

**UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS IN BRATISLAVA
FACULTY OF APPLIED LANGUAGES**

106006/M/2017/1406714702

**NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY : MYTHS AND
LEGENDS OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES**

Master thesis

2017

Bc. Malvína Feriancová

**UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS IN BRATISLAVA
FACULTY OF APPLIED LANGUAGES**

**NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY : MYTHS AND
LEGENDS OF AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES**

Master thesis

Study program: Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication
Field of study: 2.1.32 Foreign Languages and Cultures
Consultation: Department of Linguistics and Translation
Tutor: Mgr. Silvia Adamcová, PhD.

Bratislava 2017

Bc. Malvína Feriancová

Affirmation

I hereby declare, that I listed all the used literature and elaborated this final thesis independently.

Date:

.....

Acknowledgment

The words of gratitude are directed towards my supervisor, Mgr. Silvia Adamcová, PhD., who agreed to guide me even though I physically was not in the country. Her comments, insights and advice had been very helpful in order to evaluate this project. Without the voluntary help of the tribal members, this research would have never taken place. Therefore I would like to thank Mr. Benny Tahmahkera, Mrs. Juanita Pahdopony, Mrs. Marla Nauni, Mrs. Angela Yellowhair, Mr. Lawrence Shorty, Ms. Erica Kallestewa, Mrs. Marina Vasquez, and Mr. Kevin Beltran, for their kind hearts and will to participate on my project. Last but not least, it is again my grandparents, Zora and Lorence Bravenec, who discussed the proper usage of language with me, and Jara Lalková, who enjoyed every moment of discussing this topic with me and helped with its formality.

FERIANCOVÁ, Malvína: *História amerických Indiánov: mýty a legendy indiánskych kmeňov*. – Ekonomická univerzita v Bratislave. Fakulta aplikovaných jazykov; Katedra jazykovedy a translológie FAJ. – Vedúci záverečnej práce: Mgr. Silvia Adamcová, PhD. – Bratislava: FAJ EU, 2017, 83 s.

ABSTRAKT

Cieľom záverečnej práce je priblížiť históriu a orálnu tradíciu jednotlivých vybraných domorodých kmeňov Severnej Ameriky, a taktiež poukázať na ich vlastné vnímanie tradičného poznania, ktoré sa šíri ústnym podaním. Rozhodli sme sa sústrediť na tri národy – Pueblo, Navajo, a Comanche. Prácu tvorí sedem kapitol, obsahuje 48 farebných obrázkov, a jednu tabuľku, v ktorej sú zreteľne vyznačené kmene národa Pueblo. V prílohách sa nachádzajú extrakty z rozhovorov s príslušníkmi výskumu, spôsob akým boli oslovení a ukážka Navajo učenia prepísaného v pôvodnom jazyku do latinskej abecedy. Prvá kapitola sa venuje prehistórii a ako sa človek dostal na kontinent. V druhej kapitole sa všeobecne zaoberáme situáciou, ktorá nastala na kontinente vo chvíli, keď sa tu vyloďili prví Európsky moreplavci. V tretej až piatej kapitole sa bližšie venujeme vybraným domorodým národom, kde sa podrobnejšie opisuje ich história, životný štýl a vzťah k novousadlíkom. Šiesta kapitola obsahuje prehľad o tom, čo to je orálna tradícia, akým témam sa venuje aké ponaučenia v sebe ľudové príbehy nesú. Posledná kapitola je výskum, v ktorom sme zozbierali informácie a osobné názory na tradície, utlačanie, asimiláciu, spolunažívanie, ľudové príbehy, a mnohé iné. Výsledkom riešenia danej problematiky je potvrdenie významu roly ľudových učení, pre nás známych ako „mýtov“ a „legiend“.

Kľúčové slová : Pueblo, Navajo, Comanche, orálna tradícia, príbehy, domorodci, kmeň, ľudové príbehy, rozprávanie príbehov

FERIANCOVÁ, Malvína: *Native American History: Myths and Legends of American Indian Tribes*. – University of Economics in Bratislava. Faculty of Applied Languages; Department of Linguistics and Translation. – Supervisor of the thesis: Mgr. Silvia Adamcová, PhD. –Bratislava: FAJ EU, 2017, 83 p.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this master thesis is to approach the history and oral tradition of individual selected Native tribes of North America and also to demonstrate their own perception on their traditional teachings that have been orally transmitted. We chose to focus on three nations – Pueblo, Navajo and Comanche. The thesis is divided into seven chapters and contains 48 colourful figures and one table, which clearly lists the tribes of the Pueblo nation. The annexes include extracts of the interviews which were made with the survey's respondents; the first approach leading towards the Native members; and an original Navajo teaching re-written in the Latin alphabet. The first chapter studies the pre-history and the mankind's first step onto the continent. In the second chapter we describe the set situation after the arrival of the first European voyagers. From the third until the fifth chapter, the focus is given to the selected nations, whereas we take a closer look on their history, lifestyle and their relationship to the new cultures. The sixth chapter contains the explanation about what the oral storytelling is, what topics it deals with, and what morals these truthful folk stories contain. The last chapter is the empirical research, in which information about tradition, suppressing, folk tales, coexistence, and more is found. The conclusion of the thesis is the evaluation of the importance of the oral wisdom, that is to us known as „myths“ and „legends“.

Key words: Pueblo, Navajo, Comanche, oral tradition, indogenous people, tribe, folk tales, story telling

Table of Content

Introduction	9
Methodology	10
Objectives	11
Hypotheses	12
I. Theoretical approach.....	13
1 Pre- history of native tribes.....	13
2 The Natives and the Europeans.....	16
The selected indigenous nations.....	20
3 The Pueblo People.....	21
3.1 Ancestral Pueblo People	22
3.2 Mesa Verde	23
3.3 The Spanish rule vs. the Southwest.....	24
3.4 The Anglo-Americans vs. the Southwest.....	24
3.5 The Pueblo People in the modern world	25
3.6 The lifestyle of the Puebloan People.....	27
3.7 Acoma Pueblo	29
3.8 History of the Acoma Pueblo	30
3.9 Life of the Acoma Puebloans as it is today	32
3.10 Taos Pueblo	33
4 Navajo	35
4.1 From the old times towards the contemporary era.....	37
4.2 Navajo language.....	39
4.2.1 Navajo Code Talkers	39
5 Comanche	41
5.1 The Comanche and settlers from the new world.....	44
5.2 History of the Comanche nation	45
5.3 Contemporary Comanche character	46
5.4 Comanche culture.....	47

6	Storytelling.....	48
6.1	The Oral Tradition of Storytelling	52
II.	Empirical approach	56
7	Creation Stories.....	56
7.1	Emerging to the Upper World – Acoma creation story	56
7.2	The Navajo Tale of Creation.....	59
7.3	The Comanche story of creation	62
	Insights and Opinions of the Tribal Members	63
7.4	Pueblo.....	63
7.5	Navajo	72
7.5.1	Navajo Teaching	76
7.6	Comanche.....	78
	Evaluation of the hypothesis	83
	Conclusion.....	87
	Resumé	91
	List of references	98
	List of appendixes.....	101

Introduction

The question of migration into lands where the circumstances for living would for whatever reason be more suitable for a person, has been present since the beginning of mankind. The pre-modern massive migrations took place already about a million years ago, when the first Homo erectus wandered from Africa across Eurasia. The later wide spreading of people included for example the so called Barbaric Invasions, or German or Slavic movements into the territory of the Roman Empire. Our main focus, the Native Americans, themselves first entered the land of the Americas from Siberia estimated around 14 000 years ago, according to the pre-historic teeth excavations in Alaska.

The main reason why the Natives accepted the White man was on the first place the fact, that their orally transmitted mythology predicts, that the deity will one day come back to protect the nation. The white man entered the land, having his skin so pale, sitting on the horse, a creature that has never been seen before, which all appealed very impressive to the indigenous man, and therefore he started to personalise him as the long awaited deity. Because of this, it did not even come to the mind of the tribal man to resist in any way; they thought initially this was the will of their gods and sacred spirits. However, soon they realised this was no salvation, but the entry of an enemy- coloniser. Cruel battles started among the tribes and the newcomers, nevertheless bow and arrows have no chance to win against fire arms. This research points out a Native's attitude towards the facts of being suppressed, it deals with the people's resistance, the pride over the preserved, but also the existing and ongoing distrust towards the new (European) culture.

This thesis offers a dual perspective on the oral traditions, from the general point of view of a European newcomer and from the particular point of an indigenous citizen. While other cultures besides the Natives consider these teachings as plain legends, for a person of a native background they are the bearers of their culture, religion and cognition. The literature available for this matter displays the stories of the oral traditions as fables or fairytales, but if a person has a sufficient knowledge about the native culture and reads these, he will allusively recognise their spirituality. In order to not make the evaluation of this topic a simple paraphrasing of the literal version of these teachings, we are interested in the opinions of the descendants of the indigenous people and their attitudes towards the

oral truths. In a form of inquiry the needed information to the topic oral tradition and its significance on an individual's or collective lives will be collected.

Methodology

The following elaboration of this thesis was based on setting an objective that was reached through designing a method of theoretical facts and empirical research. The first step towards accomplishing the given task was to look out for information through collecting the adequate literary sources. The broad spectrum of tribal nations in North America (their various historical development, the size of the areas; but also facts as the time limitation and a not performed field research) influenced the whole process majorly. Therefore the focus of the work is on 3 tribal nations: Navajo, Comanche, Pueblo. Through questionnaires and reaching out for members of these societies, it is attempted to clarify the contemporary state of maintaining the traditions and culture. This questionnaire collected information about people's values, opinions, and the belief in the realness of the stories/myths/legends. People were reached out through virtual form of communication (e-mail, Skype), and out of 60 asked, 15 reacted helpfully and 8 answers were chosen to be processed.

One can look at the issue of oral conservation of the Native American culture from various points of view. Using adequate scientific methods of exploration for receiving the needed information mainly depends on the choice of methodology and progression. This thesis required the following methods:

Historical analysis - in order to observe the evolution of the tribal societies and to analyse their contemporary state in the changed socio-economical conditions;

Classification - in order to discover, asset and compare the common and different features of individual chosen tribal societies (Navajo, Comanche, Pueblo);

Analogy - to point out the matching values and traditions among the designated tribes;

Induction and deduction - to set some specific principles and to lead them to empirical conclusions

Concretisation – to present examples of this issue in particular conditions

Synthesis – to analyse all the collected information and in form of all the above mentioned methods come to a conclusion

Objectives

The main objective of this master thesis is to introduce the opinions and reactions of the indigenous people of North America to the folk traditions and stories that have been accompanying each of them since their early childhood. This enables us to discover their background, how they keep these traditions or whether there is enough space in the present modern American society to practice them. Universities in the US provide high quality study programmes about the indigenous nations, therefore contacting students and the personnel became the main tool to elaborate the empirical research of this thesis. Cultural centres and members of social media groups is another approach to acquire the needed information. Each volunteer of the chosen indigenous tribes will be facing questions, which will provide the answers to their perceptions of the importance of studying their history and culture more in details. They will also be asked in what extend they personally keep the traditions, from which folk story do their values originate, and if they present these stories to their offspring as world views. Besides that each of the recipients will be briefly introduced. The theoretical chapter analyses mainly the history, culture and the contemporary lifestyle of the falsely called “Indians”.

Hypotheses

Based on the used literature one can assume 3 presumptions, which sound as follows:

- 1) The forced assimilation of the Native Americans in the United States, (particularly in this thesis the focus is on the nations of the Southwest - Pueblo and Navajo and the Great Plains - Comanche), whose first occurrence is dated to the late 15th / early 16th century, when the first European man entered the American continent, leads the indigenous culture to a gradual downfall. This is caused by the exotic diseases, the suppression of the traditions, the near extinction of the bison, and others.
- 2) The knowledge about the north American indigenous culture and history of individual native tribes has been conserved primarily through oral traditions, whereas the American system of primary and secondary schools provides the children false information, or possibly ignores the facts about these tribes overall. The disclosure of the native culture in the form of touristic attractions should facilitate its better understanding, but mostly it presents only its shallow representation.
- 3) The North American Native inhabitants continue to believe in the truthfulness of their myths and legends, especially in the creation stories, and they take the heed to and follow the particular morals, emerging from the folk tales. Because of this reason are the stories sacred, and they do not like to reveal their meanings/ secrets to the newcomers or non-Natives. For their own safety they guard their secrets, which results mainly from the long lasting bad experience with their reciprocal connections.

I. Theoretical approach

1 Pre- history of native tribes

American Indians, or as they are called nowadays – Native Americans, are the nations that had been living on the American continent for many thousands of years before the people from Europe started to colonise the continent.

Historians and archaeologists cannot exactly estimate the date of their arrival. Some of the excavated archaeological evidence is said to be approximately 14 000 years old. The later Ice Age is apparently first era when the fully modern man – Homo sapiens sapiens, appeared on the continent. There was no physical evidence of a man of an earlier evolutionary stage. Before the landscape of our planet changed into what we know now and before the Bering Strait was separated by the ocean through the movement of tectonic plates – Siberia was believed to be connected to the most eastern part of the Alaskan peninsula. Geologists believe, that 75 000 – 45 000 and 25 000 – 14 000 years ago man was able to migrate through the exposed Bering bridge, and that through Siberia the first Natives came to the Americas. Some theories say, that the hunters of the northeast Asia were following the animals that were migrating south towards the warmth. This land was later recognised under the name of “Beringia”. Tundra, mountains, river valleys, of what we today know as Americas, became the home of the expanding tribes coming from Siberia. The people evolved the skills of adapting to the changing climate, landscape and availability of resources. According to the theory of Christy Turner in 1984, who is a specialist in studying the characteristics of the teeth of a pre-historic Mongoloid man, the first time a man entered the land of Alaska was 14 000 years ago.

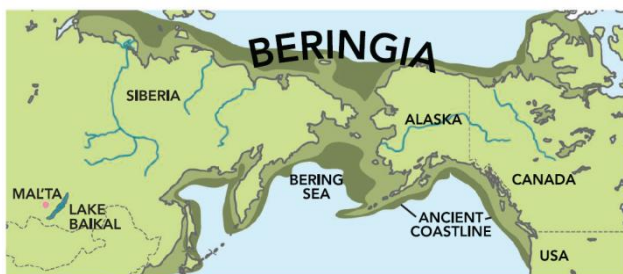


Figure 1. Primeval conjunction of the Asian and American continent

The later research shows that the original people of America could be divided into 3 main groups: the Paleo-Indians (Puebloans, Pimas, Pai), the Altaphaskans (including the Apache

and the Navajo), and the Eskimo – Aleut. Each of these groups also brought to the continent their specific languages – Algonquian, Na – Dene and Eskimo Aleut.

Even if in this thesis we will concentrate on the Native nations of North America, it is important to mention the archaeological evidence from the Central and South America is dated back to 20 000 years ago, which is much earlier than the finds from North America. The clearest evidence of early population comes from Peru and Brazil. However, especially the artefacts from Mexico bring a lot of controversy.

The Paleo-Indian tribes were most likely the most populous as they inhabited vast areas from Alaska as far south as Central and South America. Here, they utilised the stone technology, which they learned to handle in the North – arctic Alaska.

One of the most wide-spread, ancient North American Paleo-Indians established what we call Clovis culture (New Mexico). These men and women followed the mammals and migrated with them, as they were the best bison hunters and used products from animals for everything – from housing, to clothing, to nurturing. Besides being hunters, they also were gatherers – they survived on picking wild berries, fruits, vegetables, etc. Many of them settled as far as the Great Plains (Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming, Minnesota, Iowa) Around 11 000 years ago, the Clovis people unexpectedly vanished. What could have been the cause is still stay a matter of discussion. One of the theories says that mammals might have become a very easy prey. However as the water areas, where they gathered to drink, was fading due to the heat, the amounts of the mammals decreased, and hunting became impossible. Not being able to hunt, the Clovis people might have suffered from hunger, which lead to their disappearance.

The Peoples of Na-Dene – the Athapaskan people - were the tribe that often migrated according to the season of the year and the weather conditions. This was because their homeland in the far north was not adequate for a year-round habitation. They were also good in hunting, but they hunted the forest animals mainly, whereas the Clovis, for example hunted bison on the plains. The modern Apache and Navajo also originate from the Athapaskan people.

The strong bond between the people of the Eskimo – Aleut tribes fell apart around 4 000 years ago. The population of the Eskimo Indians reached from the Bering Strait all the way

to Greenland. These people were adjusted to the arctic weather conditions, and in comparison to all other tribes they had to face fewer difficulties concerning the change of the climate. They used skin kayaks for hunting, transferred to places by dog sleds, hunted musk oxen or whales. As a protection from cold they dug shelters in the ground.

Approximately 2 000 years ago farming as a source of nutrition started gaining on importance for the North American tribes. People learned how to plant crops. They knew that the rainfall is inevitable for the growth of the plants, so they dug out canals and terraces to control the water flow. Around 1 500 years ago trading among tribes started to flourish. By that time people became more dependent on the land than before, which was enabled by cultivation of crops such as maize.

Before the Europeans started conquering the Americas, the Native Americans lived all over the continent – the rain forests, the plains, deserts or arctic. Ethnologists differentiate between 9 culture groups depending on the geographic areas where the Natives of the North America settled: The Southeast, The Southwest, The Plains, Plateau and Basin, California, The Northwest coast, The Subarctic, The Arctic, The Northeast. *„I was born upon the prairie, where the wind blew free and there was nothing to break the light of the sun. I was born where there were no enclosures, and where everything drew a free breath. I know every stream and every wood between the Rio Grande and Arkansas. I have hunted and lived over that country. I lived like my fathers before me, and like them, I lived happily“*¹ (Aaron, 1994:100)

¹ The wisdom of Yamparethka Comanche Chief, old knowledge of peaceful times

2 The Natives and the Europeans

While many white people still think that the history of Native Americans began with the discovery of the continent by Christopher Columbus in 1492 and consider him a big, admired hero, in the eyes of the Native Americans this man launched something indescribable. His voyages truly had a significant impact on the development of the human history, but on the other hand for the Native People who live in America it had a devastating effect. If anybody asked a Native American with the indigenous cultural heritage, about Columbus' contribution to the American history, the person would see tears, misery in faces, anger and hear words such as: ignorance, evil, invader, murderer, a confused and lost man, pain, rapist, "the first terrorist in America", guilty, genocide, etc.

In the 15th – 16th centuries, exploration voyages were taking part to discover a cheaper, easier and faster route to Asia. When Christopher Columbus landed on San Salvador he did not realise that he reached a completely new continent. Having called the first island to step on "West Indies", the world has also wrongly started to name the continents' inhabitants "Indians". Gorge Horse Capture, an activist and a writer with Native American roots, said "*For 5 hundred years we have lived with the name Indians, because Columbus thought he arrived to India. We have gotten used to it, but we are very thankful he did not think he was in Turkey.*" (Treuer, 2010:12) It is a great mistake to talk about the Natives as if they were one nation, because they vary from each other as much as, for example, the Europeans do. The tribes also speak different languages; keep different cultural traditions, religion, lifestyles, clothes, etc.

Soon after the arrival of the first Europeans – more white settlers, diseases, crops and different kinds of animals started to be brought across the Atlantic Ocean. Some of the most dangerous diseases spread rapidly over the Americas. Common European continental illnesses as measles, influenza and smallpox caused a lot of suffering to the Natives. Only in the Bahamas these diseases killed majority of the Native population. This happened within 30 years after the arrival of new European settlers. Slavery, wars and overworking were other reasons of the rapid and drastic deaths to many members of the Native American tribes.

For centuries the Natives inhabited their lands, by the year Columbus arrived, the population of Northern America was estimated to be more than 5 million. The number

drastically decreased to roughly 250 000 by the end of the 18th century. The amount of the natives sunk, whereas the number of the European settlers, who came to America, rose to 75 million. They came mainly to spread Christianity, gather gold, to enhance their countries' glory, and to start a life all over in the "New World". Not only were lands of the Natives usurped, so were their economy, culture, habits, agriculture, housing, a long and a peaceful life. A completely new culture, to them then unknown, tried to barbarously replace their own.

The 19th century was a tragic era. In the following paragraphs we will mention three of the numerous horrifying events that took place in order to erase the Natives from the continent. In 1830 the U.S Government established a Removal Act, which was to enable the European Americans to settle all over the continent without the interference of the Native tribes. The Natives were considered an obstacle for the expansion of the Europeans, to the areas where they wanted to build huge cotton farms on which some Natives would be used as cheap labour force – or slaves. The territories of today's Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee or North Carolina, used to be homes to a population of nearly 125 000 Natives. The damaged military power of the so called "Creek Indians" made it impossible for the Natives to resist and fight governmental orders and to continue in the wars with the whites. Therefore the Creek Indians could be forced to agree to a treaty, which deprived them of almost 81 000 square kilometres of their land. The tribes believed to come to a fair compromise, and to be able to keep at least some part of their land. It was also required by law, to reclaim these treaties voluntarily, peacefully and fairly. Even though there were approaches to grant land to the tribes on the west side of the Mississippi river, as "alleviation" for giving up their land, these treaties were never peaceful and posted disguised threats. The life of those, who were once free, was now restricted within governmental "native" reservations - called the Indian Territory. During the government of Andrew Jackson (1829 - 1837), a forceful relocation of 50 000 Natives to the Indian Territory was seen as a great success. The Natives were forced to march thousands of miles to the other side of the Mississippi river. This deadly journey ascribed to the history as the Trail of Tears. Some of the Native people had to walk bound in chains, with no food, supplies or help that was promised to them by the fair U.S. Government. As a matter of fact, the more these tribes suffered and died in pain, the more it was cheered by the governmental authorities.

