

# **THE FICTIONAL WORLDS OF KEKHRIEVOÛ YHOME AND LESLIE MARMON SILKO: A SOCIO-ETHICAL STUDY**

Dissertation submitted to Nagaland University, Kohima Campus in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in English.

By

MISS THEJAZENO YALIE

M.Phil. Registration No: 61/2020

Roll. No: 14/2019

Under the supervision of

PROF. ROSEMARY DZÜVICHÜ



DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND EDUCATION

NAGALAND UNIVERSITY

KOHIMA CAMPUS, MERIEMA-797004

2021



NAGALAND

UNIVERSITY

(A Central University, Established by the Act of Parliament, 35/1989)

Department of English

Kohima Campus, Meriema, 797004 Nagaland, India

**CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION**

I Ms. Thejazeno Yalie, hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **FICTIONAL WORLDS OF KEKHRIEVOÛ YHOME AND LESLIE MARMON SILKO: A SOCIO- ETHICAL STUDY** is the bonafide record of research work done by me under the supervision of **PROF. ROSEMARY DZÜVICHÜ**, Department of English, Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema during the period of my research (2019-2021). The dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any degree, fellowship, diploma to any other universities or institutions. This is being submitted to Nagaland University for the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English.

Date:

(Miss Thejazeno Yalie)

Place: Kohima

Regn.No:61 /2020 N.U. /M.PHIL./ENG.

COUNTERSIGNED:

**PROFESSOR ROSEMARY DZÜVICHÜ****PROFESSOR JANO S. LIGISE**

Supervisor

Head

Department of English

Department of English

Nagaland University,

Nagaland University,

Kohima Campus, Meriema

Kohima Campus, Meriema



NAGALAND

UNIVERSITY

(A Central University, Established by the Act of Parliament, 35/1989)

Department of English

Kohima Campus, Meriema, 797004 Nagaland, India

NU/ENG/2021

### **SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **FICTIONAL WORLDS OF KEKHRIEVOÛ YHOME AND LESLIE MARMON SILKO: A SOCIO- ETHICAL STUDY**, is a bon fide record of research work done by Miss Thejazeno Yalie, Regd. No: 61/2020 N.U./M.PHIL./ENG. Department of English, Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema during 2019-2021 submitted to the Nagaland University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in English. This dissertation has not previously formed the basis of award of any degree, diploma or other title and the dissertation represents independent and original work on the part of the candidate under my supervision. This is again certified that the research has fulfilled the criteria mentioned in the University Ordinances for the submission of the dissertation

Plagiarism test of the dissertation was conducted as per UGC Regulations 2018 and 0% of similarity was detected which is permissible as per rules.

Date:

**PROF. ROSEMARY DZÜVICHÜ**

Place: Kohima

Supervisor

Professor, Department of English

Nagaland University,

Kohima Campus, Meriema.

noreply@ouriginal.com <noreply@ouriginal.com>  
To: nndas@nagalanduniversity.ac.in

Thu, Aug 12, 2021 at 6:18 AM

Document sent by: nndas@nagalanduniversity.ac.in  
Document received: 8/12/2021 2:47:00 AM  
Report generated 8/12/2021 2:48:42 AM by Ouriginal's system for automatic control.

Student message: Thejazeno Yalie M.Phil. Dissertation Plagiarism Test

---

Document : Thejazeno Yalie M.Phil. Dissertation.pdf[D111191221]

IMPORTANT! The analysis contains 1 warning(s).

About 0% of this document consists of text similar to text found in 128 sources. The largest marking is 0 words long and is 0% similar to its primary source.

PLEASE NOTE that the above figures do not automatically mean that there is plagiarism in the document. There may be good reasons as to why parts of a text also appear in other sources. For a reasonable suspicion of academic dishonesty to present itself, the analysis, possibly found sources and the original document need to be examined closely.

Click here to open the analysis:

<https://secure.ourkund.com/view/105962286-638409-334657>

Click here to download the document:

<https://secure.ouriginal.com/archive/download/111191221-904191-429144>



#### Document Information

---

Analyzed document	Thejazeno Yalie M.Phil. Dissertation.pdf (D111191221)
Submitted	8/12/2021 2:47:00 AM
Submitted by	Nigamananda Das
Submitter email	nndas@nagalanduniversity.ac.in
Similarity	0%
Analysis address	nndas.naga@analysis.urkund.com

## **Acknowledgement**

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Almighty God for giving me this opportunity and helping me complete my work in the due course of time. I would like to convey my heartfelt gratitude to Professor Rosemary Dzüvichü for her helpful guidance; her vast knowledge and wealth of experience have inspired me throughout my research. Without her constant support and suggestions, this research work would not have been completed.

I would also like to thank the Department of English, Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema for accepting me to register myself as a research Scholar in the Department. I express my sincere thanks to the Head of English Department, the Dean, School of Humanities & Education, Nagaland University, Kohima Campus and other faculty members of the Department for extending all immense support during my research coursework.

My sincere gratitude and thanks to Nagaland University's librarian and staff for allowing me to access study materials and utilize other existing resources, without which my research would not have been possible.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge my family members, relatives and all my fellow friends for their constant encouragement and support during the course of my research. Lastly, I want to express my gratitude to Madam Kekhrievöü Yhome for allowing me to work on her books and for her valuable time and assistance, all of which contributed to the success of my research.

**(THEJAZENO YALIE)**

## CONTENTS

<b>Candidate's Declaration.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Supervisor's Declaration.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Abbreviation.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
 <b>CHAPTER- I: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	 <b>1 – 17</b>
 <b>CHAPTER-II: ASPECTS OF SOCIO-REALISM IN SELECT</b>	
<b>WORKS OF KEKHRIEVOŮ YHOME.....</b>	<b>18 -33</b>
 <b>CHPATER–III: ECO- CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON THE SELECT</b>	
<b>WORKS OF LESLIE MARMON SILKO.....</b>	<b>34 - 51</b>
 <b>CHAPTER-IV: FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON WORKS OF</b>	
<b>KEKHRIEVOŮ YHOME AND LESLIE</b>	
<b>MARMON SILKO.....</b>	<b>52-72</b>
 <b>CHAPTER-V: ETHICAL VALUES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY</b>	
<b>OF THE TWO WRITERS.....</b>	<b>53-91</b>
 <b>CHAPTER-VI: CONCLUSION.....</b>	 <b>92- 97</b>
 <b>WORKS CITED.....</b>	 <b>98- 105</b>

## ABBREVIATIONS

1. *AOTD* : *Almanac of the Dead*
2. *CM* : *Ceremony*
3. *GITD* : *Gardens in the Dunes*
4. *KNK* : *Kijü Nu Kelhou*
5. *KZ* : *Kephouma Zhakhra*
6. *RM* : *Rünoumolie*
7. *RT* : *Rüleitatuo*



## ABSTRACT

Culture is not only about the economy or the political agendas in a society but also stresses more on its meanings and values, their relationship in communicating and exchanging our own ethnic culture to the society as a whole.

The first chapter of the dissertation begins with the introduction on culture and how ethical study brings about a change in literature. Both the writers in their own language and understanding form a bond with nature and society where family bond and relationship becomes the core aspect of their fiction. Introducing both the writers and giving a brief introduction on their narrative style, themes, traditions and beliefs draws the indigenous voices through mainstream traditional culture in both their works

The second chapter would concentrate on Naga writer Kekhrievouï Yhome and how she perceives the world through her novels, with a focus on four of her selected novels. This chapter will delve into Native Angami Naga traditions, comparing socio-realistic dimensions to those of contemporary artistic styles. As her fiction is written in her own vernacular language, Tenyidie, more attention will be drawn to her art of writing as well as her thematic values and understanding of a patriarchal society bounded by atrocities and discrimination against women in the community.

The third chapter will probe into the artistic narration of the other writer, who is Leslie Marmon Silko, a Native American writer, showcasing her powerful vocals towards her traditional beliefs and bond with nature and the spiritual aspects surrounding society. Silko's form of writing is drawn from her deeply rooted traditional beliefs while growing up through mixed ancestry and gaining knowledge through it. Through eco-critical analysis, the selected

novels will be studied by active participation through natural and spiritual forms probing into her three selected novels.

The fourth chapter will draw on both writers' feminist approaches through their writings, projecting Native beliefs and social norms faced by women across time. Both the writers projected their cultural norms and values on social equality of the sexes.

The fifth chapter will present a comparative study of the two authors, with a focus on the ethical values of Naga society and Native American society as expressed through the selected works. The portrayal of 'Ken'yü' (prohibition) and 'menga' (shame) are strongly penetrated in Yhome's narration while Silko uses her artistic oral traditional beliefs blending with the natural ecosystem in showcasing both their ethical values.

The dissertation will conclude with an overview of Native American and Naga history, in which the social issues will be merged. Mother Earth is in communion with all living things, and culture unites individual from all tribes. Through their narrating, engaging, and communicating, both writers provide moral lessons to their readers.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Culture is an inherent feature of communication, something that is relevant to every group of people from various walks of life. Culture reflects moral and ethical beliefs and standards that speak to how people should behave and interact with others. Native Americans and Nagas have a deep connection with their own distinct culture and identity, enhancing their values and beliefs through the art of writing. From an ethical stance, ethical literary criticism is a theory and approach for reading, interpreting, understanding, analyzing, and evaluating literature. It contends that literature is a historically dependent portrayal of ethics and morality, and that reading literature enhances moral awareness and consequently better ethical decisions. The goal of ethical literary criticism is to discover literature's ethical value. Nie Zhenzhao argues that, "literature is a unique expression of ethic and morality within a certain historical period, and that literature is not just an art of language but rather an art of text" (Zhenzhao 83)

The dissertation seeks to evaluate the works of Silko and Yhome, where the natural world plays an important part in both Native American and Naga society. As such, their engagement with nature and the social boundaries of society is evident in their writings. Using the theories of socio-realism, socio-economics, Feminism, and ethical criticism, it is hoped that further insight into their works will be developed to bring awareness of the importance of nature in communities that have their foundation in the social hegemony of society. Both Kekhrievouï and Leslie embody the varied aspects of cultural norms, customs, and traditional beliefs in their works. The rich cultural heritage

belonging to both the tribes has been blended with an individual's identity and existence, forming a hidden meaning of their belongingness through literature. Kekhrievouï Yhome, a Naga writer who writes in an Angami-Naga dialect called Tenyidie, explores the realistic depiction of the predicament of living in a conflicting era. The author explores the function and position of women in Naga societal tribal customs, as well as the emergence of choices. Through her forceful narration, Yhome explores the structure of the dominant patriarchal culture faced by Naga women, voicing the chain of continuity of the strength of women in forming social family bonds.

Leslie Marmon Silko has emerged as one of the most prominent Native American writers to contribute to the devils of Native American literature; she acknowledges the influence of her own family's storytelling on her method and vision as a result of her mixed ancestry. Her work is primarily concerned with Native Americans' alienation in a white society, as well as the significance of Native traditions and community in helping them to manage modern life. "The notion of culture identifies broadly those patterns of human knowledge that refer to the customary beliefs, social reformations, and traits of racial, religious, or social groups" (Wolfreys 37). Culture is something relevant to every group of people from different walks of life. Both the Native Americans and the Nagas were deeply rooted in their unique culture and identity, deprived of their productive roles in a stereotyped society.

The first chapter of the dissertation begins with an introduction to the culture and how ethical study affects literary change. In their language and understanding, both writers form a bond with nature and society, where family bonds and relationships become the core aspects of their fiction. Introducing both the writers and giving a brief

introduction to their narrative styles, themes, traditions, and beliefs, draws the indigenous voices through mainstream traditional culture in both their works. Culture expresses moral and ethical ideals and standards that govern how people should act and interact with one another. Through the art of writing, Native Americans and Nagas develop profound bonds with their own unique culture and identity, strengthening their values and beliefs.

Contemplating the literary theory of ethical criticism, the dissertation will be studied through socio-realism and eco-critical analysis. Social Realism, also known as socio-realism, is an artistic movement expressed in the visual and other realist arts, which depicts social and racial injustice and economic hardship through unvarnished pictures of life's struggles, often depicting working activities as heroic. Realistic novels can be defined as a fictional attempt to create the illusion of realism by depicting complex characters with mixed motives who are rooted in a social class, operate within a developed social structure, interact with many other characters, and go through plausible, everyday modes of experience. As a manner of writing, realism relies on the use of specific details to interpret life faithfully and objectively. In contrast to romance, this is concerned with the bizarre and psychological in its approach to character, presenting the individual rather than the type.

Often, fate plays an active role in the action. Realism became prominent in the English novel with such writers as Daniel Dafoe, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett, Laurence Sterne, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Anthony Trollope, and William Makepeace Thackeray. Social realism focuses on the lives and living conditions of the working class and the poor. *Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo (1862) is a social

novel about class and the poor in France in the early 1800s. Samuel Clemens, often known as Mark Twain, is one such author from Middle America, where he published *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in 1884. It was the first time a novel captured the distinctive life and voice of that part of the country.

On the other hand, through the works of Leslie Marmon Silko, this paper will give a brief analysis through the use of Eco-critical analysis of Native American literature. In her novel, spirituality constitutes a central part, in contrast to the advent of modernity, with all its iniquities. In *A Glossary of Literary Terms* by M.H. Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham, Eco-criticism has been described as, "the relations between literature and the biological and physical environment through human activities." Eco-criticism was coined in the late 1970s by combining "criticism" with the shortened form of "ecology" – the science that investigates the interrelationships of all forms of plant and animal life with each other and with their physical habitats. A conspicuous feature of eco-criticism is the analysis of the differences in attitudes toward the environment that are attributable to a writer's race, ethnicity, social class, and gender. (96)

Eco-criticism as a new critical discourse analyses literature's engagement with ecologically vital issues and has repeatedly highlighted the need for rediscovering our relationship with the environment around us. Silko's narrative has been celebrated with multiple voices cultivating the spirituality and holistic perspectives of the environment. Social and environmental crises are re-created through a narrative based on human-centered-materialistic, mechanistic, and dualistic worldviews. The natural world is viewed as a living, sacred entity in which each individual feels deeply connected to a

specific physical location and in which humans live in interdependence and reciprocity with other living creatures.

The feminist analysis will also be applied in contemplating the works of both the writers and understanding the concept in a more insightful manner. In her work *Authentic Feminine rhetoric: A Study of Leslie Marmon Silko's Laguna Indian prose and poetry*, Kimberly Manning states, " Leslie Marmon Silko enriches any study of women. Her novel reflects female rhetorical conventions when the purpose, audience, and occasion are constructed and derived from feminine concerns for continuity. To understand Silko's work, one must understand the power of Native American women in general, and the power of women in Silko's Laguna Pueblo tribe specifically "(2).

Yhome, in her fictive discourse, presents the experiences linked to different women where the community and tribe represent where she belongs; the relationships built by women within themselves, sharing their pain and experiences in a patriarchal society are shown throughout her narration. Attempts will be made to highlight the feminist perspective, where both the writers speak of their struggle to bring out a distinctive feature in both their writings.

Themes explored in feminism include patriarchy, stereotyping, objectification, sexual objectification, and oppression. Simon de Beauvoir says, "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (Beauvoir 295), which also argues that there was no such thing as feminine nature. There was no physical or psychological justification for women to be inferior to males, but they have always been regarded as second-class citizens throughout history and throughout communities. Elaine Showalter, an American feminist critic, laid the foundation of the feminist movement, by giving uniformity to the feminist genre of

literature. Showalter, by reexamining cultural literary history, helped women writers to rely more on their personal experience, understand the social psyche of gender differences, and help out with female creative literature.

Some feminists have applied their critical tradition to a large number of women's domestic and sentimental novels, which were noted timidly and derogatorily in the nineteenth century and produced the majority of the best sellers. Concerns about the effects of sex differences on the writing, interpretation, analysis, and assessment of literature appear destined to have the most prominent and lasting effects on literary history, criticism, and academic instruction when conducted by men and women alike. Women are taught to internalize the dominant patriarchal ideology as they are socialized, and as a result, they are conditioned to deny their sex and cooperate in their subordination.

As in the context of Naga literature, the customs and beliefs have been transmitted orally and through folklore, just as in the case of Native American tribe literature. Simon Ortiz in *Reading Native American Literature* by Joseph L. Coulombe quotes, "By our acknowledgement and affirmation, we are empowered, basically and simply, because knowledge shared gained from each other through communication is empowerment. We communicate with others because we need to empower ourselves, especially as Indigenous peoples". Native writers define who they are and inspire a diverse readership by interacting with others, while also empowering themselves. "Most Native authors refrain from inviting readers to investigate the inner workings of tribal beliefs and rituals beyond those already presented within the text, but rather guide them



to find new ways with the requisite information and context to understand" (Coulombe, 6).

The Nagas are essentially an oral society, even after the coming of white people introduced the art of writing and learning. Oral tradition is something that has been deeply rooted since the earliest times and could not be wiped away with a change in westernization. Oral tradition is the foreboding pillar of preserving knowledge and belief by passing it down from generation to generation through different forms of stories, songs, dances, folklore, legends, or the historical origins of the people embodying the rich cultural aspects of the Naga tribe. Oral literature was composed and intended to be heard by listeners who shared the Native language and culture. Naga writers writing in English have gained a wider audience only in recent times since they made a late entry into the world of modern literature in the written tradition. Written literary works started to emerge towards the end of the last century and the beginning of the new millennium and are still comparatively less known in the literature.

Writers writing in English from this region at present are the first generation of writers, giving an in-depth analysis of the cultural hegemony and traditional beliefs of their society. Most traditions in today's concept are not necessarily in the form that was known in the past. Various inventions among different tribal cultures brought about changes even in the writings of modern writers. Most Naga writings are based on or have reflections on the history of the people, which makes it an important aspect of oral tradition to influence the writings of the writers as they were taught the rich cultural norms of the patriarchal system, which can still be seen in today's world. The arrival of the British in Nagaland in 1832, followed by American missionaries, brought about

drastic change among the Naga tribe. Much like the Native American tribes, they passed down ancestral knowledge through storytelling, songs, and poetry. The missionaries set out to instill western education in the Nagas so that they could read the bible and sing hymnals.

Education allowed the Naga people, especially the women, to explore new possibilities beyond the kitchen and fields, and contact with the outside world rapidly threatened the cultural identity of the Naga community. Some prominent Naga writers writing in English and maintaining social decorum in understanding the important traditional aspects of our society are Easterine Kire, Temsula Ao, Nini Lungalang, Monalisa Chakija, Abraham Lotha, Visier Sanyu, T.Keditsu, Renthunglo Shitiri, and many more. "The scribal tradition is a recent one amongst the Nagas," Tilottima Misra writes, "and before the development of a script for the Naga languages through the efforts of the American Baptist missionaries, literature was confined only to the oral form" (3). The Naga community is often seen as putting the community and giving importance to brotherhood before an individual. Many contemporary Naga writers use orality to preserve culture and tradition. They have turned to write to preserve people's stories. Some have taken to writing to reclaim and rewrite history, while others have taken to writing to interrogate gendered roles. Still, others have taken to writing to understand the unadulterated simple philosophies of life, as well as the possibility of fantasy and the supernatural.

Indian Literature is coming to mean, for most people, the works of literature written in English by Native American authors, novels by Native American authors are different from one another in some ways. Each novel presents a very specific view of a

very specific place. The physical setting and the cultural setting are extremely important in understanding the story. Even though there are unmistakably unique characteristics, there are also similarities. Some well-known novels by Native American authors are built around the common theme of alienation and cultural conflict.

Written Native American literary history represents an impressive achievement of wide-ranging styles, opinions, and goals, particularly because many Native writers were compelled to use English rather than their languages. Folktales have been a part of the social and cultural life of American Indian and Eskimo peoples regardless of whether they were sedentary agriculturists or nomadic hunters. As they gathered around a fire at night, Native Americans could be transported to another world through the talent of a good storyteller. The effect was derived not only from the novelty of the tale itself but also from the imaginative skill of the narrator, who often added gestures and songs and occasionally adapted a particular tale to suit a certain culture.

Native American literature did not appear suddenly from avoiding the publication of Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*. Its Pulitzer Prize in 1929 is simply the historical moment when white America and others began to acknowledge the great value of Native writing. John Rollin Ridge (Cherokee) wrote the first Native American novel in English. The epoch of awakening, dubbed the Native American Renaissance by literary critic Kenneth Lincoln, witnessed the production of new Indian texts after Momaday's influential novel and autobiographical memoir, including works by Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna), Simon Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo), Ray Young Bear (Mesquaki) and many more. Native American publications provide a pathway leading readers to a more complete understanding of native history, ideas, and rights. An Indian writer helps readers look

backward to interpret not only the past but also the present. The use of the enemy's language is a powerful weapon in the fight for self-determination and sovereignty for Native Americans.

In various aspects, Native American authors' novels differ from one another. Each novel depicts a unique perspective on a unique location. The physical environment, as well as the cultural setting, are critical to comprehending the narrative. The importance of family and culture is often used to convey a sense of the Native American experience's power as represented through familial bonds. The importance of storytellers, the time given to this activity, and the relevance of mythology to ceremonialism all demonstrate the importance of mythology within a community. Mythology mainly comprises animal stories and stories about personal and social interactions; the actors and characters that appear in these stories are also a reflection of the people's beliefs and customs. For example, Navajo ceremonials, such as chanting, are centered on mythological figures and events. The dancers create masks under tight ceremonial supervision, and when they don them to symbolize the gods, they absorb spiritual power. Aztec sacrifices and rituals are thought to appease the gods, who are mythological heroes.

Kekhrievoü Yhome was born on April 17, 1970, in Kohima village and is currently employed as a full-time Assistant Pastor at the Christian Revival Church in Kohima. Kekhrievoü Yhome is a well-known Naga writer who has made significant contributions to the field of literature by writing in her native language, Angami-Naga. With more than a hundred poems and eleven fictional novels to her credit, Yhome is regarded as the most influential woman in Tenyidie literature. She was also amongst the first Naga women writers who were awarded the Governor's Award in Literature in the

year 2008. (Personal Interview with Kekhrievouï Yhome, 2019) Yhome contemplates her writing with a blend of Christian beliefs and presents the lives of ordinary people exploring the role and status of women in a blended patriarchal society.



Fig.1.1.Kekhrievouï Yhome (Personal Interview)

Reflecting on the community and tribe she belongs to, the writer draws attention to the age-old mindset faced by Naga women through the stories of gender discrimination, identity, abuse, and violence endured by them, both from within their family and outside norms. Some of her novels which I will be working on are *Kephouma Zhakhra (The Reward of Sin)*, *Kijü Nu Kelhou (Life in This World)*, *Rüleitatu (Will Be At Rest)*, and *Rünoumolie (A Regretful Yearning)*. Yhome, through her novels, creates female protagonists and examines their role in constructed family norms, exploring their roles and status as a wife, a mother, and a sister, forming a chain of continuity as Naga women.

