

**Cultural Hybridity or Nativism? Representation of Counter  
History in the Select Works of Leslie Marmon Silko**

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in

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By

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**2025**

## DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that the present work entitled, “**Cultural Hybridity or Nativism? Representation of Counter History in the Select Works of Leslie Marmon Silko**” in fulfilment of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** is outcome of research work carried out by me under the supervision of **Dr. Sanjay Prasad Pandey**, Professor, Dept. of English, Lovely Professional University, Punjab, India. In keeping with general practice of reporting scientific observations, due acknowledgements have been made whenever work described here has been based on findings of other investigators. This work has not been submitted in part or full to any other university or institution for the award of any degree.

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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the work reported in the Ph.D. thesis entitled “**Cultural Hybridity or Nativism? Representation of Counter History in the Select Works of Leslie Marmon Silko**” submitted in fulfillment for the reward of degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in the Department of English, is the research work carried out by Ms. Neena Kumari, Regd. No. 1190089, for the award of the degree of **Ph.D.** to **Lovely Professional University Phagwara, Punjab** is bonafide record of her original work carried out under my supervision and no part of the thesis has been submitted for any other degree, diploma or equivalent course

Date- 11-08-2025

Dr. Sanjay Prasad Pandey

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## ABSTRACT

I, as a researcher on the present research study under the title of “**Cultural Hybridity or Nativism? Representation of Counter History in the Select Works of Leslie Marmon Silko**” carried out a detailed analysis of the works of Native American Writer, Leslie Marmon Silko and analyzed theoretical terms of hybridity and nativism probed in her writings. The thesis is an attempt to study the influence of European colonizers on colonized Native American people and strategies of resistance used by the natives to resist colonial oppression

In any colonial situation, after facing oppression and atrocities at the hands of colonizers, colonized people are left with only two opposing options. One option is embracing change through the strategy of hybridity and the second is revival and reclamation of native culture through another strategy of nativism. Both hybridity and nativism act as resistive strategies of the colonized people against the colonizers, but may act oppositely. The conflict between these two opposing postcolonial terms is the main lens through which the works of Leslie Marmon Silko are studied and analyzed.

The works selected for the study are- *Ceremony* (1977), *Storyteller* (1981), *Almanac of The Dead* (1991), and *Gardens in The Dunes* (1999). All these works highlight the working of European colonialism in America. Most of the characters in these works feel the predicament of being colonized by European colonizers. They suffer from the dilemma of cultural conflict and find it difficult to adjust to a modernized society. These works are also embedded with the depiction of Native American history and cultural trends and values of these cultural trends in the life of these people.

A postcolonial hypothetical technique in the development of Native American literature reveals the ways in which these writers seek decolonization and address themselves in their works. The postcolonial hypothesis is mostly concerned with dissecting the social, economic and political impact of colonial powers on colonized persons and colonized society's reaction to colonizers. Several researchers and thinkers have contributed to the postcolonial hypothesis. Homi Bhabha is one of them. Homi K. Bhabha is a well-known English pundit and academic who was born in Bombay, India,

in 1949. He is known for his eminent ideas such as hybridity, imitation, and uncertainty, which are mentioned in his well praised book, *The Location of Culture* (1994).

Bhabha uses the concept of hybridity to highlight the pioneer uncertainty of colonizers and makes sense of how social connection and intermixing of two distinct societies leads to another cross-breed culture, creating a 'third space of articulation'. This crossover culture is viewed as neither colonized nor colonizer, but it addresses a blended free social personality. Leslie Marmon Silko employs a similar concept of social hybridity in her attempts to understand the social intermixing of Europeans and Native Americans and its consequences. The majorities of her characters are of mixed heritage and have mixed social personalities. Leslie Marmon Silko has also translated the names of a few Native American characters into English. Leslie Marmon Silko has also applied the European pattern of writing and merged it with local orality and storytelling, resulting in diverse hybridity in her works. Frantz Fanon, a French theorist and pundit, is another figure associated with the postcolonial idea. He is well-known for his outstanding ideas on two-fold awareness, provincial distance, and public culture. Frantz Fanon studied the development of provincial colonialism and its psychological influence on mistreated people. He saw a sense of inadequacy among the colonized, as well as their futile attempts to imitate conquerors. Colonized people see themselves through the eyes of European colonists, who see colonized people as agnostic and coarse. They soon lose their healthy self-awareness and personality as they seek to imitate conquerors. In search of the point of decolonization and nativism, Fanon asserts that in order to combat pioneer abuse, we must remember our past and history and adhere to its way of life. He asserts that colonized people can regain their identity by developing and remembering their own culture and history. In her works, Leslie Marmon Silko employs a similar concept of nativism as an anti-colonial evolution. Silko also uses nativism to make the idea of decolonization and commitment to public culture.

Since I introduced the question, “Cultural Hybridity or Nativism? Representation of Counter History in the Select Works of Leslie Marmon Silko” is concerned with the cultural interaction of Europeans and Native Americans, influence of this interaction on natives as well as the essence of Native American cultural values,

so my research is based on some predetermined objectives related to my topic, which seek to achieve my research's goal.

1. To trace the roots of cultural hybridity and nativism.
2. To explore the nature of European imperialism in the context of the selected texts.
3. To locate and highlight the representation of the counter history in the select works.
4. To apply the concepts of hybridity and nativism on Leslie Marmon Silko's texts.

Leslie Marmon Silko is a well-known writer of Native American Literature. She has written texts of different genre such as novels, poems, short-stories and non-fiction essays. She has also played role in documentary film. Her works are classified under the category of Native American Literature. Her novels: *Ceremony* (1977), *Almanac of the Dead* (1991), *Gardens in the Dunes* (2000), and *Storyteller* (1981), a collection of short stories and poems have secured her wide popularity in the field of literature, especially Native American Literature. With these collections, Leslie Marmon Silko is now considered a major contributor to Native American Renaissance Literature. Silko writes with a strong sense of affinity and connectivity with the Native American culture and tradition. Her works are based on Native American cultural trends and these native cultural trends such as stories, ceremonies, myths, songs etc. are woven under the background of European imperialism of America. Through her text, Silko reveals the reality of European imperialism in America and its influence on Native American communities. The focus of the thesis is on the strategic use of resistive techniques of hybridity and nativism. The thesis is comprised of five chapters

Chapter 1 is an attempt to study and analyze historical elements of Native America. There is a discussion on nature and arrival and settlement of ancestor of natives of America. Along with the historical beginning, a detailed analysis of the cultural background and trends of Native American communities also finds a place in the chapter. Native American culture is not new but, since the beginning of native civilization, it has been developed and nurtured by many generations of these natives. Further, there is a discussion on the beginning and establishment of Native American Literature with all its relevant themes. Native American Literature is a direct expression

of reaction of colonized natives to ruling powers. Finally, the next portion of the chapter is concerned with the discussion of the life and background of the author, a critical survey of her career, characteristics of her major literary creations, and her excellency and position in the field of literature.

Chapter 2 is concerned with a detailed analysis of postcolonial terms of hybridity and nativism. There is a discussion on how hybridity and nativism emerged as major elements of postcolonial studies and what is their relevance in the postcolonial world. There is a discussion on all the critics and theorists who have contributed to the exploration of these terms, but special attention is paid to the concept of hybridity and nativism explored by theorists, Homi Bhabha and Frantz Fanon. According to Bhabha hybridity is the result of cultural interaction of colonizers and colonized communities. According to Homi Bhabha, hybridity serves as a tool for colonized peoples to counter the pioneering power of conquerors. On the other hand, Frantz Fanon focuses on native's reaction to colonial authorities. Fanon asserts the importance national culture and literature.

Chapter 3 discusses the working of European imperialism in America and thereafter marginalization of Native American communities in their own country. European colonizers have used every possible effort to subjugate native colonized people of America. Leslie Marmon Silko, an exponent of Native American Renaissance Literature, has focused her texts on a detailed explanation of European imperialistic activities and strategies of assimilation used by these settlers. Like other writers of Native American Literature, Silko has brutally exposed and criticized colonizers. These people, according to Silko, are vampires who leave no chance of sucking blood of innocent colonized people. Most of the characters in her texts feel the predicament of being colonized and therefore suffer from the problems of identity conflict and alienation. Their pathetic and marginalized position is the direct influence of imperialistic and assimilative strategies of the colonizers.

Chapter 4 is based on a detailed analysis of selected texts of Silko in the light of hybridity. The concept of hybridity in the works of Leslie Marmon Silko explains the inevitable tendency of cultural influence on native tribes of America. Silko has skillfully presented the prevailing situation of hybridity among the Native Americans.

As a result of imperialistic activities, American society, as well as culture, become hybridized with European trends and culture. Instead, most of the characters of the texts are mixed blood and try to reconcile between two widely different worlds. Like Homi Bhabha, Silko also focuses on the failure of European's claim of civilizing natives. Both Bhabha and Silko assert that hybridity undermines the authority of superiority of colonizers and break down the symmetry of binary opposition.

Chapter 5 is based on Silko's efforts of portraying counter-history from the perspective of Native Americans, rather than what has already been displayed by European settlers to justify their activities in America. Further, the chapter also presents the role of native culture in the life of Native American people and depicts how native cultural trends are aided in relieving natives from the pangs of identity conflict and marginalization. By challenging the Euro-American perspective of history, Silko joins the lineage of those writers whose aim is glorification of such history of America that was kept hidden by the European settlers from the last five thousand years. Like Frantz Fanon, Silko asserts that native's stability can be regained by remembering own culture and history and construction own literature.

The concluding chapter of the thesis briefly explains and summaries the finding of the thesis. Three novels and one collection of short stories and poems, under the lens of hybridity and nativism, have been discussed in the thesis. All these texts follow the same themes and explore Silko's idea of how hybridity and nativism help natives to come out of the dilemmas and adjust to multicultural American society. Through nativism, Silko seeks to revitalize the relevance of native cultural values in the life of native people and through hybridity, Silko suggests the necessity of cultural accommodation to meet the present situation. This indicates that Native American people need to develop a nativistic spirit as well as the ability to adapt and modify tradition to adjust to modern situations. Without using these strategies, the possibility of living a comfortable life and attaining stability would not have been possible for the characters of Silko. This depicts that not only for Silko's characters of American origin but for all the colonized communities, both strategies are necessary to meet the challenges of the postcolonial world.



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Ms. Neena Kumari

Research Scholar

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## Chapter 1

### Making of the Author

The thesis entitled, ‘Cultural Hybridity or Nativism? Representation of Counter History in the Select Works of Leslie Marmon Silko’ is an attempt to study the influence of European colonizers on colonized Native American people and the strategies of resistance used by the natives to resist colonial oppression. The study is based on the writings of Native American Writer, Leslie Marmon Silko, and attempts to analyze theoretical terms of hybridity and nativism probed in her writings. Leslie Marmon Silko is one of the prominent writers of Native American literature. She is a leading contributor to the Native American Renaissance. Her works are embedded with the influence of colonization on Native Americans and the relevance of Native American culture in their life.

In any colonial situation, after facing oppression and atrocities at the hands of colonizers, colonized people are left with only two opposing options. One option is embracing change through the strategy of hybridity and the second is revival and reclamation of native culture through another strategy of nativism. Both hybridity and nativism act as resistive strategies of the colonized people against the colonizers, but may act oppositely. The conflict between these two opposing postcolonial terms is the main lens through which the works of Leslie Marmon Silko are studied and analyzed.

The works selected for the study are- *Ceremony* (1977), *Storyteller* (1981), *Almanac of The Dead* (1991), and *Gardens in The Dunes* (1999). All these works highlight the working of European colonialism in America. Most of the characters in these works feel the predicament of being colonized by European colonizers. They suffer from the dilemma of cultural conflict and find it difficult to adjust to modernized society. These works are also embedded with the depiction of Native American history and cultural trends and values of these cultural trends in the life of these people.

To uncover the cross-racial and cross-cultural relationship between Native Americans and Euro-Americans and the influence of this relationship on native inhabitants of America, it becomes necessary first to uncover the historical background of Native Americans and their cultural trends. So, this chapter is an attempt to study the historical

background and cultural trends of Native American people. The discussion on the beginning of Native American literature with its relevant themes along with the background and characteristics of Leslie Marmon Silko's works also find a place in the chapter.

America is a vast country and home to approximately five hundred different native cultural groups and tribes speaking about two hundred different languages. These native inhabitants of America are known by different names such as Native Americans, Amerindians, Aboriginal Americans, Amerind, Alaska Natives, or Indigenous Americans. It is estimated that about ten thousand years ago, late in the ice age, ancestors of these contemporary Native Americans traveled in small family bands and arrived in America from North Asia through Alaska. There are various stories about the timing and place of arrival and settlement of these initial tribes of contemporary Native Americans in America. According to one theory, explored by Townsend in his book, *First Americans: A History of Native People* (2019), "the Bering land bridge, opened in successive periods roughly between 30,000 and 13,000 years ago, connecting Alaska and Siberia and allowing for human migration from East Asia into North America" (Townsend 04). However, many contemporary Native American tribes assert that their stories are enough to talk about their origin.

It is also believed that the ancestors of these Native Americans do not belong to one race but in their vessels runs the blood of different races such as Mongolian, African, Asian, and European blood of Eastern Mediterranean races. Thus, we can say that they are not one but belong to different racial groups who gathered in America from different areas. Many of them were hunting and gathering cultures while others were agricultural groups. Their food search led them toward America. Soon they spread out throughout America, covered the entire continent, and became its native inhabitants, currently known as Indigenous Americans. These initial explorers of America took full benefit of the resources available on this land. These initial inhabitants of America and ancestors of contemporary Native Americans are known as Paleo-Indians.

Archeological excavations and evidence suggest that these indigenous people of America also exhibited formidable adaptability to different environmental conditions. This ability helped them to adjust to surrounding environmental conditions with

available resources. Those who moved northwards developed hunting and gathering skills. These Paleo-Indian hunters of ancient America “employed atlatls, hand-held tools carved out of wood, that allowed hunters to throw spears farther and with more force, thus making it possible for a hunter to make a fatal throw from a safer distance” (Townsend 08). The people of coastal areas were dependent upon fish and coastal berries. Few others who settled in the semi-arid regions started agricultural practices by growing different crops such as corn, squash, beans, and potatoes. Other important foods adopted by these people are peanuts, sunflowers, vanilla, tomato, chocolates, etc. Luebering in his book, *Native American History* (2011), remarks that the archeological excavations advocate that:

Native Americans were experimenting with agriculture during the Archaic Period, perhaps as early as 6000 bc. Over the next millennium, farming practices had taken root in the cultures of many American Indian groups, allowing more sedentary and stratified societies to emerge. Farming cultures included the Adena culture (c. 500 bc–ad 100), in the Ohio River valley, and the nearby Hopewell culture (c. 200 bc–ad 500). Excavations of burial sites in Ohio and Illinois established that these peoples also created widespread trade networks that reached south to the Gulf of Mexico and west to the Rocky Mountains. (Luebering 12)

Based on environmental conditions, they also learned to adjust to hot desert summers as well as frozen winters. They even managed to adjust and change themselves to meet shifting environmental conditions and circumstances. Archeological excavations of different sites also suggest that these people also developed trade networks ranging from the Gulf of Mexico to the Rocky Mountains. The artifacts, especially stone tools, recovered from different sites also suggest that these people also made a wide variety of goods from perishable materials. These tools or weapons helped them in their hunting process and also protected them from becoming prey to large animals. “The Monte Verde archaeological site in Chile, dating back to 10,500 bc, and the site near Clovis, N.M., with stone spear points and other artifacts that date to about 9000 bc, have been especially fruitful in this regard” (Luebering 11).

Later on, these aboriginal tribes of America established societies and developed a wide range of traditions and cultures, especially in the form of oral tales and folklores. These cultural features of early American cultures are still prevalent in the Native American tribes. These aboriginal people also developed many monumental architectures, big cities, states, kingdoms, and empires. One of the most striking examples of these cultures that constructed temples and council buildings in the early Americas is the Mississippian culture. “Pendants carved pottery, and other luxury items from the period of the Mississippian chiefdoms are well-preserved artifacts with images of gods and cosmic animals appearing somewhere near a carved or etched image of a leader” (Townsend 23). These preserved remnants of ancient American cultures are enough in understanding the history and nature of these cultures. All these cultural groups and aboriginal tribes of Native America had their unique cultural and traditional values that represented their identity and also separated them from other tribes in various cultural aspects such as language, habits, dress code, myths, customs, religious practices, etc. O Mark Sutton in his book, *An Introduction to Native North America* (2017), talks about the diversity of Native American tribes and their culture as:

The New World was occupied by many millions of people belonging to many hundreds, perhaps as many as a thousand, different cultures. These cultures were incredibly diverse, ranging from very small groups of hunters and gatherers to large groups of farmers living in cities, and having social and political institutions of varying complexities comparable to any in the world. (Sutton 01)

Native Americans had their oral tradition and culture in the form of tales, stories, chants, narratives, rituals, songs, and ceremonies. This astonishing diversity in the language and culture of Native Americans is really surprising. Even at the time of the European conquest of America, there were more than 50 different Native American families speaking about 300 to 500 languages. These diverse cultural tribes exhibited different traits. Barry Pritzker in *Native Americans: An Encyclopedia of History, Culture, and Peoples* (1998) explains:

Some Indian peoples developed complex mythologies and religions, whereas others made do with relatively simple beliefs. Some groups built great cities,

with tens of thousands of residents, whereas others preferred living in small groups. Fighting was endemic among some groups, whereas others lived in relative peace. Some groups discovered literally hundreds of plants that could be used for medicinal purposes. Indians were no strangers to travel. Some coastal peoples built sturdy, seagoing vessels that took them 60 or more miles out to sea to hunt marine life. (Pritzker xi-xii)

As different tribes of Native America had their own unique oral culture and diversity but one thing was common in their culture that is all human beings are equal and they must live in harmony with the physical as well as the spiritual world. This concept of harmony with the physical and the spiritual world is common in oral as well as written Native American Literature.

They also believed in the power of language, memory, and remembrance required to maintain this balance and harmony. Memory and remembrance played an important role in transferring these cultural trends of native tribes from one generation to the next generation. The location also played an important role in their culture. Every geographical location or place was connected with a story. When people passed a location or place, a story was recalled. They also believed that humans follow the natural order of the universe i.e., to move in a circle from east to south to west to north and then back to the east. For many communities, four was a sacred number. For them, four represented four directions, four seasons, and four stages of human life. They also possess a strong sense of loyalty towards their groups as well as nature. Before European arrival and settlement in America, these native people were considered as keepers and worshippers of American land and its surrounding environment.

Stories, legends, myths, and tales were used by elder members as educational tools for the education of their children. These educational tools provided them with belief and knowledge about the history of the tribes. Further, these stories, songs, rituals, and ceremonies also aided in the heading process. Native Americans used to sing songs to increase the fertility of their fields. Songs were also sung to restore harmony and balance in the universe. Instruments used while performing songs included flutes, drums, and rattle. The people of Native American tribes came to know about their history through stories that were handed down from one generation to the next.



generation. Ceremonies were performed for different purposes. Ceremonies were performed while giving a name to a newborn child, at the beginning of puberty, at the time of marriage, and at the time of death. Ceremonies were also performed in honor of the earth's fertility. Two common rituals of native tribes included the Iroquois Ritual of Condolence and the Navajo Night Chant. Both were used for healing purposes.

These stories, legends, songs, and myths were not only oral aspects of these Native American communities but also formed a part of their literature. Lavonne Brown Rouff in his paper, *American Indian Literatures: Introduction and Bibliography* (1986), rightly says, "oral literatures of the Native Americans reflect the diversity of their world views, social structures, customs languages and lifestyles" (Rouff 03). So, the history of Native American Literature began not with the influx of European colonizers but with the immigration and settlement of these first people in America. An important aspect of the oral literature of Native American people is that it was part of their everyday life. Native American people and their literature were oral. Regarding the essentialness and purpose of oral tradition in the life of Native Americans, Paula Gunn Allen in her seminal essay "The Sacred Hoop" says:

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 reverent mystery of all things, and to actualize, in language, those truths that give to humanity its greatest significance and dignity. To a large extent, ceremonial literature serves to redirect private emotion and integrate the energy generated by emotion within a cosmic framework. The artistry of the tribes is married to the essence of language itself, for through language one can share one's singular being with that of the community and know within oneself the communal knowledge of the tribe. In this art, the greater self and all-that-is are blended into a balanced whole, and in this way the concept of being that is the fundamental and sacred spring of life is given voice and being for all. (Allen 80-81)

Even presently, the oral tradition of Native American tribes plays an important role in sustaining originality in European constructed society. Orality in the form of tales and

stories helps in passing down the culture of Native American communities from one generation to the next generation. These oral trends of Native Americans are like libraries containing the knowledge and history of centuries. Porter & Roemer in their book, *The Cambridge Companion to Native American Literature* (2005), comment: The oral traditions of Native Americans are not ordinary but “survive and continue to grow, reflecting change and diversity within the cultures that produce them and those cultures relationships over time with other both Native Americans and non-Native Americans” (Porter & Roemer 42). These diverse tribes of Native American communities can be identified based on their language, their inherited place, and their traditions such as storytelling, ceremonies, rituals, songs, jokes, myths, religion, legends, event histories, morality plays, and eventual history. Thus, we can say that oral tradition is not only a trend of Native American tribes but also acts as means of their life.

Based on historical studies and evidence, it becomes clear that before the influx of foreign settlers in America, these indigenous tribes of Native America were the only settlers in America. They lived in an environment that was complete in itself and also full of peace. Their diverse cultural trends and practices were their specialties and uniqueness. Despite their diverse cultural trends, these native tribes of American land lived in strong connection and association with each other even without having any strong political setup. All social evils such as alcoholism, druggist, greed, avarice, etc. that Europeans later on introduced in America were not known to these Native Americans. But as a result of Christopher Columbus’s discovery of America, this perfect world of Native America become eclipsed. Subsequently, immediately after Columbus’s discovery, the influx and settlement of foreigners started. After the process of settlement in America, European settlers started presenting deformed and uncivilized images of natives. While defending the process of settlement, Europeans boasted that Native American tribal people are barbaric and uncivilized.

However, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Native American culture had also some positive influence on a few Europeans. In the views of these Europeans, Native American societies and their culture represented the golden age in folk history. Jean Jacques Rousseau, Genevan philosopher, and political theorist said that the main object of the policy of Native American society was freedom of nature. In Native American society, people

live without any strict rule or legislation. They live in close harmony with nature and the surrounding climate. So, according to Rousseau, the idea of democracy and freedom originated in America which Europeans learn from 1500 to 1776 during the period of their interaction with Native Americans. But some historians also supported that, historical evidence lack such contribution from Native Americans. Anthropologist, Robbie Ethridge also thinks that these Native Americans have played an important role in constructing the history of America. So, to know American history, one must read Native American history. But unluckily, these views were not shared by European administrators. Their only aim was only to subjugate natives in all possible manners.

Even in Euro-American Literature, these Native Americans are either ignored or misrepresented. In general Euro-American Literature, they are represented as weak, other, wild, second, cannibals, primitive, etc. Euro-American discourses represented these ‘Vanishing Native Americans’ as objects to be studied and experimented with rather than as human beings with a rich heritage of culture and tradition. According to Euro-American literary persons, Native Americans are barbarians and their contact with Euro-Americans can bring them towards the path of civilization. About the description of Indians in Euro-American Literature, Robert Berkhofer in his book *The White Man’s Indian* (1979) says “to understand the white image of the Indian is to understand White societies and intellectual premises over time more than the diversity of Native Americans” (Wiget 383). This clearly shows that such diminishing images of natives constructed by Europeans were only based on European ideology. Such judgments of natives were based on European ideals, civilization, and religion. Andrew Wiget in his book, *Handbook of Native American Literature* (2012), says that such early images of natives in the Euro-American were based on three assumptions, “an ambivalent attitude toward the Indian moral character, the conviction that civilization and progress were inevitable and right, and the belief that the spiritual depravity of ‘Indian’ superstition required a Christian tonic” (Wiget 384). Roy Harvey Pearce in the book, *Savagism and Civilization* (1953), depicts settler’s justification in this regard:

For the Indian was the remnant of a savage past away from which civilized men had struggled to grow. To study him was to study the past. To civilize him was to triumph over the past. To kill him was to kill the past. History would thus be

the key to the moral worth of cultures; the history of American civilization would thus be conceived of as three-dimensional, progressing from past to present, from east to west, from lower to higher. (Pearce 49)

James Fennimore Cooper's *Leather Stocking Tales*, a group of five novels which includes *The Pioneers* (1823), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), *The Prairie* (1827), *The Pathfinder* (1840), and *The Deerslayer* (1841) are examples of such stereotyping and vanishing picture of Native Americans in Euro-American Literature. Even a few writings of Henry David Thoreau and William Faulkner are also embedded with such images of native wilderness. Famous romantic historians such as Francis Parkman and George Bankroft displayed Native Americans as savages who were standing as obstacles in the way of civilization and Christianity. Literature based on realism often ignored native Indians. In such literature, Indian images were used for mere ridiculous stereotyping. The further portrayal of Indians was completely ignored in serious literature, popular literature as well as in popular culture.

Further William Gilmore Simms's two novels *The Yemassee* (1835) and *The Cassique of Kiawah* (1859), Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie* (1827), and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha* (1855) and Robert M. Bird's *Nick of the Woods* (1837) also kept on discussing such images of natives. In the novel *Nick of the Woods*, Robert bird depicts Native Americans as bloodthirsty savages who are hurdles in the path of progress and thus are required to be cut down. Murtaza and Shaheena in their paper, *Euromerican Discursive Subjection of Native Americans*, comment: natives "went through racial genocide at the hands of Euro-American colonizers and to justify the genocide, they were misconstrued by the whole plethora of White discourses." (Murtaza & Shaheena 91). These writers of the Euro-American genre kept on overlooking the traditional values of Native American culture and justifying the death of natives as natural rather than political. Analyzing the representation of Native Americans in mainstream Euro-American literature, Murtaza and Shaheena comment:

In the huge mass of American literature, the presence of the Natives is a rare phenomenon; there are mostly passing references for the sake of the plot necessity and that too in very unfavorable colors. They are never the actual

focus. Inhuman attitude of colonizers towards natives is later stereotyped by native American writers in their literature. (Murtaza & Shaheena 96)

Europeans also had a wrong opinion about Native American women. They tend to view Native American women as silent and powerless. They used the term ‘squaw’ to refer to Native American women and the term ‘Indian Princess’ to refer to European women. Native American women were also underrepresented in ethnographic and anthropological studies. But actually, this picture of Native American women is not true. Women indeed provided food to their families through their domestic tasks but it is not true that women were powerless. In reality, Native American women exercised more power than their men. They controlled their men and all other political powers. In some Native American societies, women were land owners and controlled many aspects of their culture. They thus enjoyed more liberty and higher status than their counterparts. But unluckily, like native men, their picture was also misrepresented. Later on, many Native American women expressed their skills in literature, especially autobiographies.

Stereotyping of Native Americans is not limited only to literature. Films, advertisements, bumper stickers, and slogans also rely on false images and stereotyping of natives. Such stereotyping of Native Americans in the eyes of European Americans began with the first encounter between Europeans and Native Americans. Mentioning Christopher Columbus’s first reaction and judgment on seeing Native Americans, Lee Schweninger in his book, *Listening to The Land: Native American Literary Responses to the Landscape* (2008), says:

In his 1493 letter, Columbus categorizes the Native Americans as other. After describing the physical beauty of the landscape, he describes the people, mentioning their physical stature, their clothing (or lack of it), their intelligence, their observed customs and religion (or absence of it), and their apparent naiveté: according to his report, they “give objects of great value for trifles, and content themselves with very little or nothing in return...Thus, they bartered, like idiots, cotton, and gold for fragments of bows, glasses, bottles, and jars”. (Schweninger 21)

These first judgments of Columbus about Native Americans when he first encountered them are conceived by later explorers and colonists. In this way, we can say that the main cause of such stereotyping and the wrong image of Native Americans in the minds of European settlers is rooted in the past millennium.

Even at the time of his expedition to America in 1492, Columbus made a linguistic error in mentioning Native Americans. He mistakenly thought that he has reached West Indies, so he used the term 'Indian' to refer to these native inhabitants of America. Thereafter, the word Indian was used for centuries to refer to native tribes of America. Today the term American Indian is used to refer to Native Americans in most of the academic tasks.

Such misrepresentation and misinterpretation of natives was perhaps because natives were not having their written tradition. Their only way of passing down their history and culture was an oral tradition. Townsend in his book, *First Americans: A History of Native Peoples* (2012), explains:

Native Americans did not have written languages before the early nineteenth century, instead passing their histories through the oral tradition. Their audiences, then, were their children and their children's children. Europeans, however, penned elaborate histories and tales of their exploits in the Americas, embellishing their actions, enveloping their stories in the shrouds of courage and righteousness, and convincing readers of their own superiority over other peoples. These histories, once in print, dictated a European perspective (and later white American perspective) that later generations accepted, without question, as truth. (Townsend 32)

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, after gaining education in European language and literature, many Native Americans practiced written literature, especially in the form of autobiographies, protest writing, poetry, fiction, non-fictional prose, and travel histories. We can also say that it was in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the oral literature of Native Americans got converted into written form. However, this transition from oral tradition to writing tradition was not easy for these emerging indigenous writers of Native America. Their tradition and mode of communication were oral. Instead, Native

Americans also made pictographic accounts of most of their cultural trends and rituals. Their tradition evolved without a written language. But with the gradual disappearance of native communities and culture, these indigenous writers took the help of written language to preserve their culture for future generations. Their exploitations in the hands of European invaders forced them to begin writing literature. The beginning of Native American Literature parallels white European's invasion of America, false stereotyping of natives in the mainstream literature, and subsequent education of natives in schools run by whites. Speaking about the aim of indigenous writings, Pramod. K. Nayar, in his book, *Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory* (2010), writes- "Aboriginal and First Peoples writing is an attempt to not bring back their traditions but also to ensure that modernity, is revealed as an exploitative mechanism where some cultures have been marginalized or even eliminated." (Nayar 226).

It can also be said that the following two reasons forced natives to write literature and express themselves. The first is the false representation of Native Americans in Euro-American literature and the second is the continuous assault and violence of Native Americans at the hands of colonizers. This misrepresentation and exploitation of Native Americans developed insist in them to be heard or read. Thus, after knowing different languages and possessing the heritage of oral literature of their native culture, these initial writers of Native American literature began to write literature. About their literature, Louis Owen in his book, *Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel* (1994), comments:

Native American writing represents an attempt to recover identity and authenticity by invoking and incorporating the world found within the oral tradition the reality of myth and ceremony an authorless "original" literature. Yet through the inscription of an authorial signature, the Indian writer places him- or herself in immediate tension with this communal, authorless, and identity conferring source, at once highlighting the very questions of identity and authenticity. (Owen 11)

Most probably, the first published work by a Native American author is *A Sermon Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian* (1772) by Samson Occom. In this work, Samson demonstrates his skill in literature through the genre of execution

sermon. This work highlights the devastating effect of alcoholism on Native American families. Beginning with William Apes's autobiographies, *Son of the Forest* (1829) and *The Experience of Five Christian Indians of the Piqued Tribe* (1835), other Indians who also practiced with autobiographies are- George Copway, Charles Eastman, Luther Standing Bear, Zitkala-Sa, Joseph Griffis, Anna Shaw, James Paytiamo, among others. Some of these autobiographers like William Apes and George Copway, express their dedication and commitment to Christianity, while others reveal a deepening sense of their "own Indianness and questions the superiority of white ways" (Rouff 11). These autobiographies firstly deal to inform the readers about native culture and history and secondly comment upon whites' injustice toward natives. Mentioning the initiation of the autobiographical mode of writing in earlier Native American literature, Andrew Wiget says:

Autobiography is not an indigenous form of literature for American Indian peoples. The traditional literature of tribal peoples is oral in nature and communal, consisting of myths, tales, songs, and chants performed in ceremonial context or told for the purpose of instructing and entertaining the community. Only since the nineteenth century have Indian peoples used written forms to record their histories and produce literary works, and until this century, only a minority of Indians wrote in English. And, as in mainstream and other American minority cultures, the female autobiographical tradition is separate from the male tradition. Autobiographies of Indian men tend to focus on public lives; their subjects are figures of historical importance-chiefs, warriors, medicine men-while the autobiographies of Indian women tend to focus on private lives-the examination of personal relationships and individual growth, concentrating on everyday events and activities. (Wiget 188)

The only Indian woman writer of the 19<sup>th</sup> century who published personal and local history was Sarah Winnemucca. She was the first native women writer who published an autobiography. Her autobiographical work, *Life Among the Piutes* (1883) discusses the status of Indian women in Piute society. She asserts that the status of women in Native American society, especially Piute society was much higher than in European society. She also asserts that in Piute society, women were involved in the decision-



making process. The work also discusses the impact of forceful migration on Indian life and the exploitation of natives at the hands of western agents. Later on, Sarah Winnemucca opened a school for Piute children and taught there for four years but unluckily, after the passage of Dawes law, her students were forcefully sent to English-speaking schools, and subsequently, her school was closed.

When natives were removed from their tribal lands and put on the reservation, numerous writers wrote a large account of tribal history, customs, and traditions. Among the writers who wrote tribal histories are George Copway, Peter Jones, William Whipple Warren, David Cusick, and others. Among those who practiced the ethnohistoric of their tribes are Chief Elias Johnson, Peter Dooyentate Clarke, and Chief Andrew j. Blackbird. Indian authors who had volumes of poetry in the nineteenth century are John Rollin Ridge and Emily Pauline Johnson. Emily Johnson is the first woman poet-writer of Native American literature. Her poetry collections are *The White Wampum* (1893) and *Canadian Born* (1903). Her collection of stories includes *Legends of Vancouverhe* (1911). Her characters are mixed blood caught between two contrary cultural trends.

The only major Indian dramatist of the early native written literature was Lynn Riggs who has produced about thirty plays and several poems. He is known as the author of folk drama. He is best known for his plays *Roadside* (1905), *Bornedin Texas* (1930), *Green Grow the Lilacs* (1931), *The Cherokee Night* (1936), and *The Cream in the Well* (1941). The play *The Cherokee Night* deals with the sense of loss and alienation felt by Cherokee mixed blood separated from their Cherokee heritage.

One among the Native Americans who wrote novels is John Rolling Ridge. His novel *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta* (1854) is the first novel of earlier Indian literature. The novel portrays the story of mixed-blood Murieta, who is driven to violence and crime after his contact with European miners. S. Alice Callahan is the first Native American woman writer of a novel. Her novel *Wynema* (1891) circles around issues of the American woman as the central character. Mourning dove also wrote a collection of native folklore, *Coyote Stories* (1993). Other important novelists who published their writings in the early twentieth century are John Joseph Mathew and D'Archy McNickle. D'arcy McNickle's main novels are *They Came Here First: The*

*Epic of the American Indian* (1949) and *Runner in the Sun: A Story of Indian Maize* (1954). Both these novelists mainly focus on the importance of local tribes and the impact of colonialism on tribes. Another known novelist of the early ages is Mourning Dove. Her novel *Cogewea, The Half-Blood: A Depiction of the Great Mountain Cattle Range* (1927) deals with the theme of mixed blood's attempt to find her place in the white constructed society. This novel features women as central characters. Another important native woman writer of the earlier period is Ella Cara Deloria. Her only novel, *Water lily* was published seven years after her death. Like other women writers of the period, her work is also concerned with the status and role of women in society.

Among the protest writings is Elias Boudinot's, *An Address to the Whites* (1826). In this book, Boudinot asserts "that speculations and conjectures about the practicability of civilizing the Indians must forever cease" (Wiget 145). Another important text of protest writing is William Ape's, *An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man*, added in 1833 to his book, *Experiences of Five Christian Indians of the Piquet Tribe*. In this work, William Ape strongly criticizes the new miscegenation law of Massachusetts. The next important works of William Ape on protest literature are *Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts, Relative to the Marshpee Tribe* (1835), and *Eulogy on King Philip* (1836). Another important protest writer of early Native American Literature is George Copway. His lecture on the proposal *Organization of a New Indian Territory, East of the Missouri River* (1850), presented in the third national congress of the east is considered as an eminent work on protest writings.

These earlier native writers also printed journals to recount their experiences. Hendrick Aupaumut's journal *A Short Narration of My Last Journey to Western Country* (1827) describes his journey and experiences with various tribes during his service as government liaison to the Indians of the northwest areas. Instead, these earlier Native Americans also wrote non-fictional prose and short stories.

Native writers also started the task of editing many Indian newspapers. *Cherokee Phoenix* was the first Native American newspaper in the United States. Other newspapers published by these natives were *Cherokee Advocate*, *Indian Chieftain*, *Tomahawk*, *Osage Herald*, *The Progress*, etc. These native newspapers published by local tribes covered news about local tribal affairs as well as some national and

international news. Later on, a few newspapers were seized by the federal agents. Another journal, by Peter Jones, is *Life and the Journals of Kah-ke-wah-quo-na-by* (1860). This journal acted as a missionary for the Ojibwa tribe. Some writers also wrote travel literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These include *An Account of the Chippewa Indians, who had been Travelling among the Whites...* (1848) by George Henry and *Running Sketches of Men and Places...* (1851) by George Copway.

These writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries mainly focus on their struggle to find a place in a new society dominated by white people and their culture. Their works were based on tribal ethnohistories and their struggle to adjust to the reservation. As they were the first generation of Native Americans who received education forcefully in white-based schools. So, wide descriptions of bad treatment done to Indian children in white-based schools also find a place in the writings of these early writers. No doubt, these early writers of Native American Literature had displayed their skill and eminence in the field of literature but unfortunately, readers' mind was already captivated by the mainstream writers of the Euro-American genre. That is why these writers did not come under the limelight. But still, this literature of earlier periods possesses importance. This earlier Native American Literature acts as a literature of transition between oral literature of the earlier period and the period of Native American Renaissance of the 1960s.

Modern Native American Literature began with the publication of N. Scott. Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* (1969), for which N. Scott. Momaday was honored with Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1969. The same year, Deloria's *Custer Died for Your Sins* (1969), a witty book on anthropologists was published. This literary work of Momaday marked the beginning of what Kenneth Lincoln called the 'Native American Renaissance'. The publication of Momaday's novel is responsible for bringing the concerns and issues of Native Americans into focus. It widely opened the door for recognition and appreciation of Native American Literature. Stefen Otfinoski in his book, *Multicultural Voices: Native American Writers* (2010), says, the publication of *House Made of Dawn* by Momaday "paved the way for a group of gifted writers to emerge and add their voices to a growing body of work and the burgeoning artistic movement" (Otfinoski 09).

Writing about the contribution of Momaday in beginning a new trend of Native American literature, Andrew Wiget says:

There is no question that Momaday's powerful novel and its recognition as a serious work of literature were extremely influential in changing the atmosphere in which the Native American writer could exist. Suddenly, with *House Made of Dawn*\ Pulitzer, it was possible that a Native American writer could be accepted by the literary establishment. Moreover, Native American writers could begin to see that they were not alone. For the first time, the possibility of Native American writing as something other than an isolated and isolating experience began to be a reality. Momaday's highly visible success and how that success influenced publishers to open their doors to other Native writers—in particular through the publication of American Indian anthologies—would be significant factors in the formation of a community of new Native American writers. (Wiget, 312)

Along with *House Made of Dawn*, other foundational texts of Native American literature that played role in the arrival of the Native American Renaissance are *Carriers of the Dream Wheel: Contemporary Native American Poetry*, edited by Duane Niatum in 1975 and Kenneth Rosen's *The Man to Send Rain Clouds: Contemporary Stories by American Indians* (1974) and *Voices of the Rainbow: Contemporary Poetry by American Indians* (1975). Other collections that find a place in furthering Native American Literature are Geary Hobson's *The Remembered Earth: An Anthology of Contemporary Native American Literature* (1979), and Alan Velie's *American Indian Literature: An Anthology* (1979). The contribution of all these works in initiating and boosting Native American Literature is momentous.

Instead, other events like the American Indian Movement (AIM), meant for complete devotion to native sovereignty and revival of native culture, also played an important role in contributing to the Native American Renaissance Movement. Another event that would have contributed to the Native American Renaissance was the first Native American “Media Event” held with the takeover of Alcatraz Island by the Indians of all tribes. Accordingly, natives declared the island to be Indian. Following Momaday's footpaths, contemporary writers including Louise Erdrich, Simon. j. Ortiz, Paula Gunn

Allan, Maurice Kenny, Joy Harjo, Duane Niatum, James Welch, Nila Northsun, Leslie Marmon Silko, Gerald Vizenor, Vine Deloria Jr., Greg Sarris, Martin Cruz Smith, Janet Campbell, Thomas King, Louis Owens, Diane Glancy, Linda Henderson Hogan, Ray A. Young Bear, Wanda Rose, Barney Bush, Hanay Geiogamah, Carter Revard, Lance Henson, and others enjoyed the liberty to tell their stories in their voice. Like Momaday, all these writers through their writings emphasize the problems of Native Americans in Euro-American society and the importance of native cultural values.

Following Momaday's route, all these writers of contemporary Native American Literature bluntly presented a picture of native culture and tradition and the distressing situation of Native Americans due to European imperialism in their writings. Just as the main character of Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* is confused between the modern Euro-American world and the native traditional world and finally gets satisfaction and retains stability after adhering to native tradition. Similarly, protagonists of other Native American writers such as Leslie Marmon Silko, Paula Gunn Allen, James Welch, and Janet Campbell Hale follow the same path that is followed by Momaday's protagonist. In this regard, Wiget comments:

Through its threefold exploration of his own Kiowa roots—presenting tales from the Kiowa oral traditions, a comment by Momaday on each tale, and then a related personal or family story of his own—Momaday became one of the first of the new generation of Native American writers to present work directly from the folk traditions in a literary context. Such use of the folk traditions and retellings of traditional tales would continue throughout the next two decades by numerous other Indian writers. (Wiget 313)

Through his next work *The Way to Rainy Mountains*, Momaday becomes the first writer of a new generation of Native American literature who presents tales and stories from his native tradition. All other writers of the new generation followed the path of Momaday and subsequently their writings are embedded with tales and stories of native culture and history. They experimented with both fiction and non-fiction genres of Euro-American literary tradition. Their works are even blended with native names, stories, myths, landscapes, and history and thus we can say that they combined both Euro-American and Native American literary genres in their writings. Another aspect

of Native American literature is that their characters are either full-blood or mixed-blood. For full blood characters, it is easy to adhere to their respective culture but mixed blood characters who are unable to find a place in either of the culture occupies a marginal space in both cultures.

Gerald Vizenor, one of the most prolific and versatile writers of the Native American Renaissance, even experiments with comic novels that are a blend of science fiction, satire, and fantasy. His debut novel, *Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart* (1978) later revised as *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* (1990) is a satiric novel that portrays native tribes who move through a dystopian environment of European imperialism in search of ritual knowledge.

Women writers like Leslie Marmon Silko, Paula Gunn Allan, Louise Erdrich, Joy Harjo, Linda Hogan, and Diane Glancy also focus on women's issues in the European constructed society of America. Native women writers "as editors, teachers, performers, reviewers, and writers, they establish, sustain, and broaden the scope of Native American literature and simultaneously promote artists from multiple backgrounds and communities" (Wong XX). Instead of identifying themselves as universal woman, native women writers attach themselves to tribal and national cultures. Native women writers try to reconstruct the female voice that was once silenced during the process of European colonization. Speaking about the contribution of native women writers in literature, Porter and Roemer comment:

They fought against stereotypical popular culture representations of Native women; they attempted to reinstate the importance of women to Native American cultures, and they contributed to the continuity and preservation of Native culture, not only by extending Native American values and materials into their writings and advocating for their people, but also by showing their belief in Native culture as something strong and vital. In addition, by extending Native American elements such as the oral tradition into their work, they created new forms of literature. From Jane Johnston Schoolcraft to Louise Erdrich, Native American women writers have left an immense legacy, not only to Native literature and culture, but also to American literature and culture in general. (Porter & Roemer 100)

Through the prominent writings of these Native American Writers of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, Native American Literature is accepted as Native American Literature rather than anthropology or ethnography. These native writers, through their writings, have shifted Native American Literature from the margins to the mainstream. These writers write against the improper and stereotypic images constructed by colonists. Through their literature, these Native American writers show their counter images against their false stereotypic representation in mainstream literature. They even make use of subversive techniques like irony and sarcasm to tell their story and history in their unique way. Their literature is not new, but rather a continuation of their oral tradition in written form.

Despite European's deliberate and continuous efforts of eradicating the history and culture of Native America, these responsible writers of Native America have successfully prevented their culture and history through their literature. The main feature of Native American Literature is storytelling. In almost all the texts of Native American Literature, the process of storytelling is prevalent. Explaining the uniqueness of Native American writers, Kimberley M. Blazer says:

Many Indian authors have chosen purposefully to ignore standard rules and forms ill-suited to Native storytelling. They strive to introduce different codes. Their works teach readers and critics new ways of reading and interacting with voices on the page. The work of Native women writers especially carries a new vision as it refuses to separate the literary and academic from the sacred and the daily, as it brings to the text the unpaginated experiences of contemporary tribal reality. (Wong X1V)

Through the use of oral tradition in the form of stories, tales, rituals, ceremonies, songs, etc., these native writers express the immensity and diversity of their literature. Through their deliberate efforts, these writers have kept the native culture alive forever. Works of all these Native American writers deal with the same themes such as the sufferings of natives at the hands of Europeans, cultural conflict, mental ailment, loss of native identity in white constructed society, feelings of dilemma, and urge to return to the native culture, resistive strategies to adjust in new society blended with two cultures.