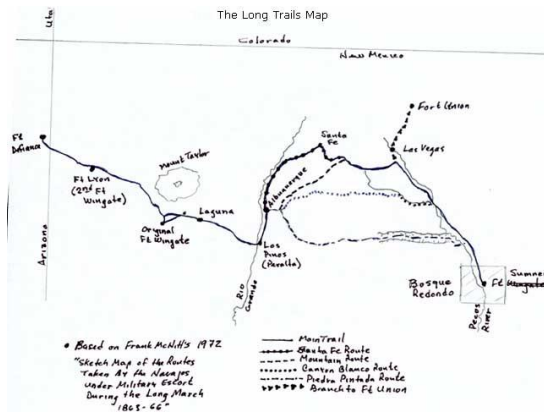


Figure 2. The trail of the Walk of Navajo (the Trail of Tears); for better understanding – Fort Defiance – Albuquerque, - Santa Fe – Fort Sumner or Fort Union



Figure 3. Documentation of the massive forced migration

The Long Walk of the Navajo, taking place in 1864, is another tragic and savage event. An American general brigadier, James Carleton, wished to win his old fame by chasing the Natives out of the land of New Mexico and Arizona. It was believed that on these grounds lots of natural resources could be found. Navajo were a feared tribe, as they were witnessed to rob and kill the uninvited, new, white citizens of these lands. Therefore it was decided to attack this tribe and destroy everything that came into the way of the angry American troops. Their supplies of water and food were contaminated, as the wells were cluttered up with rocks and dirt. Navajo were forced to surrender, and so the 300 mile walk out of the New Mexico land began. During this long marching, the food supplies ran out and the clothes of the Natives fell apart. Snow was falling in the beginning of March, which did not make the condition of the journey any easier. The worst enemy for the Navajo was the food which they were given, if they were given any. It was typical of white people, and the Navajos' organism did not know how to process it. For example, they were given white flour, which they had never seen before. They mixed it with water, drank it and developed severe stomach problems. If they stayed behind they were shot or left to freeze to death. The Rio Grande River had to be crossed, the fast currents of which washed people quickly away. Over 3000 Natives of the Navajo tribe died on this death march.

One of the native tribes of the Great Plains – the Sioux led a continuous war with the United States. In 1890 it peaked into a massacre named “Wounded Knee”, which was called after the place where it was fought - along Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota. The broken treaties and oppression caused a major frustration. The life which Sioux knew from the story telling of their ancestors was the life they longed to win back. Hunting

buffalos, for instance, became a limited form of living, as their numbers, due to the European interference were slowly diminishing. Natives believed that gods were angry at them for abandoning the traditional customs and lifestyle. As a solution they started performing a new ritual dance called the “ghost dance”. The dance was meant to chase the white men of the native territory. Gradually the Whites truly started fearing the ritual; they thought the dancing Natives went mad. The Whites established a troop of 5000 soldiers who detained Sioux chiefs. There was very little hope to get hold of the native lands back standing against a numerous troop with well developed weapons. In the morning of the 29th of December 1890, the soldiers surrounded a Native American camp. They confiscated the weapons, axes, rifles of the Sioux men and soon they began to shoot. In a matter of a couple of minutes, around 150 Sioux (including women and children) were brutally shot. 20 medals of honour were given out to the soldiers, who murdered these innocent people. *“...I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch as plain as when I saw them with eyes still young. And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud, and was buried in the blizzard. A people’s dream died there. It was a beautiful dream.”*, (Neirhardt, 2008: 218) said the Black Elk, one of the survivor chiefs, to the writer John G. Neirhardt, who originally in 1932 wrote down Black Elk’s confessions on these events.



Figure 4 This event was an inhumane massacre, leaving around 150 immobile bodies on the ground

The selected indigenous nations



The Southwest Culture Area, showing the approximate locations of Indian tribes circa 1500, before displacement by non-Indians (with modern boundaries)

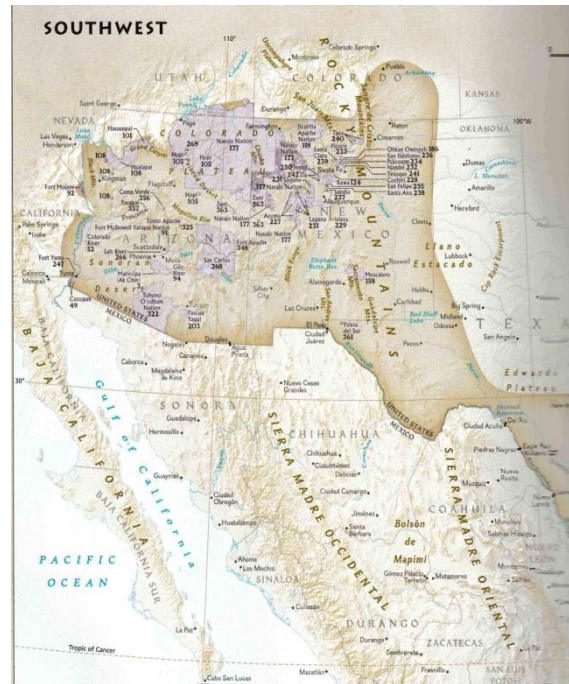


Figure 5.6. The approximate size of the Southwestern territory before the forced migration to the „Indian“ reservations

“When I am too old and feeble to follow my sheep or cultivate my corn, I plan to sit in the house, carve Katchina dolls, and tell my nephews and nieces the story of my life. Then I want to be buried in the Hopi way. Perhaps my boy will dress me in the costume of a Special Officer, place a few beads around my neck, put some paho and some sacred corn meal in my hand, and fasten inlaid turquoise to my ears. If he wishes to put me in the coffin, he may do even that, but he must leave the lid unlocked, place food nearby, and set up a grave ladder so that I can climb out. I shall hasten to my dear ones, but I will return with good rains and dance as a Katchina in the plaza with my ancestors.”² (Aaron, 1994:120)

² Wisdom from Don Talayesva, Hopi Sun Clan Chief

3 The Pueblo People

The Pueblos, according to their geographical territory, belong to the group of Southwest Nations. They mainly inhabit the area of the modern New Mexico, Arizona and some of Colorado and Utah. Individual members of this society claim, that there is 19 Pueblo tribes, whereas books, as for example one of our main literature sources – *National Geographic's Indian Nations of North America* - present 21 independent Pueblo tribes. These are:

Pueblo of Pojoaque (NM)	Pueblo of Acoma (NM)
Taos Pueblo (NM)	Pueblo of Picuris (NM)
Pueblo of Isleta (NM)	Pueblo of San Ildefonso (NM)
Pueblo of Santa Clara (NM)	Pueblo of Sandia (NM)
Pueblo of San Felipe (NM)	Pueblo of Santo Domingo (NM)
Zuni Tribe (Zuni Reservation - NM)	Pueblo of Laguna (NM)
Pueblo of Jemez (NM)	Pueblo of Tesuque (NM)
Pueblo of Santa Ana (NM)	Pueblo of Cochiti (NM)
Pueblo of Nambe (NM),	Pueblo of Zia (NM).
Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo (NM),	Hopi Tribe (Arizona)
Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo (Texas)	

Table 1. List of the tribes of the Pueblo nation

Each Pueblo is an independent separate political entity. Therefore the Pueblo nations cannot be considered one tribe – one nation. Each Pueblo has its' individual culture. Common ancestry guided them to correlative trade, but also to shared values and world views. Most of them do not exercise the same language. The most used language is Tanoan – which itself consists of 3 other languages: Tiwa, Tewa and Towa (spoken for example in Taos, Picuris, Sandia, Acoma, etc.). Then there is a Kanesans language (spoken in the villages along the Rio Grande River, such as Pueblo of San Felipe, Santa Ana, Cochiti, and others), the Zunian language spoken by the Zuni tribe, the Hopi language and many others. Each village is a highly structured theocracy, which follows rules that are organized around the ceremonies.

3.1 Ancestral Pueblo People

The Paleolithic Pueblo People were hunter-gatherers. They transferred to the southwestern part of North America from the ice-covered Alaska. They exchanged arctic environment for the warm valleys surrounded by majestic mountain ranges. After learning how to farm and harvest corn, beans and squash (around 2 000 B.C.), they started settling down. They lived in pits which they dug in the ground, which formed first permanent villages. Around the 8th century A.D. these villages and houses became more complex, they were built above ground. The men who lived in these houses were also crucial to the expansion of the trade mainly by presenting their arts and bartering the crops. Later the Pueblos established their economy on agriculture and trading with Navajo and Comanche. Chaco Canyon in New Mexico, a massive and complex construction including more than 650 rooms, became their ceremonial and trading centre. Another culturally important settlement for the Ancestral Pueblos was “Mesa Verde” – villages and houses that were built in the cliffs of Table Mountains in Colorado. Till today people can visit the very well preserved ruins of both – Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde.



Figure 7. Chaco Canyon is one of the most exceptional concentrations of Pueblos in Southwest America and is ascribed to the UNESCO World Heritage

In the 12th century Native People started to leave cliff houses built in the canyons. The reasons why they abandoned their homes were numerous. One of them was the continuing intertribal conflicts over the scarce harvest. However the most crucial reason was the 20-year drought (1276). Unusual and tough dry and cold conditions caused that Mesa Verde and Chaco Canyon were completely abandoned. Their inhabitants found new home along the river Rio Grande and the river Zuni and close to Table Mountains of North Eastern Arizona.

3.2 Mesa Verde

Mesa Verde (in Spanish Green Table) is situated in Montezuma County, Colorado, and means the green table in Spanish. It is a weather stained table mountain with a flat outer surface. Over 700 years, starting around 600 A.D. this mountain was inhabited by the Ancestral Pueblo people. They built their pueblos beneath the overhanging cliffs of the mountains, which mainly served as a protection against bad weather conditions or against enemies. It is presumed that the majority of the 700 years they lived on the top of the mesa, where they also cultivated their land. Afterwards, they moved to the cliff dwellings, they continued to farm the lands on the top. Besides farming they lived by hunting and gathering wild fruits or vegetables. The Ancestral Pueblo People were skilled rock climbers, as there was no other possibility to enter or exit their homes than cutting handgrips to the stone and climbing up and down. Around 600 houses in the cliffs are brilliantly preserved. The biggest community of the Mesa Verde lived in what we know as the “Cliff Palace”, which is the largest cliff dwelling in North America. In 1888 it was first discovered by a cowboy Richard Wetherill, who was looking for his stray cattle. The Cliff Palace is a construction of stone, wood and earth and everything a properly evolved society should have can be seen there: private spaces, public spaces, places to perform rituals - kivas, etc. It contains more than 150 rooms. The rainfall in spring and summer and the snowfall in autumn and winter assured adequate humidity for the proper preservation and growth of the crops. But in mid 13th century, people started dying of starvation, as the unexpected weather conditions and overpopulation caused the farming system to fail. The fled was sudden, with the Mesa Verdeans leaving utensils, tools or clothing behind. These were later subjected to the archaeological studies and provided valuable information about the Mesa’s original inhabitants. It was estimated that around 20 000 Puebloans lived in the areas of the Colorado Table Mountains before the great migration took place.

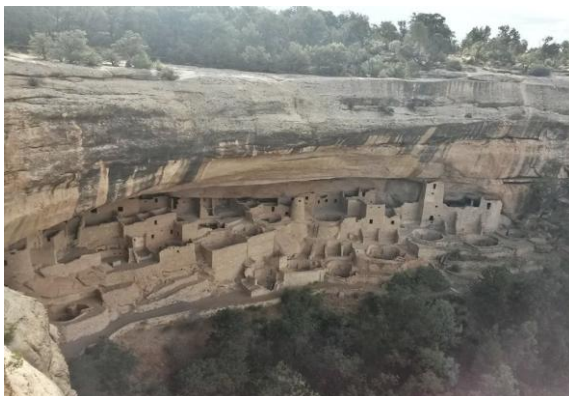


Figure 8 The cliff dwelling of the Ancestral Pueblo People – the Paradise City

3.3 The Spanish rule vs. the Southwest

Coming to the Americas was a great excitement for the European explorers. Those coming back to the European continent told stories of the limitless amount of gold and quick riches that could be found there. These tales motivated also the Spanish explorer Francisco Vasquez de Coronado to a voyage to New Mexico in 1540 to find the Seven Cities of Gold. Instead of gold, he and his men found tribes with a well developed cultural, religious and social structure. They named them Los Pueblos (eng. The Town). They named them Los Pueblos because of their peculiar architecture – permanent, compact, multi chambered houses made of stone and adobe.

The arrival of Coronado started 140 years dominance and oppression of the Spanish Catholics over this region. Any form of resistance to the European principles ended up in unbearable torture. Therefore in 1680 an uprising of the Pueblos took place. It was to manifest the refusal and disapproval of the Spanish values, especially the efforts of the Spaniards to convert the Natives to Catholicism. The uprising is known as the Pueblo Revolt. The constant overpowering, the enforcement of abandoning the native religion and the faked ascendance cause enormous anger. As a matter of fact, Spaniards started destroying the traditional religious objects, with which the Puebloans used to practice their ceremonies. Their centres of worship – Kivas – which are the underground subterranean rooms used for religious, political, and ceremonial meetings, were demolished. On August 10, 1680 2 500 warriors from over 70 pueblo communities under the leadership of a military strategist called Popay (or Popé), synchronically attacked the European nobility and offices. In Santa Fe, NM, they killed the governor and burnt his palace. They also killed about 400 Spanish soldiers. They continued burning catholic churches and getting rid of many Christian priests. The Spaniards surrendered, and were pushed away to El Paso, west Texas. However in 1692, the Spaniards retaliated and the Spanish Reconquest was completed. The lands of Rio Grande valley were won back for New Spain. In 1821 when Mexico gained independence, this area fell under its control.

3.4 The Anglo-Americans vs. the Southwest

In 1848, when the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, the United States took control over lands above the Gila River, which used to belong to Mexico. It was then when New Mexico fell under the rule of white Americans. This area kept being a feared place, also

due to incessant intrusions by the Navajo, Ute, Apache, and Comanche wanted to display their power, conquer and win back the lands. It inevitably led to a civil war among these warriors tribes, the Pueblo peoples, Hispanics, and new Anglo-American settlers. This did not finish until 1886. The building of a railway (1880) in Santa Fe - New Mexico enhanced trade and made it easier for people to travel and migrate. White miners and settlers started to come to New Mexico in great numbers and helped to create multinational today New Mexico. In 1924 the Natives in Arizona and New Mexico were promised a US citizenship, but they did not really win it until 1948. During World War II Native Americans actively participated in American military forces. After the war there was an attempt to secure a peaceful co-existence among the Pueblo Nations, Anglo-Americans and some Hispanics. To help the Native Americans assimilate into the new society, the Anglo- Americans tried to relocate them from Indian reservations to the towns. They understood it could not work. To promote the idea of assimilation, in 1950s the children from Pueblos were sent to special boarding schools – away from the Native influence. This was not a success either. Finally the Europeans (Anglos and Hispanics) realized that they themselves were the original uninvited invaders, and that at least finding peace with the Puebloans would be a satisfying compensation. They started to subsidize Pueblo institutions which have been suffering from poverty. These subsidies helped to start the development of the Pueblos. However the modern civilizations were too ahead of the Pueblos, and keeping up with the constant social developments, and creating infrastructures within the Pueblos, schools, electricity, water system, telephones, and others, was a great struggle. The difficulties the Pueblos were facing led many of their members to alcoholism, youth suicide and other depressive states.

3.5 The Pueblo People in the modern world

Federal government of the United States took control over the affairs of the Pueblo people because of the hardship they were facing. In 1960s and 1970s things started to get on a better path and the Puebloans began to run their own affairs themselves. In the 80s the Puebloans were allowed by the federal government to open and run gambling Casinos on the lands of their ancestors, which became a profound source of their regular income. The lands of the reservation belong to the Pueblo people, and the governments of individual states are obliged not to interfere with the pueblo affairs. Each Pueblo has its' own governor and a board of elders, which run the Pueblo village. Thus Pueblos have their own

opportunities to improve their economics, build employment and increase personal income. The Natives tried to win a total sovereignty of the reservations, to stay immune from the state laws that could try to stop their business. Total annual gambling revenue of all Pueblos in 2011 was \$27 billion, according to casinonewsdaily.com, which was used to keep up with the development of the region, and that is why scholarship programs, health centers or even infrastructures could be improved. Though the Puebloans partially abandoned their traditional lifestyles and went along with the development of the modern world, they still preserve their culture. It means that the stories, religions or languages and ceremonies still create a substantial part of their life. Through the stories children are taught by elders how to interact with the natural, supernatural world and the world of humans. Traditional cultural ceremonies, which include colorful kachina dancing (where usually men are dressed as a colorful kachina doll that represents the supernatural spirit being used for religious ceremonies), and singing for example, still are parts of their everyday life. Tourists are welcome to watch many of these ceremonies, but they are asked to be respectful and follow all instructions and rules. Then the Pueblo people are very welcoming. If any disturbances or intrusions into their privacy occurred, the Pueblo people stop being welcoming and asked the tourists to leave. Many Pueblos flourish thanks to tourism, casinos and selling their arts- especially pottery and native jewelery. These 2 are the main sources of the income which help to acquire a good living standard. The miseries that they used to struggle with, such as social and health problems, discrimination are decreasing nowadays. Every year more and more of the Puebloan youth enrolls to colleges and universities. Many of them study to be able to contribute to a stronger position of the Puebloan word in the state's political and economical scenes.

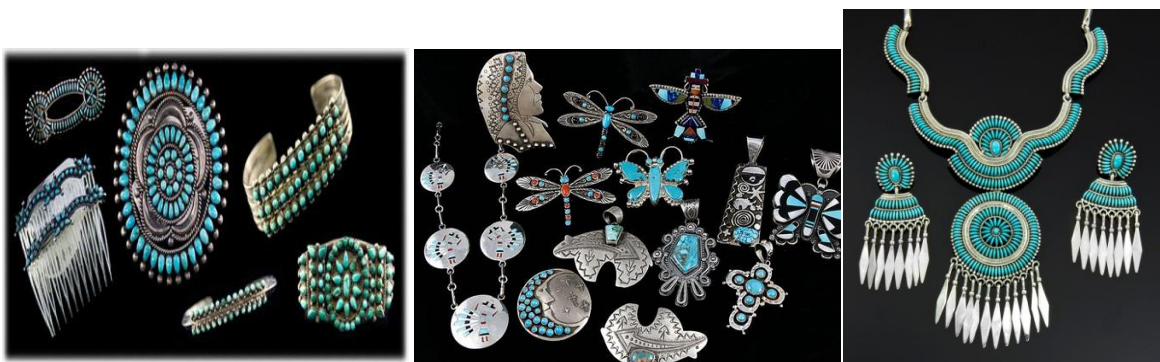


Figure 9, 10, 11. One of the main forms of the Puebloan income – wonderful jewelery made of silver and turquoise

3.6 The lifestyle of the Puebloan People

The Pueblo people have mutual traditions, but each pueblo remains a single political unit. They do not even speak the same language. As already mentioned, they mostly speak the Tewa or Tiwa (e.g. Taos) languages, whereas the Pueblo Jemez is the only one to use Towa. Zuni Pueblo uses a completely different language – the so called Zuni language. Some (e.g. Acoma) speak the Keres language.

When the Spanish arrived they introduced Catholicism to the Pueblos. After the Pueblo revolt in 1680, surprisingly the people learned how to co-exist with Catholicism. The uprising accomplished that the European theology comprised a little and recognized the native religion as a powerful force for the Puebloans. Therefore nowadays one can see the people of Pueblo attending masses in the catholic chapels they build in their villages. New-born get baptized, marriages and funerals are also organized in these churches. Foreshorten, the belief of one practicing a pueblo original religion is that each thing in this world has its soul and it is needed to live in harmony with this soul so that evil will not overtake our lives. This peace can be reached by the ceremonial dances, which are basically prayers to the souls. They also believe that man came to this world by climbing a ladder from worlds below through a small hole in the sky. This is also one of the reasons why the sacred Kivas used to be build underground with a tall ladder with which one gets in and out of it. It is to symbolize the story of how a man first entered our world.



Figure 12,13 Kivas – places to worship deity and perform religious rituals

Pueblo people are communitarian, which means that the good of the whole group is considered more important than personal success. An individual does not like to stand out of the crowd. Some say this is also a reason why the famous pueblo pottery originating in the antiques was kept unsigned by its producer. They are generally very welcoming and hospitable to the curious tourists from all over the world, but it is very important that one

remains respectful; otherwise he can get expelled from the Pueblo and be fined by their tribal governments.

In the language of pueblo people there exists no word for “art”. Despite this fact, they are considered to be some of the most talented artisans. Passionate collectors from other parts of the world specifically travel to New Mexico to purchase the remarkable artistic creations from the tribes. Selling their arts and crafts became a huge contribution for their income. The popularity of these articles also means a slight threat to the domestic businesses, as many falsifiers started to manufacture fake copies of it. Luckily, a true enthusiast gives himself the effort to analyze whether the article was crafted originally by a Puebloan. The best known craft is the handmade pottery. The origins take us back to the times around 200 AD, when the tribal people learned themselves the art of basketry. For reasons of a basket’s better resistance against elements which were laid or carried in them, the people of Pueblo started to cover them in clay. Earlier this pottery was used mainly for storing food, water or cooking itself, whereas nowadays they flourish with various complex designs and are used as decoration. Very popular are pots, plates, wedding vases, or small animal or human figures painted in bright color as turquoise or reddish. Other typical coloring is black designs on the red or white clay, whereas earth colors are very frequently used too. Some tribes, as for example Taos, mix mica with the clay, so that the product itself has a glittery like surface and creates a shiny impression of bronze or gold. The Puebloans often display the traditional storytellers which is a figure of a man, who has an open mouth as if he was narrating the tales. He is always piled up with children – which symbolizes how the folktales were spread by the word of mouth to the younger generations. The Pueblo potters are traditionally women, as in the past the role of the man was to go to the fields to hunt, whereas women stayed home with the children and cooked food for them. As they needed kitchen gadgets to prepare the food they gradually became very handy in manufacturing utensils.

