***JAST*, 2020; 54: 59-78**

Submitted: 05.08.2019

Accepted: 03.02.2020

ORCID # 0000-0002-8644-044X

Edward Dorn's Idea of the Native American and His "Curious Paleface" Consciousness in *The Shoshoneans*

Özge Özbek Akıman

Abstract

In the field of Native American Studies, the politics of representation and research was recognized as late as the 1970s, as a result of the countercultural challenge of the 1960s. Belonging to that moment of challenge and change, Edward Dorn's photo-essay or documentary prose *The Shoshoneans: The People of the Basin Plateau* (1966) is an early example for critical understandings of race, culture and subjectivity from a geo-historical perspective. The text also testifies to the poet's quest for cultural origins and claimed ancestors, defining himself as "a curious paleface." Its dialogic structure allows a space for the African American photographer Leroy Lucas' visual language and Native American activist Clyde Warrior's civic demands. Observing the Western American geography as a colonized space, a "No Where," and its inhabitants reduced to day-to-day existence, evading the police, Dorn contemplates his relation to his government, to the Shoshone and registers his otherness. A forgotten text, until the publication of its expanded edition in 2013, Dorn's *Shoshoneans* remains a geo-historical examination of subjectivity and otherness, presenting a dialogic understanding of the idea of the Native American.

Keywords: Edward Dorn, *The Shohoneans*, otherness, subjectivity

Edward Dorn'un *The Shoshoneans* Eserinde Yerli Amerikalı Anlayışı ve "Meraklı Solukbenizli" Bilinci

Öz

Yerli Amerikalılar üzerine odaklanan kültürel çalışmalarda temsil ve araştırma (bilgi kaynağı, yerli bilgi, yöntem, vb.) konularının sorunsallaştırılması, 1960'ların devrimci düşüncesinin sonucu olarak ancak 1970'lerde gerçekleşebilmiştir. Bu sorgulama ve dönüşümün ürünü olan Edward Dorn'un *The Shoshoneans: The People of the Basin Plateau* (1966) adlı belgesel çalışması ırk, kültür ve öznelliğe coğrafi ve tarihsel açıdan eleştirel yaklaşan ilk örneklerden biridir. Eser aynı zamanda kendini "meraklı solukbenizli" olarak tanımlayan şairin kültürel köken ve soy arayışının ifadesidir. Afrikalı Amerikalı fotoğraf sanatçısı Leroy Lucas'ın görsel dili ile yerli aktivist Clyde Warrior'ın konuşmalarına yer vermesi bakımından "dialogic," yani çok sesli bir yapıya sahiptir. Amerika'nın Batısını sömürü coğrafyası olarak inceleyen Dorn, yerli halkın yaşamının da günü kurtarmaya indirgendiğini gözlemlemiştir. Devlet ve Shoshone halkı ile olan ilişkisini irdelerken Dorn aslında kendi "öteki"liğinin tanıklığını yapmaktadır. Genişletilmiş 2013 basımına kadar unutulmuş bir metin olan *The Shoshoneans*, öznelliğin ve ötekiliğin coğrafi-tarihsel incelemesi olması ve çok sesli yapısı bakımından önem taşımaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Edward Dorn, *The Shohoneans*, ötekilik, öznellik

Writing on ethnicity as an outsider has an ethical dimension that is concerned with the politics of research and representation. Late in the twentieth century, humanities managed to develop critical understandings about the sources of knowledge, indigenous epistemologies and the presence of non-human factors such as landscape, flora and fauna. Given the history and legacy of Anglo-Eurocentric anthropological and ethnological research, contemporary scholarship began to address the politics of research and representation in terms of historically and ideologically developed methods and attitudes.[1] Edward Dorn's

photo-essay or documentary prose, *The Shoshoneans: The People of the Basin Plateau* (1966) was published at a time when academic discourse was undergoing a paradigm-shift, responding to the revolution that started on the streets, a time of re-evaluation of official history. Originally a product of these countercultural energies, *The Shoshoneans* has long been suspended in the out-of-print limbo, read almost exclusively by those who have a special interest in its poet-author, until the text was edited in 2013 providing a greater context with the correspondence, lectures and interviews.

