

**Performing Memory, History, and Reconciliation in Sherman Alexie's**

***The Lone Ranger and Tonto's Fistfight in Heaven***

Daouda COULIBALY

Alassane Ouattara University

ndbaly@hotmail.com

The conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of psychological trauma. People who have survived atrocities often tell their stories in a highly emotional, contradictory, and fragmented manner which undermines their credibility and thereby serves the twin imperatives of truth-telling and secrecy. When the truth is finally recognized, survivors can begin their recovery. But far too often secrecy prevails, and the story of the traumatic event surfaces not as a verbal narrative but as a symptom, **Judith Herman**

**Abstract:** This paper analyzes how Sherman Alexie's fiction revisits and proclaims out aloud the overlooked events or chronically violent conditions in the history of a nation. In his short stories, witnesses and victims of these traumatic memories of the past of American Indian community often relive these foundational events. Building on the interplay between history and memory, Alexie performs the past through stories that combine together history and memory in chameleon-like ways. Made of fragments, the individual and collective memories/ history are bridged in a series of short stories. This fictionalization combines past and present in an attempt to bridge the gap in the history of American Indians.

**Keywords:** vanishing Indian, memory, forgetting, reconciliation, Native American,

**Résumé:** Cette contribution vise à analyser comment Sherman Alexie réinscrit et proclame les événements négligés et passe traumatique de l'histoire de la nation américaine. Dans ces nouvelles, les témoins et les victimes revivent souvent les événements traumatiques qui ont marqués la mémoire de la communauté amérindienne. En reliant ensemble les différents fragments de cette histoire traumatique par la mise en fiction de la vie individuelle et collective de ces personnages, Sherman Alexie reconstruit l'intersection entre histoire et mémoire qui conjugue le passé au présent.

**Mots clefs:** mémoire, oubli, réconciliation, *The Lone Ranger*, Sherman Alexie

## Introduction

A controversial writer, Sherman Alexie has, over the years, built his fame as a key player in the Native American Renaissance. To his most staunch critics (Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Gloria Bird, Louis Owens), Alexie's literary production appropriates the tragic past and celebrates the most vulgar stereotypes of the Indian. In "The Approximate Size of my Humor," Joseph L. Coulombe points out that, "His critics characterize his writing as harmful pandering to white expectations, arguing that Alexie not only avoids the moral and social obligation to educate white readers and re-instill cultural pride in Indian readers, he also works actively against such goals with his humor." (2002: 94).

Sedimented in colonial discourse and literature as blood thirsty or noble savages and in contemporary literature as drunk, jobless, irresponsible persons, the image of the American Indian developed by Alexie is problematic to some. To others like Simon Ortiz and Joseph L. Coulombe, they appreciate his writing style and the themes he develops. To them, Alexie deconstructs, instead, the stereotypes of the Indians. As he compulsively brings to the fore, he weaponized these stereotypes by transforming them into new tools for the liberation of the Indian. In this reversal process of the predominant logic, the re-inscription of the stereotypes is symptomatic of the denunciation of colonial domination and of all the wrongs done to the American Indians.

In contemporary American Indian literature in general and in Sherman Alexie's fiction in particular, the traumatic memory of the past is so much alive that one can wonder if reconciliation is possible between the oppressor and the oppressed, between Indians and the USA. Analyzing the complexity of trauma, Geoffrey Hartman argues that: "The knowledge of trauma... is composed of two contradictory elements. One is the traumatic event, registered rather than experienced. It seems to have bypassed perception and consciousness, and falls directly into the psyche. The other is a kind of memory of the event, in the form of a perpetual troping of it by the bypassed or severely split (dissociated) psyche<sup>1</sup>."

In his collection of short stories entitled *The Lone Ranger and Tonto's Fistfight in Heaven*, the past haunts the present and runs through it, drawing its roots from 500 years of colonization, oppression and humiliation. As a lived individual and collective experience, the memory of the past is still ripe with multiple ghosts and seminal experiences which interrogate the present. This "look in" and "look out" present the two gazes that cross-examine of the past/present or present/past through the recalling or performance of memory. To recall the past is to bring it into play by reliving it. As a performance, this unveiling strategy of the past through the present is not a mere manifestation of a repetition impulse. Alexie's recreation of the past deploys the performative power of storytelling which brings to the fore past traumas, forcing in the process, the American Indians to face it anew in a healing process. As a result, this conscious re-experiencing of the past operates not as a poison, but rather as a healing mechanism. This paper analyzes how Sherman Alexie enacts memory through popular culture. He analyzes the complex processes of remembering and forgetting, of recollecting and disremembering that make up cultural memory. Alexie's American Indian community generates memory by binding the fragments of the traumatic history as a fictionalization of individual and collective experiences.

