

Within Indian wars and the Wounded Knee massacre: Native Americans' self-determination in *Bury Me at Wounded Knee*

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Article Info

Abstract

Article History:
Received
20 February 2021
Approved
18 April 2021
Published
23 April 2021

Keywords:
autonomous,
controlled,
motivations, Native
American, self-
determination

Besides recorded in textbooks, historical events sometimes are adopted into literary works. Rebecca Wiles' *Bury Me at Wounded Knee* is one of which since it portrays the Indian Wars and the Wounded Knee Massacre on 29 December 1890. The clause *Bury Me at Wounded Knee* in the poem is a form of self-determination of Native Americans. This paper aims at mapping the causal relation of historical events found in the poem to examine the Native Americans' self-determination inside it. As the basis, the paper employs the Historicism theory and Self-Determination theory (SDT) about autonomous and controlled motivations. The results found that the Native Americans' self-determination in the poem is an undermined one. It is built by their internal autonomous motivation of deeply rooted culture and beliefs. However, the encroachments of the U.S. government who seized their rights, acted as controlled extrinsic motivations, internalized and thwarted the intrinsic motivation so that the self-determination is undermined. It decreases in the degree from an eagerness to act and resist to merely a wish of being buried in the location where they die and think of extinction.

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How to cite (in APA Style):

Syukrianto, R. T. (2021). Within Indian wars and the Wounded Knee massacre. *Rainbow: Journal of Literature, Linguistics and Culture Studies*, 10(1), 13-23. <https://doi.org/10.15294/rainbow.v10i1.45169>

INTRODUCTION

Indian Wars are a set of notorious historical events in the United States of America. They are the conflicts between White Americans or the U.S. government and Native Americans caused by the White Americans' intention to pursue benefits and interests in the Native Americans' territorial lands. By the economic demands, White Americans, mostly the Southerners, sought an excuse to drive the Native Americans away because they were considered "savages and unworthy of the lands" (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2010, p. 28). Many tribes of Native Americans ran into these conflicts and all of them, eventually, ended up in the same way that

the Native Americans were subdued and forcibly lived in the reservations while the White Americans dug out every single resource they could find in their lands (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2010). However, during the events, Native Americans were decreasing in number because they fought against the oppression they received. They lost their lands, food, culture, and their lives. As the result, in the 20th century, no more than 250.000 Native Americans remained to live in the United States (Shoemaker, 1999). One of the most significant and well-known incidents in history is the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890 took place at Wounded Knee Creek, South Dakota. This massacre is a mark of the growing claims of the White Americans to the Native

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American lands and diminishing Native American's politics, army, and cultures (Roscigno & Cantzler, 2015).

These events are recorded in textbooks on history and academic papers or reports. However, sometimes, historical events are reflected in literary works. This is according to Abrams' (1971) mimetic theory that literary works, like other forms of arts, are the imitations of aspects of the universe. This concept sprouted from the belief that humans possess an interest in seeing imitations since they can generate pleasure. There are many aspects of the universe to be imitated in arts and literary works, for example, seasons in Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, atmospheres in Van Gogh's *The Starry Night*, religious events in Da Vinci's *The Last Supper*, economic conditions in Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, racism in O'Neill's *All God's Chillun' Got Wings*, historical events in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, etc. Nonetheless, the literary works' imitations are not the exact correspondence of the real world as they are fictive works. Aristotle theorized that these imitations do not work on their own, but they were altered by the personal visions of the artists to form different criteria. Literature is an imitation but it separates itself from the real form of the universe and establishes its own nature (Abrams, 1971). Therefore, though similarities appear between them, differences are also visible and need to be examined.