The critical significance of *The Shoshoneans* is that it is an early example of creative scholarship that illustrates the ways in which race is socially constructed and commercialized, witnessing the Shoshone geography of the 1960s as a colonized space, appropriated, capitalized and privatized. The text is Dorn's working out an individual and contradictory consciousness as an American poet, which addresses the aforementioned issues of research and representation. As a "curious paleface," a position he assigns to himself, Dorn explores who he is by learning about the indigenous population in the Great Basin-Plateau region to testify his relationship to the people and the land. His quest to construct consciousness is a self-inflicted assignment to find a way to relate to Native Americans that contradicts the Cold War and white supremacist representations.

The book testifies to the poet's contradictory consciousness in a dialogic and polyvocal manner. Dorn invites two other voices and visions to provide further dimensions where his own account remains limited. One of these is photography by the African American artist Leroy Lucas. Lucas' gaze wanders on the children; he captures scenes of everyday collective activity, Western landscapes, spiritual sites, commercialized spaces and abandoned lots. Of special interest are the photographs of the Dorsey couple at their abode, where Dorn develops his subjectivity, and ritual scenes from the Sun and War Dances. Contemporary scenes from Lucas' camera provide a visual dimension into Dorn's critical observations about the geography. The other voice consists of the censored and uncensored versions of Clyde Warrior's speech at the end of *The Shoshoneans*, pointing out the problems that the descendants of the ancient Shoshone have to deal with. This indicates that Dorn's work resonates with Native American activism—then and now. In his foreword to the 2013 expanded edition, Simon Ortiz remembers reading Dorn's book thinking that it was a part of the resistance:

> When I think about it, I have to consider that *The Shoshoneans* was also part of that voice from within the American community of that time, especially because the U.S. Civil Rights struggle led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had been waged for more than ten years by then. And that struggle had morphed into the Third World Liberation Movement—Black Power, Red Power, Brown Power—and catalyzed the Farm Workers Strikes led by Cesar Chavez. (6)

By way of the dialogic structure provided by Lucas and Warrior, Dorn establishes connections between his contradictory consciousness and other countercultural elements, proving *The Shoshoneans* to be a form of activism.

Academic discussions about the politics of representation and research seem to overlook the significance of dialogic approach and the potentials of 1960s cultural revolution. A significant source where Native American scholars address the politics of research is *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians* (1998). In her introduction Devon A. Mihesuah examines the system, which grants job opportunities and scholarships for those who pursue academic promotion for its own sake. In this way, Mihesuah argues, not only is the Native American presence trivialized and forced to remain secondary, but also a certain group of scholars are rewarded while the cultural informants and Native scholars are slighted and silenced.[2] Vine Deloria's question epitomizes the same point: "If knowledge of the Indian community is so valuable, how can non-Indians receive so much compensation for their small knowledge and Indians receive so little for their extensive knowledge?" (465).

Duane Champagne thinks American Indian Studies (AIS) cannot and must not be exclusively reserved for Native scholars and calls for "strong, innovative scholarship" (188). However, his projection is grim: "I do not think such an appreciative understanding of Indian, or rather non-mainstream cultures, is forthcoming. Most likely, US academia will continue along a relatively monocultural path . . ." (188). For Donald L. Fixico, the key in Native American studies, is in the researcher's attention paid specifically to the "infrastructure of interrelated societies and roles" in the Native communities: "An important part of this network is the communities' relationship to flora, fauna, and metaphysical spirituality. This network is based on socio-cultural

understanding of a religious nature" (91). Scholarly—and poetic if you will—concern with the material and the spiritual aspects of the Native world would introduce, Fixico adds, new tools, new terms and a more accurate account of "the internal history of what has happened within the community" (91).

Monoculturalism and monolingualism seem to be the major blind spots that block the production of, in Champaigne's words, "strong, innovative scholarship" (188). Though few in number, multilingual and multicultural scholarship does exist in the works of anthropologists who managed to register multiple subjectivities. Dennis Tedlock applies the Bakhtinian term of "dialogic" to anthropology to register Native American subjectivity and avoid abstractions:

> The dialogical critique of anthropology radicalizes the phenomenological critique, refusing to privilege disciplinary discourse and instead locating it on the same dialogical ground as other kinds of discourse. . . . [W]e would argue that the voices of ["native texts"] and transcripts [of interviews] should remain in play rather than being pushed into a silenced past. The disciplinary voice still has its place within a multivocal discourse, but this voice now becomes provisional right on its face rather than pretending to finality. (3)

In Tedlock's view, the anthropologist's "dialogical critique" can save disciplinary research from Anglo-Eurocentrism or Americentrism. It is necessary to maintain the possibilities of contradictory meanings and interpretations of Native voices, or to admit the limitations of understanding. Although it is informed by academic scholarship,[3] *The Shoshoneans* is not an example of disciplinary research. Dorn neither deals with the Shoshone language nor their rituals per se. His concern is to witness the present moment of the Shoshone and their geography in relation to his own contemporary presence. Still, Dorn's approach can be considered an example to the "dialogic critique," allowing for other voices and visions as pointed out above.