Mentioning the characteristics of Native American writings in his critical book, Louis Owen, declares that:

Native American writers are offering a way of looking at the world that is new to Western culture. It is a holistic, ecological perspective, one that places essential value upon the totality of existence, making humanity equal to all elements but superior to none and giving humankind crucial responsibility for the care of the world we inhabit. (Schweninger 01)

Writings of Native American Literature are mainly concerned with depicting the image of America that was plagued since the arrival and settlement of European invaders. Native women writers also focus on issues and conditions of native women in European American society. The massive realities of disease, war, and mental trauma among the natives in the writings of Native American Literature suggest the negative impacts of European control on native people. In Native American writing, all these themes of European injustice and native oppression are discussed under the background of native tales and stories.

The theme of harmony between man and nature is also prevalent in earlier as well as later Native American writing. In Native American culture as well as Native American Literature, land possesses an important place. Native Americans consider themselves keepers of the land. Another aspect of their writings is that most of these writers make use of tricksters in their narratives for comic relief. Traditionally, the figure of the trickster is known in almost all Native American communities. Gerald Vizenor's novel *Darkness in Saint Louis Bear heart* is the best example of trickster narratives and humor narrative. Through the use of humor in their writings, these writers have maintained the continuity of their culture in their writings. Mentioning the blend of two genres used by Native American writers in their works, Otfinoski says:

Native American writers have not only drawn on the rich traditions of their native literature, the myths, legends, and folk tales—they have incorporated the varying styles and structures of native storytelling into their own novels and stories. A traditionally chronological narrative is commonly forsaken for a circular narrative structure that folds back on itself. Time may be fluid, plots



nonlinear, with events occurring out of sequence, forming a pattern of intent that is often only understood at a work's conclusion. The line dividing reality from the fantastical is also often crossed; dreams, visions, and ghosts play as major a role in the plots as the living, human characters. These elements are just a few of the common threads unifying the Native American literary tradition, which has become as diverse as its practitioners. (Otfinoski 7-8)

Depiction of white settlers also finds a place in early as well as late renaissance literature of Native America. Their appearance ranges in tonality from awe and wonders at these mysterious, impatient, potent newcomers, to perplexity over their strange ways, to anger and outrage, sly or open contempt" (Wiget 139). Imagining of whites in the native literature is embedded with a sense of otherness. They are represented as villains and fools who are exactly opposite to natives. This depiction of Europeans possessing negative images is based on what natives have seen about them since the time of their expedition to America.

During the 1990s, many reference books on Native American literature were published. Among them are- A. La, Vonne Brown Ruoff's *American Indian Literatures* (1990), Andrew Wiget's *Handbook of Native American Literature* (1994, 1996) (preceded in 1985 by Wiget's *Survey Native American Literature*), Janet Witalec's *Native North American Literature* (1994), and *Native American Writers of the United States* (1997), Kathy J. Whitson's *Encyclopedia Native American Literatures* (1999), and Suzanne Eversten Lundquist's *Native American Literatures* (2004).

Currently, several journals are completely concerned with the literature of Native American writers. Few among them are American Indian Culture and Research Journal, American Indian Quarterly, Studies in American Indian Literatures, MELUS - Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States, Minority Voices: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Literature, and the Arts, Massachusetts Review, and San Jose Studies.

Parallel to Native American Literature, discussion of the European invasion and thereafter situation of native tribes also finds a place in African American Literature. One of the prominent writers of African American Literature, Toni Morrison discusses the shared experiences of Native Americans and African Americans in her novels. In

her novels, she highlights the influence of European colonization on both African Americans and Native Americans. Even a few of her characters are of mixed black Indian ancestry. She asserts to be a hybrid of black Indian ancestry.

This recent resurgence and development in Native American Literature is the result of the positivity and hopefulness of Native American writers. Their writings have played an important role in changing the attitude of the audience towards Native American people. Through their honest attempt, these writers of Native American Literature have become able to gain public attention. Another aspect of Native American Literature is that it is not only written in English but also Spanish. Although Spanish Native American Literature is not much known to all readers, still it is Native American Literature and is an integral part of Native American Literature written in English. Speaking about the power and uniqueness of Native American Literature, Andrew Wiget comments:

It is, indeed, part of the body of world literature written in English, but it is—just as much as American literature is no longer a colonial appendage of British tradition—also a literature which stands on its own and can be seen to have its own traditions and directions. Rather than trying to fit Native American literature in as a minor part of the American literary mainstream, it may be more appropriate to see Native American writing as a river in its own right. (Wiget 322)

Writings of native writers seek the aim of vanishing the stereotypic images that were once constructed by mainstream literature. A large amount of literature in the form of handbooks, encyclopedias, reference books, and bibliographies on Native American writers proves how these writers have emerged out of their oppressed and subaltern state and established their status and identity. Through this journey from ignored to read, Native American Literature can undoubtedly be claimed as an integral part of mainstream American literature instead of merely a part of it.

### **Leslie Marmon Silko**

A well-known novelist, poet, short-story writer, essayist, photographer, teacher, and cinematographer, Leslie Marmon Silko was born on 5 March 1948 in Albuquerque,

New Mexico to Leland Howard Marmon and Mary Virginia. Like most of Native American youngsters, Silko's father also joined the army but after the world war ended, he was removed from the recruitment. After being removed from the army, Silko's father started his career as a specialized photographer. So, her father was a photographer and her mother a teacher. This Marmon couple has three daughters namely Silko, Wendy, and Gigi. Silko is the eldest of the three daughters of this Marmon family. Silko is among the leading writers of Native American Literature who contributed to the Native American Renaissance. She is of mixed ancestry which is Laguna pueblo, Mexican and European. But as she was grown up in a house that bordered the Laguna community, she emphasizes Laguna heritage in her works. When she was a child, she used to listen to stories of pueblo people from her Aunt and Grandmother, and these stories are also discussed in almost all her writings. She was married to Richard. C. Chapman but after three years this relationship ended in divorce. Her second marriage with John Silko also ended in divorce. She has two sons, Robert from her first husband Richard Chapman, and Cozimir from John Silko.

Silko was grown up in the Laguna pueblo culture of Native America that's why her works show a touch of Native American culture, especially pueblo culture. At the time of the European invasion, pueblo territory was occupied by Spanish invaders in the sixteenth century who spread Catholicism in the region. During the Spanish rule, these native tribes were not treated properly and they were forced to adopt Catholicism. These Spanish invaders also targeted Indians to become their slaves. Further, their practice of overgrazing their cattle on native lands resulted in drought and famine. Later on, in the eighteenth century when Mexico attained independence from Spain, the Pueblo region became part of Mexico.

Laguna pueblo is among the aboriginal native tribes of America. Laguna pueblo is one of the seven tribes of the pueblo community (Acoma, Cochiti, Laguna, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Santo Domingo, and Zia) situated near Laguna River which lies between Albuquerque and Los Alamos. The name Laguna is Spanish, given to these people by Spanish settlers, which means lake. Laguna people are generally pronounced as Kawaka in their native language which means lake people. and the language they used to communicate is known as the Keresan language. Even presently, some elder

members of the Laguna community speak only the Keresan language. These native Laguna Pueblo tribes were originally hunting and gathering tribes. But later on, after establishing societies, they learned farming, pottery, architecture, basketry, and many other skills. Not only this, but they also developed irrigation techniques such as dams and terraces. They devoted most of their time to the practice of religious tasks. Saint Joseph feast is one of the most celebrated festivals of Laguna people celebrated on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March and 19<sup>th</sup> of September every year in which trade of handiwork and crop is done. Instead, the All-India tournament is also organized on this occasion where different games are played. For Laguna pueblo people, the central figure of rituals is Thought Woman who appears in different forms such as Spider-Woman, Corn Woman, and Earth Woman. About the arrival of thought woman, Paula Gunn Allen in her essay *The Sacred Hoop* says:

She appears on the plains, in the forests, in the great canyons, on the mesas, beneath the seas. To her we owe our very breath, and to her our prayers are sent blown on pollen, on corn meal, planted into the earth on feather-sticks, spit onto the water, burned and sent to her on the wind. Her variety and multiplicity testify to her complexity: she is the true creatrix for she is thought itself, from which all else is born...She is also the spirit that informs right balance, right harmony, and these in turn order all relationships in conformity with her law. (Allen 28-29)

Laguna Pueblo people believe in a common myth- Mother Moon. According to this myth, the sun is the father and the moon is the mother of all creatures on the earth, that is we all are their progeny. Moon has devoted one of her eyes to bring the night and her children (all creatures) may rest at night. According to the pueblo people, this is the biggest sacrifice of mother moon done for the sake of her children. Robert M. Nelson in an essay on Silko says:

According to both cultural anthropology and oral tradition, Laguna has always been one of the most adaptive pueblo communities in the Southwest, and many of the stories comprising Laguna oral tradition preserve the complex strategies of resistance and assimilation that have enabled the people to survive and adjust to myriad external pressures. Like her native Laguna, Silko's work is a study in

cultural mediation and spirit transformation. Again, and again her creative vision celebrates the transformative power of story and place, working together for life in a healing way. (Nelson 245)

These aboriginal tribes of North America used to live in peace. But European invasion and Spanish rule disturbed and even changed their normal routine of life. The assimilation policy of invaders meant for spreading of English language among the people as well as a complete transformation of local tribes into Catholicism brought destruction and havoc to pueblo tribes. The spread of smallpox among the pueblo community also resulted in the loss of some lives. Despite facing oppression and exploitation at the hands of Spanish invaders, possession of strong will and religious beliefs among these native tribes of America enabled them to fight against the invaders and attain liberty. Robert M. Nelson also states that concerning its oral tradition “Laguna has always been one of the most adaptive pueblo communities in the southwest, and many of the stories comprising laguna oral tradition preserve the complex strategies of resistance and assimilation that have enabled the people to survive and adjust to myriad external pressures” (Porter & Roemer 245).

Silko received her basic education from the Bureau of Indian affairs school and Albuquerque Indian school. Thereafter, she received her B.A. degree from the University of Mexico in 1969. She wrote her first short story when she was in the fifth standard. After graduation, she first attended the University of New Mexico law School for a short period. Soon after joining the course, she realized that “the law has nothing to do with justice, and injustice can’t be left unchanged” (Snodgrass 15). In 1910, Silko left law school and then decided to choose a literary career. Being nourished in Native American culture, Silko also faced discrimination from European teachers in the school. She was also forbidden to speak the native Keresan language in the school.

Silko grew up in an environment that was full of local stories. Since her childhood, she used to listen to stories of the Laguna community from her aunt and grandmother. It was from the beginning that she was well versed in the social, economic, historical, political, and educational influences of European settlers on Native Americans, especially the Laguna community. Even at her home, there were a wide variety of books about Laguna stories, Euro-American books, and some Laguna stories about Euro-

American contact. Further, Silko has realized and even faced the problems of Euro-American interaction. Such a heritage abetted in her intention of becoming a prominent writer of Native American Literature.

Her first short story that begins her career in the field of literature is the *Man to Send Rain Clouds*, published in 1969 in the New Mexico Quarterly. For this story, Silko was honored with National Endowment for the Humanities Discovery Grant. Her first publication is a collection of poems and short stories, *Laguna Woman* (1974). This book along with other later works of Silko depicts the influence of the oral tradition of Laguna culture in her life as well as her literary career. This collection of poems and stories of her earlier life is imbued with the description of nature and its connection with the Laguna people. The poems and stories in the collection are also embedded with a detailed explanation of the mythical and spiritual world that surrounds and protects the Laguna community. In the same year, Silko published her next short story, *Lullaby* in Chicago Review, and was also honored with the NEA writing fellowship.

Silko's first novel that provided her much-acclaimed fame and fixed her name as a major contributor to the Native American Renaissance is *Ceremony* (1977). The novel is about a Native American World War II veteran, Tayo, a mixed-blood character, who suffers from post-war traumatic disorder disease after the death of his cousin Rocky and the expected death of his uncle Josiah in the war. Because of his mixed blood, Tayo also faces problems of alienation and hatred in his family as well as in his friends' group. Because of his mixed blood heritage, his aunt always tries to separate her son, Rocky, from him. Even in his friend circle, his friend Emo does not like him. This is the trauma of all mixed-blood people of America who are not accepted by either of the cultures. In the end, Tayo finally sustains normalcy after the performance of the healing ceremony by a medicine man. Thus, the novel explores the healing power of local Laguna stories and ceremonies that help in curing the mental illness of those who are caught between two worlds. At the end of the novel, when Tayo sustains normalcy, his aunt accepts him. Further, Tayo's travel in every part of the Laguna territory offers a guided tour of the territory to the readers.

Silko's next important and appreciable work is *Storyteller* (1981). It comprises 68 poems and 8 short stories. This autobiographical collection is based on short stories,

poetry, family memories and photographs, photographs of the Laguna landscape, and the history of the Laguna tribe. This work is mainly intended to keep the voice of native cultural orality alive forever. The collection mainly deals with the importance of storytelling in Native American culture and shows how the art of storytelling acts as a Native American tribe's way to survive. It includes almost all the stories which Silko has been listening to since her childhood from her grandmother and aunt. The most important stories that are anthologized in this collection are "Storyteller", "Yellow Woman", "Tony's Story", "Coyote Holds a full Hand" and "Lullaby". Silko's first story *Man Send to Rain Clouds* was later on included in this collection.

Her next publication is *Sacred Water* subtitled *Narratives and Pictures* (1993). This autobiographical work is comprised of 41 tales and 39 black and white photographs about Silko's memory of water. Vivid pictures of pools, springs, rain, and lakes relate to the importance and sacredness of water in the Laguna community. These water bodies are inhabited by nymphs and deities and are also endowed with the power of purification.

Her next novel *Almanac of the Dead* (1991) took several years to complete. The novel was published to coincide completion of five hundred years of Christopher Columbus's discovery of America. Written in almost seven hundred pages, this long novel by Silko received mixed reactions from the side of readers and critics. Contrary to the previous novel, *Ceremony*, this novel's loose structure represents the frustration of Silko with the colonists. The novel is a fragmentary collection of stories, dreams, characters, maps, lists, and prophecies. It depicts historical injustice and the establishment of European capitalism in America. The novel is a clear picture of the working of social evils such as murder, alcoholism, pornography, drug addiction, etc. installed by European capitalists in American society. It depicts how European imperialism in America is responsible for the Native American genocide. The novel represents numerous characters. Most of the characters are indulged in evil tasks such as alcoholism, pornography, murder, abuse of technology, druggist, weapon smuggling, trafficking, etc. Through these evils, the novel presents a clear picture of how capitalism has detached humans from nature. Rather, there is a revolutionary group that is concerned with the removal of all evils installed by European colonists, from the American

society. Even the novel's opening prophecy also advocates the end of all evils. Regarding the publication of the novel, writer Rebecca Tillet in her book *Otherwise, Revolution!* writes:

*Almanac* is a profoundly disturbing analysis of the workings and effects of late twentieth-century capitalism that tracks the origin of both the capitalist system and the continued high status of a range of international social and corporate elites back to the emergence of monopoly companies and to the imperialist European cultural worldviews that initiated and facilitated the colonization of the 'New world'. In a strategy that exposes the moral results of supposedly amoral economic and political systems, *Almanac* quite specifically identifies European greed and selfishness as the primary cause of widespread policies of genocide enacted against indigenous people throughout the Americas, and the European slave trade as a market system inseparable from the development of national elites, national economies, transnational corporations, and capitalism itself. (Tillet 01)

Silko's next important work is *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit: Essays on Native American Life Today* (1996). The work is a collection of 21 non-fictional essays that are based on Laguna stories. In this work, Silko talks about the Spirit of Native Americans and their inseparability from their native culture and land. Told in first-person narrative, the work comprises both old and new stories of Laguna culture. Old stories include the mythological world of Laguna culture and new stories are comprised of the heroic actions of their ancestors.

Her next novel, *Gardens in the Dunes* (1999) is an imitation of Victorian historical romance. In this novel, Silko draws a contrast between the traditional world of Native American culture and the modern world of Euro-American settlers. The novel presents the life and story of a Native American girl, Indigo who belongs to the Sand Lizard Clan of Native American tribes. Indigo is separated from her family and then nourished by a European couple, Hattie and Edward. Just like the assimilation policy of Europeans, Hattie who acts as a surrogate mother for Indigo tries to convert Indigo and teaches her a European style of living. Despite this assimilation policy, Indigo continuously remembers her family place, gardening, and habit of storytelling and thus



manages to reconcile between two opposing worlds- Native America and European America. Along with the story of Indigo, the novel also gives a picture of the European onslaught on nature through dam building and bio-theft. Instead, the novel also presents a stark picture of slavery and the forced education of Native American children by ruthless European colonists.

Other important works of Leslie Marmon Silko are *Western stories* (1980), *Delicacy and Strength of Lace: Letters between Leslie Marmon Silko and James Wright* (1985), Silko won Boston Globe Prize for this nonfictional work. *Conversation with Leslie Marmon Silko* (2000), *Voices Under One Sky* (1994), *Rain* (1996), *Rooster and Power of Love* (1995), *Turquoise Ledge: A Memoir* (2010), *Melody Graulich* (1993), *Love Poem and Slim Canyon* (1996) and *Ocean story* (2011). All these works are also concerned with the same themes of interactions between the colonizers and the colonized, the influence of European colonization on the native tribes of America, hybridized situation of most of the natives, the native glorious culture of America, and its relevance in the survival of native identity among the native inhabitants of America.

Like others writers of Native American literature, Silko attempts to portray the realities of European injustice done to Native Americans for centuries. Practicing, almost all the genres of mainstream literature, Silko expresses her ability and understanding of literature. After blending Euro-American written form and oral trends of Native America in her writings, Silko presents her skill and eminence in literature. A detailed analysis of Silko's works indicates her understanding and devotion to native culture. Through her writings, Silko fulfills the task of reviving native cultural values. Silko's works are mainly concerned with the themes of the broad geographical description of America, cultural representation especially orality, storytelling, ceremonies, myths and rituals of the Laguna pueblo community, the influence of European culture on Native Americans, European and Native American cultural clash, sense of alienation of Native Americans in a white cultured society, confusion of identity and place of natives in colonized America, resistive strategies of natives and relevance of native cultural practices and tradition in sustaining Native American spirit and identity.

Through her works, Silko also represents Europeans as abusers and destructors of American land and its local inhabitants. History, memory, and remembrance of Native

American culture play an important role in almost all her creations. Her works represent a special kind of relationship of Native Americans with the natural world. The natural world of these natives also possesses healing power and enables natives to resist colonial oppressions and adjust to newly constructed society. Her works also put light on problems faced by Native American women in European constructed society. Almost all of her works are concerned with the description of native Laguna pueblo culture. Remembering her upbringing and nourishment in Laguna culture and analyzing European discrimination of natives, Leslie Marmon Silko says:

My parents and the people of the Laguna pueblo community who raised me taught me that we are all one family-all the offspring of mother earth- and no one is better or worse according to skin color or origin. My whole life I had believe this, but now I had to test what I had been taught as a child because I had also been taught that the truth matters more than anything, even more than personal comfort, more than one's own vanity. It was possible that my parents and the people at home, along with people like Ashley Montagu, had deluded themselves just as the segregationists had alleged. I was determined to know the truth even if truth was unpleasant... as a person of mixed ancestry growing up in the United States in the late 1950's, I know all of the cruel epithets that might be hurled at others; I learned from my father to feel comfortable and happy alone in the mesas and hills around Laguna. It was not so easy for me to learn where we Mormons belonged, but gradually I understood that we of mixed ancestry belonged on the outer edge of the circle between the world of the pueblo and the outside world. (Silko 101, 102)

On the verge of resisting colonial assimilation and because of her inability to reverse social changes, Silko uses techniques of hybridity and nativism. Through these techniques, she asserts the possibility of survival and continuity of Native American cultural trends and traditions. Her works are not only concerned with the revival of old culture and stories of Native American society but also assert the importance of this culture in the life of every Native American civilian. Belonging to mixed ancestry, Silko and most of her mixed blood characters asserts "heritage as a matter not of 'blood' but

of place; the earth remains, however altered, and so does indigenous identity, regardless of ineffectual beliefs about purity or authenticity”. (Clair 06)

Another aspect of Silko’s writing is that she breaks structural boundaries of the Euro-American literary genre and experiments with multi-genre. She even rejects conventions of the Euro-American literary genre and uses a technique that helps her in narrating local stories and tales. She applies Euro-American literary genres such as novels, essays autobiographies and blends them with Native American stories, poems, and photographs. Thus, she not only learns from the Euro-American literary genre but also adds novelty to it by altering its conventional boundaries. This energy and innovation that Silko expresses in her literature is praiseworthy.

To present date, many books and critical essays have been published on Silko’s texts and most of these critical works are based on a positive response. Her single book, *Ceremony* received a maximum critical response from the critics. This indicates the eminence and popularity of her works. Because of her focus on native cultural trends of America, the New Mexico Humanities Council named her a Living Cultural Treasure. In addition to her print work, Silko also became a part of a documentary film entitled “Running on the Edge of the Rainbow”. This film is a series of oral narratives produced at the University of Arizona. In this film, Silko played the role of a laguna pueblo storyteller. For her noteworthy contribution to the field of literature, especially Native American literature, Leslie Marmon Silko has been honored with many literary awards such as the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship (1974), Pushcart prize for poetry (1977), MacArthur Fellow Program (1981), American Book Award (1980) for *Ceremony*, Lannon Literary Award for Fiction (2000), Pen Oakland Award and Boston Globe Prize for non-fiction for *Delicacy and Strength of Lace: Letters Between Leslie Marmon Silko and James Wright*. She was also honored with The Native Writers' Circle of the Americas Lifetime Achievement Award in 1994 and many others. In the same year, Silko also received the third Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storyteller Lifetime Achievement award. After receiving this award Silko joined the group of N. Scott Momaday, Joy Harjo, and Simon Ortiz. In 2005 for her consciousness of nature, Silko also received the American Indian festival of words author award. All

these awards and honors fix her identity as a major writer of American Indian literature as well as English literature. Presently she lives in Tucson, Arizona.

### **Conclusion**

While being traditional, Silko incorporates worldwide understanding to keep her culture and tradition alive. Throughout her literary career, Silko has remained touched with the native history and culture. Her understanding and experiences in the culture have helped her to preserve it. Her multicultural knowledge becomes an easy aid in healing her wounds of being caught between two cultures. Leslie Marmon Silko in her works tries to overcome the influence of European colonialism on Native America. Through her texts, Silko explores multiple voices of native people of America that were kept hidden and silent through various assimilatory techniques. To resist European oppression, Silko seeks the help of native Laguna cultural trends such as local ceremonies, rituals, myths, beliefs, stories, tales, songs, etc. Instead, memory and remembrance also play an important role in resisting colonial oppressions. Through her writings, she has devoted herself in making people aware of cultural imperialism and its after impacts. Most of the characters in her works are mixed blood, trapped in the fangs of two different societies. Among them, only those characters can sustain identity and normalcy who remember the importance of their native cultural trends, and other characters who try to forget their cultural importance continuously suffer. A brief analysis of Silko's texts also reveals diversity of Native American culture and place of this diverse culture in natives' life. One of the most important aspects of Native American culture is the power of stories and Silko has skillfully embedded her texts with multiple stories. While possessing a circular pattern, these stories enable natives to remember the relevance of native culture.

Through the depiction of local narratives and socio-social aspects of life, a sharp examination of social changes is presented. Native American's distance from white society and the importance of local practices and the local environment in helping them manage daily life, as well as Native American traditional history, endurance, and war, are also covered. The brilliance of the persistence of Native Americans in Leslie Marmon Silko's compositions has been discussed independently in relation to the aforementioned subjects. Her texts cover the same topics, such as social hardship, oral

tradition, influence, character, sway, locality, and the necessity and power of an ongoing practice. They all present Native Americans as devoted earth emancipators who care about the land and its creatures. In other ways, Native Americans are portrayed in Silko's paintings as the victims of the planet and its inhabitants. Silko's writing explores the progression of time. She has the knowledge and experience ingrained in her DNA to write from her experience. Not only are her works closely aligned with the viewpoints of Native Americans, but she also skillfully conveys her thoughts via them. Silko makes an effort to spread it to a larger audience of readers. This makes her work one of the greatest works of Local American Writing from the 20th century.

## Chapter 2

### Cultural Hybridity and Nativism: Issues and Perspectives

#### Cultural Hybridity

The term ‘Cultural Hybridity’ is related to the postcolonial world. The concept of cultural hybridity has gained its prominence since the 1980s within postcolonial and cultural studies. Hybridity is the outcome of colonialism. Hybridity has emerged as an important aspect of postcolonial societies of Asia, Africa, and Latin America and is used to explain what happened after European’s expansion towards colonized countries. Not only this, but hybridity also exists as an important dimension of the diaspora in the west. This postcolonial concept of cultural hybridity is used to explain cultural contact between the European colonizers and the colonized people as well as cultural interaction among the diaspora and the native inhabitants of the West. Cultural hybridity arises from the cross-cultural interaction of two different cultures. We can also say that, within the context of postcolonial studies, the concept of cultural hybridity is used to describe a population that has undergone a long process of cultural intermixing and alteration and this intermixing of diverse cultures ultimately creates a new hybrid culture and environment.

Hybridity has different meanings in different fields. Generally, the word ‘hybridity’ is used to refer to the mixture. Originally, the term hybridity is related to the field of science and is used to represent a mixture of two different components or living species. In horticulture, the term hybridity is used when cross-breeding of two different species by cross-pollination or grafting gives rise to a third hybrid species. In biology, a hybrid is developed by combining the good qualities of two different breeds or species of organisms through the process of sexual reproduction. Over time, usage of this term increased its span from biology to racial, cultural, and postcolonial studies. Presently, hybridity is regarded as “one of the most widely employed and much disputed term” (Ashcroft 108) in the field of literature.

Based on its use in different fields, the term ‘Hybridity’ manifests different aspects such as linguistic, cultural, racial, political, religious, etc. Linguistic hybridity means mixing

elements from the foreign language into a particular language. It comprises pidgin and creole languages. The concept of linguistic hybridity is explained by Mikhail Bakhtin in his work, *The Dialogic Imagination* (1975). Bakhtin uses the concept of hybridity to explain the co-existence of elite and popular languages in the age of modernization. Bakhtin is credited with the exploration of the idea of polyphony of languages. Instead, he also suggested the “disruptive and transfiguring power of multivocal language situations and, by extensions of multivocal narratives” (Ashcroft 108). About the idea of linguistic hybridity, Mikhail Bakhtin in his book, *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981), remarks:

It is a mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consequences separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation or by some other factor. ... language and languages change historically primarily by means of hybridization, by means of a mixing of various “languages” coexisting within the boundaries of a single dialect, a single national language, a single branch, a single group of different branches, in the historical and paleontological past languages-but the crucible for this mixing always remains the utterance. (Bakhtin 358-59)

Here Bakhtin makes difference between two types of linguistic hybridity, organic or unconscious hybridity and conscious or intentional hybridity and this division helps theorize simultaneous coexistence of cultural hybridity or change resistive strategies. Linguistic hybridity may also involve the mixing of English words into Asian or African languages or the adoption of some Asian or African words into the English language. Such intermixing of elements of the language of different regions is the outcome of European colonialism almost all over the world. Today, there are many English words of Indian origin such as karma, nirvana, dacoit, pajamas, raita, etc. Similarly, there are many English words of African origin such as banana, chimpanzee, zombie, etc.

Racial hybridity- Race symbolizes a huge population or a group of people belonging to the same ancestry and separate from other populations based on various physical and cultural aspects. Racial hybridity is used to define variegated offspring of mixed-race

ancestry. For example- Eurasians are people of mixed Asian and European ancestry. Similarly, in Latin America, mestizos are people of mixed racial identity. The procedure of racial hybridity supports the concept of multiculturalism. However, in the postcolonial world, there always remains the sovereignty of colonizers over the native inhabitants

Religious hybridity- Religion is a system of beliefs on god or gods that transmits humanity to the world of existence through various types of narratives, symbols, and sacred histories. Religious hybridity is used to explain the influence of foreign religion on a particular religion. It further explains the interaction of varied belief systems with the tradition and local culture of a particular geographical area.

Another sub-category of hybridity is cultural hybridity. The present age is characterized by postcolonialism, transcultural movement and settlement, cultural appropriation, and diasporic communities. All these factors give rise to the intermixing of different cultures thus increasing the relevance of cultural hybridity. It can be defined as intermixing of different aspects of cultures. Within this category comes all the aspects of society. In the era of the postcolonial world, cultural hybridity involves the voluntarily or involuntarily acceptance of the colonizer's behaviors and ethnic beliefs by the native inhabitants. Postcolonial cultural hybridity not only involves cultural mixing but also represents the unbalanced relationship between the colonizers and the colonized.

The other two types of hybridity are political hybridity and economic hybridity. In political hybridity, the concept of hybridity is used to describe the political phenomenon of intermixing different political interpretations or ideas. Economic hybridity aims to modify the entire economic situation, for an instant traditional native system of the economy is altered by the colonizer's modern economic system. It also involves the intermingling of the rural and urban economies.

In this way, the term hybridity can easily be conceived as a universal term that has been used in various fields such as science, social sciences, artistic, literary, and cultural studies to explain how discrete social structures and practices of different regions combine and finally this combination gives rise to new structures and objects. Its



contemporary use is dispersed across multiple disciplines and its application lies in the discussion of racism, identity, anti-racism, postcolonialism, multiculturalism, and globalization. In its broad sense, the concept of hybridity is used to explain the process of interethnic interaction, decolonization, globalization, artistic and mass communication fusion, travel and border crossing, and linguistic mixing.

The term hybridity is often debated in connection with other key terms, denoting intercultural shifting. These terms include syncretism, mestizaje, and creolization. Marwan Kraidy in his book, *Hybridity or The Cultural Logic of Globalization* (2005), says that since the time of its origin, the term ‘Syncretism’ has been used “to refer to the fusion of divergent ideas and it has also served as a framework for the study of interreligious borrowings and interreligious fusions” (Kraidy 49). Syncretism explains cultural amalgam in the religious and musical tradition, such as Judaism represents the mixing of Christianity and Greek religious thoughts. The term ‘Creolization’ originated in the wake of the European colonization of New America. Creolization involves intermixing of different cultures and the formation of creole society from various cultural roots such as Africans, Europeans, and the native Caribbean. The term Mestizaje was most common in Latin America. “Across Latin America, states adopted mestizaje as the official ideology of nation building in their bids to forge national identities distinct from mere provincial status in the Spanish empire” (Kraidy 51). In Latin America, the term mestizaje was used as an attempt “to mitigate tensions between the indigenous populations and the descendants of Spanish colonists by positing the new nations as hybrids of both worlds” (Kraidy 51).

These terms can be used in anthropological and ethnohistorical literature as more or less classical forms of hybridity. But these terms don’t explain the fusion of rural and urban culture or local and transnational fusion. These terms are used to refer to traditional processes and the survival of pre-modern customs in the contemporary era. Hybridity is a broader term that encompasses all these equivalent terms and that is why most of contemporary critics prefer to use hybridity instead of syncretism, mestizaje, and creolization because:

it includes diverse intercultural mixtures—not only the racial ones to which mestizaje tends to be limited—and because it permits the inclusion of the

modern forms of hybridization better than does ‘syncretism,’ a term that almost always refers to religious fusions or traditional symbolic environments... ‘hybridity’ refers mostly to culture but retains residual meanings related to the three interconnected realms of race, language, and ethnicity. (Kraidy 01)

In literature, different critics and theorists have defined hybridity in their ways. In literature, the term hybridity is used to explain the mixture of cultures that results in “the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization” (Ashcraft 108). Regarding hybridity, Ashcroft again says:

The assertion of a shared post-colonial condition such as hybridity has been seen as part of the tendency of discourse analysis to de-historicize and de-locate cultures from their temporal, spatial, geographical and linguistic contexts, and to lead to an abstract, globalized concept of the textual that obscures the specificities of particular cultural situations. (Ashcraft 109)

According to one definition, “Hybridity can be understood as the ongoing condition of all human cultures, which contain no zones of purity because they undergo continuous processes of transculturation (two way borrowing and lending between cultures)” (Flower 63-64). According to another view “hybridity involves the fusion of two hitherto relatively distinct forms, styles, or identities, cross-cultural contact, which often occurs across national borders as well as across cultural boundaries” (Kraidy 05). Another definition reveals that “hybridity is a site of transformation and change where fixed identities based on essentialisms are called into question” (Kuortti & Nyman 03). Another explanation of the origin of hybridity in science and its later use in postcolonial and cultural theories is given by Avtar Brah and Annie Coombes in their book, *Hybridity and its Discontents*: “Hybridity started life as a biological term, used to describe the outcome of a crossing of two plants or species. It is now a term for a wide range of social and cultural phenomena involving ‘mixing’, and has become a key concept within cultural criticism and post-colonial theory”. (Brah & Coombes 01)

In their book *Hybridity and its Discontents* (2003), Avtar Brah and Annie Coombes identify the universality of hybridity and give it a status of ‘common sense term’ in every field. They even consider it a “key concept in cultural criticism, in postcolonial

studies, in debates about cultural contestation and appropriation and in relation to the concept of the border and the ideal of the cosmopolitan” (Brah and Coombes 01). Further explanation of Robert Young’s definition of hybridity is given by Ania Loomba in her book *Colonialism/ Postcolonialism* (2005) “a hybrid is technically a cross between two different species and that therefore the term ‘hybridization’ evokes both the botanical notion of inter-species grafting and the ‘vocabulary of Victorian extreme rights’ which regarded different races as different species”. (Loomba 145)

In these lines, Robert young considers a hybrid a cross between two different species. He further states that a hybrid is both a botanic notion as well as an interspecies grafting. It is making two out of one and creating a difference in sameness and also sameness in difference. He says that there is not a single or fixed concept of hybridity. Hybridity involves making two parts out of a single entity. Young claims:

Hybridity thus makes difference in sameness, sameness into difference, but in a way that makes the same no longer the same, the different no longer simply different. In that sense, it operates according to the form of logic that Derrida isolates in the term ‘brisure,’ a breaking and a joining at the same time, in the same place: difference and sameness in an apparently impossible simultaneity. Hybridity thus consists of a bizarre binate operation, in which each impulse is qualified against the other, forcing momentary forms of dislocation and displacement into complex economies of agonistic reticulation. (Young 24-25)

Now regarding the role of hybridity in the analysis of colonial discourses and the contribution of this analysis, Young says, hybridity

provides a significant framework for that other work by emphasizing that all perspectives on colonialism share and have to deal with a common discursive medium which was also that of colonialism itself; the language used to enact, enforce, describe or analyse colonialism is not transparent, innocent, ahistorical or simply instrumental. Colonial-discourse analysis can therefore look at a wide variety of texts of colonialism as something more than mere documentation or ‘evidence’. (Young 155)

The concept of hybridity occupies a central position in postcolonial and cultural discourses. In postcolonial and cultural studies, the concept of cultural hybridity is applied to define “the newly composed, mixed or contradictory identities resulting from immigration, exile and migrancy (in relation to Asian-American, Black-British or Turko-German communities, for example)” (Brooker 127). In postcolonial society, colonization resulted in radical inversion of the historically conceived pure identity of local people. Rather after colonization, the identity of most of the native inhabitants of a postcolonial society is represented as a hybrid version of the colonized society as well as the colonizer’s society. According to many critics, cultural hybridity is regarded as the outcome of colonization. The concept of hybridity acts as a central dimension in the literary and cultural outcomes of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the diaspora. In almost all the postcolonial discourses, cultural hybridity acts as a strategy for self-determination and subsequently, all the postcolonial writers have used hybridity “as a vehicle for the redefinition not only of themselves as individuals but also of their culture as a whole” (Flower 63).

Historically, the concept of hybridity merely served as a metaphor for the negative consequences of racial mixings. Historically, hybridity was connected with the dubious traces of colonialism and white supremacy. In the nineteenth century, hybridity was deeply inscribed in the discourses of scientific racism. Previously, as the concept of purity has been central to the racialized theory of identity, the concept of hybridity served merely as a threat to the fullness of pure identity. Not only this, hybridity was even regarded as the “moral marker of contamination, failure, or regression” (Webner & Madood 257).

Traditionally, a hybrid was also considered to be an infertile and inferior copy of the original. Even the biological concept of hybridity and its relation with infertility has led some thinkers to issue warning against the risk of spreading to culture and society the sterility typically related to the term. Even in the nineteenth century, the concept of hybridity was connected with racism and it has also been claimed, by many thinkers, that the term should be treated with caution because it encourages the ideas of racism and miscegenation. This view is expressed by Robert young in his book *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (1995), where he connects the idea of

hybridity with mongrelity and says “Today, therefore, in reinvoking this concept, we are utilizing the vocabulary of the Victorian extreme right as much as the notion of an organic process of the grafting of diversity into singularity” (Young 09). In this way, for Young, the convention of the term hybridity seems to be the ideological baggage of the nineteenth century that still lingers in the minds of contemporary critics and their writings.

But with time, contemporary studies have inversed negative thinking about hybridity and even transformed hybridity into a positive term. In postcolonial studies, the concept of cultural hybridity has moved from the discussion of race and situated itself within the framework of identity. According to Peter Brooker, in contemporary cultural studies, the meanings of hybridity “have been extended to refer to the mixed or hyphenated identities of persons or ethnic communities, or of texts which express and explore this condition sometimes themselves employing mixed written and visual discourses” (Brooker 126). It can also be claimed that contemporary use of the concept of hybridity shows resistance to the racial concept of colonial discourse. So, in contemporary studies, the concept of hybridity has been refined and used in two ways. Firstly, to represent mixed and hyphenated identities of the communities and their people and secondly, it is used in a counter discursive and resistive manner against pre-existing dominant narratives praising white supremacy. This concept is argued by Jopi Nyman in his study of Kipling’s *The Jungle Book*. According to him “the position of Mowgli as linking the worlds of colonizer and colonized, of humans and animals, yet not belonging to either, renders him in this space of liminality where he can resist fixed identifications” (Kroutri & Nyman 05). This positive role of cultural hybridity is further valorized by Pinna Webner and Tariq Madood. According to them, hybridity plays an important role in the construction of identity. Webner & Madood comments:

In its most radical form, the concept also stresses that identity is not the combination, accumulation, fusion or synthesis of various components, but an energy field of different forces...Hybridity evokes narratives of origin and encounter. Whenever the process of identity formation is premised on an exclusive boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’, the hybrid, born out of the transgression of this boundary, figures as a form of danger, loss and

degeneration. If, however, the boundary is marked positively – to solicit exchange and inclusion – then the hybrid may yield strength and vitality. Hence the conventional value of the hybrid is always positioned in relation to the value of purity, along axes of inclusion and exclusion. (Webner & Madood 258-59)

Contrary to the notion of tradition that represents consistency and unity, cultural hybridity represents multiplicity and diversity in culture. In this way, cultural hybridity liberates tradition and culture from the pangs of rigidity and fixity. As we all know that present-day world is characterized by international as well as intranational migrations, cultural appropriation, and diasporic population, all these factors increase the chances of cultural interaction and mixing, thus contributing to the intermixing of the local and the global. This condition increases the chances of developing an inevitable hybrid identity. Similarly, it can also be argued that the conditions of contradictions and differences aid in constructing identity. Kuortti and Nyman rightly regard “through the use of the term, it is possible to address the role of contradictions and difference in the making of identity by saying that hybridity ‘openly acknowledges that identity is constructed through a negotiation of difference and that the presence of fissures, gaps and contradictions is not a sign of failure’”. (Kuortti and Nyman 06)

The idea of hybridity is further explored by British sociologist and critic Paul Gilroy who recognizes the problems of cultural purity and argues for an “alternative and more challenging understanding of intercultural contact, the theorization of creolization, metissage, mestizaje and hybridity” (Kraidy 58). After examining the transatlantic flow of people, ideas, and culture as a result of slave trading and pangs of binary opposition, Gilroy suggests possibilities for cultural renewal in Europe, America, Caribbean, and Africa. The idea of cultural hybridity is further explored by Stuart Hall. Hall rejects the notion of pure essentialist identity. He asserts the possibility of possessing a multicultural identity. He says that a person can be both black as well as British. According to Hall “cultural identity is always hybrid, but he also insists that the precise form of this hybridity will be determined by specific historical formations and cultural repertoires of enunciation” (Webner & Madood 273). Another critic Garcia Canclini explored the term in the context of Latin America. According to Garcia Canclini, in Latin America, hybridity is constructed by two processes. One is the ancient encounter

of native Americans with multiculturalism and the second is contemporary social dynamics. In this sense, Garcia Canclini says “hybridity helps us understand the uncertainty that surrounds modernity in Latin America, since hybridity highlights the mixtures and discontinuities that have characterized at once the encounter between the modern and the traditional in history, and the interactions between the global, regional, national, and local that continue to this day” (Kraidy 64).

Another important postcolonial and cultural critic and theorist whose idea of hybridity I am going to apply in the theses is Homi Bhabha. It is believed that the concept of hybridity was introduced in the field of postcolonial studies by Homi. K. Bhabha in his book, *The Location of Culture* (1994), a collection of essays on culture and postcolonial social conditions. Bhabha along with Mikhail Bakhtin is “often credited with dislocating the concept of hybridity from the biological domain of miscegenation to the cultural field of power” (Kraidy 46). Homi. K. Bhabha is a well-known American Indian English critic and theorist and his “work has focused on the psychic processes of identification and the cultural practices of performance to highlight the hybridization that is intrinsic to all forms of radical transformation and traditional renewal” (Webner & Madood 274).

Bhabha’s ideas about postcolonial theory are heavily influenced by poststructuralists, mostly through the writings of Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, and Michel Foucault. He is known for his notable ideas such as hybridity, mimicry, liminality, and ambivalence mentioned in his much-acclaimed book, *The Location of Culture* (1994). All these concepts express and highlight colonized people’s strategies to resist the powers of superior cultures. Bhabha, along with Gayatri Chakravarty and Edward Said, is often regarded as a part of the ‘holy trinity’ in the field of postcolonial studies. Bhabha develops the idea of cultural hybridity in his essay ‘Signs Taken for Wonders’ to explain the emergence of a new culture from the situation of multiculturalism. About the concept of Homi Bhabha’s hybridity, writers of the book *Postcolonial Studies Reader* (2003) say, for Bhabha, hybridity “is the most common and effective form of subversive opposition since it displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination” (Ashcraft 09). Bhabha’s usage of the term

hybridity can easily be explained by referring few lines from Ania Loomba's book, *Colonialism/ Postcolonialism* (2005). Ania Loomba comments:

It is Homi Bhabha's usage of the concept of hybridity that has been the most influential and controversial in recent postcolonial studies. Bhabha goes back to Fanon to suggest that liminality and hybridity are necessary attributes of the colonial condition. For Fanon, you will recall, psychic trauma results when the colonial subject realizes that he can never attain the whiteness he has been taught to desire, to shed the blackness that he has learned to devalue. Bhabha amplifies this to suggest that colonial identities are always a matter of flux and agony. It is always, writes Bhabha in an essay about Fanon's importance of our time, ...that the colonial desire is articulated. (Loomba 148)

To understand Bhabha's concept of hybridity, it is necessary to understand the concept of culture for Bhabha. According to Bhabha, culture is not a static entity but rather is flexible and always kept on changing with time and space. For Bhabha, the idea of a pure and uncontaminated culture is a myth. He says no culture is pure. He rejects the notion of cultural isolation and cultural purity. He says that cultures are not discrete but always remain in contact with each other. Bhabha argues that all cultures are characterized by the quality of change, flux, transformation, and mixedness and according to Bhabha, this quality of mixedness and impurity is cultural hybridity.

Bhabha explores the concept of hybridity in the context of postcolonial literature and celebrates it "as a symptom of resistance by the colonized, as the contamination of imperial ideology, aesthetics, and identity by natives striking back at colonial domination" (Kraidy 58). Bhabha establishes the superiority of cultural hybridity as well as its capacity to subvert the dominance of colonial discourse. Bhabha applies the concept of hybridity to highlight the colonial ambivalence of colonizers and explains how cultural interaction and intermixing of two different cultures give rise to a new hybrid culture. Bhabha says that this creation of new hybrid culture develops the unbalanced relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. Bhabha again says that this new hybrid culture is formed in a space of in-betweenness and Bhabha terms this space as 'third space of enunciation'. Bhabha argues that this space of in-



betweenness and liminality lies between the cultures of the colonizers and the colonized. Bhabha describes this third space as a stairwell and speaks:

The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and the passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. The interstitial passages between fixed identifications open up the possibility of cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. (Bhabha 05)

Bhabha explains this third space of enunciation by applying the Freudian terms of uncanny or unhomely and says that this space is an “estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world - the unhomeliness - that is the condition of extraterritorial and cross-cultural initiations” (Kuortti & Nyman 08). Bhabha defines the construction of this ‘in-Space’ in the “hybrid moment” of political change: “Here the transformational value of change lies in the re-articulation or translation of elements that are neither the one (unitary working class) nor the other (the politics of gender) but something else which contests the terms and territories of both” (Bhabha 41). Bhabha again says that in this ‘third space of enunciation’, both the superiors and the inferiors exist in having an independent relationship with each other. The hybrid culture created in this third space is neither recognized as colonized nor as colonizer but represents a mixed independent cultural identity. This new culture may resemble the old ones but not exactly. Bhabha again says “It is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew”. (Bhabha 55)

Bhabha says that this third space of enunciation has a productive capacity of both colonial as well as postcolonial origin. This space aids in understanding different struggles, assimilation, subordination, and resistive strategies going on within a particular colonial situation. This liminal space also opens up the possibility for the creation of a new hybrid identity that challenges the already imposed hierarchy. New

cultural identity emerges and develops in this space. This reconstruction of a new identity “may be positive and empowering, its transgressive character and location in the liminal of borders and boundaries also, as Bhabha writes, poses potential dangers as it generates a new, hybrid subjectivity” (Kuorti & Nyman 08). In this regard, Bhabha says “Beyond’ signifies spatial distance, marks progress, and promises the future; but our intimations of exceeding the barrier or boundary – the very act of going beyond – are unknowable, unrepresentable, without a return to the ‘present” (Bhabha 5-6). This means that the third space generates a new non-fixed identity that may resemble the previous ones but is not the same.

