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Claiming a Native Identity in Zitkala Sa's
American Indian Stories

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Declaration

This dissertation is our own original work and has not been submitted for any assessment or award at the University of M'sila or any other university

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Dedication

Fattoum

This thesis is dedicated to my parents for their love and support throughout my entire life, and for giving me the strength to realize my dreams. This work is also dedicated to my husband, who has been a constant source of support and encouragement during the challenges of my study and life. To my beloved daughter, my family, and my friends, I am truly thankful for having you in my life.

Dedication

Rahma

I dedicate this work to my parents, grateful to them because they are the reason for my arrival at every step of my course. I also thank my brothers, especially my sister Sarah, and all those who supported me to all my teachers, especially the great ones. Thank you wherever you are.

Abstract

The quest for identity is one of the major problems of all time. The present thesis tries to demonstrate that Zitkala Sa's writings and especially *American Indian Stories* are a way to make her voice heard. The study shows that Zitkala Sa uses her pen as a weapon to defend her people, and to give a genuine identity to Native Americans; an identity that is unique and different from others. This thesis gives a clear overview of the Indians sufferance represented in Zitkala Sa as one of them, and all the obstacles she faced in her journey to define her truly Indian identity after the attempts of the whites to assimilate them through the boarding schools, and how she became an activist who could assert many laws that protect her people.

Key words: Identity, Zitkala Sa, Native Americans, The boarding schools.

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General Introduction

People lived in America a long before the arrival of Christopher Columbus and the Europeans, these people were called Native Americans or Indigenous people. They were the first live in America. They were referred to as Indians because of Columbus, when he had first landed in America; he thought he had sailed all the way to the country of India, that he had reached the East Indies. The term "Indian" originated with him, when he landed in. That is why he called the locals as the "Indians."

Moreover, numerous conflicts occurred between the American Indians and European settlers, they were forced off their lands and pushed further and further west with many promises being made that were never kept. There were also many conflicts that arose in the region that led to pushing them to live in some small Indian reservations.

As part of the colonizers policy to force Indians to give up tribal life, Congress had passed the Dawes Act, which redistributed reservations land. Once the tribe owned all land communally, now each "competent" head of a family received 160 acres. This land was put in trust for the Indians, and not to be sold for twenty-five years. Most tribal leaders had protested the law because it weakened the unity of the tribe; people had to deal with the federal government as individuals, not as a nation. Some of the tribes in reservation had resisted the government surveyors. However, the mission was completed, and then the Indian agents and the missionaries began determining the head of tribe, who accepted white culture, spoke English, and attended church regularly. Those Indians were capable enough to own land, as well as all communal land was sold to white settlers. As a result of the Dawes Act, 138 million acres of Indian-owned lands in the United States were reduced to 47 million acres. Thus the tribe's unity had been destroyed definitively (Rappaport 97-99).

In addition to that, many of the tribes became colonized. People were suffering from military actions, deceases, loss of economy, and bureaucratic control over the territory. Also the loss of relationship with traditions and identity, because of the United States' civilizing mission policy, that aimed to fight language and family system of Natives, also they used the boarding schools in order to separate the children from their families and to kill all what is Indian in them.

In the 20th century, Native American started another kind of resistance to have their own freedom. Despite of the US harsh policies, an important group of Indian intellectuals, writers and politicians started to define and bring back the cultural production and identity. Among those cultivate structure the American Indian activist "Gertrude Simmons Bonin" the woman who did many efforts to fight the exclusion of her people. She produced a lot of works that proved her presence and advocated her people's rights under the name of Zitkala-Sa. She used the English language, in order to enhance her ability as a Native American woman and prove her ambitions that aimed to win the white's audience support, through a collection of stories called *American Indian Stories*, published as a book in 1921.

Dorothea M. Susag, in her article *Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin): A Powerfull Literary Voice* suggested that Zitkala-Sa had articulated her personal and tribal experience, likewise the clash of civilization and cultures that faced her and America's indigenous people because of the colonization's policy assimilation, acculturation, and acculturation through education (3). Susag believed that the Lakota's traditions and values, her mother, and the traditional strength of women as teachers in the Lakota culture were the major source of her power and voice in advocating her people's identity.

Deborah Welch suggests that Zitkala-Sa wanted to convince the other "Eastern Society" that her people can master the white's language, and can do the same of what whites can do (Susag 6):

we come from mountain fastness, from cheerless plains, from far-off low-wooded streams, seeking the "White Man's ways." seeking your skill in industry and in art, seeking labor and honest independence, seeking the treasures of knowledge and wisdom, seeking to comprehend the spirit of your laws and the genius of your noble institutions, seeking by a new birthright to unite with you our claim to a common country, seeking the sovereign's crown that we may stand side by side with you in ascribing royal honor to our nation' flag. America, I love thee. "Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God (Zitkala-Sa 226).

Dexter Fisher, in her Review of *American Indian Stories*, argues that Zitkala Sa tried to present the Native American Indians' problem, through collecting the American Indian Stories that represented her shift interests from literature to politics. As well foreshadows her life's work on behalf of Indians and their rights about that, when she engaged the Bureau of Indian Affairs, this explains what Fisher saw in Zitkala Sa, when she was struggling in order to find her own voice (Fisher 98).

Ruth Spack in *Re-Visioning Sioux Women: Zitkala-Sa's Revolutionary American Indian Stories*, shared the view of more recent critics, who argue that Zitkala-Sa is very much in command of language and audience, among them Dorothea Susag and Jeanne Smith. For example, she reveals how Zitkala-Sa adopts trickster strategies, well known in the Sioux oral tradition, to dupe white readers into recognizing the value of her linguistic and cultural background, also when Martha Cutter suggested that Zitkala-Sa used the English language, aiming to force those whites to recognize how they have used it to further their own designs of power and domination. Ruth also takes a similar perspective and examines Zitkala-Sa's reconstruction of Sioux women as a device that unifies *American Indian Stories*, arguing with Zitkala-Sa's position herself as a revolutionary writer. According to her, the colonized person can master the colonizer's language not to "be white," not to attain power, but to "explode" or "expose" the colonizer's power position, and this was one of the cases of Zitkala-sa's life with the new society (Spack 26).

Sandra Kumamoto Stanley discussed the transcribing of Zitkala-Sa's life story into autobiography, and Native American Indian oral tradition tales into written English in her *Claiming a Native American Identity: Zitkala-SA and Autobiographical Strategies*. She shed light on how Zitkala-Sa influenced by the traditional life of her people, she saw that Zitkala-Sa believed in the construction of the private life, also the use of her own autobiographical strategies, in order to establish her cultural identity through *American Indian Stories*. Among them instance *Impression of an Indian Childhood*, and other autobiographical works, that we owing to discuss later (Stanley 64-65).

This topic was treated before by "Hala Abdel Razzaq A. Jum'ah" and "Dr. Kifah (Moh'd Khair) Ali Al Omari", In "The Hashemite University, Zarqa, Jordan" under the title of *The Rise of Indian Americans' Identity in Zitkala Sa's "Impressions of an Indian Childhood"* and Jhumpa Lahiri's "Interpreter of Maladies". This article reveals the shifts of the Indians' identity during the twentieth century and tends to outline the Indians' collapsing image at the end of the century.

Oppression and assimilation are major factors that led to the destruction of Native American identity, for a long time under policies that destroyed their tribes, and forced them to live in reservations without their traditional culture. People were obliged to obey the colonizer's laws, and send their children to learn how to be civilized, as if natives had been no civilization. We need to know the real background of Native American, their culture and

civilization, as well their struggling to maintain their Native identity. In order to achieve the goal of this study we will try to answer fundamental question which is:

To what extent did Zitkala-Sa assert her Native American Identity in her book *American Indian Stories*?

This study is an attempt to reveal Native Americans sufferance and in particular the Yankton Dakota. It shows also Zitkala Sa's efforts as an Indian writer, through her writing of *American Indian Stories* in defending her people's rights and presenting their culture and identity. This research can also be helpful in introducing the Indian American culture and civilization to others, as we see that as students we are not familiar to this literature. Then it is necessary to have idea about the role of this literature as an important part of the American society, and its contribution to American literature.

The significant of the present thesis represented in the efforts of Zitkala-Sa in glorifying her origins as a red woman in other words claiming her Native people's culture and identity, as well as her criticizing of the dominant culture by collecting her *American Indian Stories*, which is one of the major works that presents Native culture, through embodying their oral stories into an English piece of writing and therefore provided the presence of Native Americans.

For other researchers, the study can be a source of reliable up to date information, which can be very valuable for their similar studies concerning this topic.

This thesis entails some other sub-questions that are:

1. How did Zitkala-Sa made her people's voice heard using her writings especially *American Indian Stories*?
2. What difficulties did she face when she began to identify her true identity?
3. Why did she use English Language in recollecting Native Indian stories?

The research is going to depict the history of the Indian Americans in America as well as their life there, and how they were treated. Therefore the method is going to be historical analytical. The subject is interesting and wide so we faced several obstacles and difficulties, including the lack of time and the lack of references because the subject has not been addressed very much.

In the execution of this research, the work will be divided into two chapters. The first chapter will be devoted to the historical context of Native Americans and their literature, particularly Zitkala-Sa's tribe, including life on reservations and how they were treated by the U.S Government, as well as their traditional life and customs. Additionally Native American literature, some of its writers, and works, will take place in this chapter, then a brief biography of Zitkala-Sa, and some of her achievements. While the second chapter will contain a general idea about the boarding schools, and then the shift from marginalization to an activism in Zitkala Sa's life, after that a brief concepts of identity according to some scholars. Then, we came to shed light on identity in the light of selected stories from Zitkala-Sa's *American Indian Stories*.

Chapter One:

Historical Background

Throughout history, Native Americans have resisted the white colonizer and the dominant of the oppressors; they were the indigenous people of the continent before the European waves of immigrations and establishment of their settlements. No one can deny the great heritage, traditions and ceremonies that characterized Native Americans and distinguish them from others, and contributed transmitting their identity, in other words, we should focus on Native Americans' efforts in defeating the colonizers' policies in trying to assimilate them and forcing them to leave their lands by different means.

To better understand, this chapter will provide the socio-historical context of Zitkala-sa's collection *American Indian Stories* and shed light on the history of the writer's tribe as an oppressed people, and their conflicts, treaties and acts with the colonizers. It depicts the means used instead of wars to defend their rights, as well as preserve people's identity and culture, and it will also provide an overview of their traditions, beliefs, ceremonies and rituals. Moreover, it will shed light on Zitkala-sa's life and her achievements as a teacher, writer, and activist in a short biography that will present the most important events of the life of one of the most important Native American reformers.

