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COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

Peleforo GON COULIBALY University

Côte d'Ivoire

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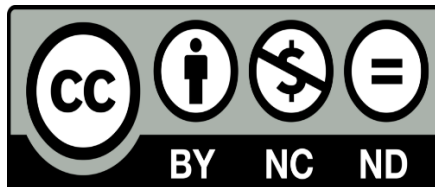
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EDITORIAL

Among the Senufos from the north of Côte d'Ivoire, the sacred grove is called "Sinzang". The first of these would date from the time of the patriarch and leader of Korhogo SORO Zouakagnon (1840-1894). It is the tutelary space of the initiatory institute of the secret society: the Poro. These sacred forests exist in all the villages of the region and are highly protected and managed. The proof is that in their midst, adolescents perform the rite of passage leading them to the age of maturity. The "Sinzang" is also the centre of intergenerational knowledge transmission. Thus, the teaching of ancestral knowledge, ontology and cosmogony-contributing to the future spiritual, moral and social formation of the Senufo elite-is associated with this pantheon.

In line with this pedagogical and academic logic, the SINZANG Journal aims to promote African and Western humanities in Literature, Language, Communication and Education Sciences. To do this, it is part of a process of promoting the reflections and studies conducted by Teachers-Researchers and Researchers for the sustainable development of society.

As distinctive signs of "Sinzang", Jacqueline DELANGE, in *Arts et peuple Sénoufo de l'Afrique noire*, identifies among others the huts, earth cones and statues (masks). The visual identity of this magazine presents two masks, one symbolizing ancestral knowledge and the other Western science. The two facing the entrance of a sacred hut express the encounter of diverse knowledge put at the service of humanity. *In fine*, they export to other horizons, hence the idea of huts in perspective.

SINZANG is a pluridisciplinary and biannual peer-reviewed scientific journal. It is published in English and French but also accepts work written in German and Spanish. Moreover, depending on the requests made at the discretion of its review committee, it may issue special thematic publications and conference proceedings.

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ÉDITORIAL

Chez les Sénoufos du nord de la Côte d'Ivoire, le bosquet sacré est communément appelé « Sinzang ». Les premiers du genre dateraient de l'époque du patriarche et chef de Korhogo SORO Zouakagnon (1840-1894). C'est l'espace tutélaire de l'institut initiatique de la société secrète : le Poro. Lieux fortement protégés et aménagés à l'envi, ces forêts sacrées existent dans tous les villages de la région. La preuve en est qu'en leur sein, les adolescents effectuent le rite de passage les amenant à l'âge de la maturité. Le « Sinzang » est aussi le haut lieu de la transmission de la connaissance intergénérationnelle. Ainsi, l'enseignement du savoir ancestral, de l'ontologie et la cosmogonie- contribuant à la formation spirituelle, morale et sociale de l'élite Sénoufo de demain-est associé à ce panthéon.

S'inscrivant dans cette logique pédagogique et académique, la Revue SINZANG ambitionne de faire la promotion des humanités tant africaine qu'occidentale dans le domaine de la Littérature, des Sciences du Langage, de la Communication et de l'Éducation. Pour ce faire, elle s'inscrit dans une démarche de vulgarisation des réflexions et des études menées par les Enseignants-Chercheurs et des Chercheurs pour le développement durable de la société.

Comme signes distinctifs du « Sinzang », Jacqueline DELANGE, dans *Arts et peuple Sénoufo de l'Afrique noire*, identifie entre autres les cases, les cônes en terre et les statues (masques). L'identité visuelle de cette revue présentant deux masques, l'un symbolisant le savoir ancestral et l'autre la science occidentale. Les deux se faisant face à l'entrée d'une case sacrée expriment la rencontre de connaissances diverses mis au service de l'humanité. In fine, elles s'exportent vers d'autres horizons ; d'où l'idée des cases en perspective.

SINZANG est une revue pluridisciplinaire à comité de lecture et scientifique. Elle est bilingue : éditée en anglais et en français. Mais elle accepte également les travaux écrits en allemand et en espagnol. C'est une revue semestrielle, tenant deux parutions l'an. Au demeurant, elle peut

procéder, selon les demandes ou les sollicitations formulées à l'appréciation de son comité de lecture, à des parutions spéciales thématiques et à la diffusion d'actes de colloque.