Bhabha again confirms that the identification of this third space of enunciation may help to reduce the exoticism of cultural variations and differences. So, to sustain normalcy, it is important to recognize the site of new identity formation. The formation of third space “demonstrates that colonial authority is never total or complete. And it is this absence of a closure that allows for native intervention” (Ashcraft 101). Bhabha in his essay ‘Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences’, says:

It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into that alien territory ... may reveal that the theoretical recognition of the split-space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture’s hybridity. (Bhabha 209)

Thus, according to Bhabha, this new hybrid culture that is constructed out of cultural interaction between the colonizers and the colonized can be seen as positive, developing, enriching, dynamic and oppressive. It means a newly developed hybrid culture possesses the qualities of resistance and representation. Bhabha again confirms that the third space carries the burden and sense of culture. He says that this third space deconstructs rigid boundaries of colonial discursivity and constructs new hybrid identities. Bhabha says that hybridity is the

name of this displacement of value from symbol to sign that causes the dominant discourse to split along the axis of its power to be representative, authoritative.

Hybridity represents that ambivalent ‘turn’ of the discriminated subject into the terrifying, exorbitant object of paranoid classification- a disturbing questioning of the images and presences of authority. The displacement from symbol to sign creates a crises for any subject of authority based on a system of recognition: colonial specularity, double inscribed, does not produce a mirror where the self apprehends itself; it is always the split screen of the self and its doubling, the hybrid. (Bhabha 162)

According to Homi Bhabha, hybridity acts as a tool for colonized to resist the colonial dominance of the colonizers. According to Bhabha, hybridity is a way to avoid polarity between the colonizers and the colonized. In this regard, Bhabha says:

Hybridity is the sign of productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal. (that is the production of discriminatory identities that secure the pure and original identity of authority). Hybridity is revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turns the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power. (Bhabha 159)

Bhabha again says that hybridity is not an issue of individuality between two different cultures. He says that two unrelated cultures are not pre-existing, rather they are the outcomes of historical alteration i.e., colonialism and postcolonialism. This states that cultures are retrospective and are consequences of historical progression. He further adds that the concept of cultural hybridity is not general rather it may be prevalent in every culture. Cultural hybridity even blurs all differences into indifference thus making all hybrid cultures almost similar. This idea of difference undermines critical differentiation and distinction. Bhabha’s theory of cultural hybridity also rejects the idea that already existing pure cultures are hybridized after colonialism and thus resists facile relativism. This can be seen in his essay, *Signs Taken for Wonder*, where he says:

Colonial hybridity is not a problem of genealogy or identity between two different cultures which can then be resolved as an issue of cultural relativism. Hybridity is the problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other, 'denied' knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority- its rule of recognition. (Bhabha 162)

In this passage, Bhabha stresses two significant points. While studying cultural hybridity we do not begin with two or more cultures and trace their historical process of hybridization. During the period of colonialism, the production of culture is an unavoidable consequence of contested authority. In the colonial situation, the cultural difference arises due to strategies applied by both cultures. According to Bhabha, cultural hybridity questions traditional analysis of colonialism and again tend to inverse the terms of colonial acquaintance. Hybridity is thus the act that reverses the process of colonial supremacy.

Not only the concept of cultural hybridity, but Bhabha's idea of mimicry also act as a process of disavowal. Being a process of cultural repetition, mimicry undermines the authority and supremacy of colonial discourse. The process of continual mimicry of colonizers by the colonized also brings into light the act of colonial ambivalence. Rather than mere imitation of superior culture, the process of mimicry makes fun of colonial supremacy and thus subverts it. Both the process of cultural hybridity and mimicry subverts the process of colonial authority and power of supremacy. Thus:

The cultural hybridity enacted in mimicry, best captured by Bhabha's notion of "third space," is thus understood as a subversive practice of resistance. It is this highly textualist formulation of hybridity as resistance that has subjected Bhabha to critiques of poststructuralist license and a lack of sensitivity to the material inequalities that riddle the previously colonized world. (M Kraidy 58)

Bhabha analyses the nature of colonized or excluded populations and notices the increasing impact of these colonized populations on the Eurocentric subject. According to Bhabha, increasing the nature of cultural hybridity helps reduce the negative impact of the superior culture. Cultural hybridity and mimicry are important and effective tools

for the colonized population to resist colonial oppression and subjugation. Bhabha says that this affinity among the revolutionary voices sets the platform for the process of change and the idea of modernity. Bhabha says “For the demography of the new internationalism is the history of postcolonial migration, the narratives of cultural and political diaspora, the major social displacements of peasant and aboriginal communities, the politics of exile, the grim prose of political and economic refugees”. (Bhabha 06-07)

Regarding his view about postcolonial discourse and cultural hybridity, Bhabha challenges the interpretations of his predecessors especially Frantz Fanon and Edward Said. Referring to Franz Fanon’s writings, Bhabha says that “Fanon is the purveyor of the transgressive and the transitional truth” (Bhabha 57). According to Bhabha, Fanon portrays “the problem of colonial cultural alienation in psychoanalytic language of demand and desire” (Bhabha 61). Bhabha rejects Fanon’s notion that colonizers advocate colonial authority by inviting colonized people to mimic and imitate colonizers’ culture. Rather Bhabha says that the process of mimicry, hybridity, and imitation challenges cultural hegemony. Bhabha asserts that both white cultures, as well as colonized cultures, are independent. Both the colonizer and the colonized act on each other.

Bhabha considers Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1994), his source of inspiration but he finds one fault in it. According to Bhabha, Said focused on the intrusion and working of colonial power and overlooked the resistive and self-representative strategies of the colonized. Said espouses colonial interconnection between the colonizers and the colonized is static and is not subjected to any kind of change. Bhabha says “there is always, in Said, the suggestion that colonial power and discourse is possessed entirely by the colonizer, which is a historical and theoretical simplification” (Bhabha 103) and this happens because of “Said’s inadequate attention to representation as a concept that articulates the historical and fantasy (as the scene of desire) in the production of the political effects of discourse” (Bhabha 103). Said emphasizes the framework of binary opposition and the difference between the superiors and the inferiors. Bhabha argues that “For Said, the copula seems to be the point at which western rationalism preserves the boundaries of sense for itself. Of this, too, Said is aware when he hints continually

at a polarity or division at the very center of Orientalism” (Bhabha 102). According to Bhabha, the condition of binary opposition between the colonizers and the colonized is unstable and always keeps on changing. He says both the colonizers and the colonized exist in a relation of interdependence. Bart Moore-Gilbert clarifies Bhabha’s departure from both Fanon and Said, Bart Gilbert says:

Whereas early Said concentrates almost entirely on the colonizer and later Fanon almost entirely on the colonized, Bhabha seeks to emphasize the mutualities and negotiations across the colonial divide. For Bhabha the relationship between colonizer and colonized is more complex and nuanced – and politically fraught – than Fanon and Said imply, principally because the circulation of contradictory patterns of psychic effect in colonial relations (desire for, as well as fear of the Other, for example) undermines their assumption that the identities and positioning of colonized and colonizer exist in stable and unitary terms which are absolutely distinct from, and necessarily in conflict with, each other. (Gilbert 116)

Instead of seeking negativity in colonial interaction and its after impacts on colonized people through cultural hybridity, Bhabha celebrates its subversive quality and says “if the effect of colonial power is seen to be the production of hybridization rather than the noisy command of colonialist authority or the silent repression of native traditions, then an important change of perspective occurs”. (Bhabha 160)

Bhabha’s contribution to the field of postcolonial literature lies in his act of displaying colonial discourses and their social representation in a deconstructive manner. According to Bhabha, colonialism should not only be seen as domination and violence of colonial powers but also as a tenure of complex cultured and traditional interaction. He aims to display a hybrid situation and mixing of tradition and culture of negotiating life as a result of the colonial situations. Bhabha says that this negotiating culture does not assimilate into the superior culture but rather represents a separate identity. It also avoids the cultural supremacy of superiors and rejects the binary representation of social antagonism. In this regard, Bhabha in his essay, *Culture’s In-Between*, says:

In my own work, I have developed the concept of hybridity to describe the construction of cultural authority within conditions of political antagonism or inequity. Strategies of hybridization reveal an estranging movement in the 'authoritative', even authoritarian inscription of the cultural sign. At the point at which the precept attempts to objectify itself as a generalized knowledge or a normalizing, hegemonic practice, the hybrid strategy or discourse opens up a space of negotiation where power is unequal but its articulation may be equivocal. (Bennet 34)

Bhabha examines the relationship between the colonizers and the colonized and adverts their interdependence and stresses “hybridity’s ability to subvert dominant discourses and reappropriate them to create what he calls cultures of postcolonial contra-modernity” (Kraidy 58). However, Bhabha himself says that hybridity can be used as an important strategy by the colonized community to sustain stability and normalcy in the postcolonial world. According to Bhabha, hybridity acts as a way of enhancing the struggles of the subjectivities within history. The main contribution of Bhabha’s theory of hybridity is to explore the role of the colonized community in the colonial discourse. Hybridity provides a way to think out of the binary difference. It opens doors for restructuring and destabilizing colonial powers. Cultural hybridity provides the chance for the colonized section to disarray the colonial authority with the help of explorative language in a non-resistive stance. In this reference Bhabha says:

Resistance is not necessarily an oppositional act of political intention, nor it is the simple negation or exclusion of the ‘content’ of another culture, as a difference once perceived. It is the effect of an ambivalence produced within the rules of recognition of dominating discourses as they articulate the signs of cultural difference and reimplicate them within the differential relations of colonial power- hierarchy, normalization, marginalization and so forth. (Bhabha 157-58)

This concept of hybridity adverts that there is no inherent notion of a superior culture or inferior culture. Cultural hybridity is thus a “strategy premised on cultural purity, and aimed at stabilizing the status quo” (Loomba 146). In this way through these views and ideas about cultural hybridity, Bhabha exhibits a fervently embracing and

celebratory attitude toward hybrid identity and culture. Bhabha's idea of cultural hybridity rejects the idea of pre-existing culture, rather he suggests that culture is the outcome of a continuous process of hybridization. Instead of establishing the difference between the colonizers and the colonized, Bhabha attempts to highlight their homogeneity. Bhabha's concept of self-destruction of the colonial authority through the technique of hybridity and mimicry is his biggest contribution to the field of postcolonial literature. Bhabha's concept of hybridity along with other ideas such as mimicry and ambivalence are appropriate for studying the complex relationship between the colonizers and colonized. Cultural hybridity can peel corporation and thus acts as empowering hybridity.

## **Nativism**

From the last decade of the twentieth century to the present time, the most discussed topic in cultural and postcolonial studies has been identity. Such discussion raises questions regarding the history and cultural roots. But this cultural identity has been triggered due to the impact of European colonization and globalization. Colonization had resulted in the destabilization of historical roots and old cultural trends. Instead of understanding the importance of the history and cultural values of the colonized, colonial invaders tried to vanish it. The ultimate aim of the colonizers was to destroy the culture and history of the natives and spread their own culture. Colonial invaders also exhibited an indifferent attitude towards colonized population and this resulted in ailment and suffering among the natives. It can rightly be said, "Colonialism denies human rights to human beings whom it has subdued by violence, and keeps them by force in a state of misery and ignorance" (Memmi 20). Ultimately, the impact of colonial invasion had been the loss of old culture and the creation of a new world. This is not only the case of one country but almost all the countries that were once colonized by European settlers faced such problems. The process of colonialism hurt cultural, historical, psychological, and material aspects of the colonized world. This reference is given by, J. Jorge Klor De Alva as:

In most places, the original inhabitants who ... grouped themselves into separate cultural units (i.e. ethnicities) all but disappeared after contact, wiped out



physically by disease and abuse, and later, genetically and socially by miscegenation, and lastly, culturally, by the religious and political practices of the Europeans and their mixed progeny. Even in regions where native peoples survived as corporate groups in their own greatly transformed communities, especially in the 'core' areas of Mesoamerica and the Andes, within two or three generations they were greatly reduced in number and politically and socially marginalized from the new centers of power. (Prakash 243)

Due to the process of colonial invasion, native inhabitants of all the colonized countries faced problems relating to cultural loss, feeling of alienation, and identity conflict. Their selflessness and identity were somewhere lost in the process of colonization. They were confused about their real identity and position in society. Just as in America, many Native Americans were confused about their real identity because they were of mixed blood. They were not able to identify themselves with either of the cultures. This problem of cultural confusion among the Americans is highlighted in the works of Native American writers. Paula Gunn Allen, an exponent of Native American Literature, in her work *The Sacred Hoop* (1992), says "the breed whether by parentage or acculturation to non-Indian society is "an Indian who is not an Indian" (Allen 129). This sense of double consciousness and confusion inhibits them to adhere with any of the cultures. Allen further says:

Colonization does not, after all, affect people only economically. More fundamentally, it affects a people's understanding of their universe, their place within that universe, the kinds of values they must embrace and actions they must make to remain safe and whole within that universe. In short, colonization alters both the individual's and the group's sense of identity. Loss of identity is a major dimension of alienation, and when severe enough it can lead to individual and group death. (Allen 129).

Not only this, but colonialism also resulted in the exploitation of natural resources and spread many social evils in the colonial countries. This extensive process of colonial oppression developed a rage of revolution among the natives. Therefore, to regain identity and sustain normalcy, these native inhabitants of Asia, Africa and Americans started anti-colonial struggles. Through these struggles, these native inhabitants of

colonized countries seek to rediscover their culture and its values. They realized that “anti-colonial struggles, therefore, had to create new and powerful identities for colonized peoples and to challenge colonialism not only at a political or intellectual level but also on an emotional plane” (Loomba 155).

Understanding the process of colonialism and cultural threat, these native people in all the colonized countries, especially in America, discovered a resistive and revolutionary strategy that deals with the revival and reclamation of native culture and history. This strategy of favoring and giving importance to native culture is termed as Nativism. A nativistic spirit believes that we can go back to history and retrieve native culture and tradition to shape our life according to it. This nativistic spirit can thus be used as a strategic move to resist colonial oppressions and regain pre-colonial identities.

Nativism as a theoretical term gained its present popularity in the last decade of the twentieth century. Generally, the term nativism posits different meanings and aspects in different fields. Within postcolonial studies, the concept of nativism is connected with the strategic move of the colonized. According to Ashcroft, nativism is a “term for the desire to return to indigenous practices and cultural forms as they existed in pre-colonial society. The term is most frequently encountered to refer to the rhetoric of decolonization which argues that colonialism needs to be replaced by the recovery and promotion of pre-colonial, indigenous ways” (Ashcraft 143). Nativism is a universal phenomenon of self-assertion. Through the process of nativism, the native colonized and marginalized section seeks to valorize their difference from the dominating culture. This acts as an important resisting tool for the oppressed section of the colonized society. Nativism is a quest for indigenusness with the agenda of the revival of self-identity and native culture. It uses all the tactics and processes of native cultural revival and ultimately aims at decolonization.

This idea of nativism is explored by Balachander Namade in his essay *Nativism in Literary Culture* (2009). According to Namade, nativism is the most powerful weapon in the hands of the colonized society to challenge colonial forces and their aim of undermining native cultural values. While giving importance to native culture, Namade expressed his conscience that it is only after the understanding of native culture, that a writer can produce the best literature. Namade rejects the idea of white supremacy that

focuses on colonial inheritance at the expense of native history and cultural heritage. Expressing his faith in nativism, Namade says:

as a result of years of slavery under crafty European rulers, a peculiar kind of colonialist internationalism was born in various parts of the colonial world in the mid-twentieth century. ... It is time to tell people who are used to such elitism that any human being or literature can stand tall only in its own native land and linguistic group. ... being native means being attached to a particular place. ... But when non-native, alien, imported values, languages, and cultures coming in from outside threaten native values, languages and cultures, communities have to become nativistic in order to survive. (Kolig, et al. 118)

This urge for nativism in the context of Indian culture is further explored by Indian writer G. N. Devy in his seminal book *After Amnesia: Tradition and Change in Indian Literary Criticism* (1992). Here, Devy claims that India has a rich heritage of native literary culture but this culture is submerged and repressed. He claims colonial conditions are responsible for such repression. He further argues that to liberate ourselves from the pangs of colonial conditions we have to revitalize the native literary tradition of India. In Devy's view, "only nativistic history which will unveil the pre-colonial traditions in each literature can correct the present malaise" (Rayan 189). While expressing their views regarding colonial conditions, both Devy and Namade reject "neo-colonial hegemony of metropolitan post-colonial theory which unduly foregrounds the colonial inheritance at the expense of earlier and richer heritages, and virtually locks the ex-colonized nation into its imperial past under the misleading rubric of a globalized cosmopolitanism". (Kolig, et al. 118)

Nativism is a phenomenon of cultural nationalism in which colonized section of the society has initiated to speak about the distinction of native culture from mainstream culture. In other words, we can also say that nativism is an anti-colonial movement that ultimately aims at glorifying local cultural trends and traditions. It acts as an important strategy for the natives that aid in resisting the claims and superiority of the colonial settlers. Nativism is connected with the rhetoric of decolonization that seeks to replace colonial conditions with the native historical culture. The main focus of nativism is the search for identity and sustenance of normalcy. Nativism looks at the nostalgic history

that was untouched by foreign oppressors and desires to re-embrace it again. Explaining the concept of nativism in the context of resistance among the American and the African continents, Amritjit Singh and Peter Schmidt defines it as “Nativism ranges from Afrocentric appeals to purity and racial solidarity on the American scene to negritude and Ngugi's nativist assertions on African Literature in African languages” (Singh & Schmidt 22). Nativism stresses the importance of various native cultural aspects and their historical value. Uses of native literature as a reaction to the mainstream culture and its elements can also be termed as “reactionary nativism”. This term is used by Patrick Colm Hogan, in his analysis of the poetry of Derek Walcott. He refers to it as a counter-narrative that is written in a native voice and aims at the inversion of ideologies of mainstream culture. He says, “the relation between reactionary nativism and colonial racism is analogous to the relation between conscious and unconscious impulses in reaction formation” (Hogan 109-110). So, the term can be used as a reaction against brutality and injustice meant upon the natives by the colonizers.

As an empowering movement, nativism seeks re-enactment of the local tribal world through the process of rejection of colonial culture and acceptance of native culture. Nativism is concerned with discourses aiming at overthrowing the hierarchical concept of colonial narratives. In this regard Benita Parry comments:

A recent discussion of nativism condenses many of the current censures of cultural nationalism for its complicity with the terms of colonialism's discourse, with its claims to ancestral purity and inscriptions of monolithic notions of identity cited as evidence of the failure to divest itself of the specific institutional determinations of the west. (Parry 41)

It also aims at the rejection of subjugating position of the colonized section of the society. Concerned with the aim of nativism and separation of African literature from the mainstream literature, writers of the book *Towards the Decolonization of African Literature*, clearly mention that “African literature is an autonomous entity separate and apart from all other literature . . . with its own traditions, models, and norms” (Singh and Schmidt 23). In this way, it can be argued that nativism considers native culture superior to European culture. This postcolonial aim of favoring local culture is further glorified by Promad K. Nayar. He claims:

Postcolonial cultures' reliance on myth and local legend is an effort at de-contamination, a process of freeing their cultures from colonialism's pervasive influence. The return to roots – while running the very real danger of fundamentalism, reactionary nativism, and chauvinism – is an attempt to gain a measure of self-affirmation that is not tainted by colonialism. (Nayar 234-35)

This idea of favoring nativism is further explored by postcolonial critic Benita Perry in her famous essay 'Resistance Theory/ Theorising Resistance or Two Cheers for Nativism' published in her book, *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique* (2004). According to Perry, nativism should be cheered because it is the only way of returning to the roots through the imaginative process of reclamation. Parry believes in the "deployment of an un-sententious approach towards nativism that takes into account the historical fact of its embeddedness in all narratives of decolonization" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 63). In postcolonial studies, there is a lot of proof of colonized communities' resistance and reaction to the brutal colonial actions of the colonizers. Parry, along with other postcolonial critics insisted that if natives want to regain identity then "it is important to acknowledge the enormous power and appeal of anti-colonial nationalism" (Loomba 165). Tracing the history of natives' dissatisfaction with colonialism, Parry explains that "there is, of course abundant evidence of native disaffection and dissent under colonial rule, of contestation and struggle against diverse forms of institutional and ideological domination" (Parry 38). Postcolonial discourses are embedded with the discussion of native disobedience but according to Parry, "traces of popular disobedience can also be recuperated from unwritten symbolic and symptomatic practices in which a rejection or violation of the subject positions assigned by colonialism" (Parry 38). Parry challenges the postcolonial critic of nativism and asserts that what these critics ignore

is that notion of communal ethnic identity was invoked in the interests of mobilizing populations against their foreign rulers, while cultural heritages denigrated and despised by colonialism were affirmed as authentic traditions. Such recuperations, however, were not made in the interest of discovering uncontaminated origins or claiming ethnic purity, and were remote from any attempt to retrieve a past known to be irrevocable. (Parry 10)

Parry asserts that nativism is a “liberationist and revolutionary ideology, a form of resistance and a central component of the decolonization agenda” (Marzagora 169). Perry condemned all those scholars who readily dismiss the idea of nativism and called it “a catalogue of epistemological errors, of essentialist mystifications, as a masculinist appropriation of dissent, as no more than an anti-racist racism” (Perry 40). She says, “Instead I would argue that the task is to address the empowering effects of constructing a coherent identity or of cherishing and defending against calumny altered and mutable indigenous forms, which is not the same as the hopeless attempt to locate and revive pristine pre-colonial cultures”. (Perry 43)

Not only this, but Perry also develops an optimistic belief in the effectiveness of nativism and urges postcolonial writers to turn towards nativism and liberation. Parry expressed her dissatisfaction with the exclusion of native subjects in the mainstream literature of colonial superiors. Even the signs of native dissent and resistance are not visible in their texts. Perry suggests one technique of subverting this colonial dominance through the influence of counter-discourses. In this sense, Perry says “Anti-colonial writings did challenge, subvert and undermine the ruling ideologies, and nowhere more so than in overthrowing the hierarchy of colonizer/colonized, the speech and stance of the colonized refusing a position of subjugation and dispensing with the terms of the colonizer’s definition”. (Perry 40)

In this way, as a reverse discourse, nativism uses the same techniques and vocabulary used by the dominant discourse to subvert, undermine, and decenter the latter. In support of nativism, Benita Parry along with other nativists agrees that the structure of cultural hegemony of European colonizers needs to be replaced with the process of nativism. Parry says:

Railing against the cultural hegemony of the west, the nativists are of its party without knowing it. Indeed, the very arguments, the rhetoric of defiance, that our nationalists muster are...canonical, time tested... in their ideological inscription, the cultural nationalists remain in a position of counter identification. (Parry 41)

Vine Deloria, an exponent of Native American Literature, in his work *God is Red* (1973) asserts the need for nativism in America. He believes that it is only through the process of nativism, that Native Americans can regain their lost identity. Expressing his belief in Native American culture and tradition, Deloria admits that, “the key to an American Indian future was the return to Native ceremonies and traditions within a context that asserted sovereignty” (Pulitano 67). According to Deloria, only native American sovereignty can help natives to build a strong community and save their future from the hands of brutal European settlers. Ngugi wa Thiong, another exponent of nativism, in his book *Decolonizing the mind: The Politics of Language in Africa* (1986), analyzed the process of colonialism in Africa and its influence on native Africans. According to Ngugi, the situation of colonialism resulted in the simultaneous running of two types of traditions in Africa. He speaks:

I shall look at the African realities as they are affected by the great struggle between the two mutually opposed forces in Africa today: an imperialist tradition on one hand, and a resistance tradition on the other. The imperialist tradition in Africa is today maintained by the international bourgeoisie using the multinational and of course the flag-waving native ruling classes...The resistance tradition is being carried out by the working people (the peasantry and the proletariat) aided by patriotic students, intellectuals (academic and non-academic), soldiers and other progressive elements of the petty middle class. (Thiong 02)

He further explains that the biggest weapon used by the colonizers is a cultural bomb i.e., their main target is to attack native culture. But he further suggests that native literature can be a cure to this cultural bomb. He explains the role of national culture, national history, and language in the realization of identity. He argues that Africans should use their language in writing literature, instead of using the colonizer’s English. Expressing his strong belief in the language of Africa, Ngugi argues that the African language possesses power in the revival and revitalization of native American culture. Ngugi, in his book, clearly distinguishes resistance tradition from the imperialist tradition and exhibits “a strong belief in the coming inevitable revolutionary break with

neo-colonialism arguing that a truly African literature will overtake the hybrid tradition". (Amritjit and Peter 22-23)

Rey Chow and Makarand Paranjape also explore the resistive concept of nativism in their essays "Where Have All the Natives Gone?" (1994) and 'Beyond Nativism: Towards a Contemporary Indian Tradition in Criticism (1997). Further, Nemade stresses that nativism is the process of cultural persistence. To him "nativeness is awareness of the "totality of the geography, of the consciousness of the homogeneity of all its castes, ethnic communities, sects, religions, traditions, period and places—with their vertical and horizontal intersections". (Girase 152). A famous historian John Higham in his book *Strangers in the Land* (1986) traced and interpreted the development of nativism in America. In this book, the discussion is based on nativism and nationalism that aims to "defend the nation against the threat of foreigners and the culture these newcomers brought, and it was articulated in language that depicted foreigners as threatening and harmful" (Bodnar 82). In this regard, he suggested a three-dimensional explanation of American nativism and comments:

- (1) anti-Catholicism - with its roots in European religious and national rivalries;
  - (2) xenophobia - the fear of foreigners and foreign radicalism; and
  - (3) racism - from early nineteenth century national character conceptions of the greatness of the Anglo-Saxon "race," to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century notions of biologically superior and inferior racial stocks.
- (Friedman 408)

This reaction to Europeanism is centered on the fear of migration and racial awareness. The concept of nativism and nationalism is explored by French philosopher and theorist Frantz Fanon. His influential texts dealing with the arguments about colonialism, its influences on colonized natives, and the struggle for freedom are *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963) and *Black Skins, White Masks* (1967). Fanon investigated the procedure of colonial imperialism and its psychological effect on the oppressed people. For Fanon "colonization is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. It turns to the past distorts, disfigures and destroys it" (Fanon 210). He claims colonialism caused various problems, such as poverty, famine, inferiority, and cultural and cultural enunciation, among the colonized



community. These problems further disturbed the native culture. Colonial invaders try to disrupt native culture in every way. Colonialism, Fanon says:

manages to disrupt in spectacular fashion the cultural life of a conquered people. This cultural obliteration is made possible by the negation of national reality, by new legal relations introduced by the occupying power, by the banishment of the natives and their customs to outlying districts by colonial society, by expropriation, and by the systematic enslaving of men and women...Every effort is made to bring the colonized person to admit the inferiority of his culture which has been transformed into instinctive patterns of behavior, to recognize the unreality of his "nation," and, in the last extreme, the confused and imperfect character of his own biological structure. (Fanon 236)

In this sense, Fanon noticed that colonizers' main weapon of colonization is the systematic destruction of native culture in every possible manner. Fanon termed native culture as "contested culture" and says "a national culture under colonial domination is a contested culture whose destruction is sought systematically. It very quickly becomes a culture condemned to secrecy" (Fanon 238). Fanon further argues that continuous oppression of native culture at the hands of colonial settlers destroyed the native soul as well as the annihilation of native identity. Fanon noticed a sense of inferiority complex among the colonized and their fruitless effort to imitate colonizers. Colonized people see themselves with the eyes of European colonizers, for whom colonized people are pagan and primitive. In their effort to imitate colonizers, they ultimately lose their sense of self and identity. According to Fanon, the biggest mistake of the colonized was that they tried to find their identity in the white culture instead of searching for it in their own culture.

Seeking the aim of decolonization and nativism, Fanon asserts that to resist colonial oppression, we must remember our past and history and adhere to its culture. To achieve nativism, Fanon suggests the idea of national literature and national culture that will ultimately lead to national consciousness. Fanon claims that natives have to generate their history and write their literature dealing with native myths and stories. Fanon explores the role of literature in achieving the goal of nativism. Literature, according to Fanon, acts as an important tool in shaping the structure of national consciousness and

awareness. Fanon says that in the initial stage, national intellectuals used to produce literary work that was meant “to be read exclusively by the oppressor, whether with the aim of charming to him or of denouncing him through ethnic or subjectivist means” (Ashcraft 155), but now native intellectuals have started addressing their work to their people. Fanon calls this literature, a ‘literature of combat’ “because it calls on the whole people to fight for their existence as a nation. It molds national consciousness. It assumes responsibility” (Fanon 240).

Fanon says that in a colonized country, the nation is an essential condition of its culture. It is that nation that “gather the various indispensable elements necessary for the creation of a culture, those elements which alone give it credibility, validity, life and creative power” (Fanon 240). This means that culture is the “expression of the consciousness of nation and it is the national consciousness which is the most elaborate form of culture” (Fanon 247). According to Fanon, culture takes a central position and plays a vital role in helping its people to gather strength against colonialism. For Fanon, “It is not alone the success of the struggle which afterward gives validity and vigor to culture; culture is not put into cold storage during the conflict (Fanon 245). Fanon also gives importance to the use of the native language, another aspect of culture, in literature. He further argues that:

that nativist language of nationalization and Africanization was to be deployed violently to attack "colonial personalities" as people constituting an "insult" to the "dignity of the nation... nationalism would again be articulated in racial terms when the "native bourgeoisie" claimed land, mines and jobs as part of indigenous entitlement. (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 63)

He argues that it is only through the representation of nativism and nationalism that these natives can liberate themselves from the pangs of colonialism and exploitation. For Fanon, the trajectory of nationalism moves "from nationalism we have passed to ultra-nationalism, to chauvinism, and finally to racism” (Fanon 156). He suggests three stages in the reframing of native culture. He comments:

A national culture is framed in three stages. In the first, the native intellectual is under the influence of the colonizer’s culture and seeks to emulate and

assimilate it by abandoning his own. The native thus tries to be as white as possible. In the second stage, the native discovers that he can never become truly white, or white enough for the colonial master to treat him as an equal. The native intellectual now returns to study his own culture, and might even romanticize his traditions and past...In the third stage, the native intellectual is truly anti-colonial. He joins the ranks of his people and battles colonial domination. This is accompanied by a careful analysis of his own culture. (Nayar 158)

Fanon here stresses that all the colonized nations of Africa and other parts of the world should stop imitating the colonizers. All the colonized nations have to work in a way to increase the unity of humanity and this is possible only when they will return to their own national culture and try to find their identity in it. According to Fanon, it is only in this culture that their identity can be revived. Fanon says “for Europe, for ourselves, and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man” (Fanon 316). Fanon asserts the importance of colonized intellectuals in the process of reasserting national culture. He says that an intellectual can use his knowledge, action, and writing skills to achieve the goal of retrieving national culture. According to Fanon, the native colonized intellectual has the responsibility for national culture and the nation as a whole because culture is a part of the nation.

Fanon further says that mere remembrance of the past and delving deep into the history of people is not enough. He suggests to people of colonized territories to work and fight to construct the future and culture. He further says that “national culture is no folklore where an abstract populism is convinced it has uncovered the popular truth” (Fanon 233), but rather it can develop from a continuous thought process, and such persistent thinking and action can help in raging resistive strategies against colonial authorities. Fanon also realizes that to make the native culture of a colonized nation to be effective, the economic conditions of that nation are also required to improve. Thus, for Fanon, “the anti-colonial struggle must be fought at the level of both culture and economics, just as postcolonial states would have to frame their identity within the cultural and economic domain” (Nayar 158). In this way, based on the above discussions, it can be

generalized that in Fanon's view, nativism is an important strategy of colonized nations to prove their identity and accomplish stability.

Edward Said in his book, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) also says that to overthrow the imperial subjection, the colonized nations have to decolonize the past and imagine pre-colonial times. Praising the power of culture, Said argues, "culture may predispose and actively prepare one society for the overseas domination of another, it may also prepare that society to relinquish or modify the idea of overseas domination" (Said 200). According to Said, cultural values can be used to fight colonial imperialism. Said says that this is possible only when native people "take up arms, to project ideas of liberation, and to imagine...a new national community, to take the final plunge" (Said 200). Culture, according to Said, "is never just a matter of ownership, but rather of appropriations, common experiences, and interdependencies of all kinds among different cultures" (Said 217). In his theory of resistance, he suggests nativism in the form of "repossession of culture and the means of self-representation; taking consciousness of oneself as a member of a subject people; reimagining the past in the context of resistance; reclaiming and renaming the landscape; and rein- habiting it through stories, often in noncanonical and nonliterary genres narrated from subordination". (Robin 6-7). But contrary to this, Said also attacks nativism and says that, instead of fighting imperialism, nativism may reinforce it. This pure idea of nativism may increase the problems of natives, instead of solving them. In his chapter on 'Resistance and Opposition', Said comments:

Nativism, alas, reinforces the distinction between ruler and ruled even while revaluating the weaker or subservient partner. ... To accept nativism is to accept the consequences of imperialism, the racial, religious and political divisions imposed by imperialism itself. To leave the historical world for the metaphysics of essences like negritude, Irishness, Islam, or Catholicism is to abandon history for essentializations that have the power to turn human beings against each other; often this abandonment of the secular world has led to ... an unthinking acceptance of stereotypes, myths, animosities, and traditions encouraged by imperialism. (Said 228-29)

Edward Said raised the question regarding this problematic topic of postcolonial identity construction and doubtfully asks how the revival of history can help to achieve independence and regain identity. In this regard, Said suggests expected solutions to this problem. “The first is for the colonized to become a willing servant of imperialism, ‘a native informant. The second is to be aware and accept the past without allowing it to prevent future developments. The third is of striving to shed off colonial self in search for the essential and authentic pre-colonial self’”. (Ahluwalia 45)

The idea of nativism concerning returning to the roots is similar to Spivak’s Strategic Essentialism and Aime Cesaire’s Negritude Movement. In her influential essay, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1985), Spivak explains the oppressive condition of subaltern genders. Talking about national autonomy, Spivak asks “whether subaltern classes can “speak” from a position beyond the Western hegemonic discourses that have produced them” (Amritjit & Schmidt 26). Spivak comments about “how the “gendered subaltern” does not speak for herself and therefore disappear” (Amritjit & Schmidt 26). Although Spivak and Homi Bhabha rejected the idea of nativism and argue that such retrieval of returning to the roots is contradictory. Even Bhabha completely dismisses the idea of nativism and argues that nativism is impossible because we cannot go back to history. He argues that there is another solution to colonialism. According to Bhabha, hybridity can lead to the destruction of colonial authority because “hybridity intervenes in the exercise of authority not merely to indicate the impossibility of its identity, but to represent the unpredictability of its presence” (Bhabha 163). But through her most recent idea of strategic essentialism, Spivak confirms that the native privilege of the colonized subaltern can be regained. Spivak acknowledges that in postcolonial nationalistic movements, a natural and essential idea of native culture and history can be used to fight against the colonial powers. This idea, according to Spivak, is strategic essentialism. Spivak’s idea of strategic essentialism “utilizes the effectiveness of a strategically positioned essential identity that can be implemented to combat the oppressive tactics of colonial structures” (Amritjit & Schmidt 27). We can also say that “such a strategy may allow these societies to better resist the onslaught of global culture that threatens to negate cultural difference or consign it to an apolitical and exotic

discourse of cultural diversity” (Ashcraft 143). Defending such an idea of identity reconstruction, Perry says:

When we consider the narratives of decolonization, we encounter rhetoric in which ‘nativism’ in one form or another is evident. Instead of disciplining these, theoretical whips in hand, I want to consider what is to be gained by an un-sententious interrogation of such articulations which, if often driven by negative passion, cannot be reduced to mere inveighing against inequities or a repetition of the canonical terms of imperialism’s frameworks. (Parry 40)

In the book, *Discourse on Colonialism* (1950), Aime Césaire talks about the impact of colonialism on colonized and says that colonialism is not meant for the benefit of colonized but aims at their economic and cultural exploitation. In his nativist attempt, Césaire published a journal, *The Black Student*. In this journal, he used the word *negritude*, for the first time. The publication of this journal was an attempt from his side to call all the descendants of Africa settled in other countries to reclaim pure and authentic native African identity. *Negritude* is referred to the writings of Léopold Sédar Senghor, Bernard Binlin Dadié and Aime Césaire. According to these African intellectuals, “*negritude* is a sum of the cultural value of the black world” (Loomba 177) and they aim to regain this black cultural identity. Césaire explains this aim of reclamation of native African identity in an interview with Haitian writer, René Depestre, in 1967. He says, “This, for me, was a call to Africa. I said to myself: It’s true that superficially we are French, we bear the marks of French customs; we have been branded by Cartesian philosophy, by French rhetoric; but if we break with all that, if we plumb the depth then what we will find is fundamentally black”. (Kelley 169-170)

To combat colonialism, Césaire and his other counterparts also started *Negritude Movement*. Proponents of the *Negritude* movement believed that people of African culture possess certain unique artistic and aesthetic qualities and these specialties are inherent to the Africans. It is believed that instead of feeling a sense of inferiority, Africans should apply their idea and knowledge in exploring their own culture. In this way, through the glorification of their own culture, they can escape exploitation. Expressing his nativistic spirit, Césaire says “*Negritude* is not a recovery of a pre-existent state, but a textually invented history, an identity effected through figurative

operations, and a tropological construction of blackness as a sign of the colonized condition and its refusal” (Perry 45). Negritude is a call to all the descendants of Africa for the reclamation of native identity. He suggested that, instead of feeling inferiority, we must celebrate ‘black broad identity’. Césaire comments:

We adopted the word *negre* as a term of defiance...we found a violent affirmation in the words *negre* and *negritude*... it is a concrete rather than an abstract coming to consciousness... we lived in an atmosphere of rejection, and we developed an inferiority complex...I have always thought that the black man was searching for his identity. And ...if what we want is to establish this identity, then we must have a concrete consciousness of what we are- that is of the first fact of our lives: that we are black; that we were black and have a history...that there have been beautiful and important black civilizations...that its values were values that could still make an important contribution to the world. (Perry 46)).

In the context of postcolonialism, nativism acts as a strategy and assumes that there were native cultures that are destroyed by the European settlers, and retrieval of these native cultures is important to start a nationalist movement. Nativist ideology is based on the belief that until and unless the native culture is retrieved, a stable identity cannot be sustained. Nativism seeks the aim of confrontation with the colonizers at the cultural level and hopes for independence. Nativism is a voice in support of the colonized natives that states legitimate grievances of the colonized natives. Explaining the brutality of colonizers and nostalgia for the past, Césaire comments “Every day that passes, every denial of justice, every beating by the police, every demand of the workers that is drowned in blood, every scandal that is hushed up, every punitive expedition, every police van, every gendarme and every militiaman, brings home to us the value of our old societies”. (Lemert 271)

According to this belief, the identity of the native people can only be regained through the process of reclamation of native culture and history. Nativists believe that the identities of colonized natives that colonizers imposed upon them, throughout the process of colonialism, are purely superficial and artificial. They believe that the pre-colonial identity of the native colonized people was their true identity. So, they seek the

aim of retrieval and revival of this pre-colonial identity that is eclipsed in the process of colonialism. This concept believes in the deployment of native cultural values as essential tools of resistance and opposition to colonial disaster. Nativism thus has to be supported and extended. The views of most of postcolonial critics argue that:

What needs further interrogation is the extent of democracy within nativist inspired movements, the question of which voices are filtered out of nativist imaginations of state, nation and democracy, and measuring the extent of coherence and homogeneity of nativism as a social movement including its capacity to successfully challenge neo-liberalism and globalization. (Marzagora 170)

By remembering the history, nativists attempt to revitalize the historical and culturally pure identity of the colonized natives. The process of colonization left the native colonized with the problems of the struggle for identity and ideology. Colonial presence even allowed natives to forget that the land where colonizers are standing and mastering them belongs to the colonized natives. This weakness of the natives allowed the colonizers to overpower them and exploit the natural resources of the native land. Seeking the aim of decolonization, nativist thinkers attempt to remind the natives that they are owners of their land and that their culture is superior. So instead of living in a state of confusion and demoralization, native inhabitants of all the colonized countries need to glorify their own culture and nation. Leaving behind the state of confusion, natives have to quest for harmony with nature and culture. In this way, the main focus of nativists is the argument of the rejection of European authenticity and the demand for native authenticity. According to the writers of the book, *Empire Writes Back* (1989) “One of the major acts of abrogation in post-colonial literature is a rejection of the process by which ‘authenticity’ is granted to the categories of experience authorized by the center at the expense of those relegated to the margins of empire” (Madsen 76)

However, many thinkers reject the nativist’s concept of pure and fixed identity. These Critics believe that the identity is not fixed but always keeps on changing with time. They believe that “the position of an individual in a cultural environment is by no means uniform, and his/her relation with society depends on several variables, like sexuality, gender, class, religion, age and race” (Marzagora 166). Explanation of such a shift in



identity from rigidity to flexibility is explained by Stuart Hall in his book, *The Question of Cultural Identity* (1992). Hall says:

the subject, previously experienced as having a unified and stable identity, is becoming fragmented; composed, not of a single, but of several, sometimes contradictory or unresolved, identities.... The very process of identification, through which we project ourselves into our cultural identities, has become more open-ended, variable, and problematic. This produces the postmodern subject, conceptualized as having no fixed, essential, or permanent identity. (Marzagora 166)

## **Conclusion**

Critics came up with diverse thoughts of hybridity and nativism. Those thinkers who support nativism, reject the idea of hybridity while those who think hybridity as a strategy of colonized people discard the concept of nativism. However, despite the difference in their theories of resistance, both the critics of hybridity as well as nativism have tried to develop tendency to express literary resistance in colonial as well as in postcolonial literature. This tendency not only express resistance but also go beyond the concept of mere questioning of colonial authority. Both hybridity and nativism intervene as well as destroys the possibility of colonial authority. Hybridity and nativism not only reject the concept of colonial supremacy but also act in a counter discursive and resistive way against pre-existing dominant narratives praising white supremacy. Further through the process of hybridity, native nations seem to get the benefit of influx of resources from the colonizers nations and this influx results in political as well as economic development of the nation. In addition of it, concepts of hybridity and nativism make it easy to understand the negative approaches of colonizers. outwardly, it seems that they are civilizing developing nations but they didn't come with the intention of clean state. The agenda or strategy is somewhat different i.e., colonization. There is no doubt that these terms have evolved and developed because of the imperialistic activities but we also cannot ignore that postcolonial stability in the colonized nations is not possible without understanding these terms. So, it can rightly be said that both the concept of hybridity and nativism

seek the aim of decolonization but in the opposite manner and therefore hold a strong position in the postcolonial discussion.

## Chapter 3

### Imperialism and Marginality

In the arena of postcolonial studies, debate on the process of European imperialism and native marginality finds a prominent place. Even without such discourses, postcolonial studies are not possible. Through the process of colonial invasion and settlement, Europeans tried every effort to put their control on colonized nations through political, educational, economic, military, and religious perspectives. These continual efforts of European settlers to establish their control and domination over colonized natives have resulted in the marginalization and subjugation of native communities. Defining the process of imperialism in their way, writers of the book, *Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (1998), says “imperialism is associated with the Europeanization of the globe which came in three major waves: the age of discovery during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; the age of mercantilism during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and the age of imperialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” (Ashcraft 112). The process of European imperialism and settlement has added a dark phase to the history of all the colonized countries. And this dark phase that has eclipsed history has changed the scenario of these colonized countries. The influence of this dark phase can easily be recognized from the present conditions of all the nations that were once eclipsed by the arrival and settlement of European colonizers.