Yhome's choice of narration is rebellious, showcasing reality and resentment through a woman's point of view, her choices and way of speaking, and the realization of women being the epitome of strength in Naga societal tradition. Yhome attempts to reconstruct Naga Feminist ideology. In the four novels, the protagonists Medonuo, Khrienuo, Siedzeleü, and Dzieszenuo portray various forms of bond and relationship that either strengthen or break the relationship. Yhome's narratives are framed by the dominant patriarchal society and the sufferings endured by women in various walks of life.

Tradition may be construction, selections, or interventions, but they are not just constructions. Not all cultural phenomena serve this purpose. We should ask what kinds of traditions are selected for revival, and for what reasons. Traditions worthy of revival are cultural phenomena which have ideological value in negotiations of identity" (Sükala, 142). Even among Nagas who write in English, the majority of their stories are reflections on events circulating in their society, based on the historic hegemony of

intrinsic norms and values. Using literature to resurrect traditions, writers construct and reconstruct their beliefs by associating ideological values with those of their identity. Temsula Ao states, "the values and principles embodied in the tradition are based on life and reality, and it has therefore been able to withstand the test of time, and, at times, even adapt to changing circumstances without compromising the basic truths" (Pou, 73).

The frequent challenges of Naga women are stated to be not just inside their families but also in the societal setting, as well as the incredible sacrifices made by women without being recognized. The linguistic diversity among Nagas may also play a role in the use of English as a vehicle for literary expression in the modern era, as evidenced by the ever-growing and emerging range of Naga writers emerging from various sectors of society, bringing to our attention previously unexplored themes, usually centered on social and political issues. The Naga society is a close-knit community.

Leslie Marmon Silko was born in 1948 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and grew up on the outskirts of the Laguna Pueblo; her ancestry is mixed with Laguna Pueblo, Mexican, and Caucasian. She is a poet, novelist, essayist, photographer, and filmmaker, whose work often centers on the dissonance between American Indian and White cultures. She has been widely worked upon by various critics and scholars who focus on the importance of Native traditions and community in helping them cope with modern life. Silko's works explore the redemptive power of Native American ceremonies, making her the first Native American woman novelist. The three novels which will be worked upon are *Ceremony*, *Almanac of the Dead*, and *Garden in the Dunes*, focusing on

her historical themes of land, ethnicity, race, gender, trauma, and healing while examining her narrative craft and her mythic lyricism.



Fig.1.2. Leslie Marmon Silko: internet source

Silko's writing is characterized by an unchanging allegiance to her indigenous worldview and valuable insights into Native American perspectives regarding life and literature. Most of her works depict the backdrop of her cultural wisdom with traits of eco-feminism, following the legacy of the Laguna tribal community to which she belongs. Silko redefines the aesthetic premise of the fictional works, forcing the readers to engage in a cross-cultural dialogue and reshaping the conventions into something that is distinctly indigenous. "In order to resist the narrative employment of their histories and



identities as dictated and controlled by Euro-American worldviews," writes Cynthia Carsten, "Native American writers have had to devise strategies to challenge the ideologies inherent in the dominant culture's convention of knowledge and truth" ( 107).

Silko's mixed ancestry has influenced her work in many ways. Growing up on the edge of the Laguna Pueblo Reservation, her earliest experiences were positioned between cultures. Right from her early schooling, she had witnessed strange treatment from those that had fallen into binary divisions of Native American and white identity. Her main focus primarily went towards the alienation of Native Americans in a white society and the importance of native traditions and community in helping them to manage modern life.

Silko's use of language and relationship to the natural milieu has continued to change throughout her writing career. Her fiction, *Ceremony*, *Almanac of the Dead*, and *Gardens in the Dunes*, includes the overarching message and the language used to set them up. In *Ceremony*, Silko reveals that the evocative passion with which Silko voices his pain, eliciting deep personal identification with Tayo, the protagonist, is the focus of one man's struggle to recover himself by reconnecting with his land and culture. As a result, the novel can be read as a traditional Bildungsroman, allowing the reader to skip the background, the larger cultural context, and the characters. However, the *Almanac of the Dead* defies conventional reading and, as such, is perceived as incoherent, pertaining more to the descriptive apprehension of the whole population rather than a single person, offers a global perspective. Her narrative is more concerned with the parallel discourse illustrating her many controversial characters and their

attempts to control their natural environment and other humans with whom they have a connection.

Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes* features a protagonist, Indigo, who struggles to reconcile two worlds that are opposed. Indigos' trans-cultural travels permit her to create hybrid gardens, rooted in the spirituality of the indigenous people. The novel brings the communion of the spiritual bond manifested with the land. There is a call for spiritual enlightenment through a mutual symbiosis with nature. While all of her works share a fundamental affirmation of Native influence and a critique of colonialism, each novel takes a different approach, with crucial overlaps and interconnections. Through re-telling stories of the past, and conveying traditional mythic figures back into existence in her stories.

Silko provides structure and meaning and the pattern of a relationship between self and Native American identity with the world, both in the past and present. Visualizing the connection between Native American life and tradition, wholeness, and timelessness, as myth and fiction, past and present, is linked in the circularity of the narratives. It also focuses on engaging her historical themes of land, ethnicity, race, gender, trauma, and healing, while examining her narrative craft and her mythic lyricism. Silko, through her themes, presents an awareness of the symbolism of the circle in Native American beliefs, leading the readers to a greater understanding of the Native American perceptions of time, ceremony, ritual, communal healing, and cosmic order.

I will attempt to represent socio-cultural relevance using the novel genre and explore the history, religious beliefs, and relationships between each character through the reading of the two writers, Kekhrievoü Yhome and Leslie Marmon Silko, in their

selected novels. As both writers have their unique way of interpreting their understanding of their native lifestyle, Yhome, as a modern writer, does not use oral traditional norms but rather provides us with a detailed description of the patriarchal society at the time. Her narration is mostly infused with a religious perspective, as she is a strict adherent of Christian norms, as evidenced by the majority of her novels. Silko, on the other hand, is more interested in the oral age-old beliefs of Native American norms. The rituals, hymns, and chants all play an important role in shaping her narrative through her characters, demonstrating nature's power and beauty. Silko considers land to be a living entity, a life- sustaining Mother Earth that nourishes, protects, comforts inspires and gives strength. Her novel reveals the relationship between man and woman as the source of the cultural phenomena that surround.

## CHAPTER II

### ASPECTS OF SOCIO-REALISM IN THE SELECT WORKS OF KEKHRIEVOÛ YHOME

"One of the most important media connecting different cultures is realistic fiction. The more we read about certain people, communities, and the nation through their fiction, the closer they become to us. "

(-Kashyap, *The Peripheral Imagination: Writing Invisible India*)

Fiction is a way for women to bear witness to and participate in the feminine quest to end the war and establish peace. This chapter examines the socio-realism dynamics through the works of Kekhrievoû Yhome, focusing on her artistic style of contemplating discrimination against women through social status and family relationships, not only within their families but also within the social circle of expectations and structures, as her narration vividly demonstrates. Her narrative is framed by the dominant Naga patriarchal structure and the sufferings and denigration of the Naga female. Specifically, focusing on the four novels, namely-*Kephouma Zhakhra* (*The Reward of Sin*), *Kijü nu kelhou* (*Life on This Earth*), *Rünoumolie* (*A Sorrowful Yearning*), and *Rüleitatuö* (*Will be at Rest*), attempts will be made to resonate with the socio-realism of the Native Angami Naga traditions. As the writer writes in his mother tongue, i.e. Tenyidie, translations will be attempted to depict the contemporary dimensions of the authors' artistic nature. By portraying the mundane, everyday

experiences as they are in real life, where familiar people, places, and stories about the middle and lower classes seek to tell a story as truthfully as possible.

Yhome depicts the realities of Naga families who send their spoiled sons to study theology despite their willing participation in doing so in her novel *Kephouma Zhakhra* (*The Reward of Sin*). During this time, wealthy and socially prominent parents see no other way to change their spoiled sons' lifestyles than to find a better alternative. The novel illustrates how women, unwillingly, can be the chief advocates of the traditional status of male superiority over women. Kekhrievöü Yhome through the lives of Medonuo and Neitho-o draws a realistic description of a negligent couple disregarding the social and ethical norms of a responsible parent to an unborn child. Through their relationship, Yhome draws the traumatic experience of "sin" committed by them without realizing the consequences which may be prevalent throughout their entire life.

Yhome, as a Christian, emphasizes the significance of God as the pinnacle of faith. As stated in the Bible, "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). The narration reveals that Medonuo and Neitho-o committed a great sin by aborting their unborn child, which is equivalent to murder. Throughout the novel, Medonuo is haunted by her unborn child, who still holds a grudge against her. We are abruptly described at the beginning of the novel in a situation where the protagonist is "woken up by the cry of an infant"- "Nuoranuo kekra pfhe puo Medonuo peco wa" (K.Z, Yhome 1), which confuses her because she does not understand the meaning behind her dream. In the novel, Medonuo is described as a well-mannered girl who has all the qualities of a perfect Naga lady in the lines:

Puo chü mehe, luo phi mo, puo zie cha, puo nyhüca zivi, puo tiekhietsa  
 puo thathe zivi, puo tha pese pechapfü, puo dzüziepoui mediemerhie,  
 puo pfheü vi, themia kehoupourei ze kepekrolieya Diethomiathocü  
 miapuorei puo le kerüdzaya mo. Puo pfhemenei se puo va si,  
 mesampoucü puo zho. Kitiékinu phere, rüso kracü mechü mezasi. Kehou  
 mhatho petenu keriethe chü mia tazhüya (Yhome, *KZ* 19-21).

Yhome portrays her character as a perfect lady as defined by Naga women's societal expectations. As a pastor's daughter, she is adored by all for her beautiful appearance and determination in life. In contrast, Neitho-o is portrayed as the spoiled rich son. Born and raised in a wealthy family and living a lavish lifestyle, he was known as a womanizer during his youth, and he frequently impregnated different women who were influenced by his parents to abort the child. The neglect of Neitho-o's parents plays a significant role in why Neitho-o is never properly educated. "Puo themia kesuo chüta rei puo krü puo yapiethor. Puo petha monyü puo se puo nei chü. " (Yhome, *KZ* 21)

The narration jumps ahead to a time when both Medonuo and Neitho-o have started their own lives. Medonuo is married to Satuo, and they have two children. We discover that she is dissatisfied with her married life. Her husband is a drunk who has no care in the world and constantly questions her moral values. In one instance, Satuo mocks her for being a pastor's daughter who does not attend church or worship God, as evidenced by the lines spoken to their children, "Ketho zo, n Zuo rei Pastormia nuonuo chü di kehoya mocü a we mengathorlie" (Yhome, *KZ* 2). Which is an ironic statement given that it demonstrates a narrow mindset in which he believes that if his wife attends the service in his place, he will receive blessings from God, which is not the case, as we

must prove ourselves before God through faith and perseverance. This patriarchal mindset is still prevalent in some families today, with women being blamed for their husbands' wrongdoings, highlighting the vivid reality through the character of Satuo.

One of the major themes that emerge throughout the novel is "sin," which is intertwined with guilt and repentance. Both Medonuo and Neitho-o are confronted with the harsh reality of the "sin" they committed in their youth; both are haunted by "the infant cry," which can be interpreted as a punishment from God. Medonuo has a loveless marriage. Neitho is childless. Both yearn for their identity loss, which is tinged with remorse and guilt. Through a church sermon, they are both shaken by the harsh reality of the sin of abortion. In this case, the church represents the truth that both protagonists were unwilling to bear. After hearing the sermon, both characters experience a flashback to the past, which can be seen in the lines, "Neitho-o zhapu dieko sishü mu dopuo nu puo mhathoko mirhi puo nunu petapie puo kieyakezha chü, puo nuonuo biewaketuo, thenumia zekewako puo melou mhiki mecümecie vorta." (Yhome, *KZ* 81).

Medonuo is traumatized and haunted by the infant again after hearing the sermon. In her dream, she hears the baby cry "No a dukhriwa kekra prei sete me? A dukhriewate rei nieko mhie idi lhou vor nyü se ba ru apuo nnie a rei nieko mhie idi lhou vor nyü se bar ru apuo nnie a rei nieko mhie idi a dukhriwateega?" (Yhome, *KZ* 81). In Medonuo's dreams, the infant tortures her. Even before she was born, she was murdered by her parents. The dynamic revelation of both characters is dramatically narrated; with both of them paying for their sins with their deaths in complete distraught and realization. V.K. Nuh states in his *Nagaland Church and Politics* that, "... Nagas should be grateful to God for adopting Christianity as their new way of life and religion because whatever small

achievements that they have so far made are all because of faith. Note the contributions of Christianity to the Naga people” (Nuh 198).

K.B.Veio Pou in his *Literary Cultures of India's Northeast: Naga Writing in English* says that "Conventionally, women in society act as subordinates to their male counterparts, and a docile woman is regarded as suitable family/wife material. Dolly Kikon is also of the opinion that the so-called private domains are often the primary sites of women's oppression," he continues. "Every Naga woman is often "reminded" of her "predestined inferior roles" even at home by her "uncles," "fathers," and "brothers.". Even today, because of all these traditional underpinnings, most women find it difficult to marry the man of their choice” (Pou 166). The above quotations are beautifully depicted in Yhome's novel *Kijü nu Kelhou (Life on this Earth)*. The narration is powerful, bringing out the focus of a single woman struggling in a class-bound society. The protagonist, Khrienuo, faces numerous challenges as the eldest daughter in their family, with four younger siblings to care for after their parents are killed in a tragic accident. She was forced to abandon her studies to work in government service that would help her support her siblings.

Another important theme in the novel is the relationship that women from within themselves share their pains and experiences and form their community in response to men's sexism. The relationship between Khrienuo and her siblings is crucial in depicting realistic attributions at the time. The protagonist is portrayed as a loving, caring, and intelligent young woman who takes on all of the responsibility herself. Education is very important to her because she wants to read and write, and she says, "I would love to go to school but I can't" (Yhome *KNK* 10), but it cannot be prioritized because she needs to



earn a living and support her siblings. She further states, "Nieko u zemiako pete leshü phrü mu u we sorkari lietho chütieyacü menga rei mu mia menguthorlie" (Yhome *KNK* 13). She pines for the days when she was happy in school with her friends, but she is now ashamed of being an orphan who is forced to work instead of study. "Thenumia sü liecie zorei vi, thepfüko bu phrülie morosuo.... Thenumia sü phrü morei vi" (Yhome *KNK* 8). As a woman, she is frequently seen portraying realistic scenes, stating that a girl is supposed to "work in the fields" and "the kitchen," not being "educated," encouraging violence against girls within their homes, and the tradition of not caring about the future of educating girls in their community, sending their brothers to better schools, and the girls are mistreated. We can even find instances of the difference in serving food where the youngest son will be served with the juiciest and tastiest meat, revealing the hidden pains of young girls and women in many Naga homes to date.

The narrative also focuses on the tragedy of a single woman in Naga society, hardworking yet abused, which is reflected in the protagonist. Her decision to leave for a faraway place and even hide her identity by living as Bunuo encourages the redefinition of womanhood and her strength amid adversity, as she is highly regarded and respected in the new place. She finds solace with her adopted daughter, Keneisenuo, and starts a new life with her and leads a more peaceful life. We even see instances in other characters where society disregards the worth of a soul. As an only child, Bode faces adversity and shame. He, like Khrienuo, has been working in the government service for almost three years at a very young age, and he talks about how he has had to suffer in society. In a conversation with Khrienuo, he states, "a zuo thenu kesuocü la zolie A penuokelie mia puorei a pevie mo üsi, a zuo a khawa mu kiya latacü apuotsa, atsa unie

thuo a theke sier". (Yhome *KNK15*) Bode is a young boy who works for a living rather than studying because both of his parents abandoned him after he was born. His mother married another man, leaving him with his grandparents. Bode, such as Khrienuo, cannot afford to study because no one can pay for his education. Khrienuo feels blessed after listening to him because she has her siblings and is not alone. Bode, on the other hand, is rejected by both his parents and society and leads a lonely life. In Naga society, a father and a mother play a really important role in upholding the family status. Without them, society disregards children and forgets about their mere existence.

"Broken promise" and "sacrifice" become the underlying downfall between Khrienuo and her siblings. Zhavi, consoling Khrienuo, says, "Khunhie puo hieko leshü phrülíe di kezha chülie ro n meholietuo, süla n nou kemezhie hicie." (Yhome *KNK 14*). Khrienuo and her siblings' underlying downfall is broken promise and sacrifice. "Khunhie puo hieko leshü phrülíe di kezha chülie ro n meholietuo, süla n nou kemezhie hicie," Zhavi consoles Khrienuo (Yhome *KNK 14*). But, as the novel reveals, Zhavi falls in with the wrong crowd and marries a politician's daughter Grace, who blinds him to the sacrifice Khrienuo had to make. Zhavi disregards his family and abandons his home for good.

In another scene, Satuo Khrienuo's childhood friend asks her for marriage because the two of them had been planning it since they were very young because they both understood each other equally, and despite his lack of wealth, Satuo came from a good family and would have kept Khrienuo happy but Khrienuo turned down the proposal with a heavy heart because her siblings would not allow her to marry. Her siblings were unaware of how important marriage was because they were only concerned

with themselves and what they would do if Khrienuo moved to a new home. Dziesenuo weeps over her sister's remarks, "Khrienuo kiyata ro hieko bu kiü bata? Puo bu kiya lholie... Hieko kru ba mote mu Khrienuo thuo hieko krü chüba, puo bu kiyatatieya ro a bu siatacüwe a neikuo." (Yhome *KNK* 48). We see glimpses of "Khrienuo" in most Naga homes, where most daughters are still stigmatized in their social upbringing. With the arrival of a new era, we have learned the value and equality of a girl child and her educational status in society, but there are still some people who struggle to overcome their conservative norms.

They were all blinded by what society had to offer them when they were young and happy with khrienuo, living a life filled with joy and laughter. Some were swayed politically, while others were intoxicated by liquor and drugs, which completely altered their environment. They all promised Khrienuo a peaceful and happy life if they all grew up and accomplished their dreams. "Hieko khunhie puo kezhamia, kenyimia chülie di n meho phrelietuo. N bu vapuo we ketheguo se di lhoutuo" (Yhome *KNK* 24). She was forced to forego her education and work, as well as refuse her most suitable marriage partner. What Khrienuo received in return for her sacrifice was unimaginable because she did not expect her sibling to abandon her in a place where she felt all alone. Khrienuo was unhappy and ran away from all the negativity, even hiding her identity under a different name where no one would recognize her. She changes her name to Bunuo and even adopts a girl named Keneisenuo, with whom she stays for many years because she felt welcomed in her new world. This demonstrates the strength of a woman who reinvents herself in the face of adversity, as she feels highly respected in her new environment.

*Riinoumolie (A Sorrowful Yearning)* also depicts the recurring theme of alienation and society's marginalized interpretation of women in society. Yhome, in this novel, brings to our attention how women inflict injustice on other women. Khrienuo, the protagonist, is forced into an arranged marriage with Vizo, who is said to come from a powerful family. She, on the other hand, is more inclined to marry Tseilie, whom she believes is more compatible with her because he has known her since childhood. The discrimination she is subjected to is unfathomable. Vizo, as a drunkard, is often viewed as an irresponsible husband because he is unaware that Khrienuo is being mistreated as a "maid" by her mother-in-law and sister-in-law. Khrienuo was filled with regret as a result of this process, which made her feel lost and negatively impacted her mental state. The verbal and physical abuse she was subjected to daily drove her to flee her home. "Tsiemalie vor puo kimia vü puo bu tatanu puo ketse ibaya ketse ibaya." (Yhome, *RM* 10).

Khrienuo expresses resentment toward her family members who arranged her marriage to such a cruel family "Kekhrie kejü kikru"- "a family without love" (Yhome *RM* 1) and swears she will never return to live with them. Khrienuo's sense of identity has been lost, and her heart is filled with anguish and despair as she is unable to change her past while caring for two children. We learn about Khrienuo's mistreatment by her in-laws through the narration. Yhome depicts how women have been treated in a marginalized society through the characters of Khotuo-ü and Konuo. . Pointing fingers and taunting women for not being enough of a woman or for not being able to do household chores has been seen in most Naga families as well, reminding us of our failures and degrading our self-esteem.

When Vizo discovers the entire truth about Khrienuo and their children, the narrative takes a turn. He realizes his mistakes and attempts to change his life by leaving his home and changing his bad habits. He even agrees to live with Khrienuo in her parents' hometown. Yhome here brings to our attention the fact that some people give up their lives for the sake of others, which in some cases is difficult to find. Vizo, as a changed man, assists Khrienuo in shaping her life as well. They both become members of the church community and live happier lives. They begin their relationship with a clean slate, purchasing a plot of land, and never look back on their mistakes in the past.

Death and illness become the primary sources of grief in their lives. The heartbreaking death of Khrienuo's mother is followed by the death of their daughter Senuo from an unknown illness, which completely devastates their family. Vizo's mother, Khotuo-u, also dies, but she is not given a proper send-off for her past wrongdoings against many people, even though she was in her final days. Following Vizo's death, the family is confronted with a slew of challenges. Konuo, her sister-in-law, is a selfish gold-digger who intends to take away all of their wealth and blames Khrienuo for her brother's death, which is ironic given that Konuo never cared for, let alone looked after, her brother in his final days. The death of Khrienuo becomes the focal point for chaos among the children—Sedeo, Neilalie, and Keneinuo. They are humiliated in a society that looks down on orphans and disregards them for being left alone without the identity of their parents.

Though they were not from a poor family, there was no one to look after them, and their social standing declined because they were still too young to care for themselves. Their sole guardian, Aunt Konuo, never took care of them, instead of taking

away all their wealth and home, leaving them completely helpless to the point of forcing Sedeo to work for a living, as their aunt Konuo never supported them financially. The three siblings were completely alone. Neilalie swore to "kill their Aunt" – from the lines "Thiesie a zhalie ro ania dukhriwatuo" (Yhome, *RM* 74) – for torturing them and showing no motherly affection towards them at a young age.