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LESLIE SILKO MARMON'S *CEREMONY*: THE CARICATURE OF THE INDIANS' ALIENATION

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ABSTRACT

History reminds us that Indians' life has indilebly been marked by Christopher Columbus's advent when he opened their doors to the whole world, forcing a cohabitation with the Europeans. This contact brough new lifestyles to the Indians, called civilization supported by Christianity. School then became the road to this civilization; destroying the young Indians, culturally. This civilization, with it school, teaches them that their ways are savage and their culture satanic – creating in their mind a confusion that leads to total alienation. Leslie Silko Marmon, in *Ceremony* (1977), helps us understand that the supposed civilization and Christianization are nothing than pure alienation.

This paper will try to highlight to what extent Indians, in Silko's *Ceremony* (1977), undergo this alienation and especially that of the Second World War veterans like Tayo – an unwanted mixed-blood who once back from the war was victim of tensions and an increasing feeling of estrangement – and how they manage to overcome it and succeed in the process of Tayo's restoration through an Indian ceremony. The historical context of the novel drives us to a postcolonial theory and Marxism theory, due the Indians' enstangement on their own land.

Key words: Indians – Whites – Alienation – Ceremony – scourges – impacts of the war.

CEREMONY DE LESLIE SILKO MARMON: UNE CARICATURE DE L'ALIÉNATION DES INDIENS

RÉSUMÉ

L'histoire nous rappelle que la vie des Indiens a été indélébilement marquée par l'arrivée de Christophe Colomb qui ouvrit leurs portes au monde entier, forçant une cohabitation Européens-Indiens. Les Européens leur imposèrent de nouveaux modes de vie qu'ils appellent civilisation, soutenue par le christianisme. L'école se fait le chemin vers cette civilisation, qui fini par détruire, culturellement, les jeunes Indiens parce qu'on leur enseignait que leurs coutumes étaient sauvages et leur culture, satanique – créant dans leur esprit une confusion, début d'une profonde aliénation. Leslie Silko Marmon, dans *Ceremony* (1977), nous aide à comprendre que les prétendues civilisation et christianisation ne sont rien d'autre qu'une pure aliénation.

Cet article montrera comment les Indiens, dans *Ceremony* (1977), subissent cette aliénation, en particulier les vétérans de la Seconde Guerre mondiale comme Tayo – un métis indésirable qui, une fois de retour du conflit, a été victime de tensions et d'un sentiment croissant d'étrangeté – et comment ils parviennent à la surmonter et à réussir le processus de restauration de Tayo à travers une cérémonie

indienne. Le contexte historique de l'œuvre nous conduit à une théorie postcoloniale et au marxisme du fait que l'Indien ne se reconnaît désormais qu'en l'homme blanc.

Mots clés: Indiens – Blancs – Aliénation – Cérémonie – fléaux – impacts de la guerre

INTRODUCTION

The history of the world is generally marked by colonization, a policy used by Europeans to quench their imperialist thirst. This profined stratagem showed to the peoples to be colonized as a Civilization and Christianization project, hiding the Europeans purpose to force them to abandon what constitutes their originality in favor of the Europeans'. For I. Chirica, in "Symbolic and Sacred Space in Leslie Marmon Silko's Novel *Ceremony*" *Advances in Literary Study*, «In their minds, there was a conflict between “the wilderness” and culture. They believed that it was necessary “to tame the wilderness” » (I. Chirica, <https://doi.org/10.4236/als.2025.131002>, pp. 11-19). This act of estranging them on their own lands is finally perceived, not as civilization, but as pure alienation. Original tribes of America, seen as Indians, were not safe from this cultural and identity enstrangement. But, This Alienation, instead of taking the Indians away from their own civilization, teaches them how to perpetuate their realities: writing. Thus, the Indians, « bien que largement dépossédés de leurs terres ... ont réussi à survivre, à affirmer leurs droits économiques et politiques, tout en préservant leur identité et leur culture face à l'assaut de la civilisation moderne » [our translation : « although largely dispossessed from their lands ... succeeded in surviving, affirming their economic and political rights, while preserving their identity and culture in the face of the onslaught of the modern civilization]» (George Catlin, p. 231). It is in this context that Leslie Silko Marmon published *Ceremony* in 1977.

