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Cannibalism, Cultural Identity, and the Discursive Construction of the "Savage" in Western Frontier Narratives

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Abstract
Cannibalism has been a concept that has held a significant position in the historical imagination of Western societies. From initial European interactions with the Americas to tales of the American frontier in the nineteenth century, the idea of cannibals has acted as a symbolic representation of extreme cultural difference. Rather than merely being a reference to extreme human practices, cannibalism has often been a discursive device through which Western societies have created a moral order between civilization and savagery. In this article, the function of cannibal discourse within Western historical narratives is analyzed from a Critical Discourse Analytical approach. The theoretical contributions of Norman Fairclough and Teun A. van Dijk are utilized to examine the function of linguistic representations of cannibalism as a device for creating ideological constructions of cultural identity within a historical period of colonial expansion. Special attention is devoted to the historical narrative of the Donner Party tragedy of 1846–1847, which turned out to be one of the most popular cases of survival cannibalism in the American West. The article utilizes various methods of historical study and discourse analysis to examine the symbolic significance of cannibalism, which acts as boundary markers of Western culture and identity, and to examine the legitimization of ideologies of the American West. This study seeks to develop interdisciplinary research in the fields of history, discourse studies, and culture.
Keywords: Cannibalism; Critical Discourse Analysis; Cultural Identity; Western Frontier Narratives; Colonial Discourse.

1. Introduction
In the course of Western civilization, few cultural icons have been as captivating as that of the cannibal. Cannibalism has been a recurring theme in historical documents, travelogues, missionary accounts, and colonialist propaganda. In many cases, cannibalism was a cultural icon that was imbued with a meaning that was much more significant than was literally possible. At times, cannibalism was a cultural construct used by Western civilization to define the boundaries between civilization and barbarism.
The cultural construct of cannibalism was first introduced to European culture as a result of the initial encounters between European travelers and the inhabitants of the Americas. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, travel literature about new lands explored by

Westerners included descriptions of cannibalistic acts by people in America. The accounts of cannibalism among the inhabitants of the Americas were disseminated throughout Europe.
However, there has been much dispute by contemporary historians and anthropologists of the accuracy of the historical accounts of cannibalism. In fact, the anthropologist William Arens, as stated by his book *The Man-Eating Myth*, argued that the historical accounts of cannibalism were based on hearsay, or second-hand knowledge of the subject. Arens stated that the charge of cannibalism was not really an observation of the activities of the colonized people but was rather used to establish the moral inferiority of the colonized people.
The recent historical research on the subject has continued to support the critical view of the historical accounts of cannibalism. In fact, it has been found by the researchers that the colonial accounts of cannibalism were based on the misperceptions of the colonized people by the colonizers. In fact, rituals, ceremonies, or extreme situations were often misperceived as cannibalism, and the misperceptions were later recorded in the colonial literature.
The recurrence of cannibalism in literature is a reflection of the extent to which such literature was ideological in nature in Western culture. As the historian Tzvetan Todorov noted of European depictions of the Americas, "the description of the other is characterized by a reference to the cultural expectations and to the intellectual schemes of the people who made it" (Todorov, 1984). In this respect, cannibalism can be seen as a product of a system of representation through which European culture made sense of the new and unfamiliar world.
The figure of the cannibal did not die out as a product of early colonial history. Rather, the figure continued to develop within the historical traditions of the centuries that followed. Within the context of American expansion in the nineteenth century, tales of cannibalism came to be linked to the mythology of the frontier. The westward expansion of American settlers across North America was marked by a number of tales of survival and hardship within a challenging environment. Among the most famous tales is that of the Donner party.
The emigrants, in their way to California during the winter season of 1846-1847, had to find a new way to cross. The emigrants had a snowstorm on the first day of their emigration to the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The emigrants knew that they were in trouble because of the food supplies. The hunger experienced by the emigrants forced them to eat human flesh. The news of cannibalism among the emigrants spread fast across America. This story is today considered to be one of the most popular emigration stories to the West.
The Donner Party case is an excellent example of how cannibalism was not only a historical fact but also a cultural symbol. The case of cannibalism among the emigrants was a result of environmental factors. However, there was a cultural symbol in the case. The case was a metaphor for the perils of the frontier and how close civilization was to survival.
From a discourse analysis perspective, the narratives of cannibalism show some important insights into the social production of cultural identity. The linguistic representation of cannibalism is often used to show social differences and hierarchies between people. The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach is an appropriate approach to consider in the analysis of the linguistic representation of cannibalism.
Norman Fairclough and Teun A. van Dijk are among the researchers who have proven that discourse is an important factor in the social production of ideological structures in society

(Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008). Through the analysis of language use, CDA attempts to show how social power relations are legitimized in society.

The purpose of this article, therefore, is to explore cannibal discourse as a discursive construction, rather than an actual historical fact. By an examination of the language used in colonial narratives and frontier history, this study hopes to explore the ways in which the figure of the cannibal was used as a symbolic boundary marker in Western historical discourse.

The article is structured as follows. The next section of the article is a summary of the key debates surrounding cannibalism as a research topic. This section is a necessary precursor to an understanding of the importance of cannibal discourse. The following section is a summary of Critical Discourse Analysis as a theoretical framework. The relevance of Critical Discourse Analysis to historical narratives is then discussed. The following sections of the article explore colonial narratives of cannibalism, with particular emphasis on historical narratives of the Donner Party disaster. The article concludes with a discussion of the implications of cannibal discourse.

