RECLAIMING STOLEN VOICES: AN INDIGENOUS, REGION-BASED READING OF LESLIE MARMON SILKO'S *CEREMONY*, PATRICIA GRACE'S *POTIKI* AND KIANA DAVENPORT'S *SHARK DIALOGUES*

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ทวงคืนเสียงที่ถูกพรากหาย: บทวิเคราะห์นวนิยาย *เซเรโมนี* ของ เลสลี มาร์มอน ซิลโก, *โพทิกิ* ของ แพทริเซีย เกรซ และ *ชาร์ก ไดอะล็อก* ของ คีอานา ดาเวนพอร์ต โดยอิงภูมิปัญญาชนพื้นถิ่นภายในภูมิภาค

น.ส.กฤตพร เรืองวัฒนกุล

วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาอักษรศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต
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กฤตพร เรืองวัฒนกุล : ทวงคืนเสียงที่ถูกพรากหาย: บทวิเคราะห์นวนิยาย *เซเรโมนี* ของ เลสลี มาร์มอน ซิลโก, *โพทิกิ* ของ แพทริเซีย เกรซ และ *ชาร์ก ไดอะล็อก* ของ คีอานา ดาเวนพอร์ต โดยอิงภูมิปัญญาชนพื้นถิ่นภายในภูมิภาค . (RECLAIMING STOLEN VOICES: AN INDIGENOUS, REGION-BASED READING OF LESLIE MARMON SILKO'S *CEREMONY*, PATRICIA GRACE'S *POTIKI* AND KIANA DAVENPORT'S *SHARK DIALOGUES*) อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก : รศ. ดร.ดารินทร์ ประดิษฐทัศนีย์

วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ศึกษาการเรียกคืนสิทธิ์ในการนิยามตนเอง ผ่านมุมมองของคนพื้นถิ่นในสามภูมิภาค โดยเลือกวิเคราะห์นวนิยายสามเล่ม ซึ่งเขียนโดยนักเขียนชนพื้นถิ่นร่วมสมัย ได้แก่ *Ceremony* ของ เลสลี มาร์มอน ซิลโก (ค.ศ. 1977) *Potiki* ของ แพทริเซีย เกรซ (ค.ศ. 1986) และ *Shark Dialogues* ของ คีอานา ดาเวนพอร์ต (ค.ศ. 1998) งานวิจัยนำเสนอว่า นวนิยายทั้งสามเล่มใช้ตำนาน องค์ความรู้ และญาณวิทยาของชนพื้นถิ่นในภูมิภาคของตนเพื่อเสนอภาพวัฒนธรรม ประวัติศาสตร์ และอัตลักษณ์ร่วมสมัยของชนพื้นถิ่นในพื้นที่ดังกล่าว ซึ่งต่างจากภาพจำอันเกิดจากการรับรู้ผ่านมุมมองของชาวตะวันตก ผู้เขียนทั้งสามชี้ให้เห็นถึงความจำเป็นในการปรับแปลงวัฒนธรรมดั้งเดิม เพื่อให้วัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่นปรับตัวอยู่รอดได้ในบริบทโลกปัจจุบัน ในงานเขียนที่เลือกวิเคราะห์ทั้งสามเล่ม ธรรมชาติมีบทบาทสำคัญในการสร้างอัตลักษณ์ของชนพื้นถิ่น ดังนั้น การทำลายธรรมชาติจึงถือเป็นภัยคุกคามต่ออัตลักษณ์ที่ยึดโยงอยู่กับพื้นที่นั้น บทวิเคราะห์เรื่อง *Ceremony* ชี้ให้เห็นว่าตัวละครหลักสามารถเยียวยาตนเองให้สามารถคลี่คลายปมปัญหาทางใจที่เกิดขึ้นจากการร่วมรบในสงครามโลกครั้งที่สองและปมความขัดแย้งทางอัตลักษณ์ของตนได้โดยการรื้อฟื้นความสัมพันธ์กับโลกธรรมชาติผ่านพิธีกรรมและประเพณีการเล่าเรื่องในวัฒนธรรมมุขปาฐะ ทั้งนี้ผู้เขียนใช้โครงสร้างการประกอบพิธีกรรมและการเล่าเรื่องของชนพื้นถิ่นอเมริกาในการเสนอโลกทัศน์ใหม่แก่ผู้อ่าน การศึกษาเรื่อง *Potiki* นำเสนอว่า แนวคิดเรื่องเวลาและต้นกำเนิดของสรรพสิ่งตามความเชื่อเชิงจักรวาลวิทยาของชาวเมารีเป็นหลักสำคัญที่กำหนดวิถีชีวิต ความสัมพันธ์ภายในชุมชนและการปฏิบัติต่อแผ่นดิน แนวคิดดังกล่าวช่วยให้ชาวเมารีสามารถรับมือกับความสูญเสียและสร้างอัตลักษณ์เมารีร่วมสมัยขึ้นมาได้ การวิเคราะห์ยังชี้ให้เห็นว่า ผู้เขียนจัดเรียงเนื้อหาในนวนิยายให้มีลักษณะคล้ายโครงสร้างทางสถาปัตยกรรมของเรือนบรรพบุรุษในวัฒนธรรมเมารี เพื่อให้ผู้อ่านมีสถานะเป็นเสมือนอาคันตุกะผู้มาเยือนชุมชน และตัวละครเป็นเจ้าบ้านผู้ต้อนรับ สุดท้าย ส่วนบทวิเคราะห์เรื่อง *Shark Dialogues* แสดงให้เห็นว่าอัตลักษณ์ความเป็นชาวฮาวายนั้นไม่ได้ขึ้นอยู่กับเชื้อชาติ หากแต่เกิดขึ้นจากประวัติศาสตร์การถูกกดขี่ร่วมกัน การต่อต้านแข็งขืนต่อผู้กดขี่และความรักต่อผืนดิน นอกจากนี้ การศึกษายังเสนอว่าการรู้และเข้าใจปมประวัติครอบครัวเป็นวิธีเดียวในการเยียวยาประวัติศาสตร์บาดแผลและแก้ไขปมขัดแย้งภายในของตัวละครแต่ละตัวภายในเรื่อง

สาขาวิชา ภาษาอังกฤษ ลายมือชื่อนิสิต .....

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Krittaporn Reungwattanakul : RECLAIMING STOLEN VOICES: AN INDIGENOUS, REGION-BASED READING OF LESLIE MARMON SILKO'S *CEREMONY*, PATRICIA GRACE'S *POTIKI* AND KIANA DAVENPORT'S *SHARK DIALOGUES* . Advisor: Assoc. Prof. DARIN PRADITTATSANEE, Ph.D.

This thesis aims to examine how contemporary indigenous writers reclaim their self-definition through the *born-within*, region-based perspectives in three novels: Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* (1977), Patricia Grace' *Potiki* (1986), and Kiana Davenport's *Shark Dialogues* (1998). It propounds that the three novels employ indigenous myths, knowledge, and epistemologies to present their modern indigenous culture, history and identity as distinct from mainstream Western stereotypical perceptions. These writers also suggest the necessity for hybridization of traditional culture in order for indigenous cultures to survive when it comes into contact with the global community. The three selected literary texts present integral roles of nature in the formation of indigenous cultural identity and the destruction of the natural environment is therefore a threat to the survival of indigeneity. My analysis of *Ceremony* suggests that the protagonist, a World War II veteran, recovers from his wartime trauma and identity crisis after he restores his connection with the natural world through the traditions of ceremonies and storytelling. The author applies the structure of Native American ceremony and storytelling in order to reshape readers' worldview. In *Potiki*, this thesis argues that Maori cosmological concepts of time and creation govern the indigenous way of life and their relationship within the community and with the land. These notions help the Maori cope with their losses and create their contemporary Maori identity. It is also contended that the novel is constructed in much the same manner as the Maori ancestral house in order to establish the relationship between the characters as hosts and readers as guests. Finally, the reading of *Shark Dialogues* argues that Hawaiian-ness is not indicated by ethnicity, but contributed by shared suffering, the spirit of defiance, and love of the land. It also postulates that only through their understanding of their family history are the characters healed from personal conflicts and historical trauma.

Field of Study:	English	Student's Signature .....
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CHAPTER I: Introduction

Many international organizations and individuals have long attempted to define what "indigenous peoples" should mean as it is one of many terms that had been used rather arbitrarily to cover all groups of ethnic minorities globally, making it difficult for human rights organizations to find measures to aid the groups in accordance with international laws. In 1965, the term "indigenous peoples" was defined by United Nations as people who are "descendants of groups which were in the territory of the country at the time when other groups of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived there" and are now "placed under a state structure which incorporates national, social and cultural characteristics alien to theirs" (Das 400). This broad definition, in other words, focused mostly on political conflicts between the dominant and non-dominant units of societies, leaving out some other equally important aspects of indigeneity such as their cultural and social practices and local wisdom as well as the importance of self-identification that should have been the rights of the indigenous peoples. Then, later, the United Nations adopted the broader definition propounded by José R. Martínez Cobo. He proposes that "indigenous peoples" refers broadly to those with "a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies" (qtd. in The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations 4). The sense of "continuity" here, he suggests, can be appraised by looking at several factors, namely, the continuation of "occupation of ancestral lands", "common ancestry with the original occupants of [the] lands", cultural practices, and language system (4). In addition to the inclusion of many important aspects of indigenous peoples, Cobo also points out the significance of self-identification for indigenous peoples, meaning that what is deemed as "indigenous" should not solely be determined by others (4).

This recognition of diverse aspects of what can be included in the concept of indigeneity and of the indigenous rights to self-identification has clearly led to a much more careful trajectory of the definition of indigeneity. The International Labor Organization, a United Nations' specialized agency, reidentified "indigenous peoples" in its 1989 ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples No. 169. It set the distinction between indigenous peoples and typical tribal peoples; that is, indigenous peoples, apart from having elements of "traditional life style", "culture and way of life different from the other segments of the national population", and "own social organization and traditional customs and laws" like tribal peoples, should also "liv[e] in historical continuity in a certain area, or before others 'invaded' or came to the area" (7). At this point, ILO maintains the significance of "historical continuity" that has earlier been proposed by Cobo. However, this convention is the first international agreement which focuses on the rights to "self-identification" of indigenous peoples as the article 1.2 in the convention No.169 states, "Self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply" (8). In so doing, ILO incorporates both the aforementioned "objective" (8) criteria of the groups that could be identified as "indigenous peoples" and the "subjective" (8) identification, allowing individuals and groups to actively claim an "indigenous" status.

It is true what international organizations have been doing for indigenous groups is well-intentioned, since the Western administrative system itself requires the inclusion of all political subjects so that citizens can enjoy their political rights and receive

protection and rights from law[1]. Indigenous peoples, with a political, social and economic system of their own, alien to the dominant unit of societies, are in a position which makes it difficult for governments to provide help and protection. Comprehensible are the attempts of human right organizations such as the United Nations and International Labor Organization to identify indigenous people both "objectively" and "subjectively" to determine how the peoples could be lawfully included to enjoy privileges from states despite different life style and social administration. The attempts, from certain perspectives, can be viewed as right moves towards more justice for indigenous peoples. However, I propose that the approaches of these organizations, if carefully dissected, reveal important underlying problems of the existing relationship between indigeneity and modern, used today almost synonymously with western logic. By tracing the development of the attempts by international organizations to promote indigenous rights, it can be seen that the position and the existence of the indigenous people are constructed as if intrinsically connected to, and dependent on, the modern world.

[1] Giorgio Agamben has proposed in his book *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* the nature of Western politics has required a human being (*zoe*) to enter the political realm, transforming itself into a *bios*, a political subject in order that one receives recognition from state and acquires political, qualified life. However, the life as *bios* also requires one to abide by laws of state. In other words, in order for a subject to receive protection from the state, under the logic of the modern law and order, it also has to become "a subject" to the sovereign power as well. In the case of indigenous peoples here, I propose in the introduction that, by being labelled and recognized by the state as "indigenous peoples", the indigenous then are automatically subjecting themselves to the power of the state in order that they are recognized and protected by laws. Yet, ironically, by subduing themselves to the state, indigenous peoples are in a position vulnerable to the exception and injustice that laws can impose upon them.

From the first attempts to recognize and define indigenous peoples to the latest ILO Convention No. 169, the contradiction of the procedures to define or identify indigenous peoples and subsequently set the framework of what is included in the concepts of "indigeneity" is clearly presented. These concepts can be deconstructed from the level of the etymology of the word that international organizations have been trying to determine. To illustrate, the word "indigenous", the very adjective that is used to give qualities to "peoples", is derived from two Greek words: "endo" (within) and "genous" (birth/race), so the indigenous can be alternatively referred to as *the born-within*. However, the term has always been defined or identified and then activated in the legal sphere by the norm, political authorities, or the dominant ethnic groups. Despite the good will of these major organizations, the term "indigenous" has become the quality given by the norm and used by the outsiders. This contradicting nature of the word "indigenous" — etymologically meaning the inside/local natives but mostly used by the outsiders/non-natives — points out that even though the term is meant to be used to give justice to the minority, it inevitably highlights the binary opposition, the pillar of Western worldview and epistemology. Moreover, by having outsiders recognizing the rights and the existence of the *indi-genous* people, those who use the word may unintentionally posit the ethnic minorities in the realm of the Western paradigm, repeating the act of cultural domination and appropriation all over again. In other words, had it not been for the success of the intrusion of the outsiders, the term "indigenous" (the born within) would not be needed. Furthermore, paradoxically, even the casual, almost innocent use of the word "indigenous" implies that the *born-within* are reduced to a marginalized state while the *born-outside* turn out to be dominant, assuming the voices of the *born-within*, owning the autonomy to determine the course

of events, the fate of the indigenous and even the definition of the actual *born-within* Other.

With a certain degree of veracity, it could be rightly claimed that international organizations have recognized that the indigenous peoples should have their own voice. Evidently, in addition to the existing characteristics of indigenous peoples given by international organizations, the ILO Convention No.169 has added the rights of indigenous peoples to declare that they belong to the criterion of "indigenous" by themselves so that the laws and protections in this convention can be applied to them without force. However, as promising as it seems, through both international definitions and self-identification, indigenous peoples are still required to become subjects of the dominant paradigm, under a particular label that is understood by the outsiders, in order that they can receive protection from the states or organizations.

In the academic domain, the very area which theoretically aims to do justice for marginalized people, indigenous peoples, the *born-within,* are mostly, again, represented by external agents. A large body of studies and debates generated by modern scholars are oftentimes done by the outsiders who belong to the dominant sphere. The nature of academia, with a great degree of resemblance to international organizations, ranging from being the arena of professionals, most of whom are ingrained with modern sets of knowledge and discursive practices to being the area to which the standardized regulations and approaches are applied, has allowed for essentialized narratives and methodologies when talking of subjects in the debates. Many studies that deal with indigenous peoples or other groups of minorities, thus, are read under Western literary critical theories, the equivalent of having the stories of the

born-within, their identities and cultures analyzed by strangers until, in the worst case scenario, they are incomprehensible to the people to which they belong. The process of reading and explicating indigenous writings by employing literary frameworks, most commonly post-colonial analysis, cannot only be read as a procedure of what might be called well-intentioned re-colonization, but may also produce rather limited, even misleading, understandings of indigenous cultures. In other words, when examined through the eyes of Westerners or those who belong to the dominant sphere, indigenous peoples are studied and explained through the eyes of people who do not share the same beliefs, background, and worldview. Due to the problematic nature of the field, many accounts of indigenous peoples might be rendered debatable.

In fact, not only does this problem occur with the common definition, concepts and studies of indigeneity, many existing fields that explore the minority or the non-West have already been pointed out as false, misleading, and Eurocentric as well. For example, in his groundbreaking book *Orientalism*, Edward Said has criticized the practice of Oriental studies as driven under the Western attitude towards the East. He proposes that what is deemed "oriental" is based upon its distinction with the Occident, and therefore:

> a very large mass of writers, among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, "mind," destiny, and so on. (2-3)

With the binary opposition between what is deemed West and what *is not* West, the definition of the Orientals then comes not from the East, but is based from the west. Thus, the Orientals are likely to be falsely represented as inferior by the West, and simultaneously are forcefully included in the Western cultural hegemony of the discourses. Similarly, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak proposes in her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" that the well-intentioned analyses of modern socio-political issues in relation to the "subalterns" done by intellectuals are "essentialist and taxonomic" (80), and that subaltern studies which are based on "the violence of imperialist epistemic" are studies in which the subalterns are defined essentially as different from the elites (80). Spivak employs the two contrasting sets of interpretations of *Sati*, an Indian ritual in which a widow commits suicide by immolating herself on her husband's pyre, to further elaborate how the interpretations of those within dominant discourses, in this case the British on the one hand and the post-independence Indian nationalists on the other, are equivalent to the silencing of others. She explains that by either condemning *sati* as a crime to grant freedom to subaltern women or praising the women for having free will over legal prohibition of the British Empire, both parties perform the act of speaking for the subalterns (96-97). This is the act of translating subaltern women into the dominant language, depriving them of the ability to speak for themselves. Spivak comes to the conclusion that the subaltern cannot speak.

The problem of the studies in all three areas: indigenous studies, Oriental studies, and Subaltern studies, therefore, share at least a few obvious common traits. First, the terms used to define (the indigenous, the Orientals, the subalterns) the targeted minorities and/or the non-Western are based on limited, essentialized, generalized sets of categories, most of which signify the qualities opposed to what the norms believe

they are. The indigenous are defined by their lifestyle, customs, languages, and origins as contrasted to the dominant, modern norm, the Orientals are characterized as inferior based upon what the West thinks they are and are not, and the subalterns are seen as different from the norm and the ruling classes of each society. In other words, the terms "indigeneity", "Oriental", and "subaltern" are problematic and contradictory in their nature, and despite the fact that they should be defined by those who belong to the categories, these three words are all conjured by the outside agents, based on their understanding of others, and mostly used by them. Second, because the three disciplines are mostly studied by Westerners or the ones belonging to dominant discourse, these individuals or societies, then, are, through the process of research and analysis, put into a discursive hegemony, which could be read as a well-intentioned discursive recolonization. Third, as definitions of the indigenous, Orientals, and subalterns are given qualities, they are distorted in the first place. The voices that speak for the groups, made to be inferior, are heard, then duplicated and spread, consequently contributing to the pervasive misconception among not only intellectuals but also even the general audience. Most ironically, from what I have demonstrated, it is the intellectuals who, perhaps not knowingly, have been making contributions to the post-colonial Western cultural dominations. With these problems of representation and identification, many scholars in the field have started to regain the rights to self-representation and redefinition through various forms of writings, be it a manifesto, a theory, a critique of modern epistemologies or fiction.

Rethinking Indigeneity and the New Wave of Indigenous Studies

The aforementioned problems of representations which occur as Western scholars delve into the world of the indigenous people do not necessarily suggest that the discipline should be demolished, nor do they discourage prospective learners from building on the existing studies. Rather, the recognition that the indigenous people have long been presented in a misleading, limited fashion coupled with the realization that the lives and cultures of the *born-within* are being described through the perspective of the outsiders can contribute to the changing course of the discipline. Similar to ways in which the defects of subaltern studies and oriental studies have led such scholars as Edward Said and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak to try to question, rethink and reform the fields, indigenous cultures have recently been approached in a different, more promising light. Out of many branches from numerous cultures, there are some approaches to the studies of indigenous peoples that have been particularly influential in academia.

Because of the many evident problems and crises brought about by the Western practices and sciences, there has emerged a small number of scholars who employ indigenous worldviews in the studies of the Western world, believing that the cooperation of different cultures will improve Western science, which are deemed problematic. These scholars have become more aware that Western ideologies, positivist approaches, and their binary worldview have not been guiding human societies in a peaceful direction. Western scientific discoveries, for instance, have brought about a series of destructions —the two World Wars, the Cold War, nuclear proliferation, and global environmental degradation. Now that it is evident that Western

ways may not always work, scholars have turned to look at other alternative perspectives that might be less harmful and hazardous.

For instance, a paper "Place-based learning and knowing: critical pedagogies grounded in Indigeneity" (2012) by Jay T. Johnson, focuses on the concept of indigeneity as specifically linked to the concept of place. He proposes that, for indigenous peoples, "places" or landscapes are "the storied histories" (829), and this particular way in which indigenous people perceive place provides a counter-narrative against dominant Western thinking. He starts off by identifying that the problems concerning the meaning of the world "place" itself lie in the fact that "place" is so complex a term that it can hardly be summarized in a specific way, and its meaning is usually taken for granted. In order to make his point clear, he, therefore, introduces the two narrowed meanings of "place" — one as an agent that offers a way for humans to learn about and understand the world, and the other as a concrete location where ongoing conflicts are present. Johnson claims that these two meanings resemble the indigenous views of place. Reading "place" through these two definitions is the key to successfully decolonizing, reclaiming, and bargaining with, the dominant Western perspective towards land. In the midst of environmental crises, this concept of "indigenous place-based learning" might also be able to offer alternative solutions against impending doom.

To demonstrate his claims, Jay T. Johnson traces the root of how "the storied histories" embedded in landscape have been taken for granted. According to him, the separation of humans from landscape is caused by "the Enlightenment meta-narrative", the idea behind the clear-cut demarcation of all things as opposite, including the

division between humans and nature. This predominant thinking inevitably entails a state of "placelessness", the term that explicates the Western condition because, as the separation between humans and nature is generated, humans' connection with the landscape and the embedded stories is forgotten. Despite Keith Basso's concept of place-making which proposes that humans never completely lose their connection with places because we, on a daily basis, have been creating certain meaning to them, it is undeniable that, as Johnson argues, we have overlooked the cultural histories and moralities stored within the landscape and in the process of place-making, these aspects of the "place" are not in the focus.

In addition to the separation between humans and nature, Johnson also argues that the Enlightenment meta-narrative also situates Western science away from the indigenous worldview and wisdom. Western-based science tends to embrace the idea of universal rules and knowledge, taking the view that all occurrences can be accounted for within a single set of explanations. This method of learning persists and prevails because established science has been separated from the specific, unique histories of each locality. Thus, it can be said that by removing local histories and narratives, Western science plays a role in suppressing the local wisdom of indigenous people, believing that all can be explained by a single, universal rule.

Having pinpointed fundamental problems regarding "place" — (1) the separation of humans and civilization from nature and (2) the exclusion of place-based local knowledge of the indigenous people from Western science, Jay T. Johnson advises that scholars acknowledge the many different epistemologies and ontologies to make people aware that there are multitudes of ideas to be explored and that the incorporation

of diverse knowledge systems can be exercised. In an attempt to do so, he claims it is vital to recognize the important role of the "place" because indigenous stories, histories, and knowledge are recorded, told, and continuously being retold in the "place". In other words, for Johnson, place is the threshold of resistance against Western, dominant discursive formation. Through the studies of "storied histories" of landscape, long-suppressed historical, cultural struggles will be realized and studied. This will contribute to the decolonization of people's minds, setting them free from the oppressive mindset that exploits indigenous people and minorities. Also, considering the role of place-based learning in the age of global environmental crises, the revival of indigenous wisdom as connected to landscape can allow us humans alternative ways of living well with the environment because, for indigenous locals, nature is a part of the place as do humans. As for the roles of the revival of place-based knowledge in the academic sphere, the incorporation of varied knowledge systems, epistemological and ontological philosophies will liberate Western science from the limited, illusionary nature of the universal knowledge system, which is, in fact, rather limited. Such a dialogue between different learning systems, if bound together with equal interest given, can yield many possibilities for humans to grasp what the "place" has offered to us, leading eventually to making scholars more critical in their profession.

In the article “Local Understandings of the Land: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Indigenous Knowledge” (2003), Roy C. Dudgeon and Fikret Berkes present a similar approach in which anthropologists in the field of indigenous/environmental studies have broken away from the previously dominant Western perspective of science. By providing the background of indigenous studies in relation to resource management and development, the article explores the definitions

and distinctions between overlapping yet significantly different theoretical approaches of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). The article outlines the history of the former, the precursor of the latter, by noting some of its major critics. It can be seen that the field has moved away from the hegemonic Western science. To start with Paul Sillitoe's predominant proposition on the role of indigenous knowledge, although he attempts to integrate indigenous knowledge into the realm of environmental and development management, he argues that traditional knowledge is indeed important but in the end cannot be a substitute for or even a factor of equal importance to Western science. Indigenous knowledge can, in other words, only complement Western science. Sillitoe's view is understandably pervasive as it is based on positivism and scientific methodologies. However, several of Sillitoe's critics such as Jan Brouwer and Arun Agrawal contend that Sillitoe takes traditional knowledge out of its cultural context, treating it as an independent set of information not cohesive to its cultural root, thereby downplaying the role of anthropologists in the politics of the relationship between the state and indigenous people in dealing with development and resource management.

The critiques on Sillitoe's stance, not different from Johnson's commentary on the limitation of the West's view of the place, mark a shift of ideologies and epistemologies in the field of indigenous studies. As Roy C. Dudgeon and Fikret Berkes illustrate the dualistic, disciplinary and reductionist view of conventional, Western science has fallen short in accounting for the ecological crises it is facing. Thus, the move to a more interdisciplinary, integrative and organic perspective is necessary. The worldview brought about by the new integrative epistemologies sees everything as relational to each other, nullifying the positivistic methodologies in which components

in the natural world are broken down into parts and studied independently. Traditional Ecological Knowledge as a theoretical approach is based on this new paradigm as it employs not only particular knowledge of the indigenous people as a tool for development but also the entirety of the way of life passed on for generations, thus taking both the environmental practices and the whole set of their beliefs and cultures into account.

Several anthropological theories, such as “holism” and “adaptive management”, introduced in the article stand in support of the thesis statement initially proposed: that there is and has been a crisis with the conventional worldview. The paradigm shift from the conventional positivistic epistemology to a more holistic one suggested by Roy C. Dudgeon and Fikret Berkes encompasses all the claims in support of an indigenous worldview and against the prevailing Western one. These approaches exploring this paradigm shift contribute greatly to the understanding of indigenous theories and issues in the academic fields.

While the approach employed in the two aforementioned essays can be viewed as a way of bringing indigenous knowledge, usually viewed as backward and inferior, to the fore in science-related fields, it is also worth noting that the ultimate purpose of such a combination between conventional approaches and those of indigenous cultures is to improve and revolutionize the existing Western-based disciplines, and thus, there automatically exists a process of picking-and-choosing what is to be presented and adapted in the science. Through this process of reduction and selection of indigenous cultural practices and beliefs to serve a particular purpose in Western science, not only are many aspects of indigenous culture omitted since they are inapplicable or unable to

serve the established purposes, but also the prospective advocates' perception of the definitions or concepts of indigeneity will be somewhat incomplete and always kept within Western frameworks.

Another approach in the study of indigeneity, on the other hand, focuses specifically on indigenous cultures, epistemologies, rituals, and practices as not necessarily linking to certain Western frameworks. This approach has contributed to the body of culturally specific research on indigeneity in the recent decades. The focal point of the research in this group is oftentimes to produce works in which the indigenous are regarded as figures of authority, given autonomy to account for their own epistemologies and self-definition based on distinct indigenous cultures and beliefs. Unlike many schools of Western science, which have universal rules applicable for all cases related to their fields, each strand of indigenous studies may only concern a particular indigenous group, making the research in this category not only very detailed and specific in its scope but also contrasting to traditional approaches on topics related to the indigenous such as Michel Foucault's biopolitics or post-colonial studies. However, due to the characteristics of this approach which make it difficult to generate a concrete summary that covers all the existing bodies of research, this chapter will provide only some studies that are directly related to the specific groups of indigenous peoples, namely, the Polynesians and the Maoris and the Native Americans, and for the sake of unity, this part of the literature review will focus on the role of indigenous knowledge in shaping indigenous literature in the particular regions, the characteristics of indigenous wisdom, practices, epistemologies and cultural products that are influential in contemporary indigenous literature written in English.

In general, some of the major obstacles that readers outside the indigenous cultures have encountered upon reading indigenous English literature are the inclusion of cultural practices and their influence on the plots and narratives, and the combination of folktales, myths, and local wisdom in the seemingly linear timeline of the story. Thus, many experts in the field of Oceanic literature and of Native American literature base their research and arguments on the region-based practices and beliefs in order that the works can be read more accurately and that the indigenous are not falsely represented, comprehended, and subsequently spoken for by the *born-outsides* who are likely to diminish many dimensions of the concept of indigeneity in the literary works. For example, concerning the concept of indigeneity and its influence in reading Oceanic literature, in his essay *"*Reconstituting Indigenous Oceanic Folktales*"* (2010), Steven Edmund Winduo, a prominent scholar and professor of Oceanic studies, proposes a way of redefining Oceanic *"*folktales*"*, by discussing how the indigenous heritage is employed in the post-colonial contexts of the regions. He first establishes the term *"*folktale*"* as social, cultural texts, independent and free from the restrictions of certain beliefs or sets of interpretation. He employs Raymond Williams' term *"*structures of feeling" to highlight the fact that folktales are not merely abstract reflections of a certain ideology, they include material aspects of people's experience. Having located the context of the *"*folktale*"* Winduo then points out that as texts, folktales are *"*unending object of possibilities*"*, meaning that they yield infinite interpretations. Winduo emphasizes the fact that there exist interactions between folktales and socio-political contexts of each place and time. Therefore, the same text/folktale can be read and reread in different contexts to yield multiple interpretations. In other words, for Winduo, the

meanings embedded in folktales as texts are relative, and able to change in different conditions.

Another important point in this essay is that it demonstrates the significance of folktales or indigenous myths in the post-colonial, Western-dominated arena. Winduo claims that indigenous folktales are commonly used among Pacific writers as a tool to explain the experience of the locals in modern society. He lists several important writers, such as Patricia Grace and Haunani-Kay Trask, all of whom have employed local myths as frameworks of their stories. In addition, concerning the role of myth in the post-colonial era, folk narratives can be used (together with Western stories) as a frame to explicate the changing condition of the modern world, a technique that many prominent writers have employed. These two major functions of folktales, thus, imply that folktales ultimately serve as a tool for indigenous people to reclaim the authority to establish their own sets of explanations of the world, history and incidents.

Focusing on the impact of folktales in the political sphere, Winduo suggests that since folktales are the combined representation of both abstract ideologies, beliefs and concrete experiences, they constitute the foundation of cultural space for certain ethnic groups. That is, folk narratives pave the way for indigenous, minor cultures to assert itself in the hegemonic space, allowing the minorities to contest predominant discourses. After having demonstrated the functions of folktales in the Pacific, Winduo also gives out a message warning that by employing folktales, most of which are originally composed for societies with oral tradition using local vernacular language, there emerge at least two versions of stories. Therefore, it is important to remember that what has been translated into English is the *"*popular*"* version of folktales, having

undergone translation, a process that might contribute to the changes in meaning or the lack of some original feelings and features.

What Winduo has proposed in his insightful essay is that folktales, which encompass both the material and spiritual aspects of Oceanic people, can work as an apparatus for self-identification. However, as Winduo has also pointed out, it is important for scholars to bear in mind as well that the embedded meaning of each folktale is relative and that the presentation of a folktale may be altered through the process of translations.

Similar attempts to Winduo's can be seen in Paula Gunn Allen's *"*The Sacred Hoop*:* A Contemporary Perspective*"* (2004). She argues that for non-Indians to approach native American literature appropriately, they must understand fundamental concepts of native American epistemology, that are alien to typical Western logic. Allen calls this concept the *"*sacred hoop*"* and defines it as *"*singular unity that is dynamic and encompassing, including all that is contained in its most essential aspect, that of life" (243).

Allen first points out two reasons behind some Western scholars*'* general inability to understand Native American culture. For one thing, it is critical for scholars to have a cultural understanding *"*from which [the literature] springs*"* in order to accurately analyze literary works (241) However, Western scholars have very little exposure to native American culture. Consequently, they have to make use of their distorted concepts of native Americans, based mostly on the Western worldview, to approach native American works. Therefore, they can grasp only the superficial aspects of native American literary texts, and falsely present them as *"*primitive, savage,

childlike, and pagan" (241). Secondly, since Western scholars have labelled native American literature as backward, they tend to read it as folklore, not knowing that for native Americans, while folklore belongs mostly to the folk, literature is the exclusive sphere for only professionals with a great deal of knowledge about culture, myth, and philosophy of their tribe.

Having stated the problems that general readers encounter upon reading indigenous Indian literature, Allen, then, explains two integral components that constitute the worldview of native American people. First, she states that the manner in which a native American person perceives him/herself in relation to other beings and universe is very different from the Westerner. To illustrate, while Christian people view themselves as separated from God due to the punishment following Eve's breach, native Americans do not think that they are separated from God, or what they call *"*All Spirit*"*. Second, they believe that God has created them, not to banish them but to have them as *"*spirits*"* connected with all spirits of beings, animated and unanimated alike, and to *"*All Spirit*"* as well. Native Americans, then, think that they are interrelated with both *"*All Spirit*"*, or God, and all spirits of beings in the universe. This aspect contrasts greatly with the Biblical notion that the Christian God has stratified all beings with men placed on the top and natural elements at lower levels.

For Allen, the Native American's concepts of self and interrelatedness are key elements that are absent from the Western worldview, but they play a great role in shaping native American literature. Western scholars' inability to understand this fundamental concept, consequently, constitutes a misreading of native American literature. As Allen explains, the purpose of indigenous Indian literature, influenced by

the idea of interconnectedness, is basically to *"*bring the isolated, private self into harmony and balance of its reality" (242). Western literature, in contrast, influenced by their concept of separation, generally creates an individual expression separated from the community. With these two radically different views, Western scholars, thus, fail to understand the logic of the stories in native American literature. They usually criticize indigenous literature as presenting outdated ideas in the modern context. Simultaneously, Western scholars are likely to condemn Native American life for lacking advancement and progress; thus, indigenous culture, in their view, is static and becomes more backward while modern society becomes more developed. However, what they do not see is that for Native Americans, progress means that everything – humans, animals, and nature – has to move forward together since humans are not the center of the universe.

In addition, Allen points out that Native American cultural products are roughly composed of *"*ceremony*"*, the materialization of the Indian perception of the universe and *"*myth*"*, the written prose that explicates the perception. Both *"*ceremony*"* and *"*myth*"* are likely to appear in all literature and cannot be studied individually. With Western research methodology, all elements are dissected, then individually studied, and those who are accustomed to this approach will not be able to understand Indian ceremonies for they are all interconnected, and thus, cannot be studied as if created individually as *"*one*"* cultural production by *"*one*"* individual in the universe. In other words, Allen points out that it is impossible for Western readers to understand Native American literature unless they familiarize themselves with the worldview of the indigenous people, for without it, the interpretation of indigenous cultural products will always be distorted.

The process which Edmund Winduo and Paula Gunn Allen employ has shed light on the more accurate and honest approaches to contemporary Oceanic and Native American literary pieces. Their research demonstrates that, for the indigenous peoples, factors other than trauma histories and socio-political conflicts shape storylines and how the literary works are crafted. With a deeper understanding, or at least the awareness of the differences between indigenous cultures and the Western mindset, scholars may be able to comprehend literature from indigenous cultures based on the eyes of the *born-within*, enabling themselves to see the true purpose and messages conveyed in each piece of art more clearly. Still, while some critics have adopted the indigenous, region-based worldview in their studies in order to present ways *(*other than post-colonial*)* to read or understand indigenous literary works and arts as have Winduo and Allen, others have even gone further by establishing literary theories based on local epistemologies, and myths in an attempt to propose a method through which indigenous literature can be analyzed. Such methods indicate the rather unprecedented, yet impressive endeavor of scholars to try to provide well-established theoretical frameworks that are established by indigenous scholars themselves who base their theory on indigenous knowledge.

In his article *"*Unwriting Oceania*:* The Repositioning of the Pacific Writer Scholars within a Folk Narrative Space*"* (2000), Steven Edmund Winduo places his focus on writing a theoretical framework as a product not of the Western world but of the combination and interaction between Western and Pacific cultures. He first identifies the problems regarding the stereotypical representation of Oceania in Western literature as a void space, instead of an area alive with diverse cultures. This misleading image of the Pacific has allowed Western cultures to present Oceania, void as it seems

for the West, as they wish to conjure. Consequently, the indigenous identity and cultural aspects of Oceania have, throughout the centuries, been erased and overwritten by the dominant Western literature. Winduo calls this process of erasure and overwriting the act of "leaving out" because by not recognizing that Oceania is alive with diverse cultures, Western literature has also assumed that Oceanic literature does not exist, thus omitting it when discussing Oceania. However, despite Pacific literature being left out, Pacific writers/scholars have tried to reclaim their cultural memories through the traces that have survived the process of overwriting and erasure. In addition to reconstructing cultural memories through the remaining traces, Winduo proposes that it is vital that Pacific writers/scholars create a literary framework based on indigenous knowledge to successfully represent their cultures by themselves, contesting the representation imposed upon them by the Western hegemonic structure.

