



## Subalternization in Arabic Novel: A Case Study of Indian Tribes in Samih Masoed's *Hoshelaja*

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### Abstract

**Objectives:** This study aims to find out the form of American subalternization of the Indian tribe as a marginalized group depicted in the *Hoshelaja* by Samih Masoed. This study investigates and analyses how the process of subalternization is displayed through characters and narratives that reflect the social, political, and cultural conditions that marginalize Indian tribes in the context of the story.

**Methods:** This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with Spivak's postcolonial analysis. Data were collected through intensive reading, translation, and note-taking of relevant quotes from *Hoshelaja*. Analysis was conducted on characters, dialogues, and narratives to identify forms of subalternization in social, political, and cultural contexts.

**Result:** The results show that the forms of subalternization of Indians in the *Hoshelaja* manifest as discrimination (sexism and racism); transformation (cultural colonialism and trade acquisition); distribution (human resources)

**Conclusion:** This study concludes that the form of subalternization is not only manifested through physical oppression of the subaltern, but also through the political system, trade, education and culture. The analysis of Indian characters in *Hoshelaja* provides valuable insight into the broader mechanisms of subalternization, which are also relevant to Arabic literature. Themes such a cultural marginalization, colonial influence, and systemic oppression can similarly be explored in Arabic literary works. Therefore, the researcher recommends further analysis of subalternization in Arabic literature to uncover parallel dynamics and contribute to a comparative understanding of marginalized voice.

**Keywords:** Epistemic violence, *Hoshelaja*, Indian tribes, postcolonial, subalternization.

التبعية في الرواية العربية: دراسة حالة القبائل الهندية في رواية "هوشيلاجا" لسميح مسعود  
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### ملخص

الأهداف: تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل شكل التبعية الأمريكية للقبيلة الهندية بوصفها جماعة مهمشة في رواية "هوشيلاجا" لسميح مسعود، من حيث معرفة شكل التبعية الأمريكية للقبيلة الهندية بوصفها جماعة مهمشة. وتبحث هذه الدراسة وتحلل كيفية عرض عملية التبعية عبر الشخصيات والسرديات التي تعكس الظروف الاجتماعية والسياسية والثقافية التي تهمش القبائل الهندية في سياق القصة.

المنهجية: يستخدم هذا البحث منهجاً وصفيًا مستنداً إلى تحليل ما بعد الاستعمار لسيفافاك. وقد جُمعت البيانات عبر القراءة المكثفة والترجمة وتدوين الملاحظات للاقتباسات ذات الصلة من رواية هوشيلاجا، وأُجري تحليل للشخصيات والحوارات والروايات لتحديد أشكال التبعية في السياقات الاجتماعية والسياسية والثقافية.

النتائج: تُظهر النتائج أن أشكال تبعية الهنود في رواية "هوشيلاجا" تتجلى في التمييز (التمييز الجنسي والعنصري)، والتحول (الاستعمار الثقافي والاستحواذ التجاري)، والتوزيع (الموارد البشرية).

الخلاصة: تخلص هذه الدراسة إلى أن شكل التبعية لا يتجلى فقط من خلال الاضطهاد الجسدي الذي يتعرض له المهمشون، بل يتجلى أيضًا عبر النظام السياسي والتجارة والتعليم والثقافة. ويوفر تحليل الشخصيات الهندية في رواية "هوشيلاجا" نظرة ناقية على الآليات الأوسع نطاقاً للتبعية التي تنطبق أيضًا على الأدب العربي. ويمكن بالمثل استكشاف موضوعات مثل التهميش الثقافي والتأثير الاستعماري والقمع المنهجي في الأعمال الأدبية العربية. لذلك، توصي الباحثة بإجراء مزيد من التحليل للتهميش في الأدب العربي للكشف عن ديناميات موازية والإسهام في فهم مقارن للصوت المهمش.

الكلمات الدالة: العنف المعرفي، هوشيلاجا، القبائل الهندية، ما بعد الاستعمار، التبعية.



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## 1. Introduction

The subalternization of Indian tribes remains persistent to this day (Chedid & Hemais, 2022). During the colonial era, colonizers marginalized Indians communities by seizing their land, enslaving their people, forcing expulsions, implementing domestic education programs, committing mass killings, and exploiting natural resources (Bearsall & Edwards, 2021a). The process of subalternization demonstrates how the arrival of white people settlers in Americas centralized certain identities while marginalizing others (Neely, 2021a). As Gayatri Spivak emphasizes in Choudry (2020), subalternization in the colonial period involved systematically impoverishing specific regions, stripping communities of their rights, and rendering them economically powerless under then newly established socio-political order.