In connection to the Indian Wars and Wounded Knee Massacre, Rebecca Wiles' *Bury Me at Wounded Knee* portrays these historical events. This poem builds a realm representing the events and is told from the Native Americans' point of view, a Miniconjou Lakota. Besides mentioning some of the events, It alludes to conflicts in rights, lands, power, and politics by exposing strong willingness against political, cultural, and regional interruptions. These events are also adapted into some other forms of literary works. Two of which are a novel entitled *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (1970) by Dee Brown and a film adaptation with the same title in 2007 by Yves Simoneau. From the Native Americans' point of view, it can be synthesized that the poem,

including the title, is the form of self-determination politically and culturally. The motivations behind the self-determination can be deciphered by analyzing the text based on historicism theory. Before going further into the poem, the review of literature should be explained first to provide the framework of the analysis.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of the related studies

There are relatively few literary works that take the Wounded Knee Massacre into account. Therefore, the references of related studies in the current paper are just a few. Moreover, I did not find any academic research that discuss the object of the current study, *Bury Me at Wounded Knee*. Nonetheless, to make the significance of the study clear, I reviewed two works that examined *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* film.

Nurcahyo (2020) studied the character Ohiyesa in *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* film. This character is an adaptation from Charles Eastman's memoir, *The Indian Boyhood*. His name is used as Ohiyesa's Christian name. The paper applies the adaptation approach by observing the character both in the film and memoir. It intends to reveal the Native American narrative world through the character of Ohiyesa. The result discovered that the narrative world from the character represents a world induced to receive cultural assimilation despite the losses and harms it brings. It is shown by the character that is dominated by traits of Charles and embodies the extinction of Native American culture by assimilation.

An earlier study on the same film was conducted by Zanjabila (2017) on her Bachelor thesis paper. This paper discusses the representation of the expansions of the U.S. government to Native American tribes in the film. As to reveal the representation, the paper uses Stuart Hall's representation theory and descriptive qualitative method. The results show that *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* depicts the superiority of the U.S. government and the inferiority of the

Sioux Indian tribes. The superiority is drawn by the expansions and oppressions towards the Native Americans. Otherwise, the inferiority can be seen from the Sioux tribes' desperation and surrender.

In general, both the works above and the current study have a similarity in terms of adapting the history of the Indian wars and Wounded Knee Massacre to study literary works. However, this paper exploring a different work and highlights a different focus; it relates the study to the Self-determination theory. It uses the causal relation based on those historical events to analyze deeply the clause *Bury Me at Wounded Knee* in Rebecca Wiles' poem with the same title as a state of self-determination and track how this statement is generated based on the poem. It digs out the way the damages of the U.S. government's invasion towards Native Indians' psychological state of mind.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Self-determination is basically a discourse in psychology on behavior and motivations. This study defines self-determination from the psychological point of view and puts the political and cultural contexts in it. Psychologically, self-determination describes a causal relation between behaviors or acts of an individual or community with categorized motivations (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Legault, 2017). It focuses on Individuals' interaction and dependency in society (Legault, 2017) and the development of the personality because of motivations (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The motivations are distinguished into two: autonomous and controlled. Whereas autonomous motivations are both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that are identified and valued by individuals, controlled motivations are only the extrinsic events that are internalized in individuals and forcing them with a reward and punishment scheme (Deci & Ryan, 2008). In other words, it deploys the interaction between motivations, both autonomous and controlled, to the formation of a psychological condition or personality. In the practice, this theory provides a sort of motivations and events causing them from

a certain field and observes the responses of individuals and their psychological development.

This theory attempts to seek the motivations of particular self-determination or state of condition in an individual or community and attempts to identify and categorize them. The above autonomous and controlled motivations dispart into two: intrinsic and extrinsic. The intrinsic motivations are established by the events occurring around an individual or community and preferences inside him/her. Thus, they comprise what exists in the individual, including "one's own perceptions, feelings, and cognitions" (Legault, 2017, p. 2). For example, a decision made by one's self of community cannot be separated from its deeply rooted teachings and beliefs. They conduct a particular activity or make a decision because they value them. On the other hand, extrinsic motivations are the social phenomena that influence an individual's internal condition; this process is called internalization (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Deci, 2017). An example is a relation between a teacher and students. The students will feel motivated and happy to choose their major programs if the teacher encourages them. In contrast, if the teacher discourages the students by saying that the major they like are not good enough, students will feel demotivated. The SDT provides researchers with based basic psychological needs, such as autonomy, competence, relatedness, and the social condition and serves as a guide to examine whether the motivations above, especially the controlled ones, facilitate or threaten the self-determination or psychological states (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Legault, 2017).

