

Republic of Iraq
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Babylon
College of Education for Human Sciences
Department of English



THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE PAST AND THE PRESENT IN LESLIE MARMON SILKO'S POETRY

A paper

Submitted to the Council of Department of English- College of Education for Human
Sciences, University of Babylon in partial fulfillment of the requirements of B.A in
English Language and Literature

Submitted by :

Ahmed Basim Muhammed

Submitted to:

Assistant Professor Lina Mohsen Abdullah

(بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ)

"وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَمَا كُنْتُمْ"

صدق الله العلي العظيم

سورة الحديد: آية ٤

DEDECATIONS

First of all, I would love to thank God for all the goodness he has shown me throughout my life.

Second, I would love to thank my family who have always supported me and made sure to take a good care of my education.

Third, I would love to thank my teachers and professors for guiding and inspiring me throughout this journey.

Finally, I would love to thank my friends for being kind and supportive .

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would love to thank Assistant Professor. Lina Mohsen Abdullah for being my supervisor. It was an honor to work with her. I could not possibly finish this research without her. She did nothing but guiding and encouraging me for the past few months. All my appreciation and respect go to her.

Table of Contents

Subject	Page
The Title Page	I
Dedication	II
Table of Contents	IV
ABSTRACT	V
Section One	
INTRODUCTION	1
Section Two	
2.1 Leslie Marmon Silko's Life	7
2.2 Leslie Marmon Silko's Literary Relevance and Themes	9
2.3 Leslie Marmon Silko's Works	10
Section Three	
“ Long Time Ago”	14
CONCLUSION	35
NOTES	36

ABSTRACT

American novelist, Leslie Marmon Silko was born on March 5, 1948. She is a prominent member of the First Wave of the Native American Renaissance, as defined by literary critic Kenneth Lincoln. She is a lady of Laguna Pueblo heritage.

She has stayed rooted in the historically rich Laguna Pueblo throughout her career as a writer and educator. Known for her novels and poetry, Silko has dedicated her career to supporting women's causes and raising awareness of systemic racism and white cultural imperialism.

The paper shows how the permanent struggle between the Native people and the Anglo- Americans has influenced Silko. This struggle has inspired her to write poetry and prose discussing Native American problems and trying to find solutions by using traditional myths.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section is about the history of Red Indians and the colonization of the Americas by Europe. It also includes the mentioning of some of the notable modern Red Indian women poets. The second section is related to life, family, education, literary relevance, themes and works of Silko. The third section includes an introduction of her poem "Long Time Ago" followed by an analysis that concentrates on the struggle between the past and the present.

Finally, the conclusion sums up the findings of the research paper.

INTRODUCTION

Native Americans, sometimes called American Indians, First Americans or Indigenous Americans, are the Indigenous peoples of the United States or some parts of it such as Alaska Natives and American Indians from the contiguous United States. The History of Native Americans in the United States returns way back before the country was founded, tens of thousands of years ago with the settlement of the Paleo – Indians in the Americas (1).

With the rise of the geographical discoveries movement in Europe, a major colonization of the Americas took place between the late 15th century and early 19th century (2). Before the European Colonization, Native Americans lived separated from the rest of the world. They founded trade routes that helped the Natives from different regions to be in contact with each other but they did not generally travel far from these familiar environments (3).

Native Americans relied primarily on hunting, fishing and gathering and they lived in small wooden cottages. They were governed by a system of tribes and each tribe has its own rituals, religion and culture. Native American belief system leans toward a universal identity, a harmony of the individual with the tribe, the tribe with the land and the land with the spirit of the universe. They believed that man is good by nature and he should be respected. They believed with the harmony of nature since nature is the center of existence. They believed that one should avoid conflict and submit to what is best for the good of the tribe. Therefore, they lived a life of peace and quiet but that did not last (4).

The European colonization of the Americas began in 1492, as an attempt to overpower the Ottoman Empire. This colonization resulted in an overwhelming decline in the Native American population for a variety of reasons including diseases, conflict, forced removal, enslavement, imprisonment, and continuous warfare between the European colonizers and the Native people.

European colonizers attempted to remove Native Indians from their lands by various ways such as treaties that are made under severe pressure, wars, violent ejection. This act of removal often resulted in Indians losing the means of living because they are restricted only to one land, poor agriculture and conflict between tribes. After the United States was founded as a country, It continued to carry wars against the Native Indians , as a part of its policy of settler colonialism , They launched ethnic cleansing campaigns, removed the Natives from their ancestral lands, forced them to be involved in one- sided treaties and discriminated against them in laws and policies .

Established Native American tribes were generally regarded as semi – independent nations at the time of the Unites States creation, since they lived in specific areas that were separated from European Immigrants. Before the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871 considered Indians as "domestic dependent nations", the federal government entered treaties at a government –to –government level. According to this law, Indians preserved rights and benefits granted by treaties, including a significant amount of tribal sovereignty. The actions of tribal Indians who live in reservations are therefore subject only to federal law and tribal law, since each tribe has its' own tribal court according to the previous act. Law is often applied differently on tribal Indians by exemption, exclusion, treaties, or superseding tribal or federal law (5) .

One of the most influential Native American women poets is Joy Harjo. She is an American poet, singer, dramatist, and author, born on May 9, 1951. Being the first Native American to hold the title, she served as the 23rd Poet Laureate of the United States. In addition, she was the only Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to hold the position for three times, the other being Robert Pinsky. Harjo is an Oce Vpofv (Hickory Ground) and a member of the Muscogee Nation (Este Mvskokvlke). She played a significant role in the late 20th-century literary Native American Renaissance's second wave. She attended the Institute of American Indian Arts,

graduated from the University of New Mexico in 1976 with a bachelor's degree, and went on to the University of Iowa to pursue an MFA in creative writing.

Harjo has written a magnificent amount of work in various genres including theatre, novel and poetry. Themes like social justice, the arts, and self-definition are frequently seen in Harjo's works. She feels that "written text is, for [her], fixed orality" and makes use of Native American oral history to illustrate these points. Through a variety of literature readings and musical performances led by Harjo, she frequently employs the oral tradition. She uses vocal intonation, storytelling, and singing to keep oral tradition alive while grabbing her audiences' attention. She says, "[she] starts not even with an image but a sound," when reading poetry, a statement that reflects her oral traditions as they are performed.

