T.C.

BAŞKENT ÜNİVERSİTESİ

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

AMERİKAN KÜLTÜRÜ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI

TEZLİ YÜKSEK LİSANS PROGRAMI

A DIALOGIC QUEST FOR IDENTITY: COMING TO TERMS WITH THE PRESENT THROUGH THE PAST IN LESLIE MARMON SILKO'S *ALMANAC OF THE DEAD* AND *GARDENS IN THE DUNES*

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

HAZIRLAYAN

FEVZİYE GÖZDE DEĞER

TEZ DANIŞMANI

DR. ÖĞRETİM ÜYESİ DEFNE ERSİN TUTAN

ANKARA – 2019

T.C.

BAŞKENT ÜNİVERSİTESİ

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

AMERİKAN KÜLTÜRÜ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI

TEZLİ YÜKSEK LİSANS PROGRAMI

A DIALOGIC QUEST FOR IDENTITY: COMING TO TERMS WITH THE PRESENT THROUGH THE PAST IN LESLIE MARMON SILKO'S *ALMANAC OF THE DEAD* AND *GARDENS IN THE DUNES*

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

HAZIRLAYAN

FEVZİYE GÖZDE DEĞER

TEZ DANIŞMANI

DR. ÖĞRETİM ÜYESİ DEFNE ERSİN TUTAN

ANKARA - 2019

BAŞKENT ÜNİVERSİTESİ

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

YÜKSEK LİSANS / DOKTORA TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORİJİNALLİK RAPORU

Tarih: 09 / 07 / 2019

Öğrencinin Adı, Soyadı: **Fevziye Gözde Değer**

Öğrencinin Numarası: **21610349**

Anabilim Dalı: **Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı**

Programı: **Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı**

Danışmanın Unvanı/Adı, Soyadı: **Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Defne Tutan**

Tez Başlığı: **"A Dialogic Quest for Identity: Coming to Terms with the Present through the Past in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* and *Gardens in the Dunes*"**

Yukarıda başlığı belirtilen Yüksek Lisans tez çalışmamın; Giriş, Ana Bölümler ve Sonuç Bölümünden oluşan, toplam 118 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 09 / 07 / 2019 tarihinde şahsım/tez danışmanım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda belirtilen filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı %5'dır.

Uygulanan filtrelemeler:

1. Kaynakça hariç
2. Alıntılar hariç
3. Beş (5) kelimeden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç

"Başkent Üniversitesi Enstitüleri Tez Çalışması Orijinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılması Usul ve Esaslarını" inceledim ve bu uygulama esaslarında belirtilen azami benzerlik oranlarına tez çalışmamın herhangi bir intihal içermediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Öğrenci İmzası:

F. Gözde Değer

Onay

09 / 07 / 2019

Öğrenci Danışmanı Unvan, Ad, Soyad,
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Defne TUTAN

KABUL VE ONAY SAYFASI

Fevziye Gözde DEĞER tarafından hazırlanan "A Dialogic Quest for Identity: Coming to Terms with the Present through the Past in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* and *Gardens in the Dunes*" adlı bu çalışma jürimizce Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

Kabul (sınav) Tarihi: 26/07/2019

(Jüri Üyesinin Ünvanı, Adı-Soyadı ve Kurumu) İmzası

Jüri Üyesi: Prof. Dr. Burçin EROL
Hacettepe Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi
İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

Jüri Üyesi: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Defne ERSİN TUTAN (Danışman)
Başkent Üniversitesi Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi
Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

Jüri Üyesi: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Selen AKTARİ SEVGİ
Başkent Üniversitesi Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi
Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

Onay

Yukarıdaki imzaların, adı geçen öğretim üyelerine ait olduğunu onaylarım

.../.../20..

Prof. Dr. İpek KALEMCİ TÜZÜN

Enstitü Müdürü

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe an incredible gratitude to my wonderful advisor, Assist.Prof.Dr. Defne Ersin TUTAN for her support and endless patience during the time I was working on the thesis. She spent hours discussing the ideas which created this thesis, and without her help, this study would not have been the same.

My most special thanks go to my parents, Belkıs DEĞER and Mehmet DEĞER, MD, who have believed in me and encouraged me from the beginning.

I would like to thank my beloved sister Ayşe Berrin EVANS and my brother-in-law David EVANS for their endless support and love.

Lastly and most importantly, my thanks go to the management of Fatih Primary School at Yenimahalle, Süleyman YALÇIN, E. İbrahim EVECEN, Nilgün GÜVEN who always supported my study through arranging my schedule accordingly.

Thank you.

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Leslie Marmon Silko'nun *Almanac of the Dead* (1991) ve *Gardens in the Dunes* (1999) adlı romanlarındaki yerli Amerikan halkının kimlik arayışını incelemektir. Beyaz ve yerli Amerikan halkının bir arada yaşamaya başlaması, dünyanın yerli halkın alışık olduğu eski yer olmadığının bir göstergesidir. Beyaz Amerikan halkının gelişinin bir sonucu olarak gösterilen değişen dünya teması her iki romanın da ana temalarından birini oluşturmaktadır. Beyaz Amerikan halkının ortaya çıkmasıyla, yerli halk da bu değişen dünyaya uyum sağlamaya çalışmakta, diğer bir deyişle, bu kültürel birliktelik kimlik sorununu da beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu tez, geçmişi aracılığıyla şimdiki zamanı ile uzlaşmaya çalışan ana karakterlerin bulunduğu iki romanın karşılaştırmalı analizini yapmaktadır, çünkü değişen dünyaya uyum sağlamaya çalışan yerli Amerikan halkının hayatında geçmişin önemli bir yeri bulunmaktadır. Bu inceleme, söylem analizine dayalı M. M. Bakhtin'in Dialogism adlı kuramının ışığında yapılmıştır. Bakhtin'in teorisi bir romandaki ideolojik görüşü ortaya koymak için dilin sistemini tanımlamaktadır ve bu çalışmanın amacı da iki kültürün arasındaki farklılığı söylem analizi aracılığıyla vurgulamaktır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Silko, *Almanac of the Dead*, *Gardens in the Dunes*, Dialogism, Yerli Amerikalı Kimliği

ABSTRACT

This study investigates Native Americans' quest for identity in two of Leslie Marmon Silko's novels, *Almanac of the Dead* (1991) and *Gardens in the Dunes* (1999). The cultural coexistence of white Americans and Native Americans leads to an awareness that the world is not the same in which Native Americans used to live. The changing world which is depicted as a consequence of the appearance of white Americans in both novels constructs one of the central themes of *Almanac* and *Gardens*. With the appearance of white Americans, Native Americans try to adjust to the changing world, in other words, the co-existence of the two cultures brings the question of identity. This thesis provides a comparative examination of the two novels in which the protagonists try to come to terms with their present through the past, since the past plays a significant role in the life of Native Americans who endeavor to adjust to the changing world. The analysis will be conducted in the light of M. M. Bakhtin's theory of dialogism, which is based on the discourse in novels. Bakhtin's theory defines the system of languages to point out the ideological centre in a novel, and the aim of this study is to underline the difference between the two cultures through their utterances.

Keywords: Silko, *Almanac of the Dead*, *Gardens in the Dunes*, Dialogism, Native American Identity

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

In order to understand Native American literature, it is necessary to take into consideration the forces which constitute Native American identity. Due to the invasion of the land, discovery of gold and westward expansion, Native's way of life in the United States has changed. This change can be claimed to influence the Native American culture mostly since they had already been in America when the whites arrived. Abraham Chapman provides information on the previous settlement of Native Americans': "America was here, and inhabited, for tens of thousands of years before the Icelandic voyagers, Columbus, and other Europeans 'discovered' it, bursting the barriers of Europe's ignorance. During the thousands of years of pre-Columbian human life on this continent the American Indian peoples created and developed diverse civilizations, cultures, and a rich and varied range of literatures in many languages" (1). Before the whites appeared, Natives had their own culture and civilization. The change in Native Americans' lives can be claimed to be the consequence of the invasion of the whites, and it does not only influence their way of living but also their literature as the two cultures continue to live together. It might be said that early Native American writings were also shaped according to these changes. As Ruoff states: "Most nineteenth century Indian authors wrote nonfiction prose. They published protest literature, autobiographies, and ethnohistories in response to the curtailment of Native Americans' rights, and attempts to remove Indians from their traditional homelands" (145). As Native Americans and white Americans continued to live together, new policies and regulations were implemented for Native Americans. They were forced to leave their tribal life and ancestral lands, and accordingly, their writing style has also changed from protest writing into a new form in which the search for identity is always at the center, as Ruoff also claims: "Fiction began to supplant nonfiction prose as the genre to which Indian authors increasingly turned. Many Native American novels dealt with mixed-bloods' quest to find their places in the Indian and white worlds and with the survival of tribalism" (151). The literature of Native Americans can be said to transform in form and content as a result of the change in their tribal life. Thus, it can be claimed that the co-existence of the two cultures is held within the thematic center of literary works in which a quest for identity becomes dominant.

In addition to these transformations in their writing style, in many sources Native American literature is also categorized under various sub-titles such as Native American oral literature, Early Native American literature or Native American literature and Contemporary Native American literature. Native American Oral literature is significant in passing on the tradition of storytelling which is transmitted through generations. Nevertheless, most critics regard the 1960s as the renaissance for Native Americans since N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* (1968) won the Pulitzer Prize in 1969, and this date is also taken as a milestone for Contemporary Native American literature and, as such, Native American literature is claimed to have been in a state of renaissance since 1969 (Ruppert 173). It might be said that the contribution of Native American literature is regarded to hold significance: "Rather than trying to fit Native American literature in as a minor part of the American literary mainstream, it may be more appropriate to see Native American writing as a river in its own right" (Bruchac 322). Hence, from the beginning Native American literature has evolved in form in its own way and in various eras. With the rise of Contemporary Native American literature, many remarkable authors have appeared. These authors seem to have a common characteristic which is also suggested by Helen May Dennis: "The social and cultural position of Native American writers has produced an exciting range of literary texts, which have in common a fascinating synthesis of tribal traditions and modern European or European-American literary formations. There is a strong case for viewing the Native American literary canon in and of itself, since it conveys a shared cultural, historical and tribal identity" (2). The traditional Native American view seems to be accompanied by the views of white Americans, thus the works of Native American authors are suggested to be the outcome of this cultural co-existence.

One of these authors is Leslie Marmon Silko whose influence within Native American literature is noteworthy. She is a Native American of the Laguna tribe of the South-west, and Connie Thorson associates Silko's roots with her writing style: "Laguna and its people that are responsible for what Silko is and will be…The women of Laguna – Silko's mother, grandmother, aunts, and others – were all influential in her life. The stories these women told were to become the basis for many of Silko's writings and were to imbue them with a historical and cultural perspective that has pervaded all her work" (274). The answer to where Silko is from becomes rewarding because all the information from her childhood and ancestors becomes relevant in order to understand her narrative

process. Silko has written three novels; *Ceremony* (1977), *Almanac of the Dead*[1] (1991) and *Gardens in the Dunes*[2] (1999), which can be categorized under similar themes, and these similar themes might be related to Silko's background according to Bakhtin who coined Dialogism. Dialogism provides a basis for understanding the involvement of an author in the process of narration:

> Behind the narrator's story we read a second story, the author's story; he is the one who tells us how the narrator tells stories, and also tells us about the narrator himself. We actually sense two levels at each moment in the story; one, the level of the narrator, a belief system filled with his objects, meanings and emotional expressions, and the other, the level of the author, who speaks (albeit in a refracted way) by means of this story and through this story. The narrator himself, with his own discourse, enters into this authorial belief system along with what is actually being told. We puzzle out the author's emphases that overlie the subject of the story, while we puzzle out the story itself and the figure of the narrator as he is revealed in the process of telling his tale. If one fails to sense this second level, the intentions and accents of the author himself, then one has failed to understand the work. (314)

In the light of Bakhtin's explanation, Silko's background becomes more important in order to understand the influences on her writing style. Moreover, it could be said that her works reflect her life in part. Robert M. Nelson supports the same point as well: "Silko was born into a family environment already rich with story. From its beginnings, the Marmon family had been prominent in Laguna's history of contact with Euro-American social, political, economic, and educational forces, and its story (like Laguna's) has always been one of outsiders who became insiders and of insiders who became outsiders – a story about cultural transformations and the artful merging of Laguna and Anglo influence" (245). In addition to the importance of storytelling, which is suggested to influence Silko's writing style, there surfaces another fact which is suggested to shape Silko's novels: the cultural coexistence. Silko grew up in an environment which is culturally rich and this environment seems to influence her novels. Alicia Kent states: "The increased contact, both locally within the nation's borders and globally through colonialism, led to new ideas about the

[1] Henceforth *Almanac of the Dead* will be referred to as *Almanac*.
[2] Henceforth *Gardens in the Dunes* will be referred to as *Gardens*.

self in relation to the Other that markedly altered the seemingly naturalized categories of race and ethnicity" (9). In line with Kent's assertion, Silko's novels *Ceremony* (1977), *Almanac* (1991) and *Gardens* (1999) might be claimed to represent the contact between the two cultures. In this respect, Silko's novels not only point to merely cultural co-existence, but also to colonization, history of globalization, effects of capitalism and imperialism, race, gender, class, fragmented identity, displacement, placelessness and the way people get consumed, which can be taken as the outcome of intermingling of the two cultures.

Silko refers to these contexts by pointing out two cultures: white Americans and Native Americans. Two cultures have been on the same land for a long time and, their literature seems to point out the experience of this interaction. Joy Porter expands upon the two cultures' coexistence and states that "the fact that Indians and non-Indians have been living in intimate juxtaposition for almost five centuries is evident both in contemporary Indian literature and in Indian life" (60). The theme of association of the two cultures dominates Silko's three novels in which the Native American protagonists seem to experience white culture for a time period. Tayo in *Ceremony*, Sterling and some other Native Americans in *Almanac*, and Indigo in *Gardens* have all experienced being in white culture for a time period. Tayo participates in World War II, Sterling has to leave the reservation and moves to Tucson, and Indigo is taken by an American couple on a Europe tour. At the end, they return home but what they experience in the world of the whites could be held within the thematic pattern of the novels, in other words, the person they become may be accepted as the outcome of this cultural coexistence.

Intermingling of white American and the Native American cultures is at the heart of both *Almanac* and *Gardens*. This co-existence of the cultures brings forth the theme of cultural difference where the fragmented identity of the Natives can be observed. This study investigates the Native Americans' quest for identity in the co-existence of the two cultures. *Almanac* and *Gardens* emphasize the theme of border crossing through their plots in which various cultures intermingle. The travel route in *Almanac* is from South America to Arizona whereas in *Gardens* Indigo, Hattie and Edward keep travelling from Needle, Arizona to Europe. The characters in both novels keep crossing the border(s), and that provides Silko's central characters with exposure to different cultures.

Cultural intermingle can also be observed through mixed parentage, as in both novels Silko depicts some Native Americans whose fathers are white. Both border crossing and mixed parentage enable Silko to point to cultural intermingling which leads to cultural

difference where each culture can be observed along with its own way of life, including traditions, values and tendencies. Allen's argument brings a similar perspective on the theme of cultural difference:

> It might be said that the basic purpose of any culture is to maintain the ideal status quo. What creates differences among cultures and literatures is the way in which the people go about this task, and this in turn depends on, and simultaneously maintains, basic assumptions about the nature of life and humanity's place in it. The ideal status quo is generally expressed in terms of peace, prosperity, good health, and stability. Western cultures lean more and more heavily on technological and scientific methods of maintenance, while traditional cultures such as those of American Indian tribes tend toward mystical and philosophical methods. Because of this tendency, literature plays a central role in the traditional cultures that it is unable to play in technological ones. Thus, the purpose of a given work is of central importance to understanding its deeper significance. (104)

In the light of Allen's argument, *Almanac*'s and *Gardens*' depiction of cultural differences can be observed accordingly, since Silko defines this diversity mainly through the theme of nature of life. The earth with all beings in it is accepted as sacred in one culture while the motif of technology dominates the other. This idea might lead readers' mind toward an affirmation that the Native American culture's tie to peace and prosperity is achieved through nature while power of technology is attributed to white culture in both novels.

In *Almanac*, Silko refers to injustice, profit-based business, technological power, loveless relations, exploitation and sense of greed. By doing so, the cultural difference is also revealed since each culture regards these issues differently. Similarly, interaction between the earth and cultures reveals the same difference in *Gardens* in which the Native Americans' deepest connection with nature stands in opposition to the whites' concern to turn it into a business. In Tillet's perspective,

> [T]he environmental and human damage that subsequently ensues can be traced in the promotion – most obviously evident in Silko's earlier novel *Almanac* – of an exploitative, manipulative, and ultimately oppressive relationship that privileges elite humans at the expense of the earth. Significantly, these exploitative and oppressive attitudes are directly linked to historical sociopolitical relationships, and Silko draws attention to how

> the exclusivity and exclusion evident in the gardens of California and Long Island are themselves dependent upon wealth and social status, and/or upon industry, science and technology. In short, *Gardens* exposes how sociopolitical and corporate elites maintain their status through their relationships to the earth. ("Sand Lizard" 229)

Almanac (1991) depicts a history of five hundred years. The book is divided into six parts: The United States of America, Mexico, Africa, The Americas, The Fifth World and One World, and Many Tribes. Despite the fact that the cast of characters is numerous, there is no single protagonist and there is heterogeneity of characters in which white Americans appear to constitute the majority. On the other hand, there is at least one indigenous character in each part. This character does not have to be from Native American roots and s/he sometimes appears as a black indigenous character. As Dauterich IV asserts "All of the characters in the story have histories to relate, and some are more extensive than others" (351). The map at the very beginning of the book also signifies this relation. By examining the map, the connected history of the characters can be observed, and as Cummings also claims, the map becomes the story (81).

Gardens (1999), Silko's third novel, is about two sisters, Sister Salt and Indigo from the Sand Lizard tribe. Through this novel, Silko represents the Native Americans' deep connection to nature. They live in harmony with nature at the beginning of the novel. Due to a sudden raid of white Americans as they are having a dance ritual, the tribe gets scattered and the sisters are separated. The eleven-year-old protagonist, Indigo, is taken to a boarding school. She dreams of finding Sister Salt and getting back to their previous tribal life. In one of her attempts to run away from the school, Indigo comes across Edward and Hattie, a Euroamerican couple. Especially Hattie loves Indigo immediately, and the couple takes permission from her school during the summer holiday so that Indigo can accompany them on their Europe tour. During the journey, Indigo merely dreams of finding her sister and returning home, and by collecting different kinds of seeds from different countries she holds on to her dream. On the other hand, Silko manages to develop the contrast between the two cultures by depicting Edward who is an ambitious botanist and aims to create a new type of rare plant which will make him rich and famous in the end. The dreams of Indigo and Edward can be associated with cultural difference which is sustained throughout both novels. Cultural difference might be claimed to become overt with the theme of the changing world which is explained with the arrival of the whites. The

changing world is depicted as a different environment in which Native Americans are having difficulty adapting due to the fact that they had different values and traditions before white Americans came.

Ecosystem which is a common and domineering issue in both novels can be associated with the motifs of cultural difference and changing world. The strong family of Maxx in *Almanac* has a big real estate company, and their desire is to build a dream city in the middle of the Arizona desert. Ecological concerns find correspondence in Maxx's plan due to his family's indifference to natural life and their profit-based business which has devastating consequences on the balance of nature. Similar to *Almanac*, ecology is in the heart of *Gardens*, too. It appears under a different theme, that of gardening. Although the natives care for gardening for their survival, white America regards it as a source of profit and of design. According to Ryan, "Silko uses the image of garden to illustrate imperialism on international, national, local and domestic levels. She accomplishes this by pointedly contrasting nineteenth-century American gardening aesthetics and ideologies with Sand Lizard's subsistence farming" (116). The Natives' survival heavily depends on the fertility of the soil whereas white Americans do not pay attention to such productivity. The construction of a big dam around the reservation area which blocks the flow of a river might also be given as an example to the changing world from the Native Americans' point of view. Although the construction effects the fertility of the soil and signals a possible flood at the same time, white Americans do not seem to realize the danger. This difference of response emphasizes the two communities' contrasting ways of considering ecology.

By pointing out the attitudes of the white culture towards the earth, Silko emphasizes a stereotypical depiction of the culture which disregards the ecological balance. Additionally, profit-based business, exploitation of nature, dependence on the power of money are all attributed to the whites as in the example of Trigg in *Almanac* and Edward in *Gardens*. Edward regards gardening as a means of profit since he constantly spends time creating rare species. Trigg constructs another stereotype of a white American who never hesitates to exploit the homeless war veterans for his blood institute. Through Edward and Trigg, Silko depicts ruthless and abusive attitudes against those of Native Americans whose world views are based on the protection of nature.

Depiction of twins or siblings is another common point in the novels, as Cohen also asserts: "Twins or siblings frequently occur in Silko's work. And they often follow the pattern of one staying near home and the other going out and returning with valuable

information garnered in the outside World" (57). In *Almanac* there are Zeta and Lecha, and El Feo and Tacho who are portrayed in terms of Cohen's assertion. In *Gardens,* there are Indigo and Sister Salt who experience the same pattern as expressed by Cohen. Indigo is taken by a Euroamerican couple during their journey and when the sisters get together, Indigo has learnt a lot through living with a white American couple and visiting different cultures. It can be claimed that siblings who experience a different culture return to their roots with a changed identity. Additionally, boarding schools provide a basis for assimilation of the Native Americans. Joy Porter's argument on the assimilation is based on a historical fact: "With Indians no longer a military threat, the United Sates set about attacking Indian tribalism and Indian values at their core. The rhetoric of the time stressed Indian assimilation to the American way of life. This justified a brutal educational program implemented within Indian boarding and day schools that aimed to totally annihilate Indian culture" (52). It can be claimed that, as the result of the whites' assimilation plan, the Native American who is educated in a boarding school or experiences the world of whites for a while returns to his/her roots with a different identity.

Another governing theme of Silko's novels is the emphasis on revolution which is represented as the consequence of the contradiction between the domineering forces and minorities. It can be argued that the Natives represent the minorities whereas white Americans' policies are depicted as domineering forces in Silko's novels: "Forced onto reservations, subject to a repressive bureaucracy, and unable to practice traditional modes of economic, social, and religious life, Indian peoples looked for ways to regenerate their communities" (Porter 54). According to Porter, the coexistence of these two cultures is accompanied by contradiction, restraint and oppression which display the attitudes of the domineering forces. In both novels, Native Americans come together to react to the domineering forces whose policy can be explained through the oppression of minorities. Moreover, this theme is claimed to be included in American writing with the emergence of Native American literature: "Although it can certainly be said that much of mainstream American writing has been and continues to be apolitical and that 'political writing' has been branded as 'mere propaganda' by many American critics, it can just as truly be said that much Native American writing seems to embrace the political as an integral ingredient" (Bruchac 315). Rising of Native Americans in Mexico against the government (in *Almanac*) and the political unrest in Italy (in *Gardens*) can be given as examples for the theme of revolution.

Another similarity in both novels can be observed through Native Americans' attachment to the past which they are forced to forget. In a related study, Alicia Kent notes that "The radical break from the past that modernity occasioned for Anglo and Euro-America Modernists began a few decades earlier for many Native Americans with federally funded efforts to rid American Indians of their culture and force them to assimilate to American culture" (73). The past which Native Americans mostly experience through the stories that their ancestors told can be assumed to help them to come to terms with their present since the present means a new environment which is also argued by Porter through the tradition of oral literature: "Even so, Indian oral traditions are not fragile: in spite of tremendous adversity they survive and continue to grow, reflecting change and diversity within the cultures that produce them and those cultures' relationships over time both with other Indians and non-Indians" (42). For Native Americans, the present means a new environment which is shared with white culture. As Native Americans adjust to a new environment, they mostly keep the past teachings alive by telling stories which are transmitted through generations by dialogues.

In addition to dialogues which transmit stories, variety of speech and voices become apparent in both novels. When *Gardens* is compared with *Almanac*, there seems to be fewer characters but both novels create numerous dialogues among various people of different cultures. Moore also comments on the importance of dialogues in Silko's works: "we may map a sequence in her dialogic approach throughout the three novels. *Ceremony* is the most focused on one character; *Almanac* sets up a cacophonous dialogue without a protagonist; and *Gardens* is focused cross-culturally on two women in dialogue, indeed an historicized distillation of almanac's dialogues" ("Linked to" 10). This variety in speech and voice might be claimed to provide a basis for different kinds of representations since each character in the novel expresses his ideology through dialogues. In other words, each dialogue might point out a different theme which can be claimed to be shaped by the speaker's own culture. For this reason, multiple cultures provide many voices and that corresponds with the theory of Mikhail Bakhtin for whom a novel is composed of diversity of speech types (262).

Bakhtin regards language as a system in which dialogues play a vital role, and he is also interested in ideologies behind utterances which convey different worldviews at the same time. Holquist's explanation of dialogism conveys the perspective of a group of people which can also be assumed as a culture:

> The norms controlling the utterance are similar to other social norms, such as those found in judicial or ethical systems. They may vary in their details, but the nature of their existence remains the same: they exist only in the individual minds of particular people in particular groups. In dialogism, of course, the 'I' of such individual minds is always assumed to be a function of the 'we' that is their particular group. (59)

When certain utterances are categorized, it can be assumed that they are shaped by certain ideologies and that can be narrowed down to cultural difference due to the fact that they see the world differently. Thus, looking at the dialogic nature of Silko's two novels can be claimed to illustrate the ideological differences of cultures.

Because of the numerous characters in both novels, different speech types which carry different ideologies are portrayed. The separate ideologies of the two cultures also reveal cultural difference in the novels. Bakhtin's dialogism points out a similar issue:

> No less than a person in drama or in epic, the person in a novel may act – but such action is always highlighted by ideology, is always harnessed to the character's discourse (even if that discourse is as yet only a potential discourse), is associated with an ideological motif and occupies a definite ideological position. The action and individual act of a character in a novel are essential in order to expose - as well as to test - his ideological position, his discourse. (334)

In other words, the person in a novel reflects his world view through his speech, utterance or dialogues, and this leads to an affirmation of a transcultural environment in which different voices, utterances and dialogues serve as a means of a world view. This representation of a world view might vary depending on culture, time or place which is also argued by Holquist: "Dialogism assumes that at any given time, in any given place, there is a set of powerful but highly unstable conditions at work that will give a word uttered then and there a meaning that is different from what it would be at other times and in other places" (67). These definitions of dialogism by Bakhtin and Holquist could be exemplified through Silko's *Almanac* and *Gardens* since the novels provide a rich basis for dialogues and utterances of different cultures and generations which makes it possible to trace the changing representations of the same utterance. Allen's discussion of the language of symbols carries similarity with the motif of dialogism which explains the perception of utterances:

> Attempts to understand ceremonial literature without knowledge of this purpose often have ludicrous results. The symbols cannot be understood in terms of another culture, whether it be that of Maya or of England, because those other cultures have different imperatives and have grown on different soil, under a different sky within the nexus of different spirits, and within a different traditional context. 'owl' in one situation will have a very different significance from 'owl' in another, and a given color – white or blue – will vary from place to place and from ceremony to ceremony in its significance, intensity, and power. In other words, the rules that govern traditional American Indian literatures are very different from those that govern western literature, though the enormity of difference is, I think, a fairly recent development. Literature must, of necessity, express and articulate the deepest perceptions, relationships, and attitudes of a culture, whether it does so deliberately or accidentally. Tribal literature does this with a luminosity and clarity that are largely free of presentation, stylized 'elegance,' or show. (106)

In the light of Allen's argument, a word can have a different meaning in each ceremony, literature or even in each culture due to the fact that each culture is formed under different circumstances. As in the example of an owl, the themes of this dissertation such as the meaning of the past, the present, history, nature and gardens have different representations depending on the ideology of white American and Native American cultures.

These different representations do not only occur between people from different cultures but also between generations of the same culture. In order to define the difference between generations, nations and cultures it can be asserted that language becomes a significant device, as Bakhtin underlines: "Thus at any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These "languages" of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying 'languages'" (291). According to Bakhtin, language can gain new meanings through time, generations or cultures. Moreover, the depiction of language as the representation of the

co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions might be expanded through the theme of the co-existence of cultural contradictions.

In both *Almanac* and *Gardens* cultural contradictions can be observed and, the analysis of these contradictions could be carried out within the frame of Bakhtin's dialogism which provides information about the formation of words, and points out how they differ according to different cultures, nations or even generations. Beside the formation of words, Bakhtin's explanation on the emergence of the discourse analysis of a novel also indicates an ability where looking at a novel from outside becomes possible: "A new mode developed for working creatively with language: the creating artist began to look at language from the outside, with another's eyes, from the point of view of a potentially different language and style" (60). Looking at a language from the outside might enable the observer to see the ideologies behind utterances since each voice becomes an object of representation according to Bakhtin. Thus, through dialogism, it can be assumed that the ideological boundaries between different groups of people who might belong to different generations or cultures, become clear.

Intermingling of cultures is at the heart of both *Almanac* and *Gardens*, thus, from the perspective of Bakhtin, the dialogues in the novels play an important role in revealing ideologies in which disagreements and oppositions distinguish the two cultures from each other. In Bakhtin's words, "What is realized in the novel is the process of coming to know one's own language as it is perceived in someone else's language, coming to know one's own horizon within someone else's horizon" (365). As such, through the language differences, this thesis will examine the cultural difference between the Native Americans and white Americans, and point out Native Americans' quest for identity in two of Leslie Marmon Silko's novels, *Almanac of the Dead* and *Gardens in the Dunes*. It can be claimed that both novels draw the attention to the fact that the quest of Native Americans in the transcultural environment is supported by their past, and a new collective identity comes into being as a consequence of the quest.

