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**Západočeská univerzita v Plzni**

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**Ethnic Elements in James Fenimore Cooper's Novel**

**The Last of the Mohicans**

**Michelle Traini**

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**Ethnic Elements in James Fenimore Cooper's Novel**

**The Last of the Mohicans**

**Michelle Traini**

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracoval (a) samostatně a použil (a) jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

Plzeň, Květen 2020

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## **Poděkování**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Bachelor's thesis is entitled "Ethnic Elements in James Fenimore Cooper's novel *The Last of the Mohicans*". The research concentrates on the analysis of cultural hybridity and its development throughout history with the support of the ideologies of several critics and experts. The purpose striven for is to illustrate the constant mutation of the opinions on this phenomenon, which constitutes the first part of the thesis, followed by the analysis of the historical novel *The Last of the Mohicans*, the historical circumstances, and the main character's hybrid features.

One of the major debated issues among our community is today's globalized world marked by constant cultural confrontation and migration, where cultural hybridity is one of the many consequences. For this reason, the objective of the Bachelor's thesis is to address a modern topic, which affects a great number of people, and an opportunity of broadening one's horizons.

This thesis contributes to the field of Cultural Studies, a broad field comprising several academic disciplines, such as history, literature, linguistics, and anthropology, integrated with features of cultural identity, gender, and social status.<sup>1</sup>

The work is structured into two main parts. In the first chapter the word hybridity is analysed, together with the development in its use, and the change in meaning from the Roman Empire until today. The argumentation is supported by several excerpts from books and essays written by respected scholars and professors, specialized in the field of anthropology.

The second part is dedicated to the analysis of the novel, more precisely to the author and his biography, the technique he used, the historical context, and the plot. The

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica. Cultural Studies, 2015, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/cultural-studies>. Accessed April 15, 2020.



historical background plays a fundamental role in a better understanding of the mentality of the author and the society in the 19th century.

In the third and final part, the information acquired on cultural hybridization is applied on the protagonist of the book, and analysed, taking into consideration the historical and social background of the narrative.

The various sources employed for writing this thesis consist mainly of anthropological publications which cover culture, race, and globalization. The primary source includes the novel *The Last of the Mohicans* by James Fenimore Cooper, for the analysis of the plot and main characters. Other important publications used for the exploration of historical context and the process of cultural hybridity are *French and Indian War* by Laurie Collier Hillstrom et. al. (2003) and *The Location of Culture* by Homi Bhabha (2012).

Moreover, some internet sources were used to verify the definition of the term hybridity, and to integrate technicalities for the finalization of descriptions and historical moments, including the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

Finally, secondary sources include an interview with Homi Bhabha, and a lecture by Professor Peter Burke at Palacký University in Olomouc, entitled *A Case of Cultural Hybridity: The European Renaissance*.

## 2 HYBRIDITY

The term *hybridity* and its significance represent the nucleus of this bachelor's thesis.

It comes from the Latin word *hibrida*, which refers to a mixture, or more precisely to “the offspring of a tame sow and a wild boar”<sup>2</sup>. The *Oxford English Dictionary* for example defines it as “of human parents of different races, half-breed”,<sup>3</sup> whereas in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* it is defined as “a mongrel or mule; an animal or plant, produced from the mixture of two species”.

The first known use in print of the word *hybrid* was found in 1601.<sup>4</sup>

Until the nineteenth century, it had been used only when referring to a physiological phenomenon within biology, zoology, and botany. Subsequently, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it found use also in linguistics and culture, primarily to describe a cultural debate and racial theory,<sup>5</sup> which is the notion that race is neither a natural nor a biological process, instead it is socially established. Therefore, from that moment on, it is usually referred to as cultural hybridity.

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<sup>2</sup> Robert J. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 5.

<sup>3</sup> Philipp Wolfgang Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*. (Heidelberg: Springer, 2012), 6.

<sup>4</sup> Merriam Webster Dictionary. Definition of Hybrid.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hybrid>. Accessed December 27, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Robert J. Young, *Colonial Desire*, 6.

## 2.1 Cultural Hybridity

Currently, hybridity can be perceived through three main aspects:

- *Artefacts*, such as architecture, literature and sculptures, which combine elements of different traditions;
- *Practices*, which involve music and sport, like Salsa, Reggae and Cricket;
- *People*, communities developed during migration and colonialism, being the Anglo-Indians or African-Americans.<sup>6</sup>

Cultural hybridity functions as an approach to maintain racial inequality in the social, economic, and legal fields in order to preserve the “supremacy of white people”, spiralling in poverty and criminality in many minority communities.<sup>7</sup>

## 2.2 Origin

Ever since the ancient times, cultural hybridity, also known as *mestisaje* or *metissage*<sup>8</sup>, has been a persisting feature in all civilizations. Populations have been borrowing foreign ideas through trade and conquest, and now through the increase of migration and globalization, hybrid cultures and societies are emerging. Especially during the period of colonialism, due to forced migration, for the most famous world powers, the achievement of an integrated economic and cultural system led to the displacement of their peoples and cultures. This process consequently caused the destruction of domestic culture and anxiety about racial difference and amalgamation. Being these repercussions for class and race contemplated as negative, an attempt has been made to frame methods for the contravention of those principles that impaired the cultural balance of traditional

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<sup>6</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 13

<sup>7</sup> Tommy Curry. Encyclopaedia Britannica. Critical Race Theory, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/critical-race-theory>. Accessed January 28, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Amardeep Singh. Mimicry and Hybridity in Plain English, May 8, 2009. <https://www.lehigh.edu/~amsp/2009/05/mimicry-and-hybridity-in-plain-english.html>. Accessed January 28, 2020.

societies.<sup>9</sup> It has been a habit people have always had, trying to classify human beings into different groups, which could be lower, equal or higher, to justify their being different from other individuals.<sup>10</sup>

### 2.3 Bilingualism

The perfect demonstration of cultural and linguistic hybrid identity is bilingualism, which generally denotes a native language spoken at home and a broken language. This is mostly a consequence of migration, and since people currently live in a globalized world, characterized not only by wider opportunities, but also by constant cultural confrontations, more than half of its population is bilingual.<sup>11</sup>

Starting from the past, already in the Egyptian society, bilingualism can be retraced. For example, among the Egyptian elite, it was common to assimilate the Greek language and culture in order to achieve social promotion. On the contrary, only a small number of Greeks learned the Egyptian languages and dialects.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, Greek scholars, such as Pericles and Euripides, Plato, and Aristotle, supported the myth of purity, perceiving non-Greeks as racially inferior. They firmly disapproved of racially mixed marriages between *superior Greeks* and *inferior non-Greeks* because they considered them *barbarians, mere plants, and natural slaves*, who lacked the Greek virtues of eloquence and brightness. Thereupon, half-blood descendants were identified as sources of social unrest and racial contamination, and no status or rights of inheritance could be granted for them.<sup>13</sup> Also, in the Roman Empire, one of the most multi-ethnic empires, biological hybridity was condemned, resulting in the prohibition of

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<sup>9</sup> Robert J. Young, *Colonial Desire*, 4.

<sup>10</sup> Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), 55.

<sup>11</sup> François Grosjean. Bilingualism's Best Kept Secret, November 1, 2010.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/life-bilingual/201011/bilingualisms-best-kept-secret>  
Accessed January 28, 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Amar Acheraiou, *Questioning Hybridity, Postcolonialism and Globalization* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 23.

<sup>13</sup> Amar Acheraiou, *Questioning Hybridity, Postcolonialism and Globalization* 41-42, 49.

marriages between Christians and non-Christians. As a matter of fact, as specified in Wolters' *Latin-Dutch Dictionary hybrida* means "bastard, child of a Roman and a foreigner, or of a free person and a slave".<sup>14</sup>

Yet, the best example of historical figure capable of seeing the silver lining in this process, was the conqueror and king of Macedonia, Alexander the Great, who during his leadership became also king of Persia, Babylon and Asia.<sup>15</sup> He supported the theory of cultural hybridity as a method of control and education of the enslaved people, through the appreciation of the beauty and uniqueness of their cultures. Alexander the Great, whose greatest aspiration was to unify the world and lead it to prosperity, with his innovative ideology inspired several other conquerors, including Napoleon Bonaparte.<sup>16</sup>

## 2.4 Samuel Morton

In the first half of the 19th century, the president of the Academy of Natural Sciences and physical anthropologist, Samuel Morton, began collecting anatomic models of human skulls. The objective of his research was to prove that Caucasians were racially superior to Africans, by comparing the size of their crania. Morton's results showed that Europeans had the largest skull, which indicated a bigger brain, and therefore a higher intelligence. This inquiry aimed to justify slavery and racism by spreading fear of racial mixing, supporting the belief that hybrids were a weak and diseased mutation.<sup>17</sup>

## 2.5 Arthur de Gobineau

Subsequently, it was the year 1853, when Arthur de Gobineau, a notorious French diplomat, writer, and ethnologist, wrote his most influential work *Essay on the Inequality of Human Races*. In the essay, Gobineau claimed the supremacy of the white race and the Aryans over others. He believed that when a civilization is made up of a too multicultural

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<sup>14</sup> Ian Clothier. Hybrid Cultures. <http://ianclothier.com/hybridia/index.htm>. Accessed January 2, 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Biography. Alexander the Great, April 27, 2017. <https://www.biography.com/political-figure/alexander-the-great>. Accessed March 23, 2020.

