CHAPTER III
A GENUINE LITERARY REMINDER
(Ceremony and The Almanac of the Dead)

Leslie Marmon Silko, a Laguna woman is the first female Native-American novelist. She grew up on the Laguna Reservation in New Mexico and is a Pueblo Indian of mixed ancestry-Cherokee, German, Northern Plains, Indian, English, Mexican and Pueblo. Contemporary Native American poetry and fiction generally relate to the oral traditions from which they derive. Silko has spoken and written frequently about the novel's indebtedness to Laguna oral tradition, particularly as those traditional materials were told to her by the storytelling men and women on the paternal side of her family. She loved storytelling and loved strong oral tradition of her tribe. Silko reflects her diverse heritage in her writing. In Rosen's 1974 anthology, Silko wrote about herself: "I am of mixed -breed ancestry, but what I know is Laguna. This place I am from is everything I am as a writer and human being." And she has also said (in Laguna Woman): "I suppose at the core of my writing is the attempt to identify what it is to be a half-breed or mixed blooded person; what it is to grow up neither white nor fully traditional Indian." It is as if she is saying that she is wholly a Laguna Pueblo and will write about the place where she grew up, but that at the same time she is a mixed -blood and therefore has been given the ability and the freedom to see Laguna also from the outside (Per Seyerstead : 1980).

Silko’s first novel, Ceremony (1977) is a non chronological work that interweaves free verse poetry and narrative prose. It begins with several poems.
Silko, here, tells about the significance of stories also: "It took a long time to explain the fragility and intricacy because no world exists alone...each world had to be explained with a story..." (35). It illustrates the importance of recovering the old stories and merging them with modern reality to create a stronger culture. For centuries the traditional stories have kept alive and renewed a rich store of tales about mythical, historical, current figures and events. In *Ceremony*, in the very beginning, Leslie Marmon Silko introduces the Pueblo creation myth and its goddess Thought Woman. Thought Woman thinks and creates a story. Silko is only the teller of that story. Ts’its’tsinako, Thought Woman and the Spider are story teller’s most valiant attempt to imagine what a character in a story would be like. It is an attempt to see how in the logic of old belief system things would come into creation. Thought woman is the female creator who provides the mythical frame for Silko to write the novel. Thought woman names things and by naming brings them into being.

Ts’its’tsinako, Thought-Woman

Is sitting in her room
And whatever she thinks about
Appears.
She thought of her sisters
Nau’ts’ity’I and I’tc’ts’ity’I
And together they created the Universe
This world
And the four worlds below. (1)
*Ceremony* represents a genuine advance in the evolution of Native American literature. The story begins after World War II. Stories shape our lives, in Silko’s account, both by giving form to events and by suggesting in advance the form events will have. *Ceremony* focuses on the Amerindians’ response to World War II and their attitude to the hostile Euro-Americans. Silko’s novel represents a genuine advance in the evolution of Native American literature. Silko grew up during a time when there was greater political and cultural awareness. She intersperses Laguna myths throughout the narrative. Silko believes that Indians are best off when they remain within their traditional culture. Silko here tells about the story of a Laguna war veteran Tayo’s quest for sanity which he achieves through reopening the lifeline to the constructive elements in his roots. Thus in *Ceremony*, the protagonist, Tayo finds his cure and salvation within an Indian context. Silko here emphasizes the need to return to the rituals and oral traditions of the past in order to rediscover the basis for one’s cultural identity. Since Tayo is a product of both worlds, he struggles to find his place in the Old and New World: "He had believed in the stories for a long time, until the teachers at Indian school taught him not to believe in that kind of 'nonsense'" (19). Consequently, he started believing in "America the Beautiful" (42) and freedom "just like teachers said in school" (42).

Silko’s novel is a literary reminder for Americans to acknowledge Native American heritage as first true national heritage and remember that the Native American heritage is still alive and well today. Silko has proved that
America has made mistakes in the past, but certainly has the power to rectify those mistakes today. Tayo finds peace in the Native American ceremonies and shows the need to return to the rituals and oral traditions of the past to rediscover the basis for one’s cultural identity. *Ceremony* tells the story of one man, but expresses the vision that it is simultaneously the story of the entire world. Every person is intimately responsible for what happens on this earth. Silko recounts a young man’s search for consolation in his tribe’s history and traditions and his resulting voyage of self-discovery and discovery of the world. When Tayo returns emotionally distressed from World War II in the Pacific against the Japanese he cannot find comfort among other Native American Veterans and their retreat into alcohol. With the help of several people, including the medicine man, Betonie, he finds his ancient connections to the land and the healing ceremonies of old rituals. The patterns of the old stories and myths, all fighting together, bring healing peace and redemption to Tayo, as well as hope to the Laguna Pueblo.

*Ceremony* depicts life on the Indian reservation and it also explores the philosophical issues. This established Silko as an important artist from the American Indian community and the enthusiastic revivers welcomed her as an important American writer. It has marked her as the first Native American woman novelist. Charles R. Larson, in *Washington Post Book World*, called *Ceremony* a novel "powerfully conceived" and attributed much of the book's success to Silko's incorporation of Indian elements. "Tayo's experiences may suggest that *Ceremony* falls nicely within the realm of American fiction about
World War II," Larson wrote. "Yet Silko's novel is also strongly rooted within the author's own tribal background and that is what I find especially valuable here." Similarly, Frank MacShane wrote in the *New York Times Book Review* that Silko skillfully incorporates aspects of Indian storytelling techniques into *Ceremony*: "She has used animal stories and legends to give a fabulous dimension to her novel," he declared. MacShane added that Silko was "without question ... the most accomplished Indian writer of her generation". (Silko, Leslie Marmon, 1948).

Some critics considered *Ceremony* a powerful confirmation of cosmic order. Elaine Jahner, who reviewed the novel for *Prairie Schooner Review*, wrote that *Ceremony* "is about the power of timeless, primal forms of seeing and knowing and relating to all of life." She observed that the Indian custom of communal storytelling provided the novel with both theme and structure and added that Tayo eventually "perceives something of his responsibilities in shaping the story of what human beings mean to each other." And Peter G. Beidler focused on the importance of storytelling in *Ceremony* by writing in *American Indian Quarterly* that the novel is both "the story of a life [and] the life of a story." Beidler called *Ceremony* "a magnificent novel" that "brings life to human beings and makes readers care about them." (ibid.).

Alan R. Velie, author of *Four American Indian Literary Masters*, says that *Ceremony* is not only an Indian narrative that "celebrates tradition," "Ceremony also belongs to another tradition and form older than the novel--the grail romance"(Velie 107). Velie compares the novel to twentieth century
novels that feature the legend of the Holy Grail in their fiction. He says that the similarity lies in the fact that there is a very serious connection between the health of the main character Tayo, and the health of his land. He argues that Tayo is the wounded king, Betonie the healer, and the Laguna reservation is the wasteland (Leslie Marmon Silko, http://english.emory.edu/Bahri/Silko.html).

Another critic, Laura Coltelli, asked Silko in an interview if it was not the case that the story stressed the importance of women and their role in society. Silko answered by saying that the role of women in society was part of the theme but not all of it. Suzanne M. Austgen writes from a different perspective in her analysis of the novel, "Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony and the Effects of White Contact on Pueblo Myth and Ritual." She says that the novel "emphasizes the important role that storytelling plays in within the Pueblo culture" (Leslie Marmon Silko, http://www.e-scoala.ro/american/us_cultures/c4j.html).

In her interviews and publications, Silko emphasizes the importance of stories to the Laguna Pueblo culture. In Critical Fictions: The Politics of Imaginative Writing, Silko writes that "the stories are always bringing us together, keeping this whole together, keeping this family together, keeping this clan together. 'don't go away don't isolate yourself because we've all had these kinds of experiences' . . . This separation not only endangers the group but the individual as well-one does not recover by oneself" (86). The different
perspectives given illustrate of the variety of opinions, thoughts and critiques of *Ceremony* (*Ceremony*, http://www.utm.edu/staff/lalexand/ceremony.htm).

*Ceremony* is explained through several different approaches. One approach discusses about the Contemporary Issues such as the role of rituals, the role of mixed-bloods, sources of evil and integrating old culture with new culture or the change etc. Young adults follow old traditions and raising habits by combing them with their own and learning more about themselves. When needed they were integrated into the main society and praised by the mainstream Americans. For example the veterans who had been praised as patriotic Americans were later demoted to their previous status. Trying to drown their bitterness, they use their disability checks to get drunk in the bars just outside the reservation line on route 66 (Per Seyersted, 1980). Betonie, had traveled a lot and had attended school in the white world. He adjusts to the changes around him and keeps samples of white culture in his house alongside the traditional paraphernalia. Tayo tells the fact of his origin to Betonie. He feels that Betonie can sympathize with him as he too is a mixed breed.

The second approach is related to Literary Concerns such as style, devices used, prototypes, and character development. Tayo's Post-Traumatic-Stress Syndrome is recovered by trying to forget (Per Seyersted, 1980). While ceremony is ostensibly a tale about a man, Tayo, it is as much and more a tale of two forces: the feminine life force of the universe and the mechanistic death force of witchery. We are the land, and the land is mother to us all. There is not a symbol in the tale that is not in some way connecting with womaness, that
doesn't in some way relate back to Ts'eh and through her to the universal feminine principle of creation: Ts'its'tsi'nako, Thought Woman, Grandmother Spider, Old Spider Woman (Paula Gunn Allen, 1983).