2. Literature Review

The discourse of cannibalism has been a significant area of research in the context of the Western encounter with the "Other." It is a multidisciplinary field of research, which includes anthropology, history, cultural studies, and discourse studies. There are three important fields of study that are associated with the discourse of cannibalism. These include the critique of historical records from an anthropological perspective, the historical and cultural study of colonial records, and the critical study of the linguistic construction of the "savage."

2.1 Anthropological Perspectives

The most important critique of the literal meaning of the discourse of cannibalism has been provided by William Arens in his book, "The Man-Eating Myth" (1979). Arens has studied the ethnographic data on the practice of cannibalism from various parts of the world at different points of time and concluded that the practice of cannibalism was more based on hearsay. Arens suggested that the discourse of cannibalism was ideologically used to establish moral and cultural differences between European societies (Arens, 1979). Though the arguments of Arens have been criticized for their tendency to dismiss the records of survival cannibalism, the book remains a foundational study of the symbolic, rather than actual, role of cannibalism in the discourse of the "savage."

In a similar vein, Obeyesekere (2005) analyzed the European stories of cannibalism in the South Pacific and concluded that they were more about the fears and cultural preconceptions of the Europeans than about the actual practices of the people of the South Pacific. He suggested that the cannibal was a cultural mirror that reflected the fears, desires, and moral judgments of the Europeans about the "other" cultures.

The example of Shirley Lindenbaum's research on Kuru sorcery in Papua New Guinea is another example of the complexities of cannibalism practices. Lindenbaum (1979) showed

that the cannibalistic practices, including the funerary consumption of the dead, are culturally defined and cannot be judged by a Eurocentric moral standard.

2.2 Historical-Cultural Analyses

There have been several studies on the historical aspects of the role of narratives of cannibalism in the context of colonialism. For example, Peter Hulme's work on the role of cannibalism in the colonial literature of the Caribbean in the early colonial period showed how the narratives of cannibalism were related to the rhetoric of conquest. Hulme's work showed how the narratives of cannibalism were not concerned with the facts of the matter, but with the establishment of a moral divide between the "civilized" European and the "savage" native.

Another work on the role of narratives of cannibalism is the work of Stephen Greenblatt on the "wonder" of the New World in the narratives of the discovery of the Americas. In his work, Greenblatt showed how the narratives of cannibalism were a mechanism to work through the cultural anxieties of the early modern period in Europe. Greenblatt's work showed the performance aspect of the narratives of cannibalism, where the figure of the cannibal was not just described, but was a figure to draw boundaries on the issue of morality, civilization, and culture.

Mary Louise Pratt's (1992) concept of "contact zones" has been particularly important in understanding how European and indigenous peoples interacted, often in an asymmetrical fashion. In this context, cannibal discourse can be seen as a rhetorical device that helped to define a hierarchy between observer and observed. Through a series of narrative strategies, a hierarchy of morality and culture could be constructed to justify colonial expansion and domination.

Watson's (2010) work has extended this discourse to examine colonial narratives of indigenous peoples in Canada and New England. She has shown how accusations of cannibalism can also be seen as a tool of cultural control, as it reinforced European assumptions of their own moral and intellectual superiority (Watson, 2010). This example illustrates how the figure of the cannibal can also be seen as having a prescriptive function, as it described cannibal practices but also prescribed how European readers ought to morally respond to them.

Discourse Analytic studies of cannibal narratives would, therefore, view these texts as spaces where language creates and reinforces ideological positions. Norman Fairclough (1995) draws attention to discourse's dual role: discourse is not only socially constitutive, meaning that language contributes to the creation of social power relations, but is also socially conditioned, meaning that language is shaped by social factors. Discourse Analytic studies of cannibal narratives would, thus, show how language positions European observers of cannibalism as morally and culturally superior beings.

Teun A. van Dijk's (2008) extension of discourse's role in creating ideology draws attention to discourse's role in reproducing societal hierarchies, using both implicit and explicit linguistic devices. Discourse's association of cannibalism with moral degradation, animality, or 'otherness' would, thus, serve to reinforce the 'in-group' (Europeans) versus 'out-group'

(indigenous peoples) dichotomy. Discourse Analytic studies of cannibal narratives would, thus, enable analysts to see how discourse subtly reinforces societal hierarchies.

An alternative perspective on the role of discourse comes from the works of Foucault, who placed the role of discourse in relation to the wider regimes of power and knowledge. The cannibal narrative is part of a "regime of truth" in the sense that it produces knowledge about human, civilized, and moral identity. Analysis of historical texts from this perspective can reveal the underlying regimes of power in the ethnographic or historical accounts.

2.3 Frontier Narratives and Survival Cannibalism

However, the role of cannibal discourse in the American frontier is a special case, as opposed to the focus of anthropological and historical studies on the colonial frontier. The Donner Party tragedy in the winter of 1846-1847, documented in great detail in historical records (Rarick, 2008), shows the interrelation between survival realities and moral discourse. Survival cannibalism occurred in extreme environmental conditions, while the subsequent discourse on cannibalism was about the risk, the transgression, the breakdown of the moral order, etc.

Richard White's work published in 1991 and Richard Slotkin's published in 1992 explored the use of extremities such as cannibalism in frontier mythology and how it expressed broader cultural concerns about the precariousness of civilization in the wilderness. These works illustrate that cannibal discourse is not limited to actual acts of cannibalism and that it has cultural, environmental, and psychological aspects.

2.4 Synthesis and Implications for Discourse Studies

The above works illustrate that cannibal discourse cannot be understood as a form of descriptive writing about actual acts committed by people. Rather, it is a linguistic and cultural tool that establishes moral and social boundaries between order and chaos. Anthropologists have explored the symbolic and ritualistic aspects of cannibalism, historians have explored its ideological role in colonial expansion, and discourse analysts have explored the mechanisms by which language reproduces power relations.

