

**Západočeská univerzita v Plzni**

**Fakulta pedagogická**

**Bakalářská práce**

**PŮVODNÍ AMERIČANÉ: HISTORIE A JEJÍ  
NÁSLEDKY V MODERNÍ AMERICKÉ  
SPOLEČNOSTI**

**Petra Vacková**

**Plzeň 2012**

**University of West Bohemia**

**Faculty of Education**

**Undergraduate Thesis**

**NATIVE AMERICANS: HISTORY AND ITS  
CONSEQUENCES IN MODERN AMERICAN  
SOCIETY**

**Petra Vacková**

**Plzeň 2012**

Tato stránka bude ve svázané práci Váš původní formulář *Zadání bak. práce*

(k vyzvednutí u sekretářky KAN)

Prohlašuji, že jsem práci vypracoval/a samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

*V Plzni dne 27. června 2012*

.....

Jméno Příjmení

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor Brad Vice, Ph.D. for his patience and trust.

## ABSTRACT

Vacková, Petra. University of West Bohemia. June, 2012. Native Americans: History and Its Consequences in Modern American Society. Supervisor: Brad Vice, Ph.D.

The object of this undergraduate thesis is to foreshadow the present situation of Native Americans in the USA thanks to the history they experienced. The thesis is divided into three main parts. The first chapter deals with the arrival of Indians to the American land, it includes three main waves of migration and later way of life of inhabitants. The second part begins with the arrival of Christopher Columbus and continues with the colonization of the American continent by European settlers. An important part of this chapter creates wars of territories and laws produced by European and later American governments that influenced the life of Native Americans forever. The third chapter outlines the situation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the slowly improving conditions of Indians. Two authors, Louise Erdrich and Sherman Alexie, are also discussed in this chapter. They are introduced by their biographies and the analysis of their significant works follows.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| INTRODUCTION .....  | 1  |
| 1. THE PRE-COLUMBIAN ERA  |    |
| Theory about the Arrival to the New World .....                                   | 4  |
| Pre-Clovis Culture .....  | 5  |
| Clovis Culture .....  | 5  |
| Na-Dene People .....  | 6  |
| Eskimo-Aleut People .....   | 7  |
| The Development of Native Americans' Culture .....                                | 7  |
| 2. THE ARRIVAL OF EUROPEANS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES                                  |    |
| Discovering of America .....  | 10 |
| The 16 <sup>th</sup> Century .....  | 11 |
| The 17 <sup>th</sup> Century .....  | 13 |
| The 18 <sup>th</sup> Century .....  | 16 |
| The 19 <sup>th</sup> Century .....  | 19 |
| 3. THE NATIVE AMERICANS' HONOUR ACQUIREMENT IN THE 20 <sup>th</sup> CENTURY'S USA |    |
| The Status of Native Americans in the 20 <sup>th</sup> Century .....              | 21 |
| Influence and Significancy of Acclaimed Authors of Native American Origin .....   | 23 |
| Louise Erdrich .....  | 23 |
| Love Medicine .....   | 24 |
| Sherman Alexie .....  | 25 |
| Ten Little Indians .....  | 27 |
| CONCLUSION .....  | 30 |
| WORKS CITED .....   | 31 |
| SUMMARY IN CZECH .....  | 36 |

## INTRODUCTION

Native Americans have always had a hard position in North America. They have had to confront contrary natural conditions at first and later they have encountered with Europeans' expansion, which have brought irrevocable changes.

Indians came from Mongoloid people and they crossed the Bering Strait and entered the New World more than 10,000 years ago. They came in three main migrations. But before these migrations there were one more culture living in American territory, the Pre-Clovis culture. Pre-Clovis culture was not accepted as the first culture for many years, but nowadays it is received by almost all archaeologists. By all means, this culture died out completely and it has no, or very small, influence on following cultures.

The first culture which came across the Bering Strait was Clovis culture. They were hunter-gatherers and probably followed large herds of mammals, which served as their source of food. They spread throughout North and South America building dwellings according the environmental conditions of concrete land. Their culture became extinct with the disappearance of large mammals, especially mammoths and mastodons.

Na-Dene people came after the Clovis people, they firstly lived in Beringia and western Alaska but the natural conditions, especially the deglaciation, expelled them to southern territories. The most recent wave of migration brought Eskimo-Aleut people who lived mainly around Bering Sea and Bering Strait and in more recent times they expanded to Greenland and Aleutian Islands.

Other cultures developed through the years from these three basic cultures and they began to evolve. The Archaic culture arosed at first, they were specialized more in small animals hunting and their hunting techniques and ways of preparing food improved.

Postarchaic people replaced Archaic around 1,5000 AD and they lived in American continent until the Europeans came. The most important was agriculture, which spread to North parts of America from South America. People became more oriented in cultivation of crops among most common were pepo squash, maize, and common bean.

Beside the agriculture many other activities spread among Native Americans. For example pottery, spread also from South America, was one of the most important contributions for North American cultures. They also made various objects from wood or skin and they used lot of ornaments, feathers and dyeing techniques to decorate their products. The biggest part in Native American lives played their religion. It was permeated through all other activities such as hunting, ceremonies, and dancing.



In this period Native Americans were settled down and lived in various dwellings but they also travelled a lot due to the trade with other tribes. Trading became an important part of their lives, they gained objects not typical for their locations and they established sophisticated systems of trading rules.

In 1492 Christopher Columbus discovered America and the era of colonization and terrorization of Native people began. At first, Europeans were interested in Native peoples but soon after they realised that new vast lands could serve as new territories for Europeans and they wanted to appropriate the natural wealth of new land. Beside the Spanish explorers, French and English investigators also began to conquer American land. In the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Europeans settled North America permanently, for example Spaniards established their first colony in present-day Florida. Spaniards also began with Christianization of Native people and although a few Spanish activists wanted to protect Natives, their opinions were strictly rejected.

The settlement of Europeans continued in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, three permanent settlements were established by Spain, France, and England. Various relationships developed between Native people and European settlers according to the way how Europeans behaved to Indians. They evolved the best relationships with French people.

Pilgrim fathers sailed in North America in December 1620 and they built strong relationship with Indians living there. Their colony flourished and English king gave them right to found Massachusetts Bay Company, which served as a trading partner for England. But after some time of mutual sympathy, Indians revolted against English people who occupied still more land. The 17<sup>th</sup> century North America saw also the first purely European war, the King William's War, which was between France and England.

The 18<sup>th</sup> century in North America continued in a spirit of French and English battles, which had the great impact on Native people because they took part in most of the battles as French or English allies. French and Indian wars against England were important, but French lost their fights and they had to concede their territories to England. That had the huge influence on following status of Native people.

After these fights the victorious England established new laws but English colonists in North America were not satisfied with them. This was one of the reasons of the American Revolution together with the consequences of Boston Tea Party in 1773. American colonists as well as England did not want Indians to participate in the Revolution but Indians though joined it. Nevertheless, in the end Indians did not obtain any rights and they had to hand over their territories to American colonists.

The status of Native Americans began to change rapidly in 19<sup>th</sup> century when the first displacement of Native people started. Indians, of course, did not want to leave their territories, so they were removed violently, which was followed by many fights among American colonists and Indians. These fights meant an indispensable loss of many Native American's lives. The transfer continued also during the Thirty Years War, which started in 1860s. The individual battles of this war were one of the most devastating and many Indians died unreasonably.

White people established new system of treating with Indians in the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century. New schools for Indians were founded by whites but it meant a repression for Native people because they had to conform into the American way of life. Their traditions were also forbidden.

Status of Native Indians during the 20<sup>th</sup> century started to change and their position in American society was better than ever before from the era of settlement. Indians participated in the World War I and soon after they gained an U.S. citizenship. Indians were supported in their religion and traditions, but then this effort was destroyed by "Termination Policy", which sent Indians to cities to assimilate with white culture. Government soon realized that this was a wrong step and they passed other laws, for example the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, which allows Indians to establish their own schools and encourages them in their tribal ceremonies and beliefs.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the position of Indians improved enough that they incorporated into the American society without bigger problems, and they also preserved their tribal traditions.

Many Native Americans are talented, for example Louise Erdrich, highly acclaimed writer of novels as well as poetry, became famous with her stories about Native American way of life. Among her most reputable novels is *Love Medicine* (1984), the book about two Indian families and their relations between them and also between white people.

Other successful Native American writer is Sherman Alexie. In the most recent times he is appreciated not only because of his books, but also because of his scripts, songs and films. His book *Ten Little Indians* (2003) is a respected collection of short stories where everyday life of Native Indians is foreshadowed.

## 1. THE PRE-COLUMBIAN ERA

### Theory about the Arrival to the New World

In process of time there have been many theories about how Native Americans got to the New World and who were their ancestors. Some of the theories were out-of-the-way, but nowadays there exists, thanks to archaeology, geology and anthropology, a reliable theory connected with northern Asia and Bering Strait, which is maintained by practically all anthropologists. According to this theory, American Indians' ancestors are definitely Mongoloid peoples of northern Asia. This opinion is verified by many physical similarities among these two nations, such as straight black hair, light brown skin, or high cheekbones (Fiedel 39). The man who had the biggest influence on proving and establishing this theory is Aleš Hrdlička, a Czech anthropologist. Through the years his theory was completed with new data but the basic principle remained the same (Šolc 16).

