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Transcultural Zone: Hybridity and Frontier Theory in Callahan's *Wynema:A Child of the Forest.*

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Abstract

The terms “Indian” and “Native American” do not only signify the indigenous peoples of America, but also includes stereotypical features and descriptions that are created by the Euro-Americans. The aim of this essay is to investigates what Indian identity is in Alice Callahan’s novel *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* (1981), and whether it promotes Indian stereotype or not. The novel is analysed through Arnold Krupat’s notion of ethnocritisicm, Louis Owens’ idea frontier discourse, and Gerald Vizenor’s theory of trickster strategies. *Wynema* promotes hybridity in a frontier space, transcultural zone, where Native American and Euro-American cultures meet and communicate with each other. Through parallel narration, and trickster strategies, the novel forces the reader to reflect upon cultural differences, and thus partly deconstructs “Indianness.” *Wynema* also narrates a utopian world to describe how Indian and Euro-American society could interchange with each other without force or oppression. However, the novel also promotes Euro-American education, and civilization, which also means that uneducated, fullblood Indians are not a part of the future. The novel reflects how complex Indian identity is, and that it is not a static identity, but ever changing. It also describes that Indian identity must change in order to survive.

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Introduction

In general when people think about Indians they see feathers, hair in plaits, tepees, horses, and axes. Then, when watching a movie, or reading a book featuring an Indian, it is expected that the Indian character has some of the described features; otherwise it is not "authentically" Indian. It is not unusual to think this way, nor is it strange, because we have been told the same story of Indians in hundreds of years. However, the question is who has decided who or what an authentic Indian is?

The terms "Indian," or "Native American," both denote the indigenous peoples of America. However, they are also terms that include myths and inventions about Native Americans, which are not made up by the Native Americans themselves. Jacquelyn Kilpatrick explains that the myths come first and foremost from the language, such as texts and descriptions of the "New World" of the European settlers. The stories that came back to Europe described the inhabitants of the New World as "wild savages," which included predetermined notions of what the Europeans thought a savage could be (Kilpatrick 1). According to Kilpatrick, Indian savagery stories were popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially the ones involving captivity of white women. On occasion a Native American character could be noble in the story, receiving sympathy from the listener/reader, but mostly the stories would be violent, filled with blood, sorrow and danger. If a Native American character was noble in a story, it was important to clarify that nobility was only about that individual character; Kilpatrick quotes Gretchen Bataille saying that "[i]ndividual Indians could be 'good', but the group had to be depicted as 'bad' in order to justify the existing philosophies and government and religion" (qtd. in Kilpatrick 2). Indians as a group had to be portrayed as bad, otherwise the government's and general propaganda of the savage Indian would not be legitimate.

Although negative images of "Indians" still exist, Martin Padget explains that he term has more positive connotations and expresses a sense of shared identity in the U.S. today (Padget 12). Also, more people want to "claim" and identify him/herself as an Indian. Russel Thornton says that the reason for the increased number of people, especially those with minimal Native American ancestry, may be "out of a desire to affirm a 'romanticized' notion of being American Indian" (qtd. in Padget 13).

However, authors of Native American studies still struggle with Indian identity in ethnic literature. Maria Lauret states that today's ethnic writing is about a search for identity (Lauret 7). The first problem in ethnic literature is how to define who belongs to which group: for instance, who is authentically Native American? Along with other

identifications such as class, gender and sexual orientation it becomes clear that ethnic identities are complex, and "the illusion of unified and homogeneous cultural representation is shattered" (Lauret 8). Louis Owens also stresses the question of the authentic Indian, and how to define it. He argues that "to write 'authentically' the 'Indian author must consult constructions of 'Indianness' by the dominant non-Indian culture" (Owens 19). Critics like Owens want to find a way to combine Native American history and culture with Euro-American culture, and thus find a transition, and deconstruct the existing image of Indians.

The chosen novel for this essay is *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* (1891). It is thought to be the first novel written by a Native American woman, Alice Callahan. The novel was published in newspapers in Oklahoma and Chicago 1891, and it did not receive more attention than a few paragraphs with an announcement of the publication. Even today the novel has not received much attention; only a few people have noticed and cared to review it. It is very interesting that a novel, said to be the first by a female Native American author, does not get more attention. It was written in the late nineteenth century, a time when Native Americans had to struggle for their survival and justice from the U.S. government's policies of allotments and acculturation. Furthermore, a woman author in the nineteenthth century had her own struggles with Victorian and patriarchal values. A woman was not supposed to express herself politically, or in any other way but regarding the domestic sphere. Therefore, women authors in this time usually wrote sentimental novels, or "domestic fiction," which, simply put, is usually about feelings, romance, and of women who seek passion and balance in their life. The very fact that *Wynema* is written by a Native American woman in a time where Indians and women had difficulties of their own, is why I chose to analyse this novel, and why I think it is important to include it in Native American literature.

The novel is about Wynema, a young, Creek girl who is very interested in Euro-American education. Her father decides to build a school for her and her friends in their Creek village, with the help of the Methodist teacher Gerald Kiethly. Wynema's teacher is a woman from the South, Genevieve Weir, who moves in with Wynema's family. Genevieve and Wynema become friends, and through their relationship the novel describes acculturation of Wynema who develops from a young Creek girl to Christian Victorian lady. Genevieve is also acculturated: she is ignorant about Indian culture at first, but then develop a great love and understanding for Indian people. The novel also promotes equality for women, and it is critical of allotments and Indian identity. Simultaneously the novel presents a love story, where Genevieve marries Gerald and Wynema marries Genevieve's brother, Robin.

This essay's aim is to investigate what Indian identity is in Alice Callahan's novel *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* (1891), and to explore whether the novel deconstructs existing Indian images, or rather promotes the stereotypical Indian. In order to do so, I will use Krupat's notion of ethnocritisicm, Owens' idea frontier discourse, and Vizenor's theory of trickster strategies. I argue that *Wynema* promotes hybridity in a frontier space, transcultural zone, where Native American and Euro-American cultures meet and communicate with each other. Through parallel narration, and trickster strategies, the novel forces the reader to reflect upon cultural differences, and thus partly deconstructs "Indianness." Wynema uses "colonizer's terminology" to make herself heard, however, it is also contradictory because it can be a reflection of her acculturation. *Wynema* also narrates a utopian world to describe how Indian and Euro-American society could interchange with each other without force or oppression. Yet, *Wynema* promotes hybridity, Euro-American education, and civilization, which also means that uneducated, fullblood Indians are not a part of the future. Simultaneously, the novel addresses political issues, such as allotment and feminism, in sentimental situations. The novel reflects how complex Indian identity is, and that it is not a static identity, but ever changing. It also describes that Indian identity must change in order to survive.