The current study extends these findings through the integration of historical, anthropological, and discourse analytic approaches. In examining both colonialist and frontier discourse, the current study contextualizes cannibalistic discourse in relation to the broader cultural and historical setting, highlighting the role of cannibalistic discourse in the development of the Western concept of the "other" and the creation of cultural identity. Furthermore, the use of CDA methodology allows the current study to balance the linguistic forms with the social effects of the discourse, bridging the gap between historical studies and applied linguistics.

3. Theoretical Framework: Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a well-developed methodology for investigating the interrelationship between language, ideology, and power in both historical and modern texts.

CDA differs from other linguistic analysis techniques in that it is concerned with the role that discourse both represents and contributes to in shaping social relations and producing ideological meaning that influences our understanding of identity, morality, and social hierarchy (Fairclough, 1995). CDA's focus in the analysis of Western colonialist and frontier discourse is the linguistic construction of the figure of the cannibal and the role this figure plays in the construction of the opposition between "civilized" and "savage" identity.

3.1 Origins and Principles of CDA

The theory underlying CDA as a methodological approach is based on the work of theorists such as Norman Fairclough, Teun A. van Dijk, and the incorporation of Foucault's (1972) theory of power and knowledge. Fairclough (1992) points to the dialectical relationship existing between discourse and social structures in his theory of CDA. He argues that "texts are both shaped by and shape broader societal processes." CDA is based on the understanding that language is not an innocent means of communication but a socially constitutive practice that actively engages in the reproduction of power relations.

Van Dijk's model is an extension of CDA theory in that it examines the cognitive aspects of discourse. According to Van Dijk's theory, discourse is used in the formation of in-groups and out-groups through the use of linguistic devices that support the concept of social hierarchy. For instance, in colonial writings, the consistent linkage of indigenous groups with cannibalism serves to place Europeans in a position of moral and cultural superiority, thus supporting colonialism and the promotion of Western values.

CDA is based on four key principles: "Discourse is socially constitutive," "Discourse is socially conditioned," "Discourse is a site of ideological struggle," and "Discourse shapes knowledge and practice" (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008). These principles form a basis for the analysis of the ways in which moral and cultural boundaries are constructed in historical writings about extreme behaviors such as cannibalism.

3.2 Application to Historical Texts

When applying CDA, it is important to consider both the linguistic form and the historical context. Colonial and frontier texts are not objective observations of cannibalistic behaviors but rather a form of discourse that is embedded in an ideological context. Cannibalism, as a discourse, is a way of drawing moral dichotomies, justifying imperialism, and reinforcing European cultural hegemonies (Hulme, 1986; Greenblatt, 1991).

For example, travel writings about the Caribbean often contain explicit moral content about cannibalism, emphasizing the brutality and "otherness" of indigenous peoples (Arens, 1979; Hulme, 1986). The literature of the American frontier, such as Donner Party, utilizes cannibalism to construct moral dichotomies, where European rationality and morality are contrasted with the extreme, threatening environment of the frontier (Slotkin, 1992; Rarick, 2008).

CDA can help us understand the discourse of cannibalism by looking at the linguistic forms and mechanisms. Words such as "savage," "monstrous," or "barbaric" are not objective descriptions of cannibalistic behaviors but rather a form of ideology that situates the "Other"

as morally inferior. Discourse structures that emphasize danger, violence, and moral deviation are ways of heightening the symbolic value of cannibalism.

3.3 Interdisciplinary Integration

One of the greatest strengths of CDA is its ability to synthesize various disciplines. Historical study provides empirical evidence, anthropological study provides contextual understanding, and discourse analysis integrates both to examine knowledge construction in a linguistic and rhetorical manner (Pratt, 1992; Obeyesekere, 2005). Take, for example, anthropologists' studies showing how cannibalism, while reported, was ritualized, symbolic, or misinterpreted by European colonizers (Lindenbaum, 1979; Obeyesekere, 2005). CDA provides a complementary perspective to both historical and anthropological study by examining the narrativization of cannibalism in colonial literature and examining knowledge construction in a linguistic and rhetorical manner. This is a more nuanced understanding of how Western literature created a lasting image of moral and cultural difference.

CDA, furthermore, would help researchers develop a sophisticated understanding of cannibalism in frontier narratives. While anthropologists would place cannibalism within its contextual framework, CDA would help researchers understand how cannibalism was narrated, thus creating a moral exemplum, a cautionary tale, or a symbol of cultural weakness (White, 1991; Rarick, 2008). This would help researchers develop a sophisticated understanding of how language creates historical memory and cultural perception.

3.4 Methodological Procedures

In the context of this study, CDA is operationalized through three methodological procedures that are important in analyzing the chosen text. These include:

1. Lexical Analysis: This is concerned with identifying key words or descriptions related to cannibalism and otherness.
2. Narrative Structure Analysis: This is concerned with analyzing the way in which narratives are structured in time and causality to create moral or cultural hierarchies.
3. Ideological Framing: Evaluation of the social and historical contexts that provide a framework for narrative construction, such as colonialism, religious, and frontier ideologies.

This process is carried out systematically, using primary materials such as colonial travel writings, missionary documents, and historical records of the Donner Party. This method ensures that there is a focus on data while taking into account the social aspects of discourse.

3.5 Implications for Historical and Linguistic Analysis

The addition of CDA to the study of cannibal discourse establishes a methodological connection between historical and linguistic studies. It shows how historical narratives are not simply a repository of facts, but rather sites where ideological constructions take place, where language is used to shape perceptions, morality, and cultural identity. CDA's emphasis on the interplay between language, narrative, and social ideology thus creates a framework

that reveals how Western societies created and sustained their moral and cultural distinctions between 'civilized' and 'savage.'