When talking about jewelry, we speak of a tradition that has been evolving in the Pueblo tribes since the era when the very first archeological dug-outs were found. The necklaces, wristbands or earrings were mainly created from finely worked turquoise beads. The Spaniards introduced silver casting techniques and nowadays one stays amazed by seeing how fine the Pueblo people are able to handle and smith metal. Their artistry has expanded rapidly in the 20th century after introducing the rail ways and automobiles into the country.



Figure 14. Kachina dolls represent the dancers, who perform ceremonial dances to the deity. These small figurines also serve for little children to play

3.7 Acoma Pueblo

The total area of the tribal land of Acoma is 1530, 77 square kilometers. Before the arrival of the Europeans its size expanded up to 6070 square kilometers. The 2010 census showed there were 4819 members of the tribal society. Acoma Haaku, or the Sky City has been inhabited since 1075. It is said to be one of the oldest permanently inhabited lands in the United States. The reason why it is called the Sky City is that it lies on the top of a 114,6 meters sand stone table mountain. One of the most eye catching Catholic churches can be found here. It's called the church of San Estevan del Rey Mission. Legends say, that around 170 men and women died during its construction in 1629, as 20 000 tons of clay were needed to be brought up to the mesa top to build it. The clay was detracted from areas almost 30 miles away, and the builders were not allowed to rest on their way. There was also no easy access to the city, and therefore under the weight of the clay and water, these men and women easily tripped over and fell off the mesa cliffs.

In 1863 the people of Acoma were granted the right to form their own government institution by Abraham Lincoln. Up till the 20th century the mesa was not accessible to the outside world, the only leading road there was a very rough and narrow foot trail. The inhabitants of the mesa were not interested in building any other access there, as they were resisting the inevitable "assimilation" of the Natives that was happening throughout the whole heritage lands of Native Americans.

Nowadays only elected elders live on the mesa. They live in Adobe buildings, and remain faithful to the traditional form of living – there is no running water or electricity. As winters get very cold in the semi deserts and deserts of New Mexico, the people of Acoma

built up hornos – which are bee-hive shaped, outdoors ovens. These ovens are used for heating up, but mainly for baking of the ceramics. The small windows and thick layers of clay used as façade rendering on the building disable the warmth of the houses to leak out. The other members of the tribe live in modern houses in the valleys below the mesa.



Figure 15. Dwellings on the Mesa Top, the so called Acoma Sky City



Figure 16. Hornos are frequently used outdoor ovens for Pueblo tribes

3.8 History of the Acoma Pueblo

The first non-native to ever enter the Haaku was the Spanish explorer Francisco Vázquez de Coronado. This was about 48 years after the first colonizers came to the continent. The reason why it took him so long was the entrance to the mesa. The only possible entrance to the Sky City was a carved road into the sandstone of the mesa. The people of Acoma Pueblo were highly skilled climbers, but for the inexperienced Europeans it was completely impossible to reach the city. Second of all, such a forth awoke respect for any possible outer visitor and was seen as a very complex defense mechanism. In 1599, via a log bridge built from the top of a nearby mesa, somewhat 60 – 70 soldiers unexpectedly entered the city. By killing over 1000 Acoma warriors, the control of the pueblo was taken over by the Spanish. The Acoma people were too proud to surrender. They heard of the attempts of the Spanish rule to manipulate the lives of the Natives, and decided to rather die than to survive and live under their control. Many, therefore, committed suicide by jumping off top of the mesa, while others decided to die in what they loved the most – their homes. These Adobe houses, which were 3-4 stories high, were set

on fire, and many Acoma people were burnt as slaves. Those, who survived, males or females or even children, were sent to Mexico for slavery, and men older than 25 got one foot chopped off. Up till today, this tragedy stays in the minds and hearts of the Acoma people. Therefore one can say that when it comes to dealing with tourists or foreigners, they are rather careful, and they do not trust strangers so easily. By 1900s the population of once a flourishing society sank on to 500 inhabitants.

The city itself became accessible to public first around the 1940s when the filmmakers from Hollywood started shooting movies about the struggles the Natives had to face when a new culture conquered their world. Even though after bulldozing a road leading to the mesa top the isolation of the people of Acoma pueblo was disturbed by the constant tourist visits, one cannot say that this act didn't have any positive contributions. It became easier to export the pottery and hand crafts out of the pueblo, and tourism expanded a lot, which has improved the economy of the city and the tribes itself. Before, the pottery was made to produce whatever containers were needed. As Acoma potters are one of the best, their products sell well as pieces of art, and selling it became one of the main sources of the Acoma pueblo income.

3.9 Life of the Acoma Puebloans as it is today

Like in many other pueblos gaming and gambling enterprises are one of the major sources of income to the Acoma people. Acoma tribe was one of the first to establish a casino. With this revenue they were able to launch language programs, a preservation program, fire stations, police departments, tribal government, meat processing factories, dairy and leather have also gained on importance as the people were able to purchase cattle and build up ranches. Nowadays not many people reside the Sky City – the reservation government reports approximately 30 elders, who continue with their traditional life there. This is due to the fact that there is still no running water or electricity on the top of the mesa and therefore the modern generations migrated to the villages of Acomita, McCarty and Anzac along the river San Jose and keep their Adobe houses as holiday homes. They visit them mainly during the times of the ceremonial rituals. Since 1940s and the construction of the road to the mesa top, pottery started being produced and sold in bigger amounts. Typical for the Acoma pueblo are precisely hand drawn black geometrical structures on white clay. They started to apply different designs on the pottery as the businesses continued to grow. For example the horsehair style became quite popular. While the clay is still heated, the horse hair is laid on its sticky white surface to create unique and beautiful patterns.



Figure 17,18, 19. Examples of beautiful precise geometrical shapes, which are typical for Acoma Pueblo pottery

3.10 Taos Pueblo

In the mid 16th century, as the gold rush culminated, the Spanish explorer Francisco Vasquez de Coronado marched into New Mexico. The original city of the Taos Pueblo, Cibola, was believed to be one of the so called “Golden Cities”, that were to contain enormous amounts of gold. We have already mentioned that this gold obsession of Coronado turned out to be a disaster for him as he did not find even an extraction of what he longed for.

Total area on which the people of the Pueblo of Taos live, which comes from the word Tuah-Tah, which means “Our village” or “At Red Willow Canyon Mouth”, expands up to 398 square kilometers, and has 2410 residents. Although, only about 50 people decided to live full time in the village, as the perks of modern life have pulled them out to more modern homes.

The first signs of the one of the oldest Native communities are dated back to 900 AD. A stream, or some call it a river, named Red Willow, flows through the Taos Pueblo village and divides it into two parts – Hlauuma (north houses) and Hlakwima (south houses). Its water has been a life-giving source for their crops. In 1992 the multistoried (up to 5 floors) Pueblo was ascribed to UNESCO as a World Heritage site and national historic landmark. Therefore it has become one of the most visited Pueblos in New Mexico. Like in Acoma there is no electricity in the buildings.

Like in other pueblos, people of Taos encountered struggles with the Spanish, with their religion and rule. They took part in the Pueblo revolt in the later 17th century, but their biggest and most significant conflict was the battle for the Blue Lake. This Lake, situated by the imposing Taos Mountains, lays about 20 miles away from the village, and was used for religious ceremonies and was a sacred place for the tribe. The white Americans pushed all the tribes away from their original lands, and so they did with the Taos Puebloans. The 1906 treaty did take into consideration that together with 48 000 acres (195 square kilometres) lands of Taos they also usurped the sacred lake. The Native Taos people went to court, but it took them 74 years to win the legal battle which was going on all that time. This victory bonded the community even more, and many of the younger generations started to present themselves in the society as proud Puebloans. Each year, fathers with

their 7-10 year old sons take the pilgrimage to their most important religious shrine – the sacred Blue Lake.



Figure 20. A young man dancing a Kachina dance at Taos Pueblo



Figure 21. Adobe multi-story dwellings that were ascribed to the UNESCO World Heritage in 1992

4 Navajo

Not much is taught in the US education system about the Native tribes in general. Navajos, being the largest tribe are mainly referred to as the most warlike people that successfully resisted the pressure of white men's occupations and oppressions. Children also learn about the population so they know, that 130 000 of Navajos live in the reservations in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah, the total area of which is around 62 000 square kilometres. This land is arid and flat, but many tablemountains, as well as deep and beautiful river canyons, had been formed by the aeration.

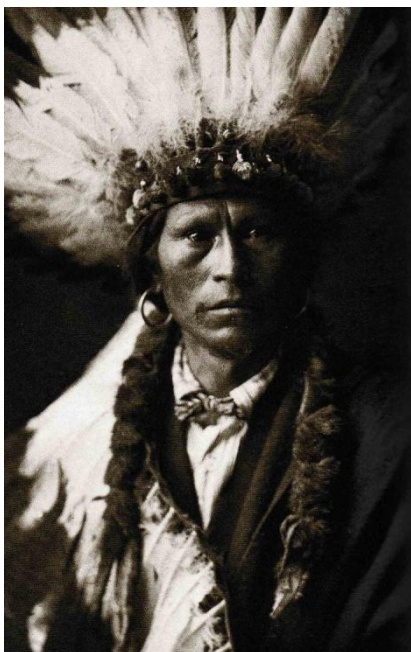


Figure 22. A typical Navajo chief

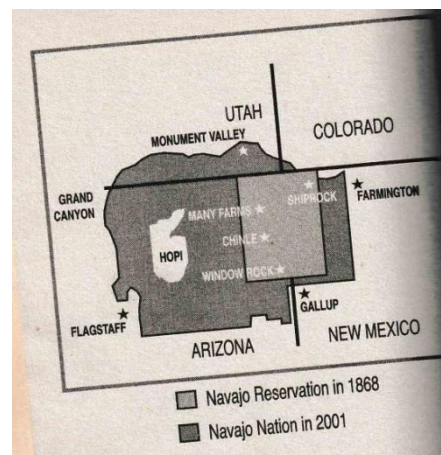


Figure 23. Comparison of the Navajo reservation in 1868 to its size in 2001



Figure 24. Navajo crafts specialize in sand art and designation of animals, whereas they frequently use the horse hair for painting the pottery

If we take a closer look at what this tribe accomplished, we will learn that due to the Navajo, the Spanish ascendancy in the Southwest was completely suppressed. The white man's fear of Navajo warriors helped all the Native tribes to retain their culture, lands and traditions. The homeland that the Navajos were expelled from was called *Dinehtah*, which means "Among the People" or "The land of The People". The name indicates their sense of unity and belief in equality, and one could interpret it in a way, that this was the land that belonged, and served to all the Navajo men. Their virtues well in the faith that everything that a Navajo knows, encounters and has – the sky, the crops, the cattle, the family or other tribal social connections, is holy.

In 1864 in an event known as "The Long Walk of Navajo" when an American brigadier, James Carleton gave orders to Colonel Kit Carson to wipe out and chase this rebelling tribe away from *Dinehtah*, the culture's most tragic defeat by the white men happened. Men, women and children were starved or martyred to surrender to a forced obedience. Their battle with Americans, which climaxed into the Walk, lasted over 20 years. 8000 Navajos marched and were subsequently imprisoned. This event left them afflicted, battled, ill of body and soul, as there was very little hope for them to come back to be a glorious and proud nation again, then they resembled more beggars than brave warriors. Later, they became huge burden to the US government. There did not exist any other option of getting rid of them, than to offer the Navajo independence again. In return for an agreement to stay in peace with the Americans for a lifetime, *Dinehtah* was given back to its original inhabitants. They were given cattle to restore their farming and industries and teachers for the children were sent to the reservation schools. The Navajo efforts to re-establish a nation they had been before the Walk, enabled them to ascribe to the Native American history as one of the richest and most successful tribe of all. In fact, their culture had been strong and dominant, that there is very little difference between practices nowadays to what it used to be long before the Spanish, American or Christian oppressions.

The Native tribes teach their history to their descendants (usually by men - storytellers) by the word of mouth, through songs and storytelling. The following traditional Navajo tribal song is included in this paper, to demonstrate an unstrained joy of being returned back to the *Dinehtah*, the Navajo land of the rainbow. "*This is your home, my grandchild – he says to me as he sits beside me; - My grandchild! I have returned with you to your home – he says to me as he sits beside me; - Upon the pollen figure I have returned to sit with you my grandchild! – he says to me as he sits beside me – Your homes are yours again, your fire is*

yours again, your mountain ranges are yours again, my grandchild – he says to me as he sits beside me.” (Locke, 2010:6)

4.1 From the old times towards the contemporary era

The word “Navajo” first occurs in history after the Spanish conquest of the Americas. The Europeans gave the name to the descendants of the Athapascans, who referred to themselves as *Dineh*. Due to the non existing archaeological written documents of the early *Dineh* people, the exact meaning of this word may vary according to the linguist. Many agree it means “The People, The Men”. Not only the Spaniards were those to re-name them, but so did the other tribes. Not many other Natives were keen on the *Dineh* people, as many of their men were fearful warriors and used drastic practices as pounding heads with their stone axes while executing an enemy. Because of this they were called “head pounders” or “enemies”. There can be some similarities found to the Puebloan culture, as areas both tribes lived in bordered on each other. What the Navajos “borrowed” from the Puebloans was adjusted to meet their needs and so a unique culture was formed.

The Old Navajoland, the *Dinehtah* is said not to be the original homeland of the *Dinehs*. Their arrival to the Southwest is estimated to 1540, which is not long before the arrival of the Europeans. The memoirs of the Spanish mention, that the nomadic Athapascans (the ancestral Navajos) came here from the eastern Rocky Mountains. They also believed that the arrival of the Navajos was the reason why the Ancestral Puebloans migrated from the cliff dwellings in the Table Mountains of Colorado in the mid 13th century, which historians later opposed. The Puebloans migrated due to the draught and little survival chances. According to the oral traditions of the *Dineh* people, they arrived from the West – from California and Oregon. Other sources date the first human settlements in this area to 1000 A.D as typical housing remains were found in western Colorado.

The Navajos used to live, and often still live in dwellings which are called the hogans. No other tribes built their shelters like this. These were designed to keep the temperature indoors cool in summer and prevent the heat to leak out in winter. A Hogan is for a Navajo a sacred place, as it is his shelter that provides security, home, stability, family... It is also one of the religious objects for the tribe, as they believe that everything they know is holy. The hogans had a very specific structure. They seldom had any windows, and sources of natural light or ventilation were the doors facing east and a smoke hole. People would set

fires indoors to heat up the dwellings. The reason to build the door always on the east was to make the rising sun the first thing to see when one opened the eyes in the morning. There were usually 2 types of hogans; a male ones and a female hogan, each differing in appearance. The male hogans were constructed with 3 wooden columns, covered with mud, logs and a bush and were in the shape of a cone. The female hogans were round or hexagonal. All the religious ceremonies took place in these dwellings. Each family usually owns more than 1 hogan, especially those who keep livestock and store necessities for it in them. But there is always only one main hogan that serves for habitation. Navajo understanding of housing is different from many other cultures. People around the world see a home as a necessity and luxury; Navajos consider their hogans holy shelters which were given to them by god. Legends state how to position objects within a house. The belongings and space in the south are the woman's and those in the north are the man's. While the poles that stabilise the dwelling are tall, they attract lightening. When it strikes, the hogan must be abandoned as it is considered witchcraft - *chindi*.



Figure 25,26. Navajo hogan dwellings

A remarkable fact about the Navajos is, on the contrary to the majority of the world's cultures, that their society is predominantly matriarchal. It is not common for Navajo to live only in the immediate biological family. One sees social cooperation built up of extended families, where older women and their husbands and their married or unmarried children and their children all live together in several hogans. Women are in control of the course of the society; men and women do not exercise common ownership. Women also "own" the children, the livestock and its production, whereas man has the right to govern over the heritage of his ancestors and his own earnings (with which he can handle whatever way he wants).

Navajo society consists of clans. Within each clan, everyone is responsible for not only his actions, but also for the actions of the other clan members. Therefore the society is well kept and controlled, as no one wants to be punished or be blamed for something (for example a crime) that he/she did not commit. These days the clans determine marriages within the society. It is forbidden to marry someone within one's own clan, or the father's clan, as that would be considered incest. People compare incest to witchcraft, and due to their beliefs what is bewitched must be abandoned and expelled.

4.2 Navajo language

It is believed that 3000 years ago the Athapascans of the Nadene-language family migrated to the lands of the Americas. No specific document about this historical moment was found, so these theories remain unproved. The Nadine dialects were, though, the most widely spoken ones by most of the tribes in the Americas. To people who do not speak any Native American language, they all may sound alike. To the contrary, Native languages differ as much as for example Slovak differs from English. Even though the Navajo are the neighbours of the Pueblo tribes, their languages are not related at all. The problem that complicates the situation even more is that in the Nadine dialect there may be over 30 different expressions for one notion. Many languages "borrow" words from other languages, and so does the Navajo. With the difference that they modify it to fit their linguistics. Words like noomba (from English coffee), gohwei (coffee), alocs (from Spanish arroz) are some of these words.

4.2.1 Navajo Code Talkers

During the 2nd World War thousands of young men across the globe were recruited to the army. Navajo boys also had to perform this obligation towards their country. In 1942, 29 of them were to serve the U.S Marine Corps. The reason why these guys were so helpful was their complex language, which enabled them to code secret messages in such a way the Japanese enemy would not be able to decode. The boys had special trainings, and by the end of the war up to 400 young Navajo men could use more than 600 secret codes for communication. The initial idea was brought to the army by Philip Johnston, who himself grew up in the reservation and spoke the language. Throughout his life he encountered numerous Anglo-American compatriots, and noticed that whenever he spoke Navajo the

others never even understood a word. Japanese had advanced technology that tracked the American coders, but the Navajo signals were too complicated to be easily seen through. For example a word “*chay-da-gahi*” (tortoise) was a code for tank, or “*gini*” (chicken hawk) was a code for a dive-bomber. They also had a very thought through strategy. The first letter of the English meaning of a Navajo word was the first letter of something that needed to be ciphered. “*Wo-la-chee*” (ant) would cover up some word that starts with an A (could have been - army, autopilot- or whatever other word that fit the context). They also made sure that the same example for a letter “A” wouldn’t be repeated too often, in order to prevent the code from being decoded. For a guaranteed safety, these codes were never written down. Eventually not even Navajos themselves, who weren’t coders, understood the language of the young marines.



Figure 27. Young Navajo code talkers during the WWII

5 Comanche



Figure 28 – Comanche warrior wearing the clothing and accessories for a battle

According to the words of one of the respondents of the survey, Benny Tahmakhera, the Comanche land base is a complicated situation. Each of the 565 federally recognized tribes in the United States signed a treaty or multiple treaties at some point during the exposure to the European contact and the Comanche were forced to move to a reservation originally expanding from southwest Oklahoma to northern Texas, which used to cover as many as 12 140,5 square kilometers. In order to accept the new Euro American culture, they again were forcefully squeezed into the area of 160 acres (around 0.6 square kilometers), which are now called trust lands.



Figure 29. – Map of Great Plains, Comanche nation lives on number 27

The territory, which Comanche people historically inhabit, is called “The Great Plains”- the land of grass, wind and sun- and is the home to 31 other tribes, such as Blackfeet,

Sioux, Kiowa and others. There are two theories where the name of the tribe originates from. It is either the way the tribe of Ute used to refer to them – *kimantsi* which means enemy (or the people who are always against us), or the land's old appellation – Comancheria, which expands from Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado, and Kansas. As the area's second biggest nation were the Apaches, the land also used to be called Apacheria. The Great Plains themselves were divided into 3 main regions – The Northern Plains, the Central Plains and the Southern Plains. In 2008 the Finnish Professor Pekka Hämäläinen from the Oxford University, published a very successful book "*The Comanche Empire*" in 2008, in which he claims that the Comanche nation formed an Empire on this land in 1750s. Their dominance lasted for a hundred years, with Apache people striving for their primacy. The main purpose of maintaining this empire was to turn it into an economic and commercial centre, from which trades with nations from distant lands would be controlled. It was not as rosy-colored, as the tribal warriors kidnapped, enslaved or robbed people of other indigenous nations from Mexico or the US to work for them. As mentioned earlier, Comanche nation belonged to the most warlike ones, and so is their encounter with some Anglo-American described in his book as follows "... *the nation's warriors without provocation or hesitation, abandon themselves on the other side of the humanity, ripping off limbs, heads, gutting the strange white torsos...*" (Hämäläinen, 2008:344). Their reign was violated, when the epidemics of chicken pox decimated the Comanche population. Nowadays there said to be around 15 000 members of this society.

Unfortunately the tradition of their original Numic language almost disappeared. It is said that less than 1% of the Comanche people can master it nowadays, which would represent around 300 fluent speakers. This is also an outcome of the fact that children used to be severely punished in local schools if they spoke their mother tongue. This heritage was slowly vanishing and native people were made to learn and speak English. The Ataphascan, Siouan, and Algonquian language groups, also the Uto-Aztec languages (from which the Numu tekwapu /Comanche/ language originates) were present and spoken by many indigenous people until the earlier part of the 20th century. An interesting fact is that names of the people of the Plains often have a much deeper meaning than the names from other regions. The babies, who were the most precious gifts to the people, were often named either after their ancestors or an occurrence that accompanied their birth. Therefore it was quite common to name the child "Coming Daylight", "Spotted Otter" or "White Bird".