In order to analyse my chosen novel it is important to clarify the terms "Native American" and "Indian." Martin Padget mentions the well-known fact that the term "Indian" came from Christopher Columbus when he arrived at the Bahamas in 1492. Columbus was convinced that he had sailed to Asia, and therefore, the term "Indian" was invented by the colonizing Europeans to describe the inhabitants of what they thought was India. At the time Native Americans were spread throughout the Americas, with no, or few, relations to each other; the tribes of the Native Americans did not have a shared identity. The different tribes had different cultural habits, social patterns, organisation and languages that were not comprehended by the European settlers. The Native American tribes were thus identified by the Europeans as one distinct people, "Indian," whether the tribes came from North or South America (Padget 12). The Europeans used the term "Indian" pejoratively in order to express the essential racial and cultural differences between themselves and the inhabitants. The "Indian" was, thus, commonly portrayed as a savage, heathen, redskin and barbarian, words that later on Euro-Americans also used (Padget 12).

To discuss "Indian" identity one must also define what the term "ethnic groups" entails. Max Weber's explanation is that ethnic groups are "those human groups that entertain a *subjective belief* in their common descent because of similarities of physical… type or of

custom or both, or because of memories of colonization or migration … *it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists*" (qtd. in Lauret 2-3). An ethnic group is thus more a matter of "identification with others who are perceived to share the same plight" (Lauret 3). Therefore, in this sense ethnicity is neither objective nor static and fixed; ethnicity has an ever-changing nature (Lauret 3). Weber's definition of an ethnic group seems reasonable. However, it is not possible for someone to claim Indian identity without blood relationship. Everything about ancestry is about blood relationship. On the other hand, Weber might want to stress that blood relationship is not necessarily a requirement for all ethnic groups.

Lauret argues that ethnic identification is likely to derive from experiences of economic, political and cultural marginalization, which is why dominant groups do not see themselves in terms of ethnicity at all. Lauret *et al.* sympathise with Kathleen Neils Conzen's definition of ethnicity as "a process of construction or invention which incorporates, adapts, and amplifies pre-existing communal solidarities, cultural attributes, and historical memories. That is, it is grounded in real life context and social experience" (qtd. in Lauret 4). This definition goes further than cultural similarities, and highlights the complexity of pre-existing features along with real life context and experience. To identify a specific ethnicity one must look at all the aspects that Conzen states. The importance is that Conzen's definition acknowledges all the different aspects of the term ethnic identity, which also makes it complicated.

"Race" is another term with a relation to ethnicity, and just as ethnicity it is also defined in political and social terms, and shaped by cultural forces (Lauret 4). Howard Winant and Michael Omi define the distinction between ethnicity and race: ethnicity is shared cultural attributes by a particular group, whereas racial formation is "the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed" (qtd. in Lauret 5). With this distinction, racial formation reaches beyond the cultural sphere and focuses more on the historical aspects, such as structural, material and institutional operations.

The complexity of ethnic identity is a problem for ethnic writers. Authors of Native American literature, deal with what Lauret calls the historical "burden of representation." The expression means that the authors deal with a dominant history of their people, a history that is disgraced or vilified. Native Americans' history has been told through the eyes of the victor, or in other words, the white man, and they have thus become invisible and silenced. Native American authors are likely to write against history, race and ethnocentrism (Lauret 7). Ethnic authors represent a group of people and must write

definitions that are intelligibly for the ethnic group, mainstream audience, and the author's own perceptions. Even more, the author's perceptions might be offensive to the ethnic group he/she is supposed to represent, and at the same time criticised because it is not authentic enough. Therefore, the author must find a balance between his/her perception and others' expectations. "The burden of representation" means that the ethnic author is expected to write about certain topics that are representative for the ethnic group, but it is rather difficult for one writer to be an "ambassador" for a whole community.

Theoretical Framework

Lauret proclaims that ethnic fiction is not about the culture per se, whether it is African American, Native American or any other culture; it is merely about hybridity in their designation. Martin Padget calls this "the bicultural situation," (Lauret 8). Since the late eighteenth century Native American fiction writers have striven to adjust to the bicultural situation. As the Native American became educated in English and first started to write in English they first and foremost wrote autobiographies, which were read by generally a non-Indian audience. Additionally, the autobiographies had Indian narrators, and were at the same time edited by white people (Padget 19). The bicultural situation is thus the complexity of Native Americans educated in English, writing autobiographies in collaboration with Euro-American editors, and Native fiction written by Indians educated in Euro-American literature. To find balance in the bicultural situation, narratives in Native writings need to include oral tradition in history, myth and tales with personal experience in order to react to economic, social and intellectual modernity in American society (Padget 20). Hybridity is a part of the bicultural situation since it combines Native culture, and tradition, with economic, social modernity, and thus becomes a new "discourse," or a new culture.

Lauret *et al.* define Ethnic American literature as common signatures and modes of representation, where also the inherent tensions of American national identity surface. Lauret explains: "The dominant notion of 'Americanness', after all, is predicated on the idea that 'America is a nation of immigrants'; that is, not one of ex-slaves, not Native inhabitants … whether they were citizens or not" (9). Therefore, Lauret claims that Indian identity is not a question of wanting to belong to the nation, but rather to transform the idea of "Americanness": a desire to take back their history since "definitions belong to the definers,

not the defined" (Lauret 9). Ethnic writing[1] aims to put the definitions into the hands of the defined, and thus give a voice to the ethnic groups themselves.

Padget wants to stress that a problem in Native American writing is the lack of knowledge by non-Native readers. They must have knowledge of the oral tradition, myth, history and the Native culture in general to understand the meaning of Native American literature. The reader must apply certain "glasses" to recognize, for example, the mythical storyline in a novel, which, according James Ruppert, a Native reader would immediately be aware of. Padget quotes Ruppert and explains that if a non-Native reader will acknowledge his/her lack of knowledge he/she will also become "open to a Native epistemological pattern that they previously did not know how to see and to the new hybrid forms of meaning and knowledge that contemporary Native American writers can create" (qtd. in Padget 23). However, what Padget implies is that all Native Americans can recognize a "Native epistemological pattern" and "new hybrid forms," which also demands for a static identification of Native Americans. He does not consider the bicultural situation or the hybridity of many Native Americans. Padget is thus simplistic in his statements because even a Native American with Euro-American education would need to apply certain "glasses." Owens, on the other hand, claims that the world must enter into a dialogue with Native American literature and make it a part of the modern presence, just as mush as Native Americans have made European literature a part them (Owens 23-24). Rather than look for what the reader expect to see in Native American literature, their so-called constructed Indianness, "readers must look past their mirroring consciousness to the other side" (Owens 24).