To this end, Chapter I analyzes *Almanac* through Native Americans' quest for identity in a transcultural environment where they strongly hold on to their past in order to protect their culture and celebrate the history of their ancestors. Moreover, this chapter deals with other minority cultures who unite their forces with Native Americans in order to take the land back. Chapter II points out two different perceptions of the whites and Native Americans towards gardening, nature and the earth in *Gardens.* This chapter also studies

two types of relations to nature which are based on either survival gardening or profit-based, in other words, capitalist gardening. In addition to different attitudes of two cultures towards gardening, the chapter points out the issue of identity through the lives of two sisters, Sister Salt and Indigo who are separated for a time period. As such, the Conclusion provides a comparative examination of *Almanac* and *Gardens* through formulating the similarities and differences in terms of cultural coexistence which leads to an awareness of a new collective identity. Dialogism might become one of the components in discussing the issue of this new collective identity which could be exemplified through the protagonists, Sterling and Indigo. Sterling and Indigo become different people who harbor diverse world views of the two cultures, and this could be observed dialogically. Thus, the Conclusion provides a basis for the theme of this new collective identity as well.

CHAPTER I

ALMANAC OF THE DEAD

Almanac of the Dead (1991) is Leslie Marmon Silko's second novel. In this novel, Silko puts forth a diversity of characters from different cultures and backgrounds which enables her to foreground the motif of intercommunal interaction in her novel. Bakhtin's definition of a novel carries the same motif: "the novel as a whole is a phenomenon multiform in style and variform in speech and voice" (261). What Bakhtin is describing here could also be called the diversified dialogues of various characters. With the depiction of various characters, therefore, the main theme revolves around the ideology of the co-existence and unification of multiple societies in which white Americans, Native Americans and other minorities are welcomed. As Regier states:

> [I]n contrast to the staging of conflicting tribal and Anglo viewpoints within one character's central consciousness, *Almanac of the Dead* has no protagonist. Rather, Silko shifts the narrative ground from a centered subject to multiple persons and, often, their various obsessively valued object collections that in turn signify belief systems and cultural histories. Within the context of her development of a hybrid narrative form, I describe Silko's narrative development as a somewhat curious shift from a centered subject to multiple objects. (186)

Regier's depiction as hybrid narrative form is sustained through multiple interactions among the cultures by which it becomes easier to trace the diversity of meanings behind the dialogues.

When this many characters are analyzed according to their different types of discourse and tones, Silko's *Almanac* becomes very productive in terms of diversity of dialogues. Similarly, Bakhtin's theory is based on the discourse in novels, and he accepts each part of language as the object of representation: "To a greater or lesser extent, every novel is a dialogized system made up of the images of 'languages,' styles and consciousness that are concrete and inseparable from language. Language in the novel not only represents, but itself serves as the object of representation" (49). With Bakhtin's explanation of language and with the numerous characters in the novel, diversified types of

ideologies are encountered. In other words, the uttered ideologies of different cultures become the object of representation which can be categorized into various subtitles such as the past and the present, the changing world, cultural differences, the minorities and history. Then, the discourse of numerous characters becomes very important for underlining this ideology of different cultures.

These ideologies might give a sense of disturbance as it is also suggested by Janet M. Powers: "Silko's intensely disturbing novel is intended to shock her readers into full awareness of environmental and moral degradation" (261). Silko achieves this awareness through corrupt, immoral and sometimes unfair actions or utterances. When Silko's *Almanac* is analyzed according to the ideological message behind the dialogues, Powers's term of moral degradation becomes overt through some unpleasant behaviors or utterances.

Almanac can be described as the novel of various voices, and for this reason David L. Moore makes a correlation between the novel and the term of heteroglossia which Bakhtin describes as "the base condition governing the operation of meaning in any utterance" (428). Moore states:

> Silko's own persona as witness derives partially from the heteroglossia of the text itself. This quality, moving through so many voices, has the reflective effect of foregrounding the author as performer (of negative capability). That is, when the contents are both so fluid and so fluctuating, there is a tendency to note the container. One technique by which she amplifies heteroglossia is to write direct quotes both without quotation marks and with the speaker in the third person. Much of the book is thus "transcribed" words or thought of the characters from widely divergent angles of the cosmic battle between witchery and witness, but these thoughts are delivered as narrative exposition, as though the narrator/author is speaking. (Silko's Blood 156)

Examining the words and thoughts of characters from widely divergent angles might enable to trace Silko's addressing of unification and co-existence, thus, the diversity of speech types, individual voices and the meaning behind them become significant.

Almanac is divided into numerous parts under various titles and subheadings, and the first pages of Book One, with the subheading Tucson, introduce some characters: Zeta, Lecha, Seese, Paulie, Ferro and Sterling. The Mexican Indian twins, Zeta and Lecha have lived apart from each other for a long time and the first chapters narrate their reunion. The

reunion of the twins makes it apparent that Lecha suffers from cancer, and she comes to the ranch for a reason. Seese, a white American character, is in desperate need for Lecha's psychic power to locate her missing son, and in the meantime, she stays with the twins to run some errands. They gather in the kitchen of the ranch. Seese prepares to give an injection to Lecha, and the first utterances convey aspects of the old and the new, in other words, the past and the present: "'The old blood, old dried-up blood,' Ferro says, looking at Lecha, 'the old, and the new blood'" (*Almanac* 19). These first lines gain more meaning as the story develops into a plot in which some historical details about whites and Native Americans and the evolution of different generations are narrated. Joy Porter's explanation of the historical evolution of Native American literature sheds light on the same subject as well. She reinforces the central theme of the past and the present from the perspective of literature: "The great transformative power of Indian literature from any era derives in part from its ability to invoke a past with direct implications for the present" (39). As in the power of Native American literature, throughout the novel the theme of the past and the present is being juxtaposed.

Silko titles Book Eight in Part One as "Indian Country" in which historical details are given and that also reveals Native Americans' resistance. Beside the historical facts and the theme of resistance, Silko creates a plot in this section which emphasizes the themes of the past and the present. The twins' cousin, Calabazas cannot stand his aunts and uncles' narration of the past because Silko makes it clear that the new generation is assigned to the present and the future:

> He had heard the old men and old women in the village when he was a child. In the darkness after the sun had been down an hour or so, they'd begin talking about how things had once been. They'd say 'before' the whites came we remember the deer were as thick as jackrabbits and the grass in the canyon bottoms was high as their bellies, and the people had always had plenty to eat. The streams and rivers had run deep with clean, cold water. But all of that had been 'before,' and Calabazas had, even as a child, grown to hate the word, the sound of that word in Spanish and finally in English too.
>
> Calabazas had resented what sounded to him like whining and crying of the old folks during the long summer evenings. He did not want to know what happened 'before.' Young as he was and with as little as he knew about the

> killing of his people, Calabazas was part of the new generation that the old-time people had scolded for its peculiar interest in 'now' and tomorrow. (*Almanac* 222)

Towards the end of the novel, Calabazas seems to change his mind about the term before. He starts to see the connection between the past and the present as he gets old and thinks that he has seen a lot. His evaluation of the wars from the past to the present is reminiscent of a common point, the recurrence: "Yoeme's great war for the land was still being fought; only now it wasn't just the Yaquis or even the Tohano O'Dom who were fighting. The war was the same war it had always been; the people were still fighting for their land. The war would go on until the people took back the land" (*Almanac* 631). Yoeme's war or the present war, they are the same. They are both fought for the land. The desire of people has not changed a lot, the driving force behind the war is the land. This experience seems to teach Calabazas the importance of the past and the meaning of the past which Beth H. Piatote also supports: "the novel rejects basic temporal orientations that separate events by chronology; thus the past is never left behind, but is always possibly present or soon be manifested again. As a book of days, the *Almanac* calls upon the reader to recognize *time* as it circulates unbound through the work. But time is not an unaccompanied being; the present time is ever paired with its twin from the past, or possibly the future" (155). Knowing the past seems to help people to predict the future since the past and the future are interwoven tightly in the Native American culture. The important point here is that Native American culture refers to time as cyclical and that is why they see the past as related to the present and the future.

As the following quotation also illustrates, Silko attempts to create a bridge between the past and the present through many plots. As the twins start to work on the almanac, one of the fragments of the old notebook signifies the same theme: "An experience termed *past* may actually return if the influences have the same balances or proportions as before. Details may vary, but the essence does not change. The day would have the same feeling, the same character, as the day has been described having had *before*. The image of a memory exists in the present moment" (*Almanac* 575). A similar type of situation occurs in Yoeme's life. In other words, Yoeme's own story could be said to stand as an example for the fragments of the almanac: "Yoeme had believed power resides within certain stories; this power ensures the story to be retold, and with each retelling a slight but permanent shift took place. Yoeme's story of deliverance changed

forever the odds against all captives; each time a revolutionist escaped death in one century, two revolutionists escaped certain death in the following century even if they had never heard such an escape story. Where such miraculous escape stories are greatly prized and rapidly circulated, miraculous escapes from death gradually increase" (*Almanac* 581). Yoeme's time in jail draws attention to the fact that as long as stories are told, their power becomes visible. As she is in jail waiting to be hanged, an influenza epidemic spreads all over the continent, and there is no one to hang Yoeme, so the epidemic saves her life. Throughout the novel, her story and some other stories are retold, and the meanings of these stories might inspire a person who is in the same situation. Piatote also defines *Almanac* in the same way: "Silko's novel, structured as a narrative almanac, offers episodic entries of past and present events that anticipate and predict future possibilities" (154). The Native American culture, as represented in the novel, pays great attention to the past and storytelling which might be accepted as a way of keeping the past alive at the present. The emphasis on storytelling becomes clear through the ideology of Karl Marx who shows a deeply-rooted respect to the power of ancestors: "Generation after generation, individuals were born, then after eighty years, disappeared into dust, but in the stories, the people lived on in the imaginations and hearts of their descendants. Wherever their stories were told, the spirits of the ancestors were present and their power was alive" (*Almanac* 520). Hence stories play an important role in remembering the past.

Beside the teachings of Karl Marx, Silko makes it clear that many characters desire to tell stories such as Menardo's grandfather. He is a Mexican Indian and also keen on telling old stories: "Menardo almost felt sorry because the old man was the only one of all the adults who did not require anything in return, except that Menardo listen. The old man talked about other times and other worlds that existed before this present one" (*Almanac* 259). The stories are accepted to have prophecy quality. In *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*, Silko also defines the prophecy quality of the stories of the past: "Native American tribes have ancient prophecies that have been retold for thousands of years, generation upon generation" (146). These prophecies are retold through generations and their influences on people are believed to continue until the present. In other words, it can be said that they provide a bridge between the past and the present.

Silko addresses the theme of the past and the present not only through the storytelling plots but also through some encounters. Ferro is Lecha's son who is raised by his aunt Zeta. After being separated for years, Lecha and Ferro's first encounter includes

some anger since Ferro had been deserted by his mother: "Lecha had put both arms on his shoulders as if to embrace him, but Ferro had pulled away. 'Oh, is this how you are going to be?' Lecha said softly…But his jaws were clenched and his words came hissing fast. 'I am a grown man. I am thirty years old.' 'Oh, Ferro I want it to be a reunion,' Lecha said" (*Almanac* 99). Lecha's discourse is important for emphasizing the word reunion which also refers to the reunion of two different generations who have been living separately for a long time. Here again the author's emphasis is on the past and the present but from a different perspective. This discourse between Lecha and Ferro can be taken to imply that their reunion will not be easy.

Unlike the Native Americans, white Americans have different perspectives on the past and on storytelling. The connection between the past and the present is achieved through the telling of stories which is assigned to Native American culture mostly, and white Americans' ignorance of storytelling is demonstrated through their lack of interest in the past. In *The Sacred Hoop*, Paula Gunn Allen states that:

> The belief that rejection of tradition and of history is a useful response to life is reflected in America's amazing loss of memory concerning its origins in the matrix and context of Native America. America does not seem to remember that it derived its wealth, its values, its food, much of its medicine, and a large part of its 'dream' from this Native American land, and that ignorance helps to perpetuate the longstanding European and Middle Eastern monotheistic, hierarchical, patriarchal cultures' oppression of women, gays, and lesbians, people of color, working class, unemployed people, and the elderly. (280)

Therefore, Allen supports the cultures' different perception about the past, and the reason for white Americans' ignorance of their past seems to be related to their intention to forget it.

White Americans' ignorance of the past is also demonstrated through El Feo's words. Many Native Americans take part in an uprising which is supposed to be conducted in Mexico. El Feo is one of them, and to further illustrate the meaning of the past in Natives' culture, his words are important: "El Feo daydreamed about the days of the past – sensuous daydreams of Mother Earth who loved all her children, all living beings. Those past times were not lost. The days, months, and years were living beings who roamed the starry universe until they came around again. 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" (*Almanac* 313). The difference between the two cultures seems to stem from the different concepts of time, and it becomes clear through Allen's assertion as well: "Another difference between these two ways of perceiving reality lies in the tendency of the American Indian to view space as spherical and time as cyclical, whereas the non-Indian tends to view space as linear and time as sequential" (86). Since Native American culture regards time as cyclical, the past becomes important for them to predict the future.

The group of people who are supposed to lead an uprising in Mexico are educated at a Cuban school through the teachings of Karl Marx. One of them is Angelita who is behind the uprising plans by leading People's Army in a village. She seems to be influenced by Marx's teachings. In addition to the stories which are narrated by the old generation, the teachings of Karl Marx harbor the importance of the past as well due to his emphasis on the past. Angelita's comment on his utterances resembles the old generation's point of view about the past: "For hundreds of years white men had been telling the people of the Americas to forget the past; but now the white man Marx came along and he was telling people to remember. The old-time people had believed the same thing: they must reckon with the past because within it lay seeds of the present and future. They must reckon with the past because within it lay this present moment and also the future moment" (*Almanac* 311). Each culture has its own way of addressing the past, but as represented in the novel, white American culture seems to ignore it. However, in Native American culture, it is believed that the past has a power on the present and the future. As previously mentioned, the almanac serves the purpose of informing about the past and it plays an influential role in predicting the future.

As Zeta thinks about the past, she remembers some anecdotes related to Yoeme: "She thought about old ones and Yoeme and how they had watched the night skies relentlessly, translating sudden bursts and trails of light into lengthy messages concerning the future and the past. Yoeme claimed it had all been written down, in another form of course, in the notebooks, which she had waved in their faces almost from the beginning" (*Almanac* 178). Since the central emphasis of the almanac is to keep the past alive through stories, to re-write and re-store the almanac becomes the most important priority for Lecha. "'A dying woman,' she lectured, 'must above all put her reputation in order. Before all other business affairs, a woman's reputation must come first!'" (*Almanac* 81). As is in the

tradition of Native Americans, Lecha wants to pass on what she knows to other generations. This tradition is also defined by Silko in *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit: Essays on Native American Life Today* which includes twenty-two essays about Native Americans from the past to the present: "Traditionally everyone, from the youngest child to the oldest person, was expected to listen and be able to recall or tell a portion of, if only a small detail from, a narrative account or story. Thus, the remembering and the retelling were a communal process. Even if a key figure, an elder who knew much more than others, were to die unexpectedly, the system would remain intact" (31). Since the almanac carries the important events of the past, the duty of transcribing and typing it becomes a significant duty for the current owner. As Lecha suffers from a serious illness, passing on the information and finishing the almanac, a legacy from her grandmother, becomes a priority for her.

The old generation's actions and utterances might be said to resemble the purpose of the almanac since both have a strong tie with the past and they want to pass it on. On the other hand, the main distinction between the old and the new generation is their diverse ways of perception. Unlike the old generation, the new generation defines the present. Calabazas seems not to be content with the past that his aunt Mahawala told, but on the contrary, he would soon find some correlation among his ancestor's past, the present and the future.

> The last thing old Mahawala had told everyone was that human life spans weren't much, and they should all remember that the soldiers had come once, and they would come again. The day would come when once more the people would have to flee to the mountains. Old Mahawala had even warned them they were becoming forgetful and arrogant because of all the white man's toys, radios and televisions and automobiles, which were causing them to forget a great many important things. 'You think it won't happen again, that the time won't come around again. Well, you just go ahead and think that way. I will be the sudden gust of wind that overturns your lantern. (*Almanac* 233)

Each member of the old generation serves like an almanac by telling the old stories, and the new generation who listens to those stories is supposed to be aware that the same days would return.

The *Collins Cobuild Dictionary* defines the almanac as a book published every year which contains information about events connected with a particular subject or activity, and facts and statistics about that activity ("Almanac",43). Facts and statistics might be interpreted as the past events in *Almanac*, however, the emphasis is not on the past merely but on the present and the future as well. Caren Irr's explanation also supports the connection between the past and the future which is supposed to be predicted: "the almanac is simultaneously a record of events (e.g., anniversaries) and a prediction; it occupies a transitive ground between past and future, as well as between English and Spanish, and official and folk religion" (226). According to Irr, an almanac provides a rich basis for the future since it stores events of the past. Additionally, Bakhtin's dialogism refers to the past and the future through examining the ways in which a word is constructed in a dialogue: "The word in living conversation is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer-word: it provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction. Forming itself in an atmosphere of the already spoken, the word is at the same time determined by that which has not yet been said but which is needed and in fact anticipated by the answering word. Such is the situation in any living dialogue" (280). Hence, the construction process of a word in a living conversation combines the past and the future just like the almanac does. The almanac brings the stories of events from the past, and the interpretation (or the adjustment to the present) of these stories provide basis to predict the future.

As the following quotation also illustrates, Native American culture's emphasis on the almanac cannot only be attached to its quality of informing on the past but also on its prophetic quality: "They were told the 'book' they carried was the 'book' of all the days of their people. These days and years were all alive, and all these days would return again. The 'book' had to be preserved at all costs" (*Almanac* 247). The unifying motif of the past and the future through storytelling is also suggested by Silko in *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*: "From the Antarctic to the Arctic, all the indigenous communities of the Americas have ancient stories that foretold the invasion of the Americas by the Europeans; the old stories prophesied the suffering and destruction that the people of Americas would endure. The old stories even foretold the amazing high technologies humans would someday possess. But the old stories also tell of another time, when all things incompatible with Mother Earth will disappear and all those who attached themselves to such things will also disappear" (153). The past which has been carried

through the centuries by telling stories can be said to construct a reality for the future, and this can be sensed through the almanac.

The prophetic quality of the almanac is underlined in the twins' utterances as well. When Zeta and Lecha get together and start to rewrite the book at the ranch, they come across one of the prophecies of the book: "'Those old almanacs don't just tell you when to plant or harvest, they tell you about the days yet to come – drought or flood, plague, civil war or invasion.' Lecha seemed to be drifting off to sleep. 'Once the notebooks are transcribed, I will figure out how to use the old almanac. Then we will foresee the months and years to come - everything'" (*Almanac* 137). Twins seem to be worried about why they have not started to type earlier because what was written in the book might as well change the future. Thus, the written words in the almanac become important for passing on the correct message.

When the almanac is passed on to Yoeme, she is warned about the missing parts. "The woman warned that it should not be just any sort of words" (*Almanac* 129). The discourse calls the significant role of words into question which is also in the center of dialogism because words formulate a concept which is important both for the speaker and the listener. As Bakhtin states in *The Dialogic Imagination*: "The authentic environment of an utterance, the environment in which it lives and takes shape, is dialogized heteroglossia, anonymous and social as language, but simultaneously concrete, filled with specific content and accented as an individual utterance" (272). In this light, different owners of the almanac seem to pay attention to their choice of words while completing the notebook. Countless quotations can illustrate Yoeme's devotion to words. Elizabeth Ann McNeil describes Yoeme as a word warrior: "Yoeme is a word warrior who dedicates her life to keeping and then passing along the almanac fragments (as does Silko, in an imaginative sense)" (254). Native Americans prophesize that completing and passing on the almanac is significant for predicting the future and the owners of the almanac do their best to complete it with the right words.

The sudden appearance of Yoeme can be related to the task of passing the almanac on to the twins who are believed to complete the almanac. From the beginning Yoeme observes the twins to decide which one she would give the duty of completing the almanac to. Since the twins' childhood, Yoeme has teased them and watched their reactions carefully. One day Yoeme tells the twins that she once had advised their mother to kill one of them "Zeta has asked, 'Me or her?' and Lecha had said, 'You kill me when I'm a baby

and they'll hang you!' which had caused Yoeme to clap her hands together and laugh until their mother had come out to see what was the matter" (*Almanac* 115). After Yoeme collects enough data about the twins' characters, she comes to an understanding that Zeta would be the one to decipher the old notebook.

Yoeme tells the journey of the almanac to the twins. According to the story, the last members of a tribe were chosen to carry the almanac to the North where the rest of the tribe's people were believed to live. The journey of the almanac is significant since it represents the past which is crucial for the next generation to know the future.

> 'A number of the pages were lost, you know,' Yoeme had intoned with her eyes half-closed so she could recall the details clearly. 'On the long journey from the south. The fugitives who carried the manuscript suffered great hardships. They were the last of their kind. They knew that after them there would no longer be human beings who had seen what they saw. A dispute erupted among those few survivors of the Butcher.' (*Almanac* 246)

For the journey, three young girls and a little boy were chosen. In the case of their failure in passing on the almanac, the information about the past would disappear forever. "After all, the almanac was what told them who they were and where they had come from in the stories…The people knew if even part of their almanac survived, they as people would return someday" (*Almanac* 246). The almanac seems to be the indigenous peoples' chance of survival in the future because they believe in cyclical time. In a related essay, Caren Irr discuss the two notions of time: "-a mythic, spatial time associated with storytelling and Native American culture, and a linear clock time associated with the novel and European culture-" (234). The assumption of cyclical time puts the focus on the past and the future. Beth H. Piatote draws attention to the fact that the process of colonization has direct relation to the past: "The central techniques of colonization involve the colonizers taking over a place by dominating its Indigenous peoples, controlling its resources, and severing the memories and functions of an autonomous, uncolonized past. Colonization strives to "fix" the past, to stop the time for colonized, to bring the previous life and time to an end" (155). As the past is tried to be erased, words, which carry stories from the past, become important in the world of the Natives.

Throughout the novel, Silko refers to the importance of words in many parts of the novel. Alegria's quotation about Tacho reminds us that Native Americans are keen on words: "Alegria thought the Indian chauffeur exemplified the worst characteristics

possessed by the Indian. He had listened to every word Menardo and Alegria said, from the airport to the dress shop, to the moment he opened the door of the Mercedes for them in front of the Royal Hotel" (*Almanac* 278). Through Alegria's concern of being listened, it becomes apparent that words have significant meaning especially in the world of the Natives. Tacho pays attention to each word since the meaning of words plays significant role in his culture. Paula Gunn Allen's assertion is also overt in terms of words: "The word articulates reality – not "psychological" or imagined reality, not emotive reality captured metaphorically in an attempt to fuse thought and feeling, but that reality where thought and feeling are the one, where objective and subjective are one, where speaker and listener are one, where sound and senses are one" (102). The Native American culture believes that a word articulates reality through which they sense the thoughts and intentions behind it, and what a word serves for can be said to expand the importance of the almanac.

The almanac which is passed on to the following generation includes written messages, and that makes the meaning of each word significant, since they carry a message for the future. In order to pass on the message correctly, the words need to be selected carefully. The importance of written words is supported by Calabazas where he talks to Root about the past and the present: "'I don't know. We live in a different world now. Liars and feebleminded are everywhere, getting elected to public office or appointed federal judge. Spoken words can no longer be trusted. Put everything in writing'" (*Almanac* 217). Calabazas defines the importance of written words in a world where spoken words are no longer trusted. Looking at these paragraphs of the almanac and Calabazas's, the importance of words, once again, surfaces.

The journey of the almanac includes many stories since the present owner is supposed to write down what has happened during his time. This is what Yoeme also did; when the twins start to decipher the old book, they come across what their grandmother has written. Yoeme had added the story of deliverance; the story when she was put in jail and sentenced to death. With the start of the epidemic of influenza, she could not be hanged. The dialogue between the twins indicates that they continue to write the almanac in their words just like Yoeme did: "'Oh…,' Zeta had said. 'You are going to copy her book…''Well,' Lecha said, her eyes dreamy and distant, 'You could say 'her book,' but of course the book will be mine'" (*Almanac* 177). As the twins talk about the almanac, Lecha's discourse indicates that each generation will add their way of perception into the almanac, and that leads the book to turn into the reunion of generations in the end.

Karl Marx's comment demonstrates a focus on the past stories from a different perspective: "Marx had understood stories are alive with the energy words generate. 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. The words of the stories filled rooms with an immense energy that aroused the living with fierce passion and determination for justice" (*Almanac* 520). The previous quotation leads to an awareness that the power of words in a story which brings facts from the past is vital for the next generation's search for justice. The Natives listen to the stories of their ancestors who suffered in the past, and when the time comes for justice, they take action both for their ancestors and for themselves.

The past is important because it involves history, and the importance of history is in direct relation with the blood the ancestors of a culture shed in the past. For that reason, indigenous people pay much attention to the past and to the spirits of their ancestors. The themes of history and the past are also defined strongly in the teachings at the Cuban school running in New Mexico where people are trained for the uprising: "the stories of the people of 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. This man Marx, had understood that the stories or 'histories' are sacred; that within 'history' reside relentless forces, powerful spirits, vengeful, relentlessly seeking justice" (*Almanac* 316). This quotation reflects all indigenous cultures' point of view as represented in the novel, which has an overt connection with the narrating of the past and of history.

Not only the Native Americans but also African Americans refer to the importance of history and the past. Clinton and Roy work as night watchmen for Trigg who owns a big business of organ donation. The role of Roy and Trigg is to find donors usually from among poor people who sleep in the street. Their duty inevitably makes them see the injustice of the streets because they look for volunteers among homeless people who are mostly Vietnam veterans. To further illustrate the perception of injustice, Roy and Clinton's anger towards those who forget their past becomes evident: "Clinton wanted black people to know all their history; he wanted them to know all that had gone on before Africa; how great and powerful gods had traveled from Africa with the people. He wanted black Americans to know how deeply African blood had watered the soil of the Americas for five hundred years" (*Almanac* 416). The living condition which Roy and Clinton

experience illustrate the perception of injustice for homeless people who had once fought for America or whose ancestors shed blood on this continent.

Both Roy and Clinton blame people for forgetting their ancestors: "Clinton just wanted black people to know the spirits of their ancestors were still with them right there in the United States" (*Almanac* 418). Clinton defines forgetting the past as madness and meanness because, as many indigenous cultures represented in the novel think, Clinton shares the belief of the power of dead souls: "Clinton had seen madness and meanness everywhere in the United States, among whites and blacks too. Because people everywhere had forgotten the spirits of all their ancestors who had preceded them on these vast continents. Yes, the Americas were full of furious, bitter spirits; five hundred years of slaughter had left the continents swarming with millions of spirits that never rested and would never stop until justice had been done" (*Almanac* 424). The quotation exemplifies the indigenous belief in celebrating the souls of ancestors by remembering them. They believe that a big power lies in the past, and this power is obtained through remembering their ancestors' history.

Clinton starts to take some lessons at the University and his anger for those who forget their past becomes clear as he specifically focuses on Black Studies: "[T]he more he learnt, the more angry he got as he realized how whites had had to scheme and manipulate day and night to keep blacks from realizing the power and beauty they had always possessed" (*Almanac* 407). Clinton's words demand to think that the real power of human beings is hidden in their past. Allen brings up the same concern about remembering which is vital for the present generation:

> Contemporary Indian communities value individual members who are deeply connected to the traditional ways of their people, even after centuries of concerted and brutal effort on the part of the American government, the churches, and the corporate system to break the connections between individuals and their tribal world. In fact, in the view of traditionals, rejection of one's culture – one's traditions, language, people – is the result of colonial oppression and is hardly to be applauded. They believe that the roots of oppression are to be found in the loss of tradition and memory because that loss is always accompanied by a loss of a positive sense of self. In short, Indians think it is important to remember, while Americans believe it is important to forget. (279)

It is significant to remember the ancestors, due to the fact that the remembering would bring freedom for those who do not forget what their ancestors lived through. Allen's argument puts the blame on the American government for forcing Native Americans to forget their past. Clinton also blames the white man: "Ignorance of the people's history had been the white man's best weapon" (*Almanac* 742). Ignoring the past means forgetting what the ancestors did for the country, and without that power, it is believed to be unsuccessful in a battle for justice.

History and ancestors also play a crucial role in the lives of Native Americans such as Mosca who is a Mexican Indian: "Mosca had watched the steam rise off the Santa Cruz on mornings when cold mountain air settled over Tucson. He understood how the steam was the moisture of the river rising, so that you had a river running into the sky, in all directions of the wind – but also that these were the souls of the dead rising out of the purgatory where they'd been prisoned hundreds and thousands of years waiting to be released so they could return to help their beloved descendants" (*Almanac* 603). Mosca has felt in connection with the souls from the very beginning of his life. His experience watching the uneasy souls has a strong tie with the explanation which refers to the present as a consequence of the past and history. The novel builds a strong emphasis on the imprisoned souls which is also supported by Carren Irr's argument: "Like the almanac, we are reminded, a memory calls on the past but is retained in an image available in the present. In form and content, then, the almanac stresses the interpretation of past and present, promising a renewal that will lessen the weight of dead fellow travelers" (226). The image of the dead souls in Mosca's eyes could be considered as messengers from the past. They demand something from the current inhabitants of the earth.