Like other colonized nations of the world, American land and its indigenous people have witnessed the process of European imperialism and thereafter marginalization of natives. Tracing the history of European’s arrival in America, Geary Hobson in his famous book, *Remembering the Earth*, explains: “Europeans came like a flight of locusts a handful, another handful, then another, then hundreds, then thousands, until there were millions” (Hobson 02). European settlement and invasion resulted in chaos, confusion, deaths, identity conflict, and marginalization of native cultural tribes in America. These European settlers employed their ideology of self-proclaimed superiority and tried to exploit and marginalize Native Americans. The process of imperialism has led to the destruction of nativism in Native Americans through the strategies of eradication of native history and culture. With the settlement of European

foreigners, these Native American tribes faced the problems of cultural confusion and conflict. This problem of cultural conflict was further intensified by the spread of chaos among the natives. It is also evident that these foreign European invaders are also responsible for bringing various diseases to America to which Native Americans were not immune. Therefore, as a result of the spread of epidemics, a huge number of native populations died. Those who escaped from the epidemic suffered from the problems of hunger. In their effort to overpower the natives, Europeans rejected to understand the cultural and historical importance of Native America. Instead, they aimed to erase its history. These European invaders “planted colonies, exploited the resources for their gain, shattered native empires, razed cities and villages alike, corrupted cultures, spread pathogens, and reduced native populations to near extinction levels” (Townsted 32). About the influx and settlement of Europeans in America, Mark O Sutton comments “a number of European powers competed in the rush to claim portions of North America, including Spain, France, England, and to a lesser extent Russia, Holland, and Portugal” (Sutton 29). Among them, Holland, Russia, and Portugal drop the idea of invasion. But England, Spain, and France used various tactics and policies to accomplish their aim of invasion. Luebering explains:

To accomplish their goals, these three European powers approached colonization of North America in different ways. As the Spanish extended their control across present-day Mexico and the American southwest through the 16th– 18th centuries, they established a form of feudal system built around plantations and Roman Catholic missions, with Native Americans as serfs. French trappers built strong partnerships with the Huron, Algonquin, and other northern native peoples. These partnerships, which included intermarriage, were designed to further the lucrative fur trade. The English approach, though, had the most success. The right to earn title to property inspired average land-hungry English subjects to leave their homeland to stake claims and build new lives across the Atlantic. (Luebering 13)

Spanish invaders were mainly concerned with the accumulation of wealth especially gold. French invaders aimed at gaining wealth and expedition of enterprises. England’s main focus was not wealth but expansion of territory. Initially, Europeans attempted to conquer the people of America and loot its resources, and then after a few years, they

established their colonies and settled there. While tracing the colonial activities of European invaders, Townsted rightly comments: European invaders “planted colonies, exploited the resources for their own gain, shattered native empires, razed cities and villages alike, corrupted cultures, spread pathogens, and reduced native populations to near extinction levels” (Townsted 32). Gradually, these European invaders started expanding their territories. European invaders used all sorts of skills and techniques to grab the land and resources of Native Americans. They applied all types of actions to erode and eradicate the identity and stability of natives. They even destroyed buildings, palaces, and religious places constructed by natives. The exploitation of natural resources at the hands of these invaders is also evident. These three European nations applied their unique techniques in America. Spanish tried to civilize natives according to their own ideals. They aimed to bring natives under Spanish political control. French also tried to civilize natives according to French ideas, but they didn’t aim to force natives to leave their settlement. Unlike Spanish and French powers, England didn’t wish to civilize natives. According to England, Native Americans were inferior and not worthy of civilization. They tried to limit the territories of natives with the passing of different treaties and acts. Native Americans resisted and even struggled against this usurpation but unluckily they were powerless. Townsted rightly says:

Native Americans invariably resisted, often through warfare. At times, native peoples believed accommodation and acculturation would assure their survival, but even these efforts more often than not featured a strategy of resistance by their retention of fundamental traditional values, family structures, or spirituality in the face of forced conversion. They often resisted until treaties were accepted that allowed them to remain on traditional lands while others, at times, fled into surrounding territories to elude compulsory relocation. (Townsted 32)

The Piquet war in New England (1637), King Philip’s war (1672- 76), and the Pueblo Revolt (1680) are examples of Native Americans’ struggle and attempt to retain their lands. But unluckily, due to a lack of power and technology, natives failed in their efforts. These revolts merely resulted in a reduction in the number of native populations. To hold control of America, Europeans applied the policy of divide and rule. This move of Europeans to America reminds us of the period of British rule in India. After taking

benefit of religious disparities, the same policy of divide and rule was applied by Englishmen in India. In America also, these European settlers aptly exploited inter-tribal conflicts and rivalries of Native Americans and took benefit of such conflicts. According to European ideology, Native Americans were barbarians and uncivilized and it was their duty to bring them into the light of civilization. They even held the view that Indians (Native Americans) were savages and had no right to occupy the land. Europeans considered native culture to be old and coarse and thus sought to change it. They then tried to impose their culture upon Native Americans. Accordingly, many natives were forcefully converted to Christianity. Their main aim was to either convert Indians into Christianity or to kill them. Europeans forced natives to forget their culture, history, and religion and embrace Christianity and modernism. Policymakers of the U.S. government used the 'Vanishing Red Man Theory', forwarded by the anthropologists, as an explanation for the subjugation of Native American tribes and seizure of land. Different policies of usurpation and expansion used by the European invaders resulted in the loss of stability and confidence among the Native Americans. European settlers not only destroyed the habits and culture of natives but also disturbed the peaceful routine life of natives.

In 1830, in response to the discovery of gold on Cherokee land in Georgia, the US government under the presidential ship of Andrew Jackson passed the Indian Removal Act. According to this act, Native Americans were involuntarily removed from their territory and forced to settle in a place that was inferior and less desirable. Poor Natives struggled to stop this relocation, but it was in vain and subsequently, they were forcefully shifted to the west of the Mississippi river, later on, known as the trail of tears. This decision to removal of natives from their habitat resulted in hardship and struggle of those who tried to resist relocation, but their fruitless efforts resulted in the loss and destruction of many tribes. As a result of this act, the land that was given to these actual inhabitants of America was infertile and valueless. Their valuable lands were in turn occupied by the white population. This act has been regarded as an act of native genocide because it discriminated against Native American tribes and resulted in the death of a vast number of their population.

However, in 1887, the government enacted the General Allotment Act of 1887, also known as the Dawes Severalty Act. It was proposed by senator Henry L. Dawes. This

act was meant for land grabbers and assimilates. According to this act, members of the Native American community were required to register with the US government. This act was directed at allotting the lands to the natives within or outside their community. But this act did not provide benefit to the natives. It aimed to convert Indians into farmers and free up land for public sale. Another aim of the act was to force conversation among Native Americans especially mixed blood into the American mainstream. Martin. N. Merger in his book *Race and Ethnic Relations* writes: “The driving force of the policy was the belief that once Indians were fully assimilated, the Indian problem would disappear” (Merger 158). Due to this act, from 1887 to 1934, Native Americans lost about 100 million acres or one-third of the land from their hands. This act has been referred to by many scholars as one of the most disparaging acts of the Euro-American government in American history. Dawes’s act was later extended as Curtis Act (1898) and Burke Act (1906). Both these acts proved to be destructive for the native tribes of America.

In strong opposition to these acts, Indians resisted and protested with the rebellion of Santa Sioux (1862) but its results were negative. The rebellion of Ghost dance and Wovoka also did nothing. These rebellions of natives against the Indian Removal Act passed by the United States resulted in the slaughtering of thousands of Indians at Wounded Knee, South Dakota in 1890. Such kinds of genocidal acts of the European government against Native Americans were common. Instead, the US government also take away the lands from five native tribes in Oklahoma (Cherokee, Creek, Chockaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole), and subsequently, Navajo and Apache tribes were forcefully shifted to reservation lands. Since the arrival of white settlers, Native Americans have been continuously facing the problems of violence and discrimination. A brief analysis of such violence and discrimination is explained by Martin. N. Merger Writes:

No other group in the American ethnic system ever experienced the kind of genocidal that ultimately led to the decimation of the Native population...the rate of racially motivated hate crimes is higher against American Indians than against any other ethnic minority...rape against Indian women occur at an alarming rate, and a vast majority of such cases involves non-Indian perpetrators...violent attacks are particularly evident in majority white cities

that about Indian reservations. In these settings, Indian and white culture collide, often calling up racist notions that subsequently lead to incidents. (Merger 157)

Europeans used western technologies to subjugate Indian tribes one by one. To kill Indianness in natives, Europeans applied the policy of assimilation. To accomplish this aim of assimilation, Europeans opened many English-speaking educational institutions and Indian boarding schools and thus sought to spread the English language among the Native Americans through the medium of education. To impart education, children of natives were separated from their parents for many years. In educational institutions, these children were given Anglo-American names and were also forced to speak English. They were even forced to renounce their religion and accept Christianity. They were forced to follow military-like discipline. Emotional, sexual, and physical exploitation of native children in these educational institutions were also common. Punishments through beating, electric shocks, withholding of food or water, and extended period of forced labor were also common. Many children who were sent to boarding school never returned. It is evident that more than ninety percent of Native American children were adopted by non-Indian families. Some of the natives rejected to embrace European colonialism and culture and sought the danger of their native cultural loss, they thus left America and settled somewhere else. One example of such treatment of natives in the hands of the white government is given by Nandana Dutta in her book:

Native children were taken from their homes and put into boarding schools, where their cultural distinctiveness was systematically removed-their long hair were cut short, they were forbidden to speak their native languages or perform their tribal dances and ceremonies, they were forced to drink milk which they could not tolerate and which led to stomach disorder and tuberculosis from infected dairy cattle. Those who remained on reservations lived in abysmal conditions of poverty – whole families crowded into single-roomed shacks with no plumbing or heat and frequently on the verge of starvation. (Dutta 327)

Not only this, but Europeans also started the slavery system in America and due to this system, many African Americans and Native Americans were forcefully treated as slaves and were unwillingly forced to serve Anglo Americans. The slavery system was later on abolished after American independence. Europeans also introduced many new



diseases to America to which Americans were not immune and thus caused many deaths. Epidemics of smallpox, typhus, cholera, measles, and flu brought about by Englishmen ultimately resulted in the heavy population decline of the Native American population. It is believed that about 90 percent of the Native American population may have died from diseases introduced by European settlers in America. This shows that only 10 percent of the Native American population survived this fatal epidemic. This decline in the population of Native Americans further reduced their ability to resist European expansion. This fatal act of British imperialism that resulted in the mass destruction of the Native American population is an important part of the story of European exploration of America and cannot be ignored. Instead, the import of European weapons and the craze of natives to use these weapons resulted in the overhunting of animals. All this indicates the hostile nature of European invaders towards Native American people and their cultural heritage as well as towards the natural environment.

At the time of the war of 1812, many Native Americans were enlisted to fight with Britain. But after the war ended, these natives were ruthlessly removed from the army without any valid reason. Even, many Native Americans were motivated to participate in World War II and subsequently, about 44000 young native men from the age of 18 to 50 get voluntarily enrolled in the United States military. Young native men's enrollment in the military was a turning point in Native American history. But unluckily about half of the World War II veterans did not return from the war and thus lost their life. Those who returned to the United States after the war suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, restlessness, and unemployment.

Due to huge overcrowding and unemployment in reservation areas, the US government started a relocation policy. In this policy of the US government, it was said that natives will be given a permanent job out of the reservation. Though, it was the policy of the US government to assimilate Indians with the general population. To seek this aim of assimilation, the government started the Employment Assistance program in 1962. This program aimed to provide jobs to Native Americans in metropolitan areas, but cunningly, these natives were given placements far away from their reservation so that they may not return to the reservation. Urban centers established for the employment of Indians included Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles, Oakland, San

Jose, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Seattle. According to this program, about 160,000 Indians which includes one-third of their total population were relocated to urban areas. Influenced by the urban culture of Europeans, these natives get caught between two cultures and thus suffered from identity conflict and inferiority complex. Wiget claims:

Urbanization was difficult for most Indians, many of whom simply were not prepared socially, psychologically, or economically for the sudden removal of all federal trust status. The trauma of adjusting to the urban environment of unemployment, slum living, and alcoholism has been described in much of the current American Indian literature. It was not surprising that approximately 30 percent to 75 percent of the American Indians who participated in the Bureau of Indian Affairs relocation programs returned to their reservations. (Wiget 167)

This is another influence of European colonialism on Native American societies that resulted in the dismemberment of Native American tribes.

Population declines with diseases brought about by Europeans, starvation of Native Americans, European's strategy of assimilation of natives into Christianity, the introduction of the slavery system, and the banishment of natives from the army after World War II are the most perilous impacts of European colonialism on Americans and have far-reaching impact on natives. Even at present time, the influence of these factors can be easily seen among the native tribes of America. The presence of European colonization in America has altered the way of life of native people. Such an explanation of European exploitation of Native Americans is given by Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz:

Under the crust of that portion of Earth called the United States of America "from California .... to the gulf stream waters". – are interred the bones of, villages, fields, and sacred objects of American Indians. They cry out for their stories to be heard through their descendants who carry the memories of how the country was founded and how it came to be as it is today...To learn and know this history is both a necessity and a responsibility to the ancestors and descendants of all the parties...Everything in us history is about the land-who oversaw and cultivated it, fished its waters, maintained its wildlife; who invaded and stole it; how it became a commodity ("real estate") broken into pieces to be bought and sold on the market. (Ortiz 01)

This cultural ramification of colonialism that manifested in different parts of the world brought together the native inhabitants and settlers in a complex and traumatic relationship. The conditions of native people of all the countries that were once colonized by invaders are almost the same. All the native inhabitants of colonized countries are now living in multicultural societies. Like Native Americans, all the native inhabitants of colonized countries have faced the problems of dangers of native cultural loss and destruction of native resources at the hands of colonizers.

Through their modern technological skills, Europeans kept on subjugating and exploiting the native tribes of America. The interaction between European invaders and Native Americans resulted in violence and warfare. European settlers are also responsible for spreading various social evils such as alcoholism, pornography, abuse of technology, drug addiction, rape, murders, etc. in American society. Because of these social evils, most of the native American youngsters, who adapted these evils, suffered. In misunderstanding and ignoring the importance of native tribal culture, Europeans kept on destroying it from time to time. European invasion resulted in the alteration of Native American society as well as its culture. Steven Otfinoski aptly remarks “The systematic destruction of Native American society and culture by the U.S. government is an often-told story and a stark reminder of the violation, violence, and cruelty that have marked certain chapters of American history.” (07). The struggle of Native Americans with their native language is another impact of colonialism. Native language was ruthlessly suppressed by Europeans, especially through the medium of education. Native children who were taken to schools were forbidden to speak in their native language. Thus, they learned to speak English but this act distanced them from their native language. One such example is given by Momaday expressing the struggle of Kiawa identity with language “I think of myself as an Indian because at one time in my life I suddenly realized that my father had grown up speaking a language that I didn't grow up speaking, that my forebears on his side had made a migration from Canada along with ... Athapaskan peoples that I knew nothing about” (Owens 13)

Almost all the colonized countries that faced brutalities at the hands of European colonizers started highlighting their experiences of struggle in their writings. Through their writings, these writers of colonized nations seek the attainment of alternative authenticity. Their writings about the colonial experience and struggle for

decolonization are termed postcolonial literature. Postcolonial literature has emerged out of the colonial experiences of the colonized people and it also encompasses foregrounding tensions between the colonizers and the colonized. The process of decolonization especially through the medium of literature involves abrogation and appropriation of European features. The development of postcolonial literature aims at the abrogation of superior powers. It also involves the appropriation of colonial language and the use of this language in highlighting colonial situations and thereafter impacts. The situations of postcolonial experience “encouraged the dismantling of notions of essence and authenticity somewhat earlier than the recent expressions of the same perception in contemporary European post-structuralist theory” (Ashcraft 40). Similarly, in recent years, many scholars and critics belonging to the field of postcolonial studies have tried to theorize the process of imperialism and thereafter the relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. In the words of Robert Young, the main aim of postcolonial critics is:

to reexamine the history of colonialism from the perspective of the colonized; to determine the economic, political, and cultural impact of colonialism on both the colonized peoples and the colonizing powers; to analyze the process of decolonization; and above all, to participate in the goals of political liberation, which includes equal access to material resources, the contestation of forms of domination, and the articulation of political and cultural identities. (Young 11)

These critics such as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Bill Ashcraft, Griffith, Homi Bhabha, and others have written about the process of European imperialism and subsequently subjugation and silencing of the colonized communities. According to Fanon, the imperialistic practices of colonizers seek the aim of colonial domination by devastating the history and culture of the natives. Said focuses on the western representation of the east and is also credited with bringing to light “issues associated with race, empire and ethnicity” (Moore & Gilbert 33). Understanding the practice of colonialism and its influence on the colonized, Bhabha expounds on various concepts that focus on the ways, the colonized try to resist the authoritative powers of the colonizers. For Bhabha “the colonized subject can be both savage (cannibal) and yet the most obedient and dignified of servants (the bearer of food); he is the

embodiment of rampant sexuality and yet innocent as a child; he is mystical, primitive, simple-minded and yet the most worldly and accomplished liar and manipulator of social forces” (Moore & Gilbert 117). According to Bhabha “the objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction” (Bhabha 101). Similarly, Spivak talks about the inability of subalterns to raise their voices. Through their seminal writings, these critics of the postcolonial era expose every aspect of the colonial period.

Leslie Marmon Silko, like other postcolonial writers, bravely exposes the brutality of European settlers and the influence of exploitative powers on Native Americans. Mary Ellen Snodgrass in her book on Silko regards her, as “the first internationally acclaimed native female author, she confronts the white world with writings derived from Aztec myth and laguna songs and stories, the pueblo Indian’s mainstay against disease and death” (Snodgrass 05). Terre Ryan claims that Silko’s creations “demonstrate how white European and American men have sought to dominate all other human beings and all the earth’s landscapes” (Ryan 115). Silko’s first and most important literary work dealing with the concept of European imperialism is her novel, *Ceremony* (1977). Speaking about the occasion of writing this novel, Snodgrass comments:

Silko tried to write a comic version of the postwar drunken antics of the fictional Harley, a veteran of the pacific war, and attempting creating a female character different from herself” but later on due to her bad mental health, her grandmother’s death and her son’s problem of asthma “the author commiserated with Tayo, protagonist of *Ceremony*, a psychological fiction haunted by despair, displacement and guilt. (Snodgrass 16)

Despite her bad mental health and family problems, Silko has excelled with this text. With the publication of this novel, Silko came into the limelight. Frank Macshane in his noteworthy article that he published in the *New York Times Book Review*, admired Silko’s tendency to amalgamation of European as well as native culture in *Ceremony*. He speaks:

Silko was able to bridge the boundaries of gender and culture to convey the reality of American Indian experience to non-Indian readers. Her novel is one of the most realized works of fiction devoted to Indian life that has been written in this country, and it is a splendid achievement...Silko without question...the most accomplished Indian writer of her generation. (Chavkin 03-04)

The novel is in the form of a story narrated by 'Thought Woman'. The novel revolves around the story of its protagonist, Tayo, a second world war veteran, who suffers from a post-war traumatic disorder. The whole story revolves around Tayo's illness and healing process and portrays Tayo's struggle in sustaining identity with the help of ceremony.

Silko's *Ceremony* addresses the problem of imperialism and thereafter marginalization of Native American tribes. European settlers rejected to give respect to the culture and history of Native American tribes. They also exclaimed that native culture is inferior and possesses no significance. They further claimed that European culture is superior and modern and it is their duty to force natives to accept and embrace European culture at any cost. Silko highlights this policy of Europeans in her novel, *Ceremony*. Silko clears those two weapons that Europeans used in subjugating and assimilating Native Americans were education and religion. Through these weapons, Europeans forced natives to reject native culture and embrace modernity. Through the medium of the English language, Europeans forced natives to forget their native languages. Frantz Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth*, also highlights this problem of language. While addressing to western elites, Fanon says, "If you speak the language of everyday, if you are not obsessed by the perverse desire to spread confusion and rid yourself of the people, then you will realize that the masses are quick to seize every shade of meaning" Fanon (188-189). Silko highlights this issue when Tayo recognizes that "he knew then he had learned the lie by heart- the lie which they had wanted him to learn: only brown-skinned people were thieves; white people didn't steal, because they always had the money to buy whatever they wanted" (Silko 177). This policy of European settlers proves successful to a great extent. Many Native Americans, after receiving education in English version schools, started believing in the power of modern culture. Their affection for modern culture distanced them from their own history and culture. Silko

highlights this situation through the character of Rocky. Tayo's cousin, Rocky becomes a victim of this assimilation policy of white settlers. As a result of his affection for white culture, Rocky forgets the importance of his native culture.

Not only this, but European settlers also tried every effort to spread Catholicism among the natives. European missionaries and educationists tried to impose a feeling of self-rejection among the natives. Referring to this policy of spreading misbelief regarding self and others, Edward Said rightly comments: "imperialism deploy a language whose imagery of growth, fertility, and expansion, whose teleological structure of property and identity, whose ideological discrimination between 'us' and 'them' had already matured elsewhere- in fiction, political science, racial theory, travel writing" (Ashcraft 114). In his famous book *Black Skin, White Mask* (1952), Frantz Fanon remarks that this language of the colonizers leads to subjugation and inadequacy of the natives. Fanon further says this process of subjugation through language affects the native's perception: "To speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture to support the weight of a civilization" (Fanon 17-18). Silko tries to expose every effort of Europeans to exploit and marginalize Native Americans. leaves no chance of highlighting injustice done by white settlers to Native Americans. One such example is to include the scene of recruitment of Native American youngsters in the war. Silko clearly depicts the recruitment of native youngsters based on false and fake promises. At the time when Tayo and Rocky pursue to join the army, a European recruiter cunningly manipulates and says:

Anyone can fight for America," he began, giving special emphasis to "America" "even you boys. In a time of need, anyone can fight for her." Now I know you boys love America as much as we do, but this is your big chance to show it" ... The recruiter was packing the leaflets into a cardboard box; he didn't look up. "Sure, sure, you enlist now and you will be eligible for everything—pilot training—everything. (Silko 59-60)

These lines clearly show the biased nature of the European recruiters. As per European ideology, Tayo and Rocky, like other native youngsters are inferior and it is easy to motivate them. Their recruitment in the army is because of a shortage of army

personnel. But Tayo and Rocky fail to understand this cunning policy of the recruiters. While in army uniform, Tayo and Rocky receive respect and high regard from everyone. During their period in the army, Tayo and Rocky, along with other youngsters, began to believe that they are equal to whites. During their service in the army, Tayo and his friends are accepted in white society. White women treat Tayo very well. Tayo comments: "White women never looked at me until I put on that uniform, and then by God, I was a U.S. Marine and they came crowding around. All during the war, they'd say to me, 'Hey soldier, you sure are handsome. All that black thick hair'... they never asked me if I was Indian" (Silko 37). Tayo enjoys this equal status till his service in the war. But as the war ended, Tayo and his friends are removed from the army. They are treated very badly. They are again treated as second-class people who have no social value and status. They are not accepted in both cultures. Through this situation, Silko puts light on two things: white's indifferent attitude toward native army men and native's anger over youngster's decisions of joining the army. At the moment of his banishment from the war, "Tayo realizes the reality that they were only useful to euromerican culture as soldiers and that after the war they were expected to return to their status as colonized minorities" (Rice 123). Although Tayo and Rocky join the army with great enthusiasm and hope, but this decision proves fatal because Rocky meets death in the war. The condition of Tayo is also not good. He like many other war veterans suffers from the problem of post-war traumatic disorder. This is shown in the opening scene of the novel when Tayo is shown lying on a bed in the hospital his physical, as well as mental condition is not good. He fails to recognize himself. He reflects upon his situation and feeling:

For a long time he has been white smoke. He did not realize that until he left the hospital, white smoke had no consciousness of itself. It faded into the white world of the bedsheets and walls; it was sucked away by the words of doctors who tried to talk to the invisible scattered smoke. He had seen outlines of grey steel tables, outlines of the food they pushed into his mouth, which was only an outline too, like all the outlines he saw. They saw his outline but they did not realize it was hollow inside. (Silko 13)



These lines show the extent of the effect that colonial activities caused on Native American youngsters. It displays how Tayo's cloud of self is breathed in by the European colonist doctor who just pretends to diagnose Tayo's disease and cure him. Actually, Tayo spends huge time in hospital but his condition doesn't change. During this period, Tayo feels detachment from the world. He thinks that he is not a part of this world. He is not able to connect himself with anything. The only choice left for him is to visualize that he is far away "inhabit[ing] a grey winter on a distant elk mountain where hunters are lost indefinitely and their own bones mark the boundaries" (Silko 14). Through this story of Tayo's identity conflict and predicament, readers can easily estimate the extent of the havoc caused by European settlers in every colonized nation. Regarding the alienation of natives from society and culture, Fanon rightly claims: "Because it is a systematic negation of the other person and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity, colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: 'In reality, who am I?'" (Fanon 250)

Through the segment of recruitment of Tayo, Rocky, and their friends in the American army for the war, Silko brings to light the historical unfairness of the European recruiting committees. During the commencement of World War II, several European personnel in the American army was very less. That condition necessitates the inclusion of native innocent youngsters in the army so that size of the army might increase. In this way there took place a huge influx of native youngsters into the army. But as the war ended, white recruiters removed native youngsters from the army. This resulted in a sense of despair and identity conflict among them. To reduce mental ailment, these native veterans embraced evil habits of alcoholism and drug addiction. Scenes of youngsters' suicide were also common at that time. In the preface to *The Wretched of the Earth*, Sartre comments:

The European elite undertook to manufacture native elite. They picked out promising adolescents; they branded them, as with a red-hot iron, with the principles of western culture; they stuffed their mouth full with high-sounding phrases, grand glutinous words that stuck to the teeth. After a short stay in the mother country they were sent home, white-washed. (Fanon 07)

Silko exposes these issues through the actions of Tayo and his friends. When Tayo and his friends were in the army, they felt a sense of belonging to America. Silko says, “they were America the beautiful too, this was the land of the free just like teachers said in school. They had the uniform and they didn’t look different no more. They got respect” (Silko 38). Silko shows a scene when Tayo and Rocky are wearing their uniform and walking in the street and a big car stops in their honor. “An old woman rolled down the window and said, God bless you, but it was the uniform not them, she blesses” (Silko 38). During their period in the army, Tayo and his friends were also confident. But soon after their banishment from the army, this feeling of belongingness starts vanishing. Silko says, “they were trying to bring back that old feeling, that feeling they belonged to America the way they felt during the war. They blamed themselves for losing the new feeling; they never talked about it, but they blamed themselves just like they blamed themselves for losing the land the white people took” (Silko 39). While analyzing this situation of not belonging to a nation and possession of a sense of inferiority among the colonized, Frantz Fanon rightly comments: “the feeling of inferiority of the colonized is the correlative to the European’s feeling of superiority... it is the racist who creates his inferior” (Fanon 93). Here while depicting the scene of the removal of native youngsters from the army and thereafter native’s feeling of blaming themselves, Silko shares her views with Frantz Fanon. Both writers agree that this sense of inferiority among the natives is not because the colonizers are superior, but because this feeling develops in the mind of the colonized, and because of this feeling, these native colonized people suffer a lot. Silko and Fanon further advocate that this feeling is the result of the imperialistic activities of the colonialists.

Through the episode of recruitment, Silko makes Tayo and his veteran friends, a fictional representation of over 44,000 Native Americans who joined the army and represented themselves in World War II. These 44,000 Native Americans not only participated in the war but also excelled in their skills. But unluckily, many native soldiers lost their lives in the war. Fictionalizing the ‘dysfunctional veterans’ in the novel, Silko exposes the brutalities of imperial powers. As a result of their banishment from the white army, Tayo’s friends spend their whole time in bars.

Presenting Tayo, a mixed blood, Silko informs us about the problems faced by mixed blood people. Because of his mixed ancestry, Tayo occupies a secondary position in his family. Since his childhood, Tayo is raised by his aunt but she shows all her care and affection to her own son, Rocky. Tayo's aunt doesn't like him because he belongs to mixed blood ancestry. Further, after his upsetting experience in the Pacific, Tayo experiences emotional distancing at home. This pathetic condition of Tayo is because of the invasion of American land by Europeans and thereafter the influence of Europeans on natives. His adverse condition is further intensified after the death of Rocky in the war and his banishment from the army. After being removed from the army, Tayo, like many other natives was forced to stay on a deserted reservation. Kenneth Lincoln in his famous book *Native American Renaissance*, rightly comments: "Many Indian cultures were removed to the great American desert during the beginning of 1830s. this forced migration is more a diaspora under the presidential decree and military escort... Indians resisted the intrusion. The west wasn't wild until the whites came; Indians claimed" (Lincoln 19).

After presenting a pathetic picture of the Native American population, Silko exposes the harshness of Europeans towards nature. While presenting destructive pictures of nature with the ongoing processes of uranium mining and testing of atomic bombs, Silko reveals how the modern culture of Europeans proves fatal to nature. These destructive pictures reveal the political aspects of European settlers whose main focus is to access power at any cost. This shows that in their rage of accessing power Europeans not only destructed Native American population but also exploited nature and its sources. The process of urbanization is thus another aspect of destruction. While depicting the activities of uranium mining and atomic bombing on Laguna land, Silko comments:

Trinity Site, where they exploded the first atomic bomb, was only three hundred miles to the south east, at White Sands. And the top-secret laboratories where the bomb had created were deep in the Jemez Mountains, on land the government took from Cochiti Pueblo: Los Alamos . . . still surrounded by high electric fences and the ponderosa pine and tawny sand rock of the Jemez

Mountain canyon where the shrine of the twin mountain lions had always been.  
(Silko, 228)

These activities of the destruction of American land due to uranium mining are visualized by Tayo in his memory. During his short visit along the arroyos, Tayo notices and realizes the complete destruction of native land due to uranium extraction. “He knelt and found an ore rock. The grey stone was streaked with powdery yellow uranium, bright and yellow pollen; . . . But they had taken these beautiful rocks from deep within earth and they had laid them in a monstrous design, realizing destruction on a scale only they could have dreamed” (Silko 228-229). After coming across these pictures of uranium mining, Tayo understands “that nuclear colonialism of the southwest reflects the threat of destruction that the atomic bomb poses to the world” (Matsunaga 72). These scenes of native land destruction have a far-reaching influence on Native American people and their culture because, in Native American culture, nature plays an important role. Matsunaga in his writing comments:

The impact of World War II on the text is undeniable; and so, to the impact of the Cold War. In *Ceremony*, while connecting transpacific atomic sites (Hiroshima and Nagasaki) to the American southwest, Silko expresses her objections to the politics and rhetoric of the cold war that promoted not only nuclear colonialism in the American southwest but also American factionalism and expansion that pushed the world toward a nuclear apocalypse. (Matsunaga 67)

Vine Deloria, in his book, *God is Red*, further puts light on injustice done by owners of mines to natives of America. These white owners of mines not only prevented natives from the reach of extracted gold but also employed systematic genocide of thousands of natives. Explaining the experience of Navajo and laguna miners serving in the Kerr-McGee mines in Mexico, Simon Ortiz comments:

The Navajo men who went into the underground mines did not have much choice except to work there, just like the laguna miners who find themselves as surface labors and semi-skilled workers. The Laguna miners would find

themselves questioning how much real value the mining operation had when their land was overturned into a grey pit miles and miles in breath. (Ortiz 356)

Like other exponents of postcolonial resistance, Silko leaves no chance of exposing the harmful effects of these uranium mines on the health of Native American workers and the nearby families. These native workers and nearby families were not informed about the fatal effects of toxic radioactive wastes. It is evident that until the closure of the uranium mines, “residents experienced high rates of miscarriages, children with birth defects and mental retardation, upper respiratory distress, and lymph, skin, and stomach cancer” (Snodgrass 10). Even after the stoppage of mines in 1981, thousands of tons of land became sterile.

After exposing European imperialist’s rude actions toward the Native American population and nature, Silko claims that Europeans also exhibited the wrong ideology toward animals. To expose European’s ill thinking toward animals, Silko introduces ranchers and hunters in the novel. These ranchers and hunters for whom animals are only meant to eat, fully exploit their liberty in killing animals. These settlers play games with animals and thus leave no chance of disturbing animals. For them, the animals possess no importance rather than to be killed and eaten. These white ranchers “raise stupid Herefords that are ill-adapted to desert terrain and available food supplies, then fence and corral them so that they cannot run free” (Beidler 13). They even “rode massive powerful roping horses that were capable of jerking down a steer running full speed, knocking the animal unconscious and frequently injuring or killing it” (Silko 197). European imperialist’s harsh attitude toward animals is shown by Silko as follows:

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 deer and bear are objects

They see no life. (Silko 125)

To depict the imperialistic and destructive actions of European settlement, Silko presents the concept of witchery in the novel. The concept of witchery is not new but it has been an important aspect of Native American culture. Since the beginning of Native American culture, the concept of witchery has been used. It is also true that the concept of witchery is not only a part of Native American culture but since the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it has also been used by many scholars to highlight colonial activities and their adverse effects on native people. Edith Swan quotes Silko's own comment on the use of witchery, "in the novel I have tried to go beyond any specific kind of Laguna witchery or Navajo witchery, and to begin to see as a metaphor for the destroyers or the counterforce, that force which counters vitality and birth. The counterforce is destruction and death" (Swan 114). The destroyers who represent the embodiment of witchery share a belief that there exists no relation between human and non-human things. This belief in denial of the notion of relatedness rejects any relationship between humans and nature. According to this notion, Silko clears that witchery is concerned only with the destruction and devastation of the world. With this aim of destruction, witchery forces native people to abandon their own pure culture and embrace the destructive culture of white people. The European imperialists who are the embodiment of witchery are responsible for imbibing this thinking among the natives and as a result of this changed thinking many natives met destruction. Being unable to understand the wrong policies of European imperialists, these natives have invited their own destruction.

Under the influence of the modernized ways and lifestyle of white people, many Native Americans have invited their own marginality and destruction. Bhabha also points out that the modern system and progressive western forms of social and economic organization are the sites where "strategies of hierarchization and marginalization are employed in the management of colonial societies" (Bhabha 119). To explain this issue,

Silko centers the focus of the novel on Rocky. Rocky is Native American, but he continually aspires to become part of modernism. He is not interested in his native culture. His desire to become a part of modernized culture causes his own death. Similarly, Tayo's friends who find hope in modern culture at the cost of their own also gain nothing in life. Like Rocky, Emo's affection for modernization also leads to his death. Frantz Fanon highlights this issue of natives' affection towards white's culture and says "the look that the natives set on the settler's town is a look of lust... it expresses his dream of possession" (Fanon 39). Silko shows that this longing and desire for modern culture at the cost of the native one is actually the product of witchery that ultimately leads to the destruction and death of both Rocky and Emo.

Although Tayo is part of both modern as well as a native culture but he is different from his friends as well as from his cousin Rocky. Although, Tayo is of mixed blood and belongs to the lineage of both cultures but still because of the prevailing situation he suffers from identity conflict. His mixed heritage doesn't protect him from the problem of identity conflict. After the death of Rocky in the war and his removal from the army, Tayo suffers from the problem of mental ailment and confusion. Main reason for his ailment is the impact of imperialistic activities of white settlers. Tayo's experience in the war and thereafter his stay away from the reservation brings a drastic change in his life. This horrific experience of Tayo in the modern city is clarified by David Rice as:

Tayo's time in the city is filled with alienation and bereft of possibility, as he has no friends or community to buttress him. He is mentally disturbed and unable to connect to even the most basic elements of his surroundings for support. Also, Tayo's youth in the city of Gallup, New Mexico, is marked by homelessness, hunger, and desperate fear. Though Tayo's fellow veterans do not reveal anything about their urban experience beyond braggadocio, there is also no evidence that city offered them lasting opportunity. (Rice 116)

From the above passage, it is evident that the advent of modernization brought about by European settlers only increased the problems of all the natives of a colonized country. While portraying traumatic conditions and conflicts of mixed blood Tayo, Silko claims "heritage as a matter not of 'blood' but of place; the earth remains,

however altered, and so does indigenous identity, regardless of ineffectual beliefs about purity or authenticity”. (Clair 06).

The second novel of Silko is *Almanac of the Dead* (1991). It is the longest novel by Silko. There is a gap of fourteen years between the publication dates of *Ceremony* and *Almanac of the Dead*. In comparison to both these novels, Lindsley Smith comments: “Although *Ceremony* has come to be considered securely and rather seamlessly ‘canonical’ becoming a favorite in high school and college English classes, *Almanac of the Dead*, in its more than seven hundred graphic pages of drug abuse, violence, and wide-ranging settings and characters, has been less popular” (145 Smith). The novel is “a powerful work of anti-imperial translation” (Cummings 81). While narrating the story of the novel, Sterling, who is the narrator of the story, exposes every aspect of working of European colonialism and thereafter marginalized position of Native Americans in their own country. This apocalyptic novel by Silko presents a harsh and devastating picture of the working of white colonialism in America. This narrative tells the story of imperialism in America from the point of view of marginalized natives who are continually suffering for the last five centuries. Rebecca Tillet rightly says:

*Almanac of the Dead*, is a harsh indictment of five hundred years of colonialism, racism and genocide in the New World. Most significantly, as its title suggests, *Almanac of the Dead* emphasizes the presence of the dead, both indigenous peoples and African slaves, to expose the real costs of settlement, and to actively un-settle the Euro- American reader. Consequently, *Almanac of the Dead* presents the powerful alternative histories of a range of dispossessed social and ethnic groups throughout the Americas, while relocating and reconsidering the US within the context of the Americas as a continental and historical whole, and emphasizing the positive potential of political activism. (Tillet 21)

*Almanac of the Dead* is a clear vision of the installation of various types of social evils of European culture in America. The novel is centered on the American city, Tucson, which represents “the novel’s apparent center of gravity and the setting for much of the story, as a hopelessly corrupt city home to an assortment of speculators, confidence men, embezzlers, lawyers, judges, police and other criminals, as well as addicts and pushers” (Porter & Roemer 254). In the novel, Silko exposes and criticizes European



imperialism by highlighting the greed and corruption prevalent in white settlers whose minds revolve only around power, money, sex, and blood. The novel “develops a story of geographic scale not as an ontological structure which exists but as an epistemological one- a way of knowing and apprehending” (Brigham 106).

Here, Silko’s concept of witchery that Silko uses in *Ceremony* is replaced by the capitalist system or what Silko terms, “vampire capitalism” (Silko 312). Just as witchery is destructive as well as self-destructive, capitalism also aims at destruction. Like witchery, capitalism also rejects any kind of relatedness between humans and non-human things because capitalism is driven by “the greedy destroyers of the land” (Tillet 30). According to Frantz Fanon capitalist system installed by European settlers in the colonized nation is the enemy of these underdeveloped nations. According to Fanon “Deportations, massacres, forced labor, and slavery have been the main methods used by capitalism to increase its wealth, its gold or diamond reserves, and to establish its power” (Fanon 101) In the novel, Silko brutally criticizes the installation of the capital system and its influence on natives. According to Silko, this capitalist system that Europeans installed in America is irredeemable. While defining capitalism, Silko says, “it is a range of global corporate ideologies that actively encourage, in fact, depend upon, an absence of state regulation or oversight to enable and facilitate corporate strategies and practices that trample-people-into-the-dirt and destroy-the-earth” (Tillet 27). To expose the bloodsucking influence of capitalism, Silko draws on Karl Marx’s statement on capitalism. Karl Marx asserted that “capital is dead labour that, vampire like, only lives by sucking living labour and lives, the more, the more labour it sucks” (Tillet 34). To expose the bloody nature of vampire capitalism, “Marx had caught the capitalists of the British empire with bloody hands” (Silko 312). Based on Marx’s analysis of the industrial system, Silko’s *Almanac of the Dead* describes British industries as “giant spinning machines that consumed the limbs and the lives of the small children in factories” (Silko 312) Following Marx’s analysis of the relation between European colonists and indigenous people of America, Silko also exposes “the crimes of slaughter and slavery committed by the European colonialists who had been sent by their capitalist slave- masters to secure the raw materials of capitalism- human flesh and blood” Silko 315). After stealing the wealth of America, these capitalist slave-

masters brought arms and weapons to “keep down the uprisings of the landless people all across Europe” (Silko 315). Here Silko exposes the brutality and merciless attitude of industrialists whose main motives are personal profits and progress. The progress of these capitalists proceeds at the cost of the lives of laborers. This deadly vampire capitalism is responsible for the killing of countless workers. While exposing this parasitic nature of capitalism, Silko further explains that this industrialist system absorbed “the tiny corps of children who had been worked to death- their deformed bodies shaped to fit inside factory machinery and other cramped spaces” (Silko 312). Silko terms this period of vampire capitalism, as an epoch of Dead Eye Dog. During this epoch, these vampire capitalists “become obsessed with hunger and impulses commonly seen in wild dogs” (Silko 251)

To present such a degrading picture of the capitalist system and imperialistic powers, Silko introduces many European characters whose minds revolve only around possession of power. Silko has introduced a huge number of characters in the novel and most of them work for enhancing the deadly capitalist system. Among them, those who carry forward the deadly capitalist system are an elite group of people. These are business entrepreneurs who seek to fulfill their aim at the cost of the suffering of poor and needy people. These capitalists are rigid, rude, and unemotional. These characters are either unloving or unloved. They are careless about the wills of others. They seek only personal profit and their pursuit of personal profit makes them inhuman. These characters with inhuman attitudes have no familial relations with anyone. Their only concern is greed for money and to earn money, they take no time sucking human blood. These are destroyers of nature as well as human beings. Because of the nature of these capitalists, Silko has termed them, vampire capitalists. Regarding this blood-sucking nature of destroyer capitalists, Silko claims:

the people had always feared the destroyers, humans who were attracted to and excited by death and sight of blood and suffering. The destroyers secretly prayed and waited for disaster and destruction. Secretly they were thrilled by the spectacle of death. The European invaders had brought their Jesus hanging bloody and dead from the cross; later they ate his flesh and blood again and again. (Silko 475)

A fine example of such a character is Beaufrey who considers himself to possess the highest place in society. Beaufrey is a person who hates others. “He had always loved himself, only himself” (Silko 533). Instead, others do not matter to him. His sense of indifference towards others is evident from the following lines:

others did not fully exist- they were only ideas that filled across his consciousness then disappeared. For as long as he could remember, Beaufrey had existed more completely than any other human being had ever met. That is why the most bloody spectacles of torture did not upset him; because he couldn't be seriously touched by the contortions and screams of imperfectly drawn cartoon victims. Beaufrey knew only he could truly feel or truly suffer. (Silko 533)

In companionship with David, Beaufrey is also indulged in the business of pornography. He is homosexual and ruthlessly exploits his lovers. He is also responsible for the death of the drug addict, Eric. Then fed up with the emotional love of David for his son, Beaufrey kidnaps David's son and kills him (most probably). He is merciless even towards David's wife, Seese. As a result, because of his son's death, David ultimately meets death. Beaufrey's plan of constructing a biosphere project was meant for the benefit and comfort of higher-class people only. This project offers no benefit to Native American tribes rather it is harmful to nature. Beaufrey's indifferent attitude toward commoners and his villainess is explained by Michelle Jarman as:

Beaufrey treats ordinary people as disposable pawns in his personal game of chess. Thriving on power and profit, Beaufrey produces and sells movies featuring real-life murders, fetal dissections, surgical fantasies, and ritual circumcision. In his personal life, he uses money, drugs, and his social influence to entice and manipulate the people around him, all for his own amusement. (Jarman 156)

Like Beaufrey, Sarlo also provides himself esteem position in society. “Their most engaging conversation together had concerned the importance of lineage. Those of highest lineage had never lost their great wealth; lesser lines of nobility had found themselves with lineages but no money” (Silko 541). Sarlo doesn't like others. His lack

of socialization is evident from “abandonment by his parents and his subsequent sexual abuse – significantly non- penetrative – at the hands of his grandfather” (Tillet 48). Sarlo is a person who hates females. His dissatisfaction with females is evident from his habit of self-sex. He saves every drop of semen in a stainless vein to develop superior progeny from it with the help of an artificial uterus. He is “anxious to get his institute underway and to obtain sperm contributions from European males of noble birth lest rare and distinguished lineage disappear without issue”. (Silko 547). His research on developing artificial uterus is based on his thinking that “women were often not reliable or responsible enough to give the ‘superfetuses’ their best chance at developing into superbabies” (Silko 547). Sarlo’s continual research to construct artificial womb and artificial earth unit suggest abusive use of science and technology and their institutions. Through the character of Sarlo, Silko aptly puts light on the engagement of Europeans in abusing modern technology.

Another eugenic character, Trigg, further justifies the self-possessing and dominating attitude of imperialistic Europeans for whom others are mere objects meant for subjugation only. Trigg is handicapped and runs the business of selling blood, organs, and biomaterials. Like other eugenic characters, Trigg also advocates racism. He “believes in the supremacy of genius, science, and capital, and that those who fail within the parameters of his rarified rubric should be sacrificed to satisfy the appetites of the privileged” (Jarman 151). His only obsession is to stand on his legs. Despite his physical deformation, Trigg continually asserts, “I see myself as being superior to the others. I am better than all of them” (Silko 386). As a white man, Trigg is “adamant about the eventual miracle of medical science and high technology for spinal cord injuries and nerve tissue transplants” (Silko 380). He is also a sexist and maintains an affair with Leah Blue. Poor, homeless, alcoholic, and addicted are his clients of organ donation. He chooses these people because such types of people have no other choices. These people, according to Trigg are merely “raw material than as whole organism” (Jarman 148). Trigg plans “millions and millions to be made from treatments for people addicted to alcohol and other drugs” (Silko 382). Trigg maintains a sexual relationship with another capitalist character, Leah. Although both Leah and Trigg maintain sexual relationship, they are also business partners. With Leah, Trigg dreams to diversify and

expand his business. Trigg plans “Leah’s Blue Water group to finance and build his detox and addiction treatment hospital” (Silko 382). Such depiction of loose structures of morality in America was prevalent in modern America. About the project of Leah, Silko says, “she had spent millions drilling the deepest water wells in North America. The water from her deep wells had been salty, but all the better for her ‘canals of Venice’... Thanks to the judge’s directed verdict, she had all the water she wanted without interference from environmentalists or Indian tribes” (Silko 656). Although Leah can convince environmentalists and Indian tribes, this does not mean that her water project is beneficial. This water project of Leah serves nothing but just acts havoc on nature and the local population, especially Native Americans. But Leah pays little attention to the risks posed by her project to the environment. she speaks:

she couldn’t understand why the Indians or the environmentalists had bothered to sue even if her deep wells did harm other wells or natural springs, which her deep wells didn’t; what possible good was this desert anyway? Full of poisonous snakes, sharp rocks, and cactus! Leah knew she was not alone in the feeling of repulsion; most people who saw the cactus and rocky hills for the first time agreed the desert was ugly. (Silko 750)

Despite their healthy relations, Leah fully exploits Trigg’s weaknesses of fear, emotional detachment, and self-preoccupation. Leah is already married to Max blue but still indulges in an unhealthy relationship with Trigg. This act of Leah suggests the capitalist’s inability to run healthy familial relations. Like these eugenic characters, Menardo who is a Native American also belongs to the group of these vampire capitalists. His intention of earning more and more money equates him to the category of destroyers. These characters of eugenic thinking are described as destructors by Silko. These destroyers, according to Silko, feel “delighted in blood” and feed on “energy released by destruction” (Silko 336).