Mongoloid peoples have lived in Siberia which is detached from Alaska by Bering Strait. The distance between the two continents is approximately 90 km; in winter the water freezes and even today it is possible to pass from one continent to another. Nevertheless, the passage across the Bering Strait was much easier more than 10,000 years ago owing to the fact that a great deal of northern hemisphere was covered with ice. The glaciation was the reason why the sea level was lower and what now is under the water, created a dry land in past (Fiedel 46). This huge area of land has been first entitled "Beringia" in 1937 by Eric Hultén, the Swedish botanist (Hoffecker and Elias 3), and served as a pasture land for various herds of mammals. Archaeologists claim that the mammals were the main cause for Mongoloid peoples to come to the area of Beringia. This hunter-gatherers followed mammals without notification that they were passing from the Old World to the New one. Based on the geological studies, the Bering Strait enabled hunters to cross over it in a few periods of time from 75,000 years ago (Fiedel 46-47).

It is assumed that three main migrations, connected also with linguistic diversity, occurred in this long period of time. First, and the oldest, group of people is known as Amerind people, who were spread in vast south territories. Their linguistic diversity seemed to be much more bigger than in the two other groups and they were certainly associated with Paleo-Indian (Clovis) culture. The second migration brought Na-Dene people, who lived in the eastern Alaska and northern British Columbia, and their descendants have extended to Washington, Oregon and southwest parts of America in

recent times. Eskimo-Aleut people arrived into the new continent in the most recent migration and they were spread in Alaska, north Canada and Greenland (Greenberg 333).

### **Pre-Clovis Culture**

Although the Clovis culture was widely received as the first nation in American land, in 1970s new sites were discovered in North America, such as Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Cactus Hill, and Monte Verde site in South America (“Guide to Pre-Clovis”). This earlier people were named simply the pre-Clovis. K. Kris Hirst, an American archaeologist, explained in her article “Guide to Pre-Clovis” that “the reason they are called pre-Clovis, rather than some more specific term, is that the culture remained controversial for some 20 years after their first discovery”.

The existence of this earlier culture is proved by dating these sites to more than a few thousand years older than Clovis era. With the discovery of pre-Clovis culture arose a problem, how these people got to the new continent. Archaeologists go out of the theory that the Bering Strait was temporarily closed due to natural conditions at the time of their arrival. The Pacific coast seems as an alternative way because it would have been ice-free in 14,500 BP, at the beginning of pre-Clovis migration (“Ice Free Corridor”). It is obvious from that way of migration and also from the sites that some of pre-Clovis people lived in huts mostly on the seashore or they were even some kind of mariners. They used tools made of bones, nets and fabrics and they gained their food by hunting, gathering and fishing (“Guide to Pre-Clovis”). According to Gary Haynes, a specialist in prehistoric archaeology, pre-Clovis culture represented a “migration whose human populations died out completely and had little or no relation at all to later Amerind populations” (19).

### **Clovis Culture**

Clovis culture belongs to the first wave of migration. Their name was given them after the adjacent town Clovis in New Mexico, where the first site was found in 1932. They came from northern Asia, because they followed megafauna animals. Clovis people crossed the Bering Strait around 13,000 BP and spread quickly through North and South America in 200 years (Stanford and Bradley 31).

Clovis people’s sites differs according to places where they were settled. Localities found in western territories served as ephemeral sites with no real dwellings. On the other

hand, eastern localities were bigger campsites formed by longhouses. Clovis people probably returned to these bigger places regularly, or they lived there for a long period of time (Stanford and Bradley 34).

For a long time, archaeologists associated Clovis culture especially with mammoths and mastodons hunting, but it is evident from the sites all over the America that these people were able to conform to any kind of food such as deer, larvae, alligators, turtles and mice (Stanford and Bradley 44). Among the weapons they used were “fluted projectile points ... the most readily identifiable Clovis artefacts ... tools made from blades and flakes struck from specialized cored, plus bifacially flaked knives and adzes [and also] bi-beveled bone, antler, and ivory rods of unknown use ... and projectile points as well as barbed harpoons” (Stanford and Bradley 33).

Clovis people are suspected of over-killing animals which can be demonstrated on some sites such as Murray Springs and Head-Smashed-In sites. Plenty of bisons and mammoth's skeletons were found there. The animals were drifted to cliffs on purpose and they fell of them. People have never consumed all the animals, in fact, they eat only a small part of it. This over-killing together with some natural disaster and changing of climate may have been the reason why the big mammals, first of all mammoths and mastodons, extinct. It is certain that this extinction led to the end of the Clovis culture sometimes around 9,000 BP (“The (Pre) History of Clovis”).

Folsom tradition, the Paleoindians lived in North America between 9,000 and 10,500 BP, was derived from Clovis culture. Folsom people were again hunter-gatherers and used slightly different tools named Folsom points for killing animals. They were oriented especially to bisons which they also killed in big numbers (“Folsom Culture”).

### **Na-Dene People**

The second migration brought Na-Dene people, also known as Athapaskan, before 9,000 BC. At first, they lived in Beringia and western Alaska, where they adapted to tundra and quite rough conditions. Nevertheless, they had to move south around 6,000 BC because of the process of deglaciation. Na-Dene people then extended to Pacific Northwest and had to adapt to different environment, especially to pine trees. In Alaska, their source of food were caribou and moose, which also extended to southern territories due to deglaciation, thus Na-Dene people did not have to change their food habits (Dumond 857-858).

Na-Dene people lived in British Columbia, from where they spread around 4,500 BC to north parts of United States such as the area of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, or even Iowa. They met hunters of the south there and moved back to the north parts. Based on the expansion of their languages, Na-Dene people spread in Canadian south and east than (Dumond 860-862).

### **Eskimo-Aleut People**

The first archaeological evidence of the third migration of people from Asia is dated to 10,000 BP; they lived in area around Bering Sea and Bering Strait. Through the years Eskimo-Aleut people spread to western Alaska and than, between 6,000 and 4,000 BP they expanded to eastern territories, more precisely to Greenland, and to Aleutian Islands in the west. Following millennia were full of both achievements and failures and 1,000 AD can be marked as the “golden age” of Eskimo-Aleut people (Burch 8).

Eskimo-Aleut people tried to deal with each other, they made wars, did trades. They hunted caribou in inland and fished by the rivers and coasts. Among the equipments they used were harpoons, oil-burning lamps, skin-covered boats (also known as kayaks and umiaks) and their clothes were made of skin of animals (Oswalt 6).

### **The Development of Native Americans' Culture**

The climatic changes and rising temperatures brought new cultures, which soon replaced the Paleo-Indians. They are called Archaic cultures and lasted from 8,000 to 1,000 BP. Instead of big game, these peoples, according to the place they lived, specialized either in hunting small game, fishing, or gathering edible wild plants. Some of them dealt with each of these activities (Sonneborn 6). Archaic Indians started to use a large number of materials such as wood, stone, bones, antlers, ivory, plant fibers, and copper, which they manufactured into various tools. They also set in the production of cooking tools and vessels made of hewn stone. New methods of preparing and preserving supplies were invented. Indians boiled water in heated stones and roasted meat and other food in warm pits. They produced baskets and assorted skin pouches, in which they preserved their food supplies. Among these Ancient cultures belong for example the Old Cordillerian culture, the Cochise culture, or the Old Copper culture (Waldman 7).

Around 1,500 BP, Postarchaic period began to appear and it continued until the arrival of Europeans. This culture is most frequently denoted as formative. Carl

Waldman, a freelance writer and an author of many books on Native Americans, explains in his book *Atlas of North American Indian*, “Formative refers to the following cultural traits: the spread of agriculture, settled village life, houses, domesticated animals, pottery, weaving, the bow and arrow, and ceremonies and beliefs” (14).

Hunting, fishing, and gathering lasted from previous period, but it changed a little. Due to the fact that the water from glaciers flooded grasslands, water fowl appeared. People stopped hunting big animals in large amount, they focused more on small animals, birds, and fishing.

Nevertheless, agriculture had the greatest contribution for postarchaic people. Agriculture was developed both in South America and Mesoamerica around 7,000 BP and it was spread to North America together with the crops during the following centuries. Among three most common crops belonged pepo squash, maize, and common bean. Except these three, North Native Americans cultivated about 150 other crops, which were also developed in south areas and were spread to north (except the sunflower, which originated in North America). Many crops were cultivated for food, but some of them were fiber plants, dye plants, and herbs. Carl Waldman sums up the best known crops grown in both South and North America and adopted by the rest of the world as follows: “Corn, beans, squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, potatoes, sweet potatoes, peanuts, cashews, pine-apples, papayas, avocados, Jerusalem artichokes, sunflowers, chili peppers, cacao, vanilla, coca, tobacco, indigo, and cotton” (40).

Beside the activities connected with diet, many other developed in North America. They varied according to regions where people lived. One of those activities was woodwork. Indians were very good at it and they made for example boats, sleds, snowshoes, bow and arrows, armor, cradles, and totem poles. They used stone, shells, copper, bones, knives and other equipments to shave wood (Waldman 67).