The process of subalternization in Indian tribes is closely linked to the concept of epistemic violence perpetrated by colonial visitors (Foxworth & Boulding, 2021). Epistemic violence, as rooted in Gramsci's theory of hegemonic ideology, involves the systematic suppression of authentic knowledge and experiences produced by the everyday lives of subaltern communities (Mbaiwa and Hambira 2021a). Gayatri Spivak extends this discussion by highlighting three specific dimensions of epistemic violence: discrimination, testimony, and distributive injustice (Spivak et al., 2022a).

Discriminatory epistemic violence dehumanizes the out-group, portraying them as inferior and subhuman to justify their exclusion and marginalization (Bunch, 2015). Testimonial epistemic violence arises when testimonies or knowledge from subaltern groups are deemed not credible or are ignored due to prejudices attached to their identities, preventing equal participation in knowledge discourse (Burlando-Salazar et al., n.d.). Lastly, distributive epistemic violence involves the unequal distribution of knowledge, where majority groups dominate its production and dissemination, while contributions from subaltern groups are minimized, reinforcing existing power structures (Bunch, 2015).

According to Neilson (2021), those in power perpetrate epistemic violence through three main motives: discrimination, testimony, and distributive. First, the colonizers enacted discrimination by oppressing and dominating the subaltern for decades, treating them as less than human (Colombo, 2020). Second, the testimony motive involved reducing and silencing the subaltern's voices to undermine their expertise and credibility (Valles & Nafstadz, 2021). Finally, the distribution motive manifested in the selective delivery of resources and education, which served to further control and reshape the subaltern's understanding of the world (Habiyaremye, 2022).

The reality of the subalternization of the Indians has caused significant problems in the United States. Many Native Americans were confined to reservation, while others were forced to migrate to other countries after being expelled from their ancestral lands. Additionally, they were subjected to discriminatory government policies, which further marginalized their communities (Barsh, 2021a). In addition, subaltern children were subjected to domestic education designed to align them with the lifestyle of white society. According to Menon, this form of education was intended to assimilate the cultural practices of American Indian communities into those of the dominant society (Zhou et al., 2021).

The Arabic novel *Hoshelaja* by Samih Masoed vividly portrays the social realities of Indian tribes during colonialism and post-colonialism (Masoed, 2020). *Hoshelaja* is the name of an Indigenous village in Canada inhabited by the Iroquois people in the 16th century, which later became the area known as Montreal. Historically, *Hoshelaja* is an important symbol of Indigenous civilization that was subsequently destroyed by colonialism. *Hoshelaja* not only reflects the subalternization of Indigenous tribes in Canada but also parallels the ongoing struggle of the Palestinian people against colonization. Both cases demonstrate systematic marginalization through land dispossession, cultural erasure, and the imposition of colonial narratives. These parallels provide a comparative framework for understanding how epistemic violence functions across different geographical and temporal contexts."

This novel was selected as the object of study due to its unique perspective, offering a portrayal of Indian struggles against colonial oppression through the lens of an Arabic author. Such a perspective underscores the universality of colonial domination and the shared experiences of marginalized communities across different cultural and geographical contexts. Masoed's narrative highlights key themes such as oppression, domestic education, poverty, and exploitation, drawing on firsthand accounts from Marvin, a young Indian, whom the author met during his time in America. By analyzing *Hoshelaja*, this research aims to explore how postcolonial themes are represented in Arabic literature, utilizing Gayatri Chakravorty

Spivak's framework to examine subalternization through discrimination, testimony, and distribution (Spivak et al., 2022a). While this study primarily utilizes Gayatri Spivak's postcolonial framework, it also acknowledges the broader spectrum of postcolonial thought, including Edward Said's concept of Orientalism and Homi Bhabha's notions of hybridity and mimicry, which provide additional layers of analysis to the narrative.