Seen as an important figure of the Native American Renaissance, Leslie Silko Marmon produced many literary works among which *Ceremony* (1977), the one through which we are going to understand alienation upon the Indians with the topic “Leslie Silko Marmon's *Ceremony*: The Caricature of the Indans' Alienation”. The topic “tries to build a bridge of understanding between the Euro-American culture and the Native culture of her people » (I. Chirica, <https://doi.org/10.4236/als.2025.131002>, pp. 11-19).

The novel tells the story of the protagonist, Tayo, a mixed-blood from Laguna Pueblo, in New Mexico — like Leslie Silko herself. He is a Second World War veteran whose return from the war is marked by many tensions and an increasing feeling of estrangement. This novel permits any reader to be acquainted with what it is to be a

Native American and the multiple challenges it implies as well, in a society dominated, controlled and managed by white civilization. A civilization that also brought them diseases, alcohol, drug, religion and new lifestyles after having stolen their past and upset their future, now recognizing themselves in the other, in foreigners, leading to the following questions: how is the issue of alienation depicted in *Ceremony*? And how does the novel show it about the Indians' life and their culture in general? Before answering these questions, it is necessary to know what "alienation" – which seems to be the key word here – is.

The term has many perceptions, according to the domain (philosophy, psychology, parental, law). But, its simplest and most understandable definition here is, as translated from Définitions 360 (<https://www.definitions360.com>):

Alienation is the process by which an individual becomes someone alien to themselves, someone strange, who has lost control over themselves. Alienation also means the subjugation or dispossession of an individual due to external constraints. The term "alienation" comes from the Latin "alienus," meaning belonging to another. This definitional approach shows the concept of alienation as one which ideologically forces people to abandon what/who they are — socially, culturally, politically, ecologically, economically, and even their selves. In other words, "alienation" refers to a situation in which one is transformed to "another".

Visibly, the Indians in *Ceremony* (1977) are completely out of phase with the foundations of the Declaration of Independence which clearly values the notions of "unalienable Rights" like "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" (Howarell Cincotta, p.73). Here, the adjective "inalienable" attracts our attention – in regard to our theme. In other words, the implication of this constitutional declaration is that each person is by nature, free and sovereign. For, if America is created on this principle, why should the Indians be dispossessed of their cultures, traditions, and beliefs and be assimilated? Where are the basis of the Indians' ethnic identity and their cultural dignity? These questions may have answers in the word "certain". In this case, one can think that the Declaration should rather write "certain peoples" instead of "certan rights". Thus, the Indians can be out of these "certain peoples" who should profit of these "unalienable Rights". The people who are not concerned by America's

“unalienable rights” are those painted in *Ceremony* (1977) and who are the cornerstone of this work.

This paper intends to show that the depiction of alienated Pueblo characters in *Ceremony* (1977) suggests a clear alternative to the previous preoccupation and a necessity to restore the atmosphere of stability which characterized the Indians’ life before the arrival of the colonizers. In other words, this paper aims at showing how the writing of the novel is for the author a means to claim freedom and happiness for her people who lost their dignity after colonization. Thus, this analysis will be based on major theories like postcolonialism and Marxism.

Tyson Lois in *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide* (1950) views postcolonialism as a: “literary and historical theory that defines formerly colonized peoples as any population that has been subject to the political domination of another population” (pp 434-435). Harry Peter, in *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (2002), thinks that the postcolonial theory must be a means of historical claim. He writes: “the first step for ‘colonized’ people in finding a voice and an identity is to reclaim their own past” (p. 127).

Marxism (<https://english-studies.net/marxism-literary-theory/>) is promoted in *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and means, in its general form, “The estrangement and alienation of individuals from their labor, products of labor, others, and themselves due to capitalist commodification of labor”. They establish it to be used to analyze “literature’s reflection of capitalist social relations and advocating for societal transformation”.

The development of this paper will fall into three main steps: the first focuses on how schools have been traumatic for Indian children and has driven them to a self-alienation. It is titled “An almost complete brainwashing”. The second part, entitled “Psychological and cultural dislocation” deals with how the Indian culture is destroyed by the white man’s presence. The third and last step “Between lost and restored Identity” is about the Indians’ fight to reconquer their indianness.