The third approach is related to Sources of Power such as names, stories, spoken and written words, knowledge, and witchery. Betonie also says that in order to achieve a balance the Indians shouldn’t consider themselves as helpless. They should believe in witchery and the destructive forces instead of blaming the whites for their sufferings. If witches are defined as destroyers and witchery as destructive rather than constructive force, then the whites certainly demonstrate such powers, to the point that they can destroy the world. Some blame the Anglos for their ills, and others blame themselves for not being whites. This feeling leads to dissatisfaction and isolation, among Indians themselves. Indians should return to their balanced views and in general remember all their old wisdom, which also includes the knowledge: as things grow, they also change. The old stories contain truth, the old verities about universal emotions and experiences. In other words, the message to all of us is that there are no boundaries, in the sense that life is repetition of what has gone before. Furthermore, you should treasure the store of traditional material handed down to you, partly because it is an integral element of your identity, partly because it ties you more intimately to the land that is yours. In this sense, stories insure survival. The last to speak in the book is old Grandma: "'I guess I must be getting old,' she said, 'because these goings-on around Laguna don't
get me excited any more . . . It seems like I already heard these stories before ... only thing is, the names sound different' " (273).

The fourth approach is related to Religious Issues such as conflicts with Christianity, and aspects of traditional beliefs such as healing and ceremony. The Laguna medicine man Ku'oosh, called in by old Grandma, gives Tayo the Scalp Ceremony. But he fails to cure Tayo. So Tayo is sent on to another medicine man, the Navajo Betonie who lives near Gallup. While Betonie does give Tayo traditional ceremonies, he wins his confidence by encouraging him to speak of his Pacific experiences. He suggests Tayo that the reason he saw Josiah in one of the Japanese was that 30,000 years ago they were no strangers. What he is giving Tayo is less a cure than a recipe for a self-cure: while the white doctors' medicine had drained memory out of him, Betonie tells him to accept the fact that things are complicated and look into himself and remember everything. This approach to healing doesn't imply a modern emphasis on the individual, however. He begins to grasp what Betonie is suggesting to him: that he is part of an unending history, of a pueblo community now influenced by another, greater community, of a set of constructive and destructive forces, and that in order to achieve wholeness, he has to accept the fact that things are complex and not static. As Betonie says, "There are balances and harmonics always shifting, always necessary to maintain . . . . It is a matter of transitions, you see; the changing, the becoming must be cared for closely. You would do as much for the seedlings as they become plants in the field" (137).
When Tayo’s friends have taken him to an abandoned uranium mine, he manages to hide behind some boulders, but when they torture the one he thought was his real friend, he is tempted to come forward and attack them. Just in time he recalls Ts’eh’s warning that they want to end his story, and he has the strength not to join in this Indian self-destruction. He has reached the end of his ceremony, and he can tell the holy men in the kiva what he has learned. Tayo is healed when he understands in magical and loving ways, that his being is within and outside him. Tayo’s mother, Night Swan, Ts’eh, Josiah, the spotted cattle, winter, hope, love, and the starry universe of Betonie’s ceremony are responsible for his cure. This understanding occurs slowly as Tayo experiences the stories both ancient and the new. He understands through the process of making the stories demonstrate in this actions and in his understanding because the stories and the land are about the same thing. These stories and the ceremony the gap between isolate human being and lonely landscape is closed. These stories are responsible to make Tayo understand the truth of his situation.

The fifth approach is related to Cultural and Social Issues such as community influence, group and tribal identity, effects of the war, and effects of racism. Tayo is filled with despair not just because he hates the whites but because he cannot accept himself. Tayo was born of an unknown white father and a mother with whom he had lived for some years among the Gallup prostitutes. Later he had been given by his mother to her sister in Laguna, and she had made it clear to him that his mother's light-footedness was a disgrace to
the family. She always treated him inferior to her son Rocky. Auntie encourages Rocky's plans to become a football star in the white world. But Tayo's duty is to help his uncle Josiah with his cattle. However, when Rocky calls him "brother" and wants him with him in the Army, he too enlists. His Auntie gives him the task of looking after his cousin Rocky. But he cannot prevent Rocky from being killed beside him in the Pacific. When they are ordered to fire on some Japanese prisoners, Tayo believes that one of them is Josiah and that he is responsible for his death as well, even though he didn't pull the trigger. This extreme self-condemnation causes him to break down, and during a long stay in a veterans' hospital he survived by withdrawing from himself into what he believes is invisibility. Finally returning to his Pueblo after six years, he blames himself for having survived, and also for the drought which has plagued Laguna since his uncle died and for the loss of the cattle which had run away. No longer caring whether he lives or dies, he one day nearly kills Emo (Per Seyersted, 1980).

The sixth approach is related to Cultural Substance such as use of language, connections to oral traditions, and authenticity of perspective and voice. Betonie presents Tayo with a serio-comic story or chant relating how the Indians had invented the whites. While most of the many other interspersed mythic chants are Laguna originals, this one is more or less made up by Silko. With this song Betonie sends Tayo on his way to look for the cattle, telling him to keep in mind the constellation of the stars which had appeared in a sand painting made for him (Per Seyersted 1980).
The seventh and final approach is Relationship with Environment such as land and water, seasons as well as celestial, and animals. Tayo’s search for the cattle is a way of showing his worth by repaying Josiah and the encounters it leads him to with a woman and a mountain both mark steps in his cure. The meaning with Ts’eh is meaningful not only because she loves him, but especially because he is able to love her. He who had been kept at a distance by Auntie and who believed it had to be that way, now experiences a warm, almost wordless closeness which opens him emotionally and makes him realize that he was indeed loved by his mother and uncle, just as he loves them. When Tayo later meets Ts'eh at the spring, she leads him further towards the natural when she shows him the marvels of things that grow. Tayo's encounters with Ts'eh are both real and unreal. There is a dreamlike quality about their tender meetings; and in short, she has many of the qualities of Spiderwoman, the Mother who also created the land. When they make love at the spring she seems to be merged with it. This reopening of Tayo’s lifeline to nature is further advanced on Pa’to’ch, the highest mesa where he finally finds the cattle. After the final encounter with Ts’eh, Tayo knows he has to enter the normal world. He is aware that his friends are after him, and he realizes he has to face them. Before doing so he watches the sunrise at Enchanted Mesa, the famous landmark between Acoma and Laguna (Per Seyersted, 1980).

There are different themes in Silko’s Ceremony. The importance of story telling in Native American culture is discussed in detail in this novel. Storytelling in the context of Ceremony refers not only to the general process
of telling a story but also to the particular Native American tradition of storytelling. Traditionally, Native American cultural is oral, and everything from biology to history to morality to medicine is passed on in the form of stories from one generation to the other. While the elders in a community may be the official storytellers, storytelling is a profoundly communal event. Women are especially the protectors of their culture. They protect it through stories. Since stories are intended to pass on information that will be remembered, they are often rhythmic, almost sung, and contain a large amount of repetition. This mode of storytelling is presented in *Ceremony* in the form of poems, both framing the main narrative and interspersed throughout. These stories are in fact traditional Pueblo stories, known outside of the context of the novel. Tayo’s tale reflects the traditional stories but is original. Along with the arrangement of the prose and poem passages, it can be seen as Silko’s personal intervention in the communal process of storytelling.

The prose sections of *Ceremony* are primarily narrated in a third person whereas the poems vary between first and third person. They announce the elements of this theme that will recur throughout the novel. Stories have the power to heal. They contain the rituals and ceremonies that can cure individuals and communities. They do this primarily by reminding us of the interrelations between all people and all things. As a story is told communally or is shared by one person with another, it creates a sense of community between those people. The presence of both the first and third person in the poems reinforces this aspect. For Tayo, the stories represent the Native
American understanding of the world that he grew up with but that the white schools, the army, and the doctors and the VA hospital tried to convince him were incorrect. As he remembers and reenacts the old stories, Tayo reconnects with his community, recovers from the trauma of the war, and returns the rain to his land. The stories teach Tayo that he is not alone, both because he shares stories with a whole community and also because content of the ancient stories remind him that others before him have had similar experiences—he is not alone, and there is always hope for renewal.

The contact between Native American and White cultures in *Ceremony* is largely destructive. While the novel presents its devastating effects in somber terms, it is not concerned with simply lamenting the fact that whites arrived on the American continent and established systems that prove fatal to the indigenous peoples. Rather, *Ceremony* presents an attempt to contend with the reality of a mixed cultural landscape in a way that allows Native American culture to persist, even as it changes. Tayo himself embodies the contact between Native American and white cultures, as he bears his mixed racial heritage in his green eyes. Tayo must learn to make use of the white parts of himself and of the world around him, without abandoning his primary allegiance to Native American traditions.

For many in the novel, the first contact between the cultures takes place in the white schools that the Native Americans attend. There, white teachers tell them that their stories are not true and that their understanding of the world is not valid. Most significantly, the white teachers present a different view of
science and nature, and, as a result, the younger generations of Native Americans want to abandon traditional farming practices. This creates an agricultural crisis that is exacerbated by the pollution of reservation lands by white mines and military industry. In addition, white towns attract Native Americans with the prospect of white-collar jobs and good pay, but racism denies those positions to Native Americans. But the money gives the accessibility to the world of alcoholism, introduced by the Whites. All these serve as strong indictments of the influence of Whites on Native American culture. However, the relationship between white and Native American cultures is completely shifted in Ceremony when Betonie reveals that whites are an invention of Native American witchcraft. In the revelation, although they are still a primarily destructive force, whites are shown to be a part of Native American culture and traditions.

In Ceremony, preserving tradition is essential to saving the Native American community. Both for Tayo and in the ancient stories, forgetting tradition brings massive drought and disaster. A key role of the medicine men is to preserve tradition, as is symbolized by the crates of artifacts they store. However, the survival of the tradition depends on its adaptability. The reservation medicine man, Ku’oosh, is unable to cure Tayo because he knows only the traditional healing ceremonies, which are not applicable to contemporary illnesses. As Betonie explains, traditions must be constantly reinvented to reflect the ever-changing reality of the world. Similarly, the novel shows the dangers of blindly adhering to traditions rather than trying to follow
their intent. Auntie represents those who simply follow the dictates of traditions, as she mistrusts any form of interracial relationship. Josiah, on the other hand, represents those who follow the spirit of traditions, such as when he finds a way to interbreed Mexican and Hereford cattle to create a herd that will be both hardy and productive.