Nine of Harjo's poems were included in her debut book, *The Last Song*, which was released in 1975. Since then, Harjo has written ten books of poetry, the most recent of which is *Weaving Sundown in a Scarlet Light: 50 Poems for 50 Years* (2022); other highly acclaimed books include *An American Sunrise* (2019), which won the Oklahoma Book Award in 2020; *Conflict Resolution for Holy Beings* (2015), which was named a Notable Book of the Year by the American Library Association and shortlisted for the Griffin Prize; and *In Mad Love and War* (1990), which won both the American Book Award and the Delmore Schwartz Memorial Award. *Crazy Brave*, her debut memoir, won the American Book Award and the PEN USA Literary Award in Creative Nonfiction (6).

Another important Native American woman poet is **Gloria Bird**. She is a teacher, poet, essayist, and member of the Spokane Tribe in Washington State. She was born in 1951. Gloria writes for herself and all Native Americans, which makes her Art even more recognizable. Bird's primary goal in her work is to challenge and break down negative perceptions about Native Americans. Her main goal is to accurately teach about her society without taking advantage of its customs.

Bird wrote and had her first poetry book, *Full Moon on the Reservation*, published in 1993. That same year, she won her first writing award. Her second book, *The River of History*, was published in 1997. Writings by Bird have been included in numerous anthologies, such as *Speaking for Generations. Changing the Language Used by the Enemy*. In addition to being a Native American, Bird's literature tells her experiences as a woman living on a reservation. Her goal to politically educate people on how Native Americans are stereotyped by others as well as by themselves and how these standardizations can be dangerous to the Native community drives a lot of her work. Bird writes with passion on the concepts of life, death, and rebirth and hopes to share her poems about gender relations (7).

One of the most brilliant Native American women poets is *Natalie Diaz*. Born on September 4, 1978, She is a Mojave American poet, educator, language activist, former professional basketball player, and winner of the Pulitzer Prize. She goes as Akimel O'odham and is registered in the Gila River Indian Community. At Arizona State University, she is an associate professor at the moment.

Diaz's debut book of poetry, *When My Brother Was an Aztec*, "portrays experiences rooted in Native American life with personal and mythic power" Fiction Book Review: *When My Brother Was an Aztec* by Natalie Diaz. It was a 2012 Lannan Literary Selection, was shortlisted for the 2013 PEN/Open Book Award, and was a 2013 American Book Award winner. One important focus of the book is a sister struggling with her brother's addiction to crystal meth. She was interviewed on PBS News Hour in 2012 regarding her work in language rehabilitation and poetry. She was appointed to Arizona State University's Maxine and Jonathan Marshall Chair in Modern and Contemporary Poetry in 2018.

Her work *Postcolonial Love Poem* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry in 2021. It was described as "a collection of tender, heart-wrenching and defiant poems that explore what it means to love and be loved in an America beset by conflict"2021

Pulitzer Prize Winners. The book was also shortlisted for the 2020 T. S. Eliot Prize, a finalist for the Forward Prize for Best Collection, a finalist for the 2020 Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and a finalist for the 2020 National Book Award (8).

We cannot possibly discuss Native American women poets without mentioning **Leslie Marmon Silko**. American novelist, was born Leslie Marmon on March 5, 1948. She is a prominent member of the First Wave of the Native American Renaissance, as defined by literary critic Kenneth Lincoln. She is a lady of Laguna Pueblo heritage.

She has stayed rooted in the historically rich Laguna Pueblo throughout her career as a writer and educator. Her exposure to the culture has increased her curiosity about maintaining traditional customs and recognizing how the past has influenced modern society. Known for her novels and poetry, Silko has dedicated her career to supporting women's causes and raising awareness of systemic racism and white cultural imperialism. Numerous characters in her books make an effort to strike a balance between the violence of contemporary America and Native American survivalism—a notion that some view as straightforward but unsettling. A periodic topic in the modern Southwest is the conflict of civilizations and the challenging seeking for stability faced by its people.

Her literary contributions are especially significant because they expand the definitions of the American literary tradition that are currently prevalent in Anglo-European minds to include the frequently marginalized customs, values, and identity-related notions that, while broadly defining many American Indian cultures, also form the cornerstone of Silko's Laguna heritage and experience.

Silko's most important novels include:

Ceremony. 1977

Almanac of the Dead. 1991

Gardens in the Dunes.. 2000

Her most important poetry and short collection stories include:

Laguna Women: Poems (1974)

Western Stories (1980)

Storyteller (1981)

Sacred Water: Narratives and Pictures (1994)

Rain (1996)

Love poem and Slim Canyon (1996)

Oceanstory (2011)

Her most important awards include:

The MacArthur Foundation Grant (1981)

The Native Writers' Circle of the Americas Lifetime Achievement Award (1994)

The Robert Kirsch Award (2020) (9)

NOTES

1. "Native Americans in the United States". Wikipedia. Date accessed 17 November, 2023

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States

2. "European Colonization of the Americas". Wikipedia. Date accessed 17 November, 2023

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_colonization_of_the_Americas

3. DiNome, William G. "American Indians Part II: American Indians before European contact". Ncpedia.org . Date accessed 18 November, 2023

<https://www.ncpedia.org/american-indians/before-europeans>

4. Ho, M. K. (1987). Family Therapy with Ethnic Minorities. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. Date accessed 18 November, 2023

<http://www.wellnesscourts.org/files/Duran%20-%20American%20Indian%20Belief%20Systems.pdf>

5. "Native Americans in the Unites States". Wikipedia. Date accessed 17 November, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States

6. Joy Harjo". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 November, 2023

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joy_Harjo

7. "Gloria Bird". Wikipedia. Date Accessed 20 November, 2023

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Bird

8. "Natalie Diaz". Wikipedia. Date accessed 1 December, 2023

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natalie_Diaz

9. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 1 December, 2023

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

SECTION TWO

LESLIE MARMON SILKO: LIFE AND LITERARY CAREER

2.1. Leslie Marmon Silko's Life

Born on March 5, 1948, **Leslie Marmon Silko** is an American novelist who is identified as one of the leading figures of the First Wave of the Native American Renaissance by renowned literary scholar Kenneth Lincoln. She is a lady of Laguna Pueblo descent. Silko was originally awarded a MacArthur Foundation Grant in 1981. The Native Writers' Circle of the Americas Lifetime Achievement Award in 1994 and the Robert Kirsch Award in 2020. She currently resides in Tucson, Arizona. (1)