Throughout the novel, Silko criticizes the imperialistic process by introducing various dreadful stories. In these stories “the scaling of bodies takes shape as the violence and reconstruction of bodily borders that are grotesquely transformative. Dismemberment and slaughter metastasize in their kind of capitalist-colonialist production, yielding an uncanny harvest” (Brigham 309). One of the stories dealing with Trigg, who buys

Tuscan real estate and converts it into a plasma donor center. Unemployed youths of copper strikers, who suffer due to economic decline, are his plasma donors. Justifying his act of killing these homeless men, Trigg says: “Nobody ever notices they are gone.... they were human debris, human refuse” Silko (444). Silko says:

For Trigg, his process of brutal dismemberment and death gives, rather than forfeits, meaningful identity to these subjects. Touting Mexican hearts as lean and strong, Trigg finds social differences imperceptible at this new interior scale of the body. Without the skin, the body multiplies in number as serviceable parts for white others. Ironically, Trigg seems ignorant of how such border violations also sabotage the purity of the white subject. (Brigham 311)

According to Trigg’s ideology, these homeless people are a waste and they can serve society only after offering their blood. Here Silko exposes the act of claiming superiority by the European settlers. Trigg’s act of handling his business on his own exposes the doubtful nature of Trigg. About the doubtful nature of Trigg, Silko says, “Trigg handled all the bookkeeping and banking himself to ensure privacy. Trigg shipped out fresh-frozen plasma and whole blood and took pride in delivering the shipments himself” (Silko 388). Although Trigg, a European settler, is physically deformed and cannot stand because of his spinal cord injury he still considers himself to be a productive entrepreneur. Even his “company van had a real lift system that allowed Trigg to remain in the wheelchair while he was driving” (Silko 388). Being a self-possessing entrepreneur, Trigg expands his business from blood plasma donation to organ transplantation. His newly developed business of organ transplantation includes “Biomaterials- the industries preferred term for fetal-brain material, human kidneys, hearts and lungs, corneas for eye transplant and human skin for burn victims” (Silko 398). The solution to the problem of obtaining the material for his business already exists in Trigg’s mind. In this regard, Silko speaks:

The secret was how to obtain the enormous supply of biomaterials and organs which was necessary, and the civil war in Mexico was already solving that. Even if there were no wars, still Trigg had come up with a brilliant solution. Trigg had a gold mine. Hobeos or wetbacks could be “harvested” at the plasma centers

where a doctor had already examined the “candidate” to be sure he was healthy.  
(Silko 663)

Silko again portrays the violence of marginalized sections of society through her discussion of the AIDS virus. It is shown in the novel that the AIDS virus is created to attack marginalized people. Here a description of AIDS as a biological weapon highlights the dangers of abuse of technology in common communities. In the novel, Silko shows that “AIDS was developed by an international consortium of wealthy and politically powerful destroyer citizens” (Champlin 41), and the aim behind this act is to erase the identity of marginalized people because “the virus achieves much of its destructive power through the relative absence of medical care in marginalized communities and the widespread hunger caused by unequal resource distribution” (Champlin 41).

Another aspect of European imperialism that Silko highlights in the novel is the tradition of the slavery system. Through the role of Clinton in the novel, Silko exposes the brutal slave trade run by whites. This slave trade was not only present in America but also prevalent in other countries like China and Siberia. Frantz Fanon rightly claims “European opulence is literally a scandal for it was built on the backs of slaves, it fed on the blood of slaves, and owes its very existence to the soil and subsoil of the underdeveloped world. Europe's well-being and progress were built with the sweat and corpses of blacks, Arabs, Indians, and Asians” (Fanon 96). A famous historian Jack Forbes talks about the import of slave Africans in America, especially in California in 1510. Jack Forbes divides the slave trade into three stages. In the first stage, the slave population consisted mainly of the American population only. In the second stage number of African slaves became equal to American slaves and in the final stage number of African slaves became more than the American ones. Through the broadcasts of Clinton, Silko explains the nature of the slavery system. In his broadcasts, Clinton explains the concept of slavery as a “continuing relationship between people and systems that results in human degradation and human suffering” (Silko 427). Clinton further explains that as the slavery system depends on violence and terrorism, women and children are considered to be the best choices. Now based on this choice, these “slaves may serve as labors, but slaves exist primarily to satisfy sexual and ego needs

of the masters” (Silko 428). While tracing the cruelty of slavery and the predicament of slave women in America, an American biographer, Harriet Jacobs in her autobiographical book, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), writes “so I was sold at last! A human being sold in the free city of New York the bill of sale is on record, and future generations will learn from it that women were articles of traffic late in the nineteenth century of the Christian religion” (Jacobs 223). Slaves, especially slave women face sexual exploitation and violence to the highest level of intolerance. Slaves have no identity. In the novel, while highlighting the problem of slave trade and violence, Clinton speaks:

European lords had slaves; so, had the Arabs and Chinese; even some tribal cultures had kept slaves. But nowhere except in the Americas had the colonial slave masters suddenly been without their own people and culture to help control the terrible compulsions and hungers aroused by owning human slaves. Nowhere had so many slaves been consumed so lavishly or so quickly. Child rape and murder had been perfected in the New World by European slave owners, who had later returned to Europe infected with bloody compulsions they had indulged in the colonies, hidden away from the eyes of their peers and their God as they smeared the fresh blood of slaves on their thighs and genitals. (Silko 425-426)

Expressing his rage and anguish over the ongoing slave trade in America, Clinton says, “slavery is any continuing relationship between people and systems that results in human degradation and human sufferings” (Silko 427). Through the face and deeds of Clinton, Silko not only exposes the brutality of colonizers but also puts light on the collaborative efforts of Natives Americans and Black Africans to overthrow capitalists. Realizing the policy of union of black slaves and American slaves, their oppressors also applied the policy of divide and rule. Clinton says “the power who controlled the United States didn’t want the people to know their history. If the people knew their history, they would realize they must rise up”. (Silko 431)

Along with presenting social and political aspects of imperialism, this novel also focuses on environmental injustice done to nature and land. It has already been noticed by critics associated with environmental justice that mainstream discourses have



already drawn an analogy between marginalized people and their lands. Since the beginning of imperialism in America, Europeans have placed natives and their lands under the category of uncivilized and underdeveloped. Because of this ideology exhibited by European imperialists, these native sufferers were even shifted from their native land to barren land on the reservation. While referring to Yucca Mountain, a sacred place of local tribes chosen as the main dumping site of nuclear waste, Winona LaDuke, a native American activist, notes: “What happened when the best scientific minds and policy analysts in the world spent 20 years examining every possible way to deal with problem of nuclear waste? They decided the solution was to ship the radioactive stuff thousands of miles from all over the country and dump it on an Indian reservation” (Reed 30).

This situation of environmental injustice is depicted in the novel with the description of ‘a giant sacred stone snake’. Silko juxtaposes giant stone snake with the uranium mines on laguna lands. This reappearance of the snake with the setting of uranium mines shows that “destruction of any part of the earth does immediate harm to all living things... like a stone snake coming to remind us that violence in the Americas- against ourselves and one another- can run as deep, as the deepest shafts with which humankind has pierced the earth” (Boyles 18). While depicting the pictures of mining and drilling, Silko strongly criticizes the indifferent attitude of European miners toward the environment. Focusing on the destruction of the earth that imperialists have caused, Silko advocates, “the violence we are doing to the earth is the violence to ourselves and our communities. Those affected by these projects- through proximity, employment or dispossession- are the most likely to suffer consequences related to their health and well-being, especially the Native people of Arizona and New Mexico” (Boyles 18). At the beginning of the novel, Sterling, a Native American is banished from the tribe because he is blamed “for unintentionally facilitating the desecration of the stone snake by a Hollywood film” (Reed 30). This act puts light on several acts of theft and expropriation of sacred native artifacts during the process of excavation and mining. The novel also highlights the act of theft of two sacred stones that occurred many years ago. These scenes are associated with sacred artifacts and represent the ongoing struggle of native tribes to recover thousands of stolen artifacts associated with native

culture. Analyzing the aim of publication of the novel, Rebecca Tillet rightly comments: “Almanac therefore traces the results of complexly historical European philosophical-religious-political worldviews to show how the exploitation at the heart of dominion is subsequently translated directly into the exploitative processes and practices of empire building and then of globalized corporate capitalism” (Tillet 02).

The next important work of Silko dealing with the same themes is the novel, *Gardens in the Dunes* (1999). After publishing *Almanac of the Dead* which received a mixed reaction from the audience for being “too political”, Silko decided to write an apolitical work that would express her fascination with gardening, but as she proceeded, Silko comments, “but then it wasn’t too long before I realized how very political gardens are. Though my conscious self had tried to come up with an idea for a non-political novel, I had actually stumbled into the most political thing of all-how you grow your food, whether you eat, the fact that the political collectors followed the conquistadors” (Arnold & Silko 03). So, despite Silko’s apolitical efforts, the novel became a great art of historical fiction that highlights imperialism and subsistence under the background of gardening techniques.

Like *Ceremony* and *Almanac of the Dead*, this novel also presents a harsh picture of European imperialism in America. The novel centers around the life and hardship of two sisters, Indigo and Sister Salt. The pictures of hardship and homelessness faced by these sisters of the Sand Lizard tribe indicate the devastating influence of the imperialistic techniques of white settlers on helpless Native Americans. It highlights the awful fate of Native American tribes at the onset of the process of European colonialism. From the time of the European invasion of America, many Native American tribes got extinct. This issue is highlighted by Silko through the representation of the Sand Lizard tribal family whose elder member says “we are the last remnants of the sand lizard clan...so many of us have died it’s no wonder cluster of rain clouds gather over the old gardens” (Silko 43).

Not only this, but the novel also highlights the injustice of white settlers on nature through the practice of dam building, mining, and bio- theft. By focusing on the 1890s period, Silko criticizes the engineering project of diverting the bed of the Colorado river. Because of this project, many Native Americans who cultivated near the bank

faced problems due to frequent flooding and lost acreage. During the process of European settlement in America, many Native Americans were forcefully shifted to the reservations. Though unwillingly, these native families were forced to settle on reservations. This land given to natives was barren and without any resources. It was actually a trick of the US government to snatch fertile land from the native families. One such explanation of the condition of Indians on the reservation is given by grandma fleet when she says:

There was nothing to eat on the reservation; the best farmland along the river was taken by the white people. Reservation Indians sat in one place and did not move; they ate white food- white bread and white sugar and white lard. Reservation Indians has no mesquite flour for the winter because they could not leave the reservation to gather mesquite beans in august. They were not allowed to go to the sandhills in the spring to gather delicacies- sprouts and roots. Poor people! If they couldn't travel around, here and there, they wouldn't be able to find enough to eat. (Silko 13-14)

Under the background of European imperialism, the novel focuses on the story of Sand Lizard tribal girl, Indigo, and her elder sister, Sister Salt. After the disappearance of their mother in the ghost dance and the death and burial of their grandmother, both Indigo and Sister Salt are captured by Indian agents. Thereafter, after declaring them orphans by the state, Indigo and Sister Salt are separated. Sister Salt is sent to Parker reservation on the Colorado river while Indigo is shifted to Indian Boarding school in California. Separated from each other, both Indigo and Sister Salt develop separate resistive natures to adapt to the changing society. Sister Salt works as a business entrepreneur and starts a laundry service at the site of the construction of a dam and the story of Indigo revolves around her successful escape from the boarding school, her temporary familiarity with the Euro-American family, and her European tour. Parallel to the story of Sand Lizard girls, Silko introduces the concept of gardens represented as a symbol of nineteenth-century imperialism. Through varying pictures of gardens maintained by various characters, Silko shifts the focus of readers to imperialism at local, national as well as international levels. To depict the link between European imperialism and gardens, Silko contrasts the aim of gardening of Native American

tribes with that of European settlers. Gardening act as means of livelihood for Sand Lizard tribes whereas for European settlers, gardening is a mean of sustaining power.

Through the character of Indigo, Silko highlights the struggles of Native American tribes against the dominating culture of foreign settlers. The novel also highlights the efforts of Europeans to spread their culture among the natives. For this purpose, they separate Indigo from her sister and send her to an Indian boarding school. In this regard, Fanon claims, “colonialism is separatist and regionalist. Colonialism doesn’t simply state the existence of tribes; it also reinforces it and separate them” (Fanon 94). While mentioning Indian boarding schools, Silko highlights the harsh picture of Europeans. During the process of European colonization of America, many Native American children were separated from their families and sent to boarding schools. In Indian boarding schools, these native children were forced to learn European trends, especially through the medium of English. In the novel, Silko highlights this assimilation strategy through the character of indigo. In addition to the continuous threat of exploitation, Grandma Fleet and Indigo’s mother experience continuous fear of separation of Sister Salt and Indigo from them. Such experience of threat of cultural loss is expressed by Stephanie Li in his paper, Domestic Resistance: Gardening, Mothering, and Storytelling in Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Gardens in the Dunes*, as:

The way of life of the Sand Lizard people is severely endangered by the threat posed by whites to the Native American children. The abduction of Indian children devastates familial relationships, causing intense personal trauma while also threatening cultural continuity. Without children to carry on the traditions and values of the ancestors, and without mothers to provide the future generation with a sense of identity and belonging, the sand lizard people are in danger of extinction. (Li 27)

As a result of the assimilation policy, Indigo and Sister Salt are captured by the US authorities. However, the authorities find sister salt too old to send to an Indian boarding school because she may prove to be a “troublemaker and [may] urge the younger students to attempt escape” (Silko 69). So, authorities decide to keep Sister salt in the custody. Higher authorities issued orders to send indigo to the Sherman Institute in California. Silko show this institute as a site of “death and silence” (Li 27). It is a place

where native children are taught to reject their culture and embrace modernity. Helen Bannan in her essay on Native American Literature writes “the greatest American threat to Native American generational continuity was the governmental policy of capturing from boarding schools, where, in the name of vocational education, Indian children were taught to reject their heritage and adopt American cultural patterns” (Li 27). Indigo notices such changing in the children who have been staying there since a long time. She says, “only their skin looked Indian. Their eyes, their hair, and, of course, the shoes, stockings, and long dresses were no different from the matron’s” (Silko 69). Indigo notices scenes of injustice and partiality in the institution. Indigo and many other new girls live a life of hardship. Within a few months of her stay in the institute, Indigo notices “three girls from Alaska stop eating, lie listlessly in their beds, then die, coughing blood” (Silko 70). These girls say nothing to Indigo but indigo “knew what their message was: she had to get away or she would die as they had” (Silko 70). Finally, after a few months of her stay in the Boarding School, Indigo successfully escapes from the school. Even after her successful escape, Indigo is again temporarily adopted by a Euro-American couple, Hattie and Edward. At the beginning of her encounter with Hattie and Edward, Indigo feels much grief. She even tries to escape from the train but unfortunately, she fails. She feels caught between two worlds and her inability to return to her previous life. About Indigo’s grief and inability to escape from the lap of Hattie and Edward, Silko says:

Clackety-clack! Clackety-clack! You left home, now you’ll never get back. Clackety-clack! Never get back, never get back, get back, get back, the rails sang; even when Indigo put her fingers in her ears, she heard the song. She cried until the tears made a wet spot on the pillow. Hattie sat on the edge other berth and patted Indigo’s back. Indigo sobbed with disappointment in herself; Grandma Fleet would have been so disappointed too, because she always managed to escape the first time she tried. Now that she missed her chance at Needles, the train was speeding her farther and farther away from Mama and Sister Salt. Hattie was a nice person, and her husband was OK; Hattie meant well, but she did not understand. (Silko 112)

Silko exposes the negativities of imperialism through the deeds of Edward Palmer. The character of Edward represents modernity. He is the husband of the second protagonist, Hattie. Edward, an Anglo-American colonizer is originally a botanist. But he has abandoned his scholarly interest and goals to gain money. Although he is a scholar but he has gained his scholarly knowledge to subordinate others. To gain money, Edward alliances with colonist enterprises. Edward helps them with the illegal transportation of plants. He searches the forests of the world in search of marketable plants. He transports and hybridizes the plants so that these plants may adjust to American conditions in a new fashionable manner. He travels all over the world to collect plant samples for money. About such passionate pursuit of Edward, Silko writes “Edward traveled to places so remote and collected plants so rare, so subtle, few white men ever saw them before. He added these rare treasures to his growing collection of roots, stalks, leaves, and, most important, when possible, seeds. His ambition was to discover a new plant species, that would bear his name” (Silko 81). His passion for this pursuit compels him to develop corrupt relations with the Bureau of Plant Industry. He also collects orchid samples for money. Silko explains his work of collecting orchids as:

Edward scanned the list of orchids wanted by the consortium of hybridizers and noted which were winter blooming and must be collected now; the others, which bloomed in the spring and summer, could be collected last. These later genera were the *Laelia* and *Cattleya* much sought by hybridizers, who wanted the rich colors of the *Laelia* flowers but with the robust size and grateful shape of the *Cattleya* flower. (Silko 122)

To explain the imperialistic attitude of Edward, Silko introduces one of the tours of Edward to collect a sample from the Caribbean. “He was eager to purchase archeological artifacts and curiosities. Weather permitting, he would hire the cabin boy to assist him with his camera so the most interesting subjects could be photographed” (Silko 90). But despite his need, native people refuse to offer him archeological artifacts. When Edward offers to buy meteor irons, the natives reply “you can’t buy them but you will pay” Silko this episode indicate that Edward doesn’t understand the native culture. He just thinks to steal from his native culture. His main aim is to maintain his superior authority and gain wealth. Christina Boyles rightly says “Edward’s failure

to acknowledge indigenous knowledge system highlights his embodiments of the racism, sexism, and capitalism inherent in colonial environmental knowledge systems” (Boyles 28-28).

While his European tour with Hattie and Indigo, Edward was busy with himself. He plans to steal cuttings of Citrus plants and smuggle the same back to America. The citrus plant is not an ordinary plant but stood for many purposes. The plant has many medicinal uses. In Africa, citrus has been used to cure many diseases. The plant was also used by the Jews as a part of their ceremonies. Further, Edward’s arrival in Corsica, Italy via Genoa also serves historical importance. These locations are related to the birth of Christopher Columbus. So, in this way, by juxtaposing this plant and place in the novel, “Silko offers a microcosmic history of ancient conquest, European imperialism, and modern botanical piracy while demonstrating commercial trivialization of the sacred” (Ryan 118). Further his visit to Corsica is meant for stealing citrus cuttings but being a corrupt colonialist, Edward tells a lie to his family by saying that his visit to Corsica is meant for a detailed study of citrus plants. About Edward’s aim of stealing citrus cutting, Silko says: “Currently, Corsica and her French and Italian owners controlled the world’s commercial supply of citron. Now, by a special arrangement with the Bureau of Plant Industry, he would own some of the first citron cuttings ever imported to the United States” (Silko 171.). This again highlights his disrespect for nature as well as landscape

Along with Edward, the novel also depicts other males indulging in money-making. These are Edward’s companion who collects rubber plant specimen for money and workers of the dam with their side acts of gambling, laundry, and beer brewing. Silko also portrays the forceful employment of Indians for the gathering rubbers. Rubber portals are even shown “infamous for the use of torture and killing to increase the output of the indentured Indians who gathered the wild rubbers. Rivalries between the rubber buyers erupted into periodic raids in which dozens of Indians and white and Negro overseers were killed” (Silko 124)

Like her previous works, Silko again introduces the mixed-blood character in her *Gardens in the Dunes*. Here Sister Salt belongs to mixed ancestry. Here Silko’s intention of introducing Sister Salt as mixed blood is to put light on the exploitation of

Native American women who, after the settlement of whites experienced the feeling of insecurity. Sister Salt is born after her mother was raped by a US soldier. This background of the story depicts the brutality of white settlers who see natives as mere objects to use and exploit.

During the process of imperialism, European settlers not only subjugated Native Americans but also tried to vanish native rituals and cultural trends. William Young claims: “Sun dance practiced by various plains nations including Lakota... was prohibited because it was considered barbaric” (Young 44-45). Young further claims that European settlers employed every possible technique to subjugate natives. Europeans even “prohibited plural marriage, ritual practices of so-called medicine men, destruction of property at the burial, and use of any intoxicant” (Young 45). There are so many examples of European’s efforts for the subjugation and banishment of traditional native cultural rituals and trends. Europeans imposed restrictions on native traditional trends because they considered that traditional native rituals might come in the way of the assimilation process. One such effort of restriction is the prohibition of the ceremony of dance. In 1883, Hiram Price, who was then the commissioner of Indian affairs, created a set of rules popularly known as the “code of Indian offenses”. According to this code, Native American rituals such as ceremonies of dance were against law and anyone who acted against the law might not get food and he also has to go to prison. To expose European’s brutal behaviors toward native’s traditional rituals, Silko introduces the scene of ghost dance in the novel. The events of the ghost dance are presented from the point of view of indigo who along with her family attends the ceremony of the ghost dance organized by southwestern tribes. While indigo and her sister enjoy the scenes of the ghost dance the scene is immediately followed by the arrest of many native ladies including indigo’s mother. Since the moment of their mother’s arrest, indigo and her sister never meet their mother again and news of their mothers’ whereabouts remains a mystery for them throughout the novel. It is because of their mother’s disappearance after the ghost dance and their decision of searching for their mother, indigo, and her sister separate from each other.

Silko’s next important work following the trend of depicting the actions of European’s injustice against the natives is a multi-genre work, *Storyteller* (1981). The book



*Storyteller* is an autobiographical account of Silko's life as a mixed-blood woman. This collection of multi-genres received much acclaim from the audience but actually, the book was not written for such a large audience. Silko herself claimed: "I have never thought much about an audience perse...initially, I guess I assumed that I wouldn't have to worry about an audience because there wouldn't be an audience" (Lorenz 59). In this book also, Silko continues her innovative capacities as a writer. This huge multi-genre book is a blend of various stories and poems. The book also includes many stories and poems that were published many years ago and later on adjusted in this book. Silko has so aptly blended all these diverse forms of literature. Jan Castro in his review of *Storyteller* claims: "while the book's credit indicate that it is an anthology, the book's format does not. The omission of titles in the text and dates of publication encourage the reader to move from poem to picture to the story so that relativity of time, place, and writing style become secondary to the overall multigenerational picture and fabric of the tales" (Lorenz 60). Like other books, *Storyteller* is embedded with stories and poems indicating European colonialism and native's strategies to resist white culture's atrocities.

In one of the most beautiful stories under the title, 'I always called her Aunt Susie', Silko addresses the problem of imperialism. While speaking about the aunt Susie whom Silko respects a lot, Silko highlights the changing situations of the natives due to the arrival of imperialistic powers. Silko regards that aunt Susie belongs to the last generation of Native Americans who teach their children knowledge of native culture through oral tradition. Silko further addresses that since the arrival of European settlers:

the atmosphere and conditions which had maintained this oral tradition in laguna culture had been irrevocable 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 29-30)

Through the story, Silko informs the readers about the dangers of the loss of native cultural trends of Native Americans. Silko makes it clear that the written word that has replaced the oral tradition of natives is concerned with the assimilation policy of Europeans. Here Silko "reflects upon the cultural and personal disruption engendered

by European and Euro-American social and political dominance over American Indian lives” (Carsten 111)

Another story ‘Lullaby’ deals with the pain, predicament, and disillusionment of a Navajo woman, Ayah who searches for her husband who has gone to buy wine in Azzie bar. While her visit to the bar, Ayah remembers dark phases of her life resulting from the arrival of foreign settlers. As a result of imperial activities, Ayah has to tolerate the “loss of her son in the war, the removal of her two young children from her home and Cato [her husband] being fired from his cattle rancher’s job” (Hollrah 01). Not only this, the changed behavior of Ayah’s children after their encounter with the modernized world of European settlers puts light on the loss and marginalization of native culture and native language as a result of the havoc of imperialism. Under the influence of European culture, many Native Americans overlooked their cultural relevance. The process and techniques of European colonization have devastated the family life of Ayah. Because of colonial actions, Ayah has to sacrifice her husband as well as children.

Silko’s next story under the same title, ‘Storyteller’, highlights the story of a young Eskimo girl who stays with her grandmother and an old man. The story is set in a region predominantly inhabited by Gussucks. Most of these Gussucks are US citizens of European heritage. These Gussucks, who are represented as outsiders try to assimilate Native Americans into their white culture. Thus, in this region, the native culture seems to be withering due to the forceful settlement of European citizens. The opening of the story shows a young girl in jail. Although the reason behind her being in jail is not mentioned in the story but from the proceeding story, it can be estimated that the main reason for her being in jail is her native identity. Through the story, Silko shows the helpless condition of natives due to the arrival of Europeans. The segment of the story when the girl asks her grandmother about the death of her parents puts light on the smuggling of poisonous alcohol by the imperialistic powers among the native Americans. Grandmother informs her: “They bought a tin can of it from the store man. Late at night. He told them it was alcohol safe to drink” (Silko 84). Her grandmother tells her that her parents had died because of intaking poisonous alcohol. To portray the slow and steady withering of the traditional culture of natives, Silko presents the scene

when the girl goes to English speaking school run by the US government. After reaching the school and observing the atmosphere of the school, the girl finds that she is the only student who wants to rebel against Europeans' ways of life. When the girl does not speak English "the dormitory pulled down her underpants and whipped her with a leather belt" (Silko 79). All other Eskimos have adapted to European ways of life. Silko adds: "Those backward village people, the matron said because she was an Eskimo who had worked for the BIA a long time. "They kept this one until she was too big to learn". The other girls whispered in English. They knew how to work the shower, and they washed and curl their hair at night. They ate Gussuck food" (Silko 79). Regarding the exploitative nature of white settlers, Martin. N. Merger clearly explains: "Throughout the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, United States policy toward American Indians was designed to destroy native cultures and political entities in hopes of creating assimilation into the dominant euro- American culture and society" (Merger 157-158). Like previous works, this story also highlights the process of uranium mining by the settlers. Silko says "They only come when there is something to steal. The fur animals are too difficult for them to get now, and the seals and fish are hard to find. Now they come for oil deep in the earth" (Silko 81). Silko also explains witnessing mining activities by the native villagers. "The village people had gathered to watch the white men, and to laugh as they drove giant machines, one by one off the steel ramp into the bogs; as if sheer numbers of vehicles would somehow make the tundra solid" (Silko 82). By portraying destroyed pictures of nature in almost all of her works, Silko makes the readers know about Native American's relation with nature. The process of foreign settlement and capitalism proved havoc on nature.

## Conclusion

By portraying the pictures of violence and destruction, Silko continues the trend of postcolonial writers who take the responsibility of exposing the darkest aspects of colonialism. In her effort to expose the colonial and postcolonial conditions of Native Americans, Silko persuades the readers to see reality through different angles. From her seminal texts, anyone who is not familiar with America can easily generalize the prevailing situations which placed colonized Native Americans in a marginalized position. Her texts questions and even defy establishment of colonial hegemony and

power. The scene of need-based recruitment of natives in the army and thereafter their banishment from the army presented in the novel, *Ceremony*, is the example of marginalized position of natives. Such activities of the colonial powers are responsible for the development of sense of inferiority complex and identity conflict among the natives. Such a truthful presentation of a colonized nation depicts what havoc can a capitalist settler cause. This havoc is on the colonized population as well as on the environment. Silko's capitalist characters shown in the novel, *Almanac of the Dead*, make it clear that capitalists have no human relation with anyone and their only motto is to earn money. Silko openly names these colonizers as vampires who satisfy their hunger by sucking blood of innocent natives. For these vampire colonizers, blood of natives is the only mean of earning money and property. This clears that despite colonizer's claim of modernization, these colonial activities only meant for degrading native population. Following the trend of postcolonial writers, Silko focuses on the issues of identity conflict and cultural fragmentation. Despite opposing forces, Tayo, in *Ceremony*, and Indigo's, in *Gardens in the Dunes*, continual efforts to maintain native identity show that identity conflict is the main challenge for natives. In the novel, *Gardens in the Dunes*, Indigo and Sister Salt's separation from the family and their journey to search each other shows that claim of white authoritative powers to civilize native is not true. Their interference with the natives only caused familial and cultural fragmentation. With these arguments, Silko proposes an enquiry about the colonial discourses and opens a way for counter discourses. Seeking the aim of dismantling the self-possessed authority of colonial powers, Silko like other Native American writers of renaissance literature takes the help of native trends like ceremony, storytelling, and myths. Through these techniques of native culture that colonial powers try to suppress, Silko continues the legacy of protecting the interests of Native Americans who continuously fight to sustain their identity. Such a truthful presentation of harsh realities and dark aspects of the colonial era and its after effects on natives tends to undermine the authority of colonial discourses.

## Chapter 4

### Hybridity and Liminality

Being a universal concept, “hybridity has entered many academic arenas, ranging from traditional disciplines like literature, anthropology, and sociology to interdisciplinary venues such as postcolonial theory and performance studies” (Kraidy 02). The concept of Hybridity has been influential in postcolonial studies. For most postcolonial critics, the concept of hybridity is related to the act of self-determination. Hybridity is often considered a resistive strategy of the colonized communities in any colonial situation. One such strategic use of hybridity is suggested by Homi Bhabha who uses the concept of “hybridity to describe cultural contact between the colonizer and the colonized that yields an interdependent relationship between the two, creating a ‘third space of enunciation’, by which he means a space that negates the dominance of the colonizer and allows the colonized to emerge as the others of ourselves” (Flower 64). This concept of hybridity is concerned with the celebration of cultural blend and alteration. According to this view, hybridity is possessed with the characteristics of alteration of colonial domination. However, there are few critics such as Aijaz Ahmad who attach negativity to the concept of hybridity. According to the views of these critics, hybridity is a retrogressive phenomenon that celebrate the experiences of intellectual superiors.

Despite such disputed ideas, the concept of hybridity is widely used in the field of postcolonial studies. Since the 1990s, it has become an indispensable component of postcolonial studies. Within the lens of postcolonial studies, hybridity is used to explain the cultural mixing or representation of diverse cultural elements and their co-existence in new cultural forms. This process of cultural mingling explains cultural intolerance of purity. As a cultural phenomenon, cultural hybridity exposes the process of cultural diversity. Analysis of the process of hybridity in the works of postcolonial writers depicts the nature of colonialism and its reaction or resistance on the behalf of colonized communities. In the works of these writers, the concept of hybridity is used to explain postcolonial identities and cultural changes among the colonized communities. In a colonial situation, the influence of colonizers is inevitable. In almost all the colonized countries, the native culture of the colonized is contaminated by the cultural influence of the European colonizers. Basically, due to the changes brought about by the

European settlers, it became difficult for the colonized communities to reject these changes. Even in most of the cases, acceptance of these changes becomes a necessity to maintain balance in a newly created multicultural society. Similarly, in America, the arrival and settlement of foreigners shattered the condition of cultural purity and segregation. This new situation necessitates the need to adjust to changing social conditions. Native American tribes that once lived in segregation were forced to live in close association with new settlers. Such predicament of Native American tribes is reflected in the works of Native American writers where hybridity seems an inevitable and inescapable trait of these people. Almost all the writers of Native American literature have depicted elements of hybridity prevailing in America after colonization and this hybridity occurs in genealogy as well as in culture. Native American literature is embedded with the presentation of the influence of the colonial process and prevailing hybridity on the native inhabitants of America.

Explaining the postcolonial concept of cultural hybridity, Homi Bhabha applies the term 'hybridity' to explain the position of colonial situation. According to Bhabha, in any colonial situation, hybridity is a condition when colonial authority of the colonizers loses its grip and power. Bhabha further advocates that the condition of native colonized people can easily be understood through the concept of cultural hybridity and liminality. To assign a proper position to colonized people, Bhabha advocates the possibility of liminality or we can also say a state of in-betweenness. Through the concept of in-between space, Bhabha questions the cultural authority of the colonizers' concept of binary opposition. According to Bhabha, this state of liminality breaks the duality of superior colonizer and inferior colonized. This concept of liminality goes together with cultural hybridity. Bhabha himself states that "this interstitial passage between fixed identifications open up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed and imposed hierarchy" (Bhabha 05). Leslie Marmon Silko, one of the prominent figures of Native American literature makes use of cultural hybridity and explores the influence of European culture on Native American tribes and their cultural trends. While applying Bhabhi's concept of hybridity and liminality, Silko seeks the possibility of regaining stability in the modern mixed cultural society. The concept of hybridity in the works of Leslie Marmon Silko explains the inevitable

tendency of cultural influence on native tribes of America. Silko has her own experience of being mixed blood and she has drawn her own experiences and feelings in her texts. Through her works, Silko reveals a deep cultural conflict and clash in the people of Native American tribes. Her multiple characters possess hybrid identities. In her texts, Silko creates a world where her mixed-blood characters struggle to adjust to changes brought about by European colonizers. These hybrid or mixed blood people possess linkage to both cultures but are not accepted in both cultures. This mixed-race identity possessed by Silko and her characters challenges and destabilizes the European and native stereotypes. Famous American writer Deborah Madsen supports Native American Writers' idea of introducing mixed blood characters and claims that these "mixed blood characters navigating between cultural worlds disturb the normative racial and also gender and sexual values of settler colony society" (Madsen 36).

Silko's novel, *Ceremony* (1977) deals with the life of mixed-blood protagonist, Tayo and the prevailing hybridity in newly constructed multicultural American society. In the novel, under the background of Tayo's story, Silko portrays the "conflict between two worldviews: the Euromerican city and the reservation" (Rice 117). In the novel, Silko reveals life on the reservation in San Diego, Los Angeles, and The Gallup, New Mexico where people of different cultures such as Anglo-Americans, Mexicans, and Laguna Pueblo live and interact with each other. The novel is embedded with implicit examples of hybridity in genealogy, names, actions and culture. The first instance of hybridity existing in the novel lies in the name of 'Thought Woman'. Her full name is Ts'its'ts/\*i'nako, Thought-Woman. Her first name is in laguna and her second name is in English. In this way, this mixed naming of deity displays the "co-mingling of linguistic and cultural systems" (Miller 168). Like many other Native American writers of the age such as Paula Gunn Allen, Louise Erdrich, N. Scott. Momaday and so on, Silko makes use of mixed blood characters in an attempt to highlight cultural hybridity in contemporary American society. In this regard, Marilyn Miller rightly says:

The liminal space of the mixed-blood is in fact the central focus of many Indian writers and functions as a powerful metaphor for the postcolonial engagement of native peoples with geographical penetration (land loss, confinement to

reservations, and so on) and cultural infiltration or assimilation (particularly in terms of language and its forms of expression). (159 Miller)

While observing the condition of mixed-blood people, Bhabha explains that these mixed-blood people who are not accepted by both cultures occupy a new space. He further explains that this new space is created by redefining culture and this redefinition surpasses the culture and ethnicity by “renewing the past, refiguring it as a contingent in-between space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present” (Bhabha 10). Similarly, Silko’s novel depicts inescapable elements of hybridity in the form of heredity in the character of mixed-blood Tayo. Tayo incorporates both white culture as well as native culture. Both cultures incorporate in his ancestry as well as in his character. About the mixed blood ness of Tayo, Silko says “yet another in the long line of liminally displaced mixed bloods who inhabit American fiction and fiction by Indian authors in particular” (Chavkin 91) Tayo’s journey from his home to war, then to the hospital and finally back to home involves an intermingling of both cultural trends. His identity is hybrid. He belongs to mixed ancestry. His mother is Indian and his father is white. This use of mixed blood characters in their works is made by almost all new generation Native American writers. About the introduction of Silko’s mixed-blood protagonist in her first novel, Louis Owen says:

Leslie Silko, in *Ceremony*...writes again of a mixed-blood protagonist lost between cultures and identities. However, in the character of Tayo, Silko turns the conventionally painful predicament of the mixed-blood around, making the mixed-blood a metaphor for the dynamic, syncretic, adaptive qualities of Indian cultures that will ensure survival. As she leads Tayo through a healing ceremony in mythic time, in a novel that becomes a ceremony for its reader, Silko makes it clear for the first time in American Indian literature that the mixed-blood is a rich source of power and something to be celebrated rather than mourned. (Owens 26)

Through the introduction of mixed blood characters in her works, Silko tries to expose the prevailing situation of Native Americans after the arrival of White men. She says:



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. I suppose at the core of my writing is the attempt to identify what it is to be a half-breed or mixed-blooded person; what it is to grow up neither white nor fully traditional Indian. (Chavkin 91)

In Native American culture, the mother possesses the responsibility of transferring cultural knowledge and values to her children. But Tayo's mother left him when he was only four years old. As a result, due to the absence of mother's love, Tayo's connection with his native culture failed to develop. It is only because of his loving and caring uncle, Josiah, that Tayo learns a few aspects of his native culture. Tayo's life revolves around both native as well as English culture. His hybrid identity is reflected through his green eyes which make it difficult for him to adhere to any culture. His hatred for his green eyes is reflected when he says "I always wished I had dark eyes like other people. When they look at me, they remember things that happened. My mother" (Silko 92).

Because of his mixed-bloodedness, Tayo suffers from mental ailment. As a result of his mixed genealogy, Tayo struggles and tries to reconcile two opposite worlds. "Tayo's struggle is the struggle of all people in the Americas who wish to live in harmony with themselves, each other, and with the nature" (Madsen 58). Because of Tayo's mixed ancestry, he is not accepted by both cultures. Due to his hybrid identity, Tayo is not accepted even in his own family. His aunt, who is a pure Indian, hates Tayo because Tayo is the son of an English father. Both Tayo and his cousin Rocky are raised together under the same roof, but Tayo is not able to draw much attention from his aunt. His aunt even hates him for his not being pure Indian. Tayo receives some love and affection from his uncle, Josiah, who acts as surrogate mother and father of Tayo. It is only with the help of his uncle, that Tayo learns a few lessons about life. The hatredness of natives for Tayo's mixed-bloodedness is highlighted when Tayo is ill and lying on his bed. At that time, Silko says:

Auntie stared at him the way she always had, reaching inside him with her eyes, calling up the past as if it were his future too, as if things would always be same for him...Many years ago, she had taken him to conceal the shame of her

younger sister. Now she stood over the bed and looked at him, and if he opened his eyes, he knew he would see her probing for new shame, the anticipation of what she might find swelling inside her. (Silko 27)

This attitude of auntie towards Tayo is further visible when he needs a medicine man for the cure. On grandma's suggestion to bring a medicine man, auntie replies, "you know what people will say if we ask for a medicine man to help for him. They will say don't do it. He is not full blood anyway" (Silko 30). This hatredness with Tayo is also shown by his friend Emo who always teases him because of his mixed ancestry. Emo used to hate Tayo since the time of their school days and Tayo's mixed ancestry was the only reason for this hatredness. Sooner and later, Emo teases Tayo because of his mixed ancestry. This hatred in the family as well as in society results in Tayo's loss of identity. Through the life and condition of Tayo, Silko makes the readers well versed in problems faced by mixed-blood people after the process of colonization in America.

Tayo's decision of joining the Second World War again aggravates his condition. His service in the American army symbolizes his condition of living in between two cultures. Tayo wished to help Josiah in the rearing of cattle. But after Rocky's persuasion, Tayo joins the American army. While in the Philippines, Tayo and Rocky were directed to kill the Japanese soldiers. But Tayo could not do that because he visualizes the image of his uncle, Josiah, in the soldier. This incident highlights his connection with all humans. This connection with humanity and all things is a characteristic feature of Native American culture. This means that both cultures incorporate into Tayo. Although being a part of the white culture, he joins the army but his connection with native culture forbids him from killing humanity. This shows that even after his decision of serving white culture he lingers between the two cultures. This decision of Tayo haunts him even after his return from the war. Due to his service in the American army, Tayo suffers from the problem of post-war traumatic disorder. Due to his decision of joining the army, Tayo loses his sense of identity. War also takes his cousin, Rocky, away from him. Like Tayo, many native Indian veterans who returned from the war faced the problems of identity conflict and alienation. Even, when Tayo is in the jungle with his cousin Rocky, Tayo curses the rain. As he is far away from native tradition, he does not understand the importance of rain. He wants a blue

sky without any mark of clouds. Ultimately, as a result of the power of words, on his return home, he notices that his harsh words to rain have caused drought and as Silko says:

he had prayed the rain away, and for the sixth year it was dry; the grass turned yellow and it did not grow. Wherever he looked, Tayo could see the consequences of his praying; the gray mule grew grunt, and the goat and kid had to wander farther and farther each day to find weeds or dry shrub to eat... Tayo looked at the long white hairs growing out of the lips like antennas, and he got choking in his throat again, and he cried for all of them, and for what he had done (Silko 13).

The character of Rocky also symbolizes cultural adaptation and changes. Rocky is already dead at the beginning of the novel but there are few talks about him. Further, Tayo's memory of Rocky also puts light on the personality of Rocky. Rocky represents those natives who are born with a hybrid mentality. Silko introduces Rocky as a representative of changing culture. Although, Rocky is a full-blood Indian, he has little knowledge of native culture. His hybridity lies not in his blood but his affection and belief in white culture and technology. He is not much affected by native cultural trends and not even interested in attending any native ceremony or ritual. He embraces white culture and shows his affection toward materialism and modernity. About the planning of Rocky, Silko comments: "He didn't think what they said. He was already thinking of the years ahead and the new places and people that were waiting for him in the future he had lived for since he began to believe in the world 'someday' the way white people do" (Silko 67). Since the time of his school days, Rocky had the least affection for native culture. He always used to express his longing and affection for modern culture. Silko again comments: "He was already planning where he would go after high school; he was already talking about the places he would live, and the reservation wasn't one of them" (Silko 71). Like his mother, Rocky falls into the category of assimilated Indians. He wants to worship white culture. He believes in the philosophy that to become successful in life, one has to forget the native culture and embrace white modernity. He even feels embarrassed when someone performs traditional Native American rituals. For him, the traditional cultural trends of Native Americans are funny

and useless. This is evident from an incident when Rocky killed a deer. On hearing this news, his father and uncle sprinkle cornmeal on the nose of the deer. According to them, this act “show their love and respect, their appreciation; otherwise, the deer would be offended, and they would not come to die for them the following year” (Silko 47). But this ritual is not liked by Rocky. According to Rocky’s ideology, these rituals and ceremonies associated with native culture are useless. He even rejects uncle Josiah’s idea of rearing cattle. Through the character of Rocky, Silko highlights a battle between:

the authoritative “alien” discourse and an internally persuasive worldview articulated by traditional values. Like the school books Rocky believes wholeheartedly, the dominant language insists upon its authority and “demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally; we encounter it with its authority already fused to it. (Owens 13)

Like Benally, in N. Scott. Momaday’s *House Made of Dawn*, Rocky becomes a victim of the American dream. His story relates to the story of all those Indian children who forcefully learned the English language and culture at the expense of native tradition in the school. Rocky represents a new generation that does not understand change very well. He is responsible for Tayo’s decision of joining the army. His affection for modern culture at the cost of native culture proves fatal to him and he ultimately meets death in the war.

Spotted cattle in the novel also represent hybridity. These hybrid cattle are bought by Tayo’s uncle, Josiah. These hybrid cattle come from the crossing of Mexican breeds and Hereford breeds of North America. The brown color of these cattle symbolizes Native American culture and white spots represent white culture. Josiah gets the idea of rearing hybrid cattle from his girlfriend, Night Swan. The hybrid cattle are tolerant to adverse environmental conditions and are bought by Josiah to tolerate drought. Because of this resistive hybrid nature of cattle, Josiah and Tayo think of rearing them. Josiah suggests:

They would breed these cattle, special cattle, not the weak, soft Herefords that grew thin and died from eating thistle and burned-off cactus during the drought.