1 — AN ALMOST COMPLETE BRAINWASHING

A colonized mentality is the attitude of ethnic or cultural inferiority felt by the people because of colonization, rendering the colonizers’ values appear to be superior. A situation voluntarily created by the colonizer to dispossess the colonized from his

own values through systems he established by, like boarding schools and churches, to facilitate the Indians' colonization and their assimilation. Thus begins « The government policy to work in the city through a system of education that “kills the Indian to save the man » (I. Chirica, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.4236/als.2025.131002>). In fact, in the hope of achieving this civilization, the Whites imposed school on them with measures that separated Indian children from their families, in order to be completely cut off from anything that could remind them of their Indian realities. Above all, they had to accept that their cultures could not survive. This was the time of 'desindianization'; that is, the collapse of the foundations of everything the Indians considered – until the arrival of the Whites – as their cultures and traditions. This collapse was also accompanied by the loss of land. And yet, the land of origin is always seen as the symbol of nostalgic memories, the reincarnation of ancestral powers, and the assurance of the survival of all those elements that make up Indian cultures. Nelcy Delanoë and Joëlle Rostkowski, in *Voix indiennes, voix américaines : les deux visions de la conquête du nouveau monde* (2003), sum all this up by saying that the Europeans succeeded in different ways : «en dispersant leurs familles, en obscurcissant leurs traditions, en interrompant la chaîne des souvenirs, en changeant toutes leurs habitudes, et en accroissant outre mesure leurs besoins » [our translation : “by scattering their families, by darkening their traditions, by interrupting the chain of memories, by changing all their habits, and by excessively increasing their needs”] (p.149).

In its quest of assimilation, school teaches the Indian children “about the deplorable ways of the Indian people” (L. Silko, p. 68) ; a kind of brainwashing. Apparently, it is that school that has made Tayo's mother, Laura, what she had been in *Ceremony* (1977). Her total assimilation conducted her to the bad direction, as far as the Indian world is concerned. She gave herself up to alcohol, drug, cigaret and even sleep with white men. She felt ashamed of herself as Indian and of her people, because she internalizes what the white teachers told her. She was lost to herself and to her people. She set herself out of the indian cultural circle and begins to copy the colonial ways, as taught at school.

When she dresses exactly like the white girls, “Tayo's mother feels pride in her reflection because it does not reflect her Native heritage” (L. Silko, p. 69). Unfortunately, “what happened to the girl did not happen to her alone, it happened to

all of them" (L. Silko, p. 69). "All of them" can mean all the Indian youth and by that, Silko tries to show the magnitude of the cultural genocide resulting from the white man's assimilation intention : Auntie goes to church, Rocky dreams of white things. There was a regulation set out to make every indigenous person feel ashamed of who he is and to feel ashamed of his people and culture and to follow the European civilization.

Visibly, assimilation seems to be planned as the most discreet alternative to physical genocide. In this case, assimilation does not simply resonate like copying the white man's ways, but refusing one's own culture. In addition, Tayo's uncle, Josiah's cows that Tayo is called to park in the enclosure, in the novel, can be seen as a symbolic representation of children forced into boarding schools : "tall with long thin legs . . . with heavy bone structure, and eyes that were big and wild, the cows physical description aligns with those of indigenous people" (L. Silko, p. 75). When boarding schools were established, it was mandated that Native children should go to these schools. The Native children never understood why they were placed in boarding schools. Often due to confusion and homesickness, they would run away to go back to the reservation. But, not for a long time, because school was the voice of the future in the modern and civilized society. For old people like Josiah "they are scared because the land is unfamiliar, and they are lost" (L. Silko, p. 74). Like the land Josiah talks about, school was unfamiliar to the Indian children, the geographical location of the school was even unfamiliar. Like Josiah, the children "are lost". Unlike the children at school, the cows eventually run away, but Tayo knows where he can expect to find them ; by following the direction they run away in: South. Located South of where Tayo keeps them, the cows' homeland is Mexico. Tayo, thus describes the cows' direction as something that "was lodged deep in their bones" (L. Silko, 188). This description can be seen as Silko's way of alluding to what extend the Native Children in boarding schools expect to run away, back homes, in spite of their probable inability to find their way back. This way of judging the children is not hazardous. Indians dislike the white man's educational system.

The treatments in the boarding schools still capture the attention of Indians, in general and more particularly, that of those who went through this system and introduce themselves as the perpetuation of the Indians realities and express their anger towards boarding schools, as well. They use *littérature* as means of expression

to tell about how one can preserve his Indian culture and benefit from the American so-called civilization, with its educational system. In her autobiography *American Indian Stories* (1921), Zitkala-Sa, describes the abominable conditions and the maltreatment that the native pupils were exposed to in the boarding schools. Nevertheless, the Amerindians' life hanged drastically after their graduation from the Boarding Schools. They were traumatized due to violence, punishments, and cultural genocide, completely lost in their own society, socially and psychologically detached, as to say, to nip the evil in the bud.