The Idea of the Native American

Dorn's engagement with the Native Americans results from a problematic sense of belonging and a feeling of "obligation." A stereo-

typical idea of the Native American occupied the public imagination in the 1960s, which represented "the vanishing Indian" as a Romantic outcast, heroically denouncing all that technology could offer. As popular culture created and exploited this stereotypical image, the idea of the Native American attracted the counterculture for being out of the American system. Laurie Anne Whitt quotes the poet Gary Snyder who feels that it is "not only the right but the obligation" "to pursue and articulate" Native American spirituality (qtd. in Whitt 145). Whitt reads Snyder's words in terms of cultural exploitation and a passing lure inspired by the 1960s: "Such responses are both diversionary and delusionary. They attempt to dictate the terms of the debate by focusing attention on issues of freedom of speech and thought and deflecting it from the active commercial exploitation and the historical realities of power that condition current dominant/indigenous relations" (146). However, the 1960s' revolution still provides usable ideas, rather than being "diversionary and delusionary." Matthew Hofer also reminds, "Those who find that [Dorn's] perspective risks an intensification of a dated sense of utopianism or an (intermittent) expression of presumptive identity politics should also consider that admiration, not acquisitiveness, underwrote his qualified act of appropriation" (105n). For Snyder and Dorn, both associated with New American Poetry, adopting Native American spirituality signifies the challenge to the monologism that pervaded every aspect of American culture from society to education and the military.

The poets associated with New American Poetry share a concern with geographical and historical circumstances to invent ways of understanding culture. Anthropology, Dorn clarifies, contributes to his poetry in training himself as a witness. He understands witnessing in terms of total presence, "geographical-mindedness" (*Live* 60). Charles Olson, one of Dorn's mentors at Black Mountain College, wrote "A Bibliography on America for Ed Dorn," upon Dorn's request for reading suggestions on the West (435n). What stands out in the "Bibliography" as much as the list of books is a methodology where the researcher immerses him/herself in the subject and in the physical process, such as travelling, of getting to those sources, which can be in any shape—human, non-human, manuscript, object, etc. In Olsonian terminology, this is "a saturation job" (307), a process of "finding out for yourself," which is what the Greek etymology of "history" means. The politics of poetic form and the nature of poetic content both man-

ifest the process of "finding out for yourself." The poetic form is the finding out of the structure that would contain the geo-historical material, or subject matter, including the ways in which it functions as a social text. Poetic form becomes both a source of information and a way of knowing, bearing the context through which that specific information is acquired. *The Shoshoneans* is the account of the poet's self-inflicted task of finding out for himself. His observations, the idiosyncratic bibliography and what he, as a reluctant subject to the US government, feels towards the wide-scale colonialism and capitalism, are in dialogic relation with Lucas' and Warrior's language. In Dorn's poetry, too, there is an urge to objectify facts. The principle of "finding out for yourself" becomes both the subject and the object of the poem, as exemplified in "The Land Below":

> In America every art has to reach toward some
> clarity. That is our hope from the start.
> Dickon among the indians.
> A very new even surprising
> element (a continent is a surprise)
> makes this our reservoir of Life (not living)
> Not looking back as the sluggish beast Europe
> at a residue of what was merely heaped up
> a prepared mound, cave to go into.
> Excavation.
> Our possibility is to sheer off what
> is only suggested. And make anything what
> soever holdable, even breezes and gasses.
> Which is possibly ugly. (*Collected Poetry* 92)

Self-awareness is inevitably the most striking aspect of this "excavation," geo-historical consciousness. When geography gains a historical dimension, a "possibly ugly" account of the exploitation of Western land from the colonial times to the late capitalist period is revealed. Patrick Barron explains Dorn's involvement with geography as an "unmasking" of conceptions and experiences of spaces. In the case

of the American West, it is the Native American cultural land that Anglo-Europeans erroneously defined as "wilderness" or "virgin land." Dorn, Barron argues, consciously aims to "construct knowledge of the production of space . . . unmasking" the colonial assumptions, and continues, "[Dorn] encourages exploration into and beyond known limits, and embraces increasingly complex fields of geographic awareness" (108).