The cattle Ulibarri sold them were exactly what they were thinking about. These cattle were descendants of generations of desert cattle, born in dry sand and scrubby mesquite where they hunted water, the way desert antelope did. (Silko 68)

Through the use of spotted cattle in the novel, Silko represents the hybridization of native culture. It indicates the survival of native culture in the southwest by incorporating dominant traits of the white culture. As we know that European colonization spread havoc among the Native Americans which resulted into fear of native tribal loss. Such conditions necessitate the adoption of dominant traits of white culture to prevent native tribes from extinction. The introduction of spotted cattle in the novel represents endurance and survival. These “spotted cattle are not only physical hybrids they are also spiritual hybrids. They have the bodies of livestock but their spiritual essence is deer/antelope, the primary large game animal(s) of the Pueblo people for thousands of years” (Blumenthal 370). Once these cattle were caught by European strangers and kept in an unknown place. The loss of cattle indicates loss of Tayo’s own identity. His search to find lost cattle is directly related to the search for Tayo’s own lost identity. Because of their unique endurance, these cattle persisted in running towards the southwest. When Tayo finds the lost cattle, he realizes the importance of the uniqueness of hybridity. He then understands that just as because of their uniqueness he becomes able to find cattle similarly with the help of his unique hybrid quality he can reconstruct his native identity and regain stability. About the positivity that cattle bring in the personality of Tayo, Helen May Dennis comments:

After he has recovered the cattle, Tayo’s skepticism is abated; he too has recovered. Further transitions occur in the story but tayo has now achieved a perspective that gives him assurance of survivance. He is no longer implicated in the destructive hopeless cycle of loss and despair that he participated in at the start of the novel... Now he is ostensibly in the same place, both physically and metaphorically, as at the start of the novel, but emotionally and spiritually he is transformed. (Dennis 53)

Tayo’s attitude towards animals again highlights his hybrid identity. Animals play an important role in Native American culture. In the words of Josiah, “cattle are like any

living thing. If you separate them from the land for too long, keep them in barns and corrals, they lose something” (Silko 68). On the other hand, in white culture, animals are merely objects meant to destroy. The white hunters hired by logging companies used to take “ten or fifteen deer each week and fifty wild turkeys in one month. The loggers shot the bears and mountain lions for sport.” (Silko 172). Tayo’s memory of a science teacher in the school who brought a tub full of dead frogs for dissections also gives a picture of whites’ harsh treatment of animals. Tayo who incorporates both white as well as native culture shows a mixed attitude toward animals. Initially, Tayo possesses a negative attitude toward animals, and one incident when Tayo was young clears it. His act of “swatting flies in the kitchen with a willow switch” (Silko 93) indicates his carelessness toward animals “because it was fun to chase them, not the serious business” (Silko 93). This act of Tayo insists Josiah narrate the story of the kindness of flies toward Native American tribes. As a soldier, when Tayo was in the jungle he exhibited a destructive and mechanical attitude toward flies. “Tayo . . . slapped at the insects mechanically” (Silko 07) and when Rocky is killed, Tayo’s grief outburst in the form of anger for flies: “He had not been able to endure the flies that had crawled over Rocky; they had enraged him. He had cursed their sticky feet and wet mouths, and when he could reach them, he had smashed them between his hands” (Silko 94). Due to his carelessness for animals, Tayo even forgets to keep the promise, that he has made to his uncle Josiah. It was the promise of taking care of cattle. At the end of the novel, there is a change in Tayo’s attitude toward animals. Now, like Native Americans, he no longer hates them. Tayo’s search for lost hybrid spotted cattle indicate his changed thinking about animals. Like Tayo, his friend Harley, who is native, also exhibits a negative attitude toward animals. But, unlike Tayo, his attitude remains the same till the end of the novel.

Another incident in the novel that reflects the incorporation of European cultural trends into the native culture is the adaption of the habit of alcoholism by the veterans. Before European arrival, the habit of alcoholism was not known to natives. Such activity of bad addiction was absent in the native culture of America. But European arrival is responsible for the introduction of such types of social evils among the native tribes. After World War Second, the majority of the native Indians who returned after the war

after facing humiliating treatment at the hands of whites pacified their anger with alcohol. Such a picture is highlighted by Silko through the characters of Tayo and his veteran friends. Tayo, Harley, Emo, and Leroy are World War Second veterans who were removed from the army after the war ended. After being terminated from the army, Tayo and his friends cannot find a place anywhere and ultimately try to “escape from the dark memories of wartime by getting drunk, picking up women, and boasting about their war experiences” (Otfinoski 64). This shows that Tayo and his friends who embraced modernization at the cost of forgetting their own culture suffer from a sense of alienation. They, Silko says:

have no real sense of hope, direction, or meaning to their lives. These men are haunted by the fact that their experience in the war has displaced the ethical and historical grounding of Native tradition. They mask their despair under a veneer of barroom camaraderie and tales of the battlefield and sexual conquest in the various American West Coast cities where they shipped out. Because of their experience abroad in the war, their time away from the reservation, and in the city particularly, comes to mark an important moment of change in their lives, where the stark contrast between traditional Indian values and contemporary Euromerican values comes into focus. (Rice 116).

Tayo’s stay in the city separates him from everything. He even lost touch with his surroundings. Even his friends gained nothing from the modernized culture of Europeans. They were left with nothing but spent most of their time in bars bragging about fake stories. This depicts the destructive effect of urbanization and industrialization on the native people of America. while discussing this, Silko puts light on the adverse effect of the modernization of native culture on native youths of America.

Another addict to alcoholism is Tayo’s mother, Laura, who becomes a victim of hybridity or we can also say cross-cultural interaction of Europeans and natives. She is not able to negotiate between two cultures and ultimately conceives Tayo with an anonymous European. Being caught between two worlds, Laura doesn’t become a good mother. She leaves Tayo when Tayo was only four-year-old. Like Laura, another woman who becomes a victim of cultural hybridity is Helen Jean. She represents all

those women who enter the modern world with the hope of getting employment and earning money and ultimately becoming victims of alcoholism and prostitution. Silko describes her first encounter with the modern world as:

She had walked around, staring up at the tall buildings, and all the big neon signs on Central Avenue. Every time she rode an elevator then, she thought of the old people at home, who shook their heads at the mention of elevators and tall buildings or juke boxes that could play a hundred different records. The old Utes said it was a lie; there were no such things. But she saw it every day, and for a long time when she saw these things, she felt embarrassed for the old people at home, who did not believe in these things. So, she was careful not to make the same kind of mistake herself; and she believed all the stories the guys told. (Silko 151)

Helen Jean meets Indian veterans in different bars who narrate her stories of their bravery in the war. She believes their stories. She offers them companionship and sex in return for alcohol and money. Helen leaves her home and native culture to earn money and support her family. She is well educated and does many jobs but because of her native background, she does not receive respect in the white world. She is often paid less salary. She hardly manages her rent and expenditure with the money she earns while serving in different jobs. She is not even able to send money to her family. She even faces humiliation and bad treatment because of her native roots. Her hidden cultural identity always threatens her in her newly adopted world. Laura and Helen Jeans are examples of all those girls of Native Americans who became victims of white's lust. Helen's affection for the modern world also connects her with Rocky. Both Helen and Rocky show their belief in the modern technological world of whites. However Rocky dies much before visualizing the adverse effects of modernization but Helen sees all the changes going on with the installation of the modern world of white's culture. In the end, Helen visualizes the foolishness of her blind faith in modern culture.

The hybrid personality of medicine man, Betonie, indicates the conditions that necessitate the cultural hybridity of whites and Native American tribes. In Native American culture, the medicine man plays the role of healer and spiritual leader. If a person gets ill then it is considered that he is overpowered by bad spirits. It is only with



the help of medicine men; that these bad spirits are eliminated from the body of the suffering person. With the help of chants, special words, dance, rituals, and ceremonies, these medicine men cure the ailing person. This means that in Native American culture, treatment is done by medicine men. When Tayo's problem persists even after his prolonged treatment in the hospital, then his grandma realizes the need for medicine man. The first medicine man summoned for Tayo's treatment is a pure native. His name is Ku'oosh. He performs a healing ritual to cure Tayo's illness. Silko writes "he spoke softly, using the old dialect full of sentences that were involuted with explanations of their own origins, as if nothing the old man said were his own but all had been said before and he was only there to repeat it. Tayo had to strain to catch the meaning, dense with place names he had never heard" (Silko 31).

He talks about land, memory, and different familiar and unfamiliar places. But he also clears that old healing rituals don't work effectively in modern times. He admits that "There are some things we can't cure like we used to ... not since the white people came. The others who had the scalp ceremony, some of them are not better either." (Silko 35). Through his chants and ceremonies, Tayo somehow finds relief for short time but not completely. His problem persists even after Ku'oosh's treatment.

The next medicine man summoned for Tayo's treatment is Betonie. Betonie represents the hybridity of white as well as native culture. Betonie's dresses develop doubts in the mind of Tayo. After noticing Tayo's doubtful expression, Betonie tells, "if you don't trust me, you better get going before dark. You can't be too careful these days... Anyway, I couldn't help anyone who was afraid of me" (Silko 113). But actually, Tayo's doubt and uneasiness are because of the reason that white people also make fun of natives and their traditions. While overcoming his doubt Tayo says I don't know anything about ceremonies or these things you talk about. I don't know how long anything has been going on, I just need help" (Silko 115). Like Tayo, he also belongs to mixed ancestry. Betonie is "a mixed-blood Navajo medicine man. An unusual medicine man mixed-blood like Tayo, with the familiar hazel eyes Betonie lives alone in a hogan cluttered with the paraphernalia of both traditional Navajo healing and modern American culture" (Owens 183). His practice of treatment of Tayo is based on both native cultural ceremonies as well as newly adapted white cultural practices.

Feeling the necessity of modifying native ceremonies, Betonie tells Tayo, “after the white people came, elements in this world began to shift; and it became necessary to create new ceremonies. I have made changes in the rituals. The people mistrust this greatly, but only this growth helps the ceremonies strong” (Silko 116). Elements of white culture involved in his ceremony include the use of calendars and phone books. About the idea of hybridity, Betonie says:

The people nowadays have an idea about the ceremonies. They think the ceremonies must be performed exactly as they have always been done, maybe because one slip-up or mistake and the whole ceremony must be stopped and the sand painting destroyed... But long ago when the people were given these ceremonies, the changing began. ... Things which don't shift and grow are dead things. That is the trickery of the witchcraft... They want us to believe all evil resides with white people. Then we will look no further to see what is really happening... And I tell you, we can deal with white people. ... We can because we invented white people; it was Indian witchery that made white people in the first place. (Silko 116 & 122)

Through his ideas, Betonie tries to convince Tayo that ceremonies play an important role in healing modern distress. After listening to the views of Betonie, Tayo understands that his ailment is not because of any physical problem but it is psychological because he feels loneliness in White society. Unlike, ku'oosh, Betonie expresses belief and positivity in his ceremonial process. Through the use of his mixed ceremonial methods, Betonie becomes successful in his effort of treating the illness of Tayo. Due to the influence of White settlers on the natives, Betonie tries to make changes to the existing native rituals and ceremonies. This is only because of changes, Betonie's ceremonies help in healing people like Tayo. In this way, through the character of the medicine man, Betonie, Silko presents a hybrid image of Native Americans and their ceremonies.

The character of Night Swan represents another example of cultural hybridity. She is the girlfriend of Josiah. As a Mexican woman, Night Swan is a cantina dancer all over southwest America. For her profession, she moves easily between multicultural towns. Being the progeny of mixed ancestry, Night Swan also faces a harsh reaction from

society. One such example is auntie who calls her “a whore and a dirty Mexican woman who convinces Josiah to buy a bunch of worthless cattle” (Causey 209) but despite these criticisms, Night Swan acts as “a symbol of cross-cultural exchange and a site where commonly held notions of authenticity and inauthenticity, physicality and spirituality, masculinity and femininity, and death and love become disrupted and redefined” (Causey 210). Night swan possesses both cultural traits. Her profession of dance connects her with both cultures. Her dance represents spirituality as well as sensuality thus merging both cultures. Night swan’s dance, an important element of Native American culture, plays the role of spirituality in the novel and also helps Tayo in regaining his normalcy. Further, Night Swan’s openness to body and sexuality connects her with white culture. She is in love with Josiah, but still, she invites Tayo into her room and takes him to her bed. Night Swan maintains thinking of modernization and social change. While discussing the color of Tayo’s eye, she expresses her awareness of cultural separation and cultural hybridity. Night Swan explains the fear of change tangled among the native people. This fear is because of discrimination that one section of society faces at the hands of another section. About such fear, Night Swan says:

they are afraid...they feel something happening, they can see something happening around them, and it scares them. Indians of Mexicans or whites-most people are afraid of change. They think that if their children have the same color of skin, the same color of eyes, that nothing is changing...they are fools. They blame us, the ones who look different. That way they don’t have to think what has happened inside themselves. (Silko 92)

Like Tayo, Night Swan can sustain normalcy because she understands changing scenario of modern American society. Through her skill, she successfully manages to live in modern as well as native culture.

Silko continues the theme of hybridity and liminality in her second novel, *Almanac of the Dead* (1991). The novel presents clear visuals of the effect of colonization on Native Americans and the resultant hybridity in the genealogy as well as in actions. The novel presents a world that is predominantly inhabited by witchery. In the novel, Silko illustrates the Anglo-American, African, and Native American connections. The novel

manifests hybridity in the form of an amalgam of European trends in America. Silko exposes this influence through a huge collection of multiple characters and their activities. One such example is the character of Menardo. Born with a hybrid mentality, Menardo represents a hybrid version of both Native American as well as white culture. Silko describes Menardo as “a yellow monkey who imitated real white men” (Silko 339). Although, Menardo is an indigenous Mexican he constantly tries to conceal his indigenous identity. He shares his identity, unintentionally, only with his servant Tacho. He tries to possess himself to be of white culture. Although he wants to vanish his indigenous identity his genealogy still attaches him to the native culture. He runs the business of insurance and ultimately becomes president of the universal insurance company. His slogan to attract customers is “we cover you for everything” (Silko 338). As per Menardo’s ideology, his continual rejection of indigenous identity aided in his successful position in his business. His obsession with power and wealth separates him from the native world. Each step of Menardo’s progress in the European-centered business further distances him from the spiritual world of indigenous culture. Considering himself to be a successful businessman, Menardo criticizes natives and says “what did ignorant Indians know about conducting a successful business? All they wanted to do was waste of money and time on village feast days, special “remembrance” for beloved relatives, and ailing clanspeople” (Silko 483). Although, Menardo rejects native culture, he still remembers stories, an important aspect of native culture, of his grandfather about the Europeans. His grandfather says:

Their god had created them but soon was furious with them, throwing them out of their birthplace, driving them away. The ancestors had called Europeans “the orphan people” and had noted that as with orphans taken in by selfish or coldhearted clanspeople, few Europeans had remained whole. They failed to recognize the earth was their mother. Europeans were like their first parents, Adam and Eve, wandering aimlessly because the insane God who had sired them had abandoned them. (Silko 258)

But due to his persistent affection for white culture, this remembrance of native culture doesn’t affect his mind. Through the character of Menardo, Silko represents the greed and affection of a few natives towards modernization. His affection for modern culture

and technology renders him incapable to analyze the meaning of these stories. Through the character of Menardo, Silko highlights the influence of cultural hybridity on Native American people. Menardo's persistent efforts to accept European culture result in the suppression and marginalization of elements of native culture in him. His continual acceptance of European culture at the cost of native identity indicates the success of the European policy of conversion of Native Americans into white culture. His rejection of his native identity leads to his marginalization in the novel. Menardo's ideology and his actions play an important role in adding contribution to the process of continual violence and capitalism in America. He is among those natives who seek to attain benefit at the cost of their community. Because he rejects indigenous identity, there also occurs a shift in Menardo's character from first person to third person in the novel. Although he rejects Indianness and accepts modernized culture, he is not fully content. His continuous efforts to reject Indianness in him make him uncomfortable. He is continually haunted by horrible dreams. This fear and faith in modern technology urge him to buy a vest from Max Blue for the purpose of safety. But this safety vest proves unsuccessful in saving his life.

A further illustration of cultural hybridity lies in the character of Sterling. Sterling appears at the beginning and end of the novel. Sterling is a Laguna Indian by genealogy but he has spent most of his life outside the reservation. Initially, he was out of the reservation for education in the boarding school, and later, after his return to the native town, he is banished from the local culture "for revealing the location of a giant stone snake to a Hollywood movie" (Priewe 228). This incident of the exile of Sterling from the reservation indicates the problems faced by natives after their return from the white culture and this occurs because of the unaccepting attitude exhibited by the local native people. We find the same problem of the indifferent attitude of natives towards Tayo who has returned after World War second. The chapter 'Exile' presents Sterling's life outside reservation that is based on his observation of European life and his fascination for crime stories and law. As a part of European culture, he has developed a habit of reading newspapers about crimes and killings. "Sterling doesn't understand international killing. But he has made it his hobby to learn and keep up with the history of outlaws and favorite criminals" (Silko 26). To receive time to time information about

these facts and incidents, Sterling also subscribes various magazines. His subscription to “*The Police Gazette* and *True Detective* magazines gave him the most detailed explanation of the law” (Silko 26). His obsession with English movies and continuous attraction for his favorite criminal, Granimo, highlights his lack of tendency to realize reality. Although, Sterling lives in the European world, images of native culture continually haunt him in the dreams that link him with the native culture.

Silko brings another angle of cultural hybridity with the pictures of patriarchy and matriarchy. In Native American culture, females play an important and dominant role in society. They mainly play the role of cultural bearers. The responsibility for passing down cultural trends of native culture lies in the hands of females. But on the other hand, if we talk about white European culture, it is clear that European society is dominated by patriarchy. European characters like Beaufrey, Sarlo, David, Max Blue and his son Sunny Blue, Trigg, etc. “fully exploit their status as men within a patriarchal system that venerates biological and cultural masculinity and despises femininity and female bodies” (Tillet 64). Not only European characters but Menardo and Ferro who are related to Native American culture also fully enjoy the benefit of patriarchy. Due to colonization, women suffered twice as males. Firstly, being dominated by colonizers, and secondly due to loss of power of matriarchy. Through the characters of twin sisters Zeta and Lecha, Silko highlights weak images of native female figures in society. Both Zeta and Lecha are molested and sexually used by their uncle, Federico, throughout their childhood. Because of this incident, both sisters hate males. Rebacca Tillet highlights such a harsh picture of patriarchy and speaks:

Within Almanac’s brutal patriarchal systems, we witness graphic representations of violence against human bodies and the natural world. Violence is everywhere, emphasized by the extensive drug trafficking, gunrunning, and political and personal assassinations of the text. Violent deaths saturate the story through suicide, homicide, infanticide and genocide. Human bodies are bought and sold through prostitution and strip clubs, blood and organ trafficking, and the trafficking and exploitation of illegal immigrants. Human bodies inflict and suffer abuse through the acts of sexual violence evident in Almanac’s tales of rape, bestiality, pedophilia and pornography. Human bodies

are literally taken apart and consumed, both for profit and for entertainment and enjoyment, through cannibalism, ‘snuff’ movies, and the ever-growing ‘market’ for videos showing torture, violent sexual assault, ‘sex change’ surgeries, female circumcisions, abortions, and foetal experiments and dissections. (Tillet 61)

Similarly, through the characters of Sarlo, Judge Arene, Trigg, and Beaufrey, Silko draws light on the cultural influence of Europeans in America in terms of patriarchy. Through the characters of Sarlo, Judge Arene, Trigg, and Beaufrey, Silko highlights the introduction of various social evils such as murder, rape, and pornography in America. Through these characters, Silko shows the hybrid nature of American society, a society that was once pure and uncontaminated, but with the arrival of foreign colonizers, it is hybridized with various social evils. These characters leave no chance of contaminating American society. These characters are described by Silko as destroyers, who “represent the force of colonialism and multinational corporate capitalism” (Schacht 56). If we take the example of Judge Arene, we can easily interpret the extent of the havoc caused by these negative characters in American society. Judge Arene’s mind is all the time preoccupied with the thoughts of bloodshed and rape. While discussing with Menardo, he shares his obsession with blood and says:

the sight and smell of blood naturally excited human sex organs. Because bloodshed dominated the natural world, those inhabited by blood would in time have been greatly outnumbered by those who were excited by blood. Blood was everywhere, all around humans all day long. There was always their own blood pumping constantly. (Silko 337)

Judge Arene does not respect women. Arene “did not think gender really mattered; sex after all was only a bodily function, a kind of expulsion of the sex fluids into some receptacle or another” (Silko 657). These negative characters of *Almanac of the Dead* who possess eugenic thinking:

navigate a social context where disproportionate wealth, exploitative sexuality, and corrupt individualism have subsumed community relationships and collective memory. Characters... defined by eugenic thinking combine

historical ideas of race betterment, targeted population control, and sexual sterilization with modern medical authority and ruthless capitalism. Through their violent, misanthropic acts, Silko suggests that this philosophical continuity represents the most destructive aspect of the European intellectual legacy. (Jarman 148)

Further understanding of the role played by mothers in the novel presents another aspect of the influence of Eurocentric quality in America. As we have already discussed that in Native American culture, mothers play a crucial role in the life of their children. But in *Almanac of the Dead*, such a role of mothers is lacking in some mothers. Not only European, but Indian mothers, under the influence of Eurocentric culture, fail to play a vital role in the life of their children. One such example is Beaufrey's mother who "tried to abort herself" (Silko 102) while Beaufrey was in her fetus. Leah Blue does not provide emotional support to her son, Bingo. Due to the lack of his mother's love, Bingo experiences "terrible feelings of grief and loss in the nightmares" (Silko 439). Another example is Sarlo's mother who left him alone to face exploitation at the hands of his grandfather. Native American mothers who exhibit such lacking qualities of motherhood are twin sisters, Lecha and Zeta. Lecha abandoned her newly born son, Ferro. However, Lecha loves his son but she proves to be an unsuccessful mother. Although, after being abandoned by Lecha, Ferro is raised by his aunt and Lecha's sister Zeta, Zeta does "not raise him out of maternal love but out of duty" (Silko 183). Further, Trigg's mother who is an alcoholic refuses to meet him even after he met a drastic accident. Root's mother also "cannot accept his irreparable brain damage as a result of a near fatal motorcycle accident, and instead 'pray[ed] he would die in a coma' despite the medical assurances that Root 'still has an IQ only a few points below the genius level'" (Tillet 72). Yet another example of the unsuccessful mother is Seese. She is alcoholic and drug addicted and lose her newborn son, Monte. Another angle of motherhood is highlighted through the character of Lecha and Zeta's Yaqui grandmother, Yeome. She handovers an old almanac, embedded with native cultural prophecies and tribal wisdom, to Lecha and Zeta. She plays the role of the cultural bearer in passing down cultural values to her progeny. Unlike other mothers in the novel, Yeome plays the role of a true mother.



Almanac of the Dead also visualizes the continuance of rape culture, drug supply, and pornography in America through the character of Cherie, stagecoach owner Tiny, Beaufrey, and Trigg. Not only these characters but Mexican police are also shown to be interested in watching porn cinemas. Their interrogation is based on films of abuse of young Mexican girls whose genitals are embedded with “lipsticks and makeup so that might show up better on the video screen” (Silko 342). Cherie is doubly harassed by patriarchy. Firstly, by her customers who sexually abuse her, and secondly by the honor of the stagecoach who continually forces Cherie and Seese to sell drugs to their customers. Such a broad picture of the running of rape culture, murder, and the porn industry in America is highlighted as:

Almanac constantly emphasizes that this ‘industry’ exploits a market that already exists within the imbalanced patriarchal rape cultures of the text, to make and distribute pornography, and videos and still images of death, torture, sexual assault, ‘sex- change’ or gender realignment surgery, female circumcisions, abortions, and foetal experiments and dissectionsnd, appropriately, we are given graphic descriptions of the most ‘popular’ videos of ‘late abortions’ where ‘the forceps’ are shown ‘finding the skull [of the foetus] and crushing it’, where ‘tiny babies’ are seen to ‘grimace and twist away from the long needle probes and the curette’s sharp spoon’... we are told of the high ‘demand’ for videos of the ‘ritual circumcisions of six year old virgins’ and shown the abuse of the female body through its de- sexualization, and the appeal of seeing female sexual organs ‘soaked with blood’. (Tillet 77)

Silko represents another aspect of cultural hybridity in America through the introduction of the character of Clinton. Clinton is a black veteran residing in America. Silko introduces Clinton in part three of the novel, entitled ‘Africa’. It is shown in the novel that Clinton and his family “had been direct descendant of wealthy slave-owning Cherokee Indians” (Silko 415). Through his character, it is evident that America is inhabited not only by Native Americans and whites but also by black Africans. America thus becomes hybrid land inhabited by three different races and cultures. The introduction of Clinton highlights the “explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective” (Byars & Nichols 95) of the novel. In her aim of regaining normalcy, Silko

includes “characters with Native American, Mexican, Spanish, European, African and Asian roots, as well as people with various physical disabilities including amputees and paraplegics” (Byars & Nichols 95). Silko also makes it clear that the connection between Africans and Native Americans is not developed since the beginning of slavery but it is pre-dated European slavery. While tracing the historical connection between Africans and the Americans, Clinton thinks, “from the beginning Africans had escaped and hide in the mountains where they met up with the survivors of indigenous tribes hiding in remote strongholds. In the mountains the Africans had discovered a wonderful thing: certain of the African Gods had located themselves in the Americas as well as Africa” (Silko 416). The names of these African Gods remembered by Clinton are the Giant Serpent, The Maize Mother, and The Twin Brothers. Since then, as per Clinton’s ideology “great American and great African tribal cultures had come together to create a powerful consciousness within all people” (Silko 416). In addition to historical confluences, African Americans and American Indians also share spiritual commonalities, which in Clinton’s view are the most important implications of their affiliation” (Smith 169). While attending his black studies classes, Clinton came to know that “there had been an older and deeper connection between Africa and the Americas, in the realm of the spirits” (Silko 416). The spirits that entered America from Africa are Ogoun (spirit of iron), Eurzulie (spirit of love), and Damballah (spirit of beauty). However, the nature of this spiritual association between Americans and Africans has changed. Clinton observes, “in Africa the spirits behaved much more gently and peacefully. On American soil these spirits had been nurtured on bitterness and blood spilled since the Europeans had arrived” (Tillet 47). The reason behind this changed behavior of spirits is “the slave hunting and the death on the ocean’s crossing” (Silko 417). Despite this shift in nature of spirits, Clinton realizes that “African Americans and Native Americans ‘stood in’ for each other at various points in history as the enslaved other to the imagined white American self” (Tillet 47). Clinton wants to inform all black people that despite their changing nature, the spirits of their African ancestors are always with them. Through his radio broadcast, Clinton “wanted black Americans to know how deeply African blood had watered the soil of the Americas for five hundred years” (Silko 416).

Silko's subsequent use of mixed blood characters adds an extent of hybridity in her writings. Like, *Ceremony, Almanac of the Dead* is also embedded with mixed blood characters. Here twin sisters, Lecha and Zeta are of mixed blood. Both Lecha and Zeta experience an inner struggle with identity. This inner conflict and struggle for identity is experienced by all minority groups. This experience of duality and identity conflict is discussed by a famous multicultural American writer, Gloria Anzaldua in her most remarkable work *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987). Anzaldua comments: "Chicanos and other people of color suffer economically for not acculturating. This voluntary (yet forced) alienation makes for psychological conflict, a kind of dual identity- we don't identify with the Anglo-American cultural values and we don't identify with the Mexican cultural values" (Anzaldua 63). Confused about their true identity, these twin sisters especially Lecha find it difficult to recognize the glory of native culture. They both struggle in terms of being women as well as Native Americans. Through the characters of Lecha and Zeta, Silko makes a look at the illegal deeds and policies used by the Europeans to subjugate Native American communities. Both oppose rules and laws enacted by the US government. While looking at the history of America they strongly criticize the hypocrisies of the US government. Zeta comments: "There was not and there never had been, a legal government by Europeans anywhere in the Americas. Not by any definition, not even by the European's own definitions and laws" (Silko 133). They also indulge in illegal activities such as smuggling of goods, using and selling drugs, having illegal affairs, etc. It is only at the end of the novel, after getting the almanac translated by Seese, that Lecha recognizes the havoc caused by European culture and understands the importance of Native American culture. Another character is Root whose genealogy also belongs to both European as well as Native American cultures. His mother belongs to white culture and wants her children to acquire white culture. But after Root's drastic head injury, she fails to accept him. These mixed blood characters suggest the possibility of cultural amalgam and hybridity in the postcolonial era and the influence of this hybridity on the native community.

Silko's next novel, *Gardens in the Dunes* again presents the possibility of hybridization. In this novel, Silko presents disparities between the traditional culture of Native

America and the modernized culture of Euro-Americans. Such disparities are presented through various indigenous and Euro-American characters. Through the story of the Sand Lizard tribal family of Native Americans, the novel highlights the connectedness of Native Americans with the earth. About the idea of writing this novel, Silko says:

Nearly all human cultures plant gardens, and the garden itself has ancient religious connections. For a long time, I've been interested in pre-Christian European beliefs, and the pagan devotions to sacred groves of trees and sacred springs. My German translator gave me a fascinating book on the archaeology of Old Europe, and in it I discovered ancient artifacts that showed that the Old European cultures once revered snakes, just as we Pueblo Indian people still do. So, I decided to take all these elements – orchids, gladiolus, ancient gardens, Victorian gardens, Native American gardens, Old European figures of Snake-bird Goddesses – and write a novel about two young sisters at the turn of the century. (Silko 451)

In Laura's Italian gardens, the Americans' next European stop, la professoressa also challenges established conventions of Western Garden architecture. She rejects the idea of preserving ancient Roman statues in the artificial atmosphere of museums or, as Edward would like it, in the homes of the American rich; instead, she reintegrates the monuments of Roman antiquity into their natural environment of flora and fauna. (Kohler 240)

This practice of Laura to develop new hybrid gardens of English style also focus light on the efforts of white settlers to replace the world with English culture. In her effort to develop new hybrid flowers of varying colors, Laura works hard. Though she works hard to reproduce hybrids her hybrids do not reproduce fragrance in the next generation. This is the failure of her hybrids. Silko explains one such example of Laura's hybridity as:

she crossed the *Gladiolus Primulinus* with the species of *Gladiolus gladiolus*: she obtained flowers of yellow with a red throat mark, cream yellow, golden yellow with a red-brown splash. She moved on the dark red and dark rose, at the same time experimenting with blue on light blue and creamy pink with a

cream throat. Lavender with purple, tan and brown with a red splash. It was a number of years before she got the black-red and the black-rose flower and some years of propagating enough corms for the terrace gardens. Currently she was trying to crossbreed the fragrant African species with the European species. (Silko 281)

Description of gardens of Aunt Bronwyn possessing flowers as well as corn plants shows explicit hybrid nature of her gardens. Aunt Bronwyn explains to Indigo the influence of different cultures on her gardens. To establish her gardens, Aunt Bronwyn has borrowed seeds from all over the world. She explains that she has borrowed “plants from all over the world- from the Americas, tomatoes, potatoes, pumpkins, squash and sweet corn; and garlic, onion, broad beans, asparagus, and chickpeas from Italy- grew with pepper from Asia and Africa” (Silko 222). About the hybrid and borrowed feature of her gardens, she further says that “the roses, the hollyhocks, and the pear trees did not originate in England but in the Near East and Asia” (Silko 226). She even expresses her indebtedness to native America and says “the American Indians, gave the world so many vegetables, fruits, and flowers- corn, tomatoes, potatoes, chilies, peanuts, coffee, chocolate, pineapple, bananas, and of course tobacco” (Silko 226). It is also clear from the novel that Aunt Bronwyn’s habit of cultivating gardening has developed not for any personal benefit but out of her honest love for nature and cultural exchange. When Indigo returns to her home, Aunt Bronwyn permits Indigo to take seeds from her garden. This generous action of Aunt Bronwyn highlights her love for nature and her understanding of the importance of sharing seeds. She understands that we should give respect to plants. Her generous nature and love for nature link her with Grandma Fleet. Grandma Fleet taught Indigo “the plants listen...always greet each plant respectfully. Don’t argue or fight around the plants- hard feelings cause the plants to wither” (Silko 11). Instead, Aunt Bronwyn shifted to England after her marriage because her husband belongs to England. But even after the death of her husband she remains in England and tries to adjust there. In England, she displays cultural hybridity and further tries “to transform her originally traditional home into a proto-environmentalist garden of creative ingenuity and artistic innovation” (Kohler 240)

The grand European tour undertaken by Indigo along with Hattie and Edward from California to Europe and back to the deserts of southwest America, represents tolerance and acceptance of the multicultural world. Silko makes this tour all-inclusive, that is why Indigo and Hattie “cross the United States by rail, travel to Europe by ship, move by boat and rail across that continent from England to Italy and Corsica, then return” (Ferguson 38-39). Indigo and Hattie’s tour of the multicultural world supports their self-orientation in modern culture. By undertaking this tour, Indigo learns a lot about European culture and its spiritual connection with the earth. From the tour, both Indigo and Hattie recognize an interrelation of people from different areas, times, and cultures. During the tenure of this summer tour, both Hattie and Indigo undergo a process of education. Silko writes:

Hattie teaches Indigo the pleasures of books, art, and travel, while Indigo's intense delight in the beauties of the world, her devotion to her animal companions-The monkey Linnaeus and the parrot Rainbow-And her unflagging determination to return to her family and their gardens in the dunes teach Hattie a new way of being in the world. (Arnold 102)

While enjoying the tour, Indigo and Hattie reach the Italian gardens of Laura. In the gardens of Laura, they see archeological traces of pre-Christian time. There they see a wide variety of stones with carvings of Celtic time. They also encounter different figures of snakes and other animals. These figures represent “an original hybridity that positions the human form, not in binary separation from the animal world, but which integrates female and snake forms, human and animal relations, just as such systems and ways of being were presented as integrated into Indigo's early life experiences in the gardens in the dunes” (Ferguson 44). During her adventurous tour with Hattie and Edward, Indigo collects packets of seeds and corn from the hybrid gardens of white people. She also takes time to time notes on the process of pollination and hybridization. When indigo is back in the sand lizard gardens, she plants these seeds. This act of Indigo that represents the transcultural movement of materials bridges the gap between two cultures. Indigo’s process of material transculturation or what we can say hybridity involves a modification of traditional practices. This is in accordance with the hybrid

ceremonial method of Betonie in *Ceremony* which states that to become effective, traditional ceremonial practices have to be hybridized with the modern times.

Both Hattie and Edward try to make Indigo learn European trends and expect her to learn modern values. While her stay with Hattie and Edward, Indigo bridges gap between two opposing societies. Although she is Native American she tries to adapt to European trends also. She even understands and speaks English and reads books on various gardening. Indigo acquires knowledge diffused to her by both cultures. As such flow of European knowledge is not under the control of Indigo, but because of her strong determination, she acquires only those characteristics of European culture that are beneficial to her and that may not hamper her understanding of native knowledge. Her adaptation of European trends helps her to easily manage herself with the Anglo-American family. Even though Indigo stays away from her family, she does not forget her family. Recurrent images of grandma fleet and sister salt connect her with Native American culture.

Hattie, a Euro-American lady represents qualities of generosity and sensibility. Her good and kindhearted qualities connect her with Native American characters. We know that after she escapes from Indian boarding school, Indigo is captured by a Euro-American couple, Edward and Hattie. Under the surveillance of Hattie, Indigo's life might become difficult. But actually, this does not happen. Hattie treats Indigo just like her own daughter. Hattie tries to give full comfort to Indigo. She even fulfills all the demands of Indigo. In absence of Indigo's mother and grandmother, Hattie plays the role of surrogate mother of indigo. She allows her to carry a parrot and monkey with her. Hattie's biggest promise that she makes to Indigo is that she will help Indigo to search for her mother and sister and she not only makes the promise but also fulfills it. It is only after the efforts of Hattie; that Indigo ultimately meets Sister Salt. Hattie exhibits explicit differences from her husband, Edward. Being a Euro-American researcher, Edward seeks nature as a means of wealth and knowledge while Hattie on the other hand plays the role of the spiritual seeker.

Through the character of Hattie, Silko focuses light on the hybridity of America with patriarchy. In "Can the Subaltern Speak?", Spivak also speaks of the issue of patriarchy and silence of the women. Spivak says that during the process of construction of

patriarchy and imperialism, the figure of the woman is continuously disappearing. Although, Hattie is a highly educated lady but due to patriarchy and before the arrival of Indigo, she spends subordinate life. She has to tolerate the dominance of her father and her husband in her life. Hattie belongs to a culture where “women are expected to be passive and subservient to their husbands, which in turn leads to a domineering approach to nature” (Li 30). In contrast to Indigo’s determinant identity, Hattie’s passivism is explained by Stephanie Li as:

Without narratives that reflect her identity, Hattie becomes alienated from other people and the earth. She accepts Edward's attempts to commodify plants and flowers and does not challenge Susan's aesthetic exploitation of the earth. Hattie functions largely as an empty vessel to be filled with the beliefs and ambitions of others. Despite her obvious desire for meaning, as evidenced by her dreams and appreciation of the European gardens, Hattie is unable to act upon these impulses and instead bases her identity in the expectations of others. (Li 30-31)

Even, because of patriarchy, Hattie is not allowed to complete her thesis work. Through the introduction of Mr. Hyslop, Silko points out females’ continual fears of being molested by dominant males. Mr. Hyslop is a classmate of Hattie. In the beginning, Hattie enjoys “his companionship in class and their discussion after class” (Silko 93). They even shared class notes. But an incident when Hattie and Mr. Hyslop were in a coach, clears Mr. Hyslop’s lust and indifferent attitude towards Hattie. About the lusty nature of Hyslop, Silko says:

...Mr. Hyslop suddenly embraced her. He pinned her against the seat with chest and shoulders, while one hand sought to pull her around to face him and the other hand fumbled, then grabbed her right breast with the cloths of her dress. Too startled to scream, Hattie struggled and twisted away while she gave him a good kick in his ankle... she retreated to the far corner of the carriage seat with her heart pounding and angrily opened the curtain next to her. Hattie waited for Mr. Hyslop’s litany of apologies to begin momentarily, but she was further shaken after he remained silent and strangely aloof. Hattie felt the blood rush to her cheeks when she realized that Mr. Hyslop was angry with her for disappointing his expectations. (Silko 94)



Silko puts light on a unique feature of the Sand Lizard tribe of indigo. People of this community embrace “wild sexual practices” (Silko 187). Silko says “Sand lizard mothers gave birth to sand lizard babes no matter which man they lay with” (Silko 187). These practices create hybrid identities and boost up chances of interconnections between different communities. Silko says “sex with strangers was valued for alliances and friendships that might be made” (Silko 187). While discussing the hybrid nature of the Sand Lizard tribe with a stranger, Sister Salt comments: “The old-time Sand Lizard people believed sex with strangers was advantageous because it created a happy atmosphere to benefit commerce and exchange with strangers...any babies born from these unions were named ‘friend’, ‘peace’ and ‘unity’; they loved these babies just as fiercely they loved all their Sand Lizard babies” (Silko 202). These people welcome hybrid identities because they want to protect their culture and ensure its survival through hybrid offsprings. Indigo’s sister, Sister Salt fully exploits his open sex behavior of the Sand Lizard tribe while she works on the dam project. She has a child from Big Candy, another mixed African and Native American man. This child represents another example of a hybrid identity who has to find his identity in a multicultural world. So, in this novel, Silko leaves traces of the presence of mixed blood identities.

Another example of cultural hybridity presented in the novel is the introduction of the ghost dance. This careful depiction of Indian ghost dance is an amalgam of the traditional dance of Native Americans with the western notion of Jesus Christ. This performance of ghost dance is based on the belief that the age-long pain and sufferings of Native Americans can be healed by invoking Jesus Christ through the ghost dance. Natives also believed that “the used-up land would be made whole again and the elk and the herds of buffalo killed off would return” (Silko 19). The dance was a peaceful movement for the natives. But this ghost dance is banned by the US government. US government believes that this ghost dance performance is a secret army of native Americans against the government. The novel depicts the performance of ghost dance as a punishable offense according to US ideology.

Next and the most important aspect of hybridity used by Silko is the process of merging and mingling the oral tradition of Native American culture and written print of modern

white culture. In the process of asserting the importance of native oral tradition, Silko applies conventions and narrative techniques of white literary culture. Her texts, infusing trends of both cultures are examples of the hybrid versions. In an effort of asserting the importance of the past in present, Silko merges memory and remembrance with the strict canon of the literary trend of European literature. Seeking the dangers of native cultural extinction due to European colonization, many Native American writers decided to protect it in written form. To obscure the native voice, European settlers used the strategy of educating the natives through the medium of English language. The English language was used by Europeans as a “tool of betrayal and dispossession” (Coulombe 18), but on the other hand native writers adapted English language and used it to fulfill their own needs. This foreign language that was once not known to natives became “a powerful weapon in the fight for self- determination and sovereignty” (Coulombe 19). Being highly educated and well versed in the use of the English language, Silko also seeks to prevent the oral tradition of Native American culture in written form. Silko not only uses native cultural trends in her writing but also inverses already established rules of European literature. By doing so, Silko thus challenges the already established trends and rules of European literature. Along with other writers of native literature, Silko breaks the conventions of the literary trends of European literature. One such example of alteration of European trend is highlighted by Christine Ferrari in Silko’s *Ceremony*. He rightly says:

Silko invokes American Indian orature and sacred beliefs by opening her novel *Ceremony* (1977) with not one but four epigraphs or incantations, the first (above) being a truncated but traditional emergence or creation myth. A series of improvisations on traditional Amerindian legends form both the prologue and epilogue to *Ceremony*, and Silko extrapolates from these in the contemporary story which forms the main body of the text. The frame announces cultural difference, and the standard prose of the main narrative is interwoven with numerous traditional legends and descriptions of ceremonial rituals which are set out on the page like poems. (Ferrari 02)

The next technique of hybridity applied by Silko is the use of multi-genre. Silko not only practices European trends of novels and autobiography but also merges them with

local oral trends of native culture. With this, Silko breaks the European expectation of logical continuity and chronology of the plot. For example, in *Ceremony*, Tayo “travels back in time to excavate and piece together the fragmentary knowledge of his ancestry” (Ferrari10). Her rejection of pure European conventions is based on the reason that these conventions are not suitable for the expression of oral trends of native tradition. Her novels are written in prose as well as poetry. There are many references to poetry in her novels. Even the opening of the novel, *Ceremony* is done with poetry. Silko writes:

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’tcts’ity’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 01)

Silko appropriates the power of the English language to express her ideas about European imperialist influences on natives and also to expose the nature of the native culture of local tribes. About such use of written text in literature, Bill Ashcraft rightly remarks that “the appropriation of the written word become crucial features of the process of self-assertion and of the ability to reconstruct the world as an unfolding historical process” (Ashcraft 81). He further comments on the merging of orality with writing and says that “the invasion of the ordered, cyclic, and ‘paradigmatic’ oral world by the unpredictable and ‘syntagmatic’ world of the written word stands as a useful model for the beginnings of post-colonial discourse” (Ashcraft 81). In doing so, Silko also experiments with the introduction of multiple genres within a single text. Silko’s single work, *Storyteller* (1981) is the finest example of multi-genre literature. This famous work of Silko is a hybrid text and includes a huge collection of stories, poems, songs, and photographs. With the use of different genres such as poetry, stories, and songs in a single work, Silko breaks the concept of purity of the literary genre. About this text Carsten comments:

Storyteller is a sui generis text composed of interconnected genres. In it, Silko draws upon Native American narrative techniques to resist conventional Euro-American 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 in-corporates 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...she demonstrates the manner in which multiple cultural voices and conflicting worldviews shape the inscription of contemporary Native American lives. (Carsten 108)

Through the use of varying genres in a single text, Silko alters classical notions of Eurocentric literature. Susan. L. Rockwell also comments that *Storyteller* “is an

appropriate example of Silko's representation of writing the oral tradition because it contains the elements of a traditional oral performance and, yet, through the use of poetic techniques, the elements are captured in written form" (Rockwell 198). The book *Storyteller* is an autobiographical account of Silko's life as a mixed-blood woman. To provide clarity of oral tradition, the book is embedded with several photographs of her family as well as landscape. In the book, Silko not only presents local native stories but also embeds them with the modern world of Christianity. Her stories are a hybrid version of both cultures.

One such example is from the story 'Man Send to Rain Clouds'. This story deals with the "hybridized subjects who must negotiate a complex bicultural world" (Hernandez 54). Here native American last rites are contrasted with the catholic last rites. The story is about Native Americans who live on American reservation land provided to them by the US authorities. The story opens with the death of an old man, Teofilo, the grandfather of Leon. After performing Native American rituals for burials and after his wife's suggestion, Leon seeks the help of a Christian priest. Native Navajo rites are performed in a hope that the departed spirits will send raincoats back to their community. And after Teofilo's death, Leon expects priest to perform a Christian ceremony after sprinkling holy water over the dead Teofilo so that raincoat will surely be sent. At first, the priest refuses to perform the Christian ceremony because Teofilo is Native American but after reconsideration priest agrees to perform the catholic ceremony for the burial of Teofilo. Silko writes:

The priest approached the grave slowly...His fingers were stiff, and it took him a long time to twist the lid off the holy water. Drops of water fell on the red blanket and soaked into dark icy spots. He sprinkled the grave and the water disappeared almost before it touched the dim, cold sand; it reminded him of something- he tried to remember what it was, because he thought if he could remember he might understand this. He sprinkled more water; he shook the container until it was empty, and the water fell through the light from sundown like august rain that fell while the sun was still shining, almost evaporating before it touched the wilted squash flowers. (Silko 326-327)

After the ceremony priest leaves the place. The story ends with Leon, who feels “happy about the sprinkling of the holy water; now the old man could send them big thunderclouds for sure” (Silko 327). Through the act of the performance of last rites in two diverse ways, Silko puts light on two different ways of interpreting the world. Natives are not interested in performing catholic rites but here in the story, for the surety of raincoats Navajos show their wish and interest in catholic rites. So, in this way, the story involves a hybrid or mixed burial of Teofilo in two ways. Firstly, in the native ceremonial way and secondly in the catholic way. This type of cultural hybridity here acts as a survival policy for natives.

