

**BAŞKENT ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
AMERİKAN KÜLTÜRÜ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI
AMERİKAN KÜLTÜRÜ VE EDEBİYATI
YÜKSEK LİSANS PROGRAMI**

**POSTMEMORY AND THE SEARCH FOR IDENTITY
IN CONTEMPORARY NATIVE AMERICAN NOVELS**

HAZIRLAYAN

GİZEMNUR SIRMA

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TEZ DANIŞMANI

DR. ÖĞRETİM ÜYESİ JEFFREY WINSLOW HOWLETT

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ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Leslie Marmon Silko'nun *Seremoni* (1986), Louis Owens'ın *En Keskin Görüş* (1991), Linda Hogan'ın *Güç* (1999) ve Diane Glancy'nin *Ayıyı İtmek: Gözyaşı Yolu'ndan Sonra* (2009) adlı romanlarını romanlarda konu edilen savaşçı kültürü, totem hayvanları, kaybedilen topraklar ve Hristiyan kültürünün etkileri üzerinden Kızılderili kimliğinin yeniden inşa edilmesini ele alışlarını incelemektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Marianne Hirsch'in postmemory kavramını kullanarak eserlerdeki yeni nesillerin kaybedilmiş gelenekler, ritüeller ya da eski kuşakların yaşadığı acı tecrübeler arasında nasıl bir bağ kurmaya çalıştıklarını ortaya koymaktır. Marianne Hirsch'in yaklaşımı çerçevesinde, Kızılderili kimliğini yeniden inşa etme ve yeni anılar yaratma konuları seçilmiş eserlerde incelenecektir.

Anahtar sözcükler: *Ayıyı İtmek: Gözyaşı Yolu'ndan Sonra*, *En Keskin Görüş*, *Güç*, Postmemory, *Seremoni*.

ABSTRACT

This study will analyze Native American traditions, culture and the reconstruction of identity in the novels of four Native American authors ,which include autobiographical elements: Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* (1986), Louis Owens' *The Sharpest Sight* (1991), Linda Hogan's *Power* (1999), and Diane Glancy's *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* (2009). The concepts of warriors, totem animals, the lost land and the traditions of the Native Americans will be discussed. The aim is to analyze the selected novels by using Marianne Hirsch's concept of postmemory in order to show how the next generations bridge the gap between themselves and their culture, history, land, and ancestors which are inseparable for Native Americans. In the light of Hirsch's approach, the reconstruction of Native American identity and creating new memories will be demonstrated.

Keywords: *Ceremony*, Postmemory, *Power*, *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, *The Sharpest Sight*.

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INTRODUCTION

Native Americans used to be described as a society made up of warriors and shamans, a spiritual people living in touch with nature. Native Americans no longer live by these traditions because of colonialism. Many tribes, including the Laguna, Choctaw and Cherokee, used to believe in totem animals and medicine that derives from the spirit. However, over the generations most Indian nations have lost the practice of these ways of life and may never see anyone who practices these old traditions. According to Jeanette Haynes Writer, "[a]s colonization was inflicted upon Native Peoples, the assertion of cultural imperialism in conjunction with colonization laid the foundation for assimilation and cultural genocide" (Writer, 2008, p.6). She also points out that cultural imperialism is "elevated, sanctioned and universalized" the experience of the dominant group over the colonized group and this experience of the dominant group "becomes the norm that all others are obligated to accommodate" (Writer, 2008, p.6). So these cultural practices have never been lived and experienced by most present day Native Americans. According to Roe Bubar and Pamela Jumper Thurman, the boarding school for Native Americans started in 1869 and lasted for one hundred years (Bubar & Thurman, 2004, p.74). Both of them claim that the experience of boarding school for Native Americans "was designed to eradicate traditional culture, family patterns and communal behaviors" (Bubar & Thurman, 2004, p.74). The aim of this thesis is to demonstrate Native American authors, whose novels are used for this study, way of feeling the old traditions and long lost cultural practices by re-imagining these traits and re-constructing a new identity with the help of post-materials such as postmemory, autoethnography and transculturation, allowing the mixture of metropolitan ideas with spirituality as opposed to the predominantly materialistic ideas of white narratives. By the end of this process, Native American authors will reimagine their own lost culture and traditions. These new ideas and the reconstruction of identity can be seen in novels such as Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, Louis Owens' *The Sharpest Sight*, Linda Hogan's *Power* and Diane Glancy's *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*.

Before Europeans' arrival to the New World, "the tribes of North America existed with an intact community self-awareness, and purpose" (Tafoya & Vecchio, 2005, p.57). Each tribe had its own linguistic and cultural backgrounds for educating their young generation. The young generation has to master three areas: "knowledge of cultural heritage, spiritual/religious practices and economic survival skills" (Tafoya & Vecchio,

2005, p.58). These skills are important to maintain the traditions and culture of Native Americans. Storytelling is another important part of Native American traditions. It "ensures cultural continuity" as it passes on "survival skills" to the next generations. Europeans found Natives' way of life and culture primitive (Tafoya &Vecchio, 2005, p.58). Few explorers thought that Native Americans "are complete and practical cultures that do not need 'civilization'"(Tafoya &Vecchio, 2005, p.58).However, the right of teaching the survival skills to the next generation is increasingly taken away from Native Americans by the dominant white culture with the process of colonization.

Leslie Marmon Silko was born on March 5, 1948 and she grew up in Old Laguna, which is a pueblo near Albuquerque, New Mexico. She has mixed ancestry, she is a Laguna Pueblo member from her great-grandmother's side. She is also a part of the Native American Renaissance from 1969 to 1970. According to Allan Chavkin in *Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony: A Casebook*, her first publication was her seven stories in Kenneth Rosen's anthology (Chavkin, 2002). Then *Ceremony* was published in 1977. In his introduction to *Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony: A Casebook*, Allan Chavkin claims that "*Ceremony* has an autobiographical basis" (Chavkin, 2002, p.6). He also states that Silko was depressed at that time and "the novel became a ceremony for its author" because at that time, as Chavkin points out, Silko was also suffering from nausea and headaches just like the protagonist of the novel, Tayo (Chavkin, 2002).

Ceremony is a novel about a WWII veteran called Tayo. Tayo is a mixed-raced character who is half white and half Native American who enlists in WWII with his cousin, Rocky. When they are on the front, Rocky dies and Tayo blames himself for Rocky's death. He suffers from PTSD. His family decides that Tayo needs a medicine man. Tayo is introduced to Old Ku'oosh and he performs a ceremony for him but it does not help. Then Tayo meets Betonie, another medicine man. After they meet, Tayo learns that there is a witchery which is poisoning the world and Tayo's health. With the help of Betonie, Tayo tries to defeat the witchery and tries to rebuild his broken bonds with his Native American heritage.

According to Cynthia Carsten, Silko mixes multiple genres in a single work (Carsten, 2006). Carsten claims that Silko does not use Euro-American aesthetic styles. She uses "narrative patterns of Laguna Pueblo oral" traditions instead of using Euro-American traditions (Carsten, 2006, p.107). According to Carsten,

Silko intentionally rejects the literary conventions of Euro-American genres because they are inherently unsuited to the inscription of Pueblo worldview and lived experience. In addition, these conventions have historically served to maintain and propagate ideologies of domination over American Indian cultures. Silko thus employs strategies of resistance to Euro-American discourses of Native American history and identity that, although clothed in the veneer of objectivity, in actuality rigidly define the possibilities of the real. (Carsten, 2006 p.107-108)

Silko uses her tribe's oral tradition in her writing because she rejects both Euro-American traditions of writing and dominion. On the one hand, Cynthia Carsten claims that for Laguna Pueblo, the stories are bound to the land, they are also connected to the people and the community (Carsten, 2006). So it can be claimed that the religious traditions of Laguna Pueblo are bound to the land as well as people. On the other hand, the religion of the dominant white culture is more like an individual experience according to Carsten (Carsten, 2006). She also claims that the connection between land, individual and community is what defines Laguna Pueblo to Silko and because of this, she rejects the individual experience and autonomy of the dominant white culture. In Silko's vision individuality and autonomy do not define Laguna Pueblo's lifestyle (Carsten, 2006).

Louis Owens was born in Lompac, California on July 18, 1948. He is a member of the Choctaw and Cherokee tribes and of Irish-American descent. He spent his childhood moving between Mississippi and California (Pulitano, 2007). According to Elvira Pulitano, Owens is concerned with the issues of Native American identity and mixed blood topics as well as the influence of Steinbeck in his career (Pulitano, 2007). He committed suicide in 2002.

The Sharpest Sight opens with the dead body of Attis McCurtain, who is a mixed descent of Choctaw and Irish, floating on the river. His dead body is found by his friend, Mundo Morales. As deputy sheriff, Mundo tries to find the culprit of this murder and he seeks justice for his dead friend. After this incident, Attis' brother, Cole goes to his Uncle Luther who lives in the Mississippi swamps. During his stay there, Cole finds out that he has to find his brother's bones in order to put his brother's soul at peace. Cole also learns that there is a story that has been going from the creation of the world and in order not to change the story's course, Cole has to stop his father from avenging Attis' death. During his stay with Uncle Luther, Cole also learns about what it means to be a Native American

member of the Choctaw tribe and to reconstruct his Native American identity in his tribe's hereditary lands.

Diane Glancy was born on March 18, 1941 in Kansas City, Missouri. She is of German-English and Cherokee descent. She teaches creative writing and Native American Literature at Macalester College (Czerny, 2004). She also continues to write poetry, novels, short stories and plays (119). *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* was published in 2009. In *Contemporary American Ethnic Poets*, Sue Czerny states that Glancy's themes are based on her ethnic heritage and that she tries to redefine herself as a Native American (Czerny, 2004).

Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears tells the story of the Cherokees after the Trail of Tears. After their forced removal from their original land in 1838, they arrive in Oklahoma and they start to adapt their lives to the new territory. The Cherokees start to make connection with the new land and they try to settle in. Some of them abandon the old traditions in the new territory and some of them still follow their old traditions in the new location. This historical novel basically tells the difficulty of settling in a new and undesired territory and the effects of a people losing their hereditary lands. During their settlement in the new territory, the Cherokees try to make new memories in order to reconnect with the land.

In "Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears/The Dream of a Broken Field" Molly McGlennen summarizes that the novel is part of historical fiction because it contains historical documents of the Cherokees (McGlennen, 2013) and the novel is also a part of creative nonfiction which can be thought, as Mary Louise Pratt suggests, an autoethnographic text because the author gets her inspiration from real events that had happened and from her ancestors. It can be argued that Glancy's intention for writing her novel by using elements of historical fiction and creative nonfiction is to oppose the dominant materialistic ideas of white narratives.

Linda Hogan was born in Denver on the 16th of July, 1947. She is a member of the Chickasaw tribe. She grew up on Chickasaw "relocation land" outside of Ardmore in Gene Autry, Oklahoma (Sail Bibliography, 1984, p.2). It is claimed that in "Sail Bibliography" in *Studies in American Indian Literatures* that Hogan's "grandparents and father kept the history and legends of their people alive by recreating them orally" (Sail Bibliography, 1984, p.2). In *Contemporary American Women Fiction Writers: An A- to- Z Guide*, Ellen

L. Arnold claims that "much of Hogan's work centers on the genocide and dispossession of indigenous peoples that began with the European conquest of North America" (Champion, 2002, p.131). *Power* was published in 1998.

Power tells the story of 16-year old Omishto and her friend Ama. Omishto and Ama are members of Taiga tribe and the panther clan members think that they are descendants of the panthers. Omishto basically lives with her mother and sister, who forget their heritage as Native Americans, and a step-father. Omishto feels closer to Ama, who is a distant relative, than to her mother. One day a storm starts and nearly destroys everything. Omishto and Ama are together in the storm. After the storm ends, they start to follow a panther and eventually Ama kills the panther. After this incident, Omishto and Ama find themselves in the courtroom. They are accused of killing an endangered panther. In this whole situation, Omishto deals with competing claims to the natural environment and ultimately learns about her clan and her Native American heritage.

These novels and the issues they explore may be explained more clearly by applying the idea of postmemory. In *Generation of Postmemory*, what Marianne Hirsch generally talks about is a process relevant to rebuilding a Native American identity. Marianne Hirsch asks questions that are in her mind about the victims of the Holocaust;

What do we owe the victims? How can we best carry their stories forward, without appropriating them, without unduly calling attention to ourselves, and without, in turn, having our own stories displaced by them? How are we implicated in the aftermath of crimes we did not ourselves witness? (Hirsch, 2012, p.2)

She emphasizes the impossibility of describing the pain of others and talking about the memories that a person does not have. Because of these thoughts, she came up with a term called "postmemory."

According to Hirsch,

that descendants of victim survivors as well as of perpetrators and of bystanders who witnessed massive traumatic events connect so deeply to the previous generation's remembrances of the past that they identify that connection as a form of *memory*, and that, in certain extreme circumstances, memory *can* be transferred to those who were not actually there to live an event.(Hirsch, 2012, p.3)

In other ways, the traumatic memory that the older generations had can be transferred to the next generations even though they were not to live those memories themselves. In

short, a person can be deeply moved by the older generations' memories and eventually a person can start to feel that these memories are mixing with his/her own memories and a person feels that these memories can be claimed as personal lived memories.

Before explaining what postmemory is, Hirsch asks some questions about her family's past and wonders how she knows about those memories. She asks questions such as,

why could I recall particular moments from my parents' wartime lives in great detail and have only very few specific memories of my own childhood, I began to wonder? Why could I describe the streets, residences, and schools of pre-World War I Czernowitz and interwar Cernaui, ... all moments and sites that preceded my birth. (Hirsch, 2012, p. 4)

The same issue can be raised for *Ceremony*, *The Sharpest Sight*, *Power* and *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*. In these books, the characters have a tragic past as members of Native American society. They lost their traditions, language, and land because of colonialism. And also they faced genocide as did Holocaust survivors. In a way, it can be thought that the next generations of Holocaust survivors and the next generations of Native Americans experienced the same situation, often stretching across several generations, and that is why both of them can be counted as postmemory generations.

According to Hirsch,

"Postmemory" describes the relationship that the "generation after" bears to the personal, collective, and cultural trauma of those who came before-to experiences they "remember" only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up. But these experiences were transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to *seem* to constitute memories in their own right. Postmemory's connection to the past is thus actually mediated not by recall but by imaginative investment, projection, and creation....These events happened in the past, but their effects continue into the present. This is, I believe, the structure of postmemory and the process of its generation (Hirsch, 2012, p.5).