---

<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey H. Hartman, "On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies," *New Literary History*, 26:3, 1999.

## **1. Resisting Cultural Erasure: The Myth of the Vanishing Indian**

Alexie's collection of short stories consistently attacks the most enduring symbols of the American Indian: the vanishing Indian. In American culture and history, the myth of the vanishing Indian is far more inflexible with its many different expressions. By regularly bringing to the surface the history of colonial oppression on the people of the reservation through military conquest, the presence of historical figures, Alexie pinpoints the persistence of colonial domination today on the reservation. This ongoing oppression is deployed through the presence of historical figures like Crazy Horse, Custer, Qualchan and white military leaders who like Colonel Wright who massacred the Indian populations. Colonial oppression is skillfully enfolded into popular culture echoing the negative stereotypes inscribed in cinema and the white man's Indian.

In the short story entitled "The trial of Thomas Builds-The-Fire," Thomas Builds-The-Fire, a compulsive storyteller, was arrested and accused of violence. At his trial, the accused tells stories which accuse the US and its system of domination of massacres that took place a long time again. First he is reincarnated into the body of a pony. Then, he tells the story of 800 horses slaughtered by Colonel Wright in 1858. Next, he embodies a warrior, Chief Qualchan, (*The Lone*, 96-97) who was hanged. Speaking with the voice of the Chief, he declares: « My name is Qualchan and I had been fighting for our people, for our land...I was hanged with six other Indians, including Epsal, who had never raised a hand in anger to any white or Indian » (*The Lone*, 98-99). Finally, the narrator, Thomas Builds-The-Fire becomes a young warrior, Wild Coyote, who goes into battle for the first time. The recall of the memory for past episodes and the substitution of long dead individuals by a contemporary allow Alexie to provide a sense of personal identity. In this vision which blurs the frontiers between past and present, the speaker implicitly acknowledges that he is the same person as someone in the past. In addition, through these narratives Thomas Builds-The-Fire also draws our attention on the struggle of Indians to resist colonialism which falsifies history. In doing so, he operates what Hayden White calls a "storification, (that is) a transformation of historical material into narrative shape"(White 1981: 2-3). Through this fictionalization of real events, Alexie narrativizes what happened and lay buried under the surface. The strong emotional response of Thomas-Builds-The-Fire clearly shows the effect of such traumatic stories on the listeners.

By bringing back to life the Sioux warrior Crazy Horse, the battle of Wounded Knee (1890) that led to the extermination and deportation of many Indian populations, Alexie shows that the Indian wars have never really ended in the US. Therefore, he re-inscribes into memory the past. As he narrates and reenacts these events for the audience of the court room, Thomas Builds-The-Fire triggered a violent emotional response made in the Indian audience. Through this indignation and anger, Sherman Alexie allows the audience to vicariously relive the past. As it is repeated again and again, the performed past loses its destructive potency on the Indian population. Thomas Builds the Fire strategically reverses things. He transforms his trial into the trial of the US domination and massacre of the Indian.

Although he is literally thrown in jail to smolder, Thomas Builds-The-Fire made a point in that he showed how history was falsified, covering the gruesome events with the masks of invisibility. The very spots where massacres took place or "lieu de memoire" to borrow the historian Pierre Nora's terms have become golf courses and parking lots. As Alexie's characters re-narrate and relive the past as a way for them to perform it anew. Repetition, as Soren Kierkegaard underlines, can have a creative power. He is quoted in Paul Ricoeur's *Memoire, histoire et oubli* wherein he writes: « La répétition est une puissance

créatrice... La puissance créatrice de la répétition tient tout entière dans le pouvoir de rouvrir le passé sur l'avenir » (*MHO*, 495). Todorov, however, warns against the abuses or apologetic celebration of the past. In *Les abus de la mémoire* he pinpoints how the inability to move on and forget about the past. He criticizes what he calls « la complaisance à demeurer dans la célébration, dans la commémoration du passé en détriment du présent: à savoir de l'action et de l'intervention au présent »(*MHO*, 495). The past can also be repetitive and uncanny.