The next short story included in the collection and dealing with the theme of cultural clash is ‘Lullaby’. It deals with the story of Navajo couple Ayah and Chato who live in New Mexico. Following the course of a single evening, the story depicts the struggles of Ayah and Chato in a society that is hybridized with European modernity. The opening of the story shows Ayah, an aging woman, who reaches out toward the falling snow so that it may cover her and her husband like a blanket. Silko says:

The sun had gone down but the snow in the wind gave off its own light. It came in thick tufts like new wool—washed before the weaver spins it. Ayah reached out for it like her own babies had, and she smiled when she remembered how she had laughed at them. She was an old woman now, and her life had become memories. She sat down with her back against the wide cottonwood tree, feeling the rough bark on her back bones; she faced east and listened to the wind and snow sing a high-pitched Yeibichai song. (Silko 111)

Through the memory and remembrance of Ayah, the story depicts the cultural conflict between Native Americans and Europeans and the further dominance of natives by the culture of foreign settlers. She remembers the loss of her native culture, native language, and her children as a result of the establishment of European colonizers. This is experienced not only by Ayah but by all the native inhabitants of America. Ayah remembers her son, Jimmie, who is dead while giving his services in the U.S. army. She remembers the day when “a man in a khaki uniform trimmed in gold gave them a yellow piece of paper and told them that Jimmie was dead” (Silko 112). It was assured by the army that the dead body will be delivered to them but this didn’t happen. This

reference reminds us of the recruitment of native Americans into the U.S. army and thereafter the fate of these soldiers. Next incident when Chato's leg is broken and his white rancher refuses to pay him highlights the cruelty and merciless attitude of whites towards native American tribes. The next incident that she remembers is the day when her children, Danny and Ella were taken away by the authorities. Here Ayah is deceived by the English language. She exactly remembers:

They were wearing khaki uniforms and they waved papers at her and a black ball-point pen, trying to make her understand their English words. She was frightened by the way they looked at the children, like the lizard watches the fly...Ayah could see they wanted her to sign the papers, and Chato has taught her to sign her name. It was something she was proud of. She only wanted them to go, and to take their eyes away from her children...She took the pen from the man without looking at his face and she signed the papers in three different places he pointed to. She stared at the ground by their feet and waited for them to leave. But they stood there and began to point and gesture at the children. (Silko 112-113)

Actually, Ayah does not know English. She only learned to sign in English from her husband. Basically, at that time, in such cases, authorities used to hire educated Navajo women who could translate English for these uneducated natives. But at this time, hospital authorities do not bother to bring any Navajo women with them. In this way, unable to understand the language and intention of the authorities, Ayah put her signatures on the papers and thus making it possible for the authorities to take her children away. This incident develops a rift between Ayah and Chato. She doesn't like to speak with him. As Silko mentions, "She hated Chato, not because he let the policeman and doctors put the screaming children in the government car, but because he taught her to sign her name" (Silko 114). The next incident shows Chato's white owner's cruelty when he dismisses Chato from the job on the ground that Chato is "too old to work for him" (Silko 114). He even orders them to vacate the shack by the next day because the shack will be given to another rancher hired in place of Chato. However, this incident satisfies Ayah's anger "to see how the white man repaid Chato's years of loyalty and work. All of Chato's fine sounding English talk didn't change things" (Silko

114). Further, the blanket which Ayah wraps around also plays a significant role in the story. This blanket is given to Ayah by her son Jimmie. So, the blanket belongs to modern white culture. But this blanket also reminds her old day when her grandmother taught her to weave blankets. The blanket gains further importance at the end of the story when Ayah wraps her dying husband in the same blanket. While wrapping the blanket, Ayah also sings a lullaby. This refers to the traditional method of weaving blankets with the oral tradition of singling songs. So, through the blanket, Silko concerns with the situation of modern time America whose culture is a hybrid version of old tradition as well as modern culture. Another angle of cultural hybridity represented in the story is the use of the English language by Aliya children, Danny and Ella. Then happens when Ayah meets her children after they have been taken away by authorities. Danny somehow manages to speak and understand the Native American language but Ella feels difficulty in using the native language. At the time of Ayah's last meeting with her children, both Danny and Ella completely forget their native language as well as culture. Even Ella looks at Ayah as a stranger. Due to her children's strange behavior, Ayah feels a sense of alienation from her children. Because of this sense of alienation and separation, Ayah does not even say goodbye to her children. Hence, the loss that Ayah experiences after the death of Jimmie and the separation of children from her are equivalent to the loss of native cultural purity at the hands of white colonizers. Finally, at the end of the story, the death of Chato completes Ayah's sense of alienation. Because of her encounter with the white culture, she experiences loss at the familial as well as the cultural level.

Yet another story namely, 'Tony's Story' in the collection is based on the fact of cultural clash. The story is centered around two main characters, Leon and Tony. Here Tony is representative of pure native tradition while Leon who has just returned from the arm represents a hybrid version of both cultures. Both Tony and Leon are native Americans but Leon was recruited by the U.S. army and because of his stay outside the reservation his traditional purity has been shattered. Because of the influence of white modernism, Leon's beliefs in the native tradition are watered down. This change in Leon is noticed by Tony at the beginning of the story when Leon meets Tony and Tony realizes "he grabbed my hand and held it tight like a white man" (Silko 244). The story also



highlights whites' oppressive and violent attitudes toward natives. Then happens when a cop "hit Leon in the face with his fist. Leon collapsed into the dust and the paper sack floated in the wine and pieces of glasses. He didn't move and blood kept bubbling out of his mouth and nose" (Silko 244). After this incident, Leon is hospitalized. Tony wants to forget the incident but Leon is determined to take revenge. "He was bitter, and all he could talk about the cop. I'll kill the big bastard if he comes around here again" (Silko 245). After noticing short tempered behavior of Leon, Tony says "I wondered why men who came back from the army were troublemakers on the reservation" (Silko 245). Through the character of Leon, Silko puts light on the changing behavior of natives due to the influence of European modernization. Through her works, Silko explains how native American oral tradition has been altered and hybridized with the installation of the modernized culture of European settlers. While blaming the European intrusion, Silko says:

... 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 29-30)

For the marginalized native people of America, the creation of new hybrid spaces helps them to

## **Conclusion**

Like all other Native American Writers, Leslie Marmon Silko aptly highlights traces of the modern culture of Europeans in the native culture of America. In the postcolonial

condition, natives have to survive and keep their culture alive, so they need to understand change. Only those characters of Silko survive who can maintain a balance between two cultures. This understanding enables Tayo, in *Ceremony*, and Indigo, in *Gardens in the Dunes*, to sustain their identity. There is no doubt that Silko has used the concept of hybridity as a way to recover and improve rather than as a degrading factor. Silko reverses the self-possessed ideology of colonizers who placed hybrid people in a damaging position. Silko's hybridity clearly reflects the postcolonial notion that no culture is pure and static. In strong opposition to the colonizer's ideology, Silko makes her characters stronger and smarter. Her hybrid characters are able to reconcile in the changing multicultural scenario. Her characters are able to cross any social or cultural boundary. They are even able to adjust to any situation and location. Mixed blood identity of these characters no longer remains something to be regretted rather it becomes a bridge between two worlds. This became possible only because they are able to understand the complex relationship between native and mainstream culture. Similarly, the introduction of hybrid cattle in *Ceremony* and hybridization of various plant species in *Gardens in The Dunes* is done to adjust the changing and adverse environmental conditions. In the texts of Silko, the 'third space' is not merely a nostalgic space; rather it is a new space that opens up new possibilities and through these possibilities, Silko's characters can manage themselves in a new multicultural society. Silko's hybridized narratives develop a new interruptive space of resistance that constitute place of enunciation. This indicates that in a postcolonial area, where cross-cultural interaction involves influence of the culture of the colonizers on the culture of the colonized, this interaction not only develops a resistant image of the colonized but also reshapes the inner map of the metropolitan area through the voices of the colonized. This interaction involves development of a new and independent ideology from native cultural values as well as from adoption of positive elements of the colonizer's culture.

## Chapter 5

### **Spirit of Nativism and Representation of Counter History**

Since the beginning of civilization, a nation or a community has been recognized based on its cultural and traditional values. Every community or nation has its unique and characteristic cultural trends and based on these unique features; nations are separated from each other. The culture and history of any nation play an important role in constructing the image and identity of that nation. Culture constructs a society and also shapes its political and economic activities. Culture and tradition direct the ways of life of individuals in society and based on his cultural trends, an individual is recognized outside his native place. Similarly, it is through the activities and deeds of an individual, that a culture gains prominence. Without culture, a nation or an individual possesses no identity. A brief explanation of the role of culture is given by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. He speaks:

Culture is a product of the history which it in turn reflects. Culture in other words is a product and a reflection of human beings communicating with one another in the very struggle to create wealth and to control it. culture does not merely reflect that history, or rather it does so by actually forming images or pictures of the world of nature and nurture. Culture transmits or imparts those images of the world and reality through the spoken and the written language, that is through a specific language. (Thiong'o 15)

Until the beginning of colonialism, almost all the nations enjoyed their unique cultural and traditional importance. But with the onset of the process of European colonialism, every colonized nation experienced the threat of native cultural loss. Even because of these colonial activities, many minor cultural tribes of colonized nations got extinct. While experiencing the threat of merciless colonizers, these colonized nations experienced a sense of inferiority complex. It is also true that in most of the colonized nations, colonizers are responsible for imbibing the element of inequality based on racism. Frantz Fanon rightly claims: "This inequality is maintained by the use of force, by the denial of educational opportunity, and by the forced segregation in living arrangements (Fairchild 192). The process of colonization also threatened the identity

of colonized nations. The colonizers have tried every effort to either erase or alter the glorious history of colonized nations. While doing so these colonizers tried to present history according to their own choices and perspectives. This perspective of historical statements is different from the history spoken from the perspective of colonized natives. This aim of the colonizers to destruct native history and native people is visible in their colonial activities. These activities are meant for either assimilation or destruction. This aim of the colonizers is also visible in the literary writings of these colonizers where they have always tried to justify the reason for their invasion. Through their literary writings, these writers have presented weak and barbaric images of the colonized who are doomed to be supervised. While presenting these weak and barbaric images of the colonized, the colonizers have always tried to defend their colonizing activities. Explaining the aim of colonial writings, Bhabha comments: “The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction” (Bhabha 101). In America also, these colonizers used the same strategies and presented doomed pictures of Native Americans. But on the other hand, if we speak from the perspective of Native American communities, the activities of colonizers are meant for the benefit of colonizers only. Their images are represented as per the choices of dominant white settlers. To fulfill their own needs and choices, these elites of the colonizer’s community have presented native images and history in their ways. Bhabha says “despite the ‘play’ in the colonial system which is crucial to its exercise of power, colonial discourse produces the colonized as a social reality which is at once an ‘other’ and yet entirely knowable and visible” (Bhabha 101). Subsequently, these non-native anthropologists, journalists, folklorists, and historians as Carsten claims:

have for many years been those who determine what is and isn’t authentically American Indian and/or worthy of serious academic regard, the courts of the United States have determined how much (or rather how little) of indigenous Americas’ oral traditions can legitimately be recognized and protected as religion. American journalists have...appropriated and misconstrued native traditions, romanticizing and trivializing the songs, prayers, and practices that

American Indians have for centuries relied on for their very survival (Carsten 106).

To challenge this false stereotypic representation of native history and culture, native writers of these colonized nations need to develop strategies through which false ideologies of dominant culture may be challenged. Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* also notices such false stereotyping of the orient by the colonizing authorities. That is why he suggests an immediate need to resist such false and distorting images constructed by the colonizing powers. Said also suggests that to resist such false stereotyping, natives have to develop alternative ways of conceiving their past and history. Such issues of colonial dominance and obliteration of native history and culture are common in America. Like many other colonized nations, American land has also witnessed the presence of dominating settlers who tried every option of altering the actual history of America. To fulfill this aim of representation and glorification of actual history and cultural relevance, Native American Writers have devised strategies of nativism and counter history. Through this technique, these native writers of America challenge the Euro-American genre of literature and try to represent and reappropriate American history and culture from the perspective of natives and original inhabitants of America. While portraying counter history, the writings of these writers also involve dismantling and exposing the rude and brutal activities of the colonizers. This counter history questions and challenges the already presented European-based facts of mainstream literature of America that is written by Euro-Americans. If we try to see these facts from the perspective of native inhabitants of the colonized nations, then we can easily recognize the false policies of the colonizers used to justify their actions.

Nativism, an emerging term in the postcolonial world seeks to glorify the importance of native cultural trends. Expressing their belief in native culture, nativists stress that the identity of a nation or community is embedded in its history and culture rather than trying to search for it in another's culture. Bill Ashcroft rightly says that "All post-colonial countries once had or still have 'native' cultures of some kind" (Ashcraft 115). European colonization has tried to destroy the native culture of these colonized countries. That is why nativist writers of colonized countries have realized that through the ethnic representation of native culture and history in their literature, colonized

communities can overcome the trauma of colonization. These nativist thinkers “have to speak the united language of struggle contained in each of their languages. They must discover their various tongues to sing the song: A people united can never be defeated” (Thiong’o 03). Nativism, thus a strategy of colonized communities rejects the colonizer’s ideologies and conventions of hegemony and binary opposition. Another aim of nativists is the representation of counter history. Colonizers have presented historical events according to their own will. So, nativists through their counter literature try to represent themselves and their history from the right perspectives. According to Frantz Fanon, this literature of nativist writers of the colonized nations helps people to unite and fight collectively for identity. Fanon says, this literature “is a literature of combat, because it molds the national consciousness, giving it form and contours and flinging open before it new and boundless horizons; it is a literature of combat because it assumes responsibility, and because it is the will to liberty expressed in terms of time and space” (Fanon 240). Like Fanon, many writers of the postcolonial world also believe in the power of words and intellectuals in regaining lost culture. They claim:

we need to remember as intellectuals that the battles we fight are battles of words. Those who argue the oppositional standpoint are not doing anything different from their enemies and are most certainly not directly changing the downtrodden lives of those who seek their survival in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan spaces alike. What academic intellectuals must confront is thus not their “victimization” by society at large (or their victimization-in-solidarity-with-the-oppressed), but the power, wealth, and privilege that ironically accumulate from their “oppositional” viewpoint, and the widening gap between the professed contents of their words and the upward mobility they gain from such words. (Pulitano 140)

Like other nativists of Native American literature, Leslie Marmon Silko leaves no chance of glorifying the historical and cultural importance of Native American culture. “A winner of several grants awards whose work is taught pervasively in literature classes and who is continually the subject of critical studies, Silko has secured a place in literary history as a voice of the disenfranchised and as a champion of eco-ethnic

concerns” (Temple & Velie 75). Her works are embedded with the description of every minute feature of Native American culture. Belonging to a mixed identity, Silko learned the tradition and culture of Native America from her great-grandmother and great-aunt and incorporate the trends of native culture into texts. By incorporating local oral tradition in her works, Silko continues and keeps the heritage of Native American culture alive. Her uniqueness lies in her sense of belonging to a particular area and a particular pueblo community. By challenging the Euro-American perspective of history, Silko joins the lineage of those writers whose aim is the glorification of the history of America that was kept hidden by the Euro-American settlers for the last five hundred years. Following the trend of Native American and postcolonial writers, Silko uses the English language in her writings but her main focus is on her own culture rather than European modernization. According to Arnold Krupat, this literature of native writers of postcolonial countries like America operates as an “anti-imperialist translation...presenting an English powerfully affected by a foreign tongue, and adopting western literary forms to convey, in writing, the rhythm and patterns of the oral tradition” (Pulitano 129). Silko’s stress on the importance of history and culture is also similar to the idea of national liberation suggested by Frantz Fanon. Fanon suggests that “to fight for national culture means in the first place to fight for the liberation of the nation, that material keystone which makes the building of a culture possible” (Fanon 233). By reversing the historical positions of the colonizers and colonized, Silko like many other nativist writers tends to expose the inability and failure of the US government to recognize the importance of diverse cultural practices and values of native inhabitants of America.

Being a part of modern Native American Writers, Silko’s main stress is to focus on the oral tradition of Native America and it is also evident that only through the involvement of oral tradition in their literature, Native American Writers can gain a place in the literary world. While recognizing the role of oral tradition as a resistance technique of the colonized writers, Fanon comments: “The oral tradition- stories, epics, and songs of the people- which formerly were filed away as set pieces are now beginning to change. The storytellers who used to narrate inert episodes now bring them alive and introduce into them modifications which are increasingly fundamental” (Fanon 240).

Silko's focus on the life and culture of laguna community fixes her connection with the laguna pueblo tribe of Native America. The oral culture of the Laguna community indicates that "Laguna has always been one of the most adaptive pueblo communities in the Southwest, and many of the stories comprising Laguna oral tradition preserve the complex strategies of resistance and assimilation that have enabled the people to survive and adjust to myriad external pressures" (Porter & Roemer 245). By incorporating the oral tradition in their writings, these writers are able to successfully recover lost identities. While recognizing the eminence of oral tradition in Native American Literature, Paula Gunn Allen says:

The oral tradition, from which contemporary poetry and fiction take their significance and authenticity, has, since contact with white people, been a major force in Indian resistance. It has kept the people conscious of their tribal identity, their spiritual traditions, and their connections to the land and her creatures. Contemporary poets and writers take their cue from the oral tradition, to which they return continuously for theme, symbol, structure, and motivating impulse, as well as for the philosophic bias that animate our work. (Pulitano 25)

Silko's aim of glorification of Native American history and culture is evident from deep scrutiny of her works. Silko has used all the traditional stories of Laguna oral culture and translated them into written form. In the works of Silko, most of the characters seek to re-establish and re-discover cultural identity. This quest of natives for re-establishment of self-identity is described by Frantz Fanon as "the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise action through which the people has created itself and keeps itself in existence" (Fanon 233). Her first work *Ceremony* "weaves traditional stories from the Laguna Pueblo into Tayo's personal story" (Temple & Velie 28). The novel is full of ancient myths, ceremonies, and rituals of the laguna pueblo and Navajo tribes. The novel written under the background of European colonization depicts Native Americans who suffer from despair and diseases. Written in a semi-autobiographical manner, Silko seeks to purge her despair through the story of Tayo. This aim of Silko's is well explained by Allen Chavkin and Nancy Chavkin as below:



Silko revealed to us that her novel *Ceremony* had an autobiographical basis and stated that she wrote the book “to save my life.” Writing of this novel became for her a “ceremony” that enabled her to cope with the profound melancholy from which she suffered. Initially, the protagonist of her novel was a female, who attempts to overcome her despair, but after writing about a third of the novel with this female protagonist, Silko concluded that the work was becoming too autobiographical. At that point she abandoned the female protagonist for Tayo, a World War II veteran who survives the Bataan Death March and eventually overcomes the despair that afflicts him when he returns from the war. Despite the change to the male protagonist, Silko explained to us that as Tayo began to recuperate and cope with his despair, she too got better. (Chavkin Allen & Chavkin Nancy 26)

In this semi-autobiographical novel, Silko narrates the story of Tayo after using an ecofeminist approach, and “in doing this, she uses several key female characters to help her male protagonist reject the stereotypical male world of dominance and destruction in favor of the traditional female world of community, connections to people, and connection to the land” (Temple & Velie 74). These female characters and deities play an important role in the novel. While analyzing the role of females in Native American culture, M. A. James Guerrero says, in Native American culture, women “provided matrilineal continuity in their roles as ‘clan mothers’ who determined role responsibilities among all members through collective cultural practices and reciprocal kinship traditions” (Guerrero 63). Following the trend of native culture, Silko introduces two types of female characters in the novel. Among them, Grandmother, Laura, Night Swan, Ts’eh, and Betonie’s mother “belong to the earth spirit and live in harmony with her, even though this attunement may lead to tragedy” (Allen 166). Other women do not belong to the earth and “live to destroy that spirit, to enclose and enwrap it in their machinations, condemning all to a living death” (Allen 166). While introducing females with their prominent roles in the novel, Silko challenges and inverses the Euro-American trend of the patriarchal world. Although her protagonist in the novel is Tayo but influence of female characters is also not negligible. Tayo’s whole life circles around these females. His learning process from childhood to maturity

begins and ends under the care of these females. It is also evident that without the involvement of these females, Tayo's upbringing and education would not have been possible. Among them, grandma and aunt enable Tayo's upbringing possible in the Native American community. Grandma fulfills the responsibility of providing full knowledge of native culture and history to Tayo. In this way, Tayo's grandma "exemplifies a generation that adheres to native teachings, respects the wisdom and status of the elders, and honors the way it has always been" (Swan 313). Similarly, two other women, Night Swan and T'she also play a significant role during the healing ceremony of Tayo. With the help of Night Swan and T'seh, Tayo is able to recognize the importance of native culture. Further Night Swan enables him to withstand his hybridity and consider it his strength rather than misfortune. T'seh helps him to remember his connectedness with humanity and the earth. T'seh enables him to understand the meaning of life. Speaking about the role of Night Swan and T'seh, Kristin Hezog says, "Night Swan is partially a mythological figure, and the encounter with her is more than sexual: like T'seh, she is connected with life-bearing rain and damp earth, with the sky-and-mountain-color blue and with the mountain itself" (Herzog 31).

Silko's creative obsession is mainly concerned with the use of cultural mediation. Her cultural mediation is associated with the setting and laguna landscape. One of the major features of Native American culture is that these people perceive and understand their relationship with nature and the environment. These people think that human beings are an integral part of nature. Frantz Fanon also comments: "for a colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all, dignity" (Fanon 44). This viewpoint is in stark contrast with Euro-American people who seek to control and overpower nature. Like other writers of Native American Literature, Silko understands the role of nature and the environment in human life. In her works, each geographical location possesses cultural value and is also associated with a story. Such description of land enables Silko to create a counter history that goes against the Euro-American point of view of the landscape. The novel begins, centers, and even ends with the word sunrise. There is no doubt that Silko leaves no chance of glorifying every cultural pattern of Native

America, especially the laguna pueblo community. Silko's skill of portraying geography and topography in the novel further boosts her intention of nativism. These pictures of native culture and landscape are presented in such a way that even a non-local reader can visualize the beauty of Native American culture and its geography. Robert M. Nelson rightly claims:

the novel offers the reader a guided tour of Laguna country...from the southwestern corner of the reservation around Patoch Butte to the westside villages of Cubero and Casablanca; from the one-time truckstop and bar at Budville on the west side to the isolated traditionalist village of Mesita on the east side; from Mt. Taylor in the northwest to Alamo Springs and the sand hills to the southeast; from Pagate village to the north, where some stories say the Laguna people originally emerged from the Fourth World into this one, to Dripping Springs to the south, where water springs cold and clear out of the sides of a sandstone mesa. And at the center of the novel's geography lies Old Laguna village, adobe houses clustered about the gleaming white Catholic mission near its highest point but containing also, as we see at the novel's end, the ceremonial kiva, newly whitewashed for the latest autumnal equinox. (Porter & Roemer 249-250)

In the novel, *Ceremony*, through the story of Tayo, Silko fixes the background of the laguna landscape. Tayo's mental ailment is because of his inability to understand his connection with his surroundings. He has lost his connection with the people, culture, and land. Because of this shortcoming, Tayo does not recover after his prolonged treatment in hospital. This is not only the condition of Tayo but most of the Native Americans suffer from such separation. Because of this alienation from the earth, the land is rude to people. To express this situation, Paula Gunn Allen rightly comments: "The land is dry because the earth is suffering from the alienation of part of herself; her children have been torn from her in their minds; their possession of unified awareness of and with her has been destroyed, partially or totally. The destruction characterizes the lives of...those who are tricked into believing that land is beyond and separate from themselves" (Allen 168). The condition for the recovery of Tayo is his understanding of his relationship with the land. Tayo's treatment in the hospital merely involves the

aid of modern medicines which is why his grandmother seeks the help of a medicine man who will help him to bring him back to native life. Further, Tayo's healing ceremony aided by the medicine man, Betonie, involves his understanding of the relationship of mankind with nature. At this step of the novel, Silko expresses her belief in the power of spirits. That is why Silko introduces spiritual characters, Thought Woman and T'she, who help Tayo to regain his ability to comprehend and appreciate nature and the environment and understand the fact that human beings and nature exhibit a mutual relationship. Her favorite setting or place is the depiction of rivers. Porter & Roemer claims:

For Silko, one of the most important of all such places is the bend of the river a short distance from the house where she was raised, itself located at the very southeast edge of the village, where the traffic of the main US cross-country interstate highway mirrors the older, quieter motion of water moving on the land. In several of Silko's Storyteller pieces, particularly those featuring the Kochinninako / Yellow Woman motif, this part of the river figures as a contact zone,<sup>4</sup> where a female representing Laguna identity "within" meets a male who represents some other cultural or spiritual identity "out there. (Porter & Roemer 247)

As the title of the novel is named, it mainly focuses on the healing process of Tayo. This healing process involves ceremonies based on the native oral tradition of rituals, myths, and stories. These ceremonial procedures are meant to "transform something (or someone) from one state or condition to another" (Gilderhus 71). Similarly, in *Ceremony*, these ceremonial procedures are aided in curing and sustaining the lost identity of Tayo. Betonie's healing ceremony of Tayo involves elements from multiple locations and varying cultural traditions. His healing ceremony involves the use of Native American ritual chant ways and sand paintings. The novel is actually "a healing ritual which changes Tayo from a diseased state, one of isolation and despair, to one of health, incorporation with his people" (Gilderhus 71).

As part of Native American oral tradition, stories play an important role in Native American culture and rituals. According to Donelle Dreese "stories...describe specific landscape from which a tribe derives its means for survival, its cultural symbols, its

sense of smell and its spirituality” (Clair 148). Through the use of storytelling, an important element and even backbone of her writings, Silko challenges and alters the Euro-centric trends of literature. Silko considers storytelling and orality to be the best way of revitalizing the glorious past of Native America. Silko “clearly does not regard the oral literature of Laguna Pueblo as something purely of the past, to be memorialized for the imaginative use of future readers of her work” (Clement 74). Silko exhibits a nativistic spirit while introducing local stories in the novel. Speaking about the powers of stories and storytellers, Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth* says, “the storyteller replies to the expectant approximations, and makes his way, apparently alone but in fact helped on by his public, towards the seeking out of new pattern, that is to say national patterns” (Fanon 241). Silko’s main argument regarding the importance of stories is the transformative power that is possessed by the native stories. According to Silko and most of the Native American Writers, this transformative power of stories is involved in the process of healing. Silko maintains thinking that the physical, as well as mental ailing of the Native Americans, can be cured only by practicing the ceremonial use of stories. Silko herself says:

I will tell you something about stories,

[He said]

They are not just entertainment,

Don’t be fooled.

They are all we have, you see,

All we have to fight off

Illness and death.

You don’t have anything

if you don’t have the stories. (Silko 02)

In *Ceremony*, the process of storytelling plays an important role. Here stories are narrated in the form of poems. At the beginning of the novel, Tayo is ignorant of his native culture. He knows nothing about the native cultural and traditional trends of the

Laguna tribe. Initially, there is a sense of alienation and ignorance in his mind. His mind is preoccupied with bad memories of war and because of these bad memories, Tayo suffers from the post-war traumatic disorder. It is only after the performance of the ceremony, that Tayo comes to know about the relevance of native culture. With the introduction of ceremonial stories, Silko depicts the power of native stories upon people's minds. These poetic stories make the formal structure of the novel more dynamic and complex. Similar power in storytellers and stories is noticed by Fanon. He says "from 1952-53, the storytellers, who were before that time stereotyped and tedious to listen to, completely overturned their traditional methods of storytelling and the contents of their tales. Their public which was formerly scattered become compact. The epic with its typified categories reappeared; it became an authentic form of entertainment which took on once more a cultural value" (Fanon 240-41). In *Ceremony*, Silko "makes storytelling a curative art form which can bring about restoration and renewal, as it always has been Native American oral traditions" (Bell 48). These stories interspersed in the novel are not innovative but belong to the native pueblo and Navajo culture. Every episode of the novel is interspersed with these traditional stories. The whole process of Tayo's healing revolves around these stories. Through the struggling story of her protagonist, Silko aims to challenge the white society and re-establish the superiority of native culture. Rachen Stein rightly claims:

Silko's first novel, *Ceremony*, employs and affirms the Laguna view of the restorative power of American Indian stories to challenge the dominant society's ethos of detachment from nature that has decimated the Laguna tribe and the natural and social worlds. *Ceremony* is a multilayered novel, constructed of frame poems surrounding a contemporary plot. Interspersed through the body of the novel are a number of tribal story-poems containing traditional legends about threats to the natural world and to Laguna people. (Chavkin 195)

While analyzing the use of nativistic elements in the texts of Silko, Helen May Dennis recognizes the value of stories and language in Silko's texts that reveal their powerful connection with the place and the world. "The stories are told not for amusement, but to hold the fabric of human society together and to remind us of our place in the larger landscape. Stories are also told as rituals or ceremonies of healing. Language and stories

are thus respected as immensely powerful” (Dennis 61). This indicates that in Native American culture, like other activities of cultural importance, every place and landscape is associated with a unique story possessing some moral importance.

At the beginning of the novel, there is drought everywhere and Tayo thinks that he is responsible for the drought. He believes that his cursing words have caused drought. This indicates the power of words. In *The Man Made of Words*, N. Scott Momaday claims: “At the heart of the American Indian oral tradition is a deep and unconditional belief in the efficacy of language. Words are intrinsically powerful. They are magical. By mean of words one can bring about physical change in the universe” (Pulitano 124). In an interview, Momaday speaks about the power, beauty, and magic of words and claims that words come from nothing into being. They are created in the imagination and given life by the human voice. Like Momaday, Silko also believes in the power of words. In Native American culture, words are considered to possess the ability to direct the universe. During the war, Tayo was struggling to hold injured Rocky, but the rain was causing problems to handle rocky. Silko comments:

He damned the rain until the words were a chant, and he sang it while he crawled through the mud to find the corporal and get him up before the Japanese saw them. He wanted the words to make a cloudless blue sky, pale with a summer sun pressing across wide and empty horizons. The words gathered inside him and gave him strength. He pulled on the corporal’s arm; he lifted him to his knees and all the time he could hear his own voice praying against the rain. (Silko 11)

The moment when there is draught everywhere reminds Tayo of the power of his words. At this moment, Silko compares Tayo’s story with the story of Corn Woman and her sister Iktoa’ak’o’ya-Reed Woman. In the mythological story of Corn Woman and her sister, Corn Woman scolds her sister, Reed Woman, for bathing all day while Corn Woman works all day in the corn fields. After being scolded, Ikota’ak’o’ya leaves the place and thus causes all things including plants, corn, and beans dry up. This drought-like situation causes people and animals thirsty and starving. Similarly, without understanding the importance of rain, Tayo, like Corn Woman commits the same mistake. Louis Owen compares the mistakes of Tayo and Corn Woman and says “by

introducing this Pueblo myth at this point in the novel, Silko implies that Tayo has committed the same error as Corn Woman: through a partial vision, he has failed to see the necessity for every thread in the web of the universe, even the maddening jungle rains. His vision is unbalanced and has immediate effect upon his environment” (Chavkin 99). Other traditional stories depicted by Silko in the novel include “the story of the gambler Kaup’a’ta, who once imprisoned the rainclouds; the story of Arrowboy, who disarms the Gunnadeyah witches by seeing what they are up to; and the long nine-part backbone story of the coming of Pa’caya’nyi and Ck’o’yo medicine to the village and the consequent departure and recovery of Our Mother Nau’ts’ity’I” (Porter & Roemer 249).

Like all other writers of the Native American Renaissance, Leslie Marmon Silko gives a prominent place to the native culture, history, and tradition of America in her works. This importance to history and tradition in literature is also suggested by T. S. Eliot in his prominent essay ‘Tradition and Individual Talent’. Regarding the importance of tradition in the poet’s career, Eliot says “the poet must develop or procure the consciousness of the past and...he should continue to develop this consciousness throughout his career” (Clements 65). Silko’s works act as a platform for Native Americans to celebrate the historical legacy of native culture and fuse it with contemporary situations. To give a native touch to her novel, Silko introduces various characters with native names. These include Kyo’s’, Ou’yu’ye’wi, Ma’see’wi, Pa’caya’nyi, A’Ck’o’yo, and Nau’ts’ity’I. Along with native names of characters, various places and landscapes are also given native names. Almost all the places visited by Tayo during his journey are also given native names. All these names are cultural elements of Native America and possess some unique cultural significance. Bill Ashcraft in *The Empire Writes Back*, rightly comments: “The technique of selective lexical fidelity which leaves some words untranslated in the text is a more widely used device which not only acts to signify the difference between cultures, but also illustrates the importance of discourse in interpreting cultural concepts” (Ashcraft 63). While Tayo’s visit to Gallup, Silko introduces names of Native American tribes. In the words of Tayo, Silko says:



The traveling made me tired. But I remember when we drove through Gallup. I saw Navajos in torn old jackets, standing outside the bars. There were Zunis and Hopis there too, even a few Lagunas. All of them slouched down against the dirty walls of the bars along Highway 66, their eyes staring at the ground as if they had forgotten the sun in the sky; or may be that was the way they dreamed for wine, looking for it somewhere in the mud on the sidewalk. (Silko 98-99)

Another important feature of Native American culture explored by Silko in the novel is the myth of creation. Silko makes use of the myth of the creation of the world through the imagination of Thought Woman and her sisters, Nau'ts'ity'l and I'tets'ity'I. In the novel, Thought Woman and her sisters are represented as creators of the pueblo tribe. As per Native American belief, old mythological beliefs and stories possess the power of creation and destruction. Similarly in the novel, as soon as the Thought Woman names or thinks things, they become visible. This indicates the power possessed by words or orality to create or destroy the world. With this Silko advocates the superiority of spoken words over written words.

In the novel, Silko exposes another angle of the oral tradition of the pueblo tribe, which is witchery. Silko says that all the mis happenings and droughts are caused due to black magic and witchery. Silko makes use of witchery in the novel to expose the evil caused by whites. Silko refers to whites' threat to native culture and tradition. In *Ceremony*, witchery "begins with white skin people who bring disease, destruction, and death" (Bell 48). While performing the healing ceremony for Tayo, Betonie explains how their world has changed due to the arrival of whites. He claims:

Things which don't shift and grow are dead things. They are things the witchery people want. Witchery works to scare people, to make them fear growth. But it has always been necessary, and more than ever now, it is. Otherwise we won't make it. We won't survive. That's what the witchery is counting on: that we will cling to the ceremonies the way they were, and then their power will triumph, and the people will be no more. (Silko 116-117)

Witchery has caused havoc in America. Silko has skillfully highlighted this havoc in the novel. Like all other Native Americans, Tayo suffers from identity conflict.

Expressing her hope in Native American culture and tradition, Silko seeks the help of native culture to overcome the havoc caused by whites, Native Americans perform various ceremonies and rituals. Similarly, in the novel, Tayo's mental ailment is followed by healing ceremonies. These healing ceremonies include the Coyote transformation story, Red Antway tradition, and hoop re-transformation rite. According to Native American belief "re-enacting mythological scenes exactly, observing carefully the sequence of prescribed movements and words brings myths alive in ritual" (Bell 49). While performing healing ceremony, Betonie explains to Tayo, "ceremonies must be performed exactly as they have been done, maybe because one slip-up or mistake and the whole ceremony must be stopped and the sand painting destroyed. That much is true" (Silko 116).

While claiming the superiority of Native American culture, Silko leaves no chance of making every aspect of a native culture familiar to the readers. Songs and music being another important feature of orality play an important role in Native American culture. Different tribes use different types of instruments while playing songs. However, in a few communities, the voice of the singer is enough and is considered as a basic instrument. Almost every occasion of Native Americans is intertwined with songs. These "songs include personal lyrics created by the individual to express his or her own feelings, such as those about love, personal sorrow or loss, and one's own death" (Rouff 08). One such example of song included by Silko in *Ceremony* is the prayer song for sunrise. Silko sings:

Sunrise!

We come at sunrise

to greet you.

We call you

at sunrise.

Father of the clouds

you are beautiful

at sunrise

Sunrise! (Silko 169)

One of the most important aspects of Silko's works is the theme of homecoming. In *Ceremony*, Tayo continually struggles to return to the native pueblo world. In his quest for reclamation of native identity, many characters like grandma, Night Swan, T'seh, Betonie, Betonie's mother, and hybrid cattle play the role of spiritual guides. In a similar way, Silko's next novel, *Almanac of the Dead*, is centered around the return of colonized natives to the aboriginal and pre-colonial world. Here Silko introduces Sterling, who after surviving cultural hybridity and urban wars ultimately succeeds in returning to the land of his people. Actually, through the character of Sterling, Silko tries to reveal a sense of confusion among the contemporary Native Americans. At the beginning of the novel, Sterling is shown as an outcast native. His exile from the native world into the world of witchery is because of his act of revealing a sacred stone to a Hollywood film crew. Because of changing scenario of American society, Sterling was also sent to boarding school and due to his stay outside the reservation, Sterling "had never paid much attention to the old-time ways because he had always thought the old beliefs were dying out" (Silko 762). During the period of his exile, Sterling stays in Tucson and works as a gardener for twin sisters, Lecha and Zeta. After spending some time in Tucson and observing the chaos in Tucson, Sterling finally decides to return home.

In the novel, Silko reveals the establishment of Euro-American empire at the cost of the deaths of natives and demands historical revision of the past. According to Rebecca Tillet, the novel "is a direct contradiction of popular Euro-American (European) perception of Native America: a written pre-contact indigenous text" (Tillet 28). The title of the novel reveals and represents the voice of "sixty million dead souls howl for justice in the Americas! They howl to retake the land as the black Africans have retaken their land" (Silko 723). The title of the novel, 'Almanac of the Dead' reveals not only the past of America but also foretells the upcoming future of the Americas. This prophecy is revealed in the historical book "almanac". This potential power of the 'almanac' is described by Lecha, granddaughter of a Yaqui woman, Yoeme, who is the keeper of the almanac. While playing the role of the keeper of the native culture and

history Yoeme has handed over the almanac and her old notebooks to Lecha. These notebooks embody the whole history as well as future of America. Lecha claims: "Once the notebooks are transcribed, I will figure out how to use the old almanac. Then we will foresee the months and years to come-everything" (Silko 137). Twin sisters, Lecha and Zeta play an important role in bringing history back. They are the keeper of the historical almanac that was given to them by their grandmother, Yoeme. After Yoeme, Lecha and Zeta play the role of cultural bearers. Through these twin sisters who continually remember Yoeme, Silko reminds the natives of the importance of storytelling and history. The memories of Yoeme are embedded in the past as well as future of the America. while remembering Yoeme, "Lecha could hear the old woman's voice even now" (Silko 580) where Yoeme foretells the destruction of the Europeans in the future. She says "you may as well die fighting the white man" (Silko 580). With the memory of Yoeme, Silko suggests a history that is told by the people of America. This history is present in the stories of these people. Silko confirms:

the stories of the people or their 'history' had always been sacred, the source of their entire existence. If the people had not retold the stories or if the stories had somehow been lost, then the people were lost...the old people had stories that said much the same, that it was only a matter of time and things Europeans would gradually fade from the american continents. History would catch up with the white man whether the Indians did anything or not. History was the sacred text. the most complete history was the most powerful force. Silko (315-316)

Here a group of revolutionists works together to recreate the past and reexamine the present. The novel is set under the background of local stories and Mayan prophecies that challenge the Euro-American perspective of the world. These revolutionists start the revolution in two locations- Mexico and Tucson. The first revolutionary group headed by Mayan twin brothers, Tacho and El Feo start the revolution in Mexico. Tacho and El Feo are also accompanied by a Marxist leader, Angelita also known as La Escapia. Another group is headed by twin sisters, Lecha and Zeta lead the revolution in Tucson. In addition to these revolutionists, Silko introduces another set of characters also. These are destroyers who hold social, financial, political, and military powers.

These characters are mainly capitalists who are self-centered and selfish. Their focus is merely power and money. their acts of continual exploitation of natives and nature forced natives to rebel against them. Regarding the need and origin of revolution, Fanon says “colonial exploitation, poverty, and endemic feminine drive the native more and more to open organize revolt” (Fanon 238). Silko imbibes the spirit of nativism through various prophecies and the acts of revolutionists, who through their actions seek to challenge and overthrow the power of the destroyers. Silko opens the novel with the almanac’s map with its prophecy of “the disappearance of all things European” (Silko 1). Following this prophecy, Silko further recalls the readers of the disappearance of Europeans through the remembrance of Tacho. Tacho remembers:

the disappearance would not be caused by military action, necessarily, or by military action alone. The white man would someday disappear all by himself. The disappearance had already begun at the spiritual level. A great many people would suffer and die. All ideas and beliefs of the Europeans would gradually wither and drop away...only the strongest would survive. The rest would die by the thousands along with the others; the disappearance would take place over hundreds of years and would include massive human migrations from continent to continent. (Silko 511)

This prophetic statement declares Silko’s aim of writing this novel. This statement declares Silko’s motif of embracing and re-establishing native power in America. This aim is clear in the words of Angelita when she says: “Now it is up to the poorest tribal people and survivors of European genocide to show the remaining humans how all could share and live together on earth...all hell was going to break loose. The best was yet to come” (Silko 749).

In the novel, Silko’s main weapon of bringing back native culture and land is the power of spirits. while speaking about her aim of writing texts, Silko expresses her faith in the power of spirits. Silko says “it was with the *Almanac* where I first realized that there are these spirit entities. Time means nothing to them. And that you can have a kind of relationship with them. They rode me pretty hard in *Almanac of the Dead*. But then I learned not to be afraid of them, to go ahead and trust them” (Arnold & Silko 06). Throughout the novel, Silko informs the readers about the importance of spirits

necessary to end the era of the Dead Eye Dog. While introducing two sets of twins in the novel, Silko focuses on the spiritual significance possessed by native twins. It is believed that in Native American culture, twins possess the power of revitalization. This is clear from Tacho's prophetic musing: "In the old days, the Twin Brothers had answered the people's cry for help when terrible forces or great monsters threatened the people" (Silko 475). All the revolutionists who are actively involved in bringing native culture back in power are an emanant believer in the power of the spiritual world. It is because of this faith in the spiritual world, that these revolutionists are able to compete with the destroyers. On the other hand, white settlers lack this belief. White people don't even want to believe and hear anything about the spirits. They "hated to hear anything about spirits... the white man only knew one way to control himself or others and that was with brute force. Against the spirits, the white man was impotent" (Silko 581). The team of revolutionaries is also joined by Clinton, an African American Vietnam veteran. Like other revolutionaries, Clinton also believes in the power of spirits. According to Clinton, he and his African people are always under the care and shadow of African spirits that traveled from Africa to America hundreds of years ago. He also communicates with the spirits of his ancestors who are always with him and his African people. Like Yoeme, Clinton also keeps notebooks containing messages of spiritual importance. From his radio broadcast programs, Clinton delivers these messages to his people. He believes that these spirits will help him and all the revolutionaries in achieving their aim of revolution. Silko introduces Clinton "with one foot, but he wore the best, the top of the line, the best kind of prosthetic foot you could buy" (Silko 404). Silko's aim in introducing Clinton with a physical disability is to challenge and overthrow notions of disability. After participating in the Vietnam War, Clinton realizes that the war "was a white man's war; the colored man was sent to do the dangerous, dirty work white men were too weak to perform... Vietnam had been a trap for people of color" (Silko 407). After realizing this policy of whites, Clinton tries to "warn his people, honest black folks who still believed all the lies fed to them about the United States of America" (Silko 407). To take revenge from white capitalists, Clinton organizes an army of homeless Vietnam War veterans. Clinton and his homeless vets used to wear "full Green Beret uniform every day" (Silko 404). Clinton's motif of wearing a uniform is to "draw attention to the farce of the war as a project to

ensure democracy and freedom...it unites Clinton with other disfranchised war veterans, and simultaneously mocks the mythology of the Green Beret as a symbol of american wartime heroism" (Byars & Nicholas 99). Because of the brutalities that whites imposed on him and his people, Clinton admits that "it was important for the people to understand that all around them lay human slavery, although most recently it had been called by other names" (Silko 411). Clinton's habit of reading and his broadcasts infuses among the readers "a sense that history can be a self-determined factor in a people's emancipation and reflect a reality that constitutes contemporary America" (Nicholas & Byars 104). Clinton's aim is evident in his belief in the power of the spirits of the dead. He claims: "Yes, the Americas were full of furious, bitter spirits; five hundred years of slaughter has left the continents swarming with millions of spirits that never rested and would never stop until justice had been done" (Silko 424). This faith in regaining lost power is also shared by Angelita Laescapia. She hopefully comments: "We simply wait for the earth's natural forces already set loose, the exploding, fierce energy of all the dead slaves and dead ancestors haunting the Americas. We prepare, and we wait for the tidal wave of history to sweep us along" (Silko 518). This statement of Angelita suggests an alternate history from the perspective of nature and the dead. This alternate or counter history will thus surely reverse the Euro-American perspective of history. According to Silko and other Native American Writers of the age, nature is playing an important role in reversing the historical perception of Euro-Americans. This interaction of nature and past, as well as the present aspect of history, is visible in the perception of Yaqui smuggler, Calabazas. "Right now. Today. I have seen it. Where the arroyo curves sharp. Caught, washed up against big boulders with broken branches and weeds. Human bones piled high. Skulls piled and stacked like melons" (Silko 216). From this statement, it is visible that history is embedded in nature. Past cannot be erased and bones buried to conceal the history have been exposed that reveal the presence of the past in the present. So, the process of reemerging of bones on the surface indicate the impossibility of erasing historical events and the sacrifice of thousands of natives.