Stories are important to Native Americans because they "remember" how the previous generations lived their lives, observed their traditions, and lost their land. It can be argued that their most powerful connection with the past is their stories. That is why the next generations accept these stories as their own memories and mold them in a way that modern world situations can reveal them as a new form of ceremony. Diane Glancy explains the how postmemory serves her works in these words:

memory is the first thing that you pass through to get to poetry. In the contest I'm judging, everyone's writing about "my grandmother." But when you start writing about yourself, about your family, memory is there. It is the informer of the poetic text. I also think we carry racial memory, generational memory, with us, a spirit DNA that brings us into line. I've found that memory when I write, for instance in *Pushing the Bear*, about the Cherokee history. As I traveled over the land those voices were there. I never heard them with my ear, but in my imagination. For all my books I drive and pick up rocks. I have a wonderful collection of rocks, and I have a wonderful collection of voices in all of my books. I could not have written *Sacajawea* without the land, or *Flutie*, *The Mask-Maker*, all those books I traveled back to Oklahoma for. (Andrews & Glancy, 2002, p.651)

It can be said that what she thinks about memory can be identified as the root of American Indian postmemory again. Because, in postmemory, one must make use of the memories that he or she never lives and Glancy does the exact same thing because she thinks that DNA and an encounter with the land brings the memories. She hears an imaginary voice in her head while travelling and after that experience she writes *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*. It can be assumed that while hearing an imaginary voice, she was also imagining the past lives of Cherokees.

In her essay, Amy J. Elias states

The American Indian writer, whose history typically was either erased or ideologically reshaped by the state of colonization in which he is (or was) located, would not have a history that was part of the public sphere except in its traces or its redefined form within the new national mythos.(Elias, 1999, p.191)

It is clear that because Native American writers do not have access to their traditions and history they have to re-imagine their traditions and history as well as their identity. As Elias stated before, this might be considered the new national mythos (Elias, 1999, p.191) or new native identity. This idea also supports the idea of postmemory.

On the one hand, according to Rosalind Morris "...post" functions like a Post-it that adheres to the surface of texts and concepts, adding to them and thereby also transforming them in the form of a Derridean supplement" (Hirsch, 2012, p.5). In a way, postmemory resembles the process of overwriting a text. As with post-its, you can add more information you already have on a subject. With post-its, you can transform the already known subject into a new one. This process also allows for new writing over the original concepts. Thus, it gives contemporary authors a space to insert their voices and to continue developing the subject.

According to Hirsch, postmemory is "... a *structure* of inter- and transgenerational return of traumatic knowledge and embodied experience" (Hirsch 2012, p.6). Postmemory can be identified as a structure and a creative process more than a movement or idea. In a way, it might be easy to apply postmemory to literature because it provides a narrative structure that can be adapted by authors of literature or even graphic novels. Hirsch read *Maus* (1980-1991) by Art Spiegelman and according to her, it can be a really good example for showing the structure of postmemory. *Maus* tells a story about a father and son. The father tells his memories about Auschwitz to his son. The son internalizes the stories as if they were his memories. After reading *Maus*, Hirsch began to realize that the generation that had nothing to do with the older generation and their memories, expresses and transfers those memories to themselves as if they own those memories.

However, it is important that postmemory should not be confused with cultural memory. In *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*, Jan Assmann draws a line between communicative memory and cultural memory. According to Assmann, communicative memory consists of "historical experiences of individual biographies which arise from interaction of everyday" and it also involves "organic memories" (Assmann, 2011, p.41). Assmann also states that cultural memory consists of "mythical history of origins or events in an absolute past which forms in ceremonial communication or festivals" (Assmann, 2011, p.41). In Native Americans' case, there may be some degree of cultural memory. During the American Indian Movement of the 1970s, the elders on large remote reservations like Pine Ridge in South Dakota transmitted traditional cultural values to young urban Indians returning to the reservations for the first time. These teachings spread far beyond the Lakota tribe and were adopted and revised by young Indians around the country who did not have such elders to deliver a living tradition. So, there may be a hybrid process of cultural memory and postmemory at work in some of the novels which are chosen for this thesis. Hirsch suggests that "the structure of postmemory clarifies how the multiple ruptures and radical breaks introduced by trauma and catastrophe inflect intra-, inter-, and transgenerational inheritance" (Hirsch, 2012, p.33). Hirsch also states that what postmemory does is "reactivate and re-embody memories by reinvesting them" (Hirsch, 2012, p.33). It can be said that postmemory is not just remembering the memories as they are. Postmemory means owning that memory and transforming that memory into your own. In other words,

postmemory works to "reinforce the *living* connection between past and present, between the generation of witnesses and survivors and the generation after" (Hirsch, 2012, p.48).

Photos are also an important issue for Hirsch because photos are deeply connected with postmemory. For the purpose of explaining the importance of photos for postmemory, Hirsch gives example of the photos that display the Nazi genocide. According to Hirsch,

These photos... cannot be redeemed by irony, insight, or understanding. They can only be confronted again and again, with the same pain, the same incomprehension, the same distortion of the look, the same mortification. And thus, they no longer represent Nazi genocide but, in their very repetition, they provoke the traumatic effect that this history has had on all who grew up under its shadow (Hirsch, 2012, p.120).

Postmemory means confrontation and memories cannot be taken back but they can only be confronted. For instance, all of the characters from the four books that are chosen for this thesis, have to look at the land that is stolen from them. They have to live, breathe, and sleep on the land that once belonged to them. However, now the land does not belong to them and they have lost their language and traditions along with the land. They are living on land like second-class citizens. They can confront these facts but they cannot change what happened.

According to Hirsch, watching visual documentaries makes a person a witness about what you see (Hirsch, 2012, p.164). She gives an example from a movie that has three children in the movie as a witness. She states that

they are witnesses not to the event but to its visual documentary records.... it seems to me that this representation of the child witness can tell us a great deal about the visual encounter with the child victim. As we see the children watching, it appears to us as if the images are projected right onto their skin, embodying memory and transmitting its bodily wounds (Hirsch, 2012, p.164).

In a way, her ideas about the child victim can be considered as truth because the person who sees a visual documentary about a specific subject is exposed to new information about the subject. Seeing it in a visual documentary makes it real in that person's eyes and also it makes that person a witness of postmemory because that person is already exposed to the information that he/she sees and absorbed the new information.

As an extension of the postmemory impulse, Native American fiction also ties in with the larger literature of trauma studies. Trauma studies' subject can derive from

traumatic and tragic events that happened to a person or to a nation such as genocide. In the book called *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, Dominic LaCapra explains trauma as well as traumatic memory. According to him,

In traumatic memory the event somehow registers and may actually be relived in the present, at times in a compulsively repetitive manner. It may not be subject to controlled, conscious recall. But it returns in nightmares, flashbacks, anxiety attacks, and other forms of intrusively repetitive behavior characteristic of an all-compelling frame. (LaCapra, 1998, p.89)

In other words, traumatic events revisit the person and make him/her live those traumatic events in the present without having any control over those events. It can be argued that Tayo experiences exactly the same situation in *Ceremony*. He always has nightmares and when he remembers those traumatic memories, he becomes sick. The war becomes for him a trigger for all past cultural traumas endured by Laguna people. Cole from *The Sharpest Sight*, Omishto from *Power* and Cherokees from *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* are not suffering from flashbacks or nightmares but they are also influenced by tragic events. For instance, Cole does not know if he can count himself as Native American and he is having an identity crisis. Omishto's case is not very different from Cole. She is also having an identity crisis and she is also suffering from the guilt of witnessing the killing of a sacred animal even though the sacred animal is in a very bad shape. Cherokees are dealing with an unyielding land everyday and they try so hard to make this unyielding land their home.

In trauma studies, it can be claimed that memory also has an important part along with history. According to Shang Biwu,

History and memory have the same function of representing the past, which makes their relationship complicated. On the one hand, history and memory are rivals, since they compete with each other in representing the past; on the other hand, they are partners, since they work together to represent the past. Noteworthy, memory can also create history, because what is told from the memory will be eventually integrated into history. (Biwu, 2015, p.68)

In other words, history and memory are closely connected with each other but the relationship between them is complicated. This relationship can be seen in selected novels for this thesis. For instance, in *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, the reader is experiencing the memories of the Cherokee tribe. The author is drawing upon tribal history

and memory in order to create this experience. The book even has several examples of original government records in it. So it can be said that Diane Glancy achieves a sense of authentic history as well as memory. As Shang Biwu believes "memory can create history" in this sense (Biwu, 2015, p.68).

The impact of trauma depends on the representation of traumatic events in the novel. In *Trauma Fiction*, Anne Whitehead believes that "novelists have frequently found that the impact of trauma can only adequately be represented by mimicking its forms and symptoms, so that temporality and chronology collapse, and narratives are characterized by repetition and indirection" (Whitehead, 2011, p.3). In other words, in order to archive the impact of trauma, novelists should imitate the symptoms of trauma. For instance, Tayo is suffering from PTSD in *Ceremony*. How can it be understood? Because of his habitual behavior and the way he consistently reacts to his traumatic memories and flashbacks previous to his healing ceremonies. It is easy to understand that he is suffering from PTSD. Attis can be given as an example also. In *The Sharpest Sight*, it is true that the reader cannot see Attis in action as much as Tayo; however, it can be understood that Attis is also suffering from PTSD and even killed his girlfriend because of this condition. There are many illustrations in this literature that, as Whitehead claims, the impact of trauma depends on the mimicking of real symptoms of trauma and both novels can be given as examples on this subject.

In *Trauma Fiction*, Anne Whitehead also gives a brief definition about trauma fiction. According to her,

The term 'trauma fiction' also signals the recent journey of the concept of trauma from medical and scientific discourse to the field of literary studies.(...)The formal recognition of PTSD was the result of sustained political campaigning by Vietnam veterans, who organised agitation groups against the continuation of the war. (Whitehead, 2011, p.4)

Attis from *The Sharpest Sight* is a perfect example of a Vietnam veteran, who is suffering from PTSD. Attis makes clear the identification of the Vietnam War veteran with PTSD. Tayo can be given as an example also since this type of trauma would have been well known by the time Silko was writing *Ceremony*. Seeing the horrors of a war is enough to give a person traumatic experience and the authors of these novels are trying to show these aspects of the war by using the traits of trauma fiction. Whitehead also claims that trauma can be transmitted to the next generations. It can be deduced that transmitting traumas can

be considered as postmemory. Because postmemory means the transmission of the memories that a person did not live, however, a person can remember those memories as if they are his or hers. The memories stay with that person after the transmission just like trauma (Whitehead, 2011, p.4).

Marianne Hirsch expresses the difference between memory and postmemory. For Hirsch, postmemory cannot go beyond memory therefore, memory and postmemory are two different concepts because of the distance from history and the personal connection. Hirsch advocates that postmemory is a process of narration and imagination which reflects back on memory (Hirsch, 1992, p.8-9). In other words, postmemory can be considered as a marker which differentiates between the memory of generational distance and that of history because of the personal connection created from these memories.

In the interview entitled "Gender, Memory and Connective Genocide Scholarship", Hirsch points out the importance of holocaust studies on to theorize some questions about the history of genocide. According to Hirsch,

... [h]olocaust studies has been influential because of the way it has been able to theorize some of the questions that these histories have in common: questions of transmission, of memorialization, questions of testimony and witness, questions of language in the aftermath of such a total annihilation of a culture, such destruction of a social fabric. (Hirsch, 2015, p.388)

Certainly, postmemory is an important aspect of genocide studies. It connects the generation that did not experience those traumatic events, with the generation that actually lived those events. Further, Hirsch extends the possible applications of this theory to other historical situations characterized by severely unbalanced power relationships, and the ongoing holocaust of many Native American tribes must be considered among them.

In "Projected Memory: Holocaust, Photographs in Personal and Public Fantasy", Marianne Hirsch defines postmemory as the distance between the original memory and the next generation that comes after the original memory. According to Hirsch,

...an enormous distance must be bridged and, in the specific case of Holocaust memory, that distance cannot ultimately be bridged; the break between then and now, between the one who lived it and the one who did not, remains monumental and insurmountable, even as the heteropathic imagination struggles to overcome it. (Hirsch, 1999, p.9)

In other words, there is a great distance between the original memories of the Holocaust survivors and the next generation that didn't live those memories. She claims that the distance cannot be bridged even though the next generation uses their imagination in order to overcome the distance. Postmemory becomes a signifier of a distance which cannot be bridged. In the selected novels, the main characters try to bridge that gap by returning to old traditions and take what they need to turn it into a new tradition which grows from the original traditions.

In "Science Fiction and Postmemory Han in Contemporary Korean American Literature", Seo-Young Chu explains what "han" means. According to her, the word has no proper translation to English, however, it basically "refers to a Korean form of grief" (Chu, 2008, p.97). In other words, it can be said that Koreans seem to experience grief in a different way. Seo-Young Chu also adds that the feeling of "han" to postmemory and she claims that "Postmemory han is a paradox: the experience being remembered is at once virtual and real, secondhand and familiar, long ago and present" (Chu, 2008, p.99). Thus, according to Seo-Young Chu, a person who is experiencing postmemory, is stuck within a paradox. Because the memory that is remembered will feel real and unreal or past and present at the same time. In the same way, Native American authors have a unique way of experiencing loss and grief. In their narratives, too, the "real" is not always distinguishable from tribal traditions or beliefs from the past. This paradox is also a condition of the prevalent form of representation in contemporary Native American novels.

The wounded hero and postmemory can be considered as relatable concepts. In *The Wounded Hero in Contemporary Fiction: A Paradoxical Quest*, Jean Michel Ganteau and Susan Onega gives the definition of the wounded hero in the "Introduction" chapter. According to Ganteau and Onega, "wounded hero(ine) immersed in a paradoxical life quest that involves the embracing, rather than the overcoming, of suffering, alienation, and marginalisation as a form of self-definition" (Onega & Ganteau, 2018, p.7-8). In "Powers of Exposure: Risk and Vulnerability in Contemporary British Fiction", Jean Michel Ganteau gives the protagonist of Ian McEwan's novel, *Saturday*, as a character who "experiences the present as a repetition of past wounds" (Ganteau, 2017, p.446). In other words, the wounded hero can be identified as a person who experiences "repetition of the past wounds" in the quest for self-definition by embracing the past wounds.