1. Native American Literature:

In general, it is difficult to define literature because most of definitions are critical ones based on a list of criteria about the literary works that being written or read aesthetically, in fact understanding exactly what literature is has always been a challenge (Meyer 1).

Native American literature begins with the oral traditions in the hundreds of indigenous cultures of North America, and finds its fullness in all aspects of written literature as well. It is also called Indian literature or American Indian literature, in other words the traditional oral and written literatures of the indigenous peoples of the Americas. This literature includes ancient hieroglyphic and pictographic writings of Middle America as well as an extensive set of folktales, myths, and oral histories that were transmitted for centuries by storytellers. For a further discussion, it was produced in the period after European contact so that Native Americans were not educated and were, certainly, not literate of the English language when the Europeans arrived. To clarify, Native Americans passed tribal information and legends from generation to generation using ceremonies and performances; since they did not have any written language to document tribal history. In particular, the first Native American literary texts were offered orally and they link the earth-surface people with the plants, animals, the rivers, and rocks. The texts tie Indian people to the earth and its life through a

spiritual kinship with the living and dead relatives of Native Americans. Coyote, raven, fox, hawk, turtle, rabbit and other animal characters in the stories are considered by many Native Americans to be their relatives (Thamarana 2).

Again, it is known that English literature has been written in English language, but for the American Indian literature there is no American Indian language, in which include more than fifty language families and hundreds of distinct languages, which are not mutually understood (Murray 152-153).

Additionally, it is important to understand some basic facts about Native languages and its systems of classification. Thus it can be classified into fifty-eight major families according to J.W. Powell, again it can be classified into fifty-four major families according to Harry Holier, and also there is another method of classification which relied on cultural area and tribes used by editors of Native American Literature anthologies. To put it another way, the major areas are Eskimo, MacKenzie River, Plateau, North Pacific Coast, California, Plains, Woodland, Southeastern, and Southwestern. As an example, the tribes listed in the Plains are Paiute, Shoshoni, Ute, Comanche, Kiowa, Wichita, Osage, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Oto, Omaha, Ponca, Pawnee, Dakota (Sioux, Teton), Hidatsa, Mandan, Arikara, Blackfoot, Piegan, Sarcee, Gros Ventre, Plains Cree, Plains Ojibway, Assiniboine, and Bungee. Obviously, this kind of geographic classification does not correspond to language families. The tribes listed above as Plains represent the following language families: Shoshonean, Kiowan, Caddoan, Siouan, and Algonquian. Bungee is not a separate tribe, but another name for the language of the Plains Ojibway (Murray 153).

1.1. Nature of Native American Literature:

Like every indigenous literature, Native American literature represents the indigenous people that have a very particular history of development and struggle for its very survival. So that the Native American literary works have a character and nature of Native American literature with its function of presenting the indigenous communities life and tradition; also it is one of the means that tells the truth about the past and history; in other words, the Native American literature plays a major rule in cultural survival of nations, because it transmits the customs, cultural knowledge, and traditional practices from one generation to another (Gorelova 28).

Furthermore, Native American literature is characterized by its flexibility, so it is never fixed and always changing under the influence of its tribal members and communities, and relies on the oral traditions like the tribal stories as a mean to transmit it rather than writing and the narratives that describes tribal histories until 1960's and 1970's, in the times of the American Indian Movement for civil rights, even if Native American histories were ignored and misrepresented. That is to say the scholastic world claimed that people should admit that the American literature have not been started when the arrival of "Columbus" but before that since the native indigenous literature of North America was oral at that time (Gorelova 28-29).

Besides, their heritage was the starting point of Native American literature that was categorized into four porous genre groupings:

- ritual dramas that include chants, ceremonies, and rituals themselves,
- songs, narratives, and oratory that expressed the fundamental truths of creation as well as the origins of human beings and their relationship to the universe, according to the Native Indians belief (Gorelova 29-30).

Despite of the changes of time and difficulties that faced Native American oral traditions, the Natives continued to succeed to reflect the diversity of cultures, that is why "Womack" argue that one must respect these literature as the Euro-American one and the interpretations should be indigenous basics and native literature should not be taught as kind of minority extension (Gorelova 30-31).

Moreover, themes of native literatures, as well as their characters, plots, settings, philosophies, the very structure and organization of literary works, oral tradition provides a valuable context for understanding current issues on religion and politics, meanwhile Native American societies are struggling today with the belief in interconnectedness of all things and the belief of the balance of all powers, still among the important characteristics of Native oral literary tradition, drawing on common traditional beliefs that are still relevant to contemporary Indian literatures, in relevant to Porter it is very important to understand culturally beliefs and landscapes as well as sacred ceremonies. Among the five hundred years of wars and colonization, Native American literatures could draw its strength from the oral tradition and the recordings of some honest journalists. That could made this literature the oldest one in America and the best evidence that proves that the existence of natives on this continent was done by "Creator" as well as they originated there (Gorelova 31-32-33-34).

1.2. Oral Tradition Versus the Written Word:

Oral literature is very important for Native Americans. It can include myths, legends, songs and chants, and even speeches; it was intended to be heard by listeners, who shared the Native language and culture. Especially songs that have particular rule as elements of ritual, where we find some songs has a big important and a strong influence on them besides the universe. It has a particular purpose and relies on the power of the words. These songs may be grouped as:

- 1) Songs of healing,
- 2) Individual songs,
- 3) Songs of growth or germination,
- 4) Songs of vision and dream,
- 5) Songs or death (Murray 155).

The tales, myths, legends, and stories are also derived from the oral tradition and can be classified according to their similarities in meaning and intent. Also the Native American stories are divided into categories as following:

- 1) The mythological stories, which deal with the world before it was in the present state; so They explain the origins of animals, or tribes, or objects, or ceremonies, or the universe itself;
- 2) The Trickster tales that related the deeds of the trickster, sometimes the buffoon is a human being, but more often he is an animal endowed with human characteristics;
- 3) The hero tales that represent the lives of human beings under conditions, at least remotely resembling the present as the transformations, magic, otherworld journeys, ogres, and beast marriages are common, but the characters are thought of as distinctly human;
- 4) The miscellaneous tales in which their borrowings from Europeans and from the Bible; these tales are somewhat like the myths of the Greeks, but animals figure more prominently in the Indian stories (155-156).

Fortunately, the tribal members suggested a system of classification and a definition, such explanations are not to be found in the introductions to anthologies written by non-Indian literary scholars, so we cannot find in the works of ethnologists and anthropologists a real difference in the use of the terms "tales, myths, legends, and stories, but when we refer to Indian literature of the Native Americans, there can be a great deal of difference, such as "Ella Deloria" the Dakota women that points out the importance of Dakota classification system to the interpretation of the stories, and has presented each story as she recorded it from the original storyteller. She has written it in the Dakota or Lakota dialect, with giving a literal

translation and a free translation, she explains that she has arranged the stories according to Dakota categories, in two parts, each of which is further divided into two parts, making four groups in all the introduction of her collection of tales that entitled by *Dakota Texts* published in 1932. Some of these tales intended to amuse, entertain, and may be narrated only after sunset. Besides, they are short and include mythological characters like "Iktomi". In everyday speech, constant allusion is made to them. For example, "He is playing Iktomi" is understood to mean that a person is posing as a very agreeable fellow to get what he wants. The stories of the second part are accepted as having happened to our people in comparatively recent times. The conventional Ohukaka ending disappears and instead, each tale closes with ske, "it is said"; and keyapi, "they say" (156-157).

In some ways, the Indian literature as a great folklore by its tales, have a specific purpose and function, because when reading these excellent tales one can realizes immediately that they are worlds away from the "how the fox got his tail" variety of folklore, often presented as Native American literature, that is why the tribal members considered that the traditions of their culture are the best interpreters besides the Anthropologists (157).

1.3. Literature of Resistance:

In essence, Native American literature was the weapon to resist the colonization during the five centuries of wars. This kind of literature should not be ignored, because it was the effective way for the Indigenous communities to voice their resistance against the policies of colonialism, and fight the distraction of their heritage, as well as cultures. Most of writers used the conventional language like English in North America, and these was in shape of novels, autobiographies, short stories, and essay (Gorelova 38).

Specifically, the novel and the short story are likely to be the most conventional and fruitful of all the literary forms, but they are not of indigenous origin. However elements of oral traditions, histories, and tribal beliefs based on conflict and resolution and the idea of opposition for example: humanity against humanity; humanity against nature; the individual against culture; against a particular ideology, or against the forces of history. Many Native American writers mastered these techniques to represent the conflict between the colonization and indigenous people. However, it is very important to keep the idea of opposition as antithetical to the communal perception of the world, in which everything is related, the major theme of Native American writers was the cultural conflict and creating the mixed-blood protagonist as the main characters, in order to depict their issues and the idea of being

between two worlds, this reflects the reality that "Zitkala-Sa" had been experienced, when she returned to the reservation. Also it assumes the conflict that faced the character in plot, when he coming home, to explain, the plot of such novels results in failure, if the main character is alienated and cannot live with his original tribe and society again (Gorelova 36-38).

1.4. Native American Writers:

At First, Native American literature began during the activist period of the 1960s and 1970s, with the oral traditions in the hundreds of indigenous cultures of North America. Then, it finds its fullness in all aspects of written literature as well produced in the period after European contact (Thamarana 01).

Beginning with N. Scott Momaday, the young professor of English at Stanford University in California, published a book that entitled *House Made of Dawn* in 1968, which dealt almost entirely with Native Americans and being honored in 1969 by the fiction committee for the prestigious Pulitzer Prizes in literature in the same year, the Sioux advocator Vine Victor Deloria Jr published *Custer Died For Your Sins, subtitled an Indian Manifesto*. In the same way of various young Native American writers and anthologists, he examined the U.S. attitudes at the time towards Native American matters, among those writers Simon J. Ortiz, James Welch, Phil George, Janet Campbell and Grey Cohoe (Hobson 1; 4).

Indeed the early 19th century, Native Americans recounted their histories that narrated their ways of life, through the storytelling as the "oral tradition." by publishing books that related to their tribal cultures and traditions, among them William Apess of the Pequod tribe, George Copway (Ojibway) and Chief Elias Johnson (Tuscarora tribe). Yet, in the second half of the 19th century, chiefly with the development of the Native American reservations system in the 1870s and 1880s, the autobiography and the biography became the most popular form, and continued to dominate well into the 20th century, likewise editing the life stories of Native Americans, who were standing at the crossroads of the 19th and 20th centuries (Hobson 4).

