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Abstract

This paper explores the creation of the post-Indian warrior identity in Zitkala-Sa's literary work *American Indian Stories*. It analyzes the work of the author and extracts the elements of post-Indian warrior of survivance identity from it. The paper puts the author's work into the context of survivance narratives by describing its features and by providing examples from the work. The post-Indian warrior of survivance identity is built on the resistance to the dominant culture and the new tribal representation. Zitkala-Sa successfully infiltrates these elements into her work by making them one of the most recognizable characteristics of her work. Both elements are caused by the dominant culture's manifest manners that withhold the real image of Native American people. Zitkala-Sa addresses this problem by evolving into the post-Indian warrior and the writer of survivance narratives.

Keywords: Zitkala-Sa, post-Indian warrior identity, survivance narratives, resistance

Contents

Introduction

This paper analyzes the creation of post-Indian warrior identity in Zitkala-Sa's *American Indian Stories*. With the creation of this identity, Zitkala-Sa resists the dominant culture's manifest manners and represents the new tribal image. She does this in order to protect her people and to fight for the rightful status of Native Americans in the society of the USA.

Chapter 1 provides insight into Zitkala-Sa's relationship with the dominant culture. It is accomplished by providing the data from Zitkala-Sa's biography and placing her and her literary works into the context of the dominant society. Another element that this chapter briefly discusses is the history of the relationship between Native Americans and the dominant society because to understand Zitkala-Sa and her works, it is necessary to understand the history of Native Americans.

Chapter 2 delivers the theoretical part of post-Indian warrior identity and survivance narratives. It presents their main features in order to set Zitkala-Sa and her work into the context of the theory of post-Indian warrior of survivance.

Chapter 3 discusses Zitkala-Sa as a writer of survivance narratives who creates an identity of post-Indian warrior of survivance. It elaborates the main features of the theory of the post-Indian warrior identity from Zitkala-Sa's life and literary work.

Chapter 4 provides the analysis of Zitkala-Sa's *American Indian Stories*. It discusses the elements of the post-Indian warrior in her work by providing examples from the work.

Chapter 5 places Zitkala-Sa's literary work into the context of survivance narratives. This is done by providing the example of Zitkala-Sa's metaphorical text because the metaphor is an important feature of survivance narratives.

1. Zitkala-Sa and the Relationship with the Dominant Culture

Zitkala-Sa belongs to the group of early Native American women writers who "had relatively high status either because of their educational background or because of their standing in their communities" (Van Dyke 86). Zitkala-Sa or Red Bird, also known as Gertrude Simmons Bonnin,

> was born at the Yankton Sioux Agency in South Dakota in 1876, the daughter of a full-blooded Sioux and a white father who died before she was born. At the age of eight, Zitkala-Sa was sent to the Indiana Manual Labor Institute in Wabash, Indiana, from which her older brother had graduated, and from this point on felt herself homeless. Throughout her life, Zitkala-Sa understood this sense of not belonging as a result both of personal experience and collective circumstances. Throughout her education – at Earlham College in Indiana, where the multitalented young woman earned prizes in oratory, and developed her abilities as a violinist; during two years teaching at the Carlisle Indian School; subsequent training at the Boston Conservatory of Music as a violin soloist; and later touring in Europe with the Carlisle Indian Band – Zitkala-Sa was haunted by the recognition that her people were less than immigrants in their own land. (Bercovitch 545-546)

She was "a lecturer, educator, political activist, Secretary of the Society of the American Indian, founder of the National Council of American Indians" (Porter 328) as well as an active member of the Native American society. As Sandra Kumamoto Stanley asserts,

> Zitkala-Sa not only fought for the rights of her people, but also sought to recover and affirm her people's cultural contributions – as she states, "to transplant the native spirit…into the English language, since America in the last few centuries has acquired a second tongue." (65)

Her relationship with the dominant culture was marked by the constant struggle. In Kunamoto's words, "Zitkala-Sa wore several veils signifying her otherness, including her Sioux language/culture, her Native American identity and her gender. Refusing to have any of the signifiers of her otherness erased" (65), brought her in a persistent fight against her oppressors. The fight had been very hard for Zitkala-Sa because it came with great consequences. In that struggle, she lost her true Native American identity. Yet, she built herself a new one – the identity of post-Indian warrior of survivance. Instead of reconciliation

with the fact that the dominant culture is stronger and more powerful than the individual, she stood up and fought against it. Sandra Kumamoto Stanley declares that Zitkala-Sa is "aware of the complexity of the politics of identity" (68) and that she "chooses not absence – to assimilate and disappear into the dominant culture – but presence – to demand that the disempowered have a voice and to record the oral tradition of her people" (68). Zitkala-Sa's fight did not happen on the battlefield as it had been before between Native Americans and the dominant white world. Zitkala-Sa, as Kumamoto writes, "seized the pen of the 'mainstream' culture, she used that emblem of phallic power as a revisionist force, to deconstruct the prevailing imperialistic mythologies of the majority culture" (65). She used words, the English language that the dominant culture gave as a present of civilization to uneducated and uncivilized Native Americans, to write the real side of the story of Native Americans. Her battlefields became her literary works and her lifelong political activism.

The image that the dominant culture provided about Native Americans was far from the real image of what that culture was. It is necessary to emphasize that the dominant culture throughout the whole history of its relationship with Native Americans, from the first contact to the mutual co-existence in the lands discovered by Columbus, set itself as a superior culture. A. Lavonne Brown Ruoff claims that "at the hearth of the consequences of contact between Western Europe and Native America are the Europeans' concepts of power and perception of the Other" (199). The main reason of this misunderstanding, as Brown Ruoff suggests, lays in

> the fact that the Native American populations lacked writing, which was crucial to how the Western Europeans, and the indigenous populations perceived each other. Dominated by memory, Native Americans lacked the power to manipulate the present. Their conceptual inadequacy prevented them from accurately perceiving the Western Europeans. The culture that possessed writing could accurately represent to itself and manipulate the culture without writing. (199-200)

In other words, the Europeans, the conquerors, were the ones who were writing the history. They created the history that was far from the truth. They created the image of the Native American nation which was the false one. The Native American nation was misinterpreted and subdued to their conquerors that had the power to manipulate the history.