<sup>16</sup> Amar Acheraiou, *Questioning Hybridity, Postcolonialism and Globalization*, 45-46.

<sup>17</sup> University of Pennsylvania. A new take on the 19th-century skull collection of Samuel Morton. ScienceDaily, October 4, 2018. [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/10/181004143943.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/10/181004143943.htm). Accessed February 19, 2020.

population, it loses its original and vital character which differs it from the others, and this will lead to corruption and immorality. Thereupon, as long as societies are composed exclusively by white population, and in particular Aryan, they have a greater chance to thrive and remain free of tension. In fact, according to his theory, it is the racial composition of the population that determines the fate of a civilization.

Such doctrine had a great repercussion on the many racist theories that developed in Europe, and Adolf Hitler was among those who were strongly inspired.<sup>18</sup> He clearly segments the primitive elements of mankind into three races: the white, also called Caucasian or Semitic, the black or the Hamites, and for the yellow, the Altaic, Mongol, Finnish, and Tatar branches.<sup>19</sup> Consequently, he states that the European populations and their progeny are endowed with the gene of beauty, and it is sufficient to make a comparison between the various types of men in the world to be convinced of it. Prominent figures are used as examples of the superiority of white people, in fact, he describes Charlemagne as a person of tall stature and noble proportions, Napoleon Bonaparte is defined as intelligent, and from the real face of Louis XIV, also known as the Sun King, the imposing majesty transpires. Arthur de Gobineau's ambition was to prove that people who are not white-blooded can approach beauty, but will never reach it, since the characteristics that make them so different are the same ones that are interpreted as defects, making them ugly and wrong.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, in his view, the only way to guarantee an ambitious and majestic future scenery is if the human races were compatible.<sup>21</sup>

## 2.6 Marginalization

The political, social, and economic marginalization is generally connected with the cultural alienation and humiliation of the colonized. As a matter of fact, throughout history there are some examples of empires, such as the French and the British ones,

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<sup>18</sup>Encyclopaedia Britannica. Arthur de Gobineau, 2019.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Arthur-de-Gobineau>. Accessed February 19, 2020.

<sup>19</sup> Arthur de Gobineau, *Essay on the Inequality of Human Races* (London: William Heinemann, 1915), 146.

<sup>20</sup> Arthur de Gobineau, *Essay on the Inequality of Human Races*, 150-151.

<sup>21</sup> Arthur de Gobineau, *Essay on the Inequality of Human Races*, 168.

which marginalized and devalued native cultures. It is, nevertheless, important to remark that the deliberate marginalization of the dominated cultures by no means suggests that imperial cultures were unaffected by native cultures. Rather, despite imperial cultural arrogance and propensity to underrate or overlook the influence of colonized cultures, there is substantial evidence that intense mutual cultural and linguistic exchanges occurred through the proximity of colonizers and colonized cultures.<sup>22</sup>

## 2.7 Marwan M. Kraidy

Marwan M. Kraidy, the Anthony Shadid Chair in Global Media, Politics and Culture at the University of Pennsylvania, claims that *hybridity is a metonym for globalization*, because it represents the whole exchange and the positive change in intercultural relations. The hybridizing process, with which we came across throughout history, relates to language, race and ethnicity, but it mostly refers to culture, and the superficial and significant cultural mixtures, that have shaken societies' cultural foundations.<sup>23</sup> The image of the mix of world cultures, portrays the fluidity of relations, and confronts their separateness and the ancient and classical doctrines of purity<sup>24</sup>.

## 2.8 Is hybridity good or bad?

Philosophers, anthropologists, and sociologists agreed in defining hybridism as an important aspect of contemporary culture, but they had different views on whether it is a positive or a negative phenomenon. Usually for political reasons, citizens and society found themselves faced with the longstanding choice: to accept and welcome hybridity with its many innovations or fight against it. To reject and condemn it as dangerous, represents a retreat to the past, where during colonialism it was presented as danger and exaltation of the power of the *white man*.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Amar Acheraïou, *Questioning Hybridity, Postcolonialism and Globalization*, 18.

<sup>23</sup> Marwan M. Kraidy, *Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), Introduction, 1, 60.

<sup>24</sup> Jan Neverveen Pieterse, *Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange* (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 55, 83, 86.

<sup>25</sup> Itala Vivan. *Ibridismi Postcoloniali e Valenze Estetiche*, 2003.

Recently, social and cultural critics have attempted to transform the condition of hybridity in a positive cultural change, because it acknowledges that identity is formed through an encounter with difference. They claim that the crossing of racial and cultural boundaries is a normative feature for the development of societies, which is the opposite of the myth of purity.<sup>26</sup> It gives prominence to the recognition of equivalent diversity, which for some experts might represent a feasible breaking point of the eternal foreign rule and invasions characterizing human history. The ambition of hybridity is not to pursue dominance or jurisdiction<sup>27</sup>, but rather to embody the co-presence of disparate patterns and values which struggle for survival. It represents a *patchwork* and a process of mediating divergencies, where culture is not an unyielding structure, but a development.<sup>28</sup>

## 2.9 The Three stages of Cultural Hybridity and Post-Colonialism

For example, according to Peter Burke, a British historian and Cambridge professor, the current period is marked by increasingly frequent and intense cultural encounters of all kinds, which makes impossible to miss the global trend towards mixing or hybridity, celebrated by some people and feared and condemned by others. During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Europe was expanding, and parts of Asia, Africa and America were being conquered. This phenomenon led to significant economic, political, social, and cultural consequences; for example, different attempts were made to convert the local population to Catholicism and transfer Renaissance, Baroque art, and architecture to the New World. Burke explains that cultural hybridity is linked to cultural globalization and migration, and in the course of the last generation it has become the focus of the attention for different disciplines. According to his theory, cultural hybridity is divided in 3 stages:

1. *Cultural encounter*, where one observes the contrasts;

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[http://archivio.el-ghibli.org/index.php%3Fid=1&issue=00\\_02&section=6&index\\_pos=2.html](http://archivio.el-ghibli.org/index.php%3Fid=1&issue=00_02&section=6&index_pos=2.html). Accessed February 17, 2020.

<sup>26</sup> Oxford Reference. Hybridity.

<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095952517>. Accessed December 27, 2019.

<sup>27</sup> Third Space Theory of Postcoloniality, March 14, 2017. <https://altexploit.wordpress.com/tag/third-space-of-enunciation/> Accessed January 7, 2020.

<sup>28</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 34.



2. *Cultural appropriation*, where fragments are juxtaposed to one's own culture, yet without them mixing;
3. *Fusion or crystallization*, the final stage, where the borrowed fragments are integrated into a new system, which means that the second language turns into one's first language, becoming much more complex in the process, vocabulary and syntax. It could be compared to an *intellectual bricolage*.

Burke's thesis leads to the conclusion that the problem of original purity becomes unreliable, since classical culture was never pure, given that the Romans as well imitated the Greeks, and the medieval culture was highly inspired by the Barbarians. In his opinion, hybridity is the result of accommodational compromise, and in this respect, Burke poses a question: "if every culture is hybrid, then is it useful to talk about cultural hybridity"<sup>29</sup>

During the Post-Colonialism, with the rise of immigration, the use and understanding of the term hybridity thoroughly shifted, and scholars interpreted it as a "subversion of political and cultural domination".<sup>30</sup> Its theorists focused mostly on the differences, transitions and disruptions, rather than on identity, origins and homogeneity, and their personal stories could serve as an example of co-produced national cultures.<sup>31</sup> Currently, in the field of postcolonial literary studies, hybridity is the prevailing subject, and the focus is oriented on the eradication and counteraction of social and cultural minorities.<sup>32</sup> As James D. Sidaway, Professor of Political and Cultural Geography at National University of Singapore, said:

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<sup>29</sup> Peter Burke. *A Case of Cultural Hybridity: The European Renaissance*. April 5, 2013. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2XToS-BI08&t=18s>. Accessed February 5, 2020.

<sup>30</sup> Marwan M. Kraidy, *Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*, 2.

<sup>31</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 12.

<sup>32</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 5.

“the best that post-colonial critics may hope for is to be able to “trouble” the category of race and stick together binaries of colonizer/colonized, primitive/civilised, East/West, Christian/Muslim.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Anoop Nayak and Alex Jeffrey, *Geographical Thought: An Introduction to Idea in Human Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 275.