Yhome emphasizes the importance of sin throughout the novel, as the saying goes, "what you sow, so shall you reap." The act of Christianity also becomes a part of their lives, revealing their resentment toward some Christians who are often depicted as mere "churchgoers" with no emotional connection to the needy and helpless. In one case, Sedeo says, "Kekhrie kejü kepelemia mhakipuorei teigei volie lho"-"Christians without genuine faith will never be able to enter heaven." (Yhome, *RM* 91). Sedeo and his siblings' lives are completely transformed after being adopted by a loving couple. Sedeo becomes a successful lawyer; reclaiming everything rightfully theirs from their aunt Konuo and making her pay for her crimes per the law. The novel progresses from a desperate yearning for belonging to its rightful place. Despite their ups and downs, they are endowed with respect and honor in society. With love and understanding of togetherness, the long journey of humiliation has been forgotten. In providing readers with a thought to ponder, Yhome is more inclined to the morality of society.

Yhome's *Rüleitatu* (*Will be at Rest*), shows the skeptic depiction of unhappy arranged marriages in Naga society in the portrayal of a forced arranged marriage of Siedzeleü to Neichüo and the choice of wealth by many families over love and character. This novel focuses on the familial bond between the novel's female characters and how each character portrays the societal outlook of those whose lives take a drastic turn in

their own married life. Yhome depicts the dark side of a married couple bound by the chain of marriage in the novel. This novel depicts the separation of three marriages through the eyes of three women - Siedzeleü, Dzieszenuo, and Avelü. Siedzeleü, the elder sister, was compelled to marry through an arranged marriage. "A bu tsie a kiya chüta hiecie leshü phrü sa nyülie" - "I still want to continue my education, I do not want to get married" (Yhome *RT 1*), but her parents were concerned that she would end up in an unsuitable relationship if she did not marry. Her parents did not trust their daughter and wed her away for political stability, even though Neichüo comes from a powerful family. As Siedzeleü discovers that her husband is a womanizer who maintains a mistress even after their marriage, in a conversation with her sister Dzieszenuo, she states sarcastically that her marriage has "no problem" because it was arranged by her parents and they would not set her up with someone who does not care for her, "U krü dieze di u kiya chücü sü Ketheguothor baya zo " (Yhome, *RT 2*).

*Will be at Rest* brilliantly shows the gap between married couples, the challenges they face in a society where marriage is considered to be a symbol of "purity" and the sacrament of "till death do us part" under any circumstances. When Siedzeleü is questioned by her sister about why she hasn't left Neichüo, she responds that society would hold her responsible for Neichüo's actions, as wives are considered to be the embodiment of virtue in a relationship. For Siedzeleü, the issue of sin lingers. What will become of her children? How will her children react to society's criticism of their parents' marriage? "How will I live as a divorcee?" Marriage is regarded as a form of ritualistic reverence by the Tenyimia people. Not all marriages succeed, which has ramifications not only for the individual but also for society as a whole.

In his book *Literary Cultures of India's Northeast: Naga Writings in English*, K.B. Veio Pou writes, "In the olden days, women in Naga society were primarily regarded as procreative agents." (Pou 104). The novel discusses the status of women in Naga society in the past, which may still hold sway in society to some extent. The common struggle of Naga women, not only within their families but also in the social circle of expectations and structures, is sharply reflected in Yhome's narration. Siedzeleü bears it all for her children because she is unable to escape the clutches of her husband's violence and abuse, Neichüo-o. The relationship between both sisters is important in shaping the plot of the novel, as both women in the novel demonstrate resilience and strength in the face of society's strong staccato.

*Will be at Rest* focuses on alcoholics and womanizers and the tragedy it brings to many Naga families. Violence, alcoholism, and the cycle of patriarchy, protected and preserved by society, including the family and mothers themselves, are revealed through this heart-rending story. The situation of women who are afraid to leave abusive husbands and failed marriages for fear of losing their children brings to light the Naga custom of giving custody of children to the father rather than the mother. The novel depicts men in the novel who realize their folly too late, when their children grow up to be like them, squandering family wealth and name and following in their father's footsteps. Lezo, the eldest son of Siedzeleü and Neichüo, is humiliated and disappointed after discovering his womanizer father and his mother's long-hidden affair.

In one instance, he says of his father, "N la mia dzümengathorte phrü sa lhote khunhie puo nu n petha phrüşü n tsütuo ho, ziezhü kemo kru, pieüboü leshuki nu rei mia pete n dze pute ho"- "I am ashamed to even go to school. I will not go anymore.



Everyone gossips about you," Lezo exclaims angrily. A womanizer and a drunk. I'll teach you a lesson one day" (Yhome, *RT 14* ). Often, according to Yhome, children get out of control due to anger and bitterness, watching their own father's irresponsible ways. It is obvious she refers to the Naga concept of many families spoiling and pampering their sons, thus making them more irresponsible as they grow up. Naga women, on the other hand, are forced to be responsible for their siblings and homes, and this prepares them to be stronger, resilient, and cope with bad situations in life, come what may. The lack of appreciation from children for whom one sacrifices one's happiness and living the reality of many Naga women is exemplified in the life of Siedzeleü.

Avelü's relationship with her drunkard husband, David, is another character in the novels that are marginalized by society. Unlike Siedzeleü, Avelü married the love of her life against her parents' wishes and blames herself for not living a religious life. She is frequently abused by her husband, who causes her to flee, but she returns because she believes it is her way of coping. In one instance, in Siedzeleü, she says, "A zuo we a krus zo üdi a bu a hie di puo la chalienu a kerhierhietayalie... u krü zhoko rei lelie motaya zo", Where the "krus," which means "Holy Cross," represents that she is paying for her own sin and should pray for her husband to change rather than run away from him (Yhome, *RT 18*). The wives' tenacity and devotion in *Will be at Rest*, as well as their belief that rest and peace will only come to women after death, send a strong message about the futility of marriage and relationships in the face of alcoholism or philander by men. The resignation of women to such situations in marriages, bound by tradition and family commitment to marriage, and the honor of the family is stressed by Yhome throughout her novel.

Yhome by describing the daily life of the characters and the working-class people portrays a realistic scene. The corrupt political and economic agendas of the so-called working-class people have been shown to portray the flaws in human nature. In the novels, characters like Sedeo in *A Sorrowful Yearning* and Khrienuo in *Life on This Earth* portray the struggle for survival in a demanding society. They were able to achieve their goals because they never gave up and maintained a positive outlook on life. The struggles and violence endured by the weak and poor resulted in increased moral obligations. While people from radically different economic, social, and ethnic backgrounds created a vibrant culture, it also resulted in social tensions and brought relief to the very wealthy and very poor.

Yhome, through Khrienuo's relationship in *Life on This Earth*, teaches us that wealth and power in society are the biggest downfalls for Zhavi, Ketouzo, and Neizo. Political stability compels them to do things to their sisters that are morally repugnant from one perspective. They receive nothing but misery and failure in return. After struggling to keep up with the class-conscious society, Setuo achieves his goal in *A Sorrowful Yearning* by becoming one of the most respected lawyers in his community, which helped him reclaim his rightful ownership of his land and home, which was snatched by his aunt Konuo. Yhome's novels provide us with an in-depth understanding of each character as well as moral lessons.

The corrupt political and economic agendas of so-called working-class people have been shown to depict flaws in human nature. Their year of educational stability helped them achieve their goals and find peace with themselves as they fought back and broke free from the bonds of self. In *Life on this Earth*, Khrienuo depicts a woman

working in a class-constrained society. The modern educational system has affirmatively allowed women to enter territories that were previously closed to them due to tradition and culture, which can be seen depicted by Yhome in her narration. The weak suffer alongside a society based on class and through the struggles of Sedeo and Khrienuo. Women's economic and social standing has been further eroded by mechanization, government policies, gender discrimination, and other economic changes.

Women's strong matrilineal strength to combat psychological abuse and violence re-creates the ideal way of life in which women with diverse perspectives can represent themselves in their community. The author appears to be actively transferring her own experiences to the characters, Naga women taking control of the chaotic social and political disorder, where their strength helps them triumphantly come out with their love of humanity amidst the oppressive nature of their struggles faced in the existing society.

The bond between Siedzeleü, Dzieszenuo, and Avelü, whose lives take different turns with their relationship status to arranged and love marriage, demonstrating their strength, experience, and resilience, and the price of sin, form a chain of continuity that dramatically changes the course of fame and fortune, showing their strength and experiences, the price of sin where Medonuo is forced to pay for aborting her child, all bring a meaningful description of All these characters have a common struggle not only within their families but also within the social circle of expectations and structures that are sharply penetrated in Yhome's narration.

### CHAPTER III

#### ECO-CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON THE SELECT WORKS OF LESLIE

#### MARMON SILKO

From the ground of her Laguna Pueblo culture, Silko revises both the history and the future of this nation still shaped by the land. Silko was writing at a time of renaissance of indigenous voices in mainstream America she is credited by some for heralding the renewal of traditional culture in her richly interwoven fictional characters, poetry, and the multicultural sense she brings to her life and works. Using her cultural narratives and indigenous discourse, Silko redefines the aesthetic premise of the fictional works she produces. This chapter will focus on the Eco-critical aspects of Silko's select works namely – *Ceremony*, *Almanac of the Dead*, and *Garden in the Dunes*, where *Ceremony* is mostly focused on one character, a mixed-blood protagonist. It deconstructs the racial rift at the heart of American identity and offers on the original presence of the American land itself, the ground as a healing power.

*Almanac* sets up a jarring dialogue without a protagonist, where the brutal chaos of modern cultures unbounded from the land re-emerges prophesying the art of indigenous history. *Garden in the Dunes* reflects the possibility of a historical trajectory moving towards spiritual and mystical recuperation celebrating the healing power of gardens and nature, focusing a cross-cultural dialogue mainly between two women. Silko's three novels explore possibilities for the initiation of compassion, healing, and meaningful alliance, building on the themes of global interconnection and narrating the

parallel reconstruction of postcolonial identities. Her representations of the Native American experience have also revised definitions of what it means to be American.

Silko's narration breaks down the imaginative ideas to the classical categories of class, race, gender, and institutionalizing through American history. In Native American literature, the concept of personal identity and struggles is a controversial subject as the people are subjected to classifications varying on the criteria. People are classified by their family, their community, or the government labeled as full-bloods, half-bloods, mixed blood or one-fourth's or one-eighth's, the people are merely categorized by cultural, linguistic standards which can be seen depicted on Silko's characters. As her work is grounded in her Laguna Pueblo land and culture, Silko's writing exposes dominant ideologies and practices as a contingent built on exploitative economic structures. She makes use of the Laguna view of narratives' ability to contextualize stories by placing the individual experience concerning a communitarian discourse. The language, imagery, and metaphor used by the Native Americans transcend earthly obstacles in preserving the culture, the stories are inherently spiritual, shrouded in symbols from natural plants and animals, earth and sky, fire and water. One of the main themes surrounding the narration is the history of colonization in North America and the disparity in justice and equality for Native American literature.

*Ceremony* deals with the healing process of Tayo who is the protagonist of the novel, as he seeks his cultural identity as a Native American and strives to overcome the alienation between his tribal community and the society dominated by white people. She explores the connection between the characters and they are surrounding rather than investigating their internal lives, and shows how their healing originates from the new

consciousness that extends across the borders of nation and race, criticizing the western capitalist ideologies and violence that caused a disaster. Tayo the male protagonist's journey about his healing is not only a simple story of tribal reunion but also the struggles warned by Silko about the worldwide ecological disaster caused by the western capitalist ideologies and violence.

*Ceremony* becomes a discourse revealing the barren atmosphere of nature exploited by human beings and at the same time an eco-critical outcry designed to bring about social and political obligations towards ecological ideology. Tayo's complicated process of recovery in healing Ceremony illustrates this notion of compassion as the key to larger social change, his mental, emotional, and at times the physical resistance against rejection, abandonment, poverty, loss, and trauma initially kept him from alienated from the ability to experience compassion and find healing by himself and fight his internal struggles to others.

*The novel Ceremony* revolves around the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder of a Native American WWII Veteran, Tayo, and his attempt to heal himself through the traumatic memories recalling the death of his uncle Josiah, as well as the death of his cousin Rocky killed by a Japanese soldier and draws his guilt and disappointment towards alcoholism. Tayo continues to struggle from "battle fatigue" and is haunted by memories of the various deaths surrounding him during the Bataan Death March of 1942. The novel unravels the value of remaining in harmony with one's natural surroundings, and of performing ceremonies as a way to journey back to one's roots. Joseph Meeker defines the western civilization as, "the collective image of the tragic hero facing ecological disaster" and "our presumed conquest over nature has brought little genuine

satisfaction, for with it has come the discovery that our very existence depends upon the complexity of natural systems that were destroyed in the process” ( 35).

Tayo’s unbearable physical suffering, insomnia, and nausea caused by his mental disorder require unconventional healing and lead Tayo to Betonie, a controversial medicine man of mixed ancestry, who combines traditional Navajo Nightway ritual with elements brought by European to America. Betonie’s ritual is personified evil not as white people but as witchery that manipulates people to help Tayo see how his trauma, Native American trauma, and global trauma are caused by the witchery setting people against each other.

Eco-criticism is based on the idea that the core of the environmental crises exemplifies the human alienation from the natural world, suggesting the environmental issues should be a major concern of literary studies and analyses. Silko reminds readers that war and violence are immeasurable in terms of the depth and breadth of the impact on people and nation. Destruction of war and Tayo’s isolation from his home, family, and natural habitat causes depression shell shock because of the white “destroyers”, as Betonie, the traditional medicine man terms them.

Tayo after losing himself to the traumatic experiences intensifies and resorts to an indigenous redeeming ceremony for salvation. Betonie treats him, listens to him advises him to search the lost cattle, and climbs the hills where Tayo’s forefathers have for centuries been performing their ceremonies, “I will bring you back... return to a long life of happiness again” (Silko, *CM* 133). He recites prayers to bring Tayo back to his ancestral heritage and strengthens his exhausted spirit as Betonie understands that it is

only Native American ancestral tradition that takes within its loving embrace by both humans and non-humans.

Tayo's psyche could be reviewed as reflecting a parallel to a larger environmental sphere, for his alienation and loss may reflect the reality of the human condition being uprooted and disconnected from mother earth. His dilemmas represent the complexity of human existence in social and environmental contexts, in which people may not easily identify the root causes of structural, cultural, and ecological violence, and in which they cannot see the pattern of ongoing conflicts. Tayo feels in the breeze, rivers, and springs the effect of uranium waste, it pervades everywhere as cancer and spreads in the body. The Natives are compelled to work in polluted areas and mines leading to their death by disease. Tayo understands the causes and consequences of industrial development and recognizes "the destroyers... working for drought to sear the land, to kill the livestock, to stunt the corn plants and squash in the gardens" (Silko, *CM* 201).

Silko in the novel claims that white ladies' smile for them is not genuine because they are considered sub-human. In one instance a white lady looks at Tayo and Rocky in military uniform and applauds them "God bless you!" but, Silko comments that "it was the uniform, not them, she blessed" (C.M, Silko 38) because after the war the white women did not even like to talk to them. The end of the war means the end of the social acceptance of Native Americans. Silko further states that "The deeds and papers don't mean anything. It is the people who belong to the mountain." (Silko, *CM* 128).



The colonizers' policies have, in the name of civilization, placed at risk their ancestral homelands, snatched their fertilizers' hunting lands, and pushed them into unwanted reservation lands of no agriculture value. Under the influence of the white American colonizers, Tayo is absorbed with hurtful instincts and grows averse to plants and animals whom he now considers not “worth anything anyway” (Silko, *CM* 23) and “slapped at the insects mechanically” (Silko, *CM* 7). He mercilessly kills the flies crawling over Rocky’s dead body, “he had smashed them between his hands” (Silko, *CM* 94), he has even lost love for life. “He didn’t even care anymore if he died” (Silko, *CM* 4), because he feels he died “the way smoke dies, drifting away in the currents of air” (Silko, *CM* 15).

In *Ceremony*, Silko foretells ecological crisis through the destructive force of nuclear weapons and warns white people who think of nature only as an object for developing, possessing, and exploiting nature. Here the nuclear bomb is the white people’s capitalistic greed and violence upon the exploitation of nature. Silko accesses the atomic bomb as a symbol for her vision of humanity and convergence, tapping a powerful cultural practice of seeing the bomb as an inflection point in history. In the novel war brings terror to Tayo and he cannot explain his war experiences to ku’oosh because big guns and mortars were too alien for him to comprehend the war was too catastrophic that even if the old man had seen it with his own eyes, he would not have believed the monstrosity of the affair (Silko, *CM* 33).

Tayo begins his seven-year struggle for healing and, ultimately, remembering mixed-blood males as national subjects through the spectral Josiah's mediation. Silko suggests that remembrance is a primary requirement for such remembering. Despite his

jumbled memories, Tayo remembers what Josiah taught him: “This is where we come from, see. This sand, this stone, these trees, the veins, all the wildflowers. This earth keeps us going” (Silko, *CM* 45). Tayo's first step toward a new subjectivity is to redefine himself in his own words, as "an old text" of his mother's shame. One of the most effective methods for accomplishing this task is to remember "with fresh eyes" and "from a new critical direction." In this novel, Silko's concept of remembrance corresponds to a gendered version, a historical alternative memory to liberate the oppressed subjugated knowledge and repressed memory from hegemonic discourse. Silko critically examines the social construction of Tayo's mixed-blood subjectivity in Laguna society, complicating it by locating World War II as a fundamental break in his subjectivity formation, in preparation for Tayo's subsequent reclaiming of the Laguna as his own home.

During WWII, terrible nuclear weapons “devoured the people in cities twelve thousands miles away” (Silko, *CM* 228), and the Natives were tied down to a new tribe in the face of WWII terror. Silko asserts in the novel that one's responsibility as a human in an era of ecological disaster is to be aware of the fact that "the earth is fragile," as Ku'oosh says in the novel. She blames the leading Western capitalist ideologies based on the concept of perpetual progress for the contemporary world's ecological crisis, claiming that if humans are determined to remain the rulers of nature, we will destroy the ecosystem on which our existence depends.

Silko in *Ceremony* warns of the universal ecological aftermath that will be caused by this capitalism, one who tells the story about the creation of white people in which so-called “the white skin people” are portrayed as troublesome humans who do not live in

organic unity with the ecosystem. The witch portrays the ecological changes resulted from the devastation by white people's capitalistic greed on earth:

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 from them the trees and the rivers are not alive

The mountains and stones are not

alive. The deer and bear are objects They see no life. (Silko, *CM* 135).

White people conquered and tamed nature to create a safe place in which to nurture their capitalism. Silko warns us about ecological disorder and disaster, which will be caused by white people who are engrossed in civilization and development which attacks western humanism at the same time. As the witch describes, white people, in *Ceremony*, are described as exploiters or destroyers who do not stop trying to own the land, mountains, and entire nature. They are digging uranium; the source material of nuclear weapons, which can destroy the whole world, Silko reiterates that it is white colonialist's greedy attitude and violent behavior that generated the destruction of nature after all. Paula Gunn Allen writes, "We are the land, and the land is mother to us all" (Allen 119). She articulates that the organic interdependent relationship between land and people should not be neglected, as humans and nature are elements of an ecosystem in which they have the same ontological value. She also suggests that a nation with the

powerful destructive force of capitalism and colonialism can be the principal offender of the ecosystem.

*Almanac of the Dead* is a sprawling, non-traditional novel set amid geopolitical changes and apocalyptic visions of the future. The novel is an incredibly corrupt and depraved legacy handed down by the United States in the Twentieth century, a legacy that in Silko's view sums up the white man's treatment of the Native American people. Silko's novel was inspired by the ancient Mayan hieroglyphics almanac, or codices, that priests once used to teach children about their culture, mathematics, history, royal lineages, rituals, and prayers. By weaving the elements of the Mayan almanacs into her novels, Silko dispels the notion that Native American literature and natural writing are new genres that first emerge in the 1960s, reminding the readers that indigenous American peoples have been orally recording and writing about their cultures and environments for hundreds, even thousands, of years.

In the *Almanac of the Dead*, Silko uses the unparalleled levels of shadowy, aggressive, and often awful language to illustrate her many controversial characters and their attempts to control their natural environment and other humans with whom they share it. *Almanac of the Dead* features multiple characters, with various plot lines shifting across multiple lands but inter-connected in their desire for a revolution. The destruction of the earth is one of the bases for their shared interest in taking back what is theirs. At the same time, the novel abstains from the essentialist, determinist, and sentimental notions of place- detachment by promoting a concept of indigenous identity that transcends nation, continent, borders, even time, as scholars have shown. Silko

shows how various people from different cultures intermingle and respond in a land that is highly inter-racial.

The novel describes the state of dispossessed and the marginalized, both of the human and non-human sphere, and a way of uniting together to bring about a complete change in the relationship between the human and non-human world. *Almanac of the Dead* begins with a map before the reader simplifying the versions of the borderlands of American Southwest with various cities marked; there are all kinds of arrows and names marked on the outlined territories, but the actual meaning is understood as the reader moves forward into the novel. It depicts the lives of many characters throughout six parts that contain various numbers of books, embedded with short stories. Much of the stories are depicted in the present which further flashbacks towards the mythos of the indigenous people interwoven throughout the plot.

In contrast to the non-indigenous imperialistic invaders is positioned to Sterling and his relationship to Mahastryu, the giant sandstone snake whose reemergence from an abandoned uranium mine on the reservation heralds the return of the tribe's protector. Sterling in the novel is a Laguna Indian exiled from Laguna Pueblo for accidentally allowing a film crew to photograph a sacred stone snake that had mysteriously appeared, he is drawn to the uranium mine like Tayo in *Ceremony*, where he can interpret the meaning of the giant serpent's appearance. In the beginning, Sterling is fascinated with the white image of "Geronimo" illustrating his inability to understand reality in a tribal sense.

Sterling is the only uncorrupted character who leaves the corrupted world behind in the novel and returns to the Stone snake and to his reservation, which helps him realize the sacredness of the earth, the correlation between the life of the individual and the life of the land in Native American literatures- represented here by Sterling and Mahastryu, respectively- is “one of intimate ownership of the land invisible reciprocity”. The answer to Sterling’s survival lies in establishing the value of human accountability to the land rather than succumbing to the non-Laguna concept of human ownership of the land as a worldview that sustains indigenous and non-indigenous populations alike. The connection between human beings, ants, and snakes succumb to the old traditional beliefs:

...the old people believed the ants were messengers to the spirits, the way snakes were. The old people used to give the ants food and pollen and tiny beads as gifts. That way the ants carried human prayers directly underground... Couldn’t think of a prayer to say...the success of the ants lifted his spirits. (Silko, *AOTD* 51-52).

