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LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE

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Re-aproppriation of Native American Identity and History in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Storyteller*

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master

By :

AYACHI Asma

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2017/2018

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Board of Examiners

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my mother and father, my mother in law, my brother, my sisters especially Meriem , my dear son Ali and to my late grandparents .

Special thanks go to my husband for his endless support and encouragement.

To my dear friends Romaissa and Walid and to all my teachers.

Asma

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work ***my parents***; the reason of what I become today. Thanks for your endless support and motivation. To my *sisters* and *brothers*especially the oldest one *Adam,*whose prayers gave me encouragement and strength. This work is dedicated also to all my *friends*, and *teachers.*

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In Loving Memory of ***Snoussi Youssef*** *1984-2018.*

True kindness

True Inspiration

True Spirit

True Love

Rest In Peace My Friend

We Will Miss you

Inna lillahiwainnailayhiraji'ûn.

Walid.

ABSTRACT

This study addresses the relationship between literature and the Native American identity in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Storyteller* (1981) and her attempt to re-appropriate native identity and history. The selected book blends original short stories and poetry influenced by the traditional oral tales that she heard growing up on the Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico with autobiographical passages, folktales, family memories, and photographs. As she mixes traditional and Western literary genres, Silko examines themes of memory, alienation, power, and identity; she communicates Native American notions regarding time, nature, and spirituality; and explores how stories and storytelling shape people and communities. *Storyteller* illustrates how one can frame collective cultural identity in contemporary literary forms, as well as illuminates the importance of myth, oral tradition, and ritual in Silko's own work. In this multidisciplinary endeavor, we are interested in exhibiting the evils of the white world and the syndromes of hybridity that plagued and troubled the Natives' life.

Key words:

Identity, according to Cambridge dictionary; identity is who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group that make them different from others.

Laguna pueblo, is federally recognized Native American tribe of the Pueblo people in west-central New Mexico, USA.

Storytelling, is the art in which a teller conveys a message, truths, information, knowledge, or wisdom to an audience – often subliminally – in an entertaining way, using whatever skills, (musical, artistic, creative.)

Hybridity, refers to the way in which people mix two cultures or languages.

TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER TWO : RE-APPROPRIATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY AND IDENTITY

INTRODUCTION

> Fiction is history, human history, or it is nothing. But it is also more than that; it stands on firmer ground, being based on the reality of forms and the observation of social phenomena, whereas history is based on documents… Thus, fiction is nearer truth…A historian may be an artist too, and a novelist is a historian, the preserver, the keeper, the expounder, of human experience. (Conrad 19)

The thesis will explore the features of Native American identity and history in general and Laguna Pueblo tribe specifically in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Storyteller* that represents an attempt towards re-appropriating the identity and the history from Indian American perspective away from Euro American stereotyped visions. Silko believes that storytelling is the primary way, perhaps the only way, to preserve and maintain Native American identity. She is dedicated to the cause of reviving Native American culture and literature, and her reputation stands tall as one of the most prominent contemporary Native American writers. She has integrated a strong Native American color to her works by perfectly mixing diversified genres into varied literary pieces, connecting her writing closely to nature, and implementing oral tradition and storytelling. They also reflect a profound understanding of Native American cultural heritage and an intense awareness of the Indians. They also reflect the complex nature of Native American identity formation.

Since the arrival of the white people (Europeans) in the New World in 1492 and for the following 450 years the indigenous people of North America, today known as Native Americans or American Indians.[1]

The term ‗Native American', ‗American Indian' or ‗Indian' refers to people of indigenous origin in the forty-eight adjoining states, Alaska and Hawaii of the United States of America. Christopher Columbus, convinced that he had sailed from Europe to Asia, used the term Indios (Spanish for Indians) to describe the indigenous

[1] the terms ―American Indians‖ and ― Native Americans‖ interchangeably when referring to the descendents of the original inhabitants of North America commonly known and referred to as Indians. This is consistent with the terminology applied by Nagel (1995).

Arawaks he encountered on arriving at the Bahamas on 12 October 1492. ‗Indian', then, is a perception created by the colonizing Europeans to refer to Native Americans.

The term became widespread among European Powers competing for domination of the Americas. The term was also used negatively along with words such as savage, barbarian and redskin to express what colonizing Europeans and later Americans considered essential racial and cultural differences between themselves and Native Americans. Today, however, when a large section of Native Americans in the United States identify themselves as ‗Indians', the term offers mainly positive propositions and expresses a sense of collective indigenous identity which transcends tribal boundaries among Native people.

Native American Literature is the literature of people of Native American ancestry. The central focus of Native American literature is on issues and subjects connected to Native American culture, ethnicity, identity, oral tradition, subjugation, dislocation, bi-cultural conflicts, history, religion, mythology, folklore and experiences. Although native people live in every country of North America and South America, the term Native American literature or American Indian literature, usually refers to works written by the indigenous people of the United States and Canada. But in Canada, Native literature is called First Nations literature. It is said that around 900 nations or tribes of Native Americans live in the United States and Canada.

Throughout history, the Indians whether as a whole community or individuals resisted the white men's attempts to assimilate, induce, deceive, dispossess and subjugate them. They were embroiled in many battles through successive generations to decolonize both their lands and their minds from the white man's destructive influence.

By the opening years of the 1960's, a new movement of literary criticism paved the way to the Native American writers to originate and construct numerous literary writing(Ammar 16).Simon Ortiz, the Acoma Pueblo writer, states that alternating the

Amerindians‘ oral traditions into a written narration in English will never affect the content since the eminent spirit of these writings is purely indigenous (Archibald 2526).

The Indian oral traditions have influenced the contemporary Literature in, content and style. Myths, folklore, stories, and songs were the postulate basis upon which contemporary Amerindian literature came into existence. Contemporary Native American literaturemight be defined as the indigenous‘ literature within the context of the post-colonialism. Thus, it encompasses the Native American themes and history, which are written in English in the Western genre; the novel.Besides, the renaissance period brought a renewed pride to the Indian communities; it was a time of hope and renewal. This provoked and motivated the renaissance writers to write about their spirituality, their ties to their motherland, mythological beliefs, and actual status.

The most significant way to get into the spirit of the Native Amerindians‘ culture and identity is to read the literary texts that are written by Native American authors such as Scott N. Momaday and Leslie Marmon Silko. As a novelist, Silko exhibited the challenges and confrontations that the Native American people experienced during their lives in the reservations and focused on the quest for the self in the modern world and the way indigenous people could integrate into the new society. Besides, Silko and some other Native American authors tried to create their own literature authentically stemmed from their communities‘ oral traditions. She tried to shed light on the Natives‘ history and identity through inspecting and delineating the psychological conflicts of the Amerindians, throughtheir journey of self-discovery as well as their need for belonging (Brommer 5).

Silko might not be the first Native American woman writer writing in English, but her writings make the rich reservoir of oral literature that sustained Native Americans for a long period accessible.Her attempt is fusing the oral tradition with the written form that makes her writing an institution serving as a link between the Native American past and present and between the Native American and the outsider. Her loyalty to the oral mode and restoration of its essential characteristics and its essence

even in the writing mode is an expression of the Native American spirit of flexibility and sustenance. The same is revealed by her structuring the premise of her writings upon tribal demands for sovereignty and equality.

The thesis will demonstrate how the Native American faith and beliefs survived and coped with the contemporary issues despite all the white‘s attempts to assimilation. It highlights the impact of Leslie Marmon Silko‘s literary works that exhibited the challenges and confrontations that the Native American people experienced during their lives through inspecting and delineating the psychological conflicts of the Amerindians, and their journey of self-discovery.

Literature is the mirror of society,the social difficulties provoke the writers to portray the people‘s struggle and sufferance. Thus, Leslie Marmon Silko writes her book *Storyteller* to exhibit and demonstrate the Native‘s strive to have a voice in the Euro-American society.

The first chapter shed light on the history, origin and the characteristics of Native American literature, then the study and the analysis of the contemporary Native American literary works to provide a bias to the hematic analysis of *Storyteller.*

Native American writers were able to challenge the stereotyped images of the Indian Americans given by some American authors to the white society, they had major role of reviving Native American identity in general.

Leslie Marmon Silkohave a deep commitment towards her tribe the Laguna pueblo, and a strong devotion to defend her tribe‘s history and identity, through her works Laguna tribe is recurrent theme, despite the fact that she is from a mix heritage but she is always proud of being a Native American and introduce herself as a Laguna woman.

Numerous post-colonial theorists such as Ngugi WaThiong‘o and Frantz Fanon believe that the literary texts are dynamic weapons; they are more powerful than the imperialistic dogmatic ascendancy mainly when they are written in the colonizer‘s language. Silko‘s storyteller is considered as a resistant literary text by using

unconventional literary models and perpetuates the Amerindian culture depending on the oppressor‘s mother language. The language of oppression was a powerful tool for cultural suppression; taking control of that language provided a means of resistance. The second chapter is devoted for the thematic study of the novel. The main thematic concerns of *Storyteller* include the alienation of Native Americans in society and the importance of Native American identity including traditions and community in modern times. Her stories are influenced by traditional oral tales that she heard growing up in the Laguna Pueblo Indian reservation in northern New Mexico.

Silko is deeply dedicated to the cause of reviving Native American identity and her loyalty to the oral mode and restoration of its essential characteristics and its essence even in the writing mode , Silko‘s most attractive and unusual element in the book is the use of photography, she uses the photographs taken by her father to family members and the pueblo landscape as a crucial part of the narrative strategy ,

Silko‘s resistance encompasses her unique structure of the book that can be viewed as autobiography where she refuses to follow Euro-American autobiographical conventions , and through the events that occurred with her family she exposes the injustice that marginalized natives suffered from ,as well as The disruption of tribal life by Euro-American contact.

In this literary piece, Silko‘s resistance continues not only stylistically but also thematically when she uses the trickster tradition of Native Americans to make a point. she relies on a "tricky" tale, set in contemporary time, to demonstrate that she chooses to interpret her life story according to Laguna Pueblo lore and tradition as strategy of resistance, as well as through the short mythic narrative by which she attempts to show the importance of the word and present the world and history from Native American perspective introducing us to the pueblo‘s worldview**.**

The concept of Native American identity can be simply described as communal identity where it is shaped by the interconnectedness between the individual, the tribe and the land; unlike the Euro American model, NativeAmericans reject individualism and autonomy as a vehicle to describe their identity.

CHAPTER ONE: SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Through successive generations, the Native Americans persisted the white oppressors‘ traumatic encroachments and offensive aggressions. The European colonizers‘ after-effects are extremely cataclysmic on communities, families, and individuals as well. These incursions encompass violent removal, annihilation, ethnic prejudice, and the extirpation of the natives‘ customs, beliefs and culture. The sanction of the slaughtering Acts oppressed the Amerindians and compelled them to assimilate into the mainstream American society.

This chapter provides a broader context to better understand the socio-historical context of Leslie Marmon Silko‘s Storyteller. It sheds light on the literature of the Natives as a whole and then on the pueblo tribe. As well as, it highlights the different endeavors of the Native American identity and history through understanding their culture and tradition and explores the deep rooted bound with their land as a crucial part of the American Indian identity and history.

1.Native American Literature

Native American literature does not have one language. Even before delving into the details of themes, context, and content, we are faced with the challenge of understanding the classification. The Native American culture is comprised of a myriad of different languages and tribes. Anthropologists and linguists have classified Native American languages according to similarity in grammatical structure and the geographical proximity of the speakers (Surez 11-29). The former basis of categorization resulted in fifty-eight major language families whereas the latter created nine major categories. Each of the nine categories has around ten to twenty tribes associated with it. The nine regions are: Mackenzie River, North Pacific Coast, Plains, Woodland, California, Southeastern, Eskimo, Plateau, and Southwestern.

Most literature revolves around man‘s connection with the land. An essential theme observed in both ancient myths and contemporary Native American literature is the deep connection between the identity of the people and the land they inhabit. The writings show that the culture considers the land as dynamic. Therefore, they surpass closeness to nature, creating a more complex link between the land and a person‘s being or ego. Even a rudimentary study of this type of literature will reveal this aspect (Taylor 453).

Oral stories are a major part of this form of literature. Early Native American Literature contains fascinating tales, songs, chants, and prayers passed down through oral traditions.

They are told using an archaic language and they make liberal use of literary devices such as repetition and enumeration. Some languages, for instance Papago (the language of the Tohono O‘odham Nation) and Pima (the language of the Akimel O‘odham), contained specific structures for oral stories. A story would have four parts; it would start out with an introduction of a stable and harmonious situation, go on to describe a disruption of stability, then tell of the efforts to restore harmony before concluding. The efforts were often told in cycles of four (Allen Gunn 14).