Autoethnographic text is very important and very relevant concept to postmemory in terms of the novels which are selected for this study. In "Arts of Contact Zone", Mary Louise Pratt explains what autoethnographic text means. According to her, the autoethnographic text is "...a text in which people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made them (Pratt, 1991, p.35)." In other words, these kinds of texts want to intervene in the metropolitan modes of understanding the marginals. These texts are "representations that the so-defined others construct in response to or in dialogue with those texts" (Pratt, 1991, p.35). It can be considered that autoethnographic texts are trying to re-write the already constructed identity imposed on "others" by the dominant metropolitan culture. She also claims that "such texts often constitute a marginalized group's point of entry into the dominant circuits of print culture (Pratt, 1991, p.35)." In the light of her idea, she gives an example from an American slave autobiography because who could have told it better than a person who lived the incident actually? The same process is frequently put into action in Native American novels. Silko and Owens have both included biographical details in their fiction. Glancy, of course, offers a broader Cherokee ethnography. It is clear that the writers of the books that are selected specifically for this thesis also have the same ideas as Pratt. All four novels contain elements of autoethnographic texts because they arise from a marginalized group within the dominant white culture and these marginals are telling their stories by themselves with the help of ideas and practices from their traditional perspective.

Pratt states that these texts include more than one language most of the time and she also realizes that such narratives tend to feature the "conquered subject using the conqueror's language (Pratt, 1991, p.35)" as the normal practice. For instance, the selected books for this thesis are all in English. The authors try to convey their traditions and memories by means of English. However, in some parts of the books, they use their tribal language: such as in *The Sharpest Sight*, "koi" means panther. This can be considered that Owens also tries to reconnect with his lost culture and traditions and that he tries to preserve it in language. He may also be challenging the white audience by showing a perspective that does not privilege English terms or ways of understanding.

In *Imperial Eyes*, Pratt continues her ideas about subordinated groups in literature. She claims that "in these case studies I make a strong methodological assumption: that important historical transitions alter the way people write, because they alter people's experiences and the way people imagine, feel and think about the world they live in (Pratt,

2008, p.4)." For Native Americans, it can be said that historical transitions started during the colonial period. After that event, everything changed in Native Americans' lives. Bit by bit, colonies occupied the land of the Native Americans. They were exiled from their own lands and they often had to move on to new territories. And they tried to adapt to their new life in their new territories. Parts of their lifestyles and culture were banned by the government such as ghost-dances or other ceremonies which were performed by the shamans of the tribe. It can be claimed that these radical transitions in Native Americans' life forced them to adopt writing and thus to feel and think and even imagine differently than before. Pratt demonstrates Guaman Poma's letter as an example of the new mode of expression (autoethnography) that became necessary after the Spanish conquest in order to challenge the abuses inflicted on native people (Pratt, 2008, p.5). It is clear that Native Americans have seen abuse and exploitation of their land and their rights when the colonists first set foot on North America. The writers of the selected books for this thesis write about white people's exploitation and abuse in detail. For instance, in *Ceremony*, white culture didn't create the witchery, but as a product of it, they make sure that witchery continues its nasty workings. The government also conducts nuclear experiments in the desert which is near the reservations on which Native Americans are living. White popular culture treats Native Americans as second-class citizens and yet the propaganda urging national unity makes Native Americans fight in their wars. In *Power*, because of the pollution that the dominant industrial culture creates, there is literally no place to live for an endangered species like panthers. In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, white intruders exile the Cherokees from their own land. They practically send the Cherokees to the places that they do not know. In *The Sharpest Sight*, the American government again uses Native Americans as manpower in their wars and they do not care if Native Americans survive the war or not. However, the authors of the novels whose works are studied for this thesis agree that the biggest exploitation and abuse that white culture had done to Native Americans is taking away their land, their traditions, their languages, and their culture.

Native American writers challenge the practices and values of the dominant white culture by generating their own narratives from the marginal perspective and making use of transculturation. Pratt claims that "ethnographers have used this term to describe how subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant or metropolitan culture" (Pratt, 2008, p.7). It can be claimed that the

subordinated groups choose materials that are introduced to them by the dominant white culture such as the novel and its conventions in English and they use these methods to create their own style of writing or expressing themselves by injecting the narratives with Native American cultural elements and perspectives. In all cases, it is clear that the writers of the selected books are using this method. They are using English as their language and they are also using Eurocentric writing style but they are telling their own stories, sufferings, traditions, and memories.

For hundreds of years, Native American peoples suffered an attack not just on their lands and populations but also on their religions, beliefs and ways of life. This traumatic experience has been carried out over the years, finally dispossessing the surviving tribe members of their cultural identities. There is no way to reclaim the lost people and the ways of life that died with them. A gap often spanning many generations creates the post-memory situation of Native Americans in the present. Contemporary Native American authors grasp at a collection of traditional ideas with the help of postmemory in order to construct a new sense of self and create narratives that imaginatively connect with the vanished past. The traditional storytelling methods that they use to oppose the assumptions of the dominant white culture's construction of reality. It has the power to challenge binary structures. Since medicine is a term that indicates magic, healing, and spirit for Native Americans, their unique storytelling can function as medicine. Native American authors can develop a new sense of Indian identity borrowing from the beliefs of the past and combining them with the products of the prevailing white European American culture.

THE WOUNDED WARRIOR: RECONSTRUCTING NATIVE IDENTITY IN THE FACE OF WAR

The warrior often performs a significant role in Native American societies, their culture, and their lifestyle. However, the level of importance varies from tribe to tribe. Being a warrior is connected to an ancient tradition and it is an essential part of the expression of their spirit (What Does It Mean to Be a Warrior, n.d.). Being a warrior is more than just fighting, it means to serve the community and to protect the land (What Does It Mean to Be a Warrior, n.d.). Chris McNab points out that the warrior and warfare skills of Native Americans evolves from the traditional hunting skills (McNab, 2016). They mostly use the strategies of "ambush, cover ... attack silently" (McNab, 2016, p11). McNab also acknowledges that the Indian concept of war and European concept of war are two different things (McNab, 2016). On the one hand, Europeans "annihilate or dominate Indians" (McNab, 2016, p.11). On the other hand, Native Americans understanding of warfare depends upon "attack, inflict casualties and withdraw" (McNab, 2016). According to Patty Loew, the warrior means the protector and the provider of the land (What Does It Mean to Be a Warrior, n.d.). Moreover, Juri Abe points out that warfare provides an opportunity for young Native Americans to show their bravery and warfare also provides them acknowledgement within the tribe (Abe, 2007). Abe also claims that many tribes give special honor to warriors and in this way, warriors gain an honorable place in Native American society (Abe, 2007).

As for warriors from Laguna Pueblo and the Choctaw tribe, there are some sources on the subject. In his book, *The Origin Myth of Acoma Pueblo*, Edward Proctor Hunt, talks about all Pueblos not just Acoma Pueblo. According to him, only after the warriors of the Pueblos performed a scalp ceremony for the victims that they killed, could the victorious warriors be honored for bravery (Hunt, 2015). This proves that there is a warrior tradition in the Pueblos and that Tayo participates in that tradition. The tribe represented in *Ceremony* had warrior traditions, and these traditions figure in their postmemory (re)constructions of identity. In *The Removal of the Choctaw Indians*, Arthur H. De Rosier states that Choctaw warriors joined the American army against the British (Rosier, 1989, p.36). This is the evidence that Cole is following his tribe's warrior tradition. Within the light of the provided information on the warrior traditions of the tribes above, it is not

wrong to assume that among most of the Indian nations of North America, the expected role of the majority of adult males would be to assume the role of warrior. The war chief participated in tribal leadership. Even today, the warrior societies play a role in tribal governance. The position confers a great deal of status and responsibility. As with every social obligation, there is a proper way to comport oneself as a warrior. Compared with the ideas about war of white society, the Native American warrior was obligated to show restraint and respect, to conserve as much as destroy. Since the warrior tradition was so respected in Native American societies, Indians routinely served in the U.S. Army. In "Lead the Way: Researching U.S. Army Indian Scouts, 1866–1914", Trevor K. Plante states that "A year after the fighting ended in the Civil War, Native Americans began serving as enlisted Indian Scouts in the U.S. Army" (Plante, 2009, p.52). And it gave them a chance to earn the respect traditionally bestowed by the position. But does the experience of fighting in WWII or Vietnam bring warriors honor? It might be found that the nature of war has changed. Because as McNab suggests, the concept of war of Native Americans is different from Europeans. While Europeans want to annihilate or dominate their enemies, Native Americans only want to stop the conflict and protect their land. Thus, the honor of the warrior may be damaged. The warrior may be wounded by participating in the kind of war that kills the spirit rather than ennobling it. In this chapter, the case of the wounded warrior in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, Louis Owens' *The Sharpest Sight* will be discussed.

As mentioned before while explaining the connection between trauma studies and the novels which are selected for this thesis, the concept of the wounded hero can be helpful to understand the protagonists of the novels. Briefly, the concept of wounded hero is a person who is embracing his/her past wounds as a form of self-definition. Some of the characters from selected novels can have the traces of wounded hero concept such as Cole from *The Sharpest Sight* and Tayo from *Ceremony*.

Ceremony is an impressive novel about healing and learning to forgive the injustice that has been done to Tayo by the dominant white culture. The novel is about simply moving forward in life and leaving the things that burden one's soul in the process. The main character of the book, Tayo, experiences bitterness towards the world, and feels resentful about the things he had to go through but after working through these negative thoughts, he starts to forgive all the things that happened to him and moves forward,

forgiving his past without burdening his soul any more. Tayo starts his journey as a wounded warrior and learns how to be a true warrior at the end. Tayo is a WWII veteran, who comes home after the war. However, he feels sick after the war and he vomits all the time and his cousin died in the war which makes him a perfect example of being the wounded warrior.

Tayo can be counted as a wounded warrior in two ways: as a war veteran and as a Native American. After the war, there is a drought and this has been going on for six years. Tayo feels responsible for the drought because he had prayed for the rain to stop when he believed the jungle rain was killing Rocky, his cousin. Tayo thinks that the rain damned him with drought on their land to get back at him for cursing the jungle rain. Tayo thinks because of this situation, there is a drought now. By damning the rain, Tayo places himself and his reality within the old Laguna story.

There are two stories going on in the book. The first one is an ancient story which is written as a poem that is about a false magician and his magic tricks. People believed his tricks and that made gods angry. Because of this situation, Gods took away rain and let drought come to their lands as punishment (Silko, 1986, p.46-49). Tayo believes he is experiencing the same process in the book. He cursed the rain and made the gods angry; now he is paying the price for that. The other story is about the witchery that is going on in the book. Like the drought story, witchery is an ancient story and it is written as a poem again. In this story, there is a witch who tells a story and as the witch tells the story, the story begins to come true (Silko, 1986, p.132-138). The poem that begins the spell of witchery may be thought of as an allegory about the colonization process of the U.S. For instance, it is claimed that "they (the dominant white culture) will kill the things that they fear" (Silko, 1986, p.135). The poem is told by a witch and the narrative shows that the wheels of witchery start to spin when the witch begins to tell the story (Silko, 1986, p.135-136). It can be argued that the story is about the colonization of the New World, including the U.S.A. The story began years ago but Tayo and his friends can see it affects still and in a way, they are a part of this wicked story of witchery. In the beliefs of the Pueblo Indians, words, incantations, stories are what create reality for them. That's why stories are important in Native American culture because stories have the power to change one's destiny or create a destiny for someone. And it can be thought that this change in the story leads to another change. It can also be deduced that this meant to happen exactly this way

in order for Tayo to forgive his past and move on. He must experience the pain of his wounds to heal himself and to bring healing to the community at large.

On the one hand, Tayo is sick because of the brutality of war. When Tayo was on the battlefield, he was struggling because he didn't want to kill Japanese soldiers. It can be said that he thinks Japanese soldiers are like the Laguna people. So he could not kill them and, as a result, Tayo is suffering from what the medics call "battle fatigue." He sees hallucinations during the war because of PTSD and they are still with Tayo after the war. Before coming home, Tayo is hospitalized and white doctors try to cure him with their own medicine. They apparently realize that their medicine cannot cure him. But they release him anyway. There may be two reasons for this. One of the reasons is that white doctors don't care about Native Americans. The other reason is white doctors are obviously unaware of the traditional healing methods. There is no way for them to see the psychic and cultural battles being fought within Tayo. It is understood that he needs to reconnect to traditional ways and mix them with his modern existence.

On the other hand, it can be assumed that Tayo is disturbed by what he has seen on the battlefield and the traumas that he has had on the battlefield. However, he is also disturbed because the medics haven't given him the necessary spiritual and psychological support to process his cousin's death. They only give drugs to him to keep him "stable." He becomes numb as a result of the medical treatment. In order to prevent him from harming himself out of his grief, doctors keep him stable and he looks like he is not alive. He lives in a giant white smoke in his head (Silko, 1986, p.14-15). The drugs make him worse by masking his memories and pain.

When Tayo was in hospital, there was a moment where he felt like a white smoke without consciousness (Silko, 1986, p.14). According to David A. Rice from "Witchery, Indigenous Resistance, and Urban Space in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*",

the colonial implications for Indian identity are clearly marked in this passage, as Tayo's thin cloud of self is inhaled by the white doctors who diagnose, categorize, anesthetize, and otherwise control his body, and he is absorbed by the very walls and tables of the industrialized antiseptic setting of the urban hospital. During his ghostly wanderings through the hospital, he is completely disconnected from the world outside. He can't even imagine himself home; the best he can do is dream he is far away (Rice, 2005, p.119).

In other words, the effects of colonization can be seen through the doctor's treatment for Tayo. The doctors keep him "sedated" without consciousness most of the time as the dominant white culture generally does to Native Americans.