Sterling’s experience with the ants indicates that he accepts the endurance of the earth and its spirit being as part of his existence, which helps us to understand it as an eco-critical novel. In the novel, a secret ‘Almanac’ is in the possession of Yoeme, a Yaqui Indian grandmother who survived the 1910 Mexican Revolution. Yoeme, a twentieth-century witness to the devastating damage being done to the earth, collects copies of these almanacs to document the fact that the Euro –American peoples did not always believe that the earth was dead which could be exploited for personal gain. Yoeme, the almanac keeper, predicts the earth’s gradual return to the ecological balance

in a passage which affirms its faith despite the excesses of the recent human interventions, “Old Yoeme had always said the earth would go on, the earth would outlast anything man did to it, including atomic bomb” she further state, “...humans might not survive”.

Yoeme’s vision of the future mobilizes as the indigenous conception of time based on an understanding of return as embodying difference and continuity, “the plants were consumed and became muscle and bone; and all the time, the energy had only been changing form, nothing had been lost or destroyed” (Silko, *AOTD* 719). Sensing that she is nearing her death, Yoeme passes the collection down her twin granddaughters, Lecha and Zeta, explaining that the book would tell them “who they were and where they had come from” (Silko, *AOTD* 246). And with these documents Lecha, Zeta and the others who care about the Earth will be able to see that the natural group should be allowed to impose their interpretation on others, especially if that interpretation might lead, as Yoeme puts it, to the end of all life on the Earth.

Calabazas explains in *Almanac*, “each location, each place, was a living organism with time running inside it like blood, time that was unique to that place alone” (Silko 29), places being unique because of the time and space which are materially interconnected. The loss of knowledge of specific landscapes is thus a source of evil. Silko’s notion of landscapes includes humans and histories, in Pueblo narratives, “it is impossible to determine which came first, the incident or the geographical feature that begs to be brought alive in a story that features some unusual aspects of this location” (*AOTD* Silko 33).

In another instance, according to Calabazas, the Europeans failed to capture Geronimo because they failed to perceive differences in both features of the landscape and among different Indians. To Europeans the “rock” was just a “rock” wherever they found it, despite obvious differences in shape, size, density, color, or position of the rock relative to all things around it” which made the Yaquis and Apache “ make use of the Europeans’ inability to perceive unique details in the landscape” (Silko, *AOTD* 224-25). The Europeans inability to appreciate the difference in humans and landscapes made the Yaquis and Apaches “exploit the weakness of the whites” (225).

Out of the myriad bunch of characters present in the novel, the characters of Leah Blue and Menardo appear significant in terms of ecological criticism and of the impending role of capitalism and that of the evolution of “whiteness” in the Americas. Leah, an ambitious and unscrupulous European land developer – plans to create a city of the twenty-first century’ Venice, in the desert surrounding Tucson. Leah exploits the relationship between her husband and the corrupt judge for her advantage, her mode of perceiving nature, under the rule of private property and money, is a real contempt for practical degradation of nature. Leah openly acknowledges the fact that she is in the real estate business, “...to make profits, not to save wildlife or save the desert” (Silko, *AOTD* 375). On the other hand, Menardo represents the forces of whiteness that seek to strengthen the underlying quest. Menardo overcomes the social malady that is born of his mixed ancestry by passing himself as a ‘white man’, he marries a rich, educated woman who would insure him the wealth and property owner against natural disasters. And as Silko asserts in the novel, “a great many fools like Menardo would die pretending they were a white man” (Silko, *AOTD* 511).



Silko's *Garden in the Dunes* celebrates the narrative of multiple voices and cultivates the holistic perspectives of the environment, as opposed to human-centered worldviews and global market-oriented mentalities in modern industrialization. The central character is Indigo, an eleven-year-old girl of the disappearing Sand Lizard tribe, a fictional group of Colorado River Indians who lived peacefully, agrarian lives before the invasion of Euro- Americans. Indigo is separated from her mother when soldiers break up a performance of the Ghost dance. Silko's suspenseful tale of separation and reunion, treachery, and revenge is told in rich, lyrical prose, with generous humor and exquisitely detailed description, providing delicious feasts of flavor and scents, color and light, texture and sound.

*Garden in the Dunes*, is an artful work of historical fiction that blended gardening techniques with tribal sovereignty, femininity with fire starting, and a child-friendly adventure narrative with a gruesome meta-narrative of genocide. The novel extends backward and forwards in time from this moment of environmental bliss, revealing that these two girls are the sole survivors of the long-term genocide of their tribe, the Sand Lizards. Originally, they were raised by their mother and her mother, Grandmother Fleet; however their mother is taken away by the ominous "Indian police" and Grandmother Fleet succumbs to old age just after passing on to the girls the ways of tending to "The Old Gardens", a place of physical and spiritual nourishment for their people.

In David L. Moore's book Melisa Levine comments, "Gardens are what unite Silko's diverse cast of characters, suggesting that what makes us human in our impact on our environment. Humans change, mold, manipulate, use and abuse the natural world more than any other species; our differences are defined by our approach to this

relationship - whether we make an attempt to lessen our impact or allow it to rage unfettered” (Moore 226). *Gardens* explore how such ideologies directly influence and helps the readers understand the concept of the text through powerful cultural ideologies. Silko’s textual garden traces long cultural histories, accessing changes in understanding the cultural, political, economic, and scientific aspects of nature which would then change the impact on human conditions.

*Garden in the Dunes* focuses on women, women coming together to form alliances among themselves and with the other living creatures and plants of the earth that will remake the world by restoring life-giving practices of caretaking and inclusivity. Indigo, her sister, her mother, and Grandma Fleet are all part of the Sand Lizard Clan. To an outsider, it may seem like a weird, made-up name, but to them, it is who they are, a unique cultural group that was initially expelled by white men hundreds of years ago. However, they have grown resilient to the outsiders' threats and finds solace in keeping their culture alive than conforming to the norms of the society. The novel explores the elimination of indigenous cultures and identity through re-educating and assimilating the young ones. Through past accounts, the older clan members such as Grandma Fleet recount the various ways the Native communities have been threatened by American culture.

In the novel, Grandma Fleet states: “we are the last remnants of the Sand Lizard clan... So many of us have died it’s no wonder clusters of rain clouds gather over the old garden.” (Silko, *GITD* 48). Through Grandma Fleet’s recollections, Indigo learns about the elements of their clan that has been eliminated over time. Their identity is tied to the land, rainstorm, flora, and fauna and the belief that the spirits of their ancestors persist

through them. Grandma Fleet being the oldest member left brings forth the cultural memory to reconstruct what has been lost. *Gardens in the Dunes* concludes where it began, in the old gardens, with an image of budding life emerging from old scars and wounds. The novel's gardens are the novel's main source of joy and restoration of life. As in *Ceremony* and *Almanac*, Silko creates Native American landscapes in *Gardens* that are hot, dry, and dusty with sparse water sources. Their environment is very spacious, wild, and uncultivated supporting only the growth of desert plants (Yadav 266).

The mutual understanding surrounding Grandma Fleet, Sister Salt, and Indigo's quest for spiritual enlightenment under which they maintain a perfect union with nature in the garden. The image of female characters being enraptured with the land, that Silko creates in her novel further mirrors the idea of affinity where the land being the embodiment of sacredness stands to protect and soothe the pain of the Sand Lizard people. One good example occurs when Sister Salt gets stung by the bees. She has ... "rubbed her swollen arms and legs vigorously and laughed, saying it was good medicine – a good cure for anything that might ail you" (Silko, *GITD* 16).

Indigo struggles to reconcile two worlds that are opposed, where she is forcefully ripped away from her tribe, the Sand Lizard people, by white soldiers, placed in a government school to learn the ways of White America. Indigo appears to be resilient to the cultural and spiritual assault on her native upbringing and stands true to her never-changing interior culture. Edward Palmer meets Indigo and is intrigued by her bright mind and shining spirit. He conceives a plan to adopt her and help his wife Hattie recover from the grief of not being able to conceive a child. Thus Indigo becomes a part of an educated white family who loved her and provides her with comfort and safety. Before

meeting the family Indigo struggles with the environment of the boarding school, the first time that she runs away from the school, she heads into the desert, a space she recognizes and can negotiate but is easily caught then she realizes that the “orange trees would hide her better than the low desert brush” (Silko, *GITD* 69), she does not reject the space because of its association with the Western consumerism and the boarding school but instead focuses on its value to her as it will keep her safe from the trackers.

Silko in the novel writes that in the orchard, “The only sound was the bees, a soothing sound that reminded her of the bees that hovered at the spring above the old gardens. When Indigo was little, Grandma Fleet used to tease that the bees sang a lullaby for Indigo’s nap so she must not disappoint them” (Silko *GITD* 69). Indigo finds peace and connection not only to the land but also to her family too. The relationship between land and family is strengthened when Indigo remembers that “Grandma Fleet still loved them and prayed for them from Cliff Town, where the dead went to stay” (69). Indigo wants to go back to the dunes, but she does not need to be in the dunes to be in an indigenous place. Indigo’s willingness to adapt as adopting Western practices into Sand Lizard culture rather than abandoning Sand Lizard traditions. While in Hattie’s parents’ house, she continues schooling in gardens begun by Grandma Fleet and also incorporates the western texts of books and illustrated plates.

Indigo is especially interested in the images that will help her be able to understand the new plants with what her grandmother has taught her; “Hattie showed her diagrams of lily bulb and a gladiolus corm, Indigo’s expression went from concentration to delight. These bulbs were giants compared to the bulbs of little plants she and Sister Salt used to dig from the sand to eat raw.” (Silko, *GITD* 178). Indigo is not drawn to the

visual drama and scientific achievement of Edward's sister's blue garden, or Aunt Bronwyn's, or even Edward's transplanted plants and hybrids. Instead, she is drawn to the embodiment of these plants of the lessons her Grandma Fleet had taught her, a continuation of the Sand Lizard tradition of growing through adaptation. *Garden in the Dunes* may best exemplify an author's attempt to reconcile the devastating experience of cultural suppression, to understand the other culture, to speak to the other culture, to compare and contrast, and to assert the values that have been lost and which are sorely needed today to achieve the highest good.

As David L. Moore has argued in his book, he states, if Silko has noted, "*Almanac* talks about how capitalism destroys a people, a continent" then *Gardens* "is about what capitalism makes people do to one another" (Moore 226). Moore's innovative scholarship continues to influence work in the field precisely because it facilitates connections between Silko's text and a range of extra and post-textual realities. *Ceremony* ends on a note of hopeful expectation that Mother Earth and the Laguna people can be restored to health if they remember their stories and honor their Mother, while *Almanac* paints a darker picture of a viable planetary future annihilated by the Euro-Americans.

## CHAPTER IV

## FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON WORKS OF KEKHRIEVOU YHOME AND

## LESLIE MARMON SILKO

Women in Indian society have been oppressed, suppressed, victimized, and marginalized in the matters of sharing the availability for the fulfillment of their lives, even though women possess equal capacities, skills, and intelligence, and work wholeheartedly for the development of their families. Women have always been subjugated to man's will, serving as a method of furthering his selfish gratification, tending to his sexual pleasure, and aiding in his comfort, but he has never aspired to raise them to the position they were designed for. He'd tried everything he could to enslave her mind and degrade it. Lerner in *Feminist Consciousness* states, "Consequently, creativity becomes a vehicle and instrument by which women can emancipate themselves, intellectually, to a level from which they can climb out of the confines of the structures of patriarchal hierarchy." (275).

Feminism is a movement that gained recognition potentially in the twentieth century, marking the culmination of two centuries' struggles for cultural roles and socio-political rights. Themes explored in feminism include patriarchy, stereotyping, objectification, sexual understanding, and oppression. In a male-dominated society, a woman is supposed to be an ideal wife, a mother, and an excellent homemaker with various roles in the family. Women's role in society is to be a mother sister or daughters to whom Simone Beauvoir in *Second Sex* says that one is not born a woman, but

becomes one (295), as she believes women to be the real crusaders to bring upheaval in the society and makes changes possible by making aware of their responsibilities.

Elaine Showalter, an American feminist critic, who laid the foundation of the feminist movement, pleaded for one structural framework of the women writers. Showalter is very interested in bringing the feminist genres of literature together, and she encourages women writers to draw on their personal experiences by rewriting their cultural literary past to see the concept of females in literature in a new way. It should be considered as a “specific category, not because of biology, but because it is, in a sense, the literature of the colonized” (Showalter 339).

With the rise of women at different political and social fronts, their voices have become more vocal in the demands to recognize them in terms of status, justice, and rights. The patriarchal context of both Native American and Naga women resonates in the writings of its women, as poems, fiction, essays, or other literary outpourings which are hidden in the historical aspects and existence with their own experience.

This chapter will indulge in the narratives of Kekhrievöü Yhome and Leslie Marmon Silko probing into their perspective on the outlook towards women through their characters. The wave of the women’s liberation movement was felt among the Nagas as well, particularly through education. The recurring themes of women and violence and battered lives, domestic violence, incest, threats, victims of prolonged political conflict are found in both fiction and art. Within this artistic expression, Naga women writers recount historical stories of discrimination, and political consciousness of rights are slowly being recognized. Naga women began to realize how restrictive their

culture has been to them and formed a movement that aimed at freedom from traditional norms that limits their growth.

Naga women's movement has sprung up amid more than half a century of armed political violence and movement of self-determination, which has compounded the violence faced by Naga women. Easterine Kire on this says, "Naga women are far better off than their counterparts 50 years ago....Today there are educated and successful women in every field. Indeed, literary pursuits have become a popular vocation among the women" (Kire *The Citizen*). This shows that Naga women writers are being recognized, and equally important that their narratives are understood, as they are often deeply rooted in the history of the community. Creativity becomes a vehicle and instrument for women to cognitively emancipate themselves to the point where they can climb out of patriarchal hierarchical structures.

Leslie Marmon Silko confutes the colonizing approach by presenting indigenous females as wise and strong characters who have a reciprocal relationship with nature; cultivate different types of plants and vegetables as well as support their male fellows in the renovation of their beliefs and cultural values as well as misused them along with nature. Being an adherent of her tribal culture, Silko attempts to restore the lost religious beliefs and social-cultural values. She opines that females deserve respect for performing their efficient role in the spheres of agricultural and domestic life, Silko believes that a healthy environment is essential for the survival of all human and non-human beings.



Silko aims to take a stand for indigenous women's strong beliefs and cultural customs. As a result, she continues to revive their ancestral culture and religious beliefs while also sharing their tribal stories, countering European invaders' misconceptions about women's communal interactions with their physical environment. The significance of women's connection to nature has never been recognized because they have always been deemed inferior beings with their voices suppressed. "The problem was the books were written by white people," (Silko, *CM* 69).

The process of acquiring gender neutrality for Naga women means addressing male superiority and simultaneously engaging with the psychological trauma of subordination among the women. This gives rise to a conflict between tradition and modernity. Kekhrievoü's two novels *kijü nu kelhou* (*Life on this Earth*) and *Rüleitatuö* (*Will be at Rest*) create women protagonists in re-constructing the role and status of women in creating and taking charge of their family's choices in a marginalized society. Yhome through her characters resonates soundly into the articulation of the subjugated self in a class-dominated society.

The corrupt political and economic agendas of the so-called working-class people have been shown to portray the flaws in human nature. Traditionally, the Naga society was patriarchal, with the 'man' being the head of the family and the genealogy traced through him. The occupations of men and women were clearly distinguished where women adhered to the norms of being limited in doing the household chores and for procreation, being the biologically weaker. While on the other hand men, being the physical embodiment of strength took the outdoor activities and political attributions not attained by women.

Yhome's *Life on this Earth* brings us to the understanding of women being the subjugation of power through the representation of the protagonist in the social outlook towards the silent sufferings endured by women both within and outside their homes. The narration has a strong staccato in bringing an emphasis on the significant cultural history of Naga women which reveals the Feminist discourse among Naga women. The narrative focuses on a young woman in the Naga society, where she is subjugated to the harsh realities of womanhood and is faced redefining her strength where Khrienuo had to sacrifice her future to be an educated woman. With the sudden demise of their parents and being the eldest among her siblings, she has to sacrifice her studies and is forced to get a job in government service to support all her siblings. Through the course of the novel, we find various instances of how the portrayal of women during the time has an impactful understanding in the outlooks towards societal views. In the novel, we also find instances of women discriminating against other women amid crisis.

Aunt Khoü is portrayed in the novel as someone who has strong Christian beliefs and is an ardent worshiper of God but is often seen as a “proud” and “pompous” woman who rebukes Khrienuo for wanting to continue her education. She states, “No need to bother about girls, they don’t need an education. But the boys should continue their studies without any worry” as they would one day become the provider of their own family (Yhome, *KNK* 8). The prestige of the family has become a way of life and many people unknowingly get adapted to this system without any proper misconception or doubt.

Characters like Khoi encourages violence against girl child education, and sending off their brothers for better educational purposes, and discriminating against girl child constraining them only to household chores and even in the distribution of serving food. This shows the cruel hidden pain the Naga girls had to face during the time of adversities in many Naga homes. Various social, cultural values have for centuries assigned women a lower status than men in society and are considered the weaker, lesser, and second sex.

Women almost everywhere are not given the same opportunities which men enjoy for personal growth and social development in education, employment, marriage, and political life. The primary occupation of Naga women in the past was that of a housewife and a mother, secondly, it was farming because of a strong social stance that a women's duty was to work and not to earn; which ultimately results in the girl child becoming illiterate. However, Khrienuo here in the novel is working and providing as well as doing all the household chores and farming as well. Khrienuo's main primary source of happiness is shown by taking care of her siblings rather than her happiness. During those days educated parents were reluctant for their daughter to continue their further studies as they were convinced that a daughter's education would not be fruitful. However, the same parents would expect their daughter-in-law to be highly educated so that they can add more political status to the family conventional norms. Parents still prefer boys over girls because they believe that girls/women would not be able to preserve the ethnic identity of the society.

Yhome through her narration talks about the marriage of the Naga society, When Urvashi Bhutalia says that "when women narrate the nation, they do so rather differently than men," she means that there are "concerns about family" and "contain violence" and even sexual abuse in women's narratives, which are often "unheard and unspoken things." (Pou 167). *Rüleitatuo- Will be at Rest* emphasized the depiction of women's protagonists and a specific feminist expressivity. The familial bond between the three women characters builds up the expression of how women had suffered the silent treatment and the shame of society's outlook towards them.

Siedzeleü being the eldest in the family is forced into an arranged marriage when the influence of family pressure binds them into making choices for the women rather than their own. Avelü on the other hand faces the same emotional outcry living with a drunkard husband; unlike Siedzeleü she marries the love of her life against her parents' consent which makes it unbearably hard for her to complain about her situation. Avelü is sometimes prompted to run away from home but returns to her husband as she feels that it is her wrongdoings that consequently made her be in such a situation in the first place. In one instance she talks about her problems to Siedzeleü, "A nupfu ro theva meze vor hienie nuonuoko rei vü phishüya . Tsiemolie kitiekinu nyako va, a bu rei thepfü pfü sei baya" –" My husband comes home drunk at night and frequently beats up our children, as well as smashing household goods... leaving me bruised." (Yhome, *RT* 11)

Dziesenuo the younger sister of Siedzeleü is portrayed as someone who is strong-willed and is often seen disgusted by the fact that her sister had to go through all the violence and torture. She on the other hand leads a pious life with her husband. When her husband Khrietso asks her what would she do if she was ever abused by him, to which

she replies, “I would beat you to a pulp myself...” Khrietso astonished with her answer states, “No sü thenumia molie, thepfumia ki rei kerüzha” (Yhome, *RT* 5) her husband remarks that Dziesenuo is “more of a man than a woman”. This gesture between the two couples assures us of a hopeful understanding between them which is beautifully depicted by the author. Through the relationship of the three women characters' marital life, Yhome narration focuses on the historical feminist discourse which had been prevalent in the Naga society and some cases are continuing in the present. Siedzeleü's husband Neichü-o keeps a mistress is portrayed as a “womanizer”, but she is unable to escape from the marriage because of her children and bears the abuse and violence in silence.

Yhome's other two novels *Kephouma Zhakhra* (*The Price of sin*) and *Riinoumolie* (*A Sorrowful Yearning*) also penetrate the struggles of Naga women and the label of a ‘typical Naga Women’ is strongly depicted through the characters of Medonuo in *The Reward of Sin* and Khrienueo in *A Sorrowful Yearning*. In the novel, Medonuo is portrayed as a ‘well-mannered girl’, a ‘respectable girl’, a ‘Pastors daughter’ in the society with all the right qualities. Societal expectations also mean that a woman is considered to be good if she is obedient and submissive; and she is expected to perform the role of a wife, mother, and child-bearer which has been set accordingly by the socio-cultural life of the Angami tribal society. Medonuo life came crashing down when she decides to abort her unborn child without any sense of guilt; this made her so-called ‘pure identity’ shattered.

Yhome through the character of Medonuo shows the unimaginable act of ‘abortion’ as to some Nagas abortion becomes an everyday lifestyle which shows the cruel reality of the societal outlook. Procreation being a very important and amazing gift becomes a burden to some women due to not being familiar with its importance during the time. Neichüo-o being portrayed as the many “spoilt rich kid” of the society shows his lack of knowledge about the physical and emotional trauma he inflicts towards the women and as we come to an end towards the narration we find the loss of sense and guilt he goes through paying for his crimes and which leads him to his demise.

Not only discrimination and violence are committed by men, but also in the Naga context, it is perpetuated by women themselves in the form of mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and so on. Gender sensitization and equity are linked with education and the fact is that most Naga mothers and grandmothers of the older generation were uneducated and unaware of women’s rights. Today, Naga feminism is strongly been articulated in poems of younger women in essays, novels drawing the attention of the Naga public and the outside world on the serious questions of gender-based violence and domestic violence behind the fragile veil of Christianity and marriages. Yhome in *Kijü nu Kelhou (Life on This Earth)* in a short abstract at the end states, “Thenu Kevimia kikru, siezedzürie, chienuo, rüna mu seyie chüpevi, chükemashüya derei thenu kesuomia süko chüpesuo mu chüphrowaya.” which is translated as “A good woman will bring your family, relatives, clans, village, and nation together in goodness, but a wicked woman destroys and break them and separate them” (Yhome, *KNK*). Yhome presents her opinions on the importance of social ties within a family structure through her narration.

