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***THE CONCEPT OF LAND IN  
THE COLONIZATION OF  
AMERICA***

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A Dissertation submitted in a partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the  
Master Degree in British and American Studies.

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## Dedicacions

I would like to dedicate this work to my parents, my brothers and sisters, my teachers, my friends. As I dedicate this work to the memory of my niece **Yasmine**.

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## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

Native Americans, Indians, Amerindians or Red skins are the indigenous people who had lived in North America for thousands of years before the arrival of the Europeans. These peoples are believed to have come to the Americas during the late Pleistocene epoch which dated from 1.6 million years to 10,000 years ago. Most historians believe that these peoples were the first inhabitants of North America who migrated from north eastern Asia.

Long before the arrival of the European settlers, Native Americans had developed many distinct cultures. There were many tribes in America and each tribe understood itself as a nation with its own culture and language that differ from the others. Native Americans had also developed and advanced economy and the tribes were trading between each other and some of them had some form of money. (Encarta 2009)

The existence of so many tribes and the development of many distinct cultures and languages made the Native American society a heterogeneous one. Although the culture and the language differ from one tribe to another, Native Americans shared a common understanding of the meaning and the behaviour of taking care of the land.

However the arrival of the European settlers to America during the late fifteenth century (1492), and the arrival of more settlers later, had decimated the life and had a harmful impact in the changing cultures of the Native Americans. The European settlers were hungry to acquire lands to make fortune, and they went to America with the concept of individualism and the desire to exploit all what nature offers. Such concepts as individualism, land ownership, etc was totally opposing the Native American culture. As a result of these opposed visions, Indians soon entered into conflicts with the Europeans, and suffered great losses.

After the Europeans had achieved their independence from Britain and formed the United States they desired to acquire more lands especially in the western territories which were not

yet settled. As a result of this, the United States government had injured the life of Native Americans. In the purpose of taking over the Indian lands, the federal government had enacted vicious means, following these means the Indians were forced to leave their homelands on the eastern coasts and were pushed to live in reservations.

This study is a critical description of the United States policy in its conquest in America which harmed the life of the Indian peoples, it is a historical and analytical study. The aim of this study is to show and discuss the tools used by the American government to take over the Indian lands. It also aims to show how the government acted through vicious means to trick the Indians. In addition it will show the results of this policy on the lives and cultures of the native Americas.

The choice of such a topic to study aims at contributing to make people aware of the policy of the United States which had nearly achieved the total extinction of Indians. It also aims at making people aware of the extinction of other peoples and civilizations like faced the civilization of the Maya.

The study will be based on some ideas of historians such as Brahim Harouni ideas in his *Teaching the Colonization of America in Algeria through an Intercultural Approach* (1999). Moreover the study will rely on Anthony Wallace's *The Long Bitter Trail* (1993) and Peter Iverson's ideas developed in his book *We Are Still Here* (1998). In addition to this, the study will rely on some archives of the American history such as *The Northwest Ordinance*.

The work will be divided into two chapters. The first chapter will give a historical insight on the origins of the Native American people and their social structure. Then, the chapter will discuss the impact of the arrival of the European settlers on the life and cultures of the Indians. At the end, it will deal with the contest of cultures between the Native American and the European settlers, which stands as the origin the conflict between the two

contrasting cultures and behaviours of the two peoples concerning lands and nature in general; to this the chapter will rely on Chief Seattle Speech delivered in 1885.

The second chapter will deal with the means and the tools used by the United States Government in its attempt to acquire and conquer the lands of Indians. The chapter will focus on the first means discussing the North West Ordinance and the Land Ordinance. Then it will discuss the policies of the Bureau of the Indian Affairs since its creation to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. After that, the chapter will discuss the policy of Andrew Jackson towards the Indian focussing on the Indian Removal Act of 1830. In addition, this chapter will analyse the enactment of the Dawes Act of 1887 and its consequences on the Indians. At the end, the chapter will speak about the Indian Reservations, and the Indian claims during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

## **CHAPTER ONE: A Historical Insight on the Indian Tribes: the Contact with the Europeans.**

Native Americans (American Indians, Amerindians, Indyans, and Injuns or Red skins) are indigenous peoples, who lived in America before the European colonization; some of these ethnic groups still exist. The name Indians was first used by Christopher Columbus, who mistakenly believed that the places he found were the islands of the Southeast Asia known to the Europeans as the Indies. These peoples had a distinct way of life, they had developed elaborate cultures. However these peoples had been persecuted and they had lost many things of their cultures with the arrival of the European colonists.

The aim of this chapter is to give a historical insight on the native people of North America who are believed to be just primitive people lacking any aspect of civilization. This chapter shows the real image of these peoples, and also shows the impact of the European colonists, together with that of the American government on the Native American cultures and life.

Firstly, this chapter discusses the origins and the history of the native people of the Americas, on the basis of the theories which deal with the ancestors of the major Native American tribes. Then, it demonstrates the social structure of the Native Americans showing the major tribal areas and the major features of each tribe. After that it deals with the arrival of the European colonist, contact with the Indians, and how they were decimated and damaged by the colonist. In addition, it shows the contest of cultures; the contrasting cultures and behaviors between the European colonists and the Native Americans which brought them to conflicts focusing on its consequences on the Native Americans. At last it discusses the obstacles of the cultural and the social heterogeneity on Indians.

### **A. The origins and the history of the Native American tribes**

Native Americans are widely believed to have come to the Americas during the Ice Age. However, this is not the only theory. Some archeologists believe that the migration consisted of seafaring tribes that moved along the coast, avoiding mountainous lands. Other researchers have assumed an original settlement by skilled navigators from Oceania, though these people are believed to be 'extinct'. Yet, another theory claims an early crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by people originated from Europe. 'Mormon tradition'<sup>1</sup> holds that the Native Americans represent one of the lost tribes of Israel; however this belief has no historical proof. Stories of many Indian tribes place them in North America from the beginning of time (Encarta 2009).

Based on anthropological evidence, at least three distinct migrations occurred. The first wave of immigrants came into a land populated by mammals of the late Pleistocene epoch<sup>2</sup>, including mammoths, horses and rhinoceroses. The Clovis culture provides one example of such immigrants. Later, there was the development of the Folsom culture based on the hunting of bison. The second wave of immigrants consisted of the Athabaskan people, including the ancestors of the Apaches and Navajos; the third wave consisted of the Intuits, the Yupik, and the Aleuts. The Athabaskan peoples generally lived in Alaska and Western Canada but some of them migrated to the south as far as California in the American southwest. The third wave of immigrants are so ethnically distinct from the other indigenous inhabitants of the Americas that they are not included in the terms 'American Indians' or 'First nation' (Hine 5).

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<sup>1</sup> -a religious thought formed by Joseph Smith in the US in 1830, officially called 'the church of Jesus Christ of latter-day Saints.'

<sup>2</sup> -Geology denoting the first epoch of the Quaternary period (between the Pliocene and Holocene epochs, from 1.64million to about 10,000years ago), a time which included the ice ages and the appearance of humans.

## **B. The social structure of Native Americans**

The European Americans use words such as ‘savages’, ‘primitives’, or ‘uncivilized’ people to describe the Native Americans, and the media played an important role especially the American movies. However, history shows that the Indians had established their own civilization and developed distinct cultures and languages. The Indians also had a distinct social structure comparing it to the European one. Long before the settlement of the Europeans in the Americas, there were many Indian tribes and each tribe functioned as a nation. The Indians had developed an advanced economy and an effective political system. Despite the social and cultural heterogeneity, the Indians had a common belief and understanding of the notion of land and nature in general.

Centuries before the arrival of the Europeans, there were more than one million of Native Americans living in the east of the Mississippi River and south of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River valley. This region was so vast and it consisted of large fertile lands and big forests. The people living in this region were divided into dozens of tribes; each of these tribes had its own language. But despite the difference in the language, these tribes share a common and basic characteristic which is an economy based on growing corn and some other vegetables in addition to hunting.

The southern tribes, in particular the Cherokees, the Choctaws, the Chickasaws, and the Creeks who were living between the Ohio River and the Gulf of Mexico, had more urbanized populations, with more organized ceremonies, and more attractive architecture than the northern tribes (Wallace 7).

The eastern part of the United States was covered by big forests in ‘aboriginal times’<sup>3</sup>. It represents now the states of Florida, Louisiana and the coastal areas of Georgia, Alabama,

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<sup>3</sup> -Inhabiting or existing in an area from the earliest times or before the arrival of the colonists.

and Mississippi. In the north of this region, there were lots of 'broadleaves and evergreen species'. East of the Mississippi, in what is now Illinois, there were 'intruded prairies', and an eastern extension of sea that spread over much of the lands west of the big river. In this great forested region, and along the edges of rivers and lakes, there were numerous 'meadows'. For a hundreds of years before the arrival of the European colonists, Native Americans had built their villages in these areas and they managed to plant corn and other vegetables; they hunted, fished, and gathered wild fruits (Catlin 124 -25).

The basic characteristic of the social and the 'subsistence' unit throughout the eastern areas was the village. Each village was composed of a number of communal houses, and each was occupied by a number of families. Another social characteristic of the tribes of the eastern areas of the United States was that most activities were done by women; they cultivated the land around the houses, planted together with the other clans, and harvested corn; squash and beans which were called 'the three sisters'. In addition to this, women were preparing food, making clothes and also making poetry (Wallace 17-18).

Concerning the western areas of the Americas, historians agree that all the Native Americans were nomadic. They were different from other nomadic people; they searched widely for their food. These populations used to fish and they used to get huge amounts of fish, they established an elaborate style of fishing; they made an enclosure of water as a trap for fish which is weirs. In this case an early French visitor to the Florida coast wrote:

Made in the water with great reeds so well and cunningly set together, after the fashion of a labyrinth or maze, with so many turns or crooks, as it is impossible to do with more cunning or industry. (Hine 6)

Across the continent, in the northwest pacific coast, there were people whose life was based on the fishing of salmon. They caught great quantities of salmon which enabled the

peoples of the coast such as the Kwakiutls, Haidas, and Tlingits to establish a rich and elegant 'material culture', including clan houses with painted wood, and they made sophisticated clothes of wool. These clans were powerful; they had powerful warriors who were feared by others. In the southwest, there were other peoples. They were mostly farmers and they kept fertile lands. They planted native plants such as corn bean and squash (O'Callaghan 7).

Politically speaking, to control the activities of people, that is to say to design the responsibilities and the rights of people, Native American people have a specific and organized political system which managed to govern people fairly. The tribes designed a chief who most of time was an elder man and all the people took in consideration his suggestions.

The farming demands elaborate institutions to help dealing with planting, harvesting, and storage, as far as fishing is concerned. Tribal government was headed by elder chiefs and councils; not by the 'foragers'. The Indians developed sophisticated systems that elaborated rights and specified the ways to resolve problems. The families lived in the clans with different social, political, or ritual responsibilities, and all the clans that shared the same language, they had the same identity and were grouped into tribes. To the Europeans, Indian tribes seemed like independent states, and they called them Indian nations (Hooker no page).

Thus it is clear that before the arrival of the Europeans in America, Indians had their social, economic and political organizations. Certainly the Indian ways were different from those of the Europeans however they permitted them to live in piece and to prosper. Of course this stands against what some American history books say.

### **C. The arrival of the Europeans**

Historians argued that the Indians had welcomed some of the first European colonist in the beginning of the European colonization of America and they helped them to integrate in the new world. According to Clack, the first Europeans who arrived in Virginia were totally

exhausted. Indians taught them how to plant native plants such as corn, squash, and beans as far as they also helped them to build houses, however the arrival of more Europeans harmed the Indians and brought them into conflicts (7-8).

It is obvious that the European colonization of the Americas changed the life and the cultures of the Native Americans. From the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries the Indians were decimated by the privations, disease, and in many cases by warfare with the European groups. These latter were searching for fortune and better life. To this purpose, they used all the necessary means to get their needs and did not hesitate commit genocides on the Native Americans. Many Indians were killed and the survivals had been persecuted; they lost their homelands.

When the Europeans came to the Americas in the fifteenth century, they brought with them horses. This kind of animals existed before in the American continent however they disappeared at the end of the ice age. Many groups of horses escaped from their owners and increased in number in the wild. As a result, the reintroduction of the horse had a severe impact on the Native American cultures in the Great Plains since it enabled some tribes to expand their territories (Encarta 2009).

The Europeans also brought with them diseases. These diseases such as chicken pox and measles touched rarely Europeans, but they were fatal to Native Americans because they have no resistance to them since they did not experience them before. Some times the Europeans did it intentionally and it was a secret weapon used by the European invaders of the new world. Some diseases like small pox were deadly to Indians and they destroyed entire villages. Some historians have argued that more than eighty percent of some Indian populations have died because of the diseases brought by the Europeans; to this the Indians sang:

There was then no sickness.

They had then no aching bones.

They had then no high fever.

They had then no smallpox.

They had then no burning chest.

They had then no abdominal pains.

They had then no consumption.

They had then no headache.

At that time the course of humanity was orderly.

The foreigners made it otherwise when they arrived here. (Hine 27)

This sang shows to what extent the Indians were harmed by the European tricks, and demonstrates the European character using all the means, even non human means, in order to succeed in his conquest.

Before the American Revolution, many bloody conflicts took place between the Indians and the Europeans such as the confrontation of New Hampshire in February, 1725 where the Indians suffered great losses. But the famous massacres were the Wyoming massacre and the Cherry Valley massacre which occurred in 1788; that is to say after the achievement of independence knowing that four nations of the Iroquois confederacy sided with the British and the Tories of the American revolutionary war. In 1799, Congress sent Major General John Sullivan to destroy the Iroquois threat to the American side. After that, the Indians lost their lands of Massachusetts and the tribes were pushed to reservations or sent westward (Hine 100-01).

The European invaders of the Americas had worsened the life of the native peoples of the continent. Despite the fact that the Native Americans struggled against the colonists, they had always lost. However the European colonists managed to establish their “country” in America. This did not stop here; the European Americans continued their conquest westward and the Native Americans suffered more and more.

#### **D. The contest of cultures**

With the arrival of more and more Europeans to America, more and more conflicts aroused between the Europeans and the Native Americans. The contrasting cultures between the two populations were the origins of the conflicts. There was a contrasting ideal of life between them; they had different beliefs and behaviors toward nature in general and toward the concept of land in particular. The Europeans came to the new world with the principles of the ‘corrupted world’. Individualism and private property are examples of the white man toward lands which were available in America with fertility and great estates. Such principles were strange to the Native Americans who had a tribal ownership of the land. The Indians also consider the land and nature in general as sacred things and they had a respect view toward it; and the white man represents danger and destruction for the universe.

In his speech delivered in 1885 after signing a treaty between the Indians and the US government, Seattle who was an Indian chief asserted the suffering of his people who were persecuted by the respectfulness of the white toward the Indian culture and way of life. He also showed the strong desire of the white man to get the Indian lands, and he asserted the Indian position against the destruction of nature:

The Great Chief in Washington sends words that he wishes to buy our lands. The great chief also sends words of friendship and good will. He has little need of our friendship in return. But we will

consider your offer, for we know if we do not so, the white man may come with guns and take our lands.

How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. Yet we do not own the freshness of the air or the sparkle of the water. How can you buy them from us? We will decide in our time. Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine is needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark trees, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory of my people.

We know the white man does not understand our ways. One portion of the earth is the same to him as the next? For he is the stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother, but enemy, and when he has conquered it, he moves on. He leaves his father's graves, and his children's birth is forgotten. The sight of our cities pains the eyes of the Redman.

There is no quiet place in the white man cities. No place to hear the leaves of spring or the rustle of the insect's wings. And what is there to life if a man cannot hear the lovely cry of the whippoorwill or the arguments of the frogs around a pond at night? The Indian prefer the soft sound of the wind darting on the surface of the pond, and the smell of the wind itself cleansed by the mid-day rain, or scented with a pinon pine. For all things share the same breath-the beasts the trees the man. The white man does not seem to notice the air he breathes. Like a man dying for many days, he is numb to the stench.

If I decided to accept, I will make one condition. The white man must treat this land as his brothers. I am a savage and I do not understand any other way. I have seen a thousand rotting buffaloes on the prairies left by the white man who shot them from a passing train. I am a savage and I do not understand how the smoking iron horse can be more important than the buffalo that we kill only to stay alive. What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from great loneliness of spirit, for what ever happens to the beasts also happens to man. All things are connected.

Our children have seen their fathers humbled in defeat. And after defeat, they turned their days in idleness and contaminate their bodies with sweet food and strong drink. It matters little where we

pass the rest of our days-they are not many. One thing we know which the white man may one discover. Our God is the same God. You may think now that own Him as you wish to own our land. But you cannot. He is the body of man. This earth is precious to Him and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its Creator. The white man, too, shall pass-perhaps sooner than other tribes. Continue to contaminate your bed and you will one night suffocate in your own waste. When the buffaloes are all slaughtered, the wild horses all tamed, and the secret corners of the forest heavy with the scent of many men, and the views of the ripe hills blotted by talking wires, where is the thicket? Gone. Where is the eagle? Gone.

We might understand if we knew what the white man dreams, what hopes he describes to his children on long winter nights, what visions he burns into their minds. If we agree, it will be to secure your reservation you have promised. There perhaps we may live out our earth, and the memory is only a shadow of a cloud moving across the prairies, these shores and forests will still hold the spirit of my people, for they love this earth as the new born loves its mother's heartbeat. If we sell you our land, love it as we have loved it. Care for it, as we have cared for it; hold in your mind the memory of the land as it is when you take it. And with all your strength, with all your might, with all your heart- preserve it for your children, and love it as God loves us all. One thing we know our God is the same. This earth is precious to Him. Even the white man cannot exempt from the common destiny. (Harouni 134-35)

This speech of course shows the contrasting beliefs between the Redman and the Whiteman as far as the real motives of the European colonists to acquire lands. To this Harouni, who is a professor at the University of Constantine had argued that the groups of European settlers who arrived in America primarily motivated by the desire to acquire land property for exclusive individual exploitation. Their relationship to land is primarily a relationship of exploitation and profit making, based on the European view that land is a commodity to be conquered, owned, sold, and extensively exploited to make profit, stood against that of Native Americans. The latter had a cosmic view of the world based on the belief that Mother Earth is a gift of the Great Spirit to all beings including animals and plants. The Indians looked at nature with great respect and took from it what they themselves needed.

The encounter of Native Americans with Europeans holding opposed and conflicting views and relationships to land brought about conflicts, resistance, bloody clashes and eventually ended with the exclusion of the native populations of America from their traditional lands (Harouni 131)

Chief Seattle speech demonstrated the Indian religious beliefs; Seattle used words and expressions such as Great Spirit and Mother Earth, and he showed the white man plans to get the Indian lands using different means. The Indians believed that land is sacred and it is given as a present by the nature; Mother Earth is a gift of the Great Spirit, and all beings have the right to take advantage from it including animals and plants are concerned. The speech shows how the Indians respect nature and which is their source of wellbeing. It is impossible to accept the idea of selling land since the ‘the freshness of the air’ or the sparkle of water’ does not belong to them, it belongs to the Great Spirit and every thing of these items had a great place in the Indian beliefs.

Chief Seattle also criticized ironically the white man presence and his behavior toward the Great Spirit. He asserted ‘for he is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs’, the white man is portrayed as a thief and a danger, and his way of life is hated by the Redman. At the end Chief Seattle suggests to the white men that even if the Indians accepted to sell them the land, they must respect and take care of it as the Indian did.

Indeed, the prophetic speech of Chief Seattle shows how the Native American people are religious, and the speech express a turning point in the life and the history of the Native Americans.

Emily Cousins in her article entitled “Native American relationships with sacred lands” had demonstrated the main aspects of the cultural aspects of the Native Americans,

especially how they regarded lands and nature in general. She had also discussed the behavior of the non- Americans or the European Americans towards the lands which she shows was totally the opposite of the view of the Native American one. She argued that the native Americans used words such as “mother earth” and “great spirit”, and expression like “the black hills are our holly land” when they tried to explain their views concerning the sacred land.

These words and expressions are the main signs that show the cultural aspects of the Native Americans concerning the land and nature in general. Native Americans respect the land which they consider as a present offered by nature or “the great spirit” to all beings including animals and plants.

The great respect that Native Americans gave to nature, lands, mountains, plants, and animals was the main aspect that characterized the cultures and the religious beliefs, especially the Native American tribes living in the mountains. All the components of nature are closely related to their spiritual life, and show their relationships to the world around them.

To this case, one Native American chief explained:

Here’s what the old people tell us. The mountains, the air, the water, the wind, the rock, the wood, every thing in the ecology-we use every bit of the ecology in our religious ceremonies. These things; wind, air, mountains, water, rock, Indian religion are connected. Whenever we do the ceremonies, we gather all that stuff. That’s the reason why they are so powerful. (Ibid)

The Indians believed that if the components of nature should be protected, and if man tried to investigate and exploit nature, it would only destroy it. For instance if the trees were cut, nature would suffer and animals and plants would also suffer. The Indians did not

cultivate all the lands that they live on because they believe that if they cultivate the land, they harm it since they had a great respect toward it; they called it “Mother Earth”.

This Indian belief and attitude is well illustrated by Don Good Voice who was a Chippewa-Cree tribal member. He said:

It is life when you make medicine to cure someone. If you are missing one ingredient it won't work that is how it is with the sweet grass hills. Our medicine ceremonies, prayers- without the hills more of it will be as effective. (Ibid)

Through the words of Don Good Voice, it is clear that the Native American life style was typical, and their relationships to nature was different compared to the views of the Non-Americans who have a harmful impact on nature and contribute to the destruction of the native American culture and life.

Native Americans used words such as “the sacred lands” in order to protect their lands from the non-Americans or the American government who had an opposite view towards nature and lands in particular comparing to the views of the Native Americans. The Indians had defined geography through myths and ritual ceremonies.

On the contrary, the non-native Americans consider the Native Americans or the Indians, as they call them, as peoples who have strange spirits since they see the land and the nature as sacred. The Non -natives do not respect the Indians' relationship to land. They saw the land as a property and a source of prosperity; it is by cultivating the land that men can prosper and make fortune. The Non-Native Americans who had come to America from Europe brought with them the concept of individualism which announces the right to private ownership of lands. Another important aspect is that the Non- Native Americans embodied a Christian belief that gave them the right to control and dominate nature (Johnson 127).

As result of the contrasting cultures and views of the Native Americans and the non-natives in dealing with the issue of land, the two groups entered into conflicts and warfares. The Non-Natives wanted to acquire the lands in order to fence for private use and cultivation to advance their economy; and Native Americans wanted to fight to protect their traditional lands. Unfortunately the Non-Americans and the American governments succeeded in taking over many parts of the Native American lands. The latter were pushed to live in reservations that were far of their home lands.

### **E. The social and cultural heterogeneity of Indians**

There was an important social and cultural heterogeneity that characterized the Native American society. Long before the arrival of the European settlers came to America, the Native Americans had established several and distinct cultures, and they had also several languages. This cultural diversity contributed to the existence of so many clans which were seen later on by the Europeans “Nations”. These nations were divided linguistically, that is to say all the tribes that had a common language belonged to a common clan. However, the heterogeneity and the diversity that existed in the Native American society were of two edged sword. It had caused many conflicts between the Native American clans.

For instance, warfare was a well known fact which characterized the life of the Iroquois and the Algonquian Indians of the northeast. These two clans were fighting one another because of their cultural and religious differentiations; they fought one another for the way and the manner in which a man wear, and the warrior fought to take the hair of his enemy in order to gain a spiritual power (Hine 41-42).

The social and cultural heterogeneity of the Native American clans and the conflicts that were caused by the difference in the cultures of the tribes made it difficult for the Native Americans to unite themselves when they faced a common problems and issues. The main

problem that all the Native American clans had faced was the European colonialism of the Americas where they managed to establish their permanent country. After that the United States of America had a great impact in the breaking down of the social structure of the Native Americans who could not unify themselves in facing such problem.

The Europeans when they explored the Americas, they used all the means that helped them to live there establishing their own way of life. Of course they had injured the life and the cultures of the Native Americans. The latter had revolted and fought against the Europeans in order to survive and restore their cultures and lands, they entered in much bloody warfare with the settlers. However they did not manage to expel them, in the contrary it was the European settlers who succeeded in acquiring the lands because the Native Americans could not unify their efforts.

The European settlers of course had benefited from the difficulty of the Native American tribes to unite themselves. They succeeded in establishing their home country in the new world; they acquired thirteen colonies. The European colonists had established the thirteen colonies despite the pressure and the impact of their mother country; they managed to unify all the colonies in the fighting against their mother country to achieve their independence.

All the colonists were influenced by Thomas Jefferson. The latter, when he wrote the Declaration of Independence in 1776, he succeeded to unite all the colonists to fight for their freedom by using words such as Life Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. As a result of this union, they won the war of the revolution and they got freedom from the mother country which was controlling the economic activities of the colonists.

After the colonists had achieved their independence and established their country, the United States government had claimed the “right to conquest”. The Americans wanted from this to expand beyond the borders or the frontiers. They believed that through the expansion, they

would gain and acquire more and more lands which would enable them to advance the United States economy and would give the Americans the opportunity to prosper and make wealth.

When the United States government expanded to the new territories, they followed and adopted all the necessary means to succeed for the conquest. The new territories were inhabited by many Native American tribes who had large part of fertile lands. These Native American tribes were decimated by the tools used by the American government to take over their lands; many Native Americans were slaughtered and others were forced to leave their homelands.

Indeed the Native Americans had had tried to react against the American government and they claimed for their right especially the right to restore their lands which represents for them the source of their beliefs. They entered many war fares with the American government but they most of times failed and caused them the loss of more and more territories. The Native Americans ware in need to unify all the clans and the tribes in order to face the tricks of the American government, the thing which was difficult if it is not possible to realize.

For instance, at the battle that occurred at the Maumee valley in Ohio in in1790 some Indian Tribes succeeded to defeat the American army. But four years later the American Government sent more organized troops to revenge headed by general “Mad Anthony” Wayne. The latter succeeded to destroy the Native American warriors at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. The result of the defeat was harm on the Native American tribes who were forced to leave their territories in the hands of the United States (Wallace 27).

One of the reasons of the losses that occurred to the Native American people in the wars against the United States was the fact that the Indian tribes did not unify their efforts; however the American government always sent big army to deal with the battles against the Indians. To this one Iroquois chief to say

The Indians east of the Appalachians had lost their lands because they fought one another instead of uniting against the Europeans. The Americans, by contrast had succeed because of the unanimity they were prudent enough to preserve consequently, and none of the divided efforts of our ancestors to oppose them had any effect (Hine 119).

These words demonstrate the difficulty of the Native American tribes to unify themselves. Because of the distinct cultures and languages the Indians fought one another instead of uniting themselves to fight against the Americans who had decimated them and took over their lands.

To conclude, it is apparent that the native people of North America were the Indians. These peoples had important cultural and social values and a distinct way of life, this way of life was different from the European one. The Indians were living in tribes and they had many languages. The tribes were divided linguistically which made the Indian society heterogeneous. In spite of this heterogeneity, all the Indians share a common belief toward the notion of land and nature in general.

However the Indian cultures and life style changed with the arrival of the European colonists; and the Indians suffered more and more since the Europeans had established themselves in America.

The coming chapter will show and discuss the means and the tools followed by the American governments to take over the Indian lands; It will show the impact of these tools on the Indians, and also how they were relocated and obliged to leave their homelands.