This research offers a unique perspective on subalternization by focusing on the marginalization of Indian tribal communities, a theme underexplored in previous studies. While postcolonial theory has examined subalternization in various contexts such as the oppression of women (Chedid & Hemais, 2022; Mlotshwa, 2020), the marginalization of Indian Muslims (Abid et al., 2021), the impact of ecological crises (Chen & Hwangbo, 2021; Das, 2019), and the dynamics of social life (Arruda & Santos, 2021)—this study extends the discussion to the specific experiences of Indian tribes. By analyzing *Hoshelaja*, this research highlights the multifaceted oppression faced by these communities, encompassing social, educational, economic, and political dimensions. Furthermore, it builds upon Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's postcolonial theory, demonstrating that subalternization affects not only specific groups, such as women, but all marginalized communities subjected to systemic oppression and discrimination.

## 2. Result and Discussion

Before examining the forms of Indian subalternization in *Hoshelaja*, it is crucial to first define the indicators applied in this study. Subalternization, as conceptualized by Spivak (2022a), refers to the marginalized position experienced by certain groups. This study identifies three key aspects of subalternization: (1) the silencing of voices within the main narrative, (2) stereotypical depictions perpetuated by dominant discourse, and (3) the struggle for recognition in historical spaces (Thomas, 2018). These aspects serve as the analytical framework to explore how Indian tribes are portrayed as marginalized historical agents who, despite systematic erasure, persist and maintain their presence within the narrative. The forms of subalternization in the novel *Hoshelaja*, as analyzed through Spivak's theory, are summarized in the table below.

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**Table 1. The subalternization of Indians in the novel *Hoshelaja* by Samih Masoed**

Indicator	Form subalternation
Discrimination	Sexism Racism
Testimonials	Cultural colonialism Trade acquisition
Distributive	The anticipation of human resources

The table above shows how the forms of subalternization of the Indians in *Hoshelaja* reflect various systematic practices of oppression. This subalternization is manifested not only through physical violence but also through political, cultural, and economic systems that perpetuate domination over Indian communities. Employing Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's theoretical framework of subalternization, this analysis elaborates on various forms of oppression, including sexism, racism, cultural colonialism, trade acquisition, and human resource appropriation.

### 1. Discrimination

Discrimination against Indians arose through subaltern dehumanization. The ruler declares that the subaltern is an inferior class, both essentially and morally (Fasakin, 2022). Therefore, discrimination treats subalterns like non-humans; some have been oppressed, marginalized, and dominated for several years (Kamila & Phil, 2018). Discrimination against Indian tribes narrated in the novel consists of two forms: sexism and racism.

- Sexism

"Sexism in *Hoshelaja* is depicted through the marginalization and sexual harassment of Indian women. They are

portrayed as a vulnerable group, powerless to resist such oppression. This is evident in the following statement:

وثمة شواهد كثيرة تؤكد أنهم تعرضوا لسوء المعاملة، وكل أنواع التجاوزات، الجوع والحرمان وحتى الإيذاء البدني والجنسي والعاطفي بما فيه الاعتصاب (Masoed, 2020, p. 212)

“There is ample evidence that they were subjected to all kinds of abuse, hunger, deprivation, and even physical, sexual and emotional abuse, including rape.”

This sentence in Hoshelaja's novel deeply illustrates the systematic violence experienced by Indians during the colonial period, especially in the form of sexism. Sexual violence, including rape, became the most extreme manifestation of sexism used by colonizers to dominate and control colonized populations. In a historical context, sexism against Indians dates back to 1541, when Jean Francois de la Rocque's military man, Sier de Roberval, led a massive colonizing expedition into Canada. Indian women were often victims of sexual harassment by European colonizers, who made it part of a strategy to destroy their community cohesion and cultural identity (Bearsall & Edwards, 2021b).

Sexism in *Hoshelaja* is also reflected through patriarchal practices that perpetuate male domination over women and the marginalization of women's roles in Indian society. As narrated:

ثم استدرك قائلاً: كان دستورنا ينص على المساواة ما بين الرجل والمرأة، كما هي الحال في المجتمعات الحديثة، وكان يفرض قيوداً صارمة على سلطة الحكام، وقد قسّمت فيه السلطة بين المرأة والرجل (Masoed, 2020, p. 74).

Then he added: - Our constitution stipulated equality between men and women, as is the case in modern societies, and it imposed strict restrictions on the authority of rulers, in which power was divided between women and men.

The sentence above reflects a critique of patriarchy and gender domination in the context of colonialism, which often destroyed the original values of gender equality in indigenous societies. In *Hoshelaja*, the Indian constitution is portrayed as upholding equality between men and women, contrary to colonial practices that introduced patriarchal culture. This patriarchy not only degraded women, but also restructured gender roles to support colonial hierarchies.