The examples above are per the Self-Determination Theory stating that the extrinsic events or motivations have an ability to enhance or undermine the internal motivations and generate self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Legault, 2017). The intrinsic motivation may be elevated when the extrinsic events such as interpersonal or inter-community relations support those needs above. On the contrary, it will be spoiled when those motivations do not support it or fulfill the psychological needs. Per

this correlation, an individual or community has two possible intrinsic motivations: becoming motivated and engaged or demotivated and separated (Deci, 2017; Legault, 2017).

When we put political context in self-determination, it refers to the right of a community to decide its political destiny, which can include independent external relations or forms of government (<https://pesd.princeton.edu/node/656>). The subject of self-determination, therefore, is a sovereign community with land, people, and governmental system; the intrinsic autonomous events or motivations are the beliefs, teachings, and systems in the community; and the extrinsic events, both autonomous and controlled, are the relations of one community to the other community. To the relation of the poem, it can be assumed that the self-determination results from Native Americans' intrinsic autonomous motivations. Those motivations are built under their cultural beliefs and religions and are affected by the disserving relationship with the U.S. government. The current study, hence, aims at mapping the causal relation of Native Americans' self-determination in *Bury Me at Wounded Knee* by describing the self-determination, examining the events and their manners as motivations in influencing the establishment of the self-determination, and interpreting whether the self-determination is enhanced or undermined.

Historicism

Lord Acton (as cited in Kelley, 2015, p. 93) mentioned that history is a “particular mode and method of knowledge in other” studies and social sciences. Hamilton (2003) stated that the theory which is initiated by Ernst Troeltsch and discussed by many German scholars is a movement that puts historical context in a crucial position to guide all kinds of text interpretation, including literary works. By this, scholars can discover the historical events in books to compare to the story in fiction (Sudiro, 2020). Further, by correlating to Abrams' mimetic approach, It can be stated that literary works contain portrayals of social phenomena under a certain space and time,

like culture, nation, social structure, politics, economic, demography, war, etc. Even though the real occurrences and the ones inside the works do not precisely imitative, historicism facilitates scholars and researchers with historical facts as a tool to convey and reveal those representations inside the works. Some aspects will not correspond to the real events because it does not exist and stands for its own reality.

According to Karl Mannheim, an influential German sociologist, historicism can generate a more comprehensive understanding of the present contexts (Kelley, 2015). This is because humans and societies are the products of history and these products are generated creatively that they can be “unfolded over time” (Bevir, 2015, p. 229). Therefore, historicism acts as a guidance to understand humans, societies, and the products even for the present time. It enables researchers to observe subjects such as humans per se, history, and philosophy more objectively. Researchers place themselves in distance from the subjects and try to see the wider connection to other aspects of history in research. They can use the concept to inquiry about human behaviors, interpret the findings and evidence, and finally, generate self-knowledge and understanding (Kelley, 2015).

In light of literary work as the creative products of civilization and humans, it means that literature is also the product of history. Hence, in the implementation of the study of literary works, historicism shows this close relation. J.G. Eichhorn (1796) described that history and literary work is related genealogically; the history of arts and sciences including literature is inseparable from the history of social conditions (Kelley, 2015). Therefore, history plays a significant role in building the body of literary works and it is important to consider historical events in studying them.

METHODS

In analyzing the self-determination of Native Americans in *Bury Me at Wounded Knee*, the current study adapts historicism and uses the

qualitative method as to reveal the present knowledge of self-determination inside it. The descriptive qualitative method is used to facilitate data processing and analysis of qualitative data in form of words, phrases, sentences, and discourses. It yields a descriptive text that serves as an explanation of the results.

The primary data of this study is the poem *Bury Me at Wounded Knee* and the secondary data is the related information from textbooks, journal papers, and history books. The data were collected by applying the library research method using the note-taking technique.