The "bitter landscape" of the Shoshone tribe covers roughly the mountains and valleys of Idaho, Utah and Nevada, which, in Dorn's time is only "well-known to a few gamblers, professional criminals, movie stars, divorcees, and, of course, the people who live there" (Dorn *Shoshoneans* 16). The "history of scarcity" is definitive to the extent that, as Paul Dresman comments, "[e]ven today . . . the Shohoneans contrast with other Indian groups such as the Pueblos in the Southwest by the nature of their geographical situation and the lack of a long and inherited cultural tradition" (99). The mid-twentieth century is such a recent period that "there are no longer any informants [born into a world before contact with whites] available in North America" (Dresman 101). Dorn is interested in the West as both a geo-historical and economic space. As discussed above, the poet endeavors to reveal the layers of capitalist investments on the land, caused first by European maritime technology and exploration, then justified by American Manifest Destiny. In Michael Davidson's words, Dorn's idea of the West is the "heavily encrusted topography of signs and dollars" (149). From Dorn's critical perspective, death prevails the air in the Shoshone land. He attempts to clarify the ideological and economic factors that produced this space:

> . . . I felt Nevada was *No* Where specifically. Since I am thinking of Indians and their present ecology, I meant: where and what is it? Leaving Shoshoneans momentarily aside, thinking of Nevada as everything else, I played with the term neo-wild West awhile before using it because the mentality of the West is strange and any place could mistake what gratuity the term might conjure. Given the peculiarly dramatic picture the "westerner" has of himself, one must be constantly aware of the perverse use he will make of the very terms that we proposed as pejorative, if not derogatory. Far from a resurgence, I mean it as an increasing ossification of what were originally thought to be prime virtues: 1. wide

> open spaces, 2. independence, 3. a special freedom from corruption (usually the imagined corruption of the "city"). (31)

The "prime virtues" of the West that depend on the expanse of the physical land has moved the American philosopher, poet and apologist alike: space is understood in terms of mental openness, and associated with self-reliance and freedom from urban, possibly European, social structures. As American western civilization came into being in relation to these "prime virtues," it also exercised its power in its total failure to acknowledge the existence of other civilizations. As a result of this fundamental failure, Dorn sees the United States as "spiritually dead" (*Shoshoneans* 81).[4]

Dorn's meditation of the Shoshone in the 20th century prompts a wider examination of the way the greater political machine operates. Understanding the concepts of race and minority as social constructs, Dorn asks the question: "Aren't we just kidding ourselves when we speak of Indians, or Civil Rights, Justice via the courts, like due process? What do we think we mean? And when culture is brought forward, like a pizza on the tray, whatever combination you want, that's *really* loading it!" (*Shoshoneans* 43). Dorn attacks the idea of race as a "gimmick" (*Shoshoneans* 84), a cheap trick that registers a false difference, food for touristic interest. As early as the 1960s, Dorn was able to read the early signs of the neoliberal mechanisms that operate on local and global levels: "it is the same official force and policy that deals with Wounded Knee (1890), the Vietnamese village (1955-), and the Watts ghetto (summer, 1965)" (Dorn *Shoshoneans* 27). Black, red or yellow is less meaningful than the institutionalized racism and systematic violence that the (formerly capitalist, now neoliberal) state exercises in different geographical locations and at different times. Dorn's gaze is on the streets of small towns where mostly the non-whites are held accountable for crime: "Various minority persuasions and institutions are faked into believing there is a majority. And there is A majority produced specifically to believe it has not been infected by the minority—meaning the rest of the existing world" (*Shoshoneans* 26-7). Contemplating the rationale behind these terms, Dorn infers that the United States of his time is "'a permissive asylum'": a huge society of the excluded, the criminalized and the marginalized. Ironically, as the exclusionary authority imagines itself to be the majority, which in this case is the white society, it is the "minority."