The first images of Native Americans divided them into two categories. As Joy Porter writes,

> European culture was considered superior to Indian culture of any sort, but from the beginning non-Indians differentiated Indians into ‘‘good’’ and ‘‘bad,’’ with ‘‘good’’ Indians having noble, innocent, and virtuous qualities and ‘‘bad’’ Indians having fiendish, warlike, and occult ones. Non-Indians understood Indians in antithesis to themselves: because they thought themselves civilized, dynamic, and in history, they judged Indians to be culturally static and somehow outside of history. (45)

Because the Native American culture differentiated a lot from the European culture, they were considered uncivilized and they were seen as savages who were far behind the civilized white world. Only the ones that had chosen to assimilate into the dominant culture and had accepted values and virtues of the dominant society were the good Native Americans while others were seen as savages. Kumamoto Stanley asserts that

> nineteenth-century social and scientific theories supported the evolutionary vision of the triumph of Western civilization over indigenous cultures – a “manifest destiny,” a historical telos of human development; Western observers/ethnographers of native societies tended to view these societies as part of vanishing past and to regard their own scholarship as a means of salvaging and preserving these cultures in a text. (66)

The Native American culture has been seen as a dying one – the culture that becomes extinct. The dominant white society did not try to preserve it but, on the contrary, it did everything that only helped in erasing that culture. To summarize the whole process of colonization and its effects on the Native American culture it is much easier to provide the data that Joy Porter uses: “by 1900, conquest, seizure, disease, war, abuse, trickery, treaties, and statutes had reduced the Indian estate from its pre-contact magnitude of nearly three billion acres and reduced Indian peoples themselves to less than 250,000 in number” (54) on the territory of the United States of America.

Barbara Chiarello states that “the dominant culture is defined by an ability to enforce its version of truth, but this task becomes difficult when the marginalized are allowed to speak” (23) and that is when the things started to change for Native Americans. Once they were given the voice to speak for themselves, they gained power to recreate and correct the history. Joy Porter claims that “literature tells truths about the past that history cannot articulate” (39). Furthermore, she explains that “Native American literature across time has voiced a different experience of American history” (39) and that

> the great transformative power of Indian literature from any era derives in part from its ability to invoke a past with direct implications for the present. Indians, after all, are not just fictional, they are real. The strength and agency of Indian America today testifies to the survival of diverse Indian nations and individuals in spite of a brutal colonial past (39).

Native Americans, including Zitkala-Sa, have started to rewrite the history through literature because it gives them freedom to express what they cannot say in the real world. This connection between the past and the present can be linked to the fact that Native Americans carry a great historical trauma caused by the dominant society that started with the colonization of the New World. Struthers and Lowe define historical trauma as "cumulative and collective emotional and psychological injury over the life span and across generations, resulting from a cataclysmic history of genocide" (258). They also explain that "the policies developed and implemented by the United States government regarding Native American tribes that devastated Native American culture and life ways" (258) caused historical trauma to Native Americans. Through this ability to represent and invoke the past in the present, Native American literature and writers try to overcome historical trauma caused by the colonization of their world which has affected every aspect of their lives.

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. Considering her modest literary opus, it can be said that

> her most important book is *American Indian Stories* (1921). In addition to her three autobiographical essays and an essay on ''America's Indian Problem,'' the volume contains her powerful and vivid short stories that provide insight into the Native American culture, customs, traditions, laws, but also give critique of the dominant culture. (Brown Ruoff 165)

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.

2. Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance and Survivance Narratives

For further analysis of the new identity that Zitkala-Sa creates for herself, it is important to give the theoretical explanation of who the post-Indian warrior is and what survivance narratives are. These two terms are created and explained by Gerald Vizenor, "one of the most prolific and one of the most versatile of contemporary Native writers" (Porter 257).

2.1. Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance

> "The post-Indian warriors encounter their enemies with the same courage in literature as their ancestors once evinced on horses, and they create their stories with a new sense of survivance. The warriors bear the simulations of their time and counter the manifest manners of domination." (Vizenor 4)

In their works of literature, Post-Indian warriors create a new image of the Native American. They stand against the image that is created by the dominant society and confront, as Vizenor states, "Manifest Destiny" (4) that "would cause the death of millions of tribal people from massacres, diseases, and the loneliness of reservations" (4) through which "entire cultures have been terminated in the course of nationalism" (4). Moreover, "the post-Indian simulations are the core of survivance, the new stories of tribal courage" (Vizenor 4) because they represent the authentic Native American. They stand against the image of the dying culture which the dominant society promotes through its representation.

Once beaten on the battlefield, Native Americans continued to be misinterpreted through manifest manners in literature. As Vizenor writes, "the simulations of manifest manners are the continuance of the surveillance and domination of the tribes in literature" (4) emphasizing the dominance of the mainstream culture over Native Americans. Manifest manners, as Vizenor explains, are "simulations of dominance; the notions and misnomers that are read as the authentic and sustained as representations of Native American Indians" (5). What Vizenor wants to say is that every representation of Native Americans that comes from the dominant culture becomes manifest manners because it does not provide an image of a real Native American. Manifest manners are focused on the extinction of Native Americans

instead on the attempts of preserving and nurturing that culture. Manifest manners are trying to destroy and influence every aspect of Native American culture and its members.

The post-Indian warriors have a task to "hover at last over the ruins of tribal representations and surmount the scriptures of manifest manners with new stories" (Vizenor 5). Additionally, "these warriors counter the surveillance and literature of dominance with their own simulations of survivance" (Vizenor 5) because they are "new indications of a narrative recreation, the simulations that overcome the manifest manners of dominance" (Vizenor 6). They need to create a new image of Native Americans with their stories that will destroy the image created by manifest manners. Post-Indian warriors write survivance narratives through which they "bear their own simulations and revisions to contend with manifest manners, the 'authentic' summaries of ethnology, and the curse of racialism and modernism in the ruins of representation" (Vizenor 12) in which "the wild incursions of the warriors of survivance undermine the simulations of the unreal in the literature of dominance" (Vizenor 12). Post-Indian warriors write their own stories that represent the new history, the real history of Native Americans.