We see Khrienuo's death at the end of the narrative, as well as her final letter to her siblings and loved ones, which Setuo read to them on her funeral day. The unrelenting journey of a woman's quest to establish a new identity for herself, whom she finds with her daughter as she lives a life on this earth, is depicted in Yhome through Khrienuo's farewell letter. This letter represents her life's ambition, which is written as follows:

‘KIJÜ NU KELHOU’ themia pete u nei tsei zolieya mo iru theruo kesuo  
 jükelie la hieko krü sia zita di hieko bu merünuo chü lhou derei hieko  
 nieu puo kimia unie hieko khriethor di hieko pfü mu hieko pie vor. Hieko  
 nia Khoü thenu kesuopfü la hieko thepesuothorshü mu hieko kikru  
 chüphrowate. A kelhou nu themia a keneitho mu kekhrietho sü Setuo  
 mia puowe. Hienie Kekhrieketho mu keze lhouketuo kepupie tuo derei  
 siezeko la hienie keze lhoulie mote. A Zhavi leshü phrüphrü tuo ru vor a  
 mezhie si mo a petsouta mu hieko kikru si mote, vo ministermia nuonuo  
 lielie di hieko rüchü rei motewe. Ukepenuopfü thuo mha pete kesiu zo,  
 Ketouzo, Neizo unie thuo a meholietieya a bu a kiya chüta hienu tuo ru  
 vor thenu lielie, mhanyilie mu u nupfüo diepfü di a bu uko khieki ba nyü  
 moketa la a tuote. Kezhaleü a khrie mo derei puo nuopfü kesonuo a  
 kekhrie la mha kekra nu a nou thupeluoshüya. A prünuo nupfünuoko uko  
 nuonuo medzü kebachie a bu uko nuonuo mehotuo, siketuo ki a khrie  
 phi ru uko nuonuo ze mota mu a pese vüte. Mhanyilie mu a si mo phrete.  
 Ketouzo Neizo unie rei unie nupfunuo prei di a rükra moketa jathor.  
 Dziesenuo a ze pepetchieta

rei a khruohishüya, puo a ze vo theketaketuo la a kie se derei a volie kenjüketa la puo chamezhiete. Zhavi sü a la we kijü nu lhou ba mote. Khunhie rei hieko üse puo siezedzürüe ücü le tuo mote. Apuo azuo unie sia zita mo ürei a kelhou nu mia menguta lho mu ru... derei themia sü u kekragenyü ketherü phreya. A nou kejako se miapuorei ze keza nyü mote mu a siezeko zho la a kelhou nu rünuo mo tseite. Khunhie puo uko rei uko kejoko silietuo nhiecü peleya. Mia a dze si motocü ra tuota nyü div or hanu lhoulie. A kelhou mehokeshü ki kijü nu a rübei kelhou chü a kenei a nou kemvü lalie di lhou a nei vorwe. A Ukepenuopfü za nu a siezeko kejo vawate mu uko bu a gei chükeshü mhiei chüpie mia kekreamia gei shü sa hiecie. A nieko theke kevor zha chüpie a tsü motarei Keneisenuo gei mhasi mota hiecie. Nieko la kijü nu kelhou mengu mo di rüleitshüiketa mengu kelho vortewe. Setuo n kimia a kekhrieko la nnie peziethor mu a kekhriemiako pete pezie ho.” (Yhome, *KNK* 122-123).

She explains in the letter about their parents' untimely deaths and how Aunt Khoü took them in and used them against each other, eventually causing them to split up due to misunderstandings. Khrienuo also discusses her eternal love and understanding for Setuo, as well as the times when they made a commitment to spend the rest of their lives together but were unable to do so owing to her siblings' disapproval. Khrienuo describes her relationship with Zhavi, Ketouzo, Neizo, and Dzieszenuo in her letter, describing how she sacrificed her love, longing dream, and education for them. She hoped that one day they would grow up to be someone she could be proud of and achieve the ambitions she



couldn't. She expressed her dissatisfaction with Zhavi, claiming that he was already "dead" to her because he abandoned them all for the sake of power and money, never looking back or even supporting her in her hardships. Ketouzo and Neizo, on the other hand, never believed her or stood up for her, allowing their wives' lies to mislead them and cause misunderstandings amongst them. But, at the end of the letter, she expresses no anger for them and, in the name of God, forgives them for their mistakes. Khrienuo even requested them to take care of Keneisenuo as their own and prays that her siblings will not make the same mistakes by discriminating against her (Yhome, *KNK* 122-123).

Even though Khrienuo faces a lot of opposition in many ways due to her aunt and siblings' deeply ingrained notions of being a dutiful woman in supporting them, she can overcome all of those negative feelings. Through all of the emotional and physical hardships, she was able to work and assist her siblings, and she was able to discover herself amidst the chaos. For Naga women to achieve gender neutrality, they must challenge male superiority while also dealing with the psychological trauma of subjugation, resulting in a clash between tradition and modernity.

Native American women authors have received little attention from feminist views, which can inherently is the approach to a written text by an indigenous woman with the concept of oppression or passivity of Native American women within their tribal community. Silko's texts have been widely viewed as authentic feminine writings, as she comes from a tribe that has always been matriarchal. Leslie's narration enriches the study of women, reflecting on the female rhetorical conventions through the exploration of how Native American women have made, invented, and defined themselves for over two –thousand years. *Ceremony* is a novel about a WWII veteran's "quest for sanity and

makes him achieve it through reopening the life line to the constructive elements in his roots”.

Tayo, the novel’s protagonist is mixed blood, part white, part Laguna, belonging to one hand to the colonizing group, and on the other hand to the people who have been colonized. Silko uses female characters to highlight Native Americans’ dilemmas and then combines them with the mythic figures in Laguna's stories. The spectral Laura, Tayo’s dead mother, and Helen Jean, a helpless, wandering Native American woman, show that it is women’s lives that bear the most multifaceted aspects of Native American history. By using Laura as the bridge for Tayo to connect his loss to the Laguna’s collective loss of their land, Silko makes Laura a vanishing point to help him in his journey of healing.

Celebrating “the feminine principle” of the Laguna tradition as recreating, Allen argues that “Tayo’s illness is a result of separation from the ancient unity of the person, ceremony, and land, and his healing is a result of his recognition of this unity” (Silko, *CM* 119). As the medicine man ku’oosh’s failure to heal Tayo implies in *Ceremony*, Silko perceives Native American tradition as an intense site of transformation. Tayo in the novel is defined as an embodied mark of “the disgrace of Indian women who went with [white men]” (Silko 57), Silko reveals mixed-blood races are denied full membership to their identified “community” in the face of the hybrid history of Native Americans. As Silko reveals through Tayo’s mother Laura and the Lagunas’ attitude toward both her and Tayo, the denial of full membership to mixed- bloods is historically constitutive of Native American culture. “[T]his other, unwanted child” between Laura and as an anonymous white man (Silko 65), Tayo is repeatedly

forced to be conscious of the fact that he is a bodily text of Native American women's shame.

As an embodiment of such interactions, Laura represents the most disturbing site of Native American life, in which ethnic boundaries are blurred by interracial sexual transgressions. When Laura:

Had started drinking wine and riding in cars with white men and Mexicans, the people could not define their feelings about her. The Catholic priest shook his fingers at the drunkenness and lust, and lust, but the people felt something deeper: they were losing her; they were losing part of themselves. (Silko, *CM* 68)

Laura's drinking with men outside the reservation shows how stereotypical the Native Americans are in the portrayal of the intersection of sexuality, ethnicity, and class. When the Catholic priest defines Laura as a promiscuous, drunken "Indian" woman, the Laguna people only feel "they were losing part of themselves" but remain unable to redefine in their terms what is happening to them. Women's bodies are the very site where cultural boundaries are maintained and policed for the sake of the "purity" of the nation. To the Laguna society, Laura, as a woman who transgresses cultural boundaries, represents a serious challenge, especially in controlling women's sexuality. The Laguna people know that "what [Laura] did not happen to her alone, it happened to all of them." (Silko, *CM* 69). Silko describes the Laguna society as unable to handle the increasing problem of their young women like Laura, revealing Laguna's genderpolitics.

The beautiful woman Ts'eh is a mythical figure of regeneration and love who appears at three moments in Tayo's journey to help him with the cattle and to teach him about wild herbs, love, and evading his pursuers. She is a symbol of Corn Mother herself, and loves Tayo as he has never been loved, and gives him the healing power. The physical act of their making love represents the spiritual transcendence of the body and soul, the union of the physical body and the universe. This helps to restore Tayo's humanity and participation with others. "He went to her to learn about the roots and plants she had gathered" (Silko 208). Ts'eh manages to restore their relationship with the natural landscape of his ancestors and also enables him to feel a sense of harmony with his native land. Ts'eh introduces to Tayo the plants that reproduce "the light of the stars, and the moon penetrating at night" (Silko, *CM* 211).

Feminists' writers and others will notice that the power behind the creation of a story comes from a woman, Thought-woman and that the male speaker of the poem keeps the stories in a metaphorical womb:

He rubbed his belly.

I keep them here

[He said]

Here, put your hand on it

See, it is moving,

There is life here

For the people.

And in the belly of this story

The rituals and the ceremony

Are still growing.” (Silko, *CM* 2-3).

Both emphasize the importance of persistence by linking the biological characteristics of women to stories. The stories are the last line of defense against extinction for the people. The feminine speaker admits that a ceremony is the only way to heal, and as previously stated, women are the agents of transformation. “The only cure I know is a good ceremony, that’s what she said” (Silko 3). In Tayo's instance, the change entails moving from a state of despair to one of wholeness and harmony. Because *Ceremony* is a Native American book, it's safe to assume that the feminine characters will play a prominent role.

Silko's *Garden in the Dunes* focuses on women coming together to form alliances among themselves and with the other living creatures and plants of the earth that will remake the world by restoring life-giving practices of caretaking and inclusivity. The feminism in the novel comes through not only by the conflict between Native American women and white men representative of a patriarchal capitalist system but also through a white woman of privilege, Hattie. She is the one who takes in Indigo, caring for her as her own, exploring Europe. Hattie gradually aligns herself more emotionally with Indigo and her native peoples, eventually turning against her husband.

Silko's *Garden in the Dunes* opens by introducing a family of women belonging to the Sand Lizard tribe; Indigo, Sister Salt, their mother, and Grandma Fleet, living in a place among dunes which according to them is paradise. Grandma Fleet gives Indigo and Sister Salt an education in the gardens that is entirely feminine in itself. She gives them advice with its roots in ancient legend, "Don't be greedy. The first ripe fruit of each harvest belongs to the spirits of our beloved ancestors, who come to us as rain; the second... to the birds and wild animals." (Silko, *GITD* 17). Another way that Grandma Fleet passes on the unique ways of the tribe is her seed gathering, specifically searching out seeds from unfamiliar plants.

Rape and domination towards women and land can also be seen depicted in the novel. Silko writes of western expansion in the United States in the 19th century, a time when settlers discovered indigenous plants and indigenous people and were marked as their own. Indigo from the beginning of the novel is seen being kidnapped and taken away from her family and is forced to an "Indian Boarding school". As Silko writes of the other girls at the school, "...only their skin looked Indian. Their eyes, their hair, and of course, the shoes, stockings, and long dresses were no different from the [white] matron's (Silko, *GITD* 69). The native girls have their bodies transformed, so much so that even their eyes looked different.

One of the brutal back stories which can be seen in *Garden in the Dunes* is the conception of Sister Salt. When she was kidnapped and separated from Indigo they were both separated and how both of them were separated from their cultural identity and connection to their education. She becomes a victim of violence and emotional abuse through the hand of the US soldiers who raped and impregnated her. Sister Salt

frequently throughout the novel dismisses and demonizes white people not simply because she has a rational fear of their oppression, but to reaffirm her mother's work has been done; she is a Sand Lizard through and through. Even when Grandma Fleet dies and her mother goes missing, she becomes the matriarch of the dwindling tribe and carries out her dutiful act even when she was separated from her tribe. Sister Salt's journey to motherhood is shaped by her relationship with Candy, a black cook. "Sand Lizard mothers gave birth to Sand Lizard kids no matter which male they lay with," Sister Salt says, "and the Sand Lizard mother's body transformed everything to Sand Lizard inside her" (Silko, *GITD* 204).

Despite only having a fourth of Sand Lizard's blood, Salt's son, the black grandfather, will be culturally and spiritually Sand Lizard like his mother. As the eldest daughter of two generations of survivors of colonial abuse, she develops a way to benefit from the white men's slavery by combining her skills and her grandmother's skills by removing herself from the garden and its cultural norms. Despite the mixed-race ancestry Sister Salt and her son, which have been enshrined as full members of their tribe, their survival codifying the survival of the Sand Lizard way, where, "...each new Sand Lizard needs to be shown that they are still connected with their extended Sand Lizard maternal family on this side as well as in the Spirit world, that birth and Death are part of one cycle" (Silko, *GITD* 87). She lays the groundwork for powerful feminine tribes intent on exploiting the leisure-seeking dam workers in the same way they have been exploited in the past. The four women she portrays are strong, self-sufficient, open-minded, and spiritually secure.

*Almanac of the Dead* traces the consequences of complexly histories European philosophical-religious-political worldviews, demonstrating how the exploitation at the heart of dominion is then directly translated into the exploitative processes and practices of empire-building and then globalized corporate capitalism. *Almanac* requires us to not only observe, but also acknowledge, oppression and injustice of all kinds, and that our witnessing gaze extends beyond the book and into the real world, to see, recognize, and ultimately prevent 'real' oppression and injustice. Silko's narrative skillfully examines the relationship between puritanical worldviews that purposefully distance themselves from a subjugated natural world and a variety of Indigenous mythologies that reveal the tremendous interconnections between humans and the Earth.

Silko in chapters 3 and 4 of *Almanac of the Dead* focuses on patriarchy, gender, and sexuality, as well as some of how power is sustained through gendered and sexualized violence that is constitutional and institutionalized. *Almanac's* examination of institutional violence reveals how patriarchal societies define and normalize gender and sexuality, as well as the violence that defines them. It examines how powerful male-dominated institutions, such as medicine, medical discourse, and medical enterprises, reinforce patriarchal societies' and legal systems' ideas and discriminatory laws. *Almanac* examines how scientific and medical discourse is used to oppress people, highlighting links with misogyny, racism, and social discrimination. *Almanac* investigates how academic discourses use their authority to create hierarchies, define 'difference,' and construct 'racial identity,' enforcing and reinforcing established power relations and violent modes of control.



The depiction of Sesse's pain demonstrates how capitalism, when ingrained in personal relationships, becomes a global source of individual trauma. "I want this Baby to be mine and not his." (Silko, *AOTD* 51). Sesse's trauma, which was triggered by Monte's death, demonstrates how white culture has conflated love with possession. Sesse's relationship with her parents, and later with David, Beaufrey, and Eric, demonstrates how capitalism is repeatedly fulfilled through relationships. Monte's death is directly related to Sesse's cocaine addiction and connection to that world of corruption. She relapses into drug usage while seeking Monte, but her experience while using proves to be a horrible reality, pushing her to commit to a lifetime of abstinence.

The spirits have chosen two twin girls, Lecha and Zeta, to play unique roles in the quest to reclaim the land, according to the narrative. Zeta is the indigenous people's physical mother, whereas Lecha is their spiritual mother. Yoeme, their grandmother, informs them of their unique status and assigns them the responsibility of transcribing the stories for the *Almanac*. As she approaches death, Yoeme hands the collection down to her twin granddaughters, Lecha and Zeta, stating that the 'Almanac Book' will reveal who they are and where they came from. Yoeme, their grandmother, informs them of their unique status and assigns them the responsibility of transcribing the stories for the *Almanac*. Despite their disagreements and times of separation, they have a core connection that nourishes their relationship and keeps them together despite the factors that threaten their union. Lecha had a child, but she abandons him at the ranch to be raised by Zeta, demonstrating how much she trusts and cares for her. Despite the difficulties they face, they maintain the bond that was formed in the first place.

Women's status in India, which had worsened during the British administration, gradually improved in later decades. Only with the growth of education and the mixing of Western cultures did women begin to recognize their value in society. The stories demonstrate how women from various tribes have comparable experiences that are linked by a common tradition. Native women who write about their personal experiences demonstrate that being a woman brings all women together, regardless of nationality. Their cultures' strength and backbone are women. Women of different origins should work together on women's concerns to prevent the ruin of their culture and to develop their own empowerment and movement towards an equitable society. Both Yhome and Silko portray women's importance in society and the message they transmit in a compelling way. Feminism is evident in both of their works, and it contributes to the depiction of women in society through the characters' awareness of the situation through their narration.

## CHAPTER: V

## ETHICAL VALUES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE TWO WRITERS

Along with the region's people's historical, political, and social concerns, some stories honor the region's people's tradition and culture, as well as the belief system that is deeply based on history but closely linked to current realities. The Naga people are an ethnic group made up of numerous tribes from India's northeast. They are predominantly an oral community that speaks in 'Nagamese' to converse with one another, with English being the official language of the state. Nagaland has sixteen tribes officially recognized, each with its own set of social customs, dialects, and festivals. Native American writers have assimilated and adapted to the language in ways that white Americans have frequently utilized as an instrument of betrayal and oppression over the years.

Native American Tribal beliefs are transmitted down through the generations through indigenous languages and oral traditions, just as they are with the Naga. Tales, songs, and histories, as well as prayers, rites, and rituals, are all part of tribal oral traditions. They are usually inextricably linked to individual tribe's clans' spiritual belief systems, and they can be found in a variety of forms. Much of the cultural knowledge and context necessary to understand the individual components of tribal oral traditions is available only to tribal members.

The Nagas follow patriarchal social norms and therefore the menfolk take over superior roles in all decision –making, Naga society is strictly bounded by a set of tribal rules, framed according to the tribal way of life, that is known as the Naga Customary laws. It is critical to recognize that each tribe has distinct qualities in terms of language, festivals, clothing, and food and that each tribe has its functional system of self-government. Because the laws and practices are tailored to the customs of each tribe, it is impossible to establish a set of Naga laws and practices. Yhome, in particular, is aware of the importance of preserving the essence of her mother tongue, Tenyidie, by employing native linguistic terms and terminologies to support her work. Culture is ingrained as a process of people's preservation and continuity, redefining culture and tradition's permanency.

When God is delighted, according to Angami tradition, God gives everything. They used to believe in the existence of a creator. The name of the creator, on the other hand, was unknown, and he was referred to as 'Terhuomia,' which means 'spirit,' and is divided into good and bad spirits. Nagas used to practice Animism as their religion before British colonialism. It is believed that the spiritual essence of each constituent of nature is attributed. Therefore, the natural world is acknowledged as divine and the source of the supernatural powers by the Nagas. As a result, the Nagas consider the natural world as divine and the source of magical powers. The Angami people's culture can be defined in a variety of ways, including their clothing patterns, the foods they eat, and the language they speak.

Angami people are known for their culture 'Kenÿü' because of their forbidden moral conduct. Anything that is 'Kenÿü' offends God and it is said that he or she will never live a good life. The Angami people take 'Kenÿü' so seriously that they have changed their life patterns to ensure that they do not break the moral code of 'Kenÿü.' In his book *The Angami Naga*, J.H. Hutton also mentions that the term 'Kenÿü' is used without any context. He says that the use of the word 'Kenÿü' is so broad that it can apply to anything from a violation of a severe norm of magical religious observance to a violation of social law, such as robbery, to the most insignificant matter of sheer utility (Hutton 190).

As she explores the Angami Naga Societal concerns through its characters, Yhome's ethics in narration can be interpreted from a Christian perspective. As a result of their Christian upbringing, most Nagas of the current generation learn to combine cultural and religious teachings to form a new understanding. The title of her novel *Kephouma Zhakhra (The Reward of Sin)* draws our attention to the religious part of the narrative that will be told throughout the novel. In seeing the link between the characters, faith and truth become the deciding factors. The two heroes had to face Christian traits and the "reward of sin" during a crisis, which Yhome's stories introduce to our understanding. Medonuo and Neitho-o are described in the text as a careless couple who aborts their unborn child, which is a crime akin to murder. Killing an unborn child is likewise 'Kenÿü' and 'sin' in the eyes of God, which would lead to damnation since it symbolizes the natural blessing bestowed by 'Ukepenuopfü', as I have already discussed the understanding and importance of 'Kenÿü' and how much weightage it has on Naga cultural standards.

Dreams play a significant role in undermining the situation. Medonuo's dreams are frequently plagued, and she is frequently awoken by "an infant's cry" (Yhome, *KZ* 1). Superstitious views concerning the value of dreams and supernatural beliefs are frequently considered in Naga culture. From the start of the novel, Medonuo has no idea what the "infants cry" implies. We learn through the narration's transition that the "infant crying" in her dreams is her unborn kid who died before being born into the world.

Medonuo pays the reward of her 'sin' through death and is faced with psychological trauma after understanding what she had done was something not humane. As a Naga, we often hear stories from our grandparents about the society during their time, and Yhome uses the figure of Medonuo to direct our attention to the brutal realities of Naga civilization. Nagas during their time often believed in superstitious beliefs and 'Kenyü' is something which remains unchanged even with the coming of Christianity and education. According to Sanyü:

History of Naga and Nagaland- dynamics of tradition-village formation, among the many forces that came to penetrate north-eastern region along with the colonial rulers, the introduction of Christianity stood out in playing a major role in the process of modernization... the introduction of education, the advent of Christianity and economic development had modernized the Naga society (Sanyü 115).

The prohibition enabled them to continue to refrain from doing what they considered to be taboo. The practice of 'Kenyü' is particularly prevalent today since we are frequently told not to do anything because it is 'Kenyü' by our parents, elders, and even religious leaders. For example, it is "Kenyü" to trim our hair after sunset, even

though many people still consider it improper to do so; it is "Ken'yü" to allow elders/males, in particular, to serve meals to our seats; it is "Ken'yü" to do nothing. , it is understandable that culture changes with time, but the basic practice of culture that defines its uniqueness may or may not change. And, in the framework of the narrative, it is 'Ken'yü' to abort or kill our children because it is a sign of blessing bestowed upon our lives.

Neitho-o on the other hand is portrayed as the spoilt rich son, a womanizer and impregnated various women during his youth, and his parents influence him to abort the child without making things right and teaching Neitho-o in the right path. "Neitho-o nuokhrienuo chü kijü nu miapuorei puo kekhalieketuo kekuo kejü chü mia puo nuo toupfukelie pete biewawa tuo. Puo nuo tou zorei puo nuo moüketa la mia puo khashü lhouükelie ze rünuo ler kehouki penuolie" – "During his youth, Neitho-o lived a wealthy lifestyle. He couldn't learn from his parents because he was an only child. He forcibly aborted the child with numerous women with whom he had affairs, refusing to believe that it was his child, and only afterwards changed his mind and began to grow closer to God" (Yhome, *KZ* 76). The 'sin' he committed during his childhood is being punished by making him infertile, and 'shame' is something that foreshadows and blurs their judgment and ethical way of life.