### 3 HOMI K. BHABHA

One of the most remarkable theorists of hybridity, Homi Bhabha, with his key text *The Location of Culture* (1994), analyses its concept through the relation of interdependence between colonizer and colonized, which has been constantly debated ever since.<sup>34</sup> In Post-Colonialism, the colonization formed hybridity through the establishment of new linguistic, political and racial structures, in fact the identity of colonized people has been shaped not only by their native culture, history, and community, but also by the colonizers.<sup>35</sup>

Homi K. Bhabha, was born on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1949, into the Parsi community of Bombay, emigrated to the United Kingdom to complete his studies, and later moved to Chicago. He is currently Professor of English and Afro-American studies, the Anne F. Rothenberg Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University and critical theorist. He is a leading voice in contemporary post-colonial studies and has developed several field's neologisms and key concepts, such as *hybridity*, *mimicry*, *difference*, and *ambivalence*.

Bhabha's theory intends to show how history and culture of colonialism are not to be seen as something locked in the past, but constantly intruding on the present. He views culture not in its unchangeable essence; however, on the contrary as something fluid, an endless process which blends various factors regularly added, leading to a transformation of cultural identities. In the 1990s, with his theoretical position, Bhabha questioned the notion of cultural hybridity and fixed borders and clarified that all cultures are in some way inauthentic, by stressing that there is no authentic culture, therefore, a pure and uncontaminated culture is just a myth. He provided a different way of seeing the relationship between colonized and colonizer<sup>36</sup>, where hybridity is conceived as a powerful tool for resistance and liberation from the colonizer, and an escape from the binary thinking. When analysing the colonial societies, there is the persistent idea that the colonizers were from the pure race, and when they mixed with the colonized, they

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<sup>34</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 1.

<sup>35</sup> "Mimicry and Hybridity in Plain English".

<sup>36</sup> Patricia Waugh, *Literary Theory and Criticism. An Oxford Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 354-55.

produced races considered as impure. Such concept supported the ideology of the fault line dividing the *West from the Rest*, since the Western World, represented by America and Europe, was valued, distinct and superior to the culture and civilizational values of the East.<sup>37</sup> And as Rudyard Kipling said in his poem *The Ballad of East and West, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet*<sup>38</sup>. When colonizers were imposing their culture upon colonized people, the reproductive sameness was hardly ever the outcome.<sup>39</sup>

### 3.1 The Location of Culture

*The Location of Culture* is a collection of essays, where the author provides a theory of cultural hybridity, which represents mixed and interconnected cultures, characterized by change and transformation. The purpose of this work is to help overcome the fear of cultural diversity and show hybridization and border cultures as natural phenomenon.<sup>40</sup>

#### 3.1.1 The Border

The borders and the areas that delineate them represent a stretch of land with an ambivalent nature, which can separate and connect people at the same time. Areas, which obviously cannot be controlled, and as a result, mixed cultures are created, reiterating once again the contact, mixing, exchange and the final hybridization, rather than separation, demarcation, and isolation.<sup>41</sup>

#### 3.1.2 Hybridity

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<sup>37</sup> Marwan M. Kraidy, *Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*, 19.

<sup>38</sup> Bartleby. Rudyard Kipling. *The Ballad of East and West*, 1889.

<https://www.bartleby.com/246/1129.html> Accessed December 27, 2019.

<sup>39</sup> Anoop Nayak and Alex Jeffrey, *Geographical Thought: An Introduction to Ideas in Human Geography*, 273

<sup>40</sup> Nestor Garcia Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 261.

<sup>41</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 20.

Bhabha's work also penetrates the concept of hybridity as no longer exclusively associated with migrant populations and with border towns, but also applied to the interaction between cultures, more precisely theories of identity, multiculturalism, and racism. Cultural hybridity is characterized by cultural differences and elements, which have to be modified in order to fit cultural norms and blend into another culture. Defined as the condition in which diversity meets without suppressing or replacing each other,<sup>42</sup> the objective of hybridity is neither to provide a truth, nor to be a third term that resolves the tension between two cultures,<sup>43</sup> instead it is the place where a new object is created, which alienates all expectations.<sup>44</sup>

### 3.1.3 India

The main object of analysis throughout this book is India, and how hybridity was the effect of colonial influences, under which a significant change of perspective took place, rather than a repression of native traditions or loss of the distinctive culture.<sup>45</sup> Bhabha explained, that when in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, British missionaries attempted to impose the *Bible* and their Christian ideology on the Indian rural society through an *act of translation*, it led to a transformation of traditions, rituals and religion, but also encouraged them to mistrust the colonisers' jurisdiction.<sup>46</sup>

### 3.1.4 Resistance to Colonialism

In these essays, hybridism is understood as a form of resistance to colonial rules and a "strategic reversal of the process of domination, which secures the 'pure' and original identity of authority".<sup>47</sup> Bhabha believes that the ultimate method to prevail over the condition of oppression, does not consist in overthrowing the domination itself through

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<sup>42</sup> Sociology Dictionary. Cultural Hybridization. <https://sociologydictionary.org/cultural-hybridization/> Accessed January 28, 2020.

<sup>43</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. (New York: Routledge Classics, 1994), 113-114.

<sup>44</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 25.

<sup>45</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 112.

<sup>46</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 13.

<sup>47</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 112.

another domination, but in the constant criticism of it. It suggests an active moment of challenge and resistance against the dominant force, rather than an equal exchange. According to Bhabha, seeing a nation's society *horizontally* and cultural differences as homogenized, no longer showcases modernity, but it reveals its ambivalent and vacillating representation, since the process of hybridization takes place through the incorporation and transformation of what is external inside.<sup>48</sup>

The hybrid individual is not simply the result of the encounter between the culture of the colonizer and the colonized people, but also a form of dispossession of colonial power and distancing from it. Who is hybrid, is considered to have a privileged position, because having no origins to defend, means to have nothing to lose and nothing to fear. In Bhabha's concept, there is, therefore, a reversal of the traditional vision of the processes of the individual and collective identities constitution. Identity is no longer something rigid and defined, but something produced with often an unexpected result.<sup>49</sup>

### 3.1.5 Third Space of Enunciation

As reported by Jonathan Rutherford, during his interview to Homi Bhabha, the Third Space of Enunciation, is a contradictory and ambivalent space, where new cultural identities and positions always emerge,<sup>50</sup> "it is the 'in-between' space that carries the burden and meaning of culture, and this is what makes the notion of hybridity so important".<sup>51</sup> The Third Space could be defined as the land between nations, where an "intellectual trade" takes place and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives. A hybrid space is a new position where communication becomes possible and something different, new, and unrecognisable rises. Bhabha claims that hybridity is a positive value that counteracts the hierarchical purity of cultures and the obsolete critical

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<sup>48</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 149.

<sup>49</sup> Daniele Petrosino. Pluralismo culturale, identità, ibridismo, 2004.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262001263\\_Pluralismo\\_culturale\\_identita\\_ibridismo](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262001263_Pluralismo_culturale_identita_ibridismo)

Accessed March 23, 2020.

<sup>50</sup> Jonathan Rutherford, *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* (London: Lawrence & Wishart Limited, 1998), 211.

<sup>51</sup> "Mimicry and Hybridity in Plain English".

judgement of the Western societies. To recognize the Third Space would imply conquering the binary portrayal of civilizations and overturning the effortless dual reasoning,<sup>52</sup> and “the distinction between strange and familiar, East and West, Us or Others”.<sup>53</sup>

### 3.1.6 Boundaries

Hybridity as a point of view is meaningless without the prior assumption of difference, purity, fixed boundaries, meaning that it would be inaccurate or untrue as a description, and without an existing regard for boundaries it would not be a point worth making. The concept of hybridity would become questionable if references to boundaries and differences were not made.<sup>54</sup> As a matter of fact, along with this theory, Philipp Wolfgang Stockhammer, a German prehistorian, archaeologist, and professor at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich, in his book *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization* states that hybridity:

“can only exist in opposition to purity; if we speak of hybridity, we must accept the existence of purity. Every aim to transcend borders starts with the acknowledgment of those borders, confirming the existence of what needs to be overcome.”<sup>55</sup>

### 3.1.7 Purity

Every discipline that deals with hybridity must define what is meant by pure. Since if nothing can be designated as pure, consequently everything is hybrid, and hybridity will

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<sup>52</sup> “Third Space Theory of Postcoloniality”.

<sup>53</sup> Anoop Nayak and Alex Jeffrey, *Geographical Thought: An Introduction to Idea in Human Geography*, 273.

<sup>54</sup> Jan Neverveen Pieterse, *Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange*, 104.