2.2. Survivance Narratives

Survivance narratives are hard to define because "theories of survivance are elusive, obscure, and imprecise by definition, translation, comparison, and by catchword histories, but survivance is invariably true and just in native practice and cultural company" (Vizenor 85). Survivance is not a theory described in books but a practice, a real life. Furthermore, survivance can be found in many aspects of tribal life:

> the nature of survivance is unmistakable in native songs, stories, natural reason, remembrance, traditions, customs, and clearly observable in narrative sentiments of resistance, and in personal attributes such as the native humanistic tease, vital irony, spirit, cast of mind, and moral courage. (Vizenor 85)

It is important to highlight that "the character of survivance creates a sense of native presence and actuality over absence, nihility, and victimry" (Vizenor 85). In addition,

> native survivance is an active sense of presence over absence, deracination, and oblivion; survivance is the continuance of stories, not a mere reaction, however pertinent. Survivance is greater than the right of a survivable name. (Vizenor 85)

Survivance narratives put emphasis on "renunciations of dominance, detractions, obtrusions, the unbearable sentiments of tragedy, and the legacy of victimry" (Vizenor 85) where survivance represents "the heritable right of succession or reversion of an estate, and in the course of international declarations of human rights, a narrative estate of native survivance" (Vizanor 86). Survivance narratives stand for stories that provide the stories of the other side, the side of history losers and survivance is an action that involves a hard fight for the basic human rights where post-Indian warriors become the voices of those who are oppressed by the dominant society.

Survivance narratives, or "native stories of survivance" (Vizenor 88), are "prompted by natural reason, by a consciousness and sense of incontestable presence that arises from experiences in the natural world" (Vizenor 88). This presence is "an active presence, more than the instincts of survival, function, or subsistence" (Vizenor 88) through which native stories become "the sources of survivance" (Vizenor 88). Furthermore, "the presence of animals, birds, and other creatures in native literature is a trace of natural reason," (Vizenor 89) so that "the creation of animals and birds in literature reveals a practice of survivance" (Vizenor 90). He states that metaphors are an important part of survivance narratives because they "create a sense of presence by imagination and natural reason, the very character and practice of survivance" (91). The most recognizable sign of survivance narratives is the resistance to the dominant culture:

> Native American Indians have resisted empires, negotiated treaties, and, as strategies of survivance, participated by stealth and cultural irony, in the simulations of absence to secure the chance of a decisive presence in national literature, history, and canonry. Native resistance of dominance, however serious, evasive, and ironic, is an undeniable trace of presence over absence, nihility and victimry. (Vizenor 97),

because the notion of resistance completes the picture with the facts that are not said or presented by the dominant society that tries to hide its sins and injustices done to the Native American population.

3. Zitkala-Sa as a Writer of Survivance Narratives and Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance

One of the strongest evidences of Zitkala-Sa as a post-Indian warrior and a writer of survivance narratives was her resistance to the dominant culture and its values. Zitkala-Sa resisted manifest manners through her literary work and her life. Indeed, Zitkala-Sa "hovers over the ruins of tribal representations" (Vizenor 5) and gives the real image of tribal life and culture. In her stories and essays collected under the title *American Indian Stories*, she provided insight into the tribal life. She described how the life in reservations looked like. She described Native American customs, traditions, laws and relationships among the members of the tribe. By this new representation of tribal life, Zitkala-Sa created a new tribal image and a new image of its members who were seen by the dominant culture as uncivilized part of American society.

Furthermore, in her formation of the new post-Indian warrior identity, the acceptance of the white men's culture played a major role. In order to be able to fight for her people rights, Zitkala-Sa chose the path of education. Zitkala-Sa needed to be "educated" and "civilized" in the dominant culture's ways, which gave her the tool to fight against it. She lost her true Native American identity because the mission of educating Native Americans was to strip them off their first identity. It was impossible to keep the Native American identity no matter how strong the children resisted in the schools. Zitkala-Sa learned English language and in that way became the voice that Native Americans lacked. Sandra Kumamoto Stanley asserts that

> in the midst of this Horatio Alger 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, she published a series of autobiographical sketches in the *Atlantic Monthly* which she later reprinted in *American Indian Stories* in 1921. (65)

Zitkala-Sa challenged the principles of the white men's culture in several ways. She needed to change the image the dominant culture created about her nation. Moreover, as Kumamoto Stanley explains, "Zitkala-Sa's task is revisionist in two ways" (66). First,

> she must reclaim the authorial voice of the Native American identity, insisting to speak for herself as well as for her people. She is no longer a silent and inarticulate

> sign, which others – whether colonizers or ethnographers – can name and explain; she, as a Yankton Sioux, can validate her culture not through the "white man's" history, but through her people's own stories. (Kumamoto Stanley 66)

Second,

> Zitkala-Sa critiques the ideology underlying the "white man's" culture. As a child, she first left the reservation as a part of an assimilationist government policy, which advocated off-reservation education. Separated from their parents and their mother land, children were discouraged from practicing Native American religions or traditions and were in fact discouraged from even speaking their native language. (Kumamoto Stanley 66)

These two revisionist tasks can be seen in her works of literature because they become major themes of her writings – to represent her own culture and to criticize the dominant culture.

The criticism of the dominant culture was at first expressed through the hidden remarks in her storytelling, especially in her autobiographical essays. She dared to speak about the bad treatment Native Americans received by the government in education and through laws that brought many damages to Native Americans. She spoke about the hypocrisy of the dominant culture's values, laws, and religion and racism to her people. She attacked the religion of the dominant culture.

She strengthened her post-Indian warrior identity by choosing "to change her name from Gertrude Simmons to Zitkala-Sa, the Sioux name signifying Red Bird" (Stanley 66). The adoption of the animal name is metaphorical: red signifies both the color of her skin and her sense of belonging to the Native American nation and identity; the bird symbolizes freedom that Zitkala-Sa's rebellious spirit constantly searched. By reclaiming her Indian name, she also reclaimed her position in American society which is marked by diversity of nations that live together in the same place. She identified herself with her cultural heritage by refusing to denounce it even though the dominant culture had the intention to assimilate all Native Americans in the white culture's ways.