There are several procedures in conducting the research. First, the poem was explicated to reveal its true meaning word by word. Second, the researcher conducted thorough research on the historical events and related theories. Third, the explicated poem was compared to the collected data to find the correlation between them. Finally, the results were analyzed to draw a conclusion based on the given theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before the Wounded Knee Massacre on 29 December 1890, Native Americans and the U.S. government had confronted each other. All battles were won by the U.S. government and the Native Americans must receive the offers. Nevertheless, their losses were not without any fights. In the context of the Great Sioux, the last Indian tribes, they once resisted and stroke back the U.S. Army and won the battle several times. When the position was turned out opposite, they had no choice but to succumb and receive the offers from the U.S. government to settle in reservations. Their desperation finally was answered through a local prophet named Wovoka who spread his visions of the good prophecy of the coming of Native Messiah and the Ghost dance as the ritual (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2010; Roscigno & Cantzler, 2015; Grua, 2015). By the time of this cultural revitalization of Native Americans through the Ghost Dance, the U.S. Army conducted removals and attacked the dancers because they considered it harmful, and they

fought back yet many Native Americans were dead.

These struggles from acts of violence to peaceful cultural performance represent the degradation of Native Americans' eagerness and persistence in preserving their lands, culture, beliefs, values, and way of life and are the forms of their self-determination. In the comparison to Rebecca Wiles' *Bury Me at Wounded Knee*, the resistance is implied in the poem both in the title and lines. The statement declaring a wish to be buried in the native land is the final form of Native Americans' self-determination both politically and culturally. The events or motivations causing this decision, therefore, are internally come from their culture and teachings and externally from White Americans. The poem is as follows:

Bury Me at Wounded Knee

Rebecca Wiles

Sunday, June 3, 2007

*Bury me at Wounded Knee,
for my heart grows faint and my body grows
old.*

*The grounds too soft for my feet to tread,
and the nights are cold; too cold.*

*Bury me at Wounded Knee,
where the warriors died young and bold.
The white man comes to steal our land,
for the gold; pure gold.*

*Bury me at Wounded Knee,
for we won't do as we're told.
The women die from lack of food,
and our children are sold; all sold.*

*And soon our footprints in the snow,
will blow away with the wind.
And only silence lingers on,
where once laughter had been!*

The poem comprises four stanzas in which the first three stanzas commence with the same line containing the clause "*Bury me at wounded knee.*" Each clause is followed by distinguished reasons and grounds why the narrator, a Sioux Native American, wants to be buried in the Wounded Knee Creek. This clause is the form of self-determination in the poem and the reasons

following are the so-called motivations or events by which they establish a determination in themselves. Wounded Knee is the name of a creek in South Dakota where the Great Sioux tribes, the last Native American tribes, reside. Following a sort of Indian Wars, in December 1890, an incident known as the Wounded Knee Massacre befell one band of this tribe, the Miniconjou under the lead of Chief Big Foot (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2010; Bevir, 2015). All the events told in the poem are based on this incident and the events before it. This clause is under the argument that all Native Americans were culturally rooted and would strive anything to protect and resist their rights and possessions. When they had no chance anymore but to die, they still wanted to be buried in the place where they belonged to. A popular quote from a Native American hero of the Apache tribe who once won the war between them and the U.S. Army, Geronimo, is under this hypothesis.

“It is my land, my home, my fathers’ home, to which I now ask to be allowed to return. I want to spend my last days there, and be buried among those mountains. If this could be I might die in peace, feeling that my people, placed in their native homes, would increase in numbers, rather than diminish as at present, and that our name would not become extinct” (Geronimo, 1906, p. 215).

Not to speak of, Meyer (2019) researched Native Americans’ ethos and found that Native Americans deem that their native or ancestral lands are sacred. He mentions the philosophical value of the sacredness derived from “an important event, such as where the buffalo would come from each season in Buffalo Gap” (p. 10). By this, it is obvious that the autonomous intrinsic motivation of the willingness to be buried in Wounded Knee is their love and fidelity to their culture, ancestors, and native lands.

Moving to the first stanza, the narrator’s first motivation of self-determination is their condition of losing power to fight as cited in line 2. Their soul which is represented by “my heart” lost its spirit to fight because the U.S. Armies were well-armed and had more power. Besides, their physical condition or “body” had no more power to fight back because the U.S.

government’s army left them unarmed and helpless. They became weak since they conflicted with other Native American bands and lost their integration because of diseases and lack of food. This line also reflects the condition after the Wounded Knee massacre that lots of Native Americans died in the location. The soul had left the body and the body had no power to live again. The Massacre of Wounded Knee, as mentioned above, took place in December 1890 which was in the winter. South Dakota is known for its extreme winter and thunderstorm. This is the worst time to visit the city because snow can be about 1 meter thick and the temperature below -120 Celsius (<https://www.weather-us.com/en/south-dakota-usa-climate>). In line 3 and line 4, the narrator describes other factors that are by the climate and weather of the location.