Yet, this eventful period of the Native American history left an overwhelming change in the use of language. The Native American languages were gradually replaced by English as a vehicle for literature. This loss has many impacts on the Indian individuals and strongly affects their community's ways of thinking and their ideologies ; reshaping their minds. And once this "Self-Alienation" completed, the Indian culture lost its central place in what makes the individual feels Indian.

2 – PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL DISLOCATION

Whatever one's origin, belief and personal philosophy about life, Culture represent a key element in his life. Thus, culture can be seen as the foundation of a people's history and the pathfinder of its youth. That being said, a people's culture should be respected. But imperialism conducts Europeans to trample on the Indian culture and replace it by their own one. This fact can be seen as an cultural imperialism, seen by Herbert Schiller as the American Empire's "coercive and persuasive agencies, and their capacity to promote and universalize an American 'way of life' in other countries without any reciprocation of influence". Th expresion "without any reciprocation of influence" is significant in the sense that the people who is supposed to adopt the foreign ways is not associated to the decision and strategies making. They are just "receicers". A way to show to what extend themselves and their realities are minimized by the stranger. By indian realities we understand the Indians' customs, traditions, languages, social and moral norms. It is in this context Spivak (1988) says in "Can the Subaltern Speak" that cultural imperialism has the power to disqualify or erase the knowledge and mode of education of certain populations that are low on the social hierarchy. When looking at all the people submitted to such an

imperialism, it is the same constat : disasters and decreased interest in preexisting cultures. Western lifestyle has become the mode, neglecting the ancestral ways.

The novel presents many cases of cultural dislocation, especially through the dysfunctional behavior of the protagonist, Tayo. His life, before and after the war has become a kind of constant quest of identity, making him culturally lost : living as a white among Indians and as an Indian among the whites. So, what culture to follow ? Tayo is at the crossroads of his indianity and his whiteness. But, he still has in mind the tribal stories. Despite all he learnt at reservation school, he still feels the tribal stories his grandmother told him:

The science books explained the causes and effects. But old Grandma always used to say, “Back in time immemorial, things were different, the animals could talk to human beings and many magical things still happened.” He never lost the feeling he had in his chest when she spoke those words, as she did each time she told them the stories and he still feel it was true, despite all they had taught him in school . . . that long ago things had been different (L. Silko, p. 99).

In this psychological dislocation, Tayo is confronted to a kind of dilemma : he has to face the discovery of oneself and the world in which he lives at the same time : L. Silko reveals that like “For long time, he had been white smoke. He did not realize that until he left the hospital, because white smoke had no consciousness of itself” (L. Silko, p. 14). This citation seems to identify the signal points of identification and alienation. One must understand that many traditions in the world use smoke as a source of purification. For example, Native American smudge themselves to prepare for a ritual and Taoist monks cleanse themselves with the smoke of a sacred life (F. Fanon, <https://symbolismandmetaphor.com/smoke-meaning-symbolism/>).

Apart from Tayo, Emo also presents signs of dislocation; through his actions, behavior and the way he thinks. Emo sees the world around them like an empty place because colonization disconnected them from their own land: “they took our land, they took everything.” (L. Silko, p. 55). This sentence is the summary of the Indians’ life after the passage of the white man. The following citation clearly shows the Native Americans’ experiences of cultural imperialism that seems to provoke disorientation and anger in them:

Tayo sat down. He knew Emo meant what he said; Emo had hated him since the time they had been in grade school together, and the only reason for this hate was that Tayo was part white. But Tayo was used to it by now. Since he could remember, he had known Auntie's shame for what his mother had done, and Auntie's shame for him. He remembered how the white men who were building the new highway through Laguna had pointed at him (L. Silko, p. 57).

Here, Emo became wicked, due to psychological disorientation; but that hatred permits Tayo to understand and accept himself as a half breed blood — making him greater. This situation permits him to move from a state of shame and embarrassment to a conscious understanding of something, what and who he is — aligning with Frantz Fanon who sees remembering as “a process of intense discovery and disorientation” (<https://symbolismandmetaphor.com/smoke-meaning-symbolism/>).