Leslie Marmon Silko was raised on the Laguna Pueblo reservation after being born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to teacher Mary Virginia Leslie and renowned photographer Leland Howard Marmon. (2) Her family was mixed-race, descended from Mexicans, Native Americans, and White Americans. She states that her father's family was "part Plains Indian" and that her paternal grandmother, who was born in Montana, "never knew" which tribe she came from. Her grandmother's father, on the other hand, was "half German" and had an "Indian" mother. She states that her Kentucky-born maternal grandmother "through her Grandfather Wood" was partially Cherokee. (3)

Silko grew up on the edge of Laguna Pueblo society both literally – her family's house was at the edge of the Laguna Pueblo reservation – and figuratively, as she was not permitted to participate in various tribal rituals or join any of the Pueblo's religious societies. (4) Her father's Laguna blood quantum was one-quarter and hers is one-eighth; the Laguna Pueblo blood quantum requirement for regular membership is one-quarter. (5) She is not an enrolled citizen of the Laguna Pueblo. Calling herself a "mixed-breed", she had said that a sense of community is more important to Native identity than blood quantum: "That's where a person's identity has to come from, not from racial blood quantum levels." (6)

She has described her Marmon family history as "very controversial, even now." She is of Laguna descent through her great-grandfather, a Laguna woman named Maria Anaya/Analla, who was married to a white settler named Robert Gunn Marmon. According to Silko, the core theme of her writing is an attempt to make sense of what it means to be "neither white nor fully traditionally Indian." She identifies culturally as a Laguna woman, but does not claim to be representative of Native voices. (7)

Silko and her two sisters were raised by their storyteller great-grandmother Helen Romero and grandma Lillie Stagner while their parents were at work. (8) During her early years, Silko's grandfather Hank, her aunt Susie, and her grandmother A'mooh taught her a lot of the Laguna people's traditional stories. Growing up between two cultures, Silko has always felt most firmly that she is a Laguna, saying in an interview with Alan Velie, "I am of mixed-breed ancestry, but what I know is Laguna". (9)

Silko went to school on the Laguna reservation until she switched to a Catholic school located in the faraway city of Albuquerque for her fifth grade year. Despite being forbidden from using her grandmother's and aunts' Keresan language, Silko shown academic prowess and graduated with a bachelor's degree from the University of New Mexico in 1969. She attended law school for a short while before dropping out in 1971 to focus on her writing career. (10)

As regarding her personal life, She got married to Richard C. Chapman in 1965, and the two had a son named Robert Chapman before getting divorced in 1969. (11) She got married to John Silko in 1971. Their son, Casimir Silko, was born. (12) Divorce also resulted from this marriage. (13)

2.2. Leslie Marmon Silko's Literary Relevance and Themes

Although Silko is most recognized for her novels, she is also a talented poet. She started writing poems based on traditional tales and customs that her family had

taught her. Her exposure to the culture has heated her curiosity about maintaining traditional customs and comprehending how the past has influenced modern society. Known for her novels and poetry, Silko has dedicated her career to supporting women's causes and raising awareness of systemic racism and white cultural imperialism. (14) Many of the protagonists in her works attempt to find a middle ground between Native American survivalism, which some find simple yet uneasy, and the savagery of modern America. The struggle for stability and the clash of civilizations that its people encounter are frequent topics of discussion in the modern Southwest. (15)

Her contributions to literature are particularly important (16) because they broaden the definitions of the American literary tradition that are currently popular in the minds of Anglo-Europeans to include the often marginalized practices, beliefs, and concepts related to identity that, although broadly defining many American Indian cultures, also constitute the core of Silko's Laguna heritage and experience. (17)

In a 1995 interview conducted in Germany, Silko discussed the importance of her works as a carryover of an oral legacy that the Laguna people already had. She made it clear that her creations convey the same significant lessons as they did when they were first delivered hundreds of years ago and are not retellings of ancient myths. According to Silko, this condition results from the Laguna people's perception of time passing: "The Pueblo people and the indigenous people of the Americas see time as round, not as a long linear string." Something that happened 500 years ago might be very immediate and real if time is rounded and an ocean, yet something insignificant that happened an hour ago might be far distant. (18)

Silko, who is widely regarded as one of the most significant Native American writers of today, crosses cultural boundaries in all of her writing. "In an interview with Thomas Irmer for Write Stuff, I see myself as a member of the global community," Silko said. "My parents, who reared me, considered themselves global citizens. There

are no borders that we can see. I write not just for the United States but for the entire planet." (19)

2.3. Leslie Marmon Silko's Works

A well-known novelist, Silko's debut book *Ceremony* (1977) attracted significant and widespread criticism. The book examines the healing potential of Native American ceremony—not just as formal ritual but as a way of living—and tells the tale of a mixed-race WAR veteran's battle for sanity after returning home from World War II. *Ceremony* made Silko a well-known Native American author and the first Native American woman novelist by portraying life on an Indian reservation and exploring deep philosophical themes. (20) On this account, fellow Pueblo poet Paula Gunn Allen condemned Silko's work, claiming that Silko was revealing secret tribal knowledge that should only be known by the tribe and not by outsiders. (21)

Storyteller, a collection of poetry and short stories by Silko that combined autobiography, mythology, and creative writing, was published in 1981. (22) One of the most significant short stories included in this collection is "Lullaby" which is a typical Silko work, dealing with themes of alienation and generational difference that define the everyday reality of Native Americans. It tells the story of an elderly woman who remembers how her children were once taken away for education and how they returned to a culture that no longer seemed familiar or pleasant. (23) *Storyteller* was well received because it was written in a style like to that of the novel *Ceremony*. (24) In the New York Times Book Review, Pulitzer-prize winning novelist N. Scott Momaday called this collection of works "a rich, many faceted book". (25)

Her friendship with poet James Wright whom she met following the publication of *Ceremony* is another notable aspect of her personality. The book *With the Delicacy and Strength of Lace: Letters Between Leslie Marmon Silko and James Wright* (1986), which won the Boston Globe Book Prize for non-fiction, is a record of their communication. (26)

The epic "*Almanac of the Dead*" ranges over five centuries of the struggle between Native Americans and Europeans and focuses upon a half-breed Tucson family voyaging to Africa and Israel," noted John Domini in the *San Francisco Review of Books*.(27) Several literary critics have been critical of the novel's depiction of homosexuality, based on the fact that the novel features male gay and bisexual characters who are variously abusive, sadistic, and cruel.(28) *Almanac of the Dead* has not achieved the same mainstream success as its predecessor. (29) .

