

- ➔ Why they're called Indians: it's an imposed term by the Europeans based on Christopher Columbus quest story
- ➔ When the Indian colonies were found by the British settlers, they were considered primitive, uncultured and inferior. On the other hand, while the English colonizers who were arrogant tried to impose their culture, especially their religion "to spread God's grace on earth", they neglected the Native's myth and beliefs.
- ➔ At first, they coexisted. The first settlers were taught how to cultivate, to fish and to survive in those harsh conditions. → Celebrate **thanksgiving** to thank God for a good harvest. Indians today don't celebrate it as it is considered a betrayal.
- ➔ As the newcomers wanted to develop and make profit, there was a clash of culture between them and the Indians on account of their rejection to assimilation. So, the WASPs didn't even bother to understand the Indian belief system; they considered their pantheism way craziness. So, they started to exterminate them with firearms, genocides, burning their villages and killing their survival 'Buffalo'. → Hundreds of Indians died from starvation and disease. → The remaining ones were obliged to assimilate.
- ➔ So, the Anglo-Saxons tried to dismember the Indian tribes and teach them this notion of **ownership** by giving each tribe a piece of land (**divide and rule**). Besides, they obliged their children to go to school. While there, they cut their hair, wear a uniform, have to speak English and prohibited them from their celebrations as they want them to completely Christianize and Americanize. → So, when they became adult and went back to Indian reservations, there was a clash of cultures (**generation gap**). → They felt lost because of their red skin stigma throughout the country
- ➔ **Comment**: Actually, it wasn't by virtue of superior culture that the white settlers dominated, but by virtue of organization and power.
- ➔ The **irony** here is that the WASPs, who were persecuted home, were hungry for religious freedom; yet, they confiscated this freedom to the Indians by enslaving them and taking their "sacred" lands.
- ➔ On account of their rejection to assimilation, American Indians were given **reservations** - *any of the areas of land given to Native Americans by the US government. The US Bureau of Indian Affairs protects them and provides schools for them. The largest is the Navajo reservation on land in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. Most Native Americans on reservations are poor and receive financial help from the government*- where they can live in the 19 and 20 Century.
- ➔ American Indians represent only 1% over 3 million. They're particularly affected by poverty, bad housing and sub-healthcare. They actually live below the poverty line; therefore, their public assistance is seven times more.
- ➔ They are **poor because** they lack the educational level, suffer high rate of illiteracy (most can't go to college), have low jobs which don't require special skill, and low income to successfully compete with other Americans. As a result, they can't find a place in the American society. So, when they moved to live in the city in the 60s, they settled in precarious ghettos because they were discriminated against whenever closer to a white American family because they are considered incompetent, lazy, alcoholic, lower, and trouble-makers. Also, they suffer a high rate of infant mortality because of infectious diseases among them, that's why their life span is lower.
- ➔ Some **reservations are good** because of land (20% of US oil, 2/3 of US uranium, iron, gold, timber). As a result, they'd be target to great multinationals and wealthy businessmen since the Indians lacked the necessary equipment and financial support (*neither means nor skills*), so they lease the land to non-Indians. Whereas, the most are rocky.

- ➔ Reservations were meant to unite the tribes and preserve their traditional heritage. Still, they lost their values. Only they use their culture to make money (clever projects). This defaces the way of life among the generations.
- ➔ Also, some reservations live on **tourism** as they remain different and worth to see and as they attract tourists to give them the opportunity to hunt buffalo for 3000\$ and 300\$ more if they want to have it cut the traditional Indian way. ➔ A lot of **Indians moved back** from the city to the **reservation** because of job opportunities with no discrimination.
- ➔ **Sovereignty**: The Indians have the right to make their own laws (*by the tribal council*) in the reservation but under the Federal law. So, they are bound to respect the reservation laws and the Federal laws while in the reservation --but once leaving the reservation, they're applied to the State law--. So, the **Casinos** in Indian reservations which are very profitable (especially they don't have to pay taxes that is an seen as an excess of rights) and which would provide them with decent living conditions even if they don't generally belong to them and gambling is not an Indian culture. Actually, non-Indians find it a legal loophole to escape State laws.
- ➔ **Today**, they want to be accepted as American citizens of Indian ancestors. They want to keep their Indian identity because America is a pluralistic society. They also want to raise their educational level to escape staying behind the others. They want the Federal government to finance and build the schools.
- ➔ BIA: (Bureau of Indian Affairs) is a federal agency which deals with Indian affairs regulated by the federal government. It's to deal especially with financial affairs. However, it is one of the most corrupted bureaus in the U.S because they often break the laws (*commissions*) on the expense of the Indians.
- ➔ Thanks to the civil rights movement, the Indians have become more visible more vocal, more aggressive and more important.