One of the speakers at the Heal Conference, Weasel Tail also reminds the souls' demand of the participants: "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 mountains'" (*Almanac* 723). It can be asserted that the emphasis on the increasing demand for justice is depicted along with the arrival of the white man. The reason that the spirits of ancestors are described as outrageous is because they hold their culture responsible for being indifferent to the change of the earth.

The arrival of the whites finds a new interpretation in the novel through a story. The four children who carried the almanac to the north were strictly warned about an era called Death Eye Dog: "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" (*Almanac* 251). They were told to be careful about such invaders. This story, which is narrated at the end of Part One, "The United States of America," establishes a link between Part One and Part Two entitled "Mexico." Part Two indicates that the era is also called The Reign of Fire-Eye Macaw with the exact same meaning. Interestingly, the lines in *Yellow Woman and the Beauty of the Spirit* refer to the Europeans as invaders as well: "All the prophecies foretell the invasion by the Europeans. The Maya and Aztec almanacs predicted the arrival of Cortes to the day, 11 Ahau (Maya reckoning). No one here was surprised when the Europeans showed up. Only the cruelty of the Europeans astonished the people" (146). Since Europeans are accepted as invaders in Native American culture, this era's explanation suggests qualities being attributed to invaders with whom the world has begun to change.

The primary reason for the changing of the world is suggested to be colonization. Paula Gunn Allen's point also reinforces the connection between the changing world and colonization: "Colonization does not, after all, affect people only economically. More fundamentally, it affects a people's understanding of their universe, their place within that universe, the kinds of values they must embrace and actions they must make to remain safe and whole within that universe. In short, colonization alters both the individual's and group's sense of identity" (129). Each Native American character's point about the changing world leans heavily on their values which they have accepted for a long time, and now they seem to be shattered by the new vision of the changing world.

Each Native American character shares his experience about the changing world. However, the important point here is that each story of these characters constitutes a micro level, and the macro influence of the changing world from the overall point of view accords with the end of the novel where those characters come together. Sterling is an Arizona Indian who lives in a reservation with his aunt Marrie. At the beginning of Book Three, Sterling's feeling of injustice becomes clear as his past is narrated. He is appointed by tribal officials to keep the Hollywood film crew out of the sacred places as they make their movie. As time goes by, Sterling loses his control over the film crew, and with the appearance of a big stone snake figure, all officials feel uneasy about protecting the figure

because stone figures are believed to be given by some spirits for some reason. Thus, the appearance of the giant stone snake during the mining work carries a vital meaning for the Natives. The conspiracy about the theft of the big stone snake changes Sterling's life. The council expels Sterling from the reservation forever, and part of his anger about injustice is caused by this experience. His utterance reflects his rage towards white people: "Stupid assholes! He had learned a number of new cuss words during the weeks he had been around them. What horrible white people! Some of the worst white people on earth was what Sterling had concluded" (*Almanac* 89). Hence, Sterling's life changes with the arrival of the white film crew. At the micro level, Sterling's life reflects the example of a changing world, while, at the macro level, the influence of the changing world through other characters' experiences can be exemplified as well. Through the lens of an individual life, as in the example of Sterling's, a small picture might be analyzed; however, the other characters' experience in the changing world puts forth a bigger picture which shows that the Native Americans do not live in a world which they used to.

Sterling finds comfort at the ranch at Tucson mountain which is far from people. The place gives him time to think and question the changing system of the world. His utterance is crucial to track this change:

> Something really had happened to the world. It wasn't just something his funny, wonderful, old aunts had made up. It wasn't just the scarcity of eligible brides or dependable women. People now weren't the same. What had become of that world which had faded a little more each time one of his dear little aunts had passed? Sterling dabbed at the tears with his shirttail. (*Almanac* 88)

As the quotation illustrates, the previous generation stands for some values which seem to be changed by the vision of a new world, and it becomes harder for the present generation to endure the changing world, because the present generation witnesses the changing world along with their memories about the past.

Both old and new generation Natives talk about this change which might lead to the conclusion that the world is not the same. It is also told by Sterling's aunt as they are at the doctor's office. The aunt states that witnessing this huge change in the world is not tolerable for her anymore: "Well, a heart of a forty-year-old isn't much good when all the rest is ninety years old. I have seen too much lately. I have begun to dislike what I see, and what I hear" (*Almanac* 96). Each Native American character suggests their sorrow about

what the world has become, depending on their own experiences, and that constitutes the macro level.

The theme of the changing world could also be investigated through the past and the present situations of the borders. The subheading, Imaginary Lines, gives information about some historical details which also refer to the change in borders. Calabazas, who runs an illegal cocaine trade across the border, belongs to the same clan with the twins and he is the twins' cousin. His name means pumpkin and this part narrates the story of how Calabazas gets this nickname. As the border controls get tight, he invents a method to hide what he passes across the border. He hides them under big pumpkins and his people start to call him Calabazas after that:

> 'We don't believe in boundaries. Borders. Nothing like that. We are here thousands of years before the first whites. We are here before maps or quit claims. We know where we belong on this earth. We have always moved freely. North-south, East-west. We pay no attention to what isn't real. Imaginary lines. Imaginary minutes and hours. Written law. We recognize none of that. And we carry a great many things back and forth. We don't see any border. We have been here and this has continued thousands of years. We don't stop. No one stops us.' (*Almanac* 216)

Each character agrees on the changing world. Especially borders establish a point where one sees the difference clearly. What Calabazas narrates here can be accepted as evidence of a changing world since moving freely can describe their way of travelling. Additionally, they call borders as imaginary lines due to the fact that they do not desire to be the owner of a place, yet they believe the earth belongs to everybody.

A similar type of situation to reinforce the theme of the changing world occurs as the twins and Calabazas cross the Mexico border and are stopped by the guards. The way the border guards treat them makes the twins remember the past which is completely different from the present, and this difference is one of the consequences of the changing world:

> The people had been free to go traveling north to south for a thousand years, traveling as they pleased, then suddenly white priests had announced smuggling as a mortal sin because smuggling was stealing from the government.

> Zeta wondered if the priests who told the people smuggling was stealing had also told them how they were to feed themselves now that all the fertile land along the rivers had been stolen by the white men…How could one steal if the government itself was the worst thief?
>
> There was not, and there never had been, a legal government by Europeans anywhere in the Americas. Not by any definition, not even by the Europeans' own definitions and laws. Because no legal government could be established on stolen land. (*Almanac* 133)

Almanac emphasizes the consequence of the changing world which is regarded by Native Americans as an invasion of their freedom. As Robin Payne Cohen argues: "The current practice of stopping and searching travelers anywhere within 100 miles of the border limits the freedom of movement presumed to be a right not only according to ancient traditional practices but also according to widely-held contemporary assumptions about the rights of citizens" (50). As it is also stated by Cohen, the rights of citizens seem to be violated with the invaders' inspections through borders by stopping travelers. What Calabazas and the twins experience at the border and what the laws state shows the change between the previous and current lives of the Native Americans.

The scene in which Weasel explains the reasons for leaving law school can be associated with the same feeling of injustice that the twins and Calabazas experience as they cross the border: "Weasel Tail had introduced his poetry by explaining he had abandoned law school because the deck was stacked, and the dice were loaded, in the white man's law. The law crushed and cheated the poor whatever color they were" (*Almanac* 714). Weasel finds the solution in the world of poems: "The people didn't need more lawyers, the lawyers were the disease not the cure. The law served the rich. The people need poetry; poetry would set the people free; poetry would speak to the dreams and to the spirits, and the people would understand what they must do" (*Almanac* 713). Silko exemplifies the change in the world by introducing the themes of law and injustice. Those who suffer from the effects of the changing world endeavor to find a cure, as in the example of Weasel who prefers poetry to law.

Through some characters, it is possible to observe the profitable consequences of the changing world as in the example of Menardo. Menardo is a Mexican Indian who finds his flat nose and darker skin weird. He has lived a childhood in which many jokes were made about his physical appearance. However, when he becomes an adult, he starts an

insurance business in Chiapas which prospers quickly. As he explains the success of his insurance company, Universal Insurance, his utterances reflect the consequence of the effect of the changing world: "Part of Menardo's work was to explain tactfully the new world that they were living in, the new age. What was necessary so a man might sleep soundly at night was insurance against all the unknown stalking the human race out there" (*Almanac* 261). From this quotation, it can be concluded that the world has changed, and it has become a dangerous place. On the other hand, Menardo turns this change into profit through his business which provides safety precautions.

In addition to the profits of the insurance business, details of Menardo's job also underline the big chaos in the world. What Menardo does as a profession might be accepted as an example for the following quotations by Yoeme whose statement is about the people who are responsible for the change. Yoeme's point indicates that those who sell the last pieces to the whites were also responsible for the present situation of the world: "Old Yoeme had made a big point of shaming those who would sell the last few objects of the people who had been destroyed and the worlds that had been destroyed by the Europeans" (*Almanac* 128). Yoeme's definition is also developed by Janet M. Powers's statement which informs about a prophecy for the end of the novel: "Meanwhile, native peoples who have been induced to sell their souls to the white man, watch and wait, take heart from the slimmest of prophecies, and rose themselves to action" (268). Powers's argument of the change leads to the conclusion that the Native Americans would eventually rise for a revolt. A big plan for an upheaval is started to be negotiated and small uprisings have already started.

Due to the uprising all around the world, Menardo feels uneasy and senses a big change is coming: "He could feel a presence that had gradually occupied his consciousness, an intuition that very soon this world would become fragmented and scatter apart" (*Almanac* 491). Based on the rumors of uprisings, the world has become a dangerous place for the whites, and taking precautions to protect themselves becomes their ultimate priority. They all fear being assassinated or finding themselves in the middle of a chaotic environment accidentally: "Just as his friend Sonny Blue had said, the world wasn't such a pretty place these days" (*Almanac* 484). The quotation can be the evidence of the changing world from the white peoples' perspective as Sonny gives the bullet-proof vest to Menardo as a gift. Sonny's father, Max Blue, is also afraid of the approaching chaos, and he takes some precautions: "Arne had heard rumors that Max Blue had armed

guards who secured the desert area outside the golf course fence; and if a small aircraft circled from time to time, it was part of Max Blue's security against assassination attempts from the air" (*Almanac* 654). Beside the fear of being killed in an uprising, some white Americans seem to be worried about the uniqueness of their race and its continuity for the next generation.

According to Serlo, "In the end, the world would be inhabitable" (*Almanac* 542). For that reason, Serlo takes some precaution by building an alternative earth module underneath the earth which is full of all the necessary equipment, including water and an alcohol tank. Serlo's fear does not only stem from the anxiety for himself but also for the next generation. The uniqueness of the next generation is supposed to carry blue blood as a sign of aristocracy: "Serlo believed the day would come when the world was overrun with swarms of brown and yellow human larvae called natives" (*Almanac* 545). The purity of the white race is tightly linked to blue blood for Serlo, and he does his best to leave the sample of blue blood for the next generation: "Serlo and the others with the 'hidden agenda' had only a few more years to prepare before the world was lost to chaos. Brown people would inherit the earth like the cockroaches unless Serlo and the others were successful at the institute. Dedicated to the preservation of the purity of noble blood, the facilities would provide genetically superior semen" (*Almanac* 561). While the white culture takes precautions for their safety or for the next generation's purity, the Native Americans try to hold on to a bigger power.

The main distinction between the two cultures' responses to the changing world and to the chaos underlines their diversified ideologies. At first, all Native Americans feel anger towards the changing world whereas white Americans' reaction stands in contrast. They do not feel anger but their fear of the changing world obliges them to take some precautions. Nevertheless, as the story goes on Native Americans seem to believe in a bigger power: "Once Liria had asked Calabazas what their protection was from the outsiders, and he had pointed at the sun and then out at the creosote flats and rocky foothills of cactus and brush" (*Almanac* 222). Unlike the white culture, the real protection lies in nature for the Native culture. Yoeme also knows that none of these precautions helps the whites to survive since the precautions that the whites take would be impotent against the power of the souls.

> 'You may as well die fighting the white man,' Yoeme had told them when they were girls. 'Because the rain clouds will disappear first; and with them

> the plants and the animals. When the spirits are angry or hurt, they turn their backs on all of us.'
>
> Of course the white man did not want to believe that. The white man always had to be saved, the white man always got the last available water and food. The white man hated to hear anything about spirits because spirits were already dead and could not be tortured and butchered or shot, the only way the white man knew how to deal with the world. Spirits were immune to the white man's threats and to his bribes of money and food. The white man only knew one way to control himself or others and that was with brute force.
>
> Against the spirits, the white man was impotent. (*Almanac* 581)

Through Yoeme's words, Silko makes it clear that the white culture and those who trust the power of money and believe in precautions, experience the real power of the earth in the end. Max Blue's terrifying end stands as an example demonstrating the power of the earth. Despite all the high-quality protections they take, he gets hit by lightning as he is playing golf. He cannot stop his end with the power of his money. In addition to the unpredictable end of Max, the depiction of Europeans through Natives' point of view could be considered to support Yoeme's point: "He thought about what ancestors had called Europeans: their God had created them but soon was furious with them, throwing them out of their birthplace, driving them away. The ancestors had called Europeans 'the orphan people' and had noted that as with orphans taken in by selfish or coldhearted clanspeople, few Europeans had remained whole. They failed to recognize the earth was their mother" (*Almanac* 258). Menardo's grandfather's story describes the European culture as rejected by God. Both the story's and Yoeme's emphasis are on nature which the Native Americans hold on to tightly and believe that the earth will punish those who disregard its power.

The ideology of the two cultures helps to understand the logic behind their diversified reactions clearly. Calabazas and Serlo's business approaches demonstrate that Natives react to the effects of the changing world differently since their way of life is different from that of the whites. Calabazas and Serlo's business approach separates them on the basis of socialist and capitalist ideologies: "[Calabazas] had routinely made advances and gave out loans for no interest. He splits profits fifty-fifty with village farmers, but he paid all the expenses himself as his pledge to them. He had not been a good

businessman. He had not bought land and new houses; he had not bought gold or guns as Zeta had" (*Almanac* 629). Calabazas's socialist ideology is the opposite of Serlo's, whose priority is profit: "Serlo and the others were alarmists. Socialism would never be a threat because it was too soft on the weak and unproductive. Capitalism stayed ahead because it was ruthless, Beaufrey said after he had finished the roll of film" (*Almanac* 565). These quotations can be claimed to bridge the changing world and the two different ideologies which describe the Native and white Americans. Beaufrey is one of the wealthiest characters in the novel, and his capitalistic point of view might be said to make him achieve his goals in life. In other words, the ruthless side of capitalism could be said to strengthen the stereotype of the rich whites.

The depiction of the rich whites is clearly exemplified through the novel from many perspectives. For example, in the world of whites, culture, ranks or levels are clearly described, and it especially becomes observable at meetings where important people such as governors, chiefs of police and judges gather: "The police chief did not like to hear the governor use the word *we* when clearly the governor did nothing all day but doze in his red leather desk chair and scribble his signature on the piles of papers his secretary brought him" (*Almanac* 272). According to these ranks, underestimating others' job is often observed in the world of rich white people. Likewise, sex scandals among these important people are also narrated quite often: "The judge thought the chief must be remembering how the girl and governor appeared on the secret video cameras that had recently been installed in the governor's office while he was away at a national conference in the Federal District" (*Almanac* 273). Through these depictions, Silko addresses the power of money, and she creates a set of white characters around the central motifs of money and power.

With the introduction of Alegria who works as an architect in a prestigious firm in Madrid, the emphasis on power and money becomes even clearer. She presents the image of a person for whom only money matters: "When she stepped out of the elevator, leather folio in hand, she looked as cool as icy white silk. She had slipped on her big sunglasses before she stepped outside" (*Almanac* 283). Silko's depiction of Alegria fits into that of a stereotypical rich white American, an idea also supported by Elizabeth Ann McNeil: "Algeria is still spiritless materialist. Algeria's trickster-like greed is archetypal; her trickster discourse story has no tragic or happy ending. The reader can certainly learn from her grotesque behavior, however, something about the shallow quality of a materialistic

approach to life" (261). Both Alegria's depiction in the novel and McNeil's idea emphasize the white American view of the world which embraces power and money.

Alegria spends much of her time on business, and the part where Alegria and her boyfriend, Bartolomeo quarrel about her way of life marks one of the characteristics of the whites. According to Bartolomeo the whites have swollen egos in accordance with their money: "Bartolomeo had been angry at the length of the lunch she had had with Mr. Portillo. Bartolomeo was furious at the time her firm spent with the rich, 'petting their swollen egos!' Bartolomeo had shouted at Alegria, 'And then you! You they keep there to pet the swelling trousers of the rich!'" (*Almanac* 278). This perspective formulates the conception that materialism in the world of rich white Americans is the most important thing for them. On the contrary, it is not an acceptable view in Native Americans' culture as represented in the novel. Paula Gunn Allen's assertion also makes it clear that Native Americans do not separate materialism from spirituality: "American Indian thought makes no such dualistic division, nor does it draw a hard and fast line between what is material and what is spiritual, for it regards the two as different expressions of the same reality, as though life has twin manifestations that are mutually interchangeable and, in many instances, virtually identical aspects of reality that is essentially more spirit than matter or, more correctly, that manifests its spirit in a tangible way" (87). Money does not mean power for Native Americans since they embrace spirituality and materialism together.

A similar type of conversation, which demonstrates the power of money, occurs between Sonny Blue and Bingo Blue, the big mafia leader Max Blue's sons. Despite the fact that they are brothers, they have quite different characteristics. Sonny runs the family business in Tucson and uses the power of money whereas Bingo is shy in proving himself. Bingo is assigned in El Paso to control the vending machine business but he is always in need of Sonny's advice: "Sonny had given him pep talks; let the big Lincoln and the Olympic-size pool work their magic. 'Linen suits and cashmere overcoats speak louder than words,' Sonny said" (*Almanac* 438). This quotation strengthens the idea that the power of money is above everything.

It becomes apparent that the strong emphasis on the power of money comes with the motivation of protecting wealth. To evaluate the rumors of local uprisings, important government people gather at a golf club where they do some shooting practice. The fact that they only care for their wealth becomes apparent:

> Menardo listens to the governor and the former ambassador as they fire at human silhouettes of black cardboard. They talk about bank accounts and real estate in Arizona and southern California. Their strategy is to invest across the border. The Mexican economy is a sinking ship. The governor is drunk on margaritas. He will embrace Mexico and love her, but his money goes to a safer place. (*Almanac* 331)

These rich people seem not to worry about the economy of the country or rumors about local uprisings; their only priority is to keep their wealth. The governor's ignorance about the economic chaos of the world and his attempt to put his money in a safer place can be taken to signal the priority of the rich white people.

The motifs of money and power continue in the parts where the Blue family is depicted. Max Blue runs cocaine and guns business across the border, and he is very powerful. After he was shot in an ambush and stayed at a veteran's hospital for a long time, he moved to Arizona with his family. He spends all his time playing golf and lets all business be run by his sons and wife. Leah is Max's wife who is in the real estate market. Leah's desire to construct a luxurious city in the middle of the desert might be taken as the consequence of power and money: "Venice, Arizona, would rise out of the dull desert gravel, its blazing purity of white marble set between canals the color of lapis, and the lakes of 'turquoise.' The 'others' had to live someplace; let it be Tucson" (*Almanac* 662). Silko's depiction of the rich whites also demonstrates that the relation among them depends heavily on profit. Both Max and Leah regard connections with the government people as profit since the scarcity of water in Arizona is at the heart of the problem which Leah thinks the judge might help: "All Judge Arne had to do for Leah was dismiss a cross-suit by the Indians in the Bullhead City case, and the state of Arizona would have to grant Leah Blue her deep-well drilling permits…He told Max he felt he could influence the holdings in this water case at every level, all the way up to Supreme Court. Arne believed in states' rights, absolutely. Indians could file lawsuits until hell and their reservation froze over, and Arne wasn't going to issue any restraining orders against Leah's deep wells either" (*Almanac* 376). Hence, rich white people depend on each other for covering up their illegal attempts, and in return, they offer a promise: "Max Blue had promised the judge a house next to the golf course Leah was planning for her Venice dream-city" (*Almanac* 652). This perspective demonstrates that the relationship among these people is tightly interwoven through profit, and they depend on each other to be successful. The

Judge's help in an illegal transport of the Blue family could be considered as another indicator of the relationships based on interest:

> The judge had gently reminded Max that with only two telephone calls, the entire mix-up at the landing field had been resolved. No one knew better than the senator how important safe landings were. The senator's reelection campaign fund depended on those shipments; other party candidates had been financed as well with the proceeds from the shipments. Max had the goods on the senator. The judge knew that. Max had saved the senator's ass with a bundle of dynamite under the car seat of a certain Los Angeles investigative reporter who had alleged the senator's involvement in a San Diego real estate fraud. (*Almanac* 651)

Many characters in *Almanac* cover for each other's illegal trades which calls the role of the government into question. The judge's explanation about the intention of the government demonstrates the relationships based on interest: "Cocaine smuggling could be tolerated for the greater good, which was the destruction of communism in Central and South America. The fight against communism was costly…Communism was a far greater threat to the United Sates than drug addiction was. Addicts did not stir up the people or start riots the way communists did" (*Almanac* 648). The reason that the rich whites and the American government ignore counterfeiting and smuggling, seems to depend on a higher purpose which is advantageous for them. In other words, they let drug trades as long as they get their share from the business.

The depiction of Trigg also fits into the stereotype of the rich white man who regards other important rich people as profitable. He knows Leah from the veterans' hospital where Max Blue stayed. Trigg also had an accident and he cannot walk. After he is released from the hospital, he gets obsessed with the blood market. He founds Bio Materials Inc. and runs the business of blood and organ donations. Leah and Trigg start a secret affair which depends on profit:

> Trigg had fucked her one way, and in typical Tucson fashion he was ready to try to fuck her with a slick real estate deal too. Trigg wanted Leah's Blue Water group to finance and build his detox and addiction treatment hospital. In return, Leah's Blue Water Investment Cooperation would receive stock in the blood plasma business as well as stock in the detox hospital…But if Leah herself took over planning and design, then the addiction treatment

> center might be one 'jewel' in a triple crown of high-tech medical care facilities, within the first luxury community designed for the handicapped and addicted. (*Almanac* 382)

Throughout the novel, Silko makes it clear that the rich whites depend on each other to gain more profit. The affair between Trigg and Leah also proves the fact that Trigg needs Leah's power to construct the hospital, and in return, she gets her share from the profit.

With the depiction of the white culture, Silko presents a different set of values which many white Americans seem to embrace. On the other hand, these values are not used to describe merely the whites, some Natives are also portrayed in this line. Nevertheless, being a powerful and rich Native does not mean that he is accepted into the world of whites. Although Menardo makes a lot of money and runs business with important government members, he is still treated as a Native American: "Don't you wonder how all the money goes to that monkey-face who passes himself off as a white man?" (*Almanac* 274). The former ambassador's wife's utterance is striking to reveal that even a lot of money cannot elevate a Native American to the status of the whites.

The power of money in the lives of both the whites and the Native Americans brings forward the theme of pride. The theme can be traced in Beaufrey's utterance who is very rich through his art gallery business: "There was nothing in the world that money could not buy. Beaufrey was especially interested in things, places, or beings that were not for sale; he got a thrill out of what was unavailable or forbidden" (*Almanac* 535). The life of Menardo whose wealth comes from selling insurance depicts the same feeling of pride. Moreover, along with the feeling of pride, he also seems to get away from his Native roots and traditions. In the plot where Menardo and his driver, Tacho, are waiting for the architect, Alegria, the delay of the plane makes Menardo feel uncomfortable. Menardo is waiting anxiously while Tacho is playing with pebbles which are represented as fortune-telling devices for the Native American culture in the novel. The driver's offer to toss some pebbles to see the future of the plane makes him more furious: "The pebbles can't tell you any more than I already know" (*Almanac* 276). Menardo's strong tie to the power of money takes him away from his Native roots. The more he lives in the luxury of life, the more pride he feels.

Regardless of the fact that Menardo and his wife Iliana are Mexican Indians, the power of money seems to give them a feeling of control over everything. The insurance company which Menardo runs gives him a significant sense of power. Menardo's words in

explaining the infallibility of his insurance company includes a kind of control which power of money can provide: "wherever revolution, mutiny, uprising, or guerrilla war might strike, Universal Insurance would be there to offer complete protection to clients. No need to depend on poorly equipped government forces…Universal Insurance would provide the answer for every security need" (*Almanac* 292). Yet, the pride that they feel does not bring a happy end to either of them. After the bomb explosion when the daughter of a banker dies, Menardo takes the threats more seriously, and he cannot go out without his bullet-proof vest. However, a terrible end awaits Menardo who is sure that he has taken all the security precautions.

Menardo's end can be read through the lens of Regier who bridges Menardo's end with his obsession with European technology. He becomes so obsessed with Western technology that it ultimately brings his death: "Having become a gun runner and a target of South American revolutionary group, Menardo becomes obsessed with his bulletproof vest; its technological complexity becomes an index to him of the separation he creates between his Indio heritage and his perception of his growing affiliation with western technology and culture" (Regier 190). As Menardo waits for the general to negotiate the situation of the country, he wants to prove the reliability of his vest without which he cannot even sleep. After the general, the governor and the police chief gather at the club; Menardo orders his driver Tacho to shoot him.

> Menardo wanted perfect timing – he wanted Tacho to wait until the cars had pulled up, then he would greet his fellow shooting-club members, then Tacho must shoot. Snap! Snap! Snap! One two three! Before the others could even open their mouths! What an exhibition they would see! Here was a man to be reckoned with – a man invincible with the magic of high technology. (*Almanac* 503)

However, this high technology puts an end to Menardo's life; the bullet-proof vest cannot stop the bullet and he dies. When interpreting Menardo's death, Carren Irr suggests that: "In this novel, attempting to cheat death means hiding from the past, while boldly approaching death enables a kind of transformative access to the grander vistas of history" (233). Irr's suggestion suits the end of Menardo and Max Blue who believe to take all safety precautions which give them a feeling of pride in controlling everything, but they fail to change their end.

Iliana's life ends up with a feeling of pride as well. It is not the same feeling as her husband's, since he thinks he controls everything. On the other hand, Iliana's feeling arises as she finds out the affair between Alegria and her husband, and she arranges to ruin Alegria's business life: "she had gone to great lengths to make sure that Miss Martinez-Soto would not find new employment in any of the prestigious architectural firms…If Miss Martinez-Soto attempted any legal action, Iliana and her allies made sure no law firm in Mexico City would take her case" (*Almanac* 296). Iliana does not live long enough to see the consequences of these precautions because she falls down the stairs and dies.

All of these depictions make it evident that rich people live with the feeling of power of money, pride and sense of control as is also stated by Rebecca Tillett:

> Through a vast and expansive text, that ranges across and draws together diverse cultures, societies, geographies and temporalities, we are shown quite clearly how the many suffer dispossession and disenfranchisement at the hands of the few; and how those few abuse extreme inequalities in current socio-political power structures in order to protect and extend their own position and status. And we are shown how these excesses and cruelties – the firm belief that certain elite groups have the right to profit at any cost – are predicated upon identical attitudes toward the natural world that have become so firmly established over the course of the last five centuries that they are now popularly accepted as 'universal truths.' (*Otherwise Revolution* 3)

Throughout the novel the rich whites are depicted as possessing the power of money. The feeling of pride and control accompanies their lives as well. However, towards the end of the novel, they begin to fear that they know change is not possible with the power of money anymore: "All over the world Europeans had laughed at indigenous people for worshiping the rain clouds, the mountains, and the trees. But now Calabazas had lived long enough to see the white people stop laughing as all the trees were cut and all the animals killed, and all the water dirtied or used up. White people were scared because they didn't know where to go or what to use up and pollute next" (*Almanac* 628). Calabazas's experience points out the power of the earth when compared with the power of money which white Americans hold on to for a long time as represented in the novel. Moreover, it can also be claimed that Calabazas's ideas indicate cultural difference by pointing out the

Natives' attachment to the power of the earth, and the whites' strong obsession with money.

One of the most significant themes of the novel is the cultural difference between the Natives and the whites. Through the white and the Native characters, Silko proves that their ways of understanding the world are different from each other. On this issue, Paula Gunn Allen in *The Sacred Hoop* also demonstrates a clear distinction between these two cultures: "Most important traditional American Indian literature is not similar to western literature because the basic assumption about the universe and, therefore, the basic reality experienced by tribal peoples and by Western peoples are not the same, even at the level of folklore" (81). Allen's argument is about the different literary tendencies of the two cultures but, in general, it can also be taken to relate to cultural differences. Based on the different cultural assumptions, it becomes necessary to trace transcultural diversities throughout the novel.