Skinwork and working with textiles were also well established. People cut away fur from skin and then they fabricated it and made clothes, blankets, and assorted pouches. Clothes and bags were made of plant fibers, for instance bark, cotton, or buffalo wool, which they manufactured by knitting and netting as well as they used a spindle. Native people also produced a lot amount of baskets, which they plaited from twigs, roots, reeds, and grasses (Waldman 68).

Pottery, as agriculture, spread from south parts of America to north and was highly popular. Two techniques of making pottery are known. One of them is coiling technique

and the second is modelling and paddling and they were sometimes combined together. Native people were also able to fire their products. Pottery was often decorated with painting, scratching the wet or hard clay, or impressing some objects, for example shells, into the clay (Waldman 69).

Native Americans did not decorated only pottery, but clothes and other objects too. They used paintings, which they gained from various raw materials such as gypsum or graphite. They painted their own bodies to show their social position or they made warpaint. Dyeing was other method of decorating. They used berries, barks, and other plants and coloured for example textiles and baskets with them. Another often used method of decorating was featherwork. People made various headbands of them or they applied them onto clothes. Even arrows were feathered to be stabilized in flight (Waldman 70).

Native American's religion played one of the most important roles in their lives. Gary Varner, a writer and a member of American Folklore society wrote, "It would be a mistake to say that Native American people were monotheistic in their beliefs. On the contrary, Native Americans traditionally believed in several deities such as gods of fire, thunder, water, fertility, etc. Most indigenous cultures had the same belief system and still do" (13). Their religion pervaded all their activities such as food, hunting, myths and legends, and dance. They respected nature and lived in harmony with it, which was later described also by explorers, who said that, "Indians from the most part lived on the land as they found it, with minimal ecological disruption ... Moreover, [it seemed] easy to hunt much of the game" (Waldman 34). Native peoples made a sacrifices to their deities, arranged lot of ceremonials including dancing and telling myths and legends. This legacy was passed orally from generations to generations, because they did not have a written language.

During this formative period, Native Americans were settled down, they worked on their fields and had permanent shelters. Shelters were built from every kind of materials they had at hand, for instance wood, bark, straw, and grass. Therefore, their dwellings differed according to the region they lived. Among the most known shelters definitely belongs tipi and wigwam, but the indigenous people built many other shelters, such as longhouses, pueblo, pithouses, or igloos in Alaska. Though they were well-settled, native Americans traveled a lot due to the intertribal trade. Almost all tribes participated in trade and they traded with all things they had at hand and sold them for other, less common things from different regions. As the trade routes served paths, rivers, lakes, and people living in coasts travelled along them. Most usual way of travel was walking, but they also



had dogs to pull travois, a wooden frame serving for holding goods. Native people, who lived near the water flows, travelled on boats (Waldman 77). There existed rules connected with intertribal trade and people developed special trade languages.

Native Americans lived in tribes and live in them up to the present day. Among the tribes were political, religious, and social differences caused by various climatic conditions as well as unlike nutrition. However, above those differences, a tribe primarily have the same value for everybody.

Tribe is a body of persons who are bound together by ties of consanguinity and affinity and by certain esoteric ideas or concepts derived from their philosophy concerning the genesis and preservation of the environing cosmos, and who by means of these kinship ties are thus socially, politically, and religiously organized through a variety of ritualistic, governmental, and other institutions, and who dwell together occupying a definite territorial area, and who speak a common language or dialect (Webified Development).

Sometimes people of one tribe created an independent state, or they made alliances if they had to protect their tribes against enemies. Some tribes even established confederacies, which were highly organized and had kind of government. The most known confederacy is definitely the League of the Five Tribes of the Iroquois (Webified Development).

## **2. THE ARRIVAL OF EUROPEANS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES**

### **Discovering of America**

Even though Christopher Columbus is regarded as the first discoverer of America, it is certain that there have been several previous contacts with Europeans. In the eleventh century Vikings took explorational voyages, which are well documented. Vikings described a land west of Greenland, they called it Vinland, and they settled at the L'Anse au Meadow in Newfoundland, where the Viking's site has been found. These Norse people primarily wanted to colonize North America, but they came back to Iceland after all,

probably because of harsh natural conditions (Crawford 1). Other archaeological discoveries indicate pre-Columbian visitors, but evidence about cultural influence on Native Americans or vice versa is not known. Carl Waldman voices in his publication *Atlas of the North American Indian* this opinion: “If there were consequential contacts in one direction or the other ... many traits were not shared – the practical application of the wheel, for example, not applied in Americas, or the cultivation of maize, unknown outside the Americas” (94).

Christopher Columbus, an Italian explorer, persuaded Spanish Crown to finance a voyage in the aim of reaching Asia. Columbus decided to sail west from Europe and on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1492, he reached Arawak (present-day island of San Salvador) in belief that he was reaching Asia, which used to be called Indies. He named the indigenous people Indians and traded with them until the 24<sup>th</sup> December when one of his three ships sank down. Columbus decided to return to Spain leaving thirty-nine men with Native Americans on Arawak Island. In Spain, he presented gold items and parrots that he gained from the trade with indigenous people and he also showed captive Indians to Spanish King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella (Sonneborn 29). Columbus has obtained the permission for the second sailing, but when he reached Arawak again on 28<sup>th</sup> November 1493, he found all thirty-nine Spaniards killed by Arawak, because they attacked Indian’s villages. Columbus terrified native people with weapons, but even though they were greater in number, they were not able to defend against Spaniards. Columbus’ men killed hundreds of Arawak people and others were imprisoned. Columbus also sent five hundred Indians to Spanish court. However, Spanish King imagined to convert Indians to Christianity rather than enslave them (Sonneborn 30).

### **The 16<sup>th</sup> Century**

Soon afterwards Columbus discovered the New World, other European wealth powers than Spain, especially England and France, began to ship out their sailors to explore new territories and people living there. One of the first explorers was Amerigo Vespucci, an Italian sailor, who later obtained a grant from German geographer Martin Waldseemüller and after whom the new continent was named America, in spite of the fact that Vespucci has probably never anchored by the American coast or even met the native people (Sonneborn 30).

The 16<sup>th</sup> century became the century of huge changes for native peoples of America as well as for Europeans. At first, Europeans were curious about the strange people, but it did not take a long time to realize that America should serve as a new source of wealth and new territories. European powers hungered for new resources and did not respect indigenous people. Spanish intellectuals, for example, stated that “Spain has a legitimate claim to title to its land in North America and to authority over the Indians living there” (Sonneborn 32), or English King Henry VII ordered John Cabot, an Italian navigator, to “subdue, occupy and possess all ... towns, cities, castles and isles” (Sonneborn 30).

Initially, Indians have been quite confident, they have showed Europeans ways and territories, or they even have helped them. But Europeans have taken advantages of their credibility and used their knowledge and weapons to terrorize them. Christopher Columbus, for instance, shipwrecked near Jamaica, indigenous people helped him, but afterwards Columbus terrified them because he needed food and Jamaican Indians refused to give it to him. Other example of the European irresponsibility appeared with the connection of Seven Cities of Cibola. Karankawan Indians saved shipwrecked Spaniards in 1528 and they joined them for the next six years. Then Spaniards travelled to present-day Mexico, where they told Spaniards about seven rich cities that they heard from Indians. This story spread fast and evoked tremendous fever among Europeans that longed for gold and silver (Sonneborn 37). Spanish and English explorers were sent to found these rich cities, battled with Indians and manipulated with them roughly, passed the land in all directions, but they did not found any of the seven cities. After this failure no exploration, either Spanish or French, has been realised for almost fifty years.

In 1565 the Spanish established the first permanent European settlement in North America. It was named St. Augustine and extended in present-day Florida. It has become a base for Spanish missionaries whose task was to convert pagan natives to Christianity. In 1584 English people found their colony on Roanoke Island, present-day North Carolina. They were welcomed by Indians as trading partners, but later, when Europeans returned from a battle with Spaniards, Roanoke was deserted either because Indians merged with other tribe, or they were killed. English failed to settle North America permanently (Sonneborn 46). In 1598 another Spanish colony was established on Pueblo territory and was called New Mexico. Native Indians had to accept Spanish law and than they could obtain new goods from Europe. After some time Indians were annoyed by Spanish dependence on their food supplies, so they revolted, but they were brutally massacred by well-armed Spaniards (Sonneborn 47).

During the 16<sup>th</sup> century Spaniards warmly discussed about Indians and their rights. They were declared as human beings and some activists, for example Bartolomé de Las Casas, wanted to negotiate better conditions for treating with Indians, or Antonio de Montesinos insisted on the freedom for Indians. As a reply for this urgency, new laws, such as Laws of Burgos, were released. These laws had to assure Indians better treatment, but they were strictly rejected by colonists and the situation stayed almost the same (Sonneborn 32). Colonists treated roughly with indigenous people, they were enslaved and forced to accept Christianity.