This framework is also useful for creating inter-disciplinary studies. For historians, this framework shows how representation is used to create collective memories. For discourse analysts, this framework creates a case study where CDA can be applied to historical narratives. For applied linguists, this framework shows how language use is socially significant, creating insights into how discourse creates knowledge.

To sum up, the CDA framework used in this study is particularly useful for analyzing cannibal discourse in Western historical narratives. This framework creates a space where language use is systematized, creating a space where inter-disciplinary studies can take place. CDA's inclusion of historical, anthropological, and linguistic studies creates a methodological framework where language use is rigorously examined.

4. Historical Background: Colonial and Frontier Narratives

The idea of cannibalism, as it is used and presented in Western discourse, has a strong historical underpinning in the narratives of colonial expansion and settlement of the American frontier. In exploring these narratives, it is possible to see how cannibal discourse has evolved from colonial times through to the frontier narratives of the nineteenth century.

4.1 Early Colonial Encounters

The discovery of America by Europeans presented Western civilization with other cultures and societies that were quite different from their own. The accounts of travelers and missionaries often focused on cannibalistic practices and created strong moral and cultural divides between European colonizers and the indigenous peoples of America.

Bartolomé de Las Casas (1566/1992) was one of the first colonial critics of Spanish colonialism. Although Las Casas was critical of colonialism and focused his work on the atrocities of colonialism, his work also includes accounts of cannibalistic practices of some of the indigenous peoples of America. This again shows how colonialism was fascinated by cannibalism. The accounts of cannibalism were published and widely disseminated across Europe and created an image of America as an ambiguous place.

Peter Hulme (1986) comments on the nature of these European tales of cannibalism, stating that they were not presented in a neutral fashion but were, in fact, rooted in an ideological construct in which indigenous peoples were seen as morally inferior. The presentation of cannibalistic practices was used to validate the role of the Europeans, both in terms of military intervention and in terms of spiritual intervention. According to Hulme, such tales were rooted in the repeated use of certain tropes, such as the association of cannibalism with ritualized violence, sexual immorality, or savagery.

The literary nature of these tales is further emphasized by Greenblatt (1991), who comments on the role of the cannibal as a mirror for European culture. He suggests that the image of the cannibal was used as a way of negotiating the nature of European identity, as the presentation of the "savage" other as morally and physically extreme was used as a way of contrasting civilization with barbarity.

4.2 Cannibalism in Missionary Reports

Missionary writings were especially important in the construction of the European view of cannibalism. The writings of Jesuit and Dominican missionaries were especially detailed, with many of them describing the rituals of the native people, including their anthropophagic practices. These writings, ostensibly meant to educate the church hierarchy about the native people, were actually an extension of the colonial construction of the native as morally degenerate, needing the guidance of the Europeans (Pratt, 1992).

For instance, the writings of the Jesuit missionaries in Brazil described the ritualized cannibalism of the Tupinambá people, which was meant to illustrate their savage nature that needed correction (Obeyesekere, 2005). Even the writings that were meant to educate were infused with the moral judgment of the Europeans. The words that are most commonly used in these writings are "monstrous," "barbaric," and "inhuman," which illustrate the discourse that was used by the Europeans in their construction of the native people.

4.3 Frontier Narratives in Nineteenth-Century America

Although the colonial records were preoccupied with the distant other, the American frontier offered an immediate setting for cannibalism discourse. The expansion of the United States into the frontier during the nineteenth century created a cultural mythology of the frontier as an area of opportunity, danger, and morality. Frontier narratives were characterized by historical records, storytelling, and morality.

The Donner Party tragedy of 1846-1847 is arguably the best-known instance of survival cannibalism on the American frontier. The historical records and newspaper articles of the time narrated an account of American settlers stranded by early snowfalls in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and resorted to cannibalism for survival (Rarick, 2008). The accounts were characterized by an oscillation between sympathetic accounts of cannibalism and morality.

According to historians Slotkin (1992) and White (1991), narratives of the American frontier used cannibalism as a symbol. The narratives centered on the extremity of the American frontier and used cannibalism as a form of morality. The extremity of the American frontier led to a zone of tension between civilization and nature. Survival cannibalism was not only used as an actual record of cannibalism but also as an element of morality for exploring the extremity of social order and morality of the European-descended settler.

4.4 The Rhetorical Construction of the "Other"

The use of cannibalism in narratives of colonial and frontier discourse is a rhetorical device used to create the "Other." In narratives of colonial discourse, the "Other" is geographically and culturally distant and is considered to be morally and spiritually inferior. In narratives of frontier discourse, the "Other" can be the environment, representing the forces of nature that are beyond human control.

According to Van Dijk (2008), discourse creates cognitive models of social groups that influence perception and reinforce ideologies. In the case of cannibalism, Europeans and

American colonizers create a cognitive model in which the cannibal is the embodiment of extreme moral and cultural deviance. The cognitive model is multi-functional, legitimizing actions, supporting social ideologies, and producing moral and existential problems.

4.5 Continuities and Transformations

The colonial and frontier narratives have different historical contexts. The colonial narratives refer to early colonial interactions, while the frontier narratives refer to expansion in the United States in the nineteenth century. However, there are significant similarities in the use of the narrative of cannibalism. In both cases, the use of cannibalism is constructed as morally and culturally deviant and is used as a boundary marker between "civilized" and "savage." However, in the case of the frontier narrative, there are additional factors at play.