<sup>55</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 2.

no longer be a concept, but a redundant term used only metaphorically for a discussion, or by individuals and groups for ideological reasons.<sup>56</sup>

Especially within the context of globalization, cultural transformations are being increasingly analysed as hybridization processes. Hybridity itself, however, is often treated as a specifically postcolonial phenomenon and discussions have rarely overcome the narrow boundaries within this precise field of study. Although Bhabha is one of the most famous theorists of Post-Colonialism, his research does not end with colonization, but it extends to the study of the present hybrid identities and cultures. In most other disciplines, the terms hybridity and hybridization are used to characterize phenomena which are easily detected as a *borderline* and are not so easily explained.<sup>57</sup> Bhabha's theory discloses that no culture is isolated enough to maintain any sort of purity or uncontaminated essence to remain static over time, which alludes to the unfeasibility of controlling who is involved in the hybrid culture and who has the option to be exempted. The hybrid phenomena spread throughout the globe and engulfed any kind of previously existing competing cultural form.<sup>58</sup>

Therefore, based on race, ethnicity, and background, being affected by many different communities and cultures, which are hard to isolate and define, the majority of people is somehow hybrid.

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<sup>56</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 2.

<sup>57</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 1.

<sup>58</sup> Philipp W. Stockhammer, *Conceptualizing Cultural Hybridization: A Transdisciplinary Approach*, 36.



## 4 THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS

### 4.1 J. F. Cooper

James Fenimore Cooper was born in Burlington, New Jersey, on September 15, 1789, as the eleventh of twelve children.<sup>59</sup> His mother Elizabeth Fenimore, was a descendant of early English settlers in New Jersey,<sup>60</sup> and his father was a judge, explorer, travel writer and land entrepreneur, who founded and governed Cooperstown in the Finger Lake region of New York State. There Cooper spent his youth and received his early education,<sup>61</sup> before attending Yale College at the age of thirteen. He was expelled three years later as a result of some *boyish mischiefs*, found unacceptable by Headmaster Dwight, and given his independent and temerarious being, his father decided to send him to sea. He served as a sailor with the crew of a merchant vessel, before entering the United States Navy as a midshipman in 1808.<sup>62</sup> Following the death of his father in 1809, killed by an opponent after a political meeting, a year later Cooper decided to resign from the naval service, and in 1811, on New Year's Day, he celebrated his marriage to Susan Augusta De Lancey, daughter of a respectable and wealthy family from New York, with French and Huguenot roots. Together they had seven children.<sup>63</sup>

James Fenimore Cooper's first novel *Precaution*, published anonymously in 1820, was inspired by Jane Austen's fictions, but his career as writer took off only with his second work *The Spy*, published in 1821 to critical acclaim, defined as the first significant historical novel in American literature,<sup>64</sup> through which he manifested how feasible it was to write historical novels with American data.<sup>65</sup> Set in the American Revolution, a time

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<sup>59</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 1912. Internet Archive.

<https://archive.org/details/jamesfenimoreco00philgoog/page/n1/mode/2up>, 1-2.

<sup>60</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 1900. Internet Archive

<https://archive.org/details/jamesfenimoreco00clymgoog/mode/2up>, 2.

<sup>61</sup> Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 95.

<sup>62</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 8-9, 12.

<sup>63</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 13-14, 15.

<sup>64</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 76-77.

<sup>65</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*. (Hertfordshire, UK: Wordsworth Classic, 1993), Introduction V.

of historical crisis and changing social order, the protagonist is Harvey Birch, a romantic adventurer, whose features foretell Cooper's most renowned character Natty Bumppo, who made his first appearance in *The Pioneers*.<sup>66</sup> Written in August 1823 after the death of his first child, it was inspired by the Lake of the Fields, where Cooper grew up, and it is the first of five novels from *The Leatherstocking Tales*.<sup>67</sup> As a matter of fact, the story is set in the New York State frontier, and the main character, Natty Bumppo, is presented as an outcast woodsman, discouraged by the new American way of life.<sup>68</sup> In 1824, after the birth of his second child, Cooper published *The Pilot*, a daring and ardent sea fiction about an American maritime pilot, which thoroughly showcased the author's seamanship background and brought him a level of fame no American novelist has ever reached before.<sup>69</sup>

Following his first three rewarding books, where he examines the Americans as tenacious people striving for the liberty of their new Motherland,<sup>70</sup> in 1826 Cooper published, what is in all probability considered as his greatest masterpiece, *The Last of the Mohicans*.<sup>71</sup> In this novel, through the exploits of Natty Bumppo and his friendship with the last survivors of the Mohican tribe, the old redskin chief, Chingachgook, and his son Uncas, the author narrated their attempt to defend the Brits assaulted by French soldiers in the Fort William Henry during the French and Indian War.

In the meanwhile, James Fenimore Cooper and his family came to the agreement that the optimal solution for reaching a better income, was to move to Europe and secure solid copyright agreements with local publishers. One of his complaints regarded the American history, which was considered unsatisfactory for the stimulation and nourishment of a romantic author's creativity, since it was newborn, forthright and commonplace.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature*, 97.

<sup>67</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 99-100.

<sup>68</sup> Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature*, 97-98.

<sup>69</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 36.

<sup>70</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 115-116.

<sup>71</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 125-126.

<sup>72</sup> Jeffrey Steinbrink. *James Fenimore Cooper and the Limits of History*, 1976  
[https://www.jstor.org/stable/41298682?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41298682?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents), 25.

Thereupon in 1826, they established themselves in Paris for almost eight years, with the ambition that, their children would receive an excellent education, and some leisure would bring Cooper new enthusiasm to light.<sup>73</sup> Subsequently, in 1827 Cooper published a new chapter of *The Leatherstocking Tales*, called *The Prairie*, where the protagonist Natty Bumppo is depicted as the old dying hero and *philosopher of the wilderness* in the final year of his life.<sup>74</sup> In addition to those famous books, during his seven years in Paris, he published novels with a European background, such as *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* (1829), a story of a Puritan New England, *The Bravo* (1831), *The Heidenmauer* (1832), and *The Headsman* (1833), political fictions depicting his political views. Critics argue that during his European period his objective was to explain the American democracy to Europeans and manifest the American belief and devotion, while scrutinizing the history of the European democracy.<sup>75</sup>

Throughout his permanency in Europe, in 1826 in Paris, Cooper met Sir Walter Scott,<sup>76</sup> and in 1828 during a brief four-month stay in London, he was introduced to Carey, the translator of Dante.<sup>77</sup> Thereafter, the Cooper family spent nine months in Tuscany, travelled across Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Holland, France and Belgium,<sup>78</sup> before returning to New York City in 1833.<sup>79</sup> In that same year, his political period of critical prose began, as he published different works externalizing his political sentiment,<sup>80</sup> where it almost seemed like he wanted to revolutionize the American mentality and the system. He re-emigrated to a country which was developing socially and politically, where the modern generation was demanding new opportunities and economical achievement.<sup>81</sup> These antagonistic speculations of the nationalists regarding his extended absence from the his native country caused a significant reduction in

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<sup>73</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 131-132.

<sup>74</sup> Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature*, 99.

<sup>75</sup> Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature*, 100.

<sup>76</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 61.

<sup>77</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 63.

<sup>78</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 65.

<sup>79</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 260.

<sup>80</sup> Robert E. Spiller, *James Fenimore Cooper* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1965), 26-29.

<sup>81</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 79-80.

Cooper's recognition,<sup>82</sup> until the distribution of the last two books of *The Leatherstocking Tales*. *The Pathfinder* (1840), which is set on the Great Lakes with Natty Bumppo in his late 30s lingering in the society, and *The Deerslayer* (1841), the tale of Natty's childhood, and his understanding of nature's pains and compensations.<sup>83</sup>

*The Leatherstocking Tales* are regarded as the apple of James Fenimore Cooper's eye,<sup>84</sup> and they can be read in two ways: following the chronological order of Natty's life, from initiation period to his manhood in *The Deerslayer* (1841), the adulthood in *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), self-chosen obscurity in *The Pathfinder* (1840), degraded elderly seclusion in *The Pioneers* (1823), and death on the distant frontier in *The Prairie* (1827). The alternative option is to proceed with the order of the publishing year of the books, to analyse Natty's character and features and contemplate the progression of Cooper's novels.<sup>85</sup>

In 1843, *Wyandotté* was published. It is described as the first novel by James Fenimore Cooper to represent realism, disillusionment and ambiguities, where Indians are not all bad or all good, virtue is always rewarded, and the idealization that characterized his novels, is put aside.<sup>86</sup> He died on September 14, 1851, at the age of 62, in Cooperstown, succumbing to a pathology called edema.<sup>87</sup> Depicted as a *national hero*, in addition to gaining recognition straight away across the United States, his thirty-two novels and many books and essays became also popular overseas.<sup>88</sup>

#### 4.1.1 Cooper's Style of Writing

As to how James Fenimore Cooper became a writer, the story tells that one evening, while reading aloud an English novel to his wife, after his constant complaints about the book,

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<sup>82</sup> Robert E. Spiller, *James Fenimore Cooper*, 31.

<sup>83</sup> Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature*, 100-101.

<sup>84</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 145.