Under her own brand (Flood Plain Press), Silko self-published her multi-genre book *Sacred Water: Narratives and Pictures* (1993). She was thus free to play around with the text's physical arrangement and its use of handcrafted materials. (30) *Sacred Water* is composed of autobiographical prose, poetry and pueblo mythology focusing on the importance and centrality of water to life. (31)

Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit: Essays on Native American Life Today was published by Simon & Schuster in March 1997. The book is a compilation of short stories on a range of subjects, such as her autobiographical essay about racism she experienced as a mixed-blood child growing up in Laguna Pueblo, sharp criticism of President Bill Clinton's immigration policies, appreciation of the creation of the Aztec and Maya codices, and analysis of Pueblo mythology. (32)

According to a reviewer, Silko's pieces "encompass traditional storytelling, discussions of the power of words to the Pueblo, reminiscences on photography, frightening tales of the U.S. border patrol, historical explanations of the Mayan codices, and socio-political commentary on the relationship of the U.S. government to various nations, including the Pueblo". (33) The short story *Yellow Woman* concerns a young woman who becomes romantically and emotionally involved with her kidnapper, despite having a husband and children. The story is related to the traditional Laguna legend/myth of the Yellow Woman. (34)

Flood Plain Press published a small run of hand-bound books by Silko in 1997. *Rain*, like *Sacred Water*, was a mix of poetry and brief autobiographical writing interspersed with her photos. The brief book concentrated on how rain is essential to a person's survival—both physically and spiritually—in the Southwest. (35)

The book *Gardens in the Dunes* came out in 1999. The story of Indigo, a little girl from the mythical "Sand Lizard People" in the Arizona Territory, and her summer travels in Europe as the companion of an aristocratic White woman named Hattie are interwoven with themes of feminism, slavery, conquest, and botany. This story takes place against the backdrop of the California Gold Rush, the establishment of the Ghost Dance Religion, and the enforcement of Indian boarding schools.(36)

Silko published *The Turquoise Ledge: A Memoir* in 2010. With a unique style and structure informed by Native American storytelling customs, the book dives deeply into the author's family history, covering Laguna Pueblo, Cherokee, Mexican, and European histories, as well as the natural world, pain, wisdom, environmentalism, and the sacred. The southwest desert environment is well noticeable. The stylish presentation, while non-fiction, is indicative of creative fiction. (37)

Native American culture and traditions have been always a source of inspiration to Silko. Oral traditions of the Native Americans are prominent in her works as for her, these stories are not just old myths but they are" tools" for the Native people to learn, develop and embrace their heritage and culture. These traditional myths can help the Native people to solve their modern- day problems such as racism, alienation and the clash of civilization with the Anglo-Americans through the rich and effective lessons they include that are considered to be timeless by Silko.

NOTES

1. "About Leslie Marmon Silko". Poets.org. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

<https://poets.org/poet/leslie-marmon-silko>

2. "Leslie Marmon Silko_1948".Nativepartnership.org. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

http://www.nativepartnership.org/site/PageServer?pagename=PWNA_Native_Biography_lesliemarmonsilko#:~:text=Leslie%20Marmon%20Silko%20%2D%201948%2D,on%20the%20Laguna%20Pueblo%20Reservation

3. Silko, Leslie Marmon (1996). *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks. p. 198. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

4. Leslie Marmon Silko. Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

5. Glenn, Cheryl (2004). *Unspoken: A Rhetoric of Silence*. Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press. p. 164. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

6. Chavkin, Allan Richard (2002). *Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony: A Casebook*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press. p. 213. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

7. Silko, Leslie Marmon (1996). *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster. p. 197. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

8. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

9. Nichols, Nafeesa T. (Fall 1997). "Leslie Marmon Silko". Emory University. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

10. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Poetry Foundation. Date accessed 19 January, 2024

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/leslie-marmon-silko>

11. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

12. Silko, Leslie Marmon; Arnold, Ellen L. (2000). Conversations with Leslie Marmon Silko. UP of Mississippi. p.XV. Date accessed 19 January, 2024

13. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

14."Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

15. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

16. Ibid

17. "An Interview with Leslie Marmon Silko". Altx.com. Date accessed 24 January, 2024

<https://www.altx.com/interviews/silko.html>

18. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Poetry Foundation. Date accessed 19 January, 2024

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/leslie-marmon-silko>

19. Ibid

20. Ibid

21. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

22. Ibid

23. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Poetry Foundation. Date accessed 19 January, 2024

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/leslie-marmon-silko>

24. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

25. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Poetry Foundation. Date accessed 19 January, 2024

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/leslie-marmon-silko>

26. Ibid

27. Ibid

28. Romero, Channette. – Project MUSE: "Envisioning a "Network of Tribal Coalitions": Leslie Marmon Silko's Almanac of the Dead". – The American Indian Quarterly. – Volume 26, Number 4, Fall 2002. pp.623–640.

29. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

30. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Poetry Foundation. Date accessed 19 January, 2024

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/leslie-marmon-silko>

31. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

32. Ibid

33. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Poetry Foundation. Date accessed 19 January, 2024

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/leslie-marmon-silko>

34. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko

35. Ibid

36. Ibid

37. Ibid

SECTION THREE

"Long Time Ago"

"Long Time Ago" by Leslie Marmon Silko is a poem which is included in her novel "Ceremony". This poem is a brilliant and effective piece of writing which portrays a world before European arrival and the possible threats it faces in a sophisticated way. (1)

Just before European settlers arrived in the Americas in 1492, the poem is set in that year. Given that the poem can be seen as a prophecy or warning about the disastrous consequences of colonization on Native American societies, this historical context is significant .

The poem narrates a witch competition that took place before to the arrival of any explorers in the New World. The competition progressively gets darker until one witch emerges to tell a tale of the horrors that await the Native people with the arrival of a new human tribe. Through their interactions with the white people, this new set of people, the white people, will change their way of life and culture. The interactions between the Native inhabitants and the newcomers negatively altered their identity. The consequences of globalization befell them. (2)

Globalization is the process by which interactions between different civilizations extend and change the world . (3) Globalization leads to the mixing of various cultures, which causes serious conflicts worldwide. Before globalization, the many cultures coexisted happily without the constant conflict between civilizations that occurs today. (4)

Regarding the structure, the poem was written in free verse. Poetry in the form of free verse is not limited to rhyme or meter, giving the poet greater artistic flexibility and expression. (5) The poem uses free verse, which is in line with Silko's artistic goals of capturing the spirit of Native American oral traditions, narrating the story in a

natural flow, emphasizing imagery and symbolism, allowing for expressive freedom, expressing strong emotions, and reflecting the variety and richness of the poem's themes.