Winduo demonstrates the way in which Pacific writers/scholars can create what he calls "folk narrative space", a set of Pacific-based narrative that can account for the experiences of the indigenous. Pacific folktales, the cultural products of the region that are based on an indigenous oral tradition, which, when adapted and used in written form of literature, become hybridized. In other words, written literary products are the result of the cross-cultural representation of the indigenous oral and Western literary customs. This state of hybridity in Pacific literature subsequently manifests a new, independent image of Oceania that suggests the development of this seemingly static culture. With its own strategic practices of self-representation, Pacific writers/scholars can contest against the opposite dominant discourses.

To use folktales as elements in literature alone, Winduo persists, is not enough for Pacific writers/scholars in their quest to challenge such dominant, universal discourses of Western culture. He proposes that Pacific writers/scholars should create *"*home-grown*"* critical theory in order to fight for their cultural survival. In order to justify his claim and demonstrate how such a *"*home-grown*"* theory can be generated and applied, Winduo comes up with the term *"*structure of viewing*"*, a systematic structural analysis of folktales he employs as a framework to explicate Pacific experiences. He uses this structure to explain how the traditional myth of *"*the ogre-killing child*"* can be deciphered and applied as a method to point out the duty of Pacific scholars and how they can achieve their goal of self-representation Winduo tells of the story of a town, occupied by a giant ogre who is eventually killed by a boy left behind with his mother after the townspeople have abandoned the town. He proposes that when the story is interpreted through *"*structure of viewing*"*, it signifies that the Pacific writer scholars are like this child — they are the ones to unwrite the distorted representation of the Pacific done by the white ogre/intruder. To succeed, they, like the child, have to learn about both ogre/Western alien discourses and their own traditional values, passed on by the mother/the traces of overwritten, conquered culture. Equipped with both Western and traditional knowledge, Pacific writers/scholars then can complete the act of confronting the ogre/dominant discourses. To put it simply, what Winduo is trying to do is to demonstrate that apart from rediscovering the repressed such cultural heritage as folktales and using them to create hybridized narratives, Pacific writers/scholars also need to create their *"*home-grown*"* theoretical frameworks and use them to present the Pacific instead of borrowing Western, alien theories to account for local experiences. Ultimately, his very endeavor to explain the mission of Pacific writers/scholars through

the use of both *"*folktale of the ogre-killing child*"* and the *"*structure of viewing*"* itself can be read as the epitome of how the process of unwriting Oceania can actually be practiced.

The process of (1) creating folk narrative space, merging oral and writing traditions together, and (2) producing *"*home-grown*"* critical theories altogether result in *"*a hybridized narrative structure*"*. Winduo further emphasizes that it is under such a structure that dialogic encounters develop, evoking many different, unique minor narratives. After all, the strategies of Pacific writers/scholars, in making use of traditional beliefs, cannot really escape the criticism of being nostalgic and revisionist. Still, it cannot be denied that they have actively engaged in "unwriting the notion of Oceania as a monolithic idea of cultures and peoples" (609).

In the concluding section, Winduo states his recognition of the developing progress of Pacific literary scholarship. What he sees as prominent in works written in post-colonial contexts is that in such writings, it is natural to view the entanglement of traditional and introduced cultures, and according to him, this entanglement is impossible to be dismantled for it is inextricably bounded together, always challenging, contesting or even complementing one another in this post-colonial context of the world.

From New Mexico to the Pacific – Indigenous Literature in Focus

Unlike what M.H. Abrams argues in *The Mirror and the Lamp (*1953*)*, indigenous literature may neither work as a mirror reflecting reality nor stand as a lamp, a means through which an individual expresses his or her perception of the world. On the one hand, indigenous literature, as Paula Gunn Allen puts it, is never a *"*pure self-

expression*"* and the Western concept of literature as *"*the private soul at any public wall*"* is *"*alien*"* to American Indian culture (242) and other indigenous cultures whose social structure encourages communal unity. On the other hand, a large body of indigenous literature does not claim to explicate indigenous lives and experiences as a whole. It recognizes the cultural specificity of different tribes and communities. Although these tribes may share similar experiences, worldviews, ontologies and rituals, each of them has its own unique culture and thus thwarts generalization.

This thesis aims to examine Leslie Marmon Silko*'*s *Ceremony* (1977), Praticia Grace*'*s *Potiki* (1986), and Kiana Davenport*'*s *Shark Dialogues* (1994) which represent three different ethnic minority cultures – Native American, Maori, and Hawaiian. The three novels share certain qualities. First, while they are temporally and spatially written in the post-colonial context, they cannot be efficiently analyzed through post-colonial analytical frameworks. Second, even though they are written with Western linear plot structures in the English language, the three indigenous texts render a general plot analysis insufficient. Most importantly, all three novels employ indigenous knowledge, which may be deemed by the non-indigenous as backward and static. Written by writers who may be deemed hybrid, the novels are cosmopolitan and global in context. They deal with major characters who are hybrid and encounter struggles at personal, communal, and ideological levels caused by the clash between indigeneity and modernity. These three qualities thus place the novels in the in-between position. Furthermore, with this quality of ambivalence, the three writers manage to challenge, in their novels, the Western frameworks of literary analysis in order to show that these approaches are not able to decipher complex cultural products that have been produced by the *born-within.* Simultaneously, however, the incorporation of Western and

indigenous techniques and epistemologies, all closely intermingled, shows that the indigenous communities are aware of change and recognize it as an integral part of the survival of their communities. In other words, although they come from three different cultures – Native American, Maori, and Hawaiian respectively – *Ceremony*, *Potiki*, and *Shark Dialogues* share the qualities of ambivalence in form, narrative techniques, content, and characterization which, as this thesis attempts to argue, work as tools for indigenous people to regain the narrative of self-representation and to re-define their cultures. At the same time, these techniques prove that whereas the Western world perceives indigenous cultures as static, backward and inclusive, indigenous cultures do adapt and flourish remaining alive and thriving in their own ways.

Literature Review: Criticism on *Ceremony, Potiki,* and *Shark Dialogues*

The three novels, *Ceremony* (1977), *Potiki* (1986), *and Shark Dialogues* (1994), have all been studied to a different degree, yet they have not been considered comparatively. However, there have been certain recurring approaches to the three works, rendering a comparative reading potentially plausible. Of the three, Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* has been analyzed most widely and the novel can be interpreted through two major approaches. First of all, a number of literary critics have focused on narrative techniques in *Ceremony*, specifically the employment of the oral tradition and its effect on readers as well as the incorporation of myth, historical records, prose, and poems which plays a role in reconfiguring Native American identity. For instance, in Susan Berry Brill de Ramirez's article "Storytellers and their Listeners-readers in Silko's 'Storytelling' and 'Storyteller'" (1998), the author argues that based on Sliko's stance viewing herself more as a "storyteller" than merely a "writer", her

works, including *Ceremony*, transform readers from "passive recipients of the told stories" into "co-creative participants", playing a part in the events in the told stories (334). This process encompasses myth and reality, past and present, and even readers/listeners and narrators/storytellers. In effect, the roles of writers as oral-traditioned "storytellers" and readers as "listener-readers" have incorporated readers into the "stories", expanding the web of relation of all beings. In other words, what Leslie Marmon Silko has attempted to do in her process of writing and plotting the novels is to put her readers in the position of participants in ceremonies in order that readers become parts of the web of relation, or rather, regain the lost relationship with other existence in the world, according to Native American epistemologies. Thus, in the case of *Ceremony*, the listener-reader is in the same position as Tayo, who is a listener to Betonie's stories and a co-creative participant in the ever-growing web of relationship. Similarly, in "Leslie Marmon Silko's Reappropriation of Native American History and Identity" (2006), Cynthia Carsten proposes that the incorporation of numerous genres of writings in *Ceremony* is a technique, intentionally employed to reclaim indigenous history and identity as it defies "Euro-American aesthetic expectations of temporal continuity and chronology of plot" (107). In addition to this, the paper also claims that the techniques, from the Keres Pluebo oral tradition are employed in *Ceremony* because they can reflect the lives of the indigenous of the Laguna Pluebo better than those in the Euro-American literary tradition.

Critics of the second approach pay attention to the role of indigenous wisdom and nature, which is linked to Native American beliefs, in healing. Holly E. Martin's essay "Hybrid Landscapes as Catalysts for Cultural Reconciliation in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* and Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless me, Ultima*" (2006) is one of the good

instances. Martin argues that natural landscape with “hybridity” as a required quality is the core factor that leads to the cultural reconciliation of Tayo, an offspring of the cultural conflict between Native Americans and whites. She points out several important passages in the story that explain the cross-cultural, hybrid qualities of landscape, such as the battlefield in the Philippines where Tayo went as a soldier in the Second World War as superimposed on the land in the reservations back in the United States and the Pluebo reservation area with Jackpile Uranium Mine. As Martin explains, these landscapes are the key to an understanding of Tayo’s identity conflicts. They represent the present conditions of nature, Native American identity and Tayo himself; all consisting of the combination of whites, as the destroyers, according to the myth, and the non-whites, as the victims of such destructions. Tayo, natural landscape in the native American community and contemporary native American culture have both the element of the whites’ culture and of nature. Thus, in order for Tayo to be completely healed, he has to recognize and subsequently reconcile his hybrid state, through his profound understanding of the landscapes of which the conditions resemble Tayo’s. Rachel Stein’s essay “Contested Ground: Nature, Narrative, and Native American Identity in Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Ceremony* and *Almanac of the Dead*” (1997), similarly proposes that nature and the Pluebo oral tradition play major roles in reconciling the two opposing cultures. Tayo, a mixed-blood protagonist, through ceremonies and encounters with personified natural agents in the form of T’seh and The Mountain Lion, has come to understand the interconnectedness of all beings, including the seemingly conflicting Euro-American and Native American, leading to his eventual recovery and the return of the rain in the community.

As for the other trends of interpretation, some critics employ an ecofeminist framework to analyze the text and/or focus on the roles of female agents and the Native American concept of femininity to see how it shapes and influences the narrative and events in the novel. In her essay "Feminine Perspectives at Laguna Pueblo: Silko's *Ceremony*" (1992), Edith Swan looks at the construction of the plot, narrative, and characters' relationships through the theory of the Karesan, a Native American tribe which Silko is from, on femininity and matrilineal, exogamous structure. In her essay "Theorizing the earth: feminist approaches to nature and Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*" (1994) Lisa Orr attempts to explain, through the analysis of *Ceremony*, how patriarchal structure and discourse have led to destructive modern technological advancement, and how returning to indigenous, feminine-based concepts can help restore the peace.

In addition to this, some critics have focused on the political effect the novel has produced. For instance, in "Keeping the native on the reservation: the struggle for Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*" (2001), Jeff Karem has examined the documents and records relating to the editing process of the novel before its first publication and demonstrates how the editing process which includes many attempts to modify the text or erase some particular passages in the novel reveals how little American readers understand about indigenous Native American cultures and how the authorities have seen indigenous writings as a threat towards maintaining a good relationship between Americans and Native Americans readers.

Patricia Grace's *Potiki* has gained interest among a number of critics as well. There have been two main approaches to the novel. The first group of interpretations

analyzes the text within a post-colonial framework, looking at techniques which the novel employs in order to address the issue of contemporary conflicts between Maori people and the *Pakeha*. In her essay "Transforming the Insider-Outsider Perspecitve: Postcolonial Fiction from the Pacific" (2000), Sandra Tawake argues that there are two waves of Pacific indigenous writers: the former with a clear-cut binary relationship between the Pakeha and the Maori and the latter with a more global, cosmopolitan approach. She places Patricia Grace as a writer belonging to the former group. In "Diminished Violence" (1997), Patrice Wilson has similarly identified *Potiki* as a postcolonial text. However, unlike Tawake, the author focuses more on local wisdom, specifically the influence of the indigenous narrative myth of creation which sets the master narrative outline of the story. Looking at the function of myths and episodic narrative style, Wilson proposes that, Grace as a postcolonial writer, uses indigenous knowledge and epistemologies to *diminish violence*, a quality pervasive in typical postcolonial literary works by the formerly colonized.

The other critical approach tends to focus more on the concept of Maori indigeneity and its influence on the form, content, and interpretations of the novel. Unlike the former group, critics with this approach are more likely to avoid seeing *Potiki* as a postcolonial text because they are aware of the complexity of the novel beyond the postcolonial framework. For instance, Eva Rask Knudsen in her essay *"*On Reading *Potiki"* (2011), for instance, employs the concept, meaning, and function of wharenui, Maori meeting house, to decipher the plot and the logic behind Grace*'*s choice of narrative voices as well as the arrangement of events in the novel. Knudsen also argues that despite the attempt to redefine itself and regain authority in self-representation, through the use of the wharenui concept, *Potiki* does not bar non-

indigenous readers from reading and interpreting the text. Rather, a novel as a wharenui actually *invites* non-indigenous readers to try to comprehend the worldview of the indigenous Maori. Likewise, Elizabeth DeLoughrey's essay "The Spiral Temporality of Patricia Grace's *Potiki*" (1999) utilizes the Maori spiral mode of time as an analytical framework not only to understand the concept of time that governs the events and narrative voices in *Potiki* but also to debunk the accusation of the Westerners who view indigenous cultures as static and, therefore, backward.

While the two approaches are likely to belong to two different stances – one looking at *Potiki* as a post-colonial text and analyzing it based on this theoretical framework, the other trying to go beyond Western-centered terms and methodologies of postcolonial frameworks – there are also critics who believe that employing postcolonial theory as a tool to read *Potiki* can be appropriately done while simultaneously looking at other indigenous wisdom as well. In "Patricia Grace's *Potiki*: A Case Study for the Adaptability of Postcolonial Theory to Indigenous Literature" (2012), Karim Abuawad proposes that *Potiki* has been written in a way in which postcolonial framework can be rightly applied, and to avoid the pitfall of postcolonial analysis, he suggests some degree of modification from the original approach.

Of the three novels, *Shark Dialogues* is the most recent; thus, it is also the least studied. However, there already exist a handful insightful criticisms of the novel. First, in "Tourism, Culture, and Reindigenization in Kiana Davenport's *Shark Dialogues* and Georgia Ka'apuni McMillen's *School for Hawaiian Girls*" (2009) Anthony Carrigan interestingly argues against the anti-tourism statement of a prominent scholar specializing in Pacific literature Rob Wilson. Carrigan claims that despite the plot

which centers around the degradation of Hawaiian customs and exploitation of the *haole* who come to build tourist facilities and hotels on Hawaiian ancestral lands, *Shark Dialogues,* in fact, suggests that tourism is an integral part for the survival of the Hawaiian community and plays a significant role in the process of Hawaiian reindigenization. Secondly, with a different focus from McMillen, Susan Wyatt, in her review *"Shark Dialogues* and Hawaiian Dreams*"* (2013), demonstrates how each character in the novel represents many aspects of Hawaii by pointing out how the characterization of the agents in the story as well as their interaction resemble the history, perceived images, and the actual reality of Hawaii. In addition, Mayumi Toyosato*'*s essay *"*Land and Hawaiian Identity*:* Literary Activism in Kiana Davenport*'*s *Shark Dialogues"* (2000) argues that the novel attempts to link threats imposed upon environment and the survival of Hawaiian culture and that Davenport, through the narrative and plot of the story, has both taken part in Hawaiian literary activism against Western domination and suggested the necessity for indigenous resistance over cultural and land domination in Hawaii. Centering her arguments on the roles of hybrid characters, Toyosato also points out that in addition to sustaining land-based identity as a form of resistance against the erasure of Hawaiian identity, Davenport also expands the meaning of Hawaiian blood from being once connected with race and thus lacking multi-racial quality to including people of multi ethnicities to further the concept of being Hawaiian for the growth and survival of Hawaiian-ness in the present day. As a source of reference for Toyosato*'*s criticism on Davenport*'*s *Shark Dialogues,* Patrick D. Murphy*'*s critical essay *"*Women Writers*:* Spiritual Realism, Ecological Responsibility, and Inhabitation*"* (2009) approaches *Shark Dialogues* in a similar fashion. Murphy argues that *Shark Dialogues* as an indigenous

literary work has a para-modernist quality; that is, the cultures and epistemologies represented in the novel and influencing it are those existing alongside the modernist and post-modernist literary movements, meaning that *Shark Dialogues*, unlike typical Western works, does not and cannot correspond to the mainstream literary trends. He further argues that in her novel, Davenport employs what Murphy recognizes as *spiritual realism*, a technique that seeks to explain the social conditions created by modernism and postmodernism, yet are more directly linked to para-modernism, in order to, as Murphy proposes, present Pono, the female protagonist, as the embodiment of *"*a flesh and blood *soul* of Hawa*'*ii in all its oppression, exploitation, resistance and reinhabitation as a set of islands and the people who inhibit those island" (8).

Thesis Objectives

Attempting to analyze the three novels, Leslie Marmon Silko*'*s *Ceremony* (1977) Patricia Grace*'*s *Potiki* (1986), and Kiana Davenport*'*s *Shark Dialogues* (1998) whose storylines are created from the *born-within*, region-based perspectives, this thesis will, firstly, argue that, in all three novels, the writers, as an act of literary activism, employ indigenous myths and knowledge to regain the autonomy to redefine their own cultures, history, and identity. In *Ceremony*, Leslie Marmon Silko employs oral literature and ceremony to rewrite the history of Western invasion, and the subsequent numerous racial conflicts between the Euro-Americans and the Native Americans. As this thesis will further argue, since the Native American culture believes that an individual self, the communal space, and nature are inextricably bounded in the web of relationship, and that the bond of all aspects of existence is essential to retain peace at all levels, the loss of connection of an individual with the greater whole is thus

a threat to the finely-interwoven system. Therefore, the protagonist's regained sense of relatedness with the communal space and nature, made possible by reconnecting himself with his indigeneity, eventually leads to the restoration of the regional peace. In terms of its form, *Ceremony* is crafted as storied ceremonies, creating the new mode of literary expression which serves as a technique for the indigenous to recount and re-enact their history and stories from the level of textuality. This thesis also argues that, by incorporating ceremonies and storytelling into her writing techniques, Silko successfully carved a text that pertains healing power. By reading the novel, readers embark on the healing journey guided by the stories, the same process which the protagonist has undergone. While in *Ceremony,* oral traditions and ceremonial practices are utilized as tools of self-redefinition, as many critics have pointed out, Patricia Grace, in her 1986 novel *Potiki*, centers the story in the Maori cosmological knowledge of spiral temporality. Thus, this thesis will argue that Maori notions of *kore*, unorganized potential hidden in the seeming nothingness, and *koru*, spiral mode of time, work together as a framework of the novel. Governing Maori ways of life and artistic expressions, these two concepts reflect an intricate indigenous paradigm. The understanding of these related notions would lead to a reading derived from the perspective of the *born-within* Maori. At the plot level, these two concepts play integral roles in determining the characters' stance when confronting conflicts of land dispute and discrimination and in healing them when faced with a series of losses caused by their resistance against injustice. For *Shark Dialogues*, Kiana Davenport, in the first part of the novel, rewrites the history of Hawaii, long overwritten by the Euro-Americans, through the life of the protagonist, Pono. This thesis will argue that Davenport succeeds in regaining indigenous voice in Hawaiian history by retelling

historical events through the Hawaiian worldview in which the mythical and supernatural aspects are intrinsic parts of life. This technique offers an alternative way of looking at the history of oppression in Hawaii from the perspective of the locals. Ultimately, by being able to tell history of Hawaii through native eyes, the novel also paves the way for self-representation as both the national historical trauma and the images of the native people, formerly dominated by the Euro-Americans, have been re-examined.

Secondly, this thesis will contend that, in contrast with several Western scholars' view of indigenous writings as locally specific and lacks multicultural qualities, *Ceremony* and *Shark Dialogues* encourages the multi-ethnic, contemporary definition of indigeneity whereas *Potiki*, despite its seeming exclusivity, accepts development, changes, and a non-indigenous worldview both in terms of political activism and at an ontological level. In *Ceremony*, it is the mixed-raced characters, not the pure-blood, who play significant roles in the restoration of the cosmic order and the completion of ceremony. Furthermore, the mental recovery of the protagonist who is the World War II veteran is made possible with the recognition of his hybridity and its role in his life and identity. Based on these observations, this thesis will argue that hybridity has been recognized as an inevitable component of today's indigenous cultures which is necessary for their survival. Similarly, in *Shark Dialogues*, Davenport demonstrates, through historical re-enactment of Hawaii from the time of autonomous sovereignty to the present day, that multi-racialism has been the quality of Hawaiian-ness, for even the protagonist who shows strong ethnocentric sentiment, is of mixed blood. On the issue of hybridity, this thesis will argue that the novel encourages a broader definition of Hawaiian-ness through recounting the lives of several mixed-

blooded characters and the perceptions of their cultural identity. The novel attempts to redefine the supposedly fixed concept of racial identity so that the definition of being a Hawaiian continues to grow in the time when inclusivity is more significant in the survival of the minority community than the purity of blood.For *Potiki,* this thesis will argue that while traditional knowledge lies at the center of the novel, this alone is no longer sufficient in sustaining the community when faced with contemporary issues. Therefore, the novel shows that there rises a necessity to incorporate the Western practices such as law and political activism into their traditional culture. In other words, traditional and modern culture and the modern one are equally indispensable for the survival of Maori identity.

Finally, this thesis will examine the role of environment and nature as tied to indigeneity in each novel with the rationale that, since indigenous cultures are rooted in nature, the concerns over the survival of indigenous cultures and of nature in the age of environmental crisis are in fact one and the same. It will propose that in *Ceremony,* nature, both in material and mythical forms, is essential for the protagonist's recovery as it is the natural agents which reintroduce the protagonist into the web of relations. The understanding of landscape and the concept of land possession, one form of domination over nature, also helps renew the protagonist's perception of the long history of Western oppression, allowing him to be healed and able to embrace his indigeneity. As for *Potiki* and *Shark Dialogues,* the issue over land disputes is their central conflict. In *Potiki,* the indigenous associate land and agriculture with Maori communal identity, and the loss of land is thus equivalent to that of a collective sense of self. Therefore, environmental activism is not for the sake of the preservation of pristine nature alone, but for the survival of the communities itself as well. Similar to

Potiki, land in *Shark Dialogues* is perceived as the place in which Hawaiian culture is rooted. To many Hawaiians, the expropriation of native land is tantamount to the destruction of indigenous culture. Thus, this thesis will analyze environmental activism and political resistance in relation to the preservation of Hawaiian land, identity, and sovereignty. At the same time, it will also examine the importance of peacefully maintaining the traditional way of life as attached to land.

CHAPTER II: Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony:* The Re-indigenization of Contemporary Native American Culture through Ceremonies and Myths

Mainstream media influences the popular perspective towards Native American people in significant ways thanks to how pervasive and easily accessible it is. One could also say that as a form of entertainment, it makes it even more appealing to most ordinary recipients. In turn, it is also accurate to claim that the image of the Indians in media stems from how people in general perceive indigenous people as well as how they are remembered historically. To put it simply, the norm's perception and popular history determines how media should present the Native American in mainstream market while the media confirms, validates and preserves such perceptions. Therefore, there exists a correlation between the media representation of the indigenous people and the norm's view and, by understanding one, we can understand the other.

In mainstream movies, particularly those produced by Hollywood studios, there are at least two recurring images of Native Americans. Firstly, when portrayed in family entertainment movies such as in comedy films or children's movies and animations, they are often depiceted as belonging to the fantasy realm. For example, in a well-renowned Disney-aminated film *Peter Pan*, the Native American tribe resides in *Neverland,* a fantasy kingdom of boys who refuse to become grown-ups along with fairies, mermaids, a band of pirates and an anthropomorphized crocodile. Similarly, *The Indian in the Cupboard* (1995), a children's movie based on Lynne Reid Banks' fantasy

novel, features an Indian as a plastic plaything which magically comes to life and befriends the nine-year-old protagonist[2].

Secondly, when put into historical contexts in films, which are targeted for both children and adults, Native Americans tend to be presented as primitive, inferior to European settlers if not barbaric. For instance, *The Far Horizons* (1955) and *Pocahontas* (1995) depict female protagonists, namely Sacagawea and Pocahontas, as the natives who fall in love with a European explorer. Despite creators' endeavor to portray the two Native American women as more ecologically aware than European colonizers, their contribution in history and their strong, independent image are largely trivialized by the romantic plot. In doing this, both films foster such an impression that native women are moved by the western men and their civilized culture. Likewise, in "cowboys-versus-Indians" films, Native Americans are often depicted as barbaric and violent yet incompetent warriors who are illiterate and superstitious. For example, in Tom Ford's most-famous film *The Searcher* (1956), fights between the white cowboys and the Indians often end with few scratches on the white men in contrast to several casualties of the Indians who lack combat tactics. Like many other movies in this genre, the film also fails to balance the severity of the crime committed by both parties. For example, Colonnese, an author of an essay "Native American Reactions to *The Searcher*" (2002),

[2] In Pauline Turner Strong's essay "Playing Indians in the Nineties: *Pocahontas* and *The Indian in The Cupboard*", the author notes the unrealistic portrayal of Little Bear in *The Indian in The Cupboard*, an Indian toy that comes to life. She critiques that the film lacks cultural accuracy and comments that if the movie was to be made based on Indian beliefs, most scenes and elements would have to be altered.

points out that the film does not include the European invasion of the Indian tribe and its effect on the main American Indian character, Scar while it heavily emphasizes the cruel arson, ambush and rape, committed by the natives to the settlers and their properties. Thus, as the famous director portrays, the Native Americans are the more barbaric and immoral in history, and, the fact that *The Searcher* is based on the true historical event of the Texas-Indian War (1820-1875) further emphasizes the veracity of such representation.

With the two persistent characteristics of the Native American in popular media, we can easily assume that for the non-natives, the American Indians who are only present in either the fantasy world or in the historical past, play no real part in contemporary societies. As the Indians and their culture are viewed as fantastical, they are regarded as unreal or unrelated to today's context. Moreover, the depiction that the viewers consume in media highlights the stereotypical images of Indians as people with strange animal-related names who wear traditional costumes and paint their faces. The natives are also viewed as static in their thoughts and behaviors, thus become increasingly backward as the world progresses. In addition to this, pigeonholed as inferior, barbaric, and incompetent in most popular action films, the Indians may also be looked down upon as uncivilized and not suitable in the civilized white societies. Therefore, it may be probable to assume that in normative perception, the culture of the Native Americans is essentially extinct and has been superseded by the more modern progressive one.

While the portrayal of the Indians may have certain effects on ordinary viewers, it is likely to have a more direct, serious impact on the Native American consumers in two significant ways, namely, the native's writings of history and their self-perception. To start with, popular historical narrative of the Indians in media tends to suggest that the existence of the Indians is intrinsically bound with the white settlers. To illustrate, as the American Indians always appear in mainstream media in relation to the whites, many Native Americans may perceive that their history officially starts after the arrival of European settlers while their history prior to the contact with the outsiders, since omitted, is not of much significance. Because of the large amount of media content that suggest similar messages, void is Native American history delivered to audience without being directly related to the whites. In other words, for some Native Americans, mainstream media may not be able to help them understand their past well. Secondly, since our perception of self is largely determined or influenced by our understanding of history, the representation of the Indians undoubtedly affects the Indians' self-perception. For instance, in Colonnese's survey-based study which records the Native American scholars' account of their childhood experience after re-watching the Hollywood's movie *The Searcher*, many subjects claim that in their childhood, the depiction of the Native Americans in Hollywood's movies used to personally affect the way in which they view their own ethnicity, and that the Hollywood-generated self-aversion is most obvious during their playtime. Some survey subjects admitted they used to avoid, out of shame, playing Native Americans during role-playing game sessions. Likewise, such fantasy movies and animations which feature Native American

people as fantastical and unreal naturally play a role in determining the Native Americans' self-perception. By being positioned and labelled as not real because of their unconventional cultural practices and beliefs, they may feel a sense of inferiority and self-hatred as they do when watching historical films. In short, mainstream media whitewashes the natives' sense of history through its distorted depiction of the natives.

However, it is worth noting that there are attempts to offer contesting representations of Native Americans in contemporary texts written by Native American writers[3]. Basically, the texts tend to discuss today's context, bringing the Indians out of the fantasy realm or the past to the present time, leading to alternative images and stories that can challenge the stereotypes. Also, considering the body of existing works, one can see that these texts have hybrid qualities in the combination of indigenous and modern lifestyles and concerns, of indigenous belief and narrative, originally passed on in vernacular languages orally, and western mode of writings, be they poetry or prose, and of races in many characters in the texts. And among many pieces of literature that fit the aforementioned category, Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* (1987), with its abundant qualities necessary in achieving the purpose and its many distinctive features, is such a work that offers a profound narrative and representation of the Native Americans not only through the form and content of the novel but also through

[3] Some well-known literary pieces may include Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* (2007) and *Reservation Blues* (1996), both of which discuss the impact of stereotypical images of Native Americans as drunk and lazy, and N. Scott Momaday's *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (1969), which deals with Kiowa descendants' struggle to gain their sense of identity.

convergence of various elements in the novel such as myth and reality, popular belief and indigenous wisdom and various strands of identities and values.

Therefore, this chapter will analyze how Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* succeeds in reclaiming the voice of indigenous Native Americans from the mainstream narratives through the content of the text. In the novel, Tayo, a Second World War veteran, suffers from post war trauma and after returning home he discovers that his hometown has encountered drought and that his late uncle's cattle have been stolen. With these problems, Tayo starts to observe traditional ceremonies in the hope that they might enable him to recover from his mental illness. As he revives his bond with his land and culture, the protagonist simultaneously learns to discern the connection between himself and other catastrophes through indigenous wisdom gained from his participation in ceremonies as well as his many encounters with influential characters. Consequently, he is able to solve each of the problems based on his acquired understanding of self and cosmology. This chapter particularly argues that through reassessing indigenous wisdom and ceremonial practices, the protagonist succeeds in breaking free from mainstream stereotypical images of himself as hybrid and of his American Indian ethnicity as an inferior, backward race. It will focus on how indigenous myths and practices are the key factors in altering his perspective toward his relationship with his surroundings, community and nature. Furthermore, this chapter will also argue that as Native American wisdom and beliefs draw upon natural elements in its practices and epistemology, *Ceremony* automatically connects nature with indigeneity, and demonstrates the fact that environmental and human concerns are

directly related. Lastly, in its analysis of Leslie Marmon Silko's writing techniques, namely, use of myths and ceremonies as well as the combination of oral poetry and prose narrative, this chapter will contend that *Ceremony* is a hybrid novel in terms of form as well.

Ceremony's Interpretative Framework

When studying literary texts, critics tend to rely on existing frameworks, most of which are of western origins, and thus, influenced by Western ways of viewing the world. For example, many analytical frames such as new criticism or psychoanalysis tend to be based on binary oppositions. *Ceremony*, written by an indigenous writer, resists these existing Western frameworks as they neither articulate the American Indian worldview and perception of reality nor cover all elements that the novel contains. Instead, Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* provides the reader with its own framework that is drawn from Native American cultural beliefs and myths.

Silko begins the novel with a series of poems, all of which play significant roles in the analytical process, but the most essential one lies in the fact that they work together as a framework of the novel itself. To begin with, the poem of the Thought-Woman's myth of creation, set in the very first page, suggests that the main plot which concerns contemporary America is a narrative within the narrative of this very myth. The first stanza explains the Native Americans' belief in an on-going process of creation. It points out that everything that exists is generated by Thought-Woman the spider: "Ts'its'tsi'nako, Thought-Woman / is sitting in her room / and whatever she thinks about / appears" (1). The author also indicates specifically in the fourth and fifth stanzas

that at the very moment the book is read by each individual, Thought-Woman "is sitting in her room / thinking of a story now / I'm telling you the story / she is thinking" (1). The author uses the indigenous myth of creation to provide proper lenses for the reader to look at the metaphysical aspects of existence. That is, to the Native Americans, human beings, the natural world, and even the conflicts present in the text are the products of Thought-Woman who has been creating reality or thinking it out into existence since the beginning of the universe. The author employs this myth to readjust the reader's interpretative framework instead of starting the novel with the prose narrative right away which might result in the reliance on the western grand narrative in the analytical process.

In addition to this, the creation myth explains the logical connection between prose and the poems that are interspersed in the main plot. In the second stanza, the poem reads, "She [Thought-Woman] thought of her sisters, Nau·ts·ity·I and I·tcts·ity·I, / and together they created the Universe / this world / and the four worlds below." This part of the myth helps readers understand that the events in certain tales and stories mentioned in the poems are, in fact, the accounts of what has happened in the four other worlds, so they do not intervene with the flow of the events in the prose of the novel. Rather, they bear a close relationship with the reality presented in the prose. To illustrate, the world that we live in, referred to in this poem as "this world", parallels the other four since all are the worlds created by Thought-Woman and her sisters. Our world is, hence, the fifth one that exists concurrently and interdependently with the other four mythical worlds in the same way as how all strands of the spider's web are connected and interwoven as one. As all are tied under one single connection, the plots of events

in poems and prose, should be construed in light of this understanding that they are linked and bear a distinct singular pattern, only with minor differences.

For example, in each world, drought has occurred as normality is disturbed and in order to restore peace and abundance, it is required that an agent or agents take on certain quests. In one of the worlds described in a series of poems, residents abandon the Mother Corn's altar for they are tricked by a deceptive magician A Ck·o·yo. As their negligence angers her, she leaves that world for the other worlds below and takes with her fertility and rain. Then the Fly and the Hummingbird volunteer to travel to the other existing worlds to appease Mother Corn. Also, on another occasion, an evil gambler kidnaps the clouds, leading to drought and subsequent death of living things, and with the help of the Sun Man, the father of all clouds, those captured prisoners are rescued and peace restored. Similarly, in our fifth world, Tayo·s community and the region experience a great, prolonged drought as nature is exploited when the uranium mine is established and the natural resources are used to create nuclear weapons. Tayo, then, has to undergo ceremonies to restore the balance and bring back the rain. With the myth of creation as an indigenous narrative framework here, readers come to understand that the myths and the folktales are not separate parts from the "reality" of Tayo in the modern world, as presented in the prose of the novel, but they are all compositional elements that constitute the Universe and are inextricably entangled.

Following the myth of creation is the poem entitled "Ceremony" (2). It describes a narrator recounting a dialogue of two anonymous voices on the long-standing conflict

between two groups of people, referred to as "they" and "we". While "they" are trying to eradicate the stories that belong to "we" in an attempt to make "we" defenseless, the narrator, a member of "we" explains that stories "are all we have to fight off / illness and death" and that without stories, the people will "not have anything". Like the preceding poem, this particular one has certain functions in framing the interpretation of this literary piece. For one thing, it determines the main conflict beyond the plot level of the novel, and, simultaneously explicates the relation of indigenous cosmology and the main plot. Here, the poem is written with the use of the present tense indicating that the conflict here is factual, and reflects a timeless truth with no importance placed in the duration of events. Therefore, the dispute between "they" and "we" here is, likewise, timeless, and, thus, constant. In contrast, the use of the past tense in the prose indicates that the novel's plot is a series of events, with a clear ending point, and that the story of Tayo is developing in a linear timeframe. The contrasting use of tenses neither suggests the disharmony nor conveys the clear-cut difference between myths and contemporary incidents. In fact, the poem helps readers see that Tayo's fate and the racial clash between the Native Americans and Euro-Americans are simply another manifestation of an ongoing problem of "they" and "we". This assumption is made even clearer toward the end of the poem when "he", the speaker says, "in the belly of this story / the rituals and the ceremony are still growing". These lines indicate that inside the narrator, presumably a mythical creature, lies the story [of Tayo].

In addition to enumerating how indigenous cosmology influences the interpretation of the main plot, the poem "Ceremony" repositions the onset of the conflict of the novel. To illustrate, "they" and "we", the main opposing groups are the witches and "the people". Even though Silko does not identify to whom "they" and "we" in this poem refer, the reader will clearly see the pronoun references by connecting them with the story of witchery, a narrative poem which spells out that the whites are actually the creation of witches who use them to destroy nature and the people (132-38). For the natives, they have acknowledged that the invasion in today's America and the unending racial conflicts in the country are consequences of the curse of witches who "set in motion" (138) the white people in the first place. In other words, this poem suggests that the prose is written under an understanding that there exists an ongoing battle between the evil entities and the common men. Here, the fight lies in the witches' intention to erase the stories and the people's attempt to preserve them. The white people, according to the witchery poem, are mere apparatuses used to achieve that purpose. Hence, taken as a framework of the novel, the poem specifies that a larger, more deeply-rooted mechanism that drives the plot is the conflict within the indigenous society. According to the poem, Native Americans and the whites are not enemies, but they both are, in reality, victimized by the same evil force.

