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"It's not just stories, it's a piece of life":
The Purpose, Practice and Preservation of Lenape-Delaware Storytelling
in a Diachronic Perspective

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Wanishi to you all.

Declaration of Authenticity

I confirm to have conceived and written this Diploma thesis in English entirely independent of outside assistance. Quotations from other authors and any ideas borrowed and/or passages paraphrased from the works of other authors are all clearly marked within the text and acknowledged in the bibliographical references.

Vienna, May 2019 Julia Streßler

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1 Introduction

The history of Native American Nations in North America is a story of great misery and tragedy. At the same time it is also a story of how native nations proved their tremendous resilience and unbreakable cultural tenacity. Until today, many issues concerning the indigenous populations in the United States are still unresolved and require political and social actions. In addition to the disregard of indigenous land rights and the building of pipelines through native land, indigenous people are vastly underrepresented in the political landscape of the United States. Furthermore, the ongoing cultural appropriation and romanticizing of native cultures exemplifies the widespread lack of respect and awareness for native nations in North America.

Primarily, Native cultures need to be supported and spreading knowledge about them can be part of this process. This thesis aspires to be a small contribution to the conversation about one specific tribe, the Lenape-Delaware. It includes not only information about them, but also oral histories from members of the Lenape who reside in different places in the U.S. today. Their voices and input will shed light on the tribe´s history and its vibrancy today.

The aim of this thesis is to show the purpose, practice and preservation of Lenape storytelling in a diachronic perspective and explain what factors have contributed to its transformation. By looking at the Lenape storytelling tradition in the past as well as today, its development can be deduced. In order to better understand the value of the tradition today, I conducted 5 semi-structured interviews with Lenape individuals located in different areas in the U.S., who possess extensive knowledge about storytelling within their tribal community.

The first part of this thesis outlines the history and origin of the Lenape as well as the most relevant encounters of Lenape with European settlers between the 17th and 19th centuries. Before talking about storytelling traditions, orality and its importance for Native American and especially Lenape culture will be explained. A qualitative analysis of the interviews with Lenape tribe members follows, in which the purpose, practice and preservation of storytelling will be investigated. Through a diachronic analysis, the development of the most important oral traditions for the Lenape-Delaware will be presented.

Recounting the history and "ethnic and political development" of many native tribes can prove to be a very difficult task for different reasons (Grimes xvii). First, many "Anglo-American record keepers" were indifferent to important events in tribal histories and failed to chronicle them, but also many tribes did not see themselves as specific people, making recounting their developments obsolete in their eyes. Therefore, "key moments in American

Indian tribal evolutions have been […] forever vanished in time" (xvii). The challenge for historians today when dealing with records and documents of colonial time is to make decisions regarding accuracy and plausibility and scrutinize "Eurocentric or Indian bias" (xviii). Especially for the Lenape-Delaware, due to their irregular migration patterns during colonialization, many different stories on their history exist and recounting their development in detail proves difficult.

However, what can be regarded a certainty is that the Lenape had to endure numerous relocations and signed an extensive number of treaties that determined their fate. Their tribal organization underwent profound restructuring due to relocations and the political and economic climate after contact with European settlers. Specifically, the years "between 1765 and 1795 proved to be an ordeal from which the Delaware emerged a changed but strengthened people" (Marsh 31). Eventually, all aspects of their culture (their homeland, stories and their name) underwent redefinition and transformation, because of their need for adaptation to the changing environment. S. Gill states that although colonial powers tried to "suppress, alter and eliminate Native American traditions", through adapting and changing their cultures, many tribes and communities survived during those turbulent times. S. Gill states, "the process of change is what constitutes a living tradition" (127). By adapting their culture and traditions, many Native American people were able to "protect and strengthen their traditions" (104). In this way, the change and adaption of Lenape culture has been and to this day still is vital for its survival.

As an oral culture, the Lenape developed without a written language system and hence, speech acts such as storytelling were most important for passing on stories, values and traditions. S. Gill asserts that "oral traditions" have a great "potential […] to adapt to the specific cultural needs and circumstances" of a culture (33). Stories can be enriched and changed in many ways to fit the specific cultural values within a community. Furthermore, through "telling and retelling", more messages and life lessons that are important for the culture can be attached and incorporated in the storytelling (33). For the Lenape, storytelling has proven to a very useful tool in strengthening the Lenape culture in their ongoing fight for survival.

Many Native North American authors as well as non-native authors today aim to spread knowledge about indigenous cultures. While being aware of my outsider perspective, only partly overcoming it by conducting interviews with Lenape individuals today, I am hoping to support the process of spreading more knowledge and respect for indigenous cultures of North America and especially the Lenape-Delaware Nation.

2 The Lenape Nation

2.1 History and Origin

The history of the Lenape (later called the Delaware Nation) is a story of "a people constantly in search of new beginnings, new identities, and new opportunities as they escaped from a world of scarceness, stagnation, and disorder" (Grimes xiv). Searching for a new homeland where they could make a fresh start and live their culture constituted their lives after first contact with European colonizers in the 16th century and during the years that followed. However, in the 200+ years of encounters with European colonists, the Lenape-Delaware showed that they are capable of adapting and transforming themselves in order to survive in the new "colonial world" while enduring "demographic pressure" and "political intrusions" (xiv).

The original homeland of the Lenape stretched across what are now the states of "New York, […] Delaware, New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania" (Hítakonanu´laxk 2). They were comprised three groups: "the Turtle, Turkey and Wolf group", which distinguished the Northern Unami, the Southern Unami and the Munsee people respectively (Grimes xv). The three groups resided close to each other, with the Northern and Southern Unami on the shores of the Delaware River and the Munsee further north. They were autonomous and spoke different dialects, but often intermarried and collaborated regularly on political issues (xvi). Although their dialectal speech differed, the language was still similar, since they were part of the Algonquin peoples, a language group consisting of many (partly now extinct) tribes, amongst them the Sauk, Shawnee, and Cheyenne (Hitakonanu´laxk 4).

The Lenape consider themselves the "progenitors of all the Algonquin peoples" (4). Hence, they started to refer to themselves as the "Grandfathers" (2). According to Hitakonanu´laxk (4) Lenape means "common people". English colonists named the river flowing through Pennsylvania and New Jersey after the "third Lord de la Warr"[1], and thus gave the name "Delaware" to the Native people living along the shores of the "Delaware River" (5). In the course of their migration to the West, the Lenape accepted that name and identified themselves as the Delaware. Today, many different expressions exist to refer to said tribe, aside from Lenape also Lenni-Lenape, Lenape-Delaware, the Western Delaware and simply the

[1] Kraft states that "the term Delaware actually derives from the title given to Sir Thomas West or Lord de la Warr III, who was appointed the English governor of Virginia in 1610. When Captain Samuel Argall first explored what would later be named the Delaware Bay and River, he chose the name Delaware to honor the newly appointed Virgina governor" (1).

Delaware. Some of those expressions were assigned to them and some developed out of their community. However, in this thesis I will refer to them as the Lenape, the Delaware or the Lenape-Delaware.

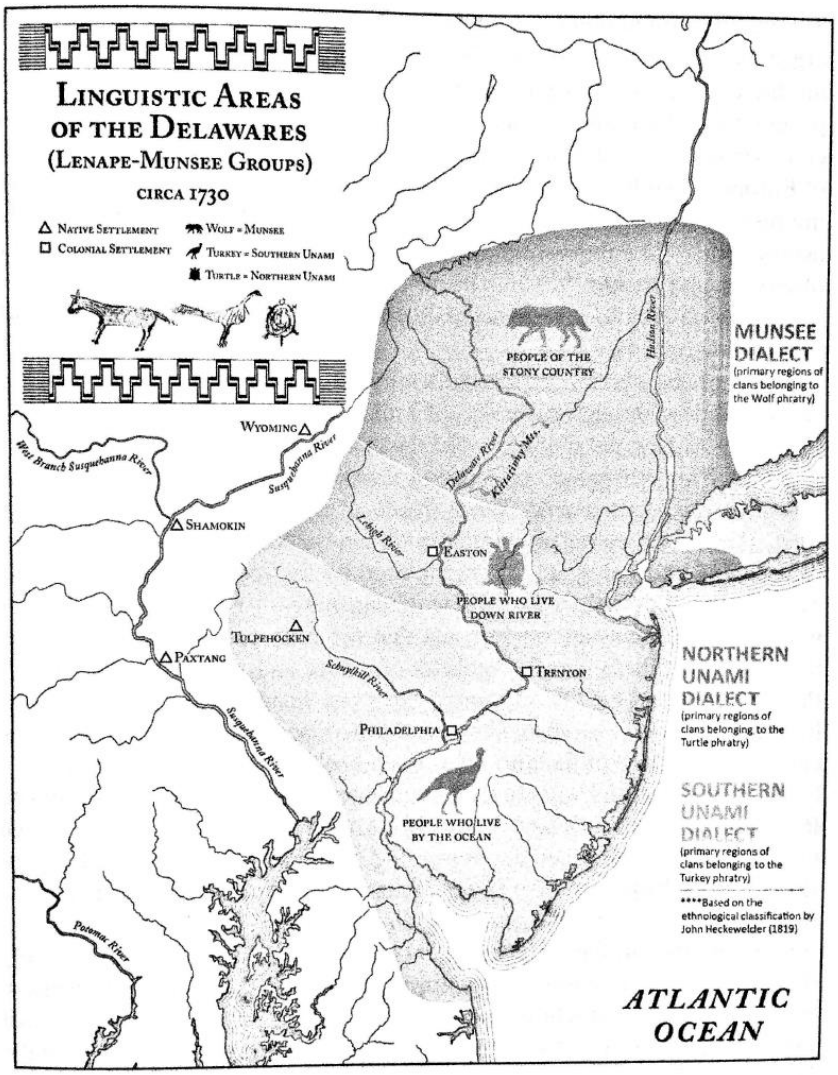

Figure 1: Linguistic Areas of the Delawares from: Richard Grimes, *The Western Delaware Indian Nation 1730-1795* (Lehigh University Press, 2017), p.xvii.

2.2 Pre- and Post-Contact with Europeans

Since recounting the entire history of the Lenape Nation would go beyond the scope of this thesis, the most important encounters of Lenape with Europeans in the period between the 17th and 19th century will be discussed below.

From 1615 to 1681 the Lenape guarded the land they lived on[2] while keeping trade relations with "Dutch, Swedes, Finns, and English" (Soderlund 7). Together they built a society of Natives and Europeans that was based on a "peaceful resolution of conflict, religious freedom, collaborative use of the land […], respect for people of diverse backgrounds, and local governmental authority" (7). During that time, a "relatively fair and equitable relationship" between the Lenape and European settlers developed in which both sides made considerable trade profits. Nevertheless, the Lenape wielded greater power over the land and trade by ensuring that the Dutch settlers were prevented from developing an "agricultural economy" and solely focused on trade as means for the acquisition of goods (7).

Renegotiations about land for possible colonies and trade posts were conducted on a regular basis "throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by different groups of Europeans and Lenapes" (9). Although the Lenape had control over the locations where European settlements could develop, they "kept all dealings on a pragmatic, non-ideological basis" (10). Soderlund (10) explains that "before 1681 the Lenape continued to outnumber Europeans in the region", which could have been a vital factor supporting their "upper hand" status at that time. The Lenape were able to protect their sovereignty by employing diplomatic strategies and "small-scale violence" (10). The cultural exchange that took place during that time between Natives and Europeans focused on gaining knowledge about "each other´s goals and […] perspectives", the assimilation of "technology, language, and respect for the other´s religion and culture" (10). Although their political and diplomatic beliefs strongly deviated, both cultures found ways to co-exist. Notably, there was a tendency for Europeans to adjust to the "Natives´ norms" (10). Through inter-marriages and daily interactions, the European settlers from Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands grew close with the Lenape, who in turn saw them as "another community in their country" with whom they would "defend against common enemies" (11).

Generally, in the years between 1615 and 1681 the mutual goal of "economic gain" and the establishment of a "business relationship" was what supported the co-existence of the two groups and enabled them to develop a system of cooperation that was based on shared values of "self-determination, shared use of the land, and an inclusive definition of freedom" (10). It

[2] Hitakonanu´laxk (2) states that the "original homeland" of the Lenape was called "Lenape´hokink". Soderlund (1) refers to it as "Lenapewihittuck". Both refer to the region of the Delaware River.

was a time of relatively peaceful relations between the Lenape groups and Europeans in the Delaware Valley, which lasted until the arrival of the English Quakers.

2.2.1 William Penn and the "Holy Experiment"

In 1682 William Penn, a Quaker from London, obtained land in what is today Pennsylvania and founded a new colony. Penn considered his colony a "holy experiment" which was established based on "Quaker principles of tolerance and pacifism" (Kenny 15). His vision was to create an "ideal society", a "peaceful kingdom" in which Christians and Native Americans "could live together in harmony" (2). In so doing, he attempted to create an "open, tolerant society that dealt honestly and amicably with the Lenape and other Natives" (Soderlund 4). With the over 20 million acres he received as a gift from Charles II in 1681, Penn quickly became the "largest individual landlord in the British Empire" (2). As such, he established a "land office" which was responsible for "all land transactions in Pennsylvania" (18). Contrary to other colonists at this time, his purchases of land from Native Americans were fair and open and he treated the indigenous peoples in his charter with "respect and decency" (2). Although Penn resided in North America only for two short periods (1682-1684 and 1699-1701), he became well known as a "benevolent colonialist" (18). However, he was still a colonist and therefore his "holy experiment" was based on "colonialist foundations" (2). After all, his mission was to "free the land of prior titles" in order to sell it to incoming European settlers and gain profits to set up the colony (2).

With the arrival of many new immigrants in Pennsylvania, the dynamics of the prevalent society created by Dutch, Swedish and Finish settlers with the Lenape in the area changed and the Quakers took over control due to their "overwhelming influx" (Soderlund 167). In some way, the Lenape and the Swedish settlers shared an experience during that time, in that they both lost "political power and prime lands along the Delaware and its tributaries" after 1682 (168). At first, the Lenape as well as the old settlers offered the thousands of new immigrants in Pennsylvania help and assistance after their arrival in America and were able to conduct negotiations with the Quakers from a powerful position (175). They introduced them to their "legal, diplomatic, economic, and cultural practices" of their established society, which were accepted by most of the "new" settlers as they were in line with their Quaker beliefs (175). However, as the new settlers became more and more independent of the "old settlers", the "new regime" gained power and influence. The Lenape, "now diminished in population, land, and power", tried to hold on to their land in eastern Pennsylvania" by forcing Penn to deliver the

amount of money for the territory in the Delaware Valley. Penn, by then illiquid, was not able to pay and thus the Lenape were successful in keeping their land in the valley until 1737 (167).

William Penn considered the Delaware Valley, the land of the Lenape, an untouched and wild area where the Quakers "first brought peace and justice" (Soderlund 4.). For centuries, he was credited for his efforts to establish the first peaceful relationships with Native Americans, leading to a complete disregard of their history prior to contact with the Quakers. The colonists under Penn showed no interest in the "society" the Lenape had established with "earlier European settlers" and focused on establishing their own rules for a peaceful co-existence (4). However, the peaceful relations did not last and the situation worsened for the indigenous communities in the area. The Quakers and the new settlers started to fabricate fraudulent treaties to acquire land from the Lenape, who in turn obtained a reputation to be weak and unable to protect their land (4). Ultimately, they lost their land in the Delaware Valley altogether through one significantly illegitimate treaty made not with William Penn himself, but with his descendants.

2.2.2 The Walking Purchase

The "Walking Purchase" and the resulting move of Lenape and Munsee communities to the Ohio valleys in the West marked only one of many forced relocations the Lenape had to endure over the course of time (Marsh 27). During 200 years of colonialization, the Lenape groups relocated from "Pennsylvania to Ohio, Ontario, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Texas, and Oklahoma" (27).

Through the "Walking Purchase" the Lenape lost all of their remaining territory of "prime agricultural and hunting land" in the Delaware valley (Soderlund 184). In 1737, when William Penn was already deceased, his sons Thomas and John Penn were the "colony´s proprietors" (184). In collaboration with James Logan, the three men started negotiations with the Lenape about the territory "from the northern boundary of Penn´s 1682 purchase in Bucks County through the Lehigh Valley (Forks) to the Poconos" where the Lenape were situated at that time (184). In various meetings, the Penn brothers and James Logan confronted the Lenape chiefs with an old deed from 1686 and tried to convince them that the boundaries of the old deed had not been exactly defined. Therefore, the Lenape agreed to measure the distance by a "walk" and concluded that "the English could have as much land as a man could walk in a day and a half" (Hitakonanu´laxk 20). Unfortunately for the Lenape, James Logan had prepared a path and hired three "fast walkers who were followed by horses with provisions" in order to run as far as possible in a day and a half (20). The Lenape chiefs had different expectations

about the distance the walkers would cover and assumed “a more leisurely pace, traversing uncleared terrain and taking frequent breaks, ending with the northern boundary at Tohickon Creek” (Soderlund 185). Ultimately, the furthest distance reached by only one of the walkers (Edward Marshall) was 64 miles in total and ended far beyond the Tohickon Creek, which bestowed the Penns and Logan with more than double the land than what was marked on the deed (185). Furthermore, the three proprietors deceived the Lenape with a “vague map

Figure 2: Lappawinsa and Tishcohan, painted by Gustav Hesselius, 1735, from: Library of Congress Rare Book and Special Division Collection.

suggesting that the lands in question extended only to Tohickon Creek, well south of the Lehigh River” (184). In the end, the Lenape chiefs “Nutimus, Lappawinsa, Manawkyhickon, and Tishcohan” signed the treaty in 1737, which ultimately forced them to give up “more than one million acres” of land inhabited by Lenape groups. The imposters continued to sell land in the territory they acquired and consequently the Lenape groups had to move west in the direction of the “Susquehanna and Ohio valleys” (185).

After this tremendous “land fraud”, some Lenape still tried to remain in the region, keeping a “low profile”, while others joined the “Moravians who arrived in the early 1740s” (Soderlund 185). Most of the Lenape left and some decided to support the French in their fight against “British colonists during the Seven Years´ war” in 1754 (185). Historical evidence indicates that because the French were not able to “supply […] enough trade goods”, the Lenape shifted their “alliance” to the British (Champagne 114). Eventually the British won the war, which forced the French to withdraw from “territory east of the Mississippi River” (114).

Many Lenape kept good relations with the French and were “dismayed” about the British “political domination and economic control” of trade in the “old Northwest region” (114).

Aware of the consequences of British dominance, Lenape groups participated in “Pontiac´s War in 1763” (Hitakonanu´laxk 25). This “series of uprisings” was organized by several different groups of natives in order to “unite the tribes to resist the westward expansion and invasion of […] lands by the English” (25). For the Lenape, it ended with the signing of a “peace treaty” and left them without any “land rights” (27).

Another important treaty that significantly affected the destiny of the Lenape was the treaty of Fort Pitt in 1778, the “first formal treaty” of the US government with a native tribe that involved the building of an “alliance between the Americans and [the] Lenape people” (Hitakonanula´xk 27). The treaty promised the Lenape permission to establish the “14th state in the American Union” and “committed [Lenape] warriors to helping the Americans” (27). Unsurprisingly, the promised resources in the treaty never reached the Lenape and political intrigues and complications broke the peaceful relations (28).

During the American Revolutionary war, when Americans fought for their independence from the forces of the British Empire, both sides “sought assistance from and alliance with the Indian nations” (Ojibwa). At the same time, both sides also carried out attacks on indigenous villages (Ojibwa). The revolutionary war brought division to many indigenous nations, including the Lenape. Some Lenape chiefs allied with the Americans, others with the British, while some decided to stay neutral and advocated for peace, pointing out that this “was not their war” (nativeamericannetroots.net).