Through the power of repetition, Alexie casts a retrospective look on the past and historical atrocities that have been haunting Indians. As he looks in the “mirror of history” through the “eyes of our tribe” (*The Lone*, 178), Alexie seems to see the haunting presence of traumas lurking at the surface. During the colonial period, the new settlers in the land that will later become the US tried to exterminate the Native populations. Then, in the 1830, the US administration proceeded with the removal of some of the indigenous populations from their ancestral lands. As a result of all these harmful actions against the Native populations, there was no doubt that Indians were disappearing because of epidemics, massacres, wars, and their removal from their ancestral lands. More importantly, they were disappearing because of the boarding schools that “killed the Indian and saved the man” as Richard Henry Pratt's famous dictum went. In other words, Indian cultures were erased and they were assimilated into mainstream American life through the reservation life. This situation gives birth to a complex presentation of the Indian in American History.

## **2. Crisis in Representation: Presence/Absence Paradigm of the Indian**

The historic marginalization or centrality of the Indian in American society operates through the presence/absence paradigm. In other words, the image of the Indian in American society is profoundly ambivalent and it plays out the history/memory dichotomy. In *Performing the Past Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, Jay Winter defines the intricate interconnection between history and memory as:

History is memory seen through and criticized with the aid of documents of many kinds – written, aural, visual. Memory is history seen through affect. And since affect is subjective, it is difficult to examine the claims of memory in the same way as we examine the claims of history. History is a discipline. We learn and teach its rules and its limits. Memory is a faculty. We live with it, and at times are sustained by it. Less fortunate are people overwhelmed by it (2010: 12).

The connection between history and memory operates at the heart of American society. The image of the Indian in American society has developed through two diametrically opposed paradigms. Two conflicting positions emerged to conceptualize the physical presence or absence of the American Indian in the US social and political landscape.

For Dina Gilio-Whitaker, for instance, the motif of the disappearing Indian developed at this very period. She writes:

By the end of the nineteenth century when the vanishing Native myth reached its crescendo and most Indians had been contained on reservations, disappearance took the form of culturecide by assimilation. Thanks to the boarding school

system which killed the Indian but saved the man, Indians throughout the twentieth century were disappearing through trauma and identity murder. Trauma--from shame induced by the boarding schools, for example--caused many Native people to deny their heritage in order to survive racism, contributing to what I call identity murder (...)<sup>2</sup>.

Euro-American colonization violently pushed Indian culture on the brink of disappearance. For Susan Scheckel, however, the ubiquitous presence of the American Indian is a defining feature of American identity formation. In *The Insistence of the Indian* Susan Scheckel underscores the omnipresent image of the Indian in the 19<sup>th</sup> century America. Perusing the field of literature, she writes that: “The number of novels, poems, dramas, captivity narratives, and visual artworks focusing on Indians that appeared between 1820 and 1860 suggests just how “interesting” Indians remained to the American public as a subject of popular representation during the first half of the nineteenth century” (1998: 5).

In “The Familiar Face of Genocide: Internalized Oppression among American Indians,” Nina Rothberg argues that, “This struggle against a history of cultural erasure defines the Indian consciousness described in Sherman Alexie’s *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fist Fight in Heaven*. Made of thirteen loosely connected stories, Alexie’s collection of short stories entitled “Indian Education,” “The Trial of Thomas Builds-The-Fire” among others, show how American colonization and its ongoing impact wiped out Indian Identity and ironically re-inscribes it as a mascot. As he revisits the past genocide, wars, massacre and epidemics, Alexie equally pinpoint the devastating impact of western colonization on the indigenous populations.

Despite the presence of the Indian in the American cultural arena and their position as the first inhabitants of America, they are cast into the margins of American politics. This marginalization operates in *The Lone Ranger* through what Lisa Poupart calls “internalized oppression.” It is basically a trauma that is mostly visible through the anger that boils inside Alexie’s characters. Triggered by their incapacity to cope with the past, the invasion of Western culture, the marginalized Indians are trapped in negative stereotypes, and their pain and experience are trivialized by the dominant American society. In “The Familiar Face of Genocide: Internalized Oppression among American Indians,” Lisa M. Poupart clarifies the idea of internalized oppression in these terms:

The intense historical unresolved grief and pain that exists is accompanied by an extreme rage at the dominant culture for abuses past and present... Indian grief and pain, this rage is also invalidated by the dominant culture and denied avenues for expression. Rather than suffer the cost of external expression, Indians internalize grief and anger with self-destructive behaviors of violence, alcoholism, drug addiction, depression, and other anxiety disorders (89).