Lecha and Zeta's childhood memories in Mexico are narrated in Book Five where one of the most important characters Yoeme, the grandmother of the twins is introduced. Yoeme had disappeared long before the twins were born and with her sudden reappearance, the twins get startled both by her outlook and her talk: "Zeta and her sister had never heard anyone talk the way Yoeme did" (*Almanac* 114). Each member of the family wants Yoeme to disappear again, both because they are angry for her disappearance and because they seem to be powerless against her. They show their resentment by getting inside the house and closing the windows tightly. Yoeme is left outside with the twins. Although everybody leaves her alone with the twins, they still listen to what she says closely. Her way of talking is still accepted respectfully (*Almanac* 115). Her utterances are composed of a few words but, still, they contain a prominent meaning contrary to the way of white Americans' speech even if they use the exact same word. As in the example of using the word flesh, "'flesh and blood'" (*Almanac* 115) is Yoeme's way of referring to life, power and existence, whereas flesh in David's utterance symbolizes death, abuse and worthlessness referring to the dead body of Eric which is used for a photo exposition: "David's success was assured. Influential international critics agreed; at last David had found a subject to fit his style of clinical detachment and relentless exposure of what lies hidden in flesh" (*Almanac* 108). The same word in two different discourses carries completely different meanings in accordance with its speaker's intention, his social life and different cultural assumptions. The fact that the same utterances carry diverse meanings is

evident in dialogism. According to Bakhtin in *The Dialogic Imagination*: "every day represents another socio-ideological semantic 'state of affairs,' another vocabulary, another accentual system, with its own slogans, its own ways of assigning blame and praise" (291). Bakhtin's explanation helps to establish a link between the different meanings of a word. When numerous characters of the *Almanac* are taken into consideration, their preference in using the same word indicates a different meaning in accordance with their cultural values.

Allen's approach to cultural difference is through the language differences which also explains the whites' and Natives' perception of the same word. Allen states that

> Culture is fundamentally a shaper of perception, after all, and perception is shaped by culture in many subtle ways. In short, it's hard to see the forest when you're a tree. To a great extent, changes in materials translated from a tribal to a western language are a result of the vast difference in languages; certain ideas and concepts that are implicit in the structure of an Indian language are not possible in English. Language embodies the unspoken assumptions and orientations of the culture it belongs to. So while the problem is one of translation, it is not simply one of word equivalence. The differences are perceptual and contextual as much as verbal. (298)

As the ways of life differ from each other, perceptions of the cultures are narrated differently as well. This perspective can be claimed to influence the perception of the words which each culture might experience differently. In other words, a word might have different meanings in each culture, according to its diversified perception by the people.

Throughout *Almanac,* words get classified differently according to their perceptions by Native and white cultures. For instance, the Apache warrior Geronimo's story demonstrates the distinction between these two cultures. The confusion of the whites over Geronimo is caused by their way of perceiving the world around them according to the Natives: "The elders used to argue that this was one of the most dangerous qualities of the Europeans: Europeans suffered a sort of blindness to the world. To them, a 'rock' was just a 'rock' wherever they found it, despite obvious differences in shape, density, color, or the position of the rock relative to all things around it…To whites all Apache warriors look alike, and no one realized that for a while, there had been three different Apache warriors called Geronimo who ranged across the Sonoran Desert south of Tucson" (*Almanac* 225). Geronimo is recognized as one Apache warrior by the whites whereas the Natives know

that there are three different warriors called Geronimo. White American culture is represented by their narrow way of perceiving the words and the world around them.

In the novel, cultural differences can be said to point out diverse perceptions of words or ideas, whereas Mosca's story brings reactional difference of cultures to the foreground. The experience of Mosca, who has brain damage due to surgery, seems to mark the cultural difference from another perspective. As Mexican women ignore him when he walks by them, Silko addresses the question of cultural differences through the reaction of the whites: "Mosca doesn't understand why white people become uneasy when they see cripples or brain damage; their fear is irrational. They believe another person's bad luck is contagious no matter how many times they are given scientific facts" (*Almanac* 203). Throughout numerous parts, *Almanac* leads an awareness that the whites are different from the Natives or other minorities in terms of perception and reaction which Mexican culture and white American culture exemplify in the previous quotation about Mosca.

This difference does not have to occur in the world of the whites only. Although Menardo's ancestors come from the Native American culture, his perception resembles that of the white culture. The traditional Native American view regards blood as life: "The blood fed life. Before anything you had the blood. The blood came at first" (*Almanac* 336). On the other hand, for Menardo blood is disgusting and has nauseating influence. His driver, Tacho regards Menardo as different from his culture: "Tacho had observed white people all his life. He had learned to follow Menardo's moods and ignore whatever Menardo might say because Menardo was a yellow monkey who imitated real white men" (*Almanac* 339). Not only the whites but also those who imitate them seem to behave in similar ways. One indicator of the white culture's difference is their diversified ways of perception, and through some Natives who try to resemble the whites, the same kind of perceptions could be observed. Janet M. Powers's comment emphasizes those who imitate the whites: "Silko seems intent on showing her readers, as Dante did, that Eurocentric society, and those who imitate them, are lost in the wilderness of destruction. In their frantic pursuit of capital, spiritual connection with each other and with the earth have been abandoned" (266). One way of interpreting Power's assertion could be through Menardo's life in which he leaves all his tribal traditions behind and gets obsessed with money.

Trigg's story can also be considered to exemplify Power's assertion: "Trigg had had an idea buzzing in the back of his head for weeks, maybe months; he had not been able

to forget the price quotes for fresh whole blood, human corneas, and cadaver skin" (*Almanac* 389). The driving force behind Trigg's plan is just money. He plans to find cheap cadaver skin, and the ongoing chaos in the country seems to bring him this chance: "Peaches said Trigg bought a great deal in Mexico where recent unrest and civil strife had killed hundreds a week. Mexican hearts were lean and strong, but Trigg had found no market for dark cadaver skin" (*Almanac* 404). Trigg only cares for providing enough organs; it does not matter for him if they come from a civil war environment where many lives are lost.

Another indicator of the cultural difference surfaces through the motif of nature. Protecting nature creates a clear distinction between the two cultures. Leah Blue is Max Blue's wife, and she is accepted as the relentless queen of the real estate market: "Max had been attracted to that killer's quality about Leah" (*Almanac* 358). Leah Blue's plan is to build a dream city in the middle of the desert. This dream city is supposed to be among the lakes and fountains which brings forth the issue of water: "They are in the real estate business to make profits, not to save wildlife or save the desert" (*Almanac* 375). Protecting nature and ecology is not in the priority list of Leah; moreover the amount of water to build her dream city has devastating effects on nature since Arizona is suffering from scarcity of water. The meaning of beauty for Leah and the Native American culture differs clearly:

> She could not understand why the Indians or the environmentalists had bothered to sue even if her deep wells did harm other wells or natural springs, which her deep wells did not; what possible good was this desert anyway? Full of poisonous snakes, sharp rocks, and cactus! Leah knew she was not alone in this feeling of repulsion; most people who saw the cactus and rocky hills for the first time agreed the desert was ugly. In her dream city, the water lilies and cattails, the giant cypress trees and palms, would soothe their eyes, and people could forget they were in a desert. (*Almanac* 750)

Leah Blue wants to change nature and regards it as ugly whereas what she describes as ugly seems to be a beauty for the Natives. She attempts to change the natural order of the desert and replaces cacti with waterlilies. Her perception of beauty stands in opposition to Angelo's depiction of nature:

> To the south in Mexico, Angelo could see the pale blue ranges of mountains, like layers of paint growing progressively paler. The distance

> and the space did not seem to end. Not ever. The colors changed rapidly after the sun set. The sky ran in streams of ruby and burgundy, and puffy clouds clotted the colors darker, into the red of dry roses, into the red of dried blood. The dunes of the horizon were soaked in the colors of the sky too; then the light faded and the breeze slashed at the ricegrass and yuccas. The cooling brought with it deep blues and deep purple bruising the flanks of the low, sandy hills. (*Almanac* 371)

Angelo is Max's nephew, and he comes to Tucson to take part in the family business. His way of describing nature contains phrases similar to the Native Americans', which Allen also states: "An Indian, at the deepest level of being, assumes that the earth is alive in the same sense that human beings are alive. This aliveness is seen in nonphysical terms, in terms that are perhaps familiar to the mystic or the psychic, and this view gives rise to a metaphysical sense of reality that is an ineradicable part of Indian awareness. In brief, we can say that the sun or the earth or a tree is a symbol of an extraordinary truth" (101). Since nature has a significant meaning for the Natives, this creates a difference between them and the white culture who tries to change it.

The attempt of Leah finds a different explanation in Carren Irr's interpretation. She agrees with Leah's careless attitude towards the environment and adds that she does not care about history, either: "Similarly, his wife Leah dreams of building a city from scratch with no clutter of history and no consideration given to future environmental consequences. This obsession with fresh starts and the denial of history is a major component of Euro-American culture for Silko" (Irr 237). History becomes another issue which separates the whites from the Natives. The past does not mean much for white Americans since it seems to be an obstacle for their future dreams based on becoming rich.

Additionally, the wealth of the Blue family shows the difference between the two cultures. Penelope M. Kelsey's argument on capitalism and human exploitation justifies this difference through the Blue family: "Meanwhile, Max Blue and his wife [Leah] Blue make unprecedented wealth from real estate development that is entirely unsustainable, pushing the desert's fragile ecosystem far beyond its limit. That these characters are making incredible wealth from capitalist ventures that 'other' the earth, while people are living without homes on the streets of Tucson, illustrates the disjuncture between venture capitalism, human consumption, and the environment" (113). The Blue family accepts the earth as an area to build new blocks on. They do not pay attention to the fragile ecosystem

or people who lose their homes. Hence greed might be regarded as an indicator of cultural difference.

Connection between the sections of *Almanac* is not only maintained by the ongoing story but also by the repetition of some words in different sections which preserve the correlation. This correlation also signifies transcultural diversity. For instance, Yoeme regards ranching as a means of profit for white people whereas the next generation, Zeta and Lecha, accept the ranch as they have inherited it. Yoeme's speech emphasizes the purpose of white people:

> 'They had been killing Indians right and left. It was war! It was white men coming to find more silver, to steal more Indian land. It was white men coming with their pieces of paper! To make their big ranches. Guzman and my people had made an agreement. Why do you think I was married to him? For fun? For love? Hah! To watch, to make sure he kept the agreement.' (*Almanac* 116)

Unification of the two cultures in the novel exists from the very beginning as twin's both grandfather and father are white. As generations change, unification is observed more vividly because unification is not only between people or nations but it is between the changing use of properties as in the example of the ranch. Although the use of a ranch was seen as white cultures' profit by the twins' grandmother Yoeme, twins use the ranch as their home. Twins' acceptance of the ranch finds meaning in Allen's statement on cultural conflict: "American Indian novelists use cultural conflict as a major theme, but their work shows an increasing tendency to bind that theme to its analogues in whatever tribal oral tradition they write from. So while the protagonists in Native American novels are in some sense bicultural and must deal with the effects of colonization and an attendant sense of loss of self, each is also a participant in a ritual tradition that gives their individual lives shape and significance" (114). The meaning of ranching in the past seems to be defined as a conclusion of colonization. Yet, the new generation transforms the meaning of a ranch, as in the example of the twins who accept the ranch as their home, and it becomes a place where they work on the almanac as part of their ritual tradition.

When the cultural difference is examined through the lens of words, Bakhtin's argument in *The Dialogic Imagination* helps in understanding the place of words which indicates different perceptions. According to Bakhtin, "we are taking language not as a system of abstract grammatical categories, but rather language conceived as ideologically

saturated, language as a world view, even as a concrete opinion, insuring a maximum of mutual understanding in all spheres of ideological life. Thus a unitary language gives expression to forces working toward concrete verbal and ideological unification and centralization, which develop in vital connection with process of sociopolitical and cultural centralization" (271). As such, Seese and Sterling's different ideological worlds can be understood by their diverse tones as they share their opinion about law. When they go to the town centre to buy a typewriter for Lecha, Sterling shares the story of Dillinger and Geronimo as much as he has read in the magazine, the subscription of which he continues wherever he goes. They decide to take a look at the place where the story takes place. As Sterling tells the history of Dillinger and Geronimo, their different utterances shed light on their distinct philosophy of law and justice:

> 'Well,' Sterling begins cautiously, watching Seese's face for reaction, 'what concerns me is that sometimes judges and courts break their own laws or they decide something completely wrong.' Sterling is thinking about the tribal court judge and the Tribal Council again. He is thinking there are instances when the law has nothing to do with fairness or justice.
>
> Seese says, 'I'm sorry. I guess I have spent too many years around scum-people that when they get caught, they deserve everything the judge can give them and then some. (*Almanac* 79)

As an Arizona Indian, Sterling's understanding of injustice is different from that of Seese, who is a white American. Both Sterling and Seese's worlds are ideologically shaped by their cultural assumptions, and this is reflected through their language through which their cultural difference can be observed.

Almanac does not merely narrate the story of Native Americans but the story of other minority groups who experience the same injustice. This injustice is observed in Sterling's utterance: "Indians flung across the world forever separated from their tribes and from their ancestral lands – that kind of thing had been happening to human beings since the beginning of time. African tribes had been also sold into slavery all over the world" (*Almanac* 88). Starting with his expulsion, Sterling keeps questioning the world not just from the perspective of his Native American identity but as a member of a minority.

Besides Native Americans, other minority cultures are depicted throughout *Almanac.* The depiction of minority cultures and the impression created on the whites present a different story which supports the unification of minorities at the end of the

novel. Lecha has a special talent in communicating with the dead and in locating them. Her reputation begins with working for an old lover whom she helps to take revenge. Later on, she starts to work for TV shows. However, she senses the temporariness of this situation.

> Lecha takes pride in knowing when to fold her cards. She is no gambler. She only goes for the sure things. The TV talk show circuit had been one of those sure things. But nothing lasts forever; she laughs to herself. The fascination the United States had had for the "other" – the blacks, Asians, Mexicans, and Indians ran in cycles. (*Almanac* 142)

White Americans' perception of 'the others' is demonstrated through Lecha's discourse which signifies the temporary impression of white Americans of the unusual talents of other cultures. Throughout the novel, Silko suggests that white American culture finds some talent of minority cultures very impressive, and the quotation above exemplifies this. It is not limited to the psychic talents of the minorities but physical appearance also impresses the white Americans: "She is accustomed to dramatic announcements at press conferences. The high Indian cheekbones and light brown skin give her an exotic quality that television news desperately need" (*Almanac* 141). The announcement seems to include a pattern which is expected to influence the audience. That is why the words are selected to create this influence. Lecha's feeling about the announcement of a Native American at the conference can be evidence of what white Americans want to see.

Silko's use of flashbacks plays a crucial role in creating parts where different minority cultures are intermingled. For instance, on one of the TV shows in which Lecha concentrates on the missing person, the snow image in her mind takes her to Alaska where she had spent a winter with the Eskimos. What is narrated in Book Six is related to Lecha's memories in an Eskimo village in Alaska. Another culture of minorities, the Eskimos are associated with a small village where they gather at a meeting hall to watch American broadcasting on TV. On the other hand, their way of life is simple. Lecha is impressed by an old Eskimo woman who reminds her of Yoeme, having special powers just like her:

> As the ivory twirled, it seemed to become lighter and lighter until the old woman twirled it with one hand. Then the surface of the tusk had begun to glisten and sweat; the old woman's hands and the lap of her dress caught luminous drops. Then the twirling of the tusk began to make a sound. At first the sound was faint, and Lecha could still hear the drone of voices on the television. But the whirring sound became louder, and as it did, the

> shape of the ivory tusk began to change. It spiraled like a giant ocean shell; it spread flat into a disk and then wobbled into a fluted wedge the shape of a fan or a bird's wing. Then the tusk had burst into flames. (*Almanac* 153)

Silko portrays minority groups as gifted, preferring to live far from crowded city centers and sustaining their unique ways of living. After Lecha detaches herself from her Alaska memories, she comes back to the present in the TV studio. When the images get clear in her mind, it turns out that the bodies belong to the U.S. ambassador to Mexico and his aide who are killed in an ambush by Indians. This prophecy leads Lecha to run away since she is also a Mexican Indian. Starting from Book Seven, her days in Tucson with her twin and Seese are narrated.

The depiction of minorities through the perspective of the whites is also uttered by Alegria, the architect. She is assigned to build a grand palace for Menardo and his wife, Iliana. She travels from Madrid to Mexico very often to check the plans and the construction. During these trips, Menardo and Alegria get close and they start an affair. When they see each other, Tacho also accompanies them as Menardo's driver. What Alegria thinks about Tacho informs the way of white people's perception of minorities: "Alegria did not like the sullen chauffeur. Negroes made better drivers. She did not like the way the Indian looked at her. He seemed to know already. She decided the Indian chauffeur must be Menardo's way of keeping in touch with his humble origins" (*Almanac* 277). This exemplifies that some positions which are not preferred by white Americans are reserved for the minorities, such as Native Americans or African Americans. Additionally, the way in which Alegria describes a minority group can also be supported through Clinton's voice:

> Human beings had been exterminated strictly for 'health' purposes by Europeans too often. Lately Clinton had seen ads purchased by so-called 'deep ecologists.' The ads blamed earth's pollution not on industrial wastes-hydrocarbons and radiation- but on overpopulation. It was no coincidence the Green Party originated in Germany. 'Too many people' meant 'too many *brown-skinned* people.' Clinton could read between the lines. 'Deep ecologists' invariably ended their magazine ads with 'Stop immigration!' and 'Close the borders!' Clinton had to chuckle. The Europeans had managed to dirty up the good land and good water around the world in less

> than five hundred years. Now the despoilers wanted the last bit of living earth for themselves alone. (*Almanac* 415)

Worries of ecologists find correspondence in an add, and Clinton's interpretation of the add indicates the whites' perception of minority cultures who are blamed for overpopulation. Moreover, Clinton emphasizes that the whites ignore their industrial wastes as a cause for pollution, yet the solution for them is to stop immigration.

The motif of minorities continues in Part One, Book Seven, entitled "Homeless" in which white homeless men and white war veterans are depicted. The term of injustice accompanies the depiction of the minorities. Mosca and Root take a tour around the camp site of the homeless white. Mosca describes the situation of homeless people as "street survival" (*Almanac* 211), and he seems to be impressed by their way of survival: "'What I mean – you learn it's not so bad. It's not the end. You learn you can do it'" (*Almanac* 211). As Root and Mosca walk around the camp site, they begin to dream of a unification where all groups of people who are treated unfairly come together and take action towards the U.S. government: "Mosca thought it would be really funny if they ever got hold of a little dynamite and a few rifles. Homeless war veterans attacking the country they had defended so many years before. Mosca thought it would be the funniest thing in the world" (*Almanac* 211). Witnessing the living conditions of homeless war veterans might be said to strengthen Mosca's dream about the union of oppressed people who come from different parts of the country.

A minority group can be composed of different cultures such as the Natives, African Americans, the Eskimos or homeless war veterans but Silko makes it clear throughout the novel that the theme of unjust treatment brings such groups together. Clinton expands upon the theme of minorities and adds that another powerful unifying motif is their history: "African gods had located themselves in the Americas as well as Africa: the Giant Serpent, the Twin Brothers, the Maize Mother, to name a few. Right then the magic had happened: great American and great African tribal cultures had come together to create a powerful consciousness within all people. All were welcome – everyone had been included" (*Almanac* 416). Though they belong to different minority cultures, the power of ancestors is depicted as one which each tribal culture could feel. Clinton's ideas effectively demonstrate that the power of the minorities lies in the power of their past when their ancestors experienced the same oppression.

The history of minority groups has an overt connection with Europeans. One of Angelita's comments on Marx's teachings indicates this connection: "Marx had never forgotten the indigenous people of the Americas, or of Africa. Marx had recited the crimes of slaughter and slavery committed by the European colonials who had been sent by their capitalist slave-masters to secure the raw materials of capitalism – human flesh and blood. With the wealth of the New World, the European slave-masters and monarchs had been able to buy weapons and armies to keep down the uprisings of the landless people all across Europe" (*Almanac* 315). As the previous quotation suggests, the real power is hidden in the past of the minorities whose ancestors had been under persecution for a long time, and this power is believed to be achieved through stories. Elizabeth Ann McNeil associates Silko's use of stories with history: "Silko is intensely concerned with storytelling as a way to revise and understand the history and culture of the Americas as a multicultural reality, a society that includes, in *Almanac of the Dead*, both indigenous and immigrant inhabitants (living or dead) of Americas" (221). Thus, what minority groups have been trying to hold on to is their history which represents the significance of ancestors.

Almanac provides clear examples of people from different cultures who are regarded as minorities. However, Root's story provides another perspective on the depiction of the minorities. Root has a terrible accident which causes him to have a brain surgery. He continues his life with brain damage. This accident is caused by a white woman who made an illegal left turn. Root and Mosca work for Calabazas; they help him to sell cocaine and do smuggling. On one of the nights when Calabazas teaches the tricks of smuggling to them, a word gives Root a different sensation which stresses that being different is pivotal in the minority culture: "Because if you weren't born white, you were forced to see differences; or if you weren't born what they called normal, or if you got injured, then you were left to explore the world of different" (*Almanac* 203). This chapter puts forth the perception of whites when they see a different person including a Native American, a Mexican, an African American or a disabled person. Silko equates the world of a disabled person with the other minority groups since they are both accepted as different in the world of whites. The fact that some of these minority groups take part in the uprisings could be considered as a result of their power which would also bring justice.

What Yoeme says also articulates the plan of union among different minority groups. "Yoeme and others believed the almanac had living power within it, a power that

would bring all the tribal people of Americas together to retake the land" (*Almanac* 569). The significant role of the almanac reminds that history is hidden in it, and the power is believed to emerge with the rise of all minority groups who seem to share the same history. Although there are different depictions of various cultures, tribes and minority groups in the novel, the unifying theme for them is revolution.

The theme of freedom plays an influential role in the lives of many characters. Silko puts this theme in the centre of the uprising plans; however, she also manages to prove the importance of freedom through individual perspectives. Unlike the groups making the uprising plans, it becomes apparent with Sonny Blue and Marilyn's utterances that the real fight is for freedom whether they are from the white or Native culture: "Sonny Blue could not wait to see the expression of shock, the stunned look, of Max when he found out Sonny had got his own business rolling with the Mexicans" (*Almanac* 435). Utterances of Sonny Blue stress the meaning of freedom in his life. Sonny is Max Blue's son, and he is in charge of controlling the operation of vending machines and pinball games in Tucson and El Paso. On the other hand, he is under the domination of his father, just like Ferro who takes orders from his aunt, Zeta. Both Sonny and Ferro want to be their own boss, and they dream of getting the control of their lives by running different jobs. "Ferro would leave the stink of old women behind in the old ranch house. He would finance Jamey's calendars, and later they might branch out and publish a magazine or books" (*Almanac* 458). The theme of freedom becomes clear in the quotations above. Both Sonny and Ferro look for job opportunities which would unleash them. What Sonny and Ferro demand is their independence from their dominant parental figures; on the other hand, despite the fact that Angelo's girlfriend, Marilyn is depicted alone, her utterances indicate the same power of freedom. She is an Albuquerque girl, and her desire is significant in order to see the meaning of freedom in the world of the Natives: "'My Freedom,' Marilyn had said, looking into his eyes intently. 'It is the most important thing I have. I will die before I give it up'" (*Almanac* 373). Beside these individual experiences, Silko illustrates the theme of freedom through creating a set of characters around the central motif of uprising.

Many new characters are depicted as related to the plan of uprising in Mexico: Angelita La Escapia, General J., and El Feo are some of them. Not only the new names but also the word revolution is mentioned for the first time in this part: "People had begun to gather spontaneously and moved as a mob or swarms follows instinct, then suddenly

disperses. The masses of people in Asia and in Africa, and the Americas too, no longer believed in so-called 'elected' leaders; they were listening to strange voices inside themselves. Although few would admit this, the voices they heard were voices out of the past, voices of their earliest memories, voices of nightmares and voices of sweet dreams, voices of the ancestors" (*Almanac* 513). Groups of people from different cultures are in preparation for a revolution. They might come from different cultures but the unifying theme is the same: freedom:

> The Ghost Dance has never ended, it has continued, and the people have never stopped dancing; they may call it by other names, but when they dance, their hearts are reunited with the spirits of beloved ancestors and the loved ones recently lost in the struggle. Throughout the Americas, from Chile to Canada, the people have never stopped dancing; as the living dance, they are joined again with all our ancestors before them, who cry out, who demand justice, and who call the people to take back the Americas!. (*Almanac* 724)

People gather around dancing rituals to remember their ancestors, and through dancing they also demand justice. They believe that their ancestors deserve the justice as well. Although the name of the dancing rituals changes from culture to culture, as it is suggested here, the driving forces behind the ritual never change.

Like many Native Americans, Tacho's twin El Feo's uprising plan is related to taking their land back: "El Feo focused all his energy into one desire: to retake the land" (*Almanac* 523). El Feo and Tacho are raised separately; El Feo is raised in the mountain village whereas Tacho spends his childhood in the coastal area. El Feo joins negotiations in Mexico City where the details of uprisings are discussed. At one of these meetings he meets La Escapia, known also as Angelita. They organize their unit in the mountain, and it becomes obvious that Angelita believes in the ancestors' souls as well:

> 'We are the army to retake tribal land. Our army is only one of many all over the earth quietly preparing. The ancestors' spirits speak in dreams. We wait. We simply wait for the earth's natural forces already set loose, the exploding fierce energy of all the dead slaves and dead ancestors haunting the Americas. We prepare and we wait for the tidal wave of history to sweep us along.' (*Almanac* 518)

As previously mentioned, taking the land back is the aim of some groups, and Angelita and El Feo are two of them. One of the repeated themes of the novel is dreams which are believed to show the right way for salvation. Deborah L. Madsen's claim supports the prophecy of dreams: "Through repetition, the narrator insists that dreams will instruct the people how to take back the land and repeatedly the narrator emphasizes the unconscious motives that will cause the people to walk" (148). As such, throughout the novel people walk to the North depending on their dreams. When people hear the rumors about the uprising, they begin to cross the Mexican border to reach Tucson.

Through Clinton and Roy, Silko proves that there are other driving forces behind the uprising plans. As a part of their job, Clinton and Roy look for donor volunteers among the homeless people. However, their fight for justice does not only stem from what they witness in the streets; they are also Vietnam veterans and their experience in the war could harbor the feeling of injustice: "Clinton believed it was important for the people to understand that all around them lay human slavery, although most recently it had been called by other names. Everyone was or had been a slave to some other person or to something that was controlled by another" (*Almanac* 412). Roy and Clinton's uprising plans are associated with justice. When the area of homeless veterans is raided by the Tucson Police team, Roy's speech to make the group rise also indicates this theme: "'You didn't fight and almost die for the United States to end up like this. You didn't crawl on your belly through bullets, blood and poison snakes in foreign countries just to starve and sleep in a ditch when you got back home'" (*Almanac* 741). Clinton and Roy's ideology in the uprising seems to be different from El Feo's and Angelita's but the important point is that they are together in the uprisings.

The driving forces of the tribes might differ as in the examples of African Americans and Native Americans; while an African American claims for justice, a Native American demands the land as represented in the novel. However, what really matters is the unifying truth which might be explained through their shared history: "African and other tribal people had shared food and wealth in common for thousands of years" (*Almanac* 408). The participants in the uprising plans might come from different races; however, their history unites them. The Barefoot Hopi is another leader who is involved in conference organization. The Barefoot Hopi, who embraces all races and cultures, is believed to take messages from the earth: "As the months passed, more guys showed up, and they had permission to meet for two hours. Then a few blacks had come, blacks who

believed they had Native American ancestry. After the black Indians, then other blacks had showed up; these guys had been quiet and never spoke; last came the white guys – some who were mixed bloods, and others who felt like Indians in their hearts – whatever that meant" (*Almanac* 629). The quotation's emphasis might indicate the open-hearted intention of the Barefoot Hopi but, on the other hand, it shows that many cultures and races are interested in these kinds of gatherings where the ultimate aim is to come together and demand justice. One of the traditions of Pueble culture is suggested by Daniel White: "The ancient Pueblo people realized that the strength of a society lay in its cohesiveness, the willingness of its people to work cooperatively. Survival depended upon a communal effort, and individuals achieved respect in proportion to the value of their contributions" (137). White's point underlines the importance of working cooperatively in the culture of Natives. The long-time accepted philosophy seems to be a salvation scheme for them. Despite the differences in people's aims, they come together to work in cooperation. The announcement of the conference also calls people to come together:

> 'the brave liberators of the Colorado River left a farewell message,' the Barefoot Hopi said. 'Here's what they wrote: 'Rejoice! Mountains and valleys! The mighty river runs free once more! Rejoice! We are no longer solitary beings alone and cut off. Now we are one with the earth, our mother; we are at one with the river. Now we have returned to our source, the energy of the universe. Rejoice!' (*Almanac* 733)

The driving forces behind the uprisings may vary but there is a common point for the participants: making their people aware of the past, ancestors, and demanding justice. Daria Donnelly's point also explains the reasons of the gathering of different groups of people: "Silko draws on it to represent zestfully the process by which individual explanations of the reality become collective action, that is, how homeless veterans, eco-terrorists, psychics, Marxists, bikers, drug addicts, poets, peasants, and mystics end up at a New Age conference in Tucson, planning to overthrow the United States of America" (246). Since greed and violence are exemplified through modern life and since many Native Americans are depicted as being under the corruptive influence of modern culture, they have a reaction to the government as represented in the novel.