The idea of remembering is also quiet similar to a way of decolonizing the mind. But one can think that remembering permits Tayo to confront the reality, leading him to fight against those memories of war, the reaction of people like Auntie, and also to face his situation. Thus, remembering becomes important and his sickness seems to belong to the earth. In any case, the Indians' alienation in *Ceremony*, colonization is pointed as the cause of all of their psychological and cultural troubles in the Indian world. Which troubles should be requalified by the Indians in order to justify their presence in America?

3 — BETWEEN LOST AND RESTORED IDENTITY

A careful reading of *Ceremony* (1977) permits to notice a complex narrative structure and the events point out important flashbacks of the Laguna Pueblo's life, as far as, for example the effects of European colonization of native lands is concerned. It is also a picture of the absorption of the Indian culture by colonization. *Ceremony* (1977), also shows white towns and highways surround the Laguna reservation and Indians' lose of their Indianness by participating to World War II, not as Indians but as Americans. During the war, they were all seen as Americans, but once back on the reservation, white people wear again he coat of racism and the veterans became again mere Indians. The veteran Tayo succeeded in reestablishing his relationship with his

Laguna Pueblo cultural roots and reconnecting to its healing abilities. To pinpoint this value, L. Silko writes that:

He sat down on the upstairs porch with his back against the adobe wall and closed his eyes. In a world of crickets and wind and cottonwood trees he was almost alive again; he was visible. The green waves of dead faces and the screams of the dying that had echoed in his head were buried. The sickness had receded into a shadow behind him, something he saw only out of the corners of his eyes, over his shoulder (L. Silko, p. 104).

The citation is the reminder of Tayo's cursing the nature during the war, when his cousin Rocky was wounded and suffering from the effects of the nature : rain and flies in the hostile jungle. In fact, the rain was aggravating Rocky's wound and the flies were infecting it. The latter leaves and, as a result, the earth gets dry : "cursed their sticks feet and wet mouths" and "smashed them between his hands" whenever he could do so (L. Silko, p. 102). R.C. Bell also mentions this curse :

Tayo believes that he created disharmony when he cursed the rain on the Pacific front. Because everything is connected, his curse has caused the drought that affects the reservation back home. He also feels guilty because he left Uncle Josiah, who was like a father to him, without help, when he enrolled in the army. His uncle died trying to take care of his herd of cattle, which ran away. Tayo's search for his uncle's spotted cattle becomes the mythical hero's quest for the Holy Grail. He tries to retrieve the cattle because this is what his uncle would have wanted him to do and he wants to redeem himself in his own eyes, as well as in the eyes of his community, after making bad choices. And his quest has a circular design, because he finally returns home with his spiritual gifts. (Bell, 2002: pp. 23-40)

This curse has dramatic consequences: "the grey mule grew gaunt, and the goat and kid had to wander farther and farther each day to find weeds or dry shrubs to eat" (L. Silko, p. 14). The curse affects the rain pattern back home. In top of that, he lost his cousin Rocky. But after, he restored his health and connection with the nature because of the medicine men Ku'oosh at the Laguna reservation and Betonie in Gallup, Arizona. To testify his reconnection with nature, rain falls again and the land blooms. His total cure comes after he completes a curative ceremony, restores his uncle's cattle,

and learns to live in harmony with nature and his people, then disoriented from the white man's culture:

For a long time, he had been white smoke. He did not realize that until he left the hospital, because white smoke had no consciousness of itself. It faded into the white world of their bed sheets and walls; it was sucked away by the words of doctors who tried to talk to the invisible scattered smoke. He had seen outlines of gray steel tables, outlines of the food they pushed into his mouth, which was only an outline too, like all the outlines he saw. (L. Silko, p. 14)

The quotation above mentions two types of "smoke»: "white smoke" and "scattered smoke". Silko clearly underlines the unconsciousness of that white smoke, meaning his disintegration of his own identity. He does not know who and what he is exactly, rendering him psychologically invisible, indistinct, and incoherent identity among whites, surely because he was far from his origins. This "scattered smoke" mentioned in the citation is his Indianness that is swallowed by the "white smoke". In fact, the contact with white people destroyed Tayo's cultural identity as Indian. When talking about Tayo's cure, K. L. Wallace (1996) underlines that:

Tayo's healing takes place when he discards his individual identity and embraces his communal, archetypal identity. He no longer identifies with the stereotype of the doomed Indian that the Anglo-American culture projects on him. Instead, he becomes one with the archetype of the hero and in this process, he becomes a cultural hero for his community, to which he brings life and health (Wallace, 1996: pp. 91-119).