### **The 17<sup>th</sup> Century**

At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century three permanent settlements were founded. The first one was established in 1607 in current Virginia and it was called Jamestown after the English King James I. About three thousand English people came to settle down, but within the first several years there were poor living conditions. Virginia was described as “a society in which life was short, diseases ran rampant, and parentless children and multiple marriages were the norm” (“Life in Early Virginia”). Colonists settled at the Powhatan’s territory, native people did not accept that with enthusiasm, conversely, Indians tried to get rid of them. It led to several wars between colonists, whose leader was John Smith, an English soldier and explorer, and Powhatan Indians during the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Indians were forced to receive British rules finally. In the meantime living conditions improved mainly owing to cultivation of tobacco. The second settlement, Quebec, was founded by French in 1608 at Stadacona, the present-day Quebec City. It was relatively small settlement depended on the trade with Indians and it has later become the capital of New France. And the third settlement, Santa Fe, founded by Spaniards in 1609 on the ruins of ancient Indian site, has become a capital of New Mexico, the Spanish province, and was engaged as the most important trading center between Spaniards and Indians (Sonneborn 51).

These permanent settlements led Indians to conclusion that Europeans wanted to stay there and their reactions on settlements differed according to the settlers’ behaviour. They prized French settlers the most, because they came to America as businessmen and changed European goods for Indian’s furs. A friendly relationship developed between them, French received some of Indian traditions or even married Indian women. Spaniards, on the other hand, were much more destructive. They put pressure on Indians to work for

them and to submit them. However, the worst of all were English settlers. They were not interested in Indians or their furs, they wanted their territories and occupied it with no respect to native people. If Indians revolted, settlers fought unequally or even wiped out the whole tribes (Sonneborn 49).

Not long after the first English colonization of Virginia, other English people came to settle down in the New World. Pilgrims, puritan separatists from Church of England, arrived to the present-day Cape Cod in Massachusetts on ship called *Mayflower* on 21<sup>st</sup> December 1620. They founded there a colony, which they named Plymouth after the port in the Old World. Puritans were afraid of Indians because they expected natives “who are cruell, barbarous, and most treacherous” (qtd. in Vaughan 64) and they thought that “they could expect no mercy from the red men” (Vaughan 64). Nevertheless, when they settled, there were no Indians at that place. Pilgrims heard their cries and saw their smokes of fire, but they did not see any of them until the middle of March of the next year. This time Samoset came to visit them and he surprised Pilgrims, because he spoke in English. Samoset told them about Wampanoags, Indians living in the surroundings, and this meeting was the beginning of a strong friendship with the local Indians. Within a few days Wampanoags’ chief Massasoit appeared and entered an agreement with Pilgrims. This treaty included mutual help, no wars between Pilgrims and Natives, and a note that this treaty was, in fact, the treaty with the English King James (Vaughan 70-72). In the following autumn, Pilgrims celebrated together with Wampanoag tribe the first Thanksgiving, the feast in honour of Indians, who learned them how to cultivate crops.

After the failures at the beginning, Plymouth started to flourish and Pilgrims obtained from the king a right to establish the Massachusetts Bay Company that guaranteed them a trade with England. In support of the trade with England, Hudson’s Bay Company was established in 1670. This was the company dealt with the fur trade, they gained fur from local Indians who were interested in trading with England because they offered them high-quality goods for lower prices than French traders for example (Sonneborn 68).

While the relationship between Pilgrims and Wampanoags flourished under the rule of Massasoit, when his son Metacom took over the rule, he organized a fight against the Pilgrims, because they began to usurp more and more land. Colonists also pushed on Indians to accept their laws. The beginning of the war is dated in 1676 and the excuse for the first fight was a killing of one of Wampanoag Indian, which colonists punished by

execution of three Indians from this tribe. Metacom, who was nicknamed King Philip by colonists, revenged and the war named after him King Philip's War lasted to 1678. The war brought many dead on both sides and almost half of the villages of New England were destroyed. The result of war was the end of Wampanoag's freedom, they had to accept colonial overhead (Kelly).

During the 17<sup>th</sup> century much of the living conditions of Native peoples changed. With the arrival of plenty of settlers European diseases spread more quickly than in the previous century. Influenza and smallpox were the most extended ones and many Indians died owing to them because they did not have immunity. Smallpox, for example, killed about ninety percent of Indians in the area of New England, some tribes even died out (Sonneborn 53).

Another thing that changed was the growing enviousness between tribes. It was evoked by Europeans who negotiated Indians various manufactured goods from Europe, and Natives sometimes organized raids on other tribes to capture their goods.

European colonies flourished and many other were established, but it was the reason why the whole century was also accompanied by annihilation of tribes by colonists, they wanted more land and Indians stood in their way. Cruel manipulating with Indians still predominated above respect, which can be seen from the first purely European war on North American land. The King William's War was between France and England, started in 1689 and lasted to 1697 and Europeans were fighting for eastern territories of Northern America. Although it was the European conflict, many Indian tribes had to help their European allies, which had "an enormous impact on Indians, whose European allies ... [called] upon them to supply military support in this and three major wars during the next 74 years" (Sonneborn 73-74).

Furthermore, the first Indian reservation was established by English colonists in 1638. English forced Wappinger Indians to leave their territory and gave them another land, but as Liz Sonneborn, the author of *Chronology of American Indian History*, points out, Indians were "forbidden from leaving or selling this land, and their activities ... [were] to be monitored by an English agent" (61).

Beside English, French, and Spanish settlers, Dutch also established their first trading post in 1632 in North America, more precisely in present-day Albany, New York. They entitled it Fort Orange and they developed good trading relationship with Indians such as Mohawk or Mahican (Sonneborn 58).

## The 18<sup>th</sup> Century

Native American's life during the 18<sup>th</sup> century was greatly stigmatized by many conflicts between England and France, which started at the end of the previous century and still continued. These two powers were fighting for eastern lands of North America and their fights were located on European soil as well as on North American soil. Beside these major conflicts many other either bigger or smaller conflicts between Europeans or between Europeans and Indians took place in American land. The main reasons for fighting were of course the Europeans' thirst for land and Indians' defence. It has not been an exception that Europeans called up their Indian allies, because they needed help, but they did not support them after all and Indians had to fight for their European allies without any help or reward.

French and English feud culminated in 1744 in the King George's War. British and their allies attack French fort Louisbourg, but France with their allies was stronger and defeated them. The result was the return of Louisbourg to French colonists. British were discontent and sent their troops, which should force out French, but it flowed into French and Indian War, named that because many Indian tribes took part in it fighting on French side (Europeans called it Seven Year's War). The excuse was a foundation of several French forts that had to preserve land from British traders and British ordered their colonist to get rid of French. In connection with the starting war, English colonies organized Albany Congress, which aim was to strenghten the relationship with Iroquois Confederacy "in light of the approaching war with France" ("The Seven Years' War"), but the plan of union failed. At first, British soldiers were defeated, but from 1758 they had predominance and they laid siege to Quebec and then Montreal and French gave up. In 1763 the Treaty of Paris officially ended the war and Britain gained almost all French land in Canada ("The Seven Years' War"). The Britain's victory had immense impact to both English colonists and Native Indians. Native people were used to trade with France and were depended on French goods, but Britain forbade it. Britain did not have enough money to pay new English troops, which controlled the situation, thus they introduced new taxes on colonist. As a response on changes, Indians were furious and attacked English forts, which was known as Pontiac's Rebellion. It did not lasted for a long time, but British government was afraid of conflicts, and established the Proclamation Line of 1763, which detached Indian and colonist's land along the Appalachian Mountains (Sonneborn 49).

The British government hoped to prevent fighting between colonists and Native Americans. It also wished to avoid the cost of defense in case a war broke out. So the government declared the vast land between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River and Native American reserve. Known as the Proclamation of 1763, the new law also prohibited settlers from moving west of the Appalachian Mountains (Santella 39-40).

English colonists did not respect the Proclamation released in overseas and continued to settle in west territories, which resulted in removal of Native people or even wiping out the whole nations. Disagreement between settlers and British government soon flowed into the American Revolution (Santella 41).

As the dissatisfaction of American colonists rised, they arranged for another rebellion. In 1773 colonists dressed as Mohawk Indian tribe, they used “American Indian imagery to express a new American identity that distinguishes them from their European forebears” (Sonneborn 96). Colonists poured out the whole cargo of tea brought from England. This event is known as Boston Tea Party and Quebec Act was created in 1774 as a response to it. Quebec Act established new borders between colonists in Canada and Indian reservations held by British. Colonists in Massachusetts, Virginia and Connecticut wanted back territories now assigned to Quebec. This event became, as well as the Proclamation, one of the causes of the American Revolution.

The American Revolution, also called American Revolutionary War or the U.S. War of Independence started in 1775. Although American colonists and also the British did not want Native Americans to participate in the conflict, Indians joined it. Many of them were on the British side because the English King promised to protect them and their lands. The most important Indians who took part in the war were those of Iroquois Confederacy. Four tribes of six joined Britain and the remaining two joined colonists, but this stigmatized their Confederacy for ever. The main person of Indian people was Thayendanega, who was educated in English and worked as a translator for Britain. In 1782, when the Preliminary Articles of Peace were released, Indians felt disapointed and annoyed, because the articles “did not mention Native Americans at all” (HistoryWiz). British themselves were not on one side and although they had valid treaties with Indians, one part of them pronounced that the treaties were valueless. On the contratry, the second



part of British people honoured these treaties and wanted to respect them. Nevertheless, in 1783 the Peace of Paris was released, by which all the territories in disregard of treaties with Natives were given to the new United States (HistoryWiz).