The functions of the myth of creation and the poem "Ceremony" not only determine the framework by which the novel should be read but also generate an inextricable bond between the novel, as well as the culture it represents, and global

communities. First, as a governing force, Thought-Woman determines the incidents in the novel as the poem itself specifically indicates that the novel, according to the poem, is "the story / she [Thought-Woman] is thinking". Therefore, such global conflicts as the Second World War and local issues like drought, exploitations of Native Americans, continuous land disputes, all of which directly concern Tayo's problems, are subsumed under Thought-Woman's narrative. As a result, this readjusts the way readers may typically see the war-related plots in that instead of having wars and their aftermaths as the central forces and individuals as those affected by them, the Second World War, under this narrative style, is the repercussion of Thought-Woman's creative minds. Similarly, shifting the point of conflict from being political or racial clashes to being that which originates from the dispute within the indigenous circle, the poem "Ceremony" denotes the influence of the indigenous people in regional and global matters as well. Reading "Ceremony" with the witchery poem, again, helps adjust the understanding of the readers that the whites, who may be perceived as influential in determining the courses of lives of indigenous peoples and the world alike, exist and act under the manipulation of some evil forces that "they" or the witches conjure. The local and global conflicts are thus caused by the same force. As all aforementioned disputes are the consequences of the battle between the evil forces and humans, it turns out that for indigenous people, it is the local problems that lead to global conflicts. In other words, the assumption that indigenous societies lack power or agency to resist the influence from the western world, a preconception that many readers may have prior to

reading *Ceremony* is debunked by the introductory poems which underpin the whole novel.[4]

Tayo, Landscapes and Ceremonies – The Road towards Healing

At the beginning of the novel, the world as presented in *Ceremony* is of enmeshment, like badly-spun spider webs. Readers see a number of tormented agents – human beings and Mother Earth alike – all connected and living in anguish. To begin with, Tayo, the protagonist who is a person of mixed race but feels rejected by both communities is clearly a traumatized being. As a son of a native mother and a Euro-American father, Tayo is abandoned by his own mother, Laura, whose whereabouts remain unknown and is viewed by his aunt as a living shame. Consequently, he is raised with a certain level of segregation from his pure-blooded cousin Rocky. The existence of Tayo as a reminder of Laura's elopement with a white man is also emphasized by some members of his community as stated: "[the] things Laura had done weren't easily forgotten by the people (65)." On the other hand, when having interactions with the whites, Tayo is treated as an outsider and remained unwelcomed by them. For instance, the fact that he has been raised only by people from his mother's side indicates that his

[4] My argument that it is the indigenous framework and metaphysical beliefs that create the link between local and global society has actually been influenced by Jeff Karem's essay "Keeping the Native on the Reservation: The Struggle for Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*. The author examines the dialogue of such major characters as Ku'oosh, Tayo, Ts'eh and Betonie and concludes that the ways they articulate and explicate contemporary conflicts are key to merging local and global problems together as well as to balancing the influence of the two seemingly opposing forces.

existence is not wanted by his father. Also, apart from the critical time of the Second World War when the government needs drafted soldiers, white people feel that Tayo is untrustworthy and different. Influenced by certain stereotypical images of the Indians as poor, drunk, uneducated, they view Tayo as a threat to them. These uneasy and disdainful sentiments which the whites have towards Tayo are clearly presented during the protagonist's encounter with the station man:

> The station man came inside. He looked at Tayo suspiciously, as if he thought Tayo might be drunk, or in there to steal something. ... he [Tayo] asked the man where he could buy some candy. 'Down the road,' he said, not looking up from the cash register. (154)

While the two cultures seem to reject him, Tayo is, at the same time, heavily influenced by both. Having been educated in the Western educational system and living in a white-dominant country, he is constantly reminded of how inferior his ethnicity is to the Euro-Americans in terms of material advancement. At school, not only are indigenous beliefs categorized as "nonsense" (19) but scientific, empirical approaches to reality taught at school also work to debunk indigenous wisdom. For example, while Native Americans see values in every living creature, including a fly, teachers at his school teach him that the insect spreads disease. Also, having seen the luxury the whites have in comparison to poverty in Native American communities, Tayo is made to question his culture. On the other hand, Tayo is raised and strongly influenced by Josiah, who embraces local wisdom and teaches it to his nephew. Therefore, it is undeniable

that indigenous beliefs do shape his perception of the world. For instance, when Tayo and his uncles hunt down a deer for consumption, they together perform a ritual to pay respect to the dead animal and show gratitude to it for having given up its life for them (51-52).

Tayo's profound identity conflict, coupled with the loss of Rocky and Josiah, and the mysterious disappearance of Josiah's cattle, leads him to a deepening sense of despair, resulting in mental illness. The protagonist's illness which might be Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), indicates his feeling of hollowness, which derives from his lack of both identity and a sense of belonging. Tayo describes himself while being hospitalized as "white smoke" with "no consciousness of itself (14)", comprised of only "outline" that is "hollow inside" (15). He also believes that he is "invisible" and therefore "[h]is words are formed with an invisible tongue, they have no sound, (15)" indicating that he has lost his voice and thus the ability to articulate his existence verbally. Even after leaving hospital, he is still sick and haunted by the sense of loss and emptiness. Succumbing to this feeling, he looks at life based on what he has left: "the dim room, empty beds, and a March dust storm rattling the tin on the roof" in a house "where the silence and the emptiness [echo] the loss (32)."

In addition to being plagued by mental illness, oftentimes, the protagonist exhibits strong rage. For example, as he starts to get intoxicated by alcohol, he talks of how indigenous people are treated differently now as compared to the time during the war. His words are full of anger and hatred directed at the white people. However, at the

same time he feels furious about his fellow indigenous veterans who seem to pretend as though nothing has changed after the war. The way to channel his anger ranges from trying to address this issue to his friends, all of whom prefer not to acknowledge it, to almost killing Emo. The experience at war, the mental trauma, and his suppressed sense of anger and desperation contribute to his mild alcohol addiction. He gives reasons for his drinking habit whereby "old people could not understand" that "liquor was medicine for the anger that made them hurt, for the pain of the loss, medicine for tight bellies and chocked-up throats (40)." Here, it is indicated that Tayo admittedly relies on alcohol as an anti-depressant and that his reliance on it means the protagonist cannot cope with his trauma.

While it is clear that his mental problems and alcoholism stem from his experience in the Second World War, Tayo, as a member of a closely knit community, is further tormented by the sense of widespread hopelessness in his community and by the image of his race as a broken one. To illustrate, other members of the community are, like him, emotionally shattered and living with a sense of self-aversion and despair. For example, considering pure-blooded characters like Rocky, Tayo's aunt, Thelma, and his fellow veterans who deny their own indigeneity because of the influence of the clash between American Indian and Euro- American cultures. Thelma, torn by the rigid view of traditional Indians who feel that Tayo and his family are their community's disgrace, resorts to Christianity and Western ideas. By presenting herself as a non-believer of Native American beliefs, she feels she is exempt from being stuck in superstition and thus elevates herself above others. However, as she tries to raise her

son Rocky in accordance with Western beliefs and values, her son ends up feeling ashamed of the very fact that she is Indian. Embracing Western ideas to counter her feeling of shame, Thelma is eventually hurt by the very attitude she has in rearing her son. Through his upbringing and mainstream education, Rocky, too, feels uneasy with his own indigenous identity, which he believes to be obsolete and superstitious. Consequently, he follows the advice of his white teachers and football coach: "Nothing can stop you now except one thing: don't let the people at home hold you back" (51). He later decides to participate in the war to see the world and plans to continue his studies at a university. The fellow veterans seem to have an inferiority complex throughout their lives. However, after the war, the acceptance and friendliness they used to gain as "American" soldiers are replaced by distrust and even hatred, the feelings the native wish to disappear as Tayo comments, "The war was over, the uniform was gone. All of a sudden that man at the store waits on you last … And the white lady at the bus depot, she's real careful now not to touch your hand when she counts out your change. (42)."

In addition to his personal conflict as a mixed person and a veteran as well as his awareness of the state of his community, another important factor that emotionally damages Tayo is the environmental disaster he witnesses. To illustrate, first, during the Second World War, he and his Native American friends encountered a great downpour of monsoon rain in a jungle in the Philippines where Japanese soldiers capture them. The rain proves immensely difficult for their survival as it weakens the American corporal of his army unit and Rocky, contributing to their eventual death. Also, after Tayo returns to Laguna community, he comes to learn that his community has been plagued by an unprecedentedly prolonged drought that destroys the livelihood of the

American Indians who depend on livestock and agriculture. As Tayo believes in the agency of nature and its interconnectedness with individuals, he reads the two incidents as connected: Tayo, therefore, thinks that the drought is the consequence of his chanting for the torrential jungle rain in the Philippines to stop, which angers the mother Earth.

While it may seem that his hybridity and exposure to the atrocities and complexity of modern societies are the root causes for his illness and agony, as Tayo comes to learn later, it is, however, under these circumstances that Tayo's hybridity and his experience in the white-dominant spheres prove not to be an obstruction but the key to redemption of himself. As a person with mixed ethnicities, his insights and involvements in both the indigenous and western spheres make him a suitable agent to realize the connection behind all the plights. The process of such realization occurs at a gradual pace throughout the story, beginning from the entrance of Ku'oosh into the story, his suggestion for Tayo to seek help from Betonie, to Betonie's guidance in Tayo's quest of retrieving his cattle, and his subsequent encounter with Ts'eh and the hunter, who return the cattle to him. With all the threaded events, the pattern becomes completely clear to Tayo in the Emo's incident at the deserted Uranium mine.

The process of redemption starts when Tayo is introduced to Ku'oosh, a community shaman who is invited to help him after it is certain that western medicine is unable to cure the traumatized veteran. In Tayo's healing journey, Ku'oosh plays many significant roles in helping the protagonist succeed in curing himself. First of all, the shaman is the first person who articulates the relation between Tayo as an individual and other elements on Earth ranging from his communities, the world, and nature.

According to the shaman, there exists a sense of a balanced interconnectedness of individuals, communities, and the world. He explains to Tayo that as the world is "fragile", the perfect balance is easily disturbed. When the harmony is broken, such mishaps and illness naturally follow. His explanation brings Tayo to the realization that his illnesses, Native American veterans' alcoholism and even natural disasters are not lone events but the connected strands of incidents. After having listened to the old man, the protagonist has come to accept "something he had feared all along, something in the old stories. It took only one person to tear away the delicate strands of the web … and the fragile world would be injured (38)." In other words, Ku'oosh is the first person who brings the inevitable connection of Tayo's existences and conditions to other elements and occurrences to the forefront. Secondly, with his introduction of the concept of Native American universe, the shaman also introduces ceremonies and oral stories as healing tools to Tayo and helps cure him to a certain extent. At one level, by telling Tayo that the world is fragile, he conveys not only that it is easy to disturb the balance, but also that there indeed exists a singular unity which is attainable and, once attained, promises the chance to restore the peaceful order. And to regain the balance so that Tayo is healed, Ku'oosh informs the protagonist that it is important that ceremonies be performed, marking the first official step of Tayo in the process of ceremony. In addition to ceremonies, the shaman discusses at length the significance of stories. Native Americans, as an essentially oral society, pass on their knowledge in the form of stories or myths. The stories are told, added up and retold as a guideline to enable the indigenous people to make sense of the reality. As Ku'oosh enquires Tayo about his illness and his experience at war, he talks about the fragile world, drawing many references from traditional stories. In other words, while ceremony is the cure to

illnesses, stories give directions and explanations of what allow Tayo to realize the patterns of each entangled, problematic issue. Ku'oosh himself, with his traditional knowledge of indigenous rituals and ceremonies, performs a Scalp Ceremony to Tayo to ease his suffering. Consequently, the protagonist starts to recover his physical strength though most of his internal psyche is yet to be cured. Thirdly, as the ceremony performed by Ku'oosh and his knowledge of stories cannot effectively help cure Tayo particularly in terms of his mental illnesses, another important role of Ku'oosh in Tayo's healing is that he works as a bridge connecting the protagonist to Betonie, who, later, will become an agent that reveals the links and the patterns of the fragile worlds of indigenous people. To elaborate, Ku'oosh tries to ask Tayo to describe the modern warfare as he tries to use his knowledge to decipher the Second World War. However, as Tayo notes, the atrocities of the war, especially nuclear weapons, are beyond the old man's understanding. Thus, as a healer who uses stories and ceremonies, Ku'oosh can neither provide stories that match the complexities of Tayo's entangled mind nor use a traditional ceremony like Scalp Ceremony to heal a person who is conflicted by modern issues. So, instead of being a healer to Tayo, Ku'oosh has become an agent who introduces Tayo to the less conventional but more modern shaman, Betonie – leading Tayo to his fate as a participant in a ceremony to heal himself and the broken world so that he regains the balance in the fragile world and also his sanity.

Upon Ku'oosh's suggestion, Tayo is led to Betonie, an unconventional medicine man who is a critical factor in helping Tayo succeed in healing himself from his traumatic conditions. For one thing, Betonie, like Ku'oosh, uses stories as a means to help Tayo comprehend his existence and the events in his life. As he shares similar qualities and conflicts with Tayo, Betonie, through his personal stories, reveals to Tayo

another side of the recurring patterns that happen to the mixed-blood Native Americans who are mixed. First, in sharing his role and that of his grandfather and his Mexican grandmother in healing people and warding off ill omens, Betonie upends typical images and reputation of mixed people that has influenced Tayo's perception of himself and those like him. The story of Betonie and his family also proves that people of mixed races do belong to the community as much as the pure-blooded. At one point, Betonie quotes the wisdom of his Mexican grandmother who teaches him that:

> things which don't shift and grow are dead things. They are things the witchery people want. Witchery works to scare people, to make them fear growth. But it [growth] has been necessary, and more than ever now, it is. (126)

Here, Betonie uses the wisdom he is taught to debunk the shameful sense of miscegenation shared among Native Americans. He argues that being mixed is not a sign of degradation but of growth. This particular reference to his grandmother is made after the shaman learns about Night Swan, a mysterious Mexican lover of Josiah, who has a sexual relationship with Tayo and who bestows Tayo's family with sturdy cattle that can withstand the severe climate in Laguna. His grandmother's wisdom corresponds with that of Night Swan who teaches Tayo that while changes are natural parts that come with being humans, the people who hate mixed-blooded descendants are "afraid of change" (99), the thing that makes them "fools". That Night Swan's wisdom happens to be identical with that of such figures as Betonie's grandmother works to empower Tayo because the wisdom confirms that his identity as a mixed is not alien; rather, the belief in the agency and value of people like Tayo has been passed

down through generations and “growth” or “change” which his existence represents, is an integral part of his very own culture.

Furthermore, Betonie provides what may be called a revisionist history of the relationship between the Euro-Americans and the Native Americans to Tayo, who, like many, feels intimidated by the whites. Traditionally, Native Americans may be viewed as the defeated whose land has been taken away and their culture is withering as the Western world develops. They are made to feel their inferiority and lacking in the ability to control what the whites do to them. Tayo, sharing this view, asks Betonie: “They took almost everything, didn’t they? (127).” This short question is essential as it reveals the agony that Native Americans in general live with. It also implies the helpless inability to protect what used to belong to them and, given the tense used, it indicates that the act of taking almost everything here is acknowledged and completed. However, Betonie dismantles Tayo’s view by bringing up the myth of witchery to contest the Western view of American history. He first rejects the concept of possession in the Western sense. Instead of giving value to legal ownership, he argues that, “The deeds and papers don’t mean anything. It is the *people* who *belong to the mountain* [emphasis added] (128).” If one looks at the concept of ownership in this sense, then the sense of belonging lies in one’s ability to live harmoniously with nature. Thus, in no way can the Euro-Americans who destroy nature to serve their purposes own the land. Then, having argued against the general view towards land ownership, Betonie narrates an indigenous myth which revises the history of the whites and the Indian. According to

the story of the witchcraft, "it was the Indian witchery that made white people in the first place" (132). As it is explicated in the witchery poem, a particularly cunning and mischievous witch has cursed the world by inventing the "white skin people" who travel from sea and set in the lands of the Indians, and mentally, they are blind, unable to see life in things. Then, as they cannot relate themselves to things they cannot comprehend, they turn against everything, the Indians and nature included, and eventually themselves too. The witch specifically refers to the whites as "objects to work for us / objects to act for us" (137). In this story, the vision of Indians as helpless victims is replaced by those fighting against the evil force that once has stemmed from one of their own devious ancestors. Comparing this to Tayo's view of the Native Americans' dispossession by the whites, one can see that Betonie's story gives tremendous agency to the Indians and together with it, their responsibility and possibility to "deal with white people, with their machines and their beliefs" (132) who are now seen as merely invention of the indigenous people.

Thirdly, Betonie modernizes traditional ceremonies to make them more suitable to heal Tayo whose concerns and causes of illness are more complex than those of the past. Like Ku'oosh, he also performs Scalp Ceremony to Tayo because, according to the Native American beliefs, it works to reincorporate the warriors who have killed lives back into their society (2). This ceremony helps mark the transition when warriors return from battle. However, as the ceremony was made when there was no interference from the whites and their weapons of mass destruction, it is comprehensible why Ku'oosh who "would not have believed white warfare – killing across great distances

without knowing who or how many had died" (37), with his traditional ceremony, can only ease Tayo's physical illness but cannot help with the more intricate issues. Betonie, in contrast, is a mixed-blood who has lived in California and received Western education. He knows a great deal about the modern society and how it is like to be in an outcast position. Therefore, his version of Scalp Ceremony is more eclectic and hence more effective in healing the protagonist.

In addition to altering the tradition, ceremonies as introduced by Betonie come in a form of series to respond to the complexity of the illness posed by the modern world. To illustrate, Betonie knows that the modified Scalp Ceremony alone cannot completely heal Tayo for it has become insufficient for just one ceremony to restore the balance of a fragile world. In discussing how deeply broken the balance is, he points out that even though the Scalp Ceremony may work to compromise the act of Native Americans' participation in the Second World War and help ease their mind, "there was something else now" (169). What the shaman means is that while the Scalp Ceremony transitions the warriors back to the warless sphere, the Second World War has caused deeper damage as he explains:

> … it was everything they had seen – the cities, the tall buildings, the noise and the lights, the power of their weapons and machines. They were never the same after that: they had seen what the white people had made from the stolen land … Every day they had to look at the land, from horizon to horizon, and every day the loss was with them; it was the dead unburied, and the mourning of the lost going on forever. So they tried to sink the loss in booze, and silence their grief

> with war stories about their courage, defending the land they had already lost. (169)

The veterans like Tayo, prior to entering the battlefield, have visited metropolises and seen Euro-Americans' excessive wealth, which had been stolen from the American Indians. Moreover, during the Second World War, the American government built nuclear bombs from uranium, which, coincidentally, it got from the land in Laguna. In mining the land and usurping the minerals for destructive purposes, the government has damaged the land and the Native Americans whose livelihood, culture, and existence depend so much on the abundance of the land. Regarding Tayo's situation, the damaged balance that contributes to his illness does not come from just the fact that Native American veterans may have killed others, but it is also caused by their experience in seeing "what the white people had made from the stolen land" (169). They damage the land by creating wealth out of the suffering of the marginalized and even nature, destroying the land through mining and urbanization to the point of no return, and using her to produce the weapons of mass destruction.

Consequently, Betonie informs Tayo of his fateful responsibility to undergo a more important and inclusive ceremony to restore the balance of the fragile world so that he too is completely healed. Here reveals another role of Betonie in healing the protagonist: he provides an entrance to the ceremony that Tayo is meant to complete. To elaborate, Betonie explains to Tayo that there exists a pattern that "has been going on for a long time" (125); that is, when the balance is disrupted, there must be an agent to complete a ceremony. Based on the shaman's stories, Tayo is a qualified agent because of his encounter with the mystic Night Swan and her bestowed speckled cattle.

His experience at warfare also gives him extensive understanding of modern society. Thus, having known the potential of Tayo in the ceremony, Betonie reveals a web of relations to him by sharing his family's histories in which his grandfather Descheeny meets the mysterious Mexican woman, his grandmother. As the story goes, Betonie's grandmother knows that there is a certain evil force working on destroying the harmonious world and in the future time, there will come "people not even born yet" (150) to resolve the conflict, and knowing this, she marries Descheeny. Connecting this with the fact that his grandmother raises him to be a knowledgeable, eclectic healer and that he then meets Tayo who also has met the mysterious Mexican woman who partakes of great wisdom and the understanding of the land, Betonie includes Tayo, through his story, in the ongoing pattern in which his grandmother predicts he will participate. In other words, this point of the novel marks the entrance of Tayo into the web of relations and into the ceremony. To assist Tayo in completing a ceremony, Betonie gives Tayo information of the key elements that will lead him through his mission – the stars he draws to Tayo out of his memory, the spotted cattle, the woman, and the mountain – and emphasizes that all of these are what he himself too has seen. The final assistance Betonie gives Tayo, again, stresses Tayo's connection with the pattern that "has been going on for a long time now" (152).

In terms of the healing progress, after the Scalp Ceremony is completed, Tayo's condition improves. He rarely exhibits the symptoms related to his previous state in which he views himself as invisible. First, he starts to feel stronger, physically, especially in the presence of nature. For example, he, for the first time, enjoys the stroll, looking at the landscape and a grasshopper as he is on the way back from the mountain

where he performs the ceremony with Betonie and his helper. The protagonist starts to experience the healing power that nature has for him, thinking that "he wanted to walk [amidst nature] until he recognized himself again". Second, Tayo are equipped with a new stance in viewing the Euro-American majority. For example, the event that follows the ceremony is his encounter with a white station man who suspects him of being a thief. At this point, it is the first time that Tayo has "seen a white man so clearly" without looking away and understands that white people like the man "had been conceived by witchery" (154). Here, it is clear that Tayo no longer feels intimidated or ashamed of his ethnicity. Third, his alcoholism starts to decrease in degree. While he finally yields to alcohol after his friends Leroy and Harley insist ceaselessly, the protagonist does not feel dependent on alcohol as much as he used to.

Following the Scalp Ceremony, Tayo is directed by Betonie's guidance to complete the ceremony and heal himself. At this point, each element – the woman, the stars, the spotted cattle, and the mountain – comes to play a role in advancing Tayo towards healing and completing the ceremony. To illustrate, the woman Tayo encounters, Ts'eh, helps Tayo revive his relationship with the land and nature, a very important aspect that Tayo as an American Indian needs. First, it is important to understand that Ts'eh in Tayo's eyes is a qualified agent to perform the task. For Native Americans, they believe in the spirit of nature, and, to a great extent, the mystic qualities of Ts'eh gives such impressions that she is not a typical human. Instead, the fact that her true identity is unknown, that she is a seer who expects Tayo and knows he is sent by someone, and that she lives in harmony with nature alone attributes to her the

qualities of the female deity of nature. In having a sexual relationship with Ts'eh, a figure that is part of nature, Tayo also has regained a deep intimacy with nature too. As this sexual contact is an intimate union of a man and an agent from nature, the eroticization of the relationship of the two elements destroys the boundary between them. On one hand, Tayo, a man, sees life in nature and realizes her liveliness. On the other hand, Ts'eh, or nature itself, has embraced Tayo and recognized his existence. The erotic scene is described as though Ts'eh is really a natural landscape and their union dissolves the physical boundary of man's the flesh and the land:

> … He eased himself deeper within her and felt the warmth close around him *like river sand*, softly giving way under foot, then closing firmly around the ankle in *cloudy warm water*. But he did not get lost …When it came, it was the edge of steep *riverbank* crumbling under the downpour until suddenly it all broke loose and collapsed into itself
>
> …Under his leg he could *feel the damp wide leaf pattern that had soaked into the blanket where she lay*. [emphasis added] (181)

The re-eroticization of nature that has been lost with empirical, binary thinking evokes Tayo's bond with nature as life. Therefore, he learns to see life, both in physical and mystical senses. For example, on the morning after his intercourse with Ts'eh, at dawn, the protagonist sings a Native American song for the sunrise. While this may seem like an insignificant development to an outsider, it is, in fact, a great step for the Native Americans. As Paula Gunn Allen comments in her essay, Native Americans rely on rituals, songs, and ceremonies because as humans, they depend on language, the tool used to articulate their relationship with nature and as in nature, there lie life and spirits

of all elements, tangible or intangible, real or mythical alike, such utterances promise one's interconnectedness with this mythical aspect of the Earth as well (242). In other words, by using Native American songs to express his feeling when seeing the sunrise, Tayo realizes the agency of natural elements as alive because the song is the direct address to the sunrise itself, signifying Tayo's recognition that sunrise is not merely a natural phenomenon or an object anymore. The description of the sunrise and the landscape that morning also shows that the world in the eyes of Tayo now teems with life and stories. For instance, while the protagonist sees the actual sunrise at dawn, he also sees Ka't'sina, the spirit of nature, and the Sun God, the father of the clouds, whose existence overlaps that of the real sun. Furthermore, the scene here shows that Tayo now views all natural elements as whole, interacting with one another, from the sun, the mountaintops, the clouds, the winds, and the horse, to Tayo himself. Dawn transforms a simple, unimportant daily occurrence into a "single moment" in which the worlds, both his actual one and the mythical ones, come to "gather".

With the ability to see life in nature and to regain his lost relationship with her, Tayo successfully recognizes the love that Mother Earth has for him which uproots his fear and loneliness: "[T]he woman [has] filled the hollow spaces" (219). Furthermore, as he observes the mountain ranges, most of which legally belong to the whites, he uses the concept of love, memory and land to diminish the destructive power that is caused by them. Tayo is convinced that even without legality, nature still persists so is its love, and its connection with people will live on as long as people still remember the land. He thinks:

> The snow-covered mountain remained, without regard to titles of ownership or the white ranchers who thought they possessed it. They

> logged the trees, they killed the deer, bears, mountain lions, they built their fences high; but the mountain was far greater than any or all of these things. This mountain has outdistanced their destruction, just as love had outdistanced death. (219-220)

Considering how Tayo forms his view of love as "outdistancing" destruction and death, it is clear that, for Tayo, as long as nature (the mountain) is still remembered by the people, the love of the land will always outshine the damages done by the whites, or, in other words, the witchery. In addition to helping Tayo revive his connection with nature and land, Ts'eh also gives impression to Tayo that nature is nurturing, kind, and abundant. For example, after Tayo successfully retrieves the stolen spotted cattle, she is the one who knows their behavior and keep them for him. Her role in keeping and bestowing cattle to Tayo resembles that of Night Swan. For another thing, Ts'eh performs a ritual to bring about a plentiful year with rain to the Laguna community and teach Tayo how he can perform rituals to return the rain to the barren land. The two instances show that unlike his friend Emo who views nature as "old dried-up thing" (25), Tayo now realizes that Ts'eh as nature is alive and abundant.

Regarding Betonie's stars, one of the ceremonial elements, they work to validate Native American philosophy in the recurring pattern and help link Tayo's journey with that of the past, nature, and the supernatural. To illustrate, the stars appear on the night that Tayo discovers Ts'eh, highlighting the mystical link of the woman to the stories of Betonie, giving even more credibility to the indigenous belief that Tayo now relies on to heal himself. Also, when Tayo and his uncle Robert go to Ts'eh's home, though there is no sign of residents, there is an ancient shield painted with the pattern of Betonie's stars. If this house belongs to Ts'eh, it means that the stars are also recognized by her.

In other words, the stars here link Tayo's journey, Betonie's family history, and the woman's life together, establishing a sense of interconnectedness of the past and present, the real and the supernatural, as well as the physical and mystical aspects. Thus, together with his encounter with Ts'eh herself, Betonie's stars, in the healing process, help complement the roles and power of the woman by proving that there indeed exists a "continuing process".

After his night with Ts'eh and his discovery of Betonie's stars, Tayo dreams about Josiah's spotted cattle "scattl[ing] over the crest of a round bare hill" (181). He, then, travels north to the direction of the mountain and eventually finds the cattle, stolen by a European-American land owner. The recovered cattle and the mountain where he finds them are the other two elements of ceremony that Betonie mentions. They help heal the protagonist by making him realize the history of the white people as thieves, and how their thievery continues as proven by the fact that the affluent white man steals the Indians' cattle. To elaborate, the white man Floyd Lee's lands used to belong to the Native Americans until they are "taken by the National Forest and by the state" (185) and then, they are sold as properties to Texan white ranchers. The new Texan inhabitants who purchase the lands, such as Lee's potential ancestors, destroy the forest by establishing logging companies and take away the lives of wild animals for excessive consumption and sports (186). Tracing this land-based history and seeing how lands have become – wildlife killed, trees cut down, and the lands fenced together with the very fact that his cattle are stolen – Tayo comes to understand that fault are his beliefs that only poverty leads ones to steal, and that subsequently the thieves are naturally the impoverished non-white Native Americans and Mexicans while the whites are so affluent that they do not have to steal. He reviews the history of the whites and

comments, “theirs was a nation built on stolen land” (191). Moreover, he now understands it is the work of evil forces that manipulates the whites and the Native Americans into making them blind to this fact. Therefore, the white people live their whole lives and build their empire on the land that they are not bonded with, and thus, the land can never be theirs, and to fill their emptiness, they resort to patriotic wars, wealth, power, and technology, believing that these might give them the sense of pride and fulfillment. Likewise, the Native Americans, including the protagonist himself, are fooled to think that the white way is the definition of success and theirs is failure.

Furthermore, the act of Tayo’s retrieving the stolen cattle itself has certain healing effect too. First, as the cattle represents his bond with Josiah as the two have been working hard in raising them and the cattle themselves connect to the woman they are deeply intimate with, that he retrieves them back to the family means he emotionally reconciles with his uncle. As he looks at the cattle, the vision of his uncle appears: “Tayo’s heart beat fast; he could see Josiah’s vision emerging, he could see the story taking form in bone and muscle” (226). In other words, the experience here returns to him not only the spotted cattle but also his deceased uncle because his stories and existence will live on in his cattle. Second, the spotted cattle, together with his regained connectedness with the land, alters Tayo’s perception of reality by means of destroying the boundaries between the myth and reality, the past and the present, the dead and the living. For instance, after the incident, as Tayo rides the horse, looking at the landscape, he sees that as long as nature continues to exist, Rocky never disappears; he, as well as the deceased uncle, still lives on in the stories embedded in the lands in the same way that mythical entities do. In Tayo’s mind,

> The ride into the mountain had branched into all directions of time. He knew then why the oldtimers could only speak of yesterday and tomorrow in terms of the present moment … The ck'o'yo Kaup'a'ta somewhere is stacking his gambling sticks and waiting for a visitor; Rocky and I are walking across the ridge in the moonlight; Josiah and Robert are waiting for us. This night is a single night; and has never been any other. (192)

The convergence of time here decimates the boundaries between the past, the time when Rocky and even Josiah were still alive, and the present time. As all times can happen at once under Native American cosmology, then Rocky, Tayo, Josiah, and Robert all co-exist in "a single night" in this sense. In his contemplation of nature's ability to overcome environmental destruction and injustice, Tayo also realizes that, like nature, the ability to remember, to give, and to feel love can conquer death as well: "… love had outdistanced death … Josiah and Rocky were not far away. They were close; they had always been close. … They love him that way; he could still feel the love they had for him. The damage that had been done had never reached this feeling" (192). Linking this concept with the notion of storytelling, as an oral culture, Native Americans rely on this activity as a valuable means to pass on knowledge and create their history. As the poem in the beginning of the text reads, stories exist to prevent people from being "confused or forgotten (2)". Here, Tayo thinks that the love that he remembers constitutes a story of his family and with it the two deceased family members can never be far away. Thus, as a ceremony, finding the spotted cattle recovers the relationship among Tayo's family members that were broken by Western binary thinking.

If we also look at how this phase of the ceremony works in restoring the broken balance of the fragile world, we can see that after the stolen cattle are retrieved and returned to the family – an act of putting things where they rightly belong –rain returns to the Laguna community as well. Right after the cattle are released from Floyd Lee's property, after years of drought, storm clouds start to form once the cattle leave the perimeter of the ranch (197). Then, following the clouds comes snow which, according to Ts'eh, who notices its early arrival, may promise "a wet winter" meaning it is going to be "a good year next year (211)".

Even though the rain is returned to the land, the members in the Laguna community, especially the war veterans of Tayo's generation, are still trapped in the curse of the witchery, believing and living in the narrative of the whites. This desperate, self-deprecating mentality shared among the younger generation, as shown in the latter part of the novel, is the most menacing of all plights. Moreover, on a larger scale, Tayo is yet to realize the fateful connection between his community in the States and the great tragedy in Japan, unthinkable to the older indigenous people. In other words, thus far, even with the rain and the recovery of individuals, the future of Native Americans as a race still appears hopeless. Older people lack a better narrative to soothe one another and articulate the happenings in their time while the younger ones turn against themselves and one another, destroying the bond and the value of traditional stories. And if we look at the conditions of the protagonist himself at this stage, he is not yet cured from being violent and having strong suppressed anger.

Several incidents show that violence is still deeply rooted in Tayo's psyche. For example, on one occasion, Tayo meets a woman, Helen Jeans, a Native American

looking for a rewarding job who happens to hang out with Tayo's drunken friends. From her perspective, while alcoholism and senseless, endless talking of other veterans appall her, she still feels even more uneasy with Tayo, who looks quiet and not eager to drink. This incident suggests that from the perspective of an outsider, Tayo still has suppressed anger, visible to even a stranger like Helen Jeans, because his quietness, to her, does not suggest peace but triggers fear. In this sense, we might conclude that there is a sense of violence in him in the same way that it plagues his friends. Similarly, when Ts'eh, with her prophetic ability, informs Tayo in tears about the witches' attempts to change "the end of the story" or the end of the ceremony the protagonist is destined to complete that will be subsumed in the story of Native Americans, Tayo exhibits a sense of anger that he cannot control:

> He saw her face in the light that came suddenly and bright; she was crying. He wanted to kneel down and put his arms around her and tell her not to cry, but his connection with the ground was solid; his arms clasped his knees to his chest like arms of another person … When he spoke, it was from a mouth independent of himself, and he had to listen to the sound of the words to know what he was saying.
>
> "What is it?" "Why are you crying?" The anger in his voice surprised him (231).

The propelling anger here suggests that Tayo, enjoying the blissful time with Ts'eh, the spirit of Nature, fears that he would lose this serenity. Like Bear Boy Shush, Betonie's helper, Tayo has entered the realm of the supernatural and found peace there. The tears and anxiety of the woman disrupt the peace that the supernatural world offers, and it

scares him. However, to be truly healed, Tayo must be able to live peacefully regardless of the place and situation, not running away from his actual, physical reality, and so the eruption of his rage means he has not yet reached that stage.

As Betonie earlier explains, the true opposing forces are nature and the Native Americans who are trying to maintain peaceful balance of the universe, on the one hand, and, on the other, the witches who want to destroy it. Since the aim of Tayo's journey is to cure himself by means of restoring the broken balance, the witchery must therefore prevent him from completing the ceremony so that the world remains broken. Linking back to the previous paragraph, the anger and tendency towards violence that Tayo manifests are the negative feelings that make ones the destroyers – "objects to work for [witchery] (137)". And it is this very emotion that the evil entity uses to take control of Tayo. In addition, since Tayo who grows up in a heavily collective culture relies on a sense of kinship as his source of security, the evil uses it against him so that he fails to complete the ceremony.

Following Ts'eh's warnings that his friend Emo is after him, Tayo goes to the mountain where he discovers a uranium mine from which the mineral is collected and turned into nuclear bombs that kill the Japanese in the Second World War. Here surfaces another healing role of the mountain, one of the ceremonial elements as informed by Betonie. The abandoned mine serves as a piece of evidence that accounts for the broken balance of the world. The land where uranium mine is found is the place that belongs to the Laguna before the government takes it away. Here, the act of taking away the mountain and abusing it to create weapons of destruction reflects, again, white thievery and their role as destroyers. The destruction of nature here happens together

with that of men because the weapon is initially made for war, which leads thousands of men and innocent lives to their sufferings, if not death. Therefore, the Trinity Site mine is the matrix that interconnects all people. It joins the fate of the whites, the Native Americans, his deceased relatives, and even the Japanese soldiers together, all interwoven under a single, on-going plot of witchery. By understanding all this, Tayo reacts:

> He cried the relief he felt at finally seeing the pattern, the way all the stories fit together – the old stories, the war stories, their stories – to become the story that was still being told. He was not crazy; he had never been crazy. (246)

In other words, as the world progresses in peaceful harmony of all livings, be it humans, non-humans or even nature, there will be a certain evil force that destroys it. In the old times, there are myths of drought which happens because the balance is disrupted such as when the Clouds are stolen from the sky by the witch or when people, fooled by the devious magicians, abandon their duties. In Tayo's time when the world is more complex, the witchery is still at work, and it takes advantage of technological and scientific progress of the whites to disrupt the peace at an unprecedented degree of atrocity. Therefore, Tayo who comes to realize the pattern knows that he has really never been crazy in seeing Josiah in the Philippines. Under this pattern, Josiah, a Native American, and the Japanese soldiers on the battlefield, all harmed by the witchery, share the same pain and are interrelated.