Something extreme marked Tayo's psychiatric trouble, his complete loss: he speaks of himself like to someone else when talking to the army doctor, using the third person [singular] : "He can't talk to you. He is invisible. His words are formed with an invisible tongue, they have no sound" (L. Silko, 15). Through "he", he means himself. This is the proof of his estrangement, his inarticulation, his tongue is : "dry and dead, the carcass of a tiny rodent" (L. Silko, 15). When he leaves the Los Angeles veteran's hospital, he continues to feel "weak" and "invisible" among whites (L. Silko, p. 16).

Tayo thinks that "he would be lost in smoke again, in the fog again" and "he waits to die the way smoke dies" (L. Silko, p. 16-17). Let us say that, in this sense, Tayo's sickness is physical and psychological at the same time: he frequently vomits and

urinates. He feels himself dead in this strange environment the white man sent him : “the thick white skin that had enclosed him, silencing the sensations of living, the love as well as the grief; and he had been left with only the hum of tissues that enclosed him” (L. Silko, p. 229). In fact,

The protagonist of the novel, Tayo, returns from the Pacific front after World War 2 as a broken man. He suffers from posttraumatic stress disorder and the doctors send him home because they can offer no further help. He stays in bed and vomits every day. ... The medicine man informs Tayo about the Destroyers who want to destabilize the world and says that Tayo must complete a ceremony, to heal himself and save the Pueblo people. (Beck, 1996: p. 101)

Talking about the cultural destruction of the Indians does not only describe their alienation but their realities after the war. The Indians war veterans and other victims of assimilation like Tayo’s mother, Auntie, and Helen Jean completely became the praise of the white man’s lifestyle. War veterans like Tayo walk proudly in the reservation as people who know the white man’s ways, they talk about the type of life they live during the war, the feminine conquests, getting together [with the white] to drink at the pub. But Tayo refuses to fall prey to alcoholism and self-pity like them. That is why they hate him, like Emo.

Many Indians like Tayo are aware of the loss of their identity as Indians because of the white man’s civilization; a civilization that had stolen the land from their ancestors. He realizes that the things Indians admire in white culture like alcohol, glittering lights, music, food, and cars are taken from Indian lands. But many others like Tayo’s cousin, Rocky, are concrete examples of Indians who lost their indianness. Rocky and all those who consider the white man’s ways as better than the Indians’ are without any possibility of restoration. They made their choice: whiteness. He “deliberately avoided the old-time ways. Old Grandma shook her head at him, but he called it superstition, and he opened his textbooks to show her. But Auntie never scolded him, and she never let Robert or Josiah talk to him either.” (L. Silko, p. 51). He listens to his white teachers who advise him not to “let the people at home hold [him] back,” and he knows “what he had to do to win in the white outside world” (L. Silko, p. 51).

What is to be retain from the reading of Leslie Silko Marmon’s *Ceremony* (1977), through Tayo’s experience is that colonization had stolen everything that make

them Indians and imposes upon them things that do not honor the individual as Indians. But the way Tayo looked for his Indian source to be cured from the strange disease can inspire others. The solution may not be absolute rejection of whatever comes from the white man — it is already rooted — but adaptation.

CONCLUSION

Following the overview of the novel *Ceremony* (1977) by Leslie Silko Marmon, which allowed us to realize the moral consequences of colonization on the Native Americans, it is clear that school plays a significant role in the loss of what should define them as Native Americans; namely, their customs and traditions. Stripped of their lands and confined to reservations, they are nothing more than the shadows of themselves; because they are now strangers on their own land. This is, in a way, what Leslie Silko Marmon tries to make us understand in *Ceremony* (1977), through carefully created characters and a historically known reservation: that of the Laguna Pueblo.