The same situation repeated with other important documents. One of them released on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1776 was the Declaration of Independence according to which all men were equal, but in fact, it was not the truth.

The Declaration of Independence states that all men are created equal, have the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and have control of the government when it becomes destructive, these rights, although stated in Americas constitution, were not granted to the Native Americans. The Native Americans were made to endure the hardships of being forced out of their land, being killed, thrown into countless wars, and promised lies (OPPapers.com).

In 1787 the draft of the Constitution of United States arose in Philadelphia, but it did not include a bill of rights. In the Constitution was defined what people could do, but it was reached only for white men, who possessed some property. Later, in 1791, the Bill of Rights was adopted, but it did not involve large groups of people. Women, for example, were some kind of property of their husbands and they did not have the right to vote. Native Americans were also not incorporated, they were “defined as an alien people in their own land” (ACLU & ACLU Foundation). There existed special treaties to deal with Indians, which resulted in waste of their territories as well as autonomy. Americans did not even have the U.S. citizenship for almost 135 years (ACLU & ACLU Foundation).

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Indian territories were strided also by other European conflict than the French and Indian War. France unleashed a war with several European powers, including Britain, in 1793. French and British fights took place mostly on the neutral territories and untimely destroyed them. The war between them lasted until 1812 (Gascoigne). Spanish also fought on American territory instead on European. They led the War of the Spanish Succession and they attacked, together with their Native allies, Florida in 1702 but their attempt failed. Britain defeated them and France with their allies became involved into this conflict too. France was strided down by English and they had to give their colony to Britan, which was documented in 1713 by Treaty of Utrecht. Britain named the colony Nova Scotia (Tucker xli).

Though bad relationships between Natives and colonies predominated, there were also a few exceptions. For example in Pennsylvania where William Penn kept quite good relations, or James Oglethorpe respected Indians in Georgia. However, in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century these two colonies tangled into longtime feuds with Indians too.

## **The 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

United States proclaimed a war to Great Britain in 1812 because of several Indian's attacks (often evoked by British). British took advantage of their allies again and Indians helped them in the war. At first, Indian allies of Britain were better, but it soon turned into American superiority and American won the war in 1814 (Wooster).

In 1830 The Indian Removal Act was passed and Americans began to remove Indian's from their lands during the 1830s and 1840s. One of the removals related with west lands around the Mississippi River flowed into a war named Seminole (after the Indians living there) because Natives refused to leave their territory. Other Semimole war followed but Indians were broke down and removed from their area. Next removing of Natives affected for example Cherokee Indians settled in Georgia. They sold their land to America, but then they revalued their thoughts and refused to move. Finally, American troops were sent to Cherokee tribe's land and untimely moved them to the west. Soldier's behaviour was describes as follows: "a gang of lawless white men may break into the Cherokee country, plunder their habitations, murder the mother with the childre, and all in the sight of the wretched husband and father, and no law of Georgia will reach the atrocity" (qtd. in Magliocca 903).

Other attacks appeared on the Pacific Coast because immigrants were searching for gold in California. War together with diseases, malnutrition, and unsuitable conditions of the land appointed as reservations caused huge reduce of Native peoples. For example, there lived 150,000 Indians in 1845 and they were reduced only to 35,000 during fifteen years (Wooster).

In 1861 the biggest war in American history began. It was the Civil War, the war between United States in the North and slavish states in the South, which separated from the United States and set up Confederate states of America. The reason of war was an unequal development of North and South and the effort of North states to abolish slavery. Albert Pike, the officer of Confederacy, convinced some of the Indian leaders to support the Confederacy. Among the convinced tribes were Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw,

Chickasaw, and Seminole, all of them also had several slaves, so they were concerned with keeping of slavery. But the alliance of Confederacy and Indians did not bring any advantage; Confederacy had only small military support from Indians and Indians obtained neither food nor help from Confederacy. The civil war ended in defeat of Confederacy in 1865 (MultiEducator, Inc). Indian tribes, which supported Confederacy in the war, were punished. Steven Mitz, an American historian, refers to the fact that “The Seminoles were required to sell their reservation at 15 cents an acre and buy new land from the Creeks at 50 cents an acre”. Not only Sminoles, but also other tribes had to cede their territories.

In 1860s started, beside the Civil War, a Thirty Years War, which goal was to drift Plain Indians to reservations. In fact, it was a huge genocide of Native peoples. This war included many smaller or bigger conflicts, among them one was the most brutal. It was The Sand Creek Massacre in November 1864 taking place in Arapaho-Cheyenne reservation. U.S. army broke into their territory and killed every Indian they could find. After six hours of fighting, about 150 Indians, including men, women and even children, were dead. The tribes should get compensation, but they obtained nothing (“The Sand Creek Massacre”). Among other big battles were, for example The Battle of the Little Big Horn in South Dakota, or conflict with Nez Perce in northern Montana, which was one of the last ones.

Plain Indians had touched bottom, they were without home and their way of life was destroyed. They wished they would live in a peaceful place without diseases, wars and deprivation. In 1880s a religious movement known as Ghost Dance spread among Plain Indians, this movement promised to renew their ancestor’s way of life. However, white settlers started to be afraid of Indians ceremonies, especially Sioux tribe was very interested in this movement. Federal army decided to push Sioux to Wounded Knee camp, where the last battle of the Thirty Years War took place in December 1890. It was again one of the terrific massacre of Native people (Wounded Knee I).

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century white people started to propagate “the white man’s way of life” (Kill the Indian and Save the Man) and boarding schools for Indian youth were opened. As a model for Indian education became a school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, established by Richard H. Pratt, an army officer. The aim of these schools were to assimilate Native people into the American culture; students had to speak only in English and their cultural traditions, clothes, or religious ceremonies were banned, in other words, whites tried to rip Indians out of their cultural heritage (Kill the Indian and Save the Man).

Not only children in schools were led to American way of life, but also the Indians in reservations. U.S. government appointed agents, who controlled Indian reservations, educated them, taught them how to farm, and had to Christianize them. Congress also set up a Court of Indian Offenses in 1882, where Indians, who broke government rules and laws, were judged (Kill the Indian and Save the Man).

The General Allotment Act was released in 1887 to strengthen the assimilation of Indians. This Act changed the communal ownership to individual ownership, which meant that every Indian could possess a unit of 40 to 160 acres, and the remaining land was sent to white people. This project was a huge failure and many tribes, for example Ojibwe, lost large parts of their homelands (Wisconsin Historical Society).

### **3. THE NATIVE AMERICANS' HONOUR ACQUIREMENT IN THE 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY'S USA**

#### **The Status of Native Americans in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

It seemed that Indian nation was vanishing in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century because only 250,000 Native Americans survived after the previous centuries of almost unceasing wars and annihilations. Their population grew up slowly and in 1940 there lived about 350,000 Indians in United States. Their social status began to raise gradually.

Although Native Americans did not have American citizenship by the time of the World War I, many of them participated in it. Precise data about the number of volunteers is not known and it differentiates from 5,000 to 10,000 but it is supposed that about 2,000 to 4,000 truly served in France. From this number, five percent died during the fight and great deal of other Indians died of diseases. There were also lots of Natives who helped for example in Red Cross, or in some part of war industry (Sharp, Westwell, and Westwood 288).

In 1924 Indians obtained U.S. citizenship. Some of them have already had citizenship due to marriage with white men, military service, or by special treaties. But many of Native people did not have it until 1924. Together with their tribal citizenship they had dual citizenship. This Act was again an effort to assimilate Natives into the American society (Nebraska State Historical Society).

An important change came with the Indian Reorganization Act that passed Congress in 1934. This Act was in contrast with the tactic, which was promoted for the past fifty years. Now Native Americans were encouraged to create tribal governments and to control their internal affairs. They were also supported in preservation of their languages, cultural traditions, and identity. New constitutions were drafted by recently established tribal governments and their sovereign rights were maintained (Wisconsin Historical Society).

Together with incoming changes, approximately 25,000 Native people (of total number moving around 350,000) served in the World War II in 1941. A historian Andrew Boxer alerts to the fact that “This was a higher proportion than from any other ethnic minority”. Many other Indians worked, as in the World War I, in industries connected with war. This meant their assimilation to big cities and “white way of life”, and it changed their lives. In the following years U.S. government responded to occurred changes.

During the 1940s U.S. government founded that living conditions of Native people were disastrous and many of them lived in poverty. Despite of previous support of Indian heritage, government decided to rip out Indians from their tribes, which they called “Termination Policy”. To support their policy, government passed House Concurrent Resolution 108 in 1953, whose aim was to incorporate Indians as soon as possible into the society with “the same laws and ... the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States” (qtd. in “Termination Policy 1953-1968”). Indian lands were sold to white people and Indians were prompted to move from rural reservations to cities where they should obtain help to integrate into working process. In 1960 almost 30 per cent Indians were living in cities, they had to cope with traffic lights, lifts, or telephones. This assimilation was very traumatic for most of them and many Indians experienced with alcohol or gambling, they lived in slums and they were often unemployed (Boxer).