As an emotional portrayal of the terrible impact of colonization on indigenous populations and the balance of nature, Leslie Marmon Silko's poem "Long Time Ago" has great value. Silko describes the separation of colonists from Earth and their fall into violence driven by fear with striking imagery and powerful symbolism. The poem provides a vivid portrayal of how colonization leads to environmental exploitation, cultural loss, and spiritual breakdown. It emphasizes how historical trauma continues to affect Native Americans, challenging readers to face the terrible truths of the past and encouraging a critical analysis of the current effects of imperialist practices.

"Long Time Ago" also represents the determination and resistance of indigenous societies. The references to witchcraft and the impossibility of stopping the dark forces that have been released represent a resilient spirit that survives despite the destruction that has occurred. Relying on Native American oral traditions, Silko connects the poem with storytelling methods which emphasize the value of preserving heritage through the use of free verse and powerful imagery. Within a few stanzas, Silko's poem transforms into an emotionally charged representation of the resilience of indigenous communities, the continuing impacts of colonization, and the need to recognize and correct past mistakes in order to gain a greater awareness of the complex connections between cultural survival and the protection of the environment.

This poem reflects the flow and rhythm of Native American oral traditions, its use of free verse structure is extremely significant. By using this particular creative technique, Silko is able to convey the essence of storytelling in indigenous societies, where stories are passed down from one generation to the next. Because there is no strict rhyme or meter, Silko is able to express emotions freely and smoothly, capturing the depth of feeling associated with the terrible effects of colonization. The free verse

form fits perfectly with the themes of environmental exploitation, cultural isolation, and the long-lasting effects of past trauma. Silko highlights the oral and cultural legacy of Native Americans by using this structure, which makes the poem an emotional representation of the resilience of indigenous societies.

Sections of Leslie Marmon Silko's poem "Long Time Ago" are used to present a prophetic story about the terrible effects of colonization on native societies. The poem opens with a world that is complete and unaffected by European culture. After then, it describes a group of witches from several tribes competing in a dark ritual and revealing horrific methods. A tale predicted by a mysterious storyteller predicts the coming of white people, who are disconnected from the natural world, and the damage that they will cause. The sections enhance the poem's effect by vividly illustrating the inevitable outcomes of colonialism, witchcraft, and the collapse of the natural world while highlighting the destructive and unstoppable forces released by the witches' acts.

(6)

Long time ago

in the beginning

there were no white people in this world

there was nothing European.

And this world might have gone on like that

except for one thing:

witchery.

This world was already complete

even without white people.

There was everything

including witchery. (7)

The poem highlights how complete the world was before the arrival of the Europeans, indicating that all the elements required for a prosperous community were already in existence. The line "there were no white people in this world" implies a period of time before European influence, setting the context for the poem's focus on the impact of their existence. A concept of supernatural components or spiritual practices that were a part of the indigenous civilizations is introduced when the word "witchery" is mentioned. According to the poetry, these customs were already common. The reference of a witch competition indicates a conflict or competition between magic specialists, suggesting towards potential conflicts that may emerge in the face of outside threats. The poem, which takes place in 1492, is a prophecy or warning about the terrible consequences of European colonization. It suggests that the introduction of Europeans will disturb the current balance and result in negative consequences.

Silko paints a picture of the pre-colonial era with colorful images. Words like "this world was already complete" transport the reader into an emotional experience. The poem has a rhythmic nature due to the phrase "Long time ago" being repeated, which highlights how old the events being portrayed are. In the poem, witchery is used as a symbol for native spiritual traditions. Its existence suggests the depth and closeness to the natural world of pre-colonial communities. It is essential to comprehend the historical background. The poem becomes a painful commentary on the effects of colonialism when read in the context of the approaching arrival of European settlers, giving it more depth. The poem is an effective tool for highlighting the possible harm that colonization might bring since it can be seen as having a prophetic tone, as if predicting the results of the meetings with European settlers.

Then it happened.

These witch people got together.

Some came from far far away

across oceans

across mountains.

Some had slanty eyes

others had black skin.

They all got together for a contest

the way people have baseball tournaments

nowadays

except this was a contest

in dark things.

The poem opens with a group of witches from various origins coming together for a competition including dark rituals. This rivalry is a metaphor for the approaching clash of cultures and the negative results that follow. Phrases such as "Some had black skin, others slanty eyes" emphasize the variety of the witch people's origins. This variety serves to support the idea that the threat is a shared problem facing many groups rather than an issue that is limited to just one group. The contest's darker progression leads to a deeper development of the evil events. A witch appears and delivers a story about the horrors that await a new human tribe, indicating the turmoil and transformation that is about to take place. The Native people are

said to be negatively impacted by their interactions with the white immigrants. It is believed that the coming of this new tribe will cause significant changes to the Native American way of life, culture, and identity. The poem suggests that the arrival of white people is an example of globalization, which results in a mixing of cultures. The poem claims that there are negative effects of this interacting, including conflicts and changes that have a damaging impact on the indigenous communities.

Silko emphasizes the variety of the group of witch people's physical characteristics and origins by using colorful and vivid language to express them. This background is made richer and more theatrical by the images. "Contest in dark things" is an effective symbol that refers to the awful and frightening things that will happen when the white settlers arrive, in addition to implying a competition in supernatural prowess. The poem's ability to create an engaging story from the witch competition to the appearance of a storyteller who predicts the future is shown by the story's development. The witch competition and the effects of globalization are connected thematically in the poem. Silko tackles the far-reaching effects of interactions between cultures by relating the exchanges with the white people to the greater idea of globalization. The poem addresses the issue of cultural clash by implying that Native Americans lose their identity as a result of their interactions with White people. Globalization has resulted in changes in culture that have led to this loss.

So anyway

they all go together

witch people from all directions

witches from all the Pueblos

and all the tribes.

They had Navajo witches there,
some from Hopi, and a few from Zuni.
They were having a witches' conference,
that's what it was
Way up in the lava rock hills
north of Canoncito
they got together
to fool around in caves
with their animal skins.
Fox, badger, bobcat, and wolf
they circled the fire
and on the fourth time
they jumped into that animal's skin.

But this time it wasn't enough
and one of them
maybe Sioux or some Eskimos
started showing off.