Native American authors effectively shine the light on Native American literature. In 1969, the Pulitzer Prize was awarded to N. Scott Momaday for his novel _House Made of Dawn‘. The novel has received critical acclaim and is considered pivotal in bringing Native American literature into mainstream culture. The Native American Renaissance highlights a major theme which many contemporary Native American publications share: the alienated individual who feels torn between two worlds and yearns to find an identity. Some major authors who gained popularity after the rekindling of interest are James Welch, Leslie Marmon Silko, Sherman Alexie, and Louise Erdrich (Taylor 266).

Native American literature was not documented in writing at first. When the first Europeans arrived in America, there were over 500 different Native American tribes

living here. Each of these tribes had rich history and culture, but their literature was not documented in writing.

Their numerous legends, tales, songs and myths were preserved through oral transmission. Thankfully, they managed to survive time, which is why you can enjoy the difference between the tales of the Navajo hunters and the pueblo-dwellers known as Acoma Repetition of myths ensured their survival (Colonnese and Owens 89). The survival of a myth in the pre-literate Native American times depended on how often it was repeated. The more popular the tale was, the more often it was repeated and the better it retained its plot points. As it spread across to other places, the folktale would take on features unique to the local culture. This phenomenon can serve as a means to track mythology across time and space (Lincoln 63).

There are different approaches to critiquing Native American literature, but one goal. Literary critics and theorists are not in complete agreement about how to approach Native American literary criticism (littelfield 12). There is a difference in opinion regarding whether to employ modern approaches or only Native American theories. The goal, however, is the same: to avoid misinterpretations and break down the centuries-long silencing of Native American voices (Scarberry 58).

Christian Missionaries in America influenced the literature with their arrival, and therefore the literature of the indigenous tribes evolved. The written Native American literary tradition began in the eighteenth century. Samson Occum published his ―Sermon Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian‖ and William Apess wrote his ―Experiences of Five Christian Indians of the Pequot Tribe‖ (Lee 25).

The Native American Renaissance Era offers a wealth of contemporary literature. The Native American Renaissance era witnessed the production of many prominent works of contemporary Native American literature. A few notable authors are: Simon Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo), Wendy Rose (Hopi-Miwok), Ray Young Bear (Mesquaki), Roberta Hill (Oneida), and Joy Harjo (Creek).

Literary traditions were inspired from their own surroundings. The literary traditions of Native Americans were largely influenced by their environment and

surroundings. Even the creation stories of different tribes reflect environmental elements. Native American ceremonies and everyday life were also dictated by the topography of the area (Harjo 14).The Papago tribe used to undertake a Salt Pilgrimage to reach distant salt deposits.

Native American literature and tribe‘s identities are related. Literature and identity are closely linked. Kelly Morgan, a Native American cultural expert claims that fiction and poetry serve as a better gauge of the cultural identities of people than scientific records. Literature is also more dynamic because it extends the cultural identity over to future generations. Communities of past, present and play a future role in the molding and transformation of literature.

Several works revolve around the loss of sense of self. One of the major themes in Native American literature is the loss of a sense of self. The loss of land and culture is reflected in the writings of contemporary and eighteenth to nineteenth century literature. D‘Arcy McNickle‘s novel ―The Surrounded‖ is a good example of this.

Nature is also part of Native American literature due to its relationship with people. A prevalent thread running through almost all of Native American literature is the interconnectedness of nature and humans. Cultural and personal identity is related to nature in many works. Authors allude to this connection using metaphors. The works of Rosario Morales, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Louise Erdrich are among the ones which illustrate this theme beautifully.

The first novel to be published by a Native Indian author was ―The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta‖ by John Rollin Ridge in 1854.

1.1. Oral Tradition

Paula Allen states that the tribes seek, through song, ceremony, legend, sacred stories (myths), and tales to embody, articulate, and share reality, to bring the isolated private self into harmony and balance with this reality, to verbalize the sense of the

majesty and the reverent mystery of all things, and to actualize, inlanguage, those truths of being and experience that give to humanity its greatest significance and dignity (197).

> The oral tradition is that process by which the myths, legends, tales, and lore of a people are formulated, communicated, and preserved in language by word of mouth, as opposed to writing. Or it is a collection of such things. (McShane 15)

The stories passed down through the oral tradition of Native Americans are ways of recording the history, culture, and beliefs of each nation .The environment and problems facing each nation also affected the stories the tribe told(Adams 2);There was no known authors for tales, the stories were orally transmitted not written down until much later, when they were translated and transcribed; For example, a famous story from the Iroquois tribe of what is today New York tells of how Owl got his wisdom and strange looks by angering the Everything-Maker as he worked to create all the animals. As a result of his run-in with the Everything-Maker, Owl got his wish for wisdom, but the price was all of the beautiful physical features that he wanted. In addition, because the Everything-Maker was angry at Owl, Owl hid and only came out at night when the Everything-Maker was fast asleep.This story explains the funny looks of owls, as well as the reason why they are nocturnal creatures(Wiget 16).

The Iroquois lived in the woods in what is today the Northeast United States.so it makes sense that they would have a story about owls. But, imagine the Hopi Indians, who lived in the desert of the Southwest. The Hopi might have encountered owls in the desert, but they are much less plentiful in that area of the United States than they are in the area where the Iroquois lived. As a result, they are less likely to have a story about owls. Despite the vast differences in Native American stories, there are some general themes that are common to the stories.

A very common theme in American Indian stories is the link between the land and people. This is not surprising since most Native American traditions hold a reverence for the land. But, it goes beyond that. Many Native American stories make it clear that

humans come from the land and return to the land. As a result, both tribal and individual identity is often associated with the land. (Johansen 6). Stories of how people are born or die, as well as stories of how people come of age, often have a strong natural element. Another common theme seen in Native American stories is that of a hero's journey. This journey is sometimes literal, as when a young warrior rides off to fight a hostile nation, or metaphorical, as when a person or animal (like the owl) learn a lesson that sets their life off on a new course. Things like initiation rites and coming of age are often seen in stories about a hero's journey. For example, the Algonquin nation have a story about a village that is besieged by a drought. The villagers send one of their men up the river to find out where all the water went. He comes across a horrible water monster and asks the creator God Glooskap to help. Glooskap comes and fights the water monster, eventually cutting its stomach open. From the monster's stomach, a great river flows forth, offering water and sustenance to the village once again (Britannica Encyclopedia).

The title of this era of writing is known as pre-Colombian. This means that the date range of this era is all of the literature before Columbus landed, while it ended when the Europeans began to transcribe the folklore from the indigenous people(Wiget 13),The Native American Oral Tradition began sometime around 12,000-9,000 BC. In 12,000 migrants arrived in what is now the United States of America.

Native American Oral tradition includes four major types, including Legends and myths, which are those accounts which portray the earliest possible time, including creation stories. Other myths account for the organization of the world and society.

For instance, how men and women were created and why they are different from one another. Because of their power to dictate how things should be, myths can be very powerful in shaping and carrying on traditions in a society, folktales, and memorates (study.com).

When the Europeans arrived to the continent, the oral tradition of the Native Americans began to shift from folk tales and mythology to something considerably

darker. With the change in tone of the literature, the stories became much darker, mirroring the feelings that Native Americans felt at the time of European colonialism.

The race felt humiliated because they were being treated less than humans by the Europeans(Jackson The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture). Also, the oral tradition started to end among the Native Americans because Europeans introduced a writing system into their culture, which made it possible for the Native Americans to record their stories a more accurate way, therefore ending the age of Oral Tradition.

1.2. Storytelling and Indian American Culture

The back cover of Silko's *Storyteller* carries her own words about the stories and the strength they give to her people and tribal people generally:

> I grew up at Laguna listening, and I hear the ancient stories, I hear them very clearly in the stories we are telling right now. Most important, I feel the power which the stories still have, to bring us together, especially when there is loss and grief. (Silko Back cover)

Like many cultures, Native Americans use storytelling as a way to pass down customs, history and heritage. By exploring their oral traditions, we can learn about how important these tales are to tribal life.

As Native Americans explored their land, storytelling became an important tool. It was used to pass down traditions, such as local customs, how to live off the land, and how to survive in the natural environment in which they lived.When other nationalities started to settle in their land, the Native Americans were often forcibly relocated to land that was not their own. Their customs, language and religion were ways for them to remain connected to each other and their homeland and keep their legacies alive.Through storytelling, Native Americans kept their tribal languages alive. They also used storytelling to pass myths down to future generations.

Mythology plays an important part in Native American religion. Creation myths are one of the most well-known traditions for Native American tribes. Much of the natural world was a sacred mystery. In creating and sharing these myths, native peoples were

able to explain everyday natural occurrences such as weather-related events, as well as their own beginnings (Silko and Hirsh 1).

Each tribe seems to have its own unique creation myth or stories that explained how their tribe came to be in the world. These myths speak to the importance of storytelling in Native Americans' culture as well as to the individuality of the tribe and its beliefs. These myths also show their respect for ancient wisdom, and how nature played an important and reverential role (Crystalinks 1).

Storytelling also included songs, music, poetry and dance as a way to connect tribe members and illustrate their history.In addition to being a teaching method, these stories became methods of entertaining the tribe. Storytelling was an important method for Native Americans to pass down their history and traditions and can be seen as the seeds from which entertainers, teachers, and historians grew.

Often misunderstood as violent people, by sharing their traditions and language, Native Americans offer an inside glimpse into their beliefs. With so many viewpoints and creative ideals from the varied tribes, the unique facets of these people are shared and explored by listening to their stories (Hale 1).

For Native Americans, the telling of stories passed down from generation to generation remained their primary form of wisdom communication even after the written word had spread across the globe. It guaranteed that members of each Indian nation would never forget their roots or lose sight of important knowledge that would allow them to continue to exist in harmony and cooperation with the natural world. In order to make this critical information memorable, Native Americans translated practical prescriptions along with subtle and sophisticated ideas about the Great Mystery of life and existence into allegories filled with heroes and villains, comedic twists and dramatic encounters and lessons learned the hard way through suffering and eventual transcendence.Native American stories were always intended to either explain or teach.

1.2.1. The Trickster as Cultural Transformer

The most popular and omnipresent character in Native American storytelling was the trickster. The trickster was an interdimensional figure, an animal with human characteristics that would confound human beings by his clever and endlessly provocative behavior. Tricksters did indeed play tricks but they did so with a purpose. Surviving by wits alone, the trickster broke down conventional categories and violated societal restrictions with glee. But in the end, this work was designed to help create a new and better order out of the chaos the trickster caused.

Tricksters lived in the borderlands between nature and culture, between this world and the next and between change and tradition.As such, they abhorred hard categories and rigid thinking. Society and culture had to learn to survive, and tricksters guided humans through this painful process by showing them how foolish and prideful they were when they tried to cling to the outmoded rules and structures of the past. Tricksters could be any animal, but the coyote was by far the most common trickster in Native American tales (Kroeber 12).

By violating the rules and upsetting the old order, tricksters helped human beings see through their limited ways of thinking. Native Americans needed to use their imagination and their creativity to survive in a world where circumstance changed and the forces of nature could turn suddenly hostile, and the trickster helped show them how to be adaptable and flexible in all situations.

1.3.TheCreation Myth

A creation myth (or cosmogonic myth) is a symbolic narrative of how the world began and how people first came to inhabit it. While in popular usage the term *myth* often refers to false or fanciful stories, members of cultures often ascribe varying degrees of truth to their creation myths. In the society in which it is told, a creation myth is usually regarded as conveying profound truths, metaphorically, symbolically and sometimes in a historical or literal sense. They are commonly, although not

always, considered cosmogonical myths – that is, they describe the ordering of the cosmos from a state of chaos or amorphousness.

Creation myths often share a number of features. They often are considered sacred accounts and can be found in nearly all known religioustraditions. They are all stories with a plot and characters who are either deities, human-like figures, or animals, who often speak and transform easily. They are often set in a dim and nonspecific past that historian of religion Mircea Eliade termed *in illo tempore* ("at that time"). Creation myths address questions deeply meaningful to the society that shares them, revealing their central worldview and the framework for the self-identity of the culture and individual in a universal context.

1.3.1. The Laguna Pueblo Creation Myth

The three most important figures in Pueblo mythology are Thought Woman, Corn Mother, and Sun Father. While all three beings are extremely powerful, they are also interdependent. Thought Woman is attributed with the creation of the universe, and one version of the creation myth is as follows:

> Ts' its' tsi' nako, Thought-Woman, is
> sitting in her room and whatever she
> thinks about appears.
> She thought of her sisters,
> Nau' ts'ity' i and I' tcs' i, and together
> they created the Universe this world
> and the four worlds below.
> Thought-Woman, the spider, named
> things and
> as she named them they
> appeared.
> She is sitting in her room
> thinking of a story now I'm
> telling you the story
> she is thinking. (Silko Ceremony 1)

This myth is important in two aspects. First, it explains the Pueblo belief that the universe consists of our world, which is the earth, and the "four worlds below," where

the spirits of the dead go. Second, it reveals the crucial function that storytelling serves in the Pueblo culture. it is also a ceremony that acts as a link between the mythical deities and the people themselves, whose ritual life is based on the myths.