<sup>85</sup> Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature*, 97.

<sup>86</sup> Robert E. Spiller, *James Fenimore Cooper*, 43.

<sup>87</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 142.

<sup>88</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, Introduction VI.

she prompted: “Why don’t you write a better one yourself?” And regardless his insufficient writing background and the lack of success of the first novel, Cooper became honestly delighted with writing stories about the sea and his motherland.<sup>89</sup>

The author’s eagerness found support among the old farmers, who in the evening would narrate him anecdotes from the battle of the White Plains and the conflicts of the Revolutionary War. They were people who took part in these conflicts, and in that way Cooper obtained all the gossip of the time.<sup>90</sup> For example the essential features of Cooper’s most famous character, Natty Bumppo, were inspired by Shipman, an old hunter, who used to offer his game to William Cooper.<sup>91</sup>

Cooper’s wording derived from a natural impulse, thence it strikes as a writing technique that dislikes specifics and academic standards, prioritizing simplicity and directness, originality with the use of idioms.<sup>92</sup> His style is commonly said to be banal, inaccurate, wearisome, and in some cases unwieldy. But in the parts set on the sea or in the woods, the style becomes suitable, adequate, unpretentious, and *The Last of the Mohicans* is the perfect example.<sup>93</sup> And yet, there are experts who believe his descriptions are so real, almost as to smell the soil.<sup>94</sup>

Cooper distinguished himself from the authors of his period for keeping abreast of historical events, as a matter of fact, he was well-known for being meticulous and weighing the authenticity of his sources when elaborating his novels.<sup>95</sup> From time to time the inclination to romanticize the American population would take over the rigorous commitment to documented events, since his focal point was to propose a countermeasure to the decadent historical model. But with the progression of his career, his obligation towards chronicle details weakened, finding more gratification in romance. The scenery was still be created with the use of historical events in order to reach the right suspense

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<sup>89</sup> Robert E. Spiller, *James Fenimore Cooper*, 12-13.

<sup>90</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 25-26.

<sup>91</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 100-101.

<sup>92</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 58-59.

<sup>93</sup> William Branford Shubrick Clymer. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 54-55.

<sup>94</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 84.

<sup>95</sup> Robert E. Spiller, *James Fenimore Cooper*, 23.

for his adventures, but it was not competing with the plot for the reader's entertainment.<sup>96</sup> The technique generally adopted by Cooper is the employment of repetition, oppositions, contrasts, and the redundancy, which serve an accentuation.<sup>97</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Opinions

*Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences* is a literary parody written by Mark Twain, where he mentions that:

“Cooper gave America the romantic narrative history it lacked. The images of pioneers and Indians he created, entered the American and the world popular mythography, they had a power of social criticism that took them far beyond legend.”<sup>98</sup>

Many authors expressed admiration for James Fenimore Cooper, for example, in 1883 Victor Hugo declared that, without taking in consideration the French authors, Cooper could be defined as the greatest novelist of the nineteenth century, and Honoré de Balzac added:

“if Cooper had succeeded in the painting of character to the same extent that he did in the painting of the phenomena of nature, he would have uttered the last word of our art.”<sup>99</sup>

Furthermore, Henry M. Alden, the American author and editor, wrote:

“Cooper had no predecessor and no successor in his own field of fiction; he stood alone-he was a creator, and his Natty will stand forever as the most original of pioneer characters.”<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> “James Fenimore Cooper and the Limits of History”, 26-29.

<sup>97</sup> Cliff Notes. Critical Essays Technique and Style in *The Last of the Mohicans*.

<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/l/the-last-of-the-mohicans/critical-essays/technique-and-style-in-the-last-of-the-mohicans> Accessed March 12, 2020.

<sup>98</sup> Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature*, 97.

<sup>99</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 350.

<sup>100</sup> Mary Elizabeth Phillips. *James Fenimore Cooper*, 355.

## 4.2 Historical Context

### 4.2.1 The Seven Years' War

The historical novel *The Last of the Mohicans*, written in 1826 by James Fenimore Cooper, is set during the Seven Years' War between 1756 and 1763, which is a global conflict that included the great European powers, and was defined by Winston Churchill as “the first world war”.<sup>101</sup> It began when the Habsburgs of Austria attempted to regain the Silesia region from Prussia during the War of the Austrian Succession.

### 4.2.2 The French and Indian War

More precisely, the story takes place in America in the summer of 1757 in the course of the French and Indian War,<sup>102</sup> the fourth conflict between Great Britain and France, which functioned as a medium to conclude which European country would become the world's cardinal power. The conflict began in 1754 and finished in 1763, which represents the extent of time between the disembarkment of the earliest European colonizers in North America and the American Revolution (1775–83), fought for the independence of the United States of America from the British Empire.<sup>103</sup>

The two factions of the conflict were made up of the British Army with some of the Native American tribes, such the Cherokees and Mohawks, in opposition to the French army, supported by several Indian allies.<sup>104</sup> Despite the fact that the English colonists were numerically predominant, the French held the reins of exploration, trade and alliance with the Native Americans.<sup>105</sup> The definitive object of discord was the upper Ohio River valley rich of resources, dominated by a powerful alliance of six Indian nations from the Iroquois

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<sup>101</sup> History. Seven Years' War, November 12, 2009.

<https://www.history.com/topics/france/seven-years-war> Accessed March 13, 2020

<sup>102</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica. Seven Years' War, 2020.

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Seven-Years-War#ref332242>. Accessed March 13, 2020

<sup>103</sup>Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, Lawrence W.Baker, Julie Carnagie. *French and Indian War*. (Farmington Hills, USA: U•X•L, 2003), Introduction.

<sup>104</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W.Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, Introduction

<sup>105</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica. French and Indian War, 2020.

<https://www.britannica.com/event/French-and-Indian-War#ref325819>. Accessed March 13, 2020.

language family called the Iroquois Confederacy, and if on the western border, France constructed forts, on the other side Britain prepared armed forces to assault them.<sup>106</sup>

### 4.2.3 Chronology

In 1754, the French and the Indians laid the foundations of their cooperation, and started attacking the British settlements, which responded with the murder of the French officer Joseph Coulon de Villiers de Jumonville at the hands of the young Lieutenant Colonel George Washington,<sup>107</sup> later defeated by French forces in the Battle of Fort Necessity.<sup>108</sup>

In the summer of 1755, about two thousand soldiers arrived from Britain, commanded by General Edward Braddock, with the aim of expelling the French from the Ohio Valley.<sup>109</sup> Unsuccessfully, they fell into an ambush tended by the French and Indians during the Battle of the Wilderness, where in addition to Braddock losing his life, the army succumbed.<sup>110</sup> Following the victory of the British in the Battle of Lake George,<sup>111</sup> and after Great Britain and France formally proclaimed the state of war in 1756,<sup>112</sup> in the same year the French general Louis-Joseph de Montcalm Grozon, marquis de Montcalm de Saint-Véran, disembarked in North America and took command of the French forces.<sup>113</sup> He expanded the defensive system around the Lake Ontario, to then destroy Fort Oswego by bombing it, thus obtaining the British surrender.<sup>114</sup>

The following year, in 1757, the British would undergo an additional significant defeat. During the summer, General Montcalm decided to take the offensive and gain control over Fort William Henry on Lake George by laying siege and bombarding it. Although the British managed to ask for help from the nearby Fort Edward, General Webb refused to lend his hand, thus forcing Colonel Munro and his men to surrender to the eleven

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<sup>106</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 12-13.

<sup>107</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 27.

<sup>108</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 31.

<sup>109</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 35.

<sup>110</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 42-44.

<sup>111</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 53.

<sup>112</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 54.

<sup>113</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 57.

<sup>114</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 59-60.



thousand French.<sup>115</sup> When the British were on the point of proceeding towards Fort Edward, they were assaulted by the Indians, who killed more than two hundred men and more than five hundred were taken captive.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, this episode backfired on the Indians, that getting infected with smallpox by the British army, involved many of the western tribes in a unfortunate epidemic.<sup>117</sup> This famous event served as historical setting of the novel *The Last of the Mohicans*.

In 1758, Major General James Abercromby became the commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America,<sup>118</sup> but the man in charge of the war was William Pitt, an ambitious and influential politician.<sup>119</sup> His ultimate goal was to defeat France by attacking its worldwide settlements, and therefore decided to leave the European matters to the British allies, and focus on North America.<sup>120</sup> Pitt's plan to conquer Canada was divided in three stages. The first step was to seize the city of Louisbourg, which had a particularly significant harbour to reach easily Quebec and Montreal. Following this, they would capture Fort Carillon on Lake George, to gain an easy access into Canada. Ultimately, the British would take control of Fort Duquesne in the Ohio Country, which the French was arranged as headquarters for the Indian assaults of the American colonies.<sup>121</sup>

In July 1758, the British general James Abercromby lost the Battle of Ticonderoga by hand of Montcalm,<sup>122</sup> which turned out to be as mortifying as the defeat of Edward Braddock on the Monongahela River in 1755; moreover, the British army dispraised the general and his choices by labelling him as *Mrs. Nanny Cromby* or *Granny*.<sup>123</sup> Later in August, British troops commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John Bradstreet seized Fort Frontenac on Lake Ontario after the French submission, and discovered a large amount of precious trading articles, such furs, weapons, and ammunition.<sup>124</sup> In November, Major

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<sup>115</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 63.