Sherman Alexie’s novels in general and *The Lone Ranger* in particular resists the cultural erasure of the American Indian by performing it. Instead of deflecting attention from it, he

---

<sup>2</sup><https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/opinions/real-indians-the-vanishing-native-myth-and-the-blood-quantum-question/>

celebrates resistance of the Native through the recall of events and memory that span several centuries. Past experiences lend themselves to employment through the power of storytelling.

## **2. Bearing Witness of the Traumatic Past**

In Sherman Alexie's *The Lone Ranger*, the past is not always passed. It impacts the present and defines the future. The traumatic past spans over 500 years of oppression, persecution and genocide of the Indian. Alexie's Indians are haunted today by the long gone past which reigns over them. To cope with this ambiguous situation, Sherman Alexie reinvents ritual and ceremonies to bridge the past and present. These ceremonial strategies offer his characters a sense of continuity and equilibrium in their constantly unstable world. "How can we imagine a new language when the language of the enemy keeps our dismembered tongues tied to his belt?"(8). The loss of language symbolized by the "dismembered tongue" pinpoints the loss of culture and identity. As a medium through which one accesses the world, language builds bridges between humans themselves and their surroundings. To be dispossessed of one's language is translates into being powerless and voiceless.

How can one remember when the medium for storage, language, is confiscated? As a source of destruction and redemption, the memory of the past appears as a force that lengthens the suffering of the past into the present and it similarly motivates individuals into resisting the oppressive system of the US. One of Alexie character, Thomas, defines past and the present as a skeleton which embodies the sources of knowledge about the past and the future:

*There are things you should learn. Your past is a skeleton walking one step behind you, and your future is a skeleton walking one step in front of you ... Now, these skeletons are made of memories, dreams, and voices. And they can trap you in the in-between, between touching and becoming. But they're not necessarily evil, unless you let them be. What you have to do is keep moving, keep walking, in step with your skeletons ... no matter what they do, keep walking, keep moving ... See, it is always now. That's what Indian time is. The past, the future, all of it is wrapped up in the now. We are trapped in the now."*(*The Lone*, 21-22)

Thomas' vision of temporality centers on the present or the "now." It points to an inescapable trap that fluctuates between past and present. In this culturally specific worldview, the present becomes an inevitable trap. Arguing about the close connection between the past and the present, Gilles Deleuze says that: « Non seulement le passé coexiste avec le présent qu'il a été, mais c'est le passé tout entier, intégral, tout notre passé qui coexiste dans chaque présent » (Deleuze: *Le Bergsonisme*, p.55). The enigma of temporality, in particular, as Ricoeur calls the "enigma of the past" refers to « ce temps qui n'est plus mais qui demeure ».

Often opposed to the duty of memory (devoir de memoire), the work of memory (travail de memoire), which is a conscious and voluntary memory. The work of memory is a duty not to forget past generations, but it also yields the necessity to connect the past with the future generations. It is a way of bearing witness of the past, the lived experiences that connect generations of human beings through memory. Some of Alexie's characters like

Victor and Thomas-Builds-The-Fire never forget. In addition, the former constantly recall the individual painful experiences while the latter brings back to memory events connected to tribal history. This haunting past creates a contagious memory and makes remembering involuntary, almost compulsive. As Kathleen L. Carroll argues that “In *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, Alexie combats this incorporation into American narratives. He brings the stories of the heroic Indians of the past and the culturally alienated Indians of the present into dialogue with each other, using tribal members as narrators (or storytellers), united by the experience of negotiating cultural boundaries to create an identity within a world that refuses to situate Indians” (2005: 76). Because the past is immanent, almost always there, it permeates through every aspect of like contagious.

## **2/Contagious Memory of the Past**

Sherman Alexie’s *The Lone Ranger* inscribes American Indian memory and identity by keeping the traces of the past. Temporal mechanisms also connect the past and the present. The past is deeply rooted into the present particularly when trauma makes it “impossible to mourn or let the past go.” Judith Herman points out how human consciousness is profoundly marked by atrocities. She writes:

THE ORDINARY RESPONSE TO ATROCITIES is to banish them from consciousness. Certain violations of the social compact are too terrible to utter aloud: this is the meaning of the word unspeakable. Atrocities, however, refuse to be buried. Equally as powerful as the desire to deny atrocities is the conviction that denial does not work. Folk wisdom is filled with ghosts who refuse to rest in their graves until their stories are told. Murder will out. Remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims<sup>3</sup>.