The meeting of witches from many tribes and Pueblos reflects the spirit of unity among Native Americans. They embrace common traditions and values while

coming together for a common goal despite their diverse cultural backgrounds . In the lava rock hills, the witches perform a ritual that emphasizes the spiritual connection between the people and the earth. The usage of animal skins and the act of jumping into them refer to a spiritual and transformative element that helps the participants establish a connection with the natural world and animal spirits. Using animal skins, such as those from wolves, bobcats, badgers, and foxes, implies a close connection with the animal kingdom. This symbolism may indicate a desire to acquire these creatures' strength and knowledge or to adopt their traits. The gathering's description as a location to "fool around in caves" refers to a playful and joyful atmosphere. The witches have a sense of humor and unity despite the seriousness of their work.

Silko paints a clear picture of the witches around the fire and jumping into animal skins by using strong imagery to portray their gathering in the lava rock hills. The usage of particular animals deepens the symbolism and visual richness. The term "witch people from all directions" is used repeatedly to highlight the gathering's diversity and to emphasize the various indigenous tribes' unity. The circle that surrounds the fire represents a gathering place and ritual center. In many cultures, fire symbolizes transformation and purification and is therefore often associated with spiritual significance. The story is arranged in order, including the gathering, the animal-skin ritual, and the entrance of an outsider or someone showcasing their abilities. The events are presented in a comprehensible and engaging way because to this arrangement.

That wasn't anything

watch this.

The contest started like that.

Then some of them lifted the lids
on their big cooking pots,
calling the rest of them over
to take a look:
dead babies simmering in blood
circles of skull cut away
all the brains sucked out.
Witch medicine
to dry and grind into powder
for new victims.
Others untied skin bundles of disgusting
objects:
dark flints, cinders from burning hogans where
the
dead lay
Whorls of skin
cut from finger tips

Lifting cooking pot lids is described as a horrifying ceremony that involves boiling dead newborns in blood. This ceremonial brutality draws attention to the dark side of witchcraft and the extent to which people will go to gain power. A sensation of horror and cannibalism is created by the images of dead newborns boiling in blood and the removed skull circles. This might serve as evidence for the exploitation or

destruction of life and innocence for an evil purpose. A variety of scary and disgusting objects are represented by the untied skin bundles holding dark flints, cinders from burning hogans, and skin cut from different body parts. These could stand for the evil powers or negative energies that witches have control over. The cycle of victimization and the continuation of damage is indicated by the use of dead babies and body parts to make powders for future victims. It appears that the witches follow rituals that inflict suffering and damage.

The reader is shocked and emotionally affected by Silko's use of vivid and disturbing images. The representation of chopped body parts, skull circles, and dead babies is meant to arouse strong feelings and indicate how disturbing witchcraft is. A strong contrast is created when the dark aspects of the witchcraft competition are presented in contrast to the preceding section's seemingly joyful gathering. This highlights the poem's portrayal of a world where celebration and darkness coexist. The story is made more authentic by the attention to detail, which includes the kinds of items included in the skin bundles and the description of the cooking pots. The vision becomes more powerful and disturbing as a result.

Finally there was only one
who hadn't shown off charms or powers.
The witch stood in the shadows beyond the fire
and no one ever knew where this witch came
from
which tribe

or if it was a woman or a man.

But the important thing was

this witch didn't show off any dark thunder

charcoals

or red ant-hill beads.

This one just told them to listen:

"What I have is a story."

The poem's concluding part exposes the reader to an ambiguous individual who refuses from showing any qualities or abilities. This person emphasizes his mystery by standing in the shadows. This figure's silent invisibility could represent a new type of power, one that depends more on discretion and intelligence than on visible displays. The character in question is different from the other witches; instead of showing off his dark thunder, firewood, and beads, he has the power of storytelling. The focus on a story as the witch's possession highlights the value of oral histories, cultural stories, and narratives as effective means of protecting identity and keeping off outside influences. There is an additional element of mystery resulting from the mystery surrounding the witch's identity, gender, and tribe of origin. This uncertainty may represent the threat's universality, and highlighting the fact that the outcomes of colonization affect all Native American communities generally and aren't limited to just one tribe. The witch's advice to "listen" suggests that being aware of and open to change is essential when it comes to future circumstances. It may be interpreted as a request that everyone nearby become aware of the tales, warnings, and lessons that are going to be revealed. When they listen, they start to fight the forces of disruption that threaten their way of life.

The poem has been set up as a story that develops gradually. It starts with the witch competition, progressively exposing darker aspects, and ends with the appearance of the mysterious storyteller. The development adds to the tension that builds to the important revelation. The poem uses strong, symbolic imagery to portray the dangers that lie ahead. The horrific contents of the cooking pots, dark thunder, firewood, and red ant-hill beads are powerful metaphors of the destructive powers that come with European colonization. Irony is created by the contrast between the other witches' lavish shows of power and the storyteller's modest appearance. The person who uses storytelling—possibly the most powerful tool—does so quietly, while others show their appealing qualities. This indicates the underappreciated influence of stories. The poem functions as a kind of foreshadowing because it is set shortly before European settlers arrive. One way to read the witch competition events is as a preface to the greater story of colonization and how it harmed Native American societies.

At first they all laughed

but this witch said

Okay

go ahead

laugh if you want to

but as I tell the story

it will begin to happen.

Set in motion now

set in motion by our witchery

to work for us.

The witch emphasizes the power of storytelling with her statement about the story starting to emerge. It implies that the story itself begins events and has a transforming power. The importance of oral traditions and storytelling in indigenous societies is emphasized by this theme. The idea that the witchery is being organized for the benefit of the witches implies the use of supernatural techniques to manipulate reality. It presents the idea of supernatural influence and the belief that particular rituals or incantations have magical powers. The witches take control over the situation by laughing and by daring others to laugh if they so want. But the idea that the story will start to emerge adds a layer of consequences, suggesting that their actions, no matter how dark or hilarious, will have consequences that are real.

There's an ironic contrast when the tone changes from one of joy to one of seriousness and forebodingness. The laughing might have at first implied a mocking attitude, but the witch's comment transforms it into a moment of horror and deepens the story. The word "set in motion" is used twice, indicating how determined and intentional the witchcraft is. It supports the theory that the witches' actions are not coincidence but rather the product of a carefully planned strategy with predetermined results. The phrase "as I tell the story," in particular, successfully pulls the reader in through the use of the first-person point of view. It gives the story a more direct and powerful feel by adding a sense of personal engagement and urgency.

Caves across the ocean

in caves of dark hills

white skin people

like the belly of a fish

covered with hair.

Then they grow away from the earth
then they grow away from the sun
then they grow away from the plants and
animals.

They see no life

When they look
they see only objects.

The world is a dead thing for them
the trees and rivers are not alive
the mountains and stones are not alive.

The deer and the bear are objects

They see no life.

They fear

They fear the world.