The significant element of Zitkala-Sa's new identity is the acceptance of the values of the dominant culture as well. As Kumamoto Stanley states, "but to assume that Zitkala-Sa does not at the same time become a product of enculturation would be a mistake. And herein lies the paradox – for even as Zitkala-Sa resists the values of the dominant culture, she also

internalizes those values" (67). Even though Zitkala-Sa resisted those values, she chose to be a part of that society. Not because she wanted to, but because she needed to. This need can be explained as her strivings to reduce the devastating consequences of the civilization that the dominant culture offered and to bring reconciliation to her people for all the maltreatment caused by the dominant society. Zitkala-Sa wanted to preserve her culture and her nation, but this could be done only if they accepted and assimilated in a certain way. Her resistance was a form of criticism of the dominant culture and injustices done to her people. Zitkala-Sa was aware of the benefits of the dominant society but the conflict started because of the different values that each culture nurtures. One of the most problematic values of the dominant culture is the hunger for power which produces the wish to exercise control over less powerful societies. This control is achieved by any means whether they are harmful or not. If the main goal is fulfilled, the method is irrelevant. The dominant society wanted to civilize Native Americans and they did it in the most inhumane way. They had been destroying the tribal life and the culture of the tribes by exchanging it with the culture and the way of life of the white men's culture. This produced the loss of the Native American identity and opened the door for taking other Native American possessions because once the internal self is lost, external objects lose its value in the minds of the damaged individual and possessions as land become trivial compared with the urge to survive in the new environment.

Zitkala-Sa's loss of the Native American identity can be traced in her early autobiographical writings. These writings also represent the beginning of her search for the new identity. She chose the path of Native American civil rights activism and set the foundations for the identity of post-Indian warrior which became more prominent in her later works of literature transforming them into survivance narratives.

4. Elements of Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance in *American Indian Stories*

Zitkala-Sa's *American Indian Stories* focus on the formation of the post-Indian identity. This is necessary to highlight because the work opens with three autobiographical essays and ends with an essay that has a strong political resonance that sums up the whole production of Zitkala-Sa's activism. In this chapter, we will discuss how Zitkala-Sa resists the dominant culture and how she describes her people.

4.1. Elements of Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance in Zitkala-Sa's Autobiography

The first three essays in *American Indian Stories* are "Impressions of an Indian Childhood," "The School Days of an Indian Girl," and "An Indian Teacher Among Indians." They are classified as Zitkala-Sa's autobiography, but as Arnold Krupat emphasizes, "it is important to note that Zitkala-Sa's autobiographical work was over by the time she was twenty-five, and to note as well that those twenty-five years span a period of time from Custer through Wounded Knee and the Dawes era" (281).

During this short period of her life, Zitkala-Sa experienced on her own skin a full range of discrimination and injustice by the dominant society. The autobiography can be enlisted under a category of autobiographies by Indians. Krupat defines them as "individually composed texts that are indeed written by those whose lives they chronicle" (3); he also notes that the writer of "such a text requires that he or she must have become 'educated' and 'civilized' and, in vast majority cases also Christianized" (3). Krupat distinguishes these autobiographies from Indian autobiographies that "are not actually self-written, but are, rather, texts marked by the principle of original, bicultural composite composition" (3). He explains that Indian autobiographies are texts that are

> the end-products of a rather complex process involving a three-part collaboration between a white editor-amanuensis who edits, polishes, revises, or otherwise fixes the "form" of the text in writing, a Native "subject" whose orally presented life story serves as the "content" of the autobiographical narrative, and, in almost all cases, a mixed blood interpreter/translator whose exact contribution to the autobiographical

> project remains one of the least understood aspects of Indian autobiography (Krupat 3-4).

Zitkala-Sa's autobiography is indeed a self-written work of an "educated" and "civilized" woman. These three essays firstly "appeared in *the Atlantic Monthly* in January, February, and March of 1900" (Cutter 33) and were reprinted in 1921 in *American Indian Stories*.

Being survivance narratives, these earliest Zitkala-Sa's writings resist and criticize many parts of the dominant society. Firstly, they resist traditional ways of writing an autobiography. As Martha J. Cutter states,

> Zitkala-Sa's work violates traditional notions of autobiography on two levels: it does not put forth a model of triumph and integration, nor does it emphasize the importance of language in the overall process of self-authentication (31)

because

> instead of adapting or adopting white models, as some Native American autobiographers, Zitkala-Sa crafts a work which calls generic standards of autobiography into question by refusing to conform to them (33).

Zitkala-Sa's life was not a model of triumph and integration. Zitkala-Sa, as Martha J. Cutter claims, "gained her audience's attention by using forms with which they would be familiar. Yet Zitkala-Sa undermined these forms by refusing to fulfill their generic criteria" (33). The storyline in these texts moves from idyllic childhood to chaotic adulthood. She was stripped off her Native American identity and instead of being "rewarded by a maturity of acceptance, integration, and vision" (Cutter 35) in her adolescent period, she finds herself lost somewhere in between. Even Zitkala-Sa states that in her autobiography:

> During this time I seemed to hang in the heart of chaos, beyond the touch or voice of human aid. My brother, being almost ten years my senior, did not quite understand my feelings. My mother had never gone inside of a schoolhouse, and so she was not capable of comforting her daughter who could read and write. 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. This deplorable situation was the effect of my brief course in the East, and the unsatisfactory "tenth" in a girl's years.

With these words, Zitkala-Sa also described her identity crisis and her inability to become a part of society, whether the dominant or Native American one. The crisis was caused by the

lack of understanding of her family members but also by attending the boarding school for Native Americans whose main purpose was to civilize them. As Martha J. Cutter argues,

> Zitkala-Sa's writing struggles with the predominant (European, male) paradigm of autobiography, creating a narrative which in both form and content rejects the notion of a unified, coherent, transcendent identity achieved through linguistic self-authentication (33).

The problematic relationship of Zitkala-Sa and the language is connected with the identity crisis because,

> for the white man's papers I had given up my faith in the Great Spirit. For these same papers I had forgotten the healing in trees and brooks. On account of my mother's simple view of life, and my lack of any, I gave her up, also. 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. (Zitkala-Sa)

She cannot use English as something that is worth of prize as English was the main cause of her identity crisis. Yet, it enabled Zitkala-Sa to finally speak up against the oppressing society that destroyed the lives of Native Americans including her own people. This opened the opportunity for her to rise from the ground and to build a new self, a post-Indian warrior who fights for her people. Thus, "the written word became a new weapon in the Indian's battle for survival" (266), but the language is itself problematic, an ambivalent tool – both "the sign of oppression, and the means of escaping it" (Cutter 37).