Corn Mother, also called Corn Woman, is perhaps the most important deity in Pueblo mythology. She is synonymous with Mother Earth, and represents growth, life, and the feminine aspects of this world. Her role in Pueblo mythology reflects the importance of corn as a staple crop of the Pueblo diet. Because corn and Corn Mother are multivocal symbols for the Pueblos, the ritual corn dance is performed for one or more of the following reasons: to bring rain, to increase fertility. It is a seasonal ceremony that occurs in the spring or summer, The dance is understood to be humans' appearance before Corn Mother. The dancers make gestures to indicate the requests they are offering to the Corn Mother: lowering the arms signifies the lowering clouds, moving the arms in a zig-zag motion indicates lightning, lowering the palms symbolizes rain, and lifting the hands signifies the growing stalks of corn. In smaller corn dances, all of the participants are men, but in larger dances, both men and women participate.When women are involved, they often wear headdresses called *tablitas*(Waters 62).

This marking likely symbolizes the special connection that women have with Corn Mother because of their shared femininity. Prayer sticks representing individual petitions are also offered to Corn Mother, and in *Ceremony*, Silko mentions the regular offering of blue and yellow pollen, which can be viewed as symbolizing fertility, to Corn Mother's altar (Silko Ceremony 47-49). Silko expresses the necessity of making these sacrifices in the following traditional myth: An evil Ck' o' yo magician appeared to the people and seduced them with his magic. They were extremely impressed, and believing his magic would give life to the plants and animals as Corn Mother did, they neglected the corn altar. Corn Mother became very angry with her people, for she knew the magic was just a trick, and took away the plants and rain clouds, and didn't allow any baby animals to be born.

Sun Father stands opposite to Corn Mother and is the most powerful creative force in the universe. He represents masculinity and light, and therefore white.The color of pure light, is the most sacred color.Cornmeal is offered to Sun Father, which demonstrates the interdependent relationship he has with Corn Mother (Waters 198). He also is connected with Thought Woman, as can be seen in another myth told by Silko in *Ceremony*. In this myth, a Ck' 'o' yo magician tricked not only the people with his magic, but the storm clouds as well, and took both the people and the clouds prisoners. Sun father went to wake the storm clouds up one morning and could not find them. Because they could not release their rain over the earth, the land began drying up, and the people and animals starved. Sun Father took blue and yellow pollen, tobacco, and coral beads to Thought Woman, asking for her help. She gave Sun Father a magic medicine that allowed him to trick the magician and free the clouds (Silko 176).

The relationships between the Pueblo people and their deities are reciprocal: if the ceremonial offerings are done properly, then their needs are met.If they are not properly carried out, then the people are not fully cared for, as the myth about neglecting the corn altar suggests. Reciprocity can also be seen in the relationship between the Pueblos and the spirits of the animals they hunt. Silko describes the tradition of sprinkling a killed deer with cornmeal in order to free its spirit. This is a sign of appreciation to the deer for giving up its life for the people, and if it is not done, deer will not return the next year to provide for them (Silko 208).

Throughout history, however, the Pueblos have been faced with certain evils that the concept of reciprocity cannot explain. For example, sometimes the ceremonial offerings had been properly carried out, yet there was still a drought, a serious illness, or an unexplainable death. The Pueblos solved this problem by attributing unexplainable evils to witcheryThe responsibility for challenging the power of witchery falls upon the shoulders of the medicine man, so when the arrival of the whites to the Pueblo region brought a ghost of previously unknown diseases, as well

as an exploitation of power that was inconceivable to the natives, the medicine man was challenged as never before (Silko 209).

2.Towards a Native American Literary Criticism

There is the kind of literary criticism that is practiced in most university English departments and the kind that has developed around the study of Native American texts, that can be called "Native American literary criticism," even though that term can be easily misinterpreted as "literary criticism as practiced by Native Americans" rather than "critical approaches to Native American literatures"(Allen Gunn 119).In the sense it is meant that Native American literary criticism has only very recently become thought of as appropriate to English or literature departments. As late as the first half of this century, Native American literatures were more likely to be studied by cultural anthropologists than by English majors.

About that time, Franz Boas and his first generation of students began to develop the sub-discipline of cultural anthropology known as ethnography (the attempt to describe and write out the unique or characteristic ethos of any ethnic group). Arguably, Boas and his followers were the first academics to pay close, often quite respectful, attention to what Native Americans had to say about themselves, both as individuals and as members of non-Western cultures. Boas and his followers were also some of the first scholars to methodically transcribe Native American oral performances into written texts; later ethnographers, as well as literary critics, came to regard these written versions as examples of "authentic" Native American literature. Few of Boas's immediate followers, however, had any formal training in literary appreciation as "scientists," they were prone to treat Native oral performances not as works of art but rather as objects to be gathered, sorted, and preserved for later study.

The next step in the development of a Native American literary criticism was the development of *ethnopoetics* literally, the study of the poetic sense of an ethnic group as a site where the disciplines of ethnography and literary criticism intersect. (Boas 15)By the 1960s, such scholars as Karl Kroeber, Jarold Ramsey, Dell Hymes, and

Dennis Tedlock, often working with earlier transcriptions of Native American oral performances collected by Boas and his followers, were learning how to look beyond the transcriptions to the *pre*-texts, the original language oral performances themselves, in order to recover the art of these performances (such as rhythm and intonation, recurring phrase, and other verbal nuances) that had so often been lost in translation.

Their pioneering work in ethno-poetics established some crucial principles of subsequent Native American literary criticism. They taught that an oral tradition is a species of literature. Like any other body of literature (including any print-text literature), Native American oral traditions have both culturally specific content or subject matter and culture-specific esthetic criteria; these aesthetic norms regulate the composition of performances and these same criteria can be used to evaluate such performances. The ongoing attempt to identify and appreciate these distinctive values still drives much of Native American literary criticism.

In addition to the development of ethno-poetics around mid-century, a second historical phenomenon, which has been called the "Native American Renaissance" by literary critic and anthologist Kenneth Lincoln, has made the study of Native American literatures a viable discipline in its own right. The period since the 1970s has seen an exponential increase in literary texts written in English by Native Americans, thus augmenting the ongoing oral literatures of their respective cultural traditions. In their poems, short stories, novels, plays, memoirs and autobiographies, and essays of all sorts, many of these new writers have been working to find ways to adapt traditional Native American literary and cultural values to these Western performance modes sometimes, by revising the modes themselves to accommodate non-Western materials and values in exciting new ways.

2.1.Native American Identity and the Land

Understandably, one of the recurring themes of recent Native American literatureis the issue of Native American identity. What is sometimes hard to grasp is that "identity," correctly speaking, is not an attribute of either the individual or of the

context the environment, including cultural traditions in which the individual is embedded. Rather, identity is an event that takes place in the creation of the *relationship* between individual and context. In recent Native American literature, as in many of the cultural traditions this body of literature refers and defers to, identity, like life itself, derives from the land. Whoever wishes either to recover or to sustain a healthy state of existence, then, must enter into some working identity not only with a cultural tradition but also with a particular landscape (Bruchac 35).

One of the clichés of New Age Nativism, American and European alike, is that Native spiritual vision is rooted in animal or "totem" identity. Nativists also tend to assume that the larger the animal one calls one's ally, the more powerful one's own vision must be: self-proclaimed New Age shamans seem more predisposed to adopt names like Black Bear or White Eagle than Pink Piglet or Gray Titmouse(Churchill 1).

Within the context of Western hierarchical traditions, as formulated perhaps most clearly and dramatically in the Renaissance concept of the Great Chain of Being, it makes more sense to think of oneself (at one's "angelic" or most spiritually rarefied, at any rate) as being closer in nature to an animal than to a plant, and closer to a plant than to a mineral (Erdrich 84).

In the universe as imagined by Western religious tradition, all life derives from God in such a way that one moves *away* from God in the direction of the earth and *towards* God in the direction of the sky. Accordingly, only the most degraded person would choose to identify with the worm rather than the eagle, let alone with the dirt the worm calls home. But in the spiritual traditions of many Native American groups, the spirit and the life of the People derive from the land: life is a "property" of the land as well as of the creatures occupying it. In her groundbreaking collection of critical essays *The Sacred Hoop* (1986), one of the first large-scale attempts to apply Native American cultural (and literary) values to modern Native American writing, Paula Gunn Allen puts it this way: We are the land (Allen Gunn 26). To the best of understanding, that is the fundamental idea embedded in Native American life and culture in the Southwest.The land is not really the place (separate from ourselves)

where we act out the drama of our isolate destinies. It is rather a part of our being, dynamic, significant, real. It is ourself, in as real a sense as such notions as "ego," "libido" or social network. Nor is this relationship one of mere "affinity" for the Earth. It is not a matter of being "close to nature." The relationship is more one of identity, in the mathematical sense, than of affinity. The Earth is, in a very real sense, the same as our self (or selves), and it is this primary point that is made in the fiction and poetry of the Native American writers of the Southwest (Harjo 109-10). The notion that a human's relationship to the land can be more than an "affinity" or a matter of being "close to nature" probably doesn't come easily to moststudents of American literature. But many Native Americans are born into family and cultural traditions that not only end with statements of this identity (as Protestant traditions do: "ashes to ashes . . .") but also begin with this fundamental vision of identity. Within the context of such traditions, the most fundamental act of spiritual vision that one can experience is the act of seeing oneself as a living part of the livingplace where one's life takes place.

3.Native American Writers

The early Native writers had to work within a political environment that was hostile to their success and within a literary tradition of the day that condoned and sentimentalized the death of Indians. Somehow, they were able to engage their detractors and author their own accounts of Native Americans which challenged the stereotypical images and showed that they would not remain silent nor were they going to disappear.

3.1.Autobiography

One of the primary genres that Native Americans borrowed from the writers in the dominant society of the time was the autobiography, which they used to address their own experiences and concerns. These autobiographies mostly involved experiences concerning their conversion to Christianity and their education in the mission schools.

At times they adopted the voice of the "authentic" Native American who had the knowledge of the practices and traditions of the tribe, but at the same time, they were educated and Christianized by into the mainstream society.

For instance, in A Son of the Forest: The Experience of William Apess, A Native of the Forest written in 1829, William Apess describes his escape from an abusive childhood by being converted to Christianity. Through his involvement in the Church he was provided access to the same freedom and position with God that white society enjoys. Yet, his ongoing experiences of discrimination within the Church as a minister in a white world reminded him that this ideal was elusive.

In his writing, Apess rejects the stereotyping of Indians and he does this by documenting his own accomplishments related to the activities that white society values. Ahead of his time, Apess advocated a balance between accepting Christianity and retaining pride in one‘s Indian identity. After the publication of his autobiography, Apess became more militant, helping to organize the Mashpee Revolt of 1833, to help the Mashpee regain lost freedoms.

George Copway, Ojibwe wrote another important autobiography of the 19th century called The Life, History, and Travels of Kah-ge-ga-gahbowh, written in 1847. Similar to Apess, the text is about Copway's childhood and his eventual conversion to Christianity. Of course, his autobiography was popular among the dominant society‘s readers and this allowed him to begin a lecture tour throughout the United States and Europe. And like Schoolcraft, he was thought of highly by his white contemporaries such as James Fenimore Cooper and Washington Irving. However, his own people shunned him.

Black Hawk‘s autobiography differs from those that emphasized Christian conversion. The Life of Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kaik or Black Hawk, was mediated by a French- Canadian writer Antoine Le Claire since Black Hawk was illiterate, which made some question its authenticity.UnlikeCopway and Apess, Hawk did not even speak English.

Early Native American literature was preoccupied with trying to change the political and social status of their people. Elias Boudinot was one the first native writers to actually voice his the concept that Indians should reject their own culture and embrace the culture of the ―civilized society.‖ He believed that acculturation was the only way the Cherokee could survive. Although he was a great student in the missionary school, he left and returned to his own people as a missionary so that he could help educate them. He became a spokesman for the Cherokee Nation, speaking throughout the country touting the abilities and civilized ways of the Cherokee people, while raising money to build a school and the Cherokee newspaper that would be called, The Cherokee Phoenix(Swann 19).

4.Native American Women Writers

S. Alice Callahan wrote the first novel written by a woman Native American called Wynema: A Child of the Forest, which was published in 1891. The novel stresses how a white girl‘s progressive adoption of an identifiably Native American perspective enhances her relationship with a Native American girl named Wynema. By ensuring mutual comprehension and respect and, on a larger level, promoting intercultural bonds they break down the barriers that their own cultures had enveloped them with. As the story progresses, both the white girl named Genevieve and Wynema learn more about one another's cultural customs, and this cross-cultural appreciation fortifies their loving relationship.