The protagonists of Alexie cannot forget the past. This past is, on the one hand, painful and it is, on the other hand, tragic and unspeakable. In other words, the past represents the crimes and the violence against Native people. This ambiguous relationship between past and present is mapped out by Paul Ricœur who said that « Il faut lutter contre la tendance à ne considérer le passé que sous l’angle de l’achevé, de l’inchangeable, du révolu. Il faut rouvrir le passé, raviver en lui des potentialités inaccomplies, empêchées, voire massacrées » (2000 :4).

The recalling of the past in *The Lone Ranger* operates like the violent and unexpected storm. In the opening story of the collection of short stories, Alexie perceives the storm that stroke the reservation as wake up call. As a witness to the storm that shook the Indian reservation, Victor declares “Memories not destroyed, but forever changed and damaged. Which is worse? Victor wanted to know if memories of his personal hurricanes would be better if he could change them. Or if he just forgot about all of it” (*The Lone*, 4). This self-exploration was triggered by storm that broke out set the stage for personal storms that bring back painful memories. As if he is looking through a magnifying glass, Victor examines how an environmental phenomenon that reshapes his life and puts things into a new perspective. The storm that suddenly broke out is a metonymy for a wide variety of storms. As Victor points out “During all these kinds of tiny storms, Victor’s mother would rise with her medicine and magic. She would pull air down from empty cupboards and make fry bread.

---

<sup>3</sup> Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, NY: Basic books, 1997, p6.

She would shake thick blankets free from old bandanas. She would comb Victor's braids into dreams"(The Lone, 5).

The philosophy of life developed by Victor's father shows a selective process whereby his memory works. The life vision of Victor's father focuses on what to forget and what to keep. He underlines, "My father's mind always worked that way. If you don't like the things you remember, then what you have to do is change the memories. Instead of remembering the bad things, remember what happened immediately before. That's what I learned from my father." (The Lone, 33-34)

Like his father, Victor imagines alternative stories wherein his will to change, to revise and to give shape to new stories work. If the past is something that truly happened, you can reimagine it as you wish. Alexie connects imagination with survival in his title story: "Survival = Imagination x Anger. Imagination is the only weapon on the reservation" (The Lone,150). Imagination actually gives power and agency to powerless individuals to imagine and reshape reality the way s/he chooses. In this same way, the storm can randomly throw away belongings and memories.

Memory can also be contagious. Actually, it moves from one person to the next. Because of their collective victimization, they share a deeply ingrained sensitivity:

The storm that had caused their momentary anger had not died. Instead, it moved from Indian to Indian at the party, giving each a specific, painful memory.

Victor's father remembered the time his own father was spit on as they waited for a bus in Spokane.

Victor' mother remembered how the Indian Health Service doctor sterilized her moments after Victor was born.

Adolph and Arnold were touched by memories of previous battles, storms that continually haunted their lives.

Other Indians at the party remembered their own pain. This pain grew, expanded. One person lost her temper when she accidentally brushed the skin of another"(The Lone, 8)

The violence of the storm symbolically stands for the violence deployed to destroy the memory of destruction and pain felt by the Spokane Indian individually and as a community. Each member of the community has her own experience of discrimination and powerlessness in the face of the domination culture. As a response to this sense of powerlessness Alexie develops humor which creates a space where dominant and dominated can meet and reconcile.

## **2/Humor as a Way to Narrativize Reconciliation**

Humor is an important feature in Native American culture. It plays a central role in Sherman Alexie's novel in the sense that it opens a space outside of the dialogic White/Indian opposition. In *Indi'n Humor: Bicultural Play in Native America* Kenneth Lincoln points out that humor is endowed with a dichotomous quality. In other words, it has an ambivalent power that simultaneously heals and hurts, bonds and exorcizes, renews and destroys (1993).



Humor in the collection of short stories under study is also the preoccupation of Joseph Coulombe in “The Approximate Size of His Favorite Humor: Sherman Alexie's Comic Connections and Disconnections in *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*.” Coulombe argues that: (...) Alexie's humor is central to a constructive social and moral purpose evident throughout his fiction but particularly in his collection of short stories .... He uses humor--or his characters use humor--to reveal injustice, protect self-esteem, heal wounds, and create bonds. The function of humor changes from scene to scene, shifting to serve these myriad goals (2005: 94).