After the discovery of the witchery's ceaseless attempt to disturb the peace, Tayo is yet to encounter the most difficult task for the ceremony to be completed. Tayo

must end the continuing plot of witchery that has put him, his community, and the world in agony. Since the witchery's key to keeping the devious plot going is violence in various forms, the protagonist needs to end this cycle of destruction. As Ts'eh explains to Tayo, using the violence is "the only ending they [the witchery and those manipulated by it] understand" (232). Therefore, the witchery decides to use Emo, a person with a deepening sense of violence, suppressed anger and self-aversion, to stir the seed of violence in Tayo. If the two men end up trying to kill each other as they have also done in the past, the witchery will conquer and the reality of helplessness and violence in Native Americans will prevail. Therefore, in their final encounter, Emo tries to capture Tayo and probably even kills him, and the last task of Tayo is actually to do nothing. Here, tolerance and inaction are the keys because actions will lead to the brawl. However, as Ts'eh predicts, this ending task of Tayo "won't be easy" (233) because inaction and tolerance here also mean letting go of his desire to help his scapegoat friends, Leroy and Harley, whom Emo and his helper, Pinkie, torture to tempt Tayo to come out from hiding. Here, Tayo needs to know the consequences if he fights against Emo: they will end up killing each other and his attempt will eventually be void of any benefit because his tortured friends are beyond remedy. Finally, Tayo is able to remain tolerant to Emo's vice and cruelty, thereby managing to prevent the witchery from completing the "stories about [Native Americans] – Indian people who are only marking time and waiting for the end" (232). Tayo thinks that if he fails to remain quiet and calm, his story will end in:

> The white people would shake their heads, more proud than sad that it took a white man to survive their world and that these Indians couldn't seem to make it. At home the people would blame liquor,

> the Army, and the war, but the blame on the whites would never match the vehemence the people would keep in their own bellies, reserving the greatest bitterness and blame for themselves, for one of themselves they could not save. (253)

After the ceremony is complete, there are many signs of Tayo's full recovery. First, he ceases to feel empty and helpless. The feelings of inferiority and the inability to do anything against the power of the white people have been replaced by his understanding of the on-going conflicts between Native Americans and the evil forces. This realization means he knows that there is and has always been a way to deal with it, and in completing the ceremony himself, it has been proven to him as true. Moreover, the completion of the ceremony enables Tayo to fully understand the love of nature. To elaborate, Ts'eh, as the embodiment of Mother Earth, has always helped him, and based on the implication of Betonie's stars, may have always been there all along to help those in need, Tayo no longer feels afraid of parting from her. He comes to understand that humans and nature are united as he thinks "we came out of this land and we are hers". The pronoun "hers" may refer to either nature or Ts'eh and both beings as well. In the end, Tayo understands that even though the actual woman is not present, she is always omnipresent in nature. With this attained sense of peace of mind, Tayo concludes, "[Ts'eh] had always love him, she had never left him; she had always been there" (255). Most importantly, at the end of his healing journey, Tayo has been transformed from a sick person into a healer as he passes on the stories and experiences to his community and the descendants in years to come. In other words, if we look at Tayo's recovery as linked to his community and the world, he will take the role of such figures as Betonie who uses his stories and ceremonies he learns from the shaman and Ts'eh to heal others

in need, sustain the balance of the fragile worlds, and guide those in the years to come should the peace is disturbed once again. All in all, Tayo and his stories alike can be considered as an epitome of hope.

Ceremony: A Text That Cures

The heart of the healing for readers, regardless of one's race, lies most profoundly in Silko's ability to craft a hybridized text – a combination of a ceremony and a novel, and subsequently bring out the highest potential of the two genres. On the one hand, Native Americans no longer live independently without contact with others, especially the Western world. The Western influence is so immense that the interaction becomes fundamental. So, in the literary world, indigenous modes of writing alone do not suffice. Silko, then, utilizes the novel as the genre to address contemporary Native American problems. There are some benefits of her employment of the novel as a narrative mode. First, unlike the indigenous oral tradition, the novel as prose writing makes her stories accessible to readers in our predominately written culture. Second, as Terry Eagleton notes, the novel "is a sign of modern man subject" (8); therefore, to a great extent, it is a proper genre in addressing contemporary culture and context.

While *Ceremony* is considered as a novel, Silko incorporates ceremonial literature, or ceremonies for short in writing it. According to Paula Gunn Allen, who, in her essay "The Sacred Hoop" discusses the meanings and functions of ceremonies as indigenous literature, while each ceremony may retain a specific function that is understood only among the people in the tribes, its overall purpose is:

> to integrate; to fuse the individual with his or her fellows, the community of people with that of the other kingdoms, and this larger

> communal group with worlds beyond this one. A raising or expansion of individual consciousness naturally accompanies this process. The person sheds the isolated, individual personality and is restored to conscious harmony with the universe. (249)

The process achieved by reading the novel or completing a ceremony will lead one to regain the awareness of one's interconnectedness with all things, bound together by the power of the creation.

To make sure that *Ceremony* achieves the quoted purposes so readers are healed from their lack of awareness, Silko incorporates the oral concept of listener/storyteller to the written novel to transform the role of readers from being passive to active. In the novel, Silko does not simply write one story that has determinate objectives or concerns of characters under a certain timeframe in a particular social context – the way that would make a reader experience texts passively. Rather, what Silko does in *Ceremony* is, as Susan Berry Brill de Ramírez comments in her essay "Storytellers and their Listener-readers in Silko's 'Storytelling' and 'Storyteller'", to transform the text from simply being a novel to a platform which allows an active participation of readers in a (written) dialogue with a writer. To illustrate, Susan emphasizes two essential agents and elements in a ceremony – a storyteller and a listener – and explains that at the plot level, Betonie is undoubtedly a storyteller who tells stories of old-time myths, traditional stories and beliefs, and communal histories to Tayo, the listener. And as a part of ceremony, Tayo has to actively participate in interpreting what Betonie tells him, connecting the stories in order that he as the listener can interweave the old and new stories together so that he is provided with "new ways of seeing, understanding,

and interpreting a world for which the old ways are no longer sufficient (1).” By the same token, his ability to discover the interwoven stories means that Tayo is healed from being clouded by the Western ways too. Then, Susan argues that in the act of reading *Ceremony*, the same storytelling process similarly takes place too with Leslie Marmon Silko as a storyteller and readers as listeners of what Silko tells them. We readers, therefore, like Tayo, must figure out on our own how stories are converged and through it, we actively participate in the rituals, giving meaning to stories, linking them, finding and realizing the existing patterns, the way Tayo has completed during his ceremonial sessions with Betonie.

With the help of the framework that the novel provides, readers are induced to explore the novel in the manner that corresponds to it. That is, they will have to try to understand links between stories, both in prose and poems, to know how they are connected under Native American cosmology. For Tayo, there are many stories he learns by heart as a Native American, so many of the poems we read as we go through the text are likely what he already knows. However, for readers, the poems are there to equip us with myths, and as stated, the myths of creation of Thought-Woman and her sisters have prepared us to realize once we see the poems interspersed during our prose reading that the stories of Fly and Hummingbird, of the Sun Man, the Bear Boy, the Coyote are all connected to Tayo’s. Thus, it could be said that while Tayo listens to Betonie and uses his stories coupled with certain myths he knows to make sense of his contemporary society in order that he is healed from witchery curses, we are listening to Silko’s telling the myths of creation, stories of the four mythical worlds, and of Tayo in the fifth. As reader-listeners, we as participants in the ceremony of ours with Silko’s words as guidance, are heading towards the road of healing as well. In other words,

within a form of the written literary work exists a ceremony. As readers, we follow the reading convention of turning from one page to another, we are simultaneously made to participate in the rituals, and like the protagonist, as we finish the text with our view of the stories, we complete our own ceremony too.

The extent to which Silko redefines the novel goes beyond merely introducing the notion of listener/storyteller in *Ceremony*. In the traditional healing ceremony, two parties meet in persons in a certain venue, just like how Betonie and Tayo go up to the mountain together, and there, ceremonies will be performed with its compositional elements, such as incantations, prayers, songs and ritual movements that together make up a complete ceremony (249). However, as the novel does not allow listeners to meet their storyteller, the venue is missing. Silko fixes this problem by using the physical text as her venue where the elements are written down. For instance, concerning incantations and prayers, Silko gives very vivid and detailed chants performed by Betonie (142) and the hunter (204), transcribing the incantations as though they were being performed right in front of the readers. Also, as the ceremonial process is based on storytelling, many strands of narrative are told in poems, yet with rhythm, patterns, and a lot of repetitions, the same manner in which stories are delivered in the actual ceremony.

In addition to that, the use of colors throughout the story corresponds with those used in indigenous ceremonies. In the novel, the colors that are mostly used are blue and yellow. For example, in Night Swan's room, the place is described in great detail and many of the objects, pieces of furniture and even the garments are in blue (98). For another example, after Tayo leaves Ts'eh, the landscape that he sees is described as

follows: “The sun was pushing against the gray horizon hills, sending yellow light across the clouds, and the yellow river sand was speckled with the broken shadows of tamaric and river willow” (255). The great focus on the specific colors does not only emphasize Silko’s artistic ability or the liveliness of areas that may seem arid and lifeless but it also makes this novel more complete as a ceremonial written text. The use of colors here resembles those used in the preparation and ritual process that Silko depicts in the plot too. For example, in the “Pollen Boy” poem, the boy who has presumably lost his way and is transformed into a coyote is depicted as covered by “blue pollen” on his eyes, mouth, neck and joints. (141) Also, when Betonie performs a ceremony on Tayo, the scene is described as followed: “The helper worked in the shadows beyond the dark mountain ranger; he worked with the black sand, making bear prints side by side. Along the right side of the bear footprints, the old man painted paw prints in blue, and then yellow, and finally white” (142).

As Native American culture draws so much on landscape and their understanding of the worlds, cosmology and rituals are essentially region-based, healing ceremonies are likewise linked to those in contact with their locality. For *Ceremony* to work for the audience who could be anywhere, Silko brings the landscape into the book. As we can see, several passages in the novel are heavily descriptive. Silko gives us an abundance of details on the color of the land, the animals that reside in it and even the plants that grow there. As one of the most significant elements in connecting the pattern is Betonie’s stars, the author also brings the stars into the novel by providing the painting right on the page on which Tayo finds the stars he is supposed to look for. In the novel, only this picture appears, and it plays a significant role in helping readers realize the connection of the past and present as well as the mythical

realm and reality for these stars appear in Descheeny's, Betonie's and Tayo's stories as well as on the wall of the house of Ts'eh's, a mythical figure. The picture of the stars provided to us in the novel illustrates Silko's attempt to include us in the Story and to help us see the pattern as Tayo does, so that, like him, we are healed.

In conclusion, after reading *Ceremony*, readers, both the natives and non-natives alike, are likely to start questioning the pigeonholed representation of the Native Americans. If we think of the most prevalent stereotypical quality of the American Indians, people in general would remember them as fantastical and outdated, if not extinct. Likewise, their love and respect for the Mother Earth are deemed by the modern capitalistic society as superstitious and backward. However, what we have discovered in Tayo's healing journey and in participating in the written ceremony is that Native Americans in the novel are in no way close to such portrayals. Their indigenous wisdom, though developed from the ancient beliefs and cosmology, is relevant to today's world, and are constantly subject to modification, growing in response to the changing conditions. Finally, the contesting narrative of the conflict between Euro-Americans and Native Americans as being conceived by the evil force and actually rooted in the Native American circle functions to reclaim the lost voices of the marginalized people in the white-domineering society, providing the Natives with their own lenses to view themselves and their own history.

CHAPTER III: The Spiral, the *Whanau*, and the Land in Patricia Grace's *Potiki*

In his history book of New Zealand, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou – Struggle without End* (1990), Ranginui Walker, one of the main academic figures advocating for the rights of the Maori, revises the narrative of New Zealand history. Written from the perspective of the oppressed, Walker challenges the image of New Zealand as a unified "one people" nation "that claimed for itself a reputation of having the finest race relations in the world" (186). In order to achieve the goal of rewriting the history, Walker traces the historical oppression which revolves around two major issues: land dispute and cultural assimilation. Firstly, from the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi on, indigenous people were forced to give up their land ownership by means of wars and legislation. During the 19th century, with forces and military power from the British Empire, the *Pakeha* government managed to subdue native dissenters as well as influential Maori figures, ranging from the appointed Maori king to indigenous religious prophets, and subsequently claimed ownership of Maori lands as the compensation for inciting turmoil.

Walker also points out that, with legislative abuses, the European settlers enacted a series of legal acts that expropriated the Maori land, both directly and indirectly. Starting with the Waitangi Treaty, William Hobson, the first British Governor of New Zealand, claimed sovereignty over North Island despite unsettled opposition from certain Maori chiefs, and over South Island on the ground that it was a no-man's land, intentionally ignoring Ngai Tahu *iwi* residing in the area. As its power and influence in New Zealand heightened, the Empire enacted many draconian and unjust laws to strip the original owners of their rights to the land. For example, with the

Native Land Act 1862, which Walker interprets as the *Pakeha*'s "first step in its establishment [of sovereignty and acquisition of land through legislation]", the authorities were to "identify the owners of the tribal land and transform communally owned land held under customary title into individual title cognizable in English law" (135). For the Maori, the concept of individual possession of land is so alien that this law "[had] the most destructive and alienating effect on Maori people" (136), because of the difficulty to set this newly established law in the Maori customs and of the cost that comes with the legal, mandatory process of individuals to claim ownership of land at court[5]. Along with this law, there were also a number of laws enacted to attain similar effects. For instance, during the 1950s, the government, having established Maori Trustee, an organization run by *Pakeha* officials, enacted the Maori Affairs Act 1953 to give power to the Trustee "to purchase Maori land deemed to be 'uneconomic' or land that was not being developed according to *Pakeha* standard" (139), and later in 1967 further amended the law to give a "compulsory power to purchase [land] … under 50 pounds (139)".

Similarly, the book also elucidates that laws dealing with New Zealand waters also work to alienate Maori from their own place. To illustrate, Oyster Fisheries Act 1866 deprived the Maori from their rights to commercial use of oyster beds even though

[5] Walker states that the debt of the Maori greatly multiplied as they relied on credit advanced for their travel and accommodation to attend hearings in different towns, the lawyers' fee, court costs, and for collecting survey and evidence to prove their rights to land. With credit accumulating, they were forced to sell their acquired land to pay off debt. In one of the most notorious cases, a Maori individual was forced to sell land to pay debts and avoid lawsuit threats from *Pakeha*, and then received only 3,000 pound out of 21,000 pound after the sale as the remaining sum were to pay for debts. In other words, the law not only robbed Maori of land but earned money from their loss as well (137-38).

it could provide work in accordance with their traditional knowledge. Moreover, as *Pakehas* introduced such fish popular among Westerners as salmon and trout to New Zealand waters, the alien species multiplied to the point that they outnumbered the native ones. As the local marine lives which originally inhabited the sea quickly died out, Maori people were forced to turn to the foreign fish. Upon seeing that the fish they had brought across the ocean were caught without permission by the natives, the *Pakehas*, failing to realize that they themselves were responsible for the destruction of the existing ecosystem, issued the Salmon and Trout Act 1867, which demanded individuals to have a license in order to fish them. With numerous legal requirements making it almost impossible for Maori people to obtain the needed license, the indigenous waters were then inaccessible for the people whose livelihood had been dependent on them for generations. In Walker's view, this was an indirect act of taking away the sea from the Maori.

Moreover, within 100 years from the signing of the Waitangi Treaty, the Maori lost most of their arable land to *Pakeha* through colonial military force and laws. In terms of demography, the European settlers eventually outnumbered those of the indigenous people due to the flooding of migration made possible by the wealth of the colony and land available for the white newcomers. As the European legal and economic systems were firmly installed in New Zealand, the Maori were compelled to assimilate into the Western social structures by several means. For one thing, in the section "Schools for Assimilation", Walker describes the role of schooling in "speedily assimilating the Maori to the habits and usages of the European" (146). To illustrate, with the arrival of settlers, schools with English curricula were established. In the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, at schools, students were

not only taught virtually Western knowledge but also instructed mostly in English. In 1905, with support from the Education Department, the Inspector of Native Schools openly urged that only English be used at schools in all educational levels. According to Walker, the so-called encouragement "was translated into a general prohibition of the Maori language within school precincts" (147) and failure to act accordingly resulted in corporal punishment. Apart from education, the Maori as *tangata whenua* or "people of the land", as Walker describes, lost their chance to continue their culture because of the loss of land. This loss meant they could not perform traditional rituals together on the land to which they belonged. Poverty-stricken, a lot of indigenous people had to move to larger towns to serve as manual labor for *Pakeha* business owners. Legally, socially, and financially underprivileged, the Maori people struggled to survive and their traditional arts came to a grinding halt as a consequence.

After the World War II, there emerged a Maori movement called Maori Cultural Renaissance, an unprecedented phenomenon in which the indigenous people started to reclaim their cultural identity and insisted on the right to live their Maori ways. In *Postcolonial Pacific Writing – Representations of the Body* (2005), Michelle Keown identifies three vital contributing factors of the movement. Firstly, there was an increase in "concern over the attendant loss of traditional values and cultural practices" caused by "the effects of post-war developments in Maori society.[6]" Secondly, by that time the number of indigenous people with Maori as their first language was so low that the

[6] After the war, New Zealand was transformed into a fully urbanized nation with towns and factories springing in many regions, causing urban migrations among the impoverished, landless Maori, and heightening the severity of Maori dispossession even further (Walker).

situation became critical[7]. Thirdly, indigenous people no longer wanted to tolerate the political and socio-economic racial injustice in the society (5).

For these reasons, many prominent activities mobilized by leading figures manifested in many parts throughout the nation as a form of cultural resistance, the revival of traditional arts, and even political activism. For instance, according to Walker, Apirana Ngata, one of the most prominent political figures in 20th-century New Zealand, revived the art of wood carving, particularly in carving the Maori meeting house, *wharenui*, that had not been practiced for almost four decades. He was also one of the advocates who fought for the reintroduction of the Maori language in New Zealand schools. Another equally influential agent that Walker mentions is Te Puea Herangi of Waikato. Active from the 1950s on, this female Maori leader focused on recovering traditional performances. She launched educational programs teaching young children action songs like *haka* and Maori dances. Likewise, in the literary field, Witi Ihimaera, the Maori first author to publish novels and short stories to the mainstream market, worked to assure that indigenous literary works survived. According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith in her book entitled *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999), Ihimaera assembled a five-volume anthology of Maori literature *Te Ao Marama* recognized as representing the "crossroads … of a literature of a past and a literature of a present and future" (qtd. in Smith 151).

One strand of many activities in the Maori Cultural Renaissance lies in the literary movement in which many Maori writers, scholars and poets started publishing

[7] Walker states in *Struggle without End* that while in 1900, 90 percent of indigenous children spoke Maori as their first language, the rate dropped to only 26 percent in 1960 (147).

academic and creative works that represent their own voices and culture as well as addressing their struggles against *Pakeha* influences from the perspective of the oppressed and dispossessed. Smith argues that when indigenous writers, such as Witi Ihimaera and Patricia Grace, the two major figures in the movement whose books are written in English, first published their works, their writings were governed largely by nostalgic sentiment. However, their later works (starting from the mid-1980s) became more confrontational, marked by overtly political themes and anti-colonial messages. As Otto Heim notes in his book *Writing along Broken Lines: Violence and Ethnicity in Contemporary Maori Fictions* (1998), the two writers' more recent novels – for example, Keri Hulme's Man Booker Prize winning book, *The Bone People* (1983) – became more violent in the sense that the writers took "direct action" against the *Pakeha* (13). Furthermore, in terms of style, Maori authors usually incorporate indigenous myths, beliefs, and cultural practices into their writing. For example, Witi Ihimaera employs traditional myths about whales and Maori perception of nature in his novel *The Whale Rider* (1987) to tell the story of cetacean stranding and the struggle of Maori in adapting to a changing society. Similarly, in Keri Hulme's *The Bone People* (1983), the lives of three main characters – Joe, his adopted son Simon, and Kerewin – are tied together under Maori myths and legends.

Patricia Grace, a prominent literary figure in the movement, is one among the indigenous writers who examines the experiences of the contemporary Maori, especially their attempts to find a balance between modern culture and its traditional counterpart as well as their encounters with ongoing exploitations, at both the individual and communal levels. Grace's works are characterized by her talented use of narrative voices, traditional myths and beliefs and her personal experience as a Maori growing

up in a conflicted society. Grace's *Potiki* (1987) not only deals with the spirit of Maori political activism regarding land disputes and their struggle against cultural appropriation but by challenging the boundaries of Pakeha narratives and worldview, it also asserts the voices of the indigenous Maori that have been long suppressed under the peaceful images of the Aotearoa.

This chapter will present an analysis of how Patricia Grace's *Potiki* (1986) successfully tackles two of the most persistent conflicts in New Zealand – the land dispute and the commercialization of and, subsequently, the menace to, Maori culture – through the story of a Maori community under threats of the *Pakeha* land developer. *Potiki* starts with a local legend of a particularly talented wood carver who is taught all the skills by his childless master. Having realized that without a child of his own, the master's legacies and artistic contributions to the communities would be forgotten, the grateful successor commits *tapu* – spiritual prohibition – by performing *hongi*, an act of giving breath (life), to his last carved wood panel (*poupou*) which models after his late master in the community's communal house (*wharenui*). The wood carver dies, intentionally leaving this particular panel unfinished as he claims that it needs to be completed by people of the future. Then, the book shifts to portray the modern reality of New Zealand through many different characters' voices. Part one of the story revolves around the everyday life of the Tamihana's family, focusing mostly on Roimata Kararaina, one of the novel's main narrative voices, her husband Hemi and his mentally challenged sister Mary, as well as the couple's four children James, Tangimoana, Manu and Toko, the adopted son to whom Mary mysteriously gives birth. Prominent among other characters is Toko, a deformed who is gifted with a prophetic ability. Along with stories that concern the family, this part also tells the story of Te

Ope, a community struggling against the government's expropriation of their land. In part two, the Tamihana family is approached by an influential Pakeha land developer Mr. Dolman, who is also called among the Maori as "Dollarman". This man sees the chance to capitalize on the lands that the Maori own as a part of his construction project. Despite the substantial sum of money promised and a guarantee of jobs to the residents as Maori traditional performers once the land is developed into a tourist attraction, the people repeatedly decline the offers. The tension between Mr. Dolman and the community escalates and, consequently, the community is exposed to a series of threats and assaults ranging from the flooding of the community garden and the arsons of the communal house, to the bombing of the rebuilt *wharenui*, which results in the death of Toko. Part three displays the repercussion of the child's death, which includes the secret destruction of the ongoing construction site by Tangimoana and other young community members. The novel ends with James completing the unfinished poupou by carving Toko next to the childless master.

This chapter will argue that the community myths of the wood craftsman, together with the tale of unfinished *poupou*, a wooden crafted pole representing ancestors and Maori gods and goddess and their concept of the spiral, at the plot level, work to help the community cope with the pain of being constantly exploited and of losing Toko at the end of the novel. Moreover, by using the Maori's notion of spiral temporality to address the present-day issues of land dispute and racial discrimination, the novel connects historical events with what happens to Tamihana family, showing, through their indigenous beliefs, that injustice is ongoing and even expected. Lastly, this chapter will argue that as the Maori culture is deeply connected to land and nature,

the dangers posed to the environment affect them directly, and thus they attempt to preserve the natural surroundings to maintain their cultural identity.

The Spiral and *kore* as Narrative Frameworks

While *Potiki* makes sense even if one approaches it with Western analytical apparatuses, such as viewing the conflicts of land ownership and cultural discrimination as post-colonial issues, the Western frameworks may yield a rather limited understanding of the story and the culture it represents. For example, in reading *Potiki* from a post-colonial perspective, readers may interpret that the focus of the story is the clash between the white *Pakeha* Dollarman and the indigenous Maori and the book will be essentially political. In doing this, readers risk failing to see what the indigenous people actually see in each situation, and subsequently, they will look at the racial conflicts in a top-down fashion, placing the labels of victims and the marginalized to Maori people who are presented as threatened and discriminated against in the *Pakeha*'s world. In other words, this reading, to a certain extent, may reduce readers' capability to see self-agency and representation among the Maori, who, obviously, have been fighting to reclaim their voice.

This chapter argues that it is important to take note of the novel's two major elements, which set the structure of the whole text, and are the suitable interpretative frameworks of the incidents in the novel. The first is the concept of *kore*, which, according to Cleve Barlow in *Tikanga Whakaaro – Key concepts in Maori culture* (1991), can roughly be translated as the "unorganized potential" (55). It is the sphere of shapeless chaos, out of which a being would take shape and come to existence. Due to this seemingly paradoxical nature of *kore*, Barlow stresses a common mistake among

Western scholars in defining *kore* as nothingness, as a result of its lack of any definite form. He argues that *kore*, although void of form itself, is the source of all forms and possibilities of life. The second essential notion is *koru*, commonly translated as "loop" or "spiral." A recurring motif in Maori arts, it is often depicted in the image of unfurling leaves of silver fern. However, the implications of *koru* are far deeper than a mere decoration. In the Maori culture, the spiral shape conveys the infinite course of time. Their concept of time is different from that of the West, which is influenced by Christianity, believing that time proceeds in a linear manner toward an ultimate end, the Judgment Day. Thus, *koru* is considered as how the Maori perceive time.

These two concepts, namely *kore*, "the unorganized potential", and *koru*, the spiral nature of time, work together to determine the Maori perception of the origins and creation of things. Maori people do not see the world in a linear manner, in which there exists a definite and universal beginning and ending. Rather, they see that the worlds, both material reality and its mythical counterpart, exist under the rule of the spiral process, in which, from the formless center of being, or *kore*, there are unorganized forms of potential beings and possibilities, waiting to spring and develop into something new. In the Prologue, this concept of creation is narrated in the form of an oral poem. The poem puts *kore* as "the centre" (7) from which movement, or life, emerges toward "an outer circle" (7). According to the poem, even in the midst of seeming nothingness, there have always existed lives and possibilities that are not yet "heard" and "seen", meaning that there is pre-determined potential for the emergence of life. Then, with the movement, life comes into form and develops in a spiral manner in terms of time. This very key idea which the poem accentuates is the base of Maori

perception of almost every element and event in their lives, ranging from their stories of Maori gods and goddesses, their art and cultural practices as well as their worldview.

Following the poem is the story of an elderly master woodcarver who has devoted his life carving various *poupous* – ancestral and legendary figures from the myths of the Maori – a task so significant for the community that he is widely revered and remembered even after he has passed. The philosophy behind Maori wood carving can be summed up in the manner of his works, which is "seeking out and exposing figures that were hidden there" (7). Essentially, the belief that the figures to be carved already exist inside the flesh of the wood is derived from the concepts of the *kore* and *koru.* To illustrate, the process of Maori wood carving is not to create the *poupous* out of his individual creativity and imagination; rather, the carver's task is to bring out the existing "unorganized potential" and give it a material form. The carver, as stated in the novel, is not the "master of what eventually comes from his hands. He is the master only of the skills that bring forward what was waiting in the womb that is a tree." (7). In this sense, the raw wood represents *kore* while the actual, completed *poupou* is the materialization, or the organization of the previously scattered pieces of life into life itself. Understood in light of the notion of *koru*, the *poupou* carved out is only one of the possibilities – one of the "outer circle[s]" – swirling out of *kore*. In other points on the spiral procession of time, these *poupous* might take different shapes, ranging from those of Maori ancestors in the so-called past to even animal forms.

Now that Maori woodcarving has been given as the example of how the notions of *koru* and *kore* define the way they perceive time and existence, another important point is that *kore* is not a singular force but an embedded source of lives in every being.

Taking this notion further, it means each “outer circle” (7) – the manifestation of the previously formless capacity – of a particular being might overlap with that of others. In other words, there are countless numbers of separate spiral processes spinning out from innumerable different sources; all of them co-existing and interacting with one another when even their paths intersect.

Moreover, time for the Maori does not pass in a linear fashion, with the oblivious past behind and the predetermined future beyond the present. This means that one particular point in time can be in the past, the present, and the future spontaneously, or more precisely, that there is no clear-cut boundary of the past, the present, and the future at all. As Roimata, one of the major characters, states, "…there [is] no past or future, all time is a now time, centred in the being … the centred being in this now-time simply reaches out in any direction towards the outer circles, these outer circles being named past and future only for our convenience…” (39).

With this notion of time, together with the idea of multiple outer circles of different existences intersecting one another, each being can be in the position of either the past or future of others, who also exist in their own now-time. Thus, readers can see the image of infinite overlapping spirals, reaching from the innermost center to outer circles, outer spots in time where radius of different spirals might intersect.

Therefore, with the concept of overlapping timeframes, what has passed, is currently happening, or yet to take place is neither categorized as the past, the present or the future, nore construed in a linear paradigm. Instead, in the temporal space of “now-time”, all are always alive and present. For one to bring the past or the future to the fore, s/he only has to “reach out in any direction towards the outer circles” (39).

Here, the process of reaching out in Maori culture occurs by means of giving material presence to them, either in the form of storytelling or in the act of crafting the *wharenui*, or ancestral house, and the *poupou*, the wood panels representing mythological or legendary figures. In this light, the art of crafting is the point of intersection between two existences, the carver and the carved. Those who are carved exist both in the present, the time of the carver; in their own time, supposedly the long-gone past; and in the future, in which the *poupou* representing them will possibly still stand. This convergence of time has been materialized in the tale of the woodcarver in the Prologue. As previously discussed, it is the story of a childless ingenious master and an orphan he adopts. The orphan, who eventually becomes his successor, continues the craft. As a skillful woodcarver himself, he carves a final *poupou* – a part of which represents his late master. However, he leaves the lowermost part untouched, claiming "[the open place] is the space for the lower figure, but there is none yet to fill that place. It is for a future time" (12). And as the novel reveals, the open space is where Toko will be after his death. Thus, the *wharenui*, and, more importantly, this *poupou*, embody the aforementioned process of temporal convergence in which 'the past' and 'the future' are brought to the now-time. While the *wharenui* is the place where people can enter and co-exist with the deceased and other mythical or legendary *poupous*, the *poupou* exists as a materialized form of the past to which the carver reaches out and makes present in the now-time. Moreover, in the very space of the communal house, there also exists "the unorganized potential" of the future in the pre-determined open space that will be filled with the figure of the person from "the future" time, to be carved by one who is not yet born.

Thus, as the master narrative of the whole novel, the tale of the wood carver and the unfinished *poupou* is an integral compositional element that governs the main plot of the Tamihana family. Here, by starting the book with the tale instead of the main storyline right away, Grace has successfully determined the manner in which the novel should be read and pre-determines the link between the mythical reality and the material one for her readers.

Apart from serving as the point where time converges, the act of woodcarving in the story also includes the tales of transgressions of traditions. Seeing that his master has no child to keep him "present" by recounting his stories after his death, the orphan violates two taboos: first, he carves his master into a *poupou*, and second, he subsequently performs hongi, a traditional act of greeting in which two people rub their noses against each other, on the craft. Concerning the first transgression, it is forbidden in the act of Maori woodcraft to carve a person out of a living memory. The art of carving is reserved for those who have passed onto the status of legendary figures – the outer circles far away enough not to be known personally by anyone living in the supposed "present". In his second transgression, breathing into the wood panel representing his late master, he does *hongi* – the custom of greetings exchanged between the living – to the dead. Following the image of beings crossing paths like ripples in the water as previously elaborated, the taboos are understandable. If someone in living memory is carved out, s/he would take two material forms simultaneously – the human form in the mind of those who remember him or her, and that of the *poupou*. Similarly, breathing into the *poupous* can be considered as forcing the force of life into the dead. In short, the Maori might view these acts as human interventions in the natural process.

However, it is shown that in Maori culture, changes and interventions in the conventional ways of life are tolerated, and from time to time, welcomed as essential factors for the community to survive. In fact, it is also the very notion of spiral temporality that allows for changes to take place. This fluid quality of the Maori cosmology is another force that governs the novel. As previously discussed, the Maori perception of time is neither a cyclical progression, which may be viewed as repetitive and static, nor a linear one, which signifies a fixed, unchanging image of progression. Instead, they view time as spiral, progressing infinitely, yet with references to the existing pattern. Therefore, in *Potiki*, we get to see transgression of traditional beliefs and practices, from the woodcarver who breaks the rules regarding Maori craft to Tangimoana's unprecedented provocative act against the *pakeha* developer. At the same time, these acts of transgression are done to secure the future as well as to preserve the past. For the woodcarver, the transgression means his master is able to live on along with the master's stories and distinguished skills. At a deeper level, it also arguably paves the way for the birth of Toko, who will become the *mokopuna*, the descendant, of this *poupou*. In other words, here the violation brings about a new way for his community to continue the line of genealogy, keeping it from being forgotten, by incorporating people from the living memories, such as the master and Toko, into the ancestral houses. With this, the roles and stories of the two figures will continue to exist as long as the *wharenui* is there. Similarly, Tangimoana's disobedience leads to success in the resistance against the land developers, preventing the community from losing their land, which is mythical and physical space, where cultural, temporal and ancestral contacts are the strongest, allowing people to continue to progress in their own way.

Potiki: The Presence of the Living Past

As Eva Rask Knudsen comments in her essay "On Reading Grace's *Potiki*" to read the novel effectively and understand the underlying ideas in the text, one needs "to look through Grace's text with Maori meaning rather than looking at it for Maori meaning" (5). To illustrate, *Potiki* is a novel written from the perspective of a Maori writer about the life and struggle of indigenous people in New Zealand. It does not work to inform readers who the Maori are; rather, it is written as it is based on how the people see their existence. In this sense, one should read *Potiki* from a Maori's point of view. At the plot level, reading the text from the Maori perspective enables readers to understand reasons behind the characters' actions and decisions as well as how the community is able to cope with exploitation from Mr. Dolman, legal injustice, and the death of Toko.

Part one of the novel, in which the conflict between the land developer and the *whanau* has not yet been mentioned, depicts Maori practices and beliefs that are the based of the community prior to its encounter with Mr. Dolman. Read it with *kore* and *koru*, this part of the novel offers us the portrayal of lives before the stirring and shifting brought about by new forces of Mr. Dolman's land development project and the subsequent conflicts. To begin with, as Knudsen points out, for the Maori, each member of the community has a particular, unique role in the *whanau*, making everyone an active agent in a social unit. Simultaneously, for a Maori to "feel whole", s/he needs to be actively engaged in "an over-all [communal] structure" (5) because the Maori view themselves and other members as individual parts that together constitute a communal body.

Equipped with this perspective, the characters in *Potiki* see each other, regardless of their condition, as having a certain role in the community, and without the role in "an over-all structure", they tend to feel alienated and dispossessed. For instance, regarding Roimata's return to her community after twelve years in the *Pakeha*'s world working as a teacher, she feels lost and dispossessed, "as though there was nothing … important" (31) and thus decides to return home. Similarly, Hemi prefers working on the community's lands to being employed by a company, thinking, "being out of a job meant that he would be able to get on with his real work [on the lands]" (61). Even with many of those who belong to new generations, they attain knowledge from the modern educational system in order that they can play a role in sustaining their community. Tangimoana, for example, studies law and uses her knowledge and understanding to help her communities by sharing the stories of New Zealand's socio-political issues (40) and by representing her *whanua* in the court (175). In other words, the Maori characters see their lives as valuable and meaningful when they can contribute to the people and the lands that hold the people together, the attitude that keeps them focus more on the lands and the *whanau* than individual progress.