Sarah Winnemucca, another early Native American woman writer wrote a personal and tribal history called ―Life among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims‖ while in a rented room at 54 Bowdoin Street in Boston and with the help of two women activists. It was quickly printed with the intention of influencing upcoming federal policy and legislation in favor of the Paiute People.

4.1.Leslie Marmon Silko

Leslie Marmon Silko, Acclaimed novelist, poet, and essayist Leslie Marmon

Silko is known for her lyric treatment of Native American subjects. Born in 1948 to the photographer Lee Marmon and his wife Mary Virginia Leslie, Marmon Silko is of Laguna Pueblo, Mexican and Anglo-American heritage. Her mixed ancestry has influenced her work in myriad ways. Growing up on the edge of the Laguna Pueblo reservation, Marmon Silko‘s earliest experiences were positioned between cultures. Remarking in an interview with Alan Velie ―I am of mixed-breed ancestry, but what I know is Laguna,‖ Marmon Silko has deepened her affiliation to her tribe through her books, which draw on Laguna myths and story-telling traditions. In 1974 she published a volume of poetry called Laguna Woman. Marmon Silko has also acknowledged the influence of her own family‘s storytelling on her method and vision. Her works primarily focus on the alienation of Native Americans in a white society and on the importance of native traditions and community in helping them cope with modern life. She has been noted as a major contributor to the Native American literary and artistic renaissance, which began in the late 1960s.

Silko attended school on the Laguna reservation until the fifth grade, when she transferred to Catholic school in distant Albuquerque. Prohibited from speaking the Keresan language of her grandmother and aunts, Silko nonetheless excelled academically and went on to receive her bachelor‘s degree from the University of New Mexico in 1969. That same year her first story, ―The Man to Send Rain Clouds‖ was published. She briefly enrolled in law school, but left to pursue her writing career in 1971 when she was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts Discovery Grant. Silko won many major awards throughout the 1970s and _80s, including a Pushcart Prize for Poetry and the MacArthur ―Genius‖ Award. This last award allowed Silko to quit her teaching job at the University of Arizon-Tucson and devote herself fulltime to writing. In 1988 she received the New Mexico Endowment for the Humanities ―Living Cultural Treasure‖ Award. She is also well-known for her friendship with the poet James Wright. Their correspondence was chronicled in the book With the Delicacy and Strength of Lace: Letters Between Leslie Marmon Silko and James Wright (1986), which won the Boston Globe Book Prize for non-fiction.

A highly regarded novelist, Silko received wide and substantial critical attention for her first novel Ceremony (1977). The story of a half-breed war veteran's struggle for sanity after returning home from World War II, the book explores the redemptive powers of Native American ceremony—not just as formal ritual but as a means of conducting one‘s life. With its depiction of life on the Indian reservation and its exploration of philosophical issues, Ceremony established Silko as an important Native American writer and marked her as the first Native American woman novelist (Littlefield 1). After the publication of Ceremony in 1977, Silko received greater recognition for her earlier work, including the exemplary short stories "Lullaby," "Yellow Woman," and "Tony's Story." "Lullaby"an old woman's recollection of how her children were once taken away for education and how they returned to a culture that no longer seemed familiar or comfortableis typical Silko, dealing with themes of alienation and generational difference that mark the daily reality of Native Americans.

Silko included many early stories in her collection Storyteller (1981), which features her poetry as well. In the New York Times Book Review, Pulitzer-prize winning novelist N. Scott Momaday called Storyteller "a rich, many-faceted book." Momaday contended, "Leslie Silko is very good indeed. She has a sharp sense of the way in which the profound and the mundane often run together." (Voices)

Though perhaps best known as a novelist, Silko is also an accomplished poet. She began writing poetry based on traditional stories and legends she learned from her family. For example, her poem "Bear Story" uses characters from Laguna and other Southwestern Indian stories to retell an ancient metamorphosis myth about humans and bears. Her poems highlight many of the same themes found in her prose, including the Native Americans' non-Western sense of time, the strength of women, and the need for political and social change (Colorado Education journals)

5.Silko and Laguna tribe

In the "Notes by the Contributors" in The Man to Send Rain Clouds (1974),

Leslie Marmon Silko wrote: ―I grew up at Laguna Pueblo. I am of mixed-breed ancestry, but what I know is Laguna. This place I am from is everything I am as writer and human being‖ (19). And these sentiments are clearly illustrated in her poetry and fiction where she has interwoven the stories of Laguna with her contemporary versions of those same stories.

Leslie Marmon Silko is dedicated to the cause of reviving Native American culture and literature, and her reputation stands tall as one of the most prominent contemporary Native American writers. She has integrated a strong Native American color to her works by perfectly mixing diversified genres into varied literary pieces, by connecting the writing closely to nature, and by implementing oral tradition, and storytelling. Her writings reflect a profound understanding of Native American cultural heritage and an intense awareness of Indian‘s matters. Her writings reflect the complex nature of Native American identity formation (Sando 22-23). Silko‘s writings explicate harmonious coexistence and syncretism as best way towards the survival of Native American identity and the maintenance of cultural continuity. The analysis should help to contribute some insights into a reciprocity and smooth communication among different cultures in the context of globalization and should be useful to the study of Native American culture.

As important to Silko as the Laguna oral tradition is her feeling of belonging to a specific place, an area of the country, a particular pueblo. The Southwest and, in particular, Laguna, are vital elements in Silko's literary works and thus worthy of consideration when discussing those works (Walker 27).

Located about 45 miles west of Albuquerque, New Mexico is the Pueblo of Laguna. The largest of the Keresan pueblos, it is comprised of six small villages including Laguna, Paguate, Encinal, Mesita, Seuma, and Paraje. Nestled below scenic Mount Taylor, ancestors of these Puebloan Indians are thought to have occupied these same lands since 1300 A.D. However, the area surrounding the villages indicates a longer history, as archeological evidence has been dated back as far as 3000 B.C.

Pueblo tradition says that their people have always been there. The Spanish name, Laguna, translates to lagoon and is derived from a lake that was once located on the pueblo lands. The people refer to themselves as Ka-Waikah or Ka-waik, meaning —lake people,‖ though the lake has long since transitioned into meadow lands. Prior to Spanish incursions in the region in the 1500s, Kawaik residents lived in a border region between the Ancestral Pueblo people to the north and the Mogollon people to the south.

In 1539 a Franciscan friar, Marcos de Niza, claimed the Pueblo region for Spain and by 1616, there were nine missions that had been built at various pueblos. When the Spanish arrived in Laguna, they found a self-governing, agricultural society. The pueblo we see today was established after the Pueblo Revolt in 1699 by a group of Kawaik people and other refugees from Cienguilla, Santo Domingo, Cochiti, and Zia Pueblos. Built under the supervision of Franciscan Friars utilizing Laguna labor, it was the last mission built during this period. During Spanish rule, the Laguna people were not treated well, but adapted to colonial rule by adopting and incorporating those aspects necessary for survival while maintaining their traditional beliefs.

Silko‘s ties to Laguna are strong because of history and her family's role in that history. In her collection of poetry, Laguna Woman (1974), Silko wrote:

> The white men who came to the Laguna Pueblo Reservation and married Laguna women were the beginning of the half-breed Laguna people like my family, the Marmon family. The Marmons are very controversial, even now; but I think that people watch us more closely then they do full bloods or white people. In the long run we aren't much different from other Laguna families.(Silko Laguna Woman 35)

In 1871 Walter G. Marmon was appointed government teacher at Laguna, a position he held until 1875 when he resigned. It was he who in 1876 led the Lagunas in the confrontation with the Acomas over land.

His brother, Robert G. Marmon (Silko's great-grandfather), came to Laguna in the l870s after the Civil War as a surveyor with a government contract. He married a native of Paguate and they had two sonsHenry (Hank) Anaya and Kenneth. After his

first wife's death he married her sister, Marie Anaya (Grandma A'mooh), and they had three sons, one named Walker K., and a daughter, Bessie. Robert G. learned to speak the Laguna language and suffered the taunts of ―Squaw Man‖ because of his marriage to an Indian woman. During his time in Laguna, he operated a store. In 1880 or 1881 he was elected governor of 39 Laguna, the first white man to hold such a high position(Walker 37).

Hank and Lillie's son, Lee H. Marmon, was born in Laguna and helped his grandparents (Robert and Marie) with their grocery store. He became interested in photography while in the Army. He married a woman of undetermined tribal connections from Montana. At one time he was elected treasurer of Laguna. Leslie Marmon Silko is Lee's daughter(Walker40).

Chapter Two: Re-appropriation of Native American History and Identity

Storyteller is a collection of traditional stories, imaginative prose, verse, and autobiographical sketches purposefully interwoven with photographs taken over four generations by Silko's family and friends. The recurrent centre of the work is Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico where she was raised. However, the book encompasses peoples other than Pueblo-Navaho, Zuni, the Yupik of Alaska-and in the opening pages we find her invocation to all Native peoples of North America. ―As with any generation the oral tradition depends upon each person listening and remembering a portion and it is together-fall of us remembering what we have heard together that creates the whole story the long story of the people."(Silko 1). The call is for the reassertion of the communal spirit through the reaffirmation of storytelling as a palpable, vital force in a world in a state of flux since "time immemorial." In a sense, Storyteller is an autobiography. Photographs blend with stories to form a unified whole defining what it is to be Laguna, to live and grow on a particular tribal landscape. However, it is also, through shared common experience and sentiment, the story of contemporary generations of Native Americans.

In its pages, one finds the concerns, which form the kernel of the writings in this genre dispossession, the destruction of the land, and the search for identity and true history in a world turned chaotic by the intrusion of white values, as one reads the work, the awareness slowly dawns that the traditional power of the story to mediate such adversities is at work strengthening tribal identity by the mythic narrative that explains the Laguna‘s worldview and reverse the history of the Euro American voice instead of white‘s literary models, Through this chapter, we have closely studied features of re-appropriating Native American history and identity in Silko‘s *storyteller.*

1. The Survival Of Native American Identity In The Writings of Leslie Marmon Silko

Leslie Marmon Silko is dedicated to the cause of reviving Native American culture and literature, and her reputation stands tall as one of the most prominent contemporary Native American writers. She has integrated a strong Native American color to her works by perfectly mixing diversified genres into varied literary pieces, by connecting the writing closely to nature, and by implementing oral tradition, and storytelling. Her writings reflect a profound understanding of Native American cultural heritage and an intense awareness of the Indian‘s matters, as well as the complex nature of Native American identity formation. Silko‘s writings explicate harmonious coexistence and syncretism as best way towards the survival of Native American identity and the maintenance of cultural continuity.

Native Americans have survived and continued to maintain their individual identities and spiritual traditions. Out of more than ten million Native Americans who lived in America at this time, about two million of their descendants still live in the United States and in North America, and as many as two hundred languages are still spoken by these indigenous groups. Believed to have migrated from Asia more than thirty-two thousand years back, these Native tribes have survived by adapting to American land and clime and incorporating into their lives the metaphysical belief and cultural understandings that sustained their existence. Her mixed ancestry has influenced her works in many ways; she also acknowledges the influence of her own family‘s storytelling on her manner and the way of their revelation. Growing up on the edge of the Laguna Pueblo Reservation, Silko‘s earliest experiences were to be found between culture and traditions. Right from her early schooling, she had witnessed strange treatment from those that had fallen into the binary division of Native American and white identity. Her works primarily focus on the alienation of Native Americans in a white society and the importance of native traditions and community in helping them to manage with modern life. Silko writes with a strong sense of affiliation with her

native land and culture. She belongs to the Laguna tribe of Pueblo people in the west-central New Mexico, USA. The Pueblos of NewMexico first confronted the Europeans some four centuries ago when the Spaniards came with Coronado expedition in 1540. Later on, the Spanish invaders used power and in 1598 made the Pueblos a commitment to the King of Spain. Silko‘s writing imbibes all these ancestral experiences and as a result, her writing is enriched by indigenous and white influences.

Silko might not be the first Native American woman writer writing in English, but her writings made the rich reservoir of oral literature that sustained Native Americans for a long period accessible. Her attempt is fusing the oral tradition with the written form that makes her writing an institution serving as a link between the Native American past and present and between the Native American and the outsider. Her loyalty to the oral mode and restoration of its essential characteristics and its essence even in the writing mode is an expression of the Native American spirit of flexibility and sustenance. The same is revealed by her structuring the premise of her writings upon tribal demands for sovereignty and equality. An important underlying prerequisite for her literary endeavors that serves as a thrust to her writings is the significance and need for truth to be explored and understood in an unbiased manner. Accordingly, she writes about her personal self and uses her writings as an expression of her quest for identity within the Native American prevailing conditions that nourishes and sustains her writing.