Water is essential to the survival of crops and animals for the Laguna, whose primary occupation is agriculture. Without city-sponsored plumbing and irrigation systems, and not wanting to interrupt the natural flow of water with dams, the Laguna are completely dependent on natural rainfall. Living in the desert land that comprises much of the southwest of the United States, the Laguna are constantly threatened by drought. Many of the traditional stories and ceremonies revolve around ensuring adequate rainfall. The primary signal of the spirits’ displeasure with something the people has done is a drought, and one of the greatest feats of a destructive spirit is the creation of a drought. However, as Josiah tells Tayo when he is a child, everything has both its good and bad sides. While too little rainfall can be disastrous, so can too much, as Tayo learns in the Philippine jungle. Tayo commits a grievous error when he forgets this lesson and, in the midst of a flood, curses the rain. Whether or not Tayo’s curse is actually responsible for the drought on the reservation, it is essential for his health as well as for that of his community that he learn through his ceremony to respect the patterns of nature. Once he does that, the rain returns.
The Native Americans of the Pueblo see time as cyclical rather than linear. Silko produces a text that emphasizes this notion by using a nonlinear narrative structure. In most of Western literature, narrative proceeds in a temporal succession from beginning to end and from earlier to later. Although features such as analepsis and prolepsis are standard, they are generally clearly marked and take up much less of the time and space of the novel than does the primary narrative. In *Ceremony*, on the other hand, it is often difficult to distinguish between primary and secondary narratives, or between past and present. Silko switches back and forth from Tayo’s childhood to his time in the Philippines to various moments after his return, following no order except the order of thematic connections between the different events. The entire novel is narrated in the past tense, so whether an event actually occurred before Tayo’s birth or in the midst of the ceremony, it appears to happen at the same time. The effect of this is to recreate a Pueblo sense of time, where all things are cyclic and where their immediacy is related not to how long ago they happened but to how important they feel in the present.

Silko’s use of poetry invokes the rhythmic, communal storytelling patterns of the Native Americans, while her use of prose belongs to a Western narrative tradition. By combining the two in her novel, Silko asserts that the form as well as the content of the story is about the blending of the two cultures. Thematically, White and Native American cultures clash with each other more often than they complement each other, but the prose and poetry weave together easily. In many ways, they tell the same story; “only thing is,”
as Grandma says at the end, “the names sound different” (260). The entire stories sound different as well, as versification, rhyming, alliteration, and repetition gives the poems a distinctive rhythm. The poem at the end of the novel completes the line on the page before the first prose section, enclosing the entire novel within a poem. In other words, just as whites are said to be an invention of Native American witchcraft, so is a Western form of storytelling shown to be contained within a Native American form of storytelling.

Every year, the white mayor and council of Gallup organize a Ceremonial. The Gallup Ceremonial symbolizes the ways in which whites misunderstand Native American tradition and appropriate it for their own purposes. Dancers from a wide range of Native American groups are invited to the Gallup Ceremonial and are paid for their performances. This demonstrates the whites’ lack of comprehension of the differences between Native American tribes, as well as their ignorance of the specific purpose of each individual ceremony. Whereas traditional ceremonies are performed around important events or times of year, with a specific ritual meaning, the Gallup Ceremonial is intended purely for the entertainment of whites. In addition, for the rest of the year, the town of Gallup at best ignores and at worst promotes the racist mistreatment of Native Americans, symbolizing the ways in which whites are eager to praise Native American artifacts but do not want to deal with the ongoing lives of real Native Americans.

The story of the novel Ceremony involves a timeline from before World War II to the present. The war has provided the catalytic shock necessary to
galvanize the forces working to alienate Tayo from his land, family, tribe and
tradition, even from his own flesh. More corrosive than the war had been his
Auntie’s Christianity, which: separated the people from themselves; it tried to
 crush the single clan name, encouraging each person to stand alone because
Jesus Christ would save only the individual soul” (68). Before World War II,
flashbacks of Tayo’s life with his mom in his early childhood are depicted and
later his teen years with his Auntie are depicted. Tayo’s ritual quest is the
central motif of Silko’s splendid novel, Ceremony. His life story contains his
painful position as an outsider. America’s perception and relationship with
Native Americans are detailed through Tayo’s experiences of biculturalism:
“Sometimes the Japanese voices came first… and the voices would become
Laguna voices, and he could hear Uncle Josiah calling to him” (6).

Tayo is doubly marginalized as a mixed blood. His mother is Laguna
and his father is anonymous white. His mother, an Indian girl named Laura, is
shameless enough to start drinking wine and riding in cars with white men and
Mexican and later even the colored men. His mother leaves him at the age of
four and he is taken care by his rejecting Aunt Thelma and Uncle Robert. The
family also includes a blind old Grandma, Auntie’s brother Uncle Josiah, and
her son Rocky, who is about the same age as Tayo. Auntie is the only Christian
woman in the family. She takes in Laura’s half-breed child in order to conceal
the shame of her younger sister. She always keeps Tayo at a distance, telling
him the story of his mother’s drunken shame. She keeps a distance between
Rocky and Tayo too. Rocky was her pride where as Tayo unwanted child.
Tayo, the orphaned outsider, grows up with Rocky in a family in which Native American Customs compete with Christian rituals and the white man’s science is super imposed upon ancient beliefs. The white teachers at the Indian School reject the tribal superstition. But Tayo is unwilling to discard his tribal traditions and ancient beliefs. Rocky on the other hand, rejects his Native American heritage to win in the White outside world. Auntie is proud of her son, and she cherishes her son’s growing understanding of the outside world, of the books, of everything of importance and power. She wants her son to be successful. Tayo remembers how: “Rocky wanted to get away from the reservation; he wanted to make something of himself in a city somewhere” (131). Rocky is interested in American ‘career’, hence he immediately volunteers for the army when the recruiter comes to the Reservation and announces to the Indians that even they can fight for America. Rocky makes even Tayo to sign up.

Tayo is alienated by the experiences of his childhood as well as the war experience. As Tayo is a Veteran of mixed white and Laguna heritage, he has to deal with the cultural pressures of bi-culturalism. He is a half-breed who has difficulties adjusting to civilian life on a New Mexican Indian reservation. Though the action of the novel deals with the Second World War, it involves rituals and stories from myths that are of ages old. Tayo and Rocky were enlisted and stationed as soldiers in the Pacific theater, where the war with Japan commenced on December 7, 1941. They undergo all the terrors and atrocities of a jungle war. Tayo and Rocky are captured by Japanese forces.
Wounded Rocky is carried in a blanket, but he falls out of the blanket and a Japanese solider brutally crushes his head with his rifle butt. Rocky, whom Tayo had promised his Auntie to protect, dies in a jungle rainstorm while on a forced march. Tayo prays for rain to end as the wetness seeps into Rocky’s wounds. Tayo hopes that if the rain stops, Rocky might live. Later in desperation, Tayo curses the rain. The delirious Tayo, who is in grief, survives the prison camp. Tayo returns home mentally and physically ill from his experiences as a solider. Tayo suffers from battle fatigue and hallucinations. But the doctors at the veterans Hospital in Los Angeles declare it to be common with malaria fever. In his traumatised state, Tayo’s life in New Mexico and in Japan becomes hopelessly intertwined. He hears Japanese Voices in the sounds of his native Indian tongue. He sees Josiah’s face merge with those of the Japanese Prison guards. He finds one of the Japanese soldiers looking like a Navajo guy. The mentally disturbed Tayo, who thinks he is just white smoke and therefore invisible spends many months in the hospital. He had no consciousness of himself and faded into the white world of the hospital invisible and silent: “visions and memories of the past did not penetrate there… there was no pain, only pale, pale gray of the north wall” (15). Finally he is declared cured and is released. He is sent back to his Auntie’s house as he is too weak to walk. He continually vomits and is haunted by his nightmarish memories. Upon his return to Laguna Pueblo, he finds that a drought has set in, and he feels responsible for this drought because Tayo believes that the actions of the individual have force and meaning upon the entire world. His power had
done nothing to affect that alien landscape, but had added to the drought in his own land.