Historically, Indian communities in North America often assigned women significant roles in social and political decision-making (Barsh, 2021b). However, colonialism introduced European patriarchal values that marginalized women, confining them to domestic roles (Neely, 2021b). This colonial patriarchy manifested through policies such as gender segregation in education, restrictions on women's property rights, and the suppression of traditional practices of equality. These measures further reinforced colonial dominance over Indigenous communities (Rorintulus, 2018a).

In addition, Indian women experience separation from broader social roles, being used as “appendages” to support men's interests. This patriarchy not only limits women's decision-making space, but also creates deep psychological trauma. As stated by Sylvia, one of the characters in *Hoshelaja*:

ما قيمة الحياة التي تعيشها كالأموال؟ نبدو فيها صفر اليمين في لجنة أجزائها (Masoed, 2020, p. 217)

“What is the value of the life you live as dead? We look empty-handed in the panel of her sorrows.”

This statement highlights how the patriarchal system and sexual harassment have eroded women's self-esteem, leaving them trapped in a perpetual cycle of oppression. According to Gayatri Spivak's subaltern theory, women are often rendered voiceless, as their existence is suppressed by two forces: external colonialism and internal patriarchy. This phenomenon, known as epistemic violence, occurs when colonialism destroys local narratives of gender equality and replaces them with patriarchal ideologies that subordinate women (Spivak et al., 2022a).

- **Racism.**

Racism in the *Hoshelaja* by Samih Masoed is the unfair treatment of people from different races (Gilroy et al., 2019). American rulers created racism to make a distinction between them through culture, skin, race and beliefs, or anything they think is strange or different in their group (Gebara, 2021). The treatment of racism occurs through the distinction of belief

and xenophobia. The explanation of the importance of confidence in the novel is as follows:

علقت زوجته قائلة: المحميات المنتشرة في كندا مظهر من مظاهر العنصرية في أشجع صورها، والغريب أنها تركز على القانون، (Masoed, 2020, p. 196).....

“His wife commented: - The sanctuaries in Canada are a manifestation of racism in its ugliest form, and the strange thing is that it is not based on the law.”

The statement in *Hoshelaja* reflects the reality of racial discrimination experienced by Indians in Canada during colonial times and even in the modern era. The utilization of “sacred places” or reservations mentioned in the narrative refers to the colonial government's policy of isolating indigenous communities within limited territories. This policy systematically deprived them of access to land, resources, and political rights, while at the same time creating a social hierarchy that discriminated against them based on race.

Historically, reservations in Canada were designed to isolate Indigenous people from colonial society, limit their access to resources, and destroy their social and cultural structures. Policies such as the Indian Act in Canada were a form of colonial exploitation that used racism to marginalize Indian communities through physical and cultural separation. These acts not only deprived them of their land but also undermined their sense of community autonomy by creating dependency on the colonial system (Coulthard, 2014).

Within the framework of Gayatri Spivak's theory of epistemic violence, this reservation is a manifestation of the erasure of cultural identity and voice of indigenous people. Spivak explains that colonial racism not only works through physical subjugation but also through the erasure of local narratives, where indigenous people are constructed as “the Other”. This is seen in the reservation narratives that create a stigma of inferiority towards indigenous people. As Spivak mentions, subalterns are often placed in a position where they cannot speak or express their experiences because of the systems of domination that silence them (Spivak et al., 2022a).

## 2. Testimonials

Epistemic violence in the form of testimony can take two forms: reduction and silence. Testimonials in the form of reduction are built to certify his subaltern expertise so that he does not have confidence in his skills and is reduced by epistemic violence (Brunner, 2021). While testimonies in the form of silencing are carried out to damage the subaltern's ability to speak and become cards (Spivak et al., 2022b), sometimes the ruling class uses physical violence to fight the subaltern. The forms of testimony against the Indians are as follows: Subalternation of Indian tribes occurred through violence, namely discrimination, where the colonizers instilled sexism and racism as their colonization strategy. The researcher's findings align with Spivak's theory which states that the characteristics of subalternation are epistemic violence in the form of racial, creed and gender injustice

- **Cultural colonialism.**

The practice of colonialism among Indians is part of the epistemic violence because it becomes a colonial discourse describing the subaltern. Cultural Colonialism refers to an ideology that advocates exploitation by political powers of a region that is not integrated into its national space and is considered neglected **Click or tap here to enter text.** colonialism happened to the Indians through the cultural assimilation. As narrated:

هل سمعت به؟ أجل، عاش قبل خمسة قرون، ويعترف الذين أبادوا شعبكم في البلد الذي يُسمى الآن الولايات المتحدة، أنه : في لحظة نظر إليّ متسائلاً (Masoed, 2020, p. 195).

