



NATIVE AMERICAN IDENTITY: VISIBLE IN THE WRITINGS OF LESLIE MARMON SILKO

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Abstract

As a Native American writer, Leslie Marmon Silko has made a vital contribution to Native American culture. The strategies used by her suggest that the Native Americans' cultural and individual identities. The Native American identity enables and facilitates Native American survival. Storytelling is a fundamental way to preserve Native American culture, which Leslie Marmon Silko identifies and employs in her writings. Her literary contributions support the Native American women's sector in redefining Native Indian female identity through her works. This article provides justification for her work by examining the author's intentions regarding Native American culture and its people.

Key terms: identity, storytelling, Laguna, genre etc.

Traditional Native American storytelling is handled by Silko with an effective expression of Native American culture. Silko is recognized as a cultural protector of Native culture, whose contributions remain indelible. She, being the resistor for the people of the lands, adds color by contributing to spiritual strongholds that other authors hesitate to touch. In "Yellow Woman" and "Lullaby," she leads the reader into a world where women in the modern world need to rethink their existence and their power to live.

The protagonists of Silko are the portrayal of real heroines she identified in her life. Osheen Sharma quotes that, "Silko's Storyteller shows how powerful indigenous storytelling can be in challenging colonial histories, changing identity, and keeping culture alive even when it is endangered." Silko has broken the colonial gender stereotypes, insisting on the Native power in her writing. By empowering Native Americans, Silko reconnects them with inherited tales of traditional value. Silko draws more on the Native language and its influences through her powerful use of language. She draws the land that had given them life and breath with the identity that they had lost to the European settlers.

Silko's stories fall within literary norms, asserting traditional Native American storytelling as a valid and effective means of expressing culture. Silko is impressed specifically by the Laguna Pueblo oral tradition. As a storyteller, Silko goes against linear and genre-based forms. She uses a multi-voiced, polyphonic framework, combining poetry as an instrument of imagination and a bridge to connect traditional storytelling. The prose she uses is with the practical realities to experience and enchant. Based

on the autobiography, readers can find the lived experience of Native Americans, bridging them to the modern world. Lincon Kennath finds her approach with the native renaissance as,

Her biographical experiences deeply inform her literature, making her works semi-autobiographical. However, the Laguna culture deeply inspired her, and she often writes beautiful poetry about the majestic beauty of her childhood home on the Laguna Pueblo. Silko is one of the key figures in the first wave of the Native American Renaissance.

The way Silko handles myth gives a vivid expression of the suffering servants whose lives remain in the tragedy of annihilation by the European settlers in their motherlands. She also displays clear photography that shows the Native ways people have been living and contributing to Mother Earth. The powerful indigenous *Storytelling* of Silko is an exigent colonial history. She displays a changing identity that is in great need of the Native American who has been thinking about the Native American way of life. It is noted that the author has been keeping the culture alive in an atmosphere of endangerment against human annihilation. Her works have traditionally been against Western literary structures, embracing the cyclical, interconnected storytelling pattern of Pueblo tradition (an impressive one for the author). Silko enters storytelling as a political project that asserts Native resilience and identity, which Silko has been insisting on.

Silko's novel *Ceremony*, published in 1977, draws on non-fiction writings and the critical critiques of other writers. *Ceremony* highlights the significance of reintegrating long-lost customs and wisdom. Since her first short story, "The Man to Send Rain Clouds," was published in 1969, Silko has been promoting her writing for Native Americans. Her "Laguna Woman: Poems," published in 1974, is a collection of poems in a skilled language that explores childhood surroundings in Laguna folklore. Known as the youngest author to be featured in The Norton Anthology of Women's Literature, Silko's career reflects ethnic writership. The Creative Launcher explains the storytelling approach of Silko as,

Silko's style is hard to define, as she creates novels, nonfiction prose, poetry, and photography in English, enriched with themes of Laguna Pueblo oral storytelling. Her *Ceremony* and *Storyteller* are complex works that blend fiction and poetry, mixing truth and fantasy. Celebrating storytelling and ritual in human existence is her main artistic focus. Her poetry and stories closely resemble her Indian ancestors' oral traditions. Unlike her style, her interests are political and contemporary. She examines prejudice and inhumanity, exposing war's devastating effects on participants and the environment.

Silko has a new approach to emphasizing the importance of revisiting past rituals; oral traditional values have been used to re-establish the foundation of cultural identity among Native Americans. Silko draws on a deep connection to her homeland and culture, using a mix of narrative forms. Silko calls out the White Americans to disregard for the environment and inhabitants. One of the top topics discussed in the writings of Silko is the alienation of the Native Americans, who have a challenging environment with the white world, and she also stresses the native customs and communities.

Yet Silko is also one of the major voices inviting readers worldwide to investigate Indigenous life and thought. She even hints, in *Almanac's* "disappearance of all things European," that the American land and its Indigenous peoples may eventually transform Euro-Americans into something that the land and its spirits would love.

Silko applies a Native attitude in her stories, celebrating Native community life that has been in high demand for justice. Silko demands justice for the cultural theft by anthropologists and archaeologists who have an illegal approach to demolishing the culture of the Native Americans. Silko is known for the lyrical depictions of racism and the reaction to environmental exploitation. Silko's writings focus on the prejudice of the white European forebears to oppress Native Americans.

Silko has an optimistic view of Native American human nature. Silko's writing makes oral tradition a powerful force, sharing North American myths and beliefs that highlight the threatening aspects of Native American culture. Silko's writings preserve the tribal language that conveys the content of many tribal myths in English using Laguna and Spanish. The substantial contribution to description and discourse

within the position space of indigeneity has been carved out of, and in many ways even against, the original domain of postcolonial literature. It has a high value to consider that the indigenous fiction of Native America, which Silko prominently features, emphasizes the continuation of Settler colonialism and attendant issues. It has conveyed the message to continue operating as a result of the reality. Silko's narrative genre serves as an important intervention in colonial discourse, representing indigenous concerns and offering an effective critique of the dominant Western discourse. Babit Devi brings out with different spells that Silko finds to produce in her writing for the better and future of Native Americans, as

Silko, in her works, projects an alternate reality. In her novels, she makes clear that 'White epistemology' or knowledge possessed and valued by the White man is not the only valid form of knowledge; rather, the knowledge created by her Native American Pueblo Indian ancestors remains equally valid. Silko clarifies that recognition of the value of indigenous knowledge is an essential part of the 'decolonization' of the native way of thinking and living, which is ultimately more desirable because it is in harmony with nature.

The study has found that Silko, as a fiction writer, was able to portray stereotypes and misconceptions about Native Americans. Applying a historical approach to account for chronological details in a shadowy way, she depicts the sanctions against the Natives imposed by colonial discourse to uphold colonial regimes. Silko's distinctive narrative genre inspires readers who are focused on Native American traditions. Through her writings, she offers an understanding of the White culture that had been imposed on the Native Americans, who were in harmony with nature, and their living was eco-friendly. Silko's fiction writing displays the destructive nature of the White philosophy, which has led to the extinction of the Native Americans whose existence created no harm to the land and the environment.

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