Tayo and all his friends from the army have a drinking problem. They are drinking while talking about their stories of courage from the war. Mostly they are trying to mask their true feelings about the war and their resentment about how they are treated after the war by telling courageous memories. For instance, Emo always talks about how he killed Japanese soldiers and the women who he was with during war times. By telling these stories, he tries to prove that he took part in the war. He wants the same treatment from whites that he got in wartime. He wants white women to see him and he also wants the fake glory so that everyone accepts him. He is living by the dominant culture's violent and vainglorious narrative of war. It can be seen that the Native American soldiers forget what they lived on the battlefield even if it is just for some time. Yet they want the fake glory that they "earned" there. The effects of war can still be seen on their minds and lives through the stories that they told. They speak of the events like it was the best time of their life. It can be deduced that apart from the trauma that they experienced there, they simply miss the war times because in that time they were visible and they were a mainstream part of the nation. In war time, they were accepted by the white society as a part of their country and they want the same treatment after the war.

White women only acknowledge the existence of Native Americans during the war in the war stories that Tayo's friends always talk about (Silko, 1986, p.40-41). However, white women only see their uniforms not Native Americans. It can be said that Native Americans mean nothing to them; what is important is the uniform that they are wearing. They notice Native Americans because of their uniforms. Uniforms are external. They are in the realm of appearances only. They present a front, not a core. The word uniform itself means standardized, stripped of difference. Thus, white women want Native Americans who want to be part of mainstream white culture.

However, Tayo is not accepted by either side: the white people or the Native Americans. The white culture doesn't accept him because he is a member of Native American society. Native Americans don't accept him because he is a "half-breed." Tayo has a strange relationship even with the members of his own family. For instance, his Auntie has been taking care of him since he was 4 years old. However, she does not want

her son to spend time with Tayo because Tayo is a "half-breed." It can be said that Tayo is a constant reminder to his Auntie of what her sister did with white males before she had Tayo. Tayo's mother went out with lots of men and they were white men. Auntie is ashamed of her sister's behavior so that she cannot accept Tayo as equal to his son in the family. Of course, Auntie is ashamed of her sister because of race and because of her religious views about sex. Auntie thinks that her sister's promiscuity is the unforgivable sin. Auntie regards Tayo as an outsider, not a member of their family. Tayo is a burden on her shoulders and a source of shame to her and her family. Tayo is wounded on this topic also. For instance, Emo harasses Tayo for being "half-breed" any chance he gets. It can be said that these types of attitudes damage Tayo's sense of belonging to his tribe.

Tayo is also not accepted in the white culture. The army recruiter says "Anyone can fight for America... even you boys" (Silko, 1986, p.64). This sentence means white culture does not accept Native Americans but, as long as they are at their service, the white culture can accept them in their society. It can be concluded that their attitude also destroys Tayo's sense of belonging to white people's society. Tayo doesn't have as much faith as Rocky has in white knowledge and beliefs. He seems to be more traditional; however, he tries to be a part of the white culture by joining the war with Rocky even though it is a slight chance for belong to white society.

In "'Settling' History: Understanding Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, *Storyteller*, *Almanac of the Dead* and *Garden in the Dunes*" Denise K. Cummings mentions that most of the "scholars suggest that *Ceremony* is the author's attempt to find a particular strength within what has most universally been treated as the 'tragic' fact of mixed blood existence" (Cummings, 2000, p.74). The main character of the book, Tayo, is also a mixed blood and he has to face the struggles of being a mixed blood. This struggle can be seen through his rocky relationship with his aunt and especially with Emo. Emo does not want Tayo near him because of his mixed blood existence. It can be claimed that the dominant white culture does not accept Tayo also because of the same existence. This "'tragic' fact of mixed blood existence" isolates Tayo.

In *Ceremony*, there is a story about witchery and this story is connected to the story of Tayo. The story of witchery mirrors the events of colonization of Native Americans and it displays the sufferings of Native Americans. According to the witchery story, the witchery does not start with whites but it uses the whites as its tool. They are not creating

the witchery but they are a part of the witchery. Because white people dispossess the Natives of their land in the first place when they came and established their colonies. After they enlisted young Natives to fight on their side, the white culture leads Natives to become "wounded warriors." It can be assumed that the witchery and the evil-doings are connected to white people but they are merely tools of the overpowering witchery.

But fighting against these evil doings and the witchery is not as easy as it was before. It requires a new kind of ceremony to fight because the old practices are not working against it. So the wounded warriors have to create their own kind of ceremony by mixing old ways and new ways. They have to perform this ceremony to cure and cleanse themselves and their lands from the witchery and evil doings of the corrupted white people. So it can be said that the witchery and evil-doing are not coming from the original battlefield, they are coming from the white people's love for war, which is a symptom of witchery. Maybe it explains their endless desire to fight for what is not theirs by right and what they don't deserve to have in the first place. This stems from the same ancient spell.

In "Witchery, Indigenous Resistance, and Urban Space in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*" David A. Rice presents his thoughts about the urbanization and its effects on Native Americans. According to Rice,

The place of the city in Silko's cultural dynamic is crucial; urbanization represents an essential element of Euramerican destructiveness and a necessary aspect of Native American syncreticism and growth in her novel. She insists that, in order to progress, Indians, and indeed all people, must be transformative in their worldviews and approaches to the destructive forces of urbanization and industrialization (Rice, 2005, p.115).

So the urbanization of the land is important and it is crucial element for the reader to see the destructive effects of the urbanization to the land and to Native Americans. In order to go forward, Native Americans have to adapt their traditions to the new demands of the world that they live in. Rice also claims that Native Americans can feel the effects of urbanization through "their experience abroad in the war, their time away from the reservation and in the city particularly" (Rice, 2005, p.116). With these experiences, it can be said that it is easy to see the contrast between the traditional views of Native Americans and the values of Euromericans.

It can be said that Native Americans are more spiritual and they are more connected to the spiritual world, compared to the white people. It can be thought that there is no

separation between the real world and the spiritual world for the Native Americans. They accept both worlds and they live in both worlds. That's why the ceremonies are so important to them because they can feel the connection between the real world and the spiritual world at the same time. It can be argued that the dominant white culture knows this connection and tries to destroy that connection so that Native Americans never recover from their witchery and evil doings anymore. If they achieve what they want from the beginning, Native Americans will never have that bond with the two worlds and Native Americans will have to submit to the dominant culture and Native Americans will also lose their identity and traditions forever. In a way, ceremonies can be thought of as a search for identity. Like the ceremonies, a new adaptation is necessary. Identities must be developed, constructed, re-imagined according to the prevailing circumstances.

The central issue in the novel is the stories. Özlem Özen states her ideas of storytelling by saying:

the act of story-telling is also significant because it recreates the narrative. Hence, it shapes the culture and the universe as well. From this sense, telling stories becomes a means of survival for the collective past and for the ongoing process of culture-transmission. (Özen, 2008, p.167)

According to Özen, it is clear that storytelling is an important part of Native American culture. It can be argued that storytelling is reshaping culture and tradition. With storytelling, it is possible to pass on the stories to the next generations also. Suzanne M. Austgen also points out that storytelling is not only transmitting culture and traditions to the next generations, it is also a ceremony which is forming a bridge between the land's mythical creatures and Native Americans (Austgen, n.d.). Because their life depends on rituals which are coming from myths. In other words, stories are connecting the spiritual beings of the land with Native Americans. That's why it can be claimed that telling stories can work like healing ceremonies. Because stories can help to fight with the witchery. In a sense, they can be used as weapons against the witchery that the white people carry. It can be said that stories can be considered as the pieces that make you who you are. For instance, a person can learn about his/her traditions from stories or how his/her ancestors lived before them. It can be claimed that Tayo experiences this situation in the book. When he was little, Tayo's teacher told the class that the flies are dirty creatures and later Tayo started to kill them one by one. His Uncle Josiah told Tayo that years before the fly went to talk to the goddess who is cross with humans and after the fly's talk, the goddess forgives

humans. It can be seen in the example that the stories can help you know your ancestors and traditions. Further, as we see throughout the novel, stories create the reality that is lived in the present. That is why it can be said that the white people also try to destroy the stories as well as the ceremonies because they are tied together. If the Native Americans lost their stories and the ceremonies, their tradition would be lost also. It can be argued that after Native Americans lost their land to the white people, Native Americans don't want to lose their stories and tradition this time.

Ceremonies are performed for war veterans to cleanse them from the action of killing. Paula Gunn Allen in *The Sacred Hoop* states that Tayo's sickness comes from the separation from the land and his people and his original tribal ways (Allen, 1992, p.167-168). Native Americans believe that the land has a soul and the people who are living on it have a connection, a bond, with the land, unlike white people who believe that land can be bought and sold. In order to turn back to his old self, he has to be connected with the land again, through a ceremony.

Allen also says that Tayo needs to learn that "the departed souls are always within and part of the people on earth, that they are still obligated to those living on earth and come back in the form of rain regularly (when all is well) so that death is a blessing on the people, not their destruction" (Allen, 1992, p.173). It can be said that after seeing Harley's death, Tayo begins to realize that all people make their own choices in life and Tayo is not responsible for Rocky's death or Josiah's death. In a way, this realization makes him lift up the guilt that had been crawling inside of him after Rocky's death.

There is a poem about the Scalp Ceremony. This ceremony is performed on the warriors who killed an enemy (Silko, 1986). The first medicine man, Old Ku'oosh, performs this ceremony on Tayo because he is also a warrior who fought in WWII. It can be argued that a warrior can be wounded by hurting and killing someone, and that warrior has to perform a ceremony to become a whole and healthy warrior again. Old Ku'oosh also tells Tayo that this ceremony is not working as well as it did before. It can be said that the white people's influence and the ancient witchery are becoming stronger and the old ceremonies cannot fight against it anymore. So they need to find out new ceremonies to fight back.

After Old Ku'oosh conducts his ceremony, Tayo becomes sick again. So the family tries and finds another medicine man named Betonie. Betonie is not liked by other people

because he makes changes to the old ceremonies. According to him, the old ceremonies have to change because evil things have changed. Betonie performs the ceremony on Tayo. In order to complete it, Tayo has to watch out for the constellation of stars, a herd of cattle, a mountain, and a woman. Betonie also warns him against the witchery which will try to prevent Tayo from completing the ceremony. Tayo is the only one who can finish off the witchery by completing the ceremony. In another words, Tayo, the wounded warrior, can be thought of as the last hope for getting rid of the witchery. So Tayo gets on the road. After Tayo finds the cattle, he is a lot better mentally. He doesn't have any weird dreams and he doesn't feel sick anymore. Instead, it can be said that he makes peace with death and realizes that love is greater than death. Tayo realizes that Josiah and Rocky will always be with him.

According to Tayo, Native Americans and Japanese people lived the same experience of the atomic bomb that the U.S. government made. So in a way, it can be said that their lives are intertwined. This may be the reason why Tayo saw Josiah's face on a Japanese soldier and why he hears mixed Japanese and Laguna voices in his dreams. It can be said that both nations are sacrifices to the destroyer's witchcraft. Also, it can be concluded that the stories of the Laguna and Japanese people fit together.

The ceremony has one thing left to be performed. Tayo has to hold on to his story even as he is changing it. After Emo kidnaps Tayo's friend, Harley, and tortures him instead of Tayo, Tayo comes really close to killing Emo. However, if he kills Emo, Tayo will be another victim as a war veteran and he will actually be helping the spell of witchery by acting violently. It could be used by the forces of witchery to portray Tayo as a war veteran who goes crazy and kills his friend because of the traumas that he lived in the war. But he does nothing and it can be said that he changed his own fate and he didn't become another war victim by following the steps of a new ceremony.

Emo is direct opposite to Tayo and they do not get along with each other because of their different views. According to David Rice,

Tayo hates Emo because Emo is responding to inhumanity in kind and flaunting his participation and perpetuation of the destruction that is slowly devouring the world. The others follow Emo and become emblems of the violence they've both received and caused. In Tayo's eyes, they are emblematic of the destructive encroachment of the violent, witching, white world upon Native peoples (Rice, 2005, p.124).

In other words, Emo is helping to spread witchery and violent behavior. He also resembles the colonizers with his support for destruction. It can be said that Emo is an example of corrupted Native Americans, because he does not follow the traditions and ceremonies of Native Americans. Instead of following these, he is a participant and supporter of destruction and violence.

Tayo tells his story to the elders of his tribe. After they listen to his story, they make another ritual for Tayo. Since he acts to complete the healing on behalf of the tribe, his vision needs to be confirmed by the shaman and elders. So it can be claimed that at last Tayo has a place in his tribe and in his culture even though he is a "half-breed" because he is not a wounded warrior, who is ill by the witchery of white people, anymore. He is a purified man, who is ready to join the tribe and carry on its customs. It can be assumed that he finally belongs to a place. He is a member of the Laguna tribe, who defeated the witchery with his new ceremony and his story. It can be said that Tayo tells his story so that his story will be added to the stories that has been passed on since the beginning of time.

Jae Young Park, in her essay "An Ecological Reading of Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*," claims that the base of Silko's discourse "refuses simple dichotomy and participation in the traditional ceremony" (Park, 2018, p.77). According to Judith Antell, "American Indians have not[...]engaged in protest politics [they] have focused on their customs and traditions" (Antell, 1988, p.219). It can be said that focusing on the traditions works like a coping mechanism for Native Americans. By focusing on the traditions, they can expose and reintegrate the tragedies that they have suffered because of the oppression they faced.

Park also explains why Silko wrote *Ceremony*. According to Park, Silko's purpose "is to show her belief that social justice and the prosperity of the earth are inseparable" (Park, 2018, p.78-79). What she means here is the wrong-doings to the land and to Native Americans are connected to each other. It can be claimed that in order to save the land and keep its prosperity, one has to use the wisdom of the traditions and follow them.

In "A Discussion of *Ceremony*", Carol Mitchell claims that Silko wants her novel to be "a curing ceremony, not just for Indians but for anybody who reads it" (Sands, 1979, p.63). Because according to her, the novel signifies that the past and the present are all one. It can be said that Carol's idea supports the idea of postmemory. In postmemory, the past

and the present is also interwoven together. Susan Scarberry gives her opinion about "the function of memory" (Sands, 1979, p.64). According to her, memory is important because both the reader and the main character have to remember the timeline and the fragmented storyline to follow the story. This idea can also be taken as an example which supports the idea of postmemory. Katleen Sands claims that "active participation and active involvement in memory and healing process" can make a novel an American Indian novel. As Susan Scarberry suggests, both the reader and the main character have to be active to follow the storyline (Sands, 1979, p.64).