In the turmoil of the war, the Moravian missionary town Gnadenhütten, where some Lenape resided in peaceful cohabitation with the missionaries, was brutally attacked by Americans in 1782 (Hitakonanu´laxk 28). In order to avenge the attack on residents of Washington County in Pennsylvania by a group of natives, Americans wanted revenge. They accused the Lenape living in Gnadenhütten of helping the natives who had conducted an attack on American residents (28). Subsequently, the Americans killed 90 innocent Lenape in Gnadenhütten, mostly women and children, in March 1782 (28).

Marsh (32) states that, “[t]he French and Indian War, Pontiac´s War, and the American Revolution divided and united Delaware across new and complex lines of alliance”. In order to survive as a Nation in those rapidly changing times, cultural adaptation constituted a necessity, which the Lenape realized early on.

2.2.3 Cultural Adaptation and a New Lenape Identity in Ohio

During European colonialization in North America the geographical and political relevance of settlements often changed very quickly. Indigenous communities had to adapt to these circumstances fast or face the dispossession of their new homeland. As Marsh puts it, "the times demanded they strengthen their sovereign and cultural identity or stand to lose it to the coming empirical firestorm" (32).

For the Lenape, migrating away from their homeland also meant the advent of new possibilities and new beginnings, which in turn illustrates their "ability […] to transform themselves and adapt to new possibilities when historical circumstances forced such a change" (Grimes xviii). Especially during the 18th century and the settling in the Allegheny and Ohio countries, the Lenape underwent several "significant transformations" in their society and culture that altered the tribal identity and organization and shaped their subsequent history (xviii).

It was during the years in Ohio that the Lenape and Munsee groups realized the need for "unification and centralization", in order to defend their new homeland in the West (xviii). The three phratries (Turtle, Turkey and Wolf) came together as a "western unity", the "Western Delaware", in order to form a strong unity, able to defend itself against "British-American power and aggression" (xviii). By expressing a "national identity" and referring to themselves as the "Delaware Nation", they attracted notice and attention from "British-American diplomats", which was important in their new political surroundings (xviii).

Furthermore, in the West there was a need for "cultural reinvention" of the Delaware communities from a "matriarchal to a mostly patriarchal society", in order to adapt to the "masculine-driven ethos of empires, nations, and tribes" that prevailed in the Western territory. (xix). Their new surroundings required the Delaware to affirm their "military and political strength" and restructure their society according to dominant social norms (xx).

However, the Lenape-Delaware were not the only Native groups residing in the Ohio region. Together with the Shawnees in the area, the Lenape-Delaware established towns and settlements which turned into "cultural hubs for migrant Indians, as well as British and French traders" (Grimes 43). Many Iroquois migrants also moved to the Ohio country in order to benefit from the hunting and trade possibilities (44). Overall, Ohio became a place with "multiethnic Indian towns" where both traders and indigenous communities resided (44).

Although Ohio was home to many indigenous communities in the 18th century, the Lenape-Delaware quickly realized that in order to survive, they needed to separate themselves from other Native groups in the region and develop their own "sociopolitical identity" as the Delaware Nation (45). The importance of a "centralized authority" led to the establishment of "war captains or principal warriors" as tribal leaders, who were working together with "peace leaders" in order to strengthen the diplomatic relations of the Delaware (xxi). Sharing the cause of defending their new homeland helped the Delaware groups to slowly come together and establish a new "unified identity", a Delaware Nation comprised of people who recognized the "new possibilities of political integration and regional prominence in the Ohio" (xxi). In this way, the "union of phratries" of the Delaware Nation became a "western Indian power" (xxi).

Developing a "unified identity" was vital for the survival of the Delaware Nation at that time. The United States Indian policies aimed at the "assimilation" of indigenous cultures in order to facilitate the colonization of indigenous land (Marsh 27). Therefore, by leaving their homeland in the East, the Lenape and Munsee groups not only lost their home, but also faced losing their Lenape culture and hence their identity and faced immersion with other indigenous cultures (27).

According to Hall, identity "is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation" (2). The construction of an identity is "a process never completed" (2). Therefore, it requires repeated and constant "material and symbolic resources […] to sustain it" (2). Hall mentions that identities are "constructed within, not outside discourse" (4). Thus, "we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies" (4). For the Lenape, this identification process was in danger, since the U.S. government implemented measurements to assimilate native cultures into one. However, by focusing on discourse within the Lenape, a new identity was born.

In the course of the development of the Delaware´s "new national identity", they began to organize themselves politically and geographically. They purposefully chose the locations of the seats of the respective clan leaders to be in close proximity to each other (32). The chief of the Turkey clan was located in Kitanning and later Tuscarawas, the Turtle chief in "Netawatwees" and later "Gekelemukpechink" and the Wolf clan leader was located in "Kuskuskies". Furthermore, there was a "chief above chiefs", a Delaware leader who conducted important "political and economic negotiations" for the whole Delaware Nation (32).

The Delaware people showed great perseverance and strength and made the new land their home, primarily by being able to farm and fish. Furthermore, they could participate in trade, since their most important towns were located on big crossroads (33). In addition, they changed their organization from small settlements to bigger towns in close proximity (33). Having experienced colonization in their original homeland in the East and therefore knowing of its consequences, the leaders of the Delaware Nation knew when they could no longer ensure their town´s safety and set out to find new land for their communities. Marsh illustrates that in addition to knowledge about what their communities' basic needs were, it was the Delaware´s "hard work and fundamental beliefs in who they were as a people [that] turned this new land into their homeland" (33). The number of relocations that the Delaware endured during that time might have led to their cultural destruction. However, the Delaware people that moved West had developed an "intrinsically adaptable framework for identifying and bonding with their homeland, wherever that might be" (30).

However, in order to establish a new home, the Delaware people needed more than "visible elements" or a "physical structure" in their towns. They needed to "[imbue] the landscape with their history, their family stories, and their spiritual worldview" (38). Although their new towns were never inhabited for very long, they still managed to make them their home by relying on their religion and rituals which "sustained [them] throughout their history" (38). An important part in their culture at that time was the "council house", which was used as a space for the community to gather and as a site for the rituals. The reconstruction of this building during all their relocations was a sign for the tribes "cultural and spiritual survival" (39). The "council house" was a space where the Delaware passed on knowledge about their community's history and rituals and where they strengthened the relationships between each other and with the new land they lived on. In order to continue living as an "independent and unique people" with a strong "identity" as the Delaware Nation, keeping such a space in these fast-changing times was crucial. The "ceremonies, dances, and meetings" that took place in the council house helped restoring "balance and […] stability" in the community (40). Through the council house the Delaware were able to "revise their memories and histories" in order to remind each other of "who they were and where they had been" (40). Marsh illustrates that "in remembering and imagining their creation, migration, and their stories, the Delaware continued to be a vibrant and unique culture that stood apart from those around them" (40).

2.3 The Lenape Today

Unfortunately, the land in Ohio turned out to be only a temporary homeland for the Lenape-Delaware. Around 1800 they joined the Miami tribe in "Indiana territory", following an invitation by the Miami under the "Treaty of Greenville" (Hitakonanu´laxk 31). In 1818, forced by a population increase of European settlers and the need for expansion of land to enable further settlements, the US government forced the Lenape into a treaty giving up their "rights to all lands in Indiana" (31). A decade later in 1829, the Lenape signed a treaty through which they acquired land in Kansas, to which they moved from their settlements on the "James Fork of the White River in Missouri" (31). Between 1854 and 1864, further treaties gradually decreased the Lenape territory in Kansas and in 1866 the Lenape were forced to relocate to the Cherokee Reservation in Oklahoma, where most of the Lenape live today (31). However, some refused to move to the West and continued to stay in the East, in the land of their ancestors, enduring land theft, living in hiding and immersing themselves in American society (32).

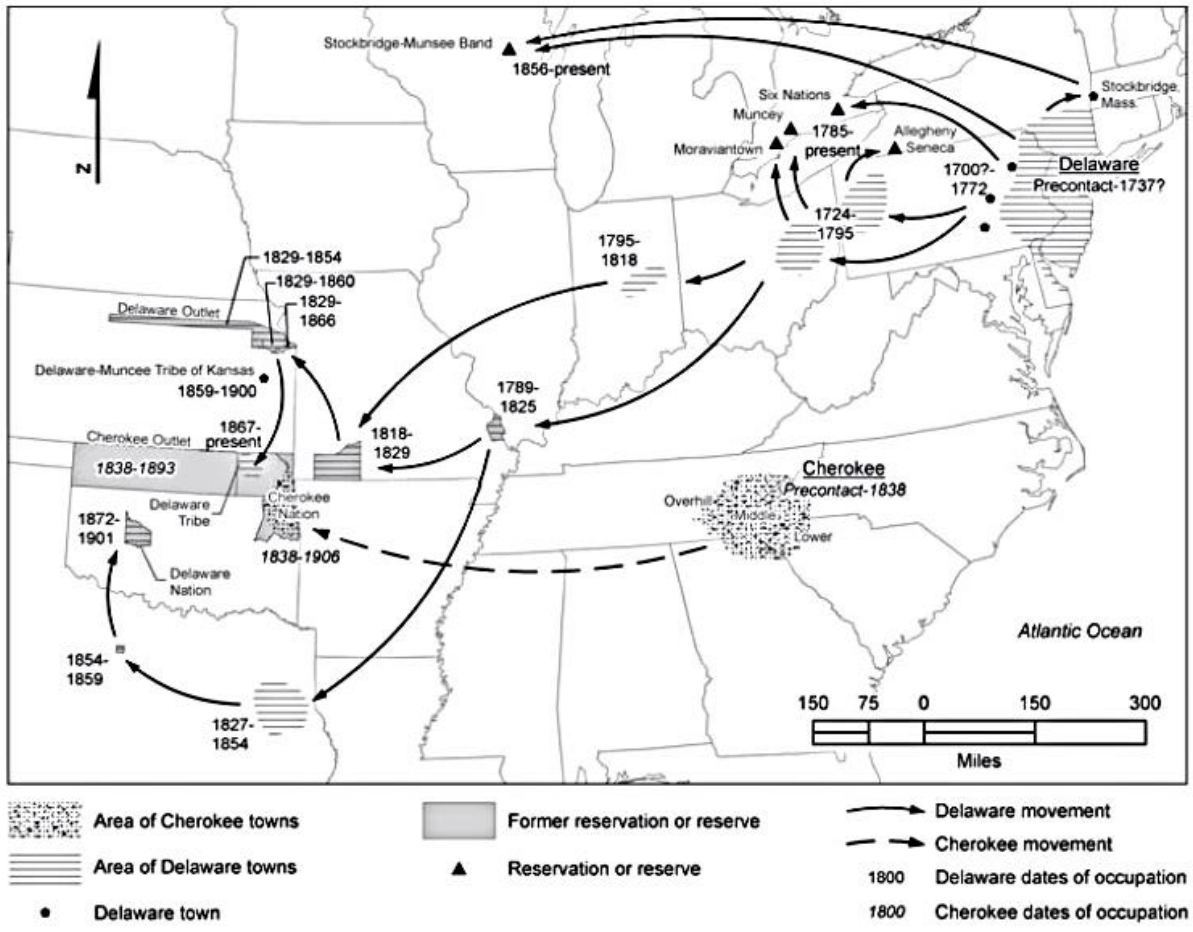

Figure 3: Delaware and Cherokee Removal from: Brice Obermeyer, *Delaware Tribe in a Cherokee Nation*, (University of Nebraska Press, 2009), p. 46.

The numerous relocations westward took a great toll on the Lenape people and their culture. Hitakonanulaxk (31) explains: “Our culture and traditions almost died out, our spirituality became almost extinct, and in 1993 there was only one fluent Lenape speaker left alive”. The years following the “Walking Purchase” were very tumultuous for the Lenape and eventually led to the creation of “boundaries between the many Delaware-descended groups that exist today” (Obermeyer 43). Several groups descending form the original Lenape-Delaware are “scattered widely throughout North America” (44). Although official dates for the Delaware removals and relocations can be found, “occupation may have preceded and followed these dates” (47). Recounting their exact movement is further complicated by the fact that “many additional Delaware settlements and movements existed and […] smaller groups consistently moved back and forth” (47).

Between 1866 and 1867, the Delaware negotiated their move to land on the Cherokee reservation in Oklahoma. Pressured by the U.S. government at that time, the Delaware were either to “stay in Kansas and become U.S. citizens or to move to the Cherokee Nation and remain a member of the Delaware Tribe” (58). Although the majority of Delaware relocated to the Cherokee territory, a small number of families stayed in Kansas and “subsequently became American citizens” (53).

According to Obermeyer, the only similarity between the Delaware and the Cherokee Nation is that both are “Indian tribes that do not presently reside in their ancestral homelands” (36). In order to better understand their current situation, it is important to state that the two nations are neither “historically related nor are they even culturally similar” (36). Both tribes were “forcibly removed through different means to Indian Territory during the nineteenth century and have lived within a shared territory only since 1867” (36).

In order to organize the Delaware´s removal to the Cherokee territory, several treaties and agreements between the two nations and the U.S. government were signed (36). In 1866, the final treaty between the Delaware tribe and the U.S. government required the former to “give up their reservation in Kansas and move to a region of their choosing on lands ceded to the federal government by the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, or Seminole [or] the Cherokees in the Indian Country” (53). The Delaware understood that removal was the only way to “ensure the continuation of the Delaware Tribe” and preserve their culture (54).

Following the 1866 treaty, the Delaware purchased a "10-by-30-mile tract of land from the Cherokee Nation" in order to resettle and rebuild their community there (54). While acquiring land on the Cherokee territory, the treaty presented the Delaware with two options for settlement on the new territory:

> The first option, also known as the incorporation option, was for the Indian tribe being removed to abandon their tribal organization and become Cherokee citizens. […] On the other hand, the second option, also known as the preservation option, allowed for the Indians being removed to preserve their tribal organization in ways that were not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of the Cherokee Nation. (Obermeyer 55)

The Delaware Tribe chose the preservation option in order to sustain their own Delaware culture and tribal government (55). They did not express any desire to assimilate with the Cherokee Nation or become Cherokee citizens (55). Both options of the agreement included considerable payments to be made to the Cherokee Nation. Obermeyer explains:

> Tribes who selected the preservation option in order to continue their tribal structure were required to pay two separate payments to the Cherokee Nation. The first payment was for citizenship that granted the relocated tribe the right to hold all rights as native Cherokee citizens. The second payment was for a parcel of land equal to 160 acres per man, woman, and child that would be set aside for the occupancy of the relocating tribe. (55)

In 1867, a formal contract, the Cherokee-Delaware Agreement, was negotiated between the Delaware and the Cherokee Nation in order to settle the details of their move to the Cherokee territory. The Cherokee-Delaware Agreement stipulated that the Delaware purchased a total of "157,600 acres for which they paid $1 per acre" (57). Further, the Delaware paid "$121,824 into the Cherokee National Fund for the right to Cherokee citizenship" (57).

Obermeyer explains that "the stipulations of the 1867 Cherokee-Delaware Agreement were not only unreasonable but could never be adequately kept by two tribal governments wishing to preserve their own sovereignty" (59). On the one hand, the Delaware wanted to protect their rights as landowners and hold the rights of Cherokee citizens, while the Cherokee "never intended to truly allow the Delaware to share full rights as citizens unless [they] gave up their tribal affiliation as Delaware" (59).

The 1866 treaty implied that relocated Indians on the Cherokee territory are allowed to "preserve their tribal organization in ways that were not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of the Cherokee Nation" (55). For the Cherokee it was clear that "[a] separate tribe asserting independent sovereignty would certainly not be consistent with Cherokee law" (59).

As a result, the Delaware ended up in an "unusual situation as a tribal government that wished to preserve its sovereignty while representing the interests of the Delaware people who owned land and citizenship in a foreign Indian Nation" (59). Although the Delaware made considerable payments for land and citizenship rights to the Cherokee Nation following their agreement, the Cherokee Nation continued to breach the agreement.

Until today, the Delaware tribe and the Cherokee Nation "have been at odds with another over the terms" of the agreement. Several court cases reveal the "long-standing tensions" between the two tribes. Tensions that arose from the seemingly "unreasonable conditions stipulated in the 1867 Cherokee-Delaware Agreement" (37).

The "competing interests" of the two tribes required "outside resolution by the federal courts" (62). Therefore, the agreement has been interpreted several times in court. Although the 1867 agreement provided the Delaware with native Cherokee rights, "the agreement did not specifically terminate the federal government´s relationship with the Delaware Tribe" (64). Thus, it was unclear if the fact that the Delaware acquired rights as native Cherokee still made them eligible for separate federal recognition (64). Over the years, the Delaware have gained and lost federal recognition several times, due to appeals and oppositions from the Cherokee Nation.

However, Obermeyer suggests that the federal government should provide a solution for this longstanding issue. Rather than forcing the two tribes to engage in endless federal court trials, the federal government should adapt its policies and laws "toward the Delaware Tribe´s position within the Cherokee Nation" (23).

Although under pressure from the federal government as well as the Cherokee Nation, the Delaware on Cherokee territory have "survived as an independent Indian Tribe" (23). Today, the Delaware in Oklahoma are "federally recognized […] as the Delaware Nation" with their headquarters in Anadarko, Oklahoma (44). Furthermore, there is the federally recognized "Delaware Tribe of Indians" located in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. State-recognized tribes affiliated with the Lenape-Delaware are the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation and the Ramapough Lenape Nation, both located in New Jersey. In addition, there are several non-

recognized groups of descendants of the Lenape-Delaware residing in different locations in the United States. The "Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania" for example, is a "non-profit organization" located in Easton, Pennsylvania and "dedicated to increasing awareness of Lenape history and culture" ("About the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania").

Although many other Lenape groups struggle with gaining federal or state recognition and hence lack financial resources to support their communities, they are certain of their endeavor to live their culture and pass on their cultural knowledge, stories, customs and traditions. Today, the Lenape all over the United States have made it their mission to revive the "culture, tradition and spirituality" of their ancestors (Hitakonanulaxk 32).

2.4 Federal Indian Law, Tribal Recognition & Sovereignty

Before contact with European settlers, indigenous tribes in North America existed as "governmental entities with inherent group political authority over their lands and people" (Gonzales and Evans 39). This means that each nation was its own "political authority", restricted only by any authority that was given to individual tribal members or came from other indigenous nations in the area (39). Gonzales and Evans explain, that "after contact with European nations, the external limitations on and the nature of tribal sovereignty changed" (39).

Generally, European colonizers based their treatment of natives on the "presumption that Indian nations are legitimately" under their "authority" (Newcomb xxiv). Until today, native nations are considered to be "subject to the official ideas and judgments – called laws and policies - formulated by U.S. government officials" (xxiii). Various principles and laws were introduced over time to "control and govern the lives and […] lands of American Indian nations" (xxiii). A number of different measurements implemented by settlers, colonies and later the U.S. government will be illustrated in the following.

First, European settlers created treaties, formal contracts, in order to "manage the situation" with native communities (Gonzales and Evans 39). Through treaties, the indigenous communities were forced to give up land in "exchange for rights in other reserved lands, weapons, commodities, and other promises by European nation" (39). Many treaties made with Native American tribes were forged or falsely interpreted by bribed translators. Over time, the "economic power" of the European settlers grew and with it their "ability to impose their political and legal will" over indigenous nations (39).