“For a moment, he looked at me and asked, "Have you heard of him?" - Yes, he lived five centuries ago, and those who massacred your people in the country that is now the United States admit that he is considered the first in history to establish a representative democratic government to exercise power in the Iroquois League.”

This sentence in *Hoshelaja* reveals how the history of indigenous people, especially the Iroquois, is reduced by colonial

narratives. The statement that the Iroquois leader is considered the first founder of democratic government in the world shows a deep irony. Colonialists recognized the success of the Indians' social structure, but on the other hand, they were responsible for the systematic massacres that deprived the people of their right to life and identity. This reflects epistemic violence as described by Gayatri Spivak, where the voices of subaltern communities (in this case, the Indians) are appropriated by colonial narratives to legitimize acts of violence and oppression.

Historically, the Iroquois Confederacy, known as the Haudenosaunee, had a democratic system of government long before colonialism arrived in the Americas. This system was based on consensus and respected the right of every tribal member to contribute to decision-making (Daschuk, 2013). However, the arrival of European colonialists not only undermined this system but also erased local narratives through violence and cultural domination. In this way, colonialism strengthened their control by reducing the Indians' history to part of their own narrative, as revealed in the novel.

The statement "...ويعترف الذين أبادوا شعبكم" shows how colonial narratives are often paradoxically contradictory. While they recognized the greatness of local cultures, they also justified the massacre of Indians through the erasure of indigenous narratives and the physical control of their territories. This process is in line with Spivak's theory of silencing illocutions, where indigenous narratives are not only ignored but also altered to support colonial interests (Chadwick, 2019).

In addition to the genocidal violent behaviour received by the Indian subalterns, they found territorial expansion by claiming their colonies as their original state. These are as follows:

عندما اكتشفوا بلادنا أطلقوا علينا اسم «الهنود الحمر» بمدلولات دونية واضحة، ثم أبادوا أجدادنا واحتلوا أرضنا، وبعد عقود من السنين أطلقوا على من بقي منا اسم «السكان الأصليين» (Masoed, 2020, p. 1).

"When they discovered our country, they called us "Red Indians" with clear connotations of inferiority."

The sentence in *Hoshelaja's* novel that states, "...عندما اكتشفوا بلادنا أطلقوا علينا اسم 'الهنود الحمر' بمدلولات دونية واضحة" shows how colonialism used language and symbols to construct the identity of the indigenous people with the name "Red Indian". "The name "Red Indian" is a clear example of cultural labeling by colonialists to construct an indigenous identity with inferior connotations. The term was not only used to describe physical differences, but also to emphasize the cultural inequality between the indigenous people and the colonizers.

Historically, these actions were part of cultural colonialism, where colonialists tried to define indigenous identities according to their own perspectives. Such labeling is often followed by acts of genocide and land exploitation, as explained: "...ثم أبادوا أجدادنا واحتلوا أرضنا". This illustrates that colonialists not only took over physical territory, but also tried to erase indigenous cultural narratives and identities.

In Gayatri Spivak's theory of epistemic violence, this act reflects how colonialism systematically erases indigenous narratives and replaces them with colonialist-dominated ones. The naming of "Red Indians" is an attempt to frame indigenous people as "the Other", a construction that justifies colonial actions such as land acquisition and population extermination. Moreover, the replacement of the term with "indigenous tribe" after several decades reflects how colonialism continues to reproduce narratives of control, even in post-colonial contexts.

Cultural colonialism in India also extended to the field of education, as narrated in the novel *Hoshelaja* as follows:

سنوات على إعلان الاتحاد الكندي، وأنشئت بمقتضاه مدارس داخلية خاصة لأبنائنا، كانوا يدخلونهم هذه المدارس عنوة، بأساليب قاسية، يقطعون فيها علاقاتهم بأهلهم لسنوات طويلة (Masoed, 2020, p. 212).