Later, in the early 20th century Zitkala-Sa was one of these important Native American writers by here most prestigious publications between the year 1900 and 1904. She published a series of three autobiographical short stories, during this period she recollected the Sioux tales publishing *Old Indian Legends* in 1901. Later she wrote some stories by 1902, like *A Warrior's Daughter* in *Everybody's Magazine*, then *Why I Am a Pagan*, that appeared in

Atlantic Monthly. Also she argued about the importance of the Indian traditions, publishing essays in Carlisle's Red Man, *the Helper*, the Santee School's paper and the *World Carrier*. It is worth mentioning that some of her stories from her *Old Indian Legends* in the 1920s, included within the textbooks and school readers for children in New York, Washington...etc, which reflects the success of Native American writers in proving their identity to the whites (Zitkala-Sa xiii-xviii, xlii).

Zitkala Sa came from a society where women were considered men's property, and grew up in conditions that made her an easy target for discrimination, marginalization, and unfairness. But none of the frustrated surroundings made her give up, on the contrary her star shined in the sky of the Native American writers and her voice was heard by all the Americans, and she could serve the cause of her people. Our study is about one of her attempts to depict her people's identity throughout her book *American Indian Stories*.

2. Dakota Sioux Tribe:

At beginning, Native American Tribes were the first people to live in North America; they were powerful groups with a rich history named as The Sioux tribes. Their language based on three major divisions represented in the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota (Clodfelter 17).

To point out, the name "Sioux" is a shortened version of the word Naduwessioux, that French traders used the plural form of the Chippewa word Naduwessi, which means "snakes" or "enemies," to describe the Dakotas during the expeditions from 1654 to 1659. Additionally, the word "Sioux" describes many tribes that speak a common language. The term "Dakota" describes Indians who speak the dialect of the Siouan linguistic family, and is taken from the Santee and Teton words meaning "friend" or "an alliance of friends." The word "Dakota" is used to describe the eastern branch of the "Sioux" Indians (Clodfelter 18).

The term "Santee" also describes the eastern division of the "Dakota" Indians as well as the four bands that made up the Dakota or Santee Indians which are: the Mdewakanton, Wahpekute, Wahpeton and Sisseton; the Mdewakanton and Wahpekute bands are sometimes called the Lower Sioux because of their location on the reservation. The Mdewakanton and Wahpekute bands lived south of the junction where the Yellow Medicine River drains into the Minnesota River. The Wahpeton and Sisseton bands, on the other hand, are often called the Upper Sioux because they lived above the Yellow Medicine River (Clodfelter 38).

Yet, the Sioux maintained many separate tribal governments scattered across several reservations, communities, and reserves in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Montana in the United States and Manitoba, Southern Saskatchewan, and Alberta in Canada.

2.1. Dakota World:

The Dakota world is an integral piece from the soil and the landscape of the State of Minnesota and the surrounding region. Many historiographers begin their description of the Dakota people in Minnesota with the reaching of the French in the seventeenth century and the written records they produced. However, they believe in their belonging to the land, Archeological evidences indicates significant man movement through this neighborhood at least 2000 years ago. Their history is the primary source of the Dakota historical record. To read between lines, the Native American elders, conducted in Dakota language and in English, established a Dakota presence in this region for centuries, and provide indigenous points of thought, in order to deny the written interactions with explorers, traders, governance agents, and missionary (Westerman 295).

Although, French descriptions of Dakota were unsystematic and illustrate the tenuous nature of the information, that often does not include the traditional history and knowledge about the Dakota people. Still European sources show the Dakota people living throughout the present-day regions of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North and South Dakota, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and beyond in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including areas near the Red, James, Mississippi, and Minnesota rivers. Mni Sota Makoce was a Dakota place when the French first arrived in 1659 (Westerman 295).

Some of the Europeans sought respectful trade relations with Dakota people, while others sought to enslave them and claim the land for themselves. Although, the land was already inhabited by millions of Native Americans, people came to the "New World" to demand for land and resources. As well as the European immigrants that migrated to America, and who wanted the land increasingly.

Moreover, after controlling many of the Native American lands and establishing the U.S settlements, the spirituality clothing, and hairstyles of the Dakota were considered as savage, and declared that it was as an illegal behavior by United States Congress in the Indian Offense Policies. Although, some people such as the Puritans protested the systematic destruction of Native Americans, their small voice went unheard. In addition to that, the

Indian Removal Act in 1830 was signed into law by President Andrew Jackson that marked the beginning of many forced relocations. Hence, this Act caused an enormous loss of life, land, and resources. To explain more, the Dakota people were forced to move westward one step ahead of the white man's advanced weaponry. Also the United States government paid citizens, for killing the Native American men, women, and children (Lonetree 2).

2.2. Dakota Conflicts:

Since the history of the tribes was full of conflicts, the Dakota war had began on August 17, 1862, because of a winter starvation, when a few Santee men murdered a white farmer and most of his family. Actually, this war was an armed conflict along the Minnesota River in South west Minnesota, between the United States and several bands of Dakota. During this war, The Dakota warriors inspired further attacks on white settlements and attacked the trading post. Indeed, the Dakota war was coupled with the violation of the treaty obligations by the government in 1850s, when the federal payment was late and would not issue any more credit to the Santee. Hence, this war was short-lived and within six weeks the Dakota were defeated by the troops organized against them (Wilson 187).

Afterwards, the US suspended treaty annuities to the Dakota for four years and awarded the money to the white victims and their families. The men remanded by order of President Lincoln were sent to a prison in Iowa, where more than half died. Another conflict known as "The Red Cloud's War" (also referred to as the Bozeman War), was an armed conflict between the Lakota and the United States Army in the "Wyoming Territory" and the "Montana Territory" from 1866 to 1868; this war was fought over control of the "Powder River Country" in north central "Wyoming" and was named after Red Cloud, the prominent Sioux chief, who led the war against the United States following encroachment into the area by the U.S. military. This war ended with the Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868, and the Sioux victory in the war led to their temporary control of the Powder River Country.

Later, the U.S Government could not abide by Laramie Treaty, the treaty that had established Native rights and control over the Great Sioux Reservation, thus, they violated this agreement and resulted the Battle of Little Big Horn or the battle of Greasy Grass, because of the discovery of the gold in 1873. The interest of the U.S Government about these lands led to a series of battles, among them the Great Sioux War of 1876, between the Lakota and allied tribes such as the Cheyenne, against the United States military. This series of battles occurred in Montana territory, Dakota Territory, and Wyoming territory, but it resulted in a victory for the United States military. After that by 1877 the majority of the Great Sioux

tribes had surrendered, and the Congress passed the law that minimize the Great Sioux Reservation, as well as followed a massive assimilation policies instead of violence represented in the Dawes Act of 1887, that aimed to dissolve communal and tribal land rights, for instance the boarding schools that aimed to separate children from their families and installed curriculums and disciplinary structures intended to eradicate traditional tribal culture (Zitkala-Sa xi; xli).

In addition to this conflict, the massacre at Wounded Knee Creek was the last major armed conflict between the Lakota and the United States. Indeed, on December 15, 1890 when the Indian police sent to arrest the great Sioux leader Sitting Bull, but they killed him on December 29, and over 300 of the Sioux people were massacred in South Dakota: "A people's dream died there... The nation's hoop was broken and scattered" (Rappaport 72). When the Dakota Sioux leaders began a spiritual dance called the Ghost Dance, in an attempt to bring strength and healing to their community, but They were forbidden to sing traditional songs and practice their religion, as a result, the federal response was quick and violent, in less than four hours, military troops surrounded the camp and positioned four rapid-fire canons and the new Gatling Gun, invented specifically for mass killing. Throughout this era, the United States government forced tribes into signing unfairly treaties, besides; they took their lands for the promise of money, food, a formal education, and medicine for diseases brought by Europeans. Hence, they pushed them into the reservations forced to rely on the United States government for food rations, due to the loss of their plentiful hunting and fishing lands (Lonetree 3-4).

After that, in the late 19th century, railroads wanted to build tracks through Indian lands. Then again, the Dakota and Lakota were forced to accept that procedures of defining reservations, in exchange for the rest of their lands, besides farming and ranching of domestic cattle as opposed to a nomadic hunting economy. During the first years of the Reservation Era, the Sioux people depended upon annual federal payments guaranteed by treaty for survival.

2.3. Life of Yankton Dakota:

The language of the large nation or the Great Sioux was represented in a three related dialects. The Dakota Sioux were speaking the Lakota language, which was part of the Siouan linguistic family, then the Nakota language that was spoken by the northern or Yankton Sioux. As to the Dakota language, it was spoken by the eastern and western Dakota or Santee Sioux. These dialects, it represented a three major alliances that gathered the Sioux tribes in

the "Oceti Sakowin", which means the Seven Council Fires, and met every summer for the Sun Dance Ceremony. Those tribes called themselves Dakotah or Dakotas, and according to the Yankton Reservation reports they were characterized by a complex traditional organization which demonstrated their heterogeneous nature (Susag 25-26).

Besides, their life was centered on the buffalo, which provided food for the people who were created in the womb of "Mother Earth", also they believed that Humankind is a part of the nature. Indeed, according to the Teton Sioux, the earth is under the protection of a power called Wakan, which is the spirit that is controlling the four major animistic forces or superior gods represented in Inyan (the Rock), Maka (the Earth), Skan (the Sky), and Wi (the Sun). Basically, these forces are connected to four associate deities: Wakinvan (Winged) in connection with Inyan, Whope (Beautiful One) in connection with Maka, Tate (Wind) in connection with Skan, and Hanwi (Moon) in connection with Sun. The supreme personification of this power is Wakan Tanka, which often referred to as "Grandfather as, who created the universe (Susag 28-29).

Furthermore, Native Americans believed in kinship and lived in one community about ten or twenty related families, even though this kinship was not defined in biological terms, but in terms of behavior, For example children by abducted white women, were considered full-blooded Sioux.

The Dakotas practice self sacrifice in order to maintain successful community also they respect elders and take responsibility. The Yankton Sioux believed in the kinship rules in order to be a good Dakota in truth and civilized (Susag 29-30).

In addition to that, the Dakota used the giveaway as another sacred, reciprocal activity, which were often held by a particular family, in memory of a deceased family member. Where specific goods were given to people, who were particularly close to the deceased or who supported the family in their time of grief. Accepting the gift is also a sacred acts done out of respect for the family and their loved one. Memorial giveaways are not the only occasion for a giveaway. There are numerous occasions connected with the giveaway. The feast and the giveaway actually accompany all major ceremonies and they are an integral part of them. Also it is considered as the way that represented in the distribution of the excess property.