## **CHAPTER TWO: the American Policy toward the Indians: the Means Used in Taking over the Indian Lands.**

When the European settlers achieved their independence and established themselves in the United States which is equivalent to five hundred million acres of lands. The character of the new American citizens was influenced by the ideals that shaped the American constitution such as life liberty and the pursuit of happiness. These Americans also were “hungry” of lands, and their desire to acquire lands grew more and more in order to prosper and make fortune. So the idea of expansion was American attitudes which emerged to search and expand new territories. The new territories especially the western ones were very large, they covered more than to hundred million acres. However these areas belong to the Native Americans with many tribes living on them.

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the policy of the federal government dealing with the Indian affairs and to focus on how the United States government succeeded in acquiring the Native American lands, and to discuss the means, the tools or the tricks that the American government used to seize the lands of Native Americans. In addition the chapter also will show the consequences of the American policy on the Native American tribes.

This chapter begins by discussing the American Policy toward the Indians during the eighteenth century; it also explains the first American tools used to take over the Native American lands in the post independence period basing on The Land Ordinance and the Articles of Confederation which had an important impact on the Native American life; and they destroyed their social structure. Then, it shows the results of the Northwest Ordinance, enacted in 1787, which changed the life of the Native Americans in the Northwest Territories and helped the Americans to gain more lands.

After that, the chapter will deal with the policy of the federal government towards the Native Americans during the nineteenth century. It will analyse the policy of President Andrew Jackson toward the Native Americans focusing mainly on the Indian Removal Act that he approved in 1830 which shows how the Indians were pushed to remove away far from their homelands.

At the end, the chapter will deal with the Dawes Act of 1887. Indeed the Dawes Act had harmed the Native Americans as the other acts did, but the Dawes Act was more vicious since it aimed at breaking the Indian views toward lands which enabled the government to cheat the Indian lands.

#### **A. The first tricks of the American government against the Indians**

The Americans were greatly influenced by the ideals of the American Declaration of Independence and the constitution such as “Life”, “Liberty”, and “the pursuit of Happiness”. The colonists were in America because of their desire to acquire lands in order to prosper and make profit.

After the independence of the thirteen colonies, the American government claimed the “Right of Conquest”. The Right of Conquest announced that the American government and the American citizens in general had the right to go and expand beyond the borders or the frontiers especially expanding westward to control and exploit all lands west of the Mississippi. So Native Americans were victims of the American policies since they lost great parts of their lands and they were forced to leave their homes.

Hine argued that the American government had taken over large part of the Native American lands in the western territories, even the lands of the tribes who were their allies during the war of independence. He argued that “the Right of Conquest” claimed by the American government motivated the Americans to expand and to take over the Indian lands.

To achieve this goal, the Confederation Congress had forced the Iroquois Indians to sign a treaty called the treaty of Fort Stanwix by which the Iroquois were obliged to abandon many parts of their homelands; after that the Iroquois under their chief Josef Brant escaped to Canada where they created their separate confederacies (105).

A year after signing the treaty of Fort Stanwix, the American Government was continuing the policy of taking over the Native Americans' lands. Now it was the turn of the Ohio Indians to be the victims and also the Indians who helped the colonists during the revolution like the Oneidas and the Tuscoraras. The latter were promised that their lands would be protected by the state, but they were betrayed by the state after the Revolution and were forced to leave their homelands as happened to other Indian tribes before (ibid).

After the phase of tribal lands confiscation, the American government devised new means to deal with the division and the distribution of the lands in the new States. To this, the government had passed the Land Ordinance in 1785 which announced the way the lands should be distributed.

The Land Ordinance announced that the lands would be divided into "township" of six mile square, and each township divided into thirty six square mile sections, and each section also divided into small sections of forty acres in order to give it to farmers (Encarta 2009).

So, the Land Ordinance had divided the lands into small areas and adopted the principle of private ownership of land, the idea which had an impact on the Indian tribes since they did not experienced such divisions and the land did not belong to individuals but to the whole tribe.

These facts showed how the Federal Government had mistreated the native Americans, the treaties signed and the other tricks followed by the federal government had cost the Native Americans too much; they not only cost them the loss of their lands but they

also led to the destruction and the change of their cultures. These means had also pushed the Indians to engage in much bloody warfare, but they most of time were the losers.

One other means adopted by the United States government to take over the Indian lands was the ratification of the Articles of Confederation since there were some states under the control of the government. As a result of the ratification, the states were given more freedom and opportunities neglecting of course rights of the Native Americans.

McKeever argued that the Articles of Confederation were the first constitution of the United States of America and they represented the soul of the war of independence. But in the post independence era, there were developments in the American society, many Americans claimed the ratification of the Articles of Confederation to function for the benefit of all the citizens. In fact the articles were ratified and began in operation in 1789 (15).

The ratification of the Articles of Confederation gave the opportunity for the Americans to acquire the western lands which the Indians had not exploited and the Congress claimed that these lands were available for use by Americans, to this they claimed:

These lands are disposed for the benefit of the United States, and be settled and formed into distinct Republican States which shall become members of the Federal Union, and have the same rights of sovereignty, freedom and independence as other states (Hine 10).

The ratification of the Articles of Confederation dealt with the Americans and how to unite them in a federal government. They granted the rights to the states and neglected the rights of Native Americans; on the contrary the ratification made them lose their lands.

In the 1790s, the Federal Government had issued other legislation to seize the Native Americans' lands in order not only to pay the soldiers and the debts of the war, but also to advance the economy and make wealth. To this the federal government had elaborated the code of transaction of lands consisting in buying and selling the lands adopting strict and

vicious licenses and charters. These actions had helped the Americans to prosper but had damaged the Indians because they had never used these kinds of papers. What existed in the Indian society is known as tribal land ownership. The status of land in the Indian societies had always been tribal and individual Indians did not have land property documents.

Wallace, who is a professor of history and anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, demonstrates that after the American Revolution, the Indians were under the pressure of the Federal Government that wanted to take over the Indian lands in order to pay debts of the War and to move on the economy. The government had given charters to private land companies to get lands. Between 1786 and 1788, the Iroquois were forced to sell their lands situated in Genesee River to the Holland Land Company. There were also large lands between the Genesee River and the Lake Erie which the company had bought from the Senecas in 1797. The Senecas still had several reservations, but they were purchased and kept later on by the Ogden Land Company (30).

In addition to charters given to the private land companies to buy the Indian lands, the Federal Government had issued a strict system of licenses that pushed the Indians to go away and let their lands in the hands of the new Americans. The Intercourse Act was the best example of these licenses. The Intercourse Act was enacted in 1790 and revived in the nineteenth century. The Indians received penalties to put them under pressure (Ibid 34).

Indeed such systems applied by the American Government were not welcomed by the Indian tribes because these systems opposed their principles and their social structure. As a result they were forced to move to farther reservations leaving room to new waves of European immigrants.

According to Wallace, the Northwest Ordinance was an attempt of the American government to establish a government in the areas of the Ohio River and east of the

Mississippi. The American government also had “financial obligations” such as paying the wages of soldiers of the revolution. So, from enacting the Northwest Ordinance, the American government had paid the soldiers with Lands and had also sold lands to other businessmen who were “hungry” of lands (26).

As a reaction, the Native Americans of the Northwest Territory claimed their lands, they claimed also their lands taken from them in the post war period by the American government. Joseph Brant who was the Iroquois leader had formed a confederation of the northwest tribes in order to resist and react against the American government.

As a result, the American government used military force against the Native Americans. At the beginning of confrontations, exactly in 1790, the Indians succeeded in defeating the American army in the Maumee Valley in Ohio. A year after, an Indian force succeeded in destroying a great part in the American army under the command General Arthur St. Clair in Wabash River in Indiana. As a result of this, the American forces had lost more than six hundred soldiers and more than a thousand soldiers had fled from the United States Army (Wallace 27).

In 1794, the American government brought a well and better organized army led by General “Mad Anthony” Wayne. This American army succeeded in defeat the Indian warriors in Ohio at the battle of Fallen Timbers. A year later, a treaty was signed between the American government and the Indian confederation by which the Indian tribes were obliged to leave the lands of Ohio to the United States (Ibid).

One thing is sure, the Native Americans were defeated most of times and all the treaties signed with the American government obliged Indians to leave their homelands. The problem here did not only rise in the American government attitude toward Native Americans, but also in the Indians themselves. The social heterogeneity of the Native

Americans had an impact on their losses since they did not unite their effort because of their cultural and linguistic diversity; where as the British colonies could unite themselves during the revolution.

After being defeated in wars and suffered from the effects of the treaties, Native Americans of the west lived under the control and the domination of the American government. The federal government aimed to break the social structure of the Native Americans so as they would be easily controlled and dominated. One of the tricks used was the ‘assimilation’<sup>4</sup> of Indians; that is to say, to oblige the Indians to adopt the European or the American values and way of life and abandon their traditional values. By adopting such policies, the government wanted to oblige the Indians to leave their homelands and removed far (Hine 123).

The American government claimed that this attempt was to civilize Native American tribes. Indeed, some Indians were influenced and they were converted to Christianity and they adopted the American way of life, but these Indians were few, whereas the Indians who remained faithful to their traditional values were living in despair loosing their properties and they were pushed to reservations (Ibid).

## **B. The Bureau of Indian Affairs**

American Policy is illustrated by the laws and the operations that were developed and enacted in the United States by the federal government. The federal government by enacting laws wanted to set and plan the relationship of the American government and the Native Americans. When the United States of America became an independent country, it adopted European policies dealing with the Native American Affairs. But as time passed, the United

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<sup>4</sup> -The concept of assimilation concerns the policy of the United States issued in the purpose of converting the Native American tribes. This policy aims at the destruction of the social structure of Native Americans who were considered by the American government as dangerous nations and a menace to the development and the advance of the American citizens.

States had changed its policies towards the Native American peoples because of the changes that were occurring in the country.

In 1824, the United States had created the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The latter had been created by the secretary of war named John C. Calhoun. The Bureau was created in order to deal with Native American affairs; its concern was the cooperation with the United States Army in the purpose of enforcing the federal policies. By the creation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the federal government claimed that it recognized the existence of the Native Americans; thus Native Americans had a self governing body and were sovereign nations. The federal government had claimed the recognition of these nations as independent communities with their cultural diversity and their identities.

However, the federal government had adopted laws which aimed at mistreating and discriminating the Native Americans way of life. The majority of the laws and the policies that the United States government had issued, attempted at the destruction of the social structure of the Native Americans. The laws and the policies aimed at forcing the Native Americans to abandon their cultural identity. This was known as the policy of assimilation. The assimilation of the Indians into the American culture would force them to give up their lands; and thus the federal government will have the control over these lands.

In the 1830s, the policies of the federal government had changed dramatically towards the relations with the Native American Tribes. The American government under the Presidency of Andrew Jackson viewed that the Native American tribes as the main obstacles that faced the American conquest or expansion. The Federal Government enacted the Indian Removal Act which aimed at removing the Native American tribes from their home lands pushing them to the farther areas. As a result many Native tribes were relocated to the West of the Mississippi River.

In the mid 1840s, the American Congress had changed the direction of the bureau of the Indian Affairs from the Department of the War to the Department of Interior which was a new department. The Federal government had created the system of reservations. They enacted treaties with the Native American tribes in order to force them to settle in the reservations but giving the tribes the chance to live with their traditional way of life. However, the Bureau of Indian Affairs could not function because of the Civil War. Many tribes were forced by the government to participate in the war, and when the war ended, the bureau followed a new policy. The policy followed by the Federal Government aimed at the destruction of the tribal governments in order to assimilate the Native American peoples and forcing them to adopt the American values. (Encarta 2009)

All the policies and the means followed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs had an impact of the Native American people. They were relocated and pushed to leave far from their traditional lands. These lands became in the hands of the United States.

The American Government continued through the Bureau of Indian Affairs in policies in destroying the Native American cultural identities and taking over the Native American lands, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century. At that time, all the American policies were influenced by the desire to expand westward.

The passing of the General Allotment Act in 1887 was the best example that shapes the federal government policy toward the Native American tribe

Through the allotments, the bureau was directed to break the cultural Native American ownership of land. That is to say, the bureau was charged to divide the lands into allotments and distribute them to individuals so as the United States would gain and take over more of the Native American lands (O'Brien no pag).

The efforts of the allotment act in the following years had harmed the Native Americans. The bureau had succeeded to take over more than seven million acres. This policy had reduced the Native American land from one hundred thirty million acres to forty eight million (Ibid).

During the twentieth century, precisely in 1930, the Bureau of Indian Affairs was headed by John Collier who was a social worker. The latter was a person who had knowledge about the Native American tribes; he had a great respect of the Native American cultures and values.

John Collier had tried to improve the Native American people's life. He had succeeded to give up the division and the distribution of Native American lands. He had, also, issued money programs in the purpose of improving the Native American education which were supported by the reforms of the president Franklin D. Roosevelt. The reform of Roosevelt was known as "the New Deal", which was a policy that aimed at improving the living conditions of the Americans during the 1930's which were the years of the Great Depression. Collier had also tried to preserve and restore the tribal political authority by enacting the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934. However, the policies and the attempts of John Collier to improve the Native Americans' life, and restore their tribal cultures were not welcomed by the American public. Collier was greatly criticized.

In the late 1940s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs had come back to the policy of assimilation of the Native American tribes.

In 1948, a commission gave a report to congress by which they stated that the assimilation of the Native American people into in the American society must be set again. Through the revival of the policy of assimilation, the United States government aimed at dominating the Native American tribes and getting control over the tribal governments the thing that was impossible for the Indian tribes to accept since it was totally apposing their

culture. This pushed one Cherokee chief named Ruth Muskrat Bronson to say in 1957, opposing the idea of assimilation:

More than one theorist has stated that “the solution to the Indian problem” is the absorption of the Indian into the culture, race, and society of the European-oriented American way. Shouldn’t the Indian have something to say about this? Should the Indian be forced to give up his beliefs, his way of conducting his affairs,.... His kind of life on the land he is part of, if chooses not to?... (Iverson 103)

Of course the Indians were seeing the assimilation to the American “mainstream” as strange idea because their cultures and way of life was totally the opposite.

According to O’Brien, the Bureau of Indian Affairs had issued several bureaucratic reforms. These reforms aimed to quicken and making easier the assimilation of the Native American peoples into the “mainstream”. Congress had also given up the responsibility over more than one hundred tribes. This attempt had ended the government protection for these communities.

The result of the policies followed by the Federal Government through the Bureau of Indian Affairs was negative for the Native American peoples. The latter were decimated by the majority of the laws which were aiming at the assimilation of the Native Americans who had been located in reservations and they lost their lands in the hands of the United States.

### **C. The policy of Andrew Jackson toward the Indians**

Andrew Jackson was the seventh president of the United States of America and was president between 1829 and 1837. Historians argued that Andrew Jackson was very hungry of the lands and he managed to acquire great pieces of Indian lands. During his presidency, Andrew Jackson had a great impact on the changing life, and culture of Native American people, and through his policy, Native Americans had lost great part of their lands.

Even before he became president, Andrew Jackson had issued many policies and tactics to acquire the Indian lands. According to Wallace, Andrew Jackson had personal interest in some land of Indians particularly the areas of north Alabama. When he was elected major general of the Tennessee “militia”, he dealt with the war of 1812 in which he succeeded in defeating the Creek Indians in Alabama. After that, he succeeded in pushing the Indians west of the Mississippi gaining more Indian lands. As a commissioner, Andrew Jackson succeeded in persuading the Indians by a treaty from 1815 to 1820, to sell great part of their lands to the United States government. The areas sold were fifth of Georgia, half of Mississippi and most areas of Alabama, and Andrew Jackson got profit by acquiring many lands to his own (4).

The Jackson’s policies before he became president shows how the Americans were hungry of Indian lands to make wealth and to prosper and shows also that Andrew Jackson symbolizes one of the most hungry Americans of the Indian lands.

When he was elected president of the United States, Andrew Jackson continued his policy towards the Indians. His policy towards Indians was mainly to remove them and get profit by taking over their lands. In 1830, Andrew Jackson adopted the Indian Removal Act. This Act was signed into a law on May 26, 1830. This Act represents the policy of the United States government issued to relocate Native Americans tribes living east of the Mississippi River.

The Indian Removal Act provided and helped the American government to negotiate treaties with Indian tribes such as the treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek with the Choctaws which obliged more than fourteen thousand Choctaws to move along the Red River (Encarta 2009).

As a result of these treaties, the Indian tribes were relocated and pushed to the new Indian territories in what is known today Oklahoma and Kansas, and the Indian Removal Act had a great impact in changing and destroying the native American values and social structure

since they were relocated and pushed into farther areas where tribes could not maintain their way of life.

Great impact on the changing life, and culture of the Native American people, and through his policy the Native Americans had lost great part of their lands.

Even before he became president, Andrew Jackson had issued many policies and tactics to acquire the Indian land. Wallace wrote in his book *The Long Bitter Trail* that

#### **D. The Dawes Act of 1887**

The Dawes Act or the General Allotment Act came in 1887. It was proposed by a senator of Massachusetts Henry L. Dawes. The aim from this act was to break out the traditional Indian ownership of land, changing it to private ownership so as the government could buy and sell the lands after dividing them into small areas. In this case Harouni wrote:

.... The Dawes Act of February 1887 ... decreed that the president of the United States authorized to break up Indian tribal lands into allotments of 160 acres to be given to Indian family heads and any surplus land was to sell on the market.

The Dawes Act demonstrates that the tribal lands to be divided into small parts of 160 acres and only the Indian Chiefs or the heads could be given some of them, whereas the other part of lands would be under the control of the president or the American government.

According to Iverson, the Dawes Act did not have the same effect on all Indian tribes. The most affected tribes were the Five Tribes of the Indian Territory including the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Geeks and Seminoles, and the five civilized "Tribes" which were called so because many of their members were well educated, they converted to Christianity and they also had the homes like the European ones.

The Five Tribes were excluded because these tribes or “Nations” were seen as the more developed and advanced tribes. “The Five Civilized Tribes” also had been mistreated because the representatives had demonstrated in Washington refusing the division and all kinds of allotments, and refusing the individual or private ownership of lands. They argued:

The change to individual title would throw the whole of our domain in a few years into the hands of a few persons.... a large portion of our country, and at least two-thirds of the Indian Territory, are only suitable for grazing purposes. No man can afford to live by stockraising and herding who is restricted to 160 or ever 320 acres, especially lands away from water (Iverson 30-31).

The aim of the federal government through the Dawes Act of the 1887 was clear. The federal government through the constituent of the Act aimed at the division of the lands and at transforming the lands from tribal land ownership to private one so as to destroy the Indian concept toward lands. These tricks as a result pushed and excluded Indians from their home lands.

#### **E. The Indian reservations and the Indian claims**

The Indian reservations were pieces of land that were given to Native Americans to live there. These reservations were formed as a result of the treaties signed between the Federal Government and the Native Americans of the tribal government. The reservations were created by the United States government which hoped, by creating them, to avoid clashes and confrontations over the lands and the boundaries with the Native Americans.

At first, the reservations were somehow large. The Native American tribes were free to live as they wished. They were given the opportunity to live with their culture practicing their customs and rituals. However, by the growing desire of the American Government to expand beyond the boundaries, the Native American reservations were reduced and became smaller

and in many cases the Native Americans were usually dry and rocky areas that the American government thought they had any fertility and they would not serve in agriculture.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Native Americans had suffered a lot from the policy of the Federal Government which was influenced by the desire to expand westward and acquire new lands. The Americans were in need of the new territories because of the growing population, and thus the American government could not satisfy the needs of all its population.

The Native Americans who lived in the western territories before the American expansion had their own way of life which was based on hunting. When those Indians met the American comers, they tried to push them away from their hunting territories. But as time passed, they recognized that this idea was impossible to realize. So they signed many treaties with the Federal Government. The treaties signed forced the Indians to abandon large pieces of their own lands to the American farmers.

The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 was a sample of the treaties signed between the United States and the Indian tribes. In this treaty, the Federal Government argued that the lands situated in the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains belonged to the Sioux Indians since the latter had been forced to give up a big area in South Dakota by a treaty signed it years before. The Federal Government had promised the Sioux Indians that the lands remained for them. However, in 1874, the Americans discovered Gold in the area, and they had ignored the treaty signed. They forced the Sioux to sell the lands.(O'Callaghan 66)

The Sioux had faced another problem which provoked them a difficult life in that area. This problem was that the animals that the Sioux hunted, and provided them food and clothes had disappeared. The main cause of the disappearing of these animals like the Buffalo was that the Americans were killing them in great quantities. As a result, the Sioux were obliged

to search for new territories, the thing that was impossible because of the growing desire of the Americans to expand and acquire lands (Ibid).

As time passed, more and more Americans settled in the western territories, and many other treaties were signed with the Indians. All the treaties had injured the Indians, as happened to the Sioux, and they were pushed to live in reservations which did not contain any good condition to survive there. These reservations were mostly dry or rocky areas.

As the reservations did not contain good living conditions, the Indians were suffering. Many tribes disappeared. Great numbers were killed in the confrontations with American soldiers, others were died because of the diseases that emerged in the reservations because of the bad living conditions, and others died because of the lack of food, clothes and coverings.

All these facts happened to the Indian peoples despite the fact that the American government had promised them by materials to build houses, and took to cultivate and work in the land.

Despite all massacres, the death and the epidemic diseases, the Sioux and other Native Americans survived. The survived Indians in the twentieth century had protested and claimed for their rights which had been broken by the Federal Government, they claimed especially for their lands that were taken over by the United States.

The American congress had passed in 1924 the Indian Citizenship Act. This act had recognized the Indians as full citizens of the United States, that is to say, they had the same rights and duties like the other American citizens, and the federal government had given them the right to vote. Ten years later, during the years of the great depression, President Franklin D.Roosevelt had issued reforms known as “The New Deal”. Through the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, the Indians were given the right to deal with the affairs of their reservations.

Although the American government had given some rights to the Indians and besides the improvements that they touched, they could not arrive at the improvement and the situation of the other American citizens, especially in the sectors of education, health, and work.

According to O'Callaghan, the Indians could not arrive at the level of the other Americans citizens in the 1980s; in the contrary they were suffering the lack of good conditions. He estimated that the unemployment rate among the Indians had touched thirty nine percent. The wages of the Indians were not sufficient to cover the needs of the Indian families especially healthcare, there were many diseases such as pneumonia and diabetes which the Indians had not the opportunity to cure them. As a result, these diseases had killed so many Indians and the number of the dead was the double comparing to the other Americans. (69)

Before the 1980s, the Indians had claimed for their lands that the federal government had taken them over. In 1970s the Indians had formed the American Indian Movement. In 1972, thousands of them had protested in Washington demanding the federal government to return them back their lands. They protested by marching, the march was called "the trail of broken treaties". However the protest did not succeed to restore the Indian lands.

For example the Sioux demanded the federal government to give them back their lands which were the Black Hills. The government however did not accept the idea; they just attempted to give them 122.5 million dollars the thing that the Sioux did not accept because they had not the culture of buying and selling the land. (O'Callaghan 70)

Despite the fact that the Indians did not succeed in restoring their lands, they continued in claiming and demanding them. In the late twentieth century, attempted to quantify their loss, and private records in the field of oil extraction and mineral mining had

discovered that the American government had stolen billions of dollars that were earned on tribal lands dating from 1887. This pushed more than three thousand of Indians in the sixth of June 1996 to give records to a federal judge. The records showed that the federal government had stolen to the Indians more than 137 billion dollars over the last century. But despite all the records, the Indians could not succeed to return their money in spite of their insistence; they claimed “this is our money that the government took, and they have to give it back”. The Federal Government argued that the money was the revenues of the taxes. (Brinkley 1-3)

To conclude, the policy of the United States government toward the Native Americans known as the federal Indian policy had wronged them and changed the life and the cultures of the Indian peoples. The federal government had used many elaborated and vicious means to take over the lands of the Native American tribes. The latter were removed from their homelands and pushed to farther reservations.

The American policy of the eighteenth century was based on exploring and exploiting the lands in agriculture and searching for new territories. The main problem that the Americans faced was that the lands belonged to Native Americans who had a different view and relationship to land. That is why the American policy dealing with the Indian affairs was very vicious; the government had followed many tricks which enabled them to take over the lands of Indians and the latter were excluded from their traditional lands.

The Land Ordinance, the ratification of the Articles of Confederation, and the Northwest Ordinance were samples of the policies of the federal government issued to deal with Americans. The American policy during the nineteenth century harmed seriously Native Americans because of the emergence of the policy of expansionism and the growing desire to acquire more and more lands. The policy of Andrew Jackson toward the Indians mainly through the Indian Removal Act enacted in 1830, and the Dawes Act enacted by Henry L. Dawes in 1887 illustrate the American policy that damaged the Native Americans in the

nineteenth century and cost them the loss of most of their lands leaving them parked in some reservations.

Indeed, the means that the federal government had followed to take over the Indian lands were vicious tricks which helped the Americans succeed in acquiring large lands to the detriment of Native Americans who were pushed farther west to survive in reservations.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

To conclude, the United States had contributed to the victimization of the Native American peoples. The latter had become a minority in the country. Why they became a minority? Because the Federal Government had cheated their lands and pushed them to live in reservations where there is a lack of the necessary conditions of life, and had killed more than two million Indians.

The study had helped to have a look at the social and cultural heterogeneity of the Native American peoples. It helped also to discover the differences between the Indian cultures and the European ones. As it is mentioned in the first chapter, the arrival of the Europeans was a turning point in the history of the Native American since the Europeans had destroyed and changed the social structure and their cultures.

The study had given an understanding of what is the image of colonialism which characterized the American policy. It shows the pragmatism and the mercantilism of the American government, which used all the necessary means to achieve its objectives. As it is mentioned in the second chapter, the Americans tried to break out the Indian cultures, for instance the Indian tribal authority, in order to get their lands. Another example is the use of the system of licenses and the adoption of the system of selling and buying the lands. All these did not exist in the Indian society. So, the policy of assimilation is just to get profit in acquiring the lands not as the Federal Government claimed that it was to civilize the Indians.

In addition, the study had showed how the American government and the Americans in general are widely influenced by the values of Europeans such as mercantilism and individualism. All these illustrated the tools followed to take over the lands of Indians. As a result of all this, people who are aware of the American policy will recognize that the real

image of the Indians was falsified by the Americans especially by western movies which portrayed the Indians as primitive and savage people.

In this context, the Federal Government tried to hide its image and tried always to show that the United States were built upon humanistic principles such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness so as to induce people to believe that it is the country of human rights and democracy. However, history shows how the Indians were decimated and their cultures were greatly changed. Where is liberty if peoples are forced to assimilate into the American values? Where is life if millions of people were killed?

Nowadays the Indians who remained are just a minority in the United States. Some of them had assimilated but some others refused. The Indians who refused are still practicing their ceremonies and speaking their native languages. Despite the fact that the Indians are just a minority and in spite of the fact that they are living in reservations, they argued “we are still here”, indeed they have been mistreated for centuries and they are a minority but they are still fighting for their rights over their ancestral lands.

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## **Abstract**

This study aims at presenting the tools and the means which the United States Government had used to take over the Native American lands. The discussion of the means followed by the Federal Government and its policy towards the Native Americans leads to speak about the contrasting cultures between the Native Americans and the European settlers which stands at the origins of the conflicts between them. The result of the discussion is that the Native Americans were touched by the American government policy, the latter was so analytical and it contributed to the changing cultures and lives of the Indians who had been forced to leave their home lands.

## **Résumé**

Cette étude sert à montrer la stratégie suivie par le gouvernement des Etats Unis d'Amérique à fin de pouvoir arracher les terres des Indiens. Le débat sur la manière suivi par le gouvernement américain et sa politique envers les indiens en général à pousser de parler sur les cultures des indiens et les colons qui est a l'origine du conflit entre eu. La conclusion fut a ce débat est que les indiens ont été très touché par la politique du gouvernement américain. Cette dernière était vicieuse et endommagent, ainsi elle à forcé les Indiens de cesser leurs terres.

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