The Native American, in this greater picture, functions more like an emblem of resistance, a fundamental element of the "permissive asylum" than an anthropological entity. The cultural, political and spiritual differences of the Native Americans and Euro-Americans in general stand as bulwarks for Dorn's carefully claimed ancestry. As in the discussion below, the terms of Dorn's affiliation does not rest on a romantic idealization but on a careful examination of his own otherness. Dismissing race as a social construct, the poet finds out for himself what this amalgamated geography means and in what terms he may relate to it.

"A Curious Paleface" Consciousness

Dorn's sense of displacement stems from this critical attitude toward the US policies in general, but symbolically manifests in the appropriation of the Native American land and life. In "The Poet, The People, The Spirit," the early version of *The Shoshoneans*, delivered at the 1965 Berkeley Poetry Conference, Dorn declares a personal annulment of the US government: "Now, the strength of [the government's] vast apparatus . . . continues to grip us and will. But for . . . even practical purposes it is not necessary to have it any more and I—everyone *must* know that" (159). In Dorn's observation, the centuries long colonialism has produced the wasteland and the wasted human that he feels himself connected to:

> Anytime someone comes through Pocatello who looks like a criminal, or a fugitive, a bum, somebody weird looking and it doesn't take much to be weird looking in Pocatello, I immediately recognize them as the people that I want to walk beside, to be near, to talk to, to be with. Because they are precisely the people who for one reason or another have compromised their allegiance to the thing that might destroy us all, including them. And they've taken that risk. Maybe they haven't taken it voluntarily. I don't—that I don't care much about. But they maintain it. The man who doesn't belong . . . He's the man who knows where he comes from. (159)

The connection Dorn establishes is the outcome of critical observations about the geo-historical circumstances as discussed above.

His visit to the old Shoshoni couple's house, William Dorsey and wife, both aged around 100, which opens *The Shoshoneans*, illustrates the critical terms of attachment. Dorn is overwhelmed by an "embarrassed confusion" (11) and "an oppressive thrill over the idea of [his] own presence" (13): "I also saw myself as a curious paleface . . . I was looking at the scene, and at myself, in a mirror, seeing the looking . . . what and who I was compressed all at once into one consideration, and again I watched myself as I might think of a god" (11). Preoccupied with his own subjectivity as a reluctant benefactor of centuries-long colonialism he commits himself to the colonized instead: "This man and woman were the most profoundly beautiful ancestors I've witnessed to go before me. He is the spirit that lies at the bottom where we have our feet" (12-3). The feeling of displacement marks this subjective experience of spiritual turbulence. However, it is still not an easy familiarity or a rash appropriation of a shared displacement. The question is: To what extent is it important that the "paleface" at the Dorseys' house is Edward Dorn, a poet, from the Midwest, born in 1929, "curious" about the American West and its people? The details of Dorn's personal qualifications obviously had little, if any, value for the people he came to visit. He interrogates the sources of this intense self-awareness and finds out that no matter how critical he is about it, he still thinks in Western habits of mind:

> I thought of [my presence] as a ruptured chord in the consciousness, a strong confusion of the signals of my culture. I think I failed to see this as a pure event having nothing to do with *me* as such. I felt intrude the foolish insistence of conception of myself, the content of my own particular conception of history raced past my head and I must say I thought of my government's relation to this man, I felt I would "realize" him somewhere in the cache of all my own sentience. (13)

Registering his own blind spots conditioned by his arbitrary privilege of whiteness, Dorn confesses he was looking for a kind of egocentric spiritual fulfillment, which did not come. What came was the acknowledgement of his difference and the couple's indifference. Dorn examines his otherness in Dorsey's house to the extent that he tests for himself the boundaries of his difference from them and the terms of their possible connection.

Dale Smith sees that "in the filth of the old couple's home, an awareness formed in him, derived from a naked disposition and a genuine reduction of intellect or western self. Not only was he other in their home, he was sensing his own otherness, that trans-human quality of the self. . . . An inwardness moved out and made him subject to facts accountable only to that moment" (102). Smith further argues that Dorn's awareness does not put Native Americans in a secondary position, either: "These people are not tools for his self-knowledge, but facts of a greater Basin-Plateau environment he has come to relate not as anthropologist or cultural apologist, but as a poet whose marginal existence within his culture gives him the freedom to honestly account for his experiences there" (109). Barron also notes Dorn's critical understanding of his own subjectivity: "his ethnographic approach places a great deal of scrutiny upon his own person as an uncomfortable and awkward observer, making it an early example of new journalism, and an example also of the turn then occurring an ethnography toward a study of one's own culture" (114). Dorn in his geo-historical-conscious approach inspects the critical terms of attachment and displacement, producing an account that functions beyond genres and disciplines, as discussed at the beginning of this article.