European settlers saw it as their "divine right" to colonize the land in North America and its people, imposing new structures and restrictions on the "political authority" of

indigenous nations (Gonzales and Evans 39). This "divine right" stemmed from a "dominating conceptual system" called "the doctrine of Christian discovery" (Newcomb xxi-xxii). The principle of this doctrine was that any land "discovered" by Christian settlers belonged to them. Moreover, only Christians could own land. With this doctrine European settlers justified their total disregard of indigenous populations' rights to a "free existence and their own territorial integrity" (xxi). Generally, they considered native people as "pagans or heathens", in contrast to themselves, "the chosen people", to whom the land was given to "by god" (Newcomb xxii).

Three Supreme Court cases between 1823 and 1832, called the "Marshall Trilogy"[3], illustrate the "foundational principles of Indian law" at that time (Pommersheim 87). Although the first case did not involve a native nation directly, the "doctrine of discovery" was still important for the verdict. Chief Justice John Marshall referred to the former and stated that Native Americans could not own or sell land and solely possess a "right of occupancy" ("Reshaping America").

> The rights of the original inhabitants were, in no instance, entirely disregarded; but were, necessarily, to a considerable extent, impaired. They were admitted to be the rightful occupants of the soil, …but their rights to complete sovereignty, as independent nations, were necessarily diminished, and their power to dispose of the soil, at their own will, to whomsoever they pleased, was denied by the original fundamental principle, that discovery gave exclusive title to those who made it. (Johnson & Graham´s Lessee v. McIntosh)

Another example of measurements introduced within the scope of federal Indian law was the Indian Removal Act in 1830. This act lead to the forced removal of "Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek and Seminole nations" away from their territories in Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee. They were forced to remove themselves to "Indian Territory" in Oklahoma (Newcomb xxiii). During the "Trail of Tears", thousands of Cherokees were killed due to exposure and lack of resources. Especially elders, sick and young Cherokee had no chance of survival during the removal.

[3] Case 1: Johnson v. M´Intosh (1823), Case 2: Cherokee Nation v. Georgia (1831), Case 3: Worcester v. (1832) teachmyaamiahistory.org/contents/section6/readings/104-marshall-trilogy. See Pommersheim, Frank. *Broken Landscape: Indians, Indian Tribes, and the Constitution*. Oxford, Oxford University Press. 2009. for detailed information.

In 1887, fifty years after the Trail of Tears, U.S. president Andrew Jackson introduced the "General Allotment Act" (Newcomb xxiii). Under this act, Indian land was allotted to settler families, individuals and "white homesteaders" (xxiii). The goal of this policy was "to break up reservations, destroy tribal relations, settle Indians upon their own homesteads, incorporate them into the national life, and deal with them not as nations or tribes or bands, but as individual citizen", as illustrated by "Indian Commissioner Thomas J. Morgan". Dealing with native individuals on their own instead of a whole nation or community, was expected to be less problematic for U.S. government officials. Their ultimate goal of "tearing […] Indian nations away from [their] extremely valuable lands" was to "destroy [their] traditional indigenous cultures and economies" in order to sell their land to arriving settlers (xxiv).

2.4.1 Tribal Recognition

Newcomb (xxiv) states that "the presumption that Indian nations are legitimately subject to the authority of the United States" can be found in many historical accounts and court decisions. However, it has never ceased to exist and presents itself today under the legal concept of "Tribal Recognition".

Gonzales and Evans (40) explain that over the years, the "recognition of tribal nations by outside powers [was] handed from the European powers to their colonies in the New World and eventually to the U.S. federal government". Although theoretically the government and the tribes "recognize each other as mutual sovereigns", the former still rules power over "tribal sovereignty" and "circumscribing tribal identity" (40). According to Gonzales and Evans (40), "one of the foundational tools for circumscribing tribal identity is federal acknowledgment – the ability of the federal government to deem as an American Indian tribe a particular group to whom it will extend an official political and legal relationship".

The process after which a tribe can gain federal or state recognition from the U.S. government is called "American Indian Tribal Recognition" (*Frequently Asked Questions*). Federally recognized tribes have a "government-to-government relationship" with the U.S. and gain "certain inherent rights of self-government" that qualify them to receive funding and benefits (*Frequently Asked Questions*). State recognition on the other hand, although it "acknowledges [the tribes] historical and cultural contributions" and recognizes "tribal status within the state", cannot ensure support from the "state or federal government" (*Federal and State Recognized Tribes*). According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, by November 2018 there were 573 federally recognized and 63 state recognized indigenous tribes in the United States (*Federal and State Recognized Tribes*). In addition to recognized tribes,

many indigenous groups and communities lack the resources to organize the tedious process of acquiring state or federal recognition and thus remain “non-recognized tribes” (O´Brien et al. 41).

2.4.2 Federal Recognition

Tribes generally strive for federal recognition, a process that can take decades, is very “complicated and requires specific historical and identity requirements” (Martha Salazar). Before petitioning for federal acknowledgement, “tribes must weigh [the] potential gains and losses as well as the time, money, and contention that the process entails” (Den Ouden and O´Brien 20). Over time, many tribes have “decided to risk the costs for the benefits” and petitioned for federal acknowledgment (20). Being federally recognized can offer the tribe or tribal community “tremendous gains” that include the “legal acknowledgment and protection of homelands, the extension of a formal diplomatic relationship with other governmental entities, and the possibility of political, social, cultural and economic revitalization” (16).

The “Office of Federal Acknowledgment [OFA]” introduced “seven criteria for recognition, including providing evidence for the tribe´s continual identification as a people from historic times to the present and providing evidence of a tribal land base” (Den Ouden and O´Brien 17). Only when every criteria is met can “federal acknowledgment” be granted to the tribe. The OFA’s “seven current criteria” are officially called “Procedures for Establishing That an American Indian Group Exists as an Indian Tribe” (18). The requirements to meet the different criteria are very strict and rigid. Therefore, it poses a tremendous challenge for indigenous tribes and communities to meet them entirely (17). Moreover, the process is an “enormous and expensive undertaking” that requires “exhaustive research and the preparation of a document that sometimes numbers hundreds of pages and consumes years” (18). Some tribes employ “historical and legal advisers” that provide them with expert knowledge on the process and “testimony in support of [their] recognition efforts” (18).

The process of federal acknowledgment within the “Office of Federal Acknowledgment” has been under intense criticism since its implementation in 1978 (19). According to Den Ouden and O´Brien (19), the petitioning process “has been characterized as capricious, inconsistent, and incompetent”. Further criticism involved the “standards for proof” to be unreasonable as well as the “evaluators of petitions” to be biased (19). The fact, that oral histories are not considered as evidence and the strong reliance on outside observers to determine “Indian authenticity” illustrates only a small number of problematic areas within the

process (19). Beyond that, the process has proven to be exceptionally slow and unpredictable, further complicating it for native tribes and communities involved (19).

2.4.3 State Recognition

State recognition constitutes a resource for states to "acknowledge the long-standing existence of specific, inherently sovereign Indian tribes within state borders [and] address and rectify centuries of oppressive policies and practices with regard to tribal nations" (118). In contrast to federal recognition, state recognition serves as an "important albeit limited alternative" (116). According to Koenig and Stein (116), over the past few years more states and tribes have recognized the importance of state recognition and its benefits. However, different states employ different "approaches" to the matter. As demonstrated by Koenig and Stein (188), for "some state officials – state recognition may simply be employed by a state government to assert its support for cultural diversity, enhance tourism, and commemorate historical locales". On the other hand, "state recognition can also be a formal prerequisite to certain federal and state benefits earmarked for indigenous communities" (118).

Generally, state recognition is vital for "establishing formal government-to-government relationships, validating tribal histories and facilitating state-tribal interaction" (135). The history and relationship between U.S. states and indigenous communities varies in every state. Therefore, different "recognition processes" need to be implemented and worked on, together with indigenous communities (135). Koenig and Stein illustrate,

> While the federal government takes an unreasonably long time to acknowledge the inherent sovereignty of many tribal nations with U.S. borders, often requiring decades to review applications and subjecting those applications to painstakingly detailed and prejudicial criteria, some states have employed their inherent federalist powers actively to counter this injustice. (137)

Going forward, states are encouraged to recognize the "existence, contributions and inherent rights of Indian tribes in their borders" (138). By doing so, both the states and the tribes can achieve great benefits from each other. Koenig and Stein (138) mention that in a dialogue with each other "distorted historical injustices" can be addressed which in turn enriches the "intercultural understanding and communication among communities".

Taking into consideration that every state shares a different history with the tribal communities in their area, adopting "their own forms of governance to address local needs, conditions, and rights that matter to tribal communities" offers the most benefits (138).

In addition to federally and state recognized tribes, many other tribes are "non-recognized […] by the United States as separate political entities even though they retain a strong sense of their own separateness as Indian peoples" (14). The reason for a tribe to be entirely out of scope for the U.S. government could be, that it has never "engaged in military conflict" with the U.S., signed a treaty, or simply because of its "geographical isolation" (14). However, some tribes simply do not agree with the notion that "recognition represents the best path to actualizing indigenous sovereignty in the colonial context" and refuse to engage in that process (16). Klopotek (5) shares this view and states: "recognition does not shield tribe from racism, colonialism, or other social forces; just as federal non-recognition does not prevent tribes from participating in revitalization movements or developing their political and economic infrastructure". For Ouden and O´Brien on the other hand, it is evident that through state or federal recognition "more is to be gained" than "rejecting it as a hopelessly fraught colonial relationship that true sovereigns need not pursue" (16).

One important concept within the discussion of federal and state recognition of indigenous tribes and communities is tribal sovereignty. For Den Ouden and O´Brien sovereignty constitutes a "political status in relation to other sociopolitical entities" (13). Especially for native tribes, this "political status" means a "right to self-governance and self-determination" (13).

Den Ouden and O´Brien speak of "sovereignty struggles" in order to refer to the "political, cultural and legal strategies, along with the conflicts, debates and transformations, that unfold as tribal nations and communities engage with federal and state governments to assert the right to govern themselves and to determine their futures" (13). Considering the relationship of the U.S. government with indigenous nations of North America, for Newcomb (xxiv) the following question arises:

> Given that our respective American Indian nations were originally free and independent of the European mind and mental processes for thousands of years in this hemisphere, now known as the Americas, how did it come to be considered ´self-evident´ that our very existence as American Indians is legitimately controlled by the ideas developed by representatives of the United States?

As far as the United States are concerned, their complicated relationship with native nations over centuries has created "distinct and problematic political situations" that require public attention and legal action in cooperation and collaboration with indigenous populations (Den Ouden and O´Brien 22).

3 Native American Oral Cultures

3.1 Native American Worldviews

In order to further the understanding of how the Lenape-Delaware were so successful in constantly adapting their culture and keeping their strength and sense of community, it is essential to investigate Native American worldviews and traditions in detail.

As pointed out by J. Gill (16), there is "no *one* Native American worldview" or "way of thinking about […] the world". The numerous cultures of Native North America are diverse and complex, each with their own language, history, tradition and practices (S. Gill 10). However, many Native American cultures show "similarities and overlapping" in their worldviews that can be further investigated in order to foster "understanding and appreciation of Native American conceptual systems and values" (J. Gill 16). The term "worldview" can be explored from three different perspectives; a philosophical, an anthropological or a religious point of view. Since elaborating on all these approaches would be beyond the scope of this thesis, J. Gill´s definition of worldview-"the notion of worldview simply indicates the way a particular people or culture understands the world in which it finds itself"- will be applied here (16). Since to fully grasp a foreign culture in its entirety can at best be achieved by living in it, the following presentation of some important aspects of many Native American Cultures, and especially Lenape culture, should simply be considered as a starting point for understanding.

3.2 In Balance with Nature

Among all the different Native North American cultures, a number of similar themes in their worldviews can be detected. Generally, the concept of balance plays a very important role, especially in interaction with the environment. J. Gill (175) states that "adapting to the environment" instead of interfering or changing it according to their needs, was and is of great importance for many Native American cultures. He also states that in Native American belief people should try to find their place within nature "rather than alter it" (175). This can be further demonstrated by the fact that, pre-contact with Europeans, many Native American cultures "did not have metal tools, or the wheel", but their technology, society and religion was "well developed in making the maximum use of the natural environment" (176). This refers to their extensive knowledge about the surrounding natural resources (including herbs and plants used for treatments) and the "migration and breeding patterns" of animals in their areas as well as the building and use of tools adapted to their needs (176). Keeping their natural surroundings in the way they found them and living as being a "part of the natural order" instead of outside

of it is the main principle around which many Native North American cultures and societies have developed (176).

For the Lenape their worldview is interwoven with in their day-to-day lives and surroundings (Hitakonanu´laxk 40). Their most fundamental belief is that they are "a part of the world, [and] of no greater or superior importance than anything else" (37). This belief acts as a starting point for their value concepts, as well as their "social, political, and economic practices" (Marsh 29). It is the Lenape belief that everything relies on "reciprocity, balance, and a peaceful co-existence in the world" (29). Furthermore, since "all things have spirit, [and] are innately alive", ensuring a co-existence of all beings on earth involves all animals and the nature in their surroundings (Hitakonanu´laxk 33). The Lenape see themselves as an element of nature and not its most important part and therefore the earth and all its beings are as important as they are. Through ceremonies and rituals, the Lenape want to ensure the preservation of "balance and harmony" in the land they were given to live on by the creator (2). For the Lenape, the concept of land possession contradicts their worldview, as land "is not a thing to be possessed, but rather something sacred and alive" (2). Hitakonanu´laxk (3) further illustrates this notion:

> We, the eastern Lenape people, are like a heartbeat in our lands of Lenape´hokink, for we are of this land and we are the land. […] There is no separation between a people and the land upon which they live. Men and women are but a part of the greater circle of life, and not superior to it in any way.

Being awarene of the forces of nature in their surroundings was crucial for the daily lives and survival of the Lenape. Having a close connection to it seems "necessary as it is natural" (J. Gill 177).

3.3 In Balance with Yourself

J. Gill (180) explains that "[g]enerally speaking among Native Americans, life is thought to stretch out or unfold in the form of a path or trail". Moving along this path is the "primary task in life" and in order to do so one needs to keep one´s "balance and integrity" (180). There are rituals that help individuals to stay on their "path" and keep the "harmony within oneself and in relation to all surrounding forces" (180). Those rituals or healings are based on a holistic approach to mental and physical health in which a person is seen as a wholeness of "physical and spiritual dimensions" (180). Being in balance with oneself reflects the striving for being in balance with nature and one´s surroundings. Keeping a balance always requires shift and change. For many Native American cultures, being flexible and adaptable in life was and is of

great relevance in their worldview. Showing capability to adapt and change was especially important for the Lenape at the time of European contact and during the years of colonization and migration (181). For the Lenape, being able to change their culture and adapt to new circumstances they found themselves in was vital for their survival during the 18th century. In this way, flexibility is not only important for the individual and their path but also for the whole community.

3.4 Ecological Sacredness

"Ecological Sacredness" or "Traditional Ecological Knowledge" refers to the relationship of indigenous cultures with nature and their surroundings. As already mentioned, for many indigenous cultures, the "interconnectedness between humans, plants, animals, fish, and birds, as well as mountains, water, the moon, and the stars" is at the core of their belief system (Turner 300). This means that "all life forms and other environmental entities" are seen as being related to each other as well as to the people (300). Turner introduces the term "kincentricity" to refer to this attitude towards the environment. Moreover, "Kincentricity acknowledges that a healthy environment is achievable only when humans regard life around them as kin" (Franklin et al. 397). Seeing themselves as "part of nature" also brings about certain "responsibilities within nature" that indigenous cultures try to assume and live according to their "ecological role" within the "natural world" (397). These responsibilities towards nature can be compared to the "obligations that almost all humans feel toward their own family members" (Turner 310). The "well-being of these relatives" is connected to the "health and well-being of humans" (310). Therefore, only when nature and all surroundings are in good health can the people live a healthy life. The people´s responsibility therefore is the protection of "the land and resources that sustain them" (314).

In the "kincentric" worldview all plants, "rocks, mountains, and lakes" are considered "sentient beings with a sensory capacity equivalent […] to that of humans" (310). In addition to all animals, also the stars and the sun are part of this "familial relationship", as represented in many "narratives, dances, songs, and ceremonies" (310). In the mythical narrations of those oral traditions, the categories that "divide people, animals, trees, ferns, flowers, rocks, mountains, rivers, and stars" were more flexible and transformations of people into plants and vice versa took place (312).

3.5 The Myth of the Ecological Indian

When talking about Native American worldviews and the concept of ecological awareness and a life in balance with nature, one important notion cannot be omitted in the discussion. According to Krech, the perception that all Native Americans live in perfect harmony with their surroundings and nature is "one of the most cherished contemporary myths" (Krech 1). The creation of this myth followed a long history of Europeans assigning certain roles to indigenous people and "classif[ying] them in order to make them sensible" (Krech 169).

This classification started with the assignment of specific terms to indigenous populations in North America more than five-hundred years ago during the "earliest stages of European contact" (S. Gill 1). The "ideas and images" that were introduced then by Europeans still affect the "perceptions and conceptions of Native Americans" today (1).

In order to understand the actions and the behavior of many Europeans in the 15th century, it is essential to look at the prevailing mindset at that time. S. Gill speaks of "maps" when he refers to people's worldviews and the limitations thereof (4). For him, "all maps are the invention of encounter and expectation" (4). A person's worldview creates certain expectations when they are faced with an unfamiliar situation. Thus, S.Gill concludes that during his four journeys Columbus only saw "what the terms of his expectations and worldview permitted him to see" (4). He expected to come ashore on the east coast of Asia and although his observations differed greatly from the records of Marco Polo and others before him, "given his understanding of the earth it could have been nothing else" (4). The "cosmological expectations" of that time determined Columbus' observations and influenced the perspective of successive exploratory voyagers (4).

For S. Gill, how we refer to Native Americans today is only a "product of encounter and is fully shaped by European expectations about the world and its people" (4). The ascription of the term Indian to the indigenous people in North America reflects the "common terminology used in the early sixteenth-century Christian world to designate people of the far East" (4).

In the course of the "conquest of the New World" several issues about the encountered indigenous populations were debated within European governments (4). In Spain, the "issue to be decided was how to Christianize the Indians" (4). The debate that followed involved two sides: "one side viewed Indians negatively as brutes, animals, evil whereas the other saw them as perhaps savage, yet noble" (5). The latter was presented by Bartolome de Las Casas, a man who had spent several years living in the "New World", and thus presented extensive

knowledge on the indigenous populations. Las Casas "recognized the high status of the Indians' nobility and went to great lengths to demonstrate their likeness to Europeans in humanity, civility, ability to learn, and artistry" (5). In the end, the Renaissance scholar Juan Gines de Sepulveda won the debate with the opposing view by contrasting the Christian culture to the Indians (5). S. Gill gives insight into Sepulveda's argument: "Sepulveda saw his own culture as Christian, civilized, learned, and advanced in the arts and production of material goods; the Indians were a perfect counter-image: pagan, uncivilized, incapable of learning, unable to govern themselves, beastly, inhumane, and barbarian. In short, the Indians were, by their nature, only fit to be slaves to Europeans" (5).

Sepulveda's argument convinced, because it rooted on the "we/they relationship" that started to emerge in society at that time (6). The belief that Native Americans were vastly different to Europeans confirmed the latter in their identity and worldview. Through defining the characteristics of indigenous people in the New World as non-Christian and uncivilized, Europeans started to see themselves as one. According to S. Gill, "new developments in communication resulting from the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century and from more extensive travel, the sense of a general European identity was growing" (6).