Fighting against the government creates another motivation which enables people to come together. One of them is Green Vengeance: "'This is war! We are not afraid to die to save the earth'" (*Almanac* 728). Green Vengeance is the secret code name of an eco-

terrorist group whom Awa Gee has found during his own break-ins to the governmental and military computer programs. Awa Gee, who is from Korea, is a genius in computer cryptology. Like Green Vengeance, he helps people who fight against the government, and knows that there are others who want to fight:

> Awa Gee knows he is not the only one who hates the giant. He knows there are others like himself all over the North America; small groups but with unusual members who would bring down the giants. It is not necessary to know more than this, Awa Gee tells himself; there are others of us and we will know when the time is at hand. No leaders or chains of command would be necessary. War machines and other weapons would appear spontaneously in the streets. (*Almanac* 686)

Awa Gee's utterance points out the necessity of war machines and weapons, thus the uprising plans seem to bring death, violence and terror, however, as Janet M. Powers points out, this chaos is welcomed: "Destruction and lawlessness are condoned, even celebrated, if one is protecting the earth and indigenous peoples against those who seek only economic gain" (267). *Almanac* creates a tolerance of the terrifying consequences of the uprisings as long as the motivation of the groups stems from pursuing justice. The following plot describes Awa Gee's feeling after he manages to blow up a police car with his new invention, a solar war machine: "English words that he had once studied and memorized to impress a lovely English teacher suddenly came to mind: Euphoria. Euphoric. Awa Gee had never felt anything so powerful sweep over his entire being" (*Almanac* 685). He defends his invention with the following words: "it was indeed a weapon for the poor masses" (*Almanac* 684). As Powers's previous quote also demonstrates, the attempts, described throughout the novel, are regarded as rewarding as long as the action is on behalf of the poor masses who demand justice.

The minorities have felt oppression through a period of time, and the feeling seems to bring them together. One of their targets is the American government, and as the following quotation illustrates, those who fight against the government, have already found its weakness and set their target:

> For Awa Gee it had become increasingly clear that the people were up against the giants. But the giants had been ruthless for too long; the giants had become deluded about their power. Because the giants were endlessly vulnerable, from their air traffic control systems to their interstate power-

> transmission lines. Turn out the lights and see what they'd do; turn out the lights on one of their state executions. (*Almanac* 683)

The American government is depicted by its dependence on the technology and without it, the whole country would be vulnerable to threats. Thus, the uprising plans are founded on the government's vulnerability points. Awa Gee believes that the power which the American government holds would not last long: "Awa Gee had to admire the arrogance of the U.S. government. They had not been able to imagine that emergency reserves or alternate power systems might be needed. Always the assumption was 'everything would be all right'; no matter what had happened, Americans believed it could be rebuilt or repaired in a matter of hours or at most days" (*Almanac* 688). Similarly, the sacred macaws foretell the end of the war which strongly indicates the power of the dreams: "The macaws said the battle would be won or lost in the realms of dreams, not with airplanes or weapons" (*Almanac* 475). The macaws' words also depict the whites' strong ties to power, money, and their strong belief in technology which stands in opposition to the dream of the Natives.

When the rumors of local uprisings begin to spread, white people seem to ignore the rumors but, at the same time, they prohibit keeping these birds as a precaution. "How could anyone take seriously thousands of landless Indians who obeyed the orders of sacred macaws? In a neighboring district they had outlawed Indians from keeping the birds for purpose of fortune-telling" (*Almanac* 332). As more people get together for the uprisings, the whites begin to fear the consequences. The behavior of the police chief stands as an example to further illustrate the fear of the whites: "Last Friday the police chief had killed a stray dog that had wandered too close; they had feared terrorists had strapped explosives to the dog for use with a remote-control security device. They had found nothing on the dead dog except fleas" (*Almanac* 500). They expect attacks from everywhere, and this leads them to take precautions. Additionally the Barefoot Hopi's talk at the Healers Conference explains the fear of the whites from a different perspective: "The Hopi said perhaps the whites could sense the changes that were approaching. What they had done to others was coming back on them; the tables had turned; now the colonizers were being colonized" (*Almanac* 739). White American culture is first called 'invaders' in *Almanac*, and their ways of life are depicted along with the power of money throughout the novel. Yet, at the end, the Barefoot Hopi's statement seems to imply that a period is about to be over for the whites.

Silko's work entirely embraces all races with one dream, and at the end of the novel, the International Holistic Healer Conference at Tucson hosts these people: "The people came from all directions, and many claimed they had been summoned in dreams. Wacah had proclaimed all human beings were welcome to live in harmony together. People from tribes farther south, peasants without land, mestizos, the homeless from the cities and even a busload of Europeans, had come to hear the spirit macaws speak through Wacah" (*Almanac* 709). Wacah is the name that two macaws call Tacho. Since some sacred animals are believed to inform about the future, their message is important to see the consequence of the uprisings. They are believed to have a prophetic talent, and the blue macaws choose Tacho to give the message. "Wacah! Wacah! Wacah! Wacah! Big changes are coming!" (*Almanac* 339).

People from different parts of the country start to go north in order to attend the conference in Tucson. One of the macaws' messages is related to the gathering: "The spirit macaws promised spiritual strength and satisfaction to all who marched north" (*Almanac* 590). According to the macaws' message, walking to the north will lead to a salvation. In addition to the macaws' message, what Lecha deciphers from the almanac is in close association with the same theme:

> One day a story will arrive in your town. There will always be disagreement over the 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. (*Almanac* 578)

People who take part in all these uprisings know that it will take some time, but that they have started to rise. When Roy and Clinton have to leave the town, their promise to the Barefoot Hopi stresses that the uprising will last until they achieve what they want: "Clinton had promised the Barefoot Hopi he would spread the word among the brothers and sisters in the cities. He would tell them to prepare; a day was coming when each human being, man, woman, and child, could do something, and each contribution no matter how small would generate great momentum because they would be acting together" (*Almanac* 747). The important point here is that both the fragment from the almanac and Clinton's promise signify the continuity of their rise. Almanac informs that there might be

interruption during the process of the rising but it also guarantees that it will continue. On the other hand, Clinton's point reminds how important the minority is. He takes part in spreading the news of the rise to the small parts of the country which are believed to have the greatest power.

As a conclusion of the depiction of numerous characters, some common aspects could be observed among many relationships. Tillett's argument on these common aspects emphasizes the lack of emotion: "Here, I hesitate to use the term 'relationships,' since that would imply a connection that suggests the involvement of emotion. Rather, what we see within *Almanac*'s profoundly patriarchal worlds are a series of 'transactions' and 'exchanges,' and extension of an emotionless and loveless vampire capitalism. Here, the textual individuals and social groups are saturated and overwhelmed by the kinds of emotional disconnection and void that are required by, and are perhaps prerequisite of, patriarchal culture" (*Otherwise Revolution* 63). A variety of articles discuss the common themes of exploitation and lack of love which seem to be adapted by the white culture mostly, and accompanied by a feeling of superiority and power of money.

The theme of lack of love becomes clear along with Seese's story where David, Eric, Serlo and Beaufrey are introduced. Their set of relations is rather complex since David is Seese's husband, but has a homosexual relation with Eric and Beaufrey at the same time. Towards the end of the novel, a similar type of relationship occurs among Serlo, Beaufrey and David who are depicted as homosexuals. Throughout the sections in which Seese, David, Eric and Beaufrey's relations are narrated, the discourses usually contain an unpleasant tone as in Eric's confession to Seese about her husband: "David never loved you. He made Beaufrey jealous with you. That's all" (*Almanac* 61). There seems to be no true love among the characters, and this theme of a loveless environment can be said to dominate the whole novel.

Moreover, what David does after Eric's suicide can be evidence to the lack of emotion. David approaches the scene of suicide with a cold heart: "After discovering Eric's body, David didn't just snap a few pictures. He had moved reflectors around and got the light so Eric's blood appeared as bright and glossy as enamel paint" (*Almanac* 108). David does not pay attention to the dead body of his lover; the only thing he cares for is to take the best pictures for the exhibition. Janet Clair associates this environment with the injustice of Western culture: "[Silko's] homosexual characters are deliberately fantastic caricature designed to condense the persistent injustices of Western culture into tightly

concentrated emblems" (208). Similar to the horrifyingly-described scene of Eric's dead body, the lack of emotion could also be exemplified through David's behavior when he shows no mercy upon the loss of his lover, Eric. Clair's point on the love of death can be said to provide an explanation to David's behavior: "*Almanac of the Dead* is not about love: it is about the death of love; about the love of death. Grossly distorted, wildly exceptional characterizations drawn broad, shallow, and tawdry are among Silko's techniques for portraying the terrifyingly imaginable outcome of our cultural course" (220). According to Clair, David's behavior exemplifies a cultural outcome which signifies distorted actions.

Death does not have a significant meaning in a capitalist world where people maintain their relations without any emotion. Both Eric's suicide and Seese's attempted abortion are narrated one after the other in order to stress the commonness of death in the world of Beaufrey, Serlo and David. One reason for this environment could be explained through some characters who were raised without a mother's love. Beaufrey's lust in describing the process of an abortion becomes also comprehensible as his relation with his mother is narrated: "His mother had told him she tried to abort herself. She had never let it happen again after she had him. Beaufrey had started by hating his mother; hating the rest of them was easy" (*Almanac* 102). As Clair also states:

> In Silko's defense, however, it must be noted that virtually all the characters in *Almanac*, not just the homosexual men, hate their mothers. Even maternity, it seems, is incapable of engendering love. But women are not the villains of the piece; they are among the victims. All have been blighted by the vicious misogyny of their culture…Love between the genders, based as this culture has traditionally dictated on inequality and contempt, cannot grow. (219)

Clair's assertion may as well be supported by Ferro's story since he was raised by his aunt in the absence of his real mother's love: "And yet Ferro had never known why Lecha had abandoned him. He only knew that his aunt did not raise him out of maternal love but out of duty" (*Almanac* 183). The characters who were raised without maternal love are depicted in accordance with the loveless environments in which the other lives do not mean much, and cruelty dominates.

After Eric's suicide, David takes his photographs, and they are exhibited in a gallery. David waits for a feeling of success through Eric's suicide photos; on the other

hand, attorney G.'s warning illustrates the worthlessness of life when it is compared to being popular:

> G. kept telling David not to worry, the publicity was worth millions and millions. G. was handling everything. David need not worry. But David had been angry about attorney's fees. G. was charging David's account thousands per month for attorneys. Prints of Eric's suicide were selling briskly, but David's share had been consumed by payments to lawyers. David was furious. He had waited years and years for this success to come; Eric's family and their lawsuits had ruined everything. (*Almanac* 553)

David has been waiting to achieve a place in the world of art; he thinks that he can get this status by photographing Eric's dead body. He also dreams of being popular among the artists, so the end of a life does not mean much to him if only this will bring him the status he has been seeking.

Another example for this kind of cruel behavior can be observed through Beaufrey's plan to kidnap Seese and David's child, Monte. With the birth of Monte, the relation among them gets difficult since Beufrey is not accustomed to sharing David. Beaufrey thinks that Monte will distract David, so he plans the kidnapping in a calm mood which makes it clear that he acts without mercy. The plan is carried out while Beaufrey, David and Serlo are in Puerto Rico for some photograph shooting: "David was ripe. Beaufrey could feel his excitement rising as the final moves of the game were being made and it was clear his prey could not escape. Beaufrey had purposely waited three weeks in Cartagena to make the kidnapping seem more plausible" (*Almanac* 539). Beaufrey's utterance can be considered as evidence to the lack of emotion which leads to the kidnapping. Throughout the novel, Silko stresses that some behaviors harbor a great deal of cruelty. Clair's statement on Beaufrey's behaviors carries similarities with Silko's aim: "Beaufrey's methodical destruction of his lover David serves as metaphorical case study of the egocentric arrogance, ruthless objectification, and cannibalistic greed that characterize Western culture in Silko's estimation" (210). Clair provides a bridge between the depiction of homosexuals and Western culture since, according to her, they could both be depicted as arrogant, greedy and ruthless. The attachment of these qualities might be associated with the theme of lack of emotion.

Beaufrey's childhood memories expand the theme of lack of emotion since love and emotion are depicted as the least important needs in Beaufrey's life even in his

childhood: “He felt indifferent toward his mother and father, and the kindest nannies. Beaufrey understood their acts signified care and love from them, but he felt only indifference toward them” (*Almanac* 533). He is depicted to have his own world during his childhood in which love is not essential, so he is indifferent to his mother’s love. Additionally, the theme of lack of love is observed in the lives of many characters who believe in the uniqueness of their race.

The unifying theme of lack of love and the uniqueness of a race could be explained through a children’s story character, Blue Blood. Beaufrey had had a different childhood since he thinks differently from other children; at the age of eight, his parents had started to take him to a psychiatrist regularly. There he mentioned his favorite book about crimes. The Long Island cannibal, Albert Fish, craves for the human meat and kills children since he is obsessed with the blue blood that children have. Through a children’s story, Silko defines the lack of emotion and uniqueness of a race: “As a child, Beaufrey’s intuition and imagination had been strangely acute. He had felt Albert Fish and he were kindred spirits because they shared not only social rank, but complete indifference about the life or death of other human beings” (*Almanac* 534). Starting from his childhood, Beaufrey associates himself with Albert Fish and the uniqueness of the white race becomes vital for him.

Additionally, the European culture is also exemplified through the qualities of this story character who has cannibalistic qualities. This theme, which many scholars point out, commonly finds a correspondence in the following quotation: “As Beaufrey had read European history in college, he had realized there had always been a connection between human cannibals and the aristocracy. Members of European aristocracy were simply more inclined to hunger and crave human flesh and blood because of le droit du seigneur had corrupted them absolutely” (*Almanac* 535). Beaufrey’s lack of love and his indifference towards people around him can be read in correlation with aristocracy since he feels like an aristocrat who belongs to blue blood: “The words unavailable and forbidden did not apply to aristocrats. Laws in England and the United States traced their origins to the ‘courts’ of feudal lords who had listened to complaints and testimony and then passed judgement on the serfs” (*Almanac* 535). Aristocracy and blue blood seem to be inflicted on the European culture as represented in the novel. Moreover, the terms aristocracy and blue blood harbor a unifying plot for some characters who share common feelings.

Serlo is Beaufrey’s lover, and he thinks similarly on having blue blood. “Serlo had *sangre pura*; ‘blue blood’ deserved ‘blue blood’” (*Almanac* 542). His dream to leave the

seed of blue blood for the next generation also reveals the importance of the uniqueness of a race in his mind. So, he has plans to build a sperm bank in which the samples of noble blood would survive: "Serlo was anxious to get his institute under way and to obtain sperm contributions from European males of noble birth lest rare and distinguished lineages disappear without issue" (*Almanac* 547). The term blue blood signifies their uniqueness which seems to be inherited from the previous generation. Serlo's obsession with blue blood is inherited from his family: "All along the droit du seigneur had been aimed at constant infusion of superior aristocratic blood into the peasant stock, just as Serlo had heard his uncles laugh about the rubber plantations years before where they had raped six or seven young Indian women, not because they had been lustful men, they were not, but because they believed it was their God-given duty to 'upgrade' mestizo and Indian bloodstock" (*Almanac* 541). The superiority which some whites feel over other races can be associated with the blue blood that they think they have as a sign of aristocracy.

The past generation of some whites could be held responsible for their grandchildren's obsession. Serlo's history of homosexuality started with his grandfather who seduced him and died during one of the sexual intercourses with his grandchild, and after that Serlo never let anyone touch him in a sexual way (*Almanac* 546). Owing to Serlo's sexual preferences according to which he does not let anyone touch his body, Beaufrey begins to have an obsession to be with him: "Tantalizing gossip had circulated throughout the long Mediterranean coast about Serlo, the pale eyes and milky skin, the pride of European nobility reared on the remote plains of Colombia" (*Almanac* 547). The fact that Serlo does not let anyone touch him seems to define him as special in the world of Beaufrey who looks for the uniqueness throughout his life, and his obsession to be with Serlo seems to stem from that interest about uniqueness.

Arne is the federal judge and he plays a significant role in the secret meetings where ambassadors, generals and government people regularly gather to discuss the illegal business affairs they run. In great contrast to his position in these important meetings, Judge Arne's sexual preferences are represented as inherited from his grandfather, too: "His grandfather had felt the same; more than once the old man had declared that his dog's mouth was cleaner than a human's mouth" (*Almanac* 655). What Judge Arne has learned from his grandfather carries similarities with Serlo's teachings from his grandfather: "The old man had practiced only masturbation into steel cylinders where his semen was frozen for future use. His grandfather had influenced him, Serlo admitted" (*Almanac* 547). As

these two quotations from two different characters suggest, Silko brings together the theme of the uniqueness of a race and the obsession of the previous generation. Both Arne and Serlo present a different story through the novel whereas their perception of relationship seems to be inherited from their previous generation whose ideas supported the uniqueness of their race.

Throughout the depiction of the judge, Arne's way of shameless behavior becomes clear. After the judge's naked photos are exhibited in a calendar, his reaction might stand as an example to the corruption: "The judge had to smile at himself and his maturity. Twenty or even ten years ago he would have been in a cold sweat, paralyzed with fear of detection; instead he had been secretly quite pleased with the bold, exotic figure he had made on the calendar" (*Almanac* 461). The judge does not seem to be disturbed by his naked photos; on the contrary, he accepts them with a sense of pride. The attitudes of the judge can be claimed to point out how ordinarily corruption is accepted. Through the depiction of corruption, Silko manages to define a set of values, and they seem to be adapted by the white culture mostly.

As in the example of the judge, Silko depicts lives of numerous people from different cultures in which values, priorities and intentions differ. For instance, the priority of Zeta and Lecha is to finish the almanac, whereas for their cousin, Calabazas, continuing his smuggling cross border is the most important thing. As such, Leah Blue intends to build a city in the middle of the desert, but her sons, Sonny and Bingo want to have their own business. Each narration of these different lives is connected to each other and serves as a facilitator for the meeting in Tucson at the end, due to the fact that the connection among people signifies some common values. These values seem to help people who have same ideology, come together at the meeting in Tucson where they discuss the future of the country.

The discussion of Tucson meeting is about the revolution through which Native Americans search for their freedom. The theme of revolution can also be read as a consequence of cultural difference and the changing world as represented throughout the novel. The revolution is based on the desire to take the land back, and it is not shared by the Native American culture merely, yet other minority cultures participate in the plans of revolution. This togetherness seems to be achieved through a driving force: the past of the ancestors. *Almanac* demonstrates many examples of different cultures who celebrate their ancestors' oppression times by participating in uprisings, and Silko addresses the

significance of the past through the use of almanac in which past events are narrated, and it is supposed to be passed on to the next generation. Additionally, Bakhtin's dialogism refers to the formation of a word through an atmosphere of already spoken, in other words, through the past. According to Bakhtin, the meaning of a word is achieved through what is spoken in the past. Both the theory of Bakhtin and the dream of Native Americans seem to be related to the past. For Native Americans, knowing their history means power, in other words, a generation who celebrates his ancestors' life gains his freedom. That is why the importance of *Almanac* can be found in part in the past which is mostly narrated throughout the novel, and it can be claimed that *Almanac* is more about the past owing to the ancestors' stories of indigenous cultures.

CHAPTER II

GARDENS IN THE DUNES

Gardens in the Dunes (1999) is Leslie Marmon Silko's third novel in which the importance of nature is emphasized. In this novel, Silko portrays the lives of two sisters from the Sand Lizard tribe who are separated for a period of time. During this time, Sister Salt mostly experiences life in a reservation area whereas Indigo is taken to a boarding school. Later Indigo manages to run away from the school and comes across a couple, Hattie and Edward, with whom she travels through Europe. Through introducing Edward, Silko manages to draw a line between the two cultures, since Edward's gardening philosophy is far from Indigo's, and moreover, that difference clarifies two new terms: survival and capitalist gardening. Silko addresses the question of how two cultures differ from each other by emphasizing the two cultures' different perspectives on nature.

Although the sisters are separated from each other and their home, their deep connection with gardens reinforces the novel's dominant theme of nature, and the connection derives from their traditional view which is also suggested by Gregory Cajete: "The belief that humans are a part of the community of plants was widespread among many Native peoples" (130). Through pointing out the importance of nature, Silko draws a clear line between the Native Americans and white Americans which also introduces capitalist and survival gardening. The capitalist approach is usually observed in the white Americans' attitudes whereas the Native American culture depends on gardens for their survival which is supported by Cajete in *Native Science Natural Laws of Interdependence*:

> Finding and growing food presented ecological principles that had to be reinforced. Native peoples constantly reminded themselves where their food came from. Every member of the community was responsible for gathering, hunting, or fishing, so each person came to know the intimate relationships humans had to maintain with the sources of their food. By following their traditional ways of food gathering, young and old came to understand that food are prepared and must be respected in certain ways. (99)

Depiction of the Sand Lizards fits Cajete's statement since they engage in nature in terms of their survival, due to the fact that their food supply heavily depends on nature. The

question of how different cultures regard gardening shapes Silko's theme in *Gardens* since each culture's different acceptance provides a basis for the cultural difference.

The Sand Lizard people live in the area named old gardens which also gives the novel its name. They describe the area as undisturbed since the invaders are afraid to go beyond the river into the desert. Living in the dunes enables Sand Lizard people to have peculiar lives which also impacts their rituals. The area is far from the river, so the fertility of the soil either depends on the rain or the water carried from the river which makes it harder to grow. Yet as Cajete states, the geographical difficulties are related to Native Americans' learning experiences:

> Nature was the frame of reality that formed the learning experiences. The geographical and structural orientations of Indigenous communities to their natural place and the cosmos reflected a communal consciousness that extended to and included the natural world in an intimate and mutually reciprocal relationship. Through clan and social symbolism, ritual, art and visionary tradition, members connected themselves to the plants, animals, waters, mountains, sun, moon, stars, and planets of their world. (95)

Cajete's discussion of nature through Native Americans' eyes can be claimed to explain the intimacy that the Sand Lizards feel towards nature where both Grandma Fleet and the sisters learn how to sustain the continuity of the soil for the following year. In order to keep the soil fertile, they learn to interpret the environmental conditions including rain, sun and also animals which make them good observers at the same time. Thus, from the beginning of the novel, the depiction of nature is very much detailed. Blossoming trees, smell of rain and the influence of a raindrop are detailed through the sisters' relation with nature: "they lay side by side with their mouths open and swallowed raindrops until the storm passed" (*Gardens* 13). Becca Gercken associates Silko's beginning with the Native American culture through Indigo and states: "With her opening paragraph, Silko establishes that Indigo is not just on the land, she is of the land, as is her sister who enjoys the rain with her" (180). Through the depiction of the sisters, Gercken and Cajete's quotations, the importance of nature in the novel which has also a significant role in the life of Native Americans becomes clear.

Throughout the novel, Native Americans' deep connection with nature is depicted, and this connection involves all kinds of lives, including plants. Tillett expands upon this issue and states that: "Sand Lizard not only specifies the fragility and impermanence of

human life – its "undependab(ility)" – but also expresses Indigenous understanding of the complex interdependencies between human and non-human life" (235). This interdependency is significant in the world of Native Americans, and the importance of non-human life becomes overt in many plots. Their tradition of celebrating the harvest could be held within this thematic pattern of the importance of non-human life: "Sand Lizard warned her children to share: Don't be greedy. The first ripe fruit of each harvest belongs to the spirits of our beloved ancestors, who come to us as rain; the second ripe fruit should go to the birds and wild animals, in gratitude for their restraint in sparing the seeds and sprouts earlier in the season. Give the third ripe fruit to the bees, ants, mantises, and others who cared for the plants" (*Gardens* 15). Natives do not only care for their food; they never forget to pay respect to those who help nature to be fertile, and moreover, they respect all human and non-human beings.

The scene in which Indigo is stung by a bee and Sister Salt's reaction attribute a healing quality to the earth. The Native Americans' acceptance of the earth as a healer reflects their strong tie to nature: "Indigo cried when the bees stung her but Sister Salt only rubbed her swollen arms and legs vigorously and laughed, saying it was good medicine - a good cure for anything that might ail you" (*Gardens* 14). The earth and nature seem to have profound influence on the lives of Native Americans in the *Gardens* as Silko also underlines in *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*: "Thus the old folks used to tell us kids not to disturb the earth unnecessarily. All things as they were created exist already in harmony with one another as long as we do not disturb them" (64). The harmony does not only include animals or plants but also human beings. The primary responsibility of human beings comes with respect to the earth whereas with the appearance of the invaders, the harmony begins to shatter.

With the appearance of white Americans, the living area of Native Americans has changed due to the fact that the whites do not give the same priority to the earth as the Natives do. White Americans do not have a sense of responsibility and respect to nature, fertility begins to diminish. This creates difficulty for the Natives and it becomes overt in the plot when Indigo wanders around the reservation area to find some food:

> Before the government drew reservation lines, there was plenty for everyone to eat because the people used to roam up and down the river for hundreds of miles to give the plants and animals a chance to recover. But now the

> people were restricted to the reservations, so everyone foraged those same few miles of river. (*Gardens* 414)

Scarcity of food is accepted as a consequence of the changing environment which is depicted throughout the novel. Native Americans do not live in an environment where they used to before the invaders. Silko's depiction of the invaders sheds light on the dramatic change observed in nature: "The invaders made the Earth get old and want to die" (*Gardens* 26). As is represented in the previous quotation, the lack of respect to the earth might be associated with the invaders. Therefore, the primary conflict lies in the two cultures' approaches to the earth. Their diverse perspectives lead to new terms: capitalist gardening and survival gardening.

It is made clear that there are many different gardens through the world, and Rebecca Tillet's depiction of the work expresses the central motif of the novel in a nutshell: "*Garden*'s deceptively gentle tour of a variety of gardens" ("Sand Lizard" 225). European, American and Native American examples of gardening are at the heart of the novel, and Indigo experiences all of them. Indigo's surprise at different gardens plays a crucial role in understanding that the Native American culture is represented by a different way of gardening. As she shares her feeling with her sister, Sister Salt's expression shifts the focus to the benefits of gardening in their culture: "Indigo told Sister about the gardens. All flowers? Nothing to eat? Yes, like the little flower gardens in front of the house in Needles" (*Gardens* 455). Sister Salt's reaction could be evidence to the changing world through gardens since gardening means farming for the Native Americans, and it plays an important role in their lives. What Terre Ryan suggests also articulates the meaning of gardens in the Native American culture: "The Sand Lizards engage in subsistence agriculture, an ancient practice that Grandma Fleet painstakingly teaches the sisters. Because their crops are indigenous to the local environment, they thrive despite the harsh landscape" (118). From the days with Grandmother Fleet in the dunes, the sisters engage in their garden by growing vegetables and all kinds of plants which they either consume or store to eat later.

Plants have significant roles in the Native Americans' world, and the sisters' interest in the soil comes from the teachings of their grandmother: "The more strange and unknown the plant, the more interested Grandma Fleet was; she loved to collect and trade seeds. Others did not grow a plant unless it was food or medicine, but Sand Lizards planted seeds to see what would come; Sand Lizards ate nearly everything anyway, and Grandma

said they never found a plant they couldn't use for some purpose" (*Gardens* 84). Plants have survival importance for the Native Americans, however, the depiction of gardening as "commercial potential" (*Gardens* 86) might be one indicator of the capitalist approach which the whites seem to adopt.

Edward who lives with his wife Hattie in California, is an ambitious expeditioner, and his obsession to collect rare plants on the expedition to far away countries could be taken to exemplify the capitalist approach: "Edward's special interest was in aromatic grasses and plants, which always were highly prized by horticulturists and gardeners. Edward traveled to places so remote and collected plants so rare, so subtle, few white men ever saw them before" (*Gardens* 78). The contrast between Indigo and Edward makes it evident that their interests in gardening are different, which is also suggested by Tillett:

> In this context, the Sand Lizard gardens in the dunes can be interpreted as an example of that which is both freely given and held in common. Sand Lizard philosophies are traced through the dune gardens, which, in contrast to Edward's mercantile horticultural understandings, privilege a philosophy of human care that returns us to the original, reciprocal meanings of "sharing" and "exchange" evident in the critical considerations of Cajete, Wilson, Buchanan, Caduto and Bruchac, and Harrison. (234)

In this quotation, Tillett brings the aspects of two gardening styles together. She defines survival gardening which is a sacred motif in the Native American culture through two terms: freely given and held in common, whereas mercantile is used to indicate the white culture's gardening.

Even though Edward's philosophy of gardening could be taken as an example for capitalist gardening, his plans are not limited to inventing a new plant or finding a rare species in far countries, yet he plans an expedition to Corsica to take the samples of citron cuttings secretly. The citrons are peculiar to the area, and he plans to bring a sample to America. He arranges everything, he takes some potatoes to keep the cuttings moist until they return to America. As Hattie and Indigo are busy with local people in Corsica, he pretends to take photographs of the citrons and he takes some cuttings. Yet, he is caught at the border inspection and put in jail for a couple of days while Hattie and Indigo wait for him in at the American embassy in Corsica.

The embarrassment of being jailed does not seem to influence Edward since after he is released, he comes up with another idea. He sees some rare type of orchids, and he

buys them for profitable hybridization: "He would create his own fragrant orchid hybrids to sell to florists from Los Angeles to San Francisco" (*Gardens* 372). Terre Ryan defines the situation, which Edward exemplifies, as imperialism: "*Gardens in the Dunes* is subtly crafted history of nineteenth-century European and American imperialism. Silko intertwines the stories of heretical scholar Hattie Palmer, her botanist husband, and Sand Lizards Indigo and Sister Salt to demonstrate the ways in which white European and American men have sought to dominate all other human beings and all of the earth's landscapes" (115). Ryan's discussion of European and American imperialism through gardening is consistent with some characteristics of Edward whose obsession is with delicate and rare plants. Furthermore, his obsession with creating a new hybrid in the world of plants could be considered as domination over nature. In other words, the meaning of capitalist gardening in Edward's mind is consistent with his plans to create a rare type in the world of nature. For this reason, Edward's plan corresponds with Ryan's argument of domination, since the plant which Edward works on does not exist in nature, and that is the reason that he is claimed to dominate the natural growth of the earth.