In order to address the bicultural situation, and hybridity, along with readers' ignorance, on needs a rather complex framework. Arnold Krupat has developed his own discourse to address the issues, and he argues for an "ethnocritical discourse." He explains that it "is the *oxymoron*, that figure which offers apparently oppositional, paradoxical, or incompatible terms in a manner that nonetheless allows for decidable, if polysemous and complex, meaning" (qtd. in Owens 55). The "ethnocritical" approach addresses the question of non-Native readers' ignorance of the tribal culture. Accordingly, Krupat's classification of the ethnocritical approach is that it acknowledges the differences between Native and Western culture and information while simultaneously determining a mediating language between the

[1] The term is rather complex. Lauret says that ethnicity is marginalized, and dominant groups (like whites) do not think themselves in terms of ethnicity. Therefore, it would only be minority groups that write "ethnic literature." Being minority is also like being "the other" (not mainstream). The term "ethnic writing" thus seems to be defined as something written by "the other," rather than something written to represent a certain group.

two. Krupat does not see Native American literature as some subject that belongs to Indian people, but rather as a practice (Padget 24). His approach is interesting and important because it is a start for new readings of Native American literature. The problem is to determine a mediating language between two cultures: who decides if it is mediating or not? Would it not require two static cultures? Nonetheless, it is a start, and can be helpful to discover new meanings in Native American literature.

Louis Owens expresses that Krupat's approach to Native literature is ground breaking, and he seems inspired by the ethnocritical discourse because it draws attention from "Indianness" and focuses on what is between two cultures. Owens concludes that Native Americans, including many protagonists in Native American literary works, have been silenced after five hundred years of denigration by Euro-America, that is, "of being "taught to speak"" by Euro-America (6). However, Owens asserts that by finding a way in which Native Americans can express themselves, and take control over the language, they can empower authorities and force "them" to read the literature on the terms of Native authors: "the only way to be really heard is to make them read on our terms, though within the language of the colonizer's terminology" (Owens 7).

However, as been mentioned before, it is not only the language that is a challenge in Native American literature, but also Indian identity. Owens explains that contemporary Indian authors' characters face a dilemma of an "identity constructed within the authoritative discourse of the non-Indian world" (Owens 12). Just as Native American authors need to express themselves through "colonizer's terminology" to be recognised as authentic the Indian must also conform to an identity, which is constructed from the outside. The use of a traditional regalia and drum are "great" for Indian fund-raisers to get cash, but for traditional Indians it is rather discouraging since tribal ceremony is still an important part of the cultural continuity of Native communities (Owens 13).

Gerald Vizenor states that the real "Indian" is the "absolute fake," or what Umberto Eco calls "hyperreal." Since "Indian" is a Euro-American invention, then Vizenor says that hyperreal and simulation "are the absence of the tribal real" (qtd. in Owens 13). That is, the "tribal real" is the Native's point of view. The Native, therefore, must confront and contest the hyperreal simulation while also recognising that "only the simulation will be seen by most who look for Indianess" (Owens 13). Furthermore, this dilemma is more difficult since the "absolute fake" is constructed through the appearance of "tribal real" (Owens 13). That is, the simulation is influenced by "tribal real," but the hyperreal is constructed through Euro-American ideas of what "tribal real" means. Therefore, the hyperreal contains tribal real

attributes but with an Euro-American interpretation. An example to demonstrate the real for hyperreal is Francis La Flesche's manuscript *The Middle Five* (1899), which was rejected by its publisher. The complaint from the publisher was that La Flesche's young Indian characters were too much alike non-Indian boys, and therefore it was suggested that the characters should show something more of the actual Indian life in their "wilder state." Owens explains that La Flesche's mistake was that he thought he could demonstrate the actual life of Indian boys who adapt to cultural changes, while the publisher knew what a real Indian is supposed to be, that is, according to established Euro-American imagination. According to Owens, La Flesche, thus, confused "the real for the hyperreal, the actual for "absolute fake"" (Owens 14) because "the actual" does not exist in the Euro-American creation of "Indian." Even more, this example signifies the burden of representation, that is, La Flesche's aim was to illustrate his Indian voice as mixedblood, but the publisher thought it was not real because the novel lacked the hyperreal. La Flesche's burden is thus to compromise whit what the publisher wants, as well as to write his version of Indian life.

Even though Owen states that the reader must educate him/herself in the cultural subjects of particular texts, rather than focus on "Indianness" (20), he wants to remind us that all novels are "authentic fiction." If a novel would pretend to be an absolute fixed reality, it would neither be art, nor a fiction. It would rather imitate the "hyperreal," that Vizenor signifies as the absence of "tribal real," because Owens thinks that the Indians described in Native American literature are only a representation of Euro-American's clichéd Indian (Owens 22). The "hyperreal" is the constructed Indian. To focus on "Indianness" in literature will only continue the construction of stereotypes and clichés of Indian (20). However, the dilemma is still that the hyperreal has attributes from the tribal real, which is why it is important to find a cross between.

Just as Padget explains about the bicultural situation and the importance to know about the Indian culture before reading Native American literature, so does Owens. It is common that contemporary Native writers are of "mixedblood," which is mixed descendants of Euro-Americans and Native Americans. Owens stresses that in order to fully comprehend and even discuss what Native American literature is it is important to know what kind of literature it is. He explains that if to understand literature of a mixedblood of Blackfoot and Gros Ventre ancestry, who writes about his/her tribal heritage, one must know the history and culture behind the mentioned tribes. The same statement goes for any mixedblood, fullblood or trickster. Even though a reader can understand the larger meaning of the literature in

speaking of shared human characteristics of a fiction that can engage most people, Owens stresses that it misses the issue of cultural specificity (Owens 15).

While Lauret asks about the definition of authentic Native writing, then Owens raises the question "Why…are the rules different for authors who write about Native Americans, whether those authors are of Native American descent or not?" (17). He wonders where to put fiction authors such as D'Arcy McNickle, who was of Cree ancestry and then adopted into the Flathead Tribe, but was writing fiction about the Salish people that he grew up with. Or continuously, Mourning Dove who claimed she was mixedblood, but according to a biographer called Jay Miller she was fullblood; are their novels less authentic if their heritage and culture are different from their narrators? (Owens 16). The "Indian" author must consult with the construction of "Indianness" by the non-Indian culture in order to write "authentically."

The mixedblood, says Owens, is a mirror that reflects a self-image from Euro-American colonization. That is, the mixedblood is like a product of the traumatic images that colonization brought. The dominant culture has had a long project of rewriting stories, to erase witnesses and to break the mirror, as if to erase the horror of colonization. The mixedblood reader sees this erasure, and sees the images of otherness and doom when reading Native American literature. Owens explains that the images started to change once "the other" wrote back, which was how mixedblood literature was born (Owens 25).

In order to see the mirror of the mixedblood, to see the other side, Owens suggests a discourse that is multidirectional and hybridized, one that he calls "frontier" space. He agrees that the term "frontier" is a concept of the Euro-American expansion and colonization. However, he uses the term to look on the "other side" of the "frontier," the Natives' perspective rather than Euro-American. He explains that "frontier" is a term for a transcultural zone where Euro-American culture and history meet the culture and history of Native Americans. It "is the zone of trickster, a shimmering, always changing zone of multifaceted contact within which every utterance is challenged and interrogated, all referents put into question" (Owens 26). Owens argues for trickster's strategies within the frontier space. Trickster's strategies emphasise appropriation, inversion and abrogation of authority, which turns to a transvaluation[2] and resistance to colonialism. Furthermore, "frontier" is in opposition to the concept of "territory. Owens asserts that territory is an imagined form,

[2] To break the existing valuation of colonisation, and transform it to a new view of colonisation.

clearly mapped with the intention to contain, control and exclude the imagined Indian, whereas "frontier" is unstable, multidirectional, hybridized and indeterminate (Owens 26).