"Years after the Canadian Federation was announced, and according to which private boarding schools were established for our children, they were forcibly entering these schools, using harsh methods, severing their relationship with their families for many years."

This statement refers to the residential school system in Canada, a colonial policy designed to eradicate Indigenous cultures by forcibly removing children from their families and communities. These schools sought to replace Indigenous languages, traditions, and identities with European colonial values and norms under the guise of education.

Historically, this policy was implemented shortly after the *Canadian Confederation* in 1867 and was institutionalized

through the *Indian Act* (1876). Indigenous children were forcibly taken to residential schools, where they were forbidden to speak their native languages, practice their cultural traditions, or maintain contact with their families. These schools became notorious for harsh treatment, physical and emotional abuse, and the long-term trauma inflicted on Indigenous communities (Daschuk, 2013).

From a theoretical perspective, Gayatri Spivak's concept of *epistemic violence* is highly relevant here. The residential school system represents a systematic erasure of Indigenous epistemologies, where colonizers sought to suppress the knowledge systems, languages, and cultural identities of Indigenous peoples. By forcibly removing children and isolating them from their families, colonizers dismantled the intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge, leaving Indigenous communities fragmented and disempowered. This policy reflects Spivak's argument that colonial powers not only dominate physical territories but also control the production and dissemination of knowledge, silencing the subaltern voice in the process.

- **Trade acquisition.**

Click or tap here to enter text. The acquisition of trade occurred to the Indians through the abuse of fur trade authorities and abuse of food labelling. The abuse of food labelling in the novel is as follows:

علق مارفن قائلاً: لعبت أطماع تجارة الفراء دورًا مهمًا في حياته، وسرعان ما جعلت منه أحد المحتلين الأوائل لبلادنا، وجرى بينه وبين أجدادنا معارك اتصلت حلقاتها في أمكنة كثيرة (Masoed, 2020, p. 105).

“Marvin commented: - The ambitions of the fur trade played an important role in his life, and soon made him one of the first occupiers of our country, and battles took place between him and our ancestors whose episodes connected in many places.”

A sentence from the *Hoshelaja* that reads: “علق مارفن قائلاً: لعبت أطماع تجارة الفراء دورًا مهمًا في حياته، وسرعان ما جعلت منه أحد المحتلين الأوائل لبلادنا...” illustrates how the fur trade was used as a tool of colonization in the territory of indigenous communities. The fur trade, initially considered a normal economic activity, turned into a means of exploitation as colonialists capitalized on the needs of the global market to seize control over local natural resources. In a historical context, the fur trade played an important role in the colonization of the North American region, especially by French and British colonizers.

Historically, fur trade has often been the main reason for colonizers entering indigenous territories, not only exploiting natural resources but also destroying the social fabric of local communities. As expressed in the narrative: “وسرعان ما جعلت منه أحد المحتلين الأوائل لبلادنا...”, the fur trade was used to pave the way for colonizers to take control of territories, control local economies, and cement their dominance through unfair treaties with Indian tribes. As a result, indigenous people lost access to their own resources, while their land was slowly taken over by the colonizers (Carlos, 2012).

In Gayatri Spivak's theory of epistemic violence, this process can be seen as a form of epistemic control in which local narratives about the trade are transformed to support the colonial agenda. The fur trade is not just about economics, but also about ideological and cultural control. Colonization through this trade not only silenced indigenous voices in economic discourse, but also removed their autonomy over resource management.

Furthermore, the phrase “...جرت بينه وبين أجدادنا معارك...” suggests that indigenous resistance to this exploitation was often met with violence by the colonizers, who used militarization to maintain control over trade. This strategy shows how trade acquisition was used as an initial form of economic colonialism, which later evolved into complete control over indigenous territories and cultures.

Testimonies through trade acquisitions caused the subaltern economy to weaken; this was marked by stagnant subaltern life, without change, poverty, unemployment, and reduced natural resources (SDA). The Indians did not have the power to explore their natural products because all trade had been taken over by the colonizers, modern food in the United States was originally the result of the hands of the ancestors of the Indians. The rulers gave a little extra to the food, claiming that the food modernized the United States as a unique food handiwork of the rulers, and this is narrated in the novel as follows:

الشمالية يقرّون أن المحتلين الأوائل أخذوا مأكولات أجدادنا وأضافوا إليها إضافات طفيفة وبيّنت أن مشاهير الطهاة في أمريكا (Masoed, 2020, p. 65).