Edward's life seems to fall in line with what Ryan suggests since he spends all his time trying to find a rare type of plant or working on hybridization which would make him an important expeditioner. Edward's passion in growing rare types of plants seems to be inherited from his father: "Edward remembered that summer vividly because his father set up a separate laboratory for perfumery in one end of the library, where he sat for hours, sipping brandy as he pressed whole dried cloves into dainty Persian oranges to make spicy pomanders that might help capitalize his perfume venture after Edward's mother refused to fund it further" (*Gardens* 280). Just like his father, Edward spends all his life on plants, and in order to achieve his dreams, he travels to far countries to bring unique plants. The depiction of Edward exemplifies the figure of a conquistador which Silko's addresses in the interview with Ellen Arnold, as she explains how *Gardens in the Dunes* turns out to be a political writing through orchid trade:

> So I decided that my characters would be from one of these remnant, destroyed, extinct groups. They'd be some of the last of them.
>
> So I started writing, but then it wasn't too long before I realized how very political gardens are. Though my conscious self had tried to come up with an idea for a non-political novel, I had actually stumbled into the most political thing of all – how you grow your food, whether you eat, the fact

> that the plant collectors followed the Conquistadors. You have the Conquistadors, the missionaries, and right with them the plant collectors. When I started reading about the orchid trade, then suddenly I realized, but it was too late then! I realized that this was going to be a really political novel too. (Arnold 3)

Silko emphasizes the capitalistic influence of gardening through Edward's sister Susan. When Edward and Hattie travel from California to Corsica, Italy they stop at many places including Long Island where they visit Susan. When Hattie, Edward and Indigo come to Long Island, they find themselves in the middle of a garden ball organization which is being arranged by Susan in her garden. In the busy process of Susan's garden reception, one expression indicates the fact that plants do not mean much for the white Americans as long as they show their beauty for a demanded time: "The *Anchusa azurea*, or the blue Asian bugloss, growing next to the delphiniums was far less demanding, though its blossoms not as long lived, but they had to last only one night – the night of the ball" (*Gardens* 184). Silko portrays the white American characters as people who take gardening differently from the Native Americans. Susan's ambition to change the garden into Renaissance style might be said to illustrate this different meaning of gardening in white American culture:

> The sounds of the steel picks and shovels against earth and stone could be heard from beyond the blue garden, which itself was undergoing its annual preparations for the ball. Susan did not want her guests to see the same plants as the year before; she relished the challenge of creating new and startling effects with the bedding plants and even shrubs and vines selected for their particular shade of blue; the white-flowering plants and shrubs were chosen for their impact in the moonlight. White blossoms took on the silvery blue of the moon, while the blue blossoms were transformed to a luminous cobalt blue. (*Gardens* 161)

Susan is in the process of preparing her garden for the ball, and the most important thing on her mind is to create a change for the guests. Seeing the same plants from the previous year seems to be an embarrassment for Susan; she has to do everything to impress her guests. What she does for change finds meaning in Stephanie Li's essay as aesthetic pleasure:

> Gardening reveals basic beliefs about the relationship between humans and the earth. For example, Granma Fleet honors indigenous values by recognizing the old gardens as a source of food, shelter, and identity, and she passes this respect for the earth on to her grandchildren. By contrast, many of the white characters in the novel adopt a more domineering and colonialist approach to the natural world; Edward develops a lucrative orchid business, and Susan recreates her garden each year for her aesthetic pleasure. (19)

The aesthetic perspective is not shared by the Native Americans who pay more attention to the natural harmony of the earth. As everybody is busy with the preparations of the gardens, Indigo wanders around on her own to examine different plants: "She slowed to a walk under the great trees so she could examine them more closely; little mushroom caps dotted the ground under the trees and when she picked one and held it up close, tiny dewdrops glistened in the light. She popped it in her mouth and it tasted as fresh as the earth and the air" (*Gardens* 160). Indigo's experience in her exploration through the garden indicates her fascination with nature whereas her amazement defines the cultural difference more obviously, which Rebecca Tillet also supports: "Europe's and America's very richest social groups used gardens to display their wealth and social status, and to firmly trace how their possession of the natural world echoed their "possession" of imperial territories and peoples" (224). The hectic arrangements to change the garden and Indigo's naïve exploration through the garden might be accepted as evidence of cultural differences which are depicted throughout the novel.

Not all white culture is exemplified through the idea of capitalist gardening. Hattie's aunt, Aunt Bronwyn who lives in England, has a garden which might stand as an example for the survivalist gardens: "The kitchen garden was the modern garden as well, she explained. Plants from all over the world – from the Americas, tomatoes, potatoes, pumpkins, squash, and sweet corn; and garlic, onions, broad beans, asparagus, and chickpeas from Italy – grew with peppers from Asia and Africa" (*Gardens* 240). In such a garden and with such a person, Indigo feels at home: "If plants and trees had individual souls, then aunt Bronwyn decided to acquaint herself with as many different beings as possible. Between the orchard and the cloister odd mounds of broken stone and rubble overgrown with weeds, wild roses, and hawthorn marked site of the Norman abbey" (*Gardens* 242). Aunt's gardening philosophy is similar to Sand Lizards' in terms of

believing in the souls of plants; with her perspective, it becomes apparent that Aunt's approach to gardening is far from the profit-based capitalistic gardening. These two different gardening styles could be explained within the pattern of dialogism where Holquist's explanation sheds light on two terms: self and the other: "That system serves as the subject of what Bakhtin calls the science of ideologies, the study of differential relationships between 'I' and others, where the meaning of 'other' may range from other individuals, through neighborhoods, classes, professions, etc., all the way up to other culture systems" (49). In survival gardening, as the Sand Lizards do, they do not define nature as other, they accept nature and themselves together which influence their way of respecting to nature. On the other hand, in profit-based gardening, the culture seems to separate itself from nature and regards it through capitalistic perspective. Each culture's acceptance of gardening differs since their ideologies in growing food or plants are based on their cultural values, and those values could be interpreted along with the thematic pattern of dialogism which explains the ideologies behind utterances.

As in the example of capitalist and survival gardening, the main distinction between the cultures can also be observed through their different responses to the earth. Susan's ball organization, which is supposed to create an impact on the guests, draws attention to the different perception of white American culture towards plants, nature and the earth. New plants are brought including a giant beach tree. In the process of planting the tree, Edward, Mr. Abbott and Indigo take their places to watch. However, only Indigo hears the voices of the tree: "Indigo was shocked at the sight: wrapped in canvas and big chains on the flat wagon was a great tree lying helpless, its leaves shocked limp, followed by its companion; the stain of damp earth like dark blood seeped through the canvas. As the procession inched past, Indigo heard low creaks and groans - not sounds of the wagons but from the trees" (*Gardens* 183). Hearing the sound of the earth seems to be assigned to the Native American culture as represented in the novel. Similarly, Holquist's explanation on dialogism affirms a belief that organisms in ecosystems exchanges just like language: "The mutuality of differences makes dialogue Bakhtin's master concept, for it is present in exchanges at all levels between word in language, people in society, organisms in ecosystems, and even between processes in the natural world" (40). From the previous quotation, it can be assumed that dialogism is not observed among the words with different meanings but organisms in ecosystem or the original state of nature may get diverse responses by different cultures whose ideologies also differ. These diverse attitudes

towards ecology and nature accord with the cultural difference between the whites and Native Americans.

Sister Salt is another character who is sensitive to these kinds of sounds. She is taken to a reservation in Colorado where the construction of a big dam brings many workers close to the reservation. While the construction creates a great number of job opportunities for a lot of people, Sister Salt's depiction of nature emphasizes a completely different issue, the sound of a grieving nature: "The river had been forced from her bed into deep diversion ditches, where her water ran angry red. Big earth-moving machines pulled by teams of mules uprooted groves of ancient cottonwood trees" (*Gardens* 211). The indifference of the people to the earth nearby the construction area gives a clear example to different cultures who either pay no attention to the earth and focus on working for money or hear the scream of the nature around.

It is significant to hear the sounds of the earth for the Native Americans since their survival depends on the connection between the earth and the sky. Silko states the same relation in *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*: "The ancient Pueblos believed the Earth and the Sky were sisters (or sister and brother in the post-Christian version). As long as food-family relations are maintained, then the Sky will continue to bless her sister, the Earth, with rain, and the Earth's children will continue to survive" (29). The Native Americans do not only hear the screams of the earth but they also witness the anger. Nature seems to react to all those construction works which might spoil the balance in the system. How Sister Salt describes the construction is, in this respect, significant:

> As the earth was heaped higher across the riverbed, the dam resembled more and more one of the monster stories Maytha and Vedna learned from their father. This monster ate up all living things up and down the poor river. Upriver, the backwaters flooded the cottonwoods and willows; now they were beginning to die. The watercress and delicate mosses that used to fringe the river's edge were submerged, and the silver green minnows disappeared. (*Gardens* 364)

Sister Salt's depiction draws the attention to the changes of the earth but the construction of the dam continues despite the river's overflowing. The ignorance of the whites toward nature and their demand to change the original state of nature resemble to the story of a monster which Maytha and Vedna narrates in the previous quotation, and that story would

end up with a big destruction. Daniel White's view assumes that the ignorance of white American culture can be read as a mistake from which lessons should be learnt:

> Silko acknowledges, as did her Pueblo ancestors, that all humans are fallible. Indeed, Pueblo teachings depend upon an awareness of such shortcomings, and Silko's goal is to exhibit how her people have heeded the lessons from their mistakes. They had to, or they would have perished. Pueblo wisdom is gained from trial and error in an arid, unforgiving land where even the tiniest mistake can be fatal. An individual transgressor may not be the only one at risk; the harmful actions of one may have dire consequences for all. (142)

As in Pueblo teaching, *Gardens* creates a strong emphasis on the consequences of an ignorance towards the earth since an individual mistake might influence all human beings at the end. White Americans' lack of respect to the earth and their ignorance towards the overflowing would soon end up with a big flood which covers all small dwellings around the dam. Silko draws the attention to the fact that the Natives' attention to nature is far from the whites' attitudes which can also be understood through Cajete's lines: "Among some Indian herbalists, plants are referred to as 'the hair of the Earth Mother.' There is a widespread traditional Native belief that the Earth feels the pull every time a plant is taken from the soil therefore, humans must always make a proper offering and prayers" (111). The Native American culture regards nature as a living organism, and that is why they pay great respect to the earth throughout the novel.

What white Americans ignore becomes a primary concern for the Native Americans. The difference becomes clearer when examining diverse ways of cultural attachment to the earth. The choices of Hattie and Indigo at the end might be read as a consequence of their different ways of accepting nature. Indigo easily leaves all the luxury and wealth behind after she finds her sister, and she starts to live in a cottage despite its limitations. Indigo is on an endless quest for her sister and mother, and the only thing that she attaches herself to is the earth. Terre Ryan also makes this point clear by stating that: "Indigo is never spoiled by material comforts or distracted from her goals: to return home to her sister, seeds in hand, and to find her mother and the Messiah along the way" (116). On the other hand, although Hattie is surrounded by her family, her quest might be described as vulnerable and according to Stephanie Li, it is because of her detachment from the earth during her life in America:

> While Indigo experiences the earth as a series of coded stories that validate her Sand Lizard heritage, Hattie yearns for such a connection and only finds meaningful attachment in her exile from the United States. The consequence of such diverse relationships to the earth is profound: while Indigo is able to sustain her sense of self despite the separation from her family, Hattie remains lost and uncertain about her future and her basic purpose in life. Although Indigo is the literal orphan in the text, Hattie's estrangement from the earth leaves her far more vulnerable to exploitation. (26)

Li emphasizes the difference between Indigo and Hattie through their way of interacting with the earth which signifies a sense of belonging. Indigo never forgets her roots because of the seeds she collects through her journey, due to the fact that she collects the seeds with a hope to plant them in the dunes one day. For this reason, her meeting with Sister Salt at the end can be said to affirm the duty of the seeds which guide Indigo's way towards the dunes.

Countless examples can illustrate that a quest of identity is in close relation to the earth for the Native American culture, and this heritage comes through stories as represented in the novel. The Native Americans who listen to stories seems to have a more powerful attachment to the earth. Silko introduces two different cultures whose sense of belonging differs according to their connection with the earth. The following quotation from Li illustrates the importance of storytelling with the connection to the earth:

> This notion of storytelling as fundamental to identity formation is explored throughout *Gardens in the Dunes*. Characters like Indigo and Sister Salt who possess a strong knowledge of their culture's stories are juxtaposed against others such as Hattie who lack the self-definition and community orientation provided by meaningful social narratives. In presenting these characters, Silko highlights the ways that a tradition of storytelling can counteract attempts at cultural genocide and acts of physical violence. The process of making and participating in meaningful social narratives allows Indigo to thrive despite the absence of her biological mother through most of the text. By contrast, Hattie, though surrounded by family, lacks cultural stories by which she can understand her own experiences. Storytelling may thus be understood as both a means of cultivating personal identity and as a way of resisting cultural erasure.

> The difference between Indigo and Hattie may also be understood by how they interact with the most fundamental maternal figure in the text, namely, the earth. (25)

As Native Americans try to hold on to the power of storytelling, the lack of it in the world of white Americans seems to be replaced with another subject, education. When Hattie and Edward decide to take Indigo on a Europe tour, they also plan to teach her some school curriculum including geography. Hattie accepts the responsibility of teaching as much as possible to Indigo during their journey: "Perhaps the task was more than Hattie wanted to take on, but of course it was their duty to educate the child to enable her to survive in the white man's world" (*Gardens* 309). The things that Indigo is supposed to learn seem to be significant for her survival in the world of whites. The quotation above signifies how Native American culture is different from the whites, and Silko makes it clear that the only distinction between the two cultures is not only restricted to the theme of the earth but also education and storytelling are regarded differently in the two cultures.

Throughout the novel, Silko stresses that storytelling has a significant role, and the Native Americans' strong tie to the earth seems to be associated with the power of stories. The power of storytelling might find a meaning in one of Pueblo's tradition which explains spoken words coming from the heart: "Where I come from, the words most highly valued are those spoken from the heart, unpremeditated and unrehearsed. Among the Pueblo people, a written speech or statement is highly suspect because the true feelings of the speaker remain hidden as she reads the words that are detached from the occasion to the audience" (Silko, *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*, 48). The tradition of storytelling in the Native American culture seems to be sustained through spoken words. Both the storyteller and the listener are in interaction during the process in which the unrehearsed spoken words from the heart of a speaker seem to influence a listener. Silko's statement about traditional process of storytelling might be said to include one of the basic principles of dialogism where the true feelings of a speaker could also be observed: "Understanding and response are dialectically merged and mutually condition each other; one is impossible without the other" (Bakhtin, 282). As in the tradition of storytelling and in the explanation of dialogism, the spoken words are in process between a speaker and a listener through which the listener senses the meaning behind the words. In other words, the speaker and the listener become the most important components in a process of a

dialogue, yet the meaning of words might differ according to the cultural ways of perception.

Any discussion of cultural differences would not be complete without the mention of religion. Silko draws attention to the fact that religion is a part of education which seems significant for white Americans. As Paula Gunn argues: "Christians believe that God is separate from humanity and does as he wishes without the creative assistance of any of his creatures, while the non-Christian tribal person assumes a place in creation that is dynamic, creative, and responsive. Further, tribal people allow all animals, vegetables, and minerals (the entire biota, in short) the same or even greater privileges than humans. The Indian participates in destiny on all levels, including that of creation" (83). One example to point out this difference occurs in the dialogue between Indigo and Hattie when Indigo explains what the dancing rituals are for. The Native Americans believe that dancing rituals are to call for the Messiah:

> Hattie hesitated before she said Jesus died in Jerusalem. Indigo shook her head; many were fooled by what happened. The Paiute woman told them after the soldiers tried to kill Jesus, he left the place and returned here to his home up in the mountains. He lives there with his family, but sometimes the Messiah takes his family great distances to visit other believers. (*Gardens* 125)

Indigo believes that Messiah still lives and he helps people who are in need. The protagonist follows the vision of a God which finds no followers in the world of white Americans since they believe that the God is not alive, thus their religious belief can be explained by single-focus perception which has strict facts and rules. This understanding might well be seen in the thesis statement of Hattie.

Hattie studies the history of early church which she defends that Jesus had women disciplines (*Gardens* 77). Hattie's thesis topic causes a controversy and her assertion was rejected. Her rejection might be accepted as evidence of the white culture's reaction to the unchangeable religious norms since the subject is also about equality of female principles in the early church (*Gardens* 100). Many details through the novel indicate the patriarchal power in religion, and Terre Ryan exemplifies some issues which indicate patriarchal power through Hattie's rejected thesis and Indigo's life:

> In *Gardens* Silko repeatedly exposes the stifling power of the Christian patriarchy, which provided much of the justification for the conquest of the

> Americas. Hattie's thesis is rejected by the clergy; Indigo and Sister Salt's mother disappears after ghost dancing; and Indigo is sent to an Indian boarding school to be Christianized and 'civilized.' By placing the innocent Indigo amid this extravagance, Silko highlights the difference between indigenous and Euroamerican attitudes toward the cosmos, reaffirming the former. (126)

What Ryan claims, articulates the connection between the power of religion and the lives which are influenced by it, and both Indigo and Hattie's lives seem to be influenced by this power.

Although Silko creates a set of white characters with the central motif of religion, Hattie can be accepted as an exception. In other words, she does not fit into the stereotypical depiction of white Americans whose religious norms are strict. The reason that Hattie has a mild attitude towards Christianity is due to her interrogative talent which comes from her father, Mr. Abbott: "Mr. Abbott planted a white oak tree in the front yard the day Hattie was born. As an ardent student of John Stuart Mill, he believed it was his paternal duty to give Hattie the fullest education possible; so he taught her himself. She was exceptional, he told her, and urged her to look beyond the narrow interests of current feminists - prohibition of alcohol and the vote for women - and look to the greater philosophical question about free will and God" (*Gardens* 93). Hattie's father is described as a freethinker (*Gardens* 93), and this seems to have influenced Hattie. She was sent to catechism classes where she learned the stories about the devil and, at the same time, she learned the depiction of loving God through her father's stories (*Gardens* 94). Hattie's view on religion determines the primary conflict between her belief system and the white culture's and that is why Hattie could be accepted as different from the stereotypical representation of white Americans.

Although her thesis is rejected by the committee, Hattie does not give up on her interrogative mind; on the contrary, she continues to carry out research especially on Gnosticism. The words that she comes across in one such research could be considered as powerful expressions which might hardly be accepted in the world of white Americans:

> Abandon the search for God and other matters of similar sort. Look for him by taking yourself as the starting point. Learn who is within you who makes everything his own and says: My god, my mind, my thoughts, my soul, my

> body. Learn the sources of sorrow, joy, love, hate. If you carefully investigate these matters you will find him in yourself. (*Gardens* 100)

As previously mentioned, Hattie's difference seems to come from her interrogative character. Moreover, Silko creates one of the facilitators for Hattie's change through the gardens of Europe where many stone figures shed light on history. Hattie is fascinated by the hidden symbols in the stones which represent history:

> Now Hattie walked with Laura, who explained the meanings of the symbols found on Old European artifacts: The wavy lines symbolized rain; Vs and zigzags and chevrons symbolized river meanders as well as snakes and flocks of waterbirds; goddesses of the rivers transformed themselves to snakes and then waterbirds. The concentric circles were the all-seeing eyes of the Great Goddess; and the big triangles represented the public triangle, another emblem of the Great Goddess. (*Gardens* 291)

The other ancient cultures are also represented through some artifacts and stones. After Hattie witnesses some stone figures in Laura's garden, what she learned from catechism classes becomes misleading for her: "Hattie drifted off to sleep recalling the pictures and statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary standing on a snake. Catechism classes taught Mary was killing the snake, but after seeing the figures in the rain garden, she thought perhaps the Virgin with the snake was based on a figure from earlier times" (*Gardens* 304). Walking through European gardens, Hattie experiences a kind of new history which is far from her school teachings.

The change in Hattie might be said to happen in the gardens of Europe but the feeling continues in America after they return. When she finds out that Edward has planned the Corsica expedition as a secret mission, their marriage is over in Hattie's mind. After they return to California, as she has promised to Indigo, Hattie takes her to find her family in Needles, and Edward starts a new capitalist venture, a search for meteor irons in Albuquerque. When Hattie learns that Edward got seriously ill, she goes to the hospital to support her former husband. As she waits for Edward, she spends her time in the yard of a church. One way of interpreting Hattie's difference in the world of white Americans comes with her way of questioning the church which also indicates the white cultures' norms of religion:

> Most days it was too cold to walk all the way to the old town square and the church, but now she slipped in the back of the church behind the pews to

> warm herself. She passed the holy water font by the door, and ignored the crucified Jesus in the center of the altar; instead she stood in the alcove with the statue of Mary with the baby Jesus in her arms. How false they seemed after the terra-cotta madonnas in Laura's back garden. *My Mother, my Spirit* - words from the old Gnostic gospels sprang into her mind. *She who is before all things, Grace, Mother of Mythic Eternal Silence* – after months in the oblivion of its shallow grave, her thesis spoke to her. *Incorruptible Wisdom, Sophia, the material world and the flesh are only temporary – there are no sins of the flesh, spirit is everything!*. (*Gardens* 450)

From the beginning to the end of the novel, Hattie experiences a lot and by the time she loses Edward, she has already become a different person. Lincoln Faller addresses Hattie's change through her diverse perspective which would change her life:

> Turning away from the Church toward a spirituality that (though it includes Jesus) is essentially pagan, she abandons what she had thought to be her life's defining work, the reincorporation of a feminist perspective into the foundational text of Christianity, abandons too, her disappointment of a husband and then, again, his corpse, becomes assertive enough for the first time in her life to strike back at male sexual violence by burning down half the town of Needles, and leaving parents behind, departs the United States to live in Europe. (195)

At the beginning of the novel, Hattie is depicted as a dependent figure who has her own belief system and never considers protesting religious norms. On the other hand, along with taking the responsibility of Indigo, she starts a new life where she sees different historical facts through the gardens in Europe, and these experiences enable her to question patterns of some religious teachings which seem to dominate all her life.

Lots of things change in Hattie's life but a sense of control could be said to remain the same. Indigo's experience riding a pony shifts the focus to another difference which demonstrates that the Native Americans' relation to everything which has a soul is different from that of white Americans. As Hattie waits for Indigo to get used to the pony, she gives some orders to calm her, but Indigo seems to be shattered by Hattie's instructions since she only cares for the pony's unwillingness to be ridden. The way Indigo listens to the pony and observes its response points out one of the dominant attitudes of Native Americans: the living soul in everything:

> ‘He doesn’t like to be ridden,’ Indigo called out to Hattie, who was trotting her horse up and down the paddock.
>
> ‘Don’t worry! He is a spoiled pony but you will show him who’s boss!’
>
> Indigo began to have second thoughts. She didn’t want to be the boss of any pony that didn’t want to be ridden, but Hattie gestured for her to come on. (*Gardens* 173)

Indigo is not willing to force the pony to be ridden, and she shows respect to its demands but, on the other hand, Hattie’s response, which signifies control, might be said to lean heavily on the theme of cultural difference, and Silko proves that the perceptions of two cultures differ in sense of control over another living being.

Besides the sense of domination on other living creatures, sexual relation in the world of white Americans contrast with that of Native Americans’. It is more acceptable to have sexual relations with strangers in the world of the Natives. What Sister Salt experiences with the dam workers might indicate their way of acceptance: “Sister Salt took her chance of the men willing to pay a dime for fun in the tall grass along the river. Maytha and Vedna said Chemehuevi-Laguna women like them knew how to enjoy life, but this Sand Lizard woman was lusty! Candy did not mind – he was making good money and busy himself. Her body belonged to her – it was none of his business” (*Gardens* 218). Sister Salt has a sexual relation with Candy and a Mexican man named Charlie. When she gets pregnant, she is not even sure about the father of the baby. On the other hand, what Indigo witnesses between the gardener and Susan indicates a different perception in the world of white Americans:

> Indigo watched as Susan picked a lily of the valley and gave it to the gardener, who did a most amazing thing: he kissed Susan on the lips. Indigo took a deep breath as her heart beat faster. She knew Colin was Susan’s husband, not the gardener, and she knew the laws of white people: men and women don’t touch unless they are husband and wife. That’s what the dormitory matrons and boarding school teachers emphasized again and again; girls stay out of one another’s beds, and the boys too. (*Gardens* 191)

Susan has an affair with the gardener, and Indigo is surprised at what she witnesses. The reason of her surprise is related to some of the teachings. She is taught about the strict rules of marriage in the world of the whites. Thus, the meaning of marriage or having sexual intimacy with strangers is perceived differently in the two cultures.

The difference between the two cultures continues to exist through the words as well. Silko stresses the meanings of the words for the Natives in *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit*: "At Laguna Pueblo, for example, many individual words have their own stories. So when one is telling a story and one is using words to tell the story, each word that one is speaking has a story of its own, too" (50). Similarly, when Laura takes a tour of her garden with her guests, the dialogue between Edward and Laura helps to establish a link between the stories behind the words:

> 'I assume black is symbolic of night and death,' Edward said; Laura broke into a smile. To the Old Europeans, black was the color of fertility and birth, the color of the Great Mother. Thus the blackbirds belong to her as well as the waterbirds – cranes, herons, storks, and geese. Laura confided she imagined the ancient people as she looked at these figures of clay and stone. After a long brutal winter, how they must have watched the sky of the southern horizon for the return of the nourishment givers!. (*Gardens* 296)

This quotation serves the dual purpose of dialogism and the cultural difference at the same time. Bakhtin's explanation of dialogism in *The Dialogic Imagination* might lead toward an affirmation that each pattern in a language carries tracks of the past, previous generation and even other cultures: "After all, one's own language is never a single language: in it there are always survivals of the past and a potential for other languagedness that is more or less sharply perceived by the working literary and language consciousness" (66). One gets the impression that the meaning in a language is created by various components, including the past, and it is also exemplified by the dialogue between Laura and Edward which signals the survival of the past in language where the meaning of black might change accordingly.

In the environment where the meaning of a word changes depending on many components, the dialogue between Indigo and Walapai woman in the dancing circle exemplifies another quality of a language: "Later, when Indigo and sister Salt discussed that night, they remembered with amazement that whenever the Messiah or the Holy Mother spoke, all the dancers could understand them, no matter what tribe they are from. The Paiutes swore the Messiah was speaking Paiute, but the Walapai woman laughed and shook her head; how silly, the Messiah spoke her language" (*Gardens* 31). Since the message is the same for all the tribes and people, they seem to understand the language of the Messiah, and the Messiah speaks through the language of love: "In the presence of the

Messiah and the Holy Mother, there was only one language spoken - the language of love - which all people understand, he said, because we are all the children of Mother Earth" (*Gardens* 32). They all believe to belong to a kind of same class as the children of the Mother Earth. They do not classify themselves according to their clans or tribes when it is time to save the world. So, the language does not create an obstacle because they all understand each other and share a common language which is love.

Beside the different perception of language in the two cultures, nature is treated differently as well. For instance, a plant might become a way to impress people, or might be in a hybridization process to invent a new type in the world of white Americans, on the other hand, the same plant could be accepted as food for Native Americans. Various examples which show how Native Americans' point of view is different from white Americans' can be said to strengthen the stereotype of the white culture.

The depiction of white Americans in the novel is attributed to the issue of changing lives of the Native American culture. The whites are held responsible for the changing life, and additionally they are also associated with a sense of control and greed:

> The Sand Lizard people heard rumors about the aliens for years before they finally appeared. The reports were alarming, and the people had difficulty believing the bloodshed and cruelty attributed to the strangers. But the reports were true. At harvest, the aliens demanded and took everything. This happened long, long ago but the people never forgot the hunger and suffering of that first winter the invaders appeared. The invaders were dirty people who carried disease and fever. The Sand Lizard people knew it was time for them to head for the hills beyond the river, to return to the old gardens. (*Gardens* 15)

A sense of greed which demands more than one needs seems to diminish the fertility of the soil. Without the support of the soil and with the arrival of strangers in great numbers, Grandma Fleet and the girls are forced to move to the railroad town Needle where they have more opportunity to survive: "Poor people! If they couldn't travel around, here and there, they wouldn't be able to find enough to eat; if people stayed in one place too long, they soon ate up everything" (*Gardens* 17). They have much more opportunity to find daily work and to sell baskets to the passengers who stop at the Needle station.

Needle is located near a fertile river, and living far from it in the Dunes makes Indigo confused. Her questioning reveals the issue of authority which the Natives seem to

refrain from: “When Indigo asked why the Sand Lizard people stayed there, if it was easier to grow plants close to the big river, Grandma Fleet laughed. Sand Lizards did things differently than other people. Sand Lizards didn’t mind if others found them odd; that’s how they distinguished themselves from others. Farming was easy along the river but getting along with the authorities was not” (*Gardens* 48). The location of the old gardens is two days’ walk from the river. This makes farming hard since they have to carry water for irrigation. Silko draws attention to the fact that the Native American culture prefers to face difficulties in the dunes as long as they feel free from the pressure of authority.