In order to understand contemporary Native American literature like the works written by Leslie Marmon Silko, one must have sufficient knowledge of the Native American worldview expressed in their oral stories that have been handed down for unremembered generations. The study has to include what the oral tradition has meant to the indigenous people and their communities, how it has been kept and passed down, and what it can do to the tribal peoples for securing their identity and power to survive with contemporary issues. Indigenous people have different worldviews from other cultural groups.

Silko combines tradition of oral storytelling and worldview in her writing to pass invaluable messages across the boundaries of culture. She is blessed with a skill and practical knowledge in her blood for writing her own tradition. Her works are not only compatible with the worldviews of the Native Americans but also, she ingeniously expresses her messages in her works.Leslie Marmon Silko‘s first novel, *Ceremony* (1977) is widely acclaimed as the most important Native American novel that has had a huge impact upon the reading community in America and the overseas.

Native American writers show division of opinions as regards the critical literary assessment and methods to be applied to Native American Literature. Many critics insist upon using mainstream assessment tools and literary models for an analysis of this text while others demand literary assessment to be based upon tribal literary perspectives and understandings. Silko‘s works artistically infuse indigenous perspectives into a Eurocentric form of writing resulting in the making of politically charged texts. *Ceremony* served as the first step in forwarding her indigenous perspectives and epistemologies and later on when the reader was prepared, she gave it a freer play in *Storyteller*. *Ceremony* emphasizes the important role that storytelling plays within the Pueblo culture. It also accurately summarizes the repeated attempts of white groups to demolish the Pueblo culture by destroying its ceremonies. Despite these attempts, which began in 1540 and continued until the 1930s, the basic elements of Pueblo myth and ritual managed to survive (Peters).

Silko‘s works depict the white Americans to some extent as abusers of the earth and its inhabitants. Moreover, her works heavily emphasize the role and importance of women in society*Storyteller* (1981). Addresses the importance of Pueblo women while her subsequent novels include women of other nationalities as well.as an author she explores the progression of time, and the Laguna influences with their oral tradition and circular nature of existence remain at the center of her writing because they are at the center of her existence and that of her people as well. Her works are characterized by the natural space, social and cultural identity to represent cultures and the universal human instinct to shape and control nature. Silko‘s use of the

language and relationship to natural environments has continued to change throughout her writing career.

Silko‘s works present a discourse on the Native American identity beyond the fixed binary divisions of ‗self‘ and the ‗other‘ implying the necessity of arriving at conclusions without a priori positions. Indeed, her use of storytelling as a technique in her writing enables her to maintain continuity between oral mode of narration and the written form of expression. It also helps her in decolonizing her writing from the Eurocentric[2]literary obligations. Silko uses artistic insights and fuses tribal cultural understandings with modern understandings to come up with valid and useful means of ‗interpreting‘ cultural content into a written form. Interpretation carried thus, is based upon principles that maintain the essence of the interpreted cultural narratives and practices.

Silko does not merely translate tribal cultural Laguna narratives into English written form; she also uses her cultural insights to transfer the essence of these narratives into a written form. Therefore, her role as a Laguna insiderbecomes very significant. Her mixed genre work *Storyteller* helps her to bring an Indian writing touch to the short fiction genre.Silko‘s experiment with a dialogic narrative present in *Storyteller* prioritizes the importance of community in the creation as well as interpretation of her writing.

Storyteller acts upon the reader and do away with the appropriating tendency of the white Americans by teaching the readers to look beyond Eurocentric literary preoccupations in order to understand the importance of culture specific insights regarding art and literature.

2.The Photographs Tell the Story

Storyteller is a sui genre text composed of interconnected genres. In it, Silko draws upon Native American narrative techniques to resist conventional Euro-American

[2] Eurocentrism (also Western-centrism) is a worldview centered on and biased towards Europe.

models of autobiography, which reflect the dominant culture's regard for the autonomous self and the core values associated with individualism. In contrast, Silko situates her individuality in a community context, drawing heavily on Laguna Pueblo oral tradition and history, shared family memories and photographs, as well as photographs of the Pueblo landscape. At the same time, she incorporates some of her own short stories and poetry, clearly including in her self-definition those elements that make her story multicultural.

Silko juxtaposes autobiographical materials with traditional stories of American Indian peoples and her original poetry and fiction based upon tribal experience in a dialectical and episodic fashion. In this way she demonstrates the manner in which multiple cultural voices and conflicting worldviews shape the inscription of contemporary Native American lives. By replicating the polyphonic character of oral tradition, Silko provides insight into the formation of Native American individuality in complex and ongoing relationships: tribal, personal, and cross-cultural. Silko thus challenges the monologic character and the authoritative voice of Euro-American autobiography. Silko strategically positions family photos and remembrances, original works of fiction and poetry, and traditional Native stories in such a way that they "speak" to one another. On the first page of *Storyteller*, Silko tells the reader about the Hopi basket that contains her family's photographs. She relates that there are hundreds of photographs in the basket, taken from the 1890s around Laguna, and explains the significance of these photos to her memories of family, community, and tribal stories:

> It wasn't until Ibegan this book that I realized that the photographs in the Hopi basket have a special relationship to the stories as I remember them.
> The photographs are here because they are part of many of the stories and because many of the stories can be traced in the photographs.(silko 1)

On the next page is a picture of her great-grandparents, Robert G. Marmon and Marie Anaya Marmon, holding her "grandpa Hank." Immediately thereafter appears a reminiscence of her Aunt Susie, accompanied by a picture of her aunt on the Marmon Ranch.

Silko then presents a traditional story often told by her aunt and relates the story as she remembers it being told, including her aunt's commentaries. Silko thus begins the introduction of her family history through a combination of photographs, reminiscence, and traditional narrative, articulating the dialogue among the voices of memory. Silko relies on this device throughout the book, revealing the multiple influences in the fashioning of her selfhood.

2.1. Photography: Adaptation and Continuance

Photographs now serve as contemporary place-names in that they are also mobilized to tell stories through differences between the captured image and the present state of the land. Like place-names, they signal what has changed and what has remained, making visible that which has disappeared. In the ―Yellow Woman‖ section of her book *Storyteller*, Silko includes a photograph taken by her father, Lee H. Marmon, to convey the human devastation of Laguna land at the site of the Anaconda company‘s open pit uranium mine (Silko 80). In the photograph, cumulus clouds hover over mesas and hills, and what appear to be shelters or dwellings appear in the foreground, along with dirt roads. The quiet scene is devoid of people, but it is evident that people are living or working on the land. Only when one turns to the back of the book, to Silko‘s caption, the reader learn that this is the site of an open pit uranium mine which has inflicted massive damage to the land:

> Looking east from Paguate Village at the open pit uranium mine which the Anaconda company opened on Laguna land in the early 1950‘s. This photograph was made in the early 1960‘s. The mesas and hills that appear in the background and the foreground are gone now, swallowed by the mine. In the beginning, the Laguna people did not want the mining done on their land, but then as now, military needs and energy development far outweighed the people. (Silko back cover).

Silko‘s caption locates the reader in time, describing the view of the land in the photograph taken about ten years after the opening of the mine. She also notes how much the land has changed: ―The mesas and hills that appear in the background and foreground are gone now.‖(270). Silko‘s voice becomes a conduit for the land,

speaking in concert with her father‘s photograph for its changes. The photograph immediately following the image of the mine is of Laguna village, showing the presence of the Laguna people on the land. Silko also speaks for her community, clarifying that the Laguna people were against the mining but could not prevent or put an end to it. Silko uses her father‘s photographs of the Anaconda company‘s mine and the Laguna village as ―place-names‖ to relay knowledge of the land‘s changes twenty years later, from the viewpoint of her generation. Silko‘s literary voice layers onto her father‘s photographic voice, and their work together allows the land to speak the story of its changes. Through visual and literary depiction, the land is able to speak more effectively than with words alone. As Bernard Hirsch notes, by using her father‘s photographs, Silko is not limited in her storytelling by her sphere of knowledge; she is able to transmit the cultural context of the land and its relationship with the Laguna people as it has continued from her father‘s generation to hers (Hirsch 155).

Silko goes back further than her father‘s generation to tell the story of the land‘s changes, calling on ancient destroyer stories such as that of the giant Estrucuyu to contextualize modern damage to the land. Immediately following the images of the Anaconda company‘s open-pit uranium mine and Laguna village, Silko tells the story of a young Lagunagirl, Kochininako, who meets the animal Estrucuyu on a hunting expedition. Silko writes, ―Estrucuyu was some kind of giant/they had back in those days‖ (82).Estrucuyu takes all of Kochininako‘s rabbits, as well as her weapons and clothes, but his hunger is insatiable. The giant animal is akin to an Algonkian Transformer and is as memorable as the Great Beaver; unlike the Beaver, however, Estrucuyu‘s actions shape the world by taking and destroying rather than building and creating. The only way for Kochininako to survive is to use her wits to hide in a cave where the giant cannot reach her. She calls on her Twin Brothers, heroes recorded in Native American literature as far back as the PopolVuh, to rescue her (Silko 88).

Silko‘s juxtaposition of her father‘s photographs with this story serves to situate contemporary destroyers such as the mine within the tradition of Native American

storytelling. By doing so, Silko extends its repertory of monsters: the mine is a symbol of a postcolonial system that dislocates human beings from the land. By drawing on both her father‘s photographs and the Native American oral tradition,

Silko creates an implicit comparison between the mine, whose hunger for the land‘s resources is insatiable, with the Estrucuyu‘s hunger, warning that unless it is stopped, it will take all. Silko identifies the mine for what it is, in a language that exposes the full force of its threat: it is a present-day destroyer, as dangerous to human survival as the Estrucuyu. Through Silko‘s use of interconnected premodern oral storytelling and contemporary fiction, the land is given voice to ―stalk‖ its reader to bring her back into dialogic relationship with the earth (Silko 84).

3.Cultural Survival : Oral Tradition or The Written Word of The Conquering “Other”

In *Storyteller*, Silko does not attempt to merely recreate and romanticize the continuity of tradition. She reflects upon the cultural and personal disruptions engendered by European and Euro-American social and political dominance over American Indian lives that have also shaped her life and sense of self. Silko begins *Storyteller* by associating herself with the first woman in her family to place herself in two worlds: one world built upon Laguna oral tradition, the other controlled by the written word of the conquering "other." In verse, Silko tells us that her Aunt Susie was of the last generation at Laguna:

> that passed down an entire culture by
> word of mouth an entire history an
> entire vision of the world
> which depended upon memory
> and retelling by subsequent generations. (Silko 4)

Yet Silko claims that Aunt Susie was a great believer in books and the written word. Silko tells of the long and painstaking hours that her aunt, in spite of poor eyesight, devoted to studying and writing. In Silko's view, her Aunt Susie may have

been as motivated to master literary skills by the break in the traditional world brought about by European contact as she was by the simple love of learning:

> She must have realized that the atmosphere and conditions which had maintained this oral tradition in Laguna culture had been irrevocably altered by the European intrusion principally by the practice of taking the children away from Laguna to Indian schools, taking the children away from the tellers who had in all past generations told the children
> an entire culture, an entire identity of a people. (Silko 4)

Silko clearly reveals the ambivalence of Native peoples toward European literacy. The acquisition of written language is tied directly to Euro-American assimilationist policies, by means of which children were removed from their tribal cultures and denied the use of their native languages and traditional practices. Reading and writing European languages was thus an act of oppression. Aunt Susie's conscious awareness of the inevitability of the colonial situation and her decision to acquire the skills of European literacy were elements in the process of cultural survival. The language of oppression was a powerful tool for cultural suppression; taking control of that language provided a means of resistance. Thus, Aunt Susie, in Silko's text, becomes a model she herself endorses by her own self-inscription.

Through the creative use of language and genre in *Storyteller*, Silko resists the colonizing effects of Euro-American control over Native American identity. In particular, Silko reveals the ambiguities of language and conquest in "*Storyteller*," a piece of fiction significantly bearing the same title as the book. "*Storyteller*" is about a young Alaskan Native woman living in a world that has inexplicably been shattered by whiteness. The story opens with the girl in jail. From her cell she can see that the sun is trapped at its zenith, struggling feebly against the encroaching ice that threatens to obliterate all of the boundaries of the natural landscape:

> The color of the sky had not been good lately; it had been pale blue, almost white, even when there were no clouds. She told herself it wasn't a good sign for the sky to be

> indistinguishable from the river ice, frozen solid and white against the earth. The tundra rose up behind the river but all the boundaries between the river and hills and sky were lost in thedensity of the pale. (Silko 17)

This is the moment the girl has been waiting for, the sign that it is time for her to tell her story. She calls to her jailer. Her jailer is Eskimo but refuses to speak his native Yupik. He will, however, be forced to act as her translator, speaking both Yupik and English to relate her story to the attorney. Her story is one of complete cultural disruption by the Gussucks, the whites. From the strange intrusive square buildings of the school and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to the oil drillers who exploit her sexuality, the landscape and her life are ravaged by the domination of the Gussucks. The girl's parents are poisoned with bad liquor sold them by the white storekeeper, and she is raised by her grandmother and the "old man," who is a storyteller of sorts. With the death of the old way of life, the old man has nothing to do all winter but lie in his bed, eating dried fish and slowly narrating the story of a giant polar bear stalking a lone hunter across the ice.