With the spread of Civil Rights Movement from American South in the early 1960s, new reforms appeared, for example the Department of Housing and Urban Development assisted Indians in building new houses, or in 1968 the Indian Civil Rights Act was released. Although it seemed like another contribution, it had an opposite effect because it meant that tribal systems of laws had to fall under American courts (Olson-Raymer).

In 1975 government changed opinion on Indian assimilation again. The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act was passed and it declared that Native people could keep their schools on their own. After publication of the Act, more than seventy

schools took advantage of this privilege and started to control their education. They included Indian traditions, philosophy, and beliefs in their education and also their languages were part of schooling (“Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act – 1975”).

Soon after Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, other act in support of Native Americans was released. Indian Religious Freedom Act was passed in 1978 and it supported Indians in their beliefs and expressing of their traditional religions as well as in use of their sacred objects during ceremonies. The act also allowed them the entrance to their sites. In 1993 the act in support of maintenance of their sites was published and in 1994 peyote, a psychoactive cactus used during Indian ceremonies, became legal (“Indian Religious Freedom Act – 1978”).

## **Influence and Significancy of Acclaimed Authors of Native American Origin**

### **Louise Erdrich**

Louise Karen Erdrich is Native American writer and story teller from Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, North Dakota. She is loved by many scholars as well as critics and she is often considered as the “writer of second wave of Native American Literary Renaissance” (Johansen 88). In her works she connects the oral traditions and culture together with multiple narrators, which is typical of her style of writing. Her works often take place in North Dakota, her native place.

### **Biography**

Louise Erdrich was born on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1954 in Little Falls, Minnesota, and spent a big part of her childhood in Wahpeton, North Dakota. Her father was a German American and her mother was a French Chippewa. She loved telling stories from early age. Louise Erdrich studied at Dartmouth University and her major was English and Creative Writing but she also took courses at Native American Studies Department. She graduated in 1976. In 1978 she enrolled Johns Hopkins University where she received a master’s degree in 1979 (Johansen 89).

During her studies she decided that she would like to be a writer: “I told myself I would sacrifice all to be a writer” (qtd. in Johansen 89). She met her future husband, Michael Dorris when she was at college, and later he helped her with the publication of her

first novel *Love Medicine* in 1984. This book won Erdrich several prizes including the National Book Critics Circle Award for best work of fiction that year. In the following years other books were published, for example *The Beet Queen* (1986), *Tracks* (1988), and *Tales of Burning Love* (1997). All these novels cooperate with characters created in Erdrich's first book *Love Medicine* (Johansen 90).

Erdrich also writes poetry, in fact, she has always been concerned about poetry more than about prose. Among her best known collections of poetry belong for example *Jacklight* (1984) and *Baptism of Desire* (1989). But she is best known for her novels, most of which were best-sellers and won her several prestigious prizes (Poetry Foundation). She also wrote non-fiction literature for example *The Blue Jay's Dance* (1995), or she published several novels for children, which are based "on the lives of Native-American young people at the time of white encroachment" (Poetry Foundation).

### **Love Medicine**

The narrative structure of the book *Love Medicine* is more like a collection of short stories than a novel and it is considered to be a postmodern novel, which is very often compared to William Faulkner, an American writer of postmodern literature, "mainly due to the multi-voice narration and non-chronological storytelling which he [also] employed in [his] works" (Poetry Foundation). This multiple narration is very similar to story telling, which was and still is very common among American Native tribes's oral traditions.

The stories in *Love Medicine* are mainly about "the lives of individuals in the Turtle Mountain community, tracking both their physical moves to stay or leave the reservation and their spiritual moves to accommodate a pervasive American culture or remain true to the lifestyle of their Chippewa ancestors" (eNotes). Poor living conditions, the problem of alcoholism and promiscuity is analysed, but more positive themes are also discussed in the novel, for example specific humor of the family, their family bonds, hopes and love which "is the force that brings them [characters] together" (Oakwood Publishing Company).

The plot of the novel *Love Medicine* is very hard to follow and "like a puzzle, can only be appreciated once finished" (Teen Ink). The book is about relationships within two families, Kashpaw and Lamartine, about mutual love and hate among them, and about their relation with other Native Americans. It also describes relations with white people. The book consists of fourteen stories, which are not arranged chronologically, but they are interconnected, and the stories are about seven different people from Kashpaw and

Lamartine family of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa community. The narration lasts from 1934 to 1984.

In the first chapter entitled “The World's Greatest Fishermen” Erdrich outlines relations within a Kashpaw family. This chapter is something like an introductory chapter to the whole book, although it has officially the same value as other chapters. One of the main characters in this chapter is Albertine Johnson, young girl from Kashpaw family who studies nursing. She tells about her not always easy living with white people and she anticipates the situation of her family for the reader. Throughout the whole book, the Kashpaw family relations and history are analysed. There are two brothers, twins Nector and Eli, Nector was sent to public school where studied many white people, but Eli stayed at home. It is evident how different these brothers are. Nector is definitely influenced by white society and he is an intellectual while Eli likes hunting and he is in the connection with nature. Eli has got a problem with integration into the white culture and he “isolates himself on the reservation, not acknowledging the presence of white culture” (eNotes).

Another member of Kashpaw family, Gordie, is a typical representative of a Native American. His family has a huge importance for him, so when his mother June died, he is not able to cope with it and he starts drinking and lives in solitude.

The Lamartine family is connected with Kashpaw family by Nector who is unfaithful to his wife with Lulu Lamartine. Lulu battles with typical Native American problems, the government takes her piece of land because they want to build there a factory. The treaty about withdrawal of her land is signed by Nector who is forced by white people from government and although he does not want to disappoint Lulu who trusts him, he has no other chance.

During the whole book Louise Erdrich tries to present every situation objectively and in contrast to other Indian authors, she does not want to emphasize only a negative influence of west civilization on Native Americans. But in spite of this fact, she still more believes in natural powers and tribal religion than in welfare of modern west civilization and Christianity (Erdrich 240, translation mine).

### **Sherman Alexie**

Sherman Alexie is very popular and successful contemporary Indian writer from Spokane tribe. He has got a huge talent, which is proved by many awards he gained for his



poems and short stories. His novels are best-sellers and he also excels in writing poems, essays, and screenplays, or in direction and film co-production. Sherman Alexie is characterized by his peculiar sense of humor and he says that he “turned to humor because he was different and got beat up a lot” (qtd. in Johansen 7).

Sherman Alexie writes about present status of Native Americans. He is concerned with everyday themes, which he comments with the fact that many Native Americans have written about nature, but he wants to “reach the younger generations of Native Americans” (Johansen) by writing about things close to them.

### Biography

Sherman J. Alexie, Jr. was born on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1966 in Wellpinit town, which is part of Spokane Indian Reservation in eastern parts of Washington state. Alexie’s father, Sherman Sr. from Coeur d’Alene tribe, was a heavy drinker and his mother, Spokane Indian, tried to make their living by sewing and working as a clerk. Sherman Alexie was born with hydrocephalus and he had to undergo dangerous surgery when he was only six months old. Doctors thought he will have continuing consequences and will be mentally handicapped. He dealt with it relatively well, although he suffered from enlarged skull, seizures, and uncontrollable bed-wetting most of his childhood. These problems caused him troubles and ridicule from other children of Spokane Reservation, but he appropriated a specific sense of humor, which he used as a defence (Grassian 1-2).

Sherman Alexie attended tribal school for eight years, but then he chose all-white high school in Reardon, Washington. First he attended Gonzaga University in Spokane in 1985 but he was not interested in it and started to drinking a lot and ended the school after two years. Then he moved to Seattle where he worked as busboy. Soon he decided to go to school again. This time he chose Washington State University. At first, he wanted to become a doctor, but later he was much more interested in poetry and during his studies he wrote his first volume of Native American poetry, *Songs from This Earth on Turtle’s Back*. In 1991 Alexie graduated and received his bachelor’s degree in American Studies. Soon after he stopped drinking. Due to the fact that he was educated in schools mainly for white, he gained only a little knowledge in Spokane language (Grassian 3).

After his graduation he received a Washington State Arts Commission Poetry Fellowship in 1991 and in 1992 a National Endowment for the Arts Poetry Fellowship. His early works are full of alcoholism and addiction, probably because of both alcoholism in his family and his own experience with it. Among his early works belong for example *The*

*Business of Fancydancing* (1991), which is his first poetry collection, *I Would Steal Horses* (1993), or his first collection of short stories published in 1993, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, for which he received Hemingway Award for Best First Book of Fiction (Johansen 8).

During the following years Sherman Alexie published his first novels, *Reservation Blues* (1995) and *Indian Killer* (1996) and he broke into the filmdom. He wrote a script of a film *Smoke Signals*, which is based on the short story “This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona” from *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. This film won several awards, for example Sundance Film Festival Audience Award in 1998. Many other books celebrated a success, for instance *Ten Little Indians* (2003) or *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (2007), which is mainly adressed to young generation of Native Americans (Johansen 10).

