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POLISH INDIAN HOBBYISTS AND CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

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ABSTRACT

This article attempts to describe the Polish-American Friends Movement (PAIFM) in the context of cultural appropriation. It first describes the history of the movement by linking it to the phenomenon of playing Indian, which started in the United States in the colonial period and then was transplanted to Europe in the late 19th century. Subsequently, it briefly presents the history of the Polish hobbyism movement in Poland, pointing out the historical, social, and psychological circumstances of its development. In the next part it defines the concept of cultural appropriation and its main types according to James Young (2010). The last part is devoted to a detailed analysis of different forms of activities of the PAIFM, especially the annual week gathering, as observed by the author during the 40th gathering of Polish Indian enthusiasts in 2016. Different types of cultural appropriation and an array of consequences resulting from such a positioning are discussed. In this paper it is argued that the negative undertones of the concept obscure the complexity of the movement as a cultural phenomenon and its multiple links with Native American cultures and their present political and cultural situation.

Keywords: Playing Indian; cultural appropriation; enthusiasts; hobbyists; whiteshamanism.

1. Introduction

In July 2016, the Polish-American Indian Friends Movement (PAIFM) celebrated its 40th anniversary. The movement dates back to a time when westerns depicting cowboys and Indians were experiencing a peak in popularity in Poland, and when films in Europe reviving German novelist Karl May's fictional Apache hero Winnetou were generating huge interest in Native Americans.[1] The films even stole

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[1] In 2016 a new mini-series featuring now a Turkish-German Winnetou was shot again in

the limelight of books by Polish authors then widely read by Polish youth.[2] Perhaps most surprising is the fact that the movement has endured for so long, attracting many new followers over the four decades of its existence. The inaugural fledgling gathering saw a mere 20 participants in its first year in Chodzież (see, e.g., Placek 2003, Nowocień 2003), whereas the 40th edition hosted over 800 participants.

Throughout this forty year period, the most devoted members have borne the monikers of Indian hobbyists, enthusiasts, and 'Indianists'. And these appellations are not inaccurate, given the devotees' interest in Native Americans' present predicaments and their desire to understand Native American history, material culture, and spirituality. In the past, this fecund curiosity was coupled with a yearning to forget the grim reality of communist Poland, whereas today it can been seen as a pining for an alternative to the capitalist-driven lifestyle so bereft of spiritual and environmental dimensions. Poles interested in the Native American cultures are a genus that belongs to a larger family of European Indian hobbyists, all hailing from a wide range of occupational and educational backgrounds. Meeting once or a few times a year for weekend gatherings or weeklong outings, they get involved in a wide range of activities resembling those that Native Americans themselves still celebrate, especially during powwows or other ceremonies. This invariably encompass "war games, hunting, craftwork, singing, dancing, sweat bathing, feasting, making ceremonies" (Taylor 1988: 562, Ellis, Lassiter & Dunham 2005, Owen 2008: 13).[3]

Academic papers and journals have recently cast a less favorable impression on all this, tagging these Indian lovers as 'cultural appropriators' (Root 1997, Deloria 1998, Owen 2008, Riley & Carpenter 2013). Academics further contend that these appropriators are not just playing Indian (Deloria 1998) or benignly imitating and mirroring their cultures, but are culturally appropriating their culture.[4] Having followed the history of the movement and shared devotees' deep interest in Native Americans, the author feels that their activities, initiatives, and passions, associated with a fervent desire to develop a knowledge and understanding of the history, culture, and spiritual heritage of Native Americans, are positive. Nonetheless, some members of this movement have started having doubts over whether or not what they have been doing is actually culturally iniquitous. Others have even stopped engaging in some activities, such as dressing up or attending powwows (see Maciołek 2000; Rosiak 2017: 239).

Germany. *Winnetou & Old Shatterhand*, directed by Phillip Stölzl.

[2] Cf. Paryż (2013).

[3] Some of the hobbyists can be classified as weekend warriors when they attend a weekend meeting, during which they mainly powwow, donning self-made dresses (cf. Kádár 2012: 100).

[4] Depending on the context they will be referred to in the text as shape-shifters (Kádár 2012), ethnic transvestites, surrogates (Penny 2014), hackers (Churchill 1996), and whiteshamans (Rose 1984).

In order to confront this dilemma, the author visited the 40th PAIFM gathering. Taking part in its events over a couple of days, conducting a questionnaire and interviewing participants, the author sought to learn how much awareness participants had about the practices they were involved in during the gathering. The consequent main aim of this paper is to position PAIFM in the context of cultural appropriation and, more specifically, to define the consequences and implications of positioning it as an example of cultural appropriation in order to broaden the context for both PAIFM's detractors, notably the staunch advocates of labeling such a gathering as cultural appropriation, and its supporters. To this effect, it would be necessary to first describe the history of Indian hobbyism and playing Indian in general, specifically in Poland, define the meaning of the term 'cultural appropriation' and its types, and address basic concerns about the harms and benefits its usage entails. Subsequently, some cultural products, practices, and perspectives related to Polish Indian hobbyists and observed during the PAIFM gathering will be described and later assessed with regard to the types of cultural appropriation described by James O. Young (2010), which will allow the author to address the principal problem of appropriation. A useful backdrop to answering the problem would be assessing comments from the questionnaire and interviews conducted by the author with participants of the gathering, in all 35, most long-term members of the movement.[5] Therefore, the statements cited in the paper will be illustrative of the stance of the "devotees" of the movement, as Feest called them (1996: 327).

2. A brief history of Indian hobbyism

The roots of the phenomenon of dressing up and imitating Indians can be traced to American history, when the first colonists, and then Americans, started to don Native regalia to achieve specific aims. This process was aptly described in the book *Playing Indian* by Philip Deloria, who singled out Ernest Thomson Seton, Daniel Carter Beard, and Lord Baden Powell as the men responsible for the "appropriation and incorporation of what they believed was the American Indian element in the traditions of the Boy Scouts of America" (1998: 96). These white men, following in the footsteps of their predecessors who took part in the Boston Tea Party and then formed fraternal societies of the early American Republic (The Tammany Society, The Red Men Society), suggested the "Indian" as the necessary Other. This Other was dualistic in nature, seen as either the enemy (for Beard) or the model to shape character (for Seton), first of boys, and then of girls,

[5] One of the questions asked about in the questionnaire was the number of times one took part in the gathering and the median number was 25.

at the turn of the 19th century, "who [i.e., the children]", as they saw, "were imperiled by the effeminate, post frontier urbanism" (Deloria 1998: 96). In their attempt to recreate the archaic mythical frontiersmen in blossoming young Americans, mainly immigrant boys when the frontier was gone, the scouting founders idealized Indians of lore, or, to be more exact, fed the impressionable youth with images of the good Indian, leaving the bad one in the shade (Berkhofer 1978: 28), for the contemporary living Native Americans were meant to be culturally transformed into white people. In this way Deloria claims the Indian "was put in the pre-contact ethnographic present always temporally outside of modernity (…), in a different temporal zone" (1998: 106), removed from the industrial, and today postindustrial, space and time of the West. The dichotomy between modernity/postmodernity/19th century globalism and the pristine environment populated by the Noble Savage is perhaps the most enduring element in the history of how Native Americans have been perceived by Euro-Americans.

In this 'mythical' temporal zone, the Noble Indian has become both an icon of the search for one's self as untouched by the vices or modernity, such as greed and corruption, and simultaneously an icon of rebellion. The former case implied an existence of a self that was in connection with nature and the community, following "simple rules of life and simpler life style", hence less polluted by modernity (Kádár 2012: 112) in either a spiritual or environmental way. Such 'Indianness' subsequently served certain individuals and groups in certain contexts (see Deloria 1998: 114–117, Kádár 2012: 99–103, Lutz 2015: 155–190) to countervail, among others, British oppression, early American establishment, slavery, or, later, capitalist society. As an acquired frame of mind in later history, it empowered individuals to resist or escape from the negative effects of industrialization, urbanization, mass culture, environmental destruction, or loneliness. Contemporary societies such as The Indian Dead and various hippie groups in and outside the United States that appeal to individuals alienated in their times, suggested a way of resolving the problem of alienation by offering participation in an association encompassing a romanticized Indian way of life.[6] Indianness, as a sign of "self, …a quest for lifestyle lost, now corrupted, …for the possibility of resistance, even spiritual redemption, in an increasingly material world" (Penny 2014: 184), allowed individuals to find their authentic Self, often through the process of transformation and creation. When Deloria (1998: 161) remarked that "[s]ince the early twentieth century, people had put on Indian clothes to search for authenticity in modern America more alienating than welcoming", he characterized the trend of dressing up as an Indian as an element

[6] Cf. Deborah Root's criticism of this trend (1997).

often accompanying this search[7] and signifying a rebellion. Besides, Deloria emphasized the importance of the act of "donning the Indian clothes [which] moved ideas from brain to bodies, from the realm of abstraction to the physical world of concrete experience" (1998: 184).

Feest claims that although there is no relation between the native populations and Europeans, Europeans are interested in "Indians", or to be more exact, "a whole fictional population inhabiting the Old World mind rather than the new world" (Feest 1999, after Stirrup 2013). Colin F. Taylor (1988: 1–5) identifies the origin of European interest in Native Americans to the United Kingdom in the mid-19th century, when the British were exposed to George Catlin's albums of Plains Indians, books by Seton, Bell[8] and many others, and eventually to photographic exhibitions and ethnographic objects collected by numerous amateur Indian-enthusiasts. The Wild West Show's smashing triumph at its London premiere in 1886 not only contributed to the promotion of Plains Indian culture in Britain's capital, but also hastened its exportation to other European countries, most notably Germany, planting a seed of interest in Native Americans that has endured ever since. In the wake of these events and influencing factors in Europe, museums sprouted up, meetings with visiting Native Americans were organized, and various clubs and associations formed. In these latter organizations, participants would engage themselves in the "war games, craftwork, singing, dancing, sweatbathing, feasting, making ceremonies" (Taylor 1988: 2), often in the presence of Native Americans, who either extended their stay with the Wild West Shows or remained in Europe after World War I (Penny 2014: 176–182).[9]

Throughout the 20th century, a plethora of varied organizations formed in European countries,[10] all displaying similar traits recreating the material and spiritual culture of the "idealized" Plains Indians (Green 1988: 38).[11] In many countries these developments inevitably spawned serious research undertaken by Indian hobbyists, who often demonstrated expert knowledge about Native American cultures. One manifestation of this interest was the publication of myriad books and journals addressing a wide range of aspects as well as the past

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7 Deloria defines the authentic as a "culturally constructed category created in opposition to a perceived state of inauthenticity" and he further remarks that this "quest for such an authentic other is … modern phenomenon" (1998: 101). Cf. Lutz (2015: 109).

8 *The Book of Woodcraft and Indian Lore* (Seton 1912); *The Gospel of the Redman* (Seton & Dee Barber Seton 2005 (1937)).

9 A fictionalized example of this phenomenon can be found in James Welch, *The Heartsong of Charging Elk: A Novel* (2001).

10 Germany, Sweden, Holland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Finland, Poland, and the Soviet Union, among many others.

11 Green claims that first West Wild Shows and then westerns transmitted the Plains Indian dance and regalia; that is why they became predominant in Europe (Axtmann 2013: 128).

and present problems of Native Americans. The resultant dissemination of this knowledge triggered yet more interest and subsumed more Europeans into the movement (Kirwan & Stirrup 2013: 59–83, and Lutz 2015: 158–174).[12]

The focus of this past interest was predominantly one of a romanticized Indian, wearing exotic clothes and engaging in peculiar activities, none yet corresponding to a particular native nation. These were rather a composite of features that looked or sounded Indian, though mostly resembling the Plains Indians culture. In this anachronistic and inauthentic sense, the Indian became an "*indian*", as Gerald Vizenor calls him: ..."a case of cultural nostalgia, the presence of tradition in a chemical civilization" (Vizenor 1998: 38). Most writers dealing with European hobbyists (see, for example, Lutz, Kádár, Taylor, Feest) agree that since the sources of the knowledge about Native Americans mostly derived from books, shows, albums of 'vanishing Indians', and dime films, the resultant image was this romanticized figure, a noble Indian later copied by European hobbyists in their reenactments. In each European country, however, fascination with the Indians was culturally or historically specific, though Europeans shared similar motivations – escapism, anti-American imperialism, desire for a community based on mutual trust (Kádár 2012: 100) – to emulate Indians. That interest and fascination was further buttressed in the 1960s and 1970s through the already mentioned German films or spaghetti westerns, which featured fictitious Indian heroes and their 'white' friends, all products of the human imagination (primarily of Karl May and an array of other authors in each country; see MacKay & Stirrup 2013, Šavelková 2017b).

The interest in the indian was paralleled by a search for information about contemporary Indians, living, authentic ones, with whom Europeans sought contact. Knowledge about the predicaments of contemporary Indians gave rise to a new phenomenon, mainly cooperation between European Indian enthusiasts and Native American activists who wished to highlight their problems and garner international support in order to pursue their goals in the United States. This was most apparent during the 1970s and 1980s, when leaders of the American Indian Movements, among them Russell Means and Dennis Banks, gave visiting lectures in Europe highlighting the pressing problems of Native Americans (Penny 2014). At the same time, European groups and societies, such as the German organization Arbeitskreis for Nordamerikanische Indianer, published notes in order to "inform the public of the real situation of the Native Americans and support them through petitions and letter campaigns, donation-drives" (Taylor 1988: 4). In Poland, this awareness-raising role was played by the journal *Tawacin*, which was published between 1995 and 2006 (see Buchowska 2011). In the Czech Republic the interest was manifested in still another manner, namely

12 Kádár (2012) says something opposite.

in establishing a Czech lacrosse team in 1967 and after the end of the communism in organizing lacrosse tournaments including the participation and support of Native American teams, i.e., from the Haudenosaunee Nation/s (see Šavelková, Petráň & Durňak 2014; Šavelková & Durňak 2015, Šavelková 2017a: 83–84).

These aspects of the European Indian Hobbyist movement can be detected in the history of Poland's PAIFM. Its activities and aims have been the subject of numerous papers, articles, books, and research papers (available on the PAIFM website, last updated in 2014) (PRPI[13]). Any comprehensive presentation of its aims and activities is beyond the scope of the paper, yet its rough delineation will serve the purpose of stressing that the annual gathering, which is the central subject of the paper, is in fact one of many diverse activities initiated or held by PAIFM. Although this gathering is not necessarily the most important one, it is perhaps the most colorful and distinguishable one, arousing the most interest and attention of the media and the Polish audience at large.

The formation of the movement can be credited, prior to its establishment, to a few individuals. These few shared an interest in the Native Americans (Leszek Michalik) and had their own personal contacts (i.e., Stefania Antoniewicz) with Native Americans in Canada, the United States, or German and then Czechoslovakian Indian hobbyists, or who claimed Indian blood (Stanisław Supłatowicz aka Sat-Okh)[14] (Placek 2003). Their personal pursuits can be seen within the context of the growing popularity of Indian culture spurred by Sat-Ohk's[15] and Karl May's books. The latter's books were censored for decades and this censorship was lifted only in the late 1960s. However, it is worth mentioning, and has been noted by Taylor (1988: 3), that the widespread interest in Native Americans was personal and internal, most evident in the way many young people avidly read these books they were fascinated by. Such interest was not generated by the concerted effort of political or social organizations seeking to achieve political or economic goals under the Polish communist regime (Rosiak 2017: 150). Paryż (2013: 156) remarks that the communist authorities did not censor books or movies about the American West, hoping that by focusing on such themes as the Native Americans' dispossession from their lands and the erasure of their culture, they would shed some negative light on imperialist America. The authorities' hope, however, did not pan out as they had planned; instead, both Native Americans themselves and America became the focal point of fascination for many Poles. In a political context, interest in the distant Indian

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13 Polski Ruch Przyjaciół Indian.

14 Cf. Rosiak 2017.

15 Among his most popular titles are *Ziemia Słonych Skał* (The Land of Salt Rocks, 1958), *Biały Mustang* (White Mustang, 1959), *Powstanie człowieka* (Emergence of Man, 1981). All were written in Polish as books for children and later translated into many languages.

could be seen as a desire to escape the dreary reality of communism in Poland, rather than as sign of ideological critique of capitalist America. For many, taking interest in 'Indians' was also an act of rebellion against the political regime in Poland, especially given that the boy scout organization, in the west a legacy of the Woodcraft Indian movement, stood at the center of communist indoctrination in Poland.[16, 17]

A consequence of all the grass root initiatives was the first official meeting of the Polish group in Chodzież in September 1977, which launched a movement modeled after similar ones in the Czech Republic and Germany. In following years, the movement branched out and attracted more followers and activists (see Wojtaszek 2002, Placek 2003, Nowocień 2003) who took part in many initiatives in the European forum, such as the European Meetings of Indian Support Groups (Zurich 1988, in Nowocień 2003), the sacred runs initiated by Russell Means[18] and many other local initiatives (Rosiak 2017: 245–247).

As in Hungary, enthusiasts in Poland can be divided into two distinct groups. The first groups are hobbyists, who in their endeavors wish to receive authentication from Native Americans by inviting them to meetings and gatherings or keeping in contact with them; their aim is to be informed and inform others about the past and present of Native Americans. The second group consists of the powwow Indians and the weekend warriors, who do not actively seek validation of their activities. The fascination with Indians in the latter group mainly boils down to dressing up, participating in Indian dances, and attending summer camps, keeping the "stereotypical picture of the 'redskin' wearing a warbonnet" (Maciołek 2000, Kádár 2012: 141) in the limelight. They are often thus referred to as traditionalists. In contrast, the great breadth of activities undertaken by hobbyists encompass such areas as education, publishing,[19] research, art, or founding of organizations, and that commands respect and admiration, especially if one considers the fact that the activists (according to Placek (2003) there were over 1,000 in 2004, of different shades) are not professional researchers or anthropologists, but blue or white collar workers who devote significant time to this interest outside of their work. It may even be

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16 HSPS (Scout in Service for Socialist Poland) lasted from 1971 till 1981.

17 See Šavelková (2017b) for an interesting explanation of the interest in Native Americans as the "exotic other(s)" taken by the Eastern Europeans, themselves exotic others exoticized by the Western Europeans according to an observation of Todorova: "Everyone has had one's own Orient, pertaining to space and time, most often of both" (Todorova 1997: 12, after Šavelková 2017b: 137–138).

18 Sacred Run Turtle Island 1992, Run for Freedom for Leonard Peltier and Indigenous Peoples, among others.

19 Of special notice are the journals *Tawacin* (discontinued in 2014), cf. Buchowska (2011), as well as *Indigena* (http://indigena.edu.pl/English) – both in Polish.

inadequate to slap the "hobbyist" label on these people, for dedication to this interest substantially determines their lifestyle, their free time, their social and cultural activities as well as their friendships. Among them we may find authors of historical books about Indians (Jarosław Wojtczak[20], Aleksander Sudak[21]), Native American cultures (Leszek Michalik[22]), editors of ethnographic journals (*Indigena*) or owners of publishing houses (editor in chief Marek Maciołek) who also publish books about Native Americans (in the past also the journal of the PAIFM *Tawacin*, cf. Buchowska 2011). These are not academic books or papers, but many are well researched and appeal to audiences whom academia rarely reaches, but who later, when enrolling at a university, are more likely to take courses on Native Americans.

When *Tawacin* became more devoted to the less spectacular issues of contemporary Native Americans, it began to lose readership and eventually had to close down.[23] H. Glenn Penny gives a similar description of the knowledge about the present and the past of Native Americans that some of German hobbyists display, concluding his essay with a statement that "many hobbyists have become authorities on a range of issues (particularly the history and production of material culture across an impressive geographical and chronological breadth) (2014: 197). This certainly holds true for some Polish hobbyists, including those who manufacture their own clothing or artifacts, in spite of the many differences in the history and origin of the two hobbyists movements (see Feest 1996, Penny 2014, Lutz 2015).

3. Some remarks about cultural appropriation

Ziff and Rao define cultural appropriation as "the taking—from a culture that is not one's own—of an intellectual property, cultural expression or artifacts, history and ways of knowledge" (1997: 1). What is taken and then adapted can be tangible or intangible, from texts and objects to motifs and musical tunes. On the surface, the term seems neutral because it can be understood as describing processes of cultural exchange or cultural transmission that have been taking place from time immemorial, yet the term cultural appropriation links cultural adaptation with politics and economy, or as Ziff and Rao claim, with the power relationships and access to power by different cultures (1997: 5). This is where cultural appropriation becomes contentious. In the political domain, it presupposes that members of a

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20 He is the author of, among others, *NEZ PERCE, Dzieci Kojota z Wyżyny Kolumbii, Sand Creek 1864, or Minnesota 1862.*

21 He is the author of, e.g. *Paunisi, Komancze, Detroit 1763*.

22 He is the author, among others, of *Ludzie i totemy* [*Peoples and Totems*] (2004), *Encyklopedia plemion Indian Ameryki Północnej. Ludzie, kultura, historia, współczesność* (2009).

23 The process and reasons are well described in an interview with Maciołek (2000).

dominant culture take elements from the marginalized cultures and exploit them in different ways unavailable to the marginalized culture, which is due to the privileged position of the dominant culture on the market or in its access to power. Though we live in the post-colonial period,[24] the dominant groups in politics and economy have mostly remained the same as in the colonial era (that is, they are members of western culture), and now, though in different ways, they still profit from the use of cultural elements of the previously colonized cultures. Here examples abound. James O. Young, the author of a book *Cultural Appropriations and the Arts* (2010), highlights the blues music of Afro-Americans, headdresses of Native Americans and ponchos of Mexican-Americans as products sold by companies owned by white businessmen without any "permission" from the groups that created the artifacts. Rise in importance of indigenous groups in the wake of Cold War (Graham & Penny 2014) and adoption of the policy of multiculturalism in many countries have empowered these groups and other minority cultures, giving them a voice that announces that they wish not only to be treated equally and with due respect. They would also like to have their share in the dominant culture acknowledged, and the accompanying share in the profits obtained from the exploitative adoption of their cultural symbols during the time of subjugation (see Scafidi 2005). This boils down to defining and establishing property rights (including intellectual property rights) of indigenous cultures over elements of their culture(s), which will be referred to later in the text.

For the purpose of further analysis, three kinds of appropriation will be briefly presented, depending on what is appropriated, as distinguished by Young (2010). The first one is called *object appropriation*, often referred to as the theft of a tangible thing. Examples abound, though some are less obvious than others. This could mean Native American skulls, artifacts, or regalia as a result of plunder, war, exchange, or trade are exhibited in a national museum or any kind of public display which takes them out of their original context and strips them of their original meaning, thus hurting the insider's culture or, in extreme cases, undermining its roots.[25] This type of appropriation, however, will not be the subject of the paper, for all objects, regalia, or artifacts used during the Polish Indian Friends' Gathering are either bought from the Native Americans or manufactured in Poland or by the Polish Indian hobbyists themselves, which is another issue and type of appropriation to be discussed later.

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[24] Though some still claim that colonialism is by no means over (Huggan 1996: 19–20), and refer to it as neocolonial, since the era when the previous colonizers still profit from the people colonized in the past is called neocolonialism.

[25] Nowadays those cultural items of Native Americans are often returned to the rightful owners, if there is a legitimate claim that the culture owns the items – in the United States by virtue of The Native Americans Graves and Remains Protection Act of 1990.

The second type of appropriation is *content appropriation*, where the items of appropriation are not tangible. This could mean musical melodies, cultural patterns, motifs, rituals, or stories that have been taken by outsiders and incorporated into their cultures. Here the classical examples are the logos bearing Native designs or Native American names that have been exploited by corporations, commercial sellers or sport clubs. Some of the adopted motifs may have a sacred meaning in the insider's culture (the medicine bundle or Black Foot's beaver bundle) or be totems (the bear, the snake), and the public is oblivious to knowledge about them or the public uses them in a way that offends or hurts an insider.

The third kind of appropriation distinguished by Young (2010) is defined as a *subject appropriation*. Such appropriation is committed when an outsider, a representative of mainstream culture, incorporates, presents, or represents the minority culture. Again, there are numerous examples, including the highly popular film *Dances with Wolves* (dir. Kevin Costner 1990) and novels such as James Fenimore Cooper's *The Leatherstocking Tales* (1985) and Karl May's *Winnetou I–III* (2007).

This kind of appropriation is supported by the so-called cultural *experience* or *provenance argument*, according to which anything authentic and valuable in a given culture can be produced only by an insider who has the "peculiar, social, cultural, economic and emotional experiences of a minority culture representative", including a Native American (Young 2010: 35). In other words, to write about Native Americans or paint them, or shoot movies about them, one has to have a personal—either direct or indirect—experience of displacement, loss, deprivation, discrimination, racial prejudice and the like. Young claims that lacking such experience does not rule out the possibility of creating a masterpiece. *Hamlet* by Shakespeare, in which Danish people are portrayed by the English writer, is such an example.

To conclude in line with Young's division of appropriation, three main arguments can be employed and enumerated to denounce any kind of appropriation. The first line of attack is called *representation offence*, where outsiders misrepresent a culture. This misrepresentation leads to the creation of a stereotype and its further perpetuation (e.g., the myth of the Noble and Ignoble Savage in western movies), which undermines the group economically, politically, culturally, or historically. The second argument focuses on the fact that the representation, no matter how hurtful, once presented by the outsider, limits the audience ready to be attracted by the topic the insiders can reach. How many people would like to see a history of boarding schools once it was shown in the movie *Where The Spirit Lives?* (Young 2010: 115). This critique stresses that cultural appropriation allows outsiders to benefit economically to the detriment of creators, the insiders. The third argument, *violence offence*, implies that outsiders'

representation may violate the objects that are sacred or significant, and, as a result, transform the objects or practices, or, at best, trivialize them.

However, when considering cultural appropriation, the advantages it brings should also be brought to light. First, it is educational. Outsiders from the majority culture can educate others about the minority culture and thus contribute to worldwide knowledge about the culture, even creating a wider market for the insiders' version, once insiders are ready or willing to share it. The knowledge provided by outsiders does not have to be distorted; it might be incomplete, but not necessarily biased. It is also economically advantageous, as the insiders' culture gains wider exposition and thus greater possibilities for self-representation or employment of their members. Finally, cultural appropriation is artistically valuable, as it has always been, because it allows for greater creativity and self-expression. Having said that, it is necessary to concede that in the context of Indigenous studies this advantage raises some ethical concerns. The major ones are the issues of the authorization of knowledge conveyed through the "artwork" and the right to present the knowledge of the Indigenous culture, as well as the authenticity of the piece.[26] This will be addressed later when discussing the issue of culture ownership and consent offence.

Lastly, the types of appropriation delineated by James O. Young were used to assess artworks, not cultural phenomena or events. Yet what he focused on in the artifacts, be it films or traditional objects, was not their aesthetic value, but their provenance and the meaning they generated, more specifically if they were misrepresenting the minority culture. In the field of cultural studies, culture is referred to as "a process, a set of practices […] which are concerned with the production and exchange of meaning" (Hall 1997: 2) and their perpetuation. The author thinks that the gatherings also produce and perpetuate a meaning; therefore, it is legitimate to apply this typology to determine in what way(s) the re-enactment or representation of Native American culture in the annual Polish American Indian Friends Movement Gathering can be treated as cultural appropriation, and what consequences this entails.

4. Positioning of PAIFM in the context of cultural appropriation

The 40th Gathering of Polish Indian Friends in 2016 lasted a week. It was organized by the Wszołek family in the town of Uniejów, in central Poland, which advertises itself as a Polish Indian hobbyists town and a seat of many Native American-centered events, such as runs for the earth, competitions, or powwows,

[26] Many tribes, e.g., Lakota and the Cree, are hesitant to share their knowledge about their ceremonies to outsiders, though, as Black Elk spoke, it was a custom to pass their knowledge (Owen 2008: 46–47).

organized throughout the year. Roughly 800 people attended the gathering in 2016. They signed in at the entrance gate, where they quickly became visually acquainted with postings detailing the code of conduct and dress code to be strictly followed during the Gathering. Just in case, leaflets were distributed to all camp participants. The guide emphasized respect for Mother Earth and all other participants, and specified how to behave in certain venues (the circle, around the 'sacred fire', in the tipis, during powwows). As for taboos, it forbade the consumption of alcohol and drugs on the campsite, limited access to electricity to the gate, as well as listed and described sensitive issues that might surprise a first-time participant, i.e., a very affectionate welcome or a scant dress during a hot day. Thus the guide additionally laid out the rules for participation in the game of Playing Indian, where Polish people reenact Native American cultures. This underscores two factors: first, that this is a reenactment done by outsiders to the culture, and second, that there is a protocol that everybody has to follow as a sign of respect for the cultures reenacted. Both statements would be crucial when assessing the title problem.

During the Gathering, the organizers offered a number of activities ranging from powwows, singing and dancing, practicing craft and skill games, archery and ball games to cooking Native American foods, running for the earth, and the like. Indeed, all these activities feature in meetings organized by Indian hobbyist movements throughout Europe, as noted in the previous subsection (Taylor 1988: 562–569, Penny 2014) and by Jennifer Osborne (author of *The Red West* (2015), a photograph album), who travelled throughout many European countries, including Poland, between 2011 and 2015, and visited similar camp gatherings. All authors emphasized, which is confirmed by the present author, that it was not only the physical skill and crafts that the Indianists admired or practiced, but also the spiritual dimension of Native American life, especially their concern for the interrelatedness between humans and nature (Wojtaszek 2002). Jennifer Osborne writes, "[h]obbyists emphasize the spirituality of their identification… They believe that Westerners [American and European] have lost their ability to live in harmony with the environment, so the camps help [them] to rediscover the connection and harmony with nature" (2016). In the camp in Uniejów, concern over the environment translated into accepting scant access to electricity, recycling containers, and an open air environment. Regarding spiritual matters, camp participants were informed about the conduct code germane to a specific activity they wished to participate in. This code was strictly followed and improper action when observed was immediately addressed; participants were always reminded of the value of any ritual or object, sacred or aesthetic, such as the pipe smoking ceremony, the medicine wheel, sage burning, and especially the powwow, and what they meant when used in ceremonies. Wendy Rose labels all this as 'whiteshamanism', brushing aside more nuanced details. According to her

definition, 'whiteshamanism' happens when white people, or unauthorized Native people, "deck themselves … in more buckskin, beads and feathers, bone chokers and body paint" (1984) and feign sacred knowledge of Indians and their ceremonialism, all for public use or material gain. In the case of Polish Indianists, however, we have no material gain, and the public assumes the role of either an audience or participants in a game. Admittedly, they act like Indians and emulate them, but they do not pretend to be them. Rose admits that she does not mind the so-called shamans who do not pretend to experience the spirituality, but rather present the indigenous perspective through play. The author shares her perspective in this case.

The most visible, perhaps most aesthetic element of the reenactment was a two-day powwow. During this event, the oldest and most faithful participants wore extremely elaborate regalia and performed different types of Indian dances in front of an audience. Putting on Native regalia, as previously mentioned, was already an important element for early colonists and Americans. In *Playing Indians*, Deloria notices that "playing and costuming was important, for they enabled transfiguring of [the persons]" (1998: 95) and enabled a connection between mind and body to experience the transformation thoroughly. Those interviewed during the gathering (25 out of 35) admit that they feel special when wearing such regalia. It allows them to stand out from the crowd and establish an affinity with other Gathering members, show their interest in that culture, and, to a degree, present their 'self-identification' with Native American culture. This facet of Indian hobbyism was also remarked upon by Taylor (1988: 564) and Osborne (2016), and is in line with one of the purposes of 'playing Indian' – to search for one's authentic identity through transformations (the other being a reconciliation of contradictions) (Deloria 1998: 101). This pretending aspect seems to contradict what was acknowledged above, and shows that some people actually look for the feeling and experience evoked when playing an Indian. Indeed, this experience may have some purifying or cathartic meaning. Perhaps the latter depends upon the motivation that pushes some people into "shape-shifting" into Indians for the moment. Here the most probable motivating factor will be the desire to escape from one's self, from society, and from reality when one enters the state of being an Indian (Kádár 2012: 112). Here the indian and the native dance may merely be escapist tools, thus are subject to objectification, which deprives both of spiritual dimension. This behavior may raise objections as being a violent offense. On a different note, it may also prompt one to think about the deficiencies of Polish culture if people fulfill themselves more fully within a framework of a culture that is actually a cultural invention.

It is beyond the scope of the paper to describe all the events that took place during the week gathering in Uniejów, but it is hoped that what has been said suffices to prove, in the light of the definition and the types of cultural

appropriation, that the enterprise as a whole, as a cultural event of Native American cultures presentation, can be classified as a subject appropriation, while all its constitutive parts can be seen as content appropriation. Polish people attempt at representing or 'reliving' or performing Native American cultures by imitating Indian ways of life, particularly the more romanticized version of the Northern Plains Indians.[27] By resuscitating this 19th century image, they misrepresent the reality of Native Americans, their problems and lifestyles of both the past and the present. Although the master of the ceremony explains all the necessary details, yet, as already said, Polish hobbyists, along with other European Indianists, are the outsiders to the insiders' culture, who take "intellectual property, cultural expression or artifacts, history and ways of knowledge" of Native American culture(s), defined above, and use them in their culture, making the element of another culture (its subculture) a part of their cultural expression.

Now, within Young's theoretical framework, let us analyze what the nature of this representation is and what offense and harm it brings to Native cultures that Poles "take and adopt" from Native American culture(s). As regards the subject representation offense, the author, though a non-Native American, might nevertheless hazard an opinion that this representation does not do much harm to Native American cultures. What may be objectionable is that such a practice can contribute to perpetuating the archaic 19th century stereotype of the Plains Indians wearing beads and feathers, as the regalia and the activities characteristic of Native Americans from that region predominate. Yet, to a more inquisitive participant, it is clear, and the organizers go to great lengths to get this message across, that what they re-enact and show is a legacy of Native Americans, not their current image. Also, as was already mentioned, they seek authentication of their endeavor by inviting Native Americans to the gatherings and thus obtaining their approval.[28] Contenders may be right in pointing that it is not from random individuals that a consent should be sought, but from authorized bodies such as tribal governments, but this point will be addressed later. Second, the Native Americans themselves, from all nations, take part in powwows wearing regalia, also of the Plains Indians (Owen 2008: 14). Though in this way they undeniably continue their tradition, they at the same time have turned the Plains tribes' garments into easily identifiable hallmarks of the "indian", thus making it a 'referential' image. These regalia indeed recall the heroic and nostalgic past of

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27 During the powwow, dances of Seminoles and Cherokees were also performed and the regalia described.

28 For instance, in 2007 Native Americans from the Nisqually Indian Tribe (members of the Native American Church) and Blackfoot visited a gathering in Katowice, Poland. The Native Americans generally approved of the gatherings and what the Indianists were doing, but there were cases when they refused participation on the grounds of this being offensive.

their ancestors or were used in sacred ceremonies. Undoubtedly, Native Americans are the insiders to Native American culture, so whatever their intention or entitlement to using "Plains Indians" regalia is, they have a right to do so as rightful members of Native cultures; Polish people not necessarily so.[29] It is paramount to everybody involved in the presentation of the Native American culture(s) in Poland to stress the historical nature of the presentation of Native Americans conveyed during the Gathering. The master of the 'Polish powwow', for instance, describes each dance, the circumstances of its performance and elements of the regalia, with reverence and accuracy, in a manner that is suitable to the place and time. It cannot be denied that not everybody is as attentive to his words as the author, but one may devise ways of making the performance and presentation more "proper" as not to offend the insiders, rather than to dismissively look down on it. Additionally, few bookstalls present at the Gathering actually offer literature that supports the educational aspect, and everybody can purchase books and magazines about the meaning of the regalia and dances. Predictably, the bookstalls are not the most frequented place, but they have their devotees. If "the perpetuation of anachronistic and often damaging stereotypes" is the main problem here, something might be done to shift the scale to the "understanding of contemporary experience" (Stirrup 2013: 13). During both formal and informal meetings by the fire or in the tipis, different problems of contemporary Native Americans, as well as past events, are discussed through talks by invited guests or long-time hobbyists. It is true that these are not academic debates, where divergent views are highlighted and argued, although such discussions cannot be entirely dismissed since all attendees can take part in the discussion, share opinions, and pose questions, even academics. The latter, however, is unlikely as this group often shuns such events.[30]

It was rather boldly (perhaps arrogantly) stated in the previous paragraph that the representation is not offensive, but who is here to decide what is derogatory to Native Americans? Naturally, they themselves, but who precisely? Here the subject of the consent offense arises. Just who gave the Polish hobbyists permission to hold these gatherings in the first place? In the author's view, two answers can address the question, each triggering different consequences. The first one harkens back to a tradition of having summer camps both in the United States and in many European countries since the early 20th century. While in the USA the Woodcraft Indian Camps were masterminded by Seton and Beard to

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[29] Owen claims that the Lakota do, in fact, resent the trend that non-Indians play Indians (2008: 15).

[30] It should be added that some academics came out of the hobbyist movement, and occasionally they still visit the gatherings and write about the Native Americans, e.g., prof. Waldemar Kuligowski (cf. Feest 1996: 328).

impart certain character qualities to young people (Deloria 1998: 95–119, Kádár 2012: 100), in Europe, as Taylor explains, "the inspiration to start such a movement was internal, made by individuals, who were mostly motivated by a natural quest for the hardships, freedom, and glory of the idealized warrior life of the native American Plains Indians" (1988: 563) . All this is coupled with a fascination of "the indians" the Europeans imagined and with their culture, and further driven by empathy shown for their victimized role in history. The gatherings in Europe were not started by Native Americans themselves, but by Europeans. Many of these gatherings, particularly those in England, Germany, and the Czech Republic, were attended by some Native Americans (Stirrup 2013), who in a way legitimized and authenticated them (Kádár 2012: 100), and as Penny states, made some of the Native American soldiers who stayed after World War Two in Europe "recapture remembered lives" and "educate the audience to the virtues of Indian cultures" (Penny 2014: 181).

The second answer to the content debate is straightforward: "Nobody gave permission". Two consequential responses thus ensue. First, you are not allowed to organize such a gathering because you were not given permission and thus you are perpetrating cultural harm and, therefore, "complete abstinence … should be recommended" (Young 2000: 314–315). The other response to the question is "nobody, because there is nobody authorized to give the consent". In fact, whom does one ask for authorization of such a gathering? This argument boils down to the question of who possesses a culture or who has the right of ownership to a whole culture and its elements in modern society. This is a devilishly tricky conundrum when we consider the fact that the colonizers selectively adopted or destroyed elements of the colonized cultures, and these elements nowadays resurface in different walks of life, mainly in the arts, fashion, sports, and the like, often against the will of the insiders of the culture. Furthermore, these insiders are often deprived of the proceeds from sales of the elements of their culture. Young has said that "content appropriation, including style and motif, is seldom, if ever harmful qua act of theft. …[since] styles and motifs (including patterns), are not owned by a culture (or anyone else). No one who appropriates these items is guilty of theft" (2010: 102). Young's opinion is expressed with reference to law, which holds true today; at the moment of writing this article, no legislation has been passed which would unambiguously solve the problem of culture ownership in the United States. The voices which are heard in the debate are divergent, often exclusionary, which only shows that the big question of "who owns a culture" is very difficult to solve, or reveals that there is much resistance to solve it once and for all. One participant in the debate, Susan Scafidi, author of the book *Who owns a Culture: Appropriation and Authenticity in American Law* (2005), opts for establishing a special legislation which would regulate ownership of any cultural products, either indigenous or non-indigenous,

preferably though intellectual property rights. She admits that "the most contentious issue of all is *how* to regulate general public access to the cultural goods of a particular community" and who should benefit economically from this distribution (2005: 10; emphasis mine). Regulation is an arduous task with respect to American Native communities as they are not 'corporate bodies' (2005: 11), which might claim some property rights; instead they are "often loosely organized networks with shifting membership or degrees of affiliation; they tend to lack a single authoritative voice that might channel cultural appreciation and prevent cultural appropriation" (2005: 11, 98). In spite of these difficulties, she proposes a solution to the problem of outside appropriation, an establishment of a system that would recognize the relation between the source (insider) communities and their cultural products "either through extension of the limited ownership concept expressed in intellectual property law or through a trademark-style recognition of a constructed legal authenticity" (2005: 103). The concept of authenticity implies that the source community itself must produce the cultural products, and it is the "definite repository of cultural meaning with respect to those products" (2005: 54). In other words, the community, and nobody else, genuinely knows and feels what these cultural products express. The argument of authentication is also discussed by Deloria, who stressed the necessity for approval to use a cultural product by an outsider (2005: 141, 135, 151).

Another participant in the debate, Michael Brown, the author of the book *Who Owns a Native Culture* (2004), subscribes to a different opinion. He proposes to replace the title question of his book with an indirect question: "How to promote respectful treatment of native cultures and indigenous forms of self-expressions within mass society", and, consequently, not pursue legislation. Instead, he insists that the conflicting sides enter into negotiations whenever there is a suspicion that cultural appropriation may occur and then arrive at a context-specific solution. Fully aware of the complex nature of the cultural borrowings between the tribes themselves and the frequent practice of using Native symbols or metaphors by the non-indigenous people, Brown is convinced that there would be many exceptions to any legislation. To avoid it, he opts for negotiations that should take into account individual circumstances; thus, parties can show flexibility and achieve a compromise satisfying to each of them.

The above presentation of the debate over the ownership of a culture, and specifically Native culture, may imply that the issue is extremely complex. While the attribution of property rights, including intellectual property rights, to cultural products seems necessary and expedient for some (Scafidi), for others, stiff legislation will open a Pandora's box of suits following suits over property rights (Brown). What is the implication of the presentation of different voices on the issue of ownership of a culture for Polish Indianists? First, theoretically, there is no legislation that solves the issue unambiguously; hence, any resolution falls in the

domain of ethics. Consequently, individuals and groups would have themselves to assess such an issue as either proper or improper. Besides, there is no legal representative of Native Americans, as yet, to whom to turn to obtain consent. Once there is someone, by virtue of appropriate legislation or tribal arrangements,[31] the situation will be different. Meanwhile, as Brown suggests, one area of broad consent for both non-Indianists and Indianists alike is ensuring indigenous cultures are treated with dignity and that their cultural representation is not defiled during the Indianists Gatherings. The author can attest that the Native American culture(s) are shown great respect, which follows from the motivation of those who "copy" the original, i.e., the authentic Native American cultures. The Polish Indianists who "imitate" the original, be it a powwow, a beaded dress, or a feathered headdress and the like, do not pretend to be authentic Indians, but perform or play Indians or execute their cultural products while showing respect to the "intrinsic values embodied by the original" (Scafidi 2005: 74). They are not mocking "a dance" or deriding a "beaded work". Scafidi calls this behavior an adoptive motivation, which occurs when a copyist adopts rather than merely appropriates a cultural product. Similarly, Deloria calls the hobbyists "participatory observers" as they "consider authentication by Natives desirable" (1998: 141).

The Indianists want neither to "join the source community or [attempt] to "subsume the product into their own culture" (98). They 'emulate' the culture and its cultural endeavors during the gathering, which has a purely "conventional or collusive" character. By no means do they intend to become Native American (though, judging from the observed physical transformation of some of them, one might be inclined to claim otherwise). As one German hobbyist said bluntly, "No matter how well you play your part, your ass remains white" (Penny 2014: 197). This same hobbyist went on to state that "revering and studying groups of American Indians, learning from their culture and history, and harnessing that knowledge to reposition themselves in their own societies and cultures is not … the same as wanting to be American Indians. They simply want to be better people" (2014: 197). The author would add that Polish Indianists also simply want to have a more fulfilling life. To my mind, if Native American culture – with its traditions, values, or activities – provides a platform in which individuals can transform their lives into something more satisfying, then Native Americans may be proud of the universality and vitality of their culture, and many of them are (Rosiak 2017: 214–247, Michalik, private communication).[32] In some cases, however, it is possible to

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31 Owen (2008: 2) actually suggests that in 2004, Arvol Looking Horse, a 19th generation of keepers of the Sacred Calf Pipe for the Lakota, issued a proclamation prohibiting non-Native participation in Lakota Ceremonies, which means that in some cases there are authorities to turn to for permission.

32 Both give examples of a desire to adopt non-Indians by Native-Americans into their families if the former show fascination with or knowledge of Native American culture.

obtain an affirmative answer to the question of consent. Participants at the 2016 gathering in Uniejów claimed that use of an object or a performance of a custom had been often approved by insiders merely through their presence, as some Native Americans were in attendance as guests.[33]

In certain cases, however, the consent to perform a dance, to lead a sacred pipe ceremony or sweat lodge ritual, or to produce a buckskin dress was sought after and then received. As a result, the Indianists subsequently feel authorized to perform or manufacture a Native cultural product. In order to be able to make a costume, for instance, one has to have a 'transfer', a right granted by a named Native American, here or in the United States, to legally produce it (this usually takes same time as it requires intensive training). The transfer can then be passed to other users, but there are some time and place restrictions imposed on the ritual of transfer that does not take place during gatherings. Organizers thus try to sensitize people in attendance to understand that gatherings are not places to receive transfers. All this is an issue of protocol; as long as any ceremony is carried out following all steps of a protocol, such as the reproduction of any artefact, vision quest ceremony, or a sweat lodge ceremony then the "integrity of the ceremony is ensured and the well-being of its practitioners protected" (Owen 2008: 13). However, the devil is often in the details. Take Leszek Michalik, one of the founders of PAIFM, who was trained and initiated into Lakota spirituality and culture by Sun Bear, whom Ward Churchill described in turn as an imposter and an example of a white shaman (Churchill 1996). As it turns out, Michalik was aware that the Native Americans[34] whose workshops or seminars he once attended were referred to as plastic medicine men, but, as he says, those people offered their teachings and guidance into the intricate world of indigenous spirituality to all those interested in Native spirituality partly because of the dropping numbers of Native Americans keen on pursuing it. In fact, the spirituality they initiated their students into was often a composite of spiritual elements absorbed from many different tribes. Sun Bear was a Native American, an Ojibway, but he did not represent any specific nation and was not considered a leader by his own tribe (see Churchill 1996).[35] As regards Michalik's credibility as a spiritual leader, however, he has since been adopted by a Cree Nation from the Cree Frog Lake reserve in Alberta, which means that he can take part in some rituals and the Nation vouches for him as he is under their care. He is also authorized to carry out the sweat lodge ceremony, the vision quest ceremony, and

33 For instance, in 2007 Native Americans from the Nisqually Indian Tribe (members of the Native American Church) and Blackfoot visited a gathering in Katowice, Poland.

34 Sun Bear, Rolling Thunder, and Twylah Nitsch, among others

35 The Lakota confirm that Sun Bear "attracted large numbers of non-Natives to his workshops for he clothed his genuine practical concern for survival in a mythical language" (Owen 2008: 13).

the sacred pipe ceremony in the Ojibway tradition also in Poland (Rosiak 2017: 147–148). In the eyes of some Native Americans and Indianists alike, the previous case can undermine the credibility of such transfers as well as the belief that the transfers are given (and received) through good will (Churchill 1996). Michalik's case shows many nuances associated with acquiring knowledge about Native spirituality and thus the transfer.

Moreover, the organizers of the gatherings are aware of the potential danger posed by content violence, meaning the desecration of a symbol, motif, recipe, or ritual. Those who lead a given ceremony make people aware of this issue by either giving information or closely following an aforementioned protocol. Take beadwork or cooking, where the whole manufacturing process starts with sage burning, the Indian health blessing, and is performed by an authorized person or not at all. Here again the issue of the legitimacy of the transfer and authentication pops up, and it should be solved by Polish Indianists through verification of the transfer. Regarding designs inscribed on cultural objects, all renderings must be 100% faithful to the original. Native Americans either inform makers during the transfer process about the meaning of the design or its constitutive element, or the makers themselves try to learn the meaning of the design, knowing that it might contain some sacred symbols, and, therefore, the arrangement cannot be accidental. The latter practice still may fall within the scope of motif or content appropriation, which may imply the trivialization of Native spirituality by "white shamans" or mimicry, as defined by Homi Bhabha.[36] But, once again, to support my stand with what Wendy Rose said, "The problem with 'whiteshamans' is one of integrity and intent, not of topic, style, interest, or experimentation" (Rose 1984). According to her, what white people enacting Indian spirituality could do is not to say that they "feel it", or mimic the Native Americans, as, being non-Native, they lack the credibility to do so, but to acknowledge that they are "playing Indian", not pretending to be one. To the mind of the author, though there is a grey area here, this is exactly what the Polish hobbyists have been doing all along.

According to James Young (2010), another harm that cultural appropriation can cause is to set back minority interests. We can imagine that the minority group, in this case, Native Americans, might have gained some economic profit if they had produced all the instruments, tools, regalia, T-shirts, and jewelry sold on the campsite premises by Polish traders. The latter, in fact, sell either the goods manufactured by themselves or cheap trinkets made in China. Potentially, had Native Americans manufactured these goods and traded them here, the commodities would have been too expensive, and trading intermediaries would

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[36] "Mimicry is thus a sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline which appropriates the "Other" as it visualizes power" (Bhabha 1984: 126).

have devoured most of the proceeds anyway. In this case, trade would cease at some point due to exorbitant costs at both ends and thus benefit no one or few. The financial gains for Native Americans would be minimal, especially that the potential buyers are not a very large group. Nonetheless, an attempt might be made to rectify the situation. Today's era of globalization, transatlantic trade, and outsourcing has resulted in at least one irony. According to sources that wished to remain anonymous, some regalia made by Polish Indianists, applying standards of expert craftsmanship, have ended up on markets as 'authentic' Indian garments.

If a subject and content offense is perceived in the manufacturing of the regalia by the Polish people, then it is counterbalanced by the fact that in no way does the camp steal the audience interested in the Native American lore from them. On the contrary, this practice may gain audience interested in pursuing their interest in Native American issues later on down the road, drives up book readership or interest in movies on the subject, or spurs them to buy something, possibly from Native Americans. All such endeavors can be classified as educationally beneficial and, as Young claims, "they reinforce and legitimize the culture from which the [content] …is appropriated (2000: 311).

Moreover, the movement leaders form solidarity groups that, via virtual or traditional post, or through petitions, support Native American causes and artists. A memorable example of this help and support might have been the Euromeetings, i.e., European conferences of support groups for Native Americans. During these meetings, held during the 1990s in different European capitals, European activists met with different Native American activists, who often came to participate in proceedings of the United Nations Humans Rights Commission or the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. Among them were representatives of the Polish American Indian Friends Movement, who exchanged information with Native American activists and planned coordinated actions to buttress Native American causes. One cause was rallying support for Leonard Peltier, an American Indian Activist and long-time political prisoner. Recently, Indianists have fortified the ranks of Native American supporters as signatories to petitions of solidarity and have participated in solidarity marches organized by PAIFM in connection with issues such as the protests to stop construction of the South Dakota gas pipeline in 2016. This in turn fosters "the value of good communication between cultures" (Young 2000: 315).[37]

Therefore, when Jennifer Osborne ends her article with the zinger that "Eastern Europeans hope for the best for Native Americans, but still what they

[37] This communication was also triggered by many hobbyists members who took to translating Native American literatures into Polish, starting another value of interest (e.g., Maciołek 2000, Nowocień 2003).

do is offensive", she essentially weighs all the engagements of so many people on one end of a scale and weighs the negative adjective linked to cultural appropriation on the other. And she tips the scales, decidedly, to the latter side, as many other authors do (Churchill 1996, Carlson 2002, Penny 2014). She thus views the phenomenon in the postcolonial perspective as actually perpetuating "colonization", in this instance, the colonization of the mind. In the colonized mind, Indians always feature as victims, 19th century warriors or highly spirited people living in harmony, as if they were distant from others, not only in a geographical sense, but also in a temporal one, which corroborates Deloria's remark expressed at the beginning of the paper. This all may be true, but there is so much more to the picture that does not receive proper recognition and explanation that it should be explained more thoroughly.

To begin, Poland was never a colonial power[38] and is not an heir to post-colonial guilt. It was itself victimized, to some extent because of its own fault, and thus it tends to empathize with the victim. The Polish Indian hobbyists follow traditions rooted in the history of Native Americans, also but not only as conquered people, whom they respect, admire, or feel affinity with because of, as Christian Feest observed, "the shared fate of a country divided, occupied, and deprived of self-determination" (1996: 325). Poland has suffered centuries of foreign rule, first by the empires that partitioned Poland from 1772 until 1918, and then by the Soviet Union, which imposed its communist regime on the country. Hence, as in the case of Native Americans, its identity was suppressed for nearly three hundred years. It is clear Polish people know the pain of resistance, the loss of life, and the confiscation of land, as well as language and culture deprivation. Hence, they are culturally and historically predisposed to take the side of Native Americans.

By the same token, when, in an answer to the implied question "Why Eastern Europeans are dressing up like Native Americans", Jennifer Osborne retorts "once to escape from the grueling dictatorship embraced behind an iron curtain", she is again right. But by no means does this statement capture the drama of life in a communist country that suffered great losses during the Second World War; nor does it adequately explain the actions of the people who desired freedom. (…) (Osborne 2016). The post-war generations were affected by the war and the subsequent period of Soviet occupation in myriad ways: many lost their dearest ones, their homes, and their belongings. For many people, it was a psychological must to "enter another world" just to go on living in the miserable dreary surroundings of communist Poland. So when Osborne continues to list as a reason why Poles and other Eastern Europeans develop their interests in Native Americans, "to exit the real world, to escape into a

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[38] There were some attempts on its part to conquer neighbors, e.g., in the 16th century to colonize Curland and Semigalia, but these were not colonial endeavors.

different reality, more interesting and exotic, …to show empathy with the victim" (Osborne 2016), she captures the facts, but these bare facts are not able to withstand the weight of the labelling of the movement as cultural appropriation, which casts the Polish Indianists only in a negative light.

When Polish Indian hobbyists identify with Native Americans, who are presently gaining more power over their own representation and defending their own interests, they symbolically empower them. Within the framework of cultural studies, which uses the concept of culture as a construct based on Michael Foucault (Hall 1997: 259) in positioning the former colonizer as one who still holds and keeps power and thus perpetuates the previous power structure in that culture, Polish hobbyists give support to the contemporary lived Indians, not the romanticized ones; they strengthen their presence in the public space by exposing it to symbols or metaphors as well as issues, and give tribute to their heroic past, thus tipping the symbolic power scales in their favor.

The last-but-one benefit is also a social value inherent and observed in the closely-knit social network, which might slightly redeem the cultural appropriation. Technological devices aside, at least for the time being, the members of the gathering form a community, not a collection of atomized individuals, a cornerstone of Native American culture. Many of the people are best buddies and pals off the camp, many have married or remarried among themselves, many have involved their children or other relatives in the Indian playing game, three generational tipis are not uncommon. This focus on community and networking via the "Native" highway is also something inherent in Native American culture. Finally, the camp offers the opportunity to play somebody else, fostering the self-realization of the participants, who, by playing the Other, might fulfill their aspirations, dreams, and intellectual or emotional pursuits. Naturally, this should be done respectfully. Above all, this practice is not derision, but about games, playing, laughter and fun, which are also intrinsic Native American values (Taylor 1988).

5. Conclusions

There are two conclusions to be drawn from the paper. The first one is that within the framework of cultural studies, according to the definition of cultural appropriation adopted in the paper, the camp meetings and the practices of the Polish American Indian Friends Movement are examples of cultural appropriation of both subject and content. Furthermore, they are not authentic, because they are not organized by insiders of the culture, though sometimes approved by them. Consequently, Polish hobbyists may "misrepresent Native Cultures", and such misrepresentation may be seen as offensive to Native observers or participants. But for those who accept these facts and who participate

in PAIFM, it might be redeeming to note that the gatherings and practices do not constitute any profound offense to Native American culture, nor do they harm them substantially, but we really do not have enough evidence to declare with certainty on that matter (Young 2000: 315). In contrast, the gatherings help establish an audience receptive to Native Americans (Young 2010: 116). In regards to the issue of misrepresentation, indirectly, the participants do subscribe to the old-fashioned image of the Native American and thus shift the focus from the present to the past, which might be seen as objectionable. But an attempt should be made to explain why Poles and other Eastern and Western Europeans put on Native garments and accept some principles of Native life in harmony and community, as they themselves understand it. Besides, as was mentioned above, the gatherings and their emphasis on powwowing attract the most attention both to gain new followers and focus on Native issues. Still, much is actually done to update the picture of the Native Americans, through the sale of books and journals, the showing of films, and talks held during the gatherings. Moreover, the movement and the meetings are a grass root initiative, rooted in the history of both the United States and Europe. Both intellectually and emotionally charged, it is a movement which is an expression of self-realization by people, who, wrongly or not, have chosen Native Americans as the field of their interest, and their intellectual and life pursuit. This deserves understanding, not derision followed by rebuttal. Young claims that, "we should always be reluctant to say that a person acts wrongly who is engaged in an act of self-realization and vital self-expression" (2010: 113), unless at someone's expense, which should be condemned. Additionally, the movement spurs the interest of some who, as second or third generation followers, are engaged in writing their BA papers or MA theses on Native Americans and their culture. Thus it seems unfair for the author to denigrate the collective effort of so many people by simply pronouncing that it is an act of appropriation. It certainly is, but it has many forms, not all equally morally or politically wrong. The entire movement in Eastern Europe is too nuanced and psychologically and culturally complex to be dismissed in mere two words.

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