As Dorn leaves Dorsey's house, he accepts his otherness and what his senses register as filth or heat as a part of the couple's habit of living: "It was I who objected to the heat and stillness of the air. Not him. It was his place, his home, that *was* where he was, his own chamber, own rectification. And I didn't wash his feet. That meliorism, strong in me, tinged with the Methodism of my youth, I put down. I left their house" (15). In addition to the sharing of cigarettes, his was the only way, and the only extent to which Dorn, as an outsider, could connect with them. This was the only possible contact that could be established. And it was established. As Dorn's journey comes to a close, he contemplates the Sun Dance, from which he is "curiously absent," as Smith puts it (110). Smith explains that since it is impossible to totally escape the Western frame of mind, his only possibility is to accept his otherness in terms of absence: "He's a poet with a secular education and experience. Without really addressing these limits, he shows it by his absence (110). Dorn is not in this project as an anthropologist who has to record and come up with evidence for publication. His allegiance is clearly defined with the politics and a poetic consciousness, which can be manifested in terms of art, such as the book itself. About

participating in a private ceremony, Dorn reflects that "One can voluntarily or involuntarily take on another man's politics, his economic or social terms, and fairly well understand the risks and rewards. But you don't fool around with his ritual" (84). Thus, he sets his personal limit between politics shared on the basis of consciousness, and an appropriation of beliefs, which indeed would be profanation.

The last word of *The Shoshoneans* is left to a member of the Native American community. Clyde Warrior, activist and the co-founder of National Indian Youth Council in 1961, is known for his criticism of both state policies and the moderate attitude of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. For the closing statement, Dorn presents Warrior's speech that he wrote for the conference, "War on Poverty," entitled "Poverty, Community and Power." Warrior's essay is available in Dorn's book in both versions—the approved and the rejected. In the approved version Warrior speaks in the formal discourse of "War on Poverty," which was a part of Lyndon B. Johnson's campaign, the Great Society. He argues that progress, understood as urbanization, is not a solution and emphasizes the need for a genuine community, as opposed to the bureaucratically determined heredity classifications. He points to the chronic poverty and emphasizes the need to preserve the tradition in other terms than defined by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The speech ends in a note of hope and encouragement for the future: "We are on the threshold of creating the Great Society. What was once thought a fantasy could become reality. But if you don't speak, no one will listen—" (91). The obvious evidences for the government's lack of commitment to The Great Society were the escalation of the Vietnam War and the urban rebellions in the ghettos of Chicago and Detroit. The fact that Warrior had no choice but to speak in permissible terms demonstrates the censorship. The rejected speech, on the other hand, is bitter and signals disbelief in the government and the conference organizers: "Now we have a new crusade in America—our 'War on Poverty'—which purports to begin with the local community" (92). Here, the speaker is a serious, bitter, and cynical Warrior, improper for such a government-supported conference. The fundamental issue, he argues, is the lack of a community and the government's ignorance of what that means for the Native American:

> In most places [communities] serve as the buffer against the outsider. And in fact other people of prestige and influence among us thus go unnoticed and unbothered by the white

> man, so that much of our own leadership is hidden from the eyes of the outsiders. Many times our tribal governments, which have very little legal power, have been forced into the position of going along with programs they did not like and which in the long run were harmful. They had no choice. They were powerless to do otherwise. (93)

Power comes with the community: "The lack of power over one's own destiny erodes character . . . self-esteem is an important part of character. No one can have competence unless he has both the experience to become competent and make decisions which display competence" (94). To illustrate his point, he gives a brief historical account of the Ponca, and comments, "In those days we were not 'out of the system.' We were the system, and we dealt competently with our environment because we had the power to do so" (94). Warrior's primary demand is that the US government recognize each Native American's self-determination. In the programs devised by the government, he argues, experience, decision-making and taking action are denied in the name of progress and modernization, which he believes are pretexts to meddle with Native communities. This process of meddling "erodes character," disarticulates and excludes people from the system that legitimizes itself on the basis of progress. Warrior's demand is plain: "Give our communities respect, the power to make choices about our own destiny, and with a little help we will be able to join the United States and live a decent fulfilling life" (94).