In addition to the perspective regarding each individual's place in the community, non-dualism is another pivotal concept that influences the characters in several ways. At a community level, the Maori do not see binary forces in a hierarchical fashion; rather, they consider the opposite forces as integral elements in the growth of the community. This notion resonates in several characters throughout the novel. For example, if we look at how Roimata perceives each member's role in storytelling, one of the most important practices to help preserve culture and customs in Maori society, it is clear that she sees everyone as actively participating in the process. Concerning

Manu, one of her children who cannot adapt to school life because he sees “cracks in the floor” and claims that there “they’ve no stories for him” (37), Roimata considers her child’s inability to adapt to the *Pakeha* educational system not as a defect, but as an opportunity for her to build a classroom to teach traditional knowledge, thus preserving communal culture and customs. Likewise, Roimata regards James and Tangimoana, for whom “school had a place” (39) as playing active roles by adding new stories to the community. She describes James as “[having] stories of light and sound” and Tangimoana as “[having] stories of people” (40). For Toko, the youngest child who has a physical disability, she does not view him as a burden or a person who lacks the ability to participate in the community. Rather, she reveres him as “[having] a special knowing” (46). Even Mary, the mentally challenged sister of Hemi, Roimata’s husband, is perceived as a person who tells stories of the ancestors and the wood panels *poupou* in the *wharenui*. In other words, for Roimata, each individual – male or female, young or old, normal or disabled can equally contribute to society. To her, all community members are contributing forces that ensure the continuation of the stories of the *whanau.*

Maori’s perception on non-dualism also constitutes the notion of reciprocity. As highlighted in the novel, mutual exchange often takes place. One of the most frequently recurring images is that of balance. As Toko states, citing Roimata, “Death is life”. The opposing forces of death and life mean the unending process of keeping the balance. For example, in the myth of the wood carver, after the man performs *hongi*, an act of giving breath to the *poupou* modelled after his master, he passes away but, with his departure, the community is given a *poupou* that represents one of the master woodcarvers who has contributed so much to the *whanau* in his artistic woodcarving.

In addition, the day of the funeral of Hemi's mother is also the day on which Roimata returns to the community.

As non-dualistic perception means there is no clear-cut line between two seemingly opposing qualities, Tamihana's family members, thus, tend to perceive that the absolute ending of things does not exist. Instead, what seems like an ending is actually a transition to a new beginning. To understand this concept, we might have to first be acquainted with the state called *wheiao,* which Cleve Barlow defines as a state "between the world of darkness and the world of light" (184). Barlow explains that "at death a person's spirit returns to the gods. The spirit enters a place of darkness and awaits the arrival of guardian spirits which will lead them through *wheiao* to the world of light and beyond" (184). This term, thus, deals with the state in which one entity or event is "advancing from one particular condition or state to another" (185).

We can see this idea throughout the novel. For example, in a state of distraught, Roimata comes back to her hometown and as she arrives, she decides not to enter the community right away. Thus, she remains at the shore near the communal house all night. She describes the return to the community from the *Pakeha* world as a transition. First, she mentions her departure which took place several years ago, emphasizing that she "was drawn away" (23) from people at the bus station who, arguably, represent lives outside her community. Then, she indicates that as she now returns to her hometown, she is instead attracted to the seagulls which "are the inheritors of the shores" (23) and decides to follow them. She ends up at the shore by the *whanau* where she rests throughout the night. Roimata describes the shore as an in-between space, while on the one hand, it is "a scavenged death place", "the wasteland", and "a neutral

place – not land, not sea" (18), it, on the other hand, is a place where the seagulls "take up death and renew it" (23). Symbolically, her description of the journey back home resembles the Maori concept of *wheiao* in dealing with death and the subsequent transition to the new beginning. Here, Roimata presents herself as a person transitioning from one state to another, returning from the *Pakeha's* world – a place of void – towards the shore, the *wheiao*, following seagulls as guardian spirits, then the transition is completed as she re-enters her hometown at dawn, the time of light. Knudsen contends in "The Community as Protagonist: *Potiki* by Patricia Grace that Roimata depicts "images which suggest that she reappears in darkness from an existential void" (201).

Similarly, when Toko is five, he knows with his "special knowing" that there is a large eel to be caught in the sea. After the creature is fished and eaten, its remains are buried in the soil and there, at its burial place, a passionfruit tree, which, prior to the burial of the eel, "was dry and without life", "began to grow and grow". From Toko's eyes, he sees the life of the eel transformed into the tree as he describes the passionfruit tree, noting:

> The branches began to swim everywhere like a multiplication of eels. It was as if the big eel head with its little seed-eyes was birthing out trail after trail of its young. All the little eels swarmed the shed walls and the trees, whipping their tails and latching them to the wall and branches, still growing and multiplying all the time. (57)

What we see from Roimata's and Toko's view of reality is that they do not perceive life as linear but as comprised of several phases, each of which leads to another stage of existence. In a way, for Roimata, the end of her time as a teacher at a *Pakeha*

school is not necessarily negative because it is merely a transition to the new beginning of her life as an active agent in the community, as she will assume the roles of Hemi's wife and her four children's mother. For Toko too, the life of the eel does not end as it is dead, but it lives on in another form – that of a passionfruit tree.

Regarding the concept of time, since the Maori view that there is no such thing as an absolute ending, and, in particular, death does not suggest the end but a transition to another phase of existence, they, therefore, believe that a person can exist in several periods of time, and in different forms. And since there is no boundary between the past and present, for all events co-exist in the temporal space of "now-time", many phases of life of an entity can overlap, coming into the present time at once. This idea is clearly illustrated through Granny Tamihana's words. Granny names Toko after her own deceased brother who passed away 70 years ago and points out that at the time of his death, "no more fishing for a long time after" (56) because he dies by the beach, falling off the horse and having his head hit the rock. This incident recurs with Toko during his birth. When he is born, Mary throws Toko's placenta, or *whenua*, into the sea despite the tradition of burying it in the communal lands, so fishing is prohibited during that time too. Upon listening to Granny, Toko recalls the sound of the head hitting on beach rock and identifies it with that of the clubbing of the fish he has caught. The sound that Toko recalls here can be read as suggesting that Toko existed in the past as his own great granduncle and he, at the present time, too exists. In other words, based on the Maori perspective, Toko exists in a seemingly linear storyline as a son of Roimata in modern New Zealand; however, Toko is a character who, according to the agreement of the family, "would never be old", yet "has never been a child" (154), "a good little father to all [his] family" (54), for, to them, he has existed in other times as well. And

his recognition of the sound of the clubbed fish as superimposing on the sound of his great granduncle's falling and hitting the rock here means that at the moment of now-time, Toko experiences the convergence, or the overlapping, of the two events in time.

Apart from the portrayal of the Maori communal identity and the notion of non-dualism, for Maori people, story is an integral part of knowledge which helps them make sense of their reality. Stories are the knowledge that, while emerging from an individual's narratives, also belong to all as they teach, reflect, and concern the life of everyone. As proposed by Knudsen, the Maori view themselves as part of an "over-all structure"; therefore, stories that are passed on from individuals to others then transform into a strand of stories in the overarching system of knowledge and are the means through which they make sense of the world. Thus, in many parts of the novel, we get to see characters giving attention to the process of storytelling as well as translating events into stories. For example, James's and Tangimoana's accounts of schools and Western education are conceived of as stories "of light" and "of people" in Roimata's sense. Likewise, Hemi's everyday happenings at his workplace and Mary's account of her vision at the *wharenui* of the ancestral wood panel *poupou* coming to life are perceived as "work stories" and stories "of talking-man and angry-wife, trick-man and singing girl, pretty-man and fighting-mother and no one for the loving man with the big big hammer" (40-41). From here, each strand of stories has become one part of the over-all structure of communal knowledge and thus, the stories belong to everyone.

As Knudsen points out, the narrative of the characters resembles the structure of *wharenui*, a communal house that is built on the notion that each panel, carved as a distinct figure, works together to support the over-all structure and even with its

uniqueness, a *poupou* is created to overlap with other panels in terms of styles, or in some cases, more than one *poupous* could be carved as literally having certain parts connected to one another (7). In a similar sense, James's stories of science and mathematics, Tangimoana's knowledge in histories and her gossips of people, Mary's vision of the living *wharenui*, Hemi's account of works, Granny Tamihana's stories of the past and myths and other stories that people in the community share can be compared to each panel of the house, working together to support the over-all structure of knowledge to be passed on as the communal heritage to the younger generations.

In addition to these stories that directly concern the Tamihana family and people in the community, the characters also integrate stories of other communities, even those that are related to *Pakeha* values and ideologies into the structure of their communal knowledge. For instance, toward the end of part one, Toko narrates "a story about Te Ope" which describes the struggle of a community of Te Ope to pressure the government to return their lands to them. Initially, the government takes the land of these Maori people, claiming that it is needed for the Second World War. However, the land is never returned to them, nor is it ever used as told. Toko narrates in minute details the original owners' struggles to reclaim their lands, how authorities try to prevent it from happening, as well as how the government views and tackles the issue of land dispute. For another example, Roimata takes note of Tangimoana's and James's stories even though they concern mostly the *Pakeha* worldviews. Likewise, she talks of stories in newspapers and books as well as television. From here, we can see that even the knowledge and information from outside the community are taken as stories too. Thus, by taking stories as sources of knowledge through which the Maori learn and make sense of the world and as the means through which they create the web of

connectedness, the characters see Western knowledge and events in books, newspapers, and their observations in everyday life as well as the plights that befall other communities as beneficial to their lives.

The Maori: The People of the Land

While part one of the novel mostly narrates the everyday life of Tamihana *whanau* and how the characters perceive their own existence, part two deals with the conflicts between the Tamihana family and the *Pakeha* land developer, Mr. Dolman. This part of the novel begins with the chapter entitled "Dollarman" which depicts scenes of Mr.Dolman's visit to the *whanau* to negotiate a business deal, asking for "the land, and [asking] also that the meeting house [*wharenui*] and the *urupa* [burial ground] be moved to another place" (88) in exchange for a large sum of money for land, jobs for the Maori to "dress up and dance and sing twice a day and cook food in the ground" (97) – in other words, to be objects of curiosity for foreign tourists – and a new housing location to which the *wharenui*, the ancestral house, and the *urupa* will be moved. However, despite numerous offers, the *whanau* refuses to sell the land and openly states their objection to the construction projects which Mr.Dolman sees as opportunities to have "large numbers of summer visitors to the area" as well as "good bargains for families and schools" (98). At a glance, to the community which is facing difficulties in farming and to its people who become increasingly unemployed, Mr.Dolman's offers are appealing. However, due to the Maori's physical, cultural, and spiritual connection to land, as Nadia Majid comments in her book *My Mother was the Earth. My Father was the Sky. – Myth and Memory in Maori Novels in English* (2010), "land is not 'a personal asset to be traded'" (38). This section examines the physical, cultural and

spiritual bonds between the Tamihana family and the land, which renders it impossible for the *whanau* to willingly let the land go.

At the most fundamental level, the land and its surroundings are not only the sources of livelihood that allow for self-sufficient economy but central to the Maori tradition and worldview; thus, to give up the land is equivalent to losing both their economic independence and chance to continue their tradition. To illustrate, the indigenous people rely on land and sea as providers of food and of materials used in the community. For one thing, with the agricultural knowledge that is passed on for generations, the Tamihana family members can independently grow vegetables and fruits, and, having lived near the sea all their lives, they know well how to get good catches based on the basic equipment they own and on the extensive knowledge of the types of native fish. For example, the chapter "Hemi" displays how well the character, deemed as a person who is "given [agricultural] knowledge on behalf of the people" (59), knows the land through his description of the community garden. Hemi minutely lists the names of produce that the crops yield and explains that they can help sustain the *whanau* because they can be *kai* (food) for the community while some are sent to the market. For Hemi, his ability to cultivate and to pass on this knowledge to the youth is considered as a kind of craftmanship as it allows for the community's self-sufficient economy. In thinking of the hardship that comes with farming, Hemi, while feeling sorry for the youth whose "young lives were being spent bent over the land" (146), also knows that for the Maori in New Zealand, working hard on the land means that "at least they could say they'd seen the fruits of their work, and that the fruit they got was their own" whereas "working for a boss [means] you stayed poor anyway, stayed poor and made someone else rich" (146-47).

By the same token, regarding fishing, Roimata talks about how the sea provides her community with the means of survival, stating that for them "it is not important to have meat on the plate when you are a shore dweller. If you are a shore-dweller there are always sea gleanings to go with the root" (110). Then she describes a variety of fish and other marine lives found along the shoreline ranging from *kina* (sea urchin), *paua* (abalone) to such fish as butterfish, *moki* and *kahawai*. Roimata describes an event concerning *kahawai* in particular. She narrates an event in which the family catches a snapper and a *kahawai*, then contrasts the two fish, saying that while a snapper is for those who "fish at leisure", the *kahawai* is "life [as] it is a fish for the shore-liver" (113). The comparison reflects not only how traditional knowledge helps the community be provided for but also how important the land is for them to hold onto their freedom. In other words, had the community lost their land and moved to other locations, they would not have been able to continue living as shore-dwellers, and their knowledge would have been rendered futile. Consequently, they would have to enter the system in which the only available jobs for them will be "cleaning [the *Pakeha*'s] toilets and digging [the] drains or emptying [the] rubbish bins]" (93) which would keep them poor and dependent on business owners.

In addition to the fact that the land is the source of physical sustenance and thus serves as their means of survival, the Maori also regards the land as part of their family, since the Maori's concept of kinship is not restricted to humans but encompasses lives around them, the benevolence of land that gives means of survival to the people suggests that land is taken as their family too. Hemi emphasizes this point as he explains why the land cannot be sold, saying "the land and the sea was our whole life, the means through which we survived and stayed together. *Our whanau is the land and sea.*

Destroy the land and sea, we destroy ourselves [emphasis added]" (98-99). He acknowledges the inextricable bond between the people, the land and sea. Thus, if we take land and the sea as members of *whanua* whose role is to help "[the Maori] survive and stay together" (89), losing them is equivalent to letting the community "fall through" (95).

Apart from the bond with the land in physical terms, the Tamihana family is also culturally and spiritually connected to the land in several aspects. Firstly, as *tangata whenua,* or the people of the land, the Maori sees themselves, according to Nadia Majid, "not only 'of the land', but 'as the land'" (qtd. in 39), so the land is an inextricable part that constitutes their sense of self and belongings. From the time of birth, as the novel notes when Toko is born, the people are linked to the land by means of having their placenta buried in the communal land. It should be noted that the Maori word for placenta is *whenua*, the very same word as "land." The dual meaning of the word *whenua*, as Majid argues, signifies the "interdependence" between the people and the land (37-38). Moreover, according to Maori myth of creations recounted in *Maori Myths and Legendary Tales* (1999), Maori people are descendants of *Papatuanuku*, the Mother Earth, since the first human was created from soil (Reed, 20). Hence, the burial of *whenua* can be read as the joining of people to the Mother Earth, from where they originally come, and to where they eventually return – the act that marks the sense of mutual belongings of humans and land. The ritual also embodies the sense of community as the placentas of everyone in the community are all buried in the same ground, resting on the very same land where the bodies of those who die lie. Taken all this together, the land is the place of origin which allows lives to spring out and simultaneously links all people together.

Hence, after the so-called “construction” of white developers begins on the land next to Tamihana’s land, Roimata expresses her pain towards what she and the Maori community see as “destruction”:

> So we tried to turn our backs on the hills and not look up. The hills did not belong to us any more. At the same time we could not help but remember that land does not belong to people, but that people belong to the land. We could not forget that it was the land who, in the beginning, held the secret, who contained our very beginnings within herself. (110)

We can see that Maori people share the view of land as the place of beginnings and that they would not have existed in the first place without land. Similarly, Uncle Stan, one of the members of the *whanau*, argues against selling land to Mr. Dolman that, for them, the land is “the heart, the body” (97) of the people and by taking it away, “the body [the community] crumbles” (97).

Another gesture of joining a person with land can be seen from the ritual of burying the deceased bodies at the *urupa*, where the dead can be in union with their origin. Yet, in addition to being the venue that signifies one’s communion with land, the *urupa* also serves as a site where the past, or the deceased, and the present, or the living, co-exist within the same *whenua*. As “a sacred site” (93), the *urupa* functions as a place where time converges by means of the living and the dead interacting and sharing stories. In other words, the *urupa* and the land together symbolize the space of now-time where the living can reach out to the dead, spiraling back to the past whilst living in the present time. The chapter “Urupa”, which depicts the children’s *urupa*

visit, emphasizes the connection between the living and the dead held together by land. The children – Tangimoana, James, Manu, and Toko – walk uphill to the *urupa* to visit Uncle Pere Thompson's grave. There, they "read the stones and discuss the dead, retelling the stories they'd heard and told" (121). While each retells different stories about their uncle based on how the children remember the story told to them and how they interpret it, the act of storytelling reflects that the deceased are remembered by the living. Another task that needs to be completed during a *urupa* visit is for the living to select the deceased they want to talk to. Then they greet the grave and share their stories that link them to the chosen dead ancestors. For example, Toko selects Granny Tamihana's brother with whom he shares the name, then he tells what he knows about the man, and that it is the man's sister herself who bestowed Toko with his name and is the one who takes care of him now (124-125).

Based on the role of the *urupa* as described in the novel together with the Maori's view of themselves as *tangata whenua* – people of the land – readers can understand that the removal of the *urupa* is impossible, as the burial service, the ritual of returning the deceased to where they belong, is the way in which the living show respect to the dead. Therefore, as the *whanau* argues, to relocate the *urupa* undoubtedly means "the displacement of the dead and the disruption of the sacred site" (93). To use the word "displace" is accurate in Maori meaning because the act of removing a body from its soul (the land) is to leave it dispossessed. Likewise, as the *urupa* has to be place-based; that is, it has to be attached to the place that holds the community together, so to relocate it can only be read as a disruption, if not the destruction, of the sacred space of 'now-time'.

Another strand of spiritual connection of the people and the land that plays a significant role in constituting Maori cultural identity lies in the *wharenui* or the meeting house. To illustrate, while the *urupa* is the place of the people in living memories of the *whanau*, the *wharenui* is the place where the living can visit legendary ancestors from the long-gone past as well as mythical figures. The meeting house extends Maori genealogies beyond immediate families, reaching to the collective legendary ancestors of the community and, oftentimes, the mythical gods and goddesses from the time of origin. According to Hiwi and Pat Tauroa in *Te Marae – a Guide to Customs and Protocal*, the house is comprised of several *poupous*, representing "ancestors from the *tangata whenua*" (91). The uprights of the building (*Poutokomanawa*) are also modelled after the relationship of the Father Sky and the Mother Earth. When discussions take place inside the house, the *tangatakainga*, or the living, and the spirits of the ancestors who reside there interact. Thus, the people of the present generation, the spirits of the ancestors, the legendary and mythical ancestral figures, all come together and co-exist within the building, which Knudsen identifies in her essay "One Reading Grace's *Potiki*" (2011) as the sphere of "sacred time and space". The house allows the Maori to reach out to "the outer circles …being named 'past' and 'future'" (39) and keep the memories, stories, and traditions alive. In the chapter "Dollarman", the omniscient narrator describes the meeting house as being a place of "warmth" (88) which comes from "the past gatherings", "people that had come and gone", and "who gathered now in the memory" (88).

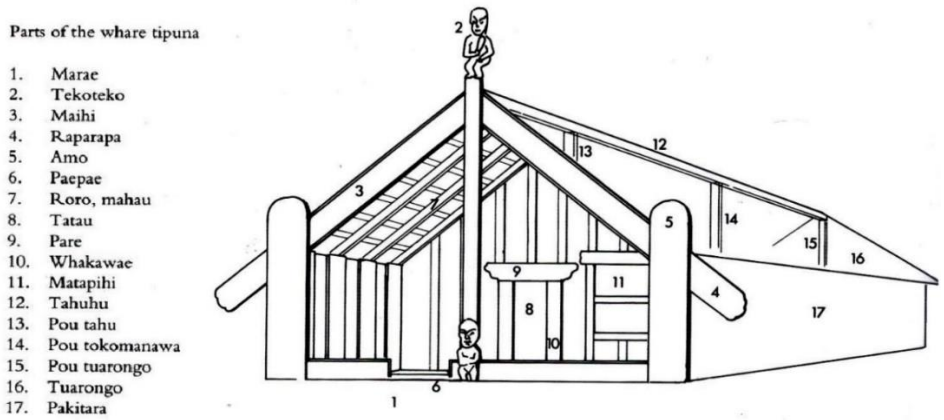

Figure 1 The Structure of Maori ancestral houses

Number 14, *Pou Tokomanawa*, or uprights of the house, function as vertical supporting posts of the building. In Maori ancestral houses, these posts are carved to resemble the Mother Earth and the Sky Father.

Source: Tauroa, Hiwi and Pat, *Te Marae: A Guide to Customs and Protocal*. Auckland: Raupo Book, 2007.

Additionally, as discussed in the previous section, Maori people need to be a part of the community or the *whanau* to feel whole, and, for them, the sense of wholeness means connecting not only to their own family but to their ancestors, their descendants, as well as their own origins.The meeting house, which embodies the communal body, encompassing all times together, is an integral part of their existence. As stated in the novel, for the *whanau*, they cannot let the meeting house be removed because it is "[their] meeting place, [their] identity, [their] security" (93)

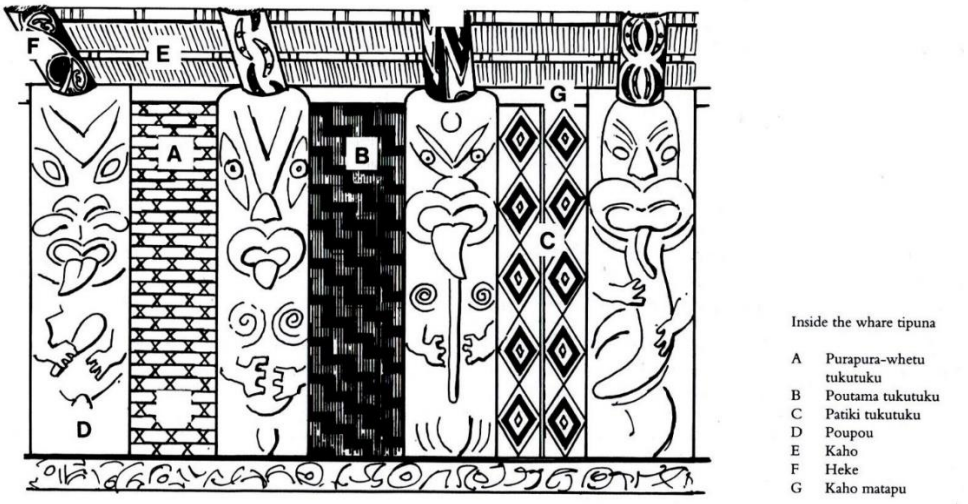

Figure 2 The interior designs of Maori Ancestral house

This image illustrates designs inside the ancestral houses. Letter A, B and C depict typical patterns of the interior that are derived from Maori mythologies and stories of each tribe. Letter D depicts *poupous* or ancestral figures.

Source: Tauroa, Hiwi and Pat, *Te Marae: A Guide to Customs and Protocal*. Auckland: Raupo Book, 2007.

Moreover, the description of the house in the novel suggests that the house is taken as a great Maori person, more specifically, a Mother to the people: “There was in the meeting-house a warmth … It was the warmth of the embrace, because the house is a parent, and there was warmth in under the parental backbone, enclosement amongst the patterned ribs” (88). Here, we can notice that the building is personified into “a parent” of the *whanau*, an ancestral parent to whom all the people are connected, and thus, it connects all the people together. In his book *The Circle and The Spiral* (2004), Knudsen argues that with the personified image of the *wharenui* as a parent, the act of entering the house can be read as being “taken into the body of the people and they

meet within 'the bosom of [their] ancestor'" (191), and since the house is a body comprised of the people, in forms of *poupous* and living human beings, the people of the *whanau* are therefore like organs that "keep [the house] alive" (191) by means of the collective memory manifested through the act of storytelling taken place in daily life and inside the house.

Another reason why the house is the heart of the community is that, as Roimata points out, the house is "[the Maori's] main book … which is itself a story, a history, a gallery, a study, a design structure and a *taonga* [memory]. We are part of that book along with family past and family yet to come" (104). Roimata's description of the house as a book here encapsulates the historical, mythical, and artistic lives of the Maori. While the structures and patterns of the house consist of only the ancestors and mythical figures, Roimata includes herself and the family as part of the book. Roimata's equating her generation with the ancestors as part of the book can be accounted for by the Maori's view of temporal convergence.

Moreover, the significance of this concept can be further elaborated on by a Maori proverb "*Ka mura, ka muri*" which means looking backwards into the future. To elaborate, governed by the notion of spirality, Maori people see the past events as recurring in different manifestations. Therefore, to learn from the past means that the living can make sense of the events in the present time as they are similar though not exactly the same. Through this method of looking backwards, the Maori can secure the future for generations to come. The concept is implied in Toko's description of the relations between the past and present generations shown in the carvings in the *wharenui*. According to him, the house is carved by the master carver whose story is

told in the Prologue. Thus, “this house of his” “[carries] forward the stories of the people long ago”, yet it is also “of ours [the present day Tamihana]” because it tells “about our lives today as well” (99). Toko illustrates the patterns in the carved house – be it local plants, fish, landscapes, weather, and human feelings and emotions – all are inspired by elements in the time of the carver; however, all the patterns still represent “every piece of [*tangatakainga*’s] lives” (99) today, bequeathed to future generations.

The land, the people on it, and the ancestral house are thus together considered as constituting the Maori identity. Only with the three functioning actively can the Maori way of life continue. This can be seen from the statement of the *whanau* to Mr. Dolman: “Take away the heart, the soul, and the body crumbles” (97) The heart means the *wharenui*, the core place which holds together everyone and everything – whether dead or living, mundane or mystical, animate or inanimate. Removing the heart or the ancestral house would kill the body and the soul which refer to the land and the people respectively. In their mutual relationship, the body i.e. the land, the sea, the shoreline, and everything engendered from them – is given meaning by the soul or the people who engrave their impression of the physical world on their heart – the ancestral house. The Maori thus rejects Mr. Dolman’s offer to move the *wharenui* “to a more central location” (100) without cost[8]. Their statement “the house was central already and could

[8] In the essay “The Spiral Temporality of Patricia Grace’s *Potiki*”, Elizabeth Deloughrey comments that Mr.Dolman cannot understand why the land cannot be sold as well as why *wharenui* and *urupa* cannot be moved because linear temporality leads him to look forward to the climatic future when he can reap material wealth from his investment. In contrast, for the Maori, time is sacred and “generates its own sense of progress [that] cannot be measured through linear time or material accumulation” (73). In the space of now-time, the Maori reach back to the past and learn how money damaged the indigenous people. In other words, the perception of spiral temporality allows them to look beyond monetary progress and “to address the (continuing) injustices of the past” (73).

not be more central" (100) signifies their belief that the heart or the house is always the center of the body or the land. Thus, if the heart is ripped out of the body, life cannot continue.

Ka Mura, Ka Muri: Looking backwards into the Future

Once we see the *whanau* as one living organism consisting of the body (land), the heart (*wharenui*), and the soul (the people), it is only natural to assume that the *whanau* will cease to function when these components are dismantled. As the novel progresses, a series of assaults precipitated by the community's refusal to sell the land to Mr. Dolman results in the destruction of land – from environmental damage that comes with construction and the intentional flooding of the community garden – and in the damage of the *urupa* as well as the conflagration of the *wharenui*. Worse yet, the conflict eventually claims Toko's life, the youngest child of Roimata and Hemi, who is "a gift that [the community] has been given" (46). The loss of Toko can be read as the damage to the soul of the *whanau*, not because he is equipped with his special knowing, but because he is one integral part that constitutes a whole communal body. In other words, from the conflicts with the *Pakeha* developer, it is as though the community lost all that it needs to sustain the Maori way of life.

However, above and beyond the fundamental parts of the *whanau*, there exist two governing temporal and cosmological forces previously discussed, namely, the unorganized potential, or *kore*, and the spiral, or *koru*, which Knudsen compares in *The Circle and the Spiral* to "the social breath" (218) of the community to push it forward in accordance with the Maori way of life. Taking her analogy further, one may say that a living organism may continue to function so long as it breathes, and it is the breath

that is first and foremost the sign of life. In the context of *Potiki,* we, thus, can argue that as the Maori's philosophy of life is founded on the underlying concept of *kore* and *koru*, the *whanau* still maintain its self-healing power. Moreover, as the spiral notion of time conveys not the absolute beginning or ending, but the temporal continuum along which lives can flow back and forth; losses and deaths, read with the Maori meaning, can indicate births and renewals. Therefore, this section will explore how the concepts of *kore* and *koru* enable Maori people to cope with losses and continue their traditional practices, and when such quintessential elements as the community's structure and members seem to be ruined beyond redemption, how the two underlying forces, paradoxically, allow for the disruption of traditions, culminating in cultural adaptation and ultimately the new Maori identity of the modern time.

The first two attacks, the flooding of the land by means of channeling the rainwater to the residential area and the arson, result in the destruction of the community's crucial structures, namely, the garden, the *urupa,* and the *wharenui*. To the community's members, the situation is of "a world not thought of but only imagined" (115). We can see that the losses are severe and bring about such great sorrow and insecurity to them not only because the presence of threat by the *Pakeha* becomes clearer than ever but also because they feel that the damages penetrate deep through the level of cultural identity. To elaborate, as shown in the narrative voices, they feel that the sense of security is destroyed alongside with the structures. To them, the land, *urupa* and *wharenui* are the cultural and genealogical reference points that give them patterns to continue their lives and culture. Losing them, they feel they have lost the guidelines. For instance, Roimata describes the atmosphere on the day of flood as "a world of silence, an unfamiliar world, a world of other, a world of almost

drowning" (129), and in a desperate state, the people try "to find a pattern and a sense, to work through piece by piece to get [them] home" (194). Similarly, when the *wharenui* gets conflagrated, the community feels that what has been destroyed is not simply a venue. Instead, to them, they feel that they have lost the great ancestor because, in Maori traditional carving, the house itself, as a building, represents a great ancestor of the *whanau*. Toko describes the scene of the fire engulfing the house:

> The great head of the great ancestor that looked out towards the people whenever they advanced across the marae had gone. The arms that had been extended in welcome, and the sacred and intricate backbone that had run through the apex, as well as the patterned ribs adjoining the backbone, had caved, and dropped into the flames, and gone. (136)

For Maori people, the personification of the *wharenui* as a great ancestor is not solely an artistic expression but comes from their indigenous philosophy. As discussed previously, the communal house is the place where people can look backwards into the future. That is, the house, rich in communal history, functions as the reference point for the present generations to find patterns to continue to thrive. Thus, the loss of the house also means the loss of the family history and the patterns that ensure the future. In his description of the fall of the *wharenui,* Toko states that the fire takes away "the tipuna (ancestors) of the people", "the patterns belonging to life and deaths of people", "the stories and histories of people, and the work of hands and minds", and "the place of learning, of discussing" (136). Here, what have been claimed by the fire, in the eye of

Maori people, is considered as the aforementioned genealogical, historical, artistic, and intellectual bodies of knowledge.

Despite being deprived of security in both physical and spiritual terms, the community still persists, declining the monetary offers that come after each assault. At this point, we can see that the cosmological concepts of *kore* and *koru* greatly influence the way in which the community copes with the losses and also play a role in reinstating what the property speculator has destroyed. To explain, the notions of the unorganized potential and spiral passage of time empower the Tamihana community by including the past and the future generations of the *whanua* into the plights the livings are going through. For the present-day Tamihana, their ancestors do not cease to exist once they pass away. Rather, they continue to be present in stories that are told and retold in the ancestral houses, and, cosmologically speaking, in a position in the spiral. Furthermore, the heritage, particularly traditional knowledge, both in the tangible form of the *wharenui* and in indigenous ideas and practices, lives on as guidelines for survival. Likewise, the future generations, which include both young ones or those who are yet to come, already exist in the mass of unorganized potential; they are to be born, grow, and thrive. And if we look at the Maori perception of progress, they look backwards into the future. While suggesting that the past generations are the reference points from which the measures to guarantee the future are derived, this idea also emphasizes the potential of the future that already exists in the past. That is, when ones look backwards, one sees not the past alone, but the future that is being looked into alongside.

As we link this concept of *kore* and *koru* to the way in which the characters deal with the losses, we can see that both the future and the past provide redemptive power

for the community to persist against the obstacles. To illustrate, the characters take the ancestors and their predecessors as the sources of power, enabling themselves not to be buried in the current distress and sorrow as they look beyond the immediate struggles in front of them to the past and the future. For example, based on Roimata's account, on the day of flood, the community manages to overcome their sense of distraught and the feeling of "drowning" (129). They find refuge in "those who were not strong that could give [them] strength" (129), and through holding the children, who are "the most precious ones" for the community members, they regain their connection to the land that, at first, has become unfamiliar (130). Roimata concludes her narrative that in the end, "the mud [from the flooded land] that covered [their] bodies and [their] clothes now clung to them as well" (130). Based on her remark, the community, at this point, clearly resorts to the younger generations, who will continue to live on the land. Thus, the act of taking care of the land to guarantee the future for the children, who will also continue the Maori traditions, is their responsibility and, simultaneously, their hope.

Moreover, during the ritualistic act performed at the damaged burial ground, Roimata describes Granny Tamihana's chant as the act of "linking the earth that we are, to the sky that we are, joining the past that we are to the now and the beyond now that we are" (130). Granny's chant, as a ritualistic act of psychological healing the *urupa*, also points to the importance of the genealogies in one's mental well-being because in the act of "joining" the old woman establishes the strand of connection between the mythical ancestral figures from the time of the origin – the Sky Father and the Earth Mother, the human ancestors, the living, and the descendants. This gesture signifies the empowering power of kinship. Most interestingly, Granny does not simply stress the sense of interconnectedness across time and space but her chant also highlights that the

community members are “the earth”, “the sky”, “the past”, and “the now and beyond now” (130). That living beings can be both mythical (the Earth Father and the Sky Mother) and mundane, and transcend time is made possible with the concept of spiral as Roimata narrates in her storytelling (39). Here, Granny utilizes the same concept, but this time, not to tell and retell stories, but to empower the livings by recounting the “adornments [of past and future] that become part of the self” (39). In other words, Granny’s chant works to reaffirm the *whanau* that they are neither alone nor powerless, but that they are with the great family which extends beyond the center in the wheel of spiral, and since they are themselves the future, there exists, in them, the seed of hope for the future generations.

As for a worldlier character, Hemi, the spiritual concept of *whanaungatanga*, or Maori kinship, is translated into the sense of responsibility to the community and his focus on people. To elaborate, despite the characterization of Hemi as a down-to-earth person when compared to the prophetic Toko or Roimata, whose portrayal and narrative voice clearly have spiritual qualities, his otherwise mundane and traditional acts of making sure that “everything we need is here” (132) derive from the Spiral concept as well. In the chapter “The Stories”, Hemi discusses the *whanau*’s responsibility to take care of the land: “it’s not only for us now. We have a *trust*. We look after this place *for those who have not yet been born*. It’s for the life and health of people and we have it in trust from those who’ve gone on ahead of us [emphasis added]” (176). Here, Hemi incorporates the past and the present into the center-beings, the *whanau,* by indicating that embedded in the existence of the present-day Tamihana are the trust from the ancestors and, hence, the responsibility for the descendants who are the true owners of the land. This perception produces the cycle of responsibility and also that of hope for

Hemi. The act of looking back at their past signifies that the present-day Tamihana is receiving trust from their ancestors and following their guidelines. They are, therefore, able to surmount the difficulty and eventually manage to pass on the land to the younger generations. That the Tamihana now has land to stand on indicates that there is still hope to overcome the plights and hand down the land to the descendants, the same way it used to be in their ancestors' time.

When the *wharenui* is burnt down, it is the very same ideas of *kore* and *koru* that come to play an essential role in recovering what has been destroyed. First of all, as the ideas of unorganized potential and spiral temporality suggest that there is no boundary between different times, and that there is no absolute beginning or ending, then it is only natural for the *whanau* to see their plight in a non-dualistic sense. Since the *wharenui* is where now-time space is materialized, losing it does not suggest an ending of the community if considered in the light of *kore* and *koru*. When assessing the loss in front of her, Roimata comments that whereas the destruction of the house could mean "an end with no new beginning in the belly of the sea, a return to the nothingness where nothing stirs" (152), she sees a series of new beginnings springing from the seeming nothingness. First, as Roimata sees Mary digging through the burnt house to rescue her Loving Man, she interprets that Mary and the legendary unfinished *poupou* symbolize the "first new breath" emerging from the debris. As people from Te Ope arrive after learning about the fire, Roimata incorporates their arrival into the process of spiral creation. That is, she views that from nothingness (the burnt house), there emerges the first breath (Mary and the *poupou*), followed by the second breath, which is the "people coming in trucks", and then, there springs "a growth and flourishing, a leaping from within the dark sea, a deep and exciting breathing" (152).