According to Owens, the concept territory is a reminder of the year 1890, when Frederick Jackson Turner chose to assault the frontier, that is, to put a stop on the Euro-American concept of frontier as an open space for settlement. It was also the year of the massacres of Wounded Knee, where nearly three hundred indigenous people were murdered (Owens 26). Owens states that once the Indians' capacity for resistance was eliminated the frontier became stable and a territory of Euro-American imagination: "Indian Territory" as a space to be occupied by the colonial power. While Euro-America continues to define Native Americans within a reserved territory the Native Americans advocate resistance towards the containment ideology - "Indian Territory" - and "insist upon the freedom to reimagine themselves within a fluid, always shifting frontier space" (Owens 27).

The author Mourning Dove's novel *Cogewea, The Half-Blood: A Depiction of the Great Montana Cattle Range* (1927) is an example of how to portray a mixedblood as the embodiment of frontier space as well as to turn the mirror back on Euro-America. The protagonist of the story, Cogewea, is mixedblood with an Indian mother and a white father. She and her siblings are abandoned by their parents, and she spends her life at her white brother-in-law's cattle ranch. Moreover, the cowboys of the cattle ranch are, too, mixedbloods. Since she is alone she can decide on her own what and who she is, but the ranch is also a hybridized mixedblood space (Owens 28-29). Therefore, the ranch is borderland space, defined and for the mixedbloods: a borderland between Indian and white worlds. Densmore, an easterner who visits the ranch, is shocked when he encounters the hybridized world; he was promised to meet "Indians," but instead he meet "half bloods." Densmore was expecting an "Indian Territory" but he came across a mixedblood "frontier" where "his privileged status will be challenged and his authoritative language disputed" (Owens 30).

Owens is inspired by Gerald Vizenor's definition of mixedblood. Vizenor states the mixedblood is a signifier of what he calls "survivance." The mixedblood "is a new metaphor…a transitive contradancer between communal tribal cultures and those material and urban pretensions that counter conservative traditions" (qtd. in Owens 83). Vizenor wants to deconstruct static "Indianness," and to liberate "postindian" identity through his trickster[3] novels (Owens 85). He explains that in trickster narratives "the listeners and readers imagine their liberation; the trickster is a sign, and the world is 'deconstructed' in a discourse" (qtd. in

[3] Trickster is someone/something that uses his/her/its knowledge to challenge controversial behaviour and rules through playing tricks, or even mischief.

Owens 86). That is, Vizenor's trickster narrative wants to free the reader from entrapments of existing constructed "Indianness." Owens asserts that Vizenor's writings target the signs "Indian" and "mixedblood," in which he conflates trickster/mixedblood. In order to liberate "Indianness" in all its appearances, Vizenor uses the trickster: "the role of trickster is to dismember all constructions that impose definitions and limit possibilities, to ensure that signifier and signified participate in a process of 'continually breaking apart and re-attaching in new combinations" (qtd. in Owens 86). Consequently, Vizenor attempts to manipulate "the absolute fake" – "absence of the real" – through vaguely defined and self-destructive characters, and thus re-establish "the homogenizing power of myth over language" (Bakhtin qtd. in Owens 95). By using a trickster character, whose role is to tear apart existing rules and images of "Indianness," one can play with the readers mind and trick him/her into knowledge. For example to use sarcastic comments about an Indian's appearance, which is absolute fake, it becomes obvious that it is not tribal real.

Previous research

There is rather sparse research on Callahan's novel *Wynema: A Child of the Forest.* Of what I could find, only about five people have written and done research on the novel, and four of these people's articles and works are discussed here. However, one of those critics stands out, Craig S. Womack. He criticises *Wynema* in his book *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism,* and is the most sceptical critic so far. As a Muskogee Creek and Cherokee, he is a Creek-Cherokee critic, and at the time he wrote his book he was assistant professor of Native American studies at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta. The purpose of his book is to open up a dialogue with Creek people in Native literature, and to include Creek perspectives in Native literature (Womack 1).

Womack argues that *Wynema* is not in any way a Creek novel. According to Womack Callahan has failed to include Creek culture, history and politics in her novel, which also leads to cultural misrepresentation. He continues by claiming that the novel supports Christian supremacy and assimilation of Creek people, and the novel is thus of non-Creek and non-Indian point of view (Womack 107).

Wynema, the protagonist, is the only Creek voice in the novel, claims Womack, and asserts that the erasure of a Creek voice is visible throughout the novel's attempt to represent Creek culture. Wynema is a full-blood but she lacks the ability to speak her own thoughts and opinions. Womack argues that Wynema's two white friends Gerald and Genevieve utter her opinions instead. So Wynema, the one character who could represent a

Creek voice, is silenced. Womack thinks that the novel's Creek voice is rather represented by the Methodist Gerald and the teacher Genevieve when they discuss the politics of allotments, that is, as if it is the white characters that can save Indian Territory (108). Further, Womack focuses on Wynema's position as assimilationist in the discussion of allotments, where she agrees upon the western tribes' lack of sophistication and their simplicity, while Genevieve argues about land-theft. Womack, therefore, claims that Wynema's thoughts and speech are colonized, and at the same time asserts that the only independent woman in the novel is Genevieve (108). He states that the allotment discussion indicates "a general pattern in the novel where Creek opinions are taken hostage by Gerald and Genevieve" (109).

Furthermore, Womack thinks that Wynema goes from being a girl who speaks "gobbledygook baby" talk, referring to her Creek dialect, to a Victorian lady, mirroring Genevieve's characteristics. He claims that Wynema's changes happen without transition or character development (109). The matter that Wynema marries Genevieve's brother, Robin, and they conceive a blonde daughter makes Womack state that "total whitewashing seems to be the book's highest aim" (110). He continues to crititicize Wynema's undoubted non-resistance towards Genevieve's "saintliness." Even though Genevieve shows repellence towards Creek culture her intentions are never questioned. To exemplify this, Womack brings up that Genevieve thinks that the Creek food is rough and tasteless, and on top of it she gets ill from it (111). The event when Genevieve does not trust the Creek medicine man is also, according to Womack, evidence of Genevieve's belief in the superiority of European culture (112). In conclusion, Womack questions whether Callahan "is purposefully writing to satisfy – white stereotypes?" (116). Since Womack's aim is to open up a dialogue, it seems as if that dialogue is closed when it comes to Wynema. He has already made up his mind about the Creek representation in the novel, and he does not even ask the question why? Why is Wynema stereotypical, for example? To open up a dialogue one needs to communicate with the text, which Womack does not. All he does is to highlight the stereotypical and negative aspects of the novel, but he excludes any other aspects. Even if Wynema's thoughts and opinions are voiced through her white friends, is that not an Indian voice after all? For being representative of Creek culture, Womack seems rather one-sided regarding his opinions of what an "authentic" Indian is, or more accurate, he seems to claim that there is an authentic Indian who is static and fixed, which is similar to Owens's and Vizenor's hyperreal Indian.