5.1 The Comanche and settlers from the new world

Comanche people were warriors who came into conflict with most of the other native groups from the Plains. The Europeans and the Anglo-Americans were their very important trade partners, but as their weapons were more advanced, the Comanche eventually rather chose not to oppose them. This didn't mean that the tribes and newcomers were in peace. As the contrary was the fact, Comanche demanded the creation of official borders between Texas and Comancheria. This was mainly in order to keep the newcomers from implementing their political power on the tribe, but also to secure that would not raid the native lands. This attempt failed. By the 1870s the majority of Comanche people suffered from plagues brought to the country by the new settlers. These were smallpox and cholera which reduced the population of 20 000 down to a couple of thousands. There was also a major problem because of massive slaughtering of the buffalos, the numbers of which were reduced almost to a complete extinction of the species therefore the Native tribes were losing their main source of livelihood. The American government promised the tribes to stop killing buffalos if they agreed to migrate to a reservation. There the Comanche, Arapho, Kiowa, Cheyenne and Apache people would live along together on a land smaller than 13 000 square kilometers. The ban of slaughtering the animals was not a success, and enraged the Comanche even more. It led to more armed conflicts. The buffalo hunters' attitude almost resulted in the extinction of the species.

The 1867 “generous” offer of the North American government concerning the size of the reservation ended up being reduced to a total of 1940 square kilometers in 1892 by the so called Jerome Treaty. However this “smaller” reservation was to be the home only to Comanche, Kiowa and Apache people.



Figure 30. The majority of Comanche products were made of buffalos- the tools, the clothes, the food, the jewellery. Overhunting, which was made easier due to the introduction of the horses by the colonisers, led almost to the animal's extinction.

5.2 History of the Comanche nation

The Shoshones were nomad tribes of the upper Great Basin of North America. Within this tribe there was a conflict, which caused the separation of its' members. One group began migrating south, and over approximately 200 years they developed their individual language. The more south these people moved, the closer they got to the Spanish colonies around Santa Fe in New Mexico, where people modified the name “*kimantsi*” into Comanche.



Figure31. Comanche are considered to have the most developed horse culture of the native tribes



Figure32. Comanche nation was said to appear in many armed conflicts, whether it was with the Apache, other tribes or the colonisers from France, Spain or other European great powers. After the introduction of the horse, also battles gained on intensity. This is Comanche warrior, galloping with his horse through a Comanche village. This nation built tipi houses from buffalo skins

Until the 16th / early 17th century the Comanche formed a nation with the Shoshones and lived by the Platte River in Wyoming. Later the tribes separated and developed into independent nations. Their most typical way of livelihood was hunting and gathering, which was improved even more after the Pueblo Rebellion in the 17th century when they acquired horses (some of which were stolen, which ensured them the sarcastic nickname – horse thieves). Since that time the Comanche have been seen as one of the most established Native American horse cultures, and also due to this mean of transport the search for other areas for hunting or gathering was eased. The incorporation of the horses into the everyday life taught them how to tame the animals and therefore later to make them the number one allowance in intercultural trade with American and French salesmen. “*The Comanche are*

usually portrayed in the existing literature as a formidable equestrian power that erected a daunting barrier of violence to colonial expansion. Along with the Iroquois and Lakotas, they have been embedded in collective American memory as one of the few Native societies able to pose a significant challenge to the Euro-American conquest of North America” (Hämäläinen, 2008:1) To prove their dominance they not only went to war with the majority of the southern plains nations, but also tried to push out the Kiowa-Apaches from the area of Southern Comancheria. This enabled them to get in the control of this territory. The French colonizers and traders who entered the new world introduced the people to weapons, which lead to further conflicts with the Apache nation. Apache were feared and quite war-like; therefore the Comanche felt it was necessary to pacify them in order to obtain some peace and secure their prior status in the area. The Comanche have always been a nation of various groups, which didn't differ much from each other. They shared the culture or the language, but also had quite often armed conflicts.

5.3 Contemporary Comanche character

Nowadays we can see that many American sports teams use the indigenous people as mascots or use the tribal names – such as Aztecs, Chiefs, Redskins, Apaches, Indians, Blackhawks. Not only would the names or mascots dress in animal costumes, but sometimes even the tribal chiefs themselves would stand in front of a crowd of a sports event and dance. Not many have ever thought how the Natives feel about it. Many found it extremely humiliating, and therefore, for example in 2007 the University of Illinois banned such representations. The reason why this is mentioned is that it is said that the Comanche are the most active when it comes to educating the Anglo-Americans about concerns of their tribal society. They also belong to the most educated and most employable North American Native tribes on the labor market. Cornel Pewewardy, a very well known writer of the Comanche tribe, is one of the main publishers of articles about such matters and the tribal issues. The writer Paul Chaat Smith, wrote about the American Indian Movement of the 1960s', which later helped with the solving of the poverty or misery that dominated in this era. Through publishing books, public speeches or articles the consciousness and awareness of the whole modern American society arises. This feeling of leadership stops the Comanche from being constricted people, the contrary is the fact. Many of them are very well known influential doctors, lawyers, professors; this is especially true in Oklahoma.

5.4 Comanche culture

Like other Native America tribes, the Comanche had their own sovereignty and independence. The tribes divided the responsibility of leadership to a number of people. They always had a peace chief (advisor) and a war chief (whose dominance was apparent only in the times of conflicts), so that the decisions making would not be only in the hands of one person. As boys were growing up, most of them wished to become warriors. They only could have done so, if they showed enough bravery while on their first buffalo hunt which happened at the age of 15/16. Girls were responsible for gathering the fruits, and since they were 12 years old they were taught to cook, so that they slowly got prepared to start their own family and could take care of it. Elder men or those who couldn't fight anymore had their own special tipi in which they gathered to smoke. Sick and feeble people were feared to be haunted by evil spirits, so they often became outcast in their tribes. After this person died the rest of the society buried him with his feet folded to his chest. They also colored the corpse's face red and sealed the eyes with mud.

Comanche people often migrated from one place to another, which made pottery out of clay a disadvantageous tool to use. This could easily break so they needed materials that would be compact. As they hunted buffalos so massively, they started to shape their horns, skin, bones, or hair into necessary tools.

6 Storytelling

The folklore mythology stories that were spread as an oral heritage explain in a serious, witty or mocking way the insight of the Native American tribes on their experiences of the cultural clash with the Europeans, on the creation and end of the world, romance, heroism, armed conflicts, nature, animals, on the supernatural and more. Some stories are speaking to us from the depths of the ages, when people believed, that animals were having an equal role in the society as humans. They spoke the same language and had the same size as people. Not even the Native tribes, though, have an explanation for the fact, why animals do not assume this role anymore, why they shrank, and why their intelligence decreased so much.

Then there are stories which talked about the times, before the Europeans entered the continent. These stories were mainly based on the lives of cultural heroes. The hero was the one to establish first social or political organisations or who performed virtuous deeds to protect the tribe from evil. One of these heroes is known under the name Motzeyouf (or Sweet Medicine). He was also a prophet. He is believed to predict long before the Europeans actually entered the land of the Americas that a pale man from the eastern world would come to spread chaos and pain. But he would also bring the unknown and later he would attempt to build up friendships. His predictions sounds: “*The buffalo will not leave us until bearded strangers will come into our country...*” (Brown, 1933: 55) The buffalo had always been the main source of food or clothing even tools would be manufactured from his bones. The disappearance of the buffalo would mean a great disaster and loss for all of the Native tribes. This was what the Sweet Medicine knew was about to come. The “Before the White Man Came” stories would also narrate creation stories. It was only the tribe of the Blackfeet (the Natives of the Northern Plains), who would ascribe the creation of all to only one existence – The Old Man. The other tribes have various reasoning and myths of the origin of things.

One of the oldest forms of storytelling are the so called allegories. Here, the nature is displayed as a supernatural creature with human qualities or reasoning. Mainly the tribes on the east of North America were inclined to narrate stories like these. The stories would mainly explain why the seasons are changing and their importance, but also things like why the leaves are falling, why and how the flowers are blooming.

Other important topic to narrate are stories about the first contacts of the Natives with a light-skinned man. As these tales have been slightly modified by each storyteller of a new generation, they started to have a mythological undertone. But it is known, that they are based on the past reality. They also describe the misery of how men were separated from their families and taken back to the eastern continent as a cheap labour force (basically slaves).

In the animal stories, the stories about horses have a very special place. It is known that horses were brought and introduced as a form of transportation and labour to the Natives by the Spaniards. This is also the reason why such tales about the horses started to be narrated among the tribes around the 15th century. The masters of taming and using horses were the Navajos and Apaches, who spread legends of horses being sent from the upper world on the earth. The Blackfoot and Shoshone storytellers referred to horses as being originally underwater animals.

Stories about tricksters and magicians are also very popular. Sometimes it is said that they are the most liked ones. A trickster was someone who used his intelligence and cleverness to trick others and to get out of any situation with a winning conclusion for himself. He was known to make promises in order to break them, and often he got himself into trouble because of that. This trickster was usually displayed as an animal – rabbit, wolf, fox, coyote, tarantula, turtle and others, but was in the majority of the tales supposed to represent a human. After the pale man entered the country, the European was reflected as the greatest trickster and appeared in the form of a spider.

The heros and heroines topics are typical for all the cultures around the world. Some may appear similar. The Biblical story of Jonah who was swallowed by a big fish is similar to so called “Hunter and the Dakwa” story of the Cherokees. The Animal Stories differ from those, which describe animals as equals to humans. The most famous ones are those, where the smaller animals have the roles of a trickster and outwit the bigger, “dumber” animals. The majority of these tales are meant to entertain, but others also point out the virtue of hard work and justice, for example. These stories are seen as fables, rather than mythologies or legends.

The last topic deals with ghosts. The Natives gathered around their tepees where they sat by the fire to narrate spooky stories. Most people imagine a white or a see-through unidentifiable mass when speaking of a ghost, whereas the Natives describe them as flesh-

less skeletons, that are wrapped in a traditional cloth. It was never predictable how the ghosts would behave. Earlier in this thesis, we mentioned the Sioux tragedy at the Wounded Knee (1890). Even though we do not analyse the Lakota (Sioux) stories, we will provide an example of their ghost story, as we believe it clearly describes the bravery Sioux warriors and the unpredictability of the ghosts behaviour. The Sioux also practiced a lot of ghost dances in order to chase the bearded stranger out of their territory. The dances and the stories are closely related, as the dances are meant to call the ghosts back to earth to help out with the evil.



Figure 33. Drawing of the Ghost stories, where skeleton-like ghosts executed mainly good deeds, but sometimes their only goal was to do harm

“The Sioux Who Wrestled with a Ghost” is about a young Sioux warrior who wanted to discover which path to take in his life. Therefore he chose to go and try to live in wilderness with the animals. At nights he heard strange noises, but he thought it must have been an owl. As he set the fire he heard the voice singing again, but when asked who it was, no one answered. Suddenly, he recognizes a ghost, sitting by his fire and singing. The ghost asked for some “wasna” (buffalo fat mixed with dry meat and berries). As illogical as it sounds, he shared these very last pieces of food with this dead skeleton which basically needs no food. After this they smoked the Native American “peace pipe”, and the smoke was leaking out of the skeletons bony rib cage. The ghost said that if the warrior wins in wrestling with him, he would give him a herd of horses. The ghost attacked the warrior unprepared, and the young man had difficulties to free himself from the ghost’s adamant grip. The Sioux realized, that the closer to the fire they fought, the weaker the ghost was. The fire was dying out, and so was the man. In his last strength he managed to throw a dry piece of wood into the fire, and as it grew, the strength of the bony ghost weakened. The man won and led by the ghost to a valley full of wild horses, where he caught as many as he could and brought them back to his village. Hearing (but not

understanding) these stories and seeing the accompanying dances multiplied the white men's need to get rid of the Sioux men. They were scared that these rituals were some sort of witchcraft and that's one of the many reasons why the massacre took place.³

³ Paraphrased Brown, 1993:166

6.1 The Oral Tradition of Storytelling



Figure 35. A pottery figure of a storyteller, specifically manufactured in Taos Pueblo. It displays the elder surrounded by many children, who listen and learn from his wise words

Usually, when one speaks of stories, he imagines fairytales, princesses, happy endings... These are not the equivalents of the stories of the Native Americans. The tales are instructional, transformational, real, mythological, spiritual, and metaphorical. It is said, that they are the very first forms of cultural expression of the individual native tribes, and were generated even before the man has expressed his abilities and thinking through pottery, basketry, music, dances or other crafts. No written language existed in the ancient times, and storytelling became the major source of learning and preserving the dialects and heritage of the tribes. As in any other social form, entertainment had an important meaning in a tribe. Therefore, some of the stories are witty, but some, on the other hand are educative. Often singing and dancing accompanies the narratives, which expresses either a religious undertone of it or is included as a way to gladden the audience. These concomitant circumstances enable to picture and remember the narrative more easily.

Even nowadays, if one decides to live traditionally, the storytelling remains the main source of wisdom communication. A storyteller can be compared to a teacher, or to someone who educates us and shows us the correct path of life, how to dispose with what the environment offers and other crucial survival matters. The storyteller was/is a highly respected man; in some communities he may have acquired the role of a shaman. His wisdom teaches other members of the communities of history, culture, legends or fiction. *„Look to the old, they are worthy of old age; they have seen their days and proven themselves. With the help of the Great Spirit, they have attained a ripe, old age. At this age*

the old can predict or give knowledge or wisdom, whatever it is; it is so. At the end is a cane. You and your family shall get to where the cane is.”⁴ (Aaron, 1994:118)

There were a lot of unanswered questions, of which logic people did not understand and so they started creating assumptions. One phenomenon, that had to be explained, was the occurrence of a thunderstorm. People realised, that the only living creature to make it close enough to the sky is a bird. They therefore spread stories of a giant bird, which was viciously fluttering its wings creating the sound of a thunder. When it gets angry it foals flash from its eyes. This, of course, is only one of many creational explanations, as each tribe had a different interpretation of the mysteries around them. A story usually provides a moral or a lesson and teaches of the importance of maintaining believes and respecting what our ancestry sacred. If not, our ungrateful actions may affect the future generations in a bad way.

No other time was the indispensability of own traditions, customs, believes and religion of the Natives felt as strong as it was when the new culture entered their land and introduced misery. The sense of brotherhood pushed them to survive the violent manipulation and genocides and the strong connection between each member kept their legacy alive. They are particular about being thankful for all that they have, and therefore through storytelling they assure of paying tribute to their past, present and the future, which means they educate their young of continuing the teaching of the heritage. The so called healing stories also were created to let the tribal people fix their wounds from the past and to positively return to the presence. It teaches them to forgive, to gain the strength of the negative experiences and to convert them into thoughts of hopefulness and positivity. Nowadays, unfortunately, this tradition is not as well preserved as it used to be in the past. Anyways, the preservation of this custom remains of great importance and is the cultural pride of each American with Native background.

⁴ Wisdom of the Black Elk



Figure 36. Graphic representation of allegories, where forces of nature are represented as a person



Figure 37. Graphic representation of stories, which teach of the arrival of the horse onto the continent



Figure 38. Graphic representation of stories, which teach of tricksters and magicians, who were mainly represented as animals and who always accomplished through their cleverness everything they set their mind to

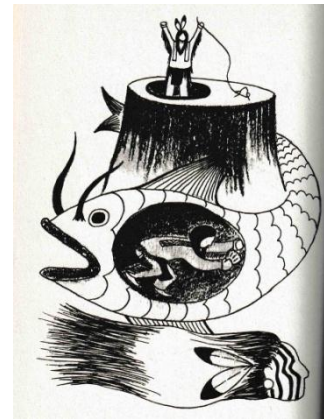


Figure 39. Graphic representation of stories, which teach of the heroes and heroines, whereas similarities between these and other cultures may be noticed



Figure 40. Graphic representation of animal stories, where animals play the same role as humans, they do not usually involve any people



Figure 41. Graphic representation of stories, which teach of times, when animals lived as equals to humans



Figure 42. Graphic representation of stories, which teach of the first contact with the Europeans

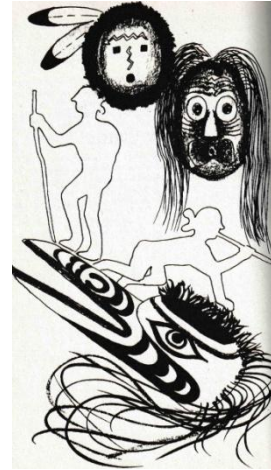


Figure 43. Graphic representation of stories, which teach of the peaceful times before the white man came

II. Empirical approach

7 Creation Stories

7.1 Emerging to the Upper World – Acoma creation story

Pueblo Natives commonly believe that the earthly life started when the man kind entered upper world from the worlds below. One of the theories why the Acoma Pueblo was built on the top of the mesa is, that “lower world” was where other people built their homes. But proud Acomas wanted to live in the upper world. However, not only the pride led to the decision to live on the top of the mesa, it was also its strategic location for defense and isolation.

The Native tribes have a widely spread tradition of storytelling. They have a legend for many world’s phenomena. As the tribes did not have the written form of the language, the legends, traditions, rules and its instructions were kept through telling stories. They like any other nation in the world, created these stories to explain the unknown. The following folktale is about how the people of Acoma explain the migration of the mankind to the earthly life as we know it.

At a place called Sipapu, somewhere in the world below, two girls were born. Nobody knew how long the world already existed, but it did. Growing up in the darkness of the underworld slowed down the process of reaching adulthood. As it eventually happened, a spirit called Tsitcinako spoke to them. The spirit taught them to speak, and also explained that the world in the light is still not ready for them to live in. They had to be patient. Their father Utc’tsiti, who was said to come from Tyunami – four skies above, sent the girls presents in baskets. These presents were small figures and images of animals and seeds of all kinds. He wanted them to take these items to the world of light. Some of the seeds were to plant a tree, which would enable the girls to climb up to that world. As it was dark, the trees were slow to grow. By the time they grew tall enough, it was believed that the world of light was ready for the two girls to bring thee life there. The tree has pushed through the ground, leaving a small hole through which light leaked in. As this hole wasn’t big enough to crawl through, the girls brought the image of an animal called dyu-p (badger) to life. It helped them to make the hole bigger and as a reward he was promised to live a happy life in the world of the light. The next animal tawai’nu (locust) was to round the edges of the

hole, so that the girls would not injure themselves while climbing up. Both of these animals were asked to wait before they could enter the world of the light. But the locust was too tempted. It said the land was tsi'iti (flat). Since then the animal has been called Tsi-k'a. As a punishment for its disobedience it had live underground of the upper world, die and come to life again each season. Tsitctinako told the girls they were ready to enter the world of light, and told them to head in the direction ha'nami (east). There they had to pray to the sun and sing a creation song so that the life in the upper world could start. The two animals climbed up the pine trees which the girls planted, and entered the world of light followed by the girls. Sun burnt their eyes, as they never saw it before. Tsitctinako explained which the other cardinal points are, too. Before they started to pray the women gave each other names – one was called Ia'tik (Bringing to life) the other was Nao'tsiti (More of everything in the basket). She got that name because she seemed to receive more presents from their father. Tsitctinako revealed to the women, that their father Utc'tsiti created the sun, the sky, the world and other things, but he missed something. Therefore he brought the women to life to rule over the world and gave them the presents while they were still living in the darkness. When the night came the women were worried that they were betrayed. It was dark and cold, just as they knew it from the underground. Tsitctinako explained that that time in the world of light was used for resting and that the sun would rise the next morning in the ha'nami (east) again and set in the evening in the nuk'um' (down, west). The women then chose which clan they wanted to establish and to belong to. Nao'tsiti created the clan called the Sun clan, and I'atik the clan Ya'ka – Hano, or the Red Corn clan. Now it was the time to bring everything that was in their baskets to life. Only this way they could start ruling the whole world. Tsitctinako explained that the seeds were for planting corn, which would provide them food. The corn still had to be cooked, but the women did not understand what it meant. They first realized what it meant once they experienced burning fire when the sun was setting. They understood that from now on they would have to prepare food for themselves, that Utc'tsiti would no longer nourish them. They learned how to sing creation songs and the mouse being the first animal they brought to life. With Tsitctinako's help they caught one of the mice and roasted it on the fire. They always offered some food for Utc'tsiti for all he has done for them. Before bringing to life other animals, which could provide them more nourishment, they were told to plant food for them. Therefore they sowed grass wherever they could reach, and created moles, rats and prairie dogs. After that they threw a certain stone and sang the song creation song for the mountains. They threw the pine seeds on the mountains, so that they would be covered by

trees. The spirit told them, that later, after these trees would grow, the women would be able to build houses and homes out of their wood. The women planted the rest of the seeds, and fruit trees, pumpkins, beans and others started to grow. Then they brought larger animals to life – placing buffalos in the plains, deer and elk to the mountains, rabbits into the forests and prairies. They realized that the meat these animals also tasted delicious, so they started hunting. Birds, wildcats, fish, rattles were created, and the women experimented on what could or could not be eaten. Nao'tsiti still had many presents in her basket, and started playing with the idea of creating something more like herself and her sister. Ia'tik did not like this idea, and they agreed to realize the plan of the one, who was going to be struck by morning sunshine first. Therefore Ia'tik went to a white bird called co'eka (the magpie), so that he would create a shade of the sun and enable it to shine on Nao'tsiti first. The women were growing more and more apart. Utc'tsiti didn't allow the women to think about having children, but Nao'tsiti started feeling lonely. In the right time, once the world of the light was prepared for it, the women could be accompanied by other humans. Tsitctinako had not received a message from the father that it was the time to create a human, yet. Nao'tsiti talked to a snake, which told her to fight her loneliness by giving birth to a child to her likeness. She conceived a child with the rainbow, as the drops of the rain by which it was created fell into her. Nao'tsiti gave birth to two baby boys, but as a punishment for her disobedience Utc'tsiti took Tsitctinako away from the women. Surprisingly, the children were so happy that they barely noticed that Tsitctinako was gone. Nao'tsiti didn't want to have two children and gave one to Ia'tik, who brought him up. As the boys became men, the women separated. Ia'tik refused Nao'tsiti's offers to create what was left in her basket. Nao'tsiti migrated east, to create the rest of the presents, whereas the other sister stayed with Tia'muni (the boy) at the same place. He became her husband and they conceived many children. Ia'tik created spirits to rule of all the seasons, as now she was tired of ruling everything by herself. The spirit of winter brought things to life on the top of the mountains in the wintertime and brought snow, the spirit of spring was to warm up the world, the spirit of summer would heat it, and the spirit of autumn was responsible for making the fresh smells of spring and summer disappear. Later Ia'tik created gods – one was called Tsitsenuts. He became the ruler of all the other gods⁵.