In a world devoid of boundaries, moral or symbolic, the old man is the first to use the girl sexually. The young woman eventually seeks revenge for her parents' deaths, luring the storekeeper over the frozen river onto the ice that she knows is too thin to support his weight. He falls through the ice and drowns, and she is arrested following his disappearance.

The young woman's story is ultimately one of resistance, but captivity and translation into a foreign tongue are requisite to the telling. When her attorney arrives at the jail, he instructs the jailer to tell her that there were witnesses to the storekeeper's "accident"; there is no way she could have planned that he chase her over the thin ice. The girl, however, insists that she must tell the "truth," that her intent was to kill the storekeeper as an act of revenge. She wants the truth of her story-the corruption of her world by the Gussucks and her act of resistance to be heard. The only way she can regain control of her world is to stay in jail, narrating her story through her jailer, who has been assimilated to the culture and language of the whites.

Silko, like the young woman in "*Storyteller*," is compelled to tell her story as an act of resistance. She rejects the literary structures of the oppressor in the same way that the girl rejects the legal system represented by the attorney of the Gussucks. Both reject institutions of the dominant culture that would prevent them from interpreting their lives according to their own systems of value.

4.Storyteller: Unconventional Autobiographical Mode

In *Storyteller*, Silko demonstrates sensitivity to the problems associated with Native American autobiography. The narration of one's life is made necessary only by the contact situation and yet is problematic because, in order to narrate, one must find ways of accommodating the language and power structures of the other. Silko's young storyteller chooses captivity as the necessary condition for "telling the truth."

Krupat points the problem of accommodation in Native American autobiography, noting that many Indians chose to enter into collaborative narrations as their only means of revealing to the world the injustices that have been committed against their people. Because defeat and the acceptance of it, are the prerequisites to these autobiographies, many are emplotted as tragedy. According to Krupat, early Indian autobiographies follow the patterns established by Western autobiographies that glorify Indian fighters and "conquerors" of the "frontier." These autobiographies present an ideology of legitimation for displacing "savage" Native peoples in the name of "civilization."

Native American autobiographies following this "taming of the West" ideology place the Indian in the role of the tragic hero accepting defeat in the struggle for civilization (Krupat 33-53).The Indian voice of strength and resistance behind the autobiographical model is obscured and rarely perceived by whites who have internalized colonial ideology. Silko, like her young "*Storyteller*," wants to tell the truth about Native American autobiography, which is that it emerges from the inevitability of the contact situation but not from the acceptance of it.

The employment of Indian autobiographies according to models of defeat and tragedy, or as salvage ethnographies of disappearing cultures, obviates the fact that Native American autobiographies arose in reaction to the collision of cultures. Silko's "*Storyteller*" points to the fact the American Indian narrators have a strong desire to reveal the injustices forced upon them and to protest the suppression of their cultural and historical interpretations. Paradoxically, the lack of control over the genre on the part of Native Americans in composite, collaborated, autobiographies prevented their sense of ongoing cultural dissonance from being perceived.

Silko obviously recognizes the thwarted intentions of Native American autobiographers. The protagonist of "*Storyteller*" demands to be perceived as an agent of revenge, not as the tragic victim of fate,and to be heard as an intentional, individuated voice.

She demands dialogue with her oppressors. Silko also demands dialogue with her audience by forcing her readers to participate in a worldview different from their own (Carsten 4). Unlike conventional autobiographies, which follow patterns of employment that meet the literary expectations of Euro-American readers, Silko forces her readers to enter into a dynamic process much like oral tradition. Bernard A. Hirsch provides insight into the way in which the structure of Storyteller acts as a teaching process patterned after oral tradition. Hirsch argues that Silko's unique use of genre and voice engages the reader in a gradual process of constructing meaningful connections among the episodic elements of the text. He writes: Successive narrative episodes cast long shadows both forward and back, lending different or complementary shades of meaning to those preceding them and offering perspectives from which to consider those that follow.

Such perspectives are then themselves often expanded or in some way altered as the new material reflect back upon them. This kind of learning process is part of the dynamic oral tradition. Silko uses it in Storyteller to foster the kind of intimacy with the reader that the oral storyteller does with the listener. Such a relationship is born of

both the powerful claims of the story, in whole and in part on the reader's attention and the active engagement by the accretive process of the reader' imagination(Hirsh 1).

Hirsch makes it clear that Silko's narrative strategy demands that the reader become involved with the text, exploring interrelationships among texts, both written and photographic(1). By entering into this process, the reader must adopt an active means of interpretation similar to the mode of learning that takes place in the context of oral tradition. At the same time, this strategy is obviously one of resistance to the structures of emplotment evident in conventional autobiographies.

Silko also combines narrative and photographs. In the author's note to Sacred Waters, an experimental, self-published text, Silko explains that her intention in pairing narratives with visual images is to create a "field of vision for the reading of the text."[3]

For Silko, photographs are not meanto "illustrate" or to "serve the text"; rather, they provide dialogic extension of the narrative intended to speak to the reader on an equal and harmonious footing with written text. According to Silko, photographs are an integral and crucial component of the text because they provide for the full expression of narratives that are inseparable from locations that are personally and culturally significant.

In *Storyteller*, Silko resists emplotment altogether, choosing instead to reveal how her life has been influenced by cultural conflict. The challenge of Euro-American contact to tribal life is evident in her presentation of family history. Silko refuses to follow Euro-American autobiographical conventions of genealogy by beginning her family history with Aunt Susie. In choosing to begin her genealogy with female ancestors, Silko rejects the conventional autobiographical mode of privileging the patriarchal line. By rejecting those conventions, Silko makes evident that the

[3] The assembly of a series of historical events into a narrative with a plot.

patriarchal family structure is a Euro-American imposition that does not apply to Laguna culture (Allen Gunn wwtdb 7).

In addition, Silko portrays herself as the inheritor of oral tradition by placingherself in an ancestral line of storytellers. Hirsch has noted that the first photographs in *Storyteller*, those of Aunt Susie, Grandma A'mooh, Grandpa Hank, are all important storytellers in her life (Hirsh, the telling which continues 2).

Silko includes herself in this tradition in her reminiscence of Aunt Susie:

> As with any generation the oral tradition
> depends upon each person listening and
> remembering a portion
> and it is together
> rall of us remembering what we have heard together
> that creates the whole story
> the long story of the people. (Silko 6)

Silko makes it clear that her place in Laguna community life as a storyteller is at The center of her identity and that her story must be viewed in that context.

5.The Disruption of Tribal Life By Euro-American Contact

All of the short narratives of family history presented in *Storyteller* highlight ways tribal life has been disrupted by contact with European culture. Grandma Marie Anaya Marmon, whom Silko calls Grandma A'mooh, "which is the Laguna expression of endearment," dies soon after being taken away to Albuquerque to live with her daughter. Her daughter, living in the midst of white culture, went to work every day, leaving Grandma A'mooh with no one to talk to. Silko says of her grandmother:

> She might have lived without watering morning glories and
> without kids running through her kitchen
> but she did not last long without someone to talk to. (Silko 33)

5.1. Cultural Conflict and Racial Divide in Silko's Own Family

In her narrative of family history, Silko reveals the disruption in communal identity precipitated by European contact. Conventional autobiographies generally present genealogical histories of cultural continuity; in Storyteller, however, Silko provides insight into a family that is conflicted by the inclusion of European blood. She speaks of her great-grandmother, Marie Anaya, a native of Paguate village, and her greatgrandfather, Robert G. Marmon, who was of European origin. Her great-grandfather learned to speak Laguna, and Silko tells us that he apparently had no interest in returning to European culture; sometimes white people referred to him as "Squaw Man."

Silko relates a story about one of her great-grandfather's trips to Albuquerque that reveals how significant the experience of cultural conflict is to her family history. Her great-grandfather had his two sons with him on this trip, and when they became hungry, he decided to take them through thehotel lobby into a café. The manager stopped them, telling her great grandfather Marmon that he was always welcome, but when he had Indians with him he should use the back entrance to reach the café.

Silko writes: My great-grandfather said,

> "These are my sons." He
> walked out of the hotel
> and never would set foot in that hotel again
> not even years later when they began to allow Indians inside. (Silko 16)

The incident demonstrates the stark realities of cultural biases strong enough to create a racial divide that cannot be closed with the closest of blood ties. This family reminiscence is followed immediately by the "*Storyteller*" piece, giving the readers a sense of the disruptive aftermath of Euro-American contact on tribal individuals and family.

Another story is mentioned in the book to Silko‘s grandfather whom she calls Grandpa Hank, who also suffered from racism ,the incident that prevented him from accomplishing his dream of becoming an automobile designer as she writes :

> Grandpa Hank wanted to be an automobile designer, "but in 1912 Indian schools were strictly vocational schools and the teachers at Sherman told Grandpa that Indians

didn't become automobile designers.so Grandpa Hank became a store clerk..... He subscribed to Motor Trend and Popular Mechanics and followed the new car designs and results of road tests each year. In 1957 when Ford brought out the Thunderbird in a hardtop convertible, Grandpa Hank bought one and that was his car until he died. (Silko 184)

5.2. Cultural Oppression of Euro-American Imperialism on Native Americans

The theme of cultural oppression is reinforced by short fictional stories of Native Americans whose lives and families have been disrupted by Euro-American imperialism. "Lullaby" is the story of a Navajo woman whose children are taken away by government social workers and the BIA because a relative had died of tuberculosis. When her husband is fired by the rancher for whom he has worked many years because he is "too old", they are forced to leave their home on the ranch. Her husband turns to drink and, as the story ends, the woman is singing a traditional lullaby to her drunk husband as he freezes to death at the side of the road:

The earth is your mother, she holds you.
The sky is your father, he protects you.
Sleep, sleep.
Rainbow is your sister, she loves you.
The winds are your brothers, they sing to you.
Sleep, sleep
We are together always
We are together always
There never was a time
when this was not so. (Silko 48)

The theme of the lullaby presents a dramatic contrast the destruction of the lives that takes place in the story. Symbolic of the warmth and strength of cultural traditions that connect generations of people to each other and the earth, it is a poignant reminder of the beauty and stability of Native American orality. The story acts as a microcosm of the structure of Storyteller Throughout the book, Silko provides dialogic contrasts between the harmony of the Native American worldview and the disruption of that way of life.

Silko also presents the mythical worldview of Native American oral tradition in an ongoing dialectical relationship with the narratives of cultural discord. This strategy challenges the hegemony of Euro-American cultural and literary interpretation that situates the experiences of Indian peoples within plots of tragedy and defeat. The mythic frame of reference offers an alternative way of interpreting the experiences of tribal individuals; it positions the individual in harmonious relationship with the community and with the cosmos (Allen Gunn The Sacred Hoop 31).

Silko employs the mythical focus on harmony and beauty to highlight the conflict between Euro-American and Native American cosmologies and ethics.

6.The Harmonious Relationship With The Landscape As a Center of Identity

In particular, in regard to the Indian relationship to ―the landscape,‖ Momaday feels the Indian has always ―centered his life in the natural world. He is deeply invested in the earth,committed to it both in his consciousness and in his instinct. In him the sense of place is paramount. Only in reference to the earth can he persist in his true identity‖ (Momaday 14). He contrasts this idealized relationship with nature with the mainstream American attitude that sees the land as a commodity, ―an object of trade and utility.‖ In contrast, the Indian does not have a sense of ownership of land, he says. The well-being of individuals and communities depends upon this worldview. In a sense, Momaday projects a romantic image of the Indian worldview here. as a means of centering Native people, reminding them of how to think and act.

His affirmative ―You see, I stand in good relation to the earth‖ intones this as fact and ideal.

> Generalizations about Native American philosophy / spirituality are also on firm footing when discussing the earth. Native peoples almost universally view the earth as a feminine figure . . . . The relationship of Native peoples to the earth, their Mother, is a sacred bond with the creation. . . . Native peoples viewed many of the products of

> the natural environment as gifts from the Creator. . . . Man, in the Native American conception of the world, was not created to ―lord‖ over other beings, but rather to cooperate and share the bounty of the earth with the other elements of the creation. (Cornell 23).