As Rarick (2008) and Slotkin (1992) have pointed out, frontier texts may combine the discourse of empirical reporting with the narrative of dramatization. The linguistic, narrative, and rhetorical choices of the texts may serve the discursive purpose of emphasizing the precariousness of civilization and the psychological pressure on the settlers. These narrative choices may follow the colonial discourse, though with some modifications according to the socio-environmental conditions of the American West.

4.6 Implications for CDA Analysis

To employ CDA, the historical analysis of the texts is of crucial importance. The historical analysis of the texts helps the researcher understand the socio-cultural and environmental conditions under which the texts were written, which is necessary to distinguish between the discourse of empirical reporting, moral judgment, and ideological construction. The historical analysis of the cannibal discourse helps us understand the linguistic, rhetorical, and narrative choices of the texts.

Thus, in brief, both colonial and frontier texts demonstrate the discursive construction of cannibalism as a strategy of boundary creation. These texts demonstrate that cannibalism is not typically constructed as an essentially neutral practice; instead, it is constructed as a symbolic marker that creates and reinforces European and settler identities, and emphasizes the risks of encountering the "Other." This discussion provides a foundation for the methodological and analytical discussions that follow.

5. Methodology

The methodological approach employed in this study is the integration of historical analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in the exploration of the construction of cannibal discourse in colonial and frontier narratives in the West. This methodological approach is significant in that it allows for an analysis of both the text and context of the narratives, thereby providing an understanding of the role of language in the construction of cultural, moral, and ideological boundaries.

5.1 Research Design

The study is based on a qualitative research design that incorporates aspects of historical-textual analysis and critical discourse analysis. This study is significant in that it seeks to examine the construction of cannibalism in colonial and frontier narratives in the West, with a focus on the relationship between language, ideology, and cultural identity.

The research design is informed by three key guiding research questions:

1. How does cannibalism represent itself in colonial or frontier discourses?
2. What kind of ideological or moral functions does the discourse of cannibalism achieve?
3. What role do the historical and environmental contexts play in the construction or reception of cannibal discourses?

5.2 Data Sources

The study employs a purposive approach to primary data sources that have been well-referenced in the body of knowledge on the construction of cannibal discourse and Western historical narratives. The primary sources used in this research are:

- Colonial travel writings and missionary reports from the Caribbean and South America, e.g., Bartolomé de las Casas, Jesuit letters.
- Early anthropological writings that described indigenous practices, with a focus on the European perception of ritualized anthropophagy, e.g., Hulme, 1986; Obeyesekere, 2005.
- Frontier discourses from the nineteenth century, especially those relating to the Donner Party (1846-1847), such as those reported in newspapers or memoirs, as discussed in Rarick (2008).

5.3 Analytical Procedures

The study is analyzed in three stages that are interconnected with each other, a characteristic that is typical of the CDA methodology (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008):

1. Lexical Analysis: The analysis seeks to identify significant terms and descriptions associated with cannibalism, such as “savage,” “barbaric,” “monstrous,” and “inhuman.” The analysis seeks to understand how this lexical choice influences the moral positionings of characters in the narrative text.
2. Narrative Structure Analysis: The analysis aims at understanding the sequence of events, highlighting, and presentation of events with the aim of creating meaning. An instance is the narrative of the frontiers, where the juxtaposition of the environment with cannibalism is aimed at highlighting the tension between civilization and survival. The sequence of events and the use of rhetorical devices such as foreshadowing is also subject to analysis with the aim of understanding the ideologies involved.
3. Contextual and Ideological Framing: The analysis seeks to understand how contexts, both historical and social, are integrated into the discourse analysis with a view to determining how characters’ actions are influenced by ideologies surrounding cannibalism. The analysis seeks to ensure that it is sensitive to both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors that influence narrative text creation.

5.4 Methodological Rigor

The study employs a number of strategies to ensure the methodological rigor of the study, which includes the following:

•Triangulation of Sources: The study employs the use of different sources from different regions and with different narratives and variations in the construction of the discourse of cannibalism.

• Reflexivity: The researcher is constantly aware of the possibility of interpretive bias, as well as the effect of current cultural perspectives on the interpretation of the past.

• Transparency and Documentation: The analytical process is carefully documented in order to facilitate reproducibility of the analysis.

• Integration with Historical Scholarship: The results of the discourse analysis are compared with the results of historical and anthropological studies, ensuring that they are in line with the known facts of history (Lindenbaum, 1979; Obeyesekere, 2005).

5.5 Ethical Considerations

Though the data for the study is drawn from historical materials, there are certain ethical factors that need to be considered in the interpretation of the data on the behavior of marginalized groups. The study, in keeping with the method of CDA, focuses on the construction of cultural identity rather than on the actual events described in the data.

5.6 Limitations

The research also acknowledges some limitations. For example, all primary texts reflect some influence of their authors' viewpoints and prejudices. In addition, the lack of indigenous viewpoints in some texts also creates limitations for certain interpretation. Furthermore, frontier texts frequently combine factual reporting and literary embellishment. However, despite these limitations, an integrated approach of historical and CDA provides an effective framework for understanding the social and ideological significance of cannibal discourse.

6. Data & Discourse Analysis

Hans Staden's eyewitness account of cannibalism in Brazil during the mid-sixteenth century was one of the first European texts to describe cannibalism among indigenous people. Staden was a German traveler captured by Tupinamba and wrote an account of his captivity. Although later scholars questioned Staden's reliability, his actual words played an important role in shaping European perceptions of the "savage."