⁵ Paraphrased (Erdoes 1984:72-93)

7.2 The Navajo Tale of Creation

In the previous chapters we mentioned that in the lands of Dinetah the ruins of hogans which dated back to 1000 A.D.s were excavated. We also pointed out that this was not the original Navajo land. The Navajo tribes were moving in search of the land where they finally settled down. It was bordering on the Pueblo tribes that were also known as the Kisani. In the creation story, the Navajo accompanied by the Kisani, were forced to march through four worlds to finally be able to settle in the fifth one. The Navajo creation story distantly resembles the Christian story of Adam and Eve as the Navajo were chased away from previous worlds because of their sins.

At the beginning, people who later became the Navajo were not humans. They were the Insect People who could speak and had some other human characteristics. The First World they lived in was an island surrounded by the ocean. They had four rulers, (Tgaltl'a Gallé (Blue Heron), Adini Dzil (White Mountain Thunder), Ch'al (Frog), and Tieholsodi (the Water Monster) who were very angry because the Insect people lived in sin. The rulers soon lost their patience, sent the waters which flooded the island, and chased the Insect People out from the First World. The only way to escape was to fly up towards the sky. There they encountered a blue creature that led them to a crack in the sky through which they could enter the Second World of Tgashji'zhidine (the Swallow People).

The Insect People appointed two Locusts to become their carriers and messengers. After two and a half days the Locusts reached the end of the world which was on a top of a huge cliff. They did not meet any people like themselves there. But realizing that the two tribes – the Swallow people and the Insect People have much in common, they became friends and created brotherhoods and sisterhoods. Unfortunately, this did not last long. Again the Insect People did not manage to live without sin. After 23 days one of them had an intercourse with the chief of the Swallow People, so they had to leave the Second World. The Locust led them to the sky and Nilch'I' (the wind) helped them to find the entrance and get into the Third World.

This world was yellow and was inhabited by the Grasshopper People, who lived in the holes by the river. The same carriers were sent out again to find if the Grasshopper People would welcome them. As they had the same language, they merged into one tribe, but after 23 days the Insect People committed adultery again and the Grasshopper Chief forbade

then to eat his food and breathe his air. So they were forced to leave the Third World. Four Grasshopper People left with them.

While they were flying the Red Wind led them to the West where they found the entrance to the Fourth World. This world was of black and white colours. There did not seem to be any inhabitants there. The only thing they could see were tall mountains covered by snow, pointing in four cardinal directions. The carriers flew to each peak. They found out that the North Peak was a home to some creatures, who were real people who had fields and were hunters. These were the Kisani (Pueblo) People. They accepted the Insect People and offered them food. They also set the borders within which the Insect People could have their home and taught them how to farm and hunt. The Insect People did everything not to be chased away again. Soon they even met the gods of these lands, who later decided to change the Insect People into humans. The Gods put two sacred buckskins on each other and put white and yellow corn between the skins to start the creation ceremony. The wind brought Mirage People who walked on the skins and changed the white corn into the First Man (Atse Hastiin) and yellow corn into the First Woman (Atse Asdzan). This is the belief of the Navaho -the Wind was the one who gave the Navaho life.

The First Woman delivered five pairs of twins. The first twins were hermaphrodites. She delivered a pair every four days and each pair matured in four days. After the birth of the last twins the Gods allowed the people to live with them and taught them how to survive, how to pray and how to carry on ceremonies. Then, the twins and Mirage People formed families and every four days each wife had a child, who matured in four days. Soon the Fourth World was full of people who lived in harmony and peace. They lived in peace with the Kisani, too. Together they built a dam and ditches and started new fields. The hermaphrodite twins were the guardians of the peaceful life. As they have a lot of time, they started making pottery and a wicker bottles. After eight years, the sky and the ground clashed together and a Coyote and a Badger were created.

The First Woman argued a lot with the First man, as she believed that women did not need men. She never thanked him for providing for the family, so the First Man decided to leave her and live across the river. The Kisani men and women the Navaho men and the hermaphrodites followed him taking the tools from the women. The men mingled with Kisani women, opened new fields and became great hunters. This helped create a successful and stable community.

At first the Navaho women were very well off. However, by the third winter they started to lose strength as they had no meat to eat. They also became sexually frustrated and carried on homosexual relationships. Out of one Naye's monster was born. Women desperately tried to get the men back. They tried to swim across the river, but were not successful. One day the mother and two daughters tried again. The mother made it, but the daughters were pulled under the water by the water monster Tieholsodi. As the men tried to save the women they got into the underwater world. The room in the north was where Tieholsodi kept the human women and his two children. The Coyote, the child of the Sky stole his children and sold them to the humans. The desperate father sent flood and destruction to the mankind. The humans ran to the top of the highest mountain in the hope there might be another world above the clouds. But nobody could help them to plant a tree which would grow tall enough to reach the sky. All of a sudden two men appeared – an old one and a young one. The young one planted reeds that grew tall and hollow. Inside the People found refuge. They sent the Great Hawk, the courier, to look for a crack in the sky. He found something, but he needed to gather all the grabbing animals to dig through very hard impenetrable sky. The animals helped him to open the crack and the Hawk, followed by the Locust entered the Fifth World. He found himself on a small island surrounded by water. After the inhabitants of the Fifth World – the Grebes interrogated him to find out if his people could be accepted to their World, they allowed him to bring the whole population. Here the Kisani started their tradition of building adobe houses and the Navajo started constructing their hogans. The Coyote, the child of the Sky, taught the Kisani and the Navaho the faith,

The population grew and the Fifth World became overpopulated. There were too many people there so it became necessary to sacrifice some. This is how Death came to the Navaho lands. Until today the Navaho believe that Coyote is a messenger of death. The People also found out that the disasters were brought upon them because of the stolen Tieholsodi's children. So they threw them into the hole through which they came to the Fifth World. Immediately the waters around them sunk and they could feel safe again.

It is said that the Kisani (Pueblo People) would always have a better harvest. It is because the Coyote was very impatient when dividing the land in the Fifth World. The young man who helped the People to get to the Fifth World became a holder of the Sun and the old man the holder of the Moon. But the night would not change into day without sacrifices –

death of old and sick is the payment to those two men. It has become a frequent visitor as the old, sick and weak have to die to make space for the newborns.⁶

7.3 The Comanche story of creation

"One day the Great Spirit collected swirls of dust from the four directions in order to create the Comanche people. These people formed from the earth had the strength of mighty storms. Unfortunately, a shape-shifting demon was also created and began to torment the people. The Great Spirit cast the demon into a bottomless pit. To seek revenge the demon took refuge in the fangs and stingers of poisonous creatures and continues to harm people every chance it gets."⁷ (Unknown, 2004)

⁶ paraphrased (Locke, 2010:58-80)

⁷ cited from <http://www.indigenouspeople.net/commcrea.htm>

Insights and Opinions of the Tribal Members

7.4 Pueblo

The following chapter is a collection of ideas and insights on the current maintenance of the original Pueblo culture. Members of the Zuni and Hopi tribes offered their answers to all of our questions about the storytelling, and the extent to which the oral teachings had an influence on their life or the life of their peers in general. Even though other tribes – Taos and Acoma, were the ones to be introduced in the work before, these two interviews served as the most educative and valuable ones of the collected Pueblo tribes answers.

One of the approaches to establish a contact with the members of the Pueblo indigenous nation was to turn to native cultural centres. It was expected that the secrecy of the information will be strong especially here, but with the help of the centre’s cultural education specialist the request was forwarded to **Kevin Beltran**. What interested him particularly about this task was the similarity in the study field of him and this thesis. Kevin, 23 (half of Zuni Pueblo and half Salvadoran), is currently attending the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, where he studies Intercultural Communication. There is a high possibility, that this form of helping a person from the other side of the world was interesting for him as well, as intercultural approaches to solving problems (or given tasks) is one of the focuses of his studies. For a closer and better connection to his university, Kevin recently moved to the city, whereas the rest of his family still resides in the Zuni Pueblo, where they have lived for many generations. Many of the elder Pueblo’s inhabitants speak the “Zuni” still quite well, whereas this orally transmitted language is very unique as is spoken only within this one Pueblo. The rest of the Pueblos speak either Tewa, Tiwa, Towa or Keres.

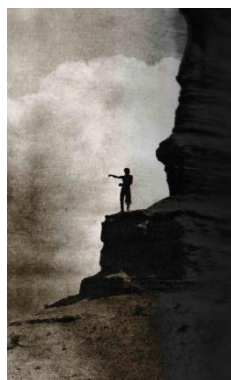
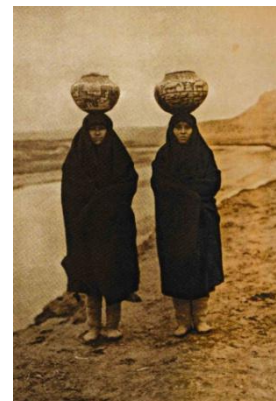


Figure 44. Zuni girls carrying water.

Figure 45. Zuni man standing on a rock welcoming the sunrise

Both photographs taken by Edward. S. Curtis



The Zuni schools were catholicised after the arrival of the Spaniards, which caused that the history of the tribal nation was not often presented to the children and Kevin therefore learned of his ancestors and of the past only through the elders. From the age of 6-14 he attended the so-called St. Anthony Indian School (whereas one cannot oversee the false designation, which we already know is very disturbing for the Natives – “Indian”). As he grew older and realised all the pain the Natives went through, he started feeling more responsible but mainly proud of what the nation has accomplished. As a child, growing up in a Catholic school, being a Zuni was not of such significance for him, but later on he learned of the courage of his people and therefore chose to have a job in the Pueblo Cultural Centre, where they cherish and teach of the Pueblo nations’ culture, art, traditions, history, etc. This is also his tribute to the elders that taught him of hard work and endurance; what they fought and suffered for is what he now hopes to preserve. This helps him also to pay the University tuitions, but mainly offers him the space to become a storyteller himself. He guides tours and teaches about his but also other Pueblos.



Figure 46. Zuni arts and crafts. Here we can see the common occurrence of basketry, which was typical for many Pueblos

With a not very traditional background (due to the learnt catholic manners), Kevin also has difficulties to identify the stories’ significance in his life. Although the ones his grandparents narrated had been educative, entertaining and very interesting. He used to be told myths as a child when he was disobedient, that taught him of respect and of what could happen if he didn’t follow the honourable behaviour. Nowadays he still remembers the feeling and impression such story left on him, and therefore decided that it will be respectable and wise to keep the lessons they offered always on his mind. Out of all the stories that he ever heard, his most favourite one is the Zuni origin story, which describes the migration through the series of underworlds and the emerging to the current world through the waterfall in the Grand Canyon (notice that these creation stories have lot of similarities, but details always differ). Once arriving to the world in the Grand Canyon,

they started to look for the centre place, where the tribe could settle. This was shown to them by the Great Spider Spirit, who stretched her legs across the whole surrounding land to find its middle, which was directly there, where her heart was. The beliefs that people originally come from beneath the earth help him understand the Zuni's strong connection to the world. This can also explain the secret behind the tribal bravery – the fact that they are standing so tall and steady.

Erica Kallestewa, 25, Hopi from the mother's side, and Zuni from the father's, carries on with the Hopi culture, as both tribes are of a matriarchal disposition. She lives in one of the 12 tribal villages, Nu Hotvelpe (eng. Hotevilla), which expands on a very dry plateau in North East Arizona, that is surrounded by the Navajo land. This village consist of around 800 people, so keeping a secret here and being private is rather impossible. The majority of these villages are distributed on three table mountains. These villages were moved there in the 17th century during the Pueblo Revolt, to offer security to the nation. Each of them is famous for different artistic approach – the Third Mesa (Erica's home) is known for the production of wicker baskets, and almost all the women in Erica's family engage themselves to it. The First Mesa is known for its' bright pottery (mainly using colour combinations as yellow on orange or black on orange), and the Second Mesa produces coil baskets. The Hopis used to be very skilled in mining and agriculture, which changed due to the arrival of the newcomers in the 16th century. They also had very specific religious ceremonies, but the Spanish missionaries attempted to Christianise these.

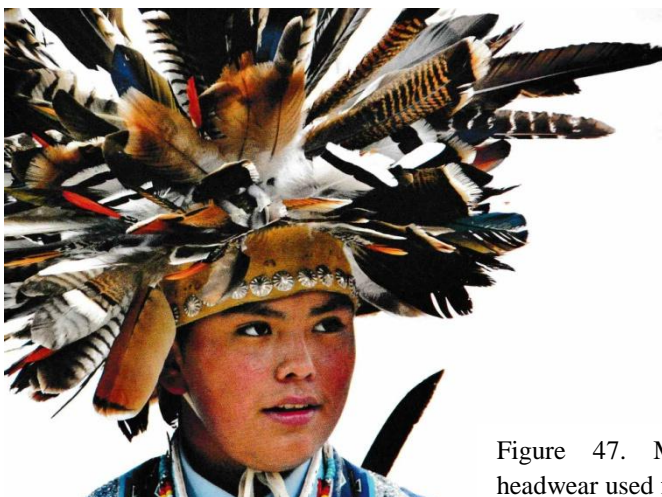


Figure 47. Majestic Hopi feather headwear used for ceremonial dances

Reaching out for Erica offered the richest amount of personal insights on the topic to the thesis. As mentioned before, it was not easy to persuade members of individual tribes to

help with this project, whereas there was no former trust built between her and the recipients. Erica was forwarded to the research, as one of the best students at the University of Northern Arizona, department of Applied Indigenous Studies, major in Environmental Studies. Her traditional way of life offered a much better understanding of the culture, of the mentality, of the ceremonies, etc. *“Good evening from Arizona, Malvina Feriancova. I'm happy to help in any way I can. The work you are doing is something that interests me greatly and I will do my best to answer any questions you have in detail.”* (Kallestewa, 2017, p. III) These were the first words of breaking the ice, from which it was clear, that this young woman will be a great enrichment not only for the project, but also for the author's future cognition.

If it weren't to the fearless reaction to the help request on the university of Mrs. Marina Vasquez, the research would most probably have to take a different direction. It was she that gave us the hope and said that this work matters, as it is important that also people in Europe expand their knowledge about indigenous nations and maybe start realising that not only were the sea voyagers of the past heroes, but also feared predators. Mrs. Vasquez herself did not answer to the given inquisitives of the questionnaire, as she is of the Mayan nation, coming from Guatemala. On the other hand, she grew interested in this research, as she has always been curious about the European cultures and saw some similarities between the effects on the humanity of the horrific events of for example the 2nd World War and of what had happened in the Americas. She knows therefore about how striving for power the Europeans can be, and that not only they execute their power in their colonies, but also in their homeland. She used to read a lot about Hitler, which awoke her interest in learning German, and later a little bit of French and Italian, too. Nowadays her main language is Spanish (which she used to hate due to the initial anger towards the Spaniards) and English, but English still causes her sometimes troubles. This is one of the examples of cooperation with Erica – Erica is Marina's language editor when it comes to publishing materials for the university about the indigenous ethno-botanical studies, which is Marina responsible for.

Marina calls Erica a princess, which is the designation for the powerful bond that these two ladies have together. Erica is one of Marina's most favourite students, who approached her in 2014, because she heard of the healing effects of the remedies she prepared from the plants from her homeland in Guatemala had. Here we can notice a great example of the power of the oral tradition. The Mayan language has never been written down, and some of

it was just carved into stones back in Guatemala. The Mayan ancestors therefore spread the teachings from mouth to mouth, teaching the descendants of the spiritual meanings of plants, objects, occurrences, etc. The teaching was so powerful, that Marina was able to learn it all from her grandma's stories and now processes the knowledge into publications and helps people to fight their health problems. Conventional medicine, antibiotics and other tons of pills that Erica used to fight her illness never helped her as much as Marina's home-prepared medicine did. Here we were given some tips how to heal medical issues, which taught us of the generosity of an indigenous individual member – as something that should or could stay a secret was to be spread further (to Europe) in order to help. The medicine that Marina prepared for Erica was a tea that was a combination of various herbs that her grandmother used to prepare – it was called Nana's Tea. Miraculously these teas made Erica feel much better, and it is not only due to the obvious healing effects of the herbs, but also for the strong belief in the traditional medicine and its spirituality. Realising the possibility of spreading this knowledge further, Erica learned from Marina and now knows herself how to prepare this medicine.

The close relationship of these ladies is virtuously manifesting the interpersonal connections among the tribal members. Even though throughout the history they were all experiencing struggles and battles, mainly for the power and survival in general, they feel even much more bonded to each other than ever before. Their common misery has taught them to form a stronger society, which currently one can observe for example at the protests by the Standing Rock of the Sioux (Lakota people), in Dakota. To sum up what this issue is about, the Dakota Access Pipeline, stretching from North Dakota, through the whole state, Iowa, etc. (see Figure 48) ending up in Illinois; is a direction ordered from the current American president – Donald Trump – to build the most “environmental” and most “sensitive” way of transporting crude oil to the American final consumers. Building it means destroying archaeological relics, disrupting sacred lands, but mainly endangering the limited sources of fresh water that are available on these reservation lands. There is an idea from the Army Corps that none of this is true, there have been around 400 meetings with the tribal chiefs of 55 tribes where it was “apparently” discussed that the route of the pipelines does not cross the Standing Rock Sioux reservation. In this case the only obscure fact would be, that there are continues protest of the Native Americans, who are also supported by many Anglo-Americans.



Figure 48 The route of the planned Dakota pipeline

Water is life, and therefore tribes from all over Americas gather in this area to protect the water resources. Even people from the Mayan origins, from Guatemala where Marina comes from, come to the Standing Rock to support these objections. Among the native communities there is a lot of sharing due to the similar value system, and therefore 125 tribal members gathered here. The elicited rage shows, that the government, or those who have the money do not pay much attention to the fact, that they disregard the treaties that were historically signed. It is important to protest against it, because otherwise the indigenous heritage will not be respected, neither the borders that the government themselves ascribed to the people will be.

Also due to the abuse of the promised, Erica decided to study the environmental preserving as her major. Sustainability of natural resources is something that the elders in her community taught her to cherish, and seeing that the government and the new president do not respect this, makes her and every other Native American quite worried about the future. People are seeing, that Mr. Trump enjoys misusing the power the presidency gave him, which is in Erica's eyes something that brings the common spirit of the people in the USA down.

To focus a little bit more on the individual aspects of the Hopi culture that Erica was born into, let us turn first to the Hopi language. As mentioned in the theoretical part, the Hopi is one of very few of the Pueblos that speak their own – Hopi language. Being brought up very traditionally, Erica learned to speak it for the most part, too. Their tradition is that when a baby is born in a Hopi village, all the aunties gather around it to wash its' hair. Therefore a child can have up to 20 names, but one is the main one. Erica's Hopi name is "*Nu Paatsivewmana*" – which can have two translations, the first one can be "I am the morning due on corn" and the second one is "twin water deer". Erica was born of twins, and this name encounters them both, and is significant for the representation of their strong

bonding. Her brother's name is "*Puuhukoyva*" which exact meaning we did not learn, as usually the meaning and hidden message of the name can be private to each individual.

The migration of the very first original indigenous people caused the separation and division into various tribes, within which a clan system was established. One clan to migrate towards the east where they saw a very significant sunrise is called the "Sun forehead" clan. Erica's clan is called Kookopwuungwa and means a bird, specifically a sparrow, and this bird according to her village and her family brought the people into the 4th world – which is the current world. Marriages within clans are not allowed, but if a young person manages to find someone, to whom he is not related by clan, he may marry him. The marriages themselves are not arranged, but the time of it happening is always assigned by the mother or grandmother. For example if a girl has had a boyfriend for a couple of months and the female ancestors decide it is time to get married, the girl will have to get ready. The marriages take several months, in order for the future spouses to learn how to live compatibly. No one has rather tried out yet to walk out of the wedding preparations, as it could cause great humiliation to all the participated parties. During these months the husband is required to braid a rope for the bride, whereas the bride plaits baskets for him. Erica's clan, Kookopwuungwa, is considered an unusually aggressive clan. The story she was told by her grandfather about her ancestors was, that when new clans came into the village they would have to ask the head leader for the permission to move into the village. Her ancestor, probably her great great great great uncle, asked for the permission and was denied several times. This was because the leader heard somewhere that this clan was aggressive. Hopis are viewed as peaceful people and the story goes, that the leader told that if he allowed this clan to enter the village then the village would be given some warriors to protect the village. They were also told that they had a very powerful deity to look after them. The Navajos and Hopis were and still are kind of a on and off group, the Navajos raided the Hopis in several occasions throughout the history, but for the most part they have been able to live quite peacefully. The conflict between these two nations was mainly caused because of the draught. When draught happens tribes are forced to raid the other tribes for survival. And as Hopis are so good in storing their harvest they can survive the droughts very well. The Navajos were raiding the village and the chief saw that there were too many of them and that they could possibly be wiped out if they didn't get any help so the chief asked Erica's ancestor for the help of his warriors and the deity of theirs. Erica is particularly proud of that story. And there is an

evidence that this is true, because the further one's fields are from the main village, the more danger it can mean – the Navajos could raid one any time. There was always the fear of death or theft. Erica's family's fields are very far – very close to the Navajo land. That is the reason why her grandfather used to say that they are the bravest Hopis because they are the ones closest to the Navajo land.