Tayo remains gravely ill for so long that his grandmother suggests he put his faith in the hands of a medicine man, who will perform a ceremony of healing. Deranged and withdrawn, Tayo initially wastes away on the reservation while his fellow Indian veterans drink excessively and rail against racism. Tayo sometimes goes out with other war veterans, Harley, Emo, Leroy, and Pinky to Tavern. The Native Americans were respected when they were required to maintain national security and when they conformed to American standards. Such discriminations may lead one to doubt just how fair and just the “land of the free” is in terms of their treatments of this quite paradoxical: “… an old white woman rolled down her window and said ‘God bless you, God bless you,’ but it was the uniform not them she blessed” (41). Tayo’s Laguna buddies return from the war bitter and violent, prone to alcoholism and brawling. They feel rejected by mainstream America, whose people praised them when they were soldiers but have no use for them now that the war is over. In Tavern these war veterans seek forget fullness in drink. They narrate boastful stories about their equality with white men. They say that they were even attractive to white women, in their uniforms. In Ceremony, Silko portrays a contemptible scene of alcohol and violence: The others were quiet, but Emo started laughing. His voice echoed around the room: “You drink like an Indian, and you're crazy like one too—but you aren't shit, white trash. You love Japs the way your mother loved to screw white men.” Emo’s shirt had
dark circles of sweat under each arm. Tayo watched his belly and the way the shirt stuck to it with sweat; he watched the belly quiver when Emo laughed at him. He moved suddenly, with speed which was effortless and floating like a mountain lion. He got stronger with every jerk that Emo made, and he felt that he would get well if he killed him. But they wouldn’t let him do it; they grabbed his arms and pulled his hands out of Emo’s belly. He saw their mouths open, yelling, but he didn’t hear them, and the snow tumbled over him. It seems as if there is a connection between the alcohol and the violence for Tayo, and this connection can potentially heal him. Tayo can’t stand these boastful stories and hence he attacks Emo, who proudly says that he has knocked out the teeth of Japanese Officer. Tayo attacks Emo with a broken beer bottle and he is sent to the hospital instead of to jail. The silence was dense; the darkness was cold (Ceremony 63). But white medicine fails to cure him. So grandma suggests that the boy needs a medicine man. Auntie is skeptical as the Army doctor has ordered not to give Indian medicine. Grandma on the other hand insists on ‘Indian’ medicine, and old Kuoosh comes to cure Tayo. When the herbal medicine is given to Tayo he begins to eat food regularly and he seldom vomits. Kuoosh named Betonie, a half-blood Navajo medicine man to treat Tayo. Betonie alters traditional ceremonies in such a way as to represent the world Indians now share with white people. Betonie asks Tayo to remember everything without blocking anything and to realize that everything is connected and in a state of change. This cure is less a remedy than self-help programming.
Tayo remembers his uncle Josiah who has died in his absence. Tayo had left his uncle Josiah with the entire task of managing new herd of Mexican spotted cattle. Tayo had been made feel ashamed for his mixed blood and for having to live with them because of his mother’s promiscuous past; by his tribe and tradition and even from his own flesh. The war provided only the catalytic shock necessary to galvanize these forces. His shattered psyche, the Laguna reservation is similar to a prison camp. Tayo is troubled by flashbacks filled with gruesome horror: “He saw the skin of the corpses again and again, in ditches on either side of the long muddy road-skin that was stretched shiny and dark over bloated hands; even white men were darker after death” (7). Tayo’s fears and vomiting and night wets experienced in the sacred lands of his people become a version of the cleansing sweat-ceremony. Tayo is unaware of his preparation, but his blind grandmother croons ‘Amoo’oh, Amoo’oh’ over him as he lies motionless and sends for the old medicine man Ku’oosh. Ku’oosh is unable to cure Tayo. So Tayo feels that the old man cannot understand the monstrous destruction of the Wasichu’s War. It is because as the old man knows himself, he has only dead ceremonies, pale ceremonies. He does remember much that Tayo will need to recollect, unwind from his paralyzed memory. He begins the process of unwinding Tayo’s memory from the depths of his being. The old man explains the meaning of the word fragile to Tayo. He applies it to the web of life all ceremonies weave. In the depth of Tayo’s memory, like the spider’s seemingly fragile silk, it waits for him to be ready creating from the most intimate parts of himself the sacred patterns of the
ceremony. The first insight comes in Tayo’s denial of the old man, making the point that the celebrant is destined, whether he chooses to comply or not, to learn what he must learn. He is the tool of a force represented by Amoo’oh. The medicine man performs a ceremony of healing but fails to cure Tayo by his herbal remedies and chants.

After futilely exploring Navajo rituals in an attempt to discover some sense of identity, Tayo befriends a wise old half-breed, Betonie, who counseled him on the value of ceremony. Betonie, like Tayo is an outcast from Laguna Society due to his white heritage. Betonie is educated by whites. His hillside hut is packed with medicine bundles, coke bottles, telephone directories from various American cities, and advertising calendars which is the embodiment of a process of cultural transformation and innovation that sustains creative survival rather than the more familiar narratives of psychological and social disintegration of Native American cultures in the face of western colonization. Betonie performs the Bear ceremony, prescribed to cure mental illness. Part of it entails having Tayo walk in bear footprints while Betonie and a helper chant:

Following my footprints
walk home
following my footprints
come home, happily
return belonging to your home
return to long life and happiness again
return to long life and happiness (143).
Tayo tells the old medicine man Betonie, "I don't know anything about ceremonies or these things you talk about. I don't know how long anything has been going on. I just need help" (125). Betonie, a powerful spiritual healer from the Bear or Hopi clan, tells him the story of white man's creation. The old medicine man reveals that white people are creations and tools of Indian witchery and trickery. The witches "want us to separate ourselves from white people, to be ignorant and helpless as we watch our own destruction" (132). Betonie teaches Tayo that ceremony is not merely ritual but a means of conducting one’s life. With the old man’s guidance, Tayo learns that humanity and the cosmos are aspects of one vast entity. Betonie offers Tayo a self-help program. Tayo reveals his confusion of the face of his dead uncle, Josiah, with that of a dead Japanese soldier which is his nightmarish experience in the jungle. Betonie says that it is not madness but merely perceptive. 30,000 years ago, the Asian and American Indian Peoples were most likely part of a single ethnic group. Nothing is black and white, counsels Betonie. He says the white men aren’t all evil, and Indians aren’t all good. Tayo’s Laguna army buddies who return from the war bitter and violent, Prone to alcoholism and brawling prove Betonie’s saying to be true. They feel rejected by main-stream America, whose people praised them when they were soldiers. After the war is over the mainstream American people have no use of them and hence they are rejected.

When denying Ku’oosh’s power, Tayo thinks: “Ku’oosh would have looked at the dismembered corpses and the atomic heat-flash out lines where human bodies had evaporated and the old man would have said something
close and terrible had killed these people. Not even old time witches killed like that” (37). Tayo is right—old time witches did not kill like that, but Ku’oosh of Tayo’s mind is also right. Witches are vital and alive, whose ceremonies have changed and adapted as Ku’oosh’s have not, do kill like that. As Tayo will learn, his adversary is a powerful witchery. If he is to return the land and its people to health, he must outfit the witchery, turn it upon itself. The second insight gained from the medicine man’s visit comes as he is leaving: “Your Uncle Josiah had taught you much before you left the reservation. Do you remember?” He does. He remembers taking a string of colts to the mountains with Josiah, who had tied the young and foolish things together to lead them up the narrow path. Each halter rope was tied to the tail of the colt ahead, and the lead colt’s rope was tied to Josiah’s Mexican saddle horn. Tayo “could still see them now— the creamy sorrel, the bright red bay, and the gray roan— their slick summer coats reflecting the sunlight as it came up from behind the yellow mesas.” The memory carries him to dawn, the proper moment for the beginning of the ceremony, although the vision goes beyond that initial impact. At first Tayo misinterprets the meaning of the memory, always a danger in visionary adventure. He assumes he must take his broken, scattered, tangled memories and, as he had once with his grandmother’s spools of thread, unknot then and rewind them on the appropriate spools. Such would be the next linear solution of the white psychiatrists at the hospital, of the world of his white father. The intricate weavings of Indian ceremony are dramatically other, denying logic,
simplicity, the world of clocks and calculators and categories. (Copeland, W Marion. 158-172)

Tayo is asked to remember everything. He says that everything is connected and in a state of change. The medicine man Betonie and the protagonist Tayo don’t do things the old way, nor are they completely of the traditional culture, but their argument is that they are truer to the spirit of the old ceremonies than are the traditionalists who keep exactly to the letter of the old ways: “The people nowadays have an idea about the ceremonies. They think the ceremonies must be performed exactly as they have always been done… But long ago when the people were given these ceremonies, the changing began, if only in the aging of the yellow gourd or the shrinking of the skin around the eagle’s claw, it only in the different voices from generation to generation, singing the chants, You see, in many ways, the ceremonies have always been changing.” She taught me this above all else: things which don’t shift and grow are dead things. They are things the witchery people want (126). Betonie says: “And the desire is strong to make things right, to take back what was stolen and to stop them from destroying what they have taken. But you see, Tayo, we have done as much fighting as we can with the destroyers and the thieves: as much as we could do and still survive” (127-28). Betonie and his helper, shush take Tayo to the Chuska Moutains, on horseback before dawn to perform the Bear Ceremony, Prescribed to cure mental illness. Betonie tells Tayo the story of Descheeny, Betonie’s grandfather. Betonie, then draws in the
dirt a pattern of stars. He asks Tayo to remember the stars. Betonie says that he has seen the stars and also he had seen spotted cattle, a mountain and a woman.

To complete the ceremony and also to feel that he was truly returned home, Tayo must set out on a quest. Before Tayo and Rocky leave for the Pacific Theater, Uncle Josiah buys a special breed of Mexican cattle. It could survive on the drought ridden Reservation. He expects Tayo to help him in this experiment. The cattle are bought from Ulibarri in Magdalena, brought home and set free. Things go fine till July, but in September Tayo and Rocky leave, and during their absence Uncle Josiah dies. His death is tormenting Tayo since his return to Laguna Pueblo. The cattle, uncle Josiah brought were stolen by nearby ranchers. Tayo had promised to help Josiah look after the land. Josiah’s speckled cattle which were thought to bring the family a measure of prosperity have gone astray, stolen by nearby ranchers. A truck driver takes Tayo to San Fidel, on his way home from Betonie. Later Harley and Leroy take Tayo in their truck along with Helen Jean. All of them go to the Y Bar to drink. Helen Jean reminisces about how she had left the Reservation and the spotted cattle. Tayo is now in search of the lost cattle. Tayo meets a nameless woman in a lonely house and spends the night with her. The beautiful woman is Ts’eh Montano who is a mysterious and almost mythical figure of regeneration and love: Tayo’s love for her helps cure him of his feelings of shock, resentment, and abandonment. Next day he sets out on horse back into the mountains. He discovers the spotted cattle in the field of a Texas rancher, Floyd Lee. Tayo who is newly strengthened by the ceremony and his experience with Ts’eh
realizes that fences and the stolen land hurt the white people more than they hurt the Indians: The people had been taught to despise themselves because they were left with barren land and dry rivers. But they were wrong. It was the white people who had nothing; it was the white people who were suffering as thieves do, never able to forget that their pride was wrapped in something stolen, something that had never been, and could never be, theirs (204).