They destroy what they fear.

They fear themselves.

The wind will blow them across the ocean
thousands of them in giant boats

swarming like larva
out of a crushed ant hill.

They will carry objects

which can shoot death
faster than the eye can see.

They will kill the things they fear
all the animals
the people will starve.

They will poison the water
they will spin the water away
and there will be drought
the people will starve.

They will fear what they find
They will fear the people
They will kill what they fear.

Entire villages will be wiped out

They will slaughter whole tribes.

Corpses for us

Blood for us

Killing killing killing killing

And those they do not kill

will die anyway

at the destruction they see

at the loss

at the loss of the children

the loss will destroy the rest.

Stolen rivers and mountains

the stolen land will eat their hearts

and jerk their mouths from the Mother.

The people will starve.

They will bring terrible diseases

the people have never known.

Entire tribes will die out

covered with festering sores...

vomiting blood.

Corpses for our work

Set in motion now

set in motion by our witchery

set in motion

to work for us

They will take this world from ocean to ocean

they will turn on each other

they will destroy each other

Up here

in these hills

they will find the rocks,

rocks with veins of green and yellow and black.

They will lay the final pattern with these rocks

they will lay it across the world

and explode everything.

The colonists are portrayed in the poem as having lost their connection to life and the natural world. They regard the world as a collection of dead objects, lacking the sacredness and connection that native cultures recognize. Because of this dehumanization, people become less empathetic and more motivated to crush what they fear. The poem paints a clear picture of how colonization has harmed the natural environment. It is said that the colonists are moving away from the sun, the earth, the plant life, and the animals. This disconnect from the natural environment causes the land to be exploited and destroyed, which causes drought, polluted water, and animal and human starvation. For the colonists, fear is their motivator. Their hostility to foreign cultures and the unfamiliar creates violence, genocide, and the ruin of entire villages and tribes. The indigenous populations are shown as dying as a result of diseases and acts of violence brought by the outsiders, who are perceived as a force of death. The great loss that the indigenous people faced is portrayed in the poem. There is a great and widespread grief as a result of their land being destroyed, their people being killed, and diseases spreading across their community. Along with the loss of life, there is also a loss of cultural legacy, a separation from the land, and a lost future for their communities. The poem implies that there is an intentional and evil force driving the colonists' destructive behaviors, suggesting that their actions are set in motion by a form of witchcraft. This could represent the intentional and systematic nature of exploitation and colonization.

Silko creates a striking portrayal of the effects of colonization through rich and powerful images. The metaphorical description of "white skin people like the belly of a fish covered with hair" strikes us as particularly powerful. The word "killing" is used repeatedly to highlight the colonists' brutality and damage. It gives their actions a

rhythmic quality that emphasizes how systematic and determined they are. the wind moving their giant boats over the ocean can be interpreted as a metaphor for the colonization's firm and unstoppable force. The objects that "shoot death" stand for the advances in technology which give colonists authority over native populations. In addition to emphasizing the inevitable and predictable nature of the colonists' acts, the parallel structure of sentences like "They will fear" and "They will kill" adds to the poem's rhythmic flow.

Set in motion now
set in motion
To destroy
To kill
Objects to work for us
objects to act for us
Performing the witchery
for suffering
for torment
for the stillborn
the deformed
the sterile
the dead.

Whirling
Whirling
Whirling
Whirling

set into motion now

set into motion.

The phrases "To destroy" and "To kill" are used repeatedly, emphasizing the destructive forces' unrelenting nature. It supports the theory that the colonists have a strong intention to cause damage and kill people. Referring to "objects to work for us" and "objects to act for us" portrays the colonists as dehumanizing beings who use tools or instruments to achieve their goals. This highlights the dehumanization idea that was mentioned in the sentences before. The poem continues further to portray the colonists' acts as witchcraft, implying premeditated and malicious manipulation. The employment of things in this witchcraft suggests an organized and heartless method of dealing with the pain and suffering committed upon the native people. The references to suffering, torture, stillbirths, injuries, sterility, and the dead draw attention to the variety of outcomes brought about by the colonists' acts. It portrays the terrible effects on both people and the environment. "Whirling" occurs repeatedly to convey a sense of disorder and uncontrollable motion. This could represent the destructive forces gathering steam, thus indicating the sudden and overwhelming nature of colonization.

The poem has a rhythmic and incantatory tone due to the repetition of phrases and words like "set in motion," "Whirling," and "Objects". This repetition serves to emphasize how inevitable and unrelenting the negative forces are. The parallel structure of sentences such as "To kill," "To destroy," "objects to work for us," and "objects to act for us" adds to the poem's systematic and structured tone. It gives the events being described a feeling of purpose and predictability. Words like "whirling" convey thoughts of harmful and destructive power. This imagery adds to the poem's overall tone and heightens its emotional impact. The poem's intensity is enhanced by the lines' directness and briefness. The gravity of the issues being discussed is emphasized by the brief language.

So the other witches said

Okay you win; you take the prize‘

but what you said just now-

it isn't so funny

It doesn't sound so good.

We are doing okay without that kind of thing.

Take it back.

Call that story back".

But the witch just shook its head

at the others in their stinking animal skins, fur

and feathers.

It's already turned loose.

It's already coming.

It can't be called back.

The lines show a power dynamic in which one witch, perhaps the speaker or her substitute, declares herself the winner of a storytelling contest and claims the reward. The other witches' tone, however, conveys anxiety and concern at the story's topic. Power is a theme that comes with consequences and responsibilities. There is a tension between humor and seriousness, as indicated by the witches' disapproval of the story and their belief that it is not humorous. The story of the apparent victor could

have deeper consequences or implications that the other participants find concerning, transforming the tone from humor to worry. The other witches' wish to reject or reverse the story's impact is evident in their requests to "take it back" and "call that story back." Their resistance to the story and its possible outcomes suggests that they are stuck between accepting and rejecting the message or power that is being presented. The witch said, "It's already turned loose," shaking its head. It's arriving already. The line "It can't be called back" creates the unchangeable theme. A tale or power cannot be simply undone or controlled once it has been started. This can represent the lasting impacts of actions and words.

