

How john smiths narrative contributes to eurocentric standards for american ident...

[Parts of the World](#), [Europe](#)



John Smith's narrative contributed a great deal to Eurocentric standards for the American identity. In his narratives Smith focused more on the good side of Europe while referring to the Native American culture as barbaric. By definition, Eurocentric refers to focus on Europe and the Europeans. It is evident from his narrative that he was antiracists at both practical and conscious levels. He believed in the prominence of Europe and the Europeans. From his narrative, Smith talks of how vicious the people of Virginia were but also acknowledge the courtesy he received from the king's son and daughter. In his narrative he talks of the King's daughter and son who were very compassionate at heart which gave him the reason to respect the daughter (Perkins & Perkins 57). Smith refers to the people who were given the responsibility of holding them as savages. He goes ahead to describe how these savages failed to give them food making them starve (Perkins & Perkins 57). To him, American soldiers were full of primitive energy and uncivilized as they could only inflict pain on people.

According to Smith, Virginia was in the verge of famine, death, and utter confusion as compared to Europe that was well off. He refers to people of Virginia as ungodly and the first Christian from that region being the daughter of the chief. He believes in the preeminence of Europe when referring to the chief's daughter as the first person from that nation to ever speak English (Perkins & Perkins 57). Smith forgets that the nation also had their language that they could use for communication. He considers Pocahontas' giving birth to child with an Englishman something special. In his letter to the queen, Smith requests the queen to acknowledge her despite her coming from unworthy people. He goes ahead to confirm to the

queen that Pocahontas' love for Englishmen and Christianity is a good reason to accept her rather than returning her to the worst evil (Perkins & Perkins 59).

What binary oppositions does he construct about civilization and how does he construct these binaries?

Show how his binaries can be deconstructed or broken down

Despite the advances in scholarship, deconstructing cultural binaries remains a prevalent problem to the society. Smith's binaries can be deconstructed through bringing a broad community of scholars together with focus on objectives for developing a shared future. In an attempt to move from "clash of civilization", scholars should come up with strategies that could help change conceptual frameworks in which different cultures are understood. It also requires defining common objectives among scholars, opinion makers, and journalists to encourage changes about these negative perceptions on different cultures. Smith does not recognize the native religions as legitimate practices. People should change how they view other cultures and stop referring to them as barbaric or primitive.

Work Cited:

Perkins, Barbara & Perkins, George. Kaleidoscope: Stories of the American Experience. Oxford University Press, 1993