Tayo goes to the house of a hunter and finds the unknown woman in hunter’s house. She has put the cattle and Tayo’s horse in her corral. Promising to come back soon to collect the cattle, he leaves. Betonie’s predicament comes true as Tayo finds the stars in the north. Old Betonie’s vision of stars, cattle, a woman and a mountain comes to be true. Without Betonie Tayo wouldn’t have hoped to find the cattle at all. When Tayo comes back to collect the cattle, the house is deserted. Tayo finds an old war shield with small white spots of paint all over it. It was like a star map of the overhead sky in late September. Tayo and Robert drive their truck to the deserted house to pick up the cattle.

Tayo sets out on his flight fearing the police and the white doctors. He hides in a culvert for rest. Next morning he moves north and his friends Harley and Leroy pick up him in their truck. Tayo feels relieved as his friends have come to him when he needs them most. But still he doubts about their friendship. After a nap Tayo wakes up to find that he is left in the dry and eroded hills northwest of Canoncito in the deserted truck. Tayo suddenly realizes that they are not his friends. They have turned against him. Tayo pulls
out the ignition wires of the truck, takes a screwdriver as the only available weapon and runs away from there sensing the danger. He hides near the uranium mine shaft. Tayo watches Emo, Pinkie and Leroy appearing in a car. He knows that they are the destroyers and hence watches their doings from his hiding place. They brutally torture bound Harley as he has let Tayo escape and has failed them. They hoped that Harley’s screams will draw out Tayo from his hideout: “Look at this, you half-breed! White son of a bitch! You can’t hide from this!” (Ceremony 252) But Tayo manages to hold back fighting his urge to attack and thwarts their hope. Later they drive away with the mutilated body of Harley in the truck. His army buddies try to do him harm because of his refusal to join their drunken, bitter and hopeless state. Tayo begins to realize that his friends are tools of the witch man Emo, who seeks to destroy him, but he also notices that the same bombs being tested outside Laguna are the bombs that are killing Japanese and American soldiers. Tayo realizes as a result of his previous sojourn on Mt.Taylor, that here, not far from Laguna land, the destroyers made a powerful bid to silence all stories, once and for all, with the nuclear explosion at the Trinity site. The detonation of the first atomic bomb there had turned the mass of humanity into victims of fear and violence. Tayo’s ceremony has led him to the uranium mine shaft on this night to complete the healing ceremony of the world. Tayo wants to keep his own story going and defeat the destroyers. Tayo begins to walk home. His transition is complete: "From that time on, human beings were one clan again, united by the fate the destroyers planned for all of them, for all living things; united by a circle of
death that devoured people in cities twelve thousand miles away, victims who had never know these mesas, who had never seen the delicate colors of the rocks which boiled up their slaughter" (246). After his return to his home Tayo himself becomes a story teller. He is in the kiva with the old man of the tribe, to whom he tells his story. The bodies of Harley and Leroy are found below the road of Paguate Hill and are buried as victims of an accident. Auntie reports that Pinkie has been shot by Emo and Emo has been ordered to leave the Reservation. He has gone to California. Grandma says that it seems as if she had already these stories before, but the only thing is the name sounds different. This means they are nothing but repetitions of and variations upon ancient Native American Myths.

Tayo tells his Grandma, he is feeling better after his return to home. He constantly dreams of the nameless woman, he met in the lonely house. Robert and Tayo check the speckled cattle once a week. They even pay a visit to Pinkie at sheep camp. Tayo sees the valley is green because there is no drought this time like last year. Tayo’s healing process has set in. His dreaming is no more there. The nameless woman appears and identifies herself as “a montano” nicknamed “Ts’eh”. The beautiful woman Ts’eh Montano (“water Mountain”) is a mysterious and almost mythical figure of regeneration and love. Tayo and Ts’eh enter into a fulfilled love relationship which unfolds in the ancient rhythm of the seasonal cycle. Tayo’s love for Ts’eh helps cure him of his feelings of shock, resentment, and abandonment.
Tayo’s grandmother comments at the end of the ceremony, “I guess I must be getting old… because these goings-on around Laguna don’t get me excited anymore. It seems like I already heard these stories before… Only thing is, the names sound different” (260). Thus Tayo’s ceremony is brought full-circle by the natural process of age, not by the power of the witchery. Tayo’s process of healing is slow. His healing by means of such purificatory rituals as repeated vomiting, curative Laguna and Navajo Scalp Ceremonies, and the larger initiation process of finding love, locating the cattle, and resisting the destroyers, during which he enjoys the help of wise mentors and supernatural females to defeat the powers of evil represented by the witches is the reason for his slow healing. At the end of the summer Robert visits Tayo and warns him about Emo, who is spreading nasty tales about Tayo’s madness, down in the village. He is fearful that the Army might send someone to take Tayo back. Ts’eh warns Tayo and entreats him to complete the pattern of Betonie’s story in a correct way and she leaves.

Continuing the same Native American themes Silko’s next novel *Almanac of the Dead* depicts all the aspects in detail. Silko has explained in *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of Spirit* that a series of photographs she took had come together and made a story of *Almanac of the Dead*. Silko’s *Almanac of the Dead*, is a long and controversial novel. Leslie Marmon Silko has created an intensely profound window into the deep undercurrents of American Civilization. Silko is able to make a connection that is intriguing. The novel gives a realistic glimpse of a small population of Native American experiences.
The 763 page lengthy novel depicts a detail description of Native American traditional history. It also includes apocalyptic prophecies of a unified movement of themes like Colonialism, Disease and Health, Human Worth, Institutionalization, Medical Ethics, Natural Experience, Native American Medicine, Nature, Power Relations, Racism, Society, Survival, and War and Medicine. Some of these narratives discuss perverted sex, drug running, abuse, alcoholism, kidnapping, and child abandonment. For instance, one narrative highlights Seese, a mother (exotic dancer) in search of her kidnapped child. While watching one of Lecha's television shows, Seese becomes obsessed with the celebrity's psychic abilities. "Seese was certain the T.V. psychic could help her" (48). Another narrative features Sterling, who was banished from his Laguna community by tribal elders because he failed to keep a Hollywood filmmaking crew out of sacred Laguna sites. Eventually, Sterling returns home and gives up his American way of life (crime magazine subscriptions), while embracing the Pueblo culture of Laguna. *Almanac of the Dead* is divided into six sections: "The United States of America," "Mexico," "Africa," "The Americas," "The Fifth World", and "One World, Many Tribes." Silko portrays some 70 characters, most at various stages of corruption, disease and addiction with a wide array of events spanning 500 years. The novel is peopled with addicts, alcoholics, politicians, unscrupulous and greedy land speculators, and a host of other unsavory characters. These characters tell the story of resistance to Euro-American oppression and growing efforts of indigene allies to retake the land and ultimately to become agents of it’s healing. The novel is woven
throughout with the stories of the past, pronouncements on the present and predications of a dire future for the European conquerors. More important with its various histories of peoples, native to Mexico and South Westerns to United States and its critique or European traditions and beliefs. The novel attempts to resume their control of North America.

The title *Almanac of the Dead* refers to a set of notebooks whose prophecies someday will bring together the tribal peoples of the Southwest and Mexico to reclaim their ancestral lands. The Yaqui called themselves Yoeme which means the people. The Yaqui Indian grandmother of 60-year-old twin sisters Lecha and Zeta, the protagonists of the novel, is named Yoeme. She is a storyteller, a representative of the people who emerges at a time when the bloodlines are being mixed and the people are losing their traditional culture. Leaving her children to be raised by her German husband, a particularly vicious and bloodthirsty mine owner, she reappears when the twin girls are old enough to understand her stories. Yoeme is the caretaker of the “Almanac”. She later passes it on to her grandchildren, Zeta and Lecha. She charges them with reconstructing the fragments of the almanac after her, and in this way preserves the old culture. Mexican and American Indian lineage The twins Zeta smuggles drugs and arms in preparation for the inevitable uprising, and Lecha, a TV talk show performer with mystical powers to locate the dead. Yoeme has kept the notebooks since they have been passed on to her many years ago. A section of the “Almanac” is accidentally lost and hence Yoeme wants Zeta to write down a replacement section. But she warns Zeta to be very careful while
replacing because nothing is supposed to be added newly to the notes. The notes are in Latin and Spanish. Almanac tells the history of the Indians in their movement north from Mexico. Hence it needs to be transcribed according to the old woman, Yoeme. Yoeme believes that she will always be protected by the spirits as she is the caretaker of “Almanac”. Lecha says that the old almanacs tell not just when to plant or harvest, but also they tell about the days yet to come such as drought or flood, plague, Civil War or invasion. Yoeme and others believed that the power of the “Almanac” will bring all the tribal people of the America together to retain the land. The almanac is a document full of prophesies that foretell the European conquests of the indigenous peoples of Mexico and the American Southwest. Through it, Silko indicts the Europeans for their hundreds of years of crimes. In addition it also tells a future in which the domination ends. Silko makes clear and undeniable links between past activities and present socio-political problems in the United States. By populating her text with ‘the dead’, Silko exposes the moral and political significance of memory, and the narrativity of history (424). Due to seduction and high treason against the federal government, Once Yoeme is convicted. Yoeme was sentenced to execution. Her execution in the Almos Jail was postponed due to governor’s busy schedule. Meanwhile the town was infected with influenza. People were dying of the disease and nobody had time to think about Yoeme. Miraculously Yoeme was saved by the hand of God.

Thus we see that Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* is ambitious, massive new novel which is an impassioned indictment of the white man's rule in the
Americas, a prophecy of a revolution by Native Americans. In *Almanac*, most of those of European descent fall into the second category, for "[t]hey failed to recognize the earth was their mother. Europeans were like their first parents, Adam and Eve, wandering aimlessly because the insane God who had sired them had abandoned them" (258). However, those of African descent more often fall into the first category since "the spirits were all around, and the tribal people torn from Mother Africa had not been deserted by the spirits" (746). They could reclaim their connection to the earth spirit.