<sup>116</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 64.

<sup>117</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 66.

<sup>118</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 68.

<sup>119</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 68.

<sup>120</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 69.

<sup>121</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 70.

<sup>122</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 72.

<sup>123</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 73.

<sup>124</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 76.

General John Forbes conquered the dismantled Fort Duquesne on the Ohio River, rebuilt as Fort Pitt, and the optimal network on the Mississippi River.<sup>125</sup>

In July 1759, the British general and colonial administrator William Johnson by seizing Fort Niagara, gained jurisdiction of the Ohio Country and several western areas. The French had to surrender and leave several forts in the Ohio Country, since, as they no longer had access to the road that led past the Niagara Falls from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie, they could no longer supply the western forts.<sup>126</sup> During the Battle of Quebec in September, after a long siege, the British defeated general Montcalm and most of his French officers, at the cost of losing the British general, James Wolfe.<sup>127</sup>

The following year the French succumbed in Montreal and gave up the totality of the North America to the British. The episode which determined the end of the French and Indian War in North America, was the surrender of the last French fort in Detroit by the hand of Robert Rogers, leader of the rangers. François-Gaston, chevalier de Levis, after taking command of the French army, tried to make an assault, which resulted in a failure, and this also signified that after one hundred and fifty years, New France perished.<sup>128</sup>

The Cherokee War began in 1760 and lasted a year. With the arrival of a large number of British settlers, the Ohio Indians felt they were losing control over their land. Moreover, Amherst established a new set of rules to reduce the confrontations between settlers and Indians and bring order to the border. He decided that Britain no longer needed the Indians after beating France, therefore, he imposed heavy trade restrictions. This resulted in the rebellion of the Indians, who fought to maintain their rights and independence, persuading other Indian nations to join in a vendetta against the British, but they found no allies.<sup>129</sup> Hence, in 1761 the chiefs of Cherokee and South Carolina settled on the end of hostilities.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 78.

<sup>126</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 83.

<sup>127</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 89-90.

<sup>128</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 94-95.

<sup>129</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 97-98.

<sup>130</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 99.

The French and Indian War found officially an end in 1763 with the Treaty of Paris, sealed by the British and French governors, where Great Britain earned its forefront position. North America, several French colonies in India, Africa, and the West Indies became British possessions, and their military base was one more time established on Minorca in the Mediterranean.<sup>131</sup>

This war, that marked the beginning of conflicts between the British government and the American colonies, terminated in the establishment of the United States of America. The predominant reason for the breakout of the American Revolution was the high colonial taxation imposed on the colonies, caused by the debts from the investments made in the military operation, which came from loaned funds.<sup>132</sup>

### 4.3 Plot

*The Last of the Mohicans* is set in North America on the frontier of western New York during the French and Indian War,<sup>133</sup> more precisely, in summer 1757,<sup>134</sup> “during the third year of the war which England and France last waged for the possession of a country that neither was destined to retain”.<sup>135</sup> Strictly speaking, it was during the French assault to the British Fort William Henry, administered by the Scottish Colonel Munro.<sup>136</sup> His two daughters, Alice and Cora, intended to be reunited with their father, and were accompanied by Major Duncan Heyward and Magua, an Indian from the Huron tribe.<sup>137</sup> On the way from Fort Edward to the British settlement, they crossed paths with Hawkeye, a white scout,<sup>138</sup> and his comrades, Chingachgook and his son Uncas,<sup>139</sup> the last of the Mohican tribe.<sup>140</sup> After realizing that they had been deluded by Magua,<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 102.

<sup>132</sup> Laurie Collier Hillstrom, Kevin Hillstrom, L. W. Baker, J. Carnagie, *French and Indian War*, 3-4.

<sup>133</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 1.

<sup>134</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 153.

<sup>135</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 3.

<sup>136</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 5.

<sup>137</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 10.

<sup>138</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 18-19.

<sup>139</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 18.

<sup>140</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 23.

<sup>141</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 29.

unsuccessfully they tried to take him into custody.<sup>142</sup> Thinking they would escape an eventual Huron assault,<sup>143</sup> the group found shelter in the cave of Glenn's Falls.<sup>144</sup> However, in the early morning,<sup>145</sup> Cora, Alice, Heyward, and the "master of the song" and New England Puritan, David Gamut,<sup>146</sup> were taken prisoners by Magua and his tribe,<sup>147</sup> while Hawkeye, Chingachgook and Uncas managed to escape looking for aid.<sup>148</sup> While in the woods, Magua admitted that the ulterior motive for his vindictive behaviour, was that in the past Munro mortified him, "whipped like a dog", in front of the whole settlement.<sup>149</sup> Thereupon, after allying with the enemies of the British Empire, the French, he decided to seek for revenge, by taking Cora as his wife, in exchange of setting Alice free.<sup>150</sup> She refused without a second thought,<sup>151</sup> and unexpectedly Hawkeye and the Mohicans materialised.<sup>152</sup> They killed every Huron<sup>153</sup> but Magua, who managed to get away unharmed one more time.<sup>154</sup> Regardless of the several Huron incursions,<sup>155</sup> the group eventually arrived at Fort William Henry, where Cora and Alice got reunited with Munro.<sup>156</sup> When Colonel Munro realized Webb would not send his soldiers to succour him,<sup>157</sup> he decides to surrender to General Montcalm and France.<sup>158</sup> Whilst a discussion between Munro and Heyward, the Colonel accused the Major of racism towards Cora by revealing her story. Munro's first wife was part African-American, which explained Cora's darker features.<sup>159</sup> During the retreat of the British to Fort Edward, they fell victims of an ambush from the Hurons,<sup>160</sup> in history called *the Massacre of William Henry*

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<sup>142</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 33.

<sup>143</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 34.

<sup>144</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 39.

<sup>145</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 55.

<sup>146</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 15.

<sup>147</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 78.

<sup>148</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 89.

<sup>149</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 91-92.

<sup>150</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 93.

<sup>151</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 98.

<sup>152</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 99.

<sup>153</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 101.

<sup>154</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 103.

<sup>155</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 120, 124, 131.

<sup>156</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 133.

<sup>157</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 152.

<sup>158</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 153.

<sup>159</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 146-147.

<sup>160</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 162.

of the 9 August 1757,<sup>161</sup> where Magua managed to recapture Alice, Cora and Gamut, and take them away to the forest.<sup>162</sup> After three days of tracking Magua's trail,<sup>163</sup> Heyward, Munro, and the Mohicans managed to rescue Alice,<sup>164</sup> and hide away in a Delaware village<sup>165</sup> with the help of Hawkeye's camouflage.<sup>166</sup> Reached the village, Magua demanded Cora as his prisoner, before taking her away with him.<sup>167</sup> Although in the final battle, the Delaware, the Mohicans, and the British triumphed over the Hurons, Magua managed to escape with Cora on a mountainside.<sup>168</sup> In attempt to save her, Uncas fought with Magua, but all three of them died.<sup>169</sup> The next morning, Cora and Uncas, involved in an unspoken love, were laid down in their final resting place following the Delaware funeral ceremony.<sup>170</sup> The final scene of the novel depicts Tamenund, the Chief of the Delaware, disclosed:

“The palefaces are masters of the earth, and the time of the red men has not yet come again. I have lived to see the last warrior of the wise race of the Mohicans.”<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 166.

<sup>162</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 165.

<sup>163</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 169.

<sup>164</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 249.

<sup>165</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 250, 259.

<sup>166</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 240.

<sup>167</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 299.

<sup>168</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 317

<sup>169</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 318-319

<sup>170</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 321

<sup>171</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 330

## 4.4 Cultural Hybridity in *The Last of the Mohicans*

One of the main themes in *The Last of the Mohicans* is hybridity and the interaction between Native Indians and the colonies.<sup>172</sup> The two characters that represent it at its best are Cora and Hawkeye.

### 4.4.1 Cora

Cora Munro, daughter of the Scottish Colonel Munro, is the older of the two sisters. She is the principal female character of the story, the brave and mature young woman who grew up in different circumstances than her sister.