From Roimata's description of these events, we can see that, equipped with the notions of *kore* and *koru,* she is ready to embrace the change – the building of the new *wharenui* – because, for her, the ending of the existence of the old house has already been transitioned into a new beginning.

In addition to justifying the reconstruction of the new *wharenui*, the concepts of *kore* and *koru* influence the building process as well. Overall, spiral temporality enables the community to make changes from the original house in many aspects while it can retain its traditional functions as *whanau.* For example, the *poupous,* one of the most integral components of the communal house, can be resurrected from the burnt ones and given different appearance. As discussed earlier, the *poupous* exist in the flesh of wood, in a formless state of unorganized potential, and the duty of the carvers is to give them physical bodies and patterns. In different positions of the spiral time, the *poupous* may manifest themselves in different shapes and forms, but their core remains the same. This perception is present during the reconstruction process, paving the way for the new beginning to take form, and also for the *whanau* to reunite with their ancestors through the image of the *poupous* once again. Toko, observing the house being rebuilt, notes:

> Gradually the new figures emerged from wood, and these figures were not new in name because ancestry remains, but they were new in appearance. What was brought forward this time, from trees, came forward under different eyes and from under different hands. (144)

Furthermore, spiral temporality allows for the addition of new artistic expressions in the reconstruction process. To demonstrate, the old house, taken as the place of knowledge of the people, records the stories of the old times and traditional

ways of lives. As this house is destroyed, if one looks at the past as essentially static, then the new house should be a mere replica of the destroyed counterpart in order to "preserve" it – the process often seen in Western heritage industry. However, the *wharenui* is not simply the remains of the past. It is the place where different periods of time overlap, with the past being present in the present time and the future waiting in the past. Translated into the artistic expressions, the *wharenui* as well as all the accompanying stories and patterns are as much of the present as of the past. The new ancestral house is reinstated in accordance with this philosophy, as Toko describes: "some of the patterns and designs followed the old ones … there were new patterns too, of flooding and fire, road and machines, oneness and strength, and work and growth" (14). This indicates that the new structure will become more contemporary in terms of the knowledge and history it stores. In short, since the lives of Maori people are not static, the additions made to the new house help add up stories of new problems, ideas, and challenges to the people, so that they are ready when the threats come to their lives.

The idea of looking backwards into the future – the spiral progress – works also to enhance the power of the weak by means of providing possibility for the *whanau* to redefine their past in the process of *wharenui* reconstruction. In the novel, one of the distinctive features of the new house is the addition of a new figure carved on the doorway which did not exist in the previous version. According to Toko, this particular entity is "a common ancestress from whom [both the Tamihana and Te Ope community] could show descent" (153). In carving "the special story" of the "joining" (153), James, Hemi's and Roimata's oldest son, "look[s] back" (153) at the genealogical history of both tribes and eventually finds the ancestress, already existing, in the state of waiting to be given shape. More than an artistic expression, the figure is

a materialized form of the past redefined. She functions now not only for the present-day Tamihana to rethink their own existence but, in relation to the current situation of being assaulted by Mr. Dolman, as a political strategy as well. That is, the newly discovered past of blood kinship, embodied in the form of this ancestress, extends the *whanau* beyond those inhabiting on the land. The inclusion of new members through relearning the past when the Tamihana seems to be outnumbered and vulnerable works to politicize the sacred space because it now includes the stories of the Te Ope who are connected to the *whanau* through the common problems of the racial conflicts, land dispute and confiscation. In his looking back to the genealogy, James redefines the past so that it has appropriate meaning in the present context and that their future is secured by the extended sense of Maori kinship and familyhood. Toko's portrayal of symbolism behind the carving can help us better understand James's intention:

> He carved the head and shoulders of this ancestress at the centre of the door lintel, showing her *to face both out and in*. The two thick, strong arms of the woman stretched out to embrace the two poles the people were interspersed, the people of our iwi and the people of Te Ope, but linked at the top of the columns by the woman. It was her children that she clasped at either side of her. And these children were working, laughing, crying, singing people, some small and some larger than life. They were young and old, and were joined by their fingers or toes, hands, feet, arms, legs, foreheads or tongues until all had become part of one another. *They faced to the hills on the outside, and on the inside they looked in.* [emphasis added] (153)

From the description, apart from joining those of Te Ope and the Tamihana family through the interlinking carved patterns, the technique common in the Maori carved houses, James carves both the ancestress and the people from both tribes in such a way that they face the direction of the outside and the inside at the same time. This gesture symbolizes how the Maori look backwards into the future. Thus, we can deduce that from James's point of view, even in the midst of crises, hope always remains so long as the past exists because it is the past that holds the future in itself. Since the past can be redefined, rediscovered, and relearned, so can the future. In this sense, the future can also be determined by the Maori themselves.

Even though the Tamihana community is equipped with ideas which enable people to see hope amidst plights, the characters know that so long as they do not give up their land, they will have to live "under the threat and destructiveness of the power people" (151). Inevitably, they have to admit that "the story had changed. And [their] lives had changed. [They] were living under the machines, and under a changing landscape" (151). The time has come for them to shift and stir when the most fatal round of attacks occurs. An explosive has been attached to a special doorway, made for Toko's access, of the recently completed ancestral house. He opens the door, triggers the detonation, and dies on spot. His death testifies to the fact that to survive, the *whanau* needs to adopt new strategies to deal with this conflict. Thus, to strike back and protect the community, Tangimoana, James, and other young Maoris, secretly bomb Mr. Dolman's construction site and the machines in the area. Also, to lessen the grief over Toko's death, James carves a *poupou* named *Potiki,* meaning the last born, underneath the unfinished carving of the Loving Man to represent Toko, and hence

eventually completes both the *poupou* of the Loving Man and the new communal house in which Loving Man resides.

To understand how *kore* and *koru* play a role in alleviating the community members' grief over in losing Toko, it is important to first understand the Tamihana's attitude towards Toko when he was alive. As discussed earlier, Toko is viewed as ageless, being both young and old at the same time, because of his prophetic and supernatural qualities. As in Granny's perception, he has existed in many different points in spiral time – as Granny's deceased brother who lived decades ago and as Toko Tamihana in the present time of the story.

Toko's passing is thus not perceived by the community in light of linear temporality. To the Tamihana, the *potiki*, the last-born, is never lost and Toko's death is part of the story of completion, rebirth and renewal. This can be seen in James's carving Toko as an ancestral figure, connected to the incomplete legendary *poupou* of the childless master woodcarver. As discussed earlier, to carve is to give material forms to the already existing life, indicating that the life carved out is pre-determined even before the time of carving. With this notion coupled with the fact that the carver has specifically predicted that the unfinished part will be completed in "a future time" (12), it means that while living in the present time, Toko has already existed in the flesh of an ancient tree, and will eventually be carved out into the form of the *potiki* after the physical death as a human. Thus, the forms and patterns of the *poupou* James ultimately carves out are always there even before the master woodcarver begins his work while they simultaneously co-exist with Toko in the human form throughout the novel. The Maori notion of carving, therefore, indicates that his destiny is determined not by Mr.

Dolman but by the legend of the Maori. As Roimata states, "[Toko's] death has been with [the Tamihana] for a long time" (163). Moreover, it turns out that his death leads to the completion of the legend and the new ancestral house as well as the birth of the new story – the story of *potiki*. Were it not for spiral temporality and the concept of unorganized potential in the art of wood-carving, Toko's death would be seen both as irreversible and as the total defeat of the Maori community.

While it seems the community can find a way to overcome a series of losses, the ever-intensifying tension and violence from land dispute signify that the community needs a new strategy which would allow not only for mending the broken and coping with sorrow but also for a strike-back. In the course of the novel, Tangimoana, the daughter of Hemi and Roimata, has always been outspoken in her interaction with Mr. Dolman, and, unlike many elders, she believes it is imperative to take direct actions against the *Pakeha* land developers even though her approach is considered as violating Maori customs. While she realizes the fluidity of her cultural roots, Tangimoana sees "the strength of a bending branch to be not in its resilience, but in its ability to spring back and strike" (152).

Tangimoana's standpoint consequently leads to disapproval of many of the more traditional members, resulting in what seems to be ideological disparity within the *whanau*. On the one hand, conservative members of the community regard Tangimoana's acts as outrageous and struggle to come to terms with them. The fear of uncertainty can be seen in the narrative of Hemi, who represents the actual, real-life Maori rather than the knowing ones such as his wife and youngest son. Some readers and critics, accustomed with Western political activism, might deem Hemi and others

as backwards and their way of strictly holding on to the old ways as wrong. However, he, in fact, expresses a realistic fear that people naturally express in the face of change. After all, Hemi is not as disdainful towards his daughter as others in the community. Although some criticize that "the ways she had learned [the Western education] away from there [her community]" are "not good ways, not their own way", or that "she was doing the same things as those she spoke against", he maintains that "his daughter was no different from what she'd always been" (148). He further adds that "it was curiosity that always moved her, then after that it was love, a love that was a kind of anger" (148). Here, Hemi not only accepts Tangimoana's curiosity which leads to her decision to engage in Western education but also recognizes that the anger inside her has spawned from the passionate love she harbors towards her *whanau*, and thus, she is as true a Maori as one can be. Despite this understanding, he is perturbed by the fact that the way of life as he knows it and "never doubt[s]" (148) for his entire life can never be the same again. This conflict within Hemi, to some certain extent, reflects the challenge the people of the *whanau* in general must undergo.

On the other hand, there are such characters as Roimata, who, observant as she is "the patient sky watcher", appears to understand, with somewhat clairvoyant intuition, both the stance of her daughter and that of the conservative Maori. During the time when many are disappointed with Tangimoana, feeling that the young woman "was becoming lost to them" (148), as she strays from the old Maori ways, the mother remains patient in her narrative, repeating multiple times that as "[it] was as Toko had said it, the stories had changed" (151). Recognizing the existing resources might not be enough for the upcoming threat, Roimata knows that the community needs to accept some vital changes in their tradition to move on, and that her daughter might be the

harbinger of that change. At the same time, she defends the community's inaction and "acceptance of a situation" (152), of which Tangimoana disapproves, and points out that it is not "a deep-down acceptance but only a *waiting* one" (152) [emphasis added], suggesting that the community anticipates something to be done, even though most of them do not know in what form or manner it would be. In other words, it is her ability to perceive the situation non-dualistically that allows her to be understanding.

The final push which enables the community to embrace Tangimoana's confrontational approach is Toko's tragic death. It is the point in spiral time which marks the end of the waiting acceptance, as Roimata puts it, and the emergence of a new Maori identity, after the shifting and stirring of the old Maori has reached saturation. After Tangimoana, James, and other young men and women destroy Mr. Dolman's construction site, they come back to the *wharenui* and, exhausted as they are, fall fast asleep inside with their muddied clothes on. In the morning, the elder generation, first deliberately ignoring the sound of destruction which they know well is caused by their children, shows up early to wash up both the young and their dirty clothes, as the mud and dirt can only be incriminating against them, and when the police arrive to investigate about the night before, everyone in the community denies any witnessing or involvement. This willing and active acceptance of change is deeply rooted in the cosmological notions of *kore* and *koru*, upon which their perception of the world is based. Apart from mythologizing the boy's death as earlier discussed, these two notions also open up new possibilities in their way of life and their interactions with the outside world, just as they incorporate new patterns into the ancestral house. Collectively, the *whanau* emerges as the final form of the previously unorganized potentials, spiraling up along the course of the modern world. It is Tangimoana as a

social activist who carves out the new *whanau*, the same way her brother James as a craft master carves out the new *wharenui*.

Conclusion: *Potiki* as a wharenui text

As one may argue, *Potiki,* is written in the manner in which the *wharenui* is constructed. Similar to the patterns of carvings in ancestral houses, the plot progresses in accordance with the Maori concepts of *kore* and *koru*: the story begins in part one with the initial state of traditional Maori-ness, followed by the stirring and the shifting in part two which introduces a foreign influence in the form of Mr. Dolman; and it culminates in the birth of the redefined Maori-ness. Apart from plot, the narrative techniques and characterization resemble the building of the *wharenui.* With each chapter told from the perspectives of various characters, the whole story is linked together like the way in which parts of every *poupou* are carved to connect, and *tukutukus* are tightly woven with intricate linking patterns. As Knudsen notes in "On Reading *Potiki*", multiple narrative voices are independent yet connected, telling the same stories that are based on shared concepts and perspectives but with different, individual interpretations. In addition to the story of conflicts, the novel presents information related to Maori's everyday life both in physical and mythical senses in the same way that *tukutuku* and *kowhaiwhai* (painted patterns) present the lives and stories of the people. Common in ancestral houses are the two figures, the Earth Mother and the Sky Father on the uprights – the main support of the whole structure. In the novel, Hemi serves as the representation of the Sky Father, always fixing his eyes at the earth, and Roimata as the Mother Earth, the watcher of the sky. Their figurative gaze

perpetually meeting each other stands as the pillar of the novel, supporting each of their children to move on.

Not only is *Potiki* constructed in much the same way as a *wharenui*, its content is also told in accordance with the customs and rules generally observed in ancestral houses. For one thing, based on the customs of *wharenui*, Graces redefines the relationship of readers and the text, transforming readers into visitors and the narrators into the hosts of the house. Knudsen, in her essay "The Community as Protagonist: *Potiki* by Patricia Grace", argues that the way in which the novel starts resembles the welcoming ritual performed when the whanau receives guests to their sphere (191). For instance, the creation myth in the Prologue can be regarded as *tauparapara*, the incantation practiced before beginning the speech when the *whanau* receives guests (192). Then, the first chapter of part one begins with the chant of *whakapapa*, or recounting genealogy, in the form of Roimata's introduction of her family, directly addressing the assumed visitors (192). In this sense, as Knudsen suggests, Grace turns an oral tradition into a written text. Readers of *Potiki* will have to undergo the aforementioned protocol before being received into the *wharenui* while the narrators act as the hosts of the community.

Moving past the rite of welcoming visitors, once readers are inside the text, or the *wharenui*, the code of conduct continues to apply. As discussed in the novel Maori people believe that the space within the ancestral house is ruled by Rongo, the God of Peace; thus, there must be complete suspension of violence and anger inside. In the novel, Grace employs several writing techniques to describe the heated conflict of the Tamihana and Mr. Dolman in a non-violent fashion even though the plot revolves

around a series of assaults, open hostility, and destruction and death. In "Patricia Grace's *Potiki*: Diminished violence", Patrice Wilson argues that through "three of the ongoing elements of her storytelling method: her use of voices, the episodic plot structure, and the idea of between-ness" (122), Grace writes a novel that reduces the sense of violence seen in the actions and confrontations in the plot[9].

In other words, the techniques mentioned are not merely literary tools for Grace to write her novel in a particular manner. Rather, it is heavily tied to Maori customs of discussion and storytelling in the *wharenui* as Hiwi and Pat Tauroa states:

> It is in this atmosphere, under a cloak of peace, that people interact with one another and with the spirits of their ancestors. Although intense discussions may take place, decisions are always made in peace (92).

This text-as-*wharenui* framework is an effective tool in returning the voice to the Maori. Readers are invited into the Maori space to be informed about such threatening problems as land dispute and racial discrimination from the Maori perspective. Also, as Knudsen names her essay, this text challenges the notion of

[9] Regarding the use of voices, Wilson contends, the novel is mostly narrated with the passive voice, rendering the events – ranging from the everyday life scenes, the flooding of land to the conflagration and the bomb – "not action oriented (active), but that-which-has-come-to-pass oriented (passive)" (124). Thus, readers rarely see active agents on both sides committing brutal acts, nor do they feel that the events are of the present time. Wilson further argues that the episodic narrative mode diminishes the sense of climax. The events are instead dissected into episodes and told in a wave-like manner, advancing then receding back, not intensifying toward the climatic scenes. With these two writing techniques combined, the text manages to secure the sense of the middle ground between peace and non-peace – the state of the stories in which the situation seems neither peaceful (for there are threats and violence) nor non-peaceful (for the grammatical tenses and voices indicate that such events are in the long-gone past).

individual protagonists found in most novels because in the *wharenui*, all characters and even the *wharenui* are regarded as integral parts that constitute one whole Maori identity; thus, "the community is the protagonist". If readers are aware that, from the Maori perspective, there is no such thing as an individual chief or protagonist, they will better understand about Maori land issues and identity from the indigenous view. For another example, as *wharenui* is the materialization of the sacred space of now-time, reader-visitors, once reading the text, enter the non-linear temporal paradigm. This, in effect, works to destabilize readers' perception. Readers will come to understand that indigenous modes of thinking can be profound, intricate and up-to-date, not backward and extinct as stereotypically presumed, and that other ways of looking at the world and at progress – like the Maori notion of spiral temporality – can function as lenses to perceive reality equally, if not more, efficiently as the dominant Western paradigm.

After all, hybridization and adaptation are in the essence of the Maori tradition. For the people, changes are natural and expected in the spiral progress. A Maori knows that when the right time comes, it is acceptable for *tapu* (taboo) to be committed, lines to be crossed, and experiments to be done. Patricia Grace herself exemplifies such trespassing. She blends traditionally oral Maori ceremonies with the Western genre of the novel in English. However, she succeeds in carving out the hidden potential in the alien species of wood – the English language – giving life to her *poupous* – the characters – and most importantly the *wharenui* – the novel itself. In this sense, Grace can be seen as de-colonizing the Western mode of literary expression and language; and in the process, she reclaims the voice for the Maori. It is the voice newly-found in linguistic forms, yet age-old in terms of the stories it tells. It is the voice the Maori use to fight against the *Pakeha*, to participate in the modern world and to preserve their

identity. The voice she reclaims might sound different from their original speech of old, but it is indeed their voice – the voice of Maori people.

CHAPTER IV: Kiana Davenport's *Shark Dialogue*: Re-claiming Hawaiian History through Land-Based Story of the Matriarch and the Hybrid *'ohana*

Rob Wilson's article "Bloody Mary Meets Lois-Ann Yamanaka: Imagining Asia/Pacific — from *South Pacific* to Bamboo Ridge" (2000) identifies unrealistic, often generalized images of Pacific people and the region that are propagated by several popular U.S. national art products. He discusses the conjured image of the Pacific islands in *South Pacific*, a Pulitzer Prize-winning musical play, to exemplify how Pacific regions, especially Hawaii, are stereotypically depicted as "a settler paradise" with "racial harmony" (94), and as areas where, under the Cold War context, military control was a necessity. These depictions, as Wilson comments, presents distortion of the real struggle of the locals and the strategy to assimilate Hawaiian locals into the white-American mainstream. In such a context, together with the long history of oppression, such portrayals can be seen as an attempt to justify the fact that it was important for Hawaii to be under the U.S. military control and that the locals were ready to embrace foreign invasion.

In addition to the inclusion of Hawaii into the Cold War master narrative, mainstream movies also use the "tourist gaze" (97) to display Hawaii and its residents; each ethnic group is attributed with certain roles and images. According to Wilson, this is the constructed Pacific that is based on how the outsiders perceive Hawaii. Wilson uses the film *Paradise, Hawaiian Style* (1964) as a supporting example. The natives in this movie, particularly the minor characters of indigenous ethnicity, are depicted as happy, service-minded hosts welcoming tourists with their traditional Hula dance. The region itself is also displayed as a photogenic, peaceful land. Presented alongside the

"tourist gaze" depiction is racial and cultural hierarchy. The main character of *South Pacific*, Bloody Mary, is seen as a crude Pidgin-speaking native, characterized as a hybrid-opportunist who allows the assimilation of native customs and costumes into the global, capitalist system. To Westernize herself, she and her daughter are also willing to undergo changes to be deemed more Western.

Given all the main features of the Hollywood movies, the achieved outcomes are (1) justification that military intervention is necessary, and (2) cultural domination of the Pacific positioning the Western culture as superior to that of the locals. Rob Wilson claims that, through the depiction of the region in the play *South Pacific* and other Western media, the Pacific region has become a place where class and historical struggles are overwritten by outside power and turned into an exotic, imagined land under Western perception.

Apart from frequently being featured in mainstream media, modern Hawaii also attracts a great number of tourists from around the globe who wish to have the experience of living on what has come to be known as paradise on Earth. In response to the popularity of Hawaii, the land and its people are subsequently forced to metamorphose to fit the images of Hawaii as generally perceived by outsiders, which are mainly influenced by the media representation of it. In the article "The Environmental, Economic, and Social Impacts of Resort Development and Tourism on Native Hawaiians" (1988), Jon Matsuoka and Terry Kelly argue that Hawaii, once "one of the most isolated areas in the world" (29), has been tremendously transformed by the outside influence – from an isolated archipelago to an economic agricultural hub in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and to a world-renowned tourist destination.

This later shift in Hawaii has brought about such massive land development on both the land and the sea in order that the small islands can "accommodate this growing industry" (29) that the natives lose not only their land to corporate business magnates but also the natural resources, both of which are the bases of their livelihood and cultural beliefs. Tourism also further strengthens the stereotypical images of the native already pervasive in the mass media. To illustrate, since the ongoing changes in the landscape and conditions of Hawaii have jeopardized the natives' livelihood and taken away their subsistence, they have had to adapt in order to survive, thus joining the workforce in industries, especially tourism. On a whole Hawaii has become "overly dependent on this one sector" (32), tourism industry imperils the region's economy as well. The natives have no choice but to surrender their traditional way of life and become part to this vulnerable system. Most of the indigenous Hawaiians work in service industries, providing culinary services at hotel restaurants or taking part in live performances such as hula dances. While it is true to argue that tourism provides opportunities for cultural survival, arguably, it is tourism and media representation that threaten the cultures in the first place, and more often than not, this seeming opportunity result in cultural appropriation and commercialization rather than the passing on of the tradition of the people.

Although it is clear that the images of Hawaii and its people have been largely influenced by mainstream media and tourism, it is important to note that there have also been voices of resistance from the oppressed locals. For instance, in the field of music, *Hawai'i 78'* (1993), a political song by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole, one of the most revered Hawaiian singers of the 20th century, presents the psychological pain of the Hawaiians witnessing landscape change in "this modern city life". The song raises the question of

how the Hawaiian ancestors, here the deceased king and queen, would feel about present-day Hawaii. The lyric describes the modernization of Hawaii as seen through "the change in our land" that jeopardizes both "our people" and "our land". It also points out that, in fact, the local themselves do not welcome such development as "highways", "condominiums", "traffic lights and railroad tracks" that come to replace "the sacred grounds" on the islands where Hawaiian kings won in the ancient wars. In contrast with songs that depict images of subservient ukulele players in Hawaiian cotton shirts and the over-sexualized hula girls, *Hawai'I 78'* intentionally contests against such imposed American concepts of modern Hawaii as a modern paradise on Earth.

Similarly, in the field of literature, scholars and writers have published works that may help destabilize the stereotyped images of Hawaii and thus reclaim the voices of the oppressed. For example, in the same article, Wilson proposes that with such strong Western influence on the images of Hawaii and the indigenous people, local literature can be used to counter against the imposed perception. To illustrate, having established features of the images of the Pacific, Wilson suggests that the way to counter against this dominant discourse is to use local literature. He identifies some of the main features of local literature as: (1) the attempt to "resist symbolic domination" (2) the use of creole English to signify that the Pacific is a multi-cultural unit of society, (3) the attempt to establish bonds to place under the global context which turns the Pacific into tourist destination, and (4) the further development of the cultivated bond to place, resulting in what he calls "critical regionalism" (94). Among local literary texts that challenge the stereotypes and pose the truth regarding the ongoing acts of atrocities done to the minorities, Kiana Davenport's 1990 novel *Shark Dialogue* splendidly encapsulates the traumatic experiences of Hawaiians and local minorities in

different chapters of the islands' history and manages to dissolve the non-dimensional and misleading stereotypes of the land, its history and its people. Through an abundance of mythical and spiritual incidents deeply interwoven with the lives of the characters and Hawaiian landscapes, Davenport invokes the images of Hawaii as a wildly bewildering complex of space and time where nature is inherently supernatural, and the people fiercely passionate, proud, defiant, and extremely patriotic to their Polynesian roots.

This chapter analyzes how Kiana Davenport succeeds in reclaiming the voices of the Hawaiians and local minorities by intertwining Hawaii's trauma history from the country first contacts with the *haole*, or the white foreign settlers, to the 1990s, with the traumatic experiences of Pono, the matriarch protagonist, as well as her ancestors, her descendants, and immigrant locals residing in Hawaii. In the novel, Pono, a proud Hawaiian and magnificent *kahuna* (a seer), calls her four grand-daughters home in Kona District, Hawaii. Summoned by the woman whom they love and fear, whose mysterious life has never been revealed, the four women – Ming, Vanya, Rachel, and Jess – all of mixed blood, come to learn about their own genealogy which has long been unknown to them. After having understood the trauma her ancestors and her grandmother underwent, Pono's girls, once leading rootless, scattered lives, discover their own genealogy and connections with their motherland, leading to different albeit profound life decisions. This chapter argues that by learning about the trauma of Hawaii national history, which parallels that on the family and individual scales, the characters then are able to cultivate their bonds with Hawaiian land and the natural world as well as learn to accept their hybridity.

Trauma of the land and the peoples of Hawaii

As earlier stated, in *Shark Dialogue*, the stories of Pono and her family are paralleled with, and therefore reflective of, the history of Hawaii. This renders national history intimately personal – making it a story of the lives, passions, and plights of the actual people living through it. Here, Pono is central in the novel's construction of the intimate Hawaiian historical narrative. From the beginning, it is made clear that even though history stretches far back before the birth of Pono, everything is seen through her perspective, as she looks through her "*aniani kahuna*, her prophet mirror, one side of which reflected the past-running-backward, and the other the future-running-forward" (25). In the image of her looking in the mirror, Pono in her late seventies living in the 1990s, which is the present time of the novel, stands as the reference point, dividing the novel into two major parts. The first is a historical account stretching back to the time of Pono's ancestors, covering the four preceding generations and ending with the time when Pono's four daughters leave her to marry their non-Hawaiian lovers. The second deals with the present-day Hawaii of the 1990s, focusing on how Pono's four granddaughters – Ming, Vanya, Rachel, and Jess – regain their sense of identity and reconcile with their grandmother. Following the narrative which reveals how the former leads up to the latter, readers will gain an insightful understanding of the Hawaiian history – spiritual, intellectual, and intimate – which defies both the American historical narratives and the objective, empirical Western historiographical conventions.

The first part of the novel which focuses on Pono's life starts in America in 1834 with Pono's great-grandfather, Mathys Coenradtsen, a descendant of a Dutch

settler. This beginning was of paramount significance because it was the time of Hawaii's first official contact with the outside world and the European and American settlers played influential roles in transforming the land and subsequently corrupting its people. The novel thus traces both Pono's genealogy and reflects the history of Hawaii at the same time.

It is essential to first understand the contexts and conditions of Mathys's life in the 19th century which would lead to the traumas and events later to come. Mathys in 1834 who first set off from Manhattan on a whaling ship, inspired by the notion of seafaring adventures, had not yet been involved in the capitalistic monetary system. With his unpleasant status as a poor peasant with virtually no possession, he was humble towards and passionate about the natural world. As a man who "never injured a living thing, always leaving the barn when his father slaughtered pigs" (34), Mathys mourned the death of his bay horse, the only thing he owned and loved. Similarly, his compassion towards whales was profound and humane:

> He has never imagined anything as magnificent as these giant mammals, never felt safer than when rowing beside them. Warm-blooded, air-breathing, they belonged to families, and clans, and talked through code-songs sung for fifty million years. Like humans, they played, mated, tended their young. (34)

Based on his attitude toward whales, Mathys valued life over monetary profits whale blubber yields and thus disagreed with his crewmate who considered a life of killing as something sailors should "get used to" for "slaughter's the only life [they] [knew]" (30). Another sign of his compassionate heart resides in his psychological responses to his

experience of the cruel nature of seafaring. Unlike other sailors in the clipper *The Silver Coin*, after having killed several whales to extract their blubber, the work he deemed "the grimmest job of all" (33), Mathys sank into a state of desperation. Moreover, despite being deprived of food and female companionship, he did not wish to join others in such inhumane acts as raping and then slaughtering nursing seals for their meat. Despite his drunkenness, he refused to exploit native prostitutes during their stops at islands along the way to the Pacific, knowing that he might be a carrier of diseases incurable to them. Rather, he was horrified by the sexual assault that he witnessed, and later as he could find no pleasure in debauching with prostitutes which he believed would partly render him as "irretrievably damned" (34), Mathys ends up attempting to commit suicide by "swallow[ing] a bottle of rat poison and [flinging] himself overboard" (34).

These internal conflicts, a sense of guilt, and the radical attempt to redeem himself serve as proofs that Mathys's conscience was working against all the indecencies his circumstances brought him to partake in. Already consumed by extreme guilt and desperation, he was further driven by his fate to commit an act he himself perceives to be the most unpardonable sin yet: cannibalism. When *The Silver Coin* was wrecked by a maddened whale, he and another crew mate were compelled to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the captain in order to survive the prolonged period at sea on a small lifeboat without food or water. After being rescued by a passing ship headed for Hawaii, Mathys and the other crew members were detained on the ship off the coast. Likely to be in fear of possibilities of "imprisonment or being hanged" (36), they decided to flee and swim ashore. There, his accomplice died in the wild, leaving him alone in a foreign land. After months, he felt empty and reduced to something less than

a human by the loneliness and guilt from years of "slaughtering, whoring, eating human flesh" (36). Eventually, he jumped off a cliff, and then suffered so intensely that he thought he was "paying for his sins, in hell, a nightmare world of blood, incessant pain, near blindness" (36).

It is under these extreme circumstances that Mathys saw himself as beyond redemption that he met Kelonikoa, Pono's great-grandmother. A Tahitian princess fleeing an arranged marriage set up by her father to the cousin of King Kamehameha III, Kelonikoa escaped to the forest of the Maui Island, relying on her indigenous knowledge of land and sea since "the sea was her solace" (37). Finding him waiting for death on a beach, she saved Mathys. He later recalled the experience as: "She came to me by the sea. God had finally forgiven me." (36) The process of Mathys's redemption originated first and foremost in the encounter of the two individuals who share similar traits. They both suffered the fateful consequences of life, which pushed them out of human society. Having been integrated into the luscious green of Hawaii, they also held in common animal-like qualities. Living in the wild, Kelonikoa "ate raw fish, slept in rock caves" (37) gradually becoming "a creature half human, half fish" (37) – a creature of the sea. Likewise, Mathys is described as resembling "a yellow dog" (37) moving "in a half crawl" and, when seeing Kelonikoa, trying "to stand on two feet like human." (37)

Indispensable in the process of Mathys's restoration was their attempt to regain what they had lost: speech in Kelonikoa's case and pride as a human being in Mathys's. In their attempt to communicate with each other, the pair created a Tahitian-English pidgin language efficient enough to enable them to recount their course of life. For the

first time, Kelonikoa saw the similarities in the humanity of the whites and Polynesians as she learned that “white men felt sadness, or longing, that they had grave souls like Polynesian.” (39) For Mathys, the tender, humane care he received from Kelonikoa brought him back to life. Moreover, with the indigenous skills of survival Kelonikoa passed on to him, he was finally capable of sustaining himself in the wild.

Kelonikoa played a crucial role in engendering Mathy’s physical rebirth and also redeeming him spiritually. As he recovers, he learned from her how to appreciate the surrounding natural beauty. Most importantly, she alleviated his gnawing sense of guilt, since relating stories of his misdeeds to her serves as the venting out of his suppressed depression. Kelonikoa liberated him from what he conceived as his greatest sin of cannibalism. She laughingly shrugged off his sense of guilt, telling him it was a Polynesian tradition to eat the flesh of the enemy. Relieved from his past, Mathys “grew calm, more confident.” (40) It is noteworthy that the process of redemption is achieved by being integrated into Polynesian culture. In other words, he is redeemed by becoming a Polynesian.

The novel thus suggests a significant claim that being a Polynesian, or to be more specific in this case, a Hawaiian, is not necessarily restricted to descent, but shared qualities anyone can achieve. Most important of those qualities are connection to the land and the shared trauma. This inclusive notion of Hawaiian identity echoes throughout the novel. “Hawaiian-ness” becomes more political than ethnical. One does not necessarily have to be a Polynesian in blood to be regarded as a Hawaiian. In this case, the union of Mathys and Kelonikoa, endorsed by a Hawaiian *kahuna,* or a seer who had supernatural power in traditional beliefs, exemplifies the notion that the

Hawaiian identity is derived from the shared experiences of those who live in Hawaii regardless of race or blood relations. However, this concept of the shared Hawaiian identity was challenged as the Westerners and their ideologies intruded the islands. The decline of traditional values and knowledge can be clearly seen a Hawaiian *kahuna*'s reply to Mathys: "They [*haole*] teach Hawaiians forget language, gods, taboos. Even forget respect for nature, the sea … [Hawaiians] want everything *haole* got. We coming greedy" (43).

Alongside the deterioration of traditional morals and values was a series of epidemic diseases – syphilis, measles, typhoid, small pox, and leprosy – one breaking out after another. The plagues were so devastating that Portia Rule, a Boston missionary's wife, said that they were "more heinous than bigotry" that the *haole* directed towards the natives, and that "if your [Kelonikoa's] people are not careful, disease will wipe them out completely" (49). Her remark was proven by the fact that within less than a century after the first contact with the Europeans, the islands' population had dwindled from "nearly a million to "under sixty thousand" (49). On a more personal level, the plights of Hawaii are paralleled with and reflected in the lives of Mathys and Kelonikoa, each representing different, yet inseparably intertwining, aspects. While Mathys symbolized ideological degradation, Kelonikoa stood as the mark of physical impairment occurring to the natives.

In Mathys's case, his downfall was caused by his obsession with accumulating wealth. He started with a coach business, and then seeing potentials in the flourishing port economies at the time, he expanded to the more exploitative businesses. He first opened an extravagant saloon, ironically named "The Bay Horse" – the only thing he

once owned and loved, the symbol of innocence in his youth – during the time when "a large percentage of native Hawaiians were being killed by alcohol" (56), including King Kamehameha III himself, and the succeeding King Kamehameha IV who was also an alcoholic. Later, his investment in a sugar plantation shows how he opportunistically took advantage of the land law which unfairly favored the *haole*. While he wept out of guilt unable to join the Union to fight for the abolition of slavery against the Confederacy in the American Civil War, Kelonikoa reflected that he had "more in common with the Confederacy than the Union" as he was "now heavily invested in the new economy, King Sugar, that depended on contract labor which imposed slave conditions on Chinese 'coolies'" (53). His inability to see the contradiction between his actions and words signifies that he gradually reverted back, encouraged by his birth race, to the status of the oppressive, opportunistic *haole*, without respect for nature and other beings. Once a man who woefully refused to acknowledge the monetary value of the whale blubber, he was now known as the saloon keeper who could "procure anything for a price" (48), trading out Oriental artifacts in which he saw only profits, not lives nor stories of the people or the land to which they belonged.

While there are several signs suggesting that Mathys deviated from the Hawaiian way of respectfully co-existing with the land, the most obvious was his failure to fulfill the promise he made to Kelonikoa, which was to return to the island of Maui "each year when the whales come to mate, to leap and spout in the Pacific" (43). Mathys and Kelonikoa vowed to "make a pilgrimage to these mountains" with an intent to "stay humble, remembering how [they] began" (43). During his years as a privileged white entrepreneur, sometimes "he missed the steamer to Maui, and she went on their annual pilgrimage alone, keeping the vow they had made on their wedding night" (54). Thus,

it can be claimed that Mathys had already lost what he wanted to preserve: his humility and awareness of his origin and how he came to be Hawaiian.

Although she acquired qualities of the upper class such as fluency in English and French, social etiquette, and knowledge about the world, Kelonikoa, unlike Mathys, kept up with the pilgrimage promise, signifying the fact that she never lost her conscience and bond with the land. If anything, the cultural exposure she received from Portia Rule sharpened her ability as a vigilant observer of people and land. Aware of the social issues burgeoning in Hawaiian society, she noted all the changes in her husband, knowing he was transformed from a victim of the capitalistic system into an oppressor himself. She witnessed the most important instance of social inequalities: the *Great Mahele*. This land law which her husband and other *haoles* exploited in order to secure their plantation was written with the intention to strip the Hawaiians of their lands as well as to ensure the security of white merchants' plantations. Not only did she see outright, physical attempts to take away what originally belonged to the Hawaiians – in this case the rights and the land – but she was also conscious of the systematic processes to Westernize, or, in other words, to ideologically and culturally colonize Hawaiian children, wiping out the traditional ways of life through education and religion. In schools and churches, the Hawaiian children were "forbidden their Mother Tongue" and "taught about Jesus, a *haole* child, while Hawaiian gods and ancestors were forgotten. Some natives have abandoned old religion, dress and customs completely" (56). Thus, with the knowledge about health care and human rights she learned from Doctor Mercy Goddard, a philanthropist *haole* who, like Portia, wanted to help the abused natives, Kelonikoa joined the Bustle Club, an association of female Westerners and high-born Hawaiians of the same sentiment, doing various

humanitarian works ranging from visiting slums to “feed[ing] the poor” to “comforting the dying” (51).