It is possible to observe a pattern of authority in the boarding school for Native Americans where strict rules and discipline define the school. After Grandma Fleet died and Indigo was separated from her sister, she was taken into this boarding school. As the Sand Lizards flee from authority, it is not surprising that Indigo attempts to run away from the school where she often misbehaves and is kept in locked rooms. In one of her attempts to escape, she finds herself in the gardens of Hattie and Edward. The couple notices the girl but does not inform the school management at first. Hattie does not want to make the child afraid so they wait until she gets used to them. After some days, Hattie gets worried about the ignorance of the boarding school authority: “The Indian child meant nothing but trouble to the school authorities; they didn’t care if she was lost or died - that meant one less Indian they had to feed” (*Gardens* 107). Hattie’s surprise at the school’s indifference to a missing child could be taken to depict the reaction of the whites.

The sense of greed and control might find meaning in the behaviors of Edward who lives in California with his wife Hattie nearby a boarding school. For Edward gardening means an experimental ground where he aims to grow rare specimen and make profit. It can be assumed that the duty of nature is associated with the theme of sharing from the perspective of Native Americans, whereas the change from a sharing to an experimental ground can be exemplified through Edward and his obsession with with technology which is also suggested by Leo Marx in *The Machine in the Garden*:

> In recent years scholars have clarified the relation between the vogue for landscape as an aesthetic object and the great scientific revolution that began in the seventeenth century. In the first place, as knowledge of the physical universe rapidly increased, a new sort of environmentalism was encouraged in every department of thought and expression…Telescopes and microscopes were uncovering a vast, orderly cosmos behind the visible

> mask of nature. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that a new mode of feeling, a heightened responsiveness to the environment now developed. In a sense the change in aesthetic attitudes toward nature was as revolutionary as the change in science. For now a well-composed landscape, whether depicted in words or paint, might arouse some of the feelings that men had when they contemplated the grand design of the Newtonian universe. (96)

Even though *The Machine in the Garden* discusses pastoral traditions and articulates a contradiction between art and nature, at the same time, its explanation of the change in nature seems to be related with how white Americans experience the earth. Leo Marx associates the change in nature with technological developments which define the world of Edward whose obsession to invent a rare type of plant is supported by his interest in technology.

Moreover, Tillet expands the theme of horticulture which depicts Edward's profession, and it also highlights the sense of greed: "Indeed, the very term 'horticulture' embodies the significant connections being made between gardens, gardening, and science, where clear links to both 'progress' and environmental 'control' transplanted long-established practices drawn from classical traditions and philosophies" ("Sand Lizard" 220). According to Tillet's emphasis, what Native American culture views as nature is under the process of change by white Americans who intend to control it and create new forms.

Edward's profession is finding rare plants. His expedition to far places for unique and valuable plants might exemplify the greedy characteristic of the whites. He is after the most delicate and rare species to sell: "Ordinarily, Edward made his own travel arrangements at his own expense; he went alone to enjoy the exotic beauties and curiosities in the solitude of the forests and mountains. He brought along a list of plant material desired by his private clients, wealthy collectors in the east and Europe" (*Gardens* 129). As the previous quotation from the novel illustrates, the depiction of wealthy collectors strengthens the stereotypical white American culture whose aim is to possess the most delicate species. As Edward is on one of these expeditions to find rare plants in the jungles of Brazil, a fire starts, and he hurts himself. He falls into a hole and cannot make the others notice him. As he is trying to save himself, his mind shows him the reason: "Now it was clear: Eliot's only purpose on the expedition was the fire; the fire had been planned months before by the investors, who wished to make certain they possessed the only specimens of

Laelia cinnabarina. They wanted no unpleasant surprises from rivals to drive down the price of *Laelia cinnabarina*" (*Gardens* 142). His companions on the expedition leave Edward there and return, taking the samples of unique plants. A similar type of situation occurs on Edward's next expedition.

When Indigo takes shelter in Hattie's house, the couple has already planned an expedition to Corsica, Italy. Yet the real intention of Edward in going to Corsica is to take the citron cuttings secretly: "his strategy was simple: he would find a grove of healthy-looking trees and pretend to make a landscape photograph that included the citron trees. Then as he set up the tripod and camera in front of the grove of citron trees, he would unpack the two sharpened twig knives from their small wooden box inside the camera case with the potatoes" (*Gardens* 313). At first, he is assigned to make this secret operation by American government officials whereas the government cancels the operation later. Yet Edward is informed about it a little late, he receives the telegram when he arrives to Italy. The reason of the government's cancellation is not written; they just inform Edward to stop the expedition. Yet it seems not possible for Edward to stop since he is obsessed with the samples of citron trees which he associates with big profit. He continues the trip and convinces people around him that he is assigned as an expeditioner by the American government.

Edward is depicted as a greedy horticulturist whose intention is to create a rare type of plant. In order to achieve his aim, he does not care for the interdependency between humans and nature, and moreover, the natural order of the earth does not mean much for him. In other words, Silko brings together Edward's life philosophy which might be said to exemplify a stereotype of white culture. Denise K. Cummings's point about Edward's life formulates the concept that his obsession brings his end:

> History, life even, for Edward is an epistemological game. His relationships with the technological apparatus of the camera and to photography lead to his fall and subsequently injury while he's driven to photograph and classify rare orchids in the sub-tropics. I would argue that his very use of the camera and his obsession with the classificatory system of botany identify him with Western modernity. The epistemological failure of Western science and technologies renders Edward blind; he can never "see" and, consequently, dies trusting in a quack's "scientific cure" for an illness he endures.

> While I do not think that Silko is completely absconding the scientific world view, technology, or photography for that matter, I do think that in the fates of her characters Hattie and Edward she is balancing the epistemological with the ethical: it is crucial to recognize where one finds her/himself in the world. This is performed life. Hattie recognizes the balance and listens to stories, whereas Edward knows no dialectical relationship and remains not only blind, but also deaf, and dead. (85)

Cummings associates Edward's interest in technology with his obsession with horticulture, moreover he is also depicted as blind and deaf, as a result of his indifference to the stories. Unlike Edward, Hattie observes the balance of the earth more than her husband does, and their attitudes begin to differ from each other.

Before Edward sets up his plan in Corsica, he forces Hattie to participate in gatherings with important government people. His intentional intimacy with the mayor of Corsica before his discreet expedition on the citrus groves indicates the importance of some whites especially in the process of illegal activities: "The goodwill of the mayor and local officials was essential, especially during this time of civil unrest" (*Gardens* 313). Edward seems to trust the power of important people in case that things get complicated. On the other hand, things do not improve as he wishes, and Tillet's argument also provides a link between Edward's ventures and his end:

> Through Edward, Silko demonstrates how our humanity is predicated upon our relationships with the earth, how this influences our treatment of other human beings, and how both have a direct impact upon our own well-being. Accordingly, Edward's acts of aggressive acquisition are accompanied by his own rapidly declining health. In Brazil, he suffers a badly broken leg, which never heals properly and, which, tellingly, causes him increased pain whenever he enters into additional capitalist ventures that further disrupt his relationships with the earth. ("Sand Lizard" 233)

Edward's end might be read as a consequence of his distance from the earth and his lack of love for nature since all of his plans and connections are based on having more. Yet, this cannot be said for Indigo who travels with them through Europe.

During her transcultural travel with Edward and Hattie, Indigo changes a lot in terms of clothing and manners. On the other hand, she does not feel comfortable with the way she becomes, and she is worried about the reactions both from the whites and those of

her own culture: “They would see the clothes and hat she wore and they would laugh and say ‘What kind of an Indian are you?’” (*Gardens* 124). Indigo feels uncomfortable due to the clothes she wears. She thinks that the Native American tribes will see her and mock her. The same reaction could be observed from the whites: “They ate lunch in the dining room of Albuquerque’s only hotel, where the white people noticed Indigo and stared at her and Hattie and Edward as they walked through the hotel lobby to return to the train. Indigo smiled to herself; in Needles no Indians were allowed in the café or hotel lobby” (*Gardens* 124). With the new clothes and manners, Indigo is sure that she does not look like a Native American anymore, and even though she is forced to adopt the manners of white Americans, she cannot become a real member of that culture either. The two cultures regard her as different, and their reactions exemplify their attitudes towards a different person.

Even though Indigo spends months among white Americans, it seems not possible for her to adapt to the sense of greed and control which are attributed to the whites. Indigo’s deep connection with nature accompanies her through the journey. She collects seeds from different countries and she hopes to plant them at the dunes later: “She picked up seeds and saved them in scraps of paper with her nightgown and clothes in the valise so she could grow them when she went home” (*Gardens* 185). Her devotion to collecting different seeds might stand in opposition to the attitudes of white Americans who desire to have more and to control as represented in the novel.

Not all whites are depicted along with the same qualities as Edward and his wealthy collectors. Hattie’s aunt Bronwyn who lives in Bath, England is an exception. Hattie and Edward stop by the aunt’s home before they move on to Corsica, Italy. Her way of life, beliefs and rituals might be said to separate her from white Americans:

> Yet despite the persecution, the old customs persisted - dairy keepers spilled a bit of milk for the fairies, morning and night; on the first night of August, a few people (Aunt Bronwyn was one of them) still gathered around fires on nearby hilltops until dawn, though the church tried to outlaw such practices centuries before. People still bowed to the standing stones at crossroads and threw coins into springs and lakes. (*Gardens* 261)

After Edward, Hattie and Indigo spend some time with the aunt and witness her way of life, and Edward decides that she is a different person. His depiction presents an image of a person who is from a different culture: “The evening of their arrival, Edward joked Aunt

Bronwyn had gone native; what could be more English than an old woman feeding tidbits to her cows" (*Gardens* 252). Aunt Bronwyn's way of life marks a departure for her from the general perception of white American culture. The reason of Edward's calling her native of England is due to her peculiar behavior and thoughts which might be supported by her variety of beliefs and habits including sacred stones, different plants from all over the world and history.

Gardens creates a strong emphasis on history through the gardens in Europe. Especially the sixth chapter of the novel gives some historical details which demonstrate the importance of the stones: "the terrible famine in Ireland in 1846 came because the Protestants and the English knocked down the old stones. The wars of Europe were the terrible consequences of centuries of crimes against the old stones and the sacred groves of hazel and oak. Still, the destruction of the stone circles and groves did not stop; now the reckoning day was not far off – twenty years or less" (*Gardens* 253). The central motif of these stones in the history of Europe seems to influence both Hattie and Aunt Bronwyn. Aunt Bronwyn is a member of an Antiquity Rescue Committee which works for the protection of the stones and groves. The members of the committee believe that these stones and groves belong to the spirits of the dead: "The stones and the groves house the 'good folk,' the spirits of the dead. Never interfere with the fairies" (*Gardens* 252). The stones in the gardens of Europe could be held within the theme of cultural difference since they influence some cultures through the history that they reflect.

In opposition to the gardens in Europe, the gardens in America reflect different aspects, including imperialism and capitalism as represented in the novel. Lincoln Faller's view sets similar qualities of American gardening: "Its gardens, the characters who move through them, their relationships to those gardens as well as to each other have all provided a rich basis for exegeses on the novel's critique of colonialism, imperialism, patriarchal privilege and misogyny, capitalism, and the disregard for, indeed the devastation of, the natural world that all these entail" (193). On the other hand, European gardens and people around them are depicted with the opposite qualities as in the example of the aunt's life. How the aunt lives stands in opposition to the definition of American gardening, since she dedicates her life to the protection of the natural world. The peculiar plants which she grows in her gardens create a sense of indigeneity in the world of Aunt Bronwyn. As they wander around the garden, what Hattie experiences indicates the issue of different cultures.

examples of other cultures are represented not through the stone figures but through some kinds of plants which the aunt grows:

> African warriors, Hattie thought as she gazed at the spiked leaves and the clusters of tiny red-orange flowers that crowned them. Coarse sand the color of ivory replaced the dark Lucca soil in the terraces, and river smoothed pebbles and fist-size stones, pale yellow and gray, were scattered beneath them. But what caught Hattie's eyes were the giant clamshells nestled in the sand and the pebbles to form shallow basins here and there at the feet of the giant plants. Here and there were conch shells so large Hattie thought they must be from the coast of Africa. (*Gardens* 301)

Aunt Brownyn's garden is also rich in these plants from all over the world. Beside the stones and history which separate the aunt from her white American culture, her way of gardening, which resembles the Native Americans', could be said to support her peculiar life. Becca Gercken's comment on these different plants from all over the world stresses that indigeneity could be provided through plants as well:

> Through Silko's focus on plants and their mobility, she expands readers' understanding of indigeneity from its narrow meaning in a settler-colonial American context. As plants from South America thrive in New England and plants from Asia thrive in England, readers grasp the constructed nature of Indigeneity and realize how much context is necessary for us to understand what and where is Indigenous. This framework puts Sand Lizard people on equal footing with settler colonials while also elevating Indigo, whose ability to maintain her cultural heritage and to learn and to adapt quickly in both worlds signifies that she is the strongest of all of Silko's characters. (184)

White American culture is represented differently from the Native American culture throughout the novel. Although the living standards of the Native Americans seem to change due to the arrival of the whites, their ways of accepting, respecting and listening to nature do not change at all, and those distinct attitudes towards nature indicate the difference in the white's and Native Americans' world. Most of these unchanged habits of the Native American culture seem to come down from their past teachings.

The woman with dogs, Delena, appears towards the end of the novel nearby the reservation area to perform circus shows. She presents a different story in the novel;

however, when she gets together with Sister Salt she opens her cards. Her interpretation of Mexican cards sheds light on the past and the present:

> ‘See, this four-leaf clover is upside. It tells me things were green and growing, then suddenly uprooted – grief and disappointment.’ Me and Candy, Sister thought to herself…
>
> Delena pointed to the first row of cards; up here means this happened in the past. Sister nodded; it was true that once the old gardens were green and growing before the starving people came. When they returned with Grandma Fleet once more green shoots appeared but Grandma Fleet died and again grief and disappointment. (*Gardens* 356)

Delena’s and Sister Salt’s interpretations of the cards are in accordance with the theme of the past and the present where the past is associated with a greener environment and the present with the arrival of the whites. Sister Salt immediately senses what the cards mean since the present is different from the past which she used to have. The past is related to her grandmother and everything she has told. The tradition of passing the information on to the next generation can be said to be sustained through teachings about nature. Daniel White also reinforces the novel’s dominant theme of the earth from the perspective of storytelling: “these stories serve as constant reminders, particularly to each new generation, of the people’s responsibilities to the earth and, consequently, to each other” (143). The first teaching is to respect nature: “Don’t argue or fight around the plants - hard feelings cause the plants to wither” (*Gardens* 14). Native Americans learn how to treat nature from their elders, and nature becomes representative of their past as in the example of Indigo. She holds on to her past through the things which remind her of the connection. A similar issue is explained in Stephanie Li’s words: “Separated from her geographic home, Indigo must rely on parts of the natural world other than specific landscapes to connect with her past and her cultural history” (29). Li’s association between Indigo and her geographic home indicates the past which she has heard of from her grandmother.

The teachings coming from the past seem to play a vital role in the lives of Native Americans. The duty of passing the information on is attributed to elders. Grandma Fleet teaches Sister Salt and Indigo how to get the best benefits from the plants:

> Beginning with the most basic skill, children learned to live respectfully in their environment, in ways that would guarantee its sustainability. By first watching and then doing, Native children learned the nature of the sources

> of their food, community, and life relationship. They learned that everything in life was a matter of kinship with all of nature. Education involves a constant flow of information and is multigenerational and cross-generational: young teach old; old teach young; sister teaches younger sister; brother teaches younger brother; aunts, grandmas, and grandpas teach children. Mentoring relationships between the young and old are essential. (Cajete, 101)

Cajete's point clarifies the tradition in the world of Native Americans through which children learn how to survive. The teachings are sometimes about storing the food properly: "Grandma showed them how to boil the prickly pear fruit into a thick, sweet paste which she dried in the sun. The mesquite beans had to be dried then roasted and stored carefully; otherwise, the little bugs would eat them" (*Gardens* 50). At the dugout house in the dunes, the sisters and Grandma Fleet store everything properly for the following year. In addition to the teachings related to food, some significant teachings relate to examining a root or a sign of a breeze which would save Indigo and Sister Salt's lives.

When Grandma Fleet passes away, the sisters decide to go to Needle to look for Mama. When they are caught by police officers, Indigo is taken to be sent to an Indian boarding school, and Sister Salt is taken to the reservation area because of her age. Indigo is a troublemaker at the school, and she attempts to run away several times. In her last attempt, the school staff lose her trail, and she manages to hide herself. Grandma's teachings seem to be engraved in Indigo's mind: "Grandma Fleet taught the girls to wait and watch for the right moment to run" (*Gardens* 69). Teachings of Grandma help the sisters to survive when in danger. After Indigo decides to run away from the school, she waits for the right moment to run. During her escape, her mind is busy with grandmother's teachings which point to a distinctive way to watch the nature around: "She was thirsty. Grandma Fleet taught them to smell water, to catch the scent of dampness early in the morning before the heat of the day scattered it" (*Gardens* 71). Many of the teachings are based on the principle of survival, and Indigo seems to use them properly.

These teachings about nature make Indigo and Sister Salt good observers, and at the same time, Indigo finds the sign of water as she runs from the school supervisors: "She took off running again, deeper and deeper into the rows of orange trees; now and then she caught a sight of a grove of tall trees, much taller than orchard trees, up ahead. She was

thirsty, and tall trees meant water nearby" (*Gardens* 70). These teachings not only save the sisters from danger but they also connect them to their cultural roots. Stephanie Li also associates Grandma Fleet's teachings with roots: "Having listened and absorbed the stories of Granma Fleet and Mama, Indigo knows who she is and where she belongs. This powerful sense of identity and self-assurance, which is deeply rooted in the natural world, enables her to flee the destructive Sherman Institute and to resist possible dissolution of her cultural roots" (29). The powerful sense of identity can be claimed to be sustained through seeds which Indigo never gives up collecting through her journey. Becca Gercken also points out the same connection: "For Indigo, these seeds, and the lessons they invoke from her grandmother about a proper relationship with the earth, keep her tied to home and to Sand Lizard life ways even as she travels the globe" (179). The quotation represents both the importance of the seeds in Indigo's life and their link to the past. With the help of the seeds, she never gets lost. What she brings from the past seems to shed light on her present.

Bakhtin's way of addressing the formulation of a language seems to have similar aspects with the meaning of seeds in Indigo's life: "[A]ll languages of heteroglossia, whatever the principle underlying them and making each unique, are specific points of view on the world, forms of conceptualizing the world in words, specific world views, each characterized by its own objects, meanings and values…As such, these languages live a real life, they struggle and evolve in an environment of social heteroglossia" (292). Language is depicted to evolve in an environment of heteroglossia as in the example of seeds in Indigo's journey. Indigo's experiences with the seeds can be said to have the same kind of change. Grandma Fleet used to collect and store apricot seeds mostly, whereas under the influence of Indigo's present life experience, the seeds can be claimed to be evolved from the past to the present, since they are not apricot seeds anymore. She meets with different types of plants and their seeds, and she starts to collect them. Both Indigo's seeds and the meaning of language formation by Bakhtin carry trails of the past, and at the same time, demonstrate the progress from the past to the present.

Moreover, the significant role of the seeds which reminds the past, can be observed in one of the scenes when Indigo tastes different Italian food. As Indigo tastes Italian food in Laura's home, her amazement in the similar taste of some dishes takes her to the past: "Then came a warm bowl of stewed sweet red peppers with yellow squash. Indigo's eyes widened at the sight of the food she knew, and as she tasted the peppers she thought of

them grown so far from their original home; seeds must be among the greatest travelers of all!" (*Gardens* 291). The seeds are linked to Indigo's past since they remind her of old days and, at the same time, her passion in collecting seeds provide a rich basis for her hope. She has learned a great deal about the plants, and through Europe, she has collected many seeds. Becca Gercken notes that "The seeds are not only about the past and her memories of the time spent in the gardens with Grandmother Fleet, Sister Salt, and her mother; they are also her assurance that she is a Sand Lizard even in Europe and of the promise of her future in the garden" (184). The teachings about the seeds and plants come from the past, but influence Indigo's present life, and they also point out to a future which seems to be shaped through adaptation, as Gercken also discusses:

> Indigo's interest in the plants stems not only from an awareness that she can find flora that interest her outside of her dunes, but rather from her determination to bring them back to the dunes. She is not drawn to the visual drama and the scientific achievement of Edward's sister's blue garden, nor Aunt Brownyn's, nor even Edward's transplanted plants and hybrids. Instead, she is drawn to the embodiment in these plants of the lessons her Grandma Fleet taught her, a continuation of Sand Lizard tradition of growing stronger through adaptation. (183)

Gercken's quotation clarifies the importance of the seeds in Indigo's life; through them and the lessons from her grandmother, she manages to find her way in the world of white Americans.

In developing the contrast between the two cultures, Silko follows the theme of the past which could be observed in the diverse gardening styles of America and Europe. In contrast to the European gardens which protect the natural state of the gardens as it has existed throughout history, aesthetic worries of white Americans change gardens according to their wishes. In other words, European gardens keep history through protecting their gardens, and this attempt distinguishes the two cultures from each other in terms of keeping or erasing the past. Lincoln Faller's argument on the gardens of Europe and America is stated through Hattie's fascination by European gardens and her decision to leave America:

> In any case, taken as tropes not just for national histories but also for ways of being in and relating to the world, the gardens in England and Italy that come to mean so much to Hattie stand in sharp and astounding contrast to

> the pseudo-Italian and pseudo-English gardens in Oyster Bay. Those gardens - with their erasure of the past, their suppression of the Indigenous, their adaptation of adventitious modes utterly alien to the place they occupy, their wish to remake the world into products of their own limited imaginings, their lack of respect for all else around them - represent not just the brief and perverse nature of EuroAmerican landscaping but also of EuroAmercian history and experience at large. Hattie flees from that experience, understandably enough. (204)

Faller's statement reveals a truth about the gardens which are in progress of change due to the intention of erasing the past, and those gardens in America can be said to exemplify this intention. The reason that Hattie gets fascinated by the gardens in England and Italy is because that they do not attempt to erase the traces of the previous settlers. Moreover, for Hattie, erasing the history of previous settlers through changing nature is also associated with oppression as a result of the whites' invasion.

In order to follow the traces of the whites' invasion, the Natives finds the solution in the world of animals which could provide a lot of information: "For Native people, knowledge of animals was important to all aspects of their lives. Learning about animals was a lifelong task integrated in every aspect of tribal life" (Cajete, 154). The emergence or the disappearance of some animals is associated with the invaders. For instance, it becomes apparent in *Gardens* that snakes are associated with freedom since their disappearance might be interpreted as a sign of invaders among the Native Americans: "If people killed the snakes, the precious water disappeared. Grandma Fleet said whatever you do, don't offend the old snake who lives at the spring… Later, when Sister Salt woke up and heard about the snake's visit, she said it was a good sign; if soldiers or others were lurking in the area, the big snake disappeared" (*Gardens* 36). When Indigo first meets the snake, she is horrified, but her sister's explanation brings the subject to an unoccupied area which is a significant for the Sand Lizards, since they prefer uninhibited places to live. Similarly, the sign of nighthawks also signals the same message that there are no people around: "If strangers had been camped near the spring, the nighthawks would be gone" (*Gardens* 42). Slowly all these animals which inform about the invaders diminish, and great numbers of people appear. In such an environment, the Native Americans have difficulty living. With the arrival of the invaders, the food supply gets scarce, life gets difficult and the solution seems to be settled in a reservation area. Yet Grandma Fleet

rejects living in a reservation: “Grandma Fleet said she would die before she would live on a reservation” (*Gardens* 17). Living in a restricted area contradicts with the belief of the Native American culture which emphasizes freedom.

The similar sense of freedom could be observed in the scene in which Grandma Fleet explains the meaninglessness of death; her words become indicative to further illustrate the perception of life. Since their way of life has changed a lot, their philosophy of freedom carries different meanings. When Grandma Fleet tells the girls about the bleeding that she had when delivering Mama, their philosophy of life becomes clear:

> ‘Because dying is easy - it’s living that is painful.’ Grandma Fleet started walking again, slowly, leaning on the girls to steady herself.
>
> ‘To go on living when your body is pierced by pain, to go on breathing when every breath reminds you of your lost loved ones - to go on living is far more painful than death.’ (*Gardens* 51)

With the invaders, living becomes harder for the Native Americans as represented in the novel, so they perform a ritual for freedom. In other words, the invaders bring an ancient belief to the fore: dancing. The Native Americans used to dance to celebrate, but as the following quotation points out, they have not danced for a long time: “Grandma and Mama used to talk about the celebrations in the old days when everyone came to dance and to feast and to give thanks for a good year. The people had not celebrated for years, not since Sister Salt was a baby. They did not see any familiar faces, in one afternoon, hundreds of strangers had arrived” (*Gardens* 25). They stopped dancing due to the appearance of the invaders and believe that the world has become a different place because of hunger and sadness: “only by dancing could they hope to bring the Messiah, the Christ, who would bring with him all their beloved family members and friends who had moved on to the spirit world after hunger and sadness got to be too much for them. The invaders made the Earth get old and want to die” (*Gardens* 26). They also dance for the freedom of the world. They believe that they would return to old peaceful days by calling the Messiah, and this would also end the sadness.

The Native American culture believes in the magic of dancing. They relate dancing to freedom, and Sand Lizard people gather at the very beginning of the *Gardens*. One of the points of climax in the novel is the dance ritual to call the Messiah. They believe that as long as they keep dancing, all sadness and anger will disappear:

> Jesus was sad and angry at what had been done to the Earth and to all the animals and people…The ancestor spirits were there to help them. They must keep dancing. They must not quarrel and must treat one another kindly. If they kept dancing, great storms would purify the Earth of her destroyers. The clear running water and the trees and the grassy plains filled with buffalo and elk would return. (*Gardens* 23)

This quotation exemplifies the Native American belief that dancing plays a crucial role in their culture since it is believed to lead to freedom and the old days. With the invasion of the white culture, there happens a big change. The Native Americans feel desperation because of the change in nature and the earth. Fertility decreases, and it can be accepted as a reason for their desperation; that is why they keep dancing to return to the past. Lincoln Faller's argument about the dancing rituals is also linked to the sense of despair which the Native Americans feel:

> The beginning of the novel is structured in a way that allows readers to see and fully appreciate the desperation and despair that the Ghost Dance seeks to overcome and replace…The ghost Dance is a product of and a response to the misery, the alienation, the subjugation, and the hopelessness that Native people feel under the settler-colonial regime. Their wish for transcendence comes from despair at not being able to be in the world as one would want to be. They dance so as not, for that moment at least, to 'stumble along in disgrace.' (206)

For the dance rituals, people from different directions come together, and the unifying influence of the gathering becomes obvious: "While the others slept, Indigo walked around the camp looking at the strangers who had come from various directions for the dance. She heard Grandma Fleet say most of the visitors were Walapai and Havasupai, and of course Paiute; but a few travelled great distances from the north and from the east, because they heard the Messiah was coming" (*Gardens* 29). Since the gathering welcomes all people, Indigo is surprised to see some white people who are Mormons. Moreover, the message the Messiah gives is understood by all the people despite the fact that they are from different cultures.

The message which all people understand despite their different mother language, is the revolution which is depicted as a power without weapons. They get the message of the Messiah and prepare themselves accordingly: "What confused Sister Salt was why the

Messiah didn't stop the killers. The Messiah told the people here not to take up weapons but to dance until the great storm winds of heaven scoured the earth of killers" (*Gardens* 354). The same kind of message which conveys an idea of weaponless revolution can be found in the Bible: "Here it was even in the Bible – everything Wovoka said was true. With winds from the four directions scouring the earth, their slain ancestors would rise up into armies" (*Gardens* 360). As Maytha, Vedna and Sister Salt read some parts of the Bible, their way of interpretation reveals the ancestors. As long as they honor their ancestors through dancing, the power, which they have been waiting for a long time, will come at last.

The search for freedom is not limited to the dancing rituals or the area where the Native Americans live. When Hattie, Edward and Indigo are in Corsica, the unrest in Italy occurs due to the assassination of the Italian king: "Their arrival was overshadowed by the news of the assassination of the Italian king only three days before, in Milan, by anarchists, to avenge the executions of their comrades. Victor Emmanuel III took the throne, but there were rumors of clashes between dissidents and police" (*Gardens* 276). Some explanations are made and the reason is the same; a small country is looking for freedom:

> Many felt that there was a connection between the army's humiliation in East Africa and the king's assassination. The Prime Minister and his Cabinet were forced to resign after the defeat at Aduwa. Nothing was the same after that. Laura's voice was softer, and she slowly turned the rings on her fingers as she spoke. Many hundreds dead, and thousands held prisoner, forced Italy to acknowledge Abyssinia's independence. A ransom of millions was paid to the Abyssinian emperor for the return of Italian prisoners. (*Gardens* 326)

All of these quotations demonstrate that the meaning of freedom is important in many cultures. It does not change for the Native Americans or for a small country, Abyssinia. Either through an assassination or through dancing, what they search for is the same, freedom.

A similar type of message is revealed in Delena's gypsy cards which foretell the issue of change: "Behind her, representing the past, was the fifth card with the red, white and green flag of Mexico, upside down, draped around its pole. A flag reversed was a distress call; someday the poor would prevail over the government, and not one but the many Mexicos would spring up overnight" (*Gardens* 363). In *Gardens*, it could be

assumed that the attempts of different cultures to gain their freedom, and the journey towards freedom seems to be achieved through holding on to the past.