Her younger sister Alice is described as her antithesis. Alice has light blond hair and bright blue eyes; she is described as the perfect woman for marriage, notwithstanding she faints in every difficult occasion and always asks for protection. Instead, throughout the story Cora shows to be more courageous than her younger sister. When they are apprehended by Magua, she takes it on herself to leave some marks on the trail with the intention of helping the Mohicans find them.<sup>173</sup> She has dark eyes, ebony-hair like “the plumage of the raven”, and the colour of her skin “was not brown, but it rather appeared charged with the colour of the rich blood that seemed ready to burst its bounds”.<sup>174</sup>

The reason behind her different physical characteristics is explained by her father in the discussion with Major Duncan Heyward. Munro was serving in the British army during the expansion in the islands of the West Indies, later denominated Caribbean,<sup>175</sup> where he met his future wife, and together they had a daughter, Cora. She is the symbol of the combination not only between the Afro-Caribbean and European cultures, but also between European and Native American, as throughout the novel she fell in love with the Mohican Uncas.

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<sup>172</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, Back of the book.

<sup>173</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 160.

<sup>174</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 9.

<sup>175</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, Introduction IX.

Cooper concludes the story with the death and later burial of Uncas and Cora, a man and a woman from different backgrounds and cultures, connected by an unexpressed romance, which developed in the course of the book.<sup>176</sup> Ever since the beginning of their journey, Cora drew attention to the unimportance of racial differences, in fact, when referring to Uncas, she mentions: “who that looks at this creature of nature remembers the shades of his skin?”.<sup>177</sup> She also shows disapproval towards Alice’s racial discrimination when referring to Magua: “should we mistrust the man because his manners are not our manners, and that his skin is dark?”.<sup>178</sup> Cora turned out to be the heroine of the story, the one who does not tolerate injustice or racism and always protects the weakest. Despite this, precisely because of her mixed roots, and her inter-racial relationship with Uncas, viewed negatively by the society of that period, she is “punished” with death. Therefore, the story of Cora and Uncas only became a romantic tale, handed down in the Native tribes for generations.<sup>179</sup>

#### 4.4.2 Hawkeye

Despite his family name being Nathaniel Bumppo, throughout *The Leatherstocking Tales* Cooper conferred him a different appellative in every novel, such as Leather-Stocking, Pathfinder, Deerslayer, Hawkeye “for his sight never fails”,<sup>180</sup> or “La Longue Carabine” for the French. His origin is not explicitly revealed, but given the frequent mentioning of Dutch throughout the entire book and Natty’s use of Dutch denominations for the Indian tribes, such as *Maquas* instead of Mohawks,<sup>181</sup> it could be inferred that, rather than of British heritage, Natty Bumppo comes from a family originally from the Netherlands. He had been educated by a Moravian sect, part of a Protestant church with Hussite roots established in Moravia in the 18th century.<sup>182</sup> He had been raised by the Delaware Indians

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<sup>176</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 171, 199.

<sup>177</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 43.

<sup>178</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 11.

<sup>179</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 324.

<sup>180</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 293-294.

<sup>181</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 22.

<sup>182</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica. Moravian Church, 2018.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Moravian-church> Accessed February 4, 2020.

and under those circumstances he became a lifelong friend of Chingachgook, Mohican chief and Sagamore, and his son Uncas, the last Mohican warrior.<sup>183</sup>

Hawkeye is a widely praised huntsman and pathfinder among the Native Indians and the colonizers, who speaks fluently the Delaware language with the Mohicans,<sup>184</sup> and English. For example, when they met the British party, Sagamore suggested: “Hawkeye, they are your brothers; speak to them”;<sup>185</sup> and this denotes the main trait of cultural hybridity: bilingualism.

He is introduced in the third chapter through a dialogue with Chingachgook, where they were discussing their ancestors, and already by his physical features, can be deduced that he does not belong to the Native Indians. Notwithstanding his heavily suntanned skin, the Native Indian characteristic clothing and equipment, namely knife, pouch, horn, and a long rifle<sup>186</sup> named Kill-deer,<sup>187</sup> he is described as a man of typical European features and light complexion.<sup>188</sup>

In this paragraph Cooper describes Hawkeye as a man open and respectful of the Indian customs and traditions, who advocates the usefulness of adaptation to the local culture, supposing the person intends to establish a truthful connection with the indigenes.<sup>189</sup> He regards highly their moral integrity and bravery, more than the excessive composure of the white people.<sup>190</sup> Natty admits that the Indian usages he admires the most are the conviction that the intellectual and spiritual qualities that distinguish a person are obtained by inheritance,<sup>191</sup> and the system of giving names: “With an Indian, tis [sic] a matter of conscience; what he calls himself he generally is.”<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica. Natty Bumppo, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Natty-Bumppo> Accessed February 4, 2020.

<sup>184</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 185.

<sup>185</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 25.

<sup>186</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 19.

<sup>187</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 104.

<sup>188</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 18.

<sup>189</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 30.

<sup>190</sup> Robert E. Spiller, *James Fenimore Cooper*, 18.

<sup>191</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 232.

<sup>192</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 47.



After more than thirty years spent in the forests of the borders,<sup>193</sup> Hawkeye acknowledged his unique situation: he embodies the figure of mediator who is not entirely engaged with neither of the factions, who picked up the code of behaviour and exploration from the Delaware, cherished the integrity of his country of origin, and learnt to distinguish the good and the bad of each culture.<sup>194</sup>

There are two attributes Natty mentions on several occasions to characterize himself: “man without a cross and genuine white”. After living for most of his life in the forest, he defines himself as a “warrior of the wilderness”,<sup>195</sup> whose only belief lays in the “laws of the woods”,<sup>196</sup> which means he only behaves in accordance with his instinct and with respect towards nature and its inhabitants, implying that his uninvolvedness in any religion. However, as already mentioned, Natty received a Christian education, and as much as he insists on repeating that he is a man with “no cross in my veins”, in many instances he still enjoys theorizing and pondering about God and religion.<sup>197</sup>

“I believe that Paradise is ordained for happiness, and that men will be indulged in it according to their dispositions and gifts. I therefore judge that a redskin is not far from the truth when he believes he is to find them glorious huntinggrounds of which his traditions tell; nor, for that matter, do I think it would be any disappointment to a man without a cross to pass his time”.<sup>198</sup>

Throughout the novel Cooper also regularly mentions that Natty is a “white man who has no taint of Indian blood”,<sup>199</sup> almost as giving a prominent display to the importance of having pure blood and descending from a “superior race”, despite Natty’s frequent disapproval of his own peoples’ ideology and traditions.<sup>200</sup> He stresses that for him having

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<sup>193</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 52.

<sup>194</sup> Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature*, 99.

<sup>195</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 103-104.

<sup>196</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 200.

<sup>197</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 169.

<sup>198</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 178.

<sup>199</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 109.

<sup>200</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 21.

a high regard for Indian customs and their wise behaviour,<sup>201</sup> and having a similar skin coloration to the Mohicans<sup>202</sup> does to imply he is a Native. During their adventure, Natty explains to the other characters his fascination for the pragmatism of the Indians, different from the white men, who, in his opinion, are cleverer and more skilled with the weapons, whereas the Native tribes have the gift of athleticism.<sup>203</sup>

The adjective that best depicts Hawkeye's character is contradictory, due to his endless vacillation between admiration and employment of the Mohican skills,<sup>204</sup> with the consequent dissent from the actions<sup>205</sup> and judgements<sup>206</sup> of the "white men", and the need to prove himself worthy in the eye of the British army.<sup>207</sup> Despite Natty's awareness of his cultural and physical dissimilarities from the Natives, he shows gratitude for their common points of view. He also proudly showcases his lifelong friendship with the Mohicans, by defining himself as Chingachgook's brother and a friend of the Delawares<sup>208</sup> to such an extent that he claims Uncas to be nearly as his adoptive child,<sup>209</sup> for the affection he feels for him, to the point that Natty would risk his life for him.<sup>210</sup>

With Hawkeye's character, Cooper portrays the features of cultural hybridity, with the support of the analysis of the frontier, and the culture of its inhabitants.<sup>211</sup> The border is a location where armies collide and bring the differences between populations to light. In this case, the opposing factions were the French and the British battling for colonial domination, the spiteful Iroquois against the magnanimous Delawares and the Mohicans fighting for their motherland.

To grow up in that geographical area, meant to assimilate the cultural influences from two different populations and disparate variety of people. That being the case, Hawkeye's

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<sup>201</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 175.

<sup>202</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 252.

<sup>203</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 256.

<sup>204</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 110.

<sup>205</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 211.

<sup>206</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 210.

<sup>207</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 28.

<sup>208</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 256.

<sup>209</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 249.

<sup>210</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 240.

<sup>211</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, Back cover.

ideology is divided into two: in some cases, he praises the Indians and their skills, and in others he proudly reminds his belonging to the European civilization.

Furthermore, the final chapter demonstrates Cooper's self-contradictory behaviour, considering that he supports the interracial friendship between Natty Bumppo and the Mohicans, when treasuring their traditions and wisdom, yet he is unsympathetic towards cross-marriages and their offspring, as in the case of Colonel Munro's interracial wedlock and the romantic relationship between Cora and Uncas.