Both Medonuo and Neitho-o pay the ultimate price and are plagued with regret and remorse for their actions, which eventually lead to their deaths. Yhome brilliantly illustrates Naga society and the outlook on the connection between a woman and a man through the social setting of both of their characters. The Angamis led a humble but moral existence. They avoid doing anything that appears to be bad for fear of angering

God. As a result, they led a morally good life and, as previously said, had a close relationship with God, using 'Kenyii' as a moral code of conduct and upholding it.

We can also find traces of 'dream' in *Riinoumolie (A sorrowful Yearning)* when Sedeo's sense of regret of not being able to take care of her parents comes as a deep sense of realization after their demise. By the end of the novel when everyone is preparing the joyful matrimonial celebration of Sedeo and Neivonuo, Sedeo longs for his parents and keeps on thinking about how her mother Khrienuo had to struggle physically and emotionally in the eyes of society. In his dream, he is seen conversing with his parents;

Sedeo n siezenie Kia? Nieko shürho ba zo mo? - "Where are your siblings Sedeo? Are you all doing well?" to which he replies, " Hieko shürho phre bazo, n nie menguthor tuotolie hieko?" - "We are all doing well; we are missing you both? (Yhome, *RM* 94)

When Sedeo wakes up, both of them have vanished before his eyes, and he is troubled since he has no idea what his dream means. It's worth noting that the author depicts the continuous love between parents and children, even after death, through this moment. This shows how their parents are with them and their spirit will forever be with them even after physical separation. Many cultures, including the Nagas, regard dreams as a source of divine knowledge, and some believe that they can even predict the future through them. This article focuses on the interpretative understanding surrounding dream narration, which appeals to the supernatural while navigating everyday social problems. Such practices are heightened in the context of the emotional stability of an individual negotiating the everyday mundane uncertainty and unpredictability.



According to Naga tradition, immovable properties such as ancestral land and buildings are only passed down through male family members. If a husband or wife dies without a male heir, the property may be claimed by the next male relative, leaving the widow or daughter at the mercy of their paternal relatives. Such kinds of customs have come under sharp criticism from intellectuals, especially women, for being unjust and obsolete to the modern world. Khrienuo is faced with the issue of land ownership with her mother-in-law and sister-in-law in *Rünoumolie*, following the death of her husband due to illness. Khrienuo suffers from a mental illness as a result of her in-laws' relentless taunts, “Khrienuo n la Vizo bu siatacū zo, no puo theke kemecie kemo la ba mo di?” (Yhome, *RM* 60), accusing her of being to blame for her husband's death and subjecting herself to guilt, which eventually leads to her death.

Sedeo is required to care for his siblings at an early age and is subjected to society's utter shame as an orphan. Orphan children are shunned by the community due to societal conventions, simply because no one is there to teach them right from wrong. Sedeo in one instance states, “... Kijū nu kelhou u krū kejürei kide kemenga shi...? U cha rei mezhiethorlie ha...izhü.” – “It's also quite humiliating to be an orphan...? It is extremely depressing for me to do anything.” (Yhome, *RM* 79). Because of their selfishness, their aunt Konuo and grandma seized their homes and sold them to make more money for themselves. Their aunt Konuo and grandmother seized and sold their homes to generate more money for themselves because of their selfishness, “... kiu chū ro puo kinyiko welietie shicū rhü sedeta”- “ finding various means to make the land theirs” (Yhome, *RM* 60). Neitho-o, their father, purchased the house with his own hard- earned money, but they were forced out of their homes.

In the Naga culture, it is 'Kenyü' to take a plot of land or boundary of someone without their consent. "It is Kenyü to re-locate boundaries," stated Vikholienue Kire in *The Angami –Naga viewpoint of Culture and Value in Nagaland, North-East India*. God created the earth, and we cannot honor our brief time here by relocating boundaries outside of our territory. If someone does this, they are making a mistake in front of God and others, and retribution will undoubtedly follow. "Therefore, there is Kenyü of re-locating boundaries" (Kire). Our ancestors often taught us that taking even one foot of someone's land is "Kenyü," since it demonstrates our greed and inability to be content with what we currently have. Yhome pleasantly portrays Naga culture in this scene. Aunt Konuo and their grandmother confront immense adversity ahead of them, and they are severely humiliated in the eyes of society.

Yhome depicts numerous aspects of Angami Naga culture through the description of marriage in his novel *Rüleitatuö (Will be at Rest)*. The narrative concentrates around three marriages and their lifestyles, as well as their viewpoints on the sorrow and suffering that comes with a failing marriage. Our elders typically teach us in Naga culture that women should marry at the appropriate time or if you've been assigned a suitor for your marriage. Rejecting a suitor is a form of 'shame' directed at women, and it will bring us misfortune. It can also be interpreted as a rejection of societal standards, with such women being labeled as "shameful" and "enjoying life," which might be interpreted as a prohibition.

Siedzeleü is forcibly married to Neichüo, who comes from a powerful family, in the book. Siedzeleü, a clever young lady, desired to "finish her studies"-"A... Phrüsanü lie" (Yhome, *RT 1*), but her parents were concerned that she would not have another

chance to marry into such a wealthy family, so they sent her off to someone she had never met. Yhome's narrative highlights the power struggle of women for their rights and to have a voice of their own. However, because of the Nagas' stigmatized social norms, women were subjected to a slew of restrictions in a patriarchal culture. Throughout the narrative, we learn that Neichüo is represented as a womanizer and an alcoholic who has various mistresses for his pleasure, which might be considered as another Naga restriction.

Under the guise of being a "love marriage," another marriage is depicted. In the novel, love marriage is depicted in two forms, which differ based on the circumstances and one's awareness of one's judgment. Siedzeleü's sister Dziesenuo is married to Khrietso in the form of a love marriage, she lives a pious and carefree life, and she believes her older sister is also married and happy but is taken aback when she realizes her brother-in-law's demeanor towards Khrienuo. Avelü's love marriage to David is also depicted differently. Avelü had no choice but to bear the physical and emotional pain for herself and their child because she married against her parents' wishes. David is an alcoholic who abuses Avelu when he is a regular user, which makes her want to flee, but she is constantly reminded that it is her "Krus"-"Cross" and she must bear it at all costs (Yhome, *RT* 11).

The novel depicts many marriage transitions and lifestyles, which help readers, understand Naga culture. Charles Chasie in "A Naga View of the World," an *Oxford Anthology of Writings from North-East India: Poetry and Essays*, discusses the importance of Naga culture "no man or people exist without 'roots.'" And when we talk about roots, we don't just mean the familial tree. "We're talking about a lot more than

that". We mean that our identity is formed by a set of beliefs and activities that distinguishes us from others and makes us distinct. "Our character's unity is largely dependent on our culture and value system". We would all be a colorless homogeneity without them, entirely uprooted and drifting around, because existence would be meaningless without convictions or identity. "There would be no need for Christ, Allah, or the pantheon of gods, and there would be no need for wars or fighting. But it is our roots and culture that give life meaning" and elevate plain existence to purpose and living... 'Meaning makes life valuable and helps us cope with the challenges we face. As a result, anyone who dismisses his or her culture is merely dismissing and spitting on himself or herself ( Chasie).

For centuries, indigenous Americans have written to express themselves and defend their lands, cultures, and sovereignty, Native American writers have voiced their opinions, shared their stories, and advocated for their rights with force and intelligence. Tribal literature which includes oral traditions of stories, ceremonies, legends, myths, etc. is unique and culturally specific. The language of the tribe, especially during story- telling, not only influences behavior but also reflects a customary response and attitude.

Novels by Native American authors are different from one another, each novel is presented in a specific manner, physical settings and cultural settings are given importance in understanding the story. Cultural conflict and alienation are the main themes built around the concept of Native literature. Even in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, the main character, Tayo, is from a mixed parentage, he returns to his home on the Laguna Reservation after World War II and must go through various stages of alienation, rejection, and finally reconciling with his cultural heritage.

Silko aims at protecting the strong beliefs and cultural values of indigenous females. Therefore, she keeps on reviving their ancestral culture and religious beliefs, and by sharing their tribal stories; she challenges the European colonizers' misinterpretation of the female's communal relationship with their physical environment. Women's bodies are the very site where cultural boundaries are maintained and policed for the sake of the "purity" of the nation. To the Laguna society, Laura, as a woman who transgresses cultural boundaries, represents a serious challenge, especially in controlling women's sexuality. Laura's personal inability to redefine her experience serves to produce a self-victimizing locus for the "monstrous twin" of "shame" and "self-hatred" (Silko, *CM* 69), which are painfully re-inscribed in Tayo. Gendered, personalized shame is often a collective wound, an embodiment of family disgrace, and a destroyer of cultural "purity," which results in Laura leaving her community. All the indigenous female characters in *Ceremony* play a pivotal role in connecting the disappointed and confused protagonist, Tayo to the natural world and also in restoring his lost tribal identity.

Betonic's ceremony Silko shows how healing comes from the knowledge that enables Tayo to connect his pain to larger collective pain, Native American and global, and identify the cultural context, the witchery, as the source of trauma. Tayo's grandmother, who is proud of her Laguna heritage, re-establishes his connection with the tribal culture. She not only reverses the elders of her generation but also admires their tribal methods for curing Native America through natural ways. She has the potential and skills to manage family affairs; she also embodies the Natives' spirit. Tayo's grandmother is also a storyteller who tells her grandsons the "long ago, time immemorial stories" (Silko, *CM* 95). By sharing the tribal stories, she transfers her ancestors' culture

from one generation to the next generations. Silko presents the real image of indigenous females to neutralize the colonizers' design of misinterpreting nature and its love for the females; she believes that the females play their constructive role in the tribal community.

Tayo's recollection of his trauma and historical trauma of Native Americans in Laguna's history leads to his epiphany that marks the completion of his ceremony. Tayo arrives "at the point of convergence where the fate of all living things, and even earth, had been laid" (*CM* Silko 228). He envisions himself and his trauma as spreading across the boundaries of ethnicity and nationality and sees how the experience of modern violence created the common traumatic experience that unites all humanity:

From the jungles of his dreaming he recognized why the Japanese voices had merged with Laguna voices, with Josiah's voice and Rocky's voice; the lines of culture and worlds were drawn in flat dark lines on fine light sand, converging in the middle of the witchery's final ceremonial sand painting. From that one time on, humans were one clan again, united by the fate the destroyers planned for all of them, for all living things...

Tayo heals when he can see and hear "the world as it always was: no boundaries, only transitions through all distance and time" (Silko 229). That fragment blurs the boundary not only between ethnicities and nations but also between individuals and their surroundings, recreating the reality through a focus on relations rather than individuals. The indigenous female characters of the novel are such wise and strong that reconnect the tribal people with their native land and enable them to practice their ancestors' tradition and religious beliefs. They not only identify them with nature but also preserve

the socio-cultural values of their ancestors and share with the coming generations the rich history of their culture.

Silko describes the Pueblo storytelling and imagination as a way to reconstruct communal identities and memories. By using the power of language and images, people interconnect the self of the world, learning from their ancestors, and connecting them towards future generations. Stories are tools that mediate people with their lands, languages, memories, and communities. Notably, by describing human conflicts, cultural violence, and ecological survival as universal issues, Silko emphasizes the need of healing the individual and communal pain and grief through storytelling. Storytelling can be a ceremonial process of remembering the past wounds to fix the broken self-images and cultural identities, thereby bringing generational and geographical boundaries.

When Josiah tells Tayo the tale of the greenbottle fly, Silko frames the scene such that both the Indian and Anglo audiences understand the idea of continuity and how it relates to storytelling. Tayo pointing to the pile of dead flies on the kitchen floor says, " ... But our teacher said so. She said they are bad and carry sickness," (Silko, *CM* 101). Both Indian and non-Indian audiences can perceive how a white teacher's cultural perceptions differ from Josiah the Laguna uncle's, and how the mythic qualities have a relation to contemporary day reality. They can also observe how stories convey culture and the importance of storytelling, as evidenced by Josiah's final words and loving recollection of how he "hugged the boy close. Next time, just remember the story." (Silko, *CM* 102). This scene between them beautifully unravels the importance Laguna customs have on the younger generations.

Storytelling custom is another aspect of spiritual awakening. *Garden in the Dunes* hinges on Grandma Fleet's instructive teaching to Sister Salt and Indigo. These instructions have helped them formulate a considerable understanding of the world concerning nature. Grandma Fleet is an important character for her impact on Sand Lizard Sisters, as her life and death exemplify the Native Women's commitment to the resistance through storytelling, "Long ago, when Apaches used to raid the Sand Lizards' villages, the sand Lizards fought back fiercely until they were beaten by the Apache..." (Silko, *GITD* 50).

Grandma Fleet honors Indigenous values by recognizing the old gardens as a source of food, shelter, and identity, and she passes on the responsibility of the earth to her grandchildren. In a part of the world where water-scarce and cultivation of a good harvest can make the difference between life and death, a plant that may produce a unique food crop is welcome regardless of the country of its origin or its appearance. Through their emphasis on cultivation and emphasis on preserving the earth and the form of gardening and mothering practiced by the Sand Lizard people of Silko's novel can be understood as critical modes of domestic resistance against both cultural and physical genocide.

Ancestor spirits play a significant role in Pueblo and Laguna mythology. Naming rituals for children are held in front of the ancestor shrines, and the Pueblos give an offering to the ancestor spirits and plead for help at various times throughout their lives. Silko explores new territory in *Gardens in the Dunes*, both geographically and thematically. They find themselves in new spiritual and religious contexts as well as intellectually. During a discussion regarding Hattie's thesis, Hattie and Indigo learn about



the suppression of traditional religions in the British Isles from Aunt Bronwyn. . They learn how "the Council of Tours decreed ex-communication for those who persisted in worshipping trees, and the Council of Nantes instructed bishops and their servants to dig up and hide the stones in remote woody places upon which vows were still made" (Silko, *GITD* 261). Along with Hattie, readers will discover some of the early Christian Church's rejected passages. As a result, the Gardens' ancestors were pre-Christian European spirits and early Christian scholars who were rejected and condemned by church fathers but revered by their followers.

As the following paragraph from *Gardens in the Dunes* demonstrates, people from many walks of life and religious beliefs can have an experience that brings them together. The spectacle Silko describes here is not the Ghost Dance in Needles, California, but an occasion during Indigo and Hattie's vacation to Corsica, when they accompany their local hosts to a schoolhouse where many pilgrims had seen the Holy Mother appear on one of the walls. Indigo experiences the Ghost Dance while the Corsicans fall to their knees and see the Virgin Mary, and even Hattie notices "a faint glow suffusing the whitewashed wall" and feels her heart racing "as the glow grew brighter with a subtle iridescence that steadily intensified into a radiance of pure color that left her breathless, almost dizzy." (Silko, *GITD* 319)

"She could make out the forms of the dancers wrapped in their white shawls and the Messiah and his mother standing in the center of the circle - all were in a beautiful white light reflecting all the colors of the rainbow, lavender, blue-red, green, and yellow" This is a clear example of people from three distinct cultures interacting. Sharing a religious experience has quite different expectations. While they're doing that, they share

in the feeling, in the understanding that something magnificent is happening to each of them, and they each experience the event in their unique way. "...That night long ago when she stood with Sister Salt, Mama, and Grandma to welcome the Messiah. In that instant joy swept away all her grief, and she felt their love embrace her (Silko 319). Silko highlights this openness, this ability to accept and learn from others, in *Gardens*. With her writing, she hopes to bring people together and show them what is possible. Silko believes that if everyone takes care of their environment and one another, there is hope for everyone.

Gardening reveals fundamental beliefs about the human-earth relationship. Grandma Fleet, for example, respects Indigenous values by seeing the old gardens as a source of food, shelter, and identity, and she instills this respect in her grandchildren. Many white individuals have a more domineering and colonialist attitude toward nature; Edward launches a profitable orchid business, while Susan recreates her garden every year for her aesthetic pleasure. Silko's emphasis on mothering in *Gardens in the Dunes* is an important component of how domestic activities encode political position, even though gardening is a key motif in her novel. While both gardening and mothering include the formation, development, and propagation of life, many Native American societies see the land in similar ways. Silko asserts that there is no distinction between caring for children and caring for the environment by combining gardening and mothering.

In Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*, a secret "almanac" in the possession of Yoeme, a Yaqui Indian grandmother who survived the 1910 Mexican Revolution, being the most recent keeper of the Almanac, for hundreds of years which contain the original Mayan

texts with additional documents, including early colonial American “farmer’s Almanac” (Silko, *AOTD* 570). American farmers believed that the earth was alive and the sun, moon, and stars influenced both the human body and the land. By following the advice in their almanac, good colonial farmers hoped Mother Earth would provide them with a bountiful harvest.

Yoeme also predicted the earth’s gradual return to the ecological balance in a passage that affirms the assurance despite the excesses of recent human interventions. The grandmother’s vision of the future mobilizes as an indigenous conception of time based on an understanding of the future as embodying both difference and continuity. Towards the end of the novel, Lecha specifically connects these ecological ravages with Yoeme’s interpretation of the ancient prophecies: “As the prophecies had warned, the earth’s weather was in chaos; the rain clouds had disappeared while terrible winds and freezing had followed burning, dry summers” (Silko 718).

A Laguna Pueblo character’s return home, Silko observes, both restores his tribal identity and represent key intersections between his tribe and emerging hemispheric pan-Indian activities. Places are distinct in that time and space are physically linked; time flows through a place like blood. The identity of a people, power conflicts, forebears, and fates are all entwined in its history. The relationship between environmentalists and indigenous groups is fraught with conflict, the purpose of the international convention, “called by natural and indigenous healers,” is “to discuss the earth’s crisis” (Silko, *AOTD* 718). A group of “eco-warriors,” called Green Vengeance, are featured, guests. One of the Indian revolutionaries, the Barefoot Hopi, unites with the eco-warriors, but he does so strategically, as the scene depicts. The Barefoot Hopi talks about

the common ground indigenous peoples have with eco-warriors, who are frequently labeled "terrorists" by the dominant society.

Despite signs that a Green Vengeance–indigenous alliance is forming at the convention, Silko makes it clear that Green Vengeance's motivations are not the same as those of the indigenous communities. Both may wish to completely restructure capitalism, name the government as actual terrorists, and value land for reasons other than profit, but their cooperation can only be tactical and brief, which isn't to say it isn't vital or effective. This scenario in the novel asserts that indigenous peoples must be able to pick their terms of action, which may be in direct contradiction with environmentalists' terms. Throughout the narrative, these guarded attitudes to environmentalists' attempts to sympathize with indigenous individuals and places emerge.

Indigenous cultural traditions have acknowledged the depth and values of storytelling as a mediating factor of knowing about cultural identity: "When I say "Storytelling," I don't just mean sitting down and storytelling and telling once-upon-a-time kind of story. I mean a whole way of seeing yourself, the people around you, your life, the place of your life in the bigger context, not just in terms of nature and location, but in terms of what has gone on before, what's happened to the other people. So it's a whole way of being..." (Silko, *CM* 49-50). Stories are part of where learning originates from, where a culture's ideals are handed on while displaying how to live within a community to an individual.

## CHAPTER: V

### ETHICAL VALUES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE TWO WRITERS

Along with the region's people's historical, political, and social concerns, some stories honor the region's people's tradition and culture, as well as the belief system that is deeply based on history but closely linked to current realities. The Naga people are an ethnic group made up of numerous tribes from India's northeast. They are predominantly an oral community that speaks in 'Nagamese' to converse with one another, with English being the official language of the state. Nagaland has sixteen tribes officially recognized, each with its own set of social customs, dialects, and festivals. Native American writers have assimilated and adapted to the language in ways that white Americans have frequently utilized as an instrument of betrayal and oppression over the years.

Native American Tribal beliefs are transmitted down through the generations through indigenous languages and oral traditions, just as they are with the Naga. Tales, songs, and histories, as well as prayers, rites, and rituals, are all part of tribal oral traditions. They are usually inextricably linked to individual tribe's clans' spiritual belief systems, and they can be found in a variety of forms. Much of the cultural knowledge and context necessary to understand the individual components of tribal oral traditions is available only to tribal members.

The Nagas follow patriarchal social norms and therefore the menfolk take over superior roles in all decision –making, Naga society is strictly bounded by a set of tribal rules, framed according to the tribal way of life, that is known as the Naga Customary laws. It is critical to recognize that each tribe has distinct qualities in terms of language, festivals, clothing, and food and that each tribe has its functional system of self-government. Because the laws and practices are tailored to the customs of each tribe, it is impossible to establish a set of Naga laws and practices. Yhome, in particular, is aware of the importance of preserving the essence of her mother tongue, Tenyidie, by employing native linguistic terms and terminologies to support her work. Culture is ingrained as a process of people's preservation and continuity, redefining culture and tradition's permanency.

When God is delighted, according to Angami tradition, God gives everything. They used to believe in the existence of a creator. The name of the creator, on the other hand, was unknown, and he was referred to as 'Terhuomia,' which means 'spirit,' and is divided into good and bad spirits. Nagas used to practice Animism as their religion before British colonialism. It is believed that the spiritual essence of each constituent of nature is attributed. Therefore, the natural world is acknowledged as divine and the source of the supernatural powers by the Nagas. As a result, the Nagas consider the natural world as divine and the source of magical powers. The Angami people's culture can be defined in a variety of ways, including their clothing patterns, the foods they eat, and the language they speak.

Angami people are known for their culture 'Kenyü' because of their forbidden moral conduct. Anything that is 'Kenyü' offends God and it is said that he or she will never live a good life. The Angami people take 'Kenyü' so seriously that they have changed their life patterns to ensure that they do not break the moral code of 'Kenyü.' In his book *The Angami Naga*, J.H. Hutton also mentions that the term 'Kenyü' is used without any context. He says that the use of the word 'Kenyü' is so broad that it can apply to anything from a violation of a severe norm of magical religious observance to a violation of social law, such as robbery, to the most insignificant matter of sheer utility (Hutton 190).

As she explores the Angami Naga Societal concerns through its characters, Yhome's ethics in narration can be interpreted from a Christian perspective. As a result of their Christian upbringing, most Nagas of the current generation learn to combine cultural and religious teachings to form a new understanding. The title of her novel *Kephouma Zhakhra (The Reward of Sin)* draws our attention to the religious part of the narrative that will be told throughout the novel. In seeing the link between the characters, faith and truth become the deciding factors. The two heroes had to face Christian traits and the "reward of sin" during a crisis, which Yhome's stories introduce to our understanding. Medonuo and Neitho-o are described in the text as a careless couple who aborts their unborn child, which is a crime akin to murder. Killing an unborn child is likewise 'Kenyü' and 'sin' in the eyes of God, which would lead to damnation since it symbolizes the natural blessing bestowed by 'Ukepenuopfü', as I have already discussed the understanding and importance of 'Kenyü' and how much weightage it has on Naga cultural standards.