In *Generation of Postmemory*, Hirsch points out the importance of photos. According to her, they are the best source that can demonstrate what postmemory is. Reading a book is similar to looking at a photo because while reading a book the reader tries to imagine the passages that he/she reads and tries to see the characters and other imagery in his/her mind. Hirsch uses a photo as an example and she starts to interpret what the work of postmemory is by saying,

... can we not see in the pictures of mass graves, too, a figuration of memory and forgetting that might also be involved in their canonization? The earth is open, the wound is open;...The work of postmemory, in fact, is to uncover the pits again, to unearth the layers of forgetting, to go beneath the screen surfaces that disguise the crimes and try to see what these images-the prewar family domestic pictures and the images of destruction-both expose and foreclose (Hirsch, 2012, p.119).

This digging up and revealing the hidden past can be considered as the duty of postmemory. The essential duty of postmemory is to "expose and foreclose" (Hirsch, 2012, p.119). These statements can be applied to *Ceremony* easily. Tayo's journey for getting rid of his sickness and stopping the spell of witchery can be counted as an example of the "expose and foreclose" duty. It can be seen that he starts to believe in his tribe's traditions and out of these traditions he creates a new ceremony that resurrects his tribal beliefs. But how can he access to these traditions? He can access them by the memories of his ancestors. He achieves this by mixing his traditions with modern ways of life. This is also an example of transculturation, the process of selecting from traditional ideas and the dominant culture's ideas and methods in order to synthesize a new form of expression, as we shall see in Mary Louise Pratt's essay later on.

As Jude Todd states, "Tayo is typical of combat veterans because he cannot separate his present reality and memory of the past and he is unhappy all the time" (Todd,

1995, p.55). It can be claimed that these traits also make Tayo a "wounded warrior.. He is a wounded warrior not because he joined the war. He is a wounded warrior because he has to fight for someone else's war and he also needs to protect his land because of someone else's conquest. In a way, it can be said that deep down in himself, Tayo knows that fighting in someone else's war is not reputable like the wars that his ancestors had. And this reality makes him a wounded warrior. As such, he is responsible for healing himself before undertaking the ultimate goal of healing the community at large in the age-old struggle with the spell of witchery.

Todd also gives example from the storyteller's story from the novel. In that part it can be said that the storyteller keeps the stories in his belly and he believes that the stories are life for people (Todd, 1995, p.157). Then Todd makes a very incredible suggestion. Tayo is sick from his stomach and vomits all the time because he has stories to tell inside of his belly and he also needs to get rid of all the lies that he was fed in his lifetime (Todd, 1995, p.157). Tayo was fed with lies from his family to his teacher according to Todd (Todd, 1995, p.157). Todd claims that in order to purify himself and make room for healing stories, Tayo has to get rid of the lies by vomiting (Todd, 1995, p.157). Tayo thinks about the lie that has been going around and this lie is connected to witchery. According to this lie, "only brown-skinned people were thieves; white people didn't steal" (Silko, 1986, p.191). It can be said that the lie is manipulating everybody. No one chooses to look beyond the lie and see the truth about who is living on a stolen land and who is the actual thief here. This lie passage also recalls what Cole learns from school and T.V. about half-breeds. Todd also uncovers another important piece of information. "Tayo is the name of a Laguna Pueblo folk hero" (Todd, 1995, p.161), who will use the gifts that he received from Spider Woman to help his people. That's exactly what Tayo does in the novel. After that, he goes to the elders and tells his story like a storyteller.

As to Michael Satterlee states that

Silko's novel demonstrates that individual trauma is rooted within a cultural context and tied to specific landscapes. The protagonist's individual trauma points toward and at times symbolically mirrors the cultural trauma of Native American's social and economic oppression and displacement based on racial heritage. (Satterlee, 2006, p.74)

With the light of this idea, it can be claimed that Tayo's individual trauma is connected to the trauma of Native Americans, and, in particular to that of Laguna Pueblo. It can be

deduced that these traumas also supports the idea of postmemory. Like their traumas are connected, their memories of the traumas they had are also connected even though Tayo was not there to live those painful memories. The mechanism for postmemory here has more to do with oral tradition, with the ancient narratives Silko weaves into the novel.

Leslie Marmon Silko, in her essay "Language and Literature from a Pueblo Indian Perspective", explains the importance of stories. According to Silko,

The stories are always bringing us together, keeping this whole together, keeping this family together, keeping this clan together. "Don't go away, don't isolate yourself, but come here, because we have all had these kinds of experiences." And so there is this constant pulling together to resist the tendency to run or hide or separate oneself during a traumatic emotional experience. This separation not only endangers the group but the individual as well- one does not recover by oneself. (Silko, 2012, p.52)

It can be claimed that Tayo's healing depends on the "stories" basically. Indeed, he needs to enter into the traditional narrative and alter it according to what he has learned in the process of self-healing. Further, Tayo needs to be reintegrated with his family and clan, if he wants to recover.

In "An Authorless Text: The Usefulness of Mythological Structures in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*" Maria Nieves Pascual Soler gives the reason why the old ceremonies are not working any more. According to Soler, "Tayo and the veterans have been changed by the war, and the consequent contact with a society outside their culture and ways of life, therefore the traditional ceremonies are no longer helpful because they have not changed to meet the new conditions of the world (Pascual Soler, 1997, p.262)". In other words, the ceremonies and traditions are not adapted to a hybridized world that has undergone the processes of transculturation. In order to make them work, Native Americans have to adapt ceremonies and traditions to the new rules of the world. On the other hand, the war that Native Americans joined can be thought as different from the wars or the disagreements that they faced as a tribe. Because as it is seen Native Americans protect their tribe and its traditions, including a unique relationship to the land. However, the dominant white culture's understanding of the protection of their land is different from Native Americans. That is another reason why ceremonies and traditions are not working anymore because modern warfare as practiced by the U.S. army is not Native Americans' fight anymore. For instance, Betonie explains why ceremonies should change. According to him, "after the white people came, elements in this world begins to shift" (Silko, 1986,

p.126). Because of this change, ceremonies should also change to adapt the new ways of the world. He also claims that if things do not change, they will die. Betonie thinks that witchery wants to scare people and prevent them from growing.

Moreover, in *Ceremony*, there is a passage that pretty much explains postmemory. Tayo's aunt is the spokesperson of a story about the creation of world (Silko, 1986, p.68). In this specific passage she says that she can feel the old ways, by means of "the sensitivity" (Silko, 1986, p.68) in her. And this sensitivity survived through thousands of years. It is clear that what she feels is the connection between the past and the present. The vehicle for connecting the past and the present is language. It is mentioned before that storytelling and stories are an important concept for Native Americans. The reason it is an important part is that by telling stories Native Americans feel the connection with earth and their ancestral ways. She can feel the time when they shared one clan name and they were one clan which was generations and generations ago. Even though she lives in the present, she can still feel these old memories through the bond of postmemory. She tells these memories as if she owns them, as if they are her own memories. She also connects this feeling of old memories to the memories of losing her sister. At that time, they, as a family, felt that they were losing a family member from their family. But also the tribe members feel that loss with the family. This example shows how strong the bond between the tribe members can be. In the Native American imagination, the ancestors never really leave them. There is a belonging to the tribe that does not distinguish between living and dead. This may be a unique feature for Indians that causes us to expand upon the postmemory definition used for Holocaust literature and African American literature.

In "Clear Waters: A Conversation with Louis Owens," Owens states that he tries to write *The Sharpest Sight* as a short story about his high school friend who committed suicide but is unable to finish it. Instead, he wrote about his brother who was lost after the Vietnam War (Purdy, 1998). So the novel shares many elements with the autoethnographic text. Owens also states that he used his grandfather's and his father's real names in *The Sharpest Sight* (Nakamura, 1996, p. 297). He also uses his grandparent's home for *The Sharpest Sight*. It can be speculated that his staying in his grandparent's house might have helped him to establish the setting for the novel.

There are lots of characters in Louis Owens' *The Sharpest Sight*, who can be considered wounded warriors. In the book Attis McCurtain and Mundo Morales are friends

and they go to the Vietnam War together. After the war, they come back together. They are both war veterans but the effects of PTSD can be seen in Attis more than Mundo. Attis is traumatized because of the things he witnessed in the war. Attis killed his girlfriend because of PTSD and the authorities locked him up in a mental hospital. When Attis was at war, he wrote letters home. In one of the letters, he says "Don't let these motherfuckers get you too" (Owens, 1991, p.10). It can be said that as a soldier, Attis is having difficulty and he is not enjoying being a part of the war. It can be concluded that Attis is concerned for his little brother, Cole, whom he doesn't want to come to the war and be like him. In another letter, Attis writes "Do anything you have to,... don't let them bring you here" (Owens, 1991, p.20). He also writes in his letter about what they are doing to the Vietnamese people. What he describes is horrifying. As a soldier, Attis kills kids and old women or anything that moves (Owens, 1991, p.20). Also because Attis is a "Native American," other soldiers think that he can see better at night and he doesn't make any noise so it is better to put Attis in the jungle at night. It can be deduced that Attis has seen lots of traumatic scenes and he has endured lots of "Indian jokes" from other soldiers. So it contributes to his traumatized state of mind after the war. On the other hand, Margaret Dwyer claims that Attis is killed as a wounded warrior and, with his death, he paid the due for killing his girlfriend and his death restored the balance in the world again (Dwyer, 1998, p.53).

Hoey, Cole's and Attis' father, is another example of a wounded warrior. He says "I thought I had to be a warrior, just like all the other Indians that died in white men's wars. I didn't know a goddamned thing" about being a warrior (Owens, 1991, p.20). Hoey thinks being a warrior is his destiny and to fulfill this destiny, he went to war alongside white people. The tribal history puts pressure on Hoey, who wants to belong to his tribe as an honorable Choctaw member, so he enlists in the war to bring his tribe glory like the elder members of the tribe in the past.¹ However, after he becomes a soldier, the war is not something that they hoped for. It can be said that for bringing glory to his tribe, he has to kill a bunch of people whom he doesn't even know like Tayo from *Ceremony*. His oldest son takes him as an example and fights in the Vietnam war. So Hoey feels guilty that his oldest son, Attis, joins the war because of him.

¹ For further knowledge on this subject: <https://www.choctawnation.com/assistant-chief-voice/throughout-history-choctaw-warriors-have-volunteered-when-needed>

After Attis' death, Hoey talks to Morales and says "He went to their war, like you did. They been doing that for a long time, using us to kill each other and then getting rid of us when it's done" (Owens, 1991, p.45). In this part, it can be seen that Hoey is disturbed by the way white people see his son. According to him, white people, don't care about his son because they used him for their own purposes and left him. But Hoey is determined and he is not going to let white people go without finding out the truth of his son's death and getting his revenge. It can be assumed that with this pursuit, Hoey looks like a wounded warrior who lost his son to another nation's war. And he seeks revenge for his son as a wounded warrior.

Hoey also feels that his son didn't come back after the war because when he came back, he was not like himself anymore (Owens, 1991, p.142). Hoey knows that there was a ceremony which was performed for warriors who came back home after a war. However, it can be said that because they lost their traditions and they lost their connections to the land, they don't know about this ceremony or how to perform it anymore. Because of this lack of knowledge, it can be argued that Hoey feels that he lets down his son as a father. It can be said that if they were still in their old lands as Choctaw tribe, Hoey or another member from the tribe could perform the ceremony and they will be able to save Attis from his pitiless purgatory of being a wounded warrior recovering from someone else's war.

Another wounded warrior in the book is Cole McCurtain. Cole is Attis' brother and Hoey's youngest son. He has a mission to bring back his brother, Attis', bones to put him at rest. However, Cole has to find Attis' body first. To get help, Cole goes to Uncle Luther and Cole's grandma Onatima. When he gets there, he finds out that they gave Cole a Choctaw name, "Taska Mikushi Humma." It can be roughly translated as " Little-Chief-Warrior Red." This name was given because Cole got hurt and his head was bleeding but he stayed still like a warrior (Owens, 1991, p.75) while getting his treatment. So it can be said that all McCurtains have warrior blood in their system but most of the time, they fight in white people's war with this warrior blood. Like Tayo, Cole returns to the original traditional land of Choctaw tribe, to his people who can teach him how to accomplish his task. It is known that Choctaw tribe, like the Cherokees, were moved west to the Indian territories in Oklahoma. That is not where Cole goes for his apprenticeship. He returns to the original homeland of his people in Mississippi. Because Oklahoma is not the original homeland and if Cole wants to learn about his tribe's past and traditions, he has to go to the "original homeland" of Choctaws. Like Tayo's mission, Cole's mission turns out to be

more than healing a family wound. He has to stop his father, Hoey because he is seeking revenge after his son's death. By doing this, he will forget who he is according to Uncle Luther. If Cole cannot stop Hoey, he will be part of the white people's story and the balance will be broken again (Owens, 1991, p.97). It can be deduced that Cole is a wounded warrior because of two things. Firstly, he has to bring back his brother's bones which are important to The Choctaw people because they believe that Attis cannot rest in peace and cannot be a part of the Choctaw tribe if this mission cannot be accomplished. The other reason for Cole is he has to stop his father from getting revenge for his brother's death. It can be claimed for the sake of the story and his brother's peace Cole has to talk with his father and convince him not to get revenge for Attis' death.

According to Uncle Luther, Hoey believes that he has to avenge his son's death because "that's the way he thinks it's 'sposed to be" (Owens, 1991, p.96). In order to be a Choctaw, Hoey thinks that he has to avenge his son's death. However, Uncle Luther thinks that it is a wrong thing to do because if he does, the evil caused by the repeated violence will never end. Luther is the model for the traditional Choctaw beliefs, living in nature in the original tribal homeland. There is an element of witchery in this novel as well. In contrast to *Ceremony*, the reader is not informed about the witchery clearly. The reader does not know how it starts or when it starts. It can be said that what matters here is not how or when it starts. The important part is, there is a witchery loose in the world and Hoey is really close to becoming a part of this witchery. Parallel with Tayo resisting the urge to kill Emo for revenge. So Cole has to stop Hoey before it is too late.

Cole is also searching for a way to become a true warrior. He thinks that being a warrior is not about killing people; it is about doing good deeds, or remarkable works. He thinks that a warrior should be able to accept death. He comes to the conclusion that "to be a warrior was to give oneself over to the unknown" (Owens, 1991, p.193). It can be said that, according to the knowledge he gains in Mississippi, what Cole thinks about being a warrior is true.