6.1 Lexical and Ideological Analysis: Staden

In the narrative of Hans Staden, a lexical analysis reveals that the narrative is centered on a specific set of words, which describe violence, fragmentation of the body, and rituals. The narrative of Hans Staden contains a series of words, which describe the killing of prisoners, cutting, and distributing the fragments of the human body, as well as roasting and eating human meat in a series of events in a high level of detail. The vocabulary of the text includes

verbs that involve physical violence, which alters the narrative from a neutral ethnographic text to a dramatic presentation of body destruction.

This particular narrative feature of the text reflects the European emphasis, as discussed by William Arens (1979), that European narratives of cannibalism often emphasized a particular feature: the tendency to present European cannibalism, rather than merely a subsistence behavior, as a moral and cultural marker of distinction between Europeans and non-Europeans. Peter Hulme (1986) indicates that colonial discourse often represented European cannibalism through a vocabulary of savagery, ritual violence, and moral remoteness, which altered travel narratives to an ideological text that emphasized European cultural superiority. This representation was not only descriptive but discursive in the sense that meaning was created in colonial discourse. As Hulme puts it:

> "It is not a question of a discourse employing a particular word whose meaning is already given: the discourse constitutes signification. 'Cannibalism' is a term that has no application outside the discourse of European colonialism: it is never available as a 'neutral' word." (Hulme, 1986, p. 84)

In this way, the term 'cannibalism' was used as a constructed term to describe the non-European Other as barbaric in order to justify colonial domination.

Discourse analysis of the text of Hans Staden's narrative reveals that the writer has positioned the reader as different from the people he has written about. The point of view of the writer in the narrative is that of a witness, and he narrates what has happened, at the same time displaying his fears, amazement, and judgment. "They seized me and took me to their huts, and I believed that they would kill and eat me" (Staden, 1557/modern ed.) By doing this, the text has transformed from a simple captivity narrative to a discourse of cultural difference. Neil L. Whitehead, in the introduction to the modern edition of Staden's text, comments that Staden's text became one of the most popular captivity narratives of early modern Europe and had a significant role to play in the construction of European attitudes towards indigenous peoples in Brazil and the New World.

6.2 André Thevet and the Emergence of Cannibal Discourse

The writings of André Thevet are an example of one of the first attempts to write about the people of the New World, specifically targeted towards a European audience. Thevet, within his book "The New Found World" written in 1558, discusses the methods of warfare and ritualistic consumption of the indigenous people. Thevet described the region as a "Countrey of Canibals, Anthropophages… comprehended in America" (Thevet, 1568). The text, though presented from an ethnographic point of view, was written based on European expectations of travel writings.

As discussed by Hulme (1986), the texts of the colonial era present a repetition of earlier texts, which created a discursive tradition. "Cannibalism is a term that has no application outside the discourse of European colonialism" (Hulme, 1986). The discursive tradition presents cannibalism as one of the primary characteristics of the "savage" in European culture. The repetition of narratives of indigenous cultures, which presented them as engaging in warfare practices and ritualistic consumption, resulted in the stabilization of cannibalism as

a cultural marker, rather than an empirically verified practice among the indigenous populations.

This process, as Pratt (1992) has termed it, is the "contact zone," **"**the space of imperial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict,"a space in which European writers represented non-European societies by rhetorical strategies of difference, danger, and moral distance, at the same time creating a European identity and authority.

6.3 Frontier Narratives: The Donner Party

In distinction from colonial discourse about natives, nineteenth-century frontier discourse about cannibalism by European settlers in America, such as the Donner Party (1846-1847), employs a completely different set of lexical means. Rather than using the subject of cannibalism to inform the reader about this topic, Montaigne uses this topic to inform the reader about European ethnocentrism. One of his most often-quoted passages are those that discuss this idea. Montaigne writes: "Everyone calls barbarism whatever is not his own practice." (Montaigne, 1580/1943, p. 152)Montaigne's

Perhaps the most quoted passage from this essay is: "Everyone calls barbarism whatever is not his own practice." (Montaigne, 1580/1943, p. 152) This statement, by referring to the concept of barbarism, turns the discourse of cannibalism on its head by stating that the concept of barbarism reveals more about the practitioner of this concept than about the culture being practiced. It is a reflection of the early discourse on the New World, which, according to Tzvetan Todorov, is a reflection of the Europeans' own fears, anxieties, and ideological structures, as discussed later. Todorov (1984) explains, "European stories reflect not the reality of the New World, but the fears, anxieties, and ideological frameworks of the Europeans who encountered it" (p. 22). This shows the way in which the Europeans portrayed their own cultural beliefs on other cultures.

6.4 Missionary Reports and Jesuit Letters

The missionary writings, especially the letters of the Jesuit missionaries in Brazil, were of critical importance in the formation of the European attitude towards indigenous cultures. The missionary writings described the indigenous practices of war, ritualism, and anthropophagy in terms of sin, paganism, and the necessity of converting to another faith as Obeyesekere (2005) argues "To the Jesuits, cannibalism served as a powerful symbol of heathen depravity and the urgent need for conversion" (p. 8) . In this sense, missionary writings on cannibalism have often portrayed it not just as a cultural practice but as a moral and spiritual anomaly (Obeyesekere, 2005).

Missionary writings on cannibalism, according to Gananath Obeyesekere (2005), have to be understood in terms of theological expectations and colonial ideology "Jesuit accounts did not merely describe native practices; they interpreted them through a framework shaped by Christian theology and colonial power" (Obeyesekere, 2005, p. 56). In this sense, missionary writings on cannibalism have to be understood not just as ethnographic writings but in terms

of what is known as "writings-as-writings." The writings have to be understood in terms of what is said, what is shown, and what is implied in the missionary writings on cannibalism as Hulme (1986) observes, “Jesuit letters often emphasized rites and ceremonies not only to report but to dramatize the difference between Christian and indigenous worlds” (p. 89). The writings have to be understood in terms of the emphasis on emotional and performative aspects like dancing, chanting, and celebration.