*“The grounds too soft for my feet to tread,
and the nights are cold; too cold.”*

Besides building the cold, desperate, and sorrowful atmosphere and tone, the poem actually describes the actual condition of Wounded Knee creek. Line 3 indicates the soft and thick snow covering the ground. The Native Americans could not walk well on the snow since they were too soft and hindered them to move. Furthermore, in line 4, the narrator explains that the temperature was really cold and even emphasizes it with the phrase “too cold” as a means of stressing and accentuating the coldness of the location. South Dakota was their refuge area before they yielded to settle in reservations. As they lived from hunting and buffalos were not as many as in their former camps, they starved in winter. Hence, they were in famine, hopelessness, and despair. If this interpretation is compared to the condition before the removals and encroachment of the U.S. government, the conditions will contrast each other. The nights before these incidents and conflicts were not as cold as described in the poem for they were together in different camps and had the warmth of kinship and sufficient food.

The main reason for the U.S. government to encroach on the Native Americans was the intention to mine gold and silver in their lands. Many citizens from new states such as Tennessee,

Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Arkansas supported and joined the governments of the Southern states to repel the Native Americans who declined the establishment of gold and silver mining and tobacco and cotton growing (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2010). Many Native American tribes had finally given up their homelands in return to much smaller reservations in which they were guaranteed to live free from U.S. Army nuisance under the 1868 treaty such as Colorado, California, and Dakota (Roscigno & Cantzler, 2015). This is how the Great Sioux tribes ended up in South Dakota. They lost their hunting areas to the U.S. Government. However, the time when the White miners discovered new gold resources found in the new settlement of the tribe, the Black Hill, they ignored the 1868 treaty and other treaties and asked them to reconsider and give the land (Estes, 2013; Roscigno & Cantzler, 2015). It insisted the Great Sioux tribe be divided into small tribes and live in much smaller parts of South Dakota under the 1877 Black Hills Act and the 1887 Dawes Allotment Act (Estes, 2013; Roscigno & Cantzler, 2015).

*"The white man comes to steal our land,
for the gold; pure gold."*

Line 7 to 8 of the poem gives understanding about this condition. The White Americans and government did not take their land just once; they required more and more lands and gold. The narrator once again puts an emphasis on the gold with "*pure gold*" to represent the rapacity of the U.S. government. Also, the phrase "*pure gold*" means that their lands are worthy and a source of their living. They hunted in their homelands. When they were seized from them, they, indeed, fought back.

Under the pressure of this condition, as explained above, a Native American shaman obtained a vision of the coming of savior for the Native Indians. According to him, they had to perform a cultural dance called Ghost Dance so that they will be reunited with their ancestors, White Americans would be defeated, their traditions would be renewed, the buffalos would be brought back, and their life would be normal as the situation before White Americans colonized the lands (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2010; Roscigno

& Cantzler, 2015; Grua, 2015). This prophecy and the good news spread to all bands of the Great Sioux tribes and Lakota reservations. The U.S. Government sent armed troops and attacked the tribes during this cultural revitalization at Pine Ridge to prevent an outbreak after the consideration that the dance and mystical rituals might threaten the White Americans and the U.S. government (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2010; Roscigno & Cantzler, 2015). In fact, this dance performance was peaceful and caused no harm at all either for them or the White Americans. The Native Americans did not draw any plan to invade the U.S. government or strikeout. The U.S. government and army were just panicked about the excitement of the movement. Eventually, one of the tribes' chiefs, Sitting Bull, was seized and killed by the reservation police because he did not want to surrender but supported the ritual. After having the news that Sitting Bull was dead, Chief Big Foot and his band, Miniconjou Lakota, led up to Pine Ridge when they were on their way from Cheyenne River (Hillstrom, 2010). From 28-29 December 1890, this group was under the siege of the 7th Cavalry U.S. Army armed with weapons. They were ushered to Wounded Knee creek to be disarmed because they were thought to join other Sioux bands in Stronghold in the Ghost dance (Hillstrom and Hillstrom 2010; Roscigno & Cantzler, 2015). After the disarmament, the tension between the two groups elevated since Yellow Bird, the medicine man invited all members of the band not to be afraid to do the Ghost dance. Even though Chief Big Foot had surrendered, the invitation was misunderstood by the 7th Cavalry soldiers and inflicted chaos between the two (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2010; Grua 2015). Some of the Native Americans were shooting and attacking the army though most of the members of the band were escaping.