A much less sceptic critic is Kara Mollis. In her article "Teaching 'Dear Mihia': Sentimentalism and Cross-Cultural Education in S. Alice Callahan's "Wynema: A Child of the Forest"" (2008) the focus is on the sentimentalism of *Wynema*. Mollis asserts that the

novel shows affectional bonds between women of racial and cultural differences. She claims that the bonds are socially desirable and hinge upon the familiarities of the cultural traditions and interests. Mollis argues that the intimate relationship between Wynema, the Indian pupil, and Genevieve, the Christian teacher, could not exist without cross-cultural understanding and sensitivity.

Although Mollis thinks that the text proposes a strong interpersonal relationship between Wynema and Genevieve, she also argues that "*Wynema* experiments with the traditional (white) teacher/(Native American) student binary in ways that underscore how educational practices might foster familiarity and deconstruct interpersonal barriers" (Mollis 111). That is, trough education, two people can find familiarities in each other, and also bring down barriers that they both feel. Furthermore, she claims that Wynema's and Genevieve's relationship is also based upon their cultural likeness in their domestic space, as two women in Victorian era. Therefore, Mollis claims that *Wynema* uses cross-cultural education to maintain interpersonal bonds, and proposes that women's sentimental writing can thus support cultural diversity (Mollis 112). Consequently, Mollis believes that a focus on cross-cultural education can deconstruct hierarchies that cause racial oppression, and can also facilitate new readings of women's sentimental writings about cultural differences (125). Mollis has an interesting point of view about cross-cultural education, because Wynema and Genevieve do find their relationship through education. However, it is questionable if hierarchies deconstruct because of education, since it is obvious that the novel advocates Euro-American education. In order to argue about deconstruction of hierarchies, one must look at other aspects of the novel, hybridity for example. Nevertheless, cross-cultural education can support cultural diversity.

A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff is the editor of the novel's 1997 edition. In her article "Justice for Indians and Women: The Protest Fiction of Alice Callahan and Pauline Johnson" (1999) she also focuses on the females in *Wynema*, but includes Callahan, the author, who was of mixedblood heritage and Euro-American educated. Callahan was thus both part and separate from the Indian culture and the issues discussed in the book. Therefore, Ruoff observes that *Wynema* takes on a "double-voiced" discourse, where the character speaks its direct intention simultaneously as the author's intentions are deflected. In such way, Ruoff explains, Callahan does not only represent two voices, but two cultures: Indian and non-Indian (251). It is interesting to look at Callahan's history, but it is impossible to say what her voice is in the novel. As a critical reader one can only define the narrators. There are several

narrators in the novel, but whether Callahan's voice/opinions are one of them can only be speculations.

However, Ruoff reasons that: "If Genevieve represents the possibility of how educated whites can learn to understand and love Creek people, Wynema exemplifies the extent to which full-bloods can become acculturated while retaining their commitment to their people" (250). That is, in part one both reader and Genevieve are introduced to Creek culture, and it is somewhat negative trough Genevieve's eyes. Simultaneously, Wynema is also acculturated and learns English literature. Ruoff claims that Genevieve's negative reactions towards Creek culture are a part of Callahan's "own ambivalence as an acculturated Creek" (250). It is important to remember that *Wynema* is fictional. It seems like Ruoff criticises the novel as an autobiography, which is common mistake when analysing Native American literature. However, Ruoff continues speculating on Callahan's intentions, and states that Callahan wants to educate the readers through multiple voices (250). By using Gerald, the Methodist, educated white man, who is accustomed to Creek culture, Callahan convinces the white audience, rather than the Creek. The reason for using his voice is, according to Rouff, because Wynema is too young and unskilled in English, and therefore cannot convince the audience (251). I do agree that the reader gets educated through several voices, in particular Gerald, but Wynema, too, is included.

Furthermore, Rouff also comments that Callahan uses "other discourses" to argue for allotments. However, Rouff does not mention what kind of discourse that is (251). Also, she comments the last part of Wynema, the Sioux war, and asserts that Callahan is so upset during this part that she addresses the reader herself and abandons the voices of the characters. Although the narrator addresses the reader him/herself, one hesitates to say it is the author's voice, because it is impossible to know what the actual intentions are.

Moreover, Rouff acknowledges that *Wynema* not only highlight the issues of Indians, but also the equality of women. She points out that the novel combines "resistance fiction with domestic romance," a discourse that she thinks most male writers at the time have left out, and thus is important in the history in Native Amrican literature (254).

Siobhan Senier's "Allotment Protest and Tribal Discourse: Reading Wynema's Successes and Shortcomings," agrees with Ruoff's statements of domesticity, romance and sentimentalism, but focuses more on *Wynema*'s opposition to the allotments and assimilation of Indians (420). Senier even expresses that *Wynema* can emerge as "one of the strongest antiallotment texts available to us today"(423). Although the novel does not, according to Senier, satisfy as a Creek literary approach or nationalist discourse, just as Womack claims,

Senier implies that the novel ”honor[s] the existence” of nationalist discourse. Also, she implies that Womack’s critique that Wynema is not a Creek novel just might be the point of the novel. She explains that Callahan writes in ”highly calculated and telling patterns” (436), where the whites speak on behalf of the Indians and by doing so, she can reveal political dialogues. If the audience were meant to be white, then white representation would be needed to show Indian protest at all. Senier admits that the antiallotment and antiassimilation discourses are rather disguised in *Wynema*, but she adds that the novel leaves ” traces of a struggle for a politically experimental, indigenous literary form,” and therefore *Wynema* is at least worthy some attention (436). Senier seems to be afraid to admit to her statements. She uses vague arguments such as “honor the existence” and “at least worthy some attention,” as if she does not want to make a claim, although she actually has noteworthy points. Senier does not have to be careful about her statement that the novel is not supposed to be Creek, because the novel emphasizes politics instead, because she presents new point of views of this novel, which is interesting. Senier is the one critic who has a dialogue with the text, and she questions it: therefore, she also gives the novel some depth.

In sum, Womack argues that *Wynema* is a completely whitewashed novel. The only Indian voice is Wynema’s, but her white friends take hostage her thoughts and opinions. Wynema does not represent, but misrepresent Creek culture and traditions. Mollis, however, believes that the novel uses cross-cultural education to maintain interpersonal bonds, and that sentimentality between the female characters can support cultural barriers. Ruoff, though, thinks that *Wynema* has a “double-voice,” where the character speaks in her own voice as well as the author’s, Callahan. She also asserts that Callahan wants to educate the reader, especially through Gerald Kiethly, but also through the acculturation of Genevieve and Wynema. According to Ruoff the novel thus represent both Indian and non-Indian culture, which confront Womack’s argument of a complete non-Indian novel. Mollis and Ruoff agree that the novel belongs to a female domestic discourse, but Ruoff also adds that *Wynema* shows resistance to allotments. Senier confirms what Mollis and Ruoff say about domestic romance and sentimentalism, but puts focus on the fact that the novel is antiallotment[4]. She also argues with Womack’s statements that the novel is not Creek, however, she asserts that that might be the point in order to reveal political dialogues.