However, while she was well aware of the harsh fact about her people’s conditions and tried to give as much help as possible, Kelonikoa’s life was wrought with physical disfigurements – the materialized effects of the corruption of land and the people. She lost two of her first children to measles and small pox respectively, both brought in by *haoles*, and miscarried her third as a result of vaccination, also introduced by the whites. Emma, her last child, eventually succumbed to yet another pestilence: leprosy. Apart from experiencing it herself, she also witnessed a great number of natives suffering from these ailments – with the most tragic instance of a thirteen-year-old girl who was sold by her father to a whaling ship and “taken to the sea, used for months as the crew’s recreation, until she contracted a “sailor’s pox” (51). When the whaler “dragged her from the ship and dumped her in an alley”, she took deadly substances to abort her pregnancy and died “in Kelonikoa’s arms” (51).

As Mathys and Kelonikoa diverged from each other – Mathys towards those with Western, capitalistic sentiments; Kelonikoa towards her own people, the Hawaiians – their discrepancy was further highlighted by political issues of the time, particularly the annexation of Hawaii. As the social gap widened and the United States made a critical move to depose Queen Lili’ uokalani, the reigning monarch of Hawaii, Mathys took more and more advantage of the situation whereas Kelonikoa fully engaged in political activism resisting the United States’ attempt to dissolve Hawaiian monarchy with its malicious intent to utilize the profitable features of the islands. She and other members of the Bustle Club went as far as to militarize themselves by hiring

a veteran mercenary to train them and collect weapons in secret hidings. When she and Emma, their youngest daughter, were arrested in the protest, Mathys utterly failed to understand his wife's actions, saying "Woman. You have shamed me for all time" to which Kelonikoa replied, "You have no idea" (68).

Kelonikoa's answer suggests that Mathys had lost the spirit he once had as a young man. In fact, he himself was aware of this loss as he knew that "there was something [Kelonikoa] had needed, something she had tried to call forth from within him, that he did not possess." (71) That "something" was conscience, a realization which came to Mathys later when Kelonikoa was gone. It was the white capitalist mentality that had taken over him which blinded him over the years, making him see only the superficial layers of things. He neither realized nor refused his unjust privilege as a wealthy white man, but, instead, he went along with the circumstances, exploiting his status. His lack, or to be more precise, his loss, of a conscience is the main driving force for Kelonikoa to swim out to the sea, never to return.

What destroys Mathys's life as a humble but contented and defiant being – the essence of being a Hawaiian – was the same thing that ruined the islands of Hawaii itself: the notion of white supremacy and colonization. Kelonikoa's presumable suicide and the annexation of Hawaii to the United States signify the further deterioration of Hawaii, the point in time when a "great context were broken forever" (73). The loss of political Hawaiian autonomy and the paralleled end of familial lineage of the Coenradstens in this historical milestone may appear as the point of no return. On the national level, after the annexation, Hawaii plunged into its downfall because exploitation occurred with unprecedented intensity. *Haoles* now assumed complete

control of the nation. They unjustly took away most of the land from the dwindling number of natives, then cleared out the original lands and turned them into mono-cultural fields of sugarcane and pineapple. The remaining natives as well as the oversea migrants from such countries as Japan, Korea, and the Philippines, were forced to work in slave-like conditions on the plantations owned by the whites.

Interestingly, the disfigurement of the land resulted in and also paralleled the physical deformities in the oppressed laborers. In other words, the personal body of a Hawaiian, inseparable from the land, represents the terrain of the island as a whole. To illustrate, as the native jungles were replaced by sugarcane and pineapple plantations, a considerable number of the workers in the compound where Pono worked were compelled to work with "razor-sharp machete[s]" which "sometimes [took] a finger, part of a leg" (119). Moreover, they suffered from particulate pollutants in the air which completely destroyed their lungs. As they told Pono, "*Pau* [finished] good health. Lungs red dust, gone *pilau* [rotten]!" (119). This statement suggests that their disfigurement was both visible and happening internally.

On the personal level, the fall of the Coenradstens was evident in the declining status of each successive generation of female members. Her mother being a Tahitian princess, Emma died a leper in a shack in an underserved community after a *haole* doctor refused to come, claiming he did not "make house calls in the *slums*" (77). Vera Lili, Emma's daughter, did not finish university after her father, a lawyer who provided legal assistance for workers, was killed by a white sugar-plantation tycoon, and she then ended up marrying a common Hawaiian man and worked as a laborer in a sugar plantation herself. Even worse, the bloodline came to an end with Vera Lili's last

daughter, Pono. Born a *kahuna,* Pono bore a power incomprehensible from the white worldview and was so feared among locals that she was taken out of school after she read teachers' mind, making her unable to read or write. Eventually, she lost her whole family line after Vera Lili disowned her, because the mother wanted to maintain "a simple life, a quiet life" (91) which she felt was threatened by Pono's supernatural gift. Moreover, Vera Lili desperately yielded to the seeming omnipotence of the whites and accepted the unfair conditions, agreeing to take the barren land the *haole* offered as the guise of making amends for the previous misdeeds. Without resistance, she came to lose one of the essences of Hawaiian identity earlier mentioned: defiance. Hence, Pono was left utterly alone by her mother's surrender, owning nothing, and lacking a sense of identity, and consequently, direction in life. Pono'ss destiny as a foreigner to her own roots reflects how Hawaiian land ironically became an alien sphere to the Hawaiians themselves who cannot afford to live with dignity in their motherland. Stranded in the city of Honolulu, the world "that had never entered her dreams" (89), Pono, and the Hawaiian identity alike, seemed to be on the brink of extinction.

In fact, now that Pono appeared to have lost everything and was reduced to something less than a human, without a sense of who she was and nowhere to go to, the reader can detect a notable similarity between Pono and her great-grandfather, Mathys, when he was left alone in the jungle of a foreign land. To elaborate, like Mathys, who is referred to as a wild beast surviving in the jungles of Maui, Pono lived like a city-dwelling critter, "sleeping in ditches, crawling on her stomach into workers' camps, crawling out with food stored in her cheeks" (87) in Honolulu. Eventually, although both decided to end their lives because of utmost loneliness and despair, Mathys and Pono were able to gain newly found identities from their partners, namely Kelonikoa

and Duke, Pono's husband to whom she would be steadfastly loyal for life, respectively. The similar pattern seen here is a significant sign suggesting the process of redemption for the two characters.

As seen in the case of Mathys, the notion of what it means to be a Hawaiian, represented by Pono, is inclusive and resilient, making it highly capable of adaptation and, subsequently, survival. Thus, it is essential to investigate the common features shared by the union of the two couples to understand how Hawaiian identity always persists, even with the threat of extinction. First, the most obvious similarity is the setting in which they meet: the sea. Resembling Mathys, Duke "would always remember" his partner as "*she came to me from the sea*" (103). The second is their initial status during their first encounter – all four of them were without a clan: Mathys venturing far away from his homeland, Kelonikoa cut off from her royal Tahitian family as a result of her defiance, Pono disowned by her family, and Duke being the only one left out of the Kealoha lineage after the rest was struck by leprosy. Third, both Mathys and Pono are in such dire hopelessness when they met their partners that they attempted to commit suicide. While Mathys jumped off a cliff, Pono consumed a seaweed "that glowed pink and tasted septic" (101), resulting in her ability to transform into a shark, the in-between stage of human and animal, pointing to her being on the verge of quitting her life as a human.

In these contexts, it can be argued that in the same way that Mathys was redeemed by becoming a Hawaiian with the help of Kelonikoa, Pono was to rediscover the core of being a Hawaiian in Duke. As Kelonikoa physically tended Mathys back to life and nourished him spiritually with her tales and Polynesian knowledge, Duke did

so with Pono, taking care of her until “she had already grown to cherish him as he droned besides her all the week of her healing, her fractured skull reknitting” (106) and introducing her to a wide range of knowledge, from Western cultures to the tradition of coffee growing in Kona District. What can be seen here in this pattern of the death of the old desperate self and the rebirth of the redeemed one marks the resilience of Hawaiian identity. Just as Mathys and Kelonikoa created their own genealogy and definition of self based on Polynesian notions, so the same process of generating a new genealogy was emerging between Pono and Duke.

However, in contrast to Mathys who gradually lets go of the acquired Hawaiian identity, the issue with Pono is that she held on too tightly to Duke, the representation of old-world Hawaiianness. A former student of Sorbonne from a native ruling class family descending from Kamehameha I, the first king of Hawaii, with exceptional Polynesian physique and beauty, Duke epitomized the ideal of Hawaiian intelligence, power, and grace. Thus, Pono’s extreme, sometimes even irrational, affection and attachment with Duke was comprehensible when compared to the intense nostalgia the whole nation felt towards its glorious days with the monarchical leader of the country. Duke became her sole solace and pride – her only reason to survive. From this point on, she did everything exclusively for Duke, from following him into the jungle to flee bounty hunters who would take him to Kalaupapa, to trying to contract his disease by “[licking] his eyes, [sucking] his saliva from his mouth” (113). She even committed such outrageous acts as killing her own infant child, born out of rape done to her by a *haole,* and ripping out the spine of her rapist, in order to safeguard her own and his pride.

On the one hand, this “private perversity” (114), as Duke describes it, was a very strong driving force propelling Pono through every plight in life. She was able to endure repeated rapes by the Portugese *luna*, or the foreman of a sugar plantation, and terrible work conditions, knowing that Duke was still alive on the island of lepers. Later, when finally she got to meet Duke again and could occasionally make visits via inter-island steamers, she could tolerate a decade of grinding hours of work in a cannery to make sure that Duke’s seeds, their daughters, lived on with dignity, carrying his true Hawaiian blood.

On the other hand, Pono’s unconditional devotion to Duke was a great distraction which blinded her from the life happening before her eyes. It became a limitation disabling her from seeing other important factors apart from Duke, particularly their daughters. In this way, it turns out that while Pono fiercely protected her four daughters, she also brutally victimized them both physically and emotionally. For instance, when Pono left Holo, at the age of six, in Kona District in Duke’s old house with Tang Ping, a Chinese servant loyal to the Kealoha, she never gave Holo a sense of stability in life to the point Holo felt that “abandonment seemed fair” as “in six years, her mother had not killed her” (150). On days when she was disturbed by her trauma, Pono “would abuse the girls, slap or ignore them, make the three oldest eat in silence while she fed the infant with disdain” (154). She was so negligent towards her daughters to the point that “[s]he gave not much thought to them, sometimes confusing them, forgetting their names, absent-mindedly patting a head in passing, like a dog she must remember to feed” (149).

Moreover, Pono seemed to give more importance to protecting the abstract, rigid and obsolete notion of pure Hawaiian pride, passed on to the daughters from their father, than who they really were as human beings. In other words, Pono's obsession with Duke blinded her from the truth that old Hawaiian values represented by Duke belonged to the past, and that the definition of true Hawaii did not remain stagnant, but always shifted and changed. Noticing this himself, Duke said that Pono "would not accept the truth" (147), believing that "*[h]e will be cured" and that "[o]ne day [she] will take him home*" (142), despite the constantly degrading state of his disease. Since the body of the Hawaiian represents the state of the land as earlier mentioned, the irreversible condition of Duke signifies the demise of the old Hawaiian identity, which rendered Pono and the people of Hawaii utterly desperate. When Pono saw Duke in day light for the first time in three years, the stubborn hopeful belief she had held crumbled completely for he had deteriorated almost beyond recognition:

> [H]is face was texture of boiled mud, hardened, bubbleblasted. The lips gone, as if they'd been sliced off. Scarred muscle tissues pulled all of his mouth to one side of his face. His nose bridge had finally collapsed. … He held his hand out, turning them palms up, then palms down. On one hand the fingers completely gone, the bone absorbed. A club. His arms were maps of lesion-scars, most of the muscle gone. (165)

This tragic, irrefutable truth about her husband, as well as the nation he embodies, took away direction and purpose from Pono's life. She had been "a woman preparing to live, not living" (165). Now that the prospect of life she had been preparing for – that one

day Duke would return to the mainland, to her and their children – was gone, the force which so far had been pushing her forward vanished, and the threads previously holding her life together begin to loosen up. Traumatized by their mother, Pono's daughters left her one after another – Holo eloping with Tang Junior, the son of Tang Ping, whom she had known since childhood; Edita with a Filipino boyfriend; Emma with a Caucasian soldier; and Mina with an unknown man. The fact that none of these men were of Hawaiian or Polynesian descent further emphasized her failure to accomplish the mission of keeping the Kealoha lineage pure and dignified. Now, once again, Pono was left alone in the world, a woman without a clan, with only occasional solace from Duke, who merely "half lived, in perpetual grief for his lost daughters" (171), stranded on the island of lepers.

However, as it can be seen throughout the course of the life of Pono's family and the history of Hawaii itself, what seems to be a hopeless end is always followed by redemption and rebirth. Pono was once again redeemed, this time by Run Run, the daughter of a Japanese prostitute with whom Pono had lived under the same roof for a short period. Having foreseen in her dream since the age of fifteen that the two of them would grow old together, Pono rediscovered the kinship she had lost for two decades. Reuniting with each other, Pono asked Run Run to teach her "…how to… live" (175), suggesting that she accepted this woman to be her instructor, her next guiding light in life. Here, it is crucial that Pono's redeemer is of Japanese descent, without any kind of relation in terms of blood or race, as this would allow Pono to accept the hybrid definition of being a Hawaiian, which, in turn, would enable her to overcome the trauma regarding her daughters and to embrace the identity of her four mixed-blood granddaughters, the only remaining family members Pono had left.

The Family's Dialogues and the Healing Journeys of the Hybrids of the New World

As the first forty years of Pono's life, which reflects the ups and downs of Hawaii as a whole, have been discussed in the previous part, it can be seen that Pono, as well as the nation she represents, becomes directionless after she simultaneously loses touch with both the past and the present when she realizes that Duke, the embodiment of the old glory of Hawaiian, is disfigured forever and when she loses her daughters, the signs of hope for a respectable life. Even though her following forty years have seen Pono, with Run Run's help, become more open and accepting, there are still unresolved traumatic experiences left ingrained in the lineage. The obvious illustrations of how the whole family remains severely lost are the conditions of Pono's daughters, as the two oldest, Holo and Edita, decidedly terminated any kind of relationship with their mother except sending Ming and Vanya to Kona district in the summer; Emma, the third child, drifted and died in search of a place she could belong, and Mina, the youngest, was gone missing forever, her fate unknown. More importantly, it is the four cousins, Ming, Vanya, Jess, and Rachel who inherit such a wounded history full of blank pages from their mothers, who in turn, are damaged by Pono in the first place. The underlying cause of this legacy of pain is the lack of family history, as Pono refuses to reveal it to keep her promise with Duke, who is too ashamed to let his children see him in an undignified state. This creates a void in the identity of the successive generations of Pono's descendants, resulting in personal insecurity so debilitating the cousins utterly fail to lead contented lives.

Just as Pono represents Hawaii as a nation in a traditional sense, so the turbulent lives of her granddaughters reflect the unstable condition of the Hawaiian state in the late 20th century, when the situation for the natives worsened with the advent of new technology and the full-blown influence of capitalism on the islands. In other words, while Pono and Duke may represent the identity of Hawaii, as well as its conflicts during the early and mid-20th century, it is Pono's four granddaughters – Ming, Rachel, Vanya and Jess – along with other characters whose lives have intertwined with these women and their family, that serve to represent Hawaii in the late 20th century in order to better reflect its hybrid and pluralistic conditions. By examining the struggles of each Pono girl, this part aims to explore how the personal traumas are resolved, enabling the four women to collectively move on with purpose and direction in life.

Arguably, the person who makes the reconciliation with the past possible in the first place is Run Run, the second-generation Japanese Hawaiian whom Pono regards as her little sister. It is crucial that Pono's helper has no Polynesian blood and is not blood-related to Pono in any way as it is hybridity that allows for the adaptability of the Hawaiian identity. As earlier mentioned in the previous part, the definition of being a Hawaiian has become more political than ethnical. What has replaced ethnicity as the unifying concept of Hawaiian-ness is the shared sufferings among people who live on the islands. In other words, suffering has become one of the essential elements of the Hawaiian identity shaping them to be unyieldingly durable and fiercely defiant towards their oppressors. No matter how bruised, scarred, and crippled after fighting their ways through all the threats, Pono and the Hawaiian people she represents always emerge undefeated with relentless determination to keep on living and to fight back. With this

inclusive notion, Run Run is able to act as the mediator between Pono, who still clings on to the purity of Hawaiian blood, and the granddaughters, who are all mixed blooded.

Run Run attempts to teach Pono how to really live her life, to actually love her grandchildren for what they are, despite limited success. Moreover, she is the one who pulls the four cousins back to give the sense of kinship and companionship to young Rachel, whom Mina – her lost mother, Pono's youngest and most neglected daughter – has left by the door. Her determination in maintaining the sense of family for Pono, herself, and the girls can be clearly seen from the fact that she secretly contacted three of Pono's children to send their children to the house on Big Island every summer, despite knowing that this might tremendously anger Pono. Even when Pono found out,Run Run stood her ground, arguing that "*One day you die, Pono. Duke die. Dis girl Rachel walk de earth one ghost. No clan, no* 'ohana" (179). Consequently, she was almost killed by Pono, as she recounts "*She* [Pono] *grab me by da hair, I rearin' up like rodeo horse, t'ink she tryin' kill me, bust me up*"(179). She also helps relieve tension between Pono and the girls by behaving in a jolly way, such as when they return to the house after Pono's call, she greeted them casually and warmly, "screaming and chattering from the kitchen" and "rushing right past Pono" (185). Moreover, she often helps translate Pono's seemingly aggressive and unloving actions and words to the four girls, giving the cousins some comfort and security to a certain extent. For instance, when Jess was upset that Pono neither wrote back nor said she missed her, Run Run consoled her, saying "She yoah blood, yoah history. Someday maybe she explain you many t'ings" (186). Run Run's words of assurance echo throughout the second half of the novel, with one key message reflected in her remarks about the cousins, "They were

her little tribe of “many kine colors”, skin different-hued but underneath, what she called “best kine blood, Hawaiian”” (186).

Still, despite her determination, Run Run alone could not bridge the gap between Pono and the grandchildren as there are two main obstructions: Pono’s prejudice against the non-Hawaiian blood, and Duke’s pride and self-loathing. As earlier stated, Pono clings on to the fading notion of the authentic Hawaiian blood, though she is aware that “the true, original blood of their ancestors, the only one she recognized, was dying” (231). Her disdain towards other ethnicities can be seen in the way in which she regards the non-Hawaiian halves of her girls. For example, during Jess’s childhood, when Pono felt proud of her granddaughter as she listened to her singing at a church, she instantly thought of the potential that Jess could “hurt [her] like Emma” (231), Jess’s mother. She dismissed Jess’s white half as: *“*[t]*he other half, the* haole *half,* [that] *isn’t worth my spit”* (231). Moreover, she ignores the existence of Hiro, Rachel’s Japanese husband who represents Rachel’s East-Asian. As their conversation steers toward the topic of Hiro, Pono “rode right over it, never having acknowledged him” (285).

However, despite her bias, Pono desperately attempts to provide her granddaughters with the family history. Realizing that they need their roots they can look back and hold on to in order to solve their identity crises, she pleads with her husband, “Duke, why can’t we finally tell them the truth?” (282). It is Duke who insists on concealing their history from the grandchildren as he replies “Truth is temporary” (282). He fears that if the truth is revealed, the granddaughters would feel disgusted toward his hideous look or what he calls the “legacy of horror” (282). In fact, although

Duke better understands the notion of changing Hawaiian identity and hybridity and urges Pono to accept it, he still adheres to his pride in royal blood which, in turn, spawns the sense of self-hatred, as he feels that his physical state signifies indignity, in contrast to what he used to represent when he was strong on the Big Island. His fear of being rejected is so intense that he makes Pono vow not to let the girls see him even in his coffin. He is unable to stand the thought of his "granddaughters looking down" fearing that his "broken pitted horror" would be "peering up at them through satin ripples" (282).

At this point, since Pono loves and fears Duke so much that she cannot even imagine herself defying his commands, the four cousins are at risk of being denied their family history. Even if Run Run promises Jess that "If Pono never say, and die before I do, one day I tell you t'ings" (284), that would be too late as she and the others would not be able to make sense of Pono's actions and reconcile with her, the process that takes time and Duke's physical presence to achieve. The turning point that enables Pono to resist Duke's order is the death of Ming, the eldest of the four granddaughters. Ridden with illness most of her life, she is the grandchild who bears the strongest resemblance to Duke. Apart from her disease, the lupus, manifesting in her skin condition and severe pain as Duke's leprosy does, Ming also shares with him intellectualism and the love of classical knowledge, such as the music of Johannes Bach and Georg Phillip Telemann. Both similarly possess the stubborn determination to suffer nobly and to hold dignity as long as possible even if the tools they use, "Dragon seeds", or opium, in Ming's case, and the denial to come out of the shadow in Duke's, torment them miserably.

Most importantly, what gives Ming such a strong influence that changes Pono's mind is that she once had a glimpse of her grandfather when taking the ferry to the leper island as she tells Pono privately in her death bed, "I saw him, *Tutu*. Grandfather Duke" (308). Interestingly, she proves Duke's fear false as she states "Such a big handsome head! I felt so proud. In all my life I never wanted so much to touch someone, take his hand", making it clear to Pono that she looks right past his disfigurement, seeing him not as a deformed, unworthy past, but as her grandfather, as "our [the family's] link, our history" (309). Moreover, it is her father's non-Hawaiian half that first informed her of her grandfather's existence. Back when Holo, the eldest daughter, decided to marry a Chinese man, Pono was enraged to the point she almost killed them. She did not recognize the young man as the son of Tang Ping, Duke's loyal house servant, seeing only his Chinese skin which she regarded as "*Stig*ma. *Filth*" (168). It is Ming's father, the man whose blood Pono dismissed, who remembered the time when Duke was still home and told the story to his daughter. Here, under such circumstances when she is pressed to promise on Ming's deathbed to reveal the truth, Pono is compelled to agree, although knowing that her granddaughter's wish contradicts that of Duke's.

Subsequently, Pono recounts their genealogy to the remaining grandchildren, from the time of Mathys Coenradtsen and Kelonikoa down to her and their mother's stories. Together with this, she reveals Duke's existence to them, saying that not only has he spent his whole life in exile at Kaluapapa, but he is still alive. Pono then takes her granddaughters to the island, and even though her action first angers Duke so much that he has almost gone insane out of rage and shame, the granddaughters are allowed to see and unite with him. This series of incidents together sets the process of healing in motion. First and foremost, Duke and Pono are healed as they are released from the

shackles of pride and prejudice which have restrained them for many years, and they allow the three granddaughters to finally know their history. Secondly, later, when Pono takes Duke, who is dying of leprosy, on the boat to return to *'aumakua*, their ancestors, the two elders' tragic death becomes the last call to action for the granddaughters. Rachel, Vanya, and Jess now have to decide their course of life with the guidance which their grandparents have left to them. This section argues that after having gained self-understanding, each of the daughters succeeds in overcoming their trauma and are now ready for the construction of a new identity.

With regard to the four granddaughters' trauma prior to their self-discovery, they do not have a clear definition of who they are, and thus are often uncomfortable in their own skin. For example, Jess reflects that "*[e]ach of us wanting something of the other*" when, as a child, she caught Vanya "*staring at [her] pale skin with a sort of ... thirst"* while Jess "*packed* [herself] *with mud, trying to grow darker so she* [Pono] *would love* [her]*"* (217). As they grow up, they drift to find the place they think they belong: Rachel in the comfort of Hiro, Vanya in legal works advocating human rights in the Pacific, and Jess in charity work in New York.

Among the three, it can be argued that Rachel is the one most lost and alienated from the rest. An orphan since birth, Rachel never gets to know either her mother or father as the other three cousins do. Her lack of parental love and a father figure, in a way, resembles that of the young Mina, her mother, who received the least love from Pono. Rachel copes with the feeling of emptiness by seeking a man who can guide her through, and protect her from, the instability of her rootless identity. Hiro is the one she chose. Twenty years older than she, this rich pure-blood Japanese serves as both her

husband and substitute father. They are so madly obsessed with each other. While Rachel yearns for the warmth of being loved; Hiro finds her charm so unique that he needs her in his life. His longing for her may also be accounted for by the fact that he himself is disowned by his father for leading a shameful life as a Yakuza.

However, their relationship has turned into an elusive game in which Hiro tries to take control of Rachel by her insecurity. He uses two strategies to prevent Rachel from gaining her independence. First, Hiro grooms Rachel into a pure-blooded Japanese woman by teaching her sophisticated Oriental arts and cultures. As Rachel becomes more talented, she forgets her Hawaiian heritage, the other half, which is equally important to her identity. Moreover, in learning Japanese arts, she is even not allowed to truly know her Japanese root for her life is confined in Hiro's mansion. Since Hiro chooses to consider her as "his creation, pure-blood Japanese" who contains "so much of him in her – culture, gestures, taste (268)" it can be interpreted that her identity has been overwritten by his image of a traditional Japanese woman. Second, Hiro controls Rachel by keeping her addicted to sexual ecstasy. As she was exposed to sexual pleasure at such a young age, when they eloped together, she has become dependent on it. This addiction distracts Rachel from life outside the influence of Hiro, who can provide what she calls "the desire to desire beyond satisfaction" (266). Her craving is so severe that she cannot imagine life without Hiro. She believes that once her aging husband dies, "she would be left naked and craving" (266), and that "[l]ife will be over when [Hiro is] gone" (269).

While it may seem that Hiro is the one solely responsible for Rachel's lack of agency and identity, it is important to note that Pono, with her distant and unloving

character, together with her inability to share family history to her grandchildren, similarly contributes to Rachel's complexes. To illustrate, what Hiro has done to Rachel is comparable to the way Pono draws her four granddaughters back to Kona District every summer. By conditioning Rachel to become dependent on him while "[keeping] her at bay and not letting her "know him entirely" (266), Hiro has become a mysterious figure, "the thing unknown, the faceless voyeur" (266), yet her only source of security. Likewise, Pono, a keeper of family secrets and a *kahuna* whose story has always remained mysterious, governs her grandchildren's actions and thoughts, leaving them confused about their own roots and their actual relation to her grandmother. Hence, we may say that as much as Hiro cannot give her the sense of being a real Japanese outside the world of traditional arts, Pono, too, makes it impossible for Rachel to grasp who she is as a Hawaiian.

It is not until Duke comes home that Rachel finally begins to realize her own autonomy. In a peaceful moment one afternoon, lying beside her grandparents, she comes to terms with her missing childhood, reflecting "*This is my childhood. It has come so very late. But, it has come*" (356). This moment would become her reference point, to which she looks back to know where she came from. Following this event, Rachel's misunderstanding that she is "*nothing to her* [Pono]*, a mistake…* (209)", is debunked by her realization that her grandmother feels profound love and pity towards her. Pono even tells Rachel herself that "your beauty, your generosity to others, leaves wet tracks on my vision" (357).

Having provided this source of clarity, knowing where she is from, and reconciling with Pono, Rachel is ready to take on life with newly discovered

confidence. This transformation can be seen most clearly when she flies back to Honolulu to the news of Hiro's death. For the first time, from the mouth of Hiro's young sidekick, Ban, a Thai man who brings the news, Rachel is struck by the cruel reality of Hiro's "water trade" which flourishes on destroying lives. Before this, she never seems to be able to grasp the reality of his business, being constrained in her villa in Honolulu. Now, she sees her late husband for what he really is, thus calling him names according to her discovery: "*You filth. You fornicator. Pederast. You trafficker in slaves*" (361). Imagining herself living with a man with no morality and conscience, she questions, "*How can I bear this? How can I bear myself*" (359), and then sets out determined to make amends for what Hiro has done.

However, she reckons first that she has to retrieve something Hiro has taken from her: her *mana*, the power borne out of dignity and authority in one's self. Here, Rachel's decision follows the pattern of Pono's action when she killed a Portugese foreman who had raped her years back and used his spine as her cane: to take the source of power of their abuser and make it their own. As the spine of the *haole* rapist becomes a walking cane, supporting Pono's weight, and later Jess's, Rachel has Hiro's fully-tattooed skin removed and put it in a frame in the most serene room: the tea house. Now that Rachel has overcome her sense of insecurity through this symbolic act of removing Hiro's skin, in which the man himself views as his source of ultimate pride and superiority, she attains agency and decides to make up for the wrong her husband has done. She first travels to Thailand to rescue Ban's sisters who were forced into prostitution by Hiro's business, and brings them back to Hawaii, giving them a home and family. Rachel also uses the money to fund Vanya's armed revolution against the

haole capitalists and government. In other words, she transforms the wealth Hiro spent as a means of oppression into the source of empowerment for the weak.

Even though Vanya initially lacks the knowledge of her own family and identity in the same way as Rachel does, the driving force behind her actions is not the search for parental figures, but mainly anger against the world. Vanya, the daughter of Edita, Pono's second daughter, and a Filipino migrant with whom Edita has eloped, was born and raised in a family of the working class. Growing up in an urban slum community, she has witnessed social injustice in Hawaii since childhood, as she recalls horrible working conditions of workers in Dole cannery in contrast to the luxurious lifestyle of the white elites: "*Pineapple rash, hands slashed, sometimes screams, a woman's lopped-off finger. While up in Makiki Heights, rich whites using fingerbowls!*" (192). Apart from outright exploitations as discrimination and commodification of land and people, she is also angered by the white people's complacency and inability to understand the suffering of the natives. Even those who try to uphold a set of political correctness, as well as academics who deal chiefly with the concept of systematized oppression such as feminism, fail to realize their ignorance about the plight of the marginalized. Vanya, for example, was repulsed with her classmates in University of Chicago for their "*'nicing'* [her] *to death*" (194). That is, they were overtly polite to her while ironically asking questions regarding whereabouts of Hawaii and its native language, which reflect their ignorance. Vanya is also infuriated by the university "*'feminist professors'* who "*see local women as 'minority women,'*" and are unable to sympathize with the native "rage" (194).

However, living as a native woman living in a society dominated by the whites, Vanya is upset with every contributing factor that makes her life miserable, including herself, her family, and the underserved community of working-class Hawaiians she grows up in. For instance, she hates "*being mix-marriage mongrel*" (192), "[her] *Hawaiian mother* [and] *Filipino father*" and even "[her]*self*" (193). What upsets Vanya is mainly the helplessness and desperation of the Hawaiians and other oppressed people, and their acquiescence to the unfortunate fate imposed upon them. In short, she feels that the oppressed natives are also complacent, with her father being a clear contribution to this attitude. A Filipino working class who got laid off and received welfare checks worth only six packs of beer, Vanya's father turned into a symbol of total defeat – "*a piece of furniture, propped in the living room before TV, prefiguration of an early grave…*" (193).

Vanya's inability to make peace with her anger towards her own legacy and anything about the *haole* resembles Pono's unfaltering animosity towards the whites, which, in part, contributes to her stubborn determination to preserve pure Hawaiian blood despite the obvious need for change in the society. In other words, Vanya seems to share the same problem of adamant attachment to her view. While it is pure Hawaiian heritage in Pono's case, Vanya accepts neither her people's hopeless state nor the presence of *haole* in Hawaii and in her life.

However, despite their similar sentiment towards the whites and also their Polynesian physical appearance, Vanya differs from Pono in that she feels at odds with her own native identity. To illustrate, she disregards the hidden family secret as the "same old mysterious crap" (236) and disowns some of the essential aspects of

traditional lifestyle, as Run Run relates to Jess, “Know what she [Vanya] say me? She no like *poi* [pudding of taro root]! Nevah did… *Poi*! Dat like juice of mama’s tee-tee” (228). Apart from food, she also gives up the habit of swimming, as Run Run further explained: “she no like swim no moah. Say it boring, nevah did like” (228). Her refusal to swim signifies her disconnection from her heritage for the sea has always been solace for Hawaiians, as illustrated in the case of Kelonikoa and Pono.

Since she is deprived of the full knowledge of family history and repudiates her cultural legacy, Vanya is lost, not knowing exactly who she is or what she wants in life. Her profound sense of loss, consequently, ruins her professional and private life. First, when it comes to her legal work, Vanya’s anger-driven activism in the Pacific region does not provide her with a sense of fulfilment. Rather, it fills her with the hollow feeling that she does not really contribute to anything. For example, she feels disappointed with herself and becomes disillusioned when her stance in dealing with conflicts regarding racial discrimination and injustice is questioned by local victims as impractical. In a conference on Pacific Women for Saving Island Environments, she urges local Pacific miners in Australia to go on strike, and her approach is challenged by a Polynesian wife of a miner who points out that without work, her family cannot afford food and education for their children. The bottom line is that she fails to contribute effectively despite her good intention and commitment to her work because, as Run Run criticizes, she is “busy wit’ politics [and] forget what she politicking foah!” (228)”.

As for her personal life, Vanya has problems establishing a stable and intimate relationship. She needs partners to fill her sense of loss and lack of direction, not

because she loves, or feels compassionate with, them. Her inability to love leads to failure in her relationship with the people who come to her life. First, out of loneliness of "spen[ding] too many years alone" (195), she decides to marry a Filipino man she does not love. When her marriage is lacking in intimacy in the first place, she feels empty despite having a child, Hernando with the man. This leads her to commit adultery when she chanced upon her ex-lover, Ta'a Utu, now a married man. As Ta'a Utu is a pure-blooded high-born Samoan, she is obsessed with what he connotes: Polynesian unstained pride. In this sense, Vanya loves Ta'a Utu not as a human being but as an embodiment of an abstract idea. Her irrational obsession borne out of her yearning for the perfect, non-hybridized image of Polynesian, hinders Vanya from being a responsible mother. She ends up not noticing changes in Hernando as he plans a reckless protest against U.S. Navy bomb testing projects. When the boy gets killed as a consequence, Vanya feels so desperate that both her marriage and extra-marital affair collapse. Then, driven even more lost by the tragedy, she lets her life loose and begins sleeping with strangers, signifying her utmost sense of helplessness and also her inability to be alone.

However, among her many insignificant casual partners is Simon Weir, a former Australian military agent specialized in warfare, who enables her to see other dimensions of white people she once overlooked. First, Simon is, presumably, the first white man in Vanya's life who establishes an intimate relationship with the indigenous people. An orphan who grew up among Aborigine people, Simon is wholly accepted by the community, and thus, identifies himself more with the indigenous than the whites, understanding their struggles, their needs, and even their traditional knowledge passed on for generations. In addition, as he is accustomed to the indigenous way of

life, Simon has not only extensive and in-depth knowledge about nature but also a sense of stewardship toward the land. With these qualities, not seen in any other white man she knows, Simon manages to soften Vanya down to a certain extent as she starts to recognize the humanity underneath one's white skin as she thinks, "deep in his being was an ineluctable hankering for maybe one moment he and [Vanya] could understand, a touching of minds, a down-deep nod in the cluttered chaos called living (252)." As promising as it seems, however, Vanya still refuses to embrace this relationship because she cannot rid herself of the doubt she bears against the whites. At the point when Vanya realizes she starts to have genuine feelings for him and when he knows of it, he proposes to live with her, offering to share with her indigenous knowledge that would connect her to the land, which is central to native cultures, including her Hawaiian one. However, Vanya rejects the opportunity he offers her for a stable relationship and connectedness to her indigenous culture and the land.

Like Rachel who can finally liberate herself from Hiro's spell, Vanya recovers from her sense of loss and her lack of direction after she is united with her grandfather, Duke. One of Duke's most crucial roles is to give clarity to her traumatic past. Thanks to her grandfather, Vanya learns about her family history, understanding why Pono could not reveal to Edita who was her father. Since Duke is back, Pono is also allowed to share her own past, helping Vanya to see Pono in a different light. She becomes amazed how Pono, whom she used to think as indifferent and unaware of situations of Hawaii, in fact, has been very politically active since her younger days. Pono tells Vanya, "*I hid Filipino strikers fighting for fair wages and conditions. You see, the ILWU* [International Longshore and Warehouse Union] *had crossed the sea …*You would have been proud of me" (329).