Zitkala-Sa also struggled with this problematic relationship of English language and Native Americans. Native American children had not yet mastered English language in schools, but Zitkala-Sa showed how she successfully used the double meanings of the words to get herself small revenges against her oppressors. Many incidents that happened during her school days involve misunderstandings in communication because they "were all still deaf to the English language" (Zitkala-Sa) meaning that they did not understand it, but as soon as she becomes fluent "a mischievous spirit of revenge possessed" (Zitkala-Sa) her. Zitkala-Sa's rebellious spirit follows her from her childhood. Once as a punishment, she has been ordered to mash some turnips and as she describes: "the order was, 'Mash these turnips,' and mash them I would! I renewed my energy; and as I sent the masher into the bottom of the jar, I felt a satisfying sensation that the weight of my body had gone into it" (Zitkala-Sa). By literally applying the order, she breaks the bottom of the jar causing the anger of her educator. She

cleverly uses the misunderstanding in communication, which allows her to be excused from punishment because she was doing what she was told. Chiarello points out that the "turnip episode is pivotal to understanding Zitkala-Sa's subversive tactics. Once the now imprisoned young child determined that she could not literally run away from her tormentors, she found formidable weapons in the folds of their language" (22). This proves that even as a child Zitkala-Sa mastered the English language and learned to use it for her benefit.

The next way of Zitkala-Sa's resistance is the criticism of the dominant culture's ways of treating Native Americans. The strongest criticism is found in the essay "The School Days of an Indian Girl" where Zitkala-Sa spoke about the bad treatment of Native American children in boarding schools. As A. Lavonne Brown Ruoff claims,

> this chapter in Zitkala-Sa's autobiography portrays the author's traumatic transition from traditional Yankton Sioux childhood to the harsh world of the White Manual Labor Institute. She depicts this experience as a cultural fall from a Dakota Eden into a hellish non-Indian school that neither nurtured the Indian children nor respected their cultures (218).

Zitkala-Sa had the rebellious spirit from the beginning of her school days, but she was left broken after her tormentors cut her long hair. This is significant because in Native American culture "our mothers had taught us that only unskilled warriors who were captured had their hair shingled by the enemy" (Zitkala-Sa). She also writes about the iron routine of the school where they had to wake up early, do numerous tasks, and in silence obey orders, which made her feel dumb:

> 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. (Zitkala-Sa)

Not only do the educators lack sympathy, they are also ignorant about children's physical ills: "I grew bitter, and censured the woman for cruel neglect of our physical ills. I despised the pencils that moved automatically, and the one teaspoon which dealt out, from a large bottle, healing to a row of variously ailing Indian children" (Zitkala-Sa).

The role of education is also ambivalent for Zitkala-Sa. She states that even with the given education in the end Native Americans do not get appropriate jobs. Her brother Dawee

is an example of an educated Native American who loses his job because “the Great Father at Washington sent a white son to take” (Zitkala-Sa) his job and since then he “has not been able to make use of the education the Eastern school has given him” (Zitkala-Sa). There is no use of education if they do not have jobs that match their level of education. The only important matter for the dominant culture is that “they were educating the children of the red men” (Zitkala-Sa) and they remain deaf to the question “whether real life or long-lasting death lies beneath this semblance of civilization” (Zitkala-Sa).

Another major theme which Zitkala-Sa writes about are prejudice and discrimination toward her people. On her way to boarding school, she describes that whites stared at them, pointed at them with their fingers, and how this made her feel embarrassed. Later, after leaving for college, many times she wept in secret because she remained “among a cold race whose hearts were frozen hard with prejudice” (Zitkala-Sa).

One of the strongest and the most important critiques of the dominant society Zitkala-Sa delivers through her mother’s words. She accuses white men for stealing Native American land and causing deaths of many Native Americans, including the members of her family:

> There is what the paleface has done! Since then your father too has been buried in a hill nearer the rising sun. We were once very happy. But the paleface has stolen our lands and driven us hither. Having defrauded us of our land, the paleface forced us away. (Zitkala-Sa)

Zitkala-Sa used her mother as a person who delivered charges against the whites for crimes against Native Americans. This was a very cunning move from Zitkala-Sa because she wanted to be read by the dominant culture and if she attacked the whites directly, it could endanger her literary work in a way that could cause the censure or even the banishment of publication of her works.

Zitkala-Sa also provides a comment on job positions and privileges of white men in comparison to Native Americans:

> When I saw an opium-eater holding a position as teacher of Indians, I did not understand what good was expected, until a Christian in power replied that this pumpkin-colored creature had a feeble mother to support. An inebriate paleface sat stupid in a doctor's chair, while Indian patients carried their ailments to untimely graves, because his fair wife was dependent upon him for her daily food. (Zitkala-Sa)

The most vigorous criticism of the dominant society that comes from Zitkala-Sa was directed toward religion and the values deriving from it. In "Impressions of an Indian Childhood," Zitkala-Sa retells the story of her idyllic childhood that is interrupted with the arrival of the missionaries who lured Native American children to leave reservations for education with a promise of "big red apples" (Zitkala-Sa). Catharine Kunce argues that this essay is "Zitkala-Sa's retelling of the Garden of Eden story" (73) with which "Zitkala-Sa offers her white audience a brilliantly subversive recitation of the missionaries' own teachings" (74). Kunce describes Zitkala-Sa's life before arrival of missionaries as the life in Eden where "her mother presides as God" (75). Furthermore, "like the God of the Old Testament, Zitkala-Sa's mother granted her 'creation' free will even while exacting compliance to rules" (Kunce 75-76).

Just as God warns Adam and Eve not to eat the fruit from the tree, Zitkala-Sa's mother warns her not to leave her because the sweet talk of missionaries is similar to the serpents' luring of Adam and Eve to eat from the forbidden tree: "Don't believe a word they say! They words are sweet, but, my child, their deeds are bitter. You will cry for me, but they will not even soothe you. Stay with me my little one!" (Zitkala-Sa).

Zitkala-Sa's disobedience of her mother's wishes causes her to lose the place in the Native American paradise and brings her into a lifelong quarrel with her mother. Similarly, Adam and Eve lose their place in Eden and "this failure of reconciliation not only matches the failure of unifying Adam and Eve with their God but also relates to Zitkala-Sa's inability to reconcile with her mother in her autobiographical writings" (Kunce 78).

Kunce also describes Zitkala-Sa's ambivalent feelings toward English language and she connects it with religion. For Kunce, Zitkala-Sa's native tongue is a part of paradise while English language, the gift of the dominant culture to Native Americans, is the devil's language. Kunce asserts that "the missionaries tempt Zitkala-Sa with the knowledge of the 'wonders' of the white world, where she will learn another language. But, at first, 'the ambition for Letters' do not tempt the girl" (79).