[4] The General Allotment Act (1887) is a mandate from congress stating that the U.S. government had authority to divide Native American land into allotments. The Act promoted assimilation of Native Americans. It also meant that the government could sell remaining Native American land on open market, and thus allowing non-Natives to settle there. Antiallotment is therefore opposition to allotment.

Analysis

This essay focuses on Native American ethnic writing with hybridity and frontier discourse. The analysis will read *Wynema* through Krupat's ethnocritisicm, Owen's frontier theory, and Vizenor's trickster strategies.

The first character the reader encounters is Gerald Keithly, a missionary of the Methodist church who teaches at a school outside of the village. Gerald is a white man, but he speaks the language of the Indian people and is well accustomed to their culture. In such way, he is in a transcultural zone, frontier. Gerald is there "to promote civilization and Christianity among these lowly people," and "he easily won the hearts of his dark companions" (Callahan 2). It seems as if Gerald has found a way to communicate his beliefs but without erasing Indian culture. That he is welcomed and an honoured guest at Wynema's home would suggest that he is not intruding, but rather inspiring. As he speaks their language there can be an open dialogue between two different cultures, and therefore, the cultures can exchange knowledge with each other.

Gerald's transcultural quality is more visible when he explains an Indian ceremony to Genevieve, who is new to the Indian culture and has no understanding of their customs. Genevieve wants to leave the ceremony, but without offending the Indians. But she exclaims to Gerald: "Oh, that the Indians would quit these barbaric customs!" (Callahan 21), and she asserts that Indians refuse to change their custom no matter how much they associate with white people. Gerald answers with a parable of a ballroom event where the situation would be the opposite for the Indian, and asks if an Indian would think that the attendants were more civilized than he. "With a slight tinge of irony," (Callahan 21) Gerald answers the question himself and says: "Of course…because he is an uncouth savage" (Callahan 21), and continues to say that he would agree with the savage by making fun of their "white" culture and the differences between the two cultures (Callahan 21). He continues with similar comparisons until Genevieve realises that her statement was inappropriate, and she says: "I shall never make use of such remarks again" (Callahan 22). In this dialogue Gerald shows both an understanding of the Indian culture, and he uses trickster strategies, as Owens and Vizenor advocate, to educate the reader as well as Genevieve. The trickster strategy is that he uses irony to compare the cultures, not by mischief, but he makes fun of existing images of both Indians and white bourgeoisie. By doing so he liberates the reader from his/her pre-existing apprehension of how both cultures look like, and thus deconstructs both Genevieve's and the reader's thoughts of how the cultures should be, which results into self-knowledge, that her culture would seem odd to an Indian, and Indian customs is not so bizarre after all. In

the same dialogue, Genevieve also says: "It is truly a pity the Indian has not more champions such as you…for then they would not be so grossly misrepresented as they now are" (Callahan 22). This is where the novel emphasises that Indians are misrepresented and in need of an ambassador to embody the voice of Indian culture.

Genevieve is, as noted, not familiar with Indian culture, and through her eyes the reader meets the stereotypical Indian. In chapter 3 Genevieve is dining with Wynema's family, and she does not find the dishes appetizing, and she eats them with difficulty. Moreover, the narrator shifts into second person narration[5] and explains to the reader how "we" are a dyspeptic people and want to improve our cooking for poor digestive organs. Although Indians are not a dyspeptic people, "we" would never put blue dumplings on our tables (Callahan 11). This is to educate the reader of how foolish "we," white people, are to believe that "our" food culture is more advanced, although "we" are the ones with dyspeptic illness and should have an open mind towards "natural" foods. What is interesting here is that if the reader does not pay attention, or wears the "wrong" glasses like Womack, the reader could miss this part where the narrator voice makes fun of white people's cuisine, and thus only see that Genevieve seems uncomfortable and negative towards Indian food. It is as if there is a parallel story within the story, that is, one story portraying Indians' bizarre cuisine through Genevieve's eyes, and one story to force the reader to reflect upon the differences between the two cultures: white and Indian. This parallel story seems to attempt to create a frontier space, where two cultures have a dialogue about their differences. Krupat's ethnocriticism require that one should look at differences rather than opposites. To have two different meanings about the same thing still makes it possible for a dialogue, but opposite meanings of the same thing put an end to the dialogue, because the meanings are opposites. In this situation there is a dialogue about food and health, two common subjects, but there are two different meanings regarding what those subjects involve. One is the Indian's meaning, saying their food is healthy, and the other is the white's meaning saying that Indian food is disgusting. Healthy and disgusting are not opposites, but differences, and therefore opens up a space for interchange and communication.

Genevieve gets ill on what seems to be the day after the dinner. The medicine man is called to cure her and Genevieve is suspicious towards his performance with herbs and queer dress (Callahan 12). Genevieve asks Wynema to tell the medicine man to leave, because she says she feels better, but instead she uses her own remedies when he has left.

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[5] How a story is told. Second person narration is when the story addresses the reader directly by using "you." As if the novel "speaks to you."

"The 'medicine man' was never called in to wait upon Miss Weir again" (Callahan 13). First of all, Genevieve's illness seems to come from what she ate the night before, which would suggest that Indian food is not suitable for a civilized woman. Just before, the narrator says that white people are foolish to think badly about Indian food, and now the story tells the reader that Indian food makes civilized people ill. The narration is double-voiced, which leads the reader to see through Genevieve's point of view, but at the same time also makes the reader to think for him/herself. Genevieve feels better some days after the event, but the reader cannot tell whether she was cured by the medicine man's performance, or if it was her own remedies. White readers might say it was because of her remedies and Indian readers might say it was the medicine man: or maybe a combination of both. Maybe a mixture of two culture's medicine is the best cure for all.

After Genevieve's encounter with the medicine man she is curious about his performance, but watches it at a distance. At another ceremony, Gerald steps in as an educator of different cultures, and explains to Genevieve that every people has its physician, medicine man, who they trust whether if they are "savage" or not (Callahan 17). He therefore focuses on differences rather than opposites of cultures, which is what Krupat's ethnocritical discourse is about. Krupat argues that opposites are "either, or", as in right or wrong, which cannot be negotiated. But differences mean that there is two meanings of the same subject, and can thus find something in common. Gerald takes a common subject, such as medicine, which both cultures have and need, and he highlights the differences (physician vs. medicine man). By doing so he finds a transcultural zone where both cultures can understand each other.