Silko combines a corrosive picture of contemporary life and an apocalyptic vision of the near future. Silko is overwhelmed both by her multifaceted, complex plot and by her own rhetoric. In an epic narrative heavy with intrigue and carnage, she juggles--unsuccessfully--more than two dozen characters and a surfeit of subplots. Set mainly in Tucson and Mexico, the novel depicts a U.S. government and judicial system as evil as the criminals with whom they deal. Indeed, there are virtually no decent nor likable characters here; even those of indigenous American descent have been corrupted by modern culture and ancient hate. Despite its laudable aims, this meandering blend of mystical folklore, thriller-type violence and futuristic prophecy is unwieldy, unconvincing and largely unappealing. In its extraordinary range of character and culture, *Almanac of the Dead* is fiction on the grand scale. The acclaimed author of *Ceremony* has undertaken a weaving of ideas and lives, fate and history, passion and conquest in an attempt to re-
create the moral history of the Americas, told from the point of view of the conquered, not the conquerors.

Silko succeeds more as a storyteller than a novelist: the book is full of memorable vignettes, but the frame story of apocalyptic racial warfare is clumsy comic book fare. *Almanac of the Dead,* Silko seems more than a little homophobic. Of course, all the homosexuality is meant to be deeply symbolic of the white man's spiritual sterility: the bisexual who wins fame exhibiting art photos of his ex-lover's suicide; the gay racist who kidnaps and makes snuff photos of his lover's infant son; the federal judge who watches the activities at whorehouses, then races home to his specially trained basset hounds; the impotent, paraplegic "bio-materials" dealer who fellates homeless vagrants even as he murders them by draining their blood for resale. There's plenty of European heterosexual perversity, too.

Silko's novel is divided into books each of which stakes out both geographical and temporal locations and refers to fragments in the ancient Mayan almanac, the text that occupies the spiritual center of the novel. We find individuals and groups of poor whites, African Americans, Indians, Mexicans and Asian Americans. All these people are connected by Silko, at least tenuously, by blood or business transactions. All these characters pursue the destruction of oppressive institutions or turn the assault against their own bodies through drugs and alcohol. These characters seek to recover histories and to reclaim land taken from them over the five hundred years span of European conquest. Obscene behaviors involving torture, murder, and the
pornographic use of bodies crowd the pages. The life force powerful enough to overcome such corruption resides in the mythic realm, where fetishes, an ancient text, dreams, and the voices of ancestors reveal a more compelling spiritual power.

In *Almanac of the Dead* the visionary or mystical mode of storytelling is represented by the almanac itself, as well as by the visionary Lecha and by a character named Tacho, who offers prophecies about "The Reign of the Fire-Eye Macaw" (the present era). In this chapter Silko spans the past five centuries into the present by marking a “Destroyer” consciousness that “worships blood”. As Tacho one of Silko’s characters recognizes, “those who secretly loved destruction and death raged all over the earth” (475). People who secretly prayed and waited for destruction or disaster were attracted to and excited by death and sight of blood and suffering. In this novel Trigg an entrepreneur and a true capitalist is the founder of Bio-Material Inc. Company. He drains blood from his victims in order to harvest “Bio-Materials- the industry’s preferred term for fetal-brain material, human kidneys, hearts and lungs, corneas for eye transplants and human skin for burn victims” (398).

The reoccupation of land is also depicted by Silko in this novel. The land was taken away from natives either by compulsion or in exchange of wealth. Europeans had no legal laws because no legal government could be established on stolen land. So the character Zeta always tries to scheme and plan to break as many of their laws as she could. Previously people used to travel north and south as they pleased bit all of a sudden the priests announced
that smuggling was a mortal sin because smuggling was stealing from the
government. El Feo is another character who believed in land. He did not
believe in political parties, ideologies or rules. Even the native people believed
in the strange voices inside themselves, the voices they heard were voices of
the earlier memories, voice of nightmares and voice of sweet dreams, voices of
the ancestors. El Feo believed that with the return of Indian land would come
the return of justice, followed by peace (513).

Zeta and Lecha believed Almanc had living power within it. This power
would bring all the tribal people of the Americans together to retake the land
(570). Silko warns Western civilization to avoid the destruction of the earth.
She depicts past and current oppression and asks Europeans to return stolen
land.

Importantly, Silko's narrative of Menardo (mestizo) reveals the
destroyers' (military and police) plans for handling Native American uprisings.
National intelligence, homeland security, and video surveillance became a
priority for Menardo's affiliates (military and police) and reflect their ominous
stream of consciousness. Consequently, Menardo's insurance company,
Universal Insurance, offers its clients private security during political unrest. In
fact, everything in Menardo’s life reflects his position during Native American
uprisings. For instance, he frequently wears his bulletproof vest while arming
himself with a pistol: "This vest, the .44s and .38s, the pistol range. Security
matters were a change for all Europeans" (329).
Silko’s character Menardo betrays history and as a result he loses his life. Menardo hates his flat nose as it shows that he is an Indian. Hence after his grandfather’s death he makes up a story that his nose never healed from a boxing injury. He says he is a white. As he betrays his history he loses access to the “ancestors’ spirits (which) were summoned by the stories” (316). He abandons his grandfather, his mother land and hence pays for his betrayal with his life. Thus we see the novel *Almanac of the Dead* explores and critiques interlocking histories of oppression that inscribe the land, labor, and bodies of indigenous peoples, oppressed peoples’ submerged knowledge is affirmed, strengthening vital social, ecological and spiritual relationships. At the end of *Almanac*, we have an indigenous spirit army sweeping up from the south and Lecha's dream of a future in which she sees American Indians "crowding the streets of Amsterdam" (756).

And Silko makes it clear that the main problem with the Europeans in the Americas, despite their obvious influence on American Indian cultures, is their lack of spirituality and their inability to recognize the sacred, especially the sacredness associated with the land, with the earth, itself. As Calabazas tells Root, whites cannot appreciate differences, and those "who can't learn to appreciate the world's differences won't make it" (203). The ancestors and elders say that the most dangerous quality of the Europeans is that they suffer "a sort of blindness to the world" (224). They cannot recognize differences in ordinary rocks, differences in land formations, differences in Indian peoples themselves. And since, from an American Indian perspective, all these things
are sacred, this "blindness to the world" amounts to a spiritual blindness.

Menardo's Indian grandfather called Europeans "the orphan people" because their God had created them, but had soon become furious with them, driving them from their birthplace, their sacred land. Consequently, they were no longer able to "recognize [that] the earth was their mother. Europeans were like their first parents, Adam and Eve, wandering aimlessly because the insane God who had sired them had abandoned them" (258). Clinton, in his radio broadcasts, argues that "the Europeans [have] been without a god since their arrival in the Americas," despite all the praying and the trappings of their religion. He points out the irony that the white man's God died, in philosophical terms, about the same time that white men started sailing around the world in the sixteenth century (417). The Barefoot Hopi says that "Europeans [do] not listen to the souls of their dead. That [is] the root of all trouble for Europeans" (604). And this spiritual blankness, this disregard for the sacred, is at the heart of the duplicitous web of conspiracies in and around Tucson, the corruption that we see on all social levels, a kind of spiritual sickness, cruel and voyeuristic, that permeates all of white society.

To the indigenous people, Marxism's lack of spirituality and lack of connection to the sacred land means ultimately that it will fail in the Americas. Angelita describes how she imagines Marx and Engels must have waited for revolution to come and how they must have been disappointed when it had not. She says they failed because they misunderstood two very important things: "They had not understood that the earth was mother to all beings," meaning
that although it might have been appropriate to dismiss European Christianity, it was not appropriate to ignore indigenous beliefs in the sacredness of the land because to do that is to disconnect themselves from that which gives them life and to disconnect themselves from history—the very conditions that postmodernists like Paul Virilio bemoan. The other point that Angelita says Marx and Engels misunderstood was the importance of the spirit beings, meaning that they dismissed any notion of the spiritual continuity between the ancestors and the communal principles they were trying to reestablish, between the ancestors and the history they were trying to analyze (749).

Just like Menardo, who misunderstands the true nature of power and seeks physical protection with his bulletproof vest rather than the spiritual protection offered by Tacho and his visions against the corrupting influence of power and money, In Almanac, there is no nurturing, life restoring spirit. There are only the enraged spirits: The spirits are outraged! They demand justice! The spirits are furious! To all those humans too weak or too lazy to fight to protect Mother Earth, the spirits say, "Too bad you did not die fighting the destroyers of the earth because now we will kill you for being so weak, for wringing your hands and whimpering while the invaders committed outrages against the forests and the mountains." . . . Sixty million dead souls howl for justice in the Americas! (723) Almanac and who hold political, financial, and military power in the Americas. As the novel has it, "During the epoch of Death-Eye Dog human beings, especially the alien invaders, would become obsessed with hungers and impulses commonly seen in wild dogs" (251). These characters
have in common a taste for violence, a disregard for humanity and the earth, and an inflated self-regard. All of them profit from the commerce of death, which Silko deplores in the novel. Sexual deviance, inadequacy, or perversion of some kind is also common among them, from impotence (experienced in various forms by Trigg, Menardo, and Max Blue) to sadomasochism to a corrupt judge whose most intense sexual gratification comes at the expense of his pet basset hounds. The alien invaders are even seen as people who are "attracted to and excited by death and the sight of blood and suffering" (475). All of these characteristics are attributed to Death-Eye Dog. Fittingly, "microscopic imperfections" in the vest prevent it from working properly, and Menardo is killed (509).