6.5 Frontier Narratives: The Donner Party

In distinction from colonial discourse about natives, nineteenth-century frontier discourse about cannibalism by European settlers in America, such as the Donner Party (1846-1847), employs a completely different set of lexical means. Hunger, cold, isolation, and desperation were the circumstances that were highlighted in these narratives.

In his book on the Donner Party, Ethan Rarick (2008) demonstrates how the narratives of the survivors of the Donner Party presented the practice of cannibalism in terms of tragic necessity. The lexical field of these narratives includes words such as "hunger," "starvation," "winter," "survival," "desperation," which highlight the environmental circumstances of the practice of cannibalism.

The difference between colonial and frontier discourse of cannibalism demonstrates that the practice of cannibalism is not inherent in itself; it is conditioned by the lexical frameworks in which it is presented. While non-European cultures’ practice of cannibalism is presented in terms of savagery, European cultures’ practice of cannibalism is presented as survival under extreme conditions.

6.6 Ideological Framing and Power Relations

According to the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis, especially as advocated by Norman Fairclough (1995) and Teun A. van Dijk (2008), the narratives of cannibalism can be seen as a form of discourse that reinforces power relations.

Colonial discourse tends to present cannibalism as an external deviance associated with the cultural “Other,” whereas frontier discourse tends to present cannibalism as an internal deviance caused by environmental factors. In each case, the discourse serves to reinforce the moral claim to authority of Western civilization by either treating cannibalism as a hallmark of savagery or by treating it as a tragic deviation from the norm in civilized societies.

The use of repetition, word choice, story line, and description all play a role in helping to create the ideological purpose of these writings. Thus, cannibalism becomes not only an act that took place, but it also becomes a symbol of cultural identity for Europeans.

7. Discussion

In discussing colonial and frontier texts, it has been shown that cannibal discourse is a multifunctional linguistic and ideological construct. In a comparative and contrasting analysis of cannibalism discourse in Hans Staden’s, André Thevet’s, Jesuit letters’, Montaigne’s essays’, and Donner Party’s narratives, some similarities and differences were found. The

results of this research have far-reaching implications for historical research, discourse theory, and linguistics.

7.1. Ideology and Moral Boundary Construction

The first and most striking finding of this research was that cannibal discourse linguistically creates moral and cultural boundaries. In colonial discourse, cannibalism was linguistically constructed as an external sign of moral deficiency. In Staden's (1557/2008) and Thevet's (1558/1986) accounts of cannibalism, adjectives such as "savage," "barbarous," and "frightful" were frequently used. These words were intended to otherize non-European colonized peoples and construct colonialist ideology (Hulme, 1986; Obeyesekere, 2005).

Montaigne's (1580/1943) counter-narrative challenges colonial discourse's construction of cannibalism. However, his counter-narrative also illustrates the ideological power of discourse. Montaigne's effort to reverse colonial discourse's moral judgment was found to be an unintentional confirmation of the arbitrariness of European evaluative morality. This supports Fairclough's (1995) argument that ideology is embedded in language.

In the narratives of the frontier, the ideological role of cannibal discourse differs. The survival cannibalism of the Donner party is not employed to identify the foreign 'other' but to examine the precariousness of civilized values within the context of environmental extremity (Rarick, 2008; Slotkin, 1992). The moral ambiguity in narratives is reflected in words such as 'desperate,' 'tragic,' 'beyond reasoning,' which humanize characters but maintain moral boundaries.

7.2 Discourse as Historical and Cultural Lens

The cannibalism in the stories of colonial and frontier America functions as a cultural lens through which the Europeans measure strange and extreme behavior. Discourse analysis as advocated by CDA reveals that the linguistic and narrative forms of describing events also provide the framework by which events are interpreted.

- The colonial narratives employ words such as 'unrestrained joy,' 'utterly monstrous' and the ordering of ritual acts to establish the picture of the indigenous 'other' as morally and culturally inferior (Obeyesekere, 2005; Hulme, 1986).
- The frontier narratives utilize the choice of words, such as "after days without food" and "as starvation deepened," to place the cannibalistic act in a morally limited framework (Rarick, 2008; Slotkin, 1992).

Both examples, therefore, illustrate van Dijk's (2008) concept of ideology as cognitive and discursive, demonstrating the effect of repetition in the representation of social perceptions and historical memories.

7.3 Lexical and Rhetorical Mechanisms

Another aspect of the analysis is the identification of specific linguistic mechanisms that contribute to the construction of ideological stances, as follows:

1. The choice of words, i.e., moral judgment words such as savage, barbarous, monstrous, etc., as opposed to desperate, extreme, necessary, etc.

2. The way the narrative is structured, i.e., ritualistic patterns, performance, etc., as opposed to temporal, causal links with the environment, etc.
3. Hyperbole, repetition, i.e., the exaggeration of the horrific, as opposed to the exaggeration of the extremity of the environment.
4. The representation of speech, i.e., indigenous speech acts such as chants, rituals, etc., as opposed to indigenous reflection, etc.

These linguistic mechanisms illustrate that discourse not only represents the world but, furthermore, determines the moral and cultural judgment of that world, as discussed in applied linguistics studies on the performativity of language (Gee, 2011; Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

7.4 Comparative Implications

A comparative analysis of the two contexts shows that cannibal discourse is an effective ideological instrument, as it secures the position of power over the other in the colonial context, while in the frontier context, it secures the position of moral and social order within the community. The similarity between the two is that they employ the same rhetorical and narrative strategies, demonstrating the consistency of discourse.