Before Genevieve fully accepts the customs of her Indian friends she gets one more educational speech by Gerald. After a burial ceremony in chapter 6 Gerald is participating in the ceremony afterwards, and Genevieve questions his intentions: "But don't you think that by participating in their strange ceremonies, you only encourage the Indians to keep up their barbaric customs?" (Callahan 28). What Gerald asserts is that there is no harm in their ceremonies, and if there is no harm then Indians should be allowed to execute their ceremonies. He continues by saying: "Indians have long ago laid aside their savage, cruel customs and have no more desire to practice them" (Callahan 28). In this conversation Genevieve emphasizes a question that white readers would consider. If she and Gerald are there to educate and civilize Indians, then why encourage their ceremonies? But through Gerald the novel shows that there must not be opposites, either or, but rather a mixture. He is a Christian missionary and lectures about his belief, but he does not see a problem by

participating in Indian ceremonies. If Gerald does not think there is any harm, then why should any other Christian think so? Indians come to his school to be educated in western customs and in English; he comes to their ceremonies and masters Indian language. Gerald and the Indians thus embody mixture, hybridity, although in this meaning it is a mixture of cultures and not by blood.

Gerald's church is outside Wynema's village, and Wynema's parents take her there to hear Gerald speak. Wynema is interested in English, and although Gerald masters her language, he speaks English with Wynema because he thinks she will profit from it (Callahan 3). "His was the touch that brought into life the slumbering ambition for knowledge and for a higher life, in the breast of the little Indian girl" (Callahan 3). This is an interchange of cultures since Wynema's family is not forced to go to Gerald's church: they choose to go there. Since Wynema wants to study at his school, her father Choe Harjo says that they can build a school at home. History says that Christian churches forced education upon Indians, but this novel shows a different side: here Indians choose education. It is enough for Choe Harjo that his daughter want to go to school to make him build one for her and her friends at their village. The novel does not show any resistance of such development; it is rather harmonious. Also, this novel pictures a situation where a white teacher comes to live in an Indian family, rather than that an Indian pupil goes to live with a white family. These contrasts indicate a "parallel" world of what could have been if there was no oppression. The novel describes a borderland where cultures meet without force, but with dialogue and interchange.

Genevieve moves in with Wynema's family and Wynema is eager to learn more English. She is a good student and idolises Genevieve. Wynema also helps Genevieve to teach the other Indian pupils. There is one situation where Genevieve tells Wynema about God and how he loves his children more than the parents (Callahan 7). After the conversation Wynema tells her friends right away everything that Genevieve had told her. After that the children paid more attention in school. In this situation Wynema represent an ambassador between two cultures. As well as she wants to understand Genevieve's culture she also wants to educate her friends. Since her friends cannot speak English as well as her, than she must translate, and therefore represents a missing piece between Indians and non-Indians. Wynema is in this situation beginning to enter a transcultural world, frontier.

In chapter 9 the novel expresses the acculturation of Wynema: "She learns faster…than any child" (Callahan 23) and reads Dickens, Scott and Shakespeare. Wynema is an example of how education is a tool to become "civilized." Furthermore, the village

develops and expands with white settlers, more residents and a new church: "Being peaceful and law-abiding, the Indians welcomed them" (Callahan 34). That is, since the white settlers do not violate the Indian culture, and thus show acceptance rather than rejection, then the Indians do not mind them being there. The development shows interchange; the village is a borderland where both cultures can live side by side. The novel does not express any force, erasure or conflict in this development, but it is romanticising the events. It is a fictional novel, which once again describes how Indians and non-Indians could get along without oppression.

When Wynema visits Genevieve's home in the South there are no rejections of or questions about her being there. The narrator describes how happy Genevieve's family is for the return of their beloved Genevieve, and questions "is our little Indian friend forgotten or pushed aside because of her dark skin and savage manner? Ah, no; she is the friend of their dear one, and for that reason…she was warmly welcomed…afterwards she was loved for her own good qualities" (Callahan 43). The quotation suggests that Wynema might be questioned if she was not a friend of Genevieve's, but it also suggests that with an open mind there should not be a hesitation, because Indian or not, she is a good person. It seems rather odd, or questionable, that Genevieve's family is so receptive to Wynema since there was such oppression towards Indians at the time being. Once again, it seems like *Wynema* portrays a parallel world, a utopian world, to show the reader what could have been without oppression.

On the event when Wynema, Genevieve, Robin and Winnie row on the bay Winnie wonders if Wynema does not feel "drunk" because of the waves. But Wynema says that she is accustomed to be on water, and does not understand the feeling of being "drunk." In this conversation the novel brings up alcohol politics. The time being in the novel, it is against the law to carry alcohol into Indian's country, but people do it anyway, which is argued as being "terrible," they should "stop the manufacture" (Callahan 44). This conversation is one of the first where politics get involved. The event is described as rather innocent, and thus does not seem like extraordinary. However, writing about politics can be harmful, which is probably why Senier thought that the novel should get attention. Drunk Indians is a cliché, and here Wynema challenges that idea by saying she does not know the feeling of being drunk.

The political discussions continue in the second part of the novel. Wynema is in conversation with Genevieve's brother Robin and the setting is rather romantic. She tells him that she is a member of Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Robin teases her and accuses her of adopting all of Genevieve's opinions, but Wynema says: "Your sister and I hold many

opinions in common, and doubtless, I have imbibed some of hers…but the idea of freedom and liberty was born in me…we are waiting for our more civilized white sisters to gain their liberty, and thus set us an example which we shall not be slow to follow" (Callahan 45). Through a sentimental situation Wynema is allowed to talk about feminism. Her opinions are her own, although she admits to have learned a lot from Genevieve. Robin is impressed by Wynema, and shows the same interest in feminism. Two people of both different cultures and gender agree upon a common problem. Krupat's ethnocriticism highlights differences and through that find a common ground, in-between, which is what this situation has. Even though Wynema and Robin have different cultures and genders they can still discuss a political aspect because it is something that influences them both. In their discussion, Wynema also claims herself as an independent woman and Indian since she does have her own opinions, and her opinions derive from her Indian culture; freedom is not something that belongs to white people, but it belongs to Indians too. However, Wynema must let the white liberal woman be liberated before her, that is, she is a minority and needs the dominant culture to take the lead. The two cultures might have different meanings of freedom, but there is a dialogue, hence a transcultural space through ethnocriticism.