Dreams play a significant role in undermining the situation. Medonuo's dreams are frequently plagued, and she is frequently awoken by "an infant's cry" (Yhome, *KZ* 1). Superstitious views concerning the value of dreams and supernatural beliefs are frequently considered in Naga culture. From the start of the novel, Medonuo has no idea what the "infants cry" implies. We learn through the narration's transition that the "infant crying" in her dreams is her unborn kid who died before being born into the world.

Medonuo pays the reward of her 'sin' through death and is faced with psychological trauma after understanding what she had done was something not humane. As a Naga, we often hear stories from our grandparents about the society during their time, and Yhome uses the figure of Medonuo to direct our attention to the brutal realities of Naga civilization. Nagas during their time often believed in superstitious beliefs and 'Kenyü' is something which remains unchanged even with the coming of Christianity and education. According to Sanyü:

History of Naga and Nagaland- dynamics of tradition-village formation, among the many forces that came to penetrate north-eastern region along with the colonial rulers, the introduction of Christianity stood out in playing a major role in the process of modernization... the introduction of education, the advent of Christianity and economic development had modernized the Naga society (Sanyü 115).

The prohibition enabled them to continue to refrain from doing what they considered to be taboo. The practice of 'Kenyü' is particularly prevalent today since we are frequently told not to do anything because it is 'Kenyü' by our parents, elders, and even religious leaders. For example, it is "Kenyü" to trim our hair after sunset, even



though many people still consider it improper to do so; it is "Ken'yü" to allow elders/males, in particular, to serve meals to our seats; it is "Ken'yü" to do nothing. , it is understandable that culture changes with time, but the basic practice of culture that defines its uniqueness may or may not change. And, in the framework of the narrative, it is 'Ken'yü' to abort or kill our children because it is a sign of blessing bestowed upon our lives.

Neitho-o on the other hand is portrayed as the spoilt rich son, a womanizer and impregnated various women during his youth, and his parents influence him to abort the child without making things right and teaching Neitho-o in the right path. "Neitho-o nuokhrienuo chü kijü nu miapuorei puo kekhalieketuo kekuo kejü chü mia puo nuo toupfukelie pete biewawa tuo. Puo nuo tou zorei puo nuo moüketa la mia puo khashü lhouükelie ze rünuo ler kehouki penuolie" – "During his youth, Neitho-o lived a wealthy lifestyle. He couldn't learn from his parents because he was an only child. He forcibly aborted the child with numerous women with whom he had affairs, refusing to believe that it was his child, and only afterwards changed his mind and began to grow closer to God" (Yhome, *KZ* 76). The 'sin' he committed during his childhood is being punished by making him infertile, and 'shame' is something that foreshadows and blurs their judgment and ethical way of life.

Both Medonuo and Neitho-o pay the ultimate price and are plagued with regret and remorse for their actions, which eventually lead to their deaths. Yhome brilliantly illustrates Naga society and the outlook on the connection between a woman and a man through the social setting of both of their characters. The Angamis led a humble but moral existence. They avoid doing anything that appears to be bad for fear of angering

God. As a result, they led a morally good life and, as previously said, had a close relationship with God, using 'Kenyü' as a moral code of conduct and upholding it.

We can also find traces of 'dream' in *Rüinoumolie* (*A sorrowful Yearning*) when Sedeo's sense of regret of not being able to take care of her parents comes as a deep sense of realization after their demise. By the end of the novel when everyone is preparing the joyful matrimonial celebration of Sedeo and Neivonuo, Sedeo longs for his parents and keeps on thinking about how her mother Khrienuo had to struggle physically and emotionally in the eyes of society. In his dream, he is seen conversing with his parents;

Sedeo n siezenie Kia? Nieko shürho ba zo mo? - "Where are your siblings Sedeo? Are you all doing well?" to which he replies, " Hieko shürho phre bazo, n nie menguthor tuotolie hieko?" - "We are all doing well; we are missing you both? (Yhome, *RM* 94)

When Sedeo wakes up, both of them have vanished before his eyes, and he is troubled since he has no idea what his dream means. It's worth noting that the author depicts the continuous love between parents and children, even after death, through this moment. This shows how their parents are with them and their spirit will forever be with them even after physical separation. Many cultures, including the Nagas, regard dreams as a source of divine knowledge, and some believe that they can even predict the future through them. This article focuses on the interpretative understanding surrounding dream narration, which appeals to the supernatural while navigating everyday social problems. Such practices are heightened in the context of the emotional stability of an individual negotiating the everyday mundane uncertainty and unpredictability.

According to Naga tradition, immovable properties such as ancestral land and buildings are only passed down through male family members. If a husband or wife dies without a male heir, the property may be claimed by the next male relative, leaving the widow or daughter at the mercy of their paternal relatives. Such kinds of customs have come under sharp criticism from intellectuals, especially women, for being unjust and obsolete to the modern world. Khrienuo is faced with the issue of land ownership with her mother-in-law and sister-in-law in *Rünoumolie*, following the death of her husband due to illness. Khrienuo suffers from a mental illness as a result of her in-laws' relentless taunts, “Khrienuo n la Vizo bu siatacū zo, no puo theke kemecie kemo la ba mo di?” (Yhome, *RM* 60), accusing her of being to blame for her husband's death and subjecting herself to guilt, which eventually leads to her death.

Sedeo is required to care for his siblings at an early age and is subjected to society's utter shame as an orphan. Orphan children are shunned by the community due to societal conventions, simply because no one is there to teach them right from wrong. Sedeo in one instance states, “... Kijū nu kelhou u krū kejürei kide kemenga shi...? U cha rei mezhiethorlie ha...izhü.” – “It's also quite humiliating to be an orphan...? It is extremely depressing for me to do anything.” (Yhome, *RM* 79). Because of their selfishness, their aunt Konuo and grandma seized their homes and sold them to make more money for themselves. Their aunt Konuo and grandmother seized and sold their homes to generate more money for themselves because of their selfishness, “... kiu chū ro puo kinyiko welietie shicū rhü sedeta”- “ finding various means to make the land theirs” (Yhome, *RM* 60). Neitho-o, their father, purchased the house with his own hard- earned money, but they were forced out of their homes.

In the Naga culture, it is 'Kenyü' to take a plot of land or boundary of someone without their consent. "It is Kenyü to re-locate boundaries," stated Vikholienuo Kire in *The Angami –Naga viewpoint of Culture and Value in Nagaland, North-East India*. God created the earth, and we cannot honor our brief time here by relocating boundaries outside of our territory. If someone does this, they are making a mistake in front of God and others, and retribution will undoubtedly follow. "Therefore, there is Kenyü of re-locating boundaries" (Kire). Our ancestors often taught us that taking even one foot of someone's land is "Kenyü," since it demonstrates our greed and inability to be content with what we currently have. Yhome pleasantly portrays Naga culture in this scene. Aunt Konuo and their grandmother confront immense adversity ahead of them, and they are severely humiliated in the eyes of society.

Yhome depicts numerous aspects of Angami Naga culture through the description of marriage in his novel *Rüleitatuo (Will be at Rest)*. The narrative concentrates around three marriages and their lifestyles, as well as their viewpoints on the sorrow and suffering that comes with a failing marriage. Our elders typically teach us in Naga culture that women should marry at the appropriate time or if you've been assigned a suitor for your marriage. Rejecting a suitor is a form of 'shame' directed at women, and it will bring us misfortune. It can also be interpreted as a rejection of societal standards, with such women being labeled as "shameful" and "enjoying life," which might be interpreted as a prohibition.

Siedzeleü is forcibly married to Neichüo, who comes from a powerful family, in the book. Siedzeleü, a clever young lady, desired to "finish her studies"-"A... Phrüsanýü lie" (Yhome, *RT 1*), but her parents were concerned that she would not have another

chance to marry into such a wealthy family, so they sent her off to someone she had never met. Yhome's narrative highlights the power struggle of women for their rights and to have a voice of their own. However, because of the Nagas' stigmatized social norms, women were subjected to a slew of restrictions in a patriarchal culture. Throughout the narrative, we learn that Neichüo is represented as a womanizer and an alcoholic who has various mistresses for his pleasure, which might be considered as another Naga restriction.

Under the guise of being a "love marriage," another marriage is depicted. In the novel, love marriage is depicted in two forms, which differ based on the circumstances and one's awareness of one's judgment. Siedzeleü's sister Dziesenuo is married to Khrietso in the form of a love marriage, she lives a pious and carefree life, and she believes her older sister is also married and happy but is taken aback when she realizes her brother-in-law's demeanor towards Khrienuo. Avelü's love marriage to David is also depicted differently. Avelü had no choice but to bear the physical and emotional pain for herself and their child because she married against her parents' wishes. David is an alcoholic who abuses Avelu when he is a regular user, which makes her want to flee, but she is constantly reminded that it is her "Krus"-"Cross" and she must bear it at all costs (Yhome, *RT* 11).

The novel depicts many marriage transitions and lifestyles, which help readers, understand Naga culture. Charles Chasie in "A Naga View of the World," an *Oxford Anthology of Writings from North-East India: Poetry and Essays*, discusses the importance of Naga culture "no man or people exist without 'roots.'" And when we talk about roots, we don't just mean the familial tree. "We're talking about a lot more than

that". We mean that our identity is formed by a set of beliefs and activities that distinguishes us from others and makes us distinct. "Our character's unity is largely dependent on our culture and value system". We would all be a colorless homogeneity without them, entirely uprooted and drifting around, because existence would be meaningless without convictions or identity. "There would be no need for Christ, Allah, or the pantheon of gods, and there would be no need for wars or fighting. But it is our roots and culture that give life meaning" and elevate plain existence to purpose and living... 'Meaning makes life valuable and helps us cope with the challenges we face. As a result, anyone who dismisses his or her culture is merely dismissing and spitting on himself or herself ( Chasie).

For centuries, indigenous Americans have written to express themselves and defend their lands, cultures, and sovereignty, Native American writers have voiced their opinions, shared their stories, and advocated for their rights with force and intelligence. Tribal literature which includes oral traditions of stories, ceremonies, legends, myths, etc. is unique and culturally specific. The language of the tribe, especially during story- telling, not only influences behavior but also reflects a customary response and attitude.

Novels by Native American authors are different from one another, each novel is presented in a specific manner, physical settings and cultural settings are given importance in understanding the story. Cultural conflict and alienation are the main themes built around the concept of Native literature. Even in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, the main character, Tayo, is from a mixed parentage, he returns to his home on the Laguna Reservation after World War II and must go through various stages of alienation, rejection, and finally reconciling with his cultural heritage.

Silko aims at protecting the strong beliefs and cultural values of indigenous females. Therefore, she keeps on reviving their ancestral culture and religious beliefs, and by sharing their tribal stories; she challenges the European colonizers' misinterpretation of the female's communal relationship with their physical environment. Women's bodies are the very site where cultural boundaries are maintained and policed for the sake of the "purity" of the nation. To the Laguna society, Laura, as a woman who transgresses cultural boundaries, represents a serious challenge, especially in controlling women's sexuality. Laura's personal inability to redefine her experience serves to produce a self-victimizing locus for the "monstrous twin" of "shame" and "self-hatred" (Silko, *CM* 69), which are painfully re-inscribed in Tayo. Gendered, personalized shame is often a collective wound, an embodiment of family disgrace, and a destroyer of cultural "purity," which results in Laura leaving her community. All the indigenous female characters in *Ceremony* play a pivotal role in connecting the disappointed and confused protagonist, Tayo to the natural world and also in restoring his lost tribal identity.

Betonic's ceremony Silko shows how healing comes from the knowledge that enables Tayo to connect his pain to larger collective pain, Native American and global, and identify the cultural context, the witchery, as the source of trauma. Tayo's grandmother, who is proud of her Laguna heritage, re-establishes his connection with the tribal culture. She not only reverses the elders of her generation but also admires their tribal methods for curing Native America through natural ways. She has the potential and skills to manage family affairs; she also embodies the Natives' spirit. Tayo's grandmother is also a storyteller who tells her grandsons the "long ago, time immemorial stories" (Silko, *CM* 95). By sharing the tribal stories, she transfers her ancestors' culture

from one generation to the next generations. Silko presents the real image of indigenous females to neutralize the colonizers' design of misinterpreting nature and its love for the females; she believes that the females play their constructive role in the tribal community.

Tayo's recollection of his trauma and historical trauma of Native Americans in Laguna's history leads to his epiphany that marks the completion of his ceremony. Tayo arrives "at the point of convergence where the fate of all living things, and even earth, had been laid" (*CM* Silko 228). He envisions himself and his trauma as spreading across the boundaries of ethnicity and nationality and sees how the experience of modern violence created the common traumatic experience that unites all humanity:

From the jungles of his dreaming he recognized why the Japanese voices had merged with Laguna voices, with Josiah's voice and Rocky's voice; the lines of culture and worlds were drawn in flat dark lines on fine light sand, converging in the middle of the witchery's final ceremonial sand painting. From that one time on, humans were one clan again, united by the fate the destroyers planned for all of them, for all living things...

Tayo heals when he can see and hear "the world as it always was: no boundaries, only transitions through all distance and time" (Silko 229). That fragment blurs the boundary not only between ethnicities and nations but also between individuals and their surroundings, recreating the reality through a focus on relations rather than individuals. The indigenous female characters of the novel are such wise and strong that reconnect the tribal people with their native land and enable them to practice their ancestors' tradition and religious beliefs. They not only identify them with nature but also preserve



the socio-cultural values of their ancestors and share with the coming generations the rich history of their culture.

Silko describes the Pueblo storytelling and imagination as a way to reconstruct communal identities and memories. By using the power of language and images, people interconnect the self of the world, learning from their ancestors, and connecting them towards future generations. Stories are tools that mediate people with their lands, languages, memories, and communities. Notably, by describing human conflicts, cultural violence, and ecological survival as universal issues, Silko emphasizes the need of healing the individual and communal pain and grief through storytelling. Storytelling can be a ceremonial process of remembering the past wounds to fix the broken self-images and cultural identities, thereby bringing generational and geographical boundaries.

When Josiah tells Tayo the tale of the greenbottle fly, Silko frames the scene such that both the Indian and Anglo audiences understand the idea of continuity and how it relates to storytelling. Tayo pointing to the pile of dead flies on the kitchen floor says, " ... But our teacher said so. She said they are bad and carry sickness," (Silko, *CM* 101). Both Indian and non-Indian audiences can perceive how a white teacher's cultural perceptions differ from Josiah the Laguna uncle's, and how the mythic qualities have a relation to contemporary day reality. They can also observe how stories convey culture and the importance of storytelling, as evidenced by Josiah's final words and loving recollection of how he "hugged the boy close. Next time, just remember the story." (Silko, *CM* 102). This scene between them beautifully unravels the importance Laguna customs have on the younger generations.

Storytelling custom is another aspect of spiritual awakening. *Garden in the Dunes* hinges on Grandma Fleet's instructive teaching to Sister Salt and Indigo. These instructions have helped them formulate a considerable understanding of the world concerning nature. Grandma Fleet is an important character for her impact on Sand Lizard Sisters, as her life and death exemplify the Native Women's commitment to the resistance through storytelling, "Long ago, when Apaches used to raid the Sand Lizards' villages, the sand Lizards fought back fiercely until they were beaten by the Apache..." (Silko, *GITD* 50).

Grandma Fleet honors Indigenous values by recognizing the old gardens as a source of food, shelter, and identity, and she passes on the responsibility of the earth to her grandchildren. In a part of the world where water-scarce and cultivation of a good harvest can make the difference between life and death, a plant that may produce a unique food crop is welcome regardless of the country of its origin or its appearance. Through their emphasis on cultivation and emphasis on preserving the earth and the form of gardening and mothering practiced by the Sand Lizard people of Silko's novel can be understood as critical modes of domestic resistance against both cultural and physical genocide.

Ancestor spirits play a significant role in Pueblo and Laguna mythology. Naming rituals for children are held in front of the ancestor shrines, and the Pueblos give an offering to the ancestor spirits and plead for help at various times throughout their lives. Silko explores new territory in *Gardens in the Dunes*, both geographically and thematically. They find themselves in new spiritual and religious contexts as well as intellectually. During a discussion regarding Hattie's thesis, Hattie and Indigo learn about

the suppression of traditional religions in the British Isles from Aunt Bronwyn. . They learn how "the Council of Tours decreed ex-communication for those who persisted in worshipping trees, and the Council of Nantes instructed bishops and their servants to dig up and hide the stones in remote woody places upon which vows were still made" (Silko, *GITD* 261). Along with Hattie, readers will discover some of the early Christian Church's rejected passages. As a result, the Gardens' ancestors were pre-Christian European spirits and early Christian scholars who were rejected and condemned by church fathers but revered by their followers.

As the following paragraph from *Gardens in the Dunes* demonstrates, people from many walks of life and religious beliefs can have an experience that brings them together. The spectacle Silko describes here is not the Ghost Dance in Needles, California, but an occasion during Indigo and Hattie's vacation to Corsica, when they accompany their local hosts to a schoolhouse where many pilgrims had seen the Holy Mother appear on one of the walls. Indigo experiences the Ghost Dance while the Corsicans fall to their knees and see the Virgin Mary, and even Hattie notices "a faint glow suffusing the whitewashed wall" and feels her heart racing "as the glow grew brighter with a subtle iridescence that steadily intensified into a radiance of pure color that left her breathless, almost dizzy." (Silko, *GITD* 319)

"She could make out the forms of the dancers wrapped in their white shawls and the Messiah and his mother standing in the center of the circle - all were in a beautiful white light reflecting all the colors of the rainbow, lavender, blue-red, green, and yellow" This is a clear example of people from three distinct cultures interacting. Sharing a religious experience has quite different expectations. While they're doing that, they share

in the feeling, in the understanding that something magnificent is happening to each of them, and they each experience the event in their unique way. "...That night long ago when she stood with Sister Salt, Mama, and Grandma to welcome the Messiah. In that instant joy swept away all her grief, and she felt their love embrace her (Silko 319). Silko highlights this openness, this ability to accept and learn from others, in *Gardens*. With her writing, she hopes to bring people together and show them what is possible. Silko believes that if everyone takes care of their environment and one another, there is hope for everyone.

Gardening reveals fundamental beliefs about the human-earth relationship. Grandma Fleet, for example, respects Indigenous values by seeing the old gardens as a source of food, shelter, and identity, and she instills this respect in her grandchildren. Many white individuals have a more domineering and colonialist attitude toward nature; Edward launches a profitable orchid business, while Susan recreates her garden every year for her aesthetic pleasure. Silko's emphasis on mothering in *Gardens in the Dunes* is an important component of how domestic activities encode political position, even though gardening is a key motif in her novel. While both gardening and mothering include the formation, development, and propagation of life, many Native American societies see the land in similar ways. Silko asserts that there is no distinction between caring for children and caring for the environment by combining gardening and mothering.

In Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*, a secret "almanac" in the possession of Yoeme, a Yaqui Indian grandmother who survived the 1910 Mexican Revolution, being the most recent keeper of the Almanac, for hundreds of years which contain the original Mayan

texts with additional documents, including early colonial American “farmer’s Almanac” (Silko, *AOTD* 570). American farmers believed that the earth was alive and the sun, moon, and stars influenced both the human body and the land. By following the advice in their almanac, good colonial farmers hoped Mother Earth would provide them with a bountiful harvest.

Yoeme also predicted the earth’s gradual return to the ecological balance in a passage that affirms the assurance despite the excesses of recent human interventions. The grandmother’s vision of the future mobilizes as an indigenous conception of time based on an understanding of the future as embodying both difference and continuity. Towards the end of the novel, Lecha specifically connects these ecological ravages with Yoeme’s interpretation of the ancient prophecies: “As the prophecies had warned, the earth’s weather was in chaos; the rain clouds had disappeared while terrible winds and freezing had followed burning, dry summers” (Silko 718).

A Laguna Pueblo character’s return home, Silko observes, both restores his tribal identity and represent key intersections between his tribe and emerging hemispheric pan-Indian activities. Places are distinct in that time and space are physically linked; time flows through a place like blood. The identity of a people, power conflicts, forebears, and fates are all entwined in its history. The relationship between environmentalists and indigenous groups is fraught with conflict, the purpose of the international convention, “called by natural and indigenous healers,” is “to discuss the earth’s crisis” (Silko, *AOTD* 718). A group of “eco-warriors,” called Green Vengeance, are featured, guests. One of the Indian revolutionaries, the Barefoot Hopi, unites with the eco-warriors, but he does so strategically, as the scene depicts. The Barefoot Hopi talks about

the common ground indigenous peoples have with eco-warriors, who are frequently labeled "terrorists" by the dominant society.

Despite signs that a Green Vengeance–indigenous alliance is forming at the convention, Silko makes it clear that Green Vengeance's motivations are not the same as those of the indigenous communities. Both may wish to completely restructure capitalism, name the government as actual terrorists, and value land for reasons other than profit, but their cooperation can only be tactical and brief, which isn't to say it isn't vital or effective. This scenario in the novel asserts that indigenous peoples must be able to pick their terms of action, which may be in direct contradiction with environmentalists' terms. Throughout the narrative, these guarded attitudes to environmentalists' attempts to sympathize with indigenous individuals and places emerge.

Indigenous cultural traditions have acknowledged the depth and values of storytelling as a mediating factor of knowing about cultural identity: "When I say "Storytelling," I don't just mean sitting down and storytelling and telling once-upon-a-time kind of story. I mean a whole way of seeing yourself, the people around you, your life, the place of your life in the bigger context, not just in terms of nature and location, but in terms of what has gone on before, what's happened to the other people. So it's a whole way of being..." (Silko, *CM* 49-50). Stories are part of where learning originates from, where a culture's ideals are handed on while displaying how to live within a community to an individual.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Indians, the world's most ethnically diverse population, have been divided into major groups based on linguistic and cultural norms. Culture is more than just the economy or political agendas of society; it emphasizes its meanings and values, as well as their relationship to communicating and exchanging our own ethnic culture with society as a whole. Naga and Native American cultures help us understand the community's way of life as well as the value judgment one perceives by articulating its meaning. The final chapter will include both the writers' diverse narration and a summary of all the chapters based on the observations. Many cultural identities have been altered or modified as a result of the advent of modernity and Christianity, but how this culture is passed down to the next generation without losing its inherent meaning demonstrates the system's vitality and viability.