The last wounded warrior from *The Sharpest Sight* is Mundo Morales. He is Attis' friend and they went to the Vietnam War together. So it can be argued that they both have been traumatized because of the things they saw in the war. They have been having difficulty adapting to life after the war. When Mundo sees an image of Attis' death, he cannot believe it and he thinks that he is hallucinating because of the after-effects of war.

However, it can be said that being friends with Attis, Mundo develops a bond with him and this is why he sees the image of Attis' death because they have a connection. It is also revealed that there is Native American blood in the Morales line, and this creates a relationship with Attis and his family. After Attis' death, Mundo tries to find who killed Attis because of their shared bonds. It can be thought that he feels responsible as a warrior and he has to find out the truth about his friend's death. Mundo also knows that white people didn't care about Attis when he was alive and they don't care about him now that he is dead (Owens, 1991, p.183). In a sense, it can be said that Mundo wants to change the perspective of white society on Native American veterans and bring justice to his friend's untimely death. On the other hand, it can be claimed that all characters are torn apart between two worlds. They try to fit in the Natives' world as well as try to fit in the white people's world. On this point, it can be said that they are failing to fit into both worlds so they don't have any sense of belonging and this can be counted as another example for why they all are "the wounded warriors." Even though they are failing to fit into both worlds, they try and fight to survive in both worlds.

In his book entitled *Medicine Bags and Dog Tags* Al Carroll states that "Natives used the military to overcome assimilation efforts that tried to eliminate their cultures and religious traditions" (Carroll; 2008, p. 3). Native Americans joined the wars (WWI, WWII, Vietnam War) for the U.S. They wanted to show their worth to the white culture and they wanted to serve their land as its protector and warrior. They believe that if they show their worth, the white culture will accept them and let them practice their traditions, spirituality and they will keep their culture. In *Ceremony* and *The Sharpest Sight*, Tayo, Rocky, Attis, Hoey, and Mundo can be given as an example of showing their worth leads them where in life exactly. In *Ceremony*, the guy who recruits soldiers for the war says " Anyone fight for America... even you boys" (Silko, 1986, p.64). It means that the white culture does not regard them as Americans.

Al Carroll also claims that there have been some tests conducted on Native Americans to see if they can see better in the dark than white people. According to Carroll,

During World War I, a white army lieutenant named Ray Duncan conducted a series of experiments comparing Native and white soldiers. He tested both groups' abilities to find their way through the woods blindfolded or at night. Duncan concluded from these tests that Natives were not only "natural warriors" but could sense "instinctively" which way north was without a compass and could even see in the dark much like cats. What

seemingly never occurred to Duncan was a much simpler explanation than alleged mystical or biological differences. Most of the white soldiers were raised in cities, and virtually all Natives at that time grew up on rural reservations. (Carrol, 2008, p.17)

So after WWI, the white military authorities made tests on Native Americans and they believed that Native Americans can see better at night. In *The Sharpest Sight*, Attis wrote exactly the same incident to Cole in his letter. Attis advises Cole not to sign up for war at all. Attis claims that because they are Native Americans, The white military authorities "put them on point (Owens, 1991, p.20)" and they "put Native Americans out in the jungle at night (Owens, 1991, p. 20)." just as Al Carrol states. It can be said that white military authorities made Native Americans fight in their wars.

In the same book, Al Carroll also takes a statement from Manuel Holcomb, the president of Santa Clara Pueblo. He claims that "During the war, we were accepted as equals. But now that the war is over we are savages again" (as cited in Carrol, 2008, p.114-115). The white culture keeps showing them their place in the society after the war with their behaviors towards Native Americans. Losing the respect they gained as a result of serving the U.S. Army makes Native Americans agitated and violent.

After the experience of serving in the U.S. army, these Native American characters need a form of healing to restore their connection with their communities and their traditional ways of life. In *The Sacred Hoop*, Paula Gunn Allen claims that " [t]hus a healing ritual changes a person from an isolated (diseased) state to one of incorporation (health).... In the transformation from one state to another, the prior state or condition must cease to exist. It must die" (Allen, 1992, p.115-116). It can be claimed that Tayo experiences the same process. In the beginning, he has been ill and isolated because of the trauma of his lost cousin whom he has always seen as a brother. It can be said that after this loss and the traumatic events that he has experienced in war make him isolated from the world. With the healing ceremony, he stops being isolated and he regains his health. However, in order to make that happen, Tayo needs to find new ceremonies and traditions out of old ones as Betonie advises him. This can be counted as an event of postmemory in the book. Because Tayo has to take what he knows from old ceremonies and traditions to re-create new ones.

Allen also states that "the stories are the communication device of the land and the people. Thanks to the stories, the ceremony, the gap between isolate human being and

lonely landscapes is closed. And through them, Tayo understands in mind and in bone the truth of his and our situation" (Allen, 1992, p.168). The importance of the stories is clearly shown by Paula Gunn Allen. Stories are the substance that ties them and connects them together. As they believe in stories, they live in stories and they are connected to the land. Ceremonies are also another bridge between the land and Native Americans. That's why they try to change their stories, to protect their land from evil doings in *Ceremony* and in *The Sharpest Sight*. If they don't believe in stories and follow them, they will lose their connection to the land and they will be isolated.

Allen argues that "...the protagonist wanders through a series of events that might have happened years before or that might not have happened to him or her personally, but that nevertheless have immediate bearing on the situation and the protagonist's understanding of it" (Allen, 1992, p.203). It is clear that the core of this statement strongly resembles the idea of postmemory. Because according to Marianne Hirsch, what we call postmemory transfers the traumatic events' effects on to the next generations. For instance, in Tayo's case, he didn't witness and live in the time of the subjugation of the Pueblos but this event can still haunt him and his life. He can still feel the effects of colonization, loss of land, culture, and traditions. But his postwar hallucinations express the depth of these deprivations. So in other words, Tayo can experience the traumatic events' effects years later, even though he was not there to witness those events by himself.

In "'Stranded in the Wasteland:' Literary Allusion in *The Sharpest Sight*", Carolyn Holbert states that Louis Owens mixes "multiple cultural and literary traditions of his own life" (Holbert, 2002, p.2) into his novels. Holbert claims that in this novel he attempted to "weave Native American and Euro American stories and mythologies and epistemologies" into a "thoroughly 'mixed-blood' novel" (as cited in Holbert, 2002, p.2). So in a way, his novel can be considered as a novel which has both Native American and Euro-American traits in it. Holbert also states that "Louis Owens creates a rural American wasteland of lost spirituality and lost identity" (Holbert, 2002, p.2). It can be claimed that through the lost spirituality and identity, Owens tries to create a new kind of Native American identity. In a way, what Owens tries to establish is through the story of wounded warriors like Cole or Mundo, Owens tries to reconstruct a new Native American identity.

In her essay called "Finding Identity through Trauma" Zuzana Buráková states that

Trauma and memory, and their impact on the assertion of ethnic and personal identity, have become an important part of recent postmodern interdisciplinary research, especially in the area of literature. The narratives of the survivors, witnesses and perpetrators of trauma and their relation to memory have gained a tremendous importance in resolving various forms of traumas. (Buráková, 2011, p.87)

So trauma and memory have a giant effect on ethnic and personal identity. The effects can be easily seen especially on Tayo and Attis. After the war, Tayo is having difficulty sleeping and keeping anything in his stomach. Most of the time he is sick and crying. He is in this situation because of the trauma he experienced in the war and its memory.

In his book *History and Memory after Auschwitz*, Dominic LaCapra claims that

the memory lapses of trauma are conjoined with the tendency compulsively to repeat, relive, be possessed by, or act out traumatic scenes of the past...in this sense, what is denied or repressed in a lapse of memory does not disappear; it returns in a transformed, at times disfigured and disguised manner (LaCapra, 1998, p.10)

As LaCapra remarks that Tayo is possessed by his trauma and he is reliving every minute of it. On the other hand, Attis is the same. Because of his trauma from war, he kills his girlfriend. Both of these characters have another trauma which is a common one among Native Americans. Like Native Americans, they suffered from alienation, loss of land, culture, and tradition. It can be said that the trauma that they had after the war awakens the trauma of the loss of land, culture, and tradition.

In *The Sharpest Sight*, Cole stays with his Uncle Luther and there he starts a journey to find his identity as a Native American just like Tayo's journey to complete the ceremony. In order to bring Attis' bones, Cole has to learn about his tribe's traditions and the memories of his ancestors; after that, he can help his brother and save his soul and stop the power of witchery. In other words, what Cole tries to do here is to internalize resent knowledge on the past experiences and use this knowledge by mixing it with modern ways of life.

Cole and Tayo resemble each other both in age and mission. They both have to train themselves and learn the traditional ways of their tribes. Both of them have to stop evil doings or witchery that is going on for some time. They are both trying to learn and create new ceremonies against evil doings. So in a way, they are creating new traditions and new ceremonies with help of postmemory. This is their role as warriors and protectors.

They have to start by re-imagining Native American identity themselves and after that, they have to combine this new imagination of identity with ceremonies. Because traditional ways were not founded by Cole and Tayo. They were founded by the elders of their tribes. However, both Cole and Tayo try to re-create new traditions, new memories by working on old ways. In a way, it can be said that they transform old traditions with a touch of new ways and create new traditions for the next generations. They are walking on their ancestors' ways and creating new ways to work with traditions against evil things. Their experience in healing themselves has qualified them to bring healing back to the tribes in updated rituals and stories.

As Susan Bernardin claims that Owens's writing is influenced by his experiences from his childhood days to adult times. According to Bernardin, Owens's memories and experiences from his life "fueled his finest writing, driving his quest to bring place and meaning together" (Bernardin, 2008, p.43). Just like his character from *The Sharpest Sight*, Cole, he grew up far away from his ancestral lands and he lost trace of his brother after the war. Bernardin suggests that "the central question in his work is the search to belong to a place and people" (Bernardin, 2008, p.43). Reintegration can be considered as the warrior's ultimate goal. Cole's journey as wounded warrior is not as broad and consequential as Tayo's perhaps, but their intentions are finally very similar. Cole must bring Attis's spirit back into the collective of the tribe. Only by this act can he restore the wholeness of the tribal identity, which includes living and dead. His education as a warrior in the traditional lands qualifies him to go beyond the world of the living and restore unity and balance.

In conclusion, Native Americans have suffered for hundreds of years because of the white culture's oppression and alienations. This suffering was not only towards their land but also their cultures and customs. This trauma has been going on for years and it can be argued that Native Americans are stripped off from their identities along the way. As a result of this oppression and lost identities, Native Americans are still experiencing a gap between the traditions of the past and the demands of the present. This leads to the post-memory situations between the past and present among Native Americans. However, Native American writers try to close the gap by writing about their old traditions and try to construct and create new identities by re-imagining the traditions of tribes in the past. In their writings, spiritual elements can be considered as rebelling against the dominant culture's materialistic and rationalistic world-view. Their narrative mode, storytelling, can be taken as a ritual for healing like a healing ceremony. The concept of the warrior in

Native American culture is an important aspect in this literature and it can be seen that Native American authors still treasure this concept greatly. It is the warrior who has healed himself internally that has the knowledge and insight to restore balance and reestablish traditional values in a changing world. The wounded ones become healers and protectors of the collective. These characteristic traits of Native American writings, mentioned above, and the concept of the wounded warrior can be seen most clearly in *Ceremony* and *The Sharpest Sight*.



RECOVERING THE ANIMAL AS THE SPIRIT GUIDE: BIG CATS AND OTHER TOTEM ANIMALS

Native Americans lost their ethnic identities as members of tribes because of being oppressed and alienated for hundreds of years by the dominant white culture that took away their land, language, tradition and most importantly their culture. As Jeanette Haynes Writer points out that colonization was the key for cultural imperialism that brought upon Native Americans. Because of cultural imperialism, Native Americans had to suffer through assimilation and cultural genocide (Writer, 2008). This situation causes a gap that is forming between the past and the present. This gap leads to a post-memory situation in the society of Native Americans. In order to prevent the gap from growing, Native American authors use the tribal traditions and oral culture or imagine a new Native American identity by writing about these issues. Dave Aftandilian defines the place of animals in Native American cultures by comparing Native American creation stories and the Christian Genesis:

...animals are more powerful than humans. They lived in the world before we did, and therefore have more practical and spiritual knowledge than humans do. This is amply demonstrated by the fact that it is animals working together who create the lands—a feat that humans could not achieve. In other words, while some interpretations of the Genesis 1 creation story describe humans as more important than any other animal because we were created last (Aftandilian, 2011, p.195).

Native Americans respect animals because animals were here before mankind. Some tribes use animals as totems. According to *Native American Encyclopedia The-Other-Magpie To Zuni*, "[t]otem is the drawn or carved symbol of an animal. The word comes from the Ojibwe term doodem, meaning clan. Some Native Americans make totems to represent a tribe, clan, family, or person" (Sepehri, 2009, p.11). Animals were in the creation stories before mankind appears, and they were playing very important roles in those stories. Moreover, unlike the Genesis, Native American creation myths portray as weaker than animals because humans appear last in creation stories. Animals are an important religious concept in Native American culture. It shows Native Americans' respect for the land and those living on the land. Native Americans regard animals as spirit guides and they believe that animals can bestow certain powers to Native Americans. It can be said that animals are the link for Native Americans to have a special bond with the land and with the Great

Spirit. In this paper, the link with animals and Native Americans and the land will be discussed briefly.

Fradkin, in her book called *Cherokee Folk Zoology: The Animal World of a Native American People*, states that most of the tribes see animals like humans. According to Fradkin, animals can talk and think just like humans (Fradkin, 1990). It can be said that Native Americans attribute human traits to animals. They believe that animals have the same abilities as humans. On the other hand, in *The Wind is My Mother: The Life and Teachings of a Native American Shaman*, Bear and Larkin claim that animals and humans are living in the same circle of life (Bear & Larkin, 1996). According to Native Americans, it can be argued that animals and humans are sharing the same universal energy and it can be thought that they are also sharing the same language. That's why Native Americans do not view themselves superior to animals. They regard animals as equals.

Dave Aftandilian points out that Native Americans are curious about animals because they are sharing the same land with them. However, Native Americans observed animals also because they are dependent on animals. It can be said that the writers used animals in order to show this relationship between animals and Native Americans (Aftandilian, 2011). Aftandilian also argues that "[s]ome animals are perceived as especially spiritually powerful because of their ability to cross between the cosmological realms" (Aftandilian, 2011, p.196). Native Americans also believe that spiritually some animals are more powerful than humans. As it is mentioned here, some animals can unite the spiritual and physical realms. For instance, in *Power*, the panther might be traveling to both realms: the world of the living and the world of the dead. Because it belongs to the underworld, it appears and delivers messages to other characters such as Mundo and Cole as it was waiting for Attis' bones.