Growing up in the Nu Hotvelpe, attending an indigenous original school was the right choice for her proper education in Native American history and culture. These were not dedicated just to one specific nation, though and educated mainly a wide range of Navajo and Pueblo children (as these reservation border on each other), but there were also a couple of white children attending that lived in close areas with their families. Later she attended a private high school in New Mexico for Natives only, where the history was discussed in great details. This is where Erica learned of Popé (the runner and organiser of the Pueblo Revolt in 1692, whose statue is built in the school's yard), the Revolt itself, the struggles, the epidemics, the slaughtering, the treaties, etc. These schools formed a great background for understanding who she is and where she comes from, but it was her grandfather who offered an even closer insight on this matter.

Stories about the migration to the world in which people live now were told to her by her grandfather, who was a storyteller. He also explained to her, that this world should be the one without corruption and evil, and that is why the ancestors settled here. The first world was dark, and each one after that was becoming brighter. This is an evidence of the belief that before the introduction of the human sin, this world was a perfect place of virtue. All the younger generations and descendants of Erica's grandfather were those to listen to his teachings. In the winter, which is a designated story telling time, people held the respect towards the elders by listening to their teachings. Even now Erica's father or uncles look for life advice in his wise words. He always talked mainly of the old ways, and how life used to be approximately 50 years ago. In these times, it was much easier to protect the culture and not be anyhow affected by the outside impacts, as the roads were not developed and there was a limited access to and from the villages. He narrated stories about the fields, about the social gatherings, games the people used to play. For example there was this event where certain families hosted the games, where they gave out gifts- mainly ceremonial items, like ropes, sash, moccasins (the Hopi footwear made out of leather),

value pottery. All the men attending this were on the horses and the other villagers were watching. These men rode across the village to gather these valuable items, and the first one to arrive to this plaza with the item in their hands could keep it. It is an honourable deed, to share with valuables; it is generous and respectful towards the community. Another event that Erica's grandfather used to talk about was the so called Namitunatyagathering for the benefit of all, which was an event that happened at the time where there was time to plant or gather crops. The men, women and children invested a lot of time on their crops – because these nourished them throughout the whole year. People went to a certain person's field – especially to those that were elderly. Within one day they did all the work, because if everybody helps then the work gets done very quickly. And when it came to flourishing the harvest was shared with everybody. The ancestral behaviour displays the consociations that teach of honour and respect, and therefore Erica believes it is important to tell the stories to the younger generations, so that they can continue in being a virtuous nation. Nowadays Erica believes that these forms of brotherly relations among the nations are a very small bit in recession. What bonds the members today, is the common attempt to come up with a solution for problems that occurred first in the contemporary era. These appear mainly due to the ongoing identity crisis that is caused by the assimilation into the still quite recent introduction of the European culture. The tribes tend to lose the sense of community, which turns some individuals to coping mechanisms such as alcohol, drugs, etc.

The Hopi nation is known also for their numerous Kachina dances that they organise often on the city plaza (square). The dances and the executorial songs were orally transmitted and express prayers for the gift of rain, for everything to bloom, for there to be a good harvest, but mainly it is an event, that brings the whole society back together.

One of the points of the questionnaire for the respondents was how they themselves preserve and teach the culture to the younger ones. Erica says that this is for her one of the easiest and most honourable tasks, as the children are so eager to know and to dress up as Kachinas. She tells the children the stories her grandfather used to tell her, and she dances and sings with them, too.

7.5 Navajo

Mr. Lawrence Shorty of the Dine Nation currently lives in Washington, DC, where he married a lady of German origin. He spent most of his childhood in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Until the age of 4 he attended the Two Grey Hills Head Start School in Newcomb, NM which was a Navajo Nation administered pre-school-type of school. In Albuquerque he enrolled to an Apache Elementary school. It is generally known, that American educational institutions ascribe a mascot to all the schools and give a name to the students, too. This one also had one (Mr. Shorty rather names it a figure-head than a mascot) and it was an Apache Crown Dancer. The pupils were called Apache Sun devils. Even though the history of the natives was discussed in his elementary school, he believes that the knowledge he has now was acquired mainly from the narrations of his grandfather and his classmates.

The language that the Navajos speak is called Dine Bizaad. As Navajo are still one of the most numerous tribes, there is also statistically the highest number of those, who speak the language fluently. Mr. Shorty himself isn't one of those, but as he also took courses on the cultural heritage of his tribe in his college, he learned some basic words and simple expressions. When he was a small child he had trouble to cope with the fact, that non-Natives called him an "Indian". He couldn't understand the ignorance being called the name, which belonged to a completely different nation. He never became close to those, who have some native background and called themselves "Indians". He was angry with them for their carelessness, and he realised that it is derogatory for the communities. He decided to keep by his side those who knew that they should refer to the tribes as to "Natives", "Skins", or "Indigenous" people.

Mr. Shorty's Navajo heritage comes from his grandfather's side of his family. His grandfather used to joke around a lot. From this part of the family stems Lawrence's Navajo heritage from. For example (as a member of the tribe of the so "Southwest Nation") he used to call the natives of the Great Plains the "Plain People", which was a satirical comment about their appearances, which were not, according to him, truly representative. Besides that, the grandfather's role in the family was to connect with his children and grandchildren through telling stories about life. These stories were supposed to set his ancestors on the correct life path, or direct them towards the correct life decisions. The classic winter-time stories were narrated less frequently, as they were

season based. He would tell stories about life on any occasion at any place. Nowadays as Mr. Shorty attends the gatherings of his tribe, he experiences the fact that anyone who feels like being a storyteller or has any wisdom to share can do so. He also mentions that he admired his grandfather for his gift of detailed description. Therefore Mr. Shorty found each of the stories he used to say very sensational. The grandfather would warn every other story teller if they lacked any part of the narration, because he was worried that the wisdom would not be precisely spread and understood.

There are more possible options of how one interprets the stories of creation of his own tribe or village. Therefore, more versions and understandings occur quite often. Mr. Shorty was taught the version of the Creation Story, which teaches the Natives mainly to value what one has, as it describes how unbearable life was at some point. This misery caused the Diné people to leave, led by a figure-head, whose name was “Changing Woman”. This woman was responsible for giving the option to the nation – either to change or to leave. This should also be an ideal, or the moral that comes out of this story. Lawrence says that this lesson is not very popular among the nation, as it also suggests that if they are not willing to assimilate to the newcomers and to meet the current situation, they should walk away and not try to maintain the land. On one hand it designs and craves for peace, but on the other, why the newcomers should not be those who leave if they did not want to adjust to what was already built on the lands of the Americas.

Mr. Shorty has a son of his own now, who is 6 years old, and to whom he is the storyteller. The famous trickster that often appears in the classic oral stories narrated mainly in the winter times is a Coyote. To fool other animals and creatures, it asks around for help a lot. As far as to ask for help was Mr. Shorty brought up differently. He was taught that in order to acquire what he wanted or needed, he should ask for it only once. In case the person disagreed to help him, it meant that it should have been like that. His parents raised him like this, as they were a strict, military family used to many rules from their services. But after hearing this story from his grandfather, he started thinking of perseverance as not being a shame, the contrary is the opposite – of it being a great virtue. Of course it should not be misused for tricking people, but for reaching out for things one really wants to accomplish in life. He first started truly applying this moral into his everyday life once he saw that his son is persistent in anything he does (whether it comes to asking questions, asking for help or following one’s ideas). His son decided not to apply the strict rules of Lawrence’s military parents, but rather to focus on the teaching that his grandfather taught

his father. Particularly the fact that his son chose to follow the Navajo teachings is what makes Mr. Shorty proud.

One of the traditions of the Navajo people that Mr. Shorty shared and originates in a traditional Navajo story is about the first person who makes the baby laugh. This person then has to throw a party, as laughter signalizes that the baby is fully a human. This traditional story also points out, that there is no life of value without laughter, and that the Navajo people pursue happiness and satisfaction. The one who makes the baby laugh and throws the party, invites other villagers to see the baby's tears of laughter, which give away salt and the salt is life sustaining substance, which is beneficial for all the attending. In Lawrence's family it was his wife that succeeded to make the baby laugh first.

Mr. Shorty's favourite story, and also a story he will explain to his 6 year old when he starts wondering about the natural circle of life is as follows: *„...prior to the creation of the Fourth World and the sacred mountains and its associated colours, seasons, and life-cycles, a proposal was made for life to continue without end. The first beings sought to ensure this through a ceremony that involved a piece of wood, water, and an anxious crowd. The proposal was that if a selected piece of wood did not sink when dropped into water during the ceremony, then life would continue without end, which is what the first beings in this world wanted. Coyote, a trickster figure in Diné cosmology who is sometimes called “one who can do nothing right” contested the wisdom of this desire and action. Coyote argued that the earth would not be able to support an uncontrolled population nor have the area for enough cultivation to feed everyone. Coyote produced a stone and subverting the words of First Man and First Woman, said that if the stone sank, life would need to end. In the midst of panicked protest and lunges to thwart his action, Coyote plopped the stone into the water and the cycle of life with birth, adolescence, adulthood, old age, and the afterlife that is known as death was established.”(Shorty,2017:IV)*

Mrs. Angela Yellowhair is also one of those, who were brought up a little less traditionally, because of the she did not grow up on the reservation land. The Navajo traditions and culture are therefore not in the forefront of her life. This does not mean that storytelling of the elder hadn't found its' way to reach her. Having the opportunity to speak and evaluate the answers of more members of the Native tribes, it was observed, that “Yellowhair” is quite a common name among the Diné nation. The name's origin, unfortunately, stays unknown. Mrs. Yellowhair is now 41 years old and was born in a

Native American hospital in Tuba City, Arizona. She moved to Westminster, Colorado to exercise her career in healthcare as a “System Ambulatory Risk Manger”. She attended public schools, where she was excited about the fact, that its’ curriculum dealt with some of the Native American history. It was not taught in detail, but at that point it was the only information she could get. As she became an adult and enrolled at the college, she decided to dig a little deeper into the information she got familiar with in junior high and high school. It was not until then that she found out that what she was previously taught were mostly lies. The courses in her college offered a very close insight into the Native American history and Mrs. Yellowhair only grew more and more disappointed about the misconceptions that each Anglo-American child is told. These children barely know the misery the Natives had to go through. They know there was some “Thanksgiving”, when everyone was happy and shared food, etc. The image of a non-Native on the American history is roughly as follows: Europeans came, accidentally caused the deaths of some Natives because of the germs and diseases, there were some minor conflicts, then they didn’t know how to plant crops so they learned from the friendly Natives and then everyone lived side by side peacefully ever after. Even if it is hard for the Whites to cope with the fact that their ancestors were very cruel, it shouldn’t be ignored and forgotten. Each nation, anywhere in the world, if it is the Germans, the Khmers, or whoever else, should live and cope with the fact that the history was not as rose-colored as it still has been presented in schools.

Mrs. Yellowhair’s primary language is English, however she speaks enough of the Diné Bizaad to communicate in it. This she learned from her grandmother, whom she and her brothers used to visit every year for three months when they were small children. Her grandmother lived on a reservation land, and for children from town it was very unusual at the beginning to get used to no running water, electricity, or to the limited access to town. Grandmother Yellowhair was a very well known person in her community – she shared a lot of wisdom and people, not only the family members, would look up to her. At least two or four times a year grandmother Yellowhair would take her grandchildren to the tribal events. She took them to church, to dances, and carnivals, but above all she took them to the tribal ceremonies where stories were sung by medicine men, each of whom could be a healer, a historian and a religious healer at the same time. The grandmother would tell them stories too, but Angela does not consider it a very important part of her childhood. In her opinion it was more or less served to entertain children during long car rides.

As Mrs. Yellowhair became a teenager and preferred to plan her summer holidays on her own, the visits at her grandmothers became less frequent. Nowadays her feeling of being part of the community is a lot different than what it used to be in her childhood. Social media groups are now one of her few contacts with the community and it has been 3 years since she had been to the reservation. In the present day, she does not consider the morals of the stories as those that direct her life path. However she still remembers some of the stories very well; especially the two superstitions - one about the coyote and one about the owl. Angela's people believe that if a coyote passes one's way it means he is warning the person of bad luck, or if an owl is acting strange it means that there will be a death in the family.

7.5.1 Navajo Teaching

In the following part a typical non-spiritual teaching about life will be provided. It is a narration of Helen Tihorn, an elder Navajo lady from Monument Valley, who is spreading the wisdom of life and directions for the younger generations. The narration will be provided in both: English and Diné Bizaad, so that the reader may have an approximate idea of how difficult their language is. The whole story is re-written from an audio record found on a social media group, "Teach Me Navajo"⁸ where Diné people share their stories. This one was found particularly authentic.

"Hello my children, I will like to say some things. From the time one is born you realize things. The time I had my Kinaaldá my mother said to me: „The moment you have your kinaaldá you become a woman“. From that point on I thought of myself as a woman. To this day I still do. Others would tell me, „You are a little girl“I would say, „I am a woman.“ And still do. I was given a husband, blankets were laid for us. A man arrived by horseback and the blankets were set down for us, and then sheet materials were laid out for us and we were wrapped in blanket and we finally were joined in marriage by my mother. She must have seen good in this man. He is a hard working man she must have thought. Some time passed and we obtained our home through hard work. Much like an upward climb of a sandy hill we pushed forward. We worked for our sheep, horses, cows, and then we worked to gather firewood and haul water. We stride for these things also we gained knowledge in making a home, shade homes. You keep pushing forward more and

⁸ Available at URL <<https://www.facebook.com/TeachMeNavajo/videos/1148310378625424/>>

more, then you turn 60 years old and that is the apex of your life. That is when you reach the elder age or the old age. From there you descend back down. You have grandchildren, great grandchildren, great great grandchildren, great great great grandchildren. They are the ones that hold on to you and lead you down the ladder of life. Every year that passes you slide down again it seems. Your children and all the boys and girls hold on to you tightly. It is like they grasp your clothing and your arms and hold on to you as you descend this age ladder. Eventually you become weak and are not able to do anything. I guess you just worn out. It seems as if your body wears out, and suppose that is the way one descends into old age. This is how I see it and think about it. So that is why we have wool carding and wool spinning to support ourselves and also rug weaving which is our only means of support and though one may not be able to do certain things you should always keep yourself occupied. “May I always have strength, may I always have the strength. May I always be well by means of these things,” is what one must think and want. One must continue to do anything that they are capable of doing and keep on doing it, until you reach the point where you cannot do them anymore and are left debilitated from old age. And this is how our days pass and end. So that is how it is, my children, my grand children, boys and girls and to all of you. That is what you would mean by “living”. This is how I understand and what I am talking about. What was and what will be are what I have come to understand. What I speak of is from my own self experience, and this is this I am sharing with you. While you still have your strength do your best. Work and learn to create and manage your life and all things in it. Because once you reach the age of 60 and you begin to lose that strength. Boys and girls, I am grateful that you will remember my words. That is how one should live, always being thankful, even for small things.”

A corresponding translation into Diné language can be found in the appendixes on page VII.

7.6 Comanche

The next group to which we will pay attention are the members of the tribe Comanche. **Mrs. Marla Nauni** was the very first candidate to help with completing the survey, which was focusing on individual's perception of oral traditions and storytelling. All though we know important the stories are, it is interesting to observe that they have been losing on their significance. Indigenous nations live in reservations after signing the historical treaties in order to maintain as much of the culture and traditions as possible. Assimilation with the new culture leads also to its' ongoing vanishing. The cultural identity among people of the indigenous background is disappearing. This is also one of the reasons why nowadays there are very few fluent speakers of the Comanche language in the United States.

A long time ago when animals could talk, the language of the people was spoken, sweet—like sugar. Today, few speak Comanche, its loss—a bitter lesson. That is all⁹. (Unknown, author, 2017)

Mrs. Nauni, contractor, 40, part Comanche and part of Seneca people, has never been taught her native language – “*Numu Tekwa*”. This may be due to the fact, that in her childhood she attended a public school, where they were taught no history or culture of the native tribes and always had to speak English. Growing up in a small town of Cache, Oklahoma and not in a tribal village, she also has not been told many stories. Annually there are organised social gatherings, where the designated story teller teaches the truths of life. The most recent Mrs. Nauni experienced was Mrs. Juanita Pahdopony, who is not only an artist and poet, but also a dedicated educator of the Comanche culture. Mrs. Nauni is always eager to maintain and forward the traditions to other generations. As a child she was taught the tribal traditional dances and the lyrics of Comanche hymns, which she now performs during some ceremonies. She also encourages the youth, as the elders always taught her too, to be proud of who they are, because they were created by the Great Spirit for a purpose.

Juanita Pahdopony, M.Ed, now 70 years old, herself agreed on sharing some of her insights. Other two nations of focus, Navajo and Pueblo, have a much more clear perception of a single creation story. The Comanche have always been very pragmatic and

⁹ cited from wordswithoutborders.org

independent and therefore it came to the point that no one has agreed yet on a single creational Comanche story to be told to public. Juanita herself, one of the popular elder storytellers among the Comanche people, has also been searching since childhood for the answer to this matter and has asked many elders. However, there are still two accounts of the creation that she identifies with. The first one is a story of a Giant chasing small children in the night. The children were alone and asked a buffalo to help them. When the Giant came towards the children the buffalo ran at him and hit him with his horns bucking him up to the moon where he sits today. The other one is a story of an elder woman who is describing the camps of the Comanche from one horizon to another in what later became "Texas Hill Country." The story claims "*We were like the stars*". When Juanita heard this story, she believed it meant that people were in 'great numbers' but also that they originally 'came from the stars' which, could support the 'Big Bang Theory' that life originated from the dust of stars.

Benny Tahmakhera, 55, is a descendant of 2 Comanche Chiefs, Chief Quannah Parker and Chief Wild horse. He later asked to be called only Benny, because the appellation Mr. makes him feel much older than he actually is. His surname means someone who travels or is constantly on the move, which might as well be reference to the migration of the Comanche people towards the south when they separated themselves from the Shoshones. In 2008 he retired from the Marine Corps after 20 years of his honorable service. He served in 3 combat tours in Iraq and 1 tour in Somalia, Africa. Benny was born in Forth Worth, Texas – a city which is a home to more than 800 000 inhabitant. Currently he lives in Cache, Oklahoma, where he met Mrs. Nauni. There they both are a member of the Comanche Nation located in Lawton, Oklahoma. This land was allotted to his ancestors, and therefore it could be claimed, that there are two types of American Indians. Benny considers one group to be those, to whom the land was allotted – e.g. Comanche, and the other group would be those, who remain living in the reservations – e.g. Dinae people (Navajo).

Benny does not belong to those, who fluently speak the *Numu tekwapu* (Comanche language), but the elders managed to teach him many phrases and words. As earlier mentioned, during the assimilation processes into the "new culture", people were forbidden to speak their language. The white man used to say "*Kill the Indian, save the man*". Therefore for the matter of survival and because of the fear of the settlers, many decided to

hide any excessive external evidence of being a Native – and so did the language emerge to extinction too.

“Soobetsu narumui huutsi” means *“Long ago my grandparents told me stories”*. The public school in Chattanooga, Oklahoma, that Benny attended, didn’t teach him anything about his own culture and history. Unless a tribal school, the education system in the US tends to be more or less ignorant to studying these nations. All the knowledge he now has, had been acquired from the story telling that his grandparents lead. They explained to him, how his tribe differs from the others and also what the historical bonds were, but the main lesson he was taught was how to treat people with respect and how to be humble. His passion for understanding his background and being able to teach his descendants and others about it clearly formed his decision of his further life path. He chose to study Native American Studies and American Indian Studies in the University of Oklahoma.

For a nation so small, it is always a miracle that it was possible to preserve its’ heritage. Therefore each member naturally feels a deep pride of where they come from and who they are. It comes with age that people learn to appreciate and respect even more what the elders and their ancestors had to endure in order to perceive their true identity. The elders prepare the younger for their future through the story telling, and one of the reasons is to prevent the obstacles they had to encounter in the past. In comparison to Mrs. Nauri, Benny was brought up in a much more traditional way. He has been taught through storytelling and has regularly listened to his grandfather’s stories which was always very significant for him. They gained on their value as the Comanche language didn’t have an alphabet, and hadn’t it been for oral tradition and storytelling, most of the stories, songs or dances would have been forgotten. There are social gatherings, such as powwows, where people meet to dance, sing and honour their cultures, where the elders publicly teach the youth.

A major value for Comanche people is to keep the tradition and to teach and spread it. For those, who cannot take part on these gatherings, or for those who moved to other places around the world, there are many newsletters that provide stories retold by the elders. This is one of the possibilities of staying close to one owns’ culture and teachings. Benny’s contribution to maintaining the tradition is also very significant. He belongs to an organization called the *“numu teda puka nuh”* which translates to the *“Comanche Little Ponies”*. This society is one of Comanche oldest warrior societies. The origin of this

organization is as follows: When the Comanche were nomads on the southern plains of Comancheria, many times the men and young men would leave the encampments on hunting parties, raids, or journeys. During these times the young boys who were old enough to go on such practices were responsible for protecting the elders, women, children and horse herds left behind. During these absences of the warriors, the camps fell under attack of hostiles. Many of these young boys would experience warfare for the first time as defenders. These young boys were called the “Little Ponies”. This society is still recognized today and participates in many social events in the Comanche communities.

The elders, friends, family and the University taught him enough, to speak knowledgeably of his own culture. He tells stories to children in many schools, and so he himself becomes and elder story teller. Every year in summer, a musical called “Texas” is preformed in Palo Duro Canyon close to the town of Amarillo in northwest Texas. It is about settling Texas by Europeans and their interactions with Native tribes, who struggled to hold on to their traditions. Before the beginning of each show, in front of a big audience of people from many parts of the USA and the world, Benny gives a beautiful speech about the Comanche.