As a "curious paleface," Dorn scrutinizes what has become of the Shoshone in the late 1960s as a result of this centuries-long assimilation. Dorn is concerned not only with the historical usurpation of the land but also the Reno police whose suspicious gaze rests on him as it does the Asian, African and Native American. To the extent that he manages to de-privilege a traditionally privileged vantage point, Dorn is entitled to the views in *The Shoshoneans*. As Dorn leaves the final word to Warrior, by demonstrating the censorship Warrior encountered, he has already manifested an idiosyncratic perspective that could be a model for a resistant and contradictory consciousness. The addressee of Dorn's *The Shoshoneans*, and Warrior's speech is the same: the white/general audience. When asked about the intended reader in his works on the Native Americans, he unapologetically conveys, "I don't need to, or care to, or don't intend to address Indians. I mean, they're not my business. But attitudes exhibited and displayed from my

own race are my business, and that's the business of any poet" (*EDL* 157). Since the academic disciplines are isolated, the book fits properly neither in the field of American Indian Studies (AIS), nor sociology, history or literature. Dorn's presentation of Warrior's two speeches, which tell the story of censorship on their own, and Lucas' photographic collaboration testify Dorn's "dialogic" attitude which is yet to be recognized within the compartmentalized disciplines of the academy. Contrary to the artificial confusion in academic qualification, in this article I have tried to show that *The Shoshoneans* still provides useful ideas as a model for creative scholarship that trigger a critique of the greater power mechanisms which first and foremost excludes contradictory consciousness.

Notes

[1] Dennis Tedlock, in his essay, "Interpretation, Participation, and the Role of Narrative in Dialogical Anthropology" referring to the canonical sources in the fields of ethnology and anthropology, illustrates the problems and errors ethnographers and anthropologists carried on from their field studies to their academic publications. Such canonized publications entailed others based on the same errors and misinterpretations. Donald L. Fixico reminds that from the nineteenth century to the 1950s, "Careless historians followed ethnographers as a part of the academic community that wrote imbalanced articles and books about American Indians" (87).

[2] See also her articles, "Activism and Apathy: The Prices We Pay for Both," (*American Indian Quarterly* 27. 1/2 (2003): 325-332) for a projection of what might happen if an academic becomes an activist hence politically dangerous, and also "Voices, Interpretations and the 'New Indian History': Comment of the *American Indian Quarterly*'s Special Issue on Writing about American Indians" (*American Indian Quarterly* 20.1 (1996): 91-108) for an elaboration of her concerns mentioned here. Elizabeth Cook-Lynn also points to the shallowness of what passes as Native American intellectualism in the mainstream culture. As she criticizes the market's preference for the stereotyped Native American images and a proliferation of modern Native American scholars disconnected with the tradition, she does not acknowledge that this shallowness resides on a larger scale, and that critical intelligence is almost always excluded from the public sphere.

[3] Dorn backs up his research with scholarship by Theodora Kroeber, Julian H. Steward, Helen Hunt Jackson, Jane E. Harrison, and D. B. Shimkin.

[4] An interesting coincidence of wording is that Martin Luther King Jr., in his 1967 speech, "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence," prophesizes a "spiritual death" if the US government continues to legitimize violence and atrocity both in and out of the country. In his speech where he relates the civil rights movement to the Vietnam War, King states, "This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation's homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into the veins of peoples normally

humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice, and love. A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death" (n.p.). An obvious analogy would be between the international policies of the twentieth and twenty-first century US power and the eighteenth and ninteenth century US policies against the Native Americans.

Works Cited

Barron, Patrick. "Unmasked Representations of Space in Edward Dorn's 'The Land Below' and 'Idaho Out.'" *Paudeuma: Modern and Contemporary Poetry and Poetics*, vol. 36, 2007-2009, pp. 105-130, *JSTOR*, www.jstor.og/stable/24726684.

Champagne, Duane. "American Indian Studies Is for Everyone." *Natives and Academics: Research and Writing about American Indians*, edited by Devon A. Mihesuah, U of Nebraska P, 1998, pp. 181-189.

Cook-Lynn, Elizabeth. "American Indian Intellectualism and the New Indian Story." *Natives and Academics: Research and Writing about American Indians*, edited by Devon A. Mihesuah, U of Nebraska P, 1998, pp. 111-138.