Alexie's *The Lone Ranger* imitates what Sigmund Freud's termed a mourning process. It implies reliving the trauma by working through an analytical cure in order to allow the traumatized to confront haunting experience. Alexie's use of humor operates as an antiseptic that reopens in order to heal the wounds of the past. As he turns the knife in the wound again and again, Alexie operates an analytical cure that allows the traumatized to relive the traumatic experience and to cope with the pain and mourning process. This mourning process also aims at moving forward and free individual and collective memory from the burden of the past.

Alexie's fictionalization of the past provides a window to learn about the past. He unveils the past ignored by the young generations. In so doing, he skillfully presents the past through popular culture. He gives visibility to the events that are part of the foundation of American Indian history. To Alexie's characters such as the storyteller Junior and Lester Falls Apart, to repeat previous events that occurred in the past is a way to bring it back to life. The performance of the past by the youth who ignore a good deal of what had happened is Alexie's strategy to throw light on some of the foundational events that shape Native American identity. As they perform the foundational historical events and recall the names of key Indian figures who resisted western colonization--, which are violent acts that the Indian population have suffered, they engage in Freud's termed “compulsive repetition.” In so doing, they open an avenue for mourning and healing.

### **Conclusion**

Sherman Alexie's *The Lone Ranger* is a celebration of the forces of renewal, of imagination of life. Remembering the forgotten individual and collective past calls for abandoning what Todorov coined a “melancholic memory.” Instead, Ricoeur calls for the “politique de la juste mémoire” which criticizes both exaggeration in commemoration, the irresponsible strive to forget and the refusal to know about the past. As Judith Herman points out: “People who have survived atrocities often tell their stories in a highly emotional, contradictory, and fragmented manner which undermines their credibility and thereby serves the twin imperatives of truth-telling and secrecy. When the truth is finally recognized, survivors can begin their recovery. But far too often secrecy prevails, and the story of the traumatic event surfaces not as a verbal narrative but as a symptom<sup>4</sup>. Alexie's *The Lone Ranger and Tonto's Fistfight in Heaven* is a text that is representative of these symptoms. It draws the attention of the ethnic individual on the need to remember, work through, mourning the past. This reconstruction of the recent and far away past that recalls colonial violence, genocide, the intrusive presence of consumerism give flesh to Alexie's performance of the past individual and collective memory.

---

<sup>4</sup> Judith Herman. *Trauma and Recovery*. NY : Basic Books, 1997.

### **Bibliography**

- Carroll, Kathleen L. "Ceremonial Tradition as Form and Theme in Sherman Alexie's *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*: A Performance-Based Approach to Native American Literature," *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, Vol. 38, No. 1, Special Convention Issue: Performance (Spring, 2005), pp. 74-84.
- Hartman, Geoffrey H. "On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies", *New Literary History*, 26:3, 1999.
- Herman, Judith. *Trauma and Recovery*. New York: Basic Books, 1997.
- McFarland, Ron. "Sherman Alexie's Polemical Stories." *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 9, no. 4 (winter 1997): 27-38.
- Nagle, Joane. *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Owens, Louis. *Mixedblood Messages: Literature, Film, Family, Place*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998.
- Purdy, John. "Crossroads: An Interview with Sherman Alexie." *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 9, no. 4 (winter 1997): 1-18.
- Poupart, Lisa M. "The Familiar Face of Genocide: Internalized Oppression among American Indians", *Hypatia*, Vol. 18, No. 2, Indigenous Women in the Americas (Spring, 2003), pp. 86-100
- Richardson, Janine. "Magic and Memory in Sherman Alexie's *Reservation Blues*." *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 9, no. 4 (winter 1997): 37-51.
- Roxane Dunbar-Ortiz and Dina Gilio-Whitaker, *All the Real Indians Died Off and Twenty Other Myths About Native Americans*. Boston: Bacon Press, 2016.
- Rothberg, Nina. "Native American Spatial Imaginaries and Notions of Erasure in Sherman Alexie's *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fist Fight in Heaven*" *The Democratic Issue* pp.63-69.
- Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from*

*Columbus to the Present*. New York: Random House, 1978.

Goldberg, Amos. "Trauma, Narrative, and Two Forms of Death", *Literature and Medicine*,

25:1, Spring (2006) :122-141.

Luckhurst, Roger. *The Trauma Question*, London and New York, Routledge, 2008.

Ricoeur, Paul. *Mémoire, histoire et oubli*. Paris : Seuil, 2000.