To present counter history, Silko imbibes the power of memory and remembrance in her characters. According to Silko, the events of historical importance always remain

alive through the power of memory and remembrance. Through this power, these nativist characters of the novel remember the past events and reconstruct their own history. According to nativists, the acts of memory and remembrance are not only associated with the recollection of past events but also “claim that the minority group has the ability to take control of, and to actively change, the future” (Tillet 32). So, to secure and protect future, one has to remember the past. Paula Gunn Allen also claims that through memory and remembrance, native cannot forget the time when natives were held captive by forces of arms. In Silko’s view, this power of memory and remembrance enables natives not only to expose brutalities of Europeans but also to decide the future according to their will. Keely Byars and Nicholas observe Silko’s strategy of using elements of nativism and counter history and comment:

Silko...offers knowledge of the past as to key to successful revolution and reversal of the type of Eurocentric definitions of race that perpetuate opposition and conflict; she focuses instead on agency and willed uprisings to show how separate groups with individual histories and identities can still collectively work to overthrow dominant, oppressive ideologies. (Byars & Nicholas 94)

Silko’s discussion of indigenous people’s army of Angelita exposes the native’s belief in the power of memory and remembrance. “Generation after generation, individuals were born, then after eighty years, disappeared into dust, but in the stories, the people lived on in the imaginations and hearts of their descendants. Wherever their stories were told, the spirits of the ancestors were present and their power was alive” (Silko 520). This belief in the power of the past is enough to overthrow the self-claimed rule of Euro-Americans because Euro-Americans have no history on American land. Silko rightly claims: “In the Americas the white man never referred to the past but only to the future. The white man didn’t seem to understand he had no future here because he had no past, no spirits of ancestor here” (Silko 313).

The aim of revolutionists is the reclamation and protection of lost land. European invasion has proved havoc to the American land. As per European ideology, land possesses material identity and is meant for exploitation. After colonial settlement, European settlers exploited American land for personal benefit. After realizing this situation, these revolutionists seek to stop further havoc on the land. In strong



opposition to European colonizers, these revolutionists maintain thinking that the land belongs to no one. This dream of retaking land is seen by El Feo who feels delighted with the thought of regaining lost land. “El Feo daydreamed about the days of the past-sensuous daydreams of Mother Earth who loved all her children, all living beings. Those past times were not lost. The days, months, and years were living beings who roamed the starry universe until they came around again” (Silko 313). This aim of revolutionists is also explained by Angelita LaEscapia. She claims, “my every heartbeat, is for the return of the land” (Silko 518). Her idea of reclamation of land arises from her reading of Marx and Engels. Angelita comments: “Engels and Marx had understood the earth belongs to no one. No human, individuals or corporations, no cartel of nations, could own the earth; it was the earth who possessed the humans and it was the earth who disposed of them” (Silko 149). Angelita also clears that this thinking of Marx and Engels has developed from their “reading about certain Native American communal societies, though naturally [as Europeans they] had misunderstood a great deal” (Silko 519). In their pursuit of reclaiming the lost land, Angelita addresses:

when they had taken back all the lands of the indigenous people of the Americas, there would be plenty of space, plenty of pasture and farmland and water for everyone who promised to respect all beings and do no harm. We are the army to retake tribal land. Our army is only one of many all over the earth quietly preparing...we must protect Mother Earth from destruction. (Silko 518)

One of the major methods of the act of resistance used by Native Americans during the period of their encounter with the Europeans is the Ghost Dance also known as Spirit Dance. This religious and social movement of Native American tribes began around the 1870S. In the beginning, the movement started around the Walker River Indian Reservation area among the Paiutes but with time, the movement covered a much wider area of America covering a huge number of native tribes. Young claims:

The movement quickly spread to neighboring peoples, including other Paiutes, the Utes, Shoshoni and Washo in western Navedo. To the west it spread to native peoples in California and to the south to Arizona Mohave, Cohonino and Pai...To the east, in addition to the Arapaho and Chyenne, the Ghost Dance was

taken up by the Assiniboin, Gros Ventre (Atsina), Mandan, Arikara, Pawnee, Caddo, Kichai, Wichita, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, some Comanche, Delaware, and Oto peoples. The Ghost Dance was embraced both in the Northern plains and among those in these nations living by the time in Indian Territory. (Young 277)

The main aim behind the origin of Ghost Dance was the unification of different native tribes of America. European colonial process had caused much havoc in America which resulted in the marginalization of native tribes. In order to combat European exploiters, native tribes tried to unite among themselves and develop strategies. Ghost dance is one among such strategies. Another major reason behind the dance was the regeneration of the lost power of the earth. “The dance enabled communities torn apart by the genocidal assault of the settlers to regroup and find a new basis for hope for the future. Many of the beliefs and practices that crystalized among...peoples as a result of the 1870 Dance Movement continue to this day in communities of native peoples” (Young 275). The main message that the Ghost Dance manifest is to live and work in harmony. Silko reinterprets this historical Ghost Dance through the words of Wilson Weasel Tail who maintains his belief that since the time of European invasion and the manifestation of strategy of Ghost Dance, it has been observed that through this Ghost Dance spirits of their ancestors have continuously been giving protection to Native Americans. While praising the benefit of Ghost Dance, Wilson sings and says:

We dance to remember,

We dance to remember all our beloved ones,

to remember how each passed

to the spirit world.

We dance because the dead love us,

They continue to speak to us

They tell our heart what must be done to survive. (Silko 722)

Another major aspect of Silko's texts is the continual attempt to challenge and cross borders. This attempt of crossing borders helps Silko's characters in resistance and survival. The construction of borders and borderlines was actually the strategy of colonizers to impose restrictions on Native Americans. To rebel against these restrictions, Silko's characters continually make attempts to cross these borders. In *Ceremony*, characters mainly live in reservation areas and the main discussion is on the issues of reservation and war experiences. But in *Almanac of the Dead*, Silko's characters cross borders to rebel against restrictions and make careers. Silko like other native writers exposes the truth that before the imposition of restrictions on borders by the US government, native people have been living in harmony and moving without any problem. Zeta highlights this issue: "The people had been free to go traveling north and south for a thousand years, traveling as they pleased, then suddenly white priests had announced smuggling as a mortal sin because smuggling was stealing from the government" (Silko 133). The opening map of the novel clearly indicates this aim. "Sixty million Native Americans died between 1500 and 1600. The defiance and resistance to things European continued. The Indian wars have never ended in the Americas. Native Americans acknowledge no borders; they seek nothing less than the return of all tribal lands" (Almanac Map). The map also shows Tucson, Mexico, and Arizona borders at the center of the map. Description of these borders in the novel depicts historical injustice and oppression and natives' attempts of crossing the borders depict resistance to restriction. Silko's most explicit character who expresses the problems of borders is Yaqui character, Calabazas. He says:

we don't believe in boundaries. Borders. Nothing like that. We are here thousands of years before the first whites. We are here before maps or quit claims. We know where we belong on this earth. We have always moved freely. North-south. East-west. We pay no attention to what isn't real. Imaginary lines. Imaginary minutes and hours. Written law. We recognize none of that. And we carry a great many things back and forth. We don't see any border. We have been here and this has continued thousands of years. We don't stop. No one stops us. (Silko 216)

Silko's urge of enhancing native cultural values is further seen in her next work. Like previous works, this novel again can be interpreted as Silko's weapon of enhancing nativistic elements. About the nativistic aim of the novel, Arnold Ellen rightly claims "Gardens in the Dunes...draws on elements of the naturalistic tradition to build an exciting tale of adventure, intrigue and mystery...the novel challenges and reshapes into something that is distinctly indigenous" (Yadav 266). All elements of native cultural importance from the habit of storytelling to the centrality of landscape find re-discussion in the novel.

Like her previous novel, Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes* also follows the theme of crossing boundaries. Here characters stay inside as well as outside America. Here Indigo's Europe voyage along with Hattie and Edward seems to break the structural boundaries of binary opposition. Indigo being a native girl freely moves around various locations. During the course of the journey, Indigo learns a lot about different types of seeds and gardening practices. However, during this period, she also notices Edward's way of clicking photographs of everything that seems worthy to him. Through his behavior and actions, Indigo easily recognizes a capitalist aim behind his journey. With the help of lessons that Indigo learns from her grandma, she easily constructs her judgment about capitalists and their attitude toward plants and gardens. From her observations, Indigo generalizes the extent of havoc that capitalists can cause to nature. This is evident from the actions of Edward who crosses all levels of immorality to fulfill his dream of earning money. Although Indigo lives under the care of her self-proclaimed Euro-American parents, Hattie and Edward, she never loses her native being. Despite the continual efforts of Hattie to civilize her, Indigo doesn't change herself. This nature of Indigo reflects her resistance and rebellion to European's strategy of cultural assimilation.

Silko's aim of introducing the concept of a Europe tour is not only confined to the theme of crossing cultural boundaries but also reflects her focus on nearby landscapes. Being a staunch believer in native cultural values, Silko describes every minute detail of the nearby landscape that Indigo encounters in her travel. About the prominence of nature and landscape that Silko gives in her works, Beena Yadav comments:

Gardens in the dunes explores a stunning array of natural landscapes including the american southwest, long island, Brazil, England, Italy, and island of Corsica in the Mediterranean. Silko's riveting descriptions of the plants and landscapes indigenous to each of these places, and in some cases, those artificially transported to territories to which they are not reveal captivating idiosyncrasies and political beliefs of the people to belongs to each of these lands. (Yadav 266)

Hattie, Edward, and Indigo undertake the tour for different purposes. Although they are together, but their motif of the journey is different from each other. For Hattie, this tour is meant for the education of Indigo whom she wants to teach modern trends. Edward's main purpose is to steal the best quality plants by making Hattie and Indigo his covers. But for Indigo, this tour is meant only as a sort of pilgrimage. Indigo goes on the tour for two main reasons. The first reason of tour is an easy escape from Sharman Educational Institute and the second reason is she expects to find her mother. Indigo's "journey to Europe is a quest for healing and reunion with her mother, as well as the hoped-for culmination promised by Ghost Dance religion" (Ferguson 38). During this journey, Indigo continually sees dreams of her mama, grandma, and sister salt. Indigo hopes that after the tour, she will surely meet her family. During her journey, indigo continually imagines her reunion with her mama: "The farther east they traveled, the closer they came to the place the Messiah and his family and followers ttraveled when they left the mountains beyond Paiute country" (Silko 337). Memories and thoughts of her family continue throughout her journey. With these memories of the women of her family, Indigo is able to solace herself during the months of her tour outside her native place. This indicates the matriarchal power of native culture that enables indigo to continue her ink with her family and culture. Along with continual memories and remembrances, Indigo also hears various encouraging voices. These voices promise the reunion of all people who are lost due to European intervention. Just like Indigo, Sister Salt also visualizes dreams and visions of their native place and gardens. As a result of European colonization, both sisters are separated from their family and native place. European assimilators try to assimilate them through different policies. To teach European manners in Indigo, she is kept in an English boarding school. Indigo stays in

the school for three months and observes the extent of exploitation and havoc that European assimilators can cause to native children. But because of her strong connection with her family and culture, Indigo is able to successfully escape from the school. She recalls, “Sand Lizard people were not afraid of capture because they were so quick. Grandma Fleet taught the girls to wait and watch for the right moment to run” (Silko 71). At this moment she remembers “Sister Salt and Grandma must have thought about her...she felt their concern for her and their love; tears filled her eyes. Grandma still loved them and prayed for them from Cliff Town where the dead went to stay” (Silko 71). After her successful escape from the school, Indigo’s second challenge is to successfully escape the assimilatory efforts of her white guardians. Hattie tries each and every effort to become the mother of Indigo. She teaches Indigo different sorts of modernized life style. Indigo’s Europe tour is also a part of her education. But despite the continual efforts of Hattie, Indigo remains intact with her native culture. Since the time of her separation from her sister and native place she continuously remembers childhood lessons that she learns from her grandma. Indigo’s ability to remain adhered to her native culture represents Bhabha’s concept of mimicry. Indigo moves into white people’s world and uses colonial ways and language. Although it seems that while her stay in the white people’s world, Indigo submits herself to the authority of the colonial world she disrupts and damages colonial authority. Through the character of Indigo, Silko subverts white’s claim of colonial authority and binary opposition. Bhabha also writes while possessing the qualities of hybridity and mimicry the natives of the colonized natives tend to represent themselves rather than to be represented. With the help of their strong connection and faith in their native culture, both sisters can remain spiritually connected with their family and place.

Just as indigo crosses physical and cultural boundaries, Hattie also does the same. As a female character in a patriarchal world, Hattie challenges and surpasses expected gender roles. Hattie’s decision of pursuing higher studies is not liked by her mother, Mrs. Abbott. According to the viewpoint of Hattie’s mother, a girl with higher studies is not considered to be a perfect suit for marriage because “no man wanted a professor for a wife” (Silko 76). Being a strict believer in patriarchal rules, Hattie’s mother strongly rejects Hattie’s decision of establishing self-identity. She “did not trust Hattie

or Hattie's father, after all, they conspired to enroll Hattie in graduate school at Harvard without her knowledge" (Silko 82). Hattie's "failed thesis with its scandalous view of early church history" (Silko 80) also exemplifies her dejection of the white patriarchal society. Because of probing female-centered arguments in the work, Hattie's thesis proved controversial and ultimately rejected. According to her mother's view "Hattie's entire life was ruined by her assertions that Jesus had women disciples and Mary Magdalene wrote a gospel suppressed by the church" (Silko 80). Being an amiable woman, Hattie does not find any satisfaction in her marital relationship with Edward. According to Hattie, her marriage with Edward "was doomed from the start" (Silko 349). Hattie's mother wants her to obey and adhere to social prospects but Hattie on the other hand focuses on self-satisfaction. Being a surrogate mother to Indigo, Hattie tries every effort to provide education to Indigo. For Hattie "it was their duty to educate the child to enable her to survive in the white man's world" (Silko 327). Although Edward admired Hattie's efforts toward Indigo, he wishes her to limit her education which may enable her to survive only. In this regard, Silko says "Edward was satisfied Hattie was teaching the child geography and reading and writing on their journey, but a docile willingness to serve must also be cultivated" (Silko 327). He always asserted that Hattie "was too soft-hearted to discipline the child" (Silko 327).

Hattie's main motif is to educate Indigo and to imbibe the spirit of self-independence in her. But for Edward Indigo's education is meant to make her a second-class citizen who can work for and serve white citizens. That is why Edward wants Hattie to put limits on Indigo so that Indigo can understand that her duty is to serve Edward and Hattie. While portraying such a complex character of Hattie, Silko rebels against white people's perspective of females. Despite being submissive to an inferior being, Hattie tries to construct her own identity. In her aim of developing identity, she also rejects her mother's suggestions. During her tour with Indigo, she crosses all borders of social expectations and constraints. While refusing her mother's suggestion, Hattie also joins the Native American people and enjoys the freedom. She is so fed up with the false superiority of white culture that she decides not to return to her parental home. Her visit to Aunt Bronwyn helps her to realize that women are not born to live under the control of males. She understands that without being submissive to her husband, a wife can

think for her own identity. Silko describes Aunt Bronwyn as “such an interesting woman-not only a scholar and collector of old European artefacts, she also hybridized gladiolus” (Silko 301). Silko represents Aunt Bronwyn, a woman who rejects all social conventions and restrictions in favor of peace and freedom.

The two pets (Linnaeus the monkey and rainbow the parrot) kept by Edward and Hattie represent exotic pets who are kept in a cage by white colonizers. Their condition is similar to Indigo who is also kept as exotic human pet by Edward and Hattie. Indigo notices a sense of desire for freedom in the pets. Just as Hattie tries to play the role of indigo’s mother, in a similar way indigo’s care and affection for the pets develop a motherly relation of Indigo with the pets. Being a motherly figure for the pets, Indigo easily recognizes animals longing for their family members and home. This is evident when the parrot encounters a cage full of other parrots. Silko describes it as an “upsetting encounter with the cage of new captives...the cries of his own kind were more than [he] could endure, he called back and flapped his wings frantically” (Silko 291) She also wants to keep the pets with her. Her desire to keep pets with her represents the dominance of kinship and belongingness among the native people of America. Indigo’s relationship with the pets helps her to remain connected with nature. Their company helps her to bear the pain of separation from Sister Salt and Grandma.

Silko reinterprets the historical Ghost Dance movement in almost all her works, but most brief description is given in novels, especially in the third one, *Gardens in the Dunes*, and represents it as a technique of natives to resist and move away from European assimilation. In the novel, Ghost Dance is performed by the southwest tribe of Paiute Indians who are suffering from severe poverty, hunger, cultural annihilation, and loss of native population. “Only by dancing they hope to bring the Messiah, the Christ, who would bring with him all their beloved family members and friends who had moved on to the spirit world after the hunger and sadness got to be too much for them” (Silko 25). Indigo and her family who witness the dance performance, also embrace and support the dance as a ray of hope. Indigo “felt them all around her, cradling her, loving her; she didn’t see them but she knew all of them- the ancestors’ spirits always loved her; there was no end to their love” (Silko 27). Silko’s aim in introducing the scenes of Ghost Dance is the revitalization of native culture. Through



the Ghost Dance, Silko reveals the connection between the people and the earth. During the dance performance, the dancers “were moving from right to left because that was the path followed by the sun” (Silko 25). While following a rhythmic pattern dancers follow the same steps of dragging their feet along the ground so that they may remain in touch with the Mother Earth. After all their dance is meant for the sake of the Mother Earth. Their dance is accompanied by songs and music through which they pay homage to the earth and invite it to respond in return. “Indigo felt the earth’s breathing through the soles of her feet (Silko 30). During her visit, Indigo also discovers a historical connection between old European and Native American cultures. During their journey, Indigo and Edward visit a Corsican village. This village was famous for the spirit of the Blessed Mother on the wall of a school. From this experience, Indigo realizes that the farther east they travel, the nearer they approach the residence of the Messiah and his family. While having these experiences on this international trip, Indigo realizes the presence of Ghost Dance in Europe also. This clears that the connection between Europe and America is a coincidence but historical. At the culmination of Ghost Dance, there occurs destruction of white society at the hands of Hattie. Actually, before the night of the Ghost Dance, Hattie faces brutal rape. Subsequently, on discovering the perpetrator’s livery stable, Hattie sets fire to it which spreads and burns the entire town of the needle. Silko says:

At the corals the corrals, she let the terrified horses run free, and followed them to a hill east of town, where she watched? amazed and elated by the beauty of the colors of the fire against the twilight sky. As the flames snaked over to catch the roofs of buildings on either side of the stable, the fire's colors were brilliant? the reds as rich as blood, the blues and whites luminous, and the orange flame as bright as Minerva's gemstone...All night the flames lit the sky...The next morning, a line of blue-grey smoke still rose above the town and...they [indigo and sister salt] got to watch the white town burn to the ground. Or may be it was only the town dump – they didn’t know until they flagged down the mail wagon and loaded their belongings. The driver said it was no joke – half the town of Needles burned that night, though no one was injured. (Silko 501-502)

This destruction of the white settler's property is not caused by natives but by Hattie, a representative of white members. This act demonstrates Hattie's aggression, initiative and resistance. On the other side, native girls reach successfully the native place. Their encounter with foreign culture doesn't harm them. The reason for their successful return to their native land is their strong belief in their native culture. In this way "the Ghost Dance has given Native Americans in desperate situations the spiritual courage to preserve in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds...rather than fomenting violence, the Ghost Dance enabled Native Americans at different times in different places to withstand...the physical and other forms of violence being perpetrated against them" (Young 298-99)

Through her seminal texts, Silko reveals the prominence and continuity of the habit of storytelling in native culture. Her multi-genre work, *Storyteller* is the finest example of text that narrates the ongoing trend of stories of Native American culture. From this text, Silko "reveals how storytelling has continued to be central in Native American life" (Clements 74). In this work, Silko challenges the Euro-American literary trend of writing a piece of literature with only one genre. By deconstructing the European constructed history, Silko's *Storyteller* "honors the moral force of Native American tradition in conflict with intrusive, impoverishing western culture" (Cummings 79). To resist white cultural influence, Silko fills her text with a huge number of native pueblo stories. This act of Silko depicts her aim of glorifying the native culture. Brewster E. Fitz analyses Silko's *Storyteller* and notices her sense and sensibility of using orality in the text. Brewster notices Silko's prioritization of pueblo tradition over modernization. Brewster comments:

Silko seems to shuttle back and forth between, on the one hand, a desire to reclaim primary orality by purging herself, her world view, and her work of western thought (in which writing is conceived of as mendacious, desiccating, and semiotically larcenous) and on the other, a writerly dream of grounding the oral tradition and her texts in an ontologically privileged kind of universal language in which writing and orality are organically one, life affirming, all embracing, and motherly. (Fitz 07)

Robert M. Nelson also recognizes this spirit of Silko and comments; “The text is a virtual encyclopedia of storytelling styles and story materials adapted to textual forms, all the kinds and ways of traditional story and storytelling- from the grave and formal tone of the old huma-ha stories to the conversational, even chatty, cadences of contemporary anecdotes” (Porter & Roemer 251). While possessing the nativistic spirit, this autobiographical text of Silko also subverts the literary conventions of writing an autobiography. Here Silko rejects the patriarchal family structural mode of Euro-centric autobiography as well as a conventional mode of genealogical histories. While doing so, Silko centers her text mainly on a family that is disrupted by European intervention. To achieve her aim of exploring the counter history and culture of Native America, Silko leaves no chance of including different trends of native culture in this single text. This intention is revealed in the title story, ‘Storyteller’ which is about a young girl who is kept by whites in a jail. While sitting in the jail, she can visualize the sun trapped and “struggling feebly against the encroaching ice that threatens to obliterate all of the boundaries of the natural landscape” (Carsten 112). Silko says:

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 the destiny of the pale ice. (Silko 37)

Just like this situation of the sun waiting for the right moment to rise, she has also been waiting for the right moment to tell her story. Her parents are murdered by Gussucks by poisoning with bad alcohol. This bad alcohol was sold to them by a white storekeeper. As a result of her parent’s death, her old glorious life is shattered and ultimately replaced by a world dominated by white settlers. As a result of her shattered life, the girl seeks to take revenge for her parent’s death from that white shopkeeper. She does so by “luring the storekeeper over the frozen river, onto the ice that she knows is too thin to support his weight” (Carsten 112). Because of his heavyweight, the storekeeper falls and dies. Because of this act, the girl is ultimately arrested by the white authorities. However, in the jail, the attorney “instructs the jailer to tell her that they

were witnesses to the storekeeper's accident, there is no way she could have planned that her chased her over the ice. All she has to do is assert her innocence and go free" (Carsten 112-113). As per the plan, the jailer instructs her, "it was an accident. He was running after you and he fell through the ice. That is all you have to say in court. That's all. And they will let you go home. Back to your village" (Silko 50). But despite of authorities' planning, the girl insists to tell her story and reveals that she planned to kill the storekeeper because he is responsible for her shattered life. She says "I will not change the story, not even to escape this place and go home. I intended that he die" (Silko 50). Silko, like the story girl, also decides to tell her story. Silko "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" (Carsten 113)

One of the unique features of Native American writers is the use of photography in their writing. By incorporating photographs of native families, landscapes, and cultural activities, these native writers develop strategies of survivance. This strategy also develops thinking of potential among them. Being a prominent member of Native American literature, Silko introduces various photographs of her family, land, and landscape, and native tribes in her texts, especially in *Storyteller*. These black and white photographs, taken by Silko's father, are twenty-six in number. Among these twenty-six photographs, only two photographs are not in Laguna. These two photographs are taken in the Arizona landscape perhaps when Silko left Laguna. These two photographs can be interpreted as Silko's way of explaining "how the life of a story, like the life of the storyteller who derives from them and cares for them, can bridge the perceived separations not only between moments of time and cultural categories but also between places" (Porter & Roemer 252). Silko's choice of introducing her father and grandfather's photographs in the book puts light on the importance that Silko gives to her familial relations. The opening poem of the book, Hopi Basket, indicates Silko's intention of adding photographs. In the poem, Silko speaks "there is a tall Hopi basket with a single figure...inside the basket are hundreds of photographs taken since the 1890s around Laguna...Photographs have always had special significance with the

people of my family and the people at Laguna...the photographs are here because they are part of many of the stories and because many of the stories can be traced in photographs". (Silko 21). From these opening lines of the poem, it becomes clear that Silko's intention of introducing various pictures of family, laguna people, and the surrounding landscape is the importance that she gives to familial relations and native culture and stories. This strategy of Silko enables her to join the line of ancestral storytellers. She also claims to be a storyteller whose stories must be read. Silko speaks:

As with any generation  
 The oral tradition depends upon each person  
 Listening and remembering a portion  
 And it is together  
 All of us remembering what we have heard together  
 That creates the whole story  
 The long story of the people. (Silko 26)

With the photographs, Silko hopes to keep native culture alive for further generations. Silko herself claims: "I wanted readers to have a feeling of the landscape and the context of the pueblo villages where the stories take place, so I included photographs...I wanted readers to have a sense of the family I came from, so I included family snapshots too" (Silko 18-19). In the book, Silko not only glorifies the cultural trends of Native America but also aims at dismantling and exposing European acts against natives. In the story, 'I always called her Aunt Susie', Silko reveals the fact that European settlers have tried every effort to completely vanish native culture. In the story, Silko represents Aunt Susie to be the last generation of laguna people who used to narrate the stories of native culture through oral tradition. She says Aunt Susie is the

The last generation here at Laguna  
 that passed down the entire culture  
 by word of mouth

an entire history  
 an entire vision of the world  
 which dependent upon memory  
 and retelling by subsequent generation. (Silko 24)

Aunt Susie is also shown to be interested in learning European trends of reading and writing. Aunt Susie is “a scholar, bibliophile, schoolteacher, and storyteller, this remarkable woman spoke and wrote from the perspective of two generations, of two pedagogies, of two cultures- one oral, the other literate, one Laguna Keresan, the other Euro-American” (Fitz 10-11). But despite her portrayal of Aunt Susie as a well-known scholar of the literary world, Silko portrays her as an heir of the oral tradition of the pueblo tribe. Although these skills are directly associated with the cunning European policy of assimilation and may indicate Aunt Susie to be a victim of this policy. But actually, Aunt Susie’s decision of learning reading and writing skills of European origin is a strategy of resistance and cultural survival. She learns reading and writing skills to preserve native cultural trends through her writings. Silko explains:

And yet her writing went painfully slow  
 because of failing eyesight  
 and because of her considerable family duties.  
 What she is leaving with us-  
 the stories and remembered accounts  
 is primarily what she was able to tell  
 and what we are able to remember. (Silko 25-26)

Similarly, like many other Native American Writers, Silko’s skills of reading and writing are aided in glorifying and preventing native culture. In the story ‘Man Send to Rain Clouds’, there are many references to pueblo belief that dead people help in sending rain clouds. These multiple references to native beliefs and rituals confirm Silko’s strong affinity to native pueblo culture. Arnold Krupat recognizes this native

sense and orality of Silko and claims that Silko's book is dedicated "to the storytellers as far back as memory goes and to the telling which continues and through which they live...Having called herself a storyteller, she thus places herself in a tradition of telling (Krupat 163).

## Conclusion

Silko's active participation in glorifying the oral tradition of laguna culture enables her and her characters to overcome the traumatic experience of European colonization. This is evident through the story of *Ceremony*'s Tayo who overcomes his mental trauma and regains his mental stability after recollecting stories of native culture through ceremonial process performed by medicine man, Betonie. Through her action of recounting actual events of history, Silko makes the readers well versed in the actual occurrence of historical events of the past. This history or we can also say counter-history reveals that the events of the historical past also occurred in narrative form and this narrative technique that Silko utilizes in her works is a formal basic structure of Native American culture. While reconstructing the past, Silko, like other nativists, attempts to resuscitate and rejuvenate the historic identity of the natives and use it to fight against colonial activities. Silko gives importance to past that is why continuous memories of past enable *Gardens in the Dunes*'s Indigo to return successfully from the pangs of modernized culture. While possessing a local historical sense, Silko sees her texts, not as a separate entity but as a part and parcel of the folk narrative culture and tradition of native communities. Silko's use of native cultural features tends to valorize cultural essentialism and authenticity. Multigenre technique in *Storyteller* violates structural rules of mainstream literature and establishes native authenticity. Continuous use of multiple stories of native culture woven under the background of imperialism within all texts reveals the vitality and diversity of native culture of America. Her works reveal progression from nativism to nationalist theory. Just like political stance of Negritude, Silko's technique of nativism becomes a political tool that questions the false stereotypical images forced on native tribes.

## Conclusion

Leslie Marmon Silko spent her career making people aware of the activities of European colonizers and the impact of these imperialistic activities on native communities of the colonized nations, especially America. Throughout her literary career, Silko has paid the most important place to cultural trends of Native America and the importance of these cultural trends in the life of native people. Her works depict a long history and process of colonial activities on American land. By narrating the historical acts of European injustice and calamities caused by the European settlers on American land, Silko reveals the real history of America. Her historical discussion is also based on the long and glorious past of native tribes who lived on American land with their culture thousands of years ago. Such history was kept untouched by the colonizers for five hundred years. It is only after the brave efforts of Native American Writers, such as Leslie Marmon Silko, harsh facts of colonial activities have been exposed. While portraying the brutal actions of colonial settlers and the life-changing influence of colonial activities on the colonized natives, Silko like her contemporaries never forgets to give a prominent place to native culture and history. Silko not only gives a prominent place to native culture and history but also reveals the importance of this nativism and history in tolerating the adversities of colonialism. Silko proves that contemporary America doesn't belong to colonial times but its roots lie much before that and its history began with the beginning of the history of Native Americans. While presenting a long counter history of Native Americans, Silko denies and unsettles Euro-American perspectives from all angles. Silko aims to provide counter-narratives that tend to act as a subversive outlet for the native population.

Although Silko believes in embracing native culture, she also agrees that the influence of colonial modernism is not negligible, so to adjust to contemporary situations, natives have to accept involuntary changes without forgetting their roots. According to Silko, this understanding among the natives will enable them to live in harmony with contemporary America as well as with native culture. This aim of Silko is visible in all her texts. In the novel, *Ceremony*, Tayo, whom Silko represents as a victim of European imperialism, is able to regain stability when he understands contemporary situations. Because of his relationship with European as well as with the native culture, Tayo is



not able to find a suitable place for him. His hybrid identity renders him adhere to any of the cultures. Even because of his in-between position and confused identity, he is not accepted by members of both cultures. In his family his aunt hates him. His friends such as Emo also hate him. And of course, the elite culture of Euro-Americans also rejects him. Tayo's lost identity and mental instability are not only because of the rejection that he faces but also because of his loss of hope and faith in his native culture. This situation of fictional Tayo is shared by all those mixed-blood Native Americans who fail to recognize their specialty and actual position in society. Thus, the problem faced by Tayo is not individual but shared by all mixed-blood people. Now it is clear that this problem has arisen only because of the activities of European settlers. Before the arrival of these foreign people, Native Americans never faced problems like that. But instead of blaming Europeans and lamenting over the misfortune, native people have to develop strategies so that they can overcome the trauma of identity conflict and instability. This idea is expressed by Silko through the story of Tayo who during the course of the novel undergoes several changes and learns lessons at every step.

Although at the beginning of the novel, Tayo suffers because of his hybrid identity and his loss of faith in his native culture but at the end of the novel, Tayo sustains normalcy. This change in Tayo's personality takes place when he understands that his hybrid identity is not a misfortune but a plus point for him. He understands that instead of feeling ashamed of his mixed bloodedness he should feel proud that he is a part of two cultures. This understanding is important for him to regain normalcy. The next task for Tayo's stability is to recognize the power of native culture. Tayo regains his lost identity and mental stability only after realizing the importance of his hybrid identity and native culture. To inculcate this thinking in Tayo's mind, various characters such as Tayo's grandmother, medicine man Betonie, cantina dancer Night Swan and Ts'eh play an important role. These characters through their roles and actions at every step of the novel help Tayo to maintain a balance between the Native American and the modern world. To focus on the need for flexibility of culture, Silko introduces the scene of the encounter of Tayo with two medicine men. The first medicine man invited by Tayo's grandmother is K'oosh. No doubt he tries every effort to cure Tayo's ailment but Tayo gains nothing much from his healing process. The reason for the failure of K'oosh is

his old method of healing. He claims that truly old-fashioned treatment methods are not effective in curing ailments caused in the present scenario. That is why Tayo's ailment remains as it was at the beginning of his treatment. On the other hand, the next medicine man, Betonie who also possesses a hybrid personality in genealogy as well as in actions uses different methods for curing Tayo's illness. Because of his comprehensive power of understanding contemporary situations, Betonie has devised a new method of treatment. His method is based on old native culture as well as modern Euro-American culture. This hybrid method applied by Betonie in curing Tayo proves successful and finally, Tayo regains his lost identity and mental stability. Tayo's mental stability and identity reconstruction are because of his understanding of the power of native culture. Through Tayo's story, Silko suggests that all those mixed-blood people who are suffering from the same problem of identity conflict can regain stability only after understanding and comprehending the importance of native culture. Thus, this achievement of Tayo not only belongs to an individual but rather is for all people who belong to mixed heritage.

Further Silko also claims that those people who embrace modernity and forget their native culture are doomed to suffer. Such people need to pay for their decision. To depict this thinking, Silko highlights the character and role of Rocky. Rocky is shown as a victim of European modernization. Since his childhood, Rocky has dreams of becoming a part of the modern world. He sees no benefit in native culture. According to Rocky, native culture and tradition is useless and has no role to play in his life. His affection for modernization propels him to join the army. But unluckily this decision of Rocky proves havoc for him. His affection for the modern world ultimately takes his life and he suffers death in the war. Like Rocky, his friend Emo also fanaticizes modernity at the cost of native culture and thus faces death at the end of the novel.

Similarly, Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* also reveals this aim of Silko. Just like Rocky, Menardo is shown as a victim of the modernized capitalist American world. Being a successful businessman Menardo fixes his identity among the social and political elites of Mexico. But he does so at the cost of forgetting his roots and history. Despite the childhood care and love that Menardo receives from his grandfather, he thinks that to achieve a good position in society he needs to forget his history and culture. His acts of

distancing from native culture and embracing the modernized culture of European origin equates him with the European destroyers. Because of his distancing from his genealogy and history, Menardo is continually haunted by horrible dreams. These dreams interpret his doomed end but being busy with his aim of gaining prosperity, Menardo fails to understand the power of these dreams. While possessing blind faith in the capitalist world, Menardo buys a vest for his protection. Menardo maintains a wrong belief in the power of the vest but he forgets that this vest is based upon its technological merits and there is no hundred percent surety in its effectiveness. Menardo's blind faith in the power of the vest urges him to command his chauffeur Tacho to shoot him. But actually, the vest does not work and Menardo dies. In this way, while accepting technology, Menardo rejects the protection of his ancestral spirits and invites his death. Thus, there are two reasons for the death of Menardo. The first one is Menardo's continuous effort to conceal his basic identity and forget native history and the second is Menardo's blind faith in Euro-American beliefs and technology.

Silko contrasts the character of Menardo with the character of Root, who possesses a hybrid identity. Root is born and grown up into a white family, a family that tends to maintain its social status after concealing its mixed identity. After an accident in which Root meets head injury, his family rejects to accept him. But rather than hiding and concealing his genealogy and feeling ashamed of his hybrid identity, Root embraces his hybrid identity and works with Yaqui Smuggler Calabazas. Further Root also finds that medicines of white culture are ineffective for his injury. As Root is not accepted by his family after his injury and medicines also prove ineffective to cure him, that is why he rejects Euro-American norms and values. Again, Root also observes that his disability is not noticed by the Native Americans. This shows that Root's disability hardly matters to Native Americans. Because of this reason he embraces the norms and values of Native American culture. Thus, in a stark contrast to Menardo who tries to forget his past and history, Root chooses to remember and embrace his genealogical and familial origin. Menardo's act of forgetting causes his death while Root sustains life even after a drastic accident through his remembrance.

Just like Menardo, Bartolomeo also rejects his past and history. Angelita who understands the power and relevance of history plays the role of judge for the trial of

Bartolomeo. As history carries no existence for Bartolomeo that is why he is sentenced to death because in Native American culture anyone who tends to reject history has to face destruction.

Both Menardo and Bartolomeo make continuous efforts to forget and reject their history which is why they meet death at the end of the novel. While depicting these complex characters of Menardo, Bartolomeo, and Root, Silko makes it clear that our past and history continually interact with the present. Through the acts of remembrance and memory, Silko retells the repressed history, a history that white settlers have always tried to conceal. Through this counter history, Silko demands justice for those who have lost their lives in the past five hundred years. The spirits of these dead people who sacrificed their lives continually howl in the minds of revolutionists and with the help and guidance of spirits, these revolutionists wage war against capitalist destroyers and ultimately succeed.

Silko also clears that without the acceptance and adoption of new technologies and ideas, this war of revolutionists would not have been possible. That is why these revolutionists understand that they must adopt new technological skills and ideas to their culture. These revolutionists know how to use computers and guns in the war. They often travel to different places and speak multiple languages. These revolutionaries from different backgrounds unite and understand that despite their cultural and geographical disparities, their struggles are the same. They all have to unite and stand against their common enemy, the capitalist group of America. This revolutionary group attains success because these people understand their connection with their land and ancestors. While maintaining this belief in culture and history, they are also flexible to accommodate changes in themselves so that they can achieve their goal. This indicates that the idea of hybridity cannot be always a concept of submission. Hybridity is not a negative concept. It can be a strong strategy of resistance and accommodation. Further use of hybridity can also be done to reclaim the lost power identity or to construct a strong new identity. Silko's revolutionary group exemplifies this concept of the resistive nature of hybridity.

To clear her concept of flexibility and adjustability of culture, Silko extends the story of Indigo outside her native culture. Because of unfavorable conditions, Indigo is forced

to stay outside her culture. Although Indigo is born and grown in the Sand Lizard tribe of Native America, she takes no time to adjust to in an altogether different environment provided to her by her self-proclaimed guardians, Hattie and Edward. She not only stays in America but also travels the whole of Europe. Her journey around Europe helps her in a better understanding of multicultural society. Although Indigo lives outside her native place and in a company of people entirely different from her native people, she doesn't forget her own culture. Continuous memories and remembrances of her family members enable her to remain connected with her native land. This strong influence of native culture and people on the mind of Indigo aids in the survival of the tribal culture of Sand Lizard people within and alongside the mainstream culture of white people. Indigo's strong connectedness with her roots and her ability to comprehend multicultural society enable her to return successfully to her native land. After returning in her native place, Indigo brings new life to the people of her land in the form of her story and new seeds. Further Indigo's encounter with the ancient spirits and Ghost Dance in Europe again puts light on the continual presence of the past in the present. Through her travel, readers get the idea that past and present, local and global, rootedness and migration, and nationalism and migration are complementary to each other.

Indigo's transcultural tour allows her to create new hybrid gardens in her native land. However, Edward thinks that being a child, Indigo will be unable to understand the process of creating hybridized gardens but with the help of her comprehension power and strong will, Indigo succeeds and masters creating hybrid gardens. Her action of creating hybrid gardens on native land brings new life and meaning to native communities. These hybrid gardens possess the qualities of subsistence as well as aesthetic values indicating a blend of traditional Sand Lizard tribal gardens and modernized gardens from imported seeds.

The continual process of storytelling in *Storyteller* enables the readers to interpret the role of storytelling and words in the survival and healing process. Silko's stories are not merely concerned with the acts of conveying a message for survival but are also embedded with the acts of paying reverence to the land as well as to animals. Her act of using the technique of storytelling in *Storyteller*, as well as in her other texts enables

her to maintain continuity between the oral narrative method and the written method. By applying the use of multiple mythical figures as carriers of the storytelling process, Silko reveals the continuity of stories and language in the contemporary written world. The use of these mythical figures enables Silko to draw a connection between the mythical and real world. The process of re-telling of old stories enables Silko to connect the past with the present and to indicate not only the pastness of the past but also its present sense. This indicates the relevance of past and history in present situations. The use of myths, rituals, customs, stories, and words intermingle throughout the text to convey the message of Silko. Silko's use of written words enables her to depict the relevance and importance of oral trends in the life of the native generation of America. It is also evident that without the use of literary trends, it would have been impossible for her to revitalize the lost value of native culture and convey her message. Like many other contemporary Native American Writers, Silko finds literary tradition as the best and most appropriate way to revitalize and preserve the oral tradition of aboriginal communities of America. This indicates the necessity of mingling or hybridizing orality with written to keep orality alive. This process of the intermingling of cultural trends of Native America with that of the written world enables the readers to understand and interpret the relationship between the complexity of both worlds.

In all her texts, Silko focuses on the loss and cruelty that foreign settlers have caused. Without understanding the impact of colonialism on the native population, these foreigners did what they wished to do and what was good for them. Their main motif was only a personal benefit. But native communities who were simple and innocent enough to understand the policies of these foreigners became easy prey to these merciless people. Ultimately, cruel actions of European settlers have resulted in the loss of many communities and their culture and tradition. Native American Writers, like Leslie Marmon Silko, consider that instead of brooding over this loss, natives have to re-emerge. If natives want to re-establish their identity, then they have to re-think their past and history. Their lost identity can be reshaped only with the help of their native culture and history. Silko claims that re-visiting of native culture and tradition can be the best strategic move for the Native Americans. While focusing her faith on native culture, these native people who have faced and tolerated cruelties of foreign settlers

for the last five hundred years can re-emerge and re-develop their identities. Silko's continual focus on the oral culture and tradition of Native America, especially the Laguna Pueblo community shows that the native culture of America is not ordinary but possesses the power of creating and recreating the identity of its people. Silko's focus on native culture and nativism is because of the influence of native culture on her and also because of loss of the most of the native cultural trends due to the foreign settlement.

Silko not only repeats the historical trends of native authenticity but also reinvents them within contemporary contact zone so as to regain identity and power that have been lost during colonial activities. While rejuvenating the stories of the past, Silko rejects the self-proclaimed superiority and dominance of mainstream America.

Besides nativism, Silko also speaks about the concept of hybridity. Silko herself possesses mixed blood genealogy and similarly, her mixed blood characters take advantage of their mixed or hybrid identity to demonstrate their power as cosmopolitan navigators. Although because of their hybrid genealogy, these mixed blood characters of Silko's texts face problems of adjustment and identity confusion, their problems vanish with time. These mixed blood characters of hybrid identity are also able to fulfill Silko's main motif of regeneration and renewal of the oral tradition of Native America. Once they realize the uniqueness of their hybrid identity, then they become comfortable in both native cultural communities as well as in modernized communities of settlers. It is also evident that, unlike other characters, these hybrid characters show the maximum capacity for resistance and assimilation. These hybrid characters move beyond boundaries and construct a new space where they can easily reconcile both cultural trends. To represent themselves, these characters of Silko cross all artificial cultural as well as physical boundaries that were once constructed by European settlers to maintain a gap between them and Native Americans. This action of Silko's characters enables them to establish a strong and unshakable identity. Although there is no doubt that these hybrid characters face problems of identity conflict that render them adhere to any of the cultural lineages. But with time and with the help of guidance and learning, these characters are able to regain their stability. After surviving their encounter with a multicultural environment, these mixed-blood characters are finally able to reconcile

themselves with both cultures. This is evident through the depiction of Tayo's and Yaqui sisters Lecha and Zeta's stories. In the case of Tayo, Betonie who already belongs to mixed ancestry plays the role of moderator. While Lecha and Zeta find satisfaction after adhering to native culture with the help of an ancient almanac containing knowledge of native culture, provided to them by their grandmother, Yoeme.

Besides violence and exploitation, colonialism also enabled complex cultural interaction and this interaction of varied cultures enabled the evolution of hybrid cultural identities. Silko through her literary creations considers hybrid cultural identity as a part of cultural transformation and evolution. For her, this hybrid cultural identity does not reflect any loss of pure blood identity but rather, through her literary creations, she considers hybrid cultural identity as a part of cultural transformation and evolution. This concept of cultural evolution is most common among the postcolonial writings about the colonizers and the colonized encounter. Silko's main argument is that culture and traditional heritage play an important role in the life of people and continually exert their influence on them from generation to generation. But Silko also rejects the idea that only with the help of a nativistic spirit, Native American characters can survive. She strongly believes that if Native American characters, especially mixed-blood people, want to survive in the modern multicultural world, then only a nativistic spirit is not enough for them. However, Silko also argues that the culture and tradition of any community or area especially colonized one must be able to accommodate and adjust itself if it is to survive the contemporary situations.

To fulfill these needs, Silko relies on the concepts of nativism and hybridity. Through nativism, Silko seeks to revitalize the relevance of native cultural values in the life of native people and through hybridity, Silko suggests the necessity of cultural accommodation to meet the present situation. Through the concept of hybridity, Silko also seeks to construct a new space that completely rejects European's concept of duality and hegemony. In the texts of Silko, the 'third space' is not merely a nostalgic space; rather it is a new space that opens up new possibilities and through these possibilities, Silko's characters can manage themselves in a new multicultural society. This indicates that Native American people need to adopt a nativistic spirit as well as



the ability to adapt and modify tradition to adjust to modern situations. Without using these strategies, the possibility of living a comfortable life and attaining stability would not have been possible for the characters of Silko. This depicts that not only for Silko's characters of American origin but for all the colonized communities, both strategies are necessary to meet the challenges of the postcolonial world. Postcolonial stability is not possible without understanding these terms. In this way, Silko perceives both nativism and hybridity as strong strategies of resistance and survival in multicultural American society.

The task of the thesis is to locate and analyze the ideological, political, social, and emotional potential of the strategies of hybridity and nativism in the multiple histories of colonial and postcolonial world. Present study aims at studying how like other ethnic groups, Native American communities are constantly changing and evolving due to colonial activities. This enables the field of the study open for further study with regard to the ways with which Native American communities survive in multicultural environment.

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