Zitkala-Sa fails to recognize the consequences of leaving her mother and chooses to go with the missionaries. The missionaries offer her to learn a new language, which will later have negative connotations for Zitkala-Sa. For example, in the episode "The Devil" Zitkala-Sa dreams of "the white man's devil" (Zitkala-Sa) who comes to her house to her mother and her. The devil does not attack her mother "because he did not know the Indian language" but

it attacks Zitkala-Sa. This expresses Zitkala-Sa's perception of English language as the language of the evil.

This catalogue of criticism represents the real picture of Native Americans in the world of the dominant culture that Zitkala-Sa as a post-Indian warrior creates in her autobiography. There is also another representation of Native Americans that can be read in Zitkala-Sa's autobiography and that is the representation of tribal life. Zitkala-Sa describes her life as a Native American child. This is important because as a child Zitkala-Sa adopts values and tradition of her people and in this way shows that Native Americans are a living culture that does not need to be civilized.

The central figure of Zitkala-Sa's childhood is her mother. The proof of this is the fact that most of the episodes in "Impressions" include Zitkala-Sa's mother as a main character. Mothers in Native American culture have a significant role and their duty is to learn and transfer their knowledge to their children. Zitkala-Sa states that when in a play with other children they imitate their mothers:

> I remember well how we used to exchange our neckless, beaded belts, and sometimes even our moccasins. We pretended to offer them as gifts to one another. We delighted in impersonating our own mothers. We talked of things we had heard them say in their conversations. We imitated their various manners, even to the inflection of their voices. In the lap of the prairie we seated ourselves upon our feet; leaning our painted cheeks in the palms of our hands, we rested our elbows on our knees, and bent forward as old women were most accustomated to do.

In Native American culture, mutual respect toward every individual is very important no matter if it is directed toward a child or a grown person. For example, Zitkala-Sa writes that her mother "treated [her] as a dignified little individual as long as [she] was on [her] good behavior." In the episode "The Coffee-making," Zitkala-Sa describes a scene where, as a child, she finds herself in a role of a host. Her mother left her alone in their wigwam and Wiyaka-Napbina, the man who Zitkala-Sa feared as a child, walked in looking for her mother. In her ignorance, Zitkala-Sa served the man "a cup of worse than muddy warm water" that she made on a dead fire. When her mother returned and the man told her about Zitkala-Sa's kind gesture, they both laughed, but "neither she nor the warrior, whom the law of our custom had compelled to partake of my insipid hospitality, said anything to embarrass me. They treated my best judgement, poor as it was, with the utmost respect" (Zitkala-Sa).

Zitkala-Sa's hospitality, no matter how silly it looked, is appreciated both by the old man and her mother. They do not try to belittle her behavior because she acts in a manner of her mother and with respect toward the guest. Native Americans are also a very hospitable nation, which can be seen in Zitkala-Sa's description of customs that are related to preparations of meals where everybody is welcome to come and dine with their families. They usually invite their neighbors to suppers:

> Though I heard many strange experiences related by these wayfarers, I loved best the evening meal, for that was the time old legends were told. I was always glad when the sun hung low in the west, for then my mother sent me to invite the neighboring old men and women to eat supper with us. (Zitkala-Sa)

Another element of Native American culture can be read here and that is the tradition of oral transition of history and culture. When people gather, they usually tell old legends and stories and in that way they keep their culture and history alive. The storytellers are old people who remember past times and try to transmit their knowledge to younger generations. Zitkala-Sa enjoys these evenings as a child and eagerly waits for stories to hear them.

The special respect is given to the elders. In the episode "The Dead Man's Plum Bush," Zitkala-Sa describes a feast where the whole village was invited. Her mother was cooking when Zitkala-Sa interrupted her and asked why she was cooking when they were invited to the feast. Her mother replied: "My child, learn to wait. On our way to the celebration we are going to stop at Chanyu's wigwam. His aged mother-in-law is lying very ill, and I think she would like a taste of this small game" (Zitkala-Sa). Zitkala-Sa felt embarrassed momentarily because she did not remember "the suffering on the thin, pinched features of this dying woman" who is not able to participate in the feast. This episode also reveals the custom of Native Americans to provide help to those who need it, especially to the sick and old people. They care a lot about people in their community and do not hesitate to offer help to those in need.

In the episode "The Beadwork," Zitkala-Sa describes the importance of beadwork for Native Americans. This skill is transferred from mothers to daughters and it cherishes Native American culture. Zitkala-Sa identifies beadwork as an art by saying "my mother spread upon a mat beside her bunches of colored beads, just as an artist arranges the paints upon his palette."

Another comment about Native American culture that Zitkala-Sa makes in "Impressions" is the custom of escorting young Indian women to feasts. Zitkala-Sa writes that "it was a custom for young Indian women to invite some older relative to escort them to public feasts. Though it was not an iron law, it was generally observed." With this, she puts emphasis on the high level of morality of Native Americans: they respect women and this act of preserving their good name is similar to the dominant culture's customs.

All these images help us see how Native American culture developed and how it functions. More examples can be traced in the second, so to say fictional, part of *American Indian Stories* that will be discussed in the next chapters.

4.2. Elements of Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance in "The Great Spirit"

"The Great Spirit" is an essay in which Zitkala-Sa "proudly proclaims herself a pagan" (Newmark 326). The essay is firstly published as "Why I am Pagan" in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1902. This fact is a paradox because Zitkala-Sa and her husband Raymond Bonnin "converted to Catholicism in 1902" (Hafen 200) and she "was practicing Christian for her entire adult life" (Newmark 326). Julianne Newmark further explains that Zitkala-Sa

> in [her] early essays effectively sets herself up as a symbolic Native resistor – one who resists narrative conventions, religious proscription, educational mandates, and even the ways and wishes of her own family back in Yankton. She was using her creative capacity to tell a symbolic story for reasons of political and social expediency (326).

With this, she tries to explain Zitkala-Sa's 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. "This sense of being 'caught between' is 'not necessary oppositional – as it is often represented in critical assessments – but rather part of complex mediation that Native peoples frequently reconcile in order to survive in the modern era'" (Hafen qtd. in Newmark 329).