Kekhrievoü Yhome has given moral teachings in all of her novels about Naga society's value judgment and principles, and she hopes that by doing so, she will encourage women Naga writers to write in their native tongue. According to Yhome, there aren't many Naga women writers who write in their native tongue. She considers herself to be "proud to be one of the very few". Most of her writings are based on the Christian perspective on society and how women, in particular, have taken a very important role in molding the structure of both the family and outside societal norms (Personal Interview with Yhome, July 2021).

The four novels, namely – *Kephouma Zhakhra (The Reward of Sin)*, *Kijü nu Kelhou (Life on this Earth)*, *Riinoumolie (A Sorrowful Yearning)*, and *Rüleitatu (Will be at Rest)*, have resonated with the realistic aspects of Naga society, particularly on the marital and customary union of women and men. Because Yhome used vernacular writing in her narration, I attempted to do her work justice with my best efforts. Yhome's ethics, as an ardent Christian principle, has been drawn primarily from a religious point of view in articulating the very concept of study.

The novel's author has deeply penetrated the matrilineal strength of women who have struggled to identify themselves due to constant abuse and violence (emotionally and physically), and who are alienated by society due to the constant fear of "shame." By incorporating such scenes, the author was able to relate to some of the events depicted throughout the novels. From a Christian perspective, we understand that it is a sin to lie, kill, and commit adultery, steal, or bear false testimony for one's benefit. In Matthew 9: 18, "Which ones? He inquired. Jesus replied, "You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony" (NIV).

Through the lives of the protagonists, we find various instances of 'sin' committed by the characters. Emerging from the stronghold of Naga patriarchy, women have been portrayed in her novel as someone who has the power to contradict the social norms in a conventional society. In her novel *Kephouma Zhakhra (The Reward of Sin)*, Yhome explores the effects of abortion on the lives of those who are responsible in her novel *Kephouma Zhakhra (The Reward of Sin)*. The memories of killing an unborn child traumatize Neitho-o and Medonuo for the rest of their lives, alluding to their guilt. Neitho-o is never blessed with children, and Medonuo suffers psychologically as a result



of discovering the true nature of the 'sin' committed by them during a sermon by a pastor.

Yhome brings out the truth about domestic violence and violence against women in Naga society, pointing to the patriarchal norms which have allowed such violations of women through the tragedy of unending physical abuse that goes on behind closed doors. Spinster's stories and mistreatment by relatives have been fictionalized by her, where girls/women are treated inappropriately in society. Khrienuo in *Kijü nu Kelhou (Life on this Earth)* has been forced to sacrifice her education for the sake of her siblings. The transition of Khrienuo being a spinster and working for her siblings to give them a quality education highlights the novel in a beautiful manner. The novel draws up the relationship between the siblings and their ill-treatment towards her as we move on to the end of the narration. *Rüleitatuö (Will be at Rest)* focuses on the resonating outlook of three couples coping with their married lifestyle, it depicts the tragedy of many Naga families who are subjected to the male dominance of alcoholics and womanizers.

*Rüinoumolie (A Sorrowful Yearning)* also depicts the struggle of Khrienuo, the protagonist who is forced into an arranged marriage with an influential family and disregards her wishes to marry her childhood friend Tseilie. The struggles the women in the novel face are all brought and served to justice. Yhome through these women resonates the feeling of womanhood. The portrayal of female characters is strongly penetrated in making the readers understand the importance of women in building a family as well as destroying it. Though Naga society is patriarchal, Yhome, through her novels, makes us understand that women also can mold society's perspective and bring change for a better future.

Leslie Marmon Silko has been highly appraised for her work in portraying Native American society and viewing literature as a way to shape readers. We are motivated merely by our acceptance and affirmation because knowledge given and received from one another through interaction is strength. We connect with others because, especially as Tribal people, we need to strengthen ourselves. *Ceremony's* inclusive optimism and power result in large part from the Laguna Pueblo stories that Silko has presented in her stories. Tayo's complicated process of recovery and healing in *Ceremony* illustrated the notion of compassion being the larger key in changing the outlook towards one's personal goal. Silko, through the female characters, helps Tayo to attain his healing and the ability to feel compassion and finds himself completely changed. Silko's imaginative narratives break down the classic categories of race, as well as gender and class in the mainstream accounts of American history.

The representation of the male protagonist in both Silko and Yhome's novels is a recurrent theme in their narrative. Sedeo, in *Riinoumolie* and Tayo in *Ceremony*, both the male protagonists experience the shame of being an orphan, as well as how society views them due to their divided attitude on life. Tayo achieves healing through nature with the support of the indigenous women who surrounded him, and Sedeo becomes one of society's most respected lawyers with the help of the nurse who took them in. Another important subject in each of their writings is how women are portrayed in society. The connection between Indigo, Grandma Fleet, and Sister Salt in *Garden in the Dunes* demonstrate their inherent kinship through the transcending journey they all experience. *Rüleitatu* depicts the unbreakable link of three different women in Yhome's narrative, and how they all endure "love" and "hate" from their spouses. The readers will realize the value of understanding between two married couples as a result of these women's stories.

The central character of *Garden in the Dunes* is Indigo, an eleven-year-old girl of the Sand Lizard tribe. Silko's suspenseful tale of separation and reunion, treachery, and revenge is told in an in-depth analysis of indigenous agricultural practices and foodways. Daniel Moerman states, "I know of no other novel in which plants, and people's attitude towards them, play such a central role" (Moerman 41). Storytelling can be a ceremonial process of remembering past wounds to fix the broken self-image and cultural identities, thereby bridging generational and geographical boundaries. In particular, indigenous oral tradition or storytelling draws on a strong relationship between narrative processes and identity formation both at individual and communal levels.

Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* challenges the assumption that nature is merely a thing for humans to appropriate and misuse. Lecha specifically connects these ecological ravages with Yoeme's interpretation of the ancient prophecies: "As the prophecies had warned, the earth's weather was in chaos; the rain clouds had disappeared while terrible winds and freezing had followed burning, dry summers" (Silko, *AOTD* 718). Silko, stressing the importance of indigenous women in uplifting societal aspects, has shaped the feminist discourse in perceiving the relinquished notion. Silko's sense of the relationship between story and audience has resulted from the very involvement of being within a Laguna community filled with stories, both contemporary and traditional. Silko states, "That's how you know, that's how you belong, that's how you know you belong, if the stories incorporate you into them. There have to be stories. It's the stories that make this a community. People tell those stories about you and your family or about others, and they begin to create your identity. In a sense, you are told who you are, or you know who you are by the stories that are told about you" (*Conversations* 12).

Though Naga and Native American fiction have various kinds of similar attributes towards peace and salvation for one's healing, Yhome and Leslie are comparatively different in some aspects. Yhome uses Christian aspects throughout the novel, bringing up the relationships and healing from salvation while uplifting the women in a socially constricted patriarchal norm. On the other hand, oral tradition is a core part of understanding her mode of narration, Silko transitions between the ecological aspects of women in a society where women take an active part in keeping the cultural norms intact. The language that Native Americans used to invoke the spirits of the sky, the earth, and the winds where the chief themes will be related to resentment of betrayal, grief over the destruction of their culture, and the humiliation of defeat one faces in society. Yhome's dominant theme lies in women being subjugated in a society where 'shame' becomes one of the biggest attributed the characters face in searching for an identity of their own.

The Nagas have always prided themselves on their tradition and culture. Despite the huge impact of modernization and Christianization on society, the customs and practices still operate as if the nature of the whole system was never affected. Both Yhome and Silko have narrated experiences of individuals whose lives were interlaced by the discomforting forces of violence, which kept continuing with each passing year, with modernization which changed reality. Both the writers have based their writings on experiences of the world they have lived through and continue to live in. In the Native American worldview, life and nature are delicately interwoven as, for them; Mother Earth is in union with each living being. In Naga society, culture connects people among themselves to find their roots among the Naga tribe. Women, in particular, have been the

driving force and the epitome of building a nation's integrity through perceiving society's portrayal of women's status.

Leslie Marmon Silko enriches the study of women. Her novels reflect the female rhetorical conventions with purpose, audience, and occasion are constructed and derived from the feminine concern for continuity, a concern that is manifested in ceremonies, rituals, societal beliefs and values, social organization, biological attribution, and, importantly, in the stories where culture is implicated through them. Yhome also deeply penetrates her beliefs and gives the readers moral teaching of the values each perceives in contrast with society. All of our communication, including the arts, becomes a network of relationships, and our descriptions of our experiences become a network of relationships. Because our method of seeing is also our way of living, communication is essentially a community process: the presenting, acceptance, and comparing of new meanings, which leads to the tensions and accomplishments of growth and change.

## Works Cited

### Primary Source

Interview with Kekhrievoü Yhome, 15 September, 2019.

Interview with Kekhrievoü Yhome, 26 July, 2021.

Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Garden in the Dunes*. Simon and Schuster, 1999.

Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Almanac of the Dead*. Penguins Books, 1991.

Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Ceremony*. United States Penguins, 1977.

Yhome, Kekhrievoü. *Kephouma Zhakhra*. NV Press, 2008.

Yhome, Kekhrievoü. *Kijü nu Kelhou*. ACLS Offset Press, 2010.

Yhome, Kekhrievoü. *Rüleitatuo*. NV Press, 2011.

Yhome, Kekhrievoü. *Rünoumolie*. NV Press, 2006.

### Secondary Source

Abrams, M.H. and Geoffrey Galt Harpam. *A Glossary of Literary Term ed.* Cengage, 2013.

Adamson, J. *American Indian literature, environmental justice, and ecocriticism: The middle place*. University of Arizona Press. 2001.

- Adamson, Joni “*Almanac of the Dead.*” Encyclopedia of Environment in American Literature. 2013. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334174002>. Accessed on 22 July,2021.
- Adamson, Joni. *American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice, and Ecocriticism: The Middle Place*. University of Arizona Press, 2001.
- Allen, Chadwick. *Blood Narratives: Indigenous Identity in American Indian and Maori Literary and Activist Texts*. Duke University Press, 2002.
- Allen, Paula Gunn.” The Feminine Landscape of Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*: Studies in American Indian Literature: Critical Essays and course Designs”.1983, pp 127-13.
- Arnold, Ellen, and Leslie Marmon Silko. “Listening to the Spirits: An Interview with Leslie Marmon Silko.” *Studies in American Indian Literatures*.1998, pp 1-33.
- Barilla, James. “Biological Invasion Discourse and *Garden in the Dunes*: Reading Leslie Marmon Silko: Critical perspective through *Garden in the Dunes*”. *Association of American University Presses*, 2007.
- Barnes, Kim. *A Leslie Marmon Silko Interview with Kim Barnes*: Journal of Ethnic Studies. Vol 13.no.14. 1986, pp 325- 55.
- Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary Theory and Cultural Theory*.3rd ed.Viva, 2015.
- Basso, E.B. *The Implications of a Progressive Theory of Dreaming. In Dreaming: Anthropological and Psychological Interpretations*. Ed. B. Tedlock , Cambridge University Press, 1997.

- Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Trans. and ed. H.M. Parshley. Picador Classics, 1988.
- Behera, M.C. *Tribal Religion: Change and Continuity*. Commonwealth publishers, 2000.
- Bell, Betty. "Gender in Native America: A companion to American Indian History, edited by Philip J. Deloria and Neal Salisbury, Routledge, 2002, pp.307-320. *Wiley Online Library*. <http://doi.org/10.1002/9780470996461.ch18>. Accessed on 22 Sept, 2019.
- Bull, Lawrence. "Introduction: In Pursuit of Ethics, special topics – Ethics and Literary Study". Vol. 114, No.1, pp 7-19.1999. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/463423>. Accessed on 22 Sept, 2019.
- Carbon, Richard, et.eds. *Retelling Naga Narratives: More than thrice – told Tales*. Heritage Publishing House, 2014.
- Chandra, N.D.R and Nigamananda Das. *Ecology, Myth and Mystery: Contemporary Poetry in English from Northeast India*. Surup and Sons, 2007.
- Chasie, Charles. "A Naga View of the World." *Oxford Anthology of Writings from North-East India: Poetry and Essays*. Ed. Tilottoma Misra. Oxford UP, 2011. pp 259-71.
- Chavkin, Allan. *Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony: A Casebook*. Oxford University, 2002.
- Chodorow, Nancy. "Family Structure and Feminine Personality." *Women, Culture, and Society*. Ed. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere. Stanford: Stanford, 1974, 44-66.
- Cole, Andre. "Growing Against the Grain: Confronting White Supremacy and Patriarchy in *Garden in the Dunes*" 2018 *University Honors Theses*, Paper 630. <https://doi.org/10.15760/honours.641>. Accessed on 15 Sept. 2020.



Coulombe, Joseph L. *Reading Native American Literature*. Routledge, 2011.

Croft, Azalyn, "Coming home: Storytelling, place, and identity in N.Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* and Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*" *EWU Master's Thesis Collection*. 184. 2013.  
<http://dc.ewu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1183&context=theses>. Accessed on 3 June, 2021.

Dr. Yadav, Arun Kumar. "The Survival of Native American Identity in the Writings of Leslie Marmon Silko" *Int.J.Eng.Lan.,Lit & Trans. Studies*.Vol.2.Issue. 4. 2015 (Oct-Dec).<http://www.ijelr.in>. Accessed on June 3, 2020

Elizabeth, Vizovonuo, and Sentinaro Tsuren. *Insiders Perspectives: Critical Essays on Literature from Nagaland*. Barkweaver Piblication, 2017.

Elwin, Verrier. *Nagaland*.Sree Saraswati Press. 1961.

Farooq, Amad Sardar. "Environmental Justice and Indigenous Feminism: An Eco- Critical Study of Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*". *NUML Journal of Critical Inquiry* Vol. 16 (I) June, 2018.<http://pr.hec.gov.pk/jspui/bitstream/123456789/12032/1/sardar%20Ahmad%20Farooq%20english%202019%20numl%20isb%20pr.pdf>. Accessed on 3 June, 2021.

Gexin,Yang. "Introduction to Ethical Literary Criticism by Nie Zhen Zhao (review)" *Style*,o.51 no.2, 2017, pp 270-275.project Muse. [Http://doi:10.1353/sty-2017.0021](http://doi:10.1353/sty-2017.0021). Accessed on 22 slept, 2019.

Gronstad, A. "The return of ethics in literary studies: In Films and the Ethical Imagination" *Palgrave Macmillan*, 2016. <http://doi.org/10.1057/978-137-5837-1-4>. Accessed on 22 Sept, 2019.

Hagberg, Gary L. *Arts and Ethical Criticism: New Directions in Aesthetics*. Willy-Blackwell, 2008.

Hill, Randall Thomas. "A performance- centered Approach to Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony": *LSU Historical Dissertation and Thesis*. 5512. [https://digitalcommons.su.edu/gradschool\\_disstheses/5512](https://digitalcommons.su.edu/gradschool_disstheses/5512). Accessed on 22 Sept, 2019.

Hutton J.H. *The Angami Naga*. First published by Macmillan and co. Limited. Published by direction of the Government of Nagaland. 1921.

Imsong, Mar. *God-Land-People: An Ethical Naga Identity*. Heritage Publication, 2011.

Jahner, Elaine. "An Act of Attention: Event Structure in *Ceremony*." *Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony: A Casebook*. Ed. Allan Chavkin, Oxford University Press, 2002. Pp 89-98.

Kashyap, Anil. "Where the Sun Rises: The Peripheral Imagination: Writing the Invisible India ". <https://www.news18.com/blogs/india/aruni-kashyap/where-the-sun-rises-the-peripheral-imagination-writing-the-invisible-india-14261-746882.html>. Accessed on June 3, 2021.

Kire, Vikholienuo. "The Angami-Naga Perspective of Culture and Value in Nagaland of North-East India." Pp 1-10. [http://papers.iafor.org/wp-content/uploads/papers/acerp2019/ACERP2019\\_45965.pdf](http://papers.iafor.org/wp-content/uploads/papers/acerp2019/ACERP2019_45965.pdf). Accessed on July 21, 2021.

- Kuefner, Sigrun, "'Spirits are writing, not me" Leslie Marmon Silko and the powers that inspired her to write *"Gardens in the Dunes"*' (2003). *Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers*, 1448. <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/1448>. Accessed on July 4, 2021.
- Kumar, B.B. *Naga Identity*. Concept Publishing Company, 2005.
- Lander, H. *Language and Culture*. Oxford University press, 1966.
- Lerner, Gerder.(1993). The Creation of Feminist Consciousness: From the Middle Ages to Eighteen-Seventy (pp. 274-275).Oxford University Press. <https://all-med.net/pdf/thecreation-of-feminist-consciousness/pdf>. Accessed on July 22, 2020.
- Levine, M. "You Are What You Grow: An American Indian Girl Finds Seeds of Identity in Gardens across Cultures." *San Francisco Chronicles*, 1999. <http://www.sfgate.com/books/article/You-Are-What-You-Grow-An-American-Indian-girl-2934558.php>. Accessed on July 15, 2021.
- Li, Stephanie. "Domestic Resistance: Gardening, Mothering, and Storytelling in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes*". *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, 2019. 21. 18-37. 10.1353/ail.0.0060. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236762866>. Accessed on August 2,2020.
- Low, D., & Beidler, P. G. (Eds.). Teaching Leslie Marmon Silko's novel Ceremony. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 28 (1), 1-82. 2004.
- Lundquist, Susan. *Native American Literature: An Introduction*. Continuum, 2004.
- Manning, Kimberly. Ed. "Authentic Feminine Rhetoric: A study of Leslie Marmon Silko's Laguna Indian Prose and Poetry". *Thesis Digitalization Project*.

1996.1100.<https://Scholarsworks.lib.csurbs.edu/etd-project/1100>. Accessed on June 4, 2021.

Mishra, Tillotima. *The Oxford Anthology of Writings from the North-East India; Fiction*. OUP, 2011.

Moore, D.L. "Leslie Marmon Silko: *Ceremony*, *Almanac of the Dead*, *Garden in the Dunes*." Bloomsbury, 2016.

Moore, D.L. Ed. Coltelli, L., "Ghost Dancing through History in Silko's *Garden in the Dunes* and *Almanac of the Dead*," *Reading Leslie Marmon Silko: Critical Perspectives through Gardens in the Dunes*. Pisa: Pisa University Press, pp. 91-118.

Nelson, M. Robert. Ed. Allen Chavnik. "The Function of the Landscape of *Ceremony*: in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*: A Casebook, Oxford University Press, 2002.

Nelson, Robert M. *Leslie Marmon Silko: The recovery of tradition*. Peter Lang, 2008.

Nuh, V.K. *Struggle for Identity In North-east India*. Spectrum Publication, 2001.

Palem, B, ed. *Nationality, Ethnicity and Cultural Identity In North-East India*. Omsons Publications, 1990.

Pérez García, Ana Belén. "Female Native AMERICAN Storytelling: Female Storytellers in Native CULTURE. Presence in Contemporary Native American LITERATURE. LESLIE Marmon Silko." *The Grove - Working Papers on English Studies*, no. 22, 2015, doi: 10.17561/grove. V0i22.2701. Accessed on July 10, 2021.

Pope, Rob. *The British Studies Book: An Introduction to Language Literature and Culture*. Routledge, 2001.

Pou, Veio. *Literary Cultures of India's North-East: Naga Writings in English*. Heritage Publishing House, 2015.

Pritzher, Barry M. *Native American: An Encyclopedia of history, Culture, and People*. Vol.2. Santa Barbara: ABC- CL10, 1998. Print.

Ramirez, Renya. "Race, Tribal, Nation and Gender: A Native Feminist Approach to Belonging". *Meridian*, Vol.7, no.2, 2017, pp 22-40.JSTOR. [www.jstor.org/stable/40314242](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40314242). Accessed on 22 sept,2019

Ray, Sarah Jaquette. "Environmental Justice, Transnationalism, and the Politics of the Local in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* " *Journal of Transnational American Studies*, 5 (1). 2013. <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/3z89t6hc>. Accessed on July 10, 2021.

Rev. Dr. V. K. Nuh. *My Native Country: The Land of the Nagas*. Publisher Spectrum Publications, 2002.

Robins, B.K. Ed. Coltelli L. "Tips for Nurturing the Home Garden". *Reading Leslie Marmon Silko: Critical Perspectives through Gardens in the Dunes*, Pisa: Pisa University Press, pp. 37-56.

Salyer, Gregory. *Leslie Marmon Silko*.Twane ,1997.

Sanyü,Visier. *A History of Nagas and Nagaland (Dynamics of Oral Tradition in Village Formation)*. Commonwealth Publishers, 2008.

St. Clair, Janet. "Death of Love/Love of Death: Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*." *MELUS*, vol. 21, no. 2, 1996, pp. 141–156. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/467955](http://www.jstor.org/stable/467955). Accessed 3 Aug 2021.

- Sükala, Anna-Leena. “ The Mythic Narratives: Authority of Tradition” in Jawarhar Handoo & Anna-Leena Sükala (Eds.), *Folklore and Discourse*. Zooni Publications, pp.131-145.
- Swan, Edith. “Feminine Perspectives at Laguna Pueblo: Silko’s *Ceremony*.” *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature*. Vol. 11.2, 1992, pp 309- 25.
- Tillett, Rebecca. “The Necessity of Lived Resistance: Reading Leslie Marmon Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes* in an Era of Rapid Climate Change.” *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, vol. 32, no. 1-2, 2020, pp. 188 208. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.5250/studamerindilite.32.1-2.0188](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5250/studamerindilite.32.1-2.0188). Accessed 03 Aug 2021.
- Tolan, Fiona. Ed. Patricia Waugh. “*Feminism*” *Literary Theory and Criticism*. Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Widget, Andrews. *Handbook of Native American Literature*. Garland, 1996.
- Willard, William. “Gardens in the Dunes (Review).” *Wicazo Sa Review*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2000, pp. 139–41. *Crossref*, doi:10.1353/wic.2000.0017.
- Wolfreys, Julian. *Critical Keywords in Literature and Cultural Theory*. Palgrave macmillan, 2004.
- Yadav,B. “The Survival of Native American Identity in the writings of Leslie Marmon Silko” *Shodganga*.[www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in](http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in). Accessed 16 Sept. 2019.

Yonuo, Asoso. *The Rising Nagas- A Historical and Political Study*. Vivek Publishing House, 1974.

Zehol, Dr. Lucy. *Women in Naga Society*. Regency Publications, 1998.

Zetsuvi, K. S. *Traditional Culture of Angami Nagas*. Heritage Publishing House, 2014.

Zhenzhao, Nie. "Towards an Ethical Literary Criticism" *arcadia*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2015, pp. 83-101. <https://doi.org/10.1515/arcadia-2015-0006>. Accessed on 22 Dec.2020.