Davidson, Michael. "'To eliminate the draw': Narrative and Language in *Slinger*." *Internal Resistances: The Poetry of Edward Dorn*, edited by Donald Wesling, U of California P, 1985, pp. 113-149.

Deloria, Vine. Jr. "Research, Redskins, and Reality." *American Indian Quarterly,* vol. 15, no. 4, 1991, 457-468, *JSTOR,* www.jstor.org/stable/1185364.

Dorn, Edward. *Ed Dorn Live: Lectures, Interviews, and Outtakes*. Edited by Joseph Richey, U of Michigan P, 2007.

---. *The Shoshoneans: The People of the Basin-Plateau*. Expanded Edition. Edited by Matthew Hofer, U of New Mexico P, 2013, pp. 9-89. *Project MUSE*, http://muse.jhu.edu/book/27896.

---. "The Poet, The People, The Spirit." *The Shoshoneans: The People of the Basin-Plateau*. Expanded Edition. Edited by Matthew Hofer, U of New Mexico P, 2013, pp.141-159. *Project MUSE*, http://muse.jhu.edu/book/27896.

---. *Edward Dorn: Collected Poems*. Edited by Jennifer Dunbar Dorn, Carcanet, 2012.

Dresman, Paul. "Internal Resistances: Edward Dorn on the American Indian." *Internal Resistances: The Poetry of Edward Dorn*, edited by Donald Wesling, U of California P, 1985, pp. 87-112.

Fixico, Donald L. "Ethics and Responsibilities in Writing American Indian History." *Natives and Academics: Research and Writing about American Indians*, edited by Devon A. Mihesuah, U of Nebraska P, 1998, pp. 84-99.

Hofer, Matthew. Introduction to the Appendix: "'Few / People Are Lost As I Am': Ed Dorn through the Great Basin-Plateau." *The Shoshoneans: The People of the Basin-Plateau*. Expanded Edition. Edited by Matthew Hofer, U of New Mexico P, 2013. 97-110. *Project MUSE*, http://muse.jhu.edu/book/27896.

King, Martin Luther, Jr. "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence." *American Rhetoric*. 5 May 2010. Web.

Mannheim, Bruce and Dennis Tedlock. Introduction. *The Dialogic Emergence of Culture*, edited by Dennis Tedlock and Bruce Mannheim, U of Illinois P, 1995, pp. 1-32.

Mihesuah, Devon A. Introduction. *Natives and Academics: Research and Writing about American Indians*, edited by Devon A. Mihesuah, U of Nebraska P, 1998, pp. 1-22.

---. "Voices, Interpretations and the 'New Indian History': Comment on the American Indian Quarterly's Special Issue on Writing about American Indians." *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 1, 1996, pp. 91-108. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/1184945.

---. "Activism and Apathy: The Prices We Pay for Both." *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 1/2, 2003, pp. 325-332. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/4138869.

Olson, Charles. "A Bibliography on America for Ed Dorn." *Collected Prose*. Edited by Donald Allen and Benjamin Friedlander, U of California P, 1997, pp. 297-310.

Ortiz, Simon J. Foreword. *The Shoshoneans: The People of the Basin-Plateau*. Expanded Edition. Edited by Matthew Hofer, U of New Mexico P, 2013, pp. 5-8. *Project MUSE*, http://muse.jhu.edu/book/27896.

Smith, Dale. "Edward Dorn Out: Forms of Dispossession." *Chicago Review* Special Issue Edward Dorn: American Heretic, vol. 49, no. 3/4, 2004, 100-114. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/25699975.

Tedlock, Dennis. "Interpretation, Participation and the Role of Narrative in Dialogical Anthropology." *The Dialogic Emergence of Culture*, edited by Dennis Tedlock and Bruce Mannheim, U of Illinois P, 1995, pp. 253-287.

Warrior, Clyde. "Poverty, Community, and Power." *The Shoshoneans: The People of the Basin-Plateau*. Expanded Edition. Edited by Matthew Hofer, U of New Mexico P, 2013, pp. 89-94. *Project MUSE*, http://muse.jhu.edu/book/27896.

Whitt, Laurie Anne. "Cultural Imperialism and the Marketing of Native America." *Natives and Academics: Research and Writing about American Indians*, edited by Devon A. Mihesuah, U of Nebraska P, 1998, pp. 139-171.