Teachings from the past play an influential role in the world of Native Americans, that is why, they regard motherhood as sacred since they believe that women play a significant role in passing on the cultural values coming from the past. Silko's depiction of motherhood in *Gardens* can be claimed to embrace a great deal of love, and moreover, Stephanie Li points out this deep sensibility through its significance to pass on information: "Women are at the center of this matrilineal culture, which strongly values the role mothers play in passing down cultural knowledge to future generations" (22). This understanding could be observed among the Sand Lizards. Indigo is brought up in such an environment where Mama, Grandma Fleet and Sister Salt show their affection. With the loss of Grandma Fleet and the disappearance of Mama, only Sister Salt remains as a mother figure for Indigo. When Sister Salt experiences her first period, she feels a little worried and wants to be alone: "Sister Salt felt regret over her short temper with her little sister. She had been fortunate to be brought up by both Mama and Grandma Fleet. Indigo had no one now but her" (*Gardens* 56). Her reaction to Indigo and how she feels afterwards highlight the significant role of a mother in their culture because Sister Salt knows that she is the only one who remains as a mother figure for Indigo. Sister Salt is supposed to pass all she knows to Indigo, and she feels responsible for showing her love. The significance of motherhood is also shared by Stephanie Li: "Without children to carry on the traditions and values of the ancestors, and without mothers to provide the future generation with a sense of identity and belonging, the Sand Lizard people are in danger of extinction. From this vantage point, mothering not only fulfills deep emotional needs for intimacy and love but also functions as a political act that ensures the survival of a people" (27). Li's discussion articulates the connection between maternal love and the responsibility for the next generations. Growing up with a mother figure who passes on love and the traditions is associated with the continuity of the generation.

On the contrary, when Hattie and her mother are observed, a different relation appears in which it is difficult to find similar patterns as in Indigo's childhood. Although her father is an open-minded man, the only thing that Mrs. Abbott cares about is Hattie's qualities to find a decent husband: "Mrs. Abbott did not share her husband's enthusiasm for Hattie's continued education; she feared Hattie's reputation might be compromised. How many respectable gentlemen wanted scholars of heresy for wives" (*Gardens* 96).

Hattie and Indigo's lives provide clarity on cultural difference in terms of relation to nature. In a related study, Stephanie Li makes the connection between growing up without a mother and detachment from nature: "As she explores a series of mother-child relationships in *Gardens in the Dunes*, Silko demonstrates that the nature of one's maternal bond significantly informs attitudes toward the earth. This dynamic is most apparent in the contrast she draws between Indigo and Hattie, whose respective maternal relationships strongly influence their approach to the earth and the wealth of stories it can provide" (20). What Indigo learns from the mother figures in her life is not limited to a sense of love; she is also taught how significant it is to have a deep relation with nature. When Indigo's life is compared with Hattie's, Indigo's connection with nature seems to play an important role to support her way of finding her roots.

The vision of mothering which seems to distinguish the two cultures from each other could be observed in the life of Edward whose childhood seems to be influenced by the lack of maternal love:

> Edward was seven when she pronounced him old enough to stay with his father. She began her annual summer visit to Long Island with Susan in tow; they took the train the day after Easter because she could not tolerate the dry heat of Riverside in the summer.
>
> For the first few years, Edward dreaded the approach of Ash Wednesday; on Easter Sunday he woke in tears because in a matter of hours his mother and sister would be gone until October. (*Gardens* 91)

In the absence of a mother's love, Edward seems to be attracted by what his father does. Edward spends all his time creating different types of plants, following the example of his father who spends all his time in his laboratory creating a scent out of different plants. He does not have a mother figure, as in the tradition of the Natives, who is supposed to create an attachment between him and nature. For this reason, his aim to create a rare type of plant can be explained through an intrusion into the natural order of the earth. Whereas, Indigo and Sister Salt grow up with teachings about nature, and these valuable teachings lead them to their roots, where the home is:

> The stories about gardening and mothering presented in Silko's novel explore how narrative encodes cultural identity and empowers individuals to embrace the earth as a nurturing force rather than as a resource to be exploited and abused for capitalistic profit and personal gain. Indigo draws

> upon the natural world as a signifier of cultural narratives such that the earth mothers her through its preservation of familial stories. By then implanting her own stories in the world around her, Indigo also succeeds in gardening the earth with new narratives that nurture her Sand Lizard heritage. In this way, the interrelated activities of gardening, mothering, and storytelling combine to achieve a powerful means of resistance against oppression and cultural erasure. (Li, 20)

A deep attachment to nature seems to be a salvation for the Natives whose distinctive gardening style can be observed in the coexistence of the two cultures. It can be assumed that the Native Americans who live together with the whites keep their identity through their strong tie with nature. Moreover, indigenous cultures' gardening seems to stand in opposition to capitalism and imperialism which can be accepted as two of the central themes in *Gardens*. Through gardening, Silko narrates the power of women as an opposition to capitalism and imperialism as well. In a related study, Mascha Gemein also states: "Silko favors female approaches not as superior, exclusionist, or even specifically Indigenous, but as the most likely and creative response to the male dominance of capitalist-imperialist ideology" (73). In other words, through teaching the love of nature, women aim to stand in opposition to the imperialist and capitalist perspectives of patriarchy.

Maternal love can be claimed to be significant in sustaining this strong tie with nature, since maternal figures are supposed to pass on the teachings about nature. As in the example of Grandma Fleet, whose lessons help both Indigo and Sister Salt to find their ways, Indigo's journey from the dunes, through Europe and to the dunes again might signify the success of these past teachings in her life. Indigo experiences some difficulties after she is separated from her family. Through each experience, Indigo tries to adjust herself to a new present moment with the help of the seeds. Thus, it can be assumed that teachings coming from the past enable Indigo to come to terms with her present. When Indigo's life experiences are taken into consideration, *Gardens* is more about the present, due to the fact that it narrates how Indigo gets through these difficult conditions. The end of the novel where Indigo manages to return to the dunes and meet her sister again can also be regarded as a conclusion of the teachings.

In *Gardens*, Silko defines the indigenous world view through their distinctive way of gardening, and it is represented against that of white American culture. Even though the

representation of the two cultural views differs, the important theme of the novel can be found in part in this difference, since each represents their own way of living. Holquist's explanation sheds light on the theme of different cultures through stating the basics of dialogism: "In dialogism, life is expression. Expression means to make meaning, and meaning comes about only through the medium of signs. This is true at all levels of existence; something exists only if it means" (47). Both white Americans' and Native Americans' lives could be analyzed according to Holquist's argument. Their culture, values, gardening styles, religious beliefs, attitudes towards the past, and their perception of freedom differ from each other, but at the same time, express their peculiar lives which could be observed through their utterances.

CONCLUSION

Even though Silko defines the indigenous world of the Native Americans in both novels, the style of *Almanac* is quite different from *Gardens*. The difference comes from the language and the plot through which *Gardens* is constructed with fewer characters and also a gentle language when it is compared with *Almanac*. In fact, the themes of the novels are similar, such as the past and the present, the changing world, cultural differences, white Americans, maternal love, freedom and revolution. Yet they are given directly in *Almanac* with numerous characters from different pasts who are in preparation for a revolution in an outrageous world, and metaphorically in *Gardens* through the life of Indigo, the naive protagonist, who tries to find her sister and travels across Europe with a white American couple.

Most of the critical articles claim that the two novels' plots and languages are quite different whereas they both emphasize the same themes. David L. Moore's view assumes that both novels depict the similar themes in different voices:

> While all of her works share a fundamental affirmation of Native survivance and a critique of colonialism, each novel takes a different approach, with crucial overlaps and interconnections. If *Ceremony* is mythic, *Almanac* is epic, and *Gardens* is lyric. If the first tends toward the spiritual, the second tends toward the historical, and the third toward the psychological – while all three weave all of these dimensions. *Almanac* directly examines vast social and historical forces, with characterization merely as brief lenses into those forces, while both *Ceremony* and *Gardens* explore such history through a more focused lens on individual lives. ("Old Snake's" 170)

The fact that the similarity between the two novels is maintained through the same themes despite different styles is also accepted by Silko herself. When Ellen Arnold asked if *Gardens* provides an antidote to the capitalistic consumerism which is represented in *Almanac*, Silko's answer points out the parallelism between the two novels:

> *Almanac* told you how to move out of that. That's where *Gardens in the Dunes* I think is different. *Gardens in the Dunes* is related to *Almanac*, but I don't think *Gardens in the Dunes* lays out how it will all be dismantled. So

> in that sense, *Gardens in the Dunes* is under the umbrella of the *Almanac*. *Almanac* talks about how *capitalism* destroys a people, a continent. This (*Gardens*) is very personal. This is about what capitalism makes people do to one another – what those guys with Edward did to him, what Edward does to Hattie. There's all the anxiety for Edward and Hattie over the debts he owes.
>
> *Gardens in the Dunes* really is about now. It all connects together and it gives you a psychic and spiritual way to try to live within this. I think that's what I'm trying to say about spirituality and the different Jesus and the Messiahs. It gives you a way, whereas the *Almanac* lays it out in a more community, worldwide kind of way. (21)

Silko's emphasis leans heavily on the theme of capitalism and explains how the two novels process it through different lives of characters. In both novels, the most important thing seems to be the power of money, and it can be claimed that this power gives a sense of priority to the rich white Americans mostly. Silko's depiction of the rich whites and the power of money could be observed between the Max family and the judge in *Almanac*, and between Edward and the mayor of Corsica in *Gardens*. While the theme of capitalism and the meaning of being rich dominate the world of white Americans, these themes seem to be far from the Native Americans' ways of life at which point another important issue surfaces: the figure of a grandmother. In both *Almanac* and *Gardens* grandmothers play a significant role, owing to their connection with the past. Even though Grandma Fleet dies early in *Gardens*, her teachings seem to influence both Sister Salt and Indigo. In *Almanac*, Zeta and Lecha's grandmother Yoeme's appearance to pass on the almanac can be claimed to resemble Grandma Fleet in terms of passing on what they know to the next generation.

Passing on the information is associated with the past in both novels, so storytelling becomes significant. The bridge between the past and the present is provided by the theme of storytelling. The narration of the past might be similar in both novels, however, the past is sustained through the ancestors' stories in *Almanac*, while, it is merely narrated through Grandma Fleet's teachings about gardening in *Gardens*. Moreover, the past is recorded in the almanac, so a significant duty is attached to it because it is believed to bring the past to the present. It is hard to suggest that the same theme exists in *Gardens*, yet what Indigo keeps as a notebook including different types of plants' drawings and details might be said to resemble the role of the almanac in the novel. The almanac which is supposed to be

passed on to the next generation can be claimed to be replaced by a notebook which Indigo keeps during her Europe tour and the seeds she collects. Both the notebook and the seeds can be claimed to resemble the role of the almanac in terms of storing the information of the present, and moreover, they help Indigo to hold on to the future by hoping to plant the seeds in the gardens of dunes.

In both novels, rain and fertility of the soil are tightly interwoven since the survival of people is believed to depend on the earth, and in both novels the invaders are held responsible for the change which influences the earth. What Native Americans call invaders carries similarity in both novels. First, the depiction of invaders is in accordance with ignoring the past and storytelling. Second, their greedy, domineering and manipulative quality seems to be the reason for the change on earth. In *Almanac*, through the profit-based business of the Blue family, Silko depicts a culture which grows away from the earth, and similarly, in *Gardens*, Edward's capitalist gardening exemplifies the change on earth. These attempts in both novels have devastative consequences, such as an overflowing river destroying a village, or decreasing fertility level of the soil which makes the survival of Natives difficult. The attitudes of the Natives to nature can be said to exemplify just the opposite of the whites. Thus, it can be claimed that cultural difference is narrated through the whites' and Natives' different approaches to earth, and the theme of the changing world is equated with the attitudes of the invaders towards nature, since the world in which the Natives used to live begins to change owing to white American culture's indifference.

The theme of nature is more detailed in *Gardens* in which Native Americans listen to the sounds of the earth attentively. They pay significant attention to the needs of the earth by listening to it and caring for it. This close observation brings forth another issue: the meaning of some animals. The Natives can follow the presence of the whites from the appearance or disappearance of a snake. For instance, the snake living nearby the dunes gives a message that there are no invaders around, and similarly, the appearance of the big stone snake figure in *Almanac* which surprises Native Americans, disappears suddenly with the film crew from Hollywood. Cajete states that: "Traditional Native perception of animal nature represents a type of thinking and attitude dramatically different from those of western science" (150). Thus, the characteristic of observing nature and interpreting the appearance of animals might be said to separate Native Americans from white Americans who ignore the earth and try to dominate the natural order, as in the example of a river

overflow owing to a dam construction. Though *Gardens* harbors great details about nature, the theme of nature in *Almanac* is sustained through Mrs. Blue's ventures to construct new buildings in the middle of a desert, and her aim brings the subject to the discussion of ecological balance.

Regardless of the fact that the whites are blamed for turning nature into a profit-based ground in both novels, in *Almanac,* people experience a changing world through new border inspections, yet in *Gardens* the Native Americans witness the change through gardens. They witness the transition from survivalist to capitalist gardening. The gardens which they used to have been transformed into a different ground where people either get profit from or change it for their pleasure and to impress people. Despite the fact that the theme of the changing world is discussed directly in *Almanac* through the changing living conditions of the Native Americans and the theme of borders, it can be said that it is discussed metaphorically in *Gardens* through the changing use of gardens. For instance, Indigo's depiction of the reservation restrictions, which carries similarity with the theme of borders in *Almanac*, might be accepted as a metaphor for the changing world. In *Almanac*, the whites' regulation on the borders can be said to exemplify a direct restriction on the Natives' routes, yet in *Gardens*, reservation area, which brings together groups of people in the same place, results in the infertility of the soil, and this can be claimed to provide a metaphorical picture of the changing world from the Natives' point of view.

The difference between the two cultures is not merely about the earth; in *Gardens* the theme of religion is accepted differently by Native Americans and white Americans. When the dance ritual is taken into consideration, it can be claimed that they believe the Messiah will come one day. They assume that the Messiah still lives, and they expect to get his help through their dance rituals, whereas, religion in the world of white culture seems to stand in opposition to that of Native Americans. Both a transcultural travel and the rejections to her thesis statement allow Hattie to look into the meaning of God which she was taught along with unchangeable strict rules during her childhood. What Hattie experiences in the gardens of England and Italy seems to transform her belief in religion. In *Gardens,* the stone figures in the gardens of Europe point out how religion is accepted in the world of whites. The stone figures play a significant role in revealing unchangeable religious norms which the whites seem to hold. The theme of religion is not narrated in *Almanac* as it is in *Gardens*, yet, *Almanac* creates a strong emphasis on history. Native Americans' history is very much detailed in *Almanac*, and it could be claimed that

knowing the history of their ancestors who lived through oppression times is supposed to be the driving force behind their plans for revolution.

As a consequence of the appearance of the whites and the changing world, there surfaces another topic: freedom. The theme of freedom, which is narrated in both *Almanac* and *Gardens*, is represented through people who prefer to live far from an authority. Beside the living preferences of the Native Americans, they also try to gain their freedom through some gatherings. The theme of revolution in *Almanac* is processed under a plan of getting together. For this aim, numerous groups of people from different parts of the country get together with one aim: to take the land back. There seems to be no bond among the people who are preparing for revolution, yet the driving force for them to get together seems to be the same injustice, and they act in accordance with the same aim, which is to reclaim the land. It is possible to mention the influence of the ancestors of minority cultures and Native Americans in these gatherings. They believe that the oppression, which their ancestors experienced, could be diminished through their gatherings for justice. On the other hand, Silko points out the theme of revolution through a dance ritual in *Gardens*, yet it is not related to the sense of injustice or taking the land back. However, the reason of the dancing ritual is related to the changing environment and living conditions, and the Native Americans gather to call the Messiah for help. In other words, the people who come together to dance have one thing on their mind which is to call the Messiah. They believe that the Messiah will come and help them.

Both *Almanac* and *Gardens* define the power of Native Americans' gatherings through which they feel the power of togetherness. The revolutionists in *Almanac* are ready to take action in order to get their land back, whereas through dancing rituals in *Gardens*, what people want is just to bring back their old days which are represented by the depiction of the old gardens in the dunes. Though the reason of these gatherings differs from each other, Moore's argument highlights the connection between the two novels through the gatherings: *"Gardens* has roots in *Almanac* via affirmations of the Ghost Dance. *Gardens* challenges readers to think in global, cross-cultural ways that *Almanac* prophesied" (Old Snake's 172). Through the theme of dancing, *Gardens* seems to start where *Almanac* finishes. The gathering at the beginning of *Gardens* welcomes all races, just like the Tucson conference at the end of *Almanac* which is visited by many people from different cultures.

It is possible to observe the participation of minority cultures in the revolution plans in both novels. *Almanac* deals with minority cultures in significant detail, including the Eskimos, the African Americans and the Native Americans, whereas in *Gardens*, a small country which has been under the persecution of Italy is mentioned as a minority. Although Silko depicts different minority groups in both novels, there seems to be a common point shared by all minorities: uprising. The minority groups in both novels are depicted along with the theme of revolution which is conducted against a big power, such as Italian government in *Gardens*, and American government in *Almanac*. Another unifying theme of these minority cultures seems to be their history according to which their ancestors are depicted through oppression days which is similar in the narration of Native Americans' ancestors.

Another similarity of the two novels can be found through the theme of maternal love which both *Almanac* and *Gardens* demonstrate through characters who are raised without a mother's love. Not only their ways of life differ but they also seem to have a different relation to the earth. As in the example of Edward in *Gardens* who is raised without a mother's love, his connection with the earth is different from the Native Americans', since for Edward earth means a profitable resource. A similar type of situation occurs in the life of Hattie whose mother cannot care about her daughter's real happiness but finding a proper husband is her priority. Yet, at the end of the novel, it can be claimed that Hattie changes a lot due to her experience with Indigo. She seems to be lost at the beginning of the novel since she cannot decide on her future. Taking the responsibility of a child seems to change Hattie through love which she could not get from her own mother. At the end of *Gardens*, Edward dies due to his eagerness to earn more but Hattie who leaves her past behind and moves to England is a clear example of a person who has changed through love.

In *Almanac*, Silko's emphasis is again on loveless relationships through some characters. Those who are raised in an emotionless environment could be said to exemplify a cruel world. The same theme of maternal love is sustained in *Almanac* through Serlo, Beaufrey and Ferro whose common childhood memories are depicted in an emotionless environment such as an abusive grandfather or the absence of a mother. The lives of these characters draw the attention to the superiority of a race. They believe that they belong to this race, and they attempt to continue this feeling of superiority through some merciless attitude they display towards other people.

The two novels' use of utterances of different cultures plays a crucial role in creating different representations which reveal each culture's ideology. For instance, minority groups, whether they are in Tucson or in a small country, Abyssinia which is under the sovereignty of Italy, react in the same way to protest. Another example might be given from those who are raised without maternal love, both Edward in *Gardens* and Beaufrey in *Almanac* point out their life philosophy through profit-based business. In other words, the language of each culture serves the purpose of representing the ideology of the characters in both *Almanac* and *Gardens*.

It can be concluded that the discourse of the Native Americans, white Americans or minority cultures has a common aspect for describing their way of lives. Bakhtin's argument on the language of a novel in *The Dialogic Imagination* highlights the same point: "The basic tasks for a stylistics in the novel are, therefore: the study of specific images of languages and styles; the organization of these images; their typology (for they are extremely diverse); whole; the transfers and switchings of languages and voices; their dialogical interrelationships" (50). Examples of specific images of languages and styles in *Almanac* and *Gardens* might be said to signify the representation of a world which separate one culture from others. These common images of languages might be said to create similar themes of dialogues which address a culture's ideology.

These different ideologies of cultures can be observed in both novels through different chronological order of events, since one of the main distinctions between the two novels comes with the motif of time; whereas *Almanac* is written in a nonlinear time scale, *Gardens* is written in a linear time scale. Nonlinear time can be said to strengthen the importance of the past in *Almanac* since the ongoing plot might suddenly move from the future to the past or from the past to the present. For instance, the narration of Leah Blue's attempt to build a dream city in the middle of a desert might be integrated by a teaching from the past in which the ancestors' stories stress the significance of ecological balance for the future generations. Additionally, Silko draws attention to the fact that the Native Americans refer to time as cyclical which corresponds with the motif of recurring past. In other words, the stories of the past might shed light on a prophecy which the Natives are about to experience. On the contrary, Silko introduces linear time in *Gardens* in which the plot could be followed step by step, so it might be said that the emphasis is more on the present. It could be claimed that through almanac, history and ancestors, *Almanac* presents

the past, and *Gardens'*s emphasis is more on the present which is mostly related to Indigo's experiences.

Although the journey of Indigo is followed in a chronological order in *Gardens* and the journey of Sterling is interrupted by other events in *Almanac*, they both travel far from their lands, and, at the end, they return to their roots with a new identity. Sterling has experienced and witnessed a lot when he returns to the reservation as in the example of Indigo who has made a transcultural travel through Europe and returns to the dunes. It could be claimed that Silko demonstrates the theme of adaptation through Indigo and Sterling, due to the fact that they witness other cultures' lives for some time. Another similarity between Indigo and Sterling is their attachment to an object. Gercken points out: "Indigenous identity and a sense of home can be found just as easily in objects tied to that identity as they can be found in the physical bodies or places of Indigenous peoples" (178). Indigo never stops collecting different seeds from all around the world, and Sterling continues his subscription to a detective magazine through which he follows the stories of bandits. Both Indigo and Sterling attach themselves to an object during the time that they are away from home.

As in the example of Indigo and Sterling, the Native Americans are looking for ways to continue their peculiar identity in a transcultural environment, since, how they lived in the past seems to be changed with the invasion of the whites. Thus, collecting or keeping an object could be held within the thematic pattern of sense of identity. In addition to the attachment of any object, the past plays a vital role in Native Americans' life. Sensing the oppression of their ancestors, listening to the past through stories, or keeping the teachings of a grandmother in mind can be related to coming to terms with the present though the past. The present is different for Native Americans due to the fact that it means a kind of survival in a transcultural environment, thus, when the novels are analyzed from the perspective of the characters, it could be concluded that both Sterling and Indigo's experiences about a present moment point out the significance of the past, since they feel the strength through their past. The themes of the past and the present could also be defined through the novels themselves due to the fact that *Almanac* mostly narrates the past, whereas the emphasis of *Gardens* is on the present. Furthermore, the dance rituals at the end of *Almanac* and at the beginning of *Gardens* provide a connection as well. Thus, the novels could be accepted as the continuation of one another, in other words, *Gardens* starts where *Almanac* finishes.

Each novel has a particular way of narration, *Almanac* narrates a whole population rather than a single person; on the other hand, Silko mostly depicts Indigo's life in *Gardens*. Still, the journey of Indigo could be accepted as an extended version of one of the lives which is narrated in *Almanac*. In other words, it could be said that *Almanac* and *Gardens* complete one another just like the twins and siblings who are narrated throughout the novels. It becomes apparent that one of the twins or siblings is separated for a while, and experiences a different environment but they get together at the end of the novels, and they complete each other in terms of their newly-acquired diaologic identities.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

Silko, L. M. 1991. ***Almanac of the Dead*.** New York: Simon & Schuster.

Silko, L. M. 1999. ***Gardens in the Dunes*.** New York: Penguin.

Secondary Sources

Allen, G. P. 1986. ***The Sacred Hoop Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions*.** New York: Open Road.

"Almanac." **Collins Cobuild English Dictionary for Advanced Learners.** 2001. Glasgow: HarperCollins Publisher.

Arnold, E., Silko, L. M. 1998. Listening to the Spirits: An Interview with Leslie Marmon Silko. ***Studies in American Indian Literatures*.** 10(3): 1-33.

Bakhtin, M. M. 1992. ***The Dialogic Imagination*.** Texas: U of Texas P.

Bruchac, J. 1994. Contemporary Native American Writing: An Overview. ***Dictionary of Native American Literature*.** New York: Garland Publishing.

Cajete, G. 2000. ***Native Science Natural Laws of Interdependence*.** New Mexico: Clear Light.

Chapman, A. 1975. ***Literature of the American Indians: Views and Interpretations.*** New York: Plume.

Clair, St. J. 2001. Cannibal Queers: The Problematics of Metaphor in *Almanac of the Dead*. ***Leslie Marmon Silko: A Collection of Critical Essays*.** Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P.

Cohen, R. P. 2002. ***Leslie Marmon Silko: Beyond Borders.*** Texas: A&M University P.

Cummings, D. K. 2000. 'Settling' History: Understanding Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, "Storyteller," *Almanac of the Dead*, and *Gardens in the Dunes*. ***Studies in American Indian Literature.*** 12 (4): 65-90.

Dauterich IV, E. 2007. Time, Communication, and Prophecy: Prodigious Unity in *Almanac of the Dead*. ***CLA Journal***, 50 (3): 348-363.

Dennis, M. H. 2007. ***Native American Literature Towards a Spatialized Reading*.** New York: Routledge.

Donnelly, D. 2001. Old and New Notebooks *Almanac of the Dead* as Revolutionary Entertainment. ***Leslie Marmon Silko: A Collection of Critical Essays.*** Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P.

Faller, L. 2016. EuroAmerica, Europe, and the Indigenous: The Complex (and Complicating) Dialectics of Silko's Jamesian Turn. ***Leslie Marmon Silko.*** London: Bloomsbury.

Gemein, M. N. 2016. 'Branched into All Directions of Time': Pluralism, Physics, and Compassion in Silko's *Ceremony*. ***Leslie Marmon Silko.*** London: Bloomsbury.

Gercken, B. 2016. World of Water, World of Sand: Teaching Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes* and Sullivan's *Star Waka*. ***Leslie Marmon Silko.*** London: Bloomsbury.

Holquist, M. 2002. ***Dialogism.*** London: Routledge.

Irr, C. 2001. The Timeliness of *Almanac of the Dead*, or a Postmodern Rewriting of Radical Fictions. ***Leslie Marmon Silko: A Collection of Critical Essays.*** Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P.

Kelsey, M. P. 2016. Indigenous Economic Critique in Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* and Gaspar de Alba's *Desert Blood*: Against a Philosophy of Separation. ***Leslie Marmon Silko.*** London: Bloomsbury.

Kent, A. A. 2007. ***African, Native, and Jewish American Literature and the Reshaping of Modernism.*** New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Li, S. 2009. Domestic Resistance: Gardening, Mothering, and Storytelling in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes*. ***Studies in American Indian Literatures***, 21(1): 18-37.

Madsen, L. D. 2016. Silko, Freud, and the Voicing of Disavowed Histories in *Almanac of the Dead*. ***Leslie Marmon Silko.*** London: Bloomsbury.

Marx, L. 2000. ***The Machine in the Garden Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America.*** Oxford: Oxford U P.

McNeil, A. E. 2003. ***Trickster Discourse: Mediating Transformation for a New World.*** Arizona: Arizona State University P.

Moore, L. D. 2001. Silko's Blood Sacrifice: The Circulating Witness in *Almanac of the Dead*. ***Leslie Marmon Silko: A Collection of Critical Essays.*** Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P.

Moore, L. David. 2016. 'Linked to the Land: An Introduction to Reading Leslie Marmon Silko.' ***Leslie Marmon Silko.*** London: Bloomsbury.

Moore, L. D. 2016. 'Old Snake's Beautiful Daughter': Introduction to Part Three. ***Leslie Marmon Silko.*** London: Bloomsbury.

Nelson, R. M. Leslie Marmon Silko: Storyteller. ***The Cambridge Companion to Native American Literature.*** New York: Cambridge U P.

Piatote, H. B. 2016. Seing Double: Twins and Time in Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*. ***Leslie Marmon Silko.*** London: Bloomsbury.

Porter, J. 2005. Historical and Cultural Contexts to Native American Literature. ***TheCambridge Companion to Native American Literature.*** New York: Cambridge U P.

Powers, M. J. 2001. Mapping the Prophetic Landscape in *Almanac of the Dead*. ***Leslie Marmon Silko: A Collection of Critical Essays.*** Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P.

Regier, M. A. 2001. Material Meeting Points of Self and Other. ***Leslie Marmon Silko: A Collection of Critical Essays.*** Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P.

Ruppert, J. 2005. Fiction: 1968 to the Present. ***The Cambridge Companion to Native American Literature.*** New York: Cambridge U P.

Ruoff, B. A. L. 1994. Native American Writing: Beginnings to 1967. ***Dictionary of Native American Literature.*** New York: Garland Publishing.

Ryan, T. 2007. The Nineteenth-Century Garden: Imperialism, Subsistence, and Subversion in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes*. ***Studies in American Indian Literature***, 19 (3): 115-132.

Silko, M. L. 1996. ***Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit.*** New York: Simon & Schuster.

Thorson, C. C. 2001. Leslie Marmon Silko and Her Work: A Biographical Essay. ***Leslie Marmon Silko A Collection of Critical Essays.*** Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P.

Tillett, R. 2018. ***Otherwise, Revolution! Leslie Marmon Silko's Almanac of the Dead.*** New York: Bloomsbury.

Tillett, R. 2016. 'Sand Lizard Warned Her Children to Share': Philosophies of Gardening and Exchange in Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes*. ***Leslie Marmon Silko.*** London: Bloomsbury.

White, D. 2001. Antidote to Desecration. ***Leslie Marmon Silko: A Collection of Critical Essays.*** Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P.