The Massacre of Wounded Knee took death tolls on soldiers, unarmed men, women, and even children. There were about 200 or 300 (Estes, 2013) Native Americans who died in this incident. Line 6 states that "*where the warriors died young and bold,*" explains that the narrator's self-

determination of being buried in Wounded Knee creek is because he wanted to reunite with their relatives and families who died for protecting the tribe. Ironically, they were not buried properly. Instead, a mass burial with merely one wide ditch in Wounded Knee Creek was conducted for those Native Americans who died of the massacre.

In the third stanza, the narrator declares other motivations of the self-determination. First, in line 10, another internal autonomous motivation is a claim that they had their own stances and had learned from past events: they were in a famine and their cultural inheritance was banished.

*“for we won't do as we're told.
The women die from lack of food,
and our children are sold; all sold.”*

The self-determination of choosing their own path was triggered by external events from the U.S. Government. These events resulted from the domination and encroachment of the Government. Since the Native Americans gave their hunting lands, their food resources were decreased. The lands on which they inhabited were not fertile besides the extreme weather and thunderstorms and when the droughts came, the U.S. Government did nothing to save the dying crops (Roth, 2012; Roscigno & Cantzler, 2015). Their life in reservations was not totally guaranteed by the U.S. Governments since they were always lack of rations from them. Line 11, reflects this condition in which they were starving because their food resources were taken and no comparable replacement was offered. Therefore, many Native Americans were died because of hunger. The diction of women here implies an important but yet vulnerable type of human. Women are considered weaker than men, but they are much needed in the tribes and family. They looked after the children and taught the children of how the life and culture of the Native Americans. It somehow tells that the U.S. Government also wanted to diminish their culture. It continues in the 12th line where the Native American Children were sold. During the conflicts between Native Americans and U.S. Army, children were abducted and shipped to boarding schools to be taught American culture

and customs, given Christian names, and attend Christian churches (Roscigno & Cantzler, 2015). The U.S. government argued that those children would grow into adults with competence so that they could “lift their people out of poverty and despair” though it turned out “sinking” the Native Americans live (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2010, p. 88). Thus, they ended up studying and learning for the sake of the United States’ industrial development. Not enough killing the Native Americans, they also wanted to kill their culture as the children are the heirs of inheritance of the culture. When they had no youths, Native Americans and their culture might go extinct.

In the last stanza, the narrator dictates the pessimistic possibility of the Native American’s fate. From the beginning of the poem, it is clear that the tone is desperate and sorrowful. The narrator thinks that they would extinct as for what U.S. Government had done to them.

*“And soon our footprints in the snow,
will blow away with the wind.
And only silence lingers on,
where once laughter had been!”*

As we have seen above that that there were only about 250.000 Native Americans left after the set Indian Wars, the narrator fears that they are standing on the verge of extinction. Line 13 and 14 explain the condition of South Dakota and the time setting of the Wounded Knee Massacre by mentioning “*the snow*”. The wind here serves as a means of time and the “*footprints*” is the rest of the settlements of the tribe. Their culture and names would be forgotten by the world since they were slaughtered, killed, murdered slowly, sold, and prevented from inheriting their culture and ancestors’ teachings. The last two lines highlight the sorrowful and cold atmosphere by adding the description of the land once they were gone; the land would full of silence from then on. It also is contrasted to the condition when they were living in peace with their laughter and warm life. This comparison adds an emphasis and strong meaning that what the U.S. Government did results in the worst scenarios. Regardless of this, even when they think that their tribes are going to be banished from the world, their self-

determination of their lands is strong and firm still.