In a series of narratives about clouds and rain, Silko allows the reader to see the significance of landscape to Laguna people. A traditional song associates the clouds and rain with the growth of corn, which is a primary Laguna symbol of creative power:

> Hena-ti-tzi
> He-ya-she-tzi
> So-you-tano-mi-ha-ai
> Of the clouds and rain
> clouds
> and growth of corn
> I sing. (Silko 148)

In the Pueblo worldview, corn provides the link between the human and nonhuman worlds, because it is symbolic of perfect cosmic order and balance.

Gunn Allen states that; Corn Mother connects the people to the earth because she "holds the essence of earth and conveys the power of earth to the people. .... Corn connects us to the heart of power, and that heart is lyatiku ―Earth Woman‖, who under the guidance of Thought woman ―the Creator‖ directs the people in their affairs" (The Sacred Hoop 22). Singing to the clouds and rain and for the growth of corn is therefore a ritual means of maintaining the interrelationality between human beings and the creative powers of the Pueblo cosmos. In this series of narratives, Silko includes two mythical stories explaining drought. Both reveal the idea of cosmic balance as a crucial element in Pueblo culture.

The first explains drought as the imbalance between the creative work of Corn woman and the equally creative rest of Iktoa'ak'o'ya-Reed Woman. Reed Woman spends all day bathing in the river, sending summer rain to the earth.Corn Woman, who works all day in the field, become angry with her sister, Reed Woman, and scolds her, driving her back to the original world below:

> And there was no more rain then.
> Everything dried up all the plants
> the corn the beans they all dried
> up
> and started blowing away in
> the wind.
> The people and the animals
> were thirsty
> They were starving (Silko 149-150).

The story illustrates how crucial cosmic balance, and human beings' role in maintaining it, is to survival in Pueblo thinking. The second narrative explains how Kaup'a'ta, the Gambler, captures the storm-clouds. The Gambler's home is high in the Zuni Mountains. Here he waits for5 unsuspecting hunters willing to gamble with him. When they eat his mixture of blue cornmeal and human blood, they fall under his spell and gamble until they lose everything they have, including their lives.The Gambler becomes so powerful that he eventually captures the storm-clouds. Sun Man, the father of the clouds, must restore cosmic balance by winning back the storm-clouds. With the help of his grandmother, Spider Woman, Sun Man guesses the Gambler's riddle and wins back his children, the clouds. Although Sun Man has the power to take Kaup'a'ta's life, he reveals his peaceful nature by sparing the Gambler:

> So Sun Man knew what to do: He took the flint blade and
> he cut out the Gambler's eyes He threw them into the
> south sky and they became the horizon stars of
> autumn.(Silko 159).

The clouds are released to bring rain again to the Earth. Kaup'a'ta's eyes become part of the landscape, a constant reminder to the people of the delicate balance of nature of which they are a part. The story and its corresponding constellation are also reminders to the Laguna Pueblo that ill intentions and individual domination, characteristics of their experience of Euro-American colonialism, disrupt the delicate balance of the world and threaten human survival.

Silko contrasts the harmonious worldview of the Pueblo people with the European Christian attachment to rites of death and salvation in a humorous story about a priest. The story tells of the death of a very old man, Teofilo, who had been away tending

sheep when he dies and is found by his family under a cottonwood tree. According to the Pueblo view of the world, death is part of the natural order of things. Teofilo's family realizes that if they conduct the appropriate rituals, his spirit will send rain clouds. Silko writes:

> Before they wrapped the old man, Leon took a piece of string out of his pocket and tied a small gray feather in the old man's long white hair. Ken gave him the paint. Across the brown wrinkled forehead he drew a streak of white and along the high cheekbones he drew a strip of blue paint. He paused and watched Ken throw pinches of corn meal and pollen into the wind that fluttered the small gray feather. Then Leon painted with yellow under the old man's broad nose, and finally, when he had painted green across the chin he smiled. "Send us rain clouds, Grandfather." (Silko 174)

After the funeral, Louise, one of Teofilo's granddaughters, wants the local priest to sprinkle holy water on her grandfather, "so he won't be thirsty." When Leon goes to Father Paul with Louise's request, the priest initially refuses; the last rites and funeral mass, so crucial to his notion of salvation, have not taken place:

The priest sank down into the green chair and picked up a glossy missionary magazine. He turned the colored pages full of lepers and pagans without looking at them. "You know I can't do that, Leon. There should have been the Last rites and a funeral Mass at the very least."

Eventually, the priest relents, reluctant to allow Teofilo's burial to be completely without Christian ritual:

> The priest walked away slowly. Leon watched him climb the hill, and when he had disappeared within the tall, thick walls, Leon turned to look up at the high blue mountains in the deep snow that reflected a faint red light from the west. He felt good because it was finished, and he was happy about the sprinkling of the holy water; now the old man could send them big thunderclouds for sure. (Silko 176)

It is quite obvious that the family views the ritual of holy water from within the Pueblo context and not from an orthodox Christian point of view. Ironically, the priest has been tricked into participating in a ceremony arising from an understanding of death that is totally alien to his religious perspective.

6.1. Storying the Land as Survivance Method in Native American Oral Traditions

Native American places are made, named, and reconstructed after colonization through storytelling. Storying the land is a process whereby the land is invested with the moral and spiritual perspectives specific to Native American communities. As seen in the oral traditions and written literature of Native American storytellers and authors, the voices of indigenous people retrace and remap cartographies for the land after colonization through storytelling. This shows that the Americas were storied by Native American communities long before colonial contact beginning in the fifteenth century and demonstrates how the land continues to be storied in the present as a method of decolonization and cultural survivance.

Storyteller exposes and examines manifestations of the oral tradition in multiple forms, including poetry, interviews, fiction, photography, and film, to demonstrate that the land itself, through storytelling, becomes a repository of the oral tradition. The dissertation investigates oral narratives from pre-contact and postcolonial time periods and across numerous nations and geographical regions in the Americas, including stories from the Mayan PopolVuh; Algonkian; Western Apache; Hopi; Iroquois; and Laguna Pueblo stories; and the contemporary poetry and fiction of Joy Harjo (Mvskoke/Creek Nation) and Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo). As a matter fact, many Native American tribes contributed in shaping the Native American identity.

In the oral traditions and written literature of Native American storytellers and authors, the voices of indigenous people story the Americas, investing the land with the moral, spiritual, and cultural perspectives specific to their communities. The place-making that occurs in and through these stories enacts cartographies for indigenous communities which meld geography with native history.

The Americas were storied by Native American communities long before colonial contact beginning in the fifteenth century, as evidenced in works such as the Mayan PopolVuh[4]. This process of storying the land has never ceased; contrary to the myth of the ―vanishing Indian‖[5], the indigenous people who live in the Americas have continually made, retraced, and adapted these stories.

In his essay, ―Yeats and Decolonization‖, Edward Said[6] discusses the geographical violence of imperialism on Native places, places which were once inhabited by indigenous communities prior to contact with colonizers. Said asserts that the imagination plays a critical role in restoring indigenous ―geographical identity‖. In Said's view, the colonial subject is exiled from an indigenous landscape, which is transformed by colonization.

That landscape can be recreated, despite these transformations, through the ―cartographic impulse‖, an act of the imagination that seeks ―to map, to invent, or to discover, a third nature, which is not pristine and prehistorical...but one that derives historically from the deprivations of the present‖ (Said 79). Through the metaphorical space of a ―third nature‖[7],writers can restore, reclaim, or recreate their native places, places which may be physically altered or physically irretrievable.

The geographical violence Said describes is, in the case of the Americas, inextricably bound with linguistic violence. The journal of Christopher Columbus from his voyage to the Americas in 1492 and his letter to Queen Isabella of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon in 1493 show how his intention to claim ownership of

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[4] The PopolVuh, literally ―Council Book‖ or ―Book of the People‖, was originally a hieroglyphic book of ancient Mayan literature. Hieroglyphic books were burned by missionaries after European contact in the 16th century.

[5] At the core of America's frontier myth is the image of ―the Vanishing Indian.‖ Noble, brave, and yet destined to sacrifice both freedom and land for the making of America.

[6] Edward Said. Professor of literature at Columbia University, a public intellectual, and a founder of the academic field of postcolonial studies.

[7] In speaking of a ―third nature‖, Said builds on the concept of a ―second nature‖ proposed by the geographer Neil Smith, who defines the term as a landscape transformed by the commodification of space under capitalism and imperialism.

the land of the Americas for Spain was enacted through renaming the lands he encountered. Christopher Columbus portrayed the Native American as ―Inhuman‖, ―Half-Naked Savages‖,― Hostile and Uncivilized Creatures.‖ (Said 84)

7.Tricksterism: Strategy of Resistance to Colonialism

In many Native American communities, trickster tales were often orally presented, usually in a creative or dramatic telling. Trickster tales often served as source of entertainment as well as morality tales for children; therefore, the tales were usually narrated by a highly respected member of the community. Trickster tales were among the most entertaining these specialists presented. It is said that although many of the members of the community might have known the tales, it was the specialists who memorized the tales.

The maintaining of the trickster stories was thus able to be continued and successful. As the teller of the tale, she was permitted to expand or embellish the tale as s/he saw fit as long as the plot and primary characters were retained. The drama in the tales such as the absurd and scandalous behavior, as well as comical mockery, made them material for easy listening. Trickster tales were presented as morality tales for children because, as the trickster found himself in trouble because of excessive pride, lust, or greed, children could be reminded of proper behavior. Some authorities believe that the trickster tales served as safety valves for adults as well by making fun of seriousritualsor difficultsocial situations.

All in all, the trickster figure challenges notions of good and evil, along with every other aspect of cultural sophistication. Ultimately, however, the trickster shows us what may be the hardest to admit: the truth about ourselves. (Minderhout11)

One of the primary characteristics of the trickster figure is its ambiguity. In Native American Indian mythology, where tricksters are a common feature, they are said to appear as supernatural creatures, usually playing an important mythological role in hu man creation—often unintentionally. It is important to note that although these

creatures are supernatural in origin, they never appear god-like. The trickster, however, can take many forms and usually transform himself into others if he wishes.

Tricksters often laugh, play jokes, and delight in wicked and scandalous behavior which, however, has a tendency to get trickster in trouble. Often, in fact, the trickster is also a fool, and his scheming plans come back to bite him.

Silko uses the trickster tradition of Native Americans to make a point. In the case of Storyteller, she relies on a "tricky" tale, set in contemporary time, to demonstrate that she chooses to interpret her life story according to Laguna Pueblo lore and tradition, not according to the stories of the dominant culture.

The "Yellow Woman" story, which portrays the mythical kidnapping of Kochininako by a ka'tsina spirit as the seduction of a contemporary Pueblo woman by a cattle rustler, asks the reader to question the boundaries between the everyday and the mythical. The story tells of a young woman who finds a man waiting for her at the river when she goes to get water. She is strangely drawn to him and goes with him into the mountains and stays with him several days. When a rancher catches them transporting meat from his stolen cattle, she is oddly disappointed.

After reluctantly returning home from her escapade, the woman enters the world of the everyday;her mother is teaching her grandmother to make Jello; her husband is playing with the baby. A. LaVonne Ruoff points out that the world with which the woman decides to identify is crucial to the story's message. The question is whether she will rely on the mythical tradition to decide what is real or upon the world that has been influenced by European modernity.

Ruoff observes: Although Silko's "Yellow Woman" is based on traditional abduction tales, it is more than a modernized version. Silko is less concerned with the events involved in Yellow Woman's abduction and her subsequent return home than with the character's confusion about what is real and what is not. Underlying this is the character's identification with Keres legends and her temporary rejection of the confining monotony of life within the pueblo (Ruoff 4).

In the end, the woman chooses to interpret her experience as a Yellow Woman story, placing herself in the tradition of her grandfather's stories. She tells the reader:—I decided to tell them that some Navajo had kidnapped me, but I was sorry that old Grandpa wasn't alive to hear my story because it was the Yellow Woman stories he liked to tell best‖(Silko 60).

With the young woman's choice of the mythic plot for her story, Silko is suggesting that tribal literary traditions provide the appropriate interpretative framework for Native American individuals' experience, not the stories of EuroAmerican modernity.

8. Mythic Narrative To Take Back The Power of Language and The Interpretation of History

A worldview can pertain to an individual, group, or society. Overall, a worldview is a set of beliefs and values that are honored and withheld by a number of people. A worldview includes how the person or group interacts with the world around them, including land, animals, and people. Every person and society ha,s a worldview. Many societies pass on their worldview to their children to ensure worldview continuity. As people interact and learn from one another, it is not uncommon for them to acquire the beliefs of other worldviews. Worldviews evolve as people and societies evolve. [8]

> I believe that the American Indian is possessed of a vision that is unique, a perception of the human condition that distinguishes him as a man and as a race . . . the sense of place, of the sacred, of the beautiful, of humanity – the Indian has had and continues to have asingular and vital role in the story of man on this planet. There, in the center, he stands in good relation to all points in the wide circle of the world. (Momaday 26)

The root of the difference between the worldviews is that they generally subscribe to opposite approaches to knowledge, connectedness, and science. Indigenous cultures focus on a holistic understanding of the whole that emerged from the millennium of their existence and experiences. Traditional Western worldviews tend to be more

[8] https://teachingtreaties.wordpre-western-historical-world-views/ . Accessed 02 May 2018.

concerned with science and concentrate on compartmentalized knowledge and then focus on understanding the bigger, related picture.