“She indicated that famous chefs in North America admit that the first occupiers took the food of our ancestors and added slight additions to it.”

The narrative in the *Hoshelaja*, which states that “المحتلون الأوائل أخذوا مأكولات أجدادنا وأضافوا إليها إضافات طفيفة” reveals another form of trade acquisition through the cultural exploitation of indigenous culinary traditions by colonizers. This act is not only the appropriation of material resources but also a form of cultural colonization, where colonizers adopted local traditions and claimed them as part of their own heritage with minor modifications. The acknowledgment by famous chefs in North America highlights how indigenous cultural heritage has been appropriated and assimilated into the dominant colonial narrative without adequate recognition of its origins. This statement also implies how colonialism devalued the intrinsic worth of local cultures. Colonizers not only physically appropriated food but also exploited its symbolic value by commodifying it to suit colonial preferences. This created economic dependency, forcing indigenous communities to relinquish control over their resources and traditions to colonial powers.

Historically, the appropriation of culinary culture frequently occurred in the context of colonialism, where colonizers leveraged the richness of local culinary practices to cater to global markets or enrich their own traditions. For example, foods like maize, potatoes, and cacao—products of indigenous agricultural innovation—were integrated into European culinary traditions without properly acknowledging their indigenous origins. This process reflects Gayatri Spivak’s concept of *epistemic violence*, in which local cultures are reduced to elements controlled by colonizers, while the original narratives of subaltern communities are erased.

### 3 Distributive

Distributive epistemic violence refers to the refusal to provide resources and education to the subaltern. Rulers convince people that all ethnicities and cultures deserve to be discriminated against again. Rulers use violent tactics with lesser but frequent and heinous crimes, so it is not surprising that distributive epistemic violence can lead to hatred and subaltern desire to attack (Kiyala, 2021). The distributive forms summarized in *Hoshelaja*'s novel as a form of subalternation of Indian tribes are as follows:

- **The anticipation of human resources.**

The anticipation of human resources or the process of detaining the basic needs of the Indians is one form of distribution in epistemic violence. American rulers are subaltern by withholding the distribution of necessities, and they have no sympathy for the subaltern. It is as follows:

وتنكر أنظمتها علينا كل متطلبات الحياة الأساسية (Masoed, 2020, p. 217).

“Its systems deny us all the basic necessities of life.”

The narrative in the *Hoshelaja* reveals a form of distributive subalternation executed by colonizers against Indigenous communities by denying access to essential needs. Colonizers, in their efforts to weaken the social structure of local communities, used deprivation as a tool of domination, forcing them to rely on the colonial system. Historically, this practice is evident in colonial policies across various regions, including North America, where access to land, food, and other resources was restricted for Indigenous communities, creating a systematic dependency on the colonizers.

One historical example of this practice is the policy of land removal and restricted access to resources imposed through reservation systems in Canada and the United States. Policies such as the *Indian Removal Act* (1830) in the United States forcibly relocated Indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands to less fertile areas, severing their access to vital resources needed for survival. This policy aimed to create complete dependence on colonial aid, which ultimately facilitated further domination over their territories (Daschuk, 2013).

According to Gayatri Spivak’s theory, this act reflects *epistemic violence*, where colonizers not only seized physical

territories but also dismantled the social and economic structures of Indigenous communities. This deprivation was deliberately designed to undermine the subaltern's ability to maintain their autonomy, both individually and collectively (Spivak, 1988).

### 3 Conclusion

The *Hoshelaja* by Samih Masoed vividly portrays the epistemic violence experienced by Native American tribes, particularly the Indians, as part of their subalternation under colonial rule. This subalternization, as analyzed through Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's postcolonial theory, manifests in various forms, including discrimination through sexism and racism, testimony through cultural colonialism and trade acquisition, and distribution through the anticipation of human resources,

Subalternization, as a colonial practice, extends beyond women and can affect all marginalized groups, including the colonized, the lower classes, and children. It encompasses both physical and psychological oppression, with epistemic violence playing a central role. This includes the suppression of identities, cultures, and knowledge systems, further deepening the marginalization of subaltern groups. The narrative in *Hoshelaja* serves as a critical lens to explore the multifaceted impact of colonialism on the subaltern, emphasizing both their silencing and their resilience in the face of systemic oppression.

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