Sherman Alexie often meets with criticism because his works are very radical, disturbing, and confrontational and he is not afraid of writing about alcoholism, addiction, and other problems occuring in connection with living in reservations. Many Native Americans do not like his unflattering portray of Indian societies, but he argues that “You know, as an artist, it’s not my job to fit in; it’s not my job to belong. I’m not a social worker; I’m not a therapist ... I’m not here to make people feel good” (qtd. in Johansen 9).

### **Ten Little Indians**

*Ten Little Indians* is a collection of short stories written by Sherman Alexie in 2003. Although there is “ten” in the title, the book contains only nine stories. The tenth Indian is considered to be Sherman Alexie himself. All main characters are Indians from Spokane tribe, they live in cities and most of them are relatively well assimilated to white society. On the other hand, they are slightly separated from their tribe and most of them live in isolation caused by psychological problems, or poor family relations. Their knowledge of being Indian is still very important but it is not the primary sense of their life and their identity (Grassian 173).

The book *Ten Little Indians* contains these short stories: “The Search Engine”, “Lawyer’s League”, “Can I Get a Witness?”, “Do Not Go Gentle”, “Flight Patterns”, “The Life and Times of Estelle Walks Above”, “Do You Know Where I Am?”, “What You Pawn I Will Redeem”, and “What Ever Happened to Frank Snake Church?”.

One of the most impressive short stories is “The Search Engine”. The main heroine is nineteen-year-old Corliss who studies English Literature at Washington State University. She loves reading, especially poetry, by which she differentiates from her family. Although her family supports her, they are not glad to see that she is so much interested in white literature. Corliss spends most of her free time in her tiny flat in Solice and she is convinced that she has “never met one human being more interesting to her than a good book” (qtd. in Grinnell).

Once she finds a collection of poems in the library of her University written by Harlan Atwater. The author of the poem is from the Spokane tribe and Corliss starts immediately searching for him. She calls him but Harlan refuses to talk to her. Corliss does not give up and goes to Seattle to visit him. She longs for any information of another Spokane who is interested in poetry. However, when she meets Harlan, he does not fit in her imaginations because he was adopted by a white family when he was a child, so he was brought up out of the tribe. At the end, Corliss as well as Harlan has only one question in her mind: “What is Indian?” (Westron 1).

The main reason Corliss searches for Harlan is, she wants to know if really exists a good Native American poet, or if even exists a successful Native American at all. Though she learnt that Harlan’s status of a successful Indian poet was just pretended because of the fact that he has never found out how people feel within a tribe, he shows her the way how to find her own identity (Workman). She now knows that “ethnic identity is not as important as the content of Atwater’s poetry” (Grassian 177).

Second short story with strong tribal background is “What You Pawn I Will Redeem”. The main character of this story is Jackson Jackson who used to study in Seattle, but he was expelled and now he is homeless and alcoholic. One day he walks past pawnshop and he sees her grandmother’s powwow dancing regalia in the window, which he knew only from photographs and which was stolen fifty years ago. He enters the shop and identifies regalia, but it costs 999 dollars. The salesman gives Jackson 24 hours to collect the money. Although Jackson meets quite nice people who help him to collect the amount, he is not able to save it. He immediately spends it for buying food and cheap wine. The other day he comes to the shop with only five dollars but the salesman takes pity on Jackson and gives him the regalia for nothing. Jackson is beside with joy, dresses the regalia and dances in the street.

Though most of the characters in *Ten Little Indians* are “urban professionals” (Grassian 187), Jackson lives in the edge of society. Nevertheless, his family and tribal

identification is very valuable for him, maybe more valuable than for other characters in the book. He wishes to buy the regalia to preserve part of their tribal heritage and he insists on the theory that the cancer her grandmother suffered from was caused by the theft of her regalia. Jackson thinks about it and says that “I wondered if I could bring my grandmother back to life if I bought back her regalia” (Grassian 187).

Sherman Alexie’s *Ten Little Indians* is slightly different book in comparison with his previous works. Formerly, he divided society to “‘them and us’ tribalism” (Westron), but after the 11<sup>st</sup> September 2001 he changed his view of the Indian problematic and he focused more on the fact that Native people are “human beings first, and Indian by accident of birth” (Westron) and their problems are not caused only by their ethnicity.

## CONCLUSION

It is obvious that the status of Native Americans improved during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the advancement still lasts till these days, but this improvement was preceded with struggling for their rights and their tribal identity.

White people had an effort to incorporate Indians into the American way of life, but they had their specific image how to do it. It included the process of Christianization and later the establishment of special schools for Native Americans where they were educated to accept modern American society. Although these efforts of changing Native people were better than previous wars and annihilations, it was still not a good way how to treat with them because many tribes lost their traditions.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the position of Native people improved so much that lots of them became well known and acclaimed. Beside Louise Erdrich and Sherman Alexie Leslie Marmon Silko is appreciated.

Leslie Marmon Silko was born in 1948 and she is an Indian from one quarter. Her Native American ancestors were from Laguna Pueblo tribe and she grew up in the edge of the reservation. She was educated at the University of New Mexico where she gained her bachelor's degree. She started writing at the University and soon after graduation her first story, "The Man to Send Rain Clouds" was published. Marmon Silko published many successful collections of poetry and novels and she obtained lots of awards, for example Pushcart Prize for Poetry in 1977. She is signalized till these days due to her first novel, *Ceremony*, released in 1977. This novel is about Laguna Pueblo veteran who returned from World War II and tries to cope with postwar shock. The poverty in their reservation is also mentioned in the book. The main character wants to come up with his experiences first by the help of alcohol, but later medicine-man helps him and he finds the balance with nature again (Poetry Foundation).

Nevertheless, not all the Native Americans are successful, there is still a huge number of those who live on the edge of society. They battle with bad living conditions in reservations or they live in poverty in cities. The interference of Europeans left an indispensable imprint on Native Americans, their tribal values, and their psyche. It is hard to estimate if they will some day face up to it, or if there will be still feel of lost of their identity inside them.

### Works Cited

- ACLU & ACLU Foundation. "The Bill of Rights: A Brief History." *Aclu.org*. ACLU & ACLU Foundation, 4 March 2002. Web. 31 May 2012.  
<[http://www.aclu.org/racial-justice\\_prisoners-rights\\_drug-law-reform\\_immigrants-rights/bill-rights-brief-history](http://www.aclu.org/racial-justice_prisoners-rights_drug-law-reform_immigrants-rights/bill-rights-brief-history)>
- Alexie, Sherman. *Ten Little Indians*. New York: Grove, 2004. Print.
- Boxer, Andrew. "Native Americans and the Federal Government." *Historytoday.com*. History Today Ltd., 2009. Web. 13 June 2012.  
<<http://www.historytoday.com/andrew-boxer/native-americans-and-federal-government>>
- Burch, Ernest S., Jr. *The Eskimos*. 2nd ed. Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990. Google Books. Web. 21 March 2012.
- Council of Indian Nations. "Indian Religious Freedom Act – 1978." *Nrcprograms.org*. CIN, "n.d.". Web. 1<sup>^</sup> June 2012.  
<[http://www.nrcprograms.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cin\\_hist\\_indianreligiousfreedomact](http://www.nrcprograms.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cin_hist_indianreligiousfreedomact)>
- . "Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act – 1975." *Nrcprograms.org*. CIN, "n.d.". Web. 15 June 2012.  
<[http://www.nrcprograms.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cin\\_hist\\_selfdeterminationact](http://www.nrcprograms.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cin_hist_selfdeterminationact)>
- . "Termination Policy 1953-1968". *Nrcprograms.org*. CIN, "n.d.". Web. 15 June 2012.  
<[http://www.nrcprograms.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cin\\_hist\\_terminationpolicy](http://www.nrcprograms.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cin_hist_terminationpolicy)>
- Crawford, Michael H. *The Origins of Native Americans: Evidence from Anthropological Genetics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Print.
- Dumond D. E. "Toward a Prehistory of the Na-Dene, with a General Comment on Population Movements among Nomadic Hunters." *American Anthropologist*. New Series, 71.5 (1969): 857-863. *JSTOR*. Web. 14 March 2012.
- ENotes. "Love Medicine." *Enotes.com*. ENotes, "n.d.". Web 17 June 2012.  
<<http://www.enotes.com/love-medicine-criticism/love-medicine-louise-erdrich>>
- Erdrich, Louise. *Love Medicine*. London: Flamingo, 1994. Print.
- Erdrich, Louise. *Love Medicine*. Trans. Alena Jindrová-Špilarová. London: Flamingo, 1994. Print.