In contrast to the resistance to religion in her autobiography, where Zitkala-Sa discusses how the dominant culture tries to infiltrate Christianity and its values in lives of Native Americans by emphasizing the contradiction between words and deeds of the missionaries, 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. 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). Nature allows her to grow in her spirituality because the Great Spirit surrounds them all, the small ones and the great ones, and provides them with the possibilities to enjoy everything that is the part of "the phenomenal universe, a royal mantle, vibrating with His divine breath" (Zitkala-Sa). Zitkala-Sa also provides explanation for her paganism by saying: "I prefer to their dogma my excursions into the natural gardens where the voice of the Great Spirit is heard in the twittering of birds, the rippling of mighty waters, and the sweet breathing of flowers" (Zitkala-Sa).

Zitkala-Sa also reveals that her mother converted to Christianity by saying "for she, too, is now a follower of the new superstition" (Zitkala-Sa). With this, Zitkala-Sa provides insight into the successful process of exertion of the dominant culture to civilize Native Americans. In the autobiography, Zitkala-Sa's mother stands for the old generation of Native Americans who could not speak English and now even they accept the mainstream religion. The extension of influence of the dominant culture becomes immeasurable when it enters the private sphere of Native Americans' lives.

Another idea that Zitkala-Sa implements in this essay is the idea of pluralism and in that way she resists a nativist current that was strong in those time in the USA:

> Between 1902 and 1938 Gertrude Bonnin came to understand that the employment of pluralist rhetoric could help her to textually and oratorically combat the zeal of race-based nativist nationalism and its narrow view of "national character." (Newmark 318)

Zitkala-Sa effectively utilizes the pluralistic rhetoric in "The Great Spirit" while describing Chän, "a black shaggy dog, 'a thoroughbred little mongrel'" (Zitkala-Sa). By classifying him as a thoroughbred mongrel, she symbolically accentuates her roots because she is also of mixed-blood origins and she is proud of it. Later she erases racial lines by saying

> The racial lines, which once were bitterly real, now serve nothing more than marking out a living mosaic of human beings. And even here men of the same color are like the ivory keys of one instrument where each resembles all the rest, yet varies from them in pitch and quality of voice. (Zitkala-Sa)

She celebrates the diversity of humans and claims that we are all similar yet slightly different and that we should unite in our diversity because it is simply beautiful. In that way, she promotes the pluralistic views and resists nativism by criticizing its bitter existence in the USA and all over the world.

4.3.Elements of Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance in "The Soft-Hearted Sioux"

In "The Soft-Hearted Sioux," Zitkala-Sa retells a story of an Indian man who leaves his parents and instead of choosing to "learn to provide much buffalo meat and many buckskins before [he] bring[s] home a wife" (Zitkala-Sa), he leaves them and "nine winters [he] hunted for the soft heart of Christ, and prayed for the huntsmen who chased the buffalo on the plains" (Zitkala-Sa). He chooses the dominant culture's ways over his Native American life. He is sent back to his father's village to preach Christianity. He brings with him the symbols of the dominant culture: "the white man's Bible" (Zitkala-Sa) and "the white man's tender heart in [his] breast" (Zitkala-Sa). He becomes "a stranger" (Zitkala-Sa) in his father's home. He finds his father deadly ill and starving. After failing in his preaching to the village people and torn between his duty toward his family and the dominant culture, he goes hunting and kills and steals one of "the white man's cattle" (Zitkala-Sa) and during his escape he kills a man. Returning home, he finds his father dead and he gives himself up "to those who were searching for the murdered of the paleface" (Zitkala-Sa). With this story, Zitkala-Sa "raises the question of what assimilation and white education cost Indigenous peoples" (Totten 156).

The criticism is stronger than the one in her autobiography because she now depicts the real-life situations occurring in Native American villages and what those situations cause. Due to starvation, people find themselves in the position where they need to steal food from the white men because they see the better way of life of white people. In the story, this scenario leads to two deaths, one Native American and one white. Zitkala-Sa also shows how deeply torn Native Americans are between two cultures and their inability to assimilate into

the society because they belong nowhere. When the protagonist hears his sentence, he is not afraid to die but rather asks himself:

> will the loving Jesus grant me pardon and give my soul a soothing sleep? Or will my warrior father greet me and receive me as his son? Will my spirit fly upward to a happy heaven? or shall I sink into the bottomless pit, an outcast from a God of infinite love? Soon, soon I shall know, for now I see the east is growing red. (Zitkala-Sa)

He is still not sure what to believe in even when the time of his death is near. His identity is so broken that the only thing in which he is sure is that he will soon find out what the real truth is.

4.4. Elements of Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance in "The Trial Path"

In "The Trail Path," the elements of post-Indian warrior identity can be seen in Zitkala-Sa's twofold representation of Native American customs and traditions. The first one is about the Native American laws and the second one is the tradition of storytelling. The grandmother tells the story to her granddaughter about her grandfather. In the Native American traditional way, the grandmother tells legends about Indian warriors. The story that she narrates is about her husband who as a young warrior kills his best friend and faces the trial. Zitkala-Sa represents the Indian law through the narration of the sentence the man has to face. In the tribe, the common rule is that "he who kills one of our tribe is an enemy, and must suffer the fate of a foe" (Zitkala-Sa). The punishment is announced by the father of the deceased:

> Come, every one, to witness the judgment of a father upon him who was once his son's best friend. A wild pony is now lassoed. The man-killer must mount and ride the ranting beast. Stand you all in two parallel lines from the centre tepee of the bereaved family to the wigwam opposite in the great outer ring. Between you, in the wide space, is the given trialway. From the outer circle the rider must mount and guide his pony toward the centre tepee. If, having gone the entire distance, the man-killer gains the centre tepee, still sitting on the pony's back, his life is spared and pardon given. But should he fall, then he himself has chosen death. (Zitkala-Sa)

According to the tribe's law, the father is allowed to set a punishment for the murderer of his son. Through the father's sentence, it can be seen that Native Americans respect life and do

not easily take one. This is in contrast with the previous story where we witnessed the death penalty for a Native American man who killed a white. With this, Zitkala-Sa shows the high level of humanity and morality among Native Americans as well as the opposing values of the dominant culture.

Another mark of Native American culture in this narration are the importance and value of storytelling for Native Americans. The granddaughter falls asleep while her grandmother is still speaking. The magnitude of being heard is denoted in grandmother's words: "'Hinnu! hinnu! Asleep! I have been talking in the dark, unheard. I did wish the girl would plant in her heart this sacred tale,' muttered she, in a querulous voice" (Zitkala-Sa). This image is stronger than the one in Zitkala-Sa's autobiography where we can only see it through Zitkala-Sa's childish delight towards storytelling.