The analysis is in agreement with the interdisciplinary studies that discuss the connection between narrative analysis, discourse analysis, and applied linguistics, as discussed by Fairclough (2015) and van Dijk (2008). The analysis of cannibalism, as a physical act and as a metaphor, demonstrates the interdependence of language, ideology, and social cognition, creating a rich field of study in the field of historical discourse.

7.5 Applied Linguistics and Discourse Studies Perspective

The above analysis has shown that:

• Language and Power: The discourse of cannibalism is a paradigmatic case of the power of language in reinforcing social hierarchies. The analysis has enriched our understanding of discourse in colonial times.
• Critical Reading Skills: The study has provided learners with tools to understand historical texts' embedded moral and ideological stances, as offered by CDA.
• Cross-Cultural Communication: The analysis of early colonial discourse has highlighted aspects of miscommunication, ethnocentricity, and reflexivity in understanding other cultures' communication styles.
• Interdisciplinary Scholarship: The application of CDA to historical discourse has allowed linguists to extend their study beyond contemporary discourse to include semantic change, rhetoric, and cognitive aspects, as highlighted by Gee (2011).

7.6 Contributions to Historical Understanding

The study has significant contributions to historical understanding by demonstrating that cannibal discourse is not a window into historical behavior but is instead a product of discursive construction. The discourse of colonialism and the discourse of the frontier are influenced by:

• Cultural assumptions and anxieties (fear of the other, cultural hierarchies, frontier uncertainty).
• Narrative Genres (exaggeration, sequencing, performativity).
• Ideological Pressures (justification, instruction, survival interpretation).
The study has highlighted the importance of CDA in understanding how language constructs our understanding of historical events and how we remember them.

8. Conclusion and Implications

This research has explored the discourse of cannibalism as represented in colonial accounts, frontier narratives, and early modern European literature. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been used to reveal the relationship between language, ideology, and social perception. In this research, authentic texts such as *True History* by Hans Staden, "The New Found World" by André Thevet, Jesuit letters, *Of Cannibals* by Michel de Montaigne, and Donner Party accounts have been used to illustrate how cannibalism is not simply an historical or anthropological practice, but also a discourse construct.

8.1 Key Findings

Firstly, it is quite evident that the discourse of colonialism makes use of words that are lexical intensifiers, as well as genres that depict indigenous people as being culturally and morally inferior to the colonizers (Hulme, 1986; Obeyesekere, 2005; Whitehead, 2008). Words such as "savage," "barbarous," and "unrestrained joy" do not simply describe cannibalistic practices. Rather, these words are ideologically powerful and construct the other as a form of contrast to European civilization. The repetition of these lexical patterns across several accounts illustrates how discourse constructs and legitimizes colonial power and intervention. This supports Fairclough's (1995) argument that language reflects and reproduces social hierarchies.
Second, frontier texts, as represented by the Donner Party texts, reveal the discourse of cannibalism as a moral and social problem within the community, with an emphasis on the role of the environment and the necessity of survival, as discussed by Rarick (2008) and Slotkin (1992). The words "desperate," "tragic," and "beyond all reasoning" create a context that is beyond the norms of cannibalism, as presented in the discourse of civilization under pressure, which is an ethical framework of cannibalism.
Third, the inter-textual analysis of the two types of texts shows that, despite the differences between the two types of cannibalism, the rhetorical devices of hyperbole, narrative structure, and the representation of speech are shared by the two types of texts, as discussed by van Dijk (2008), in constructing the audience's moral and cultural judgment of cannibalism, whether as an indigenous ritual or a means of survival.

8.2 Implications for Historical and Linguistic Scholarship

The implications of this research are significant for historical scholarship and linguistic studies. Firstly, in terms of historical scholarship, this research demonstrates that cannibalism is as much a linguistic and interpretive construct as it is a physical reality. The linguistic

construction of cannibalism played an important role in shaping the way in which the concept was perceived, judged, and acted upon in terms of colonial policy.

In terms of applied linguistics, this research demonstrates that historical texts can be useful in terms of conducting a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as it can provide useful insights into the way in which ideology, identity, and morality are represented linguistically. Such a method can be used by students and scholars in terms of analyzing the way in which various extreme phenomena are represented in texts, thus improving critical reading, semantic, and interpretive skills (Gee, 2011; Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

8.3 Directions for Future Research

Future research directions for furthering this research could include:

1. Comparative Cross-Cultural Analysis: Exploring cannibal discourse in other parts of the world, such as the Pacific Islands or Africa.
2. Multimodal Analysis: Examining how images and texts work together through the inclusion of visual representations of cannibalism, such as historical maps, illustrations, and early prints.
3. Digital Humanities Analysis: Utilizing text mining and corpus linguistics software for quantifying and understanding lexical and narrative structures.

These avenues of research could further merge historical research, linguistics, and discourse theory, offering further understanding of narrative's role in shaping perceptions and ideologies.

Thus, this study has shown that cannibalism has to be seen not only as a historical event or a human practice of extreme proportions, but also as a discursive construct in the realms of representation, ideology, and cultural identity. As has been shown in this study, through the analysis of genuine historical documents, discourse has a vital role to play in the development of cultural boundaries.

The application of Critical Discourse Analysis has also clearly demonstrated in this study that historical narratives, as a form of discourse, do not remain neutral in their representation of historical events, but are, in fact, discursive constructs, which are heavily influenced by ideological considerations.

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