Silko positions a narrative patterned after Native American myth at the center of Storyteller. Structurally, the narrative provides a focal point for the dialogue among the various texts in the book, and the mythical story gives the reader some important interpretive insights into the other texts.[9]

It is a story attributing the destructive aspects of European civilization to the misuse of language in storytelling. According to the story, in the beginning, the world was already complete, with no need for European culture. The break in the order of the cosmos that allowed the destructive power of the whites into the world occurred at a gathering of witches. The witches, who come from all corners of the world, begin to show off their powers, each trying to outdo the others.

No one knows from which tribe the last witch came or whether it was male or female, but this witch unleashed its awful power through telling a story.As the witch tells its horrible tale of death and destruction, a new kind of people are born, a race that is destined to alienate themselves from the world as it is meant to be.

> Then they grow away from the earth then they
> grow away from the sun then they grow away
> from the plants and animals.
> They see no life
> When they look they
> see only objects.
> The world is a dead thing for them the
> trees and rivers are not alive the
> mountains and stones are not alive
> The deer and bear are objects
> They see no life. (Silko 125)

A myth set "in the beginning," predicting the coming of the whites and attributing their creation to the evil of witchcraft, acts as a complete turning of the tables on

[9] Silko also places a version of the story at the structural center of her novel Ceremony. in Ceremony, the narrative provides the pivotal point of understanding: the witch's story, a misuse of the power of language, has set into motion.

cultural interpretation and inscription. In this story, Silko interprets the conflict in worldviews from a Native American perspective. By resisting conventional literary models and replacing them with a mythic narrative, Silko manages to reverse the history of the dominance of the Euro-American voice.

Through re-telling stories of the past and bringing traditional mythic figures back into existence in her stories. Silko provides structure and meaning and the pattern of a relation between the self or Native American identity and the world both past and present. Silko imagines a connection of Native American life and tradition, wholeness, and timelessness, as myth and fiction, past and present, interlink in the circularity of the narratives. By combining the oral tradition or storytelling into her writing, Silko reconciles past and present, myth and reality, myth and fiction, and demarginalizes the Native American perspective.

Traditional storytelling and myth participate in the circular structure of the short stories, which run parallel to the circular patterns in the content of the stories. The circular designs present in such themes, along with an awareness of the symbolism of the circle in Native American beliefs, lead Silko‘s reader to a greater understanding of the Native American perceptions of the notions of time, ceremony, ritual communal healing, and cosmic order.

The circular designs present in such themes, along with an awareness of the symbolism of the circle in Native American beliefs, lead Silko‘s reader to a greater understanding of the Native American perceptions of the notions of time, ceremony, ritual communal healing, and cosmic order. Silko‘s position on the edge of things, her mixed-blood identity, fully places her within the contact zone previously described. Silko is not only repeating traditional stories and myths, but also reinventing them within day-to-day‘s contact zone so as to reclaim power and identity that have been lost through colonialism: power over one‘s body (Stein 23).

Through stories of Native American survival, of Native American mythic occurrences within the present, and of Native American subversion Silko is opposing

the dominant order of mainstream America[10]. In Storyteller, Silko takes back the power of language, counteracting the worldview that has been the cause of cultural chaos and, according to Pueblo knowledge, cosmic disintegration. Silko's dialogical juxtaposition of Native American story and imagery with conflicting images of cultural disorder creates a powerful indictment of Euro American oppression.

9. Pueblo Identity: "Rejection of Individualism and Autonomy"

Silko resists the Euro-American demythologization of American Indian identity. The sacred character of the land and the Pueblo's religious and cultural interrelationality with it are recurring themes throughout *Storyteller* (Carsten 20).

Growing up at Laguna, Silko learned that her community, their stories, and their religious traditions are inextricably bound to the land. In addition, the Pueblo worldview recognizes the responsibilities of human beings to maintain the delicate relationships among people, the community, and the land. Pueblo religious activity and oral tradition is focused on cosmic cohesion, not personal inner experience, as is the European Christian understanding of religion.

Joe S. Sando, a Jemez Pueblo, notes that the prayers, oratories, and songs that have been maintained by the Pueblos since ancestral times "are not spontaneous outpourings, or outbursts of the troubled heart, but carefully memorized prayerful requests for an orderly life, rain, good crops, plentiful game, pleasant days, and protection from the violence and the vicissitudes of nature." The various ceremonial societies of the Pueblos have "particular responsibilities for weather, fertility, curing, hunting, and pleasure or entertainment of the people" (Sando 22-23).

> Historically, American Indians developed societies with well-defined roles, responsibilities, government and economic systems, recreational and leisure styles, religious rites and ceremonies, social behavior in which group involvement, support and consensus played major roles. Their social, economic and political traditions reflected a strong emphasis on group involvement and decision making (Edwards & Edwards1980).

[10] Mainstream America. Ordinary American people who are not ethnically or culturally marginalized.

The interconnectedness of person-community-land thus forms the matrix around which Pueblo identity revolves. For this reason, Silko rejects the Euro-American model of individualism and autonomy as an appropriate vehicle of Pueblo identity. She chooses instead to inscribe the self as existing in the complex inter-relationality of Pueblo cosmology as it is expressed in oral tradition.

CONCLUSION

History and identity are elastic terms. They have hundreds of definitions. Hence, psychologists, sociologists and chroniclers attempted to define these extensible, contested concepts. They sought to elucidate each concept as a single segment along with trying to demonstrate their affinity and interdependency. The two concepts‘ interconnection raised debates amid scholars. Authors also tried throughout history to trace the complexities and the nebulous nature history and Identity.

Leslie Marmon Silko‘s selected book, *Storyteller,* is a resistant literary text. Silko's reputation as a short fiction writer rests primarily on *Storyteller*, a compilation of short stories, poems, autobiographical passages, and photographs. The main thematic concerns of Storyteller include the alienation of Native Americans in society and the importance of Native American traditions and community in modern times. Her stories are influenced by traditional oral tales that she heard growing up on a Laguna Pueblo Indian reservation in northern New Mexico.

In this multidisciplinary endeavor, the Native American novelist, Silko, adopted new stylistic narrative techniques to portray the way of living within a Native American tribe, by demonstrating her deep commitment, and devotion to defend her tribe‘s history and identity, through her works where Laguna tribe is a recurrent theme. She aimed at bestowing and exhibiting the poker face of the predominant mainstream American society, which is thought of as the safeguarded secured heaven from the religious, ideological and cultural annihilation and discrimination.

The first chapter of this study attempted to shed light on the socio-historical context of the novel. This chapter provides a broader context to better understand the socio-historical context of Leslie Marmon Silko‘s *Storyteller*. It sheds light on the literature of the Natives and its historical evolution from an oral tradition to an acknowledged literature.

The Natives needed recognition and renovation of the whole community as dependent, sovereign, magisterial people in the modern world. Throughout their long history, the Natives resisted the annihilation of the colonizer, but most of their efforts were in vain. They were marginalized and oppressed; they had no voice to express themselves, their culture, their cherished history, and their spiritual and religious beliefs. Thus, they used their intellectual abilities and intelligences to prove the importance and the endurance of their culture, traditions and religious beliefs in the contemporary authoritative worlds.

The chapter also showed how Native American writers were able to challenge the stereotypes given by the white society and their contribution in shaping the Native American identity throughout literature.

Leslie Marmon Silko is dedicated to the cause of reviving Native American culture and literature, and her reputation stands tall as one of the most prominent contemporary Native American writers. Her mixed ancestry has influenced her works in many ways; she also acknowledges the influence of her own family‘s storytelling on her manner and the way of their revelation. Growing up on the edge of the Laguna Pueblo Reservation, in which she gets most of her inspirations, she have a strong sense of belonging to the Laguna tribe despite her mixed-blood origins,and she has always identified herself more strongly with her Laguna Pueblo roots than with her European ones.

In the second chapter we aimed at highlighting Leslie Marmon Silko‘s *Storyteller* attempt to re-appropriate Native American identity and history, by taking an example of one tribe which is hers ―The Laguna Pueblo‖. Through the short narratives and

poems, the reader discovers the importance of the oral tradition and its crucial role in the Laguna‘s highly spiritual community, for them it is a way to preserve their history and a guide for their present day life, also to understand the world around them.

Storyteller shows the strong bound and the deep connectedness that Native Americanshave with their land.For them it is not just the place where they live or a property, but land is part of their existence, a component of their identity , a sacred element of their culture and religious beliefs . for most natives it often referred to as ―Mother Earth‖ with the same affection that a child has towards his mother. When a reader approaches that understanding, he will definitely understand the size of loss and grief that Indian Americans felt when they lost and were removed from their homelands.

Silko‘s *Storyteller* addresses both native and non-native readers andthrough this book, the author resists Euro-American imperialism and the white dominant culture, shows that their attempts of assimilation have failed its purpose of erasing their history and identity. It is her way to say we are still here as Native Americans with our own identity and culture, the storytelling continues preserving with it our history.

Throughout the pages of the book Silko demythologizes the landscape, which has been desacralized by those who have reduced it to commodity. As Paul Beekman Taylor points out, in Euro American society, the sacred has been relegated to the private sphere, compartmentalized away from the more public institutions of community life, its economics, politics, and social intercourse (Taylor 1). In such a setting, mythical modes of thinking have little bearing on the daily life of the autonomous individual. Silko challenges this view of reality by drawing on the mythic precedents of Laguna stories in reflecting on contemporary life. Silko's interweaving of the mythic and the mundane challenges the dominance of EuroAmerican epistemologies of objectivity and empirical truth in autobiography and the concept of literary autobiography itself. For Silko, the truths of mythical knowledge have the power to speak to human experience in the present. In Storyteller, Silko sets up a

strategic dialogue among myth, fiction, and community and family lore, resisting the power of the dominant culture to circumscribe the meanings of self- and cultural identity and their expressions in the genre of autobiography.

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Résumé

Cette étude porte sur la relation entre la littérature et l'identité amérindienne dans *Storyteller* de Leslie MarmonSilko (1981), et sa tentative de se réapproprier l'identité et l'histoire autochtones. Le livre sélectionné mélange des histoires originales et de la poésie influencée par les contes oraux traditionnels qu'elle a entendu grandir sur le Laguna Pueblo au Nouveau-Mexique avec des passages autobiographiques, des contes populaires, des souvenirs de famille et des photographies. En mélangeant les genres littéraires traditionnels et occidentaux, Silko examine les thèmes de la mémoire, de l'aliénation, du pouvoir et de l'identité. Elle communique des notions amérindiennes concernant le temps, la nature et la spiritualité ; et explore comment les histoires et la narration façonnent les gens et les communautés. Le conteur illustre comment on peut cadrer l'identité culturelle collective dans les formes littéraires contemporaines, et illumine l'importance du mythe, de la tradition orale et du rituel dans le propre travail de Silko. Dans cette entreprise multidisciplinaire, nous nous intéressons à exposer les maux du monde blanc et les syndromes d'hybridité qui ont tourmenté et troublé la vie des autochtones.

ملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة العلاقة بين الأدب والهوية الأمريكية في Leslie MarmonSilko's (Storyteller (1981 ، ومحاولة لاستعادة هوية السكان الأصليين والتاريخ. الكتاب مزيج مختارة من القصص الأصلية والشعر يتأثر الحكايات الشفهية التقليدية سمعت يشبون على الهنود الحمر لاغونا في نيو مكسيكو مع مقاطع السيرة الذاتية والحكايات الشعبية، وذكريات العائلة والصور الفوتوغرافية. يمزج سيلكو بين الأدب التقليدي والغربي الأدبي مواضيع الذاكرة والتغريب والقوة والهوية. إنه ينقل أفكار الأمريكيين الهنود عن الوقت والطبيعة والروحانية ؛ ويستكشف كيف تشكل القصص والسرد الناس والمجتمعات. يوضح رواة القصص كيفية تأطير الهوية الثقافية الجماعية في الأشكال الأدبية المعاصرة ، وإلقاء الضوء على أهمية الأسطورة والتقاليد الشفوية والطقوس في عمل سيلكو نفسه. في هذه الشركة متعددة التخصصات، ونحن مهتمون في فضح شرور البيضاء المتلازمات العالم والتهجين التي يعاني منها والحياة الأصلية المضطربة.