Although it became known that "many different tribes, languages, and ways of life existed, Native Americans continued to be labeled under the single concept of Indians" (5). This simplification gave rise to stereotypical images attributed to indigenous populations in North America. The images that developed at that time in a way "still represent the major positions from which images of Native Americans are created today": "the Noble Savage" and the "Ignoble Savage" (Krech 16). According to Krech, "the Noble Savage, the first of the two stereotypes or images, has drawn persistently on benign and increasingly romantic associations; the Ignoble Savage, the second, on a menacing malignancy. The first has emphasized the rationality, vigor, and morality of the nature-dwelling native; the second, the cannibalistic, bloodthirsty, inhuman aspects of savage life" (16).

The picture of the Noble Indian has changed several times over the years. Krech illustrates that "in their earliest embodiment" Native Americans were considered "peaceful, carefree, unshackled, eloquent, wise people living innocent, naked lives in a golden world of nature" (17). The notion of a "golden world of nature" was informed by the Christian idea of "mythic places" existing "removed in space or time" (e.g.: "the Islands of the Blessed, Arcadia, Elysium, the Earthly Paradise, the Garden of Eden, and the Golden Age"). Krech states that "these places were objects of fancy and search in the New World and elsewhere" (17). For

European Christians, the New World and its inhabitants represented a "nostalgic longing for the past and a simpler life" (17). Europeans saw the supposed "primitiveness" of Native Americans as a virtue.

In order to make the indigenous people of the new World "comprehensible", many explorers, philosophers and authors wrote about them and depicted them in a way that supported the image of the Noble Indian (18). The American Indians' "savage" life was seen as "simple, communal, happy, free, equal, and pure" and thus was envied by Europeans. Authors and philosophers like Michel de Montaigne, Baron de Lahontan, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau had particular influence on devising an image of noble indigenousness that was in strong "contrast to life in the city and civilization" and criticized the European scene (18).

Between 1963 – 1973, the image of the Noble Indian changed again when the image of the Ecological Indian first emerged. Krech states, "time and again the dominant image is of the Indian in nature who understands the systemic consequences of his actions, feels deep sympathy with all living forms, and takes steps to conserve so that earth´s harmonies are never imbalanced" (21). The Ecological Indian represents a powerful imagery that influenced "humanitarians concerned about the global environment and health, [as well as] metaphysicians and new biologists" (21). Even Hollywood took up the image of the Ecological Indian in movies like "Dances with Wolves" or the animated musical film "Pocahontas" (22).

According to Krech, "few visual or textual representations of the Native North American have been as persistent over time as this one has, in one form or another, and few others are as embedded in native identity today" (22). The Ecological Indian is connected to "conservation, ecology, and environmentalism, [and has] a spiritual, sacred attitude toward land and animals" (22). Moreover, this image was ascribed to nearly every indigenous person in North America (22). Due to the image of the Ecological Indian, Native Americans were seen as having "understood and thought about the environment and its interrelating components" as well as "showing concern for the state of the environment" (24).

Over time, this "projection of Europeans and European-Americans" on Native Americans eventually became a "self-image" for them (27). American Indians took on the Ecological Indian stereotype and "embedd[ed] it in their self-fashioning" (27).

However, similar to the idea of the Noble Indian, the image of the Ecological Indian never stands alone, but always in contrast to the "non-ecological" white man who is polluting instead of thinking of the environment (22). The perception that there are "fundamental

differences between the way Americans of European descent and Indians think about and relate to land and resources" is very common in the United States (16).

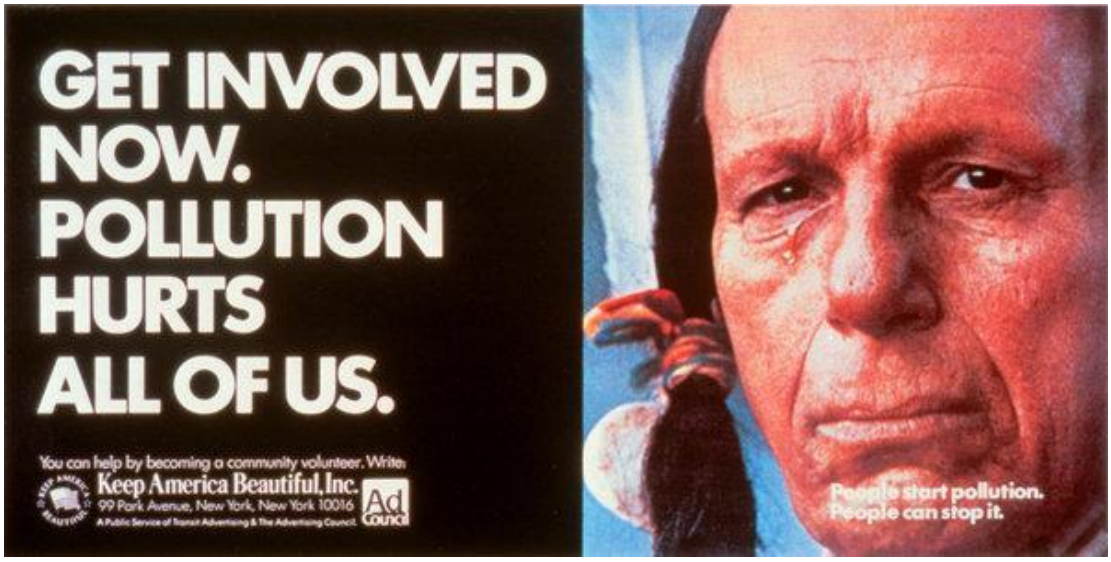

Figure 4*:* Keep America Beautiful, Inc. "The Crying Indian", 1971, The New York Times, 16 July 2013, www.nytimes.com/2013/07/17/business/media/decades-after-a-memorable-campaign-keep-america-beautiful-returns.html.

In 1971, Keep America Beautiful, Inc. together with the Advertising Council presented the above image called the "Crying Indian" within their campaign against pollution (Levere). Along with the poster, the organization also introduced a commercial featuring the same Cherokee actor Iron Eyes Cody "paddling a canoe through polluted waters and crying at the spectacle" (Levere). The campaign aimed to promote "individual responsibility in protecting the environment and ran until 1983" (Levere).

The campaign was introduced at a time when many Americans participated in protests "against the pollution of the environment and destruction of natural resources" (Krech 15). The 1970s were defined as the "Environmental Decade" and many Americans tried to shift the general focus towards the preservation of the environment and its natural resources (15). Within this public conversation, the image of the Crying Indian became very famous. Krech states, "as a noble ecologist, the Crying Indian became iconic" (15). It fit perfectly into the common perception of the American Indian as an ecologist and conservationist that was "deeply engrained in the national consciousness" (15).

The problematic with the representation of Native Americans in stereotypes such as the Noble Indian or the Ecological Indian, is that they distort culture (27). Such representations are "ultimately dehumanizing" in that they "deny both variation within human groups and commonalities between them" (26). Indigenous people are seen as ecologists that have always

known how to treat the environment and never changed or improved their culture. Krech speaks out against this stereotype and states that it is "unwise to assume uncritically that the image of the Ecological Indian faithfully reflects North American Indian behavior at any time in the past" (26).

According to Richard White, the notion that Native Americans "left no traces on the land" and always lived harmonious with nature is in a way demeaning and "makes them seem simply like an animal species, and thus deprives them of culture" (Cronon and White). This also implies that all changes made to the environment are generally negative and that "somehow the ideal is never to have been here at all" (Cronon and White).

Harkin and Lewis use the term "ecological primitivism" in order to refer to the stereotype of the Ecological Indian who lives harmonious with nature (xxii). For them, this notion equates the Indians with nature and denies them "their history, their humanity, and even their modernity" (xxii). In being one with nature, the Ecological Indian is seen as never to have changed and improved his culture.

Cronon and White explain that these stereotypes arose because of the fundamental differences in worldviews between Europeans and indigenous cultures. Generally, for a Western mindset the way Native American cultures are "making sense of the world" is hard to grasp and understand (Cronon and White). When it came to killing animals or trading goods, Native American cultures followed a different spirituality than the Europeans they encountered. In many Native American cultures the boundaries between humans and animals were non-existent. According to White, the Indians in the Great Lakes region for example "conceived of animals as having, not rights […] but powers" (Cronon and White). For them, "to kill an animal was to be involved in a social relationship" with it (Cronon and White). Killing an animal meant entering into a "gift relationship", where the animal surrendered itself and the Indian had to fulfill an obligation to give thanks. This concept differs so considerably from European ideas of hunting and killing animals that a comparison of the two worldviews is nearly impossible.

Another example of how Native American cultures differed compared to Europeans is with the trading of goods. Whereas the latter saw trade as an exchange that is straightforward, "giving one thing in return for another", the former did not understand this concept in the same way. The Native Americans that first started to trade with Europeans saw the exchange of goods as entering an obligation with the other party. It was not simply goods that were exchanged, but they were also considered as "symbols passing between them" (Cronon and White). Further, exchanging goods with someone required the establishment of a friendship or an alliance. In a

way, this could be compared to the idea of exchanging gifts on certain holidays and celebrations, for example at Christmas (Cronon and White). European fur traders did not conceive of this concept and naturally conflicts arose. According to Cronon, "it took a long time for the two sides to realize they weren´t speaking the same language" when it came to the trading of goods.

When it came to agriculture and the use of environmental resources, European settlers considered the way Native nations made use of the land as unproductive and uncivilized. The settlers assumed that the indigenous people were not cultivating the land properly. This in turn promoted the view of the wild Indian who does not know how to work the land and use its resources in a reasonable way.

Many Native American communities used to sustain their economy and way of life with a number of different subsistence bases and did not solely focus on agriculture throughout the year (Cronon and White). Cronon explains "[b]ecause the seasons of North America differ markedly between, say, the Eastern forests and the Great Plains and the Southwest deserts, Indian groups devised quite different ways of life to match different natural cycles" (Cronon and White). Within their "great diversity of environmental practices" indigenous tribes switched between hunting, gathering and agriculture depending on the season and the natural cycle. Cronon gives insight into the environmental practices of the Indians in New England:

> [s]pring started with hunting groups drawing together to plant their crops after having been relatively dispersed for the winter. While women planted beans, squash, and corn, men hunted the migrating fish and birds. They dispersed for summer hunting and gathering while the crops matured, and then reassembled in the fall. The corn was harvested and great celebrations took place. Then, once the harvest was done and the corn stored in the ground, people broke up their villages and fanned out in small bands for the fall hunt. (Cronon and White)

According to Cronon, most indigenous communities in the east had special hunting seasons, while gathering was done continuously throughout the year. Agriculture was only done at one time during the year (Cronon and White). From a European perspective, switching between environmental practices according to seasons was counterproductive.

All the above-mentioned differences in worldview about trade, killing animals and sustaining the community gave rise to a big gap in understanding between European settlers and Native Americans. For White, the reason for this gap to still exist in American society today is that "we can´t copy Indian ways of understanding nature, we´re too different" (Cronon and

White). Therefore, it is sheer impossible to "compare Indian environmentalism to modern white environmentalism" (Cronon and White).

While it is true that Native Americans lived in balance with nature and shared strong connections with their surrounding plants and animals, depicting Native Americans in a simple stereotypical image does not foster intercultural understanding. Making assumptions and simplifications about indigenous cultures prohibits an understanding of the fundamental differences in their spirituality and worldview compared to Western cultures.

Furthermore, it is essential to realize that even within indigenous communities and cultures different opinions exist. When it comes to the use of environmental resources, for example, while some "wish to preserve the environment at all costs and to take actions premised on a religious relationship with an animated natural world", others "want to develop land and resources, which represent jobs, household income, and economic security" (Krech 227).

For non-natives it is necessary to realize that the image of the Ecological Indian has never been a suitable depiction of Native Americans. Advertising companies introduced this image in order to reinforce a common stereotypes and push their agendas. According to Krech, the depiction of Native American stereotypes has more to do with "European self-criticism" than with "indigenous realities" (227). This can be demonstrated by the fact that the stereotypical images of American Indians have always been displayed as a counter-image to the genuine American and to inforce criticism of the American society.

Although in Native American spirituality a special relationship to nature and all its animate as well as inanimate beings is of importance, a depiction of Native Americans should not be articulated from a "western framework", but rather "in indigenous frames of meaning" (Cruikshank "Oral Tradition and Oral History" 414). Arriving at a better understanding of an "indigenous frame of meaning" requires extensive knowledge about Native American spirituality and especially orality.

3.6 Orality

S. Gill states that in order to understand a Native American Culture it is vital to "comprehend as fully as possible the culture´s worldview" (25). The most evident approach to acquire insight is to look at the culture´s stories, more importantly their creation stories. However, before doing so, one important differentiation between Western cultures and many Native American Cultures has yet to be introduced, namely the orality on which many of the latter are based. In order to move closer to an analysis of stories, the concept of orality from the perspective of oral cultures will be discussed.

Many Native American Cultures were developed and practiced for many centuries as solely oral cultures with no written language system (S. Gill 28). Thus, orality and oral traditions constitute the most important aspects of those cultures. Generally, the value of orality and speech in Native American cultures differs from the modern Western world, with a stronger appreciation for the connection of words, thoughts and speech acts in the former (31). In an oral culture, the "traditions, beliefs and values" are conveyed by "oral discourse" (J. Gill 47), which are mainly "songs, prayers, stories and other oral events" (S. Gill 27). S. Gill mentions that many Native Americans "commonly view [these] oral events as manifesting powerful forces" (27). Furthermore, he states that "certain words when spoken or sung affect the world, give it shape and meaning. Words can cause pain and suffering as well as create beauty and orderliness" (27). In order to arrive at a deeper understanding of oral cultures and their perspectives on orality, written and oral communication will be compared in the following. Although this comparison will not reveal any new information, looking at it from the perspective of an oral culture will hopefully support an informed view of oral cultures (J. Gill 47).

3.6.1 Written vs. Oral Communication

When talking about Native American means of communication employing negative terms like "illiterate" or "nonliterate" should be avoided. Instead, the expression "exclusively oral" is more suitable (S. Gill 29). Furthermore, a comparison of written and oral communication will shed more light on the matter.

First, speech is "of the body": it involves the "mouth, breath, heart, ear, and mind" and by its nature is very personal, involving a speaker and a listener in a "specific existential situation" (31). Moreover, it is not possible to audit, replay or reorganize a speech act, thus illustrating its uniqueness and fragility (31). S. Gill (31) states that "there remains nothing of

the speech act except the impression it leaves in the memories and effects it renders upon the world". The speaker and the listener are the only ones who can have memories of the speech act (31).

Written communication, on the other hand, differs considerably compared from oral communication. Although written words also originate from the mind, it is an "act of the hand" (31). Its production requires the use of alphabetic symbols in order to translate "mental symbols into visual images". Hence, writing is done more slowly and intricately (31). This, in turn, makes it possible to correct and erase the text before it reaches the receiver, who is able to "reread, reorder, and rephrase it" without losing the "original message" (31). The written word is more permanent than the spoken word and can be "read by […] anyone who knows how to read the language" (32). For the author of a text, there is less control on who reads the text once it is written. Speech acts are usually more directed at a particular audience. However, it is easier to "choose to read something than to hear something", since the former requires concentrating on a text while trying not to be exposed to certain sounds is harder to achieve (31).

S. Gill (28) concludes that "the modes of communication used by cultures importantly shape aspects of their way of life." For exclusively oral cultures, the transmission of their history and traditions occurs solely through speech acts and relies on the memories of its members (34). J. Gill (47) states that this positions oral cultures in a dangerous situation, since "the absence of just one generation may result in the complete loss of a culture´s customs and worldview." Therefore, it is important for "exclusively oral cultures" that every member experiences the oral traditions "personally and directly" in social settings (S. Gill 34).

3.6.2 Oral Traditions

As already mentioned it is important for exclusively oral cultures, that every member participates in oral traditions, which take place in a social setting and through "social interaction" (S. Gill 34). Those traditions include "stories, songs and prayers" (34) and are passed on from generation to generation.

S. Gill (35) states that speech act performances "are not simply streams of words" that convey information, but rather "complex symbols, networks of sounds that evoke odors, forms, colors, temperatures and rhythms". For the individual, they have an "emotional impact" and are much more significant than simply information (35). Through oral performances, indigenous cultures created not only their "cultural reality", but also the way they conceived reality (35). Trying to understand oral traditions and performances (eg. prayers and stories) as "written text

presentations" separates them from their "cultural context" and is thus "not an act of the culture" (36). S. Gill (36) illustrates this notion by stating that a "prayer, when performed as a religious act, is carefully placed in a ceremonial context according to an extensive set of rules". Putting a prayer into written form is not part of the tradition and makes experiencing the cultural tradition impossible, since it must include "all of the senses and a lifetime of personal experience in the culture" (37).

Similar to S. Gill, Einhorn (4) emphasizes the special relationship of native cultures to language and speech. He writes, "Native People view words as living, breathing, dynamic beings" (4). Further, words and utterances "carry one´s physical totality or state of being and become part of one´s being" (4). Joseph Epes Brown (a friend of Oglala Sioux holy man Black Elk) illustrates: "When we create words we use our breath, and for people and these traditions, breath is associated with life. And so if a word is born from this sacred principle of breath, this lends and added dimension to the spoken word" (Einhorn 3).

For many Native Americans, the whole "act of communication [has] a sacred dimension" ascribed to by the "life power of words". Furthermore, also the act of "listening" is a "privilege, a responsibility, a sacred act" (4). Einhorn exemplifies, "They take advantage of opportunities to listen and learn" (4). Those opportunities include storytelling gatherings where "wise leaders" talk to the community (4).

4 Stories

From the perspective of a "Western academic tradition based in literacy", trying to understand the oral traditions of some Native American cultures is a difficult task (S. Gill 41). The difficulty lies in the fundamental deviation of many native cultures from Western cultures, with the former having developed as "exclusively oral" without a written language system. S. Gill points out the importance of conceiving those differences for the process of understanding the oral aspects of cultures (41).

Kroeber further explains this deviation by recognizing that the Western tradition of narratives is one that expects a suspenseful plot, which leaves the audience wondering, "What will happen next?" (1). However, this is contrary to the structure of Native American stories, which were never meant for the sole purpose of entertainment, but served a number of different functions. First, storytelling was seen as the "most important cultural activity" that "created and sustained" the culture (6). Kroeber points out that "most sacred rituals [were] rooted in a narrative" (6). Storytelling used to be at the foundation of the "cultural life" and in contrast to

fictional stories in the modern Western world, they were “far more culturally serious” (6). They focused on the “most essential and sacred principles of the institutions upon which [the] society is founded and depends for its successful continuance” (6). In order to guarantee this “successful continuance”, the culture´s “procedures” and values were constantly evaluated and tested through the stories. Continued survival was only possible through adaptation and change of the culture and hence the stories. Kroeber illustrates that one of the stories´ purposes was to “assess” the effectiveness and appropriateness of “cultural practices” and whether or not they should be revised (3). Through “constant engagement with practical necessities”, the cultures´ stories adapted and increased in density and subtleness to become most effective “instruments of social readjustment” (3).

In order to move closer to an understanding of a story´s life in a cultural community, Kroeber recognizes that for people of the modern Western world, “disabling ingrained preconceptions about what makes a `good story`” is the first step (4). In addition to the lack of “suspense” in Native American stories, they also require the audience to participate with a “more active” imagination than Western fiction (5). The story plots of indigenous stories often incorporate a “rhetorical structure” that contrasts “parallel actions, scenes [and] characters that have no direct causal connection”. Whereas in Western fiction we find a “cause-effect relation”, in Native American stories the “paratactic” style leaves the connection open to the imagination of the audience (5). Furthermore, this serves as encouragement for the audience “to imagine different possibilities and implications of the relationship” of the two sentences (5). Paying attention to this “imaginative structure” in the stories constitutes a helpful way of gaining insight into the “mindset” of Native American cultures (4). Kroeber relates this aspect of the stories and their many possibilities for imagination to how Native American people saw life: as “complicated, uncertain and changeable” as were their stories.

The “contrastive parallelism” found in many Native American stories embodies their “deepest meanings”, which were different to every individual. As the teller of the story did not “trace out explicit connections” or voiced their “subjective feeling”, but rather let the audience imagine their individual reaction, the story meant different things for everyone (5). In this way, the story could help every tribe member to “become more useful to the community” (5). Therefore, the stories not only reinforced the connection of the individuals to the community, but also the individual´s connection to themselves. Many stories express “very serious social, moral, environmental, and psychological problems” and “very real (often very common)

situations, feelings, attitudes [and] beliefs" that were important for a functioning community (6).

The concept of "interdependence" with regards to many Native American stories refers to the communities´ "world and [the people´s] place in it" (7). In contrast to the separation of "the natural from the supernatural" in Catholic teachings, for many Native American cultures everything in the "physical world in which all humans" live is "sacred" and "infused with divine life" (7). This belief considers everything being "equally worthy of respect for what it is in itself and as a useful contributor to the dynamism of the whole" (7). This concept of "ecological sacredness" will be further discussed when talking about one specific type of Native American stories, namely creation stories.

The fact that telling stories usually took several hours further highlights the difference to fictional stories in the Western world and the important "social function" they had in native communities (8). In addition to confirming the culture, stories dealt with the community´s capability of adapting to changing situations (8). As Kroeber put it, "Few of us understand that to live as fully as Native Americans did within and as part of the natural environment was to live in continuous peril" (8). For Native Americans, their cultures needed to renew themselves constantly in order to survive. Their stories dealt with their surroundings, therefore it is only natural that when their surroundings changed, so did their stories.

It is a widely held view that the significance of Native American stories cannot be adequately expressed without telling them, which means that writing the stories down and reading them is insufficient for expressing the respective culture (Kroeber 9). Even adjusted "typographical forms" are inadequate for demonstrating what a storytelling ritual looked like (9). Native American stories cannot be analyzed in their "larger rhetorical structuring" in the way Western literature is, since the former do not "aim for closure", instead imply an openness at the end (9). Furthermore, telling original stories was not of importance to Native cultures, rather many storytellers only told stories they heard before. In this way, as Kroeber (9) puts it, "storytellers expunged the subjectivity our contemporary writers often give precedence over narrative".

Although there are similarities found in Native stories compared to Western fictional stories, research into "storytelling traditions" has not been very extensive so far (9). Until today, there exists only one "comparative analysis of differences in tellings of the same story" by two different Native American individuals speaking the same language (9). The difficulty in progressing in this research lies in the huge number of "distinct languages and cultures" in

native North America (10). Kroeber (10) concludes that "in these circumstances, our most important responsibility is so far as possible not to impose our preconceptions of form and purpose on narratives from peoples whose social, intellectual, and religious traditions radically differed – and continue to differ – from ours".

4.1 Creation Stories

Native American creation stories offer a deeper look into the mythical world of many Native American Cultures. According to Kroeber (11), there are two "major ethnographic narrative categories; "origin myths" and "trickster tales". The former, also called creation stories, deal with the "values, categories, principles, and relationships" of a culture (S. Gill 10). They are a way "people of a culture both learn and transmit what is most fundamentally valued" by them (10). Oftentimes, the cultural "mythology" begins with the phrase "in the beginning". This marker is used to express the absolute certainty of the following events (10). Creation stories provide their communities with an orientation regarding the "terms by which life is meaningfully lived" (18). They are a way of organizing the "perspectives and worldviews" of a culture. S. Gill states that there is no "generally applicable Native American view of reality": rather, every Native group has their own creation story that may show resemblance with other stories, but is nonetheless distinct in itself (25).

4.2 Trickster Stories

In addition to creation stories, trickster stories are another important category of Native American stories. According to Ballinger (5), "no other figure in the verbal art of American Indian oral traditions has garnered so much attention as tricksters in all of their guises". The reason for this attention lies in the importance of the trickster character for the "mythologies of many American Indian tribes" (5).

Wiget (16) differentiates between a number of "regional cultural traditions" regarding the trickster character. In the Far West the trickster is seen as "Coyote", in the "Northwest and Arctic as Raven, in the East as Hare, in the North Woods as Canada Jay or Wolverine, on the Plains as Spider or Old Man". The trickster can change his "animal and human forms at will" and often does so in order to mislead humans (16). Although, his "motivations" and "thoughts" are of human nature, his outward appearance mostly shows animal features ("tail, paws, muzzle, or beak", 16). He constantly shifts in gender and appearance and his character is "free of any […] restricting elements that give something definition" (S. Gill 19). According to S. Gill (19)

the only characteristic one can depend on when it comes to the trickster is that "he defies clear definition".

The trickster as mythological element in oral narratives has a number of functions (Ganser et al. 161). First, as it moves along the borders of the known and the unknown, the holy and profane (161). As hero but also anti-hero the trickster can be found in all these concepts and worlds without losing its appeal. In a way, it also represents the ambiguity of everything that can neither be understood nor explained (161). In many cultural systems, the trickster is the only figure that can exist in contradicting spaces and provoke its audience. As Ammons and White-Parks put it, "trickster disrupts. This disruption is normal. It is part of what we know is there. Making trouble – messing up the order – is part of the order" (vii).

For Ballinger, the trickster is not just "mediat[ing] between two poles", two opposites or extremes, but rather it is impossible to define what he/she/ it really is (31). He states, "[l]ike a subatomic particle, Trickster never allows final definition of time, place and character. He never settles or shapes himself so as to allow closure, either fictional or moral" (31).

Not only the trickster himself comes in different ways, also the stories in which he appears vary largely. Wiget discusses three different types of trickster stories. First, there are stories that "undermine man´s belief in his own ability to govern himself" (16). They tend to focus on the "bodily function" and claim, for example, that men would go to any length to "satisfy an enormous desire" (17). Second, there are trickster tales that use "bawdy elements to heighten a satire on social or religious customs" (17). Those stories comment on the dangers of "blind faith" and the people´s "inordinate curiosity about sacred things", hence confronting the community with criticism on the origins of their rituals. Third, there are trickster stories that express the possible "dangers of institutional power" and feature a trickster in "human form". In Wiget´s example, the trickster in the story "marries the Chief´s son", whose only concern is the "personal satisfaction of his son´s marrying […] an attractive woman" and not the well-being of the tribe (18).

Generally, trickster tales deal with the "human desire to be free of rules" and the "consequences of chaos and disorder" (S.Gill 19). On the one hand, they should "illustrate the consequences" that follow "unacceptable behaviors", while on the other hand they also have an entertaining factor. Especially younger audience members seem more susceptible to the "deceptions in the plot" and consider the trickster a way to avoid "responsibilities derived from adult-sanctioned social categories" (20).

Although trickster tales are told in many different ways with varying story details, they usually have one specific message or lesson to be learned. This lesson usually deals with the "human struggle against the confinement felt by being bound to place" (S. Gill 21). Through the trickster, the people can "experience the thrills and freedoms" of an existence without rules or boundaries (21). This characteristic of trickster stories is what makes them entertaining, however, as S. Gill points out, "to Native American people, these stories have far more significance than simple entertainment" (21). They essentially embody the "struggles and dynamics of being human" (25).

4.3 (Not) Understanding Stories

Ballinger (7) states, "Trying to reach some sort of understanding about what an individual story might mean to a Native audience is a daunting task". The interpretation of a culture´s features into another culture is always influenced by the "world and moral views" of the interpreter (7). Studying reports and notes about native communities written by settlers or missionaries in former times usually gives more insight into the settlers "cultural biases" than Native American perspectives (7).

When it comes to recording native stories, another important factor to consider is the "story´s life in its community" (8). Ballinger discusses that "stories are part of a `continual social discourse`" and their meaning becomes known only by the reactions of the audience (8). As already established, stories are told in a social and performative setting that relies on active participation and involvement by the audience.

Furthermore, our understanding of Native American stories is complicated by the fact that most people in the Western world stories can only be read in English or other languages (8). Many nuances of the stories´ meaning are therefore lost in translation and become unavailable for the reader. Anthropologists argued that the "significance of these stories cannot be divorced from the forms of their telling" (Kroeber 9). In order to enhance the ability of translations to display the distinct structure and "artistry" of the stories, the practice of "printing translations in typographical forms" was invented (9). Dennis Tedlock started to incorporate "punctuation, lineation, and different typefaces [in order to] represent pauses in delivery, raising or lowering of the voice, differences in speed of delivery" (9). However, this procedure can only be applied to "mechanically recorded" stories and is insufficient for stories "recorded in the past only by the ethnologist´s pencil" (9). Generally, looking at indigenous stories with conventional research methods proves to be difficult if not problematic. As already established, the characteristics of indigenous stories vary considerably compared to stories from the modern

western world. Therefore, as “no one has yet unmistakably identified distinctive formal characteristics of any Indian culture´s style of storytelling” researching them is a difficult task for scholars (9).

According to Kroeber, “Translations [of stories] are always inadequate” (10). He further states that “the best stories” in addition to their “social and psychological insights and their spiritual wisdom” have a tremendous “emotional impact” (10). Although much of their meaning gets lost in writing them down, reading stories is still of great value for a native as well as non-native audience (10).

Another problematic of the translation of native stories is the ascription of story titles by “collectors, usually non-Indians” (12). Kroeber points out that those titles often mislead the audience. The given title often focuses the reader’s attention on something that is, from an “Indian point of view, a trivial part of the story” (12). As stated by Kroeber, this is due to the fact, that “contemporary readers” are so used to accepting “other people´s directions” (12). The stories´ meanings are therefore restricted and prescribed for the reader.

Kroeber states that considering all these aspects of translations of native stories, and being aware of their significance for native cultures, they can still offer some “wonderfully refreshing and genuinely thought-provoking experiences” for non-native readers (12).

5 Research on Native American Oral Cultures

5.1 Research on Native American Cultures

According to Cruikshank "the entire project of nineteenth-century exploration can be understood as an exercise in collection and classification" ("The Social Life of Stories" 4). She further explains: "[t]traders were interested in collecting furs, missionaries in collecting souls, scientists in collecting and classifying facts, prospectors in collecting gold nuggets, and government-sponsored expeditions in acquiring territories" (4). Before indigenous cultures were scientifically investigated, records in "journals, letters, and reports" made by visitors and settlers were used as "authorizing statements" and became the ground on which "colonial institutions, […] the church, and the government" based their "policy decisions" (5). This approach was problematic for a number of reasons. First reports made by European settlers and visitors primarily gave more insight into "Victorian values than [into] the indigenous peoples described" in them (5). Moreover, these documents, "based on cultural understandings from Europe", caused "serious economic, political, and social consequences" for indigenous communities (5).

Scientific interest in Native American cultures only began in the late nineteenth century, when American ethnographers and researchers began to produce records of the remaining indigenous cultures in North America (S. Gill xii). Scholars in different fields (anthropology, linguistics, and folklore) started to look into the different aspects of indigenous cultures (xii). However, by that time, many indigenous cultures had already been nearly or completely destroyed by the "genocidal fury" of colonialism (Kroeber 4). Oftentimes, the last remaining member of a culture constituted the source of information for the researchers (4).

The question "how historical depictions of cross-cultural encounters are constructed and gain authority" today is still debated by educational institutions, academics as well as the "mass media" (403). Cruikshank points towards the fact that "Aboriginal peoples´ views of their own history rarely appear in academic literature" ("Oral Tradition and Oral History", 403). The two sides of the problematic are on the one hand the motivations of scholars to produce "culturally grounded histories that can help us learn from the past" and on the other hand indigenous nations who demand to "tell their own stories" (404). However, both approaches need to be respected and without question, the oral histories of indigenous peoples must be taken "seriously as legitimate perspectives on history" (403).

5.1.1 Research on Native Oral Traditions

A brief history of the research on native oral traditions summarizes the shift of scholars´ "evaluations [of] oral tradition[s]" (Cruikshank "Oral Tradition and Oral History", 404). Cruikshank states that in the "nineteenth century" the view that oral traditions are "cultural artifacts" that need to be "collected" was shared by most "European folklorists" (405). This approach treated oral narrative as "primitive-thought" that could offer explanations about the past (405).

Other anthropologists shifted their focus from the past to the present and the "social character of narrative" including the "social context in which oral tradition occurs" (405). For Durkheim, the oral narrative was the social "glue that […] helped to bind communities together" (405). Malinowski on the other hand, "pointed out that one can only speculate about what oral tradition actually means to participants, and that the more legitimate question was to observe how it is *used*" (406). He argued that because in daily life people are confronted with so many "inconsistencies [and] differences of opinion", oral traditions provide them with a method to resolve these inconsistencies. Further, "people reflect on their oral traditions to make sense of the social order that currently exists" (406). In the years that followed, structuralists shifted their present-focused view of oral narratives towards a more complex perspective (406).

In the middle of the twentieth century, anthropologists influenced by Claude Lévi-Strauss suggested that "oral narratives are not about *either* past or present" (406). Rather, they should be considered "[essential] statements about the human mind" detached from time and space (406). It was further stated that oral traditions are means of showing the "capacity of humans to think symbolically about complex problems" rather than "straightforward explanations" (406). Since "life is full of contradictions", oral traditions can help in coping with "complex problems" (406). Oral narratives are not "clear-cut reflections of society" but rather help the people to "resolve" issues that "cannot necessarily be worked out in the sphere of human activity" (406). Oral narratives were recognized as more than "cultural artefacts", but rather as complex devices that can support societies and communities in resolving issues.

Generally, the notion of past research has been that oral narrative "anchors the present in the past" and establishes "links between oral tradition and nation-building" (407). Cruikshank further states that especially in indigenous societies "where genealogical knowledge plays a significant role in explicating rules governing social organization", the fact that oral narratives connect the present with the past is of great importance (407).

In studies today, oral traditions are investigated in isolation, rather than as an "illustration of some other process" (408). The "formation of narratives and […] the positioning […] within hierarchies of other narratives" is in the focus (408). Furthermore, studies today realize that "the meaning" of oral histories "is not fixed" and that "it must be studied in practice", it its natural setting so to speak (408).

Cruikshank writes, "[b]roadly speaking, oral tradition (like history or anthropology) can be viewed as a coherent, open-ended system for constructing and transmitting knowledge" (408). The transmission of "genealogical knowledge" is especially important for the "social organization" of many indigenous cultures (407). Therefore, removing oral traditions from their context is problematic and does not serve the understanding of their "historical value" (413). Moreover, "treating orally recorded accounts as though they are equivalent to written documents" poses further problems (414). Separating any cultural tradition from its original setting always results in the loss of valuable features. Undoubtedly, when oral narratives undergo a change of appearance and are written down, their meaning shifts considerably. Thus, oral traditions in their analysis cannot be separated from their "context" and "occasion" of performance (414).

5.1.2 Oral Histories

Generally, the term oral history refers to a "research method where a sound recording is made of an interview about first-hand experience" (Cruikshank "Oral Tradition and Oral History", 404). According to Petrovic (319), oral histories are "subjective" as well as "intersubjective", the former relating to the input by the interviewee, the latter referring to the "collaborative" nature of the interview in its "dialogical" form. An interview is "a form of a heuristic collaboration between interviewer and interviewee" featuring a "shared authority in a dialogue" (319). Embry argues that interviews offer more "direct information" that can be helpful in the process of research (26). Moreover, an interview as a method of gathering information is adaptable to every situation and interviewee and thus, one can "gather more and sometimes deeper information" (26).

The use of oral histories also has its faults. First, the memories of interviewees can be distorted or their opinions might "change over time" (26). Moreover, interviewees might forget important things or "embellish their own role in the events under discussion" (Swain 68). Though like every method of investigation it has its shortcomings and deficiencies, oral histories are still very valuable (68). According to Swain, this "value" can be attributed to the fact that oral histories offer the "possibility, without guaranteeing success, of recapturing the

mood and the spirit of men and their times", making them a great "research tool" for "historians and archivist" (68).

When collecting oral histories I realized that it is of great importance to learn as much as possible about my interviewees in order to better understand their views and opinions. People´s perspectives differ according to their "social position, and level of involvement" (Cruikshank "Oral Tradition and Oral History", 414). Knowing where my interviewees are coming from and what their background is helped my understanding of their opinions and what matters most to them. Cruikshank states that presuming a "homogeneity of opinion and interest" is counterproductive as it "does not exist now and cannot be assumed to have existed in other times and places" (414). Therefore, an analysis of the individuals and their views should proceed the general analysis and view of the bigger picture.

While the understanding of individual opinions is of great importance, one should be careful to maintain an objective view and let go of bias and personal tendency. Although, as mentioned by Petrovic, the interpretation of oral history is something very "intersubjective", a certain level of objectivity should be contained (319). Furthermore, I realized that during the interviews displaying confidence on my part helps in asking in debt questions that can facilitate interesting responses from the interviewees.

In conclusion, informing oneself sufficiently about the topic of the interview beforehand as well as acquiring personal information about the interviewees in the beginning of the conversation is vital. Having this knowledge facilitates the incorporation of "the perspectives of various participants" and can be very helpful during the process of evaluating "different kinds of evidence" in the later stage (Cruikshank "Oral Tradition and Oral History" 414).

5.1.3 My Research

In order to support Native communities and individuals in making their voices heard, my research focused on oral histories collected from the Lenape-Delaware. The point of interest of my interviews concerned the Lenape storytelling tradition today and how it has changed over the course of time. Furthermore, I am interested in what factors have contributed to the change of storytelling within the Lenape tribe. There are many records of the Lenape that were produced during colonial times. However, accessible information about the Lenape today is rather scarce. Therefore, talking to Lenape members in person was necessary in order to get an idea of the tribe´s vibrancy today.

During my stay as a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant at the College of Wooster in Ohio, I researched the Lenape Nation and their history. I decided to reach out to Lenape members in order to gather first-hand information on their oral traditions. Over the course of three months, I conducted five semi-structured interviews with individuals that identified (partly) as Lenape and were located in several different areas in the US.

My first interview was with Adam DePaul, a member of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania and a PhD student at Temple University in Philadelphia. His work focuses on mythology in different cultures around the world, including the Lenape culture. Because of his studies, he was able to provide valuable insight into Lenape mythology.

Michael Pace is a member of the Delaware Tribe of Indians in Oklahoma and works as an historic interpreter at the Interactive History Park Connor Prairie in Indiana. Within the Lenape Indian Camp, he introduces the audience to different native skills and activities and shares Lenape stories.

Ann Dapice has received her PhD at the University of Pennsylvania and has been teaching sociology, anthropology and philosophy as well as Native Studies at a number of different universities and colleges in the US and abroad. Living in Oklahoma she has ties to the Lenape Delaware in the region as well as the Lenape in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Dennis Coker is the Principal Chief of the Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware in Dover, Delaware since 1995, when he was elected. Although the position is on a volunteer basis, Dennis Coker is very passionate about his work and his community.

Robert Ruth, Chief Bob, is currently located on Munsee reservation in Wisconsin. He was elected Chief of the Lenape in Pennsylvania in 1998, but retired fifteen years ago and moved to Wisconsin.

Additionally, I talked to Deleasa Randall-Griffith, a Professor at Ashland University in Ohio. She teaches a class on International Storytelling that in part also deals with Native American storytelling. I decided to include one non-native individual in my project, in order to acquire a picture of the non-native and outsider perspective on the matter. Prof. Randall-Griffith has distinct knowledge about indigenous cultures as well as experience with incorporating native stories in her lessons.

The interviews were conducted partly in person and partly on the phone. All were recorded, with permission of the interviewees, later transcribed and qualitatively analyzed. The interview questions focused on storytelling and were divided into three broad areas: the purpose, the practice and the preservation of the Lenape storytelling tradition today. All interviewees were eager to participate and willingly shared their experiences and knowledge: not only general information on storytelling, but sometimes also very personal accounts.

While researching the Lenape Nation I realized that their communities are spread across the United States. Therefore, I decided to contact as many Lenape as possible in different areas to collect their individual views on the storytelling tradition today. After contacting them either per email or per phone and asking about their possible participation in my project, I set up interview dates. In total, I conducted eight interviews; however, two of them unfortunately were unusable for my purposes, because of insufficient quality of the phone connection or deviation of the conversation away from the original topic.

After arriving at a precise topic and Native nation to investigate, formulating interview questions was a comparatively simple and engaging task. However, navigating the interviews, especially when they were conducted on the phone, sometimes posed a challenge. Although every interview developed a slightly different focus, the overreaching topic of storytelling remained.

6 Results and Discussion of Interviews

6.1 The Purpose of Lenape Storytelling Today

6.1.1 Stories and Learning

When asked about the purpose of storytelling, the Lenape in my interviews mentioned a number of different functions that stories and storytelling used to have and still have in their communities. Dennis Coker generalized, "[i]t is an educational experience and I think it also has a cultural perspective, experience as well".

As shown by Dennis Coker, Principal Chief of the Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware, storytelling is an experience on several levels. For one, it functions as a means of teaching the community about different aspects of the tribal culture. Through stories, the tribe members for example learn the tribal language and the history of the tribe. Especially the Lenape creation story illustrates the most fundamental beliefs and history of the tribe.

Robert Ruth describes his personal relation to stories: "I just always loved them and for me those stories were a way I could relate to the world around me and I learned my history that way and I learned how the creator wanted us to be in the beginning. So it always meant a lot".

Learning about the tribe's history is only one important aspect of the teachings that stories offer to the Lenape. Stories also help the Lenape in establishing and keeping a connection to their past. As Cruikshank ("The Social Life of Stories", 4) states, stories are "more than documents to be recorded and stored away". They are part of a "lively ongoing process, a way of understanding present as well as past" (4). The Lenape I interviewed repeatedly mentioned the function of stories to connect them to the past and their ancestors. Robert Ruth explains this connection:

> Storytelling is extremely important to our culture and our people. It´s the way, again originally our stories were said in our language, which makes you know a lot different, but a lot of people have lost the ability to speak the language. But our stories what they do, they are not only fun type of things but they are also teaching things. They teach us how to relate to the world around us, and also our people, it kind of takes us back, through our people, how people lived. (Robert Ruth)

As in many other indigenous cultures, Lenape stories used to be told in the tribe´s original language. However, over time less people were able to speak the Lenape language. Therefore, the Lenape translated their stories into English. Although the translation of stories into another

language changes their form and appearance, translating them into Englishg was vital for their survival.

Learning about their stories, teaches the Lenape how their ancestors lived and what morals and values they cherished. For Michael Pace, “oral traditions were to carry on the legacy of the tribes”. Today, the Lenape have other ways to keep their culture and legacy and are not relying solely on storytelling anymore. However, its significance and meaningfulness for their culture is still very much present today.

Another important teaching that was passed on through stories, is to learn about the Lenape´s relation to nature and the environment and how to treat both with respect and awareness. Robert Ruth explains the Lenape´s special attitude towards their surroundings in the following quote:

> One of the things I do when talking, you know when the Europeans first came to where my people were, they landed in New Jersey, down by Cape May and came up the river and the first thing they did was, they had an interpreter with them, they asked us how many people are in your tribe? And we said we didn’t know, because to us our tribe was what was around us. The logs were our tribe, the deer were our tribe, the trees were our tribe, so we couldn’t separate ourselves from that. So that’s one of the things I start my stories with, that I say you know, this really tells about how the cultures are different and for us it was like the stars in the sky were our relative, because everything is connected. If you go back to the beginning, in the society today it’s so easy to get lost with what’s around you but if you really stop and listen and look at nature around you, you see the power that is in us, in everybody, in everything. (Robert Ruth)

Robert Ruth explains the most fundamental difference between the Western culture and the Lenape culture, in that for the latter everything in nature was part of their tribe and connected to each other. Seeing their immediate surroundings as part of their own tribe shows a strong sense of tribal community, a holistic approach so to speak. Michael Pace’s interview further illustrates this relationship to nature and how stories help the Lenape to learn how to respect everything on earth and take care of the environment. For him, stories are a way of spreading the belief “that everything on mother earth, everything that exists has a purpose” (Michael Pace). Through the repetition of their stories this belief is internalized in the community as the very fundament of Lenape spirituality.

6.1.2 Stories and the Right Path in Life

Different stories have different backgrounds and intentions in Lenape culture. Michael Pace mentioned three different types of stories. First, there are stories, primarily for the young generation, that are told in order to explain the "mysteries […] in nature" (Michael Pace). These stories tend to be amusing and feature different animals. Trickster stories belong in that category. Then, there are "moral stories", which teach the community about morals and challenge them to find the moral of the story. Michael Pace explains, "you learn from those stories how to live your life in a moral and ethical way".

Lastly, there are stories that focus on the individual and their path in life. These stories support the individual in making good decisions in their life and help them recognize opportunities as well as realizing their own potential and talents. Although everyone can listen to every story, these types of stories tend to be oriented towards adults. Michael Pace mentions that stories about the right path in life "are sometimes amusing, sometimes they are serious, but it´s still about making the right decision in your life".

Supporting the tribal members in their personal development to "become a better person" also benefited the whole community (Michael Pace). Stories about recognizing opportunities that arise in life provide the community members with individual "learning path[s]" (Michael Pace). This learning path is very personal and different for every member of the tribe. S. Gill mentions that for many Native Americans, "life is a road one travels" (61). This "life road" does not just consist of a number of subsequent steps with "each leading to the next", but rather, "as one proceeds along the road, he or she accumulates […] knowledge of […] this way of living" (62). In this way, stories help individuals, as they are moving on their "path" or "life road" (62).

Although many aspects of Native American spirituality and communal traditions are "focused on the individuals", they are not meant to "indicate a person set against society" (81). Rather, these traditions support the integration of persons into the community and "the traditions that give it common identity and meaning" (81). S. Gill argues for the use of the word "person" instead of "individual" to support the emphasis of "attributes of identity, character, value, and role rather than to designate a unit distinct from the collective" (82). The "road of life" in many Native American cultures, should be seen as a "process of the introduction and accumulation of knowledge, techniques, responsibilities, privileges and relationships" which offers great benefits for the individual person as well as the community as a whole (82).

6.1.3 Stories are not Stories

Einhorn argues that the "oral tradition plays more than a prominent position in Native American culture; it is the culture itself" (3). Indeed, from an American Indian point of view, not only is "language […] alive", it proves to be more than just a method for information exchange and communication (3). In addition to the many functions of storytelling in native cultures, the concept of language and in particular stories as more than an oral tradition was continually expressed in my interviews. Especially Adam DePaul vocalized this important characteristic of stories in Lenape culture. He pointed out: "It's not just stories, it's a piece of life" (Adam DePaul).

As a student of mythology, Adam raised his concern about the fact, that western audiences see native stories oftentimes as fables or fairytales, when in Lenape culture they are so much more. Although fables were also passed on over generations and introduce values and morals, they cannot be compared to Native American stories. Whereas fables have been written down centuries ago and hence do not change to a great extent in form or appearance, Lenape stories do. Stories constitute the very essence of Lenape culture and portray much more than just morals. Bruchac (52) shares this view and argues, "rather than just being combinations of spoken or written words, [stories] are alive".

The belief that stories are "alive" can be demonstrated by the fact that stories continually change over time and throughout their life in a community. As already mentioned, for S. Gill "the process of change is what constitutes a living tradition" (127). Following this idea, the high adaptability and flexibility of native stories testifies to their aliveness in native cultures. Factors influencing their content, performance and other stylistic features can depend on the time, place and audience of the storytelling. Cruikshank argues that every storytelling is a "performance" that is "historically situated as the teller, the audience, and the intended meanings shift to meet the occasion" ("Life", 28). In this way, a story´s meaning is different for every individual in every "stage of life", "location [and] circumstance" (44). Therefore, stories can become something very personal for the individual.

Native American stories are not only highly flexible and adaptable, they are also "part of a communicative process" where the audience is as important as the storyteller (44). Both can influence the storytelling consciously as well as unconsciously and thus make every storytelling a unique experience for everyone.

6.1.4 Stories and Change

Stories always deal with the surroundings of the community in which they exist, therefore, when the surroundings change, the stories change with them. For the Lenape, due to the numerous relocations and resettlements in their history, their surroundings changed several times. Therefore, their stories' adaptability was vital for the survival of their culture. Robert Ruth illustrates this changeability of stories within the Lenape:

> JS: So the stories started as the same, but then they evolved and changed?
> Robert Ruth: Yes, because most of our stories if you think about it have to do with the world around us. So the people in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, we have these stories, they are very ancient and very old, but they related to the different trees and different animals. Now the people who have moved to Oklahoma, the trees are all different, the animals are all different, so it´s like their stories they often changed, from generations passed down, they haven't been to Pennsylvania, where their people came from in that way. That's why our stories really, it's very cultural because it has to do with who we are and our relationships.

As already established, the Lenape today are spread out in different areas in the U.S. While most of the descendants of the original Lenape-Delaware are residing on a reservation in Oklahoma, there are many other groups located in Delaware, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Ontario and Pennsylvania. Robert Ruth relates the deviation of Lenape stories in different groups and communities to their different individual locations and surroundings. Since stories always deal with the surroundings of a culture, when their surroundings change so do their stories. The fact that de Lenape in Oklahoma have experienced different surroundings then the Lenape who stayed in the East, explains the differences in their stories.

In conclusion, the fact that the Lenape culture developed without a written language system explains the importance oral traditions and especially storytelling used to have for them. Indeed, without passing on information and knowledge, native tribes could not have continued to exist for so many centuries. However, storytelling is more than the sum of the functions it used to have and partly still has as an oral tradition. It must be seen as the very essence of Lenape culture, as Einhorn argues, "it is the culture itself" (3). The fact that stories have the ability to adapt to changing environments shows their exceptionality.

Although the practice and especially preservation of Lenape storytelling underwent significant modifications over time, as will be demonstrated in the following sections, the Lenape's general understanding of the importance of storytelling has not changed.

Adam DePaul shared his view of stories: "The stories, they portray I know many things, they portray aspects of the Lenape culture that can´t be portrayed any other way. And this is what art does". Also Bruchac (34) shares this view of stories:

> [t]hese powerful tales are not just spoken or written words to American Indian people. They are alive. Alive as breath and the wind that touches every corner of this land. […] Our stories open our eyes and hearts to a world of animals and plants, of earth and water and sky. They take us under the skin and into the heartbeat of Creation. They remind us of the true meaning of all that lives. Our stories remember when people forget.

In general, the purpose of storytelling for the Lenape has undergone a shift away from revisiting tribal procedures and towards bringing people together and enjoying time together within the community. However, in some communities the people turn to stories when hardship strikes in order to receive comfort and perspective.

6.2 The Practice of Lenape Storytelling Today

6.2.1 The Power of Stories

Adam DePaul shared a very personal experience of storytelling during our interview. He told me about a tragic loss of a young relative in his family and the funeral which was led by their Chief, Robert Ruth. During the funeral, Chief Bob turned to storytelling in order to provide comfort and understanding to the mourning community. Adam recalled:

> He opened up with a story with him being out in the woods one day finding a dead raccoon on the road, and I am paraphrasing and I will never be as good as a speaker as he is, but he ends up following this raccoon´s tracks to see where it came from, and he flips over a log and sees a number of infant raccoons under this log. […]The story came around to say even in death something was created. Something good came out of it. And that someone just walking down the road would see only the dead raccoon, but on a symbolic level this is the kind of thing that makes people lose faith, or change people's entire lives. And he told the story in a way that gave everyone, my mother and myself included, just a feeling of some kind of redemption in this tragedy that had happened. (Adam DePaul)

In recounting this experience, Adam gave insight into how stories can speak to the community on tragic occasions and offer perspective and understanding. He wonderfully exemplified the

power of stories to remind the community of their worldview and values and bring them closer together. Adam DePaul further explains: “I think that is one of the best examples how Lenape storytelling works. Even in something as unscripted and dramatic as an event like that, it is stories that come through and connect very closely how we deal with things and see the world” (Adam DePaul).

Stories remind the Lenape members of their worldview and strengthen their bond to the community. Especially in tragic situations, when the mourning community is looking for answers as to why this happened, stories help the Lenape to come back to their shared values and understanding of the world.

6.2.2 Storytelling at Gatherings

Generally, over the years the storytelling practice for Lenape decreased in quantity. However, communities still have several gatherings throughout the year, each with a different focus and purpose. For the Lenape in Pennsylvania there is only one ritual gathering where the sole focus is storytelling. Although other gatherings might have a different objective, storytelling is a part of all of them. Adam DePaul explained that “Meesing ceremony is the only ceremony where the point is to come together and listen to a story. Because that ceremony is all about reverence of Meesing and remembering his story. All other gatherings are more general. They are like that spring ceremony. But there will always be storytelling involved” (Adam DePaul).

The “Meesing ceremony” was originally part of a hunting ceremony and features a mythological reenactment that involves “a Lenape man to dance with a Meesing mask” (Seldin et al.). The whole ceremony evolves around the character of “Meesing” and is usually told by the chief. In the Lenape story, Meesing is a powerful spirit who first questions the Lenape Creator about his plans to create humans, but then realizes that the Creator is more powerful than him. From then on, Meesing is known as the protector of the woodlands and all its animals, especially the deer, as it was the most important animal for the Lenape.

The Meesing ceremony usually took place in the fall in order to herald “the arrival of the hunting season” (Carney). In the past, the ceremony was an opportunity for the Lenape to thank the Creator for everything he had given them and was accompanied by a big feast with all kinds of different food, including the deer as the main dish (Carney).

Another example of a ceremony for the Lenape in Pennsylvania mentioned by Adam DePaul is the "Maple ceremony", which is done in the spring. He explains:

> This is just kind of a spring celebration. We do cordon planting. Traditionally, it is a celebration to welcome the spring and hope for a good crop and a good season. Unfailingly our chief will tell a story, a story of flicker, a mythological figure we have, he was the first wood pecker. The story he goes through with the old maple tree. So that's an example of a time where we don't gather for the story but the story will come up. (Adam DePaul)

In the story of the Maple Tree, certain birds, called flicker, help the Maple Tree by picking out the bugs inside its bark. Later, the woodpecker birds peck into the tree´s bark again in order to enable the other animals to drink from the tree´s sap and save them. The Maple Tree and the Flicker work together in order to save everyone.

6.2.3 Storytellers

The chiefs, the elders or the council members are usually the ones who tell the stories. Michael Pace mentioned, that to be a storyteller requires a certain kind of skill to "express [one]self in a very good way". It is of great importance that the audience understands them. Fortunately, he said, "some people are really talented to be able to pass on the stories. There are some young people who pick it up really quickly". Over time, as a storyteller, you learn more and more stories and are able to pass on more things. Storytellers are highly respected in their communities. When the question arises who of the elders tells the story priority is given to the older storytellers out of respect. Michael Pace explains:

> Like I said, there are some people who are better at it, so sometimes we´ll refer to somebody else. And you know, if you have an elder, we´ll always defer to an elder, because they are respected and if I have somebody, who is even a year older than I am I´ll defer to them, because they are an elder. So you always defer to an elder. So that is just a sign of respect. (Michael Pace)

However, not all Lenape communities have designated storytellers. Dennis Coker mentioned that within the Lenape in Delaware there are no designated storytellers. Rather, people like to sit together and tell stories in a more informal manner. He relates: "In some sense we call it spinning a yarn. So there are people that like to spin yarns, they just start talking and they may embellish it a little bit. So I think that is probably, the genesis of our storytelling today is relating our life experiences with a humorous spin on the story to make it entertaining" (Dennis Coker).

Robert Ruth recounts his experiences of storytelling when he was growing up in Pennsylvania:

> What we do is like, years ago, we would all get together, usually either weekly or monthly, some of us were living right together. But there was always a thing where we would all come together for a whole weekend where we gather in different places. At nighttime, the elders would tell stories and even with the PowWows and things, after the PowWows were over, everybody would come over and the elders would tell these old stories. (Robert Ruth)

Storytelling is still happening in various ways in the different Lenape communities. The different groups share the basic ceremonies and occasions where stories are told. However, the tradition slightly differs for every group and community: "Everyone does it in their tradition and manner. They all have a way; they are all quite different, but the end result, they all do the same thing but differently. Because all tribes of course are different" (Michael Pace).

The reason for this differentiation in-between one tribe can be traced back to the relocations and fragmentations of the Lenape over the years. Robert Ruth explains: "So even though it's all the same ceremony, all the same things, sometimes the way we use them is a little different, because of where we are from".

In conclusion, although the number of storytellings has decreased in quantity in recent years, communities still practice social gatherings and ceremonies where storytelling is incorporated. There is no strict structure or schedule for such an event and it follows no itinerary. Usually there is a couple of gatherings spread across the year, during which the chiefs or elders, who are talented storytellers, engage the community with their stories. For Adam DePaul, Robert Ruth exemplifies what storytelling used to be in the old days:

> He is, I have so much reverence, he is just a wonderful man, he is just a wonderful storyteller. Of all of us he has the most first-hand stories from his upbringing and from his ancestors. And he really embodies the way that both my instincts and my research tells me that storytelling was conducted traditionally through the Lenape, where it´s not just stories it´s a piece of life. (Adam DePaul)

6.3 The Preservation of Lenape Storytelling Today

6.3.1 Storykeeper

One way of preserving stories in the Lenape culture is implementing the role of a storykeeper in the community. For the Lenape in Pennsylvania, Adam DePaul is the storykeeper. He explains his position in the following: “My official role does not involve any storytelling. I am the one who collects the stories and records them” (Adam DePaul).

Unlike other Lenape groupings, the Lenape in Pennsylvania have not written their stories down. Hence, the need for someone to find, record and collect them arose. The position of a designated storykeeper was unknown to other Lenape that I talked to during my interviews. The storykeeper of the Lenape in Pennsylvania seeks out elders who have extensive knowledge about stories and records their voices. For the Lenape in Pennsylvania, the focus on recording stories rather than writing them down stems from different reasons. For one, throughout history European colonists, anthropologists or members of the clergy wrote down indigenous stories. Thus, the stories were exposed to the arbitrariness of European authorship. DePaul argues that the changes and modification of indigenous stories by colonists and strangers to indigenous cultures are notable. As a student of world mythology he is able to easily detect these changes and establish connections to other cultures´ mythologies. The role and especially power of the record-keeper was highly underestimated in former times. Today, the Lenape in Pennsylvania try to avoid this problematic situation altogether and focus on recording their stories themselves.

Adam DePaul further points out another difficulty of recording stories in written form: “To write these stories down now is very much like creating them. Because, if you write them down it is a thing, a thing that can be referenced” (Adam DePaul). In addition to stories being exposed to the non-native record-keeper’s knowledge, background and bias, writing them down also fixates their shape and form and thus makes them a rigid and inflexible memory of a culture. Adam DePaul argues: “The stories they portray, I know many things, they portray aspects of the Lenape culture that can´t be portrayed any other way. And this is what art does”. He further explains:

> And this is one thing, to go back to your last question that becomes restricted when you do write them down. Because when these tales become written down they become artifacts. And now they have a particular date to which they are most relevant. When I´m just sitting around listening to Chief Bob tell a story or when we have our ceremonies and the dancers come out and play the role of Meesing, one of our big mythological figures, it communicates an attitude, I am going to call it a particular reverence, that is in the Lenape culture, that you just can´t put into words. (Adam DePaul)

For Adam DePaul, writing stories down restricts them in their function of representing Lenape culture. Many aspects of the culture simply cannot be communicated via the written word. Furthermore, for DePaul storytelling is not simply an oral tradition, but a form of art that is most essential for the Lenape culture. Transferring art from one medium to another is always problematic, especially when it comes to Native American spirituality.

Robert Ruth, joins this sentiment of experiencing stories live rather than writing them down. According to him, the experiences differ largely: “To read a story in a book to me is so much different than to hear it, around a campfire under the stars. That’s a nice way of doing that” (Robert Ruth).

6.3.2 Storybooks

When confronted with the question if stories should be recorded in written form, my interview partners provided very similar responses. Summarizing the consensus and speaking for all is Robert Ruth: “Its not the best, but it’s the best we have now” (Robert Ruth).

Although the Lenape are aware of the disadvantages and possible dangers and complications of writing their stories down, they know about the advantages the written word has above the spoken in today’s world. Through writing stories down, the Lenape can spread awareness for their culture faster, more easily and over greater distances than ever before.

Today, the Lenape use different mediums and ways of preserving their culture and stories. This gives rise to the question: Which method of preservation for their stories would be best? A few answers of my interviewees will shed light on the matter. For Dennis Coker, the answer is clear: “It is to tell them. The best way to preserve the stories is to tell them. Seek them out, learn them, understand them and utilize them. That’s the best way to preserve them” (Dennis Coker).

Robert Ruth holds a similar opinion: “I think to me, the best way to learn these stories is to hear them. To sit down with an elder and hear these stories that way. Now I realize that because of how we live today, everybody spread everywhere, I think it is so important I guess to record the stories. But I think when you record a story you get the story but there is so much more” (Robert Ruth).

According to the Lenape, the best way to preserve their stories and keeping their deeper meaning and significance is to tell them in the original way. Only through the cultural experience of a storytelling can the fundamental Lenape beliefs be understood and passed on.

However, the Lenape also recognize the need for recording their heritage in a written way to ensure its consistency. Although many features of the stories get lost by translating them, it is still a necessary measure for cultural preservation.

The preservation of Lenape stories and culture is done in many different ways today, each with its own potentials and difficulties. Compared to former days, many Native American communities today use manifold opportunities to spread knowledge and respect for their cultures. The three subsequent sections focus on how the Lenape are working on preserving their stories and culture today. First, by organizing themselves on a community level as well as national level with other Lenape groups, second by focusing on their younger tribe members and lastly, in creating collaborations with non-natives.

6.3.3 Working Together on a Community Level

The different Lenape-Delaware groups in all their scattered locations are working together to ensure the continuing existence of their culture. Diverse actions are implemented on a community and national level to support the continuance of Lenape culture and stories.

The Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania will serve as an example to illustrate the importance of measurements introduced on a community level. As before mentioned, during colonialization and the move of many Lenape to the West, only some decided to stay behind and did not leave their land in the East. These Lenape started to either immerse themselves into the culture of the new settler-society or lived in hiding and "continued to practice their traditions covertly" ("Fulfilling a Prophecy"). Until today, many Lenape are still afraid of putting their culture out in the open. In order to create a space for cultural heritage, the Lenape of Pennsylvania in collaboration with the Penn Museum and the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia created an exhibit about the Lenape in Pennsylvania. It was on display from 2008 to 2010 and featured "oral histories, family heirlooms, and photographs" of Lenape in the area ("Fulfilling a Prophecy"). In this way, the Lenape that were still living in hiding to that day had the opportunity to share their experiences and their knowledge with fellow tribal members and non-native visitors. The Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania is continuously working on raising awareness about their tribe and establishing connections between Lenape in different areas of Pennsylvania.

Ann Dapice, a professor of social sciences and member of the Lenape-Delaware in Oklahoma, supports the Lenape of Pennsylvania's actions to reconnect with other Lenape spread across the United States. She asserts, "We need to start finding each other" (Ann Dapice). Over the years, she witnessed how indigenous nations became more visible and open with their cultural heritage and background:

> I still had family in north Pennsylvania, but other than those family members I talked to and got information from, that was all I knew about the Indians in Pennsylvania. Now, things changed a lot since then and Oklahoma has fairly open PowWows now and that didn't happen when I was growing up. (Ann Dapice)

Over the years, more native communities started to live their culture more openly again, which in turn made it easier for members of tribes to find each other and reconnect. Ann Dapice got in touch with the Lenape in Pennsylvania through former Chief Red Hawk of the Lenape Nation. She relates the encounter:

> So, what happened after I had Red Hawk on the phone in Oklahoma he said I want you to meet your people. So next time you come up to Pennsylvania, I will introduce you to people. […] Before Bob Red Hawk moved to Wisconsin he invited me to his house and I went there and he said I will show you your family. And he got all these Lenape records from everywhere. So he has been a tremendous help. (Ann Dapice)

Reaching out to other Lenape in different locations is now possible thanks to technology that was not accessible in former times. Being able to use telephone and internet helps the Lenape in their mission of spreading knowledge about themselves as well as finding other descendants and tribe members. Having council meetings via conference calls is only one example of how indigenous communities today are using the technical services at their disposal for living their native culture.

6.3.4 Working Together on a National Level

On a national level, the Lenape in the East and the Lenape-Delaware in Oklahoma are working on overcoming the traumatic split in their original tribe, with some members staying in the east and others moving west. Subsequently, their cultural development differed extensively. Today, they are driven by attempts to overcome this experience and are working on unification.

Dennis Coker from the Lenape-Delaware located in Delaware recounted the experiences of Lenape after contact with European settlers and referred to the outbreak of smallpox that wiped out 50% of the community every time. With elders being especially susceptible to the disease most "wisdom keepers, teachers and storytellers" deceased (Dennis Coker).

Furthermore, with new settlers came a new religion that was forced on the Lenape. Adapting to the new circumstances caused great trauma for the Lenape members in the East. Dennis Coker explains the dramatic experience: “The fact of the matter is that those that stayed behind were typically Christianized. With being Christianized, we were encouraged and in some cases prohibited from practicing our traditional way. So the focus on putting that old culture away and living with this new culture has a very dramatic effect”.

After contact with European settlers, practicing their storytelling traditions became more difficult for the Lenape in the East. Typically, indigenous communities were Christianized by European missionaries and thus prohibited from practicing their culture. Moreover, the lack of storytellers and wisdom keepers made keeping the Lenape culture alive more difficult.

Unlike the Lenape in the East, the ones that headed West had and to this day still have a vastly different experience. Dennis Coker explains: “Of course the ones that did leave, the ones that went west and ended up in Oklahoma, they were moving in front of that wave of destruction and they really kept more in touch with their traditional culture, having still lived it every day. And more stories as they went along”.

It is important to distinguish between the two groups and their differing experiences over the years in order to understand the difficulties they experience today in trying to unite with each other. Dennis Coker illustrates why this unification is so important:

> Those that left to a great extent became known as the keepers of the culture and the tradition, those that stayed behind in legend became known as the keepers of the land. It is important that the keepers of the culture and the tradition are reunited with the keepers of the land, because our spirituality emanates from our place, our location, so all of our spirituality in keeping the customs and traditions are based on the geography of the Eastcoast in their traditional homeland. So it is important that they reconnect with us, and that’s what we are trying to make happen. (Dennis Coker)

Steps towards a unification are implemented in different ways on a national level. Cultural exchange programs are taking place where experts visit each other’s communities to talk about traditions and ceremonies. Moreover, grand councils are organized in order to learn about each other’s stories and cultural ways. Robert Ruth illustrates: “We work together on language, we support each other, we go to each other’s PowWows”.

Communities are supporting each other, regardless of location or governmental recognition. Robert Ruth further states: “But we try really, at the last grand council we made a commitment to make a new Wampum belt, we made a commitment to include everybody

whether they were semi recognized or state recognized and that kind of thing. And also work with each other. And I am happy to see a lot taking place now".

Naturally, the level of involvement in that process differs and not every Lenape individual and community shares the opinion that unification should be an aspiration. However, the communities that support this endeavor are heavily involved and convinced of it.

6.3.5 Working with the Youth

Working together to ensure the Lenape culture's consistency is also taking place on the smallest level, with the individuals and their families. Only when the youngest tribe members are engaged, can the future of the tribal community be secured.

Animating young people to participate in the native culture can be a very difficult task. Some Lenape communities organize youth camps, language classes or workshops for their younger members. Undoubtedly, families play a significant part in passing on knowledge and traditions to children. Some communities support the efforts of parents and families and create opportunities for the whole family to live the native culture together. When asked if involving younger tribe members in the tribal culture is difficult, Robert Ruth answered:

> It is and it isn't. Sometimes it seems like young people they are more into say Rap music than into drumming. But there is a lot of them out there who are interested and I can see it in their faces, I can see it when they come to me with a question. And again, that is our responsibility to take what we learned and make sure they understand it, especially at a young age when they grow up and then they will take that with them and hopefully pass that on to the next generation.

Some communities realize their responsibility to pass on cultural knowledge and traditions to the children and younger members and enable them to live their ancestors´ traditions. However, being able to preserve the culture in this way depends on the availability of financial resources. For federally recognized groups, government funding facilitates their preservation methods and measures, while state or non-recognized groups do not obtain that support. Although this makes it more difficult for them to launch projects for young people and families, their willingness to overcome financial obstacles is palpable.

6.3.6 Working Together with Non-Natives

Joining forces to work on the preservation of Lenape culture also involves working together with non-natives who are interested in the culture´s traditions and ceremonies. Although European settlers and the U.S. government have brought much misery on indigenous people in North America, Native Nations continue to thrive and practice their cultural traditions. Considering the events of the past, their openness to sharing their culture with non-natives shows how extraordinary native people really are.

For the Lenape I talked to during my interviews it is clear that anyone can join their gatherings and learn from their cultural traditions. Especially histories are a great tool to learn about another culture. Dennis Coker provides a formidable summary of the answers to the question if Non-natives can also learn from indigenous storytelling:

> Yes definitely, everybody can learn from indigenous storytelling. I mean the lessons are very basic and they are mostly concerned with human nature, the good, the bad and the ugly. In some cases but they are all meant to relay a teaching, that's what´s important about that. And we can all learn from teaching. (Dennis Coker)

Also Michael Pace expresses this attitude: "Oh no, anybody can sit in on those things. We are willing to share that with anybody, we don't withhold it. Anybody is allowed to participate in that".

In their mission to spread awareness and appreciation for their culture, the Lenape in Pennsylvania for example are open to work with anyone who is interested in their culture and wants to join their community gatherings. Adam DePaul explains: "We have many partners, many important people who come to our meetings, who work with us, who are not Lenape and we welcome them and we, it's a wonderful thing to have other people who are interested, although it is not our genealogy".

The shared opinion of the Lenape I talked to was that due to their universalness and relatability, their stories offer valuable lessons for everyone, native and non-native alike. In hearing about how the original people treated the earth where American citizens live now, the latter can only benefit from that knowledge. The Lenape are happy to open up their stories to everyone who wants to learn more about them and their ways of life.

However, in dealing with Lenape stories and indigenous stories in general, it is of overarching importance to provide enough background information on the stories and put them into cultural context. Adam DePaul illustrates this argument:

> For example, this is not the best example, but for time sake, the Moccasin story, on the surface, it´s a very standard problem, here is a fool character, her is a solution, a very clean origin of Moccasin stories. What just a little statement and a little history of the Lenape people – this character was committing by slaying all these deer – this was someone going against social norms, going against tribal norms, going against survival norms, it becomes a much more serious problem. Little things like that are important to emphasize. (Adam DePaul)

In the story about Moccassins, a Lenape man, in pursuit of a Lenape woman, slants deer in order to use the skin to soften the ground on which she walked. Eventually, the deer skin was used to make her the first Moccasins. Indeed, the story without background knowledge about the significance of the deer for the Lenape loses parts of its meaning and complexity. Strapping stories from their complex dynamics makes them one-dimensional and plain.

The problem of appropriating native stories is only one aspect of the bigger issue of romanticizing of Native Americans, an issue that was mentioned extensively by my interviewees. Over the years, Native American people, their clothes, stories and essentially every part of their culture has been subject to exploitation by other cultures. In general, cultural appropriation involves taking something from a foreign culture and applying it without the necessary background information and without paying respect to the culture in question. Especially native stories have been subject to appropriation by other western cultures. Books about indigenous stories accompanied with inappropriate drawings are easily locatable in nearly every bookstore.

In connection with the issue of cultural appropriation, the Lenape in my interviews also mentioned that people of the modern western world tend to think of the indigenous people of North America as all the same. Although many tribes share the experience of colonialization and its impacts, their languages, ceremonies and cultures differ considerably.

Another complication that arises for American non-natives when approaching Native American cultures is the fact that some American citizens experience feelings of guilt towards indigenous people. Naturally, when learning about the cruel actions that have taken place in the past, American non-natives have to process it and in the next step define their perspective and approach to Native Americans and their cultures. Sadly, the U.S. government does not offer many opportunities to deal with this part of the country´s history and present adequately. Bruchac (7) argues that guilt “clouds your vision with sorrow or twists your thoughts with defensive anger”. Consequently, many Americans “turn away from the truth because they find it too painful or don’t want to accept it” (7). Bruchac refers to a teaching in the Cheyenne

culture, “Don´t keep carrying something that is of no use to anyone.” (7). Just like pouring out a “cup of water that is not good to drink”, one should “get rid of that which cannot help […] and refill [the] cup with life” (7). In this way, Americans are advised to leave their feelings of guilt behind and “take some positive actions” instead (7).

When confronted with the notion that many Americans feel guilty about the past or are unsure about how to approach Native Americans, Robert Ruth raises the following question: “But the thing is where do you stay? Do you stay in the past with that or do you try to learn from that and move ahead to a brighter future. And we are hoping to share what we know and maybe that will help, that kind of thing”.

For the Lenape, knowing about the past is as important as moving on to the future. Non-natives should educate themselves about indigenous cultures and then let go of stereotypes about them introduced mostly by the media. Learning about the indigenous populations in North America should be done in an interactive way. The Lenape are ready to welcome anyone who is interested in their culture and their people. Robert Ruth proposes:

> Yea, meet us, talk to us, get to see us, because we all look different, we all speak a different language, we all have a different culture, learn who we are. And the best way to do that is to actually meet us and talk to us and come to our PowWows and come to those things. And what youre doing. What youre doing is very important. You´re talking to the people and get an idea. And you only get an idea if you talk to the people. (Robert Ruth)

The Lenape´s readiness to embrace anyone in their culture and share their traditions and ceremonies with them undoubtedly constitutes an exceptional opportunity for non-natives. An opportunity to talk to native people and learn about their culture. By showing interest and openness to learn about another culture, natives as well as non-natives can take “positive actions” in order to move into a “brighter future” (Bruchac 7, Robert Ruth).

6.3.7 Work by Non-Natives

As mentioned by Bruchac, taking positive actions that move towards an understanding and appreciation of native cultures can benefit both, non-native and native people alike. In the following, the perspective of a non-native who works with native stories on a professional level will be discussed.

Deleasa Randall-Griffith is an Associate Professor of Communication at Ashland University in Ohio. For several years now, she has been teaching a class on International Storytelling where students deal with stories from different cultures in order to learn more about

the cultures´ worldviews. In the course of this class, she also introduces Native American stories and cultures to students.

In considering this class in more detail, two perspectives will be discussed. First, the teacher's personal approach to discussing indigenous storytelling in a classroom setting will be shown. Second, difficulties in teaching this class as well as actions that were taken in order to tackle ethical issues will be addressed.

As a teacher, before talking about indigenous storytelling in a classroom situation it is necessary to do enough research beforehand and discover one´s personal approach to the matter. Deleasa Randall-Griffith is aware of her outsider perspective and shares the feeling of guilt towards native cultures. She explains: "For me it´s fascinating that here you are, from across the sea looking in on this which is very different than me, I feel like I carry that burden maybe that guilt of living on a continent that did what it did to these people. Whereas you really have an outsider perspective that I find fascinating" (Deleasa Randall-Griffith). Although she has taken positive actions in spreading awareness for indigenous cultures for several years now by teaching her class, she still experiences feelings of guilt or discomfort when talking about Native nations. She also shares these feelings with her students in the classroom.

In order to make students comfortable to share their feelings and opinions about the topic, it is necessary to create a safe space in the classroom, where discussion and exchange can take place. Only then can students process and understand the issues that arise. Naturally, when dealing with indigenous cultures in the United States ethical issues need to be dealt with carefully.

Deleasa Randall-Griffith tries to give her students an understanding of indigenous stories and how they differ to stories in other cultures. While some students understand the differences some have a hard time to do so. Randall-Griffith relates:

> There are still some I think that don't get why it's a big deal. And just like everyone has different opinions, I never give them a right answer, but we do talk about what are the different sides of the argument. But there are some of my students that really have that well if we can tell the grandmothers fairytale from Germany, why is it any different? And its really hard for them sometimes to understand that European influence on the US and yes there are differences between Germany and France and yes, but there are also some common things that the whole western world has that is very different from indigenous people from around the world. (Deleasa Randall-Griffith)

The difficulty for some students to shift their perspective of Native American cultures and realize their characteristic features can be attributed to the fact that many students share a very romanticized view of native cultures. As expressed also by the Lenape in my interviews, this romanticized conception of indigenous cultures stands in the away of cultural awareness and needs to be overcome.

Realizing the need to break down common conceptions about native cultures and making her students more aware of some of the facts of the past is of great importance for Dr. Randall-Griffith. In order to do so she introduced the term "sacred" when talking about indigenous stories. Students were able to establish a connection to other sacred texts like the bible or a eulogy and move closer to an understanding of the significance of stories for native communities.

After addressing some ethical issues and introducing terminology for dealing with indigenous stories in the classroom, students are working on arriving at a deeper understanding of the stories. In doing so they are encouraged to recognize the many layers of a story and "how the actions in the story are really just a surface level of the iceberg of cultural values" displayed in them (Deleasa Randall-Griffith).

The objective of the class is for students to acquire "cultural awareness, cultural competence, and understanding the other" as well as for them to realize how "a story can help you get a glimpse into different worldviews and values and belief systems" (Deleasa Randall-Griffith). Although dealing with Native American cultures from an outsider perspective can be a very complicated and messy task, for Randall-Griffith "bring[ing] out some of the messiness" is of great value, "because there are such good lessons to learn in these stories". For her, the outcome of discussing native cultures and stories with her students is "worth grabbling with all those difficult and ethical issues" (Deleasa Randall-Griffith). Introducing her students to the complexity of some issues with Native American cultures through working with their stories is one of the reasons Dr. Randall-Griffith created this class. She explains: "I mean if I can open their eyes to this, at least the next time they see some documentary or the Chief Wahu discussion, then maybe they understand that in a slightly different way than oh, leave our logo alone. It's not so simple" (Deleasa Randall-Griffith).