The conversation between the witches is represented in the poem using dialogue. The straightforward statements like "Take it back" and "Okay, you win; you take the prize" "Call that story back," gives the sentences a conversational, direct feel. The vivid picture created by the portrayal of the witches in "stinking animal skins, fur, and feathers" emphasizes their wild or primal nature. The poem's overall atmosphere and characterization are enhanced by this imagery. The line "It's already turned loose" is repeated. "It's already coming" highlights how the consequences described in the story are inevitable and will happen eventually. A feeling of urgency and finality is achieved by this repetition. The witch and her story could represent the impact of stories, words, or actions. The idea that one cannot "call that story back" raises questions about the lasting impact and possible negative effects of storytelling. (8)

NOTES

1. "Long Time Ago by Leslie Marmon Silko: Practice with Poetry " . Teacherspayteachers.com. Date accessed 14 February, 2024

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Long-Time-Ago-by-Leslie-Marmon-Silko-Practice-with-Poetry-3028827>

2. "Long Time Ago Analysis". Bartelby.com. Date accessed 14 February, 2024

<https://www.bartleby.com/essay/Long-Time-Ago-Analysis-F481E185263D54D2>

3. "Globalization". Wikipedia.com. Date accessed 15 February, 2024

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Globalization>

4. "Long Time Ago Analysis". Bartelby.com. Date accessed 14 February, 2024

<https://www.bartleby.com/essay/Long-Time-Ago-Analysis-F481E185263D54D2>

5. "Free Verse Definition ". LitCharts. Date accessed 16 February, 2024

<https://www.litcharts.com/literary-devices-and-terms/free-verse>

6. "Long Time Ago by Leslie Marmon Silko". Poetry Foundation. Date accessed 16 February, 2024

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43173/long-time-ago-56d23b2735da5>.

7. "Long Time Ago by Leslie Marmon Silko". Best-poems.net. Date accessed 15 January, 2024

<https://www.best-poems.net/leslie-marmon-silko/long-time-ago.html> (All the subsequent references to the poem are taken from the same source).

8. Silko, Leslie Marmon. "Ceremony." Penguin Books, 2006.

CONCLUSION

The terror the Red Indians went through due to the colonization of their lands by the Europeans has resulted in a generational trauma. Silko has been struggling from this trauma for her entire life. Even till this day, Red Indians are discriminated by the U.S government. For example, they are forced to live on reservations, do not have access to good education or decent jobs and forced to adapt the western norms. When Silko went to a catholic school, she was forced to neglect her mother tongue and speak only in English. That was probably her first experience with forced assimilation that Red Indians were going through since the beginning of colonization.

Many young Red Indians feel apart from their culture and language since they are forced to adapt the western culture. They are lost between two cultures. That is why in her works, Silko tries to include Red Indian myths, traditions, and beliefs. As for her, these are not some sort of fairytales but they are "tools" for Red Indians to learn, develop and embrace their own heritage. An example of this is her novel *Ceremony* (1977). The book examines the healing potential of Native American ceremony not just as formal ritual but as a way of living.

In many of her works, Silko is trying to say that Red Indians' culture is complete on its own. Red Indian culture does not need western culture in order to thrive and develop. An example of this is her poem "Long Time Ago" which is included in her novel *ceremony* (1977). The first section highlights how complete the world was before the arrival of the Europeans, indicating that all the elements required for a prosperous community were already in existence. She is trying to imply the harm of colonization which resulted in this trauma. In the seventh section of her poem "Long Time Ago" There is a great and widespread grief as a result of their land being destroyed, their people being killed, and diseases spreading across their community.

Along with the loss of life, there is also a loss of cultural legacy, a separation from the land, and a lost future for their communities.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. "About Leslie Marmon Silko". Poets.org. Date accessed 20 January, 2024
<https://poets.org/poet/leslie-marmon-silko>
2. "An Interview with Leslie Marmon Silko". Altx.com. Date accessed 24 January, 2024
<https://www.altx.com/interviews/silko.html>
3. Chavkin, Allan Richard (2002). *Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony: A Casebook*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press. p. 213. Date accessed 20 January, 2024
4. DiNome, William G. "American Indians Part II: American Indians before European contact". Ncpedia.org . Date accessed 18 November, 2023
<https://www.ncpedia.org/american-indians/before-europeans>
5. "European Colonization of the Americas". Wikipedia. Date accessed 17 November, 2023
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_colonization_of_the_Americas
6. "Free Verse Definition ". LitCharts. Date accessed 16 February, 2024
<https://www.litcharts.com/literary-devices-and-terms/free-verse>
7. Glenn, Cheryl (2004). *Unspoken: A Rhetoric of Silence*. Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press. p. 164. Date accessed 20 January, 2024

8. "Globalization". Wikipedia.com. Date accessed 15 February, 2024
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Globalization>
9. "Gloria Bird". Wikipedia. Date Accessed 20 November, 2023
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Bird
10. Ho, M. K. (1987). Family Therapy with Ethnic Minorities. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. Date accessed 18 November, 2023
<http://www.wellnesscourts.org/files/Duran%20-%20American%20Indian%20Belief%20Systems.pdf>
11. "Joy Harjo". Wikipedia. Date accessed 20 November, 2023
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joy_Harjo
12. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Wikipedia. Date accessed 1 December, 2023
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Marmon_Silko
13. "Leslie Marmon Silko_1948".Nativepartnership.org. Date accessed 20 January, 2024
http://www.nativepartnership.org/site/PageServer?pagename=PWNA_Native_Biography_lesliemarmonsilko#:~:text=Leslie%20Marmon%20Silko%20%2D%201948%2D,on%20the%20Laguna%20Pueblo%20Reservation
14. "Leslie Marmon Silko". Poetry Foundation. Date accessed 19 January, 2024
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/leslie-marmon-silko>
- 15."Long Time Ago Analysis". Bartelby.com. Date accessed 14 February, 2024

<https://www.bartleby.com/essay/Long-Time-Ago-Analysis-F481E185263D54D2>

16. "Long Time Ago by Leslie Marmon Silko". Best-poems.net. Date accessed 15 January, 2024

<https://www.best-poems.net/leslie-marmon-silko/long-time-ago.html>

17. "Native Americans in the United States". Wikipedia. Date accessed 17 November, 2023

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States

18. Romero, Channette. – Project MUSE: "Envisioning a "Network of Tribal Coalitions": Leslie Marmon Silko's Almanac of the Dead". – The American Indian Quarterly. – Volume 26, Number 4, Fall 2002. pp.623–640.

19. Silko, Leslie Marmon; Arnold, Ellen L. (2000). Conversations with Leslie Marmon Silko. UP of Mississippi. p.XV. Date accessed 19 January, 2024

20. Silko, Leslie Marmon. "Ceremony." Penguin Books, 2006.

21. Silko, Leslie Marmon (1996). Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks. p. 198. Date accessed 20 January, 2024