In addition to helping Vanya come to terms with her past, Duke provides her guidance regarding her future course. Throughout Vanya's adult life, she keeps herself occupied by with her work in order to forget about her problems. When Duke comes back to the Big Island, she no longer needs distraction in her life: "all need for motion, everything, all legal work [are] on hold" (344). She spends time discussing her life's difficulties with her grandfather. Duke, as an active learner all his life who keeps abreast of the ongoing oppression on Hawaiian people and destruction of land and nature, is able to understand her anger, especially her rage borne out of Hernando's death. Furthermore, he supports her plan to join an armed force to rebel against oppression, believing that she can transform her rage into creative force that drives her to make contributions to the Hawaiian nation in the way that best suits her. Duke even justifies Vanya's radical resistance by referring to Hawaii's warrior tradition. As he states "[e]ye for an eye [is] the ways of [the] ancestors" (280). In doing so, he enables Vanya to realize for the first time that her action is rooted in her own Hawaiian blood. Endorsed by Duke, her eventual decision to join Toru, Run Run's grandson, in an armed revolution against white domination over Hawaii is the turning point that makes Vanya let Simon back in her life again, as he offers his military knowledge for their cause. It also allows Vanya to appreciate Simon's loyalty to her because although he himself is strongly against the plan, he is willing to join her, only to be with her.

In the end, she becomes the U.S.'s wanted terrorist because she kills a federal agent who is about to shoot Simon. However, the incident necessitates Simon and Vanya to live in the ancient forests of Waipi'o on the other side of the Big Island, where they remain elusive from the U.S. government by the lush green of the forest and with the help of the *old-timers*, native Hawaiians who choose to lead the traditional way of

life in the wild. This seemingly tragic fate allows Vanya to solve her problems: an inability to establish a loving relationship and a sense of hollowness that comes with her failed attempts to contribute to indigenous peoples. She learns to love Simon, a white person, and in loving him, her blind prejudice against those who are different from her is destroyed. They begin establishing their intimate relationship, similar to Kelonikoa's and Mathys's experiences in their first encounter. The process of talking and taking care of Simon who is dying of the "Orange Agent", or Carcinogen, a toxic radiation he was exposed to in his earlier days of field work, instills in Vanya love and kindness for others who are different from her.

Moreover, leading a life as a fugitive, she witnesses her contribution to the Hawaiian land and people. As the stories spread and investigation on Vanya starts, virtually all Hawaiians, regardless of their birth ethnicities, lie to the police in order to protect her. People from across the island also come to the coffee plantation, bringing *'awa*, traditional tea believed to cure grief, to give their condolences to Jess and family. Young generations of revolutionaries also seek out Vanya to ask for her help to protect Waipi'o, the last bastion of Hawaiian natural beauty, from Japanese developers who plan to turn the sacred site of the Hawaiians into resort complexes because the dwellers of the forest, whom the revolutionaries want to militarize, listens to Vanya and she knows where all the remaining explosives are. The status of Vanya as a figure of authority respected by both the *old-timers* and modern Hawaiians, leading the people in activism and revolution, resembles that of Pono. In other words, Vanya has inherited the symbolic aspect of Pono's identity as a *kahuna*, the one people turn to for advice, direction, and cure for disease. She has become a symbol of revolution, unifying people all over the islands of Hawaii.

As for the last cousin, Jess, she seems to have the least problems getting along with the mainstream American society; she owns a lucrative pet clinic business with her Euro-American friends. However, as a half white, half Hawaiian, she is plagued by the complex problem of multi-generational identity crisis. Jess witnessed the struggle of her mother, Emma, as a rootless and disoriented person. Her mother was prohibited from returning to her home in Kona, her home, and reuniting with Pono since she married a *haole*, the race against which her mother held the strongest grudge. Thus, in order to find a place she belongs, Emma drifted to several places similar to Hawaii, ended up taking residence with the tribe of Tuareg people in the Sahara Desert, and died there. For Jess, she inherits the sense of rootlessness from her mother. Thus, the way she can be healed is, as she tells Ming, "I [have to] understand her. How else I can understand myself? … Look at us, this not knowing in our lives. It ruined our mothers … I'm tired of feeling I'm not this, I'm not that" (286).

Apart from the identity crisis passed on from Emma, Jess suffers from the sense of alienation from both her Hawaiian and white heritages. On the one hand, Jess's white half makes her feel she is different from the other three cousins and Pono and believes she is an outsider in the family. Her belief leads her to have a misguided view of her family, especially Pono. She sees that because her complexion is "*[s]o pale, so different from the others*" (215), her grandmother treats her with disdain. For example, she believes Pono intentionally assigns "*the room farthest from the others*" in order to "*keep* [her] *on the outside*" (215), not knowing that it is the corner room with the best view. Failing to understand her grandmother's reticence, Jess complains that her grandmother does not love her simply because she does not say she misses her.

On the other hand, neither her white husband, Benson, nor their daughter, Anna, accept her Hawaiian half. Throughout their marriage, which ends in divorce, Benson refuses to acknowledge her Hawaiian blood. After they elope, Jess tries to convince him to visit her mother but he puts off the meetings, wanting to believe that "[Jess's] other half did not exist" in order that he can love "half of [her], [her] father's side, Southern half" (304). His denial extends to his treatment toward her, as Jess states that, to blind himself from his wife's native side, he "never [goes] home with [her]" and never wants to know "[her] family and [her] background" (304). Similarly, Anna exhibits strong resistance against Jess's Hawaiian ethnicity. After she learns that she is "one-fourth Hawaiian" Anna becomes paranoid, fearing that it would contaminate her. During her heated argument with Jess, she even accuses her mother for putting her in the position in which she is looked down upon by others.

Having witnessed her mother wither away and lead a life of alienation from her roots, Jess can fully identify herself with neither white nor Hawaiian heritages. And like her mother, she lacks the sense of belonging and certainty, she travels between Manhattan, where she practices veterinarian medicine, and Kona District, unable to decide where she wants to live.

Like Vanya who is rescued by Simon, Jess, however, runs into Mars Scoville, a person who enables her to realize her position in the world. An African-American man brought up in Harlem, Mars drops out of medical school due to financial problems, and becomes an ambulance driver and later founds a charity ambulance service to help the African-American community often overlooked by the medical system. Devoting his life to helping others, Mars sees through Jess's problems of not knowing herself and

criticizes Jess that her charity work is the act of “a twenty-minute do-gooder” (300) who fails to make significant contribution. Then, he urges her to go back to Hawaii to “fight for [her people]” and not let “[Hawaiian] history take place without [her]” (300). His remarks put Jess to reconsider what she could and should do in the time her people are facing great threats. Eventually, thanks to Mars, Jess moves to the Big Island, where her healing journey begins.

Similar to what occurs to Rachel and Vanya, the last factor which makes Jess’s process of self-realization complete is Duke. For Jess, her grandfather’s roles are to help her reconcile with Emma and Pono and to teach her to embrace her hybridity. First, the grandfather serves as a translator for the actions of his daughter, Emma, helping Jess piecing her mother’s life together. Answering Jess’s remarks that she “never thought [her] mother loved [her]”, Duke said Emma loved Jess but since she “lived a life of penance” (370), the longing for a place makes her unable to express her motherly love. Likewise, knowing the long history of the family’s trauma, especially that of Duke’s leprosy, allows Jess to understand Pono’s sufferings. For example, she comes to understand that Pono feels great sadness, being forbidden from sharing the family history with her grandchildren. Once she is able to see Pono not as rigid and unloving, Jess realizes that Pono, after all, is “human, frail, not always in control” (288). In addition to Jess’s better understanding of Emma and Pono, Duke’s return paves the way for the restoration of memories regarding Emma, which, in turn, provides Jess with a sense of belonging. If we look at the dialogues among Duke, Pono, and Jess, it consists mostly of Emma. The grandparents let Jess talk ceaselessly about Emma, sharing stories of her search for home, her dreams, and her hobbies. It is the first time when Emma is present in the household after she was banished years ago. Through the dialogues, Jess

thus brings her mother home and finally finds her place in the world, as she states “I am where I belong … Here, where you are, *where your voices together, talking, arguing*. It means my mother didn’t drop down from a star. It means no one was an orphan” [emphasis added] (373).

Second, Duke offers an alternative way of looking at Jess’s hybridity. All her life, Jess feels alienated by her hybridity, and by deciding to live in Kona, it is likely that she chooses to embrace only her Hawaiian side. However, Duke reminds Jess that she is also “*haole*” and that she and her cousin are all “hybrids”, and “the future” of Hawaii (371). Jess also learns that her grandmother loves and accepts her despite her being half white. Before Pono dies, she asks Jess to take care of the plantation, saying, “[you] will step into my shadow. You will fit” (374). Pono’s recognition of the similarities between them despite the two being most different in terms of appearance and her trust in Jess allow her to successfully embrace her hybridity.

In this way, Jess’s success in reconciling with her mixed identity and the past conflicts with her mother and Pono enables her to leave New York for good, sell her clinic, leave her daughter and return to Kona. Most importantly, it allows her to step into Pono’s place, taking up her role as the hub of connection for the family and community. The proof of her transformation can be seen in the remark of an elder who knows the family since the time Duke and Pono took refuge in the forest: “Strange t’ing. She [Jess] not a big *wahine* [woman] like Pono, neh? But people say Jess start *look* like Pono, stand tall, important. Dark now, like *kama aina* [native-born]” (464). In short, by stepping in Pono’s foot, Jess has become not only a provider of jobs and a caretaker of

land who looks after the coffee plantation but also a person who continues the Hawaiian tradition and legacy for the next generations.

The two characters – Toru and Run Run – who play important roles in helping the Kealoha family suffer from traumas of their own as well. Run Run is so intimately bonded with her grandson, her only remaining blood relation of that she considers his affliction as her own. In mentally tormented, Run Run can never be at peace. Therefore, it can be argued that, Toru's healing leads to the liberation of Run Run as well.

It is important to understand Toru's personal trauma in order to understand his healing process. There are two major causes leading to Toru's gradual mental regression. First, Toru suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder. During the Vietnam War, he was conscripted and became so traumatized by the experiences that he took solace in drugs, which almost killed him. Second, he feels helpless with ongoing social injustice against the Hawaiian and the land. Although he works hard all his life as a *paniolo*, a Hawaiian cowboy, in a ranch owned by whites, he possesses nothing but a horse Rachel gave him. As he witnesses *haole* tourists enjoying their time without being aware of the existence of the poor locals, he becomes so enraged yet cannot think of any means to address the problems. These factors lead him to, in Pono's words "[live] half a life" with "[a] heart left a shell" (231).

It turns out that each of the four granddaughters is the contributing factor in the recovery of Toru. Ming helps alleviate Toru's psychological pain, making it possible for him to go on living. First, a victim of the malicious form of lupus, Ming suffers from similar intense and inexplicable pain to that of Toru, though in different senses. Her illness, thus, allows her to empathize with his distress. Second, Ming, as the one

Toru trusts, leads her compassionate eats to his wartime stories in Vietnam. By offering opportunities for Toru to recount his experiences in the war, she relieves his guilt and long-repressed stress. Third, in being non-judgmental and understanding of Toru's past, Ming contributes to keeping him "alive" and "sane" (232). Her kindness renders her an agent who "stood for years between Toru and his past" (313), keeping his painful memories at bay. However, while Ming succeeds in helping ease Toru's trauma to a certain extent, he still neither fully recovers nor can he manage his anger at being corrupted by the war and the U.S. socio-economic system.

Vanya, who shares Toru's anger towards the country's exploitative structure further contributes to his healing process. When he loses Ming, his war memories resurface, and he becomes so blind with rage that he forgets his love of Hawaiian land and the *'ohana* and recklessly resorts to violence. Seeing this transformation, Vanya steps in and hijacks Toru's plan of radical resistance, fearing that "[his] life would pass unlived" (446). With her intervention, Toru is rescued from plunging himself into self-destruction and prevented from giving up his dream of "com[ing] home and liv[ing] in peace" (387), and taking care of the land for which he spends twenty years "slav[ing]" (410).

Thanks to Vanya's help, Toru lives on. Yet he cannot care for anyone, and according to Pono, it is not "enough to live only for one's self" (213). Thus, Rachel and Jess are to restore Toru's love for humanity and for the land respectively. Rachel helps him regain the kind of love he once gave the cousins. By bringing Ban's two orphan sisters from Thailand and taking them into the family, she gives him an opportunity to express his compassion to others. Toru, as a veteran, understands the power of haunting

memories best, so he can empathize with the sisters' whom Hiro forced into prostitution. He starts providing them with comfort and love, teaching them horse-riding and playing the 'ukulele. As for the last cousin, now an owner of Pono's coffee plantation, Jess brings out his *aloha 'aina* – the love of the land. At first, even after he is given land to work on, Toru's shame at leading a secured life while Vanya is being persecuted obstructs him from engaging in his work on the land. Jess heals him from his regret by entrusting the land in his responsibility. Gradually, his duties make him realize his useful contribution to Vanya because, in the end, the land is what she "is fighting for" (451).

Having seen her grandson's progression toward recovery, Run Run, too, is set free from her crippling worries over him. During the years under Ming's companionship, Toru is able to live on, not succumbing to depression. Likewise, Run Run maintains the will to live. However, Toru is still unstable, so Run Run lives with such fear that she resorts to religion (231). Only after Toru's decision to commit to working on the land and to quit his job as a *paniolo* is she truly liberated from the plaguing sense of concerns. Her grandson's redemption provides Run Run with assurance as she realizes that she has fulfilled her duties. Consequently, she spends her remaining days watching "the son of her dead son, building, going on" (474). She is eventually able to embrace death peacefully as Pono does after passing on the genealogy to her granddaughters.

All in all, it can be concluded that the four women as well as Toru are able to come to terms with their traumatic experience when they rediscover their roots. The individuals' reconciliations also bear important implications in that they shape the

modern definition of Hawaiian-ness, representing the nation as a whole. Most evidently, Vanya symbolizes the rebellious and defiant spirit of the Hawaiian. Jess and Toru embody steadfastness in upholding the pride and identity of Hawaiian people as the protectors of *'aina* and *'ohana*. Rachel represents the openness and generosity of the global citizen, who is eager to learn different cultures and give out helping hands when possible. As for Ming, she contributes to the definition of the Hawaiian in the most fundamental manner. She represents conscience. Without it as the underlying guidance of every action, one might deviate from moral life as Mathys did in the past. As she lay dying, Ming utters her last words to her three cousins are "I will be the conscience whispering in your genes…" (311). In this sense, it can be interpreted that the other qualities of Hawaiian-ness are governed by conscience.

Considering the four cousins together as a symbol of national identity, a Hawaiian is a person who is defiant against injustice, determined in keeping on living despite all the hardships brought upon them while at the same time opening up for the new and the unknown, and lastly always governed by conscience. Most importantly, Pono's girls carry an essential message: Even in the brink of extinction, the only way for the Hawaiian people to live is through hope, pride, and dignity in themselves.

Shark Dialogues **as** ***'ohana*** **Dialogues**

After the resolution of the conflicts as Vanya, Jess, and Rachel as well as Run Run and Toru succeed in establishing their identity, the novel ends with Jess's writing a book of genealogy. In order to understand the message of the novel, readers need to examine the ending scene. This section, therefore, studies major driving forces of Jess's

decision to write down her family history and argues that readers' understanding of her actions will contribute to their comprehension of the novel's title: *Shark Dialogues.*

In the final chapter "Imua: *To Press On, to Go Forward*", there are three key events leading to Jess's resolution. First, Jess realizes her duties to pass on the family stories to the new generations during her conversation with Lena, Toru's newly-wed wife. Lena expresses her concerns about her inability to fathom the complicated family history of her husband: "It's Toru's life, this family. No father, too many mothers… so mixed up, I cannot understand it" (476). Then, she confesses her fear of being unable to answer her children if asked about their identity and history. Having listened to Lena, Jess prophesizes that if she can provide stories regarding their roots, "[the family's] heirs would have the wealth of history to aim at life, when life aimed at them" (476). Second, Jess is urged by Vanya to pass on the stories. During her walk along the beach of Shark Bay, she meets a boy who secretly passes on Vanya's message to her. That message is *imua*, meaning to go forward and press on. At first, Jess does not know "what the next move [is]", but then she sees the "countless images spring[ing] up before her in the waves", all of which are the faces of her family's deceased members, "some from other eras, and those more recent" (479). Coming to understand Vanya's message from this supernatural event, she resolutely concludes, "lives [are] permanent because someone … was there to pass [the lives] on (479)." What Jess means here is that her act of preserving the genealogy is the way of *imua* because, by telling stories, she will be able to keep alive her ancestors and the Hawaiian identity attached to the lives of the people. Third, she gains confidence in writing her genealogy after her encounter with the spirit Pono in form of a shark. Jess, like Lena, fears the complexity of her family history and she is still skeptical of the supernatural aspects of her family such as

Kelonikoa's departure – swimming back to Tahiti – or even Pono's *kahuna* power. After seeing Pono, first as an old woman, then as a shark, Jess finally realizes that her ancestors look after her and assist her when she needs clarity and that the supernatural are deeply intertwined with the reality.

The agents who influence Jess's decision thus come from the past (Pono and the deceased ancestors), the present (Vanya), and the future (the family's heirs). This implies the importance of genealogy in establishes the inextricable link of the past, present, and future for Hawaiian people. That is, the present generations have their identity clarified by the stories about their ancestors' the existences, and having been through the process of realizing one own's genealogy, their role is to ensure that this process will occur to the future generations. Together, this leads to the continuation of family history, allowing for the Hawaiian self-definition through genealogy against the stereotypical images imposed by the normative discourse. Thus, the process of passing on genealogy here can be viewed both as the act of preserving the Hawaiian identity and as rebellion against being overwritten by the outsiders – the act of going forward, pressing on.

The notion of genealogy as discussed is the essence of the novel's title: *Shark Dialogues*. "Dialogues" are the precious means through which Hawaiians pass on their genealogy. As we have seen in the novel, having dialogues leads to the formation of relationships as in those between Pono and Jess, Vanya and Rachel Through dialogues of genealogy, the participants come to understand their sense of self and identity.

As for the word "shark", it reflects the notion of the Hawaiian family, being connected with the notion of *'aumakua*, the family ancestral gods who come in the form

of sharks. Based on Hawaiian beliefs discussed in his paper "The '*Aumakua* — Hawaiian Ancestral Spirits", Herb Kawainui Käne explains the idea of *'amakua* as the center of Hawaiian notion of genealogy; *'amakua* refers to ancestral spirits who link the living (*makua*) with the great spirits of nature (*akua*). As he elaborates, the continuation of the family is the preservation of mystical bond. It is necessary because only through family relationships can human *mana*, or Hawaiian "life force, charisma, inherited talents, intelligence, and other virtues" (1) be passed on from the great spirits of nature to living individuals. In the novel, we can see the emphasis on Hawaiian traits being passed on through genealogy. For example, the abilities to establish an intimate relationship with the sea and to swim for hours are passed on from Kelonikoa down to Pono's four granddaughters, as are the power of *kahuna* from Pono to Jess, or *'aloha aina* (the love of land) from the ancestors to the four grandchildren and Toru. We can also argue that it is impossible for human *mana* to be passed on successfully without dialogue. For instance, prior to knowing family history through her dialogues with Pono, Vanya, despite the innate ability to swim, decides to abandon it. Likewise, Jess, at first, could not decipher her *kahuna* power, and she comes to realize its significance only after her talks with Pono. The word "shark" should be used instead of the word "family" because the notion of family in the English language does not suffice to encapsulate the spiritual aspects of familyhood and it express the web of relations in a Hawaiian sense.

All in all, taking the meaning of the two words together, we may come with a conclusion that Jess's decision to write down the genealogy is the Hawaiian way of resisting extinction. Even if Hawaiians' physical appearance and identity may have been immensely shaped by the nation's history of trauma and migration, the essence of

Hawaiian values persists through dialogues of genealogy. In other words, so long as stories of genealogy keep growing through generations by means of recounting them, Hawaiian identity will always live on, grow and adapt. *Shark Dialogues*, in this light, echoes the same poignant message as *Hawai'I 78* by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole: the psychological pain of the natives in seeing the transformation of land which jeopardizes both the nation and its people is alleviated by the concluding statement of the song that even though the ancestors, the representative of old day's Hawaiian identity, may have to "cry for the gods, cry for the people / cry for the land that was taken away", Hawaii will continue to exist as the song goes: "and then yet you'll find, Hawai'i".

As a dialogue itself, the novel functions in a similar sense as the dialogues in the novel. At the plot level, dialogues enable characters to truly understand Hawaii's history of loss and exploitation and also help heal them from their personal trauma and cultivate their sense of identity by providing them with the sense of rootedness. Kiana Davenport's *Shark Dialogues* as a novel, in recounting Hawaiian history as intertwined with those residing on the land and redefining Hawaiian-ness, defies the stereotypes of Hawaii as paradise on earth and thus Hawaiian people as non-dimensional service and entertainment providers. It shows the many facets of the land and its people, especially those concerning the people's defiance and nationalistic pride, which are not recognized by typical visitors of the island. Here, we may be able to say that the healing power of this novel lies in Davenport's ability to give clarity to her fellow Hawaiians in terms of their identity and history – recovering them from the same sense of loss that plagues the characters. The novel even heals non-Hawaiian readers from the clouded, vision with Hawaii by its honest stories of passion, grief, conscience, spirituality, and defiance.

CHAPTER V: Conclusion

This thesis has examined how the three selected novels written by those categorized as indigenous writers – *Ceremony* (1977), *Potiki* (1986), and *Shark Dialogues* (1994) – make use of local, region-based myths and philosophies. In *Ceremony,* Native American concepts of ceremonies and storytelling are employed as the healing methods for the traumatized World War II veteran protagonist. By being exposed to the indigenous practices, he gradually recovers from a sense of displacement and self-hatred. He begins to realize his relationship with the community, the world, and even nature, and subsequently understands that with the help of indigenous wisdom he can sustain the balance in this complex web of relation and therefore regain a sense of belonging to the land and his cultural identity. The healing journey of the protagonist as described by Leslie Marmon Silko also works to raise awareness of the readers who engage in reading the text about the existing problems among indigenous people, their livelihood, and the environment and conditions of our world as a whole.

While *Ceremony* is based on Native American healing practices as the main driving force of the text, *Potiki* largely makes use of Maori cosmological concepts of *kore,* the unorganized potential, and *koru,* the spiral mode of time. These ideas govern the traditional ways of life of the Tamihana's community prior to the contact with the outside threat. Then, as conflicts arise, the two concepts determine their stance regarding the land dispute and their reaction against ongoing acts of intimidation. Later, when encountering a series of losses, the community members resort to the concepts of *kore* and *koru* in helping them cope with the seemingly irrevocable damages and in their political activism against the exploitative land developers. In addition, the order of story-telling in *Potiki* and the way its messages are delivered are influenced by the

traditional wisdom of wood carving. The novel is carved as a *wharenui* – an ancestral house – whose existence is based on *kore* and *koru.* In doing this, Patricia Grace succeeds in creating a host-and-visitor (writer-and-reader) relationship. This works to cultivate the understanding of Maori perception of the world for readers, who are put in the position of observers of the Maori cultural heritage.

In *Shark Dialogues*, *mana*, or supernatural power, is present in the characterization of main characters. The protagonist, Pono and one of her granddaughters, Jess, possess the ability of a *kahuna,* a future-telling seer. This is not merely a literary tool to create captivating personas; rather, it is the core of the novel's progression in that the survival of the characters depends on this mystical gift. Most importantly, the ability exemplifies a distinctive sense of Hawaiian identity non-existent in the Western American paradigm. Along with the *kahuna*'s power, the belief that the Hawaiian ancestral gods take the form of *'aumakua*, or the great sharks, brings about the hybridized qualities of major characters as half-shark, half-human beings who can swim for hours and to literally transform into sharks. This suggests an inherent connection between humans and nature in a most concrete form, the physicality. In addition to the employment of supernatural qualities, such Hawaiian moralities as *aloha 'aina,* love of the land, and *pono*, goodness, constitute the conscience and actions of the protagonists both in their peaceful mission of environmental stewardship – to take care of land as a member of an extended Hawaiian family – and in their political activism against the ongoing social injustice and land appropriation.

Through the use of native myths, practices, and philosophies, the three novels succeed in reclaiming the stolen voice by creating indigenous identities from the

perspective of the *born-within*. Still, it is undeniable that, as this thesis has illustrated, the outside influence has become a major factor in the context of the contemporary society. Inevitably, cultural hybridity emerges as another key concept which the three novels similarly explore. In *Ceremony,* Silko makes clear that it is no longer sufficient to rely on the traditional forms of ceremonies and storytelling to effectively heal individuals and sustain the balance of the world. Instead, the ceremonies as performed in the novel are modified variations of the old ones, whereas the performers and participants of these rituals are all hybrids whose lives have been heavily affected by the world outside their community. Moreover, in order for Tayo, the protagonist, to fully recover from his past trauma, he has to embrace his hybridity and understand that being a mixed-blood is not only acceptable but necessary for the survival of an ethnic group, as Night Swan, one of the characters notes, "things which don't shift and grow are dead things" (126). *Ceremony* is also hybrid in its form as it is a mixture between a novel and a tradition of performing a ceremony. The book is a novel in that it recounts a story of the protagonist in a written manner. At the same time, there are several ritualistic elements crucial in Native American ceremonies, which are usually performed orally. This combination works to establish a storyteller-listener relationship between the author and her readers, and in doing so, the work has with it not only the story of the *born-within* to share to the written culture but also the healing power for its readers/listeners too.

In *Potiki,* the notions of *kore* and *koru*, the philosophical foundations of the Maori, allow for changes to take place. In viewing the world as progressing in a spiral manner and believing in endless possibilities hidden in the seeming nothingness of *kore*, the Maori accept changes as parts of their culture. This adaptability makes it possible

for the indigenous tradition to include new sets of Western knowledge, such as law and political activism. The hybrid qualities of the modern definition of Maori, thus, help the community survive the ongoing threats from land developers.

While hybridity seems to be an additional element of the definition of Native American and Maori identities in the two novels, it has become the essence of Hawaiian-ness in *Shark Dialogues*. Kiana Davenport highlights that with its history which brings about such a multi-ethnic society, to preserve the genetic purity of Hawaiian is impractical. The novel also suggests that to accept the hybrid definition of Hawaiian identity is what the natives must do as it is the inevitable future of the nation as Duke, the pure-blooded royal descendant, tells his ethnocentric soulmate, Pono that,

> She had to learn to accept this, that the true original blood of their ancestors, the only one she recognized was dying. Their granddaughters … were hybrids of the new world. *Their* offspring were even more alien, Hawaiian blood blurred into quarters, someday eighths. A world Pono didn't want to know. (231)

To compensate for this changing state of Hawaii, Davenport broadens the scope of definition of Hawaiian culture, defining it as diverse, yet unified under the same principles of *aloha 'aina*, *pono*, and defiance against injustice in all forms.

In addition to the elements of native wisdom and hybridity, indigenous identity as portrayed in the three novels are rooted in nature. In *Ceremony*, nature plays integral roles in restoring the protagonist's connection to his surroundings. Native American nature deities, appearing in the form of humans, teaches the traumatized protagonist the interrelatedness of the nature and humans and points to the fact that one cannot survive

without the well-being of the other. As for *Potiki*, the Maori is inextricably bonded with the land because they rely on it as the source of sustenance and the foundation of their cultural heritage. In *Shark Dialogues*, with the concepts of *aloha 'aina*, Hawaiian identity is tied to land. Only when one takes care of the land can one really contribute to the preservation of native culture, and, in turn, the loss of land is the threat to the survival of Hawaiian-ness.

While some might perceive that the issues presented in the three novels are culturally specific and therefore may not contribute to the contemporary globalized society as the texts themselves were written a few decades back – the latest one, *Shark Dialogues*, was written about 25 years ago – they are, in fact, relevant to today's contexts in several essential aspects. One of the major concerns in *Ceremony* is racial discrimination. Even today, the Indians are still discriminated against and the social stigma on indigenous groups is still deeply rooted in American society. Cases of casual and serious racist treatment towards Native American people are common as seen on daily news coverage. In addition to social discrimination against the native, the ongoing environmental destruction on global scales is threatening the indigenous way of life at an unprecedented scale. For instance, the 2016 documentary *Seed: The Untold Story*, discusses that Native American livelihood and culture are seriously jeopardized by today's agriculture. First, Native Americans are faced with hardship because of drought caused by climate change, obstructing them from successfully planting corn, their staple. With genetically modified corns, the ones regarded as "the atomic bomb of agriculture" (00.33.18-00.33.40) by Claire Hope Cummings, an environmental lawyer and an author, being widely cultivated, the heirloom corn seeds, many of which were already on the brink of extinction, may be contaminated with the GMO genes. Once

this happens, the purity of native seeds will be permanently ruined and the Native Americans will be at risk of being charged for seed infringement by the agro-industrial businesses which have patented the GMO strains. As a result, they will lose the seeds they have been planting for generations and will have no choice but to depend on the corporate's seeds, which are expensive and dangerously vulnerable to diseases and climate change.

However, in spite of being some of the most vulnerable groups when it comes to industrial agriculture, in such a precarious time as today, similar to the what has been proposed in *Ceremony*, the indigenous knowledge of the Native Americans can help contribute to the solution the world is seeking. The documentary reveals that as America has lost 94 percent of its plant diversity due to commercial monoculture and genetic modification and therefore at risk of the greatest famine in history, Bill McDorman, an official at Native Seeds/SEARCH, an Arizona-based non-profit seed bank, states that Native Americans are among the largest contributors of the organization and that they are the last expression of these stewards going back thousands of years that took care of these things and made sure that we [humanity] got them [the seeds]" (00.14.40-00.16.05).

Not unlike the long series of plights of the Native Americans, the history of the Maori people can be appropriately summed up by the title of the 1990 book written by Ranginui Walker, a prominent figure in Maori renaissance: a *Struggle without End*. With threats posed by the *Pakeha* majority to indigenous cultures and livelihood as common today as in the past, Maori people are still affected by land dispute and ongoing environmental degradation caused by land development. For instance, in the book *Sea*

Change: Climate Politics and New Zealand (2017), the author Bronwyn Hayward discusses how residents in certain areas are more prone to environmental problems than others. She explains that there are two contributing factors leading to this kind of social injustice. First, due to economic gaps between the privileged white and the oppressed natives, the low-income Maori and Islanders are conditioned to live in cheap and crowded areas vulnerable to floods. Second, since New Zealand climate has been devastated by multi-billion corporates, climatic issues have become so evident that it starts to disrupt the livelihood of the people. This put more risks of severe environmental hazard to the indigenous people who already live in the areas non-profitable and thus undesirable for the white *Pakeha* (39-43). This scenario, as the author points out, affects children in particular. They cannot go to school on rainy day as parents fear flash floods, leading to lower performance at school compared with the more affluent, mostly *Pakeha*, pupils. These underprivileged children also fall victims to illnesses borne out of flood and humid living conditions, becoming the group "with the highest rate of rheumatic fever in the world (40)."

It is worth noting that people in these affected areas are the Maori communities that willingly lead a self-sufficient life like the Tamihana. Whether they were forced to relocate or they are the original land owners, they have cultivated strong bonds with the land they depend on and built their community's cultural heritage on it. This aspect, too, resembles the Tamihana's approach in the novel. Even when these communities are threatened with environmental disasters, they choose not to leave as the act of leaving would mean the desertion of their cultural and spiritual bonds to land. Hence, so long as social inequality persists – i.e. the land the Maori reside are not taken care of by the government – and if the government and New Zealanders still do not take actions

on environmental issues, the lives and the culture of the Maori and Pacific people will always be at risk.

As for the case of Hawaii in today's context, land dispute and the commodification of Hawaiian culture for tourism are still some of the most prevalent problems. One recent incident concerns the construction of a Disney's 800-million Aulani Resort following the success of *Moana*, a Disney's animated movie about a daughter of a Polynesian village chief who embarks on a journey to return the stolen heart to the goddess of life. In her article "Moana might be great for representation but it's not all heartwarming for Hawaii" published online in 2017 in *The Guardian,* Tina Grandinetti, a Hawaii-born writer specialized in indigenous politics, points out that although the movie may represent the indigenous culture better than the preceding projects, the popularity of it results in the construction of this luxurious theme-parked resort, built on Waianae, one of the poorest areas in the state. Ironically, *Moana*, the movie which is supposed to properly represent the Polynesian people and their culture, turns out to worsen ongoing crises in Hawaii as it has brought about a monumental amount of income for Disney at the cost of environmental problems caused by the construction of resorts and waste from tourism, while an increasing number of native people who cannot afford accommodation in their own ancestral areas are forced to live homeless lives by an extremely high cost of living. The case of Aulani Resort shows that tourism industry is similar to what is presented in *Shark Dialogues*, has completely transformed the coastline of Hawaii, jeopardized the region's nature and put locals into financial trouble. As a result, in spite of the façade of prosperity brought about by tourism, the state of Hawaii now has the highest number of homeless populations in the nation (Sambamurthy et al.).

Furthermore, as the majority of the fertile Hawaiian land is owned by the descendants of the *haole* settlers, it has always been used for large-scale industrial agriculture. Today, according to the documentary *Seed: The Untold Story*, much of the *haole*'s land is owned by such massive agrochemical and biotech corporations as Monsanto and Dow, whose main product lines are genetically-modified crops and a long line of insecticides and herbicides. The land is also used as the testing field for newly-invented and unregulated chemicals (00.38.45-00.41.10). Locals suffer from skin diseases, respiratory illnesses, and various kinds of cancers caused by the ongoing sprayings. Some of them are compelled to relocate. As Jeffrey Smith from Institute of Responsible Technology illustrates in the documentary, since many governmental authorities in legal sectors are associated with Monsanto, local problems are almost virtually ignored (00.42.45-00.43.52). This leads to political activism and a series of lawsuits against the company. It is noteworthy that the kind of injustice and maltreatment inflicted on many characters in *Shark Dialogue*, published almost two decades ago, is still occurring to the people of Hawaii today. What is more appalling, yet noble and respectable on the part of the locals, is that throughout the course of history, the affected people have had to stand up for their own. To be more precise, they have to stand up for each other, their '*ohana*. After all, this sense of responsibility for one's clan and family has been the strongest driving force that propels the Hawaiians to continue living and fighting as they are.

We have seen that Leslie Marmon Silko, Patricia Grace, and Kiana Davenport not only reveal the ongoing struggles of indigenous people but do so from the perspective of the natives. By being immersed in the world of the indigenous people and informed of how much they have to endure such injustices, we come to realize our

ignorance and complicity. Mass tourism and consumerism are the global trends in which most of us unquestioningly participate. Believing we have the right to consume and to pursue happiness, we do not know that these activities come at a great cost for the most disadvantaged groups. In partaking in global ignorance, as we learn from the novels, we are letting the land being taken away from the indigenous people to serve our appetite to consume, allowing for endless projects of exoticization and commodification. Thus, we can say that the three novels work to raise our awareness of the reality of the world, prompting us to take each of our actions into more careful consideration. In addition, since the sworks shed light on the profundity of indigenous knowledge and philosophy, the aspect most disregarded and overlooked by the mainstream society, they raise questions of whether our perception of the world is limited and whether there are some other possibilities to perceive reality. Particularly in this era of global environmental crises, social and economic inequality as well as political insurgency, the indigenous views regarding the harmonious and non-hierarchical relationship of humans and nature together with their committed stewardship to the Mother Earth may teach us to learn how to better love, treat, and cherish the land with full awareness of our bonds with nature.

As for literary scholars in the academia, one of the possible contributions that they are able to make is to introduce sets of indigenous knowledge which are foreign to the public and illustrate how they can be as relevant in today's society, and, particularly in this case, in the area of contemporary literary criticism, as any mainstream Western theories and frameworks. The scholars of indigenous studies can also seek to help bring the existence of the marginalized people to the fore and expose the ongoing social injustices done to them throughout the history. More importantly, they make these

important contributions with an awareness that the academics as the outsiders of a particular indigenous culture are unable to fully comprehend the specific subtlety borne out of the plights and experiences that the subjects of their studies have lived through. In the end, while the scholars attempt to give justice to the oppressed ethnic groups, the fact that it is hardly possible for them to grasp all the cultural complexities should render them humbler individuals, and with this cultivated sense of humility, they then can appropriately play their own part in the continuing endeavors of indigenous peoples to reclaim their stolen voices.

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