In chapter 13 Genevieve and Wynema discuss the matter of allotment, because the papers say the U.S. government is about to allot Wynema's country. Wynema believes that the allotment can bring fortune to the Indians. She believes that the "idle" Indians would choose to civilise their allotment if they got one for themselves, their own land. But Genevieve explains that the allotment will not happen in discussion with the Indians, but it will happen whether they want it or not. Therefore, the allotments will not be "their own" land, but the U.S.'s property. Those Indians who won't move will instead be threatened to sell their homes, and thus become outcasts. Wynema apologizes for her statements, saying she is "superficial" and "foolish." Wynema puts forward a point of view that Genevieve has not thought of, which says that the Indians would willingly develop into more civilized custom if they had their own land. Wynema believes that the Indians would be inspired to "cultivate" and "build up their homes" (Callahan 51). The question is why Wynema's opinion is so foolish? It should not be foolish to say that Indians should be a part of the discussion about allotment, or that they should have their own land. More importantly, why is it a foolish thought that Indians would choose education and would want to "civilize" their allotment? Wynema sees her own village, where she wanted to be educated and her father chose to build a school. Therefore, her village has become a borderland for both cultures. Thus in her mind it is not an odd thing if the rest of the country would do the same. In that sense, Wynema

challenges the "absolute fake," stereotypical Indian, who is the uncivilized savage, and she says that Indians very well could develop and be a part of the nation if there were a dialogue between Indians and the white, if the cultures would meet in a transcultural zone: Owens' frontier. However, Wynema uses the word "civilize," implying that Indians are savages, but it does not necessarily mean that she actually sees Indians as savages. Owens claims that "the only way to be really heard is to make them read on our terms, though within the language of the colonizer's terminology" (Owens 7), and Wynema's choice of word could be an example of making herself heard by using colonizer's terminology.

Furthermore, Gerald explains through a letter that allotments are "best for the half-bloods and those educated…able to fight their own battles; but it would be the ruin of the poor, ignorant full-bloods" (Callahan 57). Hybridity is expressed here as something advanced, because half-bloods and educated Indians can argue and fight for their rights, that is, hybrids can communicate with the white people. Once again the novel emphasizes a transcultural zone, frontier, where the two cultures can communicate. However, in this situation it is clear that hybridity is the only way to have a dialogue between the cultures. Hybridity here means that the Indian is either half-blood or educated. Therefore, Wynema embodies hybridity since she is both Indian and she has a Euro-American education, and thus is a frontier "ambassador". Gerald says that allotments will be the ruin for those uneducated Indians, which mean that the "ignorant" Indian will die, and the future is for the hybrids. Gerald is concerned about the fullbloods; he does not want them to die, he wants to help them. The quotation stresses that the ruin for fullbloods is not about the fact that they are fullbloods, but they are misunderstood and cannot communicate their opinions so that the U.S. government can understand them. Fullbloods have no "ambassador" to represent them like mixedbloods can.

Another example, which portrays the death of the "ignorant" Indian, is in Chapter 20. Carl is a teacher in Gerald's school, and he has lived with the Sioux people for five years. He tries to persuade the Sioux chief Wildfire to avoid war. Carl wants to save their lives, and persuade them to make a living in the reservations. But Wildfire does not want to make peace with a government he thinks has only tried to exterminate his race. Carl says: "But, my dear friend Wildfire", "this is not a policy to live by," and Wildfire replies: "Then let it be a policy to die by" (Callahan 81). If it is only hybrids that can communicate with the U.S. government, and the "ignorant" Indian is not educated, then Wildfire embodies that "ignorant" Indian. Wildfire explains his situation very thoroughly in this chapter, and he does not see any other way than to go to war. He wants to protect his Indian culture, and if that is

to be destroyed and "civilized" he would rather die. Also, it is interesting that Womack does not mention this chapter at all since it contains the voice of Wildfire. However, Womack might see Wildfire's voice as ridiculed since Wildfire is portrayed like a savage. If Wildfire is the savage, "absolute fake," then the novel advocates for a death of the stereotype, and emphasizes a future for hybridity. Wildfire also says: "Let those talk of peace who live in quiet homes, who are surrounded by friends and loved-ones…but peace is not the watchword of the oppressed" (Callahan 82). Wynema is one of those at peace because she is mixed and surrounded by friends. Hybridity is then a sign of peace because, as Gerald stated, half-bloods and educated can fight their own battles, without a certain death, but rather with a dialogue. Furthermore, this quotation is also strongly against the oppression, and that it is oppression that forces the Sioux people to war and death.

The novel ends with the words: "There they are, the Caucasian and American, the white and the Indian; and not the meanest, not the most ignorant, not the despised; but the intelligent, happy, beloved wife is WYNEMA, A CHILD OF THE FOREST" (Callahan 104). The quotation describes a borderland, a transcultural zone, where both the whites and Indians live together in balance with each other. Wynema is not an ignorant, despised Indian, for she is a hybrid. This is where the stereotypical, ignorant, "absolute fake" Indian is gone, and borderland is the future. However, this is a utopian wish, which *Wyenma* describes as the ultimate solution to make peace between Indians and Euro-Americans.

Furthermore, the chapters before the ending describe the horrible occurrence of Wounded Knee, where the U.S. government slaughtered Sioux men and women. That the novel describes a war, and then describes a happy life seems odd, because it makes the reader wonder if Wynema believes that the Wounded Knee occurrence was necessary to reach some kind of peace. The same time as the narration tells about oppression, it also tells a story that turned out quite happy despite that, which seems contradictory.

Conclusion

This essay's aim is to investigate what Indian identity is in Alice Callahan's novel *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* (1891). I have used Krupat's notion of ethnocritisicm, Owens' idea frontier discourse, and Vizenor's theory of trickster strategies to analyse Indian identity. The novel's protagonist, Wynema, has a complex identity. She is fullblood Creek, but mostly she expresses herself through Euro-American culture that she has been taught by mainly Genevieve. It seems like Wynema promotes a type of hybridity where she represents Indians in a frontier space, and she embodies an educated and civilized Indian. However, the novel's

parallel narration is also a utopian world where the two cultures communicate with each other without oppression. This utopian world meditates that if there would be no oppression, then the Indians would choose education and leave a part of their culture, just like Wynema. Wynema does not continue to live in tepees, and she converts to Christianity, which means that she thinks it is important for Indians to become educated and leave some of their customs in order to communicate, and live in a bicultural space with the white Americans. In this sense, Wynema partly deconstructs the stereotypical Indian. Wynema also argues politics in "colonizer's terminology," but it is rather difficult to state whether she uses colonizer's terminology to make herself heard, or if she actually believes in the terms: when she uses the term "savage" for instance.

Furthermore, it also seems like the novel's utopian wish accepts some kind of erasure of uneducated fullbloods, which means that uneducated fullbloods cannot be a part of a frontier space, because Indians must be able to communicate with the whites by accepting Euro-American culture. At the same time, the novel describes a horrible oppression, and the slaughter of Sioux people, commenting that it was a terrible action. It is as if the text itself in *Wynema* is the trickster. That is, it is not obvious that the text is teasing the stereotypical Indian or that the text provokes readers who lack knowledge of Indian customs. It seems like the text implicitly provokes the reader, and it is up to the reader to see it or not. Therefore, *Wynema* reflects how complex Indian identity is, and that it is not a static identity, but ever changing. It also describes that Indian identity must change in order to survive.

This essay is an attempt to read Native American literature with different eyes than how it usually is read, that is, to highlight Indians point of view. As a non-Native American the reading has not been simple, because I had to put aside my own perceptions, and force myself to see the *Wynema* with different "glasses." Although this essay may not be a perfect example of how to read Native American literature, it does reveal that it is possible. Maybe this essay can inspire more readings of Native American literature, and thus be a part of a new "discourse".

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