- Fiedel, Stuart J. *Prehistory of the Americas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Print.
- Gascoigne, Bamber. "History of the United States of America." *Historyworld.net*. "N.p.", "n.d.". Web. 31 May 2012.  
<<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid=3496&HistoryID=ad11&gtrack=pthc>>
- Grassian, Daniel. *Understanding Sherman Alexie*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005. Google Books. Web. 20 June 2012.
- Greenberg, Joseph H. *Language in the Americas*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987. Print.
- Grinnell, Jim. "Ten Little Indians." *The Bloomsbury Review*. 24.1 (2004): n. pag. Web. 22 June 2012.  
<<http://www.bloomsburyreview.com/Archives/2004/Ten%20Little%20Indians.pdf>>
- Haynes, Gary. *The Early Settlement Of North America: The Clovis Era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Print.
- Hirst, K. Kris. "Folsom Culture - Early Paleoindian Bison Hunters." *About.com: Archaeology*. The New York Times Company, "n.d.". Web. 18 May 2012.  
<<http://archaeology.about.com/od/fterms/qt/folsom.htm>>
- . "Guide to Pre-Clovis - Founding Population of the Americas." *About.com: Archaeology*. The New York Times Company, "n.d.". Web. 6 June 2012.  
<<http://archaeology.about.com/od/upperpaleolithic/qt/Guide-To-Pre-Clovis.htm>>
- . "Ice Free Corridor - An Early Hypothesis for American Colonization." *About.com: Archaeology*. The New York Times Company, "n.d.". Web. 6 June 2012.  
<[http://archaeology.about.com/od/iterms/qt/ice\\_free\\_corrid.htm](http://archaeology.about.com/od/iterms/qt/ice_free_corrid.htm)>
- . "The (Pre) History of Clovis - Clovis were the first well-established people in the Americas." *About.com: Archaeology*. The New York Times Company, "n.d.". Web. 18 May 2012.  
<[http://archaeology.about.com/od/clovispreclovis/qt/clovis\\_people.htm](http://archaeology.about.com/od/clovispreclovis/qt/clovis_people.htm)>
- Hoffecker, John F., and Elias Scott A. *Human Ecology of Beringia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. Print.
- Johansen, Bruce E. *Native Americans Today: A Biographical Dictionary*. Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2010. Print.
- Kelly, Martin. "King Philips War - History of King Philips War." *About.com: Archaeology*. The New York Times Company, "n.d.". Web. 31 May 2012.

- Magliocca, Gerard N. "The Cherokee Removal and the Fourteenth Amendment." *Duke Law Journal*. 53.3 (2003): 875-965. *JSTOR*. Web. 8 June 2012.
- Mintz, S. "Kill the Indian and Save the Man." *Digital History.uh.edu*. "N.p.", 27 May 2012. Web. 27 May 2012.  
<[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=557](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=557)>
- . "Life in Early Virginia." *Digital History.uh.edu*. "N.p.", 12 Apr 2012. Web. 12 Apr 2012.  
<[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=671](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=671)>
- . "The Seven Years' War." *Digital History.uh.edu*. "N.p.", 18 May 2012. Web. 18 May 2012.  
<[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=688](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=688)>
- . "The Sand Creek Massacre." *Digital History.uh.edu*. "N.p.", 27 May 2012. Web. 27 May 2012.  
<[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=559](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=559)>
- . "Wounded Knee I." *Digital History.uh.edu*. "N.p.", 27 May 2012. Web. 27 May 2012.  
<[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=556](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=556)>
- MultiEducator, Inc. "Native Americans." *Historycentral.com*. MultiEducator, Inc, "n.d.". Web. 2 June 2012.
- "Native Americans and the American Revolution." *HistoryWiz.com*. "N.p.", "n.d.". Web. 25 May 2012.  
<<http://www.historywiz.com/nativesrevolution.html>>
- Nebraska State Historical Society. "1924 Indian Citizenship Act." *Nebrascastudies.org*. Nebraska State Historical Society, "n.d.". Web. 16 June 2012.
- Oakwood Publishing Company. "Love Medicine." *Studyworld.com*. Oakwood Publishing Company, "n.d.". Web. 21 June 2012.  
<[http://www.studyworld.com/newsite/reportessay/Literature/Novel%5CLove\\_Medicine-38946.htm](http://www.studyworld.com/newsite/reportessay/Literature/Novel%5CLove_Medicine-38946.htm)>
- Olson-Raymer, Gayle. "20th Century Indian Relations with the United States." *Americanindiantah.com*. Del Norte County Unified School District, "n.d.". Web. 15 June 2012.  
<[http://americanindiantah.com/history/nar\\_20thcenturyrelations.html](http://americanindiantah.com/history/nar_20thcenturyrelations.html)>
- OPPapers.com. "Native Americans and the Declaration of Independence." *OPPapers.com*. OPPapers.com, "n.d.". Web. 28 May 2012.



- <<http://www.oppapers.com/essays/Native-Americans-Declaration-Independence/81514>>
- Oswalt, Wendell H. *Eskimos and Explorers*. 2nd ed. Novato: Chandler & Sharp Publishers, 1999. Google Books. Web. 21 March 2012.
- Poetry Foundation. "Leslie Marmon Silko." *Poetry Foundation.org*. Poetry Foundation, 2010. Web. 22 June 2012.  
<<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/leslie-marmon-silko>>
- Poetry Foundation. "Louise Erdrich." *Poetry Foundation.org*. Poetry Foundation, 2010. Web. 22 June 2012.  
<<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/louise-erdrich>>
- Santella, Andrew. *The French and Indian War*. Minneapolis: Compass Point Books, 2004. Google Books. Web. 18 May 2012.
- Sharp, Mike, Ian Westwel, and John Westwood. *History of World War I*. Ed. Peter Mavrikis. New York: Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2002. Google Books. Web. 14 June 2012.
- Sonneborn, Liz. *Chronology of American Indian History*. Upd. ed. New York: Infobase Publishing, 2001. Google Books. Web. 28 March 2012.
- Stanford, Dennis J., and Bradley, Bruce A. *Across Atlantic Ice: The Origin of America's Clovis Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012. Google Books. Web. 12 March 2012.
- Šolc, Václav. *Indiánské historie*. Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1977. Print.
- Teen Ink. "Love Medicine by Louise Erdrich." *Teenink.com*. Teen Ink, "n.d.". Web. 17 June 2012.  
<[http://www.teenink.com/reviews/book\\_reviews/article/87443/Love-Medicine-by-Louise-Erdrich/](http://www.teenink.com/reviews/book_reviews/article/87443/Love-Medicine-by-Louise-Erdrich/)>
- Tucker, Spencer C, ed. *The Encyclopedia of North American Indian Wars, 1607–1890: A Political, social, and military history*. Vol. 1. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011. Google Books. Web. 3 June 2012.
- Waldman, Carl. *Atlas of the North American Indian*. 3rd ed. New York: Infobase Publishing, 2009. Google Books. Web. 28 March 2012.
- Varner, Gary R. *Mysteries of Native American Myth and Religion*. USA: Lulu, 2007. Google Books. Web. 29 March 2012.
- Vaughan, Alden T. *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians, 1620-1675*. 3rd ed. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995. Print.

- Webified Development. "Indian Tribal Structure." *Access Genealogy*. Webified Development, "n.d.". Web. 1 Apr 2012.  
<<http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/tribes/history/tribestruct.htm>>
- Westron, Loree. "'Indianness' and Identity in the Novels and Short Stories of Sherman Alexie." *Academia.edu*. "N.p.", "n.d.". Web. 22 June 2012.  
<[http://chi.academia.edu/LoreeWestron/Papers/888741/Indianness\\_and\\_Identity\\_in\\_the\\_Novels\\_and\\_Short\\_Stories\\_of\\_Sherman\\_Alexie](http://chi.academia.edu/LoreeWestron/Papers/888741/Indianness_and_Identity_in_the_Novels_and_Short_Stories_of_Sherman_Alexie)>
- Wisconsin Historical Society. "Indians in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century." *Wisconsinhistoricalsociety.org*. "N.p.", "n.d.". Web. 16 June 2012.  
<[http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/tp-050/?action=more\\_essay](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/tp-050/?action=more_essay)>
- Wooster, Robert. "American-Indian Wars." *History.com*. A&E Television Networks, "n.d.". Web. 5 June 2012.  
<<http://www.history.com/topics/american-indian-wars>>
- Workman, Jessica. "Review of Ten Little Indians by Sherman Alexie." *American Fiction*. "N.p.", "Jan 4, 2009". Web. 22 June 2012.  
<<http://suite101.com/article/review-of-ten-little-indians-by-sherman-alexie-a88194>>

## SUMMARY IN CZECH

Předmětem bakalářské práce je nastínit současnou situaci původních Američanů v USA díky historii, kterou prožili. Práce je rozdělena na tři hlavní části. První část práce se zabývá vlastním příchodem indiánů na americký kontinent, zahrnuje tři hlavní vlny migrace a pozdější zaběhlý způsob života obyvatel. Druhá část začíná příchodem Kryštofa Kolumba a pokračuje osidlováním amerického kontinentu evropskými osadníky. Důležitou součástí této kapitoly tvoří války o území a zákony vydané evropskými a později americkými vládami, které navždy ovlivnily život původních Američanů. Třetí kapitola nastiňuje situaci dvacátého století a pomalu se zlepšující podmínky Indiánů. V této kapitole jsou také rozebráni dva autoři, Louise Erdrichová a Sherman Alexie. Jsou představeni životopisy a následuje rozbor jejich významných děl.