



SIGNS OF PLACE IN NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE: AFFINITY OF INDIGENOUS SPACE AND TEXT



© **Svitlana Kot**, PhD Student, Petro Mohyla Black
Sea National University, 10,
68-Desantnykiv Street, Mykolaiv, Ukraine,
54003, kot.svetlana.yurievna@gmail.com

Summary

In this paper, the discussion centers on Native American Literature and the way it is connected with space. The issues to discuss are how space is represented there and why Native American writers attach considerable importance to landscape and space. Evidence suggests such importance is a result of the influence of markedly different indigenous epistemological and ontological paradigms, which traditionally consider land and space in general as a fundamental and spiritual basis of Native American identity. This research examines the emerging role of space in the context of Native American literature. Ecocritical, postcolonial and semiotic approaches were adopted to provide the in-depth analysis of all the factors which contribute to Native American understanding of space. At first, this study reviews the evidence for genetic ties between Native space and literature; secondly, it investigates the factors that determine the significance of spatial elements in Native American literature. Thirdly, it examines the different ways in which spatiality functions in texts written by Native American authors.

Key words: Anishinaabe literature, indigenous epistemology, Native American literature, identity, space.

In the history of Native American¹ studies, land has been thought of as a key concept in the indigenous understanding of the world and self. As it has previously been observed, land forms a core of Native identity. It is almost certain that the importance placed upon this concept is a result of the influence of indigenous epistemological and ontological paradigms that traditionally regard land as a fundamental and spiritual basis of Native American picture of the world. However, if we look deeper we would realize that is not just land, which is

particularly significant for Native Americans, but a system of ecological, cultural, and mythological relationships between all components of the geophysical dimension, which forms Native space. The specific understanding of space penetrates into all spheres of indigenous life and influences all kinds of cultural production. Literature is no exception here. Thus, the concepts of Native space can be instrumental in our understanding of the indigenous picture of the world and its representation in Native American Literature. Although it is now well established from a variety of studies, that land and environment play a significant role in texts written by Native Americans (Noodin, 2014; Brooks, 2008; Vizenor, 1984), a systematic understanding of how space, in general, contributes to Native American Literature is still lacking.

This study set out to investigate the role of spatiality for Native American Literary tradition. This work draws comparison between the ways in which space is represented in Native American and Euro-American literary traditions. Firstly, the evidence for genetic ties between Native writing and space is examined. Followed by an assessment of the significance of spatial elements in Native American Literature. Thirdly, this study explores the functions of spatial representations in texts written by Native American authors.

The methodological approach taken in this study is mixed, based on ecocritical, postcolonial, and semiotic approaches. This mixed methodology is one of the more practical ways to avoid one-sidedness and stereotyping. Indeed, a major criticism surrounding much of the literature that examines the relationship between Native Literature and land is that Native people tend to be classified as closer to nature (Riche, 2013: 55), an image which perfectly fits the “noble savage” stereotype. In his book, “The Voice in the Margin: Native American Literature and the Canon” Arnold Krupat challenges the widely held appeal to the “naturalness” of Native American Literature “as though it was not individuals and cultural practices but the very rocks and trees and rivers that had somehow produced the Native poem or story, and somehow spoke directly in them” (Krupat, 1989: 99). Krupat believes that along with considering a markedly different consciousness in which Native American literary tradition is rooted, we should remember that it is nevertheless produced by complex historical tradition and a certain cultural code. While this paper comments on the concept of land, it also emphasizes spatial manifestations in Native American literature, which requires a multidisciplinary approach. This work explores space not merely through an ecocritical lens, but also makes use of postcolonial and semiotic dimensions as well, which allows consideration of all the factors that Krupat

mentions as crucial when focusing on Native American Literature. The overlapping field of ecocriticism and semiotics was adopted to obtain further in-depth information on the Native space as a system of meaningful signs in Native American Literature. The intersection between ecocriticism and postcolonial approaches might allow a deeper insight into the impact of drastic changes that happened on the North-American continent and thus its reflection in the indigenous literature(s).

Space as the object of research has an extremely wide spectrum of usage, which poses a problem for analysis, as it may lead to overgeneralization. This potential problem demonstrates a need to be explicit about exactly what is meant by the term in this paper. The term “space” (lat. spatium) as a “boundless three-dimensional extent in which objects and events occur and have relative position and direction” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.) is the basic category of the human understanding of the physical world. The experience of space is an integral part of people’s everyday life. Depending on cultural, historical, and geographical conditions, this process will generate various, sometimes completely different world views, which represent an individual understanding of the spatial organization of the world. Besides, space cannot be reduced to its physical dimension, as it also manifests differently in various areas of human culture. Spatial perception varies at individual and social levels. As a result, numerous kinds of space are distinguished, the most common of which are geophysical, social, cultural, etc (Plakhotnyuk, 2011: 84). Literature as a special kind of art has its own specifics in space reproduction. Being "topological" in nature, literature constantly uses "topological language (V.Podoroha’s term), because it is based on the desire to express its spatial entity” (Anon., 1993: 152) Space in all its diversity is reflected in literary text; however, it will assume a conventional character. Researcher Wendy Wheeler in her article, "Postscript on biosemiotics: reading beyond words--and ecocriticism," which follows the ideas of Charles Sanders Peirce and Tartu school of Semiotics, claims that literature and any other kind of art is a tertiary world-modelling system. The primary one is world modeling undertaken by all living things, while the second form of world modeling developed along with the human evolution of mimetic and language. Finally, as a result of the production of self-reflecting representative forms of knowledge in art, religion, and philosophy a tertiary world-modelling system appears (Wheeler, 2008). Spatial characteristics of the text depend greatly on the author’s world view. An artist, like every person, has the mental and spiritual abilities that allow

him to collect, manage, maintain, and process information about outer space and its various manifestations, which are eventually reflected in his artistic creation. Native scholars understand space in a specific manner. Native scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson claims that Aki (Anishinaabe word for Earth) “includes all aspect of creation land forms, elements, plants, animals, spirit, sounds, thoughts, feelings, energies, and all emergent systems, ecologies and networks that connect these elements” (Simpson, 2014: 14). Obviously, the concept of Aki corresponds to the Native American vision of space. Thus, when exploring the correlation between Amerindian literature and space, it is important to focus on all manifestations of spatiality in its indigenous sense, and on their artistic representation in Native American literature.

Furthermore, it is necessary here to clarify exactly what Native American literature is, as a number of controversial means and much-disputed questions usually arise when we regard a text as a part of Native American literary tradition. The first significant current discussion is whether Native American literary tradition should be viewed as ethnic literature, or if we should speak about various tribal literatures instead. Secondly, the term “Native literature” has been notoriously hard to define. One of the most debated questions here is whether it consists of texts written by Native American authors, written about the life of Native American people, or those, which feature Native American characters. As was pointed out, there is no agreed upon definition of what constitutes Native American literature. According to many in the field, it is not appropriate to use the term ‘Indian Literature’ or ‘Indian culture’ because there is no single Indian culture at all. Quite the contrary, there is a vast number of ethnicities on the North American continent and hence the same number of literatures written within the tribal background. In his critical works, Gerald Vizenor, a famous Native American scholar and writer, normally uses the term tribal literatures and post-Indian literature(s), clearly pointing to the existence of different literary traditions that existed in each indigenous tribe of North America. This fact is indisputable as it reflects noticeable differences between tribes in terms of traditions, philosophies, origin stories, histories, and even ways of life. However, all indigenous peoples of America are likely to have historically related cultures and share common experiences of colonization, deprivation, discrimination, and dislocation. It is those experiences that can lead to what Linda Hogan identified as “pan-Indian” or “indigenous worldview” which is higher than any tribal borders (cited in (Harrison, 2012: 105). A similar idea was expressed earlier by a Native American writer and critic Louis Owens, who believed that Native

literature exists in texts written by Native Americans about the Native American experience. Owens concluded that despite the fact that Native authors represent diverse tribal and cultural traditions, all of them to a great extent share the worldview, which tends to be characterized by identity search (cited in (Grice et al., 2001: 21). Therefore, in spite of differences between tribal cultures and literatures, the term Native American literature or literary tradition will be used in this paper to refer to all texts written by Native American authors that share the common Pan-Indian worldview and have similar characteristic features. In this case, the potential problem of the study is that the scope may be too broad, due to numerous tribal literary traditions that all belong to Native American literature. Since this study is unable to encompass the entire range of Native texts, I will refer mainly to Anishinaabe² tribal traditions, where most of the scholars and critics whose works are discussed here belong.

The existing body of research on the indigenous perception of space and its representation in Native American literature suggests that it is vastly different from the Western vision. Vine Deloria, in his book “Metaphysics of Modern Existence,” actually claims that this is the difference in worldviews that prevent Indians and non-Indians from communicating. Unlike time-oriented Westerners, non-Western peoples are space-oriented. As a result, they tend to attach considerable significance to geographical phenomena and place immense value on land (Deloria, Wildcat, and Wilkins, 2012). One of the most recent attempt to draw fine distinctions between the concept of space as it represented in Native American and Euro-American literary tradition was made by Ghulam Murtaza and Shaheena Ayub Bhatti. Favoring an ecocritical approach, the scholars (in Deloria’s manner) emphasize “land-rootedness” of Native American literature, in contrast to Euro-American history-oriented Literature (2015). Similarly, Loise Erdrich, in her essay “Where I ought to be: a writer's Sense of Place,” identifies American writers as being very much obsessed with chronicling and recording the world before the end of the history, asserting a certain “desperation to engrave” one’s culture upon an alien space, instead of outlining the background of the landscape (1985). Even if environment does perform an essential role in writer’s works, Murtaza and Bhatti maintain that it only serves to facilitate “the realization of sublime self of the code hero” (2015: 281). Thus, the man is always seen as the one dominating the landscape, the one who is above any other “objects” in the surrounding environment. Indeed, Murtaza and Bhatti also observe that space in Native American literature is viewed as an ecosystem marked by harmony rather than a hierarchy as in Euro-American Literature. These dissimilar literary

traditions seem to pursue contrasting objectives when addressing space. While the western discourse aims at analyzing, dissecting, manipulating, and utilizing space, Native writers are “reconstructing the epistemology that has been erased, obliterated and blurred by the White westernized sign system”. The researchers claim that recovery of Nature (which is also a rediscovery of space -addition is mine) is a kind of repudiation of “deformation” of Native culture and epistemology by white discourse (Murtaza, and Bhatti, 2015: 288). Being a “mouthpiece” of dominant colonial discourse, Euro-American literature formed a canon and mainstream of the U.S. literary traditions, which impose the colonial vision of space. Consequently, Native American literature seeks for the decolonization and reshaping of spatial discourse on the North American continent.

The specific role which space plays in Native American literature may be predetermined by their genetic connection. Some scholars and literary critics (Vizenor, 1984; Brooks, 2008) have attempted to identify the interrelation between indigenous literature and the land as space Native Americans inhabit. In his “Narrative histories of the Chippewa people,” a famous Native American critic and writer Vizenor states: “The words the woodland tribes spoke were connected to the place the words were spoken. The poetic images were held, for some tribal families, in song pictures and in the rhythms of visions and dreams in music: timeless and natural patterns of seeing and knowing the energies of the earth. The Anishinaabeg drew pictures that reminded them of ideas, visions, and dreams, that were tribal connections to the earth. These song pictures, especially those of the Midewiwin, or the Grand Medicine Society, were incised on the soft inner bark of the birch tree” (Vizenor, 1984: 24-25). By drawing on the concept of land in Native American culture, Vizenor once again has been able to show that Amerindians in general, and the Anishinaabeg in particular, bear a significant relation to the earth, and this relation is reflected in language, folklore, poetic images, or any kind of indigenous art. Likewise, Liza Brooks metaphorically compares Native writing with corn that emerged from within Native space, “Indigenous writing, like corn, emerged from within Native space out of a great need. Native languages contain the map of the common pot, but writing in English is the means through which its boundaries have been maintained, asserted, and reclaimed” (Brooks, 2008: 54). However metaphorical this comparison of Native writing and corn is, Brooks defines evidence on Native Literature as derived from geographical space and traces the development of Native writing to indigenous maps used on the North American continent long before the first white settlers. In

her study investigating the system of relation within the Native space, Brooks reports that the maps carved on birch bark or made in the form of wampum – traditional shell beading – were designed according to cartographic principles. At first these maps were used to exchange information within indigenous space and later to inform Whites about spatial matters, the relationship between human and non-human world, places, and water arteries, which united all the components of the Native space network (Brooks, 2008: 12). At the same time, such writings bore the signs of history and culture eventually turning into cultural narratives long before appearing in Native American poetry or fiction. Brooks coins the term “place-world” to refer to a locus, which exceeds a geophysical place and extends in meaning due to its relation to events that happened in the past and other places that exist in space and time. Thus, Brooks claims that Native American spatial narratives “mark important transformations in Native space” and are characterized by existence somewhere in-between history and literature (Brooks, 2008: 40-41). A serious weakness with this last argument, however, is that not all indigenous spatial narratives focus on history (in the Eurocentric meaning of this word) as events that happen in the past. Some of the narratives about space deal with the circular mythical time, for instance, stories of origin. The space represented in such narratives embodies on the one hand sacredness, but on the other hand a desired state of the world in the Native mental map. Furthermore, Brooks pinpoints the fact that in many tribal languages the vocabulary to write, to draw, and to map are expressed by one and the same word: *awikhigan* (2008: 38). The morpheme *igan* is also a part of the word *book*. Brooks concludes that *awikhigan* is a tool for creating an image, writing, and communicating this image. Hence, a book at the same time is an activity in which we participate, an instrument, and a map. “It is a map of a network of writers and texts, as well as a process of mapping the historical space they inhabit. It is a mapping of how Native people in the northeast used writing as an instrument to reclaim lands and reconstruct communities, but also a mapping of the instrumental activity of writing, its role in the remembering of a fragmented world” (Brooks, 2008: 39). In reviewing Brooks’ study, it supports the hypothesis that the Native American Literary tradition rests on the spatial foundation. This foundation concerns their image of the world as a system of relations, as well as their own place within this system and marks any crucial changes that have happened in it.

A fair number of papers that have been written on Native American literature and culture include spatial /“earth” metaphors for describing Native writing, which mark the affinity between indigenous space and literature. Along with Vizenor

and Brooks as mentioned above, Margaret Noodin in the book “American Indian Studies: Bawaajimo: A Dialect of Dreams in Anishinaabe Language and Literature” compares Anishinaabe literary texts to rocks, which are “layers of time and earth shaped slowly by water and wind” (2014: 21). As Noodin points out “Anishinaabe literary history is both ancient and imminent, traceable to the sound of stones and adaptive as white winter fur, evolving in order to survive” (2014: 19). She maintains that despite the fact that Native literature is written not in tribal languages but in English, it still preserves and reflects indigenous patterns and centers in Native space (Noodin, 2014: 21). It is almost certain, that a close correlation between Native space and Native Literature is two-way. The ontological and epistemological views on land as a core of being demands vivid geographical thinking (landscape imagination), which ultimately shapes a writer’s mental map. Later this mental map is reflected in the spatial imagery of the text.

The evidence of the fact that Native American writers have vivid landscape imagination and give much prominence to space can be clearly seen throughout Native American Literary history. Noodin’s research particularly implies that Native writers frequently refer to earth, environment, certain places or some spatial elements and such evidence of these common references can be found in Noodin’s case study of Anishinaabe literature. Notable Anishinaabe authors whose works focus on spatial representation like Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, George Copway, William Jones, William Whipple Warren, Simon Pokagon, Ignatia Broker, Arthur McGregor, among many others, encompass a lot of similar techniques. At first, the writers generally allude to animistic, mythic, and spiritual connections with the land. The first published American Indian writer, Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, whose stories might have been a major source for Henry Longfellow’s “The Song of Hiawatha³”, in her poem “To the pine tree” praises a tree and addresses it as an animate being (Noodin, 2014: 23). George Copway, a converted Ojibwe Christian, wrote “The recollections of Forest Life” and “The life and Travels of Hah-Ge-Gah-Bowh,” in which he often refers to Anishinaabe spatial narratives of earth and cosmos origin while comparing them to Christian ones (Noodin, 2014: 25). William Jones depicts a road between the dimension of the living and dead in his story “The Youth Who Died and Came Back to Life” (Noodin, 2014: 26). William Whipple Warren paid significant attention to migration narratives, which describe how Ojibway People settled the territory around the Great Lakes in his “History of the Ojibway People”. Simon Pokagon marked the cultural and social landscapes of the time in “The Queen of the Woods”. Later, Ojibwa authors began to draw on relocation and urban space as

modern realities, like Ignatia Broker in “Night Flying Woman”. However, some still refer to tribal patterns, as Arthur Mcgregor does in “Wiigwaaskingaa: Land of the Birch Trees” and “Sinmedwe’ek: Bell Rock” as he aims to remind that Anishinaabe language, people, stories, and landscape are interconnected (Noodin, 2014: 30). As Noodin suggests, Native writers soon realized that telling stories in English was one of the ways to pass on a collective memory of land and history over to new generations (Noodin, 2014: 31). Modern Ojibwe writers still preserve the tendency to address the traditional indigenous knowledge understanding of space as one of the major patterns, although changed due to modern reality. This tendency presents itself in “Three Day Road” by Joseph Boyden, a spatial narrative in search of an identity. Another example can be found in Jim Northrup’s numerous writings: “Walking the Rez Road,” “Rez Road Follies,” “Anishinaabe Syndicated,” and “A View From The Rez,” all of which are filled with a deep sense of place. The Anishinaabe writers mentioned above were not the only ones concerned with spatial issues, as many more Native American writers were and still are focused on representation of earth as Native space. In her investigation, Brooks notices that the politics of land is a major focus in the vast majority of early Native American writing (2008: 51).

In general, any Native text assumes the particular significance attached to the place. The way Native space becomes a constituent to Native American identity is similar to the way it is reflected in texts. Thus, it also forms a part of Native American literary identity. In the chapter “Anishinaabebiige: Anishinaabe Literature” Noodin claims: “It is not possible to understand Anishinaabe identity without knowing at least something of the way the sky looks from their perspective on earth, the way the land and water are part of time and the way presence includes all life—human, plant, animal, and a few things like rocks and weather that are not commonly considered characters. All of this part of place and the Anishinaabe literary identity” (Noodin, 2014: 36). Noodin argues that the setting and imagery of the text and the perspective from which Anishinaabe writers see the world arise out of the space of their origin. Besides, according to Noodin “signs of place” in Anishinaabe literature “echo” the old stories, with their frequent references to the Great Lakes’ environment, symbiotic relationship between the space and people, and nomadic way of life (2014). Thus, the indigenous spatial context in many cases may be associated with the Native American literature and personal identity.

In a similar vein, the issues of identity and reference linked to space are widely discussed by Louise Erdrich in the above-mentioned essay, “Where we ought to

be: a writer's sense of place". Erdrich admits that not all modern-day writers are tied to a certain setting either due to the postmodern metafiction, which "may take place anywhere, or nowhere," or because of the contemporary nomadism, mobility which tends to be people's experience today (1985). However, her own approach to place is different. In her view, the mental map, or "personal geography" (the way Erdrich refers to the concept) is all a person/writer knows of the world. The personal geography is a place to refer one's identity. In addition, it reflects one's deepest feelings. Erdrich points out, "A writer needs for his or her characters to have something in common with the reader. If not the land, which changes, if not a shared sense of place, what is it then that currently gives us a cultural identity?"(1985). Hence, the place is equally important for a writer and a reader to understand the personal and communal connotations attributed to it. This is especially true about Native American writers, whose task is to preserve the meanings and identity conveyed by the spatial settings. In Native Literature, indigenous spatial context provides meanings to other components of the text, as Erdrich's above quotation indicates. Elsewhere, Erdrich states, "It is difficult to impose a story and a plot on a place. But truly knowing a place provides the link between details and meaning" (1985). On the one hand, the idea of an ability of indigenous space to convey meanings is comparable to Lotman's understanding of poetic space, as an author's picture of the world, which functions in the text as a semiotic system. On the other hand, a certain kind of intertextuality features Native American poetic space. Indigenous space seen as a text generates an understanding of fiction adding layers of depth to it, depending on a reader's prior knowledge or the mental map a reader and a writer share. This probable effect is brought about by spatial narratives attached to multiple topoi or space in general.

Another valid reason, which fuels Native writers concern for place, is environmental threats or, as Erdrich specifies, the daunting prospect of nuclear devastation. The preciousness of the world confronted with a threat of apocalypse is what makes authors too thoroughly note every detail of the current world and reflect such in their writing (Erdrich, 1985). Erdrich partially supports the point of view of Eudora Welty (Welty, 1957), in that everything including love, history, and art instincts are rooted in space and the loss of it might ruin everything that is human in people. Commenting on Erdrich's vision of environmental menace, Gioa Harrison argues that it is also a threat to personal and cultural identities (2012: 40). Harrison's argument can be supported by Erdrich's statement as, "environmental degradation, land loss, and displacement have an inevitable impact on identity" (Erdrich, 1985). In fact, for Native Americans, who

have already survived a destruction of space and traditional lifeway, any further environmental harm, from unsustainable exploitation of the planet's resources, land, air, and water pollution to ecocide and nuclear disasters seems even more menacing. In light of native epistemology, which sees a human as an integral part of the environment, special attention to space in Native American Literature is quite evident.

The colonial experience, which brought massive changes to the Native American picture of the world reverberated in Indigenous literatures reinforces attention to space depiction and introduces new tasks and functions. Describing Native American apocalyptic experience of land-loss and misfortunes, Erdrich claims: “Contemporary Native American writers have therefore a task quite different from that of other writers I've mentioned. In the light of enormous loss, they must tell the stories of contemporary survivors while protecting and celebrating the cores of cultures left in the wake of the catastrophe. And in this, there always remains the land. The approximate three percent of the United States that is still held by Native American nations is cherished in each detail, still informed with old understandings, still known and used, in some cases, changelessly” (Erdrich, 1985).

Representation of space, thus, often becomes a tool for reconstructing and re-imagining geography, which has been transformed through a long history of colonization of the continent. This view is supported by Brooks' study discussed above. She emphasizes the instrumental role of writing as a mapping activity used for resisting the colonization (Brooks, 2008: 44). Mapping, marking, describing, and naming Native space are all strategies used by writers to resist its appropriation by the colonizers. Adopting such strategies, Native authors demand both socioenvironmental justice and their right to the land.

The main goal of this current study was to determine the role of space in Native American literature. Overall, this study strengthens the idea that Native Americans differ in their vision of the world. The considerable importance Native writers attach to space is rooted in their land-based epistemology. This reflects greatly in their literary tradition where space plays one of the central roles. Such a fact may partly be explained by genetic ties between space and indigenous literature, as the latter is born from indigenous cartography, which is used both to mark changes that happen in geophysical space and explain the relationship in the ecosystem. In addition, it contains traces of history and culture, which are later

converted into spatial narratives. It can also be suggested, that as an important component of Native American identity, a strong link to land and space causes developed geographical imagination in Amerindians. An implication of this is the possibility that geophysical space transforming into the poetic becomes an integral part of Native American literary identity. This observation is supported by numerous Native American texts and authors who focus on spatial images throughout the Native American literary history. Such spatial images gain eminence and depth due to their semiotic significance and intertextuality. Native American authors frequently refer to these images in an attempt to preserve the indigenous vision of space in times of environmental and cultural threats. Besides, these images also draw on the traumatic experience of land-loss and dislocation while appealing to social, cultural and environmental justice. To develop a full picture of spatiality as a meaningful component of Native American literature, additional studies are needed that will focus on spatial imagery and its functions in particular texts of Amerindian writers. This type of study will provide the opportunity take certain variables into account and further develop specific spatial models in order to recreate a mental map of a particular writer.

¹ The term 'Native' or "Indigenous" is used its broadest sense here to refer to Native Americans who are people descended from the Pre-Columbian indigenous population of North America. A term Amerindians which is short for "Indians" of the Americas will also be used. While the term Native Americans is a self-name for more than 500 peoples living on the territory of the USA, which also highlights their common background, the broadly used term "American Indians" appeared as a result of a mistake, and had long been used by the dominant European colonizers to refer to all the indigenous people of South and North Americas. On the one hand, this term had been misused and even abused because it mistakenly unified all the nations and ethnic groups in both Americas whose origin, culture and language were in most cases significantly different. Moreover, this term was contemptuously used along with the words "savage" and "barbarian", "red skin" –to highlight racial and cultural differences, the colonizers saw between themselves and the Others. On the other hand the term "Indian" today is gaining positive connotation and reflects the mutual identity of Native Americans, which transcends tribal borders (Grice et al., 2001: 12). In the English-speaking literature, the terms "Native Americans" and "First Nations" are differentiated. While the former refers to people in the USA, the latter names indigenous population of Canada. Throughout this paper, all the discussed terms will be used, except for the "First Nations" as the research focuses only on the US literature and context.

² Anishinaabeg is a self-name of Ojibwa people, also spelled Ojibwe or Ojibway, and also called Chippewa. Anishinaabeg is an Algonquian-speaking North American Indian tribe who lived in what are now Ontario and Manitoba, Can., and Minnesota and North Dakota, U.S., from Lake Huron westward onto the Plains. Their name for themselves means "original people" (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2017).

³ The theories about this fact are controversial, as some scholars believe it is Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's stories were the source for Longfellow, others (among which is M.Noodin) believe that it was her husband Henry Schoolcraft, whose material inspired *The Song of Hiawatha*. In fact, Henry Schoolcraft published works included materials of Jane Schoolcraft, which clearly defines her significant role in creating Longfellow's 1855 epic poem.

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