Tucson and Arizona are two main cities functioning in the novel. In Arizona, the economy is declining due to drought and growing civil unrest in Mexico. As the prophecies have foretold, the narrator inexorable movement of the people in North, and while it may take 500 to 5000 years, for their allies will reclaim on the diseased and corrupted land. Many characters are inserted by Silko who work as part of the resistance. Sixty years old twin sisters, Zeta and Lecha are two important characters in the novel. Lecha is a Demerol-addicted psychic. She is a TV talk show psychic. She helps police locate the bodies of murder victims through her power. Her power helps her to have connection with the dead. The power of ability to foretell things is the gift given to Lecha by Yoeme. Lecha has been finding people for years and has made a good living from it. But later, Lecha realizes that she has the power
only to find the dead, never the living. Hence after solving the case of two missing boys, Lecha decides to take a break. She wants to go back to her home at Tucson. Their home at Tucson has a heavily guarded compound. She wants to stay with her sister, Zeta. Lecha wants to fulfill her promise of translating the old note books of the Almanac given by her grandmother, Yoeme in her youth. She has to take care of it as that has been passed down for thousands of years. It contains the traditional history of Native Americans. Lecha hires another main character, Seese, a coke addict from San Diego, to help her transcribe the Almanac into a computer, because Lecha is getting old. The Almanac tells the story of indigenous people, who fled from the south of Mexico centuries ago to escape "the destroyers," sorcerers who practiced blood sacrifice and became the Aztec rulers. The Almanac is also a history of the arrival of the Europeans in the new world and a prophecy foretelling their departure from it. According to the myth, people were moving up from the underworlds to escape European slavery. Consequently, four Indian children traveled northward with the ancient book's pages sewn inside their torn clothes: "The almanac was what told them who they were and where they have come from in the stories" (246). In *Almanac*, Silko also includes an Alaskan connection. Her psychic character Lecha remembers a year in Alaska when she boarded with a Native American woman, Rose, whose six sisters and brothers had burned in a fire while she was away at the boarding school for Eskimos and Indians. Her parents had been "across the river at the bootlegger's house" (150). Lecha also met an old woman who had gathered great surges of energy out of the atmosphere, by summoning
Taj172

spirit beings through recitations of the stories that were also indictments of the greedy destroyers of the land. With the stories the old woman was able to assemble powerful forces flowing from the spirits of ancestors. (156)

Zeta has already translated her section of the Almanac. She believes that the Almanac is the key to everything. Zeta has been staying on their father’s land and she had good business running drugs and stocking arms. Meanwhile Zeta and Ferro, Lecha's son, are arms and drug smugglers along with some other local Yaquis. Zeta raises Ferro, the abandoned son of Lecha. He helps her in her business. Zeta’s business of smuggling is carried on with the partnership of Calabazas. Her business deal is also linked with Greenlee whom she murders in the end.

Seese is a drug addict living with several homosexual men. David, one the homosexual men is the father of her baby, Monte. Seese’s baby is stolen and hence she goes off to find him. Seese has come to Tucson to find Lecha, because Lecha has psychic powers that allow her to find murder victims, and Seese wants to find out if her kidnapped baby has died. Seese's ex-boyfriend, an artist named David, is in with some rich racist drug and porn dealers from Argentina and Columbia named Beaufrey and Serlo. David kidnaps his and Seese's baby and heads down to Serlo's ranch in Columbia with Beaufrey, but Beaufrey gets jealous and has the baby kidnapped from David and makes it look like Seese did it. During all this Serlo is working on a crazy post-apocalypse eugenics scheme to preserve the "sangre pura" master race in sealed biospheres at his ranch.
Seese traces down Lecha on her TV talk show and hopes that Lecha’s psychic power can locate her lost child. Finally Seese finds Lecha in Tucson and becomes her bond woman. Earlier, Seese had the opinion that psychics are only for the ignorant and superstitions. But later, she realizes the need of a psychic. Seese herself is in need of a psychic to find her lost baby. Lecha utilizes the opportunity and makes Seese to work for her. Seese is supposed to translate the notes if the Almanac. Lecha finds the “Almanac” to be truly of a great legacy. Yoeme and others had believed that the living power of the “Almanac” would bring all the tribal people of the America together to retain the land. Lecha first of all thought of staying with Root in Tucson because he was the person who could manage to keep her out of the way of the law. She also has Zeta and Ferro who could provide security to her. Though both Zeta and Lecha are 60 year old they are very active. But Lecha pretends to be sick and acts as if she is unable to walk. She says she has been suffering from cancer and sticks on to the wheel chair. Her idea is to gain the sympathy of the cops.

Another important character in this novel is Sterling who is employed by Zeta. He is Laguna Indian whose tribe has sent him away for a transgression he didn’t think he really has control over. Sterling is banished because of the Hollywood movie crew’s filming of the giant stone snake. The tribal council thought that Sterling has betrayed them revealing the sacred secrets to the outsiders. Sterling is left all alone as his aunt Marie is dead. He is interested in reading police Gazette magazine, a detective and crime magazine and he also
loves to learn about Tucson history. Ferro has hired Sterling for some special assignment. But he was doing the work of gardening in Lecha’s compound after having been exiled from Laguna. Sterling returns to Laguna in *Almanac*’s final chapter, titled "Home": Sterling hiked over the little sand hills across the little valley to the sandstone cliffs where the family sheep camp was. The windmill was pumping lazily in the afternoon breeze, and Sterling washed his face and hands and drank. The taste of the water told him he was home. Even thinking the word made his eyes fill with tears. (757) In *Ceremony*, we are pulled back from the brink of destruction, but not so in *Almanac* in which the Destroyers' forces seem too strong. When Sterling returns to his Pueblo people, he is changed. He appreciates the old beliefs, the natural things around him—the red sandstone cliffs and the high thin clouds. He imagines the return of "plentiful" rain clouds, of "bellyhigh" grass and wildflowers, of buffalo herds (758). However, this is no immediate healing vision; the meaning of the stone snake is apparent in the "cruel years that were to come once the great serpent had returned" (703). The fragments indicate that jealousy among the people drained the lake and drove away the giant serpent:

Maah' shra-True'-Ee is the giant serpent

the sacred messenger spirit

from the Fourth World Below.

He came to live at the Beautiful Lake, Ka-waik

that was once near Laguna village.

But neighbors got jealous.
They came one night and broke open the lake
so all the water was lost. The giant snake
went away after that. He has never been seen since. (135)

The snake didn't care if people were believers or not; the work of the spirits and prophecies went on regardless. Spirit beings might appear anywhere, even near open-pit mines. The snake didn't care about the uranium tailings; humans had desecrated only themselves with the mine, not the earth. Burned and radioactive, with all humans dead, the earth would still be sacred. Man was too insignificant to desecrate her. . . . Sterling knew why the giant snake had returned now; he knew what the snake's message was to the people. The snake was looking south, in the direction from which the twin brothers and the people would come. (763)

He is very friendly and has special interest in Seese. They both share their joy and depression. Sterling finds consolation when he reads articles on depression in the magazines. Seese’s husband David hates her as he is a homosexual. He kidnaps his own child Monte, to punish Seese. He spends his time with Beaufrey who exploits him. David loves Beaufrey. David is a photographer. He gains some acclaim in the art community for the series of photographer of the suicide of another friend and lover Eric. Seese also loves Eric. They both are good friends. Eric informs Seese about the relation of Beaufrey and David. Even Eric is a homosexual who is in deep love with David. Eric hides his feelings in front of Seese. Unable to bear his depressed state he commits suicide and David makes money selling his suicide
photographs. To impress Beaufrey, David once, rides a pony. He is trampled by the horse he has mercilessly galloped to death. Beaufrey feels that David is worth more dead than he has been worth alive. He wants to make money by selling the pictures of David’s corpse for good price, instead of mourning his death.

Zeta and Lecha we have two more twin characters in the novel, Tacho and El Feo who are twin brothers. Tacho works as a chauffeur for the wealthy Menardo. He also functions as a spy for the resistance movement. El Feo heads the resistance movement in the far South of Mexico. Tacho and El Feo commune with spirit macaws for advice. Tacho isn’t interested in leading the organizations. He is very happy to leave the teams and units and chains of command to El Feo and Angelita. Tacho gives the entire information about the security forces to them, listening to the talks of the boss and the police chief. Tacho’s strategy is to let the dogs turn on one another. Tacho also has contact with the spiritual world, being frequently guided by twin macaws who speak to him from their perches in the trees behind Menardo's garage.

According to the almanac we are currently living in an Age of Death-Eye Dog, which is about to end. Numerous references are made in the almanac that great changes are about to occur:

One day a story will arrive in your town. There will always be disagreement over direction--whether the story came from the southwest or the southeast. The story may arrive with a stranger, a traveler thrown out of his home country months ago. Or the story may be brought by an old friend,
perhaps the parrot trader. But after you hear the story, you and the others
prepare by the new moon to rise up against the slave masters. (578)

Down in Chiapas another subplot involves a corrupt general and his
business partner who are getting guns from the U.S. They are worried about a
recent upsurge of indigenous restlessness in the region. La Escapia is a Mayan
woman who is part of a secret army of poor villagers all over Chiapas
preparing for an armed rebellion. Angelita is a dangerous, crazy woman from
the coast. There are rumors that she had seduced El Feo. She laughs and makes
fun of everything including uprisings. She sends El Feo to Tacho to get reports
about General J and the “Security Forces”, including the Police Chief and other
in El Group. El Feo believes only in the land, not in political parties, ideology
or rules. Whenever El Feo visits Tache, Tacho is to be very careful so that his
boss or his new wife should not suspect El Feo’s visits. Angelita La Escapia
and El Feo and their extensive discussions of Marxism, which for them is
intertwined with Native beliefs and forms an ideal example of political and
spiritual link of exchange. For them Marxist’s ideas are in the end. They are not
so important for them. They are simply a tool, one more means to regain the
land which is the only goal that really matters. In this novel we see a whole
world that has completely entangled European and Native. She goes to Mexico
City to attend a secret Cuban "freedom school" that teaches about Marxism in
exchange for providing arms and weapons for insurgents around Latin
America. The Mayans don't care about Cuba or Marx, but they pretend they do
just to get weapons. All they care about is taking back their land. The ideology
is just bullshit to them. Angelita says about the forthcoming changes: “A great ‘change’ is approaching, soon the signs of the change will appear on the horizon” (468). Her changes inspire Native Americans to unite against the destroyers. On one occasion, the crowd cheers when someone yells "We want our mother the land!" (519). When Angelita reads a list (1510-1945) of crimes against their history, her audience attentively listens. "Word by word, the stories of suffering, injury, and death had transformed the present moment, seizing listeners' or readers' imaginations so that for an instant, they were present and felt the suffering of sisters and brothers long past" (520). As Angelita, La Escapía, points out, Marx was European, and "he and those following after him had understood the possibilities of communal consciousness only imperfectly" (291). Without the spirituality which underpins them, these concepts become abstract and meaningless. Also, as Angelita later points out, the lack of spirituality allows them to commit heinous crimes against the land and the people, crimes that have soiled the hands of communists in the Americas, crimes for which the tribal peoples can never forgive them. She tells us over and over that though she admires Marx's ideas {12} in many ways, all she and other tribal people really care about is the land. All that really matters is the land, "that was their secret and the only 'truth' tribes could agree upon" (310). Angelita asserts that native peoples "must reckon with the past because within it lay this present moment and also the future moment" (311). As a way to strengthen the people--to connect them with their pasts and thus their identities-storytelling is invaluable. La Escapía goes
on to say, "the stories of the people or their 'history' had always been sacred, the source of their entire existence. If the people had not retold the stories, or if the stories had somehow been lost, then the people were lost; the ancestors' spirits were summoned by the stories" (315-16). For Silko, Almanac participates in the retelling of these stories and thus helps to summon the era which the novel declares is imminent.