On several occasions, it is possible to observe Cooper's tendencies towards ethnic discrimination and the emphasis on the supremacy of the pure race, for example, when Munro accuses Heyward of racism towards Cora because of her darker skin.<sup>212</sup> Also, when Hawkeye explained that he considered every Native Indian that spoke a foreign language an enemy, regardless of their tribe or their allegiance, meant he is influenced by the stereotypes based only on cultural backgrounds.<sup>213</sup> Furthermore, when he asserts that "Who is born a Mingo will die a Mingo",<sup>214</sup> implies that people, including himself, are unable to change their real nature, and as a result, despite his efforts to emulate the Natives and master their skills, he will never genuinely feel part of their tribe.

The dissent for a romance between persons of a distinctive cultural background, is expressed by Natty during the funeral of Uncas and Cora.<sup>215</sup> After Munro's prayer and message of hope,

"The time shall not be distant when we may assemble around His throne without distinction of sex, or rank, or colour."<sup>216</sup>

Natty shakes his head and states that it will never be possible. He maintains his resolute judgment, considering this sentiment dishonourable, despite the circumstances and the

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<sup>212</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 147.

<sup>213</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 40.

<sup>214</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 27.

<sup>215</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 325.

<sup>216</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 328.

involvement of Uncas. Nonetheless, when he became aware of Duncan's proposal to Alice, he complimentarily added:

“I have heard that there is a feeling in youth which binds man to woman closer than the father is tied to the son. I have seldom been where women of my colour dwell; but such may be the gifts of the nature in the settlements.”<sup>217</sup>

The difference between Cora, Munro and Nathaniel Bumppo is that if Cora shows with pride and confidence her origins, and advocates against the oppression and racism, on the other side, Natty cannot seem to feel that void rooted in the emotion of alienation, despite his unrelenting giving proof of the purity of his blood, while seeking acceptance and respect from the Delaware.

Hawkeye serves the purpose of hybrid archetype, who merges two antithetical ethnicities.<sup>218</sup> To analyse in detail how cultural hybridity affected the character of Nathaniel Bumppo, the previously mentioned method of Peter Burke could be used. However, it is necessary to divide this phenomenon into three stages:<sup>219</sup>

1. The cultural encounter, when Natty made his first contact with the Delawares, and came to the awareness of the countless differences between the two cultures;
2. Cultural appropriation, when he started absorbing some aspects of the new culture, but the native traits were still well-defined;
3. Fusion or crystallization, the last stage of cultural hybridity, when the cultures cannot be distinguished anymore, like in this case, when Natty assimilates their traditions and customs, the language, and the mentality to such an extent that he does not know where he belongs anymore.

Throughout the novel, Cooper depicts the stereotypical conception of the Native Indians among the American society of those years. For example, when talking about the Huron tribe, they are described like a primitive and unmannered tribe, that communicate only

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<sup>217</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 249.

<sup>218</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, Introduction XI.

<sup>219</sup> "A Case of Cultural Hybridity: The European Renaissance".

through barbaric sounds,<sup>220</sup> whose camping grounds are considerably inefficient when compared to the settlements of the British and French armies.<sup>221</sup>

Nevertheless, the final scene of the book seems to be a sign of hope towards a future of tolerance for multiculturalism and acceptance of diversity. It portrays Chingachgook and Hawkeye holding hands as an act of brotherhood, mutual support and respect, meanwhile Natty utters a final comforting speech for the chief of the Mohicans in Uncas' honour:

“The gifts of our colours may be different, but God has so placed us as to journey in the same path. I have no kin, and I may also say, like you, no people. He was your son, and redskin by nature, and it may be that your blood was nearer; but if ever I forget the lad who has so often fou't at my side in war, and slept at my side in peace, may He who made us all, whatever may be our colour, or our gifts, forget me! The boy has left us for a time; but, Sagamore, you are not alone.”<sup>222</sup>

Through the historical novel *The Last of the Mohicans*, Cooper gave voice to the widespread opinions of the nineteenth century society on popular subjects, for instance interracial marriage, cultural hybridism, and racism. But he also showed his modern approach, for the commitment to overcome the prejudices about social differences, that were, and still are in the modern society, a meaningful and controversial subject. And one of the moments demonstrating his progressiveness, where boundaries between cultures are broken, could be found in the twenty-sixth chapter, when Natty in attempt to save Uncas from the Hurons decides to change clothes with David, the Puritan.

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<sup>220</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 56.

<sup>221</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 217.

<sup>222</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 330.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The thesis aimed to briefly outline the origins and development of the phenomenon of hybridity, which later became known as the cultural hybridity, and to demonstrate that it is not a phenomenon found exclusively in the twentieth century with the globalization, but on the contrary, it had been a cause of contentions and debates already among the ancient Greeks and Romans.

The first section consists of the definition of the word *hybridity*, which found its roots in the Greek word *hibrida*, originally used purely when referring to plants or animals, and later extended also to the social and cultural fields. Various anthropologic theories and reflections were enclosed, such as Homi Bhabha's *Location of Culture*, to better delineate the advancement of cultural hybridity and the correlative opinions throughout history. The ideologies were divided between those who were in favour and those against. On one side, it was considered as a positive process, a natural phenomenon that embraces and appreciates uniqueness, and considers hybridity as a fundamental characteristic for the development of a society. Furthermore, the fluidity of relationships could benefit the world and perhaps end the aspiration for domination. On the other hand, the opposition believed in the concept of pure race and in the superiority of the white race, criticizing any form of diversity, which could impair the cultural balance of the society, and therefore justify any form of discrimination, including slavery.

In the second part, the focus is on the historical novel *The Last of the Mohicans* and its main character Nathaniel Bumppo. In the first place, the biography of the author James Fenimore Cooper, often compared to that of Sir Walter Scott, was used to portray the cultural and social circumstances of that period, his writing technique, and his role in American society. As a matter of fact, he is considered the first American novelist and one of the greatest writers of the nineteenth century.

Subsequently, the historical background and the plot of the novel of *The Last of the Mohicans* were analysed. Hawkeye's adventure is set in America on the border with

Canada, during the Seven Years' War, and more precisely during the French and Indian War in the summer of 1757.

Lastly, the protagonist Natty Bumppo was analysed, considering his embodiment of cultural hybridity and the positive and negative consequences that it entails.

The concept of this bachelor's thesis is to show that despite constant criticism and theories against cultural hybridism, it is important to emphasize that it has been proved, that the problem of original purity has been unreliable. Ever since the ancient times, populations have been exposed to foreign influences, and through migration and later globalization, the exchange of information became unavoidable.

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## 7 ABSTRACT

This Bachelor's thesis, entitled "Ethnic Elements in James Fenimore Cooper's novel *The Last of the Mohicans*", deals with cultural hybridity and its development throughout history. It refers to the mixture of cultures, that ever since the ancient times as a consequence of migration and globalization, influenced civilizations.

The work is structured in a theoretical part and a practical one. The first part is focused on the definition of cultural hybridity and its characteristics, together with the development in its use, and how meaning changed from the myth of purity supported by the Greek scholars until Homi Bhabha's theory, in which hybridity provides an escape from binary thinking.

In the second part, the historical novel *The Last of the Mohicans* and its main character Nathaniel Bumppo serve as means to analyse cultural hybridity and its three stages, encounter, appropriation, and fusion during the nineteenth century in America. Through the analysis of specific examples, it is easier to define the positive and the negative aspects that make up a hybrid person.

In sum, the objective of the work is to deliver a detailed chronological description of hybridity based on specific theories and examples, and confront the classical doctrines of purity, which regard cultural hybridity as destruction of domestic cultures, instead of a positive exchange of knowledge.

## 8 RESUME

Tato bakalářská práce, nazvaná „Etnické prvky v románu Jamese Fenimora Coopera *Poslední Mohykán*“, se zabývá kulturní hybriditou a jejím vývojem v celé historii. Jedná se o směs kultur, která od dob starověku v důsledku migrace a globalizace ovlivňovala civilizace.

Práce je strukturována do teoretické a praktické části. První část je zaměřena na vymezení kulturní hybridity a jejích charakteristik společně s vývojem v jejím použití a na proměny jejího významu od mýtu o rasové čistotě podporované řeckými učiteli až po teorii Homi Bhabhy, v níž hybridita poskytuje únik z binárního myšlení.

Ve druhé části slouží historický román *Poslední Mohykán* a jeho hlavní postava Nathaniel Bumppo jako prostředek k analýze kulturní hybridity a jejích tří fází, tj. setkání, přivlastňování a fúze, během devatenáctého století v Americe. Pozitivní a negativní aspekty definující hybridní osobu budou analyzovány na konkrétních příkladech.

Práce celkově usiluje o detailní chronologický nástin konceptu hybridity, založeného na konkrétních teoriích a příkladech, a konfrontaci klasických doktrín čistoty, které namísto pozitivní výměny znalostí považují kulturní hybriditu za destrukci domácích kultur.