Benny retold us one of his favourite stories called “Fish Tries to Swell up to Become a Turtle”. According to this story, to impress his children, the fish tried to swallow water to become as big as a turtle. This story was told to Benny when he was a child and taught him how important it is to be humble and think twice before making a decision. The moral of the story is to understand who you are. If we try to impress others and pretend we are not what we really are, we start doing foolish things. Each person should be cautious and try not to impress others by anything else then his/her own deeds. We should live our lives in such a way that we could be proud of ourselves. Benny agreed to the previously mentioned fact, that there really are problems to distinguish the one and only Comanche story. He agrees with Mrs. Pahdopony that it is almost impossible to decipher and understand it. Therefore, a new creation story, based on the original Shoshone traditions, has been developed and most of the Comanche nation can identify with it. According to this version, the Comanche came from the Mother Earth, who still continues to provide them with all they need for life.

“To me this is an interesting concept. I have heard many origin stories of many different tribes. There are 2 stories I have heard from one tribe or another. The origin of Indians comes from mother earth or from the stars. This concept can be interpreted in real time. Many people believe in evolution or many believe creation of man by the hand of God. American Indian tribes respect each tribe’s beliefs of their origin. In today’s society there is conflict of your belief for many non-Indians. I have heard much controversy when non-Indians hear of Indian origin stories. Many cannot believe Indians come from the stars or from earth. I don’t think these stories are any more controversial than the Christian beliefs. Christian beliefs claim God created the heavens and earth, Adam and Eve from a rib. The Immaculate Conception is a belief of faith. For me I respect all opinions and personal faiths. I believe respecting my fellow man is the most important virtue of all.”
(Tamakhera, 2017:VI)

Benny also expressed himself that the creation story of the recently developing Comanche tribe pertains to the nation itself. As Mrs. Pahdopony mentioned, discovering the original Comanche creation story is almost impossible for the public (and so it is for some members of the tribes themselves). Therefore many incline to the opinion, that many of the Comanche adopted the Shoshone origin story. The people are believed to come from mother earth who continues to provide us with life. These people believe in a creator who has provided all.

Evaluation of the hypothesis

1)

After laying out the first hypothesis that sounds: “The forced assimilation of the Native Americans in the United States (particularly in this thesis the focus is on the nations of the Southwest - Pueblo and Navajo, and the Great Plains- Comanche), that’s first occurrence is dated to the late 15th / early 16th century, when the first European man entered the American continent, leads the indigenous culture to a gradual downfall. This is caused by the exotic diseases, the suppression of the traditions, the near extinction of the bison, and others.” we reached the conclusion and can state that:

In 1492 the first sailors and settlers stepped on the land of the continent under the leadership of Christopher Columbus. Because of the reason of searching for a new space for Europeans to settle, and because of the possibilities of reaching the sources of natural assets, the cruel extermination and violent assimilation of the indigenous inhabitants took part. Under the guise of catholicization were the religions of the Natives suppressed, as well as there was an attempt to deprive the nations of their so-called “pagan myths”. In case of resistance, the never ending armed conflicts among the newcomers and the Natives took place, or strategies of that were to set the hostility among tribes were highly supported. The exotic diseases also played an important role in wiping out the Native nations from the new found land. The assimilation process was lead in the motto: “Dead Indian, good Indian”. Because of the massive genocides the number of these people sunk rapidly, almost to the point of a complete eradication. It was believed by the Whites, that these actions fought the myths off the earth’s surface. Even in the 20th century, particularly after the 2nd World War, was the keeping of the traditions undesirable and repressed. The state’s administration sent children of a native background to boarding schools, where the Anglo-American educational manners were forcefully taught to them. The forbidden speaking in the tribal languages always led to painful physical punishment. Nowadays we have to point out, that the situation is stabilised and liberalised, and the individual tribal members have a free choice of leading their lives traditionally. The myths, storytelling, traditions, songs, dances, culture etc. Were all preserved thanks to the active oral tradition. Therefore we can conclude, that this hypothesis is confirmed.

2)

After laying out the second hypothesis that sounds: “The knowledge about the north American indigenous culture and history of individual native tribes has been conserved primarily through oral traditions, whereas the American system of primary and secondary schools provides the children false information, or possibly ignores the facts about these tribes overall. The disclosure of the native culture in the form of touristic attractions should facilitate its better understanding, but mostly it presents only its shallow representation.” we reached the conclusion and can state that:

In case the today's generation of infant and youth members of the individual tribes attend a public primary or secondary school, it is more than likely that they do not come across the details of the history and resistance of their ancestors. One of the reasons is also to picture the ancestors in the eyes of the Anglo-American children as of heroes (a clear example could be the celebration of the day of the debarkation of Christopher Columbus on the new continent, which for the Natives is a day of horror and destruction). Many of the respondents of the survey reacted to the question, whether their public school taught them of the background of their tribe, negatively. Alternatively were the provided facts false or distorted. A closer insight on who they actually are and where they come from was given to them first by the higher education in the universities, or by other members living on the native reservations, such as the traditional storytellers, the elders, the medicine men, the fathers, the grandfather, the grandmothers, etc. Later in the last century, the Native villages opened for public and tourism. The original idea was to educate the non-Natives, in order to realise how important it is to preserve the possibility of executing the traditions if the indigenous people. The members of the tribes themselves do not know what kind of attitude they are to engage towards this idea. Their stories teach them of kindness, and therefore they believe that the one, who is willing to acquire enlightenment through observation of their traditional rituals, dances, or songs, is more than welcome to attend these. Nevertheless, the teachings and the hidden messages these rituals carry, must not stay misunderstood. On the other hand, their demonstration in front of people of a non-Native background unfortunately becomes more and more of a commercial understanding. The hypothesis is therefore true.

3)

After laying out the third hypothesis that sounds: “The North American Native inhabitants continue to believe in the truthfulness of their myths and legends, especially in the creation stories, and they take the heed to and follow the particular morals, emerging from the folk tales. Because of this reason are the stories sacred, and they do not like to reveal their meanings/ secrets to the newcomers or non-Natives. For their own safety they guard their secrets, which results mainly from the long lasting bad experience with their reciprocal connections.” we reached the conclusion and can state that:

According to the words of a well-known Czech ethnologist, writer and journalist Mnislav Zelený, 2012, the world of the Natives is completely different to our world we know – the one that is full of technology and people striving for success and personal victories. If one had the opportunity to live in a tribal village for some time, he would get gradually convinced by the women, children, healers or other tribal members, that all their activities, all the space, and all the objects up till the very last grain of sand are sacred and mythical. This is something that unfortunately cannot be said about our materialistic modern world, and one can conclude, that for us nothing is sacred anymore.

It is not easy to understand the argumentative mythological thinking of the Natives, whereas the mythology is closely bound to their activities, nature, weather, animals, plants, hunting, gathering, ceremonies, planting, etc. If one truly wants to understand these, it is necessary to have a deep knowledge of these facts, because otherwise these stories can for the reader become ordinary fables or fairytales. Oral traditions have been employed by indigenous peoples to impart knowledge, and attitudes surrounding them. Many indigenous myths are actually creation narratives and are considered to contain sacred knowledge. One has to understand, that individual ceremonies linked to the creational and other stories (eg. stories about fertilising the soil) have been conserved for many centuries (and hopefully will remain for many further). Since the very beginning of times the indigenous people believe, that through their maintenance the world will be balanced and deprived of corruption and catastrophes. Despite the fact, that the European newcomers have never meant anything positive to the people, they try to stay with them in peace, but expect respect in return.

Because of this secrecy, not even the conduction of the survey was easy to be done. The individual groups that were reached out for help answered mostly as follows (which would

be also the reason why only 20 of 60 asked answered, and only 8 were really willing to help to answer the questions or lead Skype interviews): *“I am not comfortable with your research approach, because it is clear that it will benefit you, but I do not see how it can benefit the communities you are researching, and I fear it may rather have harmful results that perpetuate damaging stereotypes.”* Or *“We cannot conduct any research involving Native American students without the express permission of their whole Nation.”* Or *“These are not questions we are comfortable telling or sharing outside of our own community”*; whereas very few truly tried to verbally assault the author by saying *“People, don’t answer to this girl, she is a scam, no one in her part of the world cares about us”* or *“Forge the connections personally, I am not your servant. It is not fair you even dared to ask me for these services and your lack of proximity makes me feel as if you should rather stop trying to do any research at all.”*

One could have felt that it was fear talking, some expressed secrecy, but those, who helped completing the survey were definitely the nicest, purest and most virtuous people we can come across with. The third hypothesis is therefore, also true.

Conclusion

In the times as far as approximately 14 000 years ago, migrants from northeast Asia and Siberia settled on the Alaskan peninsula to form nations that we know now as the indigenous, native people of the Americas. According to a recent list of the Federal Register from 2015, there are 567 official tribes with a federal recognition only in the United States. This is a topic, which is not usually discussed or even considered in many other parts of the world, but it is important to raise the awareness about it. If it were not to these historical circumstances, the contemporary American society would have been much different, with much less cultural and historical heritage as it has. One of the objectives of the thesis was to demonstrate, to what extent this original culture of the continent is kept or more precisely how it has been oppressed by the arrival of the European new settlers throughout the history and now.

The thesis attempted to highlight some of the historical events that occurred at the clutch of the indigenous people and the European new culture and caused massive controversy. Also the topic of diverse forms of understanding the historical facts is draught. There is a high possibility, that many people are conscious of the facts that affected these tribes, but despite of that are the first voyagers seen as heroes and are celebrated by the majority of the American society. In our eyes acts of heroism are memories of horror in the eyes of any person of a native background. We do not usually realise the brutal events that took place, and therefore it was identified as valuable to dedicate some of the work to the summary of the massive genocides.

The empirical part of the thesis offered information from the first person confessions, whereas we focused on the oral traditions that spread ancient wisdoms from generations to generations. An approach to elaborate events and oral histories of all the recognised tribes would have been impossible to fit into one master's thesis. Therefore, there were 3 designated indigenous nations of North America that we focused our attention to. These were the Navajo, Comanche and Pueblo. One has to realise, that Pueblo nation consists of up to 19 different Pueblo communities, and therefore the work contains information about those, that in our subjective opinion are of a great significance. The designated Taos Pueblo and its adobe houses were ascribed to UNESCO World Heritage in 1992, the Acoma Pueblo was chosen for its memorable proud and defensive location on the top of a table mountain, whereas Hopi Pueblo and Zuni Pueblo are included in the thesis as

members of these tribes offered a long and enriching conversation about the traditions, ceremonies, folk oral sacred teachings, etc.

The layout of the thesis suggests that the main focus will be given to “myths” and “legends”, whereas while studying the matter more precisely, it was realised that this is not the most correct designation of the tribal teachings of the elders. Some members feel uncomfortable with such a designation, as they believe that they may invalidate the significance of the oral histories. These oral traditions have been employed by the indigenous people in order to impart knowledge and wisdom from the tribal elders, and one has to realise they were historically never written down, as the native languages never had a written form. Designating the teachings as “myths or legends” may awake the idea, that they were spread by hand, therefore we rather referred to them further in the thesis as to storytelling, oral traditions, folk teachings, etc. Many indigenous teachings are actually creation narratives and are considered to contain sacred knowledge and should not to be reduced to or described as mere “myths” or “legends.”

The most virtuous way of approaching this topic was to reach out for members of such societies, who live traditionally and have the best opinion about their surrounding and about the recent and historical events that formed up their nation. More of the asked of the survey had the will to help with raising the awareness about indigenous nations of the thesis’ readers, but the reason why the following 7 particular answers were chosen to be included in the empirical part of the work are as follows: Of the Navajo nation it was Mrs. Angela Yellowhair, because she was offered the traditional life and taught the wisdom as a child, as she regularly visited her grandmother on the reservations. Mr. Lawrence Shorty was an interesting candidate, as even though his wife is of German origin and he lives in Washington, they still keep the Navajo traditions and teach them to their son. Of the Comanche nation we had 3 respondents: Mrs. Marla Nauni, who is conscious of her origin, but on the contrary to other respondents of the whole survey, she has never felt the significance of the oral traditions, as she was brought up distant to the traditions and teachings of the nation. Mrs. Juanita Pahdpony has been looking for the original creation stories for her whole life, and therefore she felt some connection to the author, as she also keeps looking for valuable answers. Mr. Benny Tahmakhera is a descendant of the tribal chiefs, and therefore could offer very beautiful insights and opinions. For the last nation, the Pueblo, we read the reflections of a young, beautiful and powerful student of the environmental studies, Erica Kallestewa (*Nu Paatsivewmana*), who out of all the asked

leads the most traditional life. She lives in a tribal village, attends and organises ceremonies, etc. She was accompanied by her respectable teacher, professor and friend Marina Vasquez of the Mayan culture. Kevin Beltran's answers, of the Zuni Pueblo, were included due to his prompt eagerness to help and his own interest in the culture of the author.

During the interviews each respondent was asked to think of the most valuable lesson, that the oral tradition of teaching the wisdom and explaining the unknown occurrences offer them. They all agreed on the same moral – the elders have been teaching them since the day they remember, of how to live an honourable and valuable life, how to be humble, how to be a good person a spread good.

To conclude this thesis, the most essential message of this whole work is the fact, that even though there are many obstacles in the evolution and development of an individual or a nation, it is important to not to forget where one comes from and be proud of who they are. Hadn't it been for the long resistance of the indigenous people, the society of the Americas would be formed differently. There is much that there is to learn from these nations; it is the pride, the gratitude, the excitement, the courage, the peace, the wisdom, the harmony of life, the humbleness, and much more. After all, hadn't it been for the "Native Indians", the possibility of the survival of the Europeans in the 16th century onwards, would be questionable. Hadn't it been for these people's ability to forgive and adjust to the newly created living conditions, the contemporary society in America would have much smaller possibilities to expand and develop.

There was barely any nation in the world that was not forcefully suppressed and deprived of their rights somewhere in its history. Weather it were the Jews, the Khmers, the Africans, the Slovaks, the North Koreans, the Indians (from actual India) and all the historically colonised and defeated countries. Important is to keep defending the preserved, and to forward it to the following generations in order to help a culture to survive.

One of the other reasons to handle this topic was to demonstrate that people in Europe are not careless about the matters of cultures so distant to theirs. Another thing that led to such decision was the fascination about the nation's collaboration in order to preserve the little of the traditions that the difficulties they had to face throughout the history resulted in. Therefore, hopefully, with the help of this project, will the reader realise and learn of some facts he previously was not familiar with.

It is important to highlight some of the confusions that appeared already in the layout of the thesis. One has to realise, that the Native Americans are not Indians; therefore one shall not name them like that. This false designation originates in the mistake of the first European voyagers, who landed on this continent. Everybody is familiar with the story, how Christopher Columbus searched for the fastest route to India in 1492, and “discovered” America. The thing is, one cannot discover something that already had been at that time inhabited by millions of people (which means, that it was already discovered). Second of all, if considering the previous point, it is incorrect to name a nation by the designation of a different one. Therefore, the most proper names for these people are “Indigenous People” or “The Natives”.

The oral narratives that always carry a hidden message, truth and knowledge, deal with various matters. There are some main topics that serve as a common blue print – there are teachings from the times how the life was, before the White man stepped on the land; narratives from the times when the Natives believed that animals were equal to them; allegories; stories about how the Indigenous nations coped with the new settlers; heroic/ghost (spirits or deity)/ or animal stories; as well as creation stories that explain the belief of the tribal man of how the world and humans were created. These stories are usually told to the younger generations by the elders during the winter when the nights are long and the days are short. Children, men and women gather around the storyteller, pay him respect and listen to his wisdom, which they hope to carry further to their own descendants.

Resumé

Hlavným cieľom diplomovej práce bolo poukázať a priblížiť fakt, že kultúra domorodých národov Severnej Ameriky sa už od nepamäti šírila ústnym tradovaním. Nárečia týchto národov doteraz nepoznajú svoju písomnú formu, a preto je pre zachovanie ich múdrostí a poznatkov potrebné, aby mladšie generácie rešpektovali za každých okolností tie staršie. Vzdelaní a skúsení starí otcovia či mamy každoročne v zime rozprávajú deťom a ich rodičom ľudové príbehy. Zahŕňajú životné múdrosti, ktoré počas svojich dlhých životov zozbierali, či ktoré im v ich detstve rozprávali predkovia. Aby sme mohli mať lepší názor na to, čo za ľud tieto kmene sú, je potrebné sa najprv oboznámiť s ich históriou. Treba pochopiť, z čoho a z akých udalostí pramení kríza ich identity, z ktorej sa tieto národy dodnes spamätávajú. Práve pre tieto dôvody sa teoretická časť práce venuje najmä absolútnym koreňom národa a ako sa prvý človek na kontinent vôbec dostal. Ďalej sú predstavené jednotlivé tri vybrané kmene domorodých obyvateľov. V samotných spojených štátoch je kmeňov 565. Kmene Navajo (oblasti Nové Mexiko, Arizona, Colorado, Utah) a Pueblo (oblasti NM, AZ, UT) pochádzajú z takzvaného „Juhozápadu“ USA, avšak tretí kmeň – Comanche (oblasti od Oklahomy až po Texas) patrí medzi kmene takzvaných „Veľkých planín“. Dôvod, prečo sme sa sústredili na tieto národy je nasledovný: počas cestovania naprieč Juhozápadnými Spojenými štátmi sme mali osobnú možnosť v krátkosti pozorovať ceremónie a životný štýl práve týchto troch národov. Zažiť a vidieť posvätné tance, príbehy, či nádherné pueblá z nepálených tehál je zážitok na celý život. Práve otázka turizmu vzbudzuje diskusie o tom, do akej miery majú ostať domorodé tradície posvätným tajomstvom a do akej miery majú byť sprístupnené zvedavým očiam verejnosti. Najväčšia obava členov kmeňov je tá, že sa história zopakuje a ak zverejnia svoje tajomstvá a budú bezhlavo veriť takzvaným „novousadlíkom“, môžu na to opäť kruto doplatiť, či dokonca zaplatiť životom. Je však všeobecne známe, že vyzbieranými peniazmi za vstupy na tance a ceremónie financujú udržiavanie svojich historických a prírodných pamiatok. Ponúknutím poznávania strážených tradícií sa kmene snažia o nastolenie mieru a rovnováhy na zemi.

Na spracovanie témy ako je táto a na poskytnutie vhodných informácií s ňou spätých treba systematicky a adekvátne aplikovať vedecké metódy postupu, aby tak výskumník dosiahol želaný výsledok. Prostredníctvom historickej analýzy sme popísali vývoj kmeňových spoločností, na základe ktorých sme následne vysvetlili ich súčasné postavenie v socioekonomických podmienkach Spojených štátov. Klasifikáciou, neskôr aj

v empirickej časti, sme objavovali a vyhodnocovali rozdielnosti a podobnosti vybraných kmeňov; metódou analógie sme poukázali na skutočnosť, že aj keď v jednotlivých kmeňoch sa okolo učení vytvorili iné príbehy, stále vedú ich lekcie k náuke o podobných, ak nie rovnakých hodnôt a životných presvedčeniach. Metódou syntézy sme sa dopracovali po pozbieraní všetkých potrebných informácií práve k tomu záveru, že ľudové rozprávania, ktorými starší učia svojich potomkov, v skutku nie sú iba obyčajnými príbehmi. Sú príbehmi, ktoré vysvetľujú životné úkazy ako napríklad stvorenie sveta, obsahujú posvätné tajomstvá, učia o pýche, odpúšťaní, vďačnosti, sile, pokore, harmónií, rozvážnosti a pokoji.

V teoretickej časti sme sa venovali najmä témam, ktoré vysvetľujú prapôvod domorodých kmeňov. Dozvedeli sme sa tak, že prvé archeologické vykopávky hovoria o tom, že prvý človek vstúpil na ich územie pred približne 14 000 rokmi. Geológovia, ktorí skúmali zemský povrch za doby ľadovej tvrdia, že v dvoch obdobiach (75 000 – 45 000 a 25 000 – 14 000 rokov dozadu) boli Sibír a Aljašský polostrov prepojený takzvaným mostom Beringie, ktorý neskôr zanikol z dôvodu pohybu litosferických dosiek. Práve jeho výskyt umožnil človeku migrovať z tundier severozápadnej Ázie na nový kontinent. Neskôr v rámci kontinentu putovali noví obyvatelia z dôvodu nasledovania dobytku. Rozdelením tak vznikli rôzne kmene, v ktorých sa vytvorilo klanové usporiadanie spoločnosti. Vďaka neskoršej výpovedi jednej z respondentov rozhovoru sme sa dozvedeli, že klany si pomenúvali podľa toho, v čom vynikali. Jeden, smerujúci na východ, zbadal ráno dych berúci východ slnka, a odvtedy ich domorodá dedina pozná ako klan „Sun forehead“ (čiže klan „Slnko pred nami“). Každému národu – Pueblo, Comanche, Navajo, sa venujeme v tejto časti osobitne, kde predstavujeme v skratke ich históriu, životný štýl (ako napríklad ľudové umenie, múzeá, či populárne kasína), prvé stretnutia s novou kultúrou pochádzajúcou z východu, avšak aj nárečiam a dialektom, ktorými rozprávajú. Bohužiaľ nemôžeme konštatovať, že sa popularita jazykov dokázala udržať do takej miery, ako iné charakteristické črty kmeňov. Keďže ešte aj v minulom storočí bolo používanie jazyka trestné, členovia tejto kultúrnej „menšiny“ naň postupne zabúdali. Z vybratých troch kmeňov, ktoré sú objektom nášho záujmu preto, sú najväčším národom, s pôvodným jazykom Diné, kmeň Navajo. Jazyk národa Comanche sa nazýva Numu Tekwapu, jazykov národa Pueblo je hneď niekoľko – Tewa, Tiwa a Towa (ktorým sa rozpráva jedine v Pueble Jemez), potom Zuni či Keres (používaná v Acoma Pueblo). Skutočnosť, že pôvodné nárečia nikdy nepoznali svoju písomnú formu, znižovaniu počtu jej používateľov

tiež vôbec nenapomohla. My sme napriek tomu v prílohách uviedli fonetické znenie prehovoru stareny z kmeňa Navajo.