Tacho’s boss, Menardo, is very rich. He has earned tremendous wealth by running an insurance company that protects the rich against natural disasters and uprisings. Menardo’s first wife belongs to a family set on the brink of ruin by dirty, stupid Indians. His first wife Iliana accidentally falls from the steps of her own dream house. This is a terrible tragedy, but Menardo wastes no time in replacing the dead wife with one as young as his daughter. Menardo reveals his dreams to Tacho. Tacho is from a village near a Mayan temple ruin, where all are trained to decipher dreams. He thus could interpret dreams. He understands Menardo’s days are numbered from his dreams. But he never tells the truth to Menardo as he is interested in gaining the boss’s trust. Tacho always suspects Menardo’s second wife, Algeria, a trained architect. She knew very well Tacho’s feelings. She was afraid that the spy’s “dream reading” might know her betraying nature. She was also afraid that Tacho might know about her lovers, Bartolome and Sony Blue and he would reveal her secret to Menardo. Algeria is a trained architect. She marries Menardo not out of any love but only because of his wealth. She actually loves Sonny Blue and she always imagines him in Menardo’s place. Menardo gets a vest which is a special gift from
Sonny Blue, his business associate and his wife’s lover. The vest is the triumph of modern science, believes Menardo. He wants to witness the superiority of man-made fibers that stop bullets and steel and cheat death. Menardo’s obsession with power and wealth is rooted in his longing to be other than he is. He endows bullet proof vest with the power to stop night mares and to ease his conscience and his despair about being Indian. Menardo asks Tacho to shoot him to demonstrate his invincibility. But the vest fails and he dies. Tacho is stunned by Menardo’s death. He very well knows that the white men halted to see an Indian shoot a Mestizo. He is safe because his boss himself had stressed him to shoot. Actually, the spirits of Macaws and Opals have chosen Tacho for better or for worse. All the spirits eat blood and even the bulletproof vest wanted a little blood. A macaw spirit delivers Thought Woman's message to Tacho (War Twin) that a great change is coming. As the chosen one, Tacho or Wacah responds obediently to numerous requests. He reveals that "...all requests, warnings, and orders from the macaws had to be obeyed, no matter what was asked" (476). Soon, newspapers spread the macaw spirit's message that unrest is on the horizon. In this way, Lecha learns about the War Twins and Angelita's tribal army (591).

Algeria, all of a sudden disappears after her husband’s death. She not even waits for his funeral. She carries away everything from the vaults. She is abandoned in a desert and is left to die by the travel agent she hires. Ultimately she is saved, but taken as a prisoner by Sarita and Lyria, the wives of Calabazas. Sarita and Lyria are Brito sisters joined in a Catholic radical group.
Calabazas is a brilliant businessman expanding his import and export business year after year. He is born in Tucson. His great grandmother belonged to the place but his grandmother was from the mountain in Sonora. They had fled north to settle in Tucson because Yaquis were killed there. The meaning of Calabazas is ‘Pumpkins”. He has the business of selling pumpkins. But actually hidden in pumpkins are drugs which are sold secretly. Calabazas hired root to help him in his business. He has also hired fifty in-laws, cousins and nephews of his. Root is a white kid with Mexican and Indian second and third cousins.

Mosca is the brother of Calabazas. Mosca and Root smuggles firearms. Meanwhile back in Tucson an East Coast mafia family is starting to move in on Zeta's smuggling operation. They work with a corrupt senator and a clandestine agent from the CIA to smuggle arms into southern Mexico and Central America in exchange for cocaine. They're also involved in shady real estate development and building huge water-sucking suburbs, buying off judges to head off the environmental lawsuits filed against them. A lover of the wife has a "biomaterial" business that secretly harvests organs and plasma from homeless people and Indians, but two of his employees are organizing a Homeless Army in Tucson and around the country, waiting for the right time to rise up. In the people's spiritual army, all were welcome. It was only necessary to walk with the people and let go of all the greed and the selfishness in one's heart. One must be able to let go of a great many comforts and all things European, but the reward would be peace and harmony with all living things. All they had to do was return to Mother Earth. No more blasting, digging, or
burning. (710) The Reign of Death-Eye Dog (also known as Fire-Eye Macaw to Mexican Indians) manifests itself most dearly in the number of "Destroyer" characters who populate. As Calabazas states, "Because it was the land itself, that protected native people. White men were terrified of the desert's stark, chalk plains that seem to glitter with the ashes of planets and worlds yet to come" (222). El Feo later connects this disconnection from the land to ideas of time: "In the Americas the white man never referred to the past but only to the future. The white man didn't seem to understand he had no future here because he had no past, no spirits of ancestors here" (313).

Bartolomeo is a communist working with Indians in the mountains. We have an “Army of the Homeless”. This army plans to retake ‘stolen’ goods and land. Tacho and Clinton are the two characters who devote their lives to revolution and work for justice. Bartolomeo is typing to educate the Indian masses on communism. Angelita is his best student who learns the lesson of Marx and Engle, but she knows that communism does not hold the secrets for Indians. The communists rewrite history and do not want the Indians to remember their own uprisings, their own resistance. Rambo and Clinton marched their men in Homeless Day rallies being careful that no member of their unit is arrested in the protests. Corporation and big business had seized control of America during the Vietnam War, and only a poor man’s army of patriots could hope to restore the people’s democracy to the United States. Clinton is an African American character. His messages would be a call to war. Homeless US citizens would occupy vacant government lands. Clinton and his
family are direct descendants of wealthy, slave owning Cherokee Indians. Clinton believes that education is the answer for all the tortures and troubles. He wants the black American to know how deeply African blood has watered the soil of Americas for five hundred years. He also wants them to know about the spirits of their ancestors. He believes the spirits are still with them right there in the United States. When there was a civil war the old spirits drank up the rivers of white man’s blood while the slaves ran free.

Barefoot Hopi is another organizer, who has dedicated his life to one day of mutual cooperation among all incarcerated persons in North America and in Mexico. Mosca and Root learn about Hopi from Calabazas. The Hopi has petitioned federal courts all over the United States, to obtain special permission to work as a Clergyman, to perform religious rites for imprisoned Native Americans. Hopi is respected by all, but only few other Hopi and Indians called him a witch. He is considered to be a witch because he talks about the dead as if their spirits still hoer among the living. Mosca too believes in spirits. He says he has a spirit in his shoulder and it speaks to him. Mosca says, he has spirit voice in his right shoulder. Actually a spirit doesn’t need a voice to communicate. The spirit puts the idea into head and all at once the people will know what they must do. Dead spirits of massacred Indians are present in the mountains, rivers, and skies. They believe that these spirits and the spirits of their ancestors help them to get their stolen land back from the destroyers. In The Almanac of the Dead, the spirits urges terrible vices on the
Europeans while creating chaos, such as long periods of sexual pleasures, excessive drinking and occasional napping.

Max Blue is one more murderous and powerful character created by Silko. Max had been shot some time ago and hence he no longer desires sex with his wife Leah. Leah shares her bed with Trigg, an entrepreneur in the “biomaterials industry”. Max spends all his time on his golf course, aside from his illegal business ventures. His wife has plans for a wealthy communist that will feature fountains in the golf course. She plans to get the water from deep wells from the life of the desert in order to achieve personal wealth. Sonny Blue and Bingo are sons of Max and Leah, sonny Blue is impatient to make money. So he wants to work with Menardo. Leah Blue is the only daughter and hence her father and brothers supported her in business. They operated real estate ventures in California and Florida. The family had arranged real estate business to support Max.

In the end we see that all the characters are in confusion. Ferro’s lover Jamey an undercover officer is killed accidentally by his own people. Lecha and Zeta are also in a hurry to escape from the law. They take the help of Awa Gee to get duplicated Passports. Sony is arrested by the Police.

Awa Gee is a specialist who creates new identities complete with passports, driver licenses, social security numbers and everything obtainable through computer records. He had created many identities for himself and he had already created three new identities for Zeta, complete with US passports. He was not interested in personal power but in the purity of destruction. He had
prepared a solar war machine. Zeta was not happy about her living style in the end. She feels that she and Calabazas have seen fools. Their lives were nearly over and they had done nothing right. All their talk of war against the United States Government resulted in nothing good.

Thus in the end we understand that Silko has painted a picture of the white man as a sadist, self centered, self-destructive force who has raped, pillaged and killed her people. The white man has violated mother Earth. Most horrible are the forces for evil and the contemporary social contract in the Americas. The overall movement toward the destruction of decadent Western culture in North America is associated with the rapid decline of late capitalism predicted by Marx.

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