Aftandilian also acknowledges that:

The spiritual power of animals is another reason why people should treat animals with respect. If we do, animals may take pity on us, and share some of their power. If, on the other hand, we do not treat them with respect, they may take revenge against us.
(Aftandilian, 2011, p.198)

In *Ceremony*, Tayo comes across the mountain lion. However, the mountain lion does nothing harmful and indeed saves Tayo from the men who are harassing him. If Tayo didn't treat the mountain lion with respect, the outcome would be very difficult. For

instance, Tayo sprinkles flower pollen into its tracks. This means Tayo's thankfulness and his respect towards the mountain lion. As a result of this idea, Tayo treats the mountain lion with respect and the mountain lion saves him.

According to Susan McHugh in her essay "Animal Gods in Extinction Stories: *Power* and *Princess Mononoke*" claims that "*Power* addresses the genocide of the Seminole and other Southeastern Native American tribes by European and later American colonists through the lenses of ancient and contemporary justice systems (McHugh, 2014, p.216)." McHugh also states that Hogan wants to show the effects of killing the panther. It can be claimed that killing the panther damages the historical ties between animals and Native cultures (McHugh, 2014, p.216).

In *Power*, the totem animal is a panther. According to Omishto, the land and the territory that they live in, belong to the cat, the panther. Omishto also believes that the cat and she are relatives as well as Ama. Because certain Taiga people believe that they are in the same clan with the panther. One of the Taiga tribe's totem animals is the panther. So the panther is guiding them throughout their life (Hogan, 1990, p.3). Omishto says she has never seen a panther before but she can feel it. According to Omishto, it is like the panther watches you all the time and you can feel it. It can be said that in order to protect its clan members, it is only natural that the panther is watching the clan members because the panther is their spirit guide. Apart from Omishto, Ama also has a unique relationship with the panther. Ama disappears one day and shows up weeks later. When she comes back everyone notices that she is different (Hogan, 1990, p.21). Some people say that "she'd met and married a panther, and now she was an animal come back to observe us" (Hogan, 1990, p.22).

Omishto admires and also she is scared of the panther and its power. She states that she tries not to think of the panther because they say to speak an animal's name is to call out to the powers inside it (Hogan, 1990, p.3). It can be said that the Taiga people have a very strong connection with the land and their spirit animal. However, it can be deduced that this strong bond is also frightening because it can "call" the power of the panther to the clan members. It can be assumed that Omishto does not want to possess the powers of the panther. She might be a little afraid of it because she has never seen one in her lifetime.

However, now everything has changed. It is not easy to see a panther around the place that Taiga tribe lives. Once the Taiga tribe believed panther's scream could bring

down the world (Hogan, 1990, p.15). Now the panther is nowhere to be seen or heard. It can be said that after the colonization of America and the removal of Native Americans, the connection between the land and the tribe members are severely injured. That's why the Taiga tribe of Omishto cannot see or hear the panther around them because the bond is gone. This novel in particular deals with the effect of pollution and development in destroying natural habitat. The panther (and the tribe) are losing land to these twin threats.

However, Ama's situation is a lot more different than that of Omishto on this particular subject. Ama loves panthers and she claims that "an animal was born when we were born, that it is our one ally in this life. It lent us power when we need it" (Hogan, 1990, p.16). As can be understood from the quotation that an animal that is born with a person, gives that specific person powers when needed and becomes one true ally with that person. In other words, it can be claimed that every person has his/her own spirit guide. Unlike Omishto, Ama believes this and she lives her life according to nature and living alongside nature makes her bond with the land more powerfully. It can be assumed that Ama is like a mediator, "keeping up relations" with nature and the real world (Hogan, 1990, p.17).

It wouldn't be wrong to say that Ama has a strong connection with the land and the panther because she sees the panther in her dreams. In one of her dreams, the panther stands up like a person and talks to Ama. It can be said that the panther wants to guide Ama. However, the panther does not look healthy. The panther asks for Ama's help and the panther wants Ama to find her and kill her because of the bad shape that she is in. After this dream, Ama follows the panther and shoots it. After Ama kills the panther, it can be claimed that Ama also kills herself because of their connection. From now on, Omishto and Ama cannot be themselves anymore because the damage is done and no one can take back what happened there with the panther. In other words, Ama is a murderer, who killed the one that she loves the most in her life, the panther. But there is a regenerative process implied in the killing. The big cat's return to the spirit world mirrors the rumors that Ama had been taken away by the panther only to return to life a changed woman.

Omishto tells herself the Panther Woman's story (Hogan, 1990, p.110). It can be said that this story resembles what happened to Ama. So in a way, it can be claimed that Ama is like a mediator who can keep the world in balance. In order to restore the balance, Ama is chosen to kill the panther, her own kind. Killing the panther was Ama's destiny and

by killing the panther, Ama fulfills her destiny (Hogan, 1990, p.189). As Jesse Peters argues, Ama plays an essential role in the novel even though the reader cannot see her in the novel so much. Peters articulates that "they do not see her as taking her place within a story that works to balance the world and heal not only their own people but everyone else as well. And the story that she is a part of, as indeed they are all a part of, is one that takes place in a contemporary and changed world" (Peters, 2013, p.116). In other words, he claims that even though the elders cannot place Ama in this story of balancing and healing of the world, she is the necessary agent in updating the tribe's relationship with the environment and, whether or not she appears "on stage" for much of the novel, she becomes an essential part of the story. The polluted natural setting shows that the story takes place in a modern and transformed world, just like Tayo's world.

The reader can also see the whole story from Sisa's eyes. According to Sisa, with modernization, the humans lose their touch with nature and humans break their covenant with animals. Omishto also feels the same feelings with Sisa and Omishto says that Sisa's ancestors teach humans to breathe. Sisa's ancestors also give many things such as "medicines to heal" and "power to hunt" (Hogan, 1990, p.191-192). Sisa's ancestors and Sisa saw humans as their brothers and they just kept an eye on humans and even protected them as if they are family. However, now everything has changed because humans do not have any connection with the land and the animals like they used to. In the meantime, Sisa notices Ama, who resembles the old humans that Sisa remembers and they understand each other. To save the world that they live in, Ama and the panther decide to sacrifice themselves.

In *The Sharpest Sight*, the position of the panther is a little bit different. In this novel, the panther is seen as the soul-eater. It is here to take Attis' soul. Uncle Luther dreams of a dream which includes the panther and his nephew. It can be said that with this dream, Uncle Luther starts the story. The reader can see how Attis died from his point of view. A cat with a hooded parka killed him (Owens, 1991, p.94). It can be said that in this novel, the panther is here for the soul of Attis. It can be deduced that, in this case, it is not interested in making sacrifices or helping humans like the panther in *Power*. It can be argued that its chief mission is to collect the souls. In other passages, it is also a frightening teacher for Cole, who must overcome his inner darkness and fear to accomplish his mission, and a messenger to Mundo about his friend's death. This panther is a spirit animal whose main mission is to cross between two worlds.

Uncle Luther says "be the koi" to Cole when they are hunting (Owens, 1991, p.176). It can be said that being the "koi", one becomes a better hunter because when one dreams to be the panther, he/she acts like it and he/she will have better results while hunting. In this way, you will merge with nature; in other words, being the panther is to be one with nature. From another point of view, it can be said that the panther is here to change things, to make things better with death. For instance, Attis had to die so that Cole could realize that he is a Choctaw and he can make his decision about his own heritage and embrace his Native identity. It can be assumed that Hoey needed to see the tribal ways are still working for solving the problems of Choctaws in the present day.

Comparing Sisa, the golden panther, the black panther in *The Sharpest Sight* and the mountain lion in *Ceremony*, all are variations of the same species. All are supernatural beings who intervene in human affairs. The big cats have lots of power or medicine. They are here to change things for the better. It can be argued that, as spirit guides, they are here to help the people that they are associated with and they try to lead them on a better path.

In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, bears are important figures for Cherokees. As Maritole states "bears were nearly human" (Glancy, 2009, p.15). Cherokees believed that the bears could talk (Glancy, 2009, p.15). For instance, the Bear Man story can show how much Cherokees care about bears. In the story, a hunter lives with a bear in a cave and never hurts the bear and the bear never hurts the man. When the time comes, the bear talks to him about other hunters and what he will do when they come. The hunter does exactly everything that bear says. After the bear dies, the hunter puts leaves around the place and the bear "rise[s] out of the leaves, shake[s] himself, and go[es] back into the woods" (Glancy, 2009, p.17). It can be claimed that Cherokees see themselves as bears. They think that they can rise from leaves just like the bear. Native Americans do not privilege humans as a higher species. It can be said that Native Americans accept animals as societies just like humans. More importantly, Native Americans regard animals as spiritual forces. According to Native Americans, animals can help, teach and guide human beings. Therefore, animals are an essential part of Native American culture. They believe that animals can be more than one being at the same time. For instance, the mountain lion in *Ceremony* can be lion, man (the woman's brother) and spirit all at once. Indians generally do not distinguish between the various types of vitality (either man, animal or spirit; either living or dead). Animals in this literature can be all at once.

The story continues when other hunters find the hunter, who lives with the bear. The hunter tells them to lock him up until "the nature of bear leaves him" (Glancy, 2009, p.17). However, his wife does not let him and he dies before turning to the nature of man from the nature of the bear. It can be said that Cherokees identify themselves with this story because like the hunter, they cannot adjust themselves in the new territory and they are waiting for the old territory to leave them. They are attempting to become new creatures so they can get used to the new territory and build a new life there to start over.

However, it can be said that moving forward is hard for the Cherokees. It demands struggle and Cherokees are struggling with the new territory. It can be said that their memories seem like a burden for them. They are like "the bear they pushed" (Glancy, 2009, p.52). Also rebuilding is a hard task to accomplish and it can be deduced that Cherokees are discouraged by the undesired land. It is evident that they feel like they are fighting with a roaring bear for settling in their new territory. However, they have to keep moving forward and build their new life in the new territory. They are hopeful of their situation as time goes by. It can be seen that they are determined to build a new life in their new territory. The repeated animal imagery shows that they get their determination and power from the bear. The narrative implies that the bear makes them keep going.

There is also a bear story in *Ceremony* mentioned as Tayo is ascending the mountain for his ritual with Betonie. The story is about a little boy who goes to the cave of the bears and becomes one of them. The medicine man calls the child back step by step because if they take him back immediately he can be stuck in both worlds and he will die after that. After the story, Betonie says that living with bears is a peaceful experience. So it can be said that the boy might have been taken by the bear clan because he might need help and the bear clan wants to help the kid and gives him the protection that he needs. Either path, human or bear, can be possible and desirable for the child.

Ceremony includes many examples of animals that play a role in bringing spiritual truths to human beings. Green bottle flies are sacred because they intercede for the people in times of trouble (Silko, 1986, p.100). In the Laguna narrative, it is the hummingbird, the fly and the buzzard who go on a quest to return the rain to the world, interceding with Spider Woman (Silko, 1986, 93-95) and again (Silko, 1986, p.113-114). In the ceremonies overseen by Old Betonie, we hear of the bear people and coyote boy. It can be seen that

Silko consistently demonstrates how the Laguna people also care about spirit animals and their guidance.

One day, Tayo kills flies because in school he is taught that flies carry disease. After that, Josiah tells him a traditional Laguna story about why he should not kill flies. According to the story, green bottle flies go to the mother of the people to ask forgiveness for human kind (Silko, 1986, p.102). From the traditional point of view, the relationship between humans and animals used to be very strong in the past and stories have better lesson to teach than science. Silko clearly shows the difference between science and stories. It can be said that Native Americans represent truth through stories and the dominant white culture represents it through science. Tayo's science teacher explains what superstition is and offers the science text book as evidence against these superstitions. However, Grandma says that in old times, "the animals could talk to human beings and many magical things still happened" (Silko, 1986, p.94). When they talk about stories of Native Americans, Tayo feels different and this shows his connection to stories, traditions and the land because all of these are connected to each other. On the other hand, Emo and his group only tell war stories and this shows that there is no connection between them and the land and the stories of Natives and traditions anymore. They become what the dominant white culture wants them to be.

In *Ceremony*, when searching for Josiah's cattle, Tayo encounters a mountain lion, which points him in the right direction. Tayo treats the lion as a spirit animal, pouring yellow pollen in its footprints, calling on the animal as the hunter's helper. Thanks to the big cat, he is able to find the cattle and to evade the cowboys who guard them (Silko, 1986, p.195–196). At the first sight of North Top, Tayo recalls a story told by Josiah about a hunter seeing a mountain lion cub playing. Only when the hunter feels fear, does the lion cub runaway (Silko, 1986, p.185). So a cooperative and harmonious relationship between humans and animals leads to knowledge, while fear and distrust keep the two forms of consciousness separate.

It can be said that the authors choose animal figures to depict that animals are part of their life and culture as well as animals spiritual importance in their life. They are regarded as spirit guides. In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, Cherokee tribe's spirit animal is a bear. Because whenever they face difficulty, they always face it by telling a bear story. In *Power*, Omishto's and Ama's spirit guide is a panther. It is no coincidence

that they belong to a panther clan. It is true that Ama kills the panther but the killing can be considered as for the panther's own good. Ama saves the panther from a miserable situation. In *The Sharpest Sight*, Cole's spirit guide is a panther also. Cole tries to transform himself into a panther for seeing the world from its eyes (Owens, 1991, p.193). It is apparent that the panther is also waiting for Attis' bones to guide him to the spiritual realm. It can be claimed that Native American authors use animal figures to create a counter-reality against the dominant culture's materialistic and rationalistic worldview.

In conclusion, the selected novels deal with the loss of the culture, language, traditions, as well as the land. Native Americans have to uncover their old beliefs and spirituality. Native Americans believe that animals are sacred and they are spirit guides to them. Turning back to animals and asking their help to find their place in the modern world can be helpful to rebuild Native American identity. In order to rebuild their Native American identity, in *Ceremony*, Tayo follows the mountain lion and he also pays attention to the animal stories. In *Power*, Omishto gets closer to her clan after following the panther. In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, the Cherokees try to adapt their new territory with bear stories in mind. In *The Sharpest Sight*, Cole finds Attis' bones and the panther guides Attis' soul. In the process of rebuilding Native American identity the old traditions and stories of animals are important.