In addition, there are also aspects in the poem that do not precisely depict the related historical events. First, the line “*for my heart grows faint and my body grows old,*” does not necessarily describe the history. The historical events do not provide any explanations in detail of the personal conditions of the Native Americans. Second, the line “*for we won't do as we're told,*” partially contradicts the real events because eventually the Native Americans gave their lands and live in the reservations. Third, the last stanza differs from the real historical events in this study since Native Americans never went extinct though the above quotation of Geronimo (1906) alludes to extinction. These aspects merely work as a means of building its own reality of the self-determination and atmosphere in the poem.

The self-determination found in *Bury Me at Wounded Knee* by Rebecca Wiles is an example of an undermined one. The extrinsic events are the controlled motivations that thwarted internal autonomous motivations and psychological needs. Their self-determination could be so much greater than just a willingness to be buried in their native lands had the extrinsic events would have encouraged their internal motivations of preserving cultures. In the poem, however, the self-determination remains in that the Native Americans persist their dignity and homeland until their last breath that they want to be buried on the land where they died: the Wounded Knee Creek. This self-determination is also resonated by Oglala Lakota's ethos. It states that:

“*An Oglala Lakota ethos is rooted in the land and the events and experiences taking place on that land. As part of that representation, the events and conflicts on that land leave cultural memories—wounds that can be articulated and understood*” (Meyer, 2019, p. 6).

This ethos marks the damages of the extrinsic controlled motivations. They left wounds which affected their autonomous motivation and demotivate the self-determination.

Finally, provided the fact that this poem is based on a true historical event and adopts historicism theory, the internal and external

reasons or motivations underlying the self-determination in the poem can be drawn. The internal autonomous events or motivations of it were the Native Americans' ethos and nature of being loyal and love to their culture, homelands, and ancestors. The more immense reasons were brought by the U.S. Government who encroached and thwarted them for their own interests. They forcibly claimed the Native Americans' homelands, cut off their food resources, abandoned them in famine, killed and murdered them, and obliterated Native American's culture by force-feeding their inheritances with White American teachings. Therefore, the firm self-determination of the Native Americans of willingness to be buried in Wounded Knee Creek in the poem brought about from the strong and continuous factors, both intrinsic autonomous and controlled motivations.

CONCLUSION

By applying historicism and self-determination theories, this paper has explicated and analyzed Rebecca Wiles' *Bury Me at Wounded Knee* and found the self-determination statement of Native Americans in it. Historicism serves as a device to outline the historical events which the poem is based on as the motivation of the self-determination. Likewise, SDT provides a framework for how these motivations affect the self-determination and what they result in. The current study revealed that the Native Americans' self-determination found in the poem is undermined by the Indian Wars and the Wounded Knee Massacre. The self-determination is contained in the clause “*Bury me at Wounded Knee*”. It is a solicitation driven by the internal autonomous motivation of ethos and belief to their native people, lands, culture, and way of life. In fact, this self-determination was much more than just a wish or appeal. It might be their intention to live separated from other cultures, develop their own civilization, and determine their external relations with other cultural entities. Even, they once stiffly persisted in the U.S. government expansions. However, since the

extrinsic events internalize to their intrinsic autonomous motivation, this self-determination is undermined instead of enhanced. Those extrinsic events came from the U.S. government who subjugated them by forcibly taking their lands for gold and silver mining, insisting they move to reservations, diminishing their culture by teaching young Native Americans about White Americans' culture, and killing them. All of these resulted in famine and diseases which led to disintegration among Native American individuals. They had to surrender and received the offer in order to survive. They even became pessimistic about their life future. Therefore, the self-determination is impaired by those thwarting extrinsic events from a strong pretension to determine their own destiny of civilizations to the wish of being buried in a corner of their native lands.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my Poetry Explication lecturer, Mr. R. B. Edi Pramono, S.S., M.A. who has guided me in poetry analysis, and my literary studies lecturer, Dr. Tatit Hariyanti, M. Hum., who had given me great insights in conducting the study.

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