According to the Dakota, the right relationship will remain only as long as the people maintain their practice of ceremony, because through the ritualistic practice of ceremony and so, the power Wakan can be transferred and serves to keep the society together, create harmony, balance, and establish right relations within the social and natural world. (Susag 30-31). For example, the Dakota people believe in the story of the White Buffalo Calf Woman, one of the wakan Tanka, which embodies the traditional Lakota, because it demonstrates a set of values as well as, gives identity to the people, makes connection between buffalo people and the mankind, and gives them the Sacred Pipe to teach them Sacred Rites. This suggests that, the Sacred Pipe was considered as a major symbol of Lakota belief and ritual, that is to say these rituals are a means by which the Lakota can honor and maintain their kinship, with the ordinary and the extra-ordinary world (Susag 31-32).

The Lakota religious life relied on two major rituals represented in The Sweet Lodge and The Hunka, the first one is a spiritual purification an action of group solidarity and self-sacrifice in gratitude for the gift of the buffalo also for individual purpose in life; and the Sun Dance and they were performing The Ball Throwing Ceremony at the onset of menstruation or puberty; the second one embodied in the adoption of a child to keep the strong kinship and keeping of the soul "nagi-wanagi" a ceremony that reminds the family of death and ghosts. These practices had a specific importance because it might bring the harm, if it were not performed correctly (Susag 33-34).

In spite of the colonization and limitation of ceremonial practices Native Americans kept on passing on their traditions through generations.

2.4. Yankton Reservation:

A part from the Yankton people were travelling all times by migrating twice a year, relying on hunting to live in Southeastern Minnesota. They are considered as the first Sioux whom made contact with Euro-Americans, because of their location; they were also the first Sioux to cede land to the United States Government according to the treaty at Prairie du Chien in 1830 (Susag 66-67).

Thereafter, in 1858 many of the remaining lands were given up by the Yanktons to the government, for a certain amount of money until 1908, under the policy of dismantling the tribal structure and building Euro-American civilization on a farming base, and by 1889 the Great Sioux Nation as well as the three major alliances of Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota, were rendered politically meaningless by the reservation system (Susag 67-68).

Additionally, the Yanktons were different when it comes to resistance and contact with the Euro-Americans. Indeed, they used peaceful and non-violent ways to resist, as if they were accepting the foreign existence, while the other Sioux tribes struggled with violence against the invasion, that is why the US policy on the Yankton reservation was different, comparing to the other Sioux tribes. It is important to mention that the Yanktons were forbidden from practicing their ceremonies and native languages; besides, the Yankton Agents reported about the secret resistances carried out by the Yanktons within the reservations, and these reports were given to the Department of the interior each year. This operation had begun in 1874 and lasted for twenty years. The Yanktons were described by the Agents as friendly and strictly temperate people, living at peace with all tribes without any hostility towards Christianity (Susag 68-69).

Under the civilizing process, some of the Indians were working as employees, so that women were weaving cloth and making willow baskets, while men were selling lumber and some of them were training to be blacksmiths, carpenters, and herders. Nevertheless, by 1902 the agency had replaced Native American employees with whites, because, the government believed that teaching Indians farming and English would help in Americanizing the young Indians, and instead of paganism, they would learn the Bible. The Government schools were replaced by the boarding ones for girls and boys. At the beginning in 1874 they still educating in the Dakota language, while in 1890 the agents recommended the replacement of Dakota with English, because it was more sympathetic with Indians. Children were separated from their parents and took the brightest ones from the reservations schools. After that, by 1899 only two reservation schools remained and by 1901 St. Paul's school closed. In addition to that, changing the way of living of the Yanktons was a part from the civilizing process. For instance, made all things that confirm the Indian identity disappears. Like making the houses instead the teepees (is a cone-shaped tent, traditionally made of animal skins upon wooden poles). Hence, in 1874 one half of Indians were lived in houses. Then by 1893 the teepees were used only for tent or occasional outing or journey (Susag 71-73).

Moreover, Epidemics of sore eyes, sore throats, influenza, consumption, scrofula (tuberculosis), measles, chicken pox and whooping cough raged through these Yankton people. They were dying due to poverty, problems of division, especially in the schools; where such highly contagious diseases. In short, the prevalence of disease was due to the stupid indifference laws of health by the U.S Government, as well as, the poverty and old age (Susag 74).

In spite of this devastating disintegration, the agents still pushed assimilation aiming to keep the Yankton people away from their tribal traditions, in order to kill what is Indian them and spread the white man's civilization. But the Yanktons resisted the dismantling of their culture.

This was the cultural and physical landscape of Gertrude Simmons Bonnin's childhood and young adulthood.

3. Zitkala-Sa's Life and Achievements:

Zitkala Sa was born on February 22nd in 1876 on the Yankton Indian Reservation in South Dakota. She had a full-blooded Sioux mother named Reaches for the Wind (given the name Ellen Simmons by her husband), and a white European-American father (Felker Simmons). Little is known about him, except the fact that he abandoned them when she was a young girl. Although Zitkala Sa was given the name Gertrude Simmons at birth, she later adopted the Sioux name she has come to be known by as a way of asserting her independence and reclaiming her heritage (Rappaport I- 3- 14).

Zitkala Sa lived on the reservation until she was eight; she described those days in her autobiography, as ones of freedom, safety and happiness, in the care of her tribe. In 1884 when she was only eight years, missionaries took several children from the reservation, including Zitkala Sa to a boarding school in Wabash, Indiana, run by Quakers, where she was expected to learn just enough to become a successful housemaid (Rappaport 6, Zitkala-Sa xv-xvi).

In spite of the fact that, she had mixed feelings about the three years she spent at the institute, feeling sad at having her Sioux heritage stripped from her and being forced to participate in Quaker prayers. At the same time, she was joyful about learning to read and write. Although Zitkala Sa eventually returned home in 1887 to the Sioux reservation, she felt that she didn't fully belong to them anymore, that she was caught between two different worlds. This, as well as a yearning for more knowledge, eventually sent her back to the Institution to continue her education, when she returned to School "Santee Normal Training School" in 1888-1889 she selected this school, because it was close to her mother, then she decided to move on and accept entrance to as well as scholarship from "Erlham College" in "Indiana" (Champion, Emmanuel S.Nelson 383-385).

Moreover, in July 1897, Zitkala-sa became a teacher at the "Carlisle Indian School" at the age of twenty one years old. Although, it was the most famous Indian boarding school in the United States, she was never comfortable with the school's rigid and conformist protocol, or the fact that it favored European culture, and this ultimately put her in conflict with its founder, Richard Henry Pratt. However, Zitkala Sa's accomplishments were so remarkable, that Pratt sent her back to the Sioux reservation after a month of teaching to assemble more Native American students. Although she didn't realize it at the time, the trip would mark a turning point in her life. Upon her arrival at the Sioux reservation, she was saddened to see how much poverty had taken hold of the community, and how her mother's own home had fallen into disrepair. It was not the thriving community she remembered. She was especially disturbed to find that white settlers were beginning to occupy the territory, even though the land was promised solely to the Sioux by federal law, All of this affected her deeply and made her question some of her larger choices (Rappaport 85; 90).

After Zitkala Sa return to the Carlisle School in the fall of 1897, she was abruptly dismissed. Between her disagreement with the school's rigid and one-sided system and an article she had written expressing sorrow for the loss of Native American identity. She was no longer wanted by the school's administration. In January 1899 she resigned as a teacher and won a scholarship, in order to study music at the New England Conservatory of Music in Bosten (Rappaport 100; 104).

Yet, Zitkala Sa returned to the Sioux reservation, because of her mother's advancing years, and the poverty she and her brother were enduring. There, she soon took a clerical job at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, where she met her future husband, Captain Raymond Talefase Bonnin, after she broke up the engagement with "Carlos Montezuma" a "Yavapai" activist and physician, because of their different ambitions and becoming Mrs. Carlos Montezuma would submerge her identity and independence.

Indeed, she adopted the pen name Zitkala-Sa in 1900, and began writing articles and short stories about Native American life, which were published in prestigious magazines like Harper's Monthly. The articles mostly covered her thoughts on her struggle to retain her native identity, while being pressured to adapt to European culture, as well publishing articles criticizing the "Carlisle Indian School (Zitkala-Sa xviii).

Furthermore, "Zitkala-Ša's decision to marry Raymond Bonnin was on August 10, 1902. Because of that he was a Yankton Dakota Sioux man and the mixed-blood, who was raised in the traditional Sioux way of life. According to Iverson, marrying someone from her culture mattered a great deal to Zitkala-Ša, their marriage was a complimentary relationship, in that they were both Sioux and shared similar cultural and political views. Moreover, both agreed on the process, in which the Native Americans should assimilate to Anglo American society. Throughout her life with Raymond, she established and participated in many efforts that supported the progress of Native rights and culture, they supported one another and collaborated for Native causes throughout their lives together (Iverson 34-38).

As a turning point, Zitkala Sa and her husband moved to Utah to work with the natives of another reservation, and gave birth to her only son Raymond Ohiya Bonnin. There they worked for the next 14 years. Around that time, she met professor and composer William F. Hanson, who taught at Brigham Young University, and created together an opera called *the Sun Dance*, which debuted in 1910, it was the first opera ever co-written by a Native American. At this point, Zitkala Sa became engaged in political activism. While she lived in Utah, she joined the Society of American Indians (SAI), a progressive group dedicated to preserving the Native American way of life, and fighting for their rights, besides, she was elected as a secretary and treasurer in the organization, as well as, she served in different organizations that supports the American Indian rights (Zitkala-Sa xx-xxi, xxiv).

After all, at the age of 61, Zitaka Sa passed away on January 26th, 1938, and was buried at Arlington cemetery, and much of her writings on Native American culture, have been republished by the University of Nebraska.

Throughout her life, she worked hard to gain basic human rights for her people, including the right to vote, for better education and access to proper health care. And because of her dedication to Native Americans and their way of life, solid legislation had been passed to protect them and their lands.

Chapter Two:

**Zitkala-Sa Depiction of
a Native Identity in
*American Indian Stories***

One of the first Native American women to publish traditional stories derived from oral tribal legend was Zitkala-Sa. Her writings have frequently harangued on the white oppression of Native Americans and were devoted to preserve her people's tradition, culture, and identity. This chapter will demonstrate Zitkala Sa's experience in the boarding school and how that shaped her identity, and then we will tackle the effect of being marginalized and how that generates activism in her soul and writings, finally we will try to provide a definition to the term identity and its different types, and how Zitkala Sa depicted identity throughout her book *American Indian Stories*.