ATTEMPTS AT RECONNECTING WITH THE LOST LAND

Native American authors try to reconnect with the land as their ancestors did in order to create a Native American identity because they have a strong connection with the land. They do not see the land as property or a thing that they can buy or sell. Natives believe that the land has a soul of its own. After the colonial expansion, white people eventually claimed the land of the Natives. In "Anticolonial Strategies for the Recovery and Maintenance of Indigenous Knowledge" Leanne R. Simpson states that "[o]ur knowledge comes from the land, and the destruction of the environment is a colonial manifestation and a direct attack on Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous nationhood" (Simpson, 2004, p.377). They desired the land for their own uses, which may have turned out to be destructive, but which they believed to be valid, and even superior uses of natural resources. In other words, the land was the object by which their own technologies could yield them profits. The Native people were merely obstacles to the acquisition of land. European settlers may have been entirely ignorant of the spiritual value of land in Native American belief as they saw it strictly in terms of "commodity" which makes it compulsory for them to break the bond in order to claim Native American territory. In this chapter, the vision of both sides about land and what it means to be live on a lost land will be discussed.

According to Leanne R. Simpson, "[r]ecovering and maintaining Indigenous worldviews, philosophies, and ways of knowing and applying those teachings in a contemporary context represent a web of liberation strategies Indigenous Peoples can employ to disentangle themselves from the oppressive control of colonizing state governments" (Simpson, 2004, p.373). Tayo, in *Ceremony*, attempts at liberating himself from oppression by turning to what Leanne Simpson lists above. He maintains the worldview and teachings of Natives and molds them with a contemporary context. This new perspective helps him to recover and heal from his sickness. Even though Tayo cannot take back his land, he cuts off the ties that bind him to the oppressive government by maintaining ancestral ways and teachings and mixing them with new concepts.

Emo in *Ceremony* says "[u]s Indians deserve something better than this goddamn dried-up country around here. Blowing away, every day" (Silko, 1986, p.55). It can be said that Natives like Emo are restless in this part of the country because they have been convinced by a materialistic view that "they deserve something better." In a certain way,

they are right in principle; they are the original occupants of this land but they are treated as second-class citizens or as garbage. White people do not even see them as Americans but they want Natives to fight for them in their wars. However, it can be claimed that some of the Natives, like Emo, adopt the materialism of the dominant white culture.

In "The Desert as a Repertoire of Resistance for the Indians in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*" Farhat Ben Amor suggests that it is "the so-supposed 'non-savageness' and 'refined' character of the Whites, along with their 'Arts, science and trade,' that kept them apart from the flora and the fauna" (Amor, 2016, p.353). They believe the distance from nature is what makes them "civilized". Native Americans, on the other hand, are close to nature so they remain "savages." However, the closeness to nature provides Native Americans adaptability to the land unlike the white people, who choose to transform the land according to their purposes. Because of the distance from nature, they are not compatible with the land. Amor also suggests that Tayo's search for the cattle and finally claiming the cattle shows Tayo's belonging to the tribe and the land. In other words, the search for the cattle can be seen as a quest for Tayo to show that he is worthy to belong to the tribe and the land.

It can be argued that the drinking problem among Native Americans described by Silko and Owens is not because of the after effects of the war only, but also because of the psychological results of having lost their land. In "The National Survey of Indian Vietnam Veterans", Tom Holm conducts a survey on 170 veterans. According to Holm, veterans "suffer numerous stress-related symptoms" (Holm, 1994, p.22) and 138 veterans reveal that "they had mild to severe alcohol problems" (Holm, 1994, p.22). It can be argued that they drink because they feel empty and they don't feel that they belong to any place because of the after effects of the war but most importantly they drink because they lost their land. It can be deduced that the Laguna people are lost in their original homeland. They feel alone on the land that used to be theirs but know they are not the owner of the land and no longer can feel their original relationship to it. It can be said that they are feeling this in their bones. Furthermore, spiritual sickness results from losing contact with the land and the lifestyle it traditionally supported.

Betonie, the medicine man, explains why white people keep Natives in highlands. According to him, "They keep us on the north side of the railroad tracks, next to the river and their dump. Where none of them want to live. They don't understand. We know these

hills, and we are comfortable here" (Silko, 1986, p.117). It can be understood that white people want Natives to live in undesired and infertile parts of the land. Even though Natives live on the undesired part of the land, they still feel a sense of belonging since they know the land and therefore, they do not feel alone or uncomfortable in it. Even though they lost their original territory, they are still connected, even if unconsciously, to the land. They especially revere the high lands, which have no agricultural value to the dominant white culture but have spiritual value for the Laguna people.

The lost land is always on Tayo's mind. He states that "white people take as much of the land as they can" (Silko, 1986, p.127). It can be said that Tayo sounds very pessimistic with his remark however, Betonie states that:

We always come back to that, don't we? It was planned that way. For all the anger and the frustration. And for the guilt too. Indians wake up every morning of their lives to see the land which was stolen, still there, within reach its theft being flaunted. And the desire is strong to make things right, to take back what was stolen and to stop them from destroying what they have taken. But you see, Tayo, we have done as much fighting as we can with the destroyers and the thieves: as much as we could do and still survive (Silko, 1986, p.127-128)

It can be argued that Natives always feel the guilt of not being the stewards of the land for the rest of their lives. But the truth is, as Betonie says, Natives seem to get tired of fighting for the lost land. It can be said that Natives don't need to take back the lost land physically, because they feel that they are already a part of the land. So a part of them is gone also with the lost land. White people are the ones that "fool themselves" and believe that the land belongs to them. Because of their connection with the land, it is hard to separate Natives from their land. It can be said that the land chooses to support whom it will by itself. The land only fully accepts Natives who have courted it with respect, not white people. As Leanne Simpson states above, if Native Americans follow the traditional worldviews and philosophy, they can re-establish a relationship with the land. For instance, after completing the ceremony, Tayo's sickness is cured because he has re-established a relationship with the land. It can be claimed that he starts to see the land as his ancestors did and he feels connected to the land as his ancestors did. It can be deduced that the land means more than a plot of soil to him any more after re-establishing his connection to it. After the ceremony, Tayo states that they lost nothing as long as the mountains remain. It

does not matter who owns it. What matters is "the mountain in their bones" (Silko, 1986, p. 219).

The witchery poem in the novel, is about the spell that leads to white people's coming to the new world. It describes them as people who "drift apart from nature and kill what they fear" (Silko, 1986, p.135). It is clear that white people fear Natives and that is why they try to destroy Native beliefs and ways of life. It can also be argued that they are afraid of the connection of Natives with nature so they destroy nature in order to destroy their bond with the land. Nature itself may inspire awesome and fearful reactions in white colonists, who feel the need to change and control the natural world. By doing these things, white people do not realize that they are also hurting themselves because they are living on the same land with Natives. For instance, the uranium mine incident can be given as an example. As Kyoko Matsunaga states in "Leslie Marmon Silko and Nuclear Dissent in the American Southwest" that "[s]ince uranium was discovered on Navajo lands in Arizona in 1941, uranium mining and milling has been conducted on land belonging to Navajo, Hopi, Pueblo, and Ute peoples" (Matsunaga, 2014, p.68). So the members of the dominant white culture "drift apart from nature" (Silko, 1986, p.135) because they only use nature for their evil deeds like creating a bomb to kill thousands of people and testing the bomb in their own country in nature. It can be claimed that they are disconnected from nature so they do not care about the outcome of testing the bombs in the sensitive desert environment. In another instance, two cowboys who were harassing Tayo, went after the mountain lion to hunt it down. It can be said that they want to kill the mountain lion because it will prove that they are stronger than the powerful beast.

According to Tayo, white people live on "a stolen land" and they will never know that they are used by witchery and finally they will be the reason for the destruction of the earth. Tayo also states that "they work to fill their emptiness; they tried to glut the hollowness with patriotic wars and with great technology and the wealth it bought" (Silko, 1986, p.191). It can be said that their emptiness is coming from their lack of connection to the land. They treat the land as property, a thing that they can purchase or take. They cannot feel that the bond is "alive" and it is "living" with them. Unlike Native Americans, whites think many things are "inanimate".

In "Silko's Arroyos as Mainstream: Process and Implications of Canonical Identity" Kenneth M. Roemer claims that *Ceremony* is a different novel from other Native American novels. According to Roemer,

the landscape, re-creations of oral literatures, the Laguna and Navajo concepts of the generative positive and negative powers of storytelling and ceremony, and the gendered, cultural, and racial identity of the author all rendered *Ceremony* "different enough" to be perceived as a distinct and "authentic" Native American text (Roemer, 1999, p.20).

In other words, it can be understood that the display of the landscape, characters and the use of oral traditions alongside with concepts of tribes creates a hybrid narrative that is more accessible and attractive to mainstream audiences than other Native American novels. Betonie expresses his thoughts about stolen land. According to him, Native Americans are done fighting. They did what they could do. What matters is that mountains and the land will only remember them (Silko, 1986, p.127-128). In the end, Native Americans belong to the land and the official papers mean nothing compared to this fact.

In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, the narrator is sensitive to "[t]he protest of the land—not to us, no, but to the ones who made us walk (Glancy, 2009, p.5)." It can be said that the land knows who the true occupant is. The land does not accept white people in their ownership role and protests against their decision. The land does not want the Cherokees to go so the land and the tribe are sharing a bond. This shows that they are intimately connected to each other. The novel's first paragraph gives precise information on the Trail of Tears, which resulted in forcefully removal of Cherokee nation and other tribes from their tribal lands, as a part of Indian Removal Act by Andrew Jackson. According to the paragraph, "[f]rom October 1838 through February 1839 some eleven to thirteen thousand Cherokees walked nine hundred miles in bitter cold from the Southeast to Indian Territory. One-fourth died or disappeared along the way" (Glancy, 2009, p.3). This historical information is given just to let the readers understand what the Cherokees had lived through their journey to the new territory. After that the reader reaches the saddest truth about the Cherokee Removal. Cherokees are removed away from their land because of three chiefs. Their chiefs signed away their land to white people (Glancy, 2009, p.14). Along with the land, it can be deduced that the chiefs also signed away their memories, culture, history and their way of life. It can be understood that Cherokees not only lost their land; they lost everything.

The new territory which was given to the Cherokees is a hard one to live on. The land is hard so they cannot plow the dry rocky land. But Cherokees need to plow the land to grow something. They leave their old farms in their old territory but the new territory is so stubborn the land acts as if it does not accept the Cherokees. It can be said that the land protests the white people's decision to remove the Cherokees and it demonstrates this protest by not letting Cherokees plow the land. The character of the land, too, is very different. Rather than in the green forested mountains of their homeland, they must try to live in the dry prairie of Oklahoma. Obviously, the culture and way of life deriving from one place cannot just be transferred to a terrain so different. O-ga-na-ya summarizes the whole situation beautifully. He says "It's easy to know why this happened. Greed. They wanted our land. What else is there to say?" (Glancy, 2009, p.30) After the treaties between the U.S. government and the tribes, white people demand the land from the tribes. So in this way, it can be said that white people are greedy and they want to take what tribes have.

It is clear that Cherokees are missing their old territory but they also know that it is not theirs anymore: "[i]t had separated from them but it was with them, in their minds and memories, in their hearts and bodies" (Glancy, 2009, p.102). Cherokees still have their old land in memories, minds, hearts, and bodies. O-ga-na-ya comes home with a mule and Knobowtee says "What an excuse for a horse. What a misfit-just like the Cherokees alone in their farms in the new territory" (Glancy, 2009, p.152). The quotation reveals that they are trying so hard to fit in but they cannot as they miss their old territory, their lives experiences and past. It can be deduced that Cherokees feel alone in their new land as an excuse. There is no connection with the new territories. The people and the land do not fit. They feel awkward and unnatural.

In "A Conversation with Diane Glancy", Glancy states that

There are many different borderlands. I don't have access to what the pure Cherokee were like. I work in a borderland; the students who listen to the culture walk in a borderland. America is a borderland of these many differences. The melting pot, the oneness, the one nation under God, never was and never will be. And Canada has probably got even more complexities as a multicultural nation. (Andrews & Glancy, 2002, p.649)

Her ideas about the borderlands support the idea about postmemory because if she wants to write about Cherokees, she has to imagine how they lived, how their life was before the removal. She has to imagine these things because she simply does not have this experience.

In order to write about Cherokee life before the removal, she has to re-imagine the Cherokee life before the removal, she has to re-imagine the lost Cherokee culture and create an identity.

Glancy also connects her ideas about the land to the ideas of memory. According to her, land has memory also. She thinks,

the land has got a sharper memory than we do. I don't know how it works, but the land carries the voices of those who have walked upon it. It is the land that informs Sacajawea. The land had to give me permission to write. The ancestors had to give permission to write, too. For instance, I started off *Pushing the Bear* with one voice, and it wasn't enough. I had to go back and add her husband and everybody who had traveled with them on the Trail of Tears. (Andrews & Glancy, 2002, p.651)

Her ideas support the idea of the spirituality of the land. According to Native Americans the land has spiritual traits and Native Americans also think that the land as a being. So it is not a surprise that the land can be identified as a spiritual being which has memories of its own. So there is a basic connection between, the land, the people and oral culture.

As Patricia Haseltine claims that Diane Glancy in *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* "alludes to the bear in order to broach the issue of forced migration by government decree" (Haseltine, 2006, p.82). According to her, Glancy might have used bears to show the effects of forced migration on The Cherokee tribe. She also claims that "the traditional motif of transformation in such stories both shows and bridges the difference between other creatures and man. The bear walking on two legs like the human and therefore different from the four-legged creatures, is just such a mediator"(Haseltine, 2006, p.84). In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, the Cherokee tribe has just started a new life in the new territory after the forced removal. Bears might help them to get used to their new territories because bear is their spirit guide.

In "Give Me Land Lots of Land" Diane Glancy admits that she "often write[s] about [her] own heritage, white and Indian, as an outsider to it. As something that was out away and found different from how it was before it was gone" (Glancy, 1999, p.114). In other words, while writing, she imagines how it was to be a Cherokee in ancient Cherokee lands. It can be argued that she also uses her imