

University of Pardubice
Faculty of Arts and Philosophy

Ethnic Issues in Tony Hillerman's Detective Novels

Andrea Bohatová

Bachelor Thesis

2017

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

Jméno a příjmení: **Andrea Bohatová**
Osobní číslo: **H14047**
Studijní program: **B7310 Filologie**
Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk pro odbornou praxi**
Název tématu: **Etnické aspekty detektivních románů Tonyho Hillermana**
Zadávací katedra: **Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Závěrečná bakalářská práce se bude věnovat dílu amerického autora detektivních románů z prostředí navažské rezervace Tonyho Hillermana.

V úvodu práce studentka stručně charakterizuje tvorbu zvoleného autora a zasadí ji do literárně-historického kontextu. Dále bude definovat základní pojmy, s nimiž bude ve svých analýzách pracovat, především detektivní žánr či etnicita.

Jádrem práce bude analýza vybraných děl, v níž se studentka soustředí na způsoby, jimiž autor pomocí literárního žánru detektivky seznamuje své čtenáře se specifiky života současných amerických indiánů kmene Navajo, Hopi, ad. Své vývody bude vhodně ilustrovat ukázkami z primárních děl a konfrontovat s relevantními kritickými zdroji. V rámci pojednání může také zmínit kritickou recepci díla.

Závěrem studentka své analýzy shrne a pokusí se vyslovit obecnější závěr o způsobu, jímž Hillerman etnické prvky do svých děl začleňuje a jak s nimi pracuje.

Rozsah grafických prací:

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**

Seznam odborné literatury:

1. Browne, Ray Broadus. *Murder on the Reservation: American Indian Crime Fiction: Aims and Achievements*. Madison: Popular Press, 2004.
2. Gleason, Philip. *Speaking of Diversity: Language and Ethnicity in Twentieth-century America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.
3. Hillerman, Tony. *A Thief of Time: A Novel*. New York: Harper & Row, 1988.
4. Hillerman, Tony. *Dance Hall of the Dead*. New York: Harper & Row, 1973.
5. Hillerman, Tony. *Skinwalkers*. New York: Harper & Row, 1986.
6. Hillerman, Tony. *Talking God*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1989.
7. Reilly, John M. *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996.
8. Rieuepeyrou, Jean-Louis, and Helena Beguivinova. *Dejiny Navahu: Indianska Saga 1540-1990*. Praha: Argo, 2000.
9. Scaggs, John. *Crime Fiction*. London: Routledge, 2005.
10. Ziolkowski, Margaret. *Alien Visions: The Chechens and the Navajos in Russian and American Literature*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005.
11. Bubíková, Š. "Indiánský Sherlock Holmes: Tony Hillerman a tradice detektivky." *Dějiny a současnost* 12 (2011): 30-33.
a další.

Vedoucí bakalářské práce:

doc. Šárka Bubíková, Ph.D.

Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **30. dubna 2016**

Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **31. března 2017**



prof. PhDr. Karel Rýdl, CSc.
děkan



doc. Šárka Bubíková, Ph.D.
vedoucí katedry

V Pardubicích dne 30. listopadu 2016

Prohlašuji:

Tuto práci jsem vypracovala samostatně. Veškeré literární prameny a informace, které jsem v práci využila, jsou uvedeny v seznamu použité literatury.

Byla jsem seznámena s tím, že se na moji práci vztahují práva a povinnosti vyplývající ze zákona č. 121/2000 Sb., autorský zákon, zejména se skutečností, že Univerzita Pardubice má právo na uzavření licenční smlouvy o užití této práce jako školního díla podle § 60 odst. 1 autorského zákona, a s tím, že pokud dojde k užití této práce mnou nebo bude poskytnuta licence o užití jinému subjektu, je Univerzita Pardubice oprávněna ode mne požadovat přiměřený příspěvek na úhradu nákladů, které na vytvoření díla vynaložila, a to podle okolností až do jejich skutečné výše.

Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně Univerzity
Pardubice.

V Pardubicích dne 27. 6. 2017

Andrea Bohatová

ANNOTATION

The bachelor thesis deals with Tony Hillerman's detective novels, particularly how ethnic issues are depicted in chosen novels. The thesis characterizes Hillerman's work and sets it into the historical and literal context and the term ethnicity is defined. The means by which Hillerman depicts the ethnicity in the novels are divided into several sections and analyzed. The paper also describes how Hillerman is assessed by experts and readers.

KEY WORDS

ethnicity, Navajos, crime fiction, detective novels, Native Americans

ANOTACE

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá detektivními romány Tonyho Hillermana, obzvláště tím, jak jsou etnické aspekty vyobrazeny ve vybraných dílech. Práce charakterizuje Hillermanovu tvorbu a zasazuje ji do historicko-literárního kontextu a definuje pojem etnicita. Prostředky, kterými Hillerman zobrazuje etnicitu v dílech, jsou rozděleny do několika sekcí a analyzovány. Práce také popisuje, jak Hillermanovu tvorbu hodnotí experti a čtenáři.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

etnicita, Navahové, detektivka, detektivní romány, severoameričtí Indiáni

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	7
1. Introduction to the crime fiction genre.....	9
1.1. Characteristics of crime fiction.....	9
1.2. Brief history of the crime fiction.....	11
1.3. The ethnic crime fiction.....	12
1.4. Police procedural.....	13
2. Ethnicity.....	14
3. Tony Hillerman's life and work.....	17
4. Ethnic issues in Hillerman's fiction.....	18
4.1. Religion, religious values and philosophy of life.....	18
4.2. Navajo habits and the way of life.....	21
4.3. Navajos and other ethnic groups.....	24
4.3.1 Navajos and other tribes – Zunis.....	24
4.3.2 Navajos and white men.....	25
5.1. Influence of ethnicity on characters.....	31
5.2. Influence of ethnicity on the motives and the plot.....	33
6. Critique of Hillerman's work.....	37
7. Conclusion.....	39
Resumé.....	41
Bibliography.....	45

Introduction

The issue of different skin color and ethnic background has troubled the humanity throughout centuries and it is a problem even these days. The view of the public on different skin color and ethnic origin has changed immensely, however, the incomprehension is rooted deep in the past and sometimes is difficult to overcome. Therefore, some stereotyped views of people about a different origin persist.

Nevertheless, “there are no ethnic minorities without an ethnic majority.”¹ This quotation from Steve Fenton, an ethnicity writer himself, can appropriately introduce the novels from Tony Hillerman, an American ethnic crime fiction writer of the 20th century, who is known for his Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee detective novels set in the Big Reservation environment. In the novels, Hillerman focuses on ethnic groups (minorities), which would not exist without the existence of the ethnic majority. Owing to this fact, Hillerman presents a series of novels located in the territory of the Native Americans and invites the reader into the world of the Navajo police investigation and ordinary lives of these people.

This paper should provide the reader with an introduction into the crime fiction genre, the ethnic crime fiction, and the police procedural sub-genre, which are the focus of Hillerman’s novels. The concept of ethnicity is explained and mainly, it answers to the reader the question by which means the ethnicity is depicted in Hillerman’s novels and what are the specifics of a life of the Navajo Indians at the Navajo Reservation and finally, how Hillerman himself is criticized by other writers, critics and the Natives themselves.

Firstly, Hillerman describes the religious essence of the ethnic Navajo, which is the belief in harmony of life. The belief is the core of Navajos’ lives but still, their existence has been influenced by Christianity, which also plays an important role in the life of a Navajo. Beside the religious values, there are other values that the Navajos hold and are presented in the novels. Their way of life and habits rooted in their religion are commonly shown in the stories. These values include tight family bonds, which are essential in the tribal hierarchy, but also less optimistic features which are the poor ways of taking care of themselves in the form of bad teeth, alcohol issues and so forth.

The paper focuses on how Hillerman familiarizes the reader with the Navajo tribe in his novels. But he also introduces other tribes, in this case, the Zunis, who differ from the Navajos variously which Hillerman did not forget to show through several means. In the *Dance Hall of*

¹ Steve Fenton, *Ethnicity, Key Concepts*, (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 165.

the Dead, Hillerman presents the diversity of the tribes through the story of crime as well as the story of investigation when two boys, a Zuni and Navajo, get missing and the following investigation joins the two tribal police offices together in hunt for the missing boys. This story shows the reader how the ethnic features of different tribes vary and it proves how diverse these tribes are.

Apart from the contact with other tribes, such as the Zunis, in this analysis, the interaction with the white American majority is inevitable and it is given proper attention. As Hillerman shows the reader, there is a hint of superiority in the FBI agency status which basically represents the white culture. Hillerman also expresses the disregard of the whites to the Natives' culture by passionate monologues (*Skinwalkers*) or main characters' encounters with unscrupulous characters representing the white culture (*A Thief of Time*). However, this point of view is also presented in much more simple way in the form of thoughts about everyday actions.

After that, the influence of ethnicity is also tangible when analyzing the main characters, which are given proper attention in comparison with secondary characters. Both Jim Chee and Joe Leaphorn are cross-cultural figures representing the link of the two worlds. They got education in the white world and became investigators, which proves the influence of the "mainstream" culture. On the other hand, they still hold some Navajo values, which they are not willing to abandon. After that, the paper deals with the analysis of the murderers' motivation to kill and consequently with the influence of ethnicity on the plot itself.

The final chapter summarizes the critique of Hillerman's writing. Hillerman, well-known for his contribution to the ethnic crime writing, has been analyzed and criticized by several experts, amateurs, and the Natives themselves. Their opinions vary but despite some minor flaws, his books are commented to be authentic and well-written.

To sum up, this paper provides the reader with the basic insight into the genre, it demonstrates the principles by which Hillerman acquaints the reader with the other cultures, and at the end it shows how Hillerman is perceived by the reading public.

1. Introduction to the crime fiction genre

1.1. Characteristics of crime fiction

The first chapter presents the main characteristics of the crime fiction genre, its development throughout the history and its sub-genres that continuously developed throughout the time. Then, it focuses on the relevant crime fiction sub-genres which are the ethnic crime fiction and the police procedural.

As stated by John Scaggs in his *Crime Fiction*, various titles have been given to the crime fiction genre throughout the time. However, in all the time periods, the genre has been focused on the “crime,” but not always on the theme of an “investigation.” Therefore, most critical analyses use the term “crime fiction.”² He also refers to Tzvetan Todorov’s structuralist analysis in which he suggests that the main story consists of two other stories. The first one deals with the crime itself and the second with the investigation.³ Either way, what one could expect of a story of crime fiction are these two elements of crime and some following investigation of the crime.

Lee Horsley in *A Companion to Crime Fiction* cites Simpson who deals with the sub-generic division of the popular literature that John Cawelti introduced a half of a century ago. He divided the popular literature into three main categories or so called “archetypes:” “Adventure, Romance and Mystery.” It is suggested that “literary detection” undoubtedly falls into the Mystery category, but many crime stories are not that straightforward to categorize, as they do not contain the “real mystery: whoever “dunit” is never in question.” It is said that the readers are distracted by solving the puzzle from the real enjoyment of reading of the hunting game and chase, the manipulation and danger.⁴ However, generally, the stories of detection can be mostly classified as the Mystery archetype.

Crime fiction as a genre carries certain features that are common to the various sub-genres, be it hard-boiled fiction, classic whodunit, or police procedural. There are some main features which characterize the genre, however, if analyzing further, every sub-genre varies. Milda Danyté in her guide through crime fiction summarizes some typical features of detective novels:

² John Scaggs, *Crime Fiction* (London: Routledge, 2005), 1.

³ Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 2.

⁴ Philip L. Simpson, *Psycho Paths: Tracking the Serial Killer through Contemporary American Film and Fiction*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000, chapter 14. as quoted in Lee Horsley and Charles J. Rzepka, *A Companion to Crime Fiction*, Chichester: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2010, 2.

- A crime, most often murder, is committed early in the narrative.
- There are a variety of suspects with different motives.
- A central character formally or informally acts as the detective.
- The detective collects evidence about the crime and its victim.
- Usually the detective interviews the suspects, as well as witnesses.
- The detective solves the mystery and indicates the real criminal.
- Usually this criminal is now arrested or otherwise punished.⁵

These are some typical features that are characteristic for so-called detective novel. However, when speaking of crime fiction genre, comparisons with so-called detective fiction appear and the question arises: is crime fiction equal to detective fiction? What are the differences? In “Anatomy of Murder: Mystery, Detective, and Crime Fiction,” Malmgren deals with the characterization of these three genres, their differences, and characteristic signs. As he cites Grella, the detective fiction is focused mainly on its main character - the detective, his investigation, and the world surrounding him more than the “central mystery” that is, thus, overlooked due to the adventures the detective encounters.⁶ In other words, as Malmgren cites Todorov, the detective fiction keeps the traces of the crime story but the story of an investigation is superior to the crime. The adventurous investigation of the detective is of more importance than the murderer’s identity, which is, however, still important to the story.⁷

Characteristics of the genre are defined differently by many authors but what the stories share is the central story of a crime and its following investigation. Be it a detective story, the focus of the story is on the character of a detective and his methods and stories of an investigation. However, as the genre developed throughout the time, the characteristics have changed too. Therefore, it is appropriate to provide a reader with at least a brief historical insight into the genre.

⁵ Milda Danyté, *Introduction to the analysis of crime fiction*, (Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University, 2011), 5, accessed November 30, 2016, http://vddb.library.lt/fedora/get/LT-eLABa-0001:B.03~2011~ISBN_978-9955-12-698-0/DS.001.1.01.BOOK.

⁶ George Grella, “The Hard-Boiled Detective Fiction“ in Winks, 115 as quoted in Carl D. Malmgren, “Anatomy of Murder: Mystery, Detective, and Crime Fiction,” *The Journal of Popular Culture* 30 (1997): 126, accessed May 2, 2017, doi:10.1111/j.0022-3840.1997.3004_115.x.

⁷ Tzvetan Todorov, *The Poetics of Prose*, New York: Cornell UP, 1977, 47. as quoted in Malmgren, “Anatomy of Murder: Mystery, Detective, and Crime Fiction,” 126.

1.2. Brief history of the crime fiction

The history of the genre can be traced over 2.000 years to the past, as John Scaggs cites Dorothy L. Sayers, a crime fiction writer herself, in her introduction to *Great Short Stories of Detection, Mystery and Horror* who claims four ancient stories to be ancestors of the crime fiction. Two of them originate in the Old Testament, the book of Daniel, one story in Herodotus, dating from the fifth century BC, and one story with its origin in the Hercules myths.⁸

Nevertheless, these “fragments” of the detective genre of the historical stories cannot be considered as the original ancestors of the genre, as Julian Symons comments on Sayers’ statement in *Crime Fiction*.⁹ As Priestman claims, Edgar Allan Poe, however, is named as the founder of the crime fiction. With his gothic short stories, he is the first one to establish the character of a detective and set the frame of a detective story.¹⁰ After Poe set the basis, Wilkie Collins is considered to create a proper detective novel in his 1860’s work *The Moonstone*. Twenty years later, the Arthur Conan Doyle’s detective Sherlock Holmes gained his popularity along with The Father Brown created by G.K. Chesterton.¹¹

As Priestman explains, while short detective stories gradually reformed into proper detective novels during the inter-war “Golden Age” in Britain, represented by Agatha Christie and her protagonists Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple, the crime fiction developed in the opposite direction in the North America. As the counter-part to the “genteel” British tradition, the USA detective novel responded with the hard-boiled private eye fiction, popularized by Dashiell Hammet and Raymond Chandler, who were specializing in depicting crime in a big city underworld.¹² However, as Scaggs writes, hard-boiled fiction survived World War II in a way that the Golden Age fiction could not. Firstly, the readers found themselves in the hard-boiled fiction after the war and the other reason to survive was “the suitability of hard-boiled fiction for gender, ethnic, and cultural appropriation.”¹³

To sum up, the very roots of the criminal stories originate in distant history over 2.000 years ago and the genre still seems to have its readers and followers. Beside the long historical development, the genre developed into various sub-genres thanks to different cultural

⁸ Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 7-8.

⁹ Julian Symons, *Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel*, 3rd revised edn, (New York: The Mysterious Press, 1993), 19. as quoted in Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 8.

¹⁰ Martin Priestman. “Introduction: crime fiction and detective fiction” in *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, ed. Martin Priestman et al., (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.

¹¹ Priestman, “Introduction: crime fiction and detective fiction,” 2.

¹² Priestman, “Introduction: crime fiction and detective fiction,” 2.

¹³ Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 29-30.

backgrounds. In the dark, urban environment of a city, the hard-boiled fiction developed. In Britain where social classes and proper behavior are crucial, the cozy stories of Miss Marple were read among the public. Nevertheless, the hard-boiled mode was more likely to survive after World War II, which was caused by its authenticity and the fact that culture, gender, and ethnicity could be reflected in the genre.

1.3. The ethnic crime fiction

One of the sub-genres of the crime fiction is the ethnic crime fiction. In "The Ethnic Detective," Ray B. Browne presents the main features of the ethnic crime fiction; the work usually deals with a crime, typically a murder and there are always two ethnic groups involved in the book. The main investigator usually belongs to a dominant culture, whereas minorities are being investigated. As next, in comparison with hard-boiled fiction, the ethnic crime writing is "much less stylized and literary." It is also depicted much more realistically partly because of the honest and straight language used. The ethnic crime fiction seems to be also much more authentic and realistic compared to the "cozy" Golden Age crime writing.¹⁴ Considering Tony Hillerman's novels, they fulfill certain features of the ethnic crime fiction; there is a crime or a murder or multiple murders and the books involve two ethnic groups; however, in this case, the investigators belong to the minority and they interrogate both the minority and the dominant culture.

Ray B. Browne suggests that there are 3 main reasons why the ethnic crime fiction became popular among readers in 1980s and 1990s. Firstly, authors of crime fiction always seek new ways to impress their readers; they try to involve new attractive and exotic places, plot, settings, and characters in their books. The readers can discover exotic places and religions through reading without facing any danger. Secondly, the authors started introducing ethnic minorities in their books to rectify ethnic delusions and destroy cultural ignorance. Thirdly, the crime fiction offers readers the view on other cultures.¹⁵

In conclusion, the ethnic crime writing carries some key features same as other sub-genres, such as a crime, its investigation, and someone investigating the crime but it is enriched with the ethnic aspect where there is a minority put next to a majority. Also, the ethnic crime fiction is to be more authentic, honest, literary and realistically depicted than other genres mentioned.

¹⁴ Ray B. Browne, "The Ethnic Detective: Arthur Upfield, Tony Hillerman and Beyond," in *Mystery and Suspense Writers: The Literature of Crime, Detection, and Espionage*, ed. Robin W. Winks et al. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1998), 1029-1030.

¹⁵ Browne, "The Ethnic Detective: Arthur Upfield, Tony Hillerman and Beyond," 1029.

The genre earned its popularity especially thanks to the exotic features together with the new view on other cultures and the educational aspect.

1.4. Police procedural

The crime fiction can be furthermore divided into specific sub-genres which developed depending on the cultural and historical context. Nevertheless, the sub-genre relevant for this analysis is the police procedural which, as Scaggs claims, developed in late 1950's. John Scaggs describes the development of the genre in his book:

The transition from hardboiled fiction to police procedural is, [...], a transition from the private eye, in the sense of personal, small-scale, and often self-serving investigation, to the public eye, in the sense of civic, large-scale policing that serves society as a whole.¹⁶

As Lee Horsley describes the genre in *The Twentieth-Century Crime Fiction*, “the individual investigator becomes part of or indeed is replaced by an official team of investigators, and emphasis is on the collective rather than the individual effort.” As the individualistic feature moves towards the collectiveness, there occurs to be “more focus on the established routines of solving cases and the techniques of a police investigation (ballistics, forensic technologies, electronic databases, surveillance).”¹⁷

In this genre, the Leaphorn and Chee novels undoubtedly fall into the category of the police procedural as defenders of justice and order on the reservation. However, the novels do not fulfil exactly the criteria the proper police procedural do. As John Scaggs writes in *Crime Fiction*, the urban environment is much more authentic speaking of hard-boiled fiction. The depiction of rural area of the states such as Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico or Utah in Hillerman's fiction, brought a new view on the setting of hard-boiled fiction, which was missing in the development of the police procedural.¹⁸

Tony Hillerman's novels are enriched by the unusual not-suburban setting as well as significant ethnic characteristics. Besides ethnicity, racial and gender aspects appear in the police procedural as the evidence of moving towards realistic depictions, which are essential to the genre.¹⁹

¹⁶ Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 89.

¹⁷ Lee Horsley, *The Twentieth-Century Crime Fiction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 100.

¹⁸ Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 88.

¹⁹ Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 90.

2. Ethnicity

This chapter focuses on the issue of ethnicity, how the term is used in relation to nationality, race or ethnic groups, how these terms are used in different contexts and what the definitions of the term ethnicity are. It also describes how the term ethnicity is connected to Native Americans as a minority group. As Thomas Hylland Eriksen suggests in his book *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, the terms “ethnic,” “ethnicity” or “nation” and “nationalism” are commonly used in English language and appear in TV, press, even in informal conversations on a regular basis. Therefore, the meanings of these expressions might appear “ambiguous and vague.”²⁰ Moreover, these terms carry different meaning depending on demography and their users.

As Siniša Malešević claims in *Identity as Ideology: Understanding Ethnicity and Nationalism*, “in the English speaking world nation and nationality are often used as synonyms for state or nominal citizenship, while in Central and Eastern Europe these terms imply symbolic or real link with ethnic ancestry.” This applies also to the term “ethnicity.” The North Americans perceive ethnicity “as a synonym for cultural minority with no salient physical group difference, where Italian or Polish Americans were defined as ‘ethnic groups’ while African Americans or Amerasians were denoted as ‘racial groups.’” Europeans, on the other hand, thanks to European historical development, tend to see ethnicity as a “substitute for nationhood which is articulated in terms of a presumed commonality in shared territory or descent.”²¹ To sum up, Europeans tend to connect terms nationality and ethnicity into one concept with regard to the territory and the line of ancestry, whereas English speaking world has a tendency to differentiate ethnicity depending on the skin color, which means making differences between ethnic and racial groups especially in the Northern America.

The meaning of the word ethnicity may be perceived in a different way by various groups. Eriksen claims that approaches to ethnicity may differ depending on what “analytical purposes” they should “serve,” but all of them “has something to do with the classification of people and group relationships.” In everyday conversation, the term ethnicity is commonly used in relation to “minority issues and race relations.” However, in social anthropology, ethnicity simply de-

²⁰ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, 3rd edition, (London: Pluto Press: 2010), 1.

²¹ Siniša Malešević, *Identity as Ideology: Understanding Ethnicity and Nationalism*, (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 25.

notes characteristics of relations of groups of people who consider themselves and are considered by others somehow culturally differentiated.²² Therefore, the senses of the term may be various, however, the common feature of the term is the reference to some group of people differentiated from others culturally.

As stated by Malešević, to define the terms ethnicity and nation may be problematic, as the definitions describe usually statically a concept which is very “dynamic set of relationships.”²³ For instance, Malešević cites Bulmer’s definition of ethnicity which she considers as the static one; ethnic group is

a collectivity within larger society which has real or imagined common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus upon one or more common elements which distinguish the members of the group from other members of the society ... [and these] include: area of origin, language, religion, nationality, kinship patterns, physical appearance such as skin colour.²⁴

However, as Malešević suggests, this static definition counts on the constancy of human characteristics in societies. As she claims, the definitions presented “posit human collectivities as either-or fixed and overly structured entities with stable and almost unchangeable features.”²⁵ Therefore, it is difficult to define statically such a dynamic, ever-changing concept. However, as already previously stated on the basis of Erikson’s idea, all of the definitions are based on “the classification of people and group relationships.”²⁶

The term ethnicity is also being used relating to the term race, which, however, is defined differently. As stated by Steve Fenton in his book *Ethnicity: Racism, Class and Culture*, historical usage and old theories dividing humans into different “types” interconnects “the term ‘race’ with physical or visible difference” and implies that groups denoted by their characteristic look are “constitutionally or biologically different.” On the contrary, the term ethnic group is used in relation to cultural difference which is widely recognized as connected to “shared ancestry, with language markers, and with national or regional origin.”²⁷ Nevertheless, to speak of ethnicity, people cannot only share these three values, but they need to bring them to life and use them in their social lives and exchange them among themselves.²⁸

²² Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 5.

²³ Malešević, *Identity as Ideology*, 25.

²⁴ Martin Bulmer, ‘Ethnicity’, in *Encyclopedia of Nationalism*, ed. A. S. Leoussi and A. D. Smith, (London: Transaction, 2001), 69-70, as quoted in Malešević, *Identity as Ideology*, 25.

²⁵ Malešević, *Identity as Ideology*, 26.

²⁶ Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 5.

²⁷ Steve Fenton, *Ethnicity: Racism, Class and Culture*, (Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 1999), 3-4.

²⁸ Fenton, *Ethnicity: Racism, Class and Culture*, 6.

The terms race and ethnicity can be furthermore analyzed in terms of connotation. According to Banton, as cited by Eriksen, “race refers to the (negative) categorization of people, while ethnicity has to do with (positive) group identification.” Banton claims that ethnicity generally deals with the positive identification of “us,” whereas racism concerns rather the negative identification of “them.”²⁹ Yet, as Eriksen says, “[n]obody would suggest that the horrors of Yugoslavia and Rwanda in the 1990s were racial, but they were certainly ethnic – in other words, there is no inherent reason why ethnicity should be more benign than race. “All in all, the term race seems to carry more negative connotation than the term ethnicity does, as people tend to look at ethnicity as those who stand with us in the contrary with race which evokes the feeling of the people being around or against us.

The term ethnicity started to be used not a long time ago. As Eriksen writes, in the U.S., “ethnics” started to be used in World War II as a “polite term referring to Jews, Italians, Irish and other people considered inferior to the dominant 'WASP' group (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants).”³⁰ Since World War II, Native Americans belong among those ethnic groups who demand their ethnic identity to be “recognized same as their territorial entitlements.”³¹ According to Eriksen, Native Americans and African-Americans belong to the “unmeltable” ethnic categories. They are differentiated phenotypically from others Americans and still insist on not taking full part in the labor market and the U.S. political system.³²

To sum up this chapter, as Fenton says, ethnicity is concerned with “social classifications” in connection with “relationships”, on which Eriksen puts the biggest emphasis. That is because people tend to differentiate themselves from other groups of people, no matter to what extent. Fenton suggests that there are no groups as “a static category,” rather “social relationships in which people distinguish themselves from others.”³³

²⁹Michael Banton, *Racial and Ethnic Competition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 106, as quoted in Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 6-7.

³⁰ Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 4.

³¹ Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 3.

³² Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 169.

³³ Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, (London: Pluto Press, 1993), as quoted in Fenton, *Ethnicity: Racism, Class and Culture*, 6.

3. Tony Hillerman's life and work

Tony Hillerman – it was a white man, who knew about Navajos more than usual. Tony Hillerman grew up in Oklahoma, a rural state, where he lived among Pottawatomie and Seminole Indians and for 8 years attended an Indian school, as Ray Browne writes in “The Ethnic Detective.”³⁴

John Reilly describes Hillerman's life; he learned to live in poverty as well as to honor Catholic values. After his return from military service in World War II, he worked as a journalist and a crime reporter. After that he returned to the University of New Mexico to study writing and to become a “faculty member in journalism.”³⁵ At first, he didn't want to write his first novel about mystery, he intended his first book to be focused on politics. However, the mystery writing seemed to him as a better option and much easier to start with. He was always interested in the Indian culture and after reminding himself of the encounter with a Navajo ceremonial in 1945,³⁶ in his first novel *The Blessing Way* (1970), the reader is acquainted with Joe Leaphorn – the protagonist – and the life on a reservation, as stated by G. Clarke Chapman.³⁷

As said by Reilly, after publishing, the novel achieved an unprecedented success and encouraged Hillerman in writing Indian mysteries. Hillerman then continued at the university teaching, although he did not quit writing. He published many essays, children's books and non-fiction works about the Southwest region and of course, published 17 other sequels featuring Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn and Officer Jimmy Chee of the Navajo Tribal Police.³⁸

Tony Hillerman continued publishing until 2006 when he produced the last novel of the Leaphorn and Chee saga – *The Shape Shifter*. In 2008, Tony Hillerman unfortunately passed away, but his protagonists lived on thanks to Anne – Hillerman's daughter who wrote other stories featuring the characters.

An undeniable evidence of significance of Hillerman's work is the appreciation he received from the Navajo community itself. He officially became a respected friend of the Diné for his “sensitive and authentic depiction of the traditional Navajo culture,” as he confessed in “Interview with Tony Hillerman.”³⁹

³⁴ Browne, “The Ethnic Detective: Arthur Upfield, Tony Hillerman and Beyond,” 1031.

³⁵ John M. Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996), 6, accessed February 2, 2017, eBook Academic Collection Trial, EBSCOhost.

³⁶ Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, 6.

³⁷ G. Clarke Chapman, “Tony Hillerman's Fiction: Crime and Common Grace,” *Christianity & Literature* 48, no. 4, (1999), 475, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://cal.sagepub.com/content/48/4/473.full.pdf+html>.

³⁸ Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, 7.

³⁹ Hamlin Hill, “Interview with Tony Hillerman,” *South Central Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1995): 35, accessed October 24, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3189731>.

4. Ethnic issues in Hillerman's fiction

4.1. Religion, religious values and philosophy of life

In Hillerman's detective fiction, ethnicity is reflected in various ways and religious beliefs fall into the category of ethnic aspects which influence Hillerman's work. As Hillerman admits himself, religion and religious values play a major role in his novels. In "Interview with Tony Hillerman," Hillerman is asked if religion is important in his books. Hillerman replies that religious values are essential in his writing, as he tries to demonstrate the complexity and delicacy of the Indian religious values because they are more complicated than many people would say. Therefore, he tries to illustrate these values in hope the readers are interested.⁴⁰ But why he describes the relationship of Navajos and religion in the way he does? As Chapman suggests in "Tony Hillerman's fiction: Crime and Common Grace, "Hillerman is devoutly Catholic, generous and modest in manner, simple in lifestyle. But he also deeply admires Navajo spirituality and its resistance to white society's materialism."⁴¹

Hillerman depicts the religious devotion and beliefs of Native Americans in his novels and displays also the diversity of several tribes. In *Dance Hall of the Dead*, Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn is investigating a murder of a Zuni boy and is contemplating if the boy's family would be able to revenge on the boy's Navajo friend who might be the killer. However, Leaphorn realizes the fact that Zuni religion is firmly against violence and any kind of anger is strictly forbidden during ceremonial periods. In addition, there have not been many homicides among Zunis, as it is against their belief to take revenge on someone.⁴² Based on Leaphorn's knowledge of Zuni religion, he is determined that the killer would not belong to the Zuni people. Nevertheless, Zuni is not the only religion that Hillerman refers to in his novels. Beside Zuni beliefs, Hillerman describes religious beliefs and practices of other tribes.

The Navajo way is frequently described and analyzed in Hillerman's novels, as the adventures take place in the Navajo territory and the main characters belong to the minority. For example, in *Skinwalkers*, when Chee and Leaphorn are discussing an evidence in the form of a bone bead, Jim Chee ponders over the philosophical attitude of Navajos after he is not in agreement with Leaphorn:

The origin story of the Navajos explained witchcraft clearly enough, and it was a logical part of the philosophy on which the Dinee had founded their culture. If

⁴⁰ Hill, "Interview with Tony Hillerman,"40.

⁴¹ Chapman, "Tony Hillerman's Fiction: Crime and Common Grace," 476.

⁴² Tony Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 126.

there was good, and harmony, and beauty on the east side of reality, then there must be evil, chaos and ugliness to the west.⁴³

The Navajo way of the harmony of life is the focus of Hillerman's view on the religion, as it is mentioned countless times in his novels and a considerable number of thoughts is devoted to the philosophy. In *Dance Hall of the Dead*, when Hillerman describes Leaphorn's origin and the historical events connected to his clan, he also deals with the essence of the Navajo belief; "That had always been the point of the lesson. Interdependency of nature. Every cause has its effect. Every action its reaction. A reason for everything. In all things a pattern, and in this pattern, the beauty of harmony."⁴⁴

In the contrast to the belief in the harmony of life, Hillerman shows the other side of the Navajo belief in his novels. When a preacher spreads gospels in *A Thief of Time*, he persuades his listeners to believe in Christian God while referring to the Navajo practices and beliefs connected to the death. The preacher claims that the Navajos believe only in bad spirits, they focus on the bad about dying and that there is nothing "good" about the belief.⁴⁵ This view of the harmony of life creates a contrast to the anxious fear of dying.

Nevertheless, beside the descriptions of the Navajo beliefs themselves, Hillerman also enriches his stories of investigation with other ethnic features that relate to religion. As an example, in *Dance Hall of the Dead*, Hillerman devotes many pages only to the Zuni ritual called Shalako, where the most important moments of the plot take place.⁴⁶ As next, apart from various rituals that Hillerman depicts in his novels, he also employs the ethnic element through engaging the characters into places that are connected with the Native culture and their religion, such as ruins of the Anasazi culture in *A Thief of Time* or the anthropological research of Folsom Man in *Dance Hall of the Dead*.

No matter how the Native Americans might try to preserve their native beliefs, the white man's world affected them also, if not mainly, in the religious way, as suggested in Hillerman's novels. In *Dance Hall of the Dead*, Father Ingles, who is a Catholic priest, talks about Ernesto Cata, the Zuni boy and the victim, who is, as he says, "a Catholic. An altar boy."⁴⁷ When Leaphorn contemplates about Ernesto, he is determined that if he hadn't died, he would have become "one of the valuable men" of his people, as he reached many religious honors in such

⁴³ Tony Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), 75.

⁴⁴ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 77.

⁴⁵ Tony Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), 75.

⁴⁶ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 222-223.

⁴⁷ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 147.

a young age. The combination of being a Catholic altar boy and the presenter of Zuni God proves his people would have appreciated him.⁴⁸

There are several examples of how Hillerman demonstrates that Christianity infiltrated into Native Americans' lives. In *A Thief of Time*, Leaphorn visits Slick Nakai, a Catholic preacher, to interrogate him. In his speech, he is referring to Hopi religious beliefs in the life after death and the Navajo belief in "chindi," a ghost of every deceased person who might come to hurt someone when the one calls its name. He expresses his distaste in his speech to these beliefs and tries to passionately persuade the audience that Jesus is their salvation and that Jesus is a promise of the happy life after death with no sorrow or hunger or sickness: "Jesus didn't let Death live. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!"⁴⁹ The Natives seems to seek consolation in another religion, as they do not appear to receive it in their original one.

At the visit of Slick Nakai, Joe Leaphorn also notices that sixty percent of the congregation is created by middle-aged women, mostly of Navajo origin. This is not what Leaphorn would expect. He would suppose that the congregation would be created by young people who are influenced by the white culture the most.⁵⁰ Obviously, this does not apply to this case. Hillerman suggests that not only young people affected by white man's world habits follow white man's religion and beliefs.

If Slick Nakai should be furthermore analyzed, he himself is a Navajo and was taught the Navajo way as a child.⁵¹ Nakai is accompanied also by referend Tafoya, an Apache, a Christian preacher, who also found a way to Christianity. As Nakai says in *Thief of Time*: "God made the Apaches, and the *belagana*, and the blacks, and the Hopis, and us Dineh and everybody else just the same."⁵² In conclusion, in this book, catholic preachers on the reservation are Native Americans and the focus is the Christianity, not the origin of believers.

Christianity creates a contrast with the Navajo culture in many ways in the book. For example, when Leaphorn searches for Nakai to ask some questions due to the investigation, Nakai puts a note on a flier that "all hungering for the Word of the Lord could find him between Nageezi and the Dzilith-Na-O-Dith-Hie School."⁵³

To sum up this chapter, Hillerman provides the reader with a complex view of the Native American's religion and beliefs, especially the Navajo way, as the main characters belong to

⁴⁸ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 97.

⁴⁹ Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 76-77.

⁵⁰ Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 72.

⁵¹ Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 73.

⁵² Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 64.

⁵³ Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 58.

the Navajos themselves. He presents these beliefs in various ways; through the environment in which the characters appear, through the portrayal of various religious rituals, or by simple descriptions of the beliefs via thoughts of the main characters. He also demonstrates how other religions influenced their original beliefs. The Christian principles, as Hillerman suggests, are spreading through the territory and play a major role in Native American's lives and it is no exception for a Navajo to be an honored Christian.

4.2. Navajo habits and the way of life

Regarding the ethnic characteristics of Hillerman's novels, the way of life of Native Americans is not as uniform as it may appear. Hillerman tries to illustrate the differences in the way of living of different clans that he deals with in his novels. In *Dance Hall of the Dead*, Joe Leaphorn contemplates about the size of a village and the way of living of Zuni and his own people. It suggests that apart from Navajo who decided to live more separately from each other, together but still alone, Zunis tend to gather and live together at one place which, as he suggests, may be the reason they managed to survive the years of invasions. He also refers to the different way of living regarding the mother-in-law taboos.⁵⁴ Simply, Hillerman shows the readers that the concept of Native Americans is wider than it may appear and that every tribe differ in their way of life and beliefs.

G. Clarke Chapman in his paper "Tony Hillerman's Fiction – Crime and Common Grace" explains the reason of Navajos for this way of behavior. He claims that this pattern of their behavior started to form when "Siberian Athapaskan hunter-gatherers" many centuries back came to the southwestern region and settled beside the Pueblo people. Up to these days, Navajos live among Apache and Hopi and adopted the ways of them both. As Apache, Navajo tend to be individualists, on the other hand, as Hopi, they have the sense for communal togetherness. Their individualism is obvious when looking at the disposition of their dwellings spread across the land. On the contrary, when one's harmony is disrupted by either a sickness or bad luck, the community gathers to perform rituals and heal the individual.⁵⁵ This principle that Clarke describes is basically the exact thought that Hillerman presents in *Dance Hall of the Dead* when contemplating about the Zunis and Navajos and their different way of living in groups. Nevertheless, as Chapman suggests, Navajos' sense of unity is changeable. After living

⁵⁴ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 70.

⁵⁵ Chapman, "Tony Hillerman's fiction – Crime and Common Grace", 480.

between two other ethnicities, their sense of togetherness is challenged by the third party in the form of white men's society.⁵⁶

However, this divergence is not valid speaking of characters and their family lives, as Clarke suggests. No matter how the personalities of Hillerman's characters differ, the tight family bonds remain, as every member of a family is responsible for another family member's actions.⁵⁷ Hillerman displays these family bonds in his novel *A Thief of Time*. When Chee is searching for an old lady, he thinks over his relationship with her: "[b]esides, she was Streams Come Together Clan, which was linked to Chee's father's clan, which made her a relative. Chee had been raised knowing that you watch out for your relatives."⁵⁸

As John Scaggs proposes in *Crime Fiction*, the large area of 28,000 miles of the Navajo reservation spreading over four countries is not an obstacle to maintain the cultural integrity of the tribe and "localizes" Jim Chee and Joe Leaphorn in terms of culture instead of space.⁵⁹ In Hillerman's novels, the close bounds among Navajo family members are obvious. For instance, in *Skinwalkers*, when Chee introduces himself to Iron Woman, he says the name of the family, the clan and also the relatives, which is the same Iron Woman does after Chee. It is suggested that their families are linked, which is usual at the reservation.⁶⁰

The sense of family togetherness is tightly related to some habits that are described in the books. In the second chapter of *Skinwalkers*, it is explained why Leaphorn feels uneasy in the presence of his sister-in-law when they are alone. His wife is dying of a serious disease and there is a tradition in the Navajo community to marry another female member of the family when the wife dies. Even though he likes the sister-in-law, he has no intention to marry her despite the old-fashioned tradition.⁶¹

In the third chapter of *Dance Hall of the Dead*, the Lieutenant Leaphorn tries to persuade young Cecil Bowlegs, the brother of the missing boy, that he can provide Leaphorn with the information about George's escape, as they both belong to the Dinee which means "the People"⁶² and therefore, refers to the cultural unity of the Navajos. This example, together with many others throughout the books, demonstrates the importance of the family integrity in the Navajo world in Hillerman's novels.

⁵⁶ Chapman, "Tony Hillerman's fiction – Crime and Common Grace", 480.

⁵⁷ Chapman, "Tony Hillerman's fiction – Crime and Common Grace", 480.

⁵⁸ Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 47.

⁵⁹ Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 93.

⁶⁰ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 81-82.

⁶¹ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 12.

⁶² Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 20.

Beside tight family bonds, there are other features that characterize the Natives and are mirrored in Hillerman's novels. As stated by Laura Baker, an ethnic crime fiction writer, in an interview for Ray B. Browne in *Murder on the Reservation: American Indian Crime Fiction*: Navajos were fighting surrounding groups for almost over two centuries by which they earned the name "Lords of the Land. They are now the largest tribe, residing on the largest reservation, with the most money. Yet the Navajo individually are among the poorest, the most illiterate, with obscene rates of unemployment, alcoholism, and infant mortality."⁶³ This fact is also projected into Hillerman's stories.

In the books chosen for the analysis, the issue of alcoholism appears and usually is accompanied with the reference to Natives' bad teeth or poor diet. Hillerman seems to be suggesting that these features are also parts of the Indian culture. The reference appears for example in *A Thief of Time* when Leaphorn consults the preacher Nakai. Lieutenant Leaphorn notices his bad teeth and thinks that these are teeth of Navajos.⁶⁴ In *Skinwalkers*, when Leaphorn consults Dr. Jenks during an investigation, he refers to him as to a white American doctor who stayed longer over the 2-year period he was supposed to serve on the Reservation and helps the Natives to defeat various illnesses that "follow poor diets, bad water, and isolation."⁶⁵

Regarding the issue of excessive drinking, there are references to the problem throughout the books. These issues are presented mainly in the form of characters' conversation. Shorty Bowlegs, a secondary character might serve as an example of a Navajo with drinking issues; in *Dance Hall of the Dead*, when Leaphorn visits Bowlegs to interrogate him because of his missing son, the father is uncappable of a "coherent conversation."⁶⁶ In another case, Leaphorn talks to a white girl Susanne, a friend of the missing boy: "'Were you thinking he might come here to kill himself? Or do Navajos do that?' 'Not much. Except with the bottle,' Leaphorn said. 'It's a little slower than a gun.'"⁶⁷ Another example appears in *Skinwalkers*, when Chee discusses a possible perpetrator with his FBI co-worker: "'The kind of people I arrest are mostly too drunk to remember who arrested 'em. Or care,' Chee said. 'If they have enough money to buy shotgun shells they buy a bottle instead.'"⁶⁸

⁶³ Ray B. Browne, *Murder on the Reservation: American Indian Crime Fiction* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 243.

⁶⁴ Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 65.

⁶⁵ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 99-100.

⁶⁶ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 16.

⁶⁷ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 167.

⁶⁸ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 28.

In conclusion, Hillerman's novels provide the reader with the view of the Native Americans' habits and way of life, which are usually explained and complemented with some historical background, such as in the case of origin of their behavior in groups. This sense of togetherness is tightly connected to the family life. Even on a very large area, the Navajos families and clans are very tightly mutually related. These cultural features are mostly presented to the reader in the form of interactions of the characters during the investigation or via the main characters' thoughts. This sense of togetherness might also help during the investigation, such as in the case of Cecil Bowlegs. There is also the other side of the Navajo nature, drinking issues and bad life conditions, which are also depicted in the novels, mostly in the form of dialogues.

4.3. Navajos and other ethnic groups

4.3.1 Navajos and other tribes – Zunis

As Ray Browne states in *Murder on the Reservation*, Hillerman portrays the relationship between Native American cultures – Hopi, Zuñi, Navajo, and others. He tries to show readers the distinctions and complexity of the tribes. However, the fact is that he focuses on the Navajos the most.⁶⁹

In the *Dance Hall of the Dead*, the diversity of the tribes is displayed via the friendship of the two victims and consequently through the characters of the Zuni and Navajo police officers who are thus working on the case of the two boys. The book tells a story of two boys from different tribes – Ernesto Cata from the Zuñi tribe and George Bowlegs from the Navajo tribe- who managed to be friends despite the unequal relationship between their communities. This novel contains hints of the relationship between the two groups. Hillerman himself admits through his main character Leaphorn in the *Dance Hall of the Dead* that the two communities do not feel they would share equal status: “Leaphorn suddenly understood his mood. It was because he felt that Zuñis felt superior to Navajos.”⁷⁰

Another evidence that shows the unequal status between the two communities is the gap in study results of young Native Americans:

“It says they're classmates,” Leaphorn said. “But Bowlegs is fourteen and Cata is listed as twelve. Were they in the same grade?” Leaphorn wished instantly he'd not asked the question. Pasquaanti would simply remind them all that Bowlegs was a Navajo-therby explaining the gap in academic performance.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Browne, *Murder on the Reservation: American Indian Crime Fiction*, 77.

⁷⁰ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 9.

⁷¹ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 10-11.

Hillerman basically suggests that Navajo do not reach the same results at school as Zuñis. Nevertheless, this is not the only hint pointing at the inequality of the two minorities. When Leaphorn talks to George's brother Cecil to find out more about him missing, Cecil expresses distinctly the mistrust and distaste to Zuñis; “‘No friends there at school,’ Cecil said. ‘They’re Zuñis.’ He glanced at Leaphorn, to see if he understood. ‘They don’t like Navajos,’ he said. ‘Just make jokes about us. Like Polack jokes.’”⁷²

The reasons of this behavior might be rooted in the past. As Laura Baker, a novelist, mentions in an interview in *Murder on the Reservation*, The Navajos were for almost 200 years fighting against almost every tribe that surrounded them, they reached the largest area with the biggest wealth and yet, they are considered the poorest with alcohol and drug issues and high infant mortality.⁷³

Another reason for their unsettled relationship might be the differences in religion and rituals. Hillerman presents those alterations and provide the reader with an explanation. For instance, in the thirteenth chapter, father Ingles explains the differences between Zuñi and Navajo gods to Leaphorn and compares them to the Greek mythology. There are many gods for Navajos, however, the Zuñis worship only one creator.⁷⁴ Moreover, their way of life also differs. These could be reasons of their mistrust among each other.

Yet, these irregularities among tribes are not that significant as the differences Hillerman demonstrates in relation to the white majority and if Hillerman suggests that tribes among themselves feel unequal, then the relationship of Navajos and the white men is much more complicated to define.

4.3.2 Navajos and white men

Beside the relationship between Navajos and other clans, Hillerman highlights the differences in the behavior between the Navajos and the white majority. In *Skinwalkers*, he suggests that the Native Americans had to adapt to the white man's world, however, they still preserved their habits:

⁷² Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 26.

⁷³ Browne, *Murder on the Reservation*, 243.

⁷⁴ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 144.

The answer didn't surprise Chee. His people had adopted many ways of the *belagana*, but most of them had retained the Dinee tradition of personal modesty. Roosevelt Bistie would have kept his shirt on in the presence of his daughter.⁷⁵

"Belagana," in other words "Belacani" is a very frequent expression that is used in Hillerman's books which refers to the white men, as it is explained on the website devoted to Hillerman's work.⁷⁶ However, Hillerman does not imply the reason for using the expression. It might be suggested that Hillerman intends to stress the cultural gap or the detachment of the Natives from the white Americans. The same could be said about some other expressions referring to the Native Americans used in the book. For example, when a white police officer talks to his Native colleague in *Skinwalkers*: "I defer to you redskins on that."⁷⁷

Jane S. Bakerman from Indiana State University also highlights the constant recognition of the racial strains in Hillerman's novels. "Though many non-Navajo characters are admirers or students of Navajo culture, and though others, who are strangers, are often open, friendly, and seemingly unbiased, still others are unfriendly or dangerous."⁷⁸

As an example of an unbiased and open friend of Navajos is Dr. Jenks presented in *Skinwalkers*, a pathologist who cooperates with Leaphorn when investigating a murder, who tends to stereotype Navajos by wearing the same outfit as Navajos supposedly does. He might be categorized as a so-called "Indian lover."⁷⁹ Then, there is the white man Randal Elliot who happens to be the killer in the end of *A Thief of Time*. He tries to assimilate to the Natives by speaking in their native language, when he greets with Leaphorn in the Navajo way.⁸⁰

Ray B. Browne has a different opinion on this subject. He suggests that Hillerman in his books stresses the likeness of the white men and Navajos instead of their distinction. It is said that he blends the way of living of the two groups to demonstrate the sameness.⁸¹

In "The Ethnic Detective," Browne also suggests that Hillerman is more concerned with the way the white men despise the Native American cultural heritage and their sacred bond to their home, than with the way the Natives assimilate to the new ways of living.⁸² The theme of

⁷⁵ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 189.

⁷⁶ E-Hillerman. "Belacani," accessed February, 8, 2017, <http://ehillerman.unm.edu/ehillerman/node/1423#sthash.HLY0FvTv.dpbs>.

⁷⁷ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 178.

⁷⁸ Jane S. Bakerman, "Cutting Both Ways: Race, Prejudice, and Motive in Tony Hillerman's Detective Fiction," *Ethnic Images in Popular Genres and Media* 11, no. 3 (1984): 18, accessed October 24, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/467130>.

⁷⁹ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 93.

⁸⁰ Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 99.

⁸¹ Browne, *Murder on the Reservation*, 77.

⁸² Browne, "The Ethnic Detective", 1032.

A Thief of Time itself supports this statement. In *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, the rich New York Anasazi pot collector Richard DuMont is analyzed;

Behaving with inhuman detachment, he appropriates objects of culture for his amusement, severing them from their roots in a civilization. As DuMont says, material possession does not satisfy his acquisitiveness. The items he buys must become objects of his ego.⁸³

DuMont is a secondary character in the book, however, he is a prototypical demonstration of the white man's ignorance regarding the Native American culture. It is not the cultural and historical value of the pots DuMont appreciates, but the financial value it holds.

That the white man's value of life is measured by the fortune is also depicted when Leaphorn comes to the crime scene where a father of a victim is also murdered in *Dance Hall of the Dead*:

Everything that Bowlegs had accumulated in perhaps forty years of living was littered on the hogan floor. Add it together- the clothing, the supplies, the sheepherder's tools- and it might have cost five hundred dollars, new, at inflated trading post prices. Now it was worn, used. By whiteman's standards, Leaphorn thought, Bowlegs had a net worth of maybe one hundred dollars. The white world's measure of his life. And what would the Navajo measure be? The Dinee made a harder demand- that man find his place in the harmony of things.⁸⁴

In this aspect of life, Navajos differ significantly from the white men. It is not the fortune what is important to their lives, it is the balance between them and the nature - the harmony of life.

Another illustration of the disregard of the white men concerning the Native Americans' heritage is the sermon of the Navajo Catholic Preacher Slick Nakai in *A Thief of Time*, in which Nakai refers to a sacred place he used to visit as a child to make sacrifices. Now when he is adult he cannot visit the place anymore to bring fruits to gods, as the white men are responsible for destroying those holly places. He claims that the divinity abandoned Navajos and let the white people destroy their sacred places;

“Just close your eyes now and remember how that holy place looked the last time you saw it. Truck road runs up there. It's got radio towers built all over the top of it. Oil companies built 'em. Whole forest of those antennae all along the top of our holy place.” Nakai was shouting now, emphasizing each word with a downward sweep of his fist. “I can't pray to the mountain no more,” he shouted. “Not after the white man built all over the top of it. Remember what the stories tell us. Changing Woman left us. She's gone away....”⁸⁵

⁸³ Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, 142.

⁸⁴ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 86-87.

⁸⁵ Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 73.

The fact that a Navajo Catholic priest stands against white men's world seems contradictory, as Christianity itself is the heritage of the white man's society. The priest and his followers seems to seek consolation and a spiritual refuge to run away from the white man's ignorance, which is, in fact, provided by the white man's culture itself.

Another example of the complicated relationship of the white culture and the Native Americans might be the relationship between Mary Landon and Jim Chee in *A Thief of Time*. In order to be together, either Mary would have to change her way of life and move to the reservation, which is not an option, or Chee would have to move to Mary to the white man's world and change his way of life and assimilate to the white man's culture. As a result, their love remains unfulfilled, as Jim is unwilling to abandon his Navajo habits and beliefs.

This complicated situation is symbolically depicted by the illustration of an abandoned domestic cat which now lives freely in the wild and Chee takes care of in *A Thief of Time*. As Šárka Bubíková suggests in "Ethnicity and Social Critique in Tony Hilleman's Crime Fiction," the two lovers cannot live together, as they are not willing to assimilate; same as the domesticated cat cannot become wild, the Navajo would have difficulties to assimilate to the white culture. This also applies to Mary who cannot give up her way of life and behave in a Navajo fashion.⁸⁶

Hillerman also depicts the cultural differences in everyday life and ordinary actions the main characters experience. Some examples can be seen in *Skinwalkers* when Chee sits in a car with his co-worker and contemplates about the case when his mind is distracted by a simple thought: why white men tend to drink beverages always icy.⁸⁷ In another situation, Chee thinks of a lawn that needs watering:

What was it about white men that caused them to plant grass in places where grass couldn't possibly grow without them fiddling with it all the time? Chee had thought about that a lot, and talked to Mary Landon about it. He'd told Mary he thought it represented a subconscious need to remind themselves that they could defy nature.⁸⁸

A similar situation where a cultural difference is displayed only by depicting everyday ordinary actions is the one when Chee rinses his coffeepot with water and drinks its content instead of pouring the dirty water to the sink.⁸⁹ He drinks it, as he is used to have little supplies of water and he finds nothing unusual about it unlike Mary Landon, a white woman of a different cultural background where water is never lacking.

⁸⁶ Šárka Bubíková, "Ethnicity and Social Critique in Tony Hilleman's Crime Fiction," *Prague Journal of English Studies* 5, no.1 (2016): 154, accessed September 21, 2016, DOI: 10.1515/pjes-2016-0008.

⁸⁷ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 37-38.

⁸⁸ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 117-118.

⁸⁹ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 190-191.

These distinctions between Natives and whites are minor in some cases, but not always. As Jane Bakerman suggest, “[i]n the detective novel, it is common practice for the author to exploit assumed tensions between various law enforcement agencies and even sometimes between departments within the same agency.”⁹⁰ In Hillerman’s books, the white culture is primarily represented by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) which cooperates with the Tribal Police on some cases. The FBI agents are displayed stereotypically – all looking and behaving the same, as Leaphorn thinks in *Dance Hall of the Dead*. He compares agent O’Malley with other FBI agents: “The FBI people always seemed to be O’Malleys - trimmed, scrubbed, tidy, able to work untroubled by any special measure of intelligence.”⁹¹ The FBI agents also conceal the truth and do not tell the Tribal Police all the facts, such as that one of the agents present is a narcotic agent,⁹² which seems like they feel superior and do not need to share information with the minority. However, the distrust is mutual. For instance, in *Skinwalkers*, when Chee visits Roosevelt Bistie for an interrogation with his FBI co-worker, Bistie’s daughter opens the door and pretends to speak only Navajo, even if she might speak well in English, but she distrusts the white FBI agent and speaks only in her native language.⁹³

As Hillerman suggests, these two cultures are diverse in various ways and it is difficult to understand each other. To give an example, at the end of *Dance Hall of the Dead* Leaphorn tries to comprehend why Ted Isaacs still wants to lie about an anthropological research which was unrightfully manipulated in order to get his degree at school and a proper recognition in the anthropological world more than the love of his girlfriend, whom he leaves abandoned. Leaphorn fails when trying to reason the deeds of the white men.⁹⁴

To sum up, Hillerman provides the reader with a wide view of other cultures. Beside Navajos, he demonstrates the diversity of other clans (Zunis) and presents their relationship, which, as Hillerman suggests, is unequal, according to the characters’ feelings and attitudes. The diversity Hillerman demonstrates via connecting the two missing boys in *Dance Hall of the Dead* and connecting the Zuni and Navajo police offices together in joint investigation. He also puts Natives to the contrast with the white majority which is done by creating some biased and unbiased characters, the superior status of the FBI, and thoughts of the characters which

⁹⁰ Jane S. Bakerman, “Cutting Both Ways: Race, Prejudice, and Motive in Tony Hillerman's Detective Fiction,” 17-18.

⁹¹ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 98.

⁹² Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 99-100.

⁹³ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 34.

⁹⁴ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, 239-240.

are oriented on their differences, such as their value of life versus value of money, or by common everyday actions.

5. Influence of ethnicity on characters, motives, and the plot

5.1. Influence of ethnicity on characters

Joe Leaphorn, the main character of the novels, is a person influenced by two different cultures. As stated by Reilly, he learned to be a Navajo, adopted the way of life and thinking of reality. His grandfather taught him of the Navajo philosophy of beauty and harmony. On the other hand, he is educated in anthropology in the white man's world and learned to see the world alternatively.⁹⁵ As said by Reilly, He is skilled in Navajo practices, but is also a skillful police officer with interests in other cultures thanks to his education. "Thus, in the execution of police work, as much as in the experience of culture, he remained a Navajo but adapted to new circumstances."⁹⁶ Therefore, it could be said that Joe Leaphorn is a figure on the edge of two different cultures. He is a Navajo in his soul but had to adapt to the white man's world.

As stated by Scaggs in *Crime Fiction*, the main characters' education in anthropology together with their origin and knowledge of cultural beliefs and the way of life, same as the knowledge of the process of investigation, helps them with the orientation in social and cultural issues and eventually leads them to a solution of a crime. During this process, they learn about themselves and their position in the Navajo world, same as about the cases they investigate. "They are cross-cultural figures, frequently trapped with one foot in the Belacani world and the other in the Dinee world."⁹⁷

In the 7th novel called *Skinwalkers*, Officer Jim Chee, the second main character, joins Leaphorn's investigative adventure. Same as Leaphorn, Chee is also a person on the edge of two cultures. As stated by Reilly, "[a]s Navajos who have studied ethnography in universities, Leaphorn and Chee are participant - observers; that is, they are native to the culture that creates the witchcraft beliefs and lore, but are trained also in the methods of objective investigation."⁹⁸ All in all, the Anglo-culture is represented by the police environment where they observe, whereas they are participants in the Native American culture.

The main feature of Leaphorn's native culture he belongs to – Navajo – is the philosophy of life. As claimed by professor Bubíková, Joe Leaphorn as a genuine Navajo follows "hozho," the main spiritual principle which means being in harmony with self and with others, which, according to Leaphorn, helped the Navajos survive the hard times and persist in the constantly shifting world. However, sometimes he cannot get along with other Navajos due to

⁹⁵ Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, 56.

⁹⁶ Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, 60.

⁹⁷ Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 103-104.

⁹⁸ Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, 128.

their irrational belief in witchcraft.⁹⁹ As said in *Skinwalkers*, “Leaphorn had no tolerance for witchcraft or anything about it – for those who believed in witches, or for stories about skinwalkers, corpse sickness, the cures for same, and everything connected with the Navajo Wolves.”¹⁰⁰

Nevertheless, in the final part of *Skinwalkers*, Jim Chee has a different opinion on the issue of witchery; “Chee believed in witchcraft in an abstract way.” He didn’t believe that thanks to witchery, Navajos would have the power to change into animals or have the ability to fly. “But he knew witchcraft in its basic form stalked the Dinee.”¹⁰¹ Thus, Jim Chee believes in witchery on the spiritual level, as the opposite of the good part of the balance of good and evil.

As Reilly writes, “The contrast between the two men can be seen as a contrast between the romantic and the realist.” Chee hopes to become a ceremonial singer and wants to keep the traditional Navajo life in the white men’s world. On the other hand, there is Leaphorn, who applies the most significant historical knowledge, the ability of the People to assimilate, to the everyday life, which in this case is represented by Leaphorn’s police practice.¹⁰² Hillerman himself in “Interview with Tony Hillerman” describes Leaphorn as “a rationalist,” who “looks on the Navajo origin story as a metaphor in the purest sense. He still sees a more basic truth in it.”¹⁰³

Jim Chee also appears more unsecure than Leaphorn about the question of identity. As claimed by Reilly, the relationship of Jim Chee with Mary Landon depicts the issue of identity. In *A Thief of Time*, Chee deals with the decision whether to follow Mary to the “mainstream” world or stay at the reservation alone. After that, there is also Janet Pete, a local lawyer woman who shares the same interests rooted in their common culture.¹⁰⁴ Jim Chee seems to struggle with the decision whether to follow his heart or his roots.

In “Interview with Tony Hillerman,” Hillerman is questioned with regard to his characters. As Hillerman describes, he tried to create his main character – Leaphorn - after some Navajo men of his generation, slightly younger than him, who were pulled of their “sheep camp” to a boarding school and assimilated pretty well and returned to some extent urbanized but still a Navajo in the way of life. When creating Chee, the reasons for his appearance was Hillerman wanted to write a book with a less urbanized, less assimilated Navajo who would be younger,

⁹⁹ Bubíková, “Ethnicity and Social Critique in Tony Hilleman’s Crime Fiction,” 144.

¹⁰⁰ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 74.

¹⁰¹ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 252.

¹⁰² Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, 129.

¹⁰³ Hill, “Interview with Tony Hillerman,” 39.

¹⁰⁴ Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, 147.

romantic and a dreamer. The second, less thematic reason was Hillerman had lost the television rights to Joe Leaphorn.¹⁰⁵

To sum up, the two main characters vary in certain ways but hold some shared values, such as keeping the Navajo tradition alive, living in the Navajo manner and according the Navajo philosophy of harmony. They both are educated in anthropology, which means they understand Native history and folklore. They are also police investigators, which represents the mainstream culture. The two of them, as Scaggs cites Willett in *Crime Fiction*, “fall between the white (Belacani) world of pickup trucks, short-wave radios, and police procedure, and the Navajo (Dinee) world of ritual and folklore, as well as poverty, alcoholism, and white racism.”¹⁰⁶ They are influenced by two different cultures – they observe the white man’s world and participate in the Navajo world. In the novels, they learn about their identity and where they belong. Leaphorn is a realist, whereas Chee is a dreamer with optimistic attitude towards life. These two are different but very much alike in terms of ethnicity, even though Leaphorn is more able to assimilate to the changing world than Chee.

5.2. Influence of ethnicity on the motives and the plot

Ethnic aspects play a major role in Hillerman’s novels, as they influence many features of the books. For instance, the motives of the characters to act in a certain way are very often (but not always) affected by the ethnicity. The same can be claimed about the plot development.

As an example, the murderer in *Skinwalkers*- Dr. Yellowhorse. He is a half Sioux and half Navajo¹⁰⁷ who was orphaned and consequently raised in the white culture environment in a Mormon orphanage.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, Yellowhorse holds some Navajo values and knows the religion, but he is not a genuine Navajo. He spent his childhood with white men, which must have affected him considerably. As Reilly states in *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*:

For the villain, exaggerated thoughts about his service to the community result in his betraying Navajo beliefs, by misuse of crystal gazing and abuse of witchcraft, and finally in the taking of life. For the detective heroes, however, their reasoning about values motivates them to the genuine service of maintaining peace and order within the Navajo community.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Hill, “Interview with Tony Hillerman,” 39.

¹⁰⁶ Ralph Willet, *Hard-Boiled Detective Fiction*, (Keele: British Association for American Studies, 1992), 48-49. as quoted in Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 90.

¹⁰⁷ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 29.

¹⁰⁸ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 32.

¹⁰⁹ Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, 137.

Obviously, Yellowhorse is influenced by the white culture to the extent that he is willing to break the rules of living in harmony and commit murders which he reasons by serving his people by saving lives thanks to the unrightfully gained finances. On the other hand, the attempted murder of Officer Chee in this book is highly ethnically motivated.

When Dr. Yellowhorse persuades a desperate mother, whose child is dying that Chee is a Skinwalker- an evil witch who cursed her infant, she is unwaveringly convinced that she must kill him to protect her child. When she lures Chee to an abandoned house to murder him, her devotion is highly recognizable: ““Skinwalker! Why are you killing my baby?””¹¹⁰ Hillerman shows that the Navajo belief in witchcraft still persists and may influence the characters’ lives and actions.

In *Dance Hall of the Dead*, the perpetrator’s motive to murder two young boys of different ethnicity is complicated to define. As claimed by Jane S. Bakerman, Reynolds’ motive to commit this crime is protecting his own life and reputation as an anthropologist. However, he thinks of anyone else out of the academic white man’s world as dispensable. He cannot put away his professional appearance “because his victims and the cultures they represent are, for him, merely artifacts. They are, in a very real sense, convenient tools to use in order to advance his career.”¹¹¹ All in all, he is mainly motivated by his own non-racist ambitions. However, he uninhibitedly takes two lives away, as he perceives the two boys of a different ethnicity as expendables. Therefore, it can be claimed that besides his non-racist and selfish motives, the ethnic differences may be also partly the reason for professor Reynolds to commit the crime of murder without regrets.

The murderer in *A Thief of Time* is also powered by the non-ethnic desire for recognition, except he wants to prove himself to a woman more than the anthropological world.¹¹² An upper-class descendant feels that the woman he wants to be recognized by knows that he reaches his achievements without any hard work, as he is used to gain it for free thanks to his pedigree. He needs to impress her and show her he is worth her attention, which, however, requires murders to cover up traces of speeding the process of the anthropological research and the paperwork connected to it.

Nevertheless, speaking of the plot itself, it is influenced significantly by ethnic aspects, as the titles of books themselves suggest. As Browne admits in “The Ethnic Detective,” “In

¹¹⁰ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 249.

¹¹¹ Bakerman, “Cutting Both Ways: Race, Prejudice, and Motive in Tony Hillerman's Detective Fiction,” 20.

¹¹² Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 303.

Dance Hall of the Dead, Hillerman is unusually passionate in his study of Navajo lore.”¹¹³ The theme of *Dance Hall of the Dead* is focused on a Zuni ritual and Hillerman devotes many pages only to the description of the ritual itself; in *Skinwalkers*, the theme is motivated by the Navajo belief in witchery, which is consequently a motive for an attempt to murder Jim Chee. In *A Thief of Time*, the title itself is a denotation for “a pot hunter-” a person who steals artifacts from ancient Indian sites,¹¹⁴ as Hillerman explains.

Firstly, in *Dance Hall of the Dead*, Joe Leaphorn investigates two missing boys, one of them a Zuni member who is supposed to become a “Little Fire God” at the upcoming Shalako ritual. The story escalates conveniently at the ritual when Leaphorn tries to save the other boy who has not been killed yet. Hillerman fits the story of investigation into this environment, which provides the reader with the view of a different culture and presents the behavior of other ethnic groups.

Then in *Skinwalkers*, the whole story is focused on the theme of witchery which plays a major role in investigating the attempt to murder Officer Chee. In this book, Hillerman demonstrates to which content the Navajo religious beliefs can influence one’s decisions, which can eventually lead to an act of murder, or at least, an attempt to kill. In this book, Hillerman also shows in what way the ethnicity can influence the plot; firstly, the knowledge of Navajo beliefs and habits helps during the investigation to confirm the possibility that the murderer could be a Navajo; thanks to specific traces that the perpetrator left behind on the crime scene and their knowledge of their culture, the investigators are capable of identifying the suspect, or at least, his cultural background.¹¹⁵ On the contrary, Hillerman shows how the ethnicity may harm the investigation: the Navajo families do not allow an autopsy of the victims out of religious reasons, which may complicate the search.¹¹⁶

Finally, the theme of *A Thief of Time* might be the least appealing, however, deals with a deeper philosophical question of identity; Reilly suggests that the book deals especially with the problem of inherited culture, which is reflected mainly in the Chee’s identity problem of two cultures. It could be said that similar issue troubles other Native Americans. “How can one manage the past, his novel asks, within present circumstances?” Additionally, he thinks that “Hillerman clearly condemns the subjugation of aesthetic and cultural objects to cash

¹¹³ Browne, “The Ethnic Detective”, 1033.

¹¹⁴ Hillerman, *A Thief of Time*, 14.

¹¹⁵ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 66.

¹¹⁶ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, 96.

value. Even so, he leaves a problem for his readers to ponder—namely, how to find a modern use for the past that preserves the integrity of tradition and culture.”¹¹⁷

In conclusion, it cannot be said that there is a pattern in a way Hillerman creates murderers in his books and that the ethnicity has direct influence on their motives. The perpetrators belong to the both cultures, even some of them are more influenced by it than others. Some of their motives to murder are powered by ethnic features; when the mother wants to kill Chee in *Skinwalkers*, or when the anthropologist murders two Indian boys without regrets, as he thinks of them as merely “artifacts.” However, mostly, even if the perpetrator is a Native American himself (Dr. Yellowhorse), his motives are not ethnically motivated. They are mostly motivated by selfish reasons such as desire for recognition, such as in the case of Randall Elliot, Dr. Reynolds or Dr. Yellowhorse, even though their motives differ in some aspects.

On the contrary, the themes of the books carry ethnical features; the *Dance Hall of the Dead* with the Zuni ritual or *Skinwalkers* which mainly deals with the other side of the belief in the harmony of life- the witchery, and finally, the most complex thought of the Anasazi digging sites which is tightly connected to the question of keeping the identity and culture.

¹¹⁷ Reilly, *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*, 152.

6. Critique of Hillerman's work

Regarding the critique of Hillerman's novels, Hillerman himself in author's notes of the books warns about some inaccuracies regarding some names and rituals, as in *Skinwalkers*¹¹⁸, or he informs that the setting is genuine but the characters are not created on the basis of real characters, as in *Dance Hall of the Dead*.¹¹⁹ But still, some critics occur who refer to some cultural inaccuracies in Hillerman's books. Hillerman himself confesses in the "Interview with Tony Hillerman" that he changed a position of Burntwater once, as he needed to employ it into the story. Therefore, Burntwater is located in the north instead of the south. After receiving some unflattering letters, he would stop changing the reality in his novels.¹²⁰

However, as Ray B. Browne proposes in *The Ethnic Detective*, "Native American experts agree that Hillerman sometimes misses the details of Indian culture." According to Ernie Bulow, Hillerman's fellow writer, he misses the Hopi pronunciation and some details concerning rituals, but except the few minor mistakes, he is "an excellent storyteller."¹²¹

Browne also suggests that some Natives come to an agreement with Bulow. As he rephrases Bulow from *Talking Mysteries*, Bulow states about the *Blessing Way* that the "ethnography of the book was shaky," and mentions some inaccurate rituals.¹²² As said by Browne, Hillerman later admits the book has some errors.¹²³

Also Stephen Knight in his *Crime Fiction, 1800-2000: Detection, Death, and Diversity* presents some critical views of Hillerman's work. He cites Symons, who says that Hillerman's work is "essentially unexciting," with addition "for a British reader anyway."¹²⁴ On the contrary, the British author Ralph Willet experienced "grandeur and intensity" in reading Hillerman's books.¹²⁵

Despite Hillerman's minor inaccuracies in descriptions of rituals, places and some minor mispronunciations, Ray B. Browne concludes in "The Ethnic Detective" that the author Tony Hillerman is a "master storyteller, sympathetic with ethnic groups outside the main

¹¹⁸ Hillerman, *Skinwalkers*, Author's note.

¹¹⁹ Hillerman, *Dance Hall of the Dead*, Author's note.

¹²⁰ Hill, "Interview with Tony Hillerman," 41.

¹²¹ Browne, "The Ethnic Detective", 1031.

¹²² Ernie Bulow and Tony Hillerman. *Talking Mysteries: A Conversation with Tony Hillerman*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981) 13-14, as quoted in Browne, "The Ethnic Detective", 1032.

¹²³ Browne, "The Ethnic Detective", 1032-1033.

¹²⁴ Julian Symons, *Bloody Murder*, 3rd edn (London: Penguin, 1992). 240. as quoted in Stephen Knight, *Crime Fiction, 1800-2000: Detection, Death, Diversity*, (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 191.

¹²⁵ Ralph Willett, *Hardboiled Detective Fiction* (Keele: British Association for American Studies, 1992), 48. as quoted in Stephen Knight, *Crime Fiction, 1800-2000: Detection, Death, Diversity*, (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 191.

power structure. He is poetic, religious, sensitive, and understanding. [...] He is especially noted for his peaceful tone and incremental presentation of detail.”¹²⁶

In conclusion, Hillerman is blamed by some critics for some minor errors in his writings concerning the cultural background or the geography. However, Hillerman himself admits he might be sometimes misleading in his books, even though unintentionally, as he tries to present the reality as best as he remembers. There are also some critics who find Hillerman’s writing dull, but the majority would agree that he is minority friendly and a master in telling stories and presenting details.

¹²⁶ Browne, “The Ethnic Detective”, 1035.

7. Conclusion

Hillerman invites the reader to the world of Native Americans to his novels and proves the complexity and diversity of the American ethnic groups. He adds to his detective stories of investigation features of ethnicity thanks to which the reader is enriched by the knowledge of the Navajo culture together with other tribes (in this case Zunis) and the relationship with the mainstream world that influences the Navajo Reservation. He also shows how the ethnic features may influence the belief and decisions of characters as well as the plot itself.

Through the detective stories of investigation, the ethnic aspects are presented, such as religious values that Navajos holds. The Navajo way – the harmony of life – is especially presented in the environment in which the characters appear and is put to the contrast with the Navajo belief in witchery (*Skinwalkers*), which also influences their lives. The religion is also displayed via Navajo and Zuni rituals, such as the Shalako ritual (*Dance Hall of the Dead*), during which the most important moments happen. The religious values are also depicted via characters' thoughts when they contemplate about the philosophy of existence. Besides the original Navajo belief, the importance of Christianity is not omitted in Hillerman's books. Many characters are Christians and Navajos at once, which supports the fact that Christianity infiltrated into Natives' lives, as presented, for example, via Slick Nakai (*Thief of Time*) and his monologues.

Hillerman shows that even if Navajos are individualists, they still tend to gather together and that family bonds are of high importance in their community, which all was caused mainly by the historical development, as properly described in his novels. The importance of the family is expressed mainly through the dialogues of the main characters with the suspects and witnesses during the investigation. After that, Hillerman describes the issue of bad life conditions of Navajos, such as poor diet, bad teeth, and alcohol issues, which is usually described also by dialogues.

The relationship between Navajos and white men is complicated, as Hillerman suggests, as the whites tend to feel superior. This is expressed especially through the FBI agency and its dominant position, which represents the white culture. The differences between the cultures are depicted by means such as thoughts of the characters of the value of life, which is different in both cases, or by thoughts about everyday things in which the ethnics differ, such as watering the grass in the desert land.

Chee and Leaphorn are influenced by the mainstream culture too, as Hillerman suggests in his books. They are both figures on the edge of two cultures, both working as investigators with the white man's education, but they still tend to preserve their beliefs, one of them more than the other. Obviously, Chee tries to preserve the culture more than Leaphorn, as he is more romantic character and believes in witchery which Leaphorn despises.

Considering the motives of murderers, they are various. The killers are both white and Natives and the motives also vary. Some of them are ethnically motivated (the mother in *Skinwalkers*), others are not (selfish Dr. Yellowhorse) and there are also border line cases, such as in the case of Dr. Reynolds, who kills for his dignity but does not regret to kill boys because of their origin.

On the other hand, all the three books chosen for the analysis carry ethnic features in the plot. *Dance Hall of the Dead* is focused on the Zuni culture and the Zuni ritual during which the most important scenes happen. In *Skinwalkers*, the fear of the witchery forces the mother to desperate actions and is a convenient tool for Dr. Yellowhorse's fraud and lastly, the most complex theme is dealt with in *A Thief of Time*, in which the issue of the preservation of the culture arises.

Except a few minor mistakes concerning geography, inaccuracies in rituals and pronunciation about which Hillerman himself warns the readers, Hillerman writes books with authentic settings, highly detailed and realistic and his stories are told very well according the critiques. Even if some experts claim that his writing is highly exciting, some still claim the opposite. Hillerman's novels thanks to their setting in the Big Reservation might be recommended to read to everyone who is interested in the Native Americans' culture or students of this field. However, it should be noted that the ethnic aspects are based on Hillerman's personal experience, some of the facts might be slightly changed and therefore, they should not be read literally.

Resumé

Hlavním cílem této bakalářské práce je zanalyzovat vybrané detektivní romány Tonyho Hillermana a nastínit, jakým způsobem ve vybraných dílech zobrazuje etnické aspekty pomoci detektivního žánru a jak etnicita ovlivňuje děj knih a motivy postav k vraždě. V práci je také nakonec zmíněna kritická recepce děl Tony Hillermana.

V první, teoretické části práce, je definován žánr detektivky a je zasazen do historicko-literárního kontextu. Především jsou zmíněny jeho charakteristické znaky, které žánr definují. Je naznačen úplný prvopočátek detektivky, který má své kořeny již ve Starém Zákoně a jsou uvedeni nejdůležitější představitelé tohoto žánru, především jeho údajný zakladatel Edgar Allan Poe, který v 19. století svými povídkami definoval základy detektivky. Dále je popsáno, na jaké hlavní větve se žánr rozdělil před a po druhé světové válce v Anglii a v USA a kdo byl světoznámým zastupitelem tohoto žánru v té době. Zatímco v Británii byl za doby předválečné a meziválečné populární styl detektivního románu „Zlatého věku“ v zastoupení například Agathy Christie s její postavou Herculem Poirotem nebo slečnou Marplovou, v USA se vyvíjel žánr takzvané americké tvrdé školy, který reprezentoval například Raymond Chandler. Dále je charakterizován žánr etnické detektivky a jsou popsány jeho specifické znaky. Nakonec je definován pojem police procedural, což je žánr detektivky, ve kterém Hillerman psal své romány a je vysvětleno, jak Hillermanovy romány spadají do zmíněných žánrů, vzhledem k tomu, že Hillerman ve svých dílech kromě obecných znaků detektivky zapojuje právě etnické aspekty a pro police procedural tolik netradiční venkovské prostředí.

Dále je v teoretické části vysvětlen pojem etnicita, který je často zaměňován za pojem rasa, anebo je dokonce určitými skupinami považován za ten samý koncept. Kapitola o etnicitě vysvětluje, proč jsou tyto výrazy často zaměňovány anebo spojovány, kým jsou používány a co doopravdy tyto pojmy znamenají, tudíž jak jsou definovány. Evropané mají tendenci rozlišovat rasu od etnicity na základě historického vývoje a území, kdežto například Američané rozlišují rasu a etnicitu na základě barvy pleti. Poté kapitola vysvětluje konotaci těchto slov, jelikož etnicita s sebou nese spíše pozitivní konotaci na rozdíl od pojmu rasa, který je pocíťován spíše negativně. Je ale také popsáno, jak je složité staticky definovat takto dynamický koncept, jako je etnicita. Kapitola také popisuje počátek užívání tohoto pojmu, který nesahá daleko do historie, tedy jen do druhé světové války, kdy etnicita byl pojem užíván k označení Židů, Italů nebo Irů. Kapitola také odkazuje na Severoamerické Indiány a na to, do jaké kategorie v rámci etnicity spadají.

Poslední kapitolou teoretické části je stručný popis života spisovatele Tonyho Hillermana, jehož životní události tolik ovlivnily jeho tvorbu, tedy že vyrůstal ve skromnosti jakožto katolík, žil na venkově v Oklahomě, ale především vyrůstal a sžil se severoamerickými Indiány, což ho po letech studia na univerzitě v Novém Mexiku, vojenské službě v druhé světové válce a následném vyučování na univerzitě dovedlo ke ztvárnění detektivních románů o Jimu Chee a Joe Leaphornovi, kterých nakonec vydal dohromady 18. Za tyto díla si vysloužil oficiální uznání od navažských Indiánů jakožto respektovaný přítel lidu (Dineh).

Po teoretické části následuje část analytická, která se věnuje analýze vybraných děl. Pro tuto analýzu byly vybrány tři romány Tonyho Hillermana. První knihou je *Dance Hall of the Dead*, ve které se Joe Leaphorn věnuje především vyšetřování a druhá dějová linie jeho osobního života je v pozadí. V tomto románu také Leaphorn nemá posilu ve formě Jimma Chee. Tento detektivní román pojednává o přátelství, únosu, a následně vraždách dvou malých chlapců z kmene Zuni a Navaho, kteří byli i přes rozdílný původ přáteli. Jejich rozdílný původ svede dohromady vyšetřování dvou policejních složek těchto kmenů a v knize jsou tyto kmeny v mnohých případech porovnávány a jsou vyobrazeny jejich kulturní rozdíly, shody a neshody. Děj knihy vyvrcholí při rituálu Shalako, kdy je zavražděn i druhý pohřešovaný chlapec. V této knize je taktéž analyzován způsob života Indiánů, který je spojován s alkoholismem, problémy se zuby a se zdravím obecně.

Druhým románem použitým k rozboru je kniha *Skinwalkers*, která pojednává o několika neobjasněných, zdánlivě nesouvisejících vraždách, a víře v čarodějnictví, jenž je součástí Navažské kultury. V této knize se poprvé setkávají a spolupracují Jim Chee a Joe Leaphorn. V této knize je už také mnohem více rozvinutá druhá dějová linie popisující osobní životy hlavních postav. Tato kniha je především zdrojem analýzy čarodějnictví jakožto součásti Navažské víry, jenž může významně ovlivnit chování některých postav.

Posledním dílem použitým k analýze je *A Thief of Time*, ve kterém je pohřešována doktorka antropologie poté, co náhle zmizí od rozdělané práce. Objeví se několik těl, a oba vyšetřovatelé si spojí krádež rypadla se zmizením doktorky. V tomto díle je bohatě rozvinutá dějová linie osobních životů postav, které se již dobře znají. Tato kniha se především zabývá zachováním kultury, jež je čím dál tím těžší udržet ve světě, ve kterém se vlivu majoritní společnosti nelze jen tak jednoduše ubránit. Také analýza tohoto díla poskytuje náhled na Navahy jakožto katolíky a katolickou víru jakožto nástroj ovlivňující jejich životy.

První kapitola analytické části je věnována rozboru knih, ve kterých jsou nejvíce znatelné principy Navažské víry. V této kapitole je uvedeno, co znamená pro Navahy jejich víra, jaké jsou základní principy této víry, tedy že základním principem Navažské teologie je harmonie života a soulad s přírodou a sebe samým, ale také neodmyslitelný strach ze zlých duchů zesnulých a strach ze smrti samé. Kapitola poté uvádí, jak Navahové utíkají od tohoto strachu ke křesťanství v naději, že v něm najdou útěchu, kterou nenachází ve své původní víře. Nakonec je zmíněno, jakým způsobem Hillerman tyto náboženské principy zobrazuje, tedy především postavami, které jsou katolíci anebo monologem fanatického kněze.

Další podkapitolou zabývající se etnickými aspekty vyobrazenými v Hillermanových dílech je kapitola o jejich způsobu života a ustálených zvycích. V této kapitole se pojednává o velkém významu rodiny a propletených rodinných vztazích mezi mnoha rodinami v rezervaci. Dále je přiblížena charakteristika Navahů, tedy že jsou individualisté, ale na druhou stranu se shlukují kdykoliv je například potřeba pomoci rodinnému příslušníkovi. Tyto tendence jsou patřičně vysvětleny historickým vývojem, které jsou čtenáři v knize náležitě vyloženy. Tato kapitola se také věnuje chudému způsobu života Navahů, jejich problémům se zdravím a alkoholismem.

Další podkapitola řeší vztah Navahů s ostatními Indiány, které Hillerman ve svých dílech popisuje čtenáři. V tomto případě se jedná o popis kmene Zuni v knize *Dance Hall of the Dead* a také nepatrnou zmínku původu doktora Yellowhorse ve knize *Skinwalkers*, který je napůl Sioux. Kapitola řeší nerovnost Indiánů kmene Zuni a Navaho, jejich neshody a pocit povýšenosti nad Navahy, jenž může být zakořeněno v jejich bohaté společné historii a rozdílných vírách.

Poté se práce zabývá vztahem Indiánů kmene Navaho s většinovou Americkou společností. Tato kapitola popisuje, čím je majoritní společnost v knihách zastoupena a jaké je postavení Navahů k většinové společnosti a naopak. Jak je navrženo v práci, většinová společnost je zastoupena vládní agenturou FBI, ze které je cítit nadřizenost a nerovné chování k Indiánským vyšetřovatelům. Dále kapitola řeší bělošské postavy, některé jsou zaujaté proti Navahům, a některé jsou naopak fanoušky této etniky. Práce také řeší, jakými dalšími způsoby jsou tyto rozdílnosti nastíněny – tedy interním monologem postav o rozdílných hodnotách života, anebo jen o obyčejných každodenních úkonech.

Následující kapitola se zabývá rozbohem samotných hlavních postav – strážníka Jima Chee a poručíka Joe Leaphorna. V kapitole jsou postavy zanalyzovány a je vysvětleno, jak se

od sebe liší, a v čem si jsou naopak podobné: Jim Chee je mladší, je větší snílek a mnohem větší podporovatel jeho původní víry. Naopak Joe Leaphorn je starší, má více zkušeností a je více realista a skeptik a na rozdíl od Jima nevěří v čarodějnictví. Co mají ale oba dva společné je jejich Navažský původ, práce u policie, a vysokoškolské vzdělání, což z nich dělá postavy na okraji dvou kultur – Navaho a většinové společnosti.

Dále se práce zabývá analýzou motivů postav k vraždě, anebo jejich pokusu o vraždu. Z kapitoly vyplývá, že na původu pachatele nezáleží, jelikož ve vybraných dílech se objevují jak příslušníci většinové společnosti, tak Indiáni. Jejich postavy také nejsou ve všech případech ovlivněny etnicitou. V některých případech jde jednoduše o akt sebezáchovy, pýchy, chamtivosti a dále. Ale naopak, v některých případech je pachatel motivován etnicitou, jako třeba v případě matky, jež chce zabít „Skinwalkera“, jenž údajně zabíjí jeho dítě, anebo doktor Reynolds, jenž pociťuje vraždu dvou malých Indiánů jakožto přijatelnou obětí, vzhledem k jejich původu.

Následuje kapitola věnovaná samotnému ději a tomu, jak etnicita ovlivňuje děj knih. Co se týče první knihy *Dance Hall of the Dead*, její děj je ovlivněn etnicitou tím, že celé téma knihy je etnické – děj knihy se zaměřuje na rituál Shalako a chlapce, jenž měl být účastníkem tohoto rituálu. Dále v případě *Skinwalkers*, téma knihy je zaměřeno na čarodějnictví – součást Navažské víry. Poslední kniha *A Thief of Time* je zaměřena na vykopávky pradávných Anasaziů, předků dnešních Indiánů a tím i řeší problém udržitelnosti této kultury.

Poslední kapitola je věnována kritické recepci Hillermanova díla. Kapitola popisuje, že Hillerman sám upozorňuje na určité nejasnosti v jeho knihách, které se týkají nepřesnosti polohy, anebo chyb v jistých rituálech, a i přesto je kritizován za určité nepřesnosti ve svých knihách, jako například výslovnosti určitých Indiánských slov. Někteří autoři považují Hillermana za nezajímavého, avšak většina kritiků se shoduje, že Hillerman je skvělý vypravěč, má smysl pro detail, jeho postoj k Indiánům je velice přátelský a vyobrazuje jeho příběhy velice realisticky. Po této kapitole dále už následuje konečné shrnutí všech poznatků získaných z analýz všech tří knih Tonyho Hillermana.

Bibliography

- Bakerman, Jane S. "Cutting Both Ways: Race, Prejudice, and Motive in Tony Hillerman's Detective Fiction." *Ethnic Images in Popular Genres and Media* 11, no. 3 (1984): 17-25. Accessed October 24, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/467130>.
- Browne, Ray B. *Murder on the Reservation: American Indian Crime Fiction*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004.
- Browne, Ray B. "The Ethnic Detective: Arthur Upfield, Tony Hillerman and Beyond." *Mystery and Suspense Writers: The Literature of Crime, Detection, and Espionage*, edited by Robin W. Winks and Maureen Corrigan, 1029-1035. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1998.
- Bubíková, Šárka. "Ethnicity and Social Critique in Tony Hilleman's Crime Fiction." *Prague Journal of English Studies* 5, no. 1 (2016): 141-158. Accessed September 21, 2016. DOI: 10.1515/pjes-2016-0008.
- Chapman, G. Clarke. "Tony Hillerman's Fiction: Crime and Common Grace." *Christianity & Literature* 48, no. 4 (1999): 473-486. Accessed October 20, 2016. <http://cal.sagepub.com/content/48/4/473.full.pdf+html>.
- Danyté, Milda, *Introduction to the analysis of crime fiction*. Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University, 2011. Accessed November 30, 2016. http://vddb.library.lt/fedora/get/LT-eLABa-0001:B.03~2011~ISBN_978-9955-12-698-0/DS.001.1.01.BOOK.
- E-Hillerman. "Belacani." Accessed February, 8, 2017. <http://ehillerman.unm.edu/ehillerman/node/1423#sthash.HLY0FvTv.dpbs>.
- Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, 3rd edition. London: Pluto Press, 2010.
- Fenton, Steve. *Ethnicity: Racism, Class and Culture*. Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 1999.
- Fenton, Steve. *Ethnicity, Key Concepts*. Malden: Blackwell, 2003.
- Hill, Hamlin. "Interview with Tony Hillerman." *South Central Review* 12, no. 1 (1995): 31-42. Accessed October 24, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3189731>.
- Hillerman, Tony. *A Thief of Time*. 1988. New York: HarperCollins, 2009.
- Hillerman, Tony. *Dance Hall of the Dead*. 1973. New York: HarperCollins, 2009.
- Hillerman, Tony. *Skinwalkers*. 1986. New York: HarperCollins, 2002.
- Horsley, Lee. *The Twentieth-Century Crime Fiction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

- Knight, Stephen. *Crime Fiction, 1800-2000: Detection, Death, Diversity*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
- Malešević, Siniša. *Identity as Ideology: Understanding Ethnicity and Nationalism*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Malgren, Carl D. "Anatomy of Murder: Mystery, Detective, and Crime Fiction." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 30 (1997): 115-135. Accessed May 2, 2017. doi:10.1111/j.0022-3840.1997.3004_115.x.
- Priestman, Martin. "Introduction: crime fiction and detective fiction." In *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, edited by Martin Priestman, 1-6. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Reilly, John M. *Tony Hillerman: A Critical Companion*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996. Accessed February 2, 2017. eBook Academic Collection Trial, EBSCOhost.
- Rzepka, Charles J. "Introduction: What is Crime Fiction?." In *A Companion to Crime Fiction*, edited by Lee Horsley and Charles J. Rzepka, 1-9. Chichester: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2010.
- Scaggs, John. *Crime Fiction*. London: Routledge, 2005.