Ako ďalšie je podrobnejšie predstavený konflikt pri zraze dvoch tak veľmi odlišných kultúr ako je európska a domorodá americká. Spomenuté a v krátkosti opísané sú niekoľké z mnohých krvavých udalostí, ktoré sprevádzali európsky príchod na kontinent. Prvý z nich je takzvaná „Masakra pri Wounded Knee“, ktorá sa odohrala v roku 1890. Išlo o vyhrotenie napätých situácií prameniacych z faktu, že biely príst'ahovalec začal vytláčať domorodcov z ich pôvodných území. Tieto polia chceli využívať na sadzbu bavlníka a zapriahli tak do práce aj domorodcov (ale aj Afro -Američanov) ako lacnú pracovnú silu. Kmene verili, že sa ich božstvá na nich hnevajú za opustenie zeme a za neschopnosť sa už ďalej brániť bielemu mužovi, a tak začali vykonávať svoje tradičné tance, avšak tie vystrašili bieleho muža natoľko, že sa ozbrojené jednotky rozhodli v noci napadnúť nič netušiacie osídlenie pri potoku Wounded Knee v južnej Dakote. Päť tisíc bojovníkov zajalo náčelníkov a dôležitých vojenských stratégov z kmeňa a v priebehu niekoľkých minút brutálne vyvraždili okolo 150 bezbranných detí, žien a mužov národa Sioux.

Ďalším z barbarských činov novousadlíkov bolo takzvané „Dlhé putovanie Navajov“, odohrávajúce sa v roku 1896. Frustrácia kolonizátorov spôsobená vzdorom domorodcov, ktorí im tak zabraňovali v jednoduchom rozšírení svojho územia, prenikla do násilného vyhnaní kmeňov Navajo z ich pôvodnej posvätnéj zeme. Ľudia boli prinútení putovať 300 míľ do oblastí, ktoré boli nanovo pre nich ohraničené americkou vládou. Počas pochodu došli zásoby jedla, ľudia umierali na vyčerpanie, pokiaľ niekto zaostával bol nekompromisne zastrelený, a často sa stalo, že sa zo zúfalstva radšej pri riekach utopili akoby mali kráčať ďalej. Viac než 3000 Navajo ľudí pri tomto putovaní umrelo. Všetky porušovania základných ľudských práv domorodých kmeňov vyústili do revolúcií a vzbury. Jednou z nich je aj známa vzbura kmeňov z Puebla, ktorá bola zorganizovaná o vyše 200 rokov skôr. Jej príčinou bola španielska snaha zakázať a vymazať existujúce „pohanské“ náboženstvá a pretlačiť do povedomia obyvateľstva katolicizmus. Dá sa skonštatovať, že moment nepripravenosti a výborné strategické plánovanie tentokrát dopomohol domorodcom k úspešnému výsledku. Nemôžeme, však tvrdiť, že nešlo o neľudskú brutalitu. Objavuje sa tu teda otázka, nad ktorou si často aj Európan, ktorý sa o tieto veci zaujíma, láme hlavu. Nedá sa zhodnotiť, kto sa v ozbrojených konfliktoch správal brutálnejšie, či išlo do veľkej miery o pomstu, a prečo obe zúčastnené strany nedokázali spor riešiť inak ako niekoľko storočí pretrvávajúcou nevraživosťou.

Spracovaním otázok, ktoré boli následne rozposlané do kultúrnych centier, univerzít či múzeí domorodých kultúr v Severnej Amerike (špecifickejšie do štátov Nové Mexiko, Arizona a Texas), sme mali možnosť zozbierať osobné názory na tematiku orálnych tradícií a učení životných právd a hodnôt pochádzajúcich z ľudového rozprávania. Rozhovor s každým jedným z respondentov sa odvíjal najmä od vyjadrení k témam ako sú život vo vyhradených domorodých rezerváciách/ dedinách či mimo nich, forma a obsah náuky o vlastnej histórii a kultúre v školách. Ďalej nás zaujímala znalosť vlastného kmeňového jazyka, či do akej miery sa respondent cíti byť súčasťou domorodého národa, ako zachováva a učí o svojich tradíciách, avšak najdôležitejšie pre nás bolo zistiť, či ľudové rozprávania ich predkov do nejakej miery zasiahli ich spôsob života a rozhodovania sa. Pri každom jednom národe sme si uviedli aj parafrázované či citované znenie príbehov o stvorení sveta a života na ňom. V takomto prípade má čitateľ možnosť porovnať svoje náboženské presvedčenie s tým ich. Je možné si všimnúť isté podobnosti (napríklad prvý bytostný hriech spôsobený neposlušnosťou a zvedavosťou) podstaty javu, avšak rozdielnosti v ich vysvetlení.

Čím viac informácií a osobných názorov sa nám podarilo vyzbierať, tým lepšie sme mohli danú tému zodpovedať. Viacero požiadanych malo iniciatívne chuť pomôcť s výskumom, avšak bohužiaľ niektorí chápali ponuku pomoci a jej následné neuskutočnenie ako dobrý vtip. Stalo sa dokonca, že niektorí reagovali príliš neadekvátne a verbálne útočili na požiadavku o pomoc, či na ľudí, ktorí sa na ňu ohlásili. Nakoniec však výskum prebehol úspešne a mohli tak byť spracované osobné rozhovory či e-mailové konverzácie s tými najvhodnejšími kandidátmi, z ktorých každý mal k danej problematike v niečom podobný, no v mnohom aj rozdielny názor. Z Navajo národa je predstavená pani Angela Yellowhair. Jej priezvisko je v kmeni Diné veľmi časté. Ako dieťa chodievala každé prázdniny za babičkou do rezervácie, kde sa žije bez tečúcej vody či elektriny. Babička ju učievala múdrosťami, avšak Angelino presťahovanie sa do mesta v nej potrebu naďalej sa mýtom venovať mierne utlačilo. Pán Lawrence Shorty sa rozhodol na svoje ľudové učenia sústrediť doteraz. Napriek tomu, že žije vo Washingtone a má syna s Európankou, rozhodli sa obaja rodičia, že synčeka vychovávajú podľa hodnôt prameniatic z múdrostí kmeňa Navajo. Z národa Comanche máme predstavených hneď troch členov. Pani Marla Nauni, ktorú predkovia učili byť hrdou na svoj pôvod, dnes žije mimo rezervácie a nezúčastňuje sa často tradičných osláv, tancov či spoločenských rozprávání príbehov o zmysle či pôvode života, javov a ľudských vlastností. Pani Juanita Pahdpony sa prihlásila na výzvu o pomoc

pri hodnotení výskumu z dôvodu, že ju zaujal náš záujem o nájdenie plného znenia Komančskej legendy o stvorení sveta. Navrhla preto aj možnosť, že v rámci kmeňa stále môžu existovať jednotlivci, ktorí si danú skutočnosť vysvetľujú rozdielne. Pán Benny Tahmakhera je potomkom dvoch náčelníkov svojho kmeňa, a preto pre svoj rozhlád a vzdelanosť ponúkol veľmi zaujímavý pohľad na otázku orálneho učenia o histórii mladých staršími. V neposlednej rade treba spomenúť respondentov z národa Pueblo. Národ Pueblo je tvorený z 19 kmeňov, avšak v práci sú spomenuté iba 4. V teoretickej časti sa zaoberáme Pueblom Taos, práve z dôvodu, že ich dedina, v ktorej sú vybudované až 5 poschodové budovy z nepálenej tehly, bola zapísaná do svetového dedičstva UNESCO v roku 1992. Acoma Pueblo je druhou dedinou, o ktorej vzhľade, životnom štýle a histórii sa v práci píše. Jej špecifickosť spočíva v tom, kde je vybudovaná. Leží na vrchole stolovej hory, čo vyjadruje hneď niekoľko skutočností a síce sú to izolovanosť od sveta pre ochranu, ale aj pre blízkosť k božstvám. Ďalej môžeme polemizovať aj o tom, že je to forma zachovania tradičného spôsobu života predkov Pueblových kmeňov. Tí si vytvárali sídla v skalných previsoch, aby sa tak chránili, čo z nich vyformovalo veľmi zručných lezcov. Aj poloha dediny Acoma „Sky City“ bola pôvodne prístupná len tým najlepším domorodým lezcom, kým k nej v 19. storočí nebola vybudovaná príjazdová cesta. V empirickej časti práce venujeme pozornosť dvom ďalším kmeňom, a tie sú Hopi a Zuni. Erica Kallestewa z kmeňa Hopi (alebo jej domorodým menom *Nu Paatsivewmana*) je mladá a ambiciózná študentka štúdií o životnom prostredí, ktorá sa v budúcnosti chce venovať najmä zachovaniu obmedzených zdrojov pitnej vody na území suchých a púštnych domorodých rezervácií. Prístup k nej bol umožnený vďaka jej profesorky a priateľke Maríne Vasquez, ktorá nám pomohla skontaktovať sa s Ericou. Erica zo všetkých účastníkov vedie najtradičnejší život, keďže vo svojej dedine v rezervácii organizuje ceremónie a učí mladšie deti rituálne piesne a tance. Člena kmeňa Zuni, Kevina Beltrana, na spoluprácu priviedla vlastná zvedavosť o autorkin pôvod a kultúru. Neskôr vysvitlo, že autorka a Kevin majú spoločné akademické záujmy, a síce, že študujú veľmi podobný odbor na univerzite.

Pre umožnenie logickej následnosti vypracovania zadania, bolo potrebné si určiť zameranie, ku ktorému sa získané informácie smerovali. Pred začiatkom písania sme si vymedzili cieľ, ktorý bolo možné ku koncu vyhodnotiť. Zaujímali nás teda nasledovné fakty: vieme, že po príchode Európanov koncom 15. storočia nastala takzvaná nútená asimilácia. Chceli sme zistiť, ako táto skutočnosť ostala v pamäti domorodcov, a do akej

miery obmedzila či zmenila už vytvorenú kultúru v Spojených Štátoch. Je všeobecne známe, že americký školský systém neponúka žiakom pravdivé fakty o skutočnostiach, ktoré nastali po európskom dobýjaní Ameriky. Toto platí nie len pre „biele“ deti, ale aj pre deti domorodého pôvodu. Práve preto by malo sprístupnenie dedín a relikvií turistom dopomôcť k lepšiemu pochopeniu týchto kultúr a ich histórii. Často však ide len o formu zárobku, čiže nie je možné presne určiť, kde je hranica medzi túžbou vzdelávať „nedomodorcov“ a túžbou speňažiť historické a prírodné pamiatky. Človek však musí mať na pamäti, že každá kultúra na svete, ktorá má čo ponúknuť, stojí na rozhraní týchto dvoch skutočností. Venovali sme sa aj zisteniu, že každý mýtus obsahuje ľudové pravdy a presvedčenia o reálnosti nepoznaných javov a preto tieto rozprávania poskytujú návod na vedenie čestného života. Kmene si tieto poznatky a ponaučenia starostlivo strážia, čo s najväčšou pravdepodobnosťou pramení z nedôvery k ostatným ľuďom.

Mnohým nie je jasný fakt - a práve aj z tohto dôvodu je dôležité venovať sa tematike domorodých amerických národov - že po príchode prvých prisťahovalcov a moreplavcov nastalo na kontinente doslova peklo. Nielen cudzokrajné choroby (rôzne epidémie), ale aj túžba po moci, bohatstve, rozšírení kresťanstva, no najmä tá po nových kolóniách, stála mnohých život. Odhadovaných 50-100 miliónov pôvodných obyvateľov sa znížilo až o 80-90% po odborníkmi nazývanej Americko-Indiánskej genocíde/holokauste. Pod rúskom kresťanstva boli využívané aj taktiky ako podpora vzájomnej nevraživosti medzi kmeňmi. Nielen vyvražďovanie, ale aj nútené vzdanie sa pôvodných náboženských rituálov sa stalo nechcenou súčasťou každodenného života domorodca. Heslo „Dobry Indián, mŕtvy Indián“ zaznievalo na kontinente až do 19. storočia. Napríklad až v roku 1924 bolo domorodcom poskytnuté vôbec mať z polovice americké občianstvo. Po Druhej svetovej vojne boli ešte stále v rámci nútenej asimilácie domorodé deti násilne odobraté rodinám na internátne školy, kde boli fyzicky potrestané za akýkoľvek prejav svojej kultúry (či už to bolo dorozumievanie sa v ich pôvodnom jazyku alebo náznak oslavného „kachina“ tanca).

Systém verejného školstva v Amerike neposkytuje pravdivú alebo dostatočnú možnosť vzdelania v oblasti histórie a kultúry pôvodného amerického obyvateľstva. Dôvodom je aj snaha vykresliť predkov anglo-amerických detí v ich očiach ako hrdinov (jasným príkladom by mohla byť oslava dňa vylodenia Krištofa Kolumba na novom kontinente, ktorý je pre pôvodné obyvateľstvo dňom hrôzy a skazy). Predsa len sa mnohí riadia heslom „Históriu píšú víťazi“, a víťazi sú z pravidla tí, ktorí sú viac odvážni, silnejší, odhodlanejší, a podobne. Avšak je potrebné uvedomiť si strašnú prevahu nie len v počte, ale aj

v technologickom vybavení Európanov voči domorodým kmeňom. Ťažko bude bojovať chorobou oslabený domorodec v zajatí s lukom a šípom proti Európanovi s koňom a strelnou zbraňou. Práve prívoz koňa na kontinent bol jedným z mála svetlých stránok príchodu Európana do Ameriky. Zmenila sa tak dynamika lovu bizóna a tak sa domorodec vedel rýchlejšie dostať k obžive. Kone však tiež museli zo začiatku od prisťahovalcov kradnúť, a tak medzi týmito rozdielnymi národmi neustále prebiehali ozbrojené konflikty. Detaily o tom, kto vlastne sú, získali členovia kmeňov výhradne od svojich predkov, ktorí im to vysvetľovali formou rozprávania príbehov a pôvode, poprípade prostredníctvom vysokoškolského štúdia so zameraním na aplikované štúdiá o domorodých kmeňoch. Tradičným rozprávačom v dedinách je takzvaný „medicine man“, ktorý je zároveň aj liečiteľom, psychológom, vodcom náboženstva, alebo ako ho čitateľ môže lepšie poznať – „šamanom“.

Z prieskumu a študovania jednotlivých kmeňov vysvitlo, že všetky aktivity, ktorým sa domorodec venuje, všetky objekty živé či neživé, každá molekula vzduchu, každá kvapka vody, či každé zrnko piesku je mýtické a posvätné. Pochopiť ich príbehy a učenia nie je niečo, čo by človek dokázal bez toho, aby bol dlhšie súčasťou tejto spoločnosti a mal hlboké znalosti v danej skutočnosti. Bez potrebných poznatkov je pravdepodobné, že sa význam ľudových príbehov zúži na ich vnímanie ako obyčajných a úsmevných bájkach o zvieratách, mystických rozprávkach o duchoch, či povestiach z dôb pred a po príchode Európskeho moreplavca. Každý jeden príbeh je prerozprávaný z toho dôvodu, aby si ho človek zapamätal, poučil sa, riadil sa ním a posunul ho svojim potomkom. Kmene sprístupňujú niektoré príbehy verejnosti, nie je náročné sa k nim dopracovať, avšak pre objektívneho alebo neinformovaného pozorovateľa je ťažké nájsť a pochopiť ich spirituálny význam. Práve preto sú v práci uvedené ukážky príbehov, aby sa človek mohol rozhodnúť sám, čo pre neho tieto učenia znamenajú.

List of references

Printed Sources

- AARON, G.C. – BORGENICHT, D. & co. 1994. *Native american Wisdom – Photographed by Edward. S. Curtis*. Philadelphia, PA: Running Press Book Publishers, 1994. p. 123. ISBN 978-1-56138-307-8
- BROWN, D. 1993. *Folktales of the Native American*. New York : Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 1993. p. 167. ISBN 978-0-8050-2607-84
- CURTIS, E. 2005. *Die Indianer Nord Americas*. Koln : Taschen GmbH, 2005. p. 574. ISBN 978-3-8228-4770-1
- DEBO, A. 1970. *A History of the Indians of the United States (The Civilization of the American Indian Series)*. Norman, Oklahoma : University of Oklahoma Press, 1970. p. ISBN 978-0-8061-1888-8
- ERDOES, R - ORTIZ, A. 1984. *The American Indian Tales*./ KLABANOVÁ, K. 2012. *Indiánské příběhy*. Horoměřice : Argo, 2012. p. 293. ISBN 978-80-257-0625-1
- GIBSON, D. 2001. *Pueblos of the River Grande*, Tuscon, Arizona : Rio Nuevo Publishers, 2001. p. 105. ISBN 1-887896-26-0
- HAVEMAN, Ch. 2016. *Rivers of Sand: Creek Indian Emigration, Relocation, and Ethnic Cleansing in the American South*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2016. p. 415. ISBN 978-0-8032-7392-4
- HÄMÄLÄINEN, P. 2008. *The Comanche Empire*. United States : Yale Universitz Press, 2008. p. 500. ISBN 978-0-300-15117-6
- LANGDON, S. 2002. *The Native People of Alaska*. Anchorage, Alaska : Greatland Graphics, 2002. p. 122. ISBN 0-936425-81-4
- LANGELLIER, J. – PAREZO, N. – ROWLEY, S. – STURTEVANT, W. – TAYLOR, C. – TOBERT, N. – WYATT, V. 2003. *The Native Americans/ The Indigenous People of North America*. 2003. p. 249. ISBN 0-861-01-523-1
- LOBO, S. – TALBOT, S. – MORRIS, T. 2010. *Native American Voices*, New York, NY: Routledge, 2010. p.488 ISBN 9781138687684
- LOCKE, R.F. 2010. *The Book of the Navajo*, New York, NY : Kensngton Publishing Corp, 2010. p. 474. ISBN-13: 978-0-87687-500-1
- MILLER, L. 1995. *From the Heart: Voices of the American Indian*, Newyork : Pathaways Productions, Inc., 1995. p.342. ISBN 0-679-76891-2

NEIHARDT, J. 2008. *Black Elk Speaks*, Albany, New York : State University of New York Press, 2008. p. 336. ISBN 978-1-4384-2540-5

TREUER, A. – WOOD, K. – FITZHUGH, W. – CAPTURE, G. – FRAIZER, T. – MILLER, M. – BELARDE-LEWIS, M. – NORWOOD, J. 2010. *Indian Nations of North America*, Washington D.C., 2010. p. 371. ISBN 978-1-4262-0664-1

Online Sources

Comanche creational Story. [online]. 2004. [retrieved 2017-01-08]. Available at URL <<http://www.indigenouspeople.net/commcrea.htm>>

Indian Treaties and the Removal Act of 1830. [online]. 2010.[retrieved 2016-11-03]. Available at URL <<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1830-1860/indian-treaties>>

KLEIN, Ch. 2015. *Remembering the Wounded Knee Massacra*. [online].2015. [retrieved 2016-10-30]. Available at URL <<http://www.history.com/news/remembering-the-wounded-knee-massacre>>

Native American Casinos – Revenue Overview and Trend Analysis. [online]. 2015. [retrieved 2016-11-12]. Available at URL <<http://www.casinonewsdaily.com/2015/05/29/native-american-casinos-revenue-overview-and-trend-analysis/>>

Native American Indian Facts - Pueblo Indian Facts. [online]. 2007.[retrieved 2016-10-28]. Available at URL <<http://www.native-american-indian-facts.com/Southwest-American-Indian-Facts/Pueblo-Indian-Facts.shtml>>

SHARP, J. 2015 *The Long Walk Trail*. [online]. 2015. [retrieved 2016-11-02]. Available at URL <<http://www.desertusa.com/desert-trails/long-walk-trail-navajos.html>>

SLOAN, K. 2016. *Indian Removal*. [online]. 2016. [retrieved 2016-11-07]. Available at URL <<http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=2595>>

TONGUES, J. 2005. *The Loss of our Language*. [online]. 2005. [retrieved 2016-10-01]. Available at URL <<http://www.wordswithoutborders.org/article/the-loss-of-our-language/>>

Trail of Tears. [online]. 2008. [retrieved 2016-11-02]. Available at URL
<<http://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/trail-of-tears>>

ZELENÝ, M. 2012 *Co říkají indiánské mýty*. [online]. 2012. [retrieved 2017-03-11]. Available at URL <<http://www.literarky.cz/blogy/mnislav-zeleny-atapana/19607-co-ikaji-indianske-myty>>

Audio- visual Sources

WatchCut Video. 2015 “*One Word/ Christopher Columbus/ Native Americans*” [online]. Youtube, 24.11.2015. [retrieved 2017-10-23]. Available at URL
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fYTXRDtYzYc>>

Teach me Diné – Navajo Language. “*Teaching from Helen Tinhorn from Monument Valley*”. [online].Facebook 2017-02-27. [retrieved 2017-02-29]. Available at URL
<<https://www.facebook.com/TeachMeNavajo/videos/1148310378625424/>>

Scientific qualifying works

FERIANCOVÁ, M. 2017. Native American History : Myths and Legends of American Indian Tribes – List of appendixes - *Extracts from the interviews with the respondents* : Master Thesis. Bratislava: University of Economics, 2017. p.83

LIBENSKÁ, L. 2007. *The culture and life of the Indians of the Great Plains* : Bachelor Thesis, Brno : Masaryk University, 2007. p. 44

List of appendixes

Appendix 1: First electronic approach to the indigenous people

Appendix 2: Extracts from the interviews with the respondents

Appendix 3: Navajo teaching – original sounding