In fact, like many other Indian writers, Leslie Marmon Silko, in *Ceremony* (1977), « évoque certains thèmes essentiels dans le roman indien de la fin du XX^{ème} siècle : retour de la guerre, sentiment d'aliénation, quête spirituelle, retour aux sources dans un désir de réconciliation avec le monde [our translation : exploits certain essential terms in the indien novel of the end of th XXth century : back from the war, alienation feelings, spiritual quest, back to the sources in a desir of reconciliation with the world] » (Joëlle Rostkowski, p. 16). The book also addresses the question of identity — which, once again, challenges Tayo, the protagonist — and what it means to be mixed-race: "I'm half-breed, I'll be the first to say it. I'll speak for both sides" (Silko, p. 42), as testified by Tayo himself. Indeed, because of his origins, he faces humiliation and almost rejection from full-blooded Indians, especially from his own aunt (Auntie), the older sister of his deceased mother Laura. In the novel, Tayo is presented as the child of an Indian mother of very poor morals and an unknown father, a white man. This wrongly perceived hybridity in the Laguna Pueblo reservation makes him the target of ridicule from the entire community; even after returning from the war, traumatized by its atrocities and especially by the death of his cousin Rocky. This

trauma can only be remedied through pure Indian tradition, with ceremonies conducted by the old man Ku'oosh, aimed at a possible identity reconstruction.

However, beyond all these perceptions, *Ceremony* (1977) introduces Native Americans marked by the civilization and the Christianity of the white man. This observation, coupled with Tayo's return from the Second World War (1939–1945), reminds us that Silko immerses us in a postcolonial Native world, especially after their recognition as Americans through the 1924 "Indian Citizenship Act". According to Philippe Jacquin and Daniel Royot,

Alors que beaucoup d'Américains ne voient des Indiens que dans les premiers westerns, ils se rappellent au souvenir de la nation en s'engageant en masse, 17.313 dont la majorité de l'ouest, dans le premier conflit mondial. Leur sacrifice et leur courage obligent le Congrès à voter la citoyenneté en 1924 pour tous les Indiens.[our translation : While many Americans only see Native Americans in the early Westerns, they remembered the nation by enlisting en masse, 17,313 of whom were mostly from the West, in the First World War. Their sacrifice and courage forced Congress to grant citizenship in 1924 to all Native Americans]” (Philippe Jacquin and Daniel Royot, p. 290).

At this stage, school has finished its daily task of turning Indians into Americans, and civilization had succeeded in its policy of social assimilation. Thorntorn Russel, discussing this disorientation among the Indians, recalls this elderly Chunut woman who almost cried in these words: "I am the last full-blood Chunut left. My children are part Spanish. I am the only one who knows the Chunut or Wowol language. When I am gone, no one will have it. I have to be the last" (Thorntorn Russel, p.186). This account directly relates to Tayo, the protagonist of *Ceremony* (1977) by Leslie Marmon Silko. But unlike this woman's children, who chose to be white, Tayo was able to choose to be Indian by seeking renewal after his terrible trauma upon returning from the war. Can Tayo's case be considered exceptional due to his background and the circumstances of his birth? If that is the case, what can be said about Auntie who attends the white man's church, about Rocky who all his life has always chosen what belongs to the white people and rejected everything from Indian tradition, as Indians? The question of alienation thus finds its meaning here in *Ceremony* (1977).

It should be noted that the entire story of the novel, which is that of Tayo, begins with Rocky's decision to conduct the former to be enlisted in the army. An army that goes to the Second World War in the name of America. Clearly, active participation in this war strengthened the American identity of young Native Americans at the expense

of everything that makes them "les Indiens authentiques [our translation: authentic Indians]" (*Coeurs fiers: voix et visions des Indiens d'Amérique du nord*, p. 104).

Returning to the definition of alienation given by Marx, this war greatly contributed to the alienation of Native youth in *Ceremony* (1977). This new life for Native Americans seems to create two worlds within the Native world, leading Vine Deloria to believe that:

Aujourd'hui, il existe un sentiment de trahison et de jalousie parmi les Indiens dès qu'un autre Indien tente de participer à l'évolution contemporaine [...]. La poursuite de l'isolement sur des bases culturelles et le refus de participation aux mouvements nationaux conduiront seulement à faire disparaître encore une fois notre race qu'on a longtemps dite en voie de disparition. [our translation : Today, it exists a feeling of betrayal and jealousy among Native Americans whenever another Native American tries to participate in contemporary development [...]. The pursuit of isolation on cultural grounds and the refusal to participate in national movements will only lead to the disappearance once again of our race, long said to be on the verge of extinction] (Vine Deloria, p. 28).

This quotation leads us directly to a single question: how do Native Americans, for the most part, view and perceive the effects of colonization that we, as outsiders, consider as alienation?

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