1. American Indian Boarding Schools:

In the past, before the European dominant, the Indigenous people of North America were living in tribal communities with respect for the land, plant and animal life, and their languages. Education was through everyday life within homes and families by parents and grandparents they were learning from story-telling and ceremonies practices. All these activities were destroyed the American Indian culture and languages in order to Christianize them as well as Americanize them. The Carlisle Indian Industrial Boarding School is considered as the first, and most well-known of these schools, it was established in 1879 by an Army officer named Richard Pratt, who conducted a social experiment with Apache captives of war. They were taken to a camp in Florida, in order to cut the men's long hair, put them in uniforms, forced them to learn English, and subjected them to strict military protocols.

Most of the prisoners survived and learned the English customs and language but some of them could not endure and committed suicide. That is why he requested from congress to funding for the similar education of all American Indians. children were transported by train and later by bus to American Indian Boarding Schools by 1900 were taken from their families, to apply on them the same Pratt's experiment without seeing their parents and families for many years moreover new students were humiliated by telling them that they are dirty Indians and usually they were stripped and disinfected by having alcohol, kerosene, or DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane), one of the most well-known synthetic pesticides, poured on them. Any personal belongings were taken from them and never returned such as cut long hair that valued for its cultural and spiritual significance, medicine pouches, beadwork, family photographs, etc.. Students were given uniforms that were made of low quality, uncomfortable also the school administrators renamed the students, giving them common English first and last name (Lonetree 2-5-10).

In addition, children at boarding schools were given inadequate food and medical care, and conditions were overcrowded. So that Native children in South Dakota schools were often fed only one sandwich for a whole day. As a result, children routinely died in mass numbers of starvation and disease in other words, children were dying because of common medical ailments due to medical neglect. moreover they were often forced to do hard works in order to raise monies for the schools and salaries for the teachers and administrators, Some Boarding School survivors have reported that children being killed because they were forced to operate dangerous machinery, but in return they were never compensated for their labor. Many of them report being sexually, physically, and emotional abused by multiple perpetrators in these schools, and often children were forced to beat other children besides the punishments through whipping and beating (Smith 5-6).

After graduating them they still retained certain aspects of their traditional culture. They would often return to their families and communities they were treated them as strangers, they were no longer finding an identity in either the white or tribal society and though the assimilation, they were not accepted by the whites because the differences between them rendered American Indians inferior. In 1893 Congress allowed the Bureau of Indian Affairs to withhold food rations and supplies from American Indian parents who refused to send or keep their children in the Boarding Schools. American Indian parents were hiding their children from governmental agents or officials fear of being forcefully removed from their families and communities (Lonetree 5-6).

American Indian Boarding Schools were often operated by churches because it was a priority to convert American Indian Boarding School students to European religious beliefs also they were viewed as savages, rather than as self-sufficient, knowledgeable, creative, Schools were typically Christian, Catholic, and Protestant. Students were taught that the teachings and practices of their culture were wrong and even savage. They were also told that their original language was the devil's tongue or a sinful way to talk that is why they put a priority to provide American Indian children with the basic components of an academic education. another rule of order represented in individualizing American Indians they believed that the importance of the tribal community must be abolished in order to civilize American Indians (Lonetree 06- 09) .

Native American Indians resisted assimilation policy by refusing to surrender their children to governmental officials. Parents taught their young children how to avoid capture by authorities so parents preferred to be jailed rather than giving up their children to boarding school agents. As well students resisted by running away, sometimes hundreds of miles back to their families, because they were beaten for speaking their language, but many secretly “talked Indian” with their fellow students, as well as Parents were prevented from taking their children out of the American Indian Boarding Schools. Some parents wrote letters pleading with administrators to release their children so they could return home, also students were allowed to write letters home, however letters were censored by school administrators. Thus, the letters were destroyed or simply not mailed, if it contained some complaining. The same thing that happened to their parents in other words these letters were withheld by school administrators if they felt the correspondence from home would disrupt the student's conversion to white life, more than that many times visits were canceled at summer vacation, in order to work as day laborers during the summer and their wages were taken to fund the schools (Lonetree 08-09-10).

2. Zitkala Sa From Marginalization to Activism:

In general, many of the American Indian writers did much efforts in order to make their voice heard, likewise "Zitkala Sa" who experienced the discriminating, and hostile treatments that motivated her to vocalize her opinion about her Native people, and that is why she sought to convince Eastern society that Indian people possessed abilities equal to those of Whites, in other words implying a regard for Anglo culture as equal if not superior to Indian culture, additionally she could no longer tolerate the anti-Indian educational principles, that is why she remained connected to her Native heritage in order to win the approval and support of her non-Indian audiences (Susag, *A Power(full) Literary Voice* 5-6).

Dina Barajas stated that Zitkala-Ša's oppression and marginalization was due to many facts; she was born a female, mixed-blood (half Native American and Anglo) in the late 1800s. She was born and grew up during the eras of colonialism and post colonialism in which women were seen as second class citizens in relation to men. Native Americans were not considered even citizens. Furthermore, a number of colonial tactics were designed to oppress and marginalize them, including racism, discrimination, disenfranchisement, dispossession of land and natural resources, and warfare. In an excerpt from Zitkala-Ša's autobiography, “The School Days of an Indian Girl,” she describes one of her earliest experiences of marginalization when she went to boarding school at the age of eight (83-86),

the missionaries compelled her into going to boarding school. They romanticized the idea of attending boarding school instead of informing her of its harsh reality (66).

Barajas affirmed that rigid colonizing strategies were implemented in the educational system by the United States government to integrate the Natives into Anglo American society. Zitkala Ša conveys the traumatic experience of having her hair cut by the boarding school staff. She expresses that she felt violated and maimed as a result of this event (91). This type of practice is only one example of the degrading efforts to assimilate Zitkala-Ša and many other Native children. These procedures followed the "Kill the Indian and save the Man," doctrine which Colonel Richard Henry Pratt conceived and advocated. Many others, both Native and non-Native, followed this creed. This ideology informed policies that not only diminished the Native's culture and identity; they also diminished the Natives' spirit and made them feel less than human. The assimilation policy did not consider the emotions of Native children. This practice of a dominant culture subjecting and disempowering another culture is the process of marginalization. Zitkala-Ša experienced marginalization within the American educational system and her own Native community. She did not quite fit into either of these environments because she was a young, mixed-blood, female striving to further her education during a time when according to White stereotypes, as a Yankton Dakota Sioux woman she was expected to be "silent, invisible, segregated and submissive" (Barajas 67).

In Davidson and Norris' edited anthology of Zitkala-Ša's writings, *American Indian Stories, Legends, and Other Writings*, Zitkala-Ša reveals that her mother Ellen distrusted and despised White people because of the harm they did to the Sioux. As a result, she opposed her daughter's decision to attend Anglo American schools throughout ZitkalaŠa's adolescence and young adult life (68-70, 83-86, 100-104). Zitkala-Ša discussed her mother's disdain toward White society in the following excerpt:

Though an illness left me unable to continue my college course, my pride kept me from returning to my mother. Had she known of my worn condition, she would have said the White man's papers were not worth the freedom and health I had lost by them. Such a rebuke from my mother would have been unbearable, and as I felt then it would be far too true to be comfortable (Zitkala Sa 104).

According to Barajas, Zitkala-Ša had stomach problems and became increasingly weary while a student at Earlham, her mother could not relate to her experience, the harsh treatment of Anglo society, and the periodic transitions of coming back to a Native community that Zitkala-Ša was taught to deny. Ellen's disdain toward White people, coupled with her inability to understand Zitkala-Ša's emotional suffering, prevented her from being able to console her daughter. Ultimately, Ellen's disapproval of Zitkala-Ša's decision to live in White society created a life-long rift between them. As a young woman Zitkala-Ša was able to comprehend the reasons why she was marginalized by both Native and non-Native society. She was a minority, female, mixed-blood trying to fit into the dominant society by obtaining her education among people who did not care to understand her, much less like her due to their prejudiced preconceptions. Her mother, as well as other Native people who were traditional full bloods, disinterested in learning the White man's ways did not comprehend her feelings of weariness and isolation (68).

Furthermore, she began to figure out her activist skills while she was a student at "Earlham College" where she found the effectiveness of her voice, which could be heard and appreciated, with attention to her activism that began to flourish through written works and political activism, in particular when she published in Earlham's student newspaper and in her participation as a contestant in two oratorical competitions; "Zitkala-Ša" wrote a number of editorial comments As an editor of the *American Indian Magazine*, such as "Hope in the Returned Indian Soldier," which advocated for Natives' right to citizenship, as a result of her first victory, she competed in a state college oratorical competition as her colleges' representative (Barajas 71-72). Zitkala-Ša recalls this memory in her text, "The School Days of an Indian Girl:

Here again was a strong prejudice against my people . . . The slurs against the Indian people that stained the lips of our opponents were already burning like a dry fever in my breast. But after the orations were delivered a deeper burn awaited me. There, before the vast ocean of eyes, some college rowdies threw out a large white flag, with a drawing of a most forlorn Indian girl on it. Under this they had printed in bold black letters . . . "squaw." Such worse than barbarian rudeness embittered me. While we waited for the verdict of the judges, I gleaned fiercely upon the throngs of palefaces. . . Then anxiously we watched the man carry toward the stage the envelope containing the final decision. The evil spirit laughed within me when the white flag dropped out of sight, and the hands which hurled it hung limp in defeat (102-103).

To clarify, she fought for the Indian rights in 1896 in front of a large audience; it was the start of her political career when she ascended the stage of Indianapolis opera house, to compete statewide oratorical contest (Chiarillo 1).

On another side, Cari Carpenter in his journal *Detecting Indianness: Gertrude Bonnin's Investigation of Native American Identity* stated that Zitkala-Ša became a member of a number of organizations, in order to promote Native American rights. meanwhile, her National Council of American Indians (NCAI) that founded in 1926 aimed to advocate the citizenship rights, improved health care, and cultural recognition and preservation, she investigated the case of princess "Chinquilla", the New York woman; who claimed that she has been separated from her "Cheyenne" parents at birth, Zitkala Sa invited her to join the organization to improve American Indian lives (139-140).

Before that, she involved to the Society of American Indians (SAI), which was the first national association that founded in 1911 by "Arthur C. Parker", "Carlos Montezuma" and others she chaired of the "Committee on Indian Welfare" for the "General Federation of Women's Clubs" (GFWC), she reflected the self-reliance and independence of the New Woman, by creating multiple political platforms from which to fight against the outrages affecting Indian peoples (Wilkinson 190).

Although the her organization lack the resources, she herself received no salary from the organization as its president, they were travelling by the car a long distances to a various reservations, in order to win the support for the NCAI, in the mean time the American Indians in the reservations and boarding schools were suffering from deceases, starvation, dishonesty, and neglect...etc (Carpenter 147).

Zitkala-Sa expressed her viewpoints on the state of Native affairs within the United States and ways in which their condition could be improved. Her involvement with these organizations, afforded her support, exposure, and credibility. As a member of these groups, she facilitated the advancement of Native people by educating the American public about her own and other Native cultures.

3. Identity Through *American Indian Stories*:

The Native American writer and activist Zitkala-Sa (1876- 1938), attempted to preserve her people's oral tradition by transcribing oral tales into written English, as well as transcribing her life's story into an autobiography. *American Indian Stories* is a collection of childhood stories, allegorical fiction, and an autobiographical essay including several of Zitkala Sa's articles that were published in the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's Magazine*. It was first published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, where her articles were serialized from 1900 to 1902: they included "an Indian teacher among Indians" published in volume 85 in 1900, and included in the same issue two other stories "Impression of an Indian childhood" and "School Days of an Indian Girl". This collection was published later on as a book in 1921.

Before addressing the elements that reflect the original American identity, we must first discuss the concept of identity, and then we will attempt to identify it in the stories and essays.

3.1.The Concept of Identity:

The quest for identity is the prevailing theme in the work of almost all Native American writers. For centuries of colonization, during which children, mixed and full-blood, were taken from their homes and 'civilized' have scoured away nearly all remnants of traditional Indian identity. Sent to boarding schools such as that in Carlisle, Pennsylvania whose motto was 'Kill the Indian, Save the man', these children were no longer permitted to speak their own languages, wear their own clothes, or pray to their own gods. Imperfectly assimilated, they lost their voices and their histories, and found themselves balanced between two opposing worlds: the old world where they no longer belonged, and the new world in which they would be no more than immigrants, always foreign, always seeking acceptance.

David Buckingham stated that identity is an ambiguous term that has been used in many different contexts and for many different purposes. He added that, the fundamental paradox of identity is inherent in the term itself. From the Latin root *idem*, meaning "the same," the term nevertheless implies both similarity and difference. On the one hand, identity is something unique to each of us that we assume is more or less consistent (and hence the same) over time. For instance, as I write, there is an intense debate in the U.K. about the government's proposed introduction of identity cards and their potential for addressing the problem of "identity theft." In these formulations, our identity is something we uniquely possess: it is

what distinguishes us from other people. Yet on the other hand, identity also implies a relationship with a broader collective or social group of some kind. When we talk about national identity, cultural identity, or gender identity, for example, we imply that our identity is partly a matter of what we share with other people. Here, identity is about identification with others whom we assume are similar to us (if not exactly the same), at least in some significant ways (01). Although it is difficult to understand the concept of identity, it has been defined as a psychosocial concept concerned with understanding who we are and who we are not and what other people think we are.

Erik Erikson in his book *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, (published in 1968), defines identity; he described it as psychosocial, because it is influenced by personal and social factors in which memory plays a vital part. Social and personal identities are interlinked, thus what happens to individuals depends on what is happening in society during the historical period in which they live (Dambuzdo 07).

3.1.1. Cultural Identity:

Cultural identity refers to identification with, or sense of belonging to a particular group based on various cultural categories, including nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, and religion. Cultural identity is constructed and maintained through the process of sharing collective knowledge such as traditions, heritage, language, aesthetics, norms and customs. As individuals typically affiliate with more than one cultural group, cultural identity is complex and multifaceted. While formerly scholars assumed identification with cultural groups to be obvious and stable, today most view it as contextual and dependent upon temporal and spatial changes. In the globalized world with increasing intercultural encounters, cultural identity is constantly enacted, negotiated, maintained, and challenged through communicative practices (Hsueh-Hua Chen 1).

According to Stryker S, the concept of cultural identity refers to familial and cultural dimensions of a person's identity, and how others perceive him or her. Identity is influenced by positive or negative experiences in a social setting, especially for marginalized individuals (F.A. Ibrahim, J.R. Heuer 15). Thus one can draw a simple definition to the term, cultural identity, which is a person's identity associated with his surroundings, family, and position in society.

Marta Beznak suggested that the Europeans, the conquerors, were the ones who were writing the history. They created a history that served their benefits, a history that is far from truth, and gave a false image of the Native American nation. The Native American nation was misinterpreted and subdued to their conquerors that had the power to manipulate the history (05).

Thus Native writers, including Zitkala Sa used literature as a tool to rewrite history, and to transmit a correct image of their culture; their attempts to preserve it and to protect it from the white oppressor who did everything possible to erase it.

Once Zitkala-Sa had been given the voice to be heard, she could start her fight against the distorted image the dominant culture created about her nation. "Educated" and "civilized," she became able to raise her voice against the culture that instead of protecting her culture, tried to destroy and erase it. She became the warrior just as her ancestors were when they fought for their rights to live on the lands that belonged to them. She used the tool that the dominant culture gave her and she turned it into her benefit. Her resistance can be seen in her works of literature, mainly her book *American Indian Stories* (Marta Beznak 07).

As Marta Beznak argues, Zitkala-Sa fought against the picture the dominant culture created about the Native American nation. In her autobiographical essays, she spoke about the cruelty and the effects of the schools whose purpose was to civilize Native Americans. She raised her voice against racism and injustice in the treatment of her nation. She criticized the values of the mainstream culture and the hypocrisy of the human and moral laws that the white world obeys. In her stories and essays, she described the life in the tribes, their customs, laws, relationships with the world and the nature creating an image of not so dying culture as it was presented by white men. She built a new identity, the identity that was neither Native American nor the identity of a member of the dominant society. This identity was stronger than both of those. She was no longer a silent Native American who lived in the reservation, nor a citizen of the USA whose main goal was to move from rags to riches, to fulfill the American Dream. She became an activist for the rights of her people. She fought for their true place in the American history, culture and life. She transformed into the post-Indian warrior of survivance (08).

When analyzing the element of identity in Zitkala-Sa's work, Marta Bezjak advocates that anyone can notice that Zitkala-Sa kept resisting the dominant culture and gave a new tribal representation. The resistance is integrated in *American Indian Stories* as a collection, including every individual part of it. Every story is a Native American story of survivance because Zitkala-Sa writes about the real experiences of her people and, in that way, stories become the abundant sources of survivance (30).

Zitkala Sa's "*Impressions of an Indian Childhood*" depicts the life of the Dakota people in the first half of the twentieth century. It presents the preserved identity of the Indians through the eyes of an unnamed girl at the age of seven. The story traces such an identity through different sections as *My Mother*, *The Legends*, *The Beadworks*, and *The Coffee-Making*. These sections prove the fundamental existence of the Indians despite the paleface missionaries' attempt, as the mother's girl calls them, to destroy such united identity by force. The story ends by the mother sending her daughter, now eight years old, to the East to whites' boarding schools in order to educate her (Hala Abdel Razzaq A. Jum'ah and Dr. Kifah (Moh'd Khair) Ali Al Omari).

In the light of the previous definitions of the concept of identity, Stanley attempted to show how Zitkala-Sa's life is transcribed in the cultural life of her people. In order to establish her cultural identity, Zitkala-Sa enacted her own autobiographical strategies, rejecting, on the one hand, the predominant assimilationist autobiographical mode of her time era, Zitkala-Sa raised her voice to challenge the values of the dominant culture especially in such autobiographical works as "*Impressions of an Indian Childhood*" and "*The School Days of an Indian Girl*." In 1900 (Stanley 64-65).

In the first part of *American Indian Stories*, "*Impressions of an Indian Childhood*" Zitkala-Sa draws a complex picture of Native American lifestyle of that time by describing her childhood among Native Americans on the Pine Ridge reservation and illustrating Native American customs and traditions (Češková 7):

A wigwam of weather-stained canvas at the base of some irregularly ascending hills. A footpath wound its way gently down the sloping land till it reached the broad river bottom; creeping through the long swamp grasses ...my mother came to draw water from the muddy stream for our household use. Always when my mother started for the river, I stopped my play to run along with her" (Zitkala-Sa 68).

The lifestyle of the reservation had a major influence on Zitkala-Sa's character. Until the arrival of Christian missionaries on the reservation, Zitkala Sa -according to her autobiography - lived in a kind of paradise. All the adult members of the Indian community on the reservation supported the children and were very patient with them. Zitkala-Sa also describes the close relationship she had with her mother who taught her how to behave towards elders, how to do Native cultural beadwork and how to cook, and told her stories about Indian spirits and brave warriors:

It took many trials before I learned how to knot my thread on the point of my finger as I saw her do. The next difficulty was in keeping my thread stiffly twisted, so I could easily string my beads upon it my mother insisted I make original designs. At first I spent many a sunny hour working a long design. Soon I learned not to draw complex patterns, for I had to finish whatever I began (Zitkala-Sa 74).

When reading *Impressions of an Indian Childhood* over and over, one can get a clear image on the change of the Indians' identity during the twentieth century. The huge transformation of their identity made the Indians in a sense of lose, their identity shifted from being original to imitative one, from having their own distinctive culture to a whipped and ignored one, Indians became aimless and hopeless fascinated by the whites' life after they were full of spirituality.

Through these stories, Stanley claimed that Zitkala-Sa recovered and affirmed her people's cultural contributions in order to transplant the native spirit into the English language she wore several veils signifying her otherness, including her Sioux language and culture, her Native American identity and her gender (65).

Zitkala-Sa wanted the white readers to understand how their government always kept in destroying her people's culture. Moreover, she refused the policies that supported adopting the white's way of life, because it has always brought to her the pain and humiliation, and arouse revenge in her soul in order to take back their lands and identity (Rappaport 11).

According to Carpenter, Indians are the innocent in America, the true inhabitants of the land, wronged by the shameful deceptions of palefaces Whites lose the status of innocence, because under the influence of imperialism they commit genocide on Native Americans in order to occupy the land (8). Zitkala Sa tried through her writings to describe the paleface in a conversation between her and her mother:

Returning from the river, I tugged beside my mother ...So I said: Mother, when I am tall as my cousin Warca-Ziwin, you shall not have to come for water. I will do it for you." With a strange tremor in her voice which I could not understand, she answered, If the paleface does not take away from us the river we drink.

Mother, who is this bad paleface?" I asked. My little daughter, he is a sham, --a sickly sham! The bronzed Dakota is the only real man. I looked up into my mother's face while she spoke...I knew she was unhappy. This aroused revenge in my small soul (Zitkala-Sa 69).

She learned to write in a "white man's missionary school," serves, through her writing, as a link between the oral tradition of an indigenous tribal culture and the written tradition of the literate colonizers. As such, Zitkala-Sa is one of the first Native American women writers to write her autobiography without the help of an interpreter or ethnographer.

Zitkala-Sa talks about the Native children's schooling experiences in the chapter "*The School Days of an Indian Girl*", she presents that education and schooling rip away Natives identity and mentally abuse children. Zitkala-Sa was sent to a Quaker Boarding School at the age of eight. It was a voluntarily wish to go to school and explore the land of the red apples. She wanted to explore the Eastern world that she has heard so much about.

In a day or tow I gleaned many wonderful stories from my playfellows concerning the strangers. " Mother, my friend Judéwin is going home with the missionaries. She is going to a more beautiful country than ours; the palefaces told her so!" I said wistfully, wishing in my heart that I too might go (Zitkala-Sa 83).

During her time in school, she learned that the schooling system has not only given knowledge to the Indian children but it has also taken many things from them. They were forced to give up their cultural practices, clothes, and language. They were forced to live their lives in a western way. They eventually lost their most precious thing, their identity:

Late in the morning, my friend Judéwin gave me a terrible warning. Judéwin knew a few words of English; and she had overheard the paleface talk about cutting our long hair. Our mothers had taught us that only unskilled warriors who were captured had their hair shingled by the enemy. Among our people, short hair was worn by mourners, and shingled hair by cowards! (Zitkala-Sa 90).

Forbidding children from performing tribal rituals, speaking tribal languages, and wearing traditional clothes is part of assimilation. It is in fact an obvious way to destroy the Natives' cultures from the society. The aims were to assimilate the Natives into the mainstream society and cleanse the savage race. The cultures that live and give meaning to the Natives' life were being erased from their lives. There are many sudden changes for children in "*The Land of the Red Apples*" which make them scared, uncomfortable, and out of place. When children arrive at school, they are told to take off their traditional beadwork cloth, moccasin shoes, and wear white pajamas like other children. In the next morning, Zitkala-Sa is embarrassed when she fails to follow the morning routine at breakfast table. She cannot understand and she is unable to adjust to the routines. The biggest situation that occurs during her first days is when her braided hair is cut off:

I remember being dragged out, though I resisted by kicking and scratching wildly. In spite of myself, I was carried downstairs and tied fast in a chair. I cried aloud, shaking my head all the while until I felt the cold blades of the scissors against my neck, and heard them gnaw off one of my thick braids. Then I lost my spirit. Since the day I was taken from my mother I had suffered extreme indignities (Zitkala-Sa 22-23).

From this quote, we can see the effects the school left in her soul. The traditional appearances represent cultures and Natives dignity. For the Natives, shingled hair represents coward people who have no will to fight or protect their cultural identity. Zitkala-Sa cherishes her braids and costume as they remind her who she is, a native daughter. They also remind her home and make her feel safe in such a strange new place. Her spirit is enacted to the last piece of traditional traits she has on her. When cutting off her hair, her soul is also taken away from her true self. Zitkala-Sa was an example of many young children who went to school, they had to suffer the loss of their identity and to go through hard times adapting themselves into the new cultures (Worakul and Yimwilai 4).

In "*The Land of the Red Apples*", Zitkala-Sa is new to English because she has just arrived in school. Though she slowly learns English as time goes by, it is still insufficient. Zitkala-Sa retraces her first struggle that is related to the incapability of language and communication. When she first set feet into the school, the different atmosphere and people intimidate her. She cried: "Oh! I want my mother and my brother Dawée! I want to go to my aunt!" I pleaded; but the ears of the paleface could not hear me" (Zitkala-Sa 89). No one could understand and give her what she wanted at that time because she was unable to speak

English. The Native language was the only thing that made her feel comfortable but she and other children were forbid from speaking it.

Another incident occurs in "*The Snow Episode*". Zitkala and her friends are breaking rules by playing in the snow. One of the Native children, Judéwin, informs her and others that the paleface woman, or teacher, is upset and they are to be punished. The only way to survive is to be quiet and reply with the word "no" because Judewin has heard the palefaces saying the word many times (Zitkala-Sa 92-93). Ironically, Judewin who has better English than other children still lead others into hard situations where they are eventually punished. The inability of language causes them problems many times. Moreover, forbidding children from speaking Native language makes them voiceless. Being voiceless is like being invisible or meaningless in the society. As voices of the Natives cannot be heard, their stories are lost. More importantly, their rights and identity will no longer be existed.

Furthermore, she proudly proclaims herself a "pagan" in the pages of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1902, in "*Why I Am a Pagan.*". Although she was practicing Christianity, she tries to explain her paradoxical behavior concerning the acceptance of religion. Zitkala-Sa proclaims herself a pagan, because she comes to recognize the supposed civilization as only simulation (Newmark 326).

She challenges the values of Christianity because she sees the hypocrisy of people who preach Christianity. She becomes Christian because remaining a "pagan" in those times would bring her more damage and criticism of the dominant culture than any other issue that could challenge her character.

In this essay Zitkala-Sa describes the beauties of her Native American religion. Zitkala-Sa connects her religion with nature and with that she shows the strong sense of respect of Native Americans to nature: "When the spirit swells my beast I love to roam leisurely among the green hills..."(Zitkala-Sa 114). She states that she loves to roam in wilderness while she thinks about spirituality. This gives her: "the strong, happy sense that both great and small are so surely enfolded in His magnitude that, without a miss, each has his allotted individual ground of opportunities" (Zitkala-Sa 115). She made juxtaposition between the two religions aiming to accept each other religion.

3.1.2. Social Identity:

It is how people categorize or label themselves and others, and how they identify as members of particular groups; how a sense of group belonging or “community” is developed and maintained, also how groups discriminate against outsiders; how the boundaries between groups operate, and how groups relate to each other (Buckingham 5-6). Moreover the concept of social identity was developed by Henri Tajfel and Jhon Turner in 1979. This term describes the portion of an individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group (Turner and Penelope J. Oakes 240).

In the episode “*The Legends*”, Zitkala-Sa found that the most exciting thing of the day was to listen to the elders, she always feeling of belong to her native tribes and respect the relation that tied her to Native American community and tradition: "I loved best evening meal, for that was the time old legends were told. I was always glad when the sun hung low in the west" (Zitkala-sa 71). She presents readers with myths, legends and tales which are told by the elders of the tribe. They also look up to courageous warriors and highly respect those who lived and fought bravely in the past. Zitkala-Sa is proud to be a Native. She shares the pride of her family with the readers. She learns their stories and respects her ancestors even more. Zitkala-Sa tells readers how she is delighted and entertained while listening to the elders. She also shows that people cherish the warriors which are told in the legends dearly:

At young My uncle, whose death my mother ever lamented, was one of our nation's bravest warriors. His name was on the lips of old men when talking of the proud feats of valor; and it was mentioned by younger men, too, in connection with deeds of gallantry (Zitkala-Sa 70).

Living in one community is considered as a part from the social unit of the Dakota people, in a camp of teepees. But the federal government tried to destroy this kinship and broke up the social unit of the tribe, by forcing them to move from their teepees to houses scattered across the reservation:

In the early morning our simple breakfast was spread upon the grass west of our tepee...the morning meal was our quit hour, when we tow were entirely alone. At noon, several who chanced to be passing by stopped to rest, and to share our luncheon with us, for they were sure our hospitality" (Zitkala-Sa 70).

The Dakota social unit also appeared in The Legends represented in inviting each other to share the evening meal and starting telling the old legends as well feeling glad when replied their invitations.

3.1.3. The Identity Politics

This term 'identity politics' came into being during the latter part of the 20th century, specifically during the civil rights movement. It refers to a political position that is based on the interests and perspectives of social groups with which people identify. It includes the ways in which people's politics are shaped, the aspects of their identity, through correlated social organizations. These social organizations can be based on age, religion, social class, culture, dialect, disability, education, ethnicity, language...etc.

Buckingham suggests that the questions of social power are implicit in social identity theory, but they come to the fore in what is often termed "identity politics." Clearly, different groups of individuals will lay claim to positive identities in quite different ways, and these claims may be recognized as more or less legitimate by those who hold power in society. As such, questions of identity are inevitably tied up with the issue of social status. The term "identity politics" refers primarily to activist social movements that have explicitly sought to challenge this process: they have struggled to resist oppressive accounts of their identities constructed by others who hold power over them, and claimed the right to self-determination. The most obvious aspects of this relate to "race," ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and disability; although the term "identity politics" is also often used in relation to forms of indigenous nationalism, religious groupings (and indeed forms of "fundamentalism"), and so on(07).

Aware of the complexity of the politics of identity, Stanley stated that Zitkala-Sa chooses to be present in demanding to have a voice by recording the oral tradition of her people when she wrote *A warrior's Daughter*, the story is centered around a female hero. Although Zitkala-Sa recognizes that she will occupy a small position, she understands that texts are facts of power. Ultimately, she valorized her own autobiography and her people culture in order to transform the existing hegemonic social and political systems.

Zitkala-Sa recognizes the Euro-American values one identity more than the Native American identity. Thus, she chooses to occupy the marginal identity and to resignify that cultural construction. As such, she rejected both assimilationist autobiographical models,

demonstrating that she and her tribe are not part of a vanishing culture, but one of the many diverse living cultures inscribed into a pluralistic, multiple American (Stanley 68).

In *A Warrior's Daughter*, Zitkala-Sa celebrated the Indian women who are as much warriors as their men. She praises their strength and bravery equalizing it with the men's and she does it by choosing the female protagonist. The story symbolically represented her own bravery to sneak into the dominant society in order to save her people from the imprisonment of their bodies and souls. Just as brave Tusee prays, Zitkala-Sa utters her prayer: "Great Spirit, speed me to my lover's rescue! Give me swift cunning for a weapon this night! All-powerful Spirit, grant me my warrior-father's heart, strong to slay a foe and mighty to save a friend!" (Zitkala-Sa 137) asking for swiftness, cunningness, strength and bravery when facing her enemies also she dedicates some space to tribal customs. This shows that Native Americans treat slaves with more respect. Also she implemented her critique of the dominant society and their relations to slavery and treatment of Native Americans (Bezjak 27-28).

The political essay *America's Indian Problem* can be described as a crown of Zitkala-Sa's activist work for the rights of her people. By actively participating in the life of her nation, by writing about her culture, by publishing in magazines such as the *American Indian Magazine*, by participating in the work of *The Society of American Indians*, Zitkala-Sa contributed to the fight for Native American citizenship and in 1924 finally saw the passage of legislation granting US citizenship to Indians. The identity of the Native American activist recognized when "on February 27, 1926, the Bonnins confounded the National Council of American Indians".

The American Indian identity is strongly reflected in this essay through Zitkala-Sa's demands for the Native American citizenship and her open accusations of the dominant culture: "It was in this fashion that the old world snatched away the fee in the land of the new. It was in this fashion that America was divided between the powers of Europe and the aborigines were dispossessed of their country" (Zitkala-Sa 155). She felt free even to openly criticize the government organizations by asking "Do you know what *your* Bureau of Indian Affairs, in Washington, D.C., really is?" (156). She does not use stories any more to cover up her critique of the dominant culture. She boldly advocates her opinion and demands civil rights for her people. She plainly explains America's Indian problem suggesting a solution to it, and claimed to return back the stolen American Indian identity.

3.2. Double consciousness and the creation of a new identity:

Before discussing double consciousness in Zitkala Ša's *American Indian Stories*, we must first know what is meant by double consciousness; the concept was introduced by the African American intellectual and political figure W. E. B. Du Bois, in *The Souls of Black Folk*. Du Bois defines double consciousness as the struggle African Americans face to remain true to black culture while at the same time conforming to the dominant white society. Du Bois writes, "It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness...one ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two un-reconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (Du Bois 02). Later on the term is no longer limited to African Americans; other ethnic groups experience the same conditions, they attempted to preserve their identity in a dominant white society by being a representation of their societies in the world around them. Writers also played an important role in the exploration of double consciousness. Zitkala-Ša's *American Indian Stories* depicts the Native American experience with double Consciousness.

Britta Gingras stated in her essay *Double Consciousness" and the Racial Self in Zitkala-Ša's American Indian Stories* that one cannot understand the presence of double consciousness in *American Indian Stories* without having a clear idea about the term itself and its three important components. Du Bois scholar Rutledge Dennis breaks double consciousness down into three main components. He first argues "that the American world 'yields' to blacks no true-self consciousness" (Stone and Dennis 16). This holds America accountable for African Americans' clouded perception of themselves. The second component, Dennis argues, is "that blacks always see themselves through the eyes of others" (16). African Americans are torn between the way they see themselves and the way they are seen by others. Their identities become fragmented as a result of this struggle. The third component is, according to Dennis, that "there exists an eternal and unreconciled two-ness (two thoughts, two souls, two warring ideals) within the collective black population" (16). By conforming to the expectations of whites, African Americans split themselves into two different selves (83).

In *American Indian Stories*, Britta Gingras assumed that Zitkala-Ša discusses the “twoness” she faces when interacting with a world in transition. Zitkala-Ša, a Sioux woman and early Indian author, captures life as a Native American child who leaves her native life behind to pursue an education from missionaries in the East. She is torn between two cultural identities—her native identity and her “white” identity. She writes, “Even nature seemed to have no place for me. I was neither a wee girl nor a tall one; neither a wild Indian nor a tame one” (69). The protagonist experiences double consciousness, but when she feels alienated from the native world and the “white man’s world,” she begins to occupy a “third world” in which she signals the inadequacy of “double consciousness.” She added that the experience of Zitkala Sa; a young indian girl who lived her native life among her people was brought to boarding school along with many Indian children; they were put into an educational system that would guide them in assimilating into white society; an attempt to destroy all what is Indian and uncivilized according to them and replace it with Christian values and white man’s civilization (84).

Zitkala-Ša provides a firsthand account of the fragmented identity Native American children faced during this attempted integration. Zitkala-Ša’s interaction with the white world at the boarding school deepens the awareness of her double consciousness as well. Upon leaving her home on the reservation and traveling to the boarding school in the East, Zitkala-Ša immediately experiences a conflicted identity: “I was in the hands of strangers whom my mother did not fully trust. I no longer felt free to be myself, or to voice my own feelings” (25). She already recognizes a change in herself. Even the train ride on the way to the school proves to be a discouraging experience. The children of the “palefaces” stare at her, while pointing at her moccasins. This behavior is unacceptable in the Native American world, and makes the protagonist extremely uncomfortable. Once she arrives at the school, the social atmosphere is emotionally draining for the young girl. A paleface woman tosses her in the air. She is shocked by this interaction, commenting that her mother would never treat her like a “plaything” (30). Sandra Kumamoto Stanley evaluates the effect the conflicting cultures have on the young girl’s character: “Imposing one set of values and erasing another, the missionaries impose a whole system of signification which the child Zitkala-Ša cannot decode and, as such, one in which she cannot situate the self” (67). Many aspects of the white world leave her confused and frustrated (Britta Gingras 85).

Britta Gingras traced the changing in Zitkala Sa's identity throughout her life since her arrival to the school as an Indian girl with an Indian identity, and how the boarding school policy tried to assimilate her and other children; starting with their external appearance; by cutting their long hair, changing their clothes, the missionaries move on to her inner self. She is forced to learn the white man's language and is able to speak only broken English within a year. However, her comprehension of the English language triggers resistance as well: "As soon as I comprehended a part of what was said and done, a mischievous spirit of revenge possessed me" (36). Her Dakota self and her "white" self are never far from each other. Her time spent at school leaves her seesawing between conformity and rebellion. Young Zitkala-Ša is aware of the effect the education has on her: "It was next to impossible to leave the iron routine after the civilizing machine had once begun its day's buzzing; and as it was inbred in me to suffer in silence rather than to appeal to the ears of one whose open eyes could not see my pain, I have many times trudged in the day's harness heavy-footed, like a dumb sick brute" (41). As Du Bois' description of double consciousness suggests, by conforming to the expectations of white society, she is divided into two different selves (85).

Zitkala Sa felt the change more and more when returning to the reservation after three years at the boarding schools, The teenage Zitkala-Ša feels alienated from her mother, who is unable to console her educated daughter. She writes, "Even nature seemed to have no place for me. I was neither a wee girl nor a tall one; neither a wild Indian nor a tame one" (42). Her shifting identity is enhanced during her adult years. Zitkala-Ša eventually becomes a teacher at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, founded by Captain Richard Henry Pratt. Her position at the school continues her integration into the white world. She confesses, "I made no friends among the race of people I loathed. Like a slender tree, I had been uprooted from my mother, nature, and God... Now a cold bare pole I seemed to be, planted in a strange earth" (62). She reminds her readers of the difficulties of erasing the Indian identity that Trafzer, Keller, and Siquoc spoke of in *Boarding School Blues*. Despite her residency in the white world, her native roots are still intact (Britta Gingras 86).

Despite the fact that Zitkala Sa was taking to the boarding school in order to erase all what is Indian in her, and after all what she encountered and the fact that she struggled in a certain stage of her life between an Indian identity and an identity that was drawing by white man at the boarding school, yet she finally found her true self, resisted white assimilation and held her Indian roots; moreover she used her experience as a weapon to fight for her people.

General Conclusion

The discussion presented in this work was about the Native American's Identity and their marginalization in a time of dominance by the white colonizers. Our purpose from this work was to shed the light on Zitkala Sa's claiming of the Indian's oppressed identity. This study aimed to emphasize her role in her community as a woman of literature; knowing that literature affects and is affected by society, we traced her depiction of the native identity throughout her book.

In spite of the other's destruction of their identity with all the possible means, claiming this identity requires an effective efforts and strong desire to resist against the dominant power that humiliates them. It also needs a brave advocator such as the activist Gertrude Simons Bonnin who devoted her life and writings to serve her people. Therefore, our research is going to address the claim of identity through *American Indian Stories* written by Zitkala-Sa in which she depicted her life as a Native American and her pride of her belonging as well as her origins. Moreover, it is necessary to know the details of the history of the Indians, indeed the history and tradition of Zitkala-Sa's tribe, which clearly indicate the authenticity of their civilization. Then reach the goal of the study represented her stories which serve the identity and the rights of her people in indirect way to be a direct mean to maintain the American Indian culture and identity.

Zitkala Sa's writings contributed to a great deal in shaping a truly Indian identity, despite all the attempts made by whites to erase every belief they ever had. Moreover readers can see that culture has long been existed in the American Indian society. Zitkala-Sa chooses literature as her battlefield, the English language as her weapon, and her brave spirit and persistence in her attempt to help and protect her people.

Identity can easily be occurred in any section from the Stories; this suggested that the Native American Identity existed in Zitkala-Sa's soul as well as her people. She has presented her people's struggle in order to find herself, when she was in the boarding school through *American Indian Stories*. She describes how the Natives lived happily in the past in a unit society, before colonization and assimilation.

Moreover we can realize that Zitkala Sa is an example of a person who utilizes her pen to fight the destruction of the social and cultural unit of the tribe. Native American people never stopped fighting for their rights and neither did she; that is why she joined many organizations to mark a shift from literary activities to political one.

Additionally, Zitkala-Sa mastered the English language to fight against manifest manners that are forced by the white dominant society; this explains her fight that is seen in her resistance to the dominant culture, through her autobiographical writings, not only by criticizing the colonizer, but also by accepting it. Indeed she does not choose to assimilate and disappear into the mainstream culture, but she chooses presence. She actively participates in the lives of Native Americans, by promoting their culture and protecting their rights, she chooses to raise her voice against her oppressors, through creating these stories that portray the real image of Native Americans.

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الملخص:

لطالما كان البحث عن الهوية أحد أهم المشاكل في كل حين، ولهذا جاءت هذه المذكرة لتوضح أن كتابات زيتكلاشا وخاصة قصص الهنود الأمريكيان، هي وسيلة لجعل صوتها مسموعا. وتظهر الدراسة أن زيتكلاشا استعملت قلمها سلاحا للدفاع عن شعبها، ولإبراز الهوية الأصلية للأمريكان الأصليين؛ التي هي هوية فريدة ومختلفة عن الآخرين. ويقدم هذا العمل يقدم نظرة واضحة عن معاناة الهنود ومعاناة زيتكلاشا كواحدة منهم، وكل ما واجهته من عوائق في رحلتها لمعرفة هويتها الهندية الحقيقية، خاصة بعد محاولات البيض لدمجهم عبر المدارس الداخلية، وكيف أصبحت بعدها ناشطة؛ حيث استطاعت المساهمة في إقرار عدة حقوق لحماية شعبها. وفي الأخير تسلط الدراسة الضوء على وصف زيتكلاشا للهوية من خلال كتابها المعروف "قصص الهنود الأمريكيان".

الكلمات المفتاحية: الهوية، زيتكلاشا، الأمريكيان الأصليين، المدارس الداخلية.