
Suppression of Native Americans Through Law: An Althusarian Critique of Erdrich's *The Night Watchman*

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Abstract

The present study investigated the issues of suppression of Native Americans on the part of Euro-Americans through Law in Louise Erdrich's *The Night Watchman* (2020) with a focus on using law a state apparatus as specified by Althusser. Key characters of this novel i.e. Wazhashk, Patrice, Roderick help to illustrate the centrality of hegemony of Euro-Americans. For Althusser, the state apparatus includes the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc. In order to bring the issues of hegemony of Euro-Americans into the centre, Erdrich's novel needs to be analyzed from the perspective of Althusser's ideological state apparatuses especially Law. This study was qualitative in nature and used the research method of textual analysis in order to expose hegemonic treatment of Native Americans on the part of Euro-Americans. The research scholars of Native American Studies will get benefit from the findings of this work.

Keywords: Native Americans, Euro-Americans, Hegemony, Althusser, Apparatuses, Law

Introduction

Louise Erdrich is an American author, writer of novels, poetry, and children books featuring Native American characters and settings. Erdrich is widely acclaimed as one of the most significant writers of the second wave of the Native American Renaissance. She has written 28 books in all, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and children's books. Her works are focused on the portrayal of Native American characters. Famous for her poetry, Erdrich also explores many of the same topics in her fiction. She received the Pushcart Prize for Poetry in 1983. Her first book of poetry, *Jacklight*, which was released the same year as *Love Medicine*, contained a

large portion of the poetry she wrote while pursuing her master's degree at Johns Hopkins University.

The Night Watchman by Louise Erdrich was recently awarded the 2021 Pulitzer Prize in Fiction. *The Night Watchman* recently won the 2021 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. This book is based on the events of Erdrich's grandfather, who fought against the American government's attempt to take over Native American territories. It is a story seeped in Erdrich's own family history, based on her grandfather's experiences resisting the dispossession of Native American lands from the U.S. government. In addition to the response to the Termination Bill in 1953, the narrative in *The Night Watchman* shifts back and forth from a variety of characters, allowing Erdrich to cover other important topics involving the treatment of Native Americans and to tell stories about personal, interior dramas as well.

This research throws light on the marginalized Native Americans and exposes Euro-Americans' use of law as a state apparatus to suppress Native Americans in the mainstream of American society. Euro-American law is always used as a repressive state apparatus against Native Americans as it is reflected in the acts of Senator Watkins in *The Night Watchman*. In the Termination bill, Watkins had also refused to appropriate sufficient money to relieve the Navajo, who were in a desperate situation down there in the desert to propel her forward. Native Americans face issues of injustice on the part of white masses as well in the Twin Cities. When Patrice was in train going to the Twin Cities, she faces injustice and prejudice on the part of the white settlers.

Patrice faces harassment in the shop during her visit to the white man's the Twice Cities in *The Night Watchman*. On tribal territories and in Alaska Native towns, violence against indigenous women in the United States has reached previously unheard-of levels. The prevalence of violence and sexual violence among American Indian and Alaska Native women is higher than 4 in 5 and 1 in 2 respectively. Euro-Americans hate the Native Americans because they consider them "savage" and their skin was dark. Throughout history, white supremacy has demonstrated its power to reshape institutions and supersede legality. When President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act of 1830, ordering the removal of all Native Americans from their tribal land to reservations, the Supreme Court initially attempted to side with the tribes, who had signed treaties that ensured their national sovereignty. President Jackson bypassed the courts, and bent the strength of federal institutions to further meet the needs of white supremacy. Between 1830 and 1850, President Jackson oversaw the forced relocation of 100,000 Native Americans at the hands of federal and local military forces, resulting in the loss of ancestral homelands and 15,000 deaths from exposure, disease, and starvation. These death marches were white supremacy made manifest, and the legitimization of land theft was codified.

Research Questions

1. What are the issues of Native American suppression through Euro American law in *The Night Watchman*?
2. How can suppression of Native Americans be interpreted with reference to Althusserian Ideological State Apparatuses?

Objectives of the Research

1. To depict the issues of Native Americans suppression through Euro American law;
2. To interpret the suppression of Euro American with reference to Althusserian Ideological State Apparatuses;

Significance of the Research

This study will contribute to Native American Studies through an analysis of a Native American writer, Erdrich, under the umbrella of Althusser's ideological state apparatuses. The researchers of Native American Studies will get benefit from this work. Furthermore, the study will develop the understanding of Erdrich's works for the students, critics, and researchers. It will open up new horizons in resistance literature and redefining the canon.

Literature Review

Louise Erdrich is an American author, writer of novels, poetry, and children's books featuring Native American characters and settings. Erdrich is widely acclaimed as one of the most significant writers of the second wave of the Native American Renaissance. She has written 28 books in all, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and children's books. There exists a body of material concerned with Erdrich's representations of women, of mothers, and of Native identity. But Euro-Americans' using law as a state apparatus is often overlooked or may be deemed unimportant because not any research has yet been accomplished. Although several scholarly studies have been accomplished on Erdrich from the perspective of identity, stereotyping, and marginalization, yet a lot is to be done on this writer in the frame of reference to Althusser's ideological state apparatuses. The Natives Americans' life, culture, and history have been treated from a biased white perspective. The previous researchers analyzed Erdrich's *The Night Watchman* from different perspectives: Millay (2020) explored the use of historical fact of termination in this novel; Urrea (2020) investigated Erdrich's fight to save her tribe from termination; and Vick (2020) discerned Erdrich's battle over fiction and identity. Mace (2013) took novel *The Round House* Erdrich with more political tone and highlighting historic legal difficulties faced by the Chippewa due to laws and policies created by the U.S. government. These themes are very similar to ideas of this novel *The Night Watchman*. Dr Kyle Bladow (2018) discussed violence against women in Erdrich's novel *The Round House*. The rape of Indigenous women is a central topic in the novel. In this novel Joe's mother is raped but he does not get justice in court. Laurel Jimenez (2017) also depicted that how does Euro

American law impose upon Native Americans. Lauren Cotham (2008) discovered culture clash and identity crisis in her other novel *Tracks*. Sajjad Gheytasi (2017) depicted that how Native Americans are struggling for their cultural survival on Reservations. This struggle is also being viewed in the characters of this novel *The Night Watchman*. Murtaza (2015) unveiled conflicting attitudes of Euro American and Native Americans towards nature in novels *Tracks* and *Love Medicine* by Erdrich: the Euro Americans go against the nature whereas the Native Americans take nature as theirs part of culture. Unlike the Whites, the Natives realize their dreams of culture and society in Nature. But a lot is still required in order to bring Erdrich's *The Night Watchman* under the analysis of ideological state apparatuses especially law.

Theoretical Framework

“Ideological State Apparatuses” is a term developed by the Post Marxist theorist Althusser to denote institutions such as education, the churches, family, media, trade unions, and law, which were formally outside state control but which served to transmit the values of the state, to interpellate those individuals affected by them, and to maintain order in a society, above all to reproduce capitalist relations of production. In contemporary capitalist societies education has replaced the Church as the principal ideological state apparatus. Among Marxists, the term is contrasted with the so-called ‘repressive state apparatus’ of the armed forces and police, and is allotted a major role in securing compliance within developed capitalist societies.

Althusser complicates Marx's understanding of the relation between base and superstructure by adding his concept of “ideological state apparatuses.” Marx distinguished among various “levels” in a society: the infrastructure or economic base and the superstructure, which includes political and legal institutions (law, the police, the government) as well as ideology (religious, moral, legal, political, etc.). The superstructure has a relative autonomy with relation to the base; it relies on the economic base but can sometimes persist for a long period after major changes in the economic base. Althusser does not reject the Marxist model; however, he does want to explore the ways in which ideology is more pervasive and more “material” than previously acknowledged. As a result, he proposes to distinguish “ideological state apparatuses” (ISAs for short) from the repressive state apparatus (SA for short). The state apparatus includes “the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc.” (Althusser, 2001, p.96). These are the agencies that function “by violence,” by at some point imposing punishment or privation in order to enforce power.

Law or courts are one of the state apparatuses for government. The basic model is comprised of the base and the superstructure, wherein the base is the unity of the productive forces (raw materials, the instruments of

production such as tools and machines) and the relations of production (labour, the bourgeoisie, capital, the agents of production). The superstructure, in contrast, is made up of two distinct components, the legal-political (law and state) and the ideological (religious, moral, etc.). Althusser (1970) is making through his theory of the ISAs and the role of law in suturing both the legal-political to the ideological within the superstructure, as well as the base to the superstructure. Law for Althusser (1970) is “necessarily repressive” (p.65) in that behind law is the threat of repressive action by the RSA—the police, courts, penalties, and prisons. But law cannot only rely on the repressive apparatus for support. Law also requires the existence of a ‘legal ideology’ to ensure that subjects of the state behave as legal subjects without the need for the repressive apparatus.

Research Methodology

This study was qualitative in nature and it used method of textual analysis for the analysis of Erdich’s *The Night Watchman*. With the help of textual analysis and theoretical framework of Althusser’s ideological state apparatuses, the present study explored suppression of Native Americans by Euro-Americans.

Analysis and Discussion

The primary characters of this book, who all reside on the Turtle Mountain reservation, are first introduced in the opening chapter, which takes place in September 1953. Thomas Wazhashk is the tribal chairman for the Turtle Mountain people and *The Night Watchman* of a local manufacturing facility. The 19-year-old Patrice “Pixie” Paranteau supports her family by working at the facility. She was the first member of her family to hold a “white people’s” job and was the class valedictorian. Additionally, the high school’s non-Native instructor Lloyd Barnes also oversees the students’ boxing club. Everett “Wood Mountain” Blue, a young man who graduated last year, is the top boxer in the area. At a gem factory, Thomas Wazhashk is introduced as he begins his night watchman job. Thomas’ last name, Wazhashk, is derived from the muskrat, a meek but tenacious creature essential to the survival of its habitat and, as we later discover, a fitting namesake for Thomas.

Thomas is worried about a law Congress has enacted known as the termination bill, which would force the Turtle Mountain people to migrate and take away their current government benefits. The bill was superheaded by Mormon Congressman Arthur V. Watkins. They start putting plans into action to oppose the law, including gathering signatures for a petition to the government and writing to their senator, along with the other members of the tribal advisory group.

Thomas and the other tribe members debate how Native Americans had consented to give up their lands in exchange for government services while they study the law (which could be equated to “rent” paid in exchange for use of the rest of United States). But now the government is unwilling to

make the payment. They would rather force them out of the majority of their property. At the same time, Thomas also considers and sees the ghost of his friend Roderick, who passed away after becoming ill while being imprisoned in an underground cellar at their government-run boarding school as a result of unduly cruel punishment administered by a teacher.

Using method of Althusserian Ideological State Apparatuses, suppression of Native Americans through Euro-American law especially Termination Policy, 1953-1969 has been explored from *The Night Watchman*. Purpose of this law was to finish Native American identity and termination of their residence on the reservation and to assimilate them with current fabric of U.S. life. In this section, a public reading and explanation of the termination bill is held in Fargo. An official from the Bureau of Indian Affairs reads the bill out loud and explains that the federal government will be terminating all services to Indians and that they will be relocated to “areas of equal opportunity” (p.197). Resistance to the bill is immediately vocalized. They do not want to relocate from their homes, nor do they think they are “too advanced” to need governmental help anymore. They speak about their poverty and economic struggles to survive. They accuse Congress of breaking its promises to Indians enshrined in past treaties, which promised them the ability to stay on their land even if they did “better themselves.” They accuse Congress of trying to destroy Indian identity through relocation. One of the Indians in the audience likens the governmental services to Indians as rent for using the entire country of the United States. Thomas takes a vote on the bill, which results in zero people for the bill, 47 people against.

To decide who should go to Washington, D.C., the committee is convening. Since Patrice is intelligent and skilled at speaking, Millie asks that she step aside since she is unsure of her abilities and doesn't trust her voice. Patrice declines to replace Millie but consents to accompany the delegation in case they require a back-up plan. The group going to Washington, D.C., will be made up of Thomas, Juggie, Millie, Moses, and Patrice, the committee decides.

Proper names are emphasized, and the writing is arranged into speeches and dialogues like in a play during the proceedings. Roderick arrives out of nowhere as Watkins starts talking. He knows Watkins as the instructor who introduced him to the Palmer Method, a well-liked cursive writing training program. Watkins violently assaulted Roderick, pulled him down the cellar stairs as punishment for “talking Indian,” and threatened Thomas with the same treatment. As Thomas testifies in court and disproves Watkin's assertions that Indians were impoverished because they were too lazy to work, Roderick gives him the moral fortitude he needs to do so. The delegation presents a strong argument with the help of their attorney. They choose to buy time by claiming that the tribe is actually far too poor to be

able to sustain itself without support from the government and, in fact, required more money.

With the help of Althusserian method of law as a state apparatus, suppression of the Native Americans has been investigated from the section of Congressional hearings. The Natives did not show their resistance against the Termination bill but they demanded time as the government's five-year plan was not enough. Power of U.S. law is reflected in these discourses: "Instead of arguing the premise of termination itself, the tribal committee had decided to buy time. The government's five-year plan was insufficient because the reservation was currently unable to sustain itself without support" (Erdrich, 2020, p.330).

Physical violence and suppression of law for Native American is reflected in Watkins' dragging to Native lawyer, Roderick. Watkins was a Senator who was in favor of the Termination Policy, 1953. Roderick was his student when Watkins was a teacher in the boarding school who taught the Palmer Method to the little Roderick. Watkins was man who had whacked his hands with the ruler's edge, who had pulled his ears, who had screeched at him, who had called him hopeless, who had punished him for talking Indian. "Watkins was the man who'd dragged Roderick to the cellar stairs and said to Thomas, "Would you care to join your friend?" (Erdrich, 2020, p.331). Suppressing and crushing authority of U.S. government and US law is reflected in the above-mentioned statements extracted from the section of Congressional hearings.

Senator Watkins, a White man, is a liar because he gives a false statement of Native Americans' giving on lease their farmable land to the white people. Suppression of the Native American through law or Congressional hearings has been explored. For Eason, A.E. (2018), federal policies treated Native Americans as "wards of the government". Their suppression is reflected in the proceedings of Congressional hearings. Watkins says,

In my area, whites got the poor land on the reservation. Within a year, however, the Indians leased their allotments. They just didn't want to farm. That is true today. I think most of the Indian allotments are under lease to white people (Erdrich, 2020, p.331).

Patrice is also present during proceedings and she thinks that Watkins is giving a false statement. She thinks about a white man who picked up cheap Indian land after the taxes came due on allotments. He did not get the poor land because no white person would buy it. He got the only farmable land. Thomas Wazhashk defends the Native Americans and gives true statement that what farmable land there is on the reservation is mostly farmed by Indians

Thomas raises the employment issue of the Native Americans that has shown a downward trend throughout the United States as a whole. He

further tells court, “the relocation program is ill timed and would be fraught with insurmountable difficulties” (Erdrich, 2020, p.332). He points out that the relocation program does not cover their problems. He raises voice against tyranny of U.S. law but his voice is suppressed by another state apparatus, Watkins. He says to Thomas that government cannot solve the problems of the Native Americans as “most of them have to be solved by yourselves” (Erdrich, 2020, p.332).

Watkins presents the Indians as lazy and immoral creature in the Congressional proceedings. Native Americans have been presented in negative ways. According to Moniz (2016), all races, especially minorities, are victims to stereotyping, and this includes Native Americans. Watkins says that no government can put ambition into the Native Americans. He further says, “you can’t legislate morality, character, or any of those fine virtues into people” (Erdrich, 2020, p.333).

At the Congressional hearings, Watkins tries to present the Native Americans of the reservation as poor and traffics in racist stereotypes of the lazy Indian and they do not choose to farm in their own land. Thomas refutes these assertions and he defends the Native with the help of Millie’s testimony on her economic study of the reservation. Watkins’ rhetoric and portrayal of the “lazy Indian” rings outrageously and instinctively false, as we have witnessed how hard Thomas, Patrice, and others work so that their families might survive, despite the policies that keep them impoverished. Patrice gives testimony of her being expert in the jewel bearings. She says:

This little wire that you see here is a wire made out of tongue steel, and that is set in the machine and worked back and forth until you finally drill a hole in the jewel....It has to be to the certain dimensions stated on the card, which you see here, and it is also cupped, so that it will hold oil for lubrication purposes (Erdrich, 2020, p.334).

Before Congressional proceedings, attitude of common Indians like Eddy Mink towards the Termination bill was very casual as reflected in *The Night Watchman*. Eddy is foil to Thomas because the former is indifferent to the bill and Indian identity whereas the latter is very much conscious of Indians’ rights. Thomas is conscious of legal complication that would be brought by the bill. Eddy changed the subject by asking if Thomas knew about the emancipation. Thomas said yes, but it wasn’t emancipation. It was interesting that Eddy had heard about the bill before anybody else—but he was that way. Thomas says to Eddy after termination bill there will be nothing for the Indians. He says, “But then you wouldn’t have any hospital. No clinic, no school, no farm agent, no nothing. No place to even rest your head” (Erdrich, 2020, p.31). Thomas further says that he cannot enjoy government commodities, saying: “By law, you wouldn’t be an Indian” (ibid.). Discourses of both Indians show the innocence of Eddy and legal consciousness of Thomas.

Euro-American law is always used as a repressive state apparatus against Native Americans as it is reflected in the acts of Senator Watkins in *The Night Watchman*. In the Termination bill, Watkins had also refused to appropriate sufficient money to relieve the Navajo, who were in a desperate situation down there in the desert. Watkins said that the Navajo “were used to poverty.” But his remark was widely circulated and perhaps he felt the sting. Thomas decided to hit the economic plight hard. It seemed that Watkins wanted Indians both to disappear and to love him for making them disappear. According to Thomas, in Watkins’ religion Indians were not white and delightful, but cursed with dark skin, so they had no right to live on the land. That they had signed legal treaties with the highest governmental bodies in the United States was also nothing to Watkins.

Indifferent attitude of the state towards Native Americans is reflected in the discourses of Thomas. Native American demands for civil rights and access to quality housing, education and health care are founded not just in the moral duty to treat all people equally. Thomas thinks that every so often the government remembered about Indians. And when they did, they always tried to solve Indians, thought Thomas. They solve us by getting rid of us. And do they tell us when they plan to get rid of us? Thomas further ponders,

“E-man-ci-pation. Eman-cipation. This word would not stop banging around in his head. Emancipated. But they were not enslaved. Freed from being Indians was the idea. Emancipated from their land. Freed from the treaties that Thomas’s father and grandfather had signed and that were promised to last forever. So as usual, by getting rid of us, the Indian problem would be solved”. (Erdrich, 2020, p.73)

Watkins has been presented as a representative of US state apparatuses. He is against the Native Americans. he has been presented as: “Senator Arthur V. Watkins was indeed a pompous racist” (Erdrich, 2020, p.371). The Termination bill is the climax of US government’s breaking all promises and treaties made with the Native Americans:

To provide for the termination of Federal supervision over the property of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians in the States of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana, and the individual members thereof; for assistance in the orderly relocation of such Indians in areas of greater economic opportunity; and for other purposes (Erdrich, 2020, p.82).

Native American Boarding Schools were established by the U.S. government in the late 19th century as an effort to assimilate Indigenous youth into mainstream American culture through education. This era was part of the United States’ overall attempt to kill, annihilate, or assimilate Indigenous peoples and eradicate Indigenous culture.

Native American Boarding Schools first began operating in 1860 when the Bureau of Indian Affairs established the first on-reservation boarding school on the Yakima Indian Reservation in Washington. Shortly after, the first off-reservation boarding school was established in 1879. The Carlisle Indian School located in Carlisle, Pennsylvania was founded by Richard Henry Pratt. He modeled the boarding school off an education program he designed while overseeing Fort Marion Prison in St. Augustine, Florida. He developed the program after experimenting with Native American assimilation education on imprisoned and captive Indigenous peoples. Pratt served as the Headmaster of the Carlisle Indian School for 25 years and was famously known for his highly influential philosophy which he described in a speech he gave in 1892.

Native students were not allowed to speak in their Native languages. They were only allowed to speak English regardless of their fluency and would face punishment if they didn't. The discipline enforced at these boarding schools was severe. Punishments varied and included privilege restrictions, diet restrictions, threats of corporal punishment, and even confinement. Additionally, Native students were neglected and faced many forms of abuse including physical, sexual, cultural, and spiritual. They were beaten, coerced into performing heavy labor. Their daily regimen consisted of several hours of marching and recreational time consisted of watching disturbing movies such as Cowboys and Indians.

Since they were used as forms of punishment, food and medical attention were scarce. This led to boarding schools becoming more susceptible to infections and diseases like tuberculosis, the flu, trachoma. Although a majority of Native children were forced to attend these boarding schools, some parents chose to send their children because those were the only schools available to their children. However, several forms of resistance were performed in response to having their children pulled from their homes and forced to attend these boarding schools. Some forms of resistance included entire villages refusing to enroll their children in the boarding schools, coordinated mass withdrawals, as well as encouraging their children to run away from the school. Indian agents – individuals hired to interact with Indigenous communities on behalf of the U.S. Government – would retaliate by withholding rations and supplies to Indigenous communities. These agents were also responsible for seizing children from their families and their homes until boarding schools were filled.

The boarding schools played a vital role in eradication of Native American identity in the Native children as it is reflected in Thomas' treatment in the boarding school where they were forced to salute the U.S. flag. Thomas remembers his days as a student in a flashback. His mother had wept after cutting off his braid since she knew the teachers at the government boarding school would do the same. He noted how common the US flag was at school. His teacher had the students stand and repeat the

Pledge of Allegiance while placing their hands on their hearts. He gets chills when he hears the words “a flag worth dying for” (Erdrich, 2020, p.90).

Native Americans’ assimilation in the U.S. urban society after Termination Policy means eradication of their Native identity that is reflected in discourse of Thomas. Thomas reflects how the Euro-Americans try to wipe off his tribe by assimilating it into American culture. He is a member of the “after-the-buffalo-who-are-we-now” generation, which was raised on a reservation and always kept time with a watch rather than the moon and sun. He wonders how Indians are supposed to interact with a nation that seeks to eradicate his tribe by fully absorbing it into the American culture.

Euro-American tyranny of law gave birth to several issues for Native American in the assimilated U.S. world i.e. violence, rape, insecurity, poverty, hatred and prejudice, and injustice that have been explored from *The Night Watchman*. Throughout the 19th century, white settlers continued to push West, as the U.S. government sought to expand its political and economic reach. Westward expansion required the appropriation of Native peoples’ land. The government took several different approaches acquiring the land of tribal nations, including direct treaty-making with Native Americans, legislative action, the decimation of food supplies, and forcible removal.

In *The Night Watchman*, through Patrice’s stay in the Twin Cities, Erdrich shows Natives’ problems in the assimilated world of U.S. She faces the issues of insecurity, violence, and rape during her this stay in white man’s world in which U.S. government intends to settle the Natives. She faces insecurity at the train station with the driver of the cab who tries to seduce her. She showed the address to the driver and asked how much it would cost to go there. “Nothing,” said the driver. “I’m going there anyway.” “No,” she said. “I will pay you something.” “We’ll see. Special price for a pretty lady” (Erdrich, 2020, p. 94). Furthermore, when she opened the door to get into the backseat, the driver said, “sit up front, why don’t you?” “No, thanks,” she said. She was positive that she remembered the backseat from a magazine story. She would not be fooled. The driver teases her because his arm went around her and he tried to propel her forward.

Native Americans faced issues of injustice on the part of white masses as well in the Twin Cities. When Patrice was in train going to the Twin Cities, she faced injustice and prejudice on the part of the white settlers. Euro-Americans hate the Native Americans because they consider them “savage” and their skin was dark. When a blond man who is sitting next to Patrice on the train asks her to switch seats with his wife, she is still dozing off in her seat. She rejects by keeping her mouth shut. The man waves a conductor down in exasperation. Finally, a different man suggests exchanging seats with the wife. The blond man beside Patrice was still for a

few moments, then he swatted lightly at her arm. He says, “Hey, my wife’s on board. She’ll change seats with you” (Erdrich, 2020, p.78).

Throughout history, white supremacy has demonstrated its power to reshape institutions and supersede legality. When President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act of 1830, ordering the removal of all Native Americans from their tribal land to reservations, the Supreme Court initially attempted to side with the tribes, who had signed treaties that ensured their national sovereignty. President Jackson bypassed the courts, and bent the strength of federal institutions to further meet the needs of white supremacy. Between 1830 and 1850, President Jackson oversaw the forced relocation of 100,000 Native Americans at the hands of federal and local military forces, resulting in the loss of ancestral homelands and 15,000 deaths from exposure, disease, and starvation. These death marches were white supremacy made manifest, and the legitimization of land theft was codified.

Patrice faced harassment in the shop during her visit to the white man’s the Twice Cities in *The Night Watchman*. On tribal territories and in Alaska Native towns, violence against indigenous women in the United States has reached previously unheard-of levels. The prevalence of violence and sexual violence among American Indian and Alaska Native women is higher than 4 in 5 and 1 in 2 respectively. Alaska Native women continue to have the highest rate of forceful sexual assault, and they have reported experiencing domestic abuse at up to ten times the national average. The amount of American Indian and Alaska Native women who are missing or murdered, as well as the lack of a prompt and sufficient federal reaction, are deeply concerning to indigenous women, tribal governments, and communities, despite the minimal data that is currently accessible. Native American women are murdered at a rate of more than 10 on some reservations (Adams, 1995). In this novel, Patrice is forcibly dragged inside the basement of the shop by another man. When another man steps in and commands the other to release Patrice, she is struggling against them out of fear that they will kidnap her.

Another issue that Native Americans faced was injustice that is reflected in *The Night Watchman*. Injustice on the part of the settlers has been investigated from the boxing match between Wood Mountain, Juggie’s son (Native American) and Joe Wobleszynski, another boxer from a local white settler family that maintains a rivalry with Wood Mountain’s family over land. For Lynch and Stretsky (2012), despite social and economic injustice, Native Americans faced environment injustice as well. On a foundation of colonization, racism, and genocide, the United States was established. Although it is not merely a sin from the past, this is a national original sin. Native Americans currently have much lower median earnings, lower homeownership rates, growing health inequities, and poverty rates that are twice as high as those of the general population. These results are a result of a white supremacy system. In this novel injustice on the part of white

referee is reflected in the section of the boxing match. Wood Mountain emerges as the winner of the match and comes close to defeating Woblesynski, but the referee blows the final whistle too soon, rattling Wood Mountain and cheating him of his momentum. The majority of the Indian audience leave disappointed when he loses the match with cheating of the whites. Injustice on the part of the referee is reflected the lines, “which went on points to Joe Wobble although anyone could see that the timekeeper had cheated for Wobble” (Erdrich, 2020, p.54).

Another issue that Native Americans faced was poverty and crimes that is reflected in *The Night Watchman*. LaBette’s confessing stealing from factory shows issue of poverty that Native Americans faced in the assimilated world. According to Champagne (2013), without addressing the poverty problem, it may not be feasible to address the problems with violent crime affecting Indian reservations. Poverty is a root cause of crime. High rates of crime are also seen in areas with high rates of poverty. The official poverty rate for American Indians living on reservations is 29.4%, which is higher than the country’s average of 15.3%. Compared to the national average of 9.2 percent, the reserve poverty rate for Indian families is 36 percent. Indians living in urban areas have a poverty rate of 22%, which is lower than that on reservations. In the states of Washington, California, Wisconsin, Michigan, North Dakota, South Dakota, Arizona, and Wisconsin, reservations have some of the highest rates of poverty. In this novel, LaBette confesses his theft, saying to Thomas that he does not make enough to feed his large family. He stole,

Anything can fit in his pockets. Whatever they don’t count.
Paper clips. Staples. Writing paper. Rolls of butt-wiping paper.
Coffee. Sugar. Spoons it out of the bag. Little at a time. He’s
taking soap. He’s taking crankcase oil. Just dribbling it into a
jar. He’s taking scraps of metal (Erdrich, 2020, p.140).

Other issues that Native Americans faced were hatred and prejudice on the part of the settlers for the Native Americans that is reflected in *The Night Watchman*. According to Hirschfelder and Molin (2018), the ongoing perception of Indians as dangerous contributes to negative expectations, interactions, and consequences. Thus, Indians are incarcerated at high rates, encounter discrimination and hate crimes, and experience other negative impacts. Stereotyped Indian violence also leads non-Indians to fear Native people. In *The Night Watchman*, Euro-American hatred and prejudice is reflected in the section of Congressional bill. Native Americans have been presented as savage and uncivilized in the Congressional Bill.

Their hatred was fixed, and they were led by their evil nature that they became wild and ferocious, and a blood-thirsty people, full of idolatry and filthiness, feeding upon beasts of prey, dwelling in tents, and wandering about in the wilderness with a short skin girdle about their loins.

There are different negative stereotypes for Native Americans. Respondents, particularly those who reside close to Indian Country, highlighted negative connotations with reservations such “They drink too much and get into fights” and “Alcohol misuse.” drug addiction mistreatment of kids. gambling dependency White Americans completely deny the otherness of aboriginal Americans yet honouring the rich cultural history of Indigenous Americans.

Conclusion

The present study has justifiably explored the principle aim, the related aim as well as its all research questions. This study investigates different issues i.e. violence, rape, insecurity, poverty, and injustice that Native Americans faced in the assimilated U.S. world have been explored from this novel. Through Patrice’s time in the Twin Cities, Erdrich illustrates the difficulties facing Native Americans in the incorporated United States in this novel. During her time in the white man’s world where the U.S. government plans to settle the Native Americans, she deals with challenges including insecurity, brutality, and rape. The present study is novel and unique. It is significant because it was meant to explore the Euro-American law as a state apparatus for Native Americans from the perspective of Althusserian model.

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