For Bruchac (38), when non-Natives are dealing with Native American stories, they need to accept and honor native peoples´ "right to their own traditions". Therefore, it is important to "turn to [them] about a story" (38). According to Bruchac, authors and "professional storytellers" should ask Native nations for "permission to use that story" (38). He

also urges non-Natives to “remember always that there is not one overall American Indian culture” (39). Hence, being “specific about what particular Native nations owns that story” and appropriately acknowledging them is vital (39). Bruchac also states, “stories are embedded in a cultural matrix. Every story lives within the larger circle of a nation, and there are aspects of the story that can be understood only by knowing more than the story tells on its surface” (39).

For Deleasa Randall-Griffith, these layers of meaning and significance illustrate the stories´ great value for natives and non-natives, a view, which is shared by the Lenape I talked to. Considering Bruchac´s guidelines while engaging with Native American cultures and their stories can be a powerful starting point for spreading cultural awareness and reverence for the indigenous populations of North America.

7 Conclusion

Native American cultures and their traditions are as constant as they are adaptable. Constant in the way they overcome any obstacles thrown their way and adaptable in the way they use their traditions to withstand troubled times and move on. Nichols states, “if Native American history has taught anything to modern scholars, it is that Indians are among the most resilient human beings on the continent” (204). This resilience stems from their cultural traditions, especially storytelling traditions, that have been adapted and passed on over centuries.

Lenape stories have changed in the past and will continue to change in the future. Although their practice decreased and the preservation of them has adapted, the purpose of stories and their fundamental importance for the culture is alive and well and has not been altered by either time or space.

The fact that stories are able to change and adapt to the communities’ needs shows that they are alive. They need to be preserved in order to support the continued existence of the culture. After numerous relocations and political pressures and wars the Lenape-Delaware preserved their culture and are still here today. This further illustrates the power of stories as a tool for cultural persistence. Progressing in their continuing work for unification, stories will be by the Lenape’s side and help them grow in strength and unity in the years to come.

The tremendous fracturing as well as physical and emotional separation of Lenape communities in the past generated regional and generational differences within the several groups. This fracturing affected not only their stories, but also their approaches to different issues like the preservation of their stories in writing. However, consensus exists in other areas as was presented. When it comes to sharing their culture and stories with non-natives many Lenape express an openness and willingness to do so.

Different projects in the process of spreading knowledge and cultural awareness of native cultures exist. The method of conducting and interpreting interviews with Lenape individuals is by nature a very subjective process, based on communication and exchange. However, different methodological approaches foster a widespread spectrum of research on Native American cultures that invites more scholars, native and non-native alike, to participate in the discussion.

When engaging with indigenous nations and cultures, for scientific research or driven solely by a general interest, a new framework that is detached from a Western mindset has to be developed. While doing so it is important that common stereotypes and myths, such as the myth of the Ecological Indian, are set aside. Furthermore, as expressed by all participants in my interviews, the romanticizing of Native Americans propagates a distorted view of native people and their cultures. It is essential to look behind the myths and stereotypes to realize how they developed in the first place.

Uncovering myths and stereotypes requires engaging with the culture in question in depth, first, by learning about its history. When focusing on the Lenape Nation, this means learning about their display of great perseverance in sustaining their independent tribal culture. Over the years, they continuously demonstrated great strength and ability to thrive even when faced with pressure from European settlers, other indigenous nations or later on the U.S. government.

Furthermore, learning about Lenape spirituality means realizing the great power of their stories and recognizing them as the essence of their culture. As Adam DePaul so eloquently displayed, stories are art and stories are alive. Therefore, they display the Lenape culture in an exceptionally meaningful way. This in turn gives rise to the question if they can and should be distributed in writing at all. While the opinions on this issue are highly divided, the stories´ importance for the Lenape is clear for everyone.

Engaging with a different culture also means learning about the current issues and agendas of its people. Today, the Lenape are trying to reconnect with tribe members all over North America and are working together on the preservation of their culture. As in any culture, different opinions and views exist. For an outsider who looks into the culture it is important to debunk the myths that surround Native Americans, such as that they are all the same and share one opinion.

It is important to enrich one´s point of view of history, present and future with a Native American perspective in order to arrive at a better understanding of the bigger picture. However, there is not one right or correct approach for going about this. In fact, finding one´s personal approach is the only way to arrive at an informed opinion. This approach should start with acquiring knowledge about the culture in question. This should be done by reading about it, but also talking to individuals of that culture and demonstrating interest and respect. As demonstrated by my interviews, many Native Americans are more than willing to share their knowledge and opinions with anyone who is interested.

Bruchac (7) introduced the idea of “taking positive actions” towards spreading awareness and respect for Native American cultures. Reading about them and especially talking to them could be such a step. By doing so, not only can one learn about the history and present of a culture, but engaging with a different culture most definitely provides valuable life lessons and opportunities to broaden one’s horizon in a meaningful way.

Thanksgiving Oration

(Richard Adams)

There´s a Spirit of whose greatness
Far excels all other spirits,
Who neglects not e´n the smallest
Or the greatest of events;
Who ordained the starry highway,
The sun, the moon, the earth, the sea,
And for his glory we´re created,
And for this we´re very thankful.

There are Manitous who serve him,
Each have duties of their own,
In the spheres they are controlling,
As the great spirit wills they should.
But not the least of all their duties
Is to hear our humble cry,
And convey it without waiting
To the spirit who is greatest,
And for this we´re very thankful.

We´ve had chiefs and teachers with us
Who were faithful, brave, and true,
And the lessons they have taught us
Our recorders oft´ repeat.
We have those who are inspired
And who tell us what they see,
And their teachings often cheer us,
And for this we´re very thankful.

We have warriors brave and skillful,
We have mothers good and true,
And their children are attentive
And with reverence seek to learn,
By each example set before them,
That they, too, may be respected,
And for this we´re very thankful.

We have wives who are devoted
And their husbands do adore them;
We have children born unto us,
Who with pride we look upon,
And who yet will make the nation
What it once has been before,
And for this we´re very thankful.

We have guardian spirits with us
Who, without our knowing guide us
Past much danger in our way,
And who often have enticed us
To the pleasures that we find;
Of the voice that speaks within us
We may learn which is our friend,
And for this we´re very thankful.

We have friends that have departed
To the life to us unknown;
While we grieve much as we miss them,
Yet we know they are progressing,
Nearer to the final station,
Where their knowledge will be perfect
And their happiness completed,
And for this we´re very thankful.

We belong unto a nation
Which now shattered, wrecked, and severed,
Still belongs to the Great Spirit,
Who announces us His own,
And has pointed out a highway
We may travel to his realm,
And for this we´re very thankful.

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9 Appendix

9.1 English Abstract

The history of indigenous nations in the United States is filled with tragedy and loss. However, it is also a story of great perseverance and strength demonstrated by many indigenous nations, such as the Lenape. Their story specifically was characterized by numerous relocations and migrations, with each move leading to new problems and difficult situations for them. However, their stories have helped them in sustaining their culture and keeping the community together. Interviews with Lenape individuals in different locations in the U.S. give valuable insight into the purpose, practice and preservation of their storytelling traditions today. Although for most Lenape the practice has changed considerably and their opinions on the best method of preservation differ, the purpose of stories and their importance for Lenape culture has not changed over time. Collecting oral histories within the Lenape culture supports positive actions towards raising awareness for indigenous cultures.

9.2 German Abstract

Nach Columbus‘ Auffassung Indien entdeckt zu haben, folgte ein jahrzehntelanger Völkermord an Amerikanischen Ureinwohnern in Nordamerika. Aufgrund zahlreicher Kriege, der Verbreitung von Krankheiten und der Entwendung von Land und Ressourcen nahm die Anzahl der indigenen Bevölkerung dramatisch ab. Dennoch schafften es viele Stämme zu überleben und ihre Kultur zu bewahren. Der Stamm der Lenape hatte seinen Hauptsitz an der Ostküste der USA, in den Bundesstaaten New York, New Jersey und Delaware. Über die Jahre zerbrachen sie in viele Eigengruppen und Formationen. Heute leben die meisten Lenape-Delaware auf einem Reservat in Oklahoma. Ihre Kultur und Eigenständigkeit zu behalten gelang ihnen durch ihre besondere Spiritualität und Traditionen. Vor allem die mündlichen Überlieferungen, welche die Essenz ihrer Kultur auf besondere Weise darstellen, hatten dabei eine besondere Rolle. Interviews mit einigen Lenape in verschiedenen Orten in den USA geben einen Einblick auf die Praxis und Bewahrung dieser besonderen Tradition heutzutage.

9.3 Lenape Creation Story

The Lenape Creation story as told by Robert Red Hawk, “Chief Bob”:

At one time everything was dark. There was nothing. But there was a spirit in that nothingness, and it would have remained that way, but the spirit fell asleep. As he slept, he dreamed. He dreamt of a world: mountains, sky, the ocean, all of the fish in the ocean, all the birds in the sky, all the trees, the deserts, all of the animals on the earth. He dreamed of man. He dreamed of ceremony: of people drumming and singing. But then, he awoke, and because it was just a dream, everything was still black. But because the seed had been planted in him, that dream, he started to manifest it.

The first thing he did was create helpers – spirits: the Grandfather of the North, the Grandfather of the East, the Grandmother of the South, and the Grandfather of the West. And they, in turn, put their dreams and thoughts into creating the Earth, the stars, the sun, and the heavens. They added their gifts, and more was created. And everything the Creator dreamed came true. And one of the last things that they did was dream a special tree – a shimmering tree. And from that root, the first man arose. The tree bent down and kissed the ground. And where it kissed the ground, the first woman came. And everything was good – everything was good and perfect, and everyone had a job from the creator.

Squirrels were given the task of collecting nuts and burying them to make trees grow. Deer were sent to go through the underbush and eat and make room so that the trees could grow. Man´s job was to take care of the earth – to be a caretaker of the land. As time went on, there was a great problem that arose among the people. There was a certain charm – it was the tooth of a giant naked bear. When you had this tooth, you could have lots of magic powers. The people started to fight each other over the tooth. They fought so hard and so long, that some of the people started moving. This is why we have different languages. But, when the creator saw what was happening, he sent a spirit being to help the people, Nanabush.

Nanabush went atop one of the mountains and started a fire. It was the first sacred fire that was ever made. From that fire, he sent up smoke. And all the people from all over saw that smoke, and they came to see what the smoke was. Nanabush reached down and came up with a stone. It was a soapstone. And from that soapstone he fashioned a bowl. And then he took from a branch of the sumac tree. He made a stem and fashioned that and put that together with the bowl. Then he reached down and the creator gave him a sacred plant. And they called it tobacco. Nanapush held that pipe up and told the people, “Whenever there´s discord, whenever you hold council, whenever you want to come together, and bring your minds together as one, take this tobacco, put it in a pipe, and smoke it. And that smoke will go into you and when you blow it out your thoughts your prayers will all intermingle together. And you´ll be able to make decisions that are right for everyone and everything.

Nanapush comes back into our stories a lot. One of them is an emergence story. As I told you before the people originally started fighting over the tooth of that naked bear but what happened was there was some evil spirits here. One of them was a giant toad. He was in charge of all the waters. There was also a giant snake. They started fighting over that tooth and the great frog ate the snake and ate the tooth. The snake jabbed him in the side and all those waters started coming out in a big flood. Nanapush again came and he saw everything was being destroyed. He came upon a mountain and he started gathering all the animals and sticking them in a sash. Eventually he got to the top of this mountain and there was a cedar tree. He started climbing the tree. As he climbed, he would snap cedar bows off and stick them in his belt. He got to the top and what he did was he took his bow and started plucking on his bow and he sang

a song and all the waters stopped rising. Then Nanapush asked of the animals, who will let me put all the cedar branches on top of you so that all the animals can go on top of you? And the turtle said, you can put them on me and I´ll float on the water and you can put the branches on me. So they did. That's why we call this land turtle island.

Then Nanapush said, "Well, we gotta make it a little bigger than it is – turtle´s only so big, even a snapping turtle´s only so big – so they had to go down and get some of the old earth under the water and put it up on top of the turtle. So first guy that goes down, the beaver, says I´m gonna go down. Beaver went all the way down. He comes up dead with no soil. Nanapush breathes some more life into him and brought him back to life. Then the bird nation came up and the loon said, "I wanna go down. I wanna go down and see if I can do it." Loon went down; he was down for a long time. He came back up dead. So Nanapush breathed into him. So finally, the little bitty muskrat said, "Let me try". So he went down. And poor little muskrat, he was down for the longest time, and he came up dead, but on his nose was some of the old earth. So he breathed into the little muskrat and they put the earth on the back of the turtle. And he told the muskrat he would always be blessed and his kind would always thrive in this land.

Then Nanapush took his bow out again and started singing a song. And as he sang the turtle´s back grew and grew so much that you couldn´t even see from one end to the other anymore. And it kept growing. Nanapush says I wonder how long we should let this turtle grow. I´m gonna send out each of the animals. He sent the bear out. Bear came back 2-3 days later and said, "OK I got to the edge." He sent the deer out. Deer came back two weeks later and said, "I made it to the edge." Finally, they sent the wolf. The wolf went. They waited for the wolf to come back. They waited months. They waited years. The wolf didn't come back. That´s how big the land got. In fact to this day wolves at night will often howl, and what they´re howling for is they´re calling for their ancestor who went off to see if he can find his way back home again. That´s the story of how the earth was first made and how the first pipe came to our people and how the first flood came and we re-emerged from the flood.

9.4 Interview Guidelines

Interview Questions

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Name:
2. Home (currently and where you are from):
3. Profession:
4. Native Background:
5. Role in Tribal Community:

PURPOSE OF STORYTELLING/ PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

1. Why is storytelling important for you personally and your tribal community?
2. What are your personal experiences with storytelling?
3. What is your favorite story and why? What messages does the story convey?

PRACTICE OF STORYTELLING

4. When is storytelling practiced in your tribal community?
   How does such a practice look like?
5. Who tells the stories? Is there a designated storyteller?
6. Did the storytelling tradition within your community change over the years?
   If yes, how and why?

PRESERVATION OF STORYTELLING

7. How exactly are your stories being preserved? Is there a storykeeper?
8. What is the best way to preserve them?
9. In your opinion, can non-native people learn from indigenous storytelling?
   If yes, what and how?
10. What is cultural appropriation for you and when does it start? How can it be avoided?
    (→Taking something from another culture and using it in a wrong way/without acknowledging the culture. For example: native storybooks by non-native authors with cartoon illustrations.)
11. Are the Lenape in Oklahoma/ Delaware/ Pennsylvania/ Canada very different from each other?
    Are you in touch with them?

9.5 Consent Forms Oral Histories

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH
(Oral History)

Project Title: Storytelling within the Lenape/Delaware
Researcher: Julia Streßler
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Jordan Biro Walters

Introduction:

You are being asked to take part in an oral history research study being conducted by Julia Streßler for a Diplomathesis (Master thesis) at the University of Vienna under the supervision of Dr. Jordan Biro Walters in the Department of History at the College of Wooster in Ohio, US. According to the Oral History Association, "oral history is a method of gathering and preserving historical information through recorded interviews with participants in past events and ways of life." You have been approached for an interview because you possess knowledge about storytelling within the Lenape/Delaware tribe and have a Lenape background.

Purpose:

The goal of this oral history project is to examine the oral tradition of storytelling within the Lenape/Delaware. The scope of this project will include the collection of oral histories with 10 Lenape individuals. In this way, I am hoping to collect information on the value of storytelling within the Lenape, its practice, purpose and preservation and what non-native people can learn from it.

Procedures:

The interview will take approximately 1 hour. During the interview you will be asked questions related to the Lenape/Delaware tribe, oral traditions, storytelling traditions and personal experiences with the before mentioned. The interview will be audio-taped and transcribed. The results of your interview will be used in the master thesis "Storytelling within the Lenape/Delaware".

Risks/Benefits:

The risks associated with participation in this interview are minimal. There are no direct benefits to you from participation, but your willingness to share your knowledge and experiences will contribute to historical knowledge.

Confidentiality:

You may check below to request anonymity, otherwise your name will be referenced in the transcript and audiotape and in any material generated as a result of this research. If you request anonymity, the tape of your interview will be closed to public use, and your name will not appear in the transcript or referenced in any material obtained from the interview.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. Even if you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the interview without penalty, or request confidentiality, at any point during the interview. You may also choose not to answer specific questions or discuss certain subjects during the interview or to ask that portions of our discussion or your responses not be recorded on tape.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have any questions about this research project or interview, feel free to contact Julia Streßler (jstressler@hotmail.com, jstressler@wooster.edu, +1 702 844 9067, 0043 650 4353201). You may also contact the faculty advisor Dr. Jordan Biro Walters (jbirowalters@wooster.edu).

Statement of Consent:

I agree to participate in this oral history interview, and to the use of this interview as described above. My preference regarding the use of my name is as follows:

✓ I agree to be identified by name in any transcript or reference to the information contained in this interview.

___ I wish to remain anonymous in any transcript or reference to the information contained in this interview.

Participant's Signature — Date: May 9, 2018

Researcher's Signature — Date: 5/12/2018

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Ann Dapice
Participant's Signature

4/12/18
Date

Julia Streßler
Researcher's Signature

4/20/18
Date

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[signature] 3/15/18

Participant's Signature Date

[signature] 3/20/18

Researcher's Signature Date

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[signature] 4-5-2018

Participant's Signature Date

Julia Streßler 4/10/2018

Researcher's Signature Date

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The goal of this oral history project is to examine the oral tradition of storytelling within the Lenape/Delaware. The scope of this project will include the collection of oral histories with 10 Lenape individuals. In this way, I am hoping to collect information on the value of storytelling within the Lenape, its practice, purpose and preservation and what non-native people can learn from it.

Procedures:

The interview will take approximately 1 hour. During the interview you will be asked questions related to the Lenape/Delaware tribe, oral traditions, storytelling traditions and personal experiences with the before mentioned. The interview will be audio-taped and transcribed. The results of your interview will be used in the master thesis "Storytelling within the Lenape/Delaware".

Risks/Benefits:

The risks associated with participation in this interview are minimal. There are no direct benefits to you from participation, but your willingness to share your knowledge and experiences will contribute to historical knowledge.

Confidentiality:

You may check below to request anonymity, otherwise your name will be referenced in the transcript and audiotape and in any material generated as a result of this research. If you request anonymity, the tape of your interview will be closed to public use, and your name will not appear in the transcript or referenced in any material obtained from the interview.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. Even if you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the interview without penalty, or request confidentiality, at any point during the interview. You may also choose not to answer specific questions or discuss certain subjects during the interview or to ask that portions of our discussion or your responses not be recorded on tape.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have any questions about this research project or interview, feel free to contact Julia Streßler (jstressler@hotmail.com, jstressler@wooster.edu, +1 702 844 9067, 0043 650 4353201). You may also contact the faculty advisor Dr. Jordan Biro Walters (jbirowalters@wooster.edu).

Statement of Consent:

I agree to participate in this oral history interview, and to the use of this interview as described above. My preference regarding the use of my name is as follows:

__✓__ I agree to be identified by name in any transcript or reference to the information contained in this interview.

___ I wish to remain anonymous in any transcript or reference to the information contained in this interview.

Participant's Signature — Date: 4-15-18

Researcher's Signature — Date: 4/15/18

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH
(Oral History)

Project Title: Storytelling within the Lenape/Delaware
Researcher: Julia Streßler
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Jordan Biro Walters

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