4.5. Elements of Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance in "A Warrior's Daughter"

This story "portrays the courage and determination of Tusee, a beautiful daughter of a chief. Disguised as an old woman, Tusee sneaks into the enemy camp to rescue her lover" (Rouff 164). The elements of post-Indian warrior can be recognized in Zitkala-Sa's portrait of a strong Indian woman who is ready to sacrifice her own life in order to rescue her beloved one. She celebrates 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 represents Zitkala-Sa's 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) asking for swiftness, cunningness, strength and bravery when facing her enemies.

In this story, Zitkala-Sa also dedicates some space to tribal customs. Tusee's father, the chief, had in his possession a captured Indian man, who was taken from an enemy's camp, but "the unusual qualities of the slave had won the Sioux heart, and for the last three winters the man had had his freedom. He was made real man again. His hair was allowed to grow, he himself had chosen to stay in the warrior's family" (Zitkala-Sa). Zitkala-Sa shows here that Native Americans treat slaves with more respect. Once they become free, the stigma of

slavery is erased while in the dominant society it is impossible to get rid of it. In this indirect way, Zitkala-Sa implements her critique of the dominant society and their relations to slavery and treatment of Native Americans.

4.6. Elements of Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance in "The Widespread Enigma Concerning Blue-Star Woman"

The story of Blue-Star Woman is a story about a woman who "was left an orphan at the tender age" (Zitkala-Sa) and "the unfortunate circumstances of her early childhood, together with the lack of written records of a roving people, placed a formidable barrier between her and her heritage" (Zitkala-Sa). With this story, Zitkala-Sa criticizes the dominant culture's allotment act. It allows the government to divide the Native American land and in that way to reduce the Native American land possession.

Blue-Star Woman receives help from two Indian men who falsify the documents of her origins and in return they demand that the old woman "pay[s them] one half of [her] land and money when [she] gets them" (Zitkala-Sa). She accepts the offer and it leads to the allotment of the tribal land of Chief High Flier. He writes a letter to Washington D.C. in which he asks the government to give the government's own land and money if they want to help the old Indian woman. Zitkala-Sa thus condemns the Allotment Act and criticizes its unjust and trickster procedure. Chief High Flier is imprisoned because he protested against the allotment of his land by setting fire in front of the government building. He is freed with the help of the same two men who helped Blue-Star woman and he had to pay the price of the half of his land. Zitkala-Sa shows all the means that the government uses in order to get as much Native American land as they can. She also criticizes her own people who betray their nation by helping their oppressors to mistreat them. The whole story reflects on her mother's words from the beginning of the collection and shows how Zitkala-Sa's identity of post-Indian warrior grows as the years pass by.

4.7. Elements of Post-Indian Warrior of Survivance in "America's Indian Problem"

This political essay 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" (Hafen 205). The identity of post-Indian warrior was finally created when "on February 27, 1926, the Bonnins confounded the National Council of American Indians" (Hafen 205). The identity of post-Indian warrior 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).

Europeans took the land from their "legal victims, American Indians" (Zitkala-Sa) who are hold "as wards and not citizens of their own freedom loving land" (Zitkala-Sa) and because "wardship is no substitute for American citizenship, [they] seek [their] enfranchisement" (Zitkala-Sa). Zitkala-Sa feels 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?" 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. In this way, Zitkala-Sa truly becomes the post-Indian warrior of survivance.

5. *American Indian Stories* as Survivance Narrative

By closely analyzing the elements of the identity of post-Indian warrior in Zitkala-Sa's work, it can be noticed that Zitkala-Sa constantly resists the dominant culture and provides a new tribal representation. With the resistance that is, according to Vizenor, the most recognizable sign of survivance narratives, *American Indian Stories* as a collection, but also every individual part of it, can be described as survivance narrative. 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.

Zitkala-Sa's stories are full of metaphors that are important part of survivance narratives. For example, the story "A Dream of Her Grandfather" is a metaphorical announcement of the new future of Native Americans. The story is about the vision of a granddaughter of a Dakota "medicine man" who "was the first band of the Great Sioux Nation to make treaties with the government in the hope of bringing about an amicable arrangement between the red and white Americans" (Zitkala-Sa). Zitkala-Sa writes:

> When his small granddaughter grew up she learned the white man's tongue, and followed in the footsteps of her grandfather to the very seat of government to carry on his humanitarian work. Though her days were filled with problems for welfare work among her people, she had a strange dream one night during her stay in Washington. (Zitkala-Sa)

In her dream, the granddaughter receives a gift from her grandfather: "The gift was a fantastic thing, of texture far more delicate than a spider's filmy web. It was a vision! A picture of an Indian camp, not painted on canvas nor yet written" (Zitkala-Sa) and through this vision she receives the "new hope for her people" (Zitkala-Sa). The story is a metaphor for Zitkala-Sa's work and reveals her hopes and dreams for her people. By learning the white man's tongue, Zitkala-Sa becomes able to carry the humanitarian work and to resist the dominant culture by writing survivance narratives and living the life of the post-Indian warrior. By choosing presence over absence, Zitkala-Sa recreates and influences the history of Native Americans and

> her whole life left a legacy of political action, resistance, justice and voluminous writings, both published and unpublished. Her experiences, combined with Raymond's legal expertise, led to efforts to represent Indians during a time of crucial change for

Native people. Regardless of the changes around them, the Bonnins remained committed to the Indian cause. (Hafen 214)

Conclusion

Zitkala-Sa is one of the most prominent Native American writers and that fact is confirmed by her political and literary work. She creates for herself a new identity – a post-Indian warrior identity. Post-Indian warriors, such as Zitkala-Sa, fight against manifest manners that are forced by the dominant society. Her fight is seen in her resistance to the dominant culture and in the representations of Native Americans.

Zitkala-Sa resists the dominant culture not only by criticizing it but also by accepting it. 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 and to write survivance narratives that stand for stories that portray the real image of Native Americans.

Each text in *American Indian Stories* can be read as survivance narrative whose writer is the post-Indian warrior that resists the dominant culture by criticizing it and thus creates a real history of Native Americans. Zitkala-Sa's mission consists of these two elements and she dedicates her whole life to that cause. Just like the Indian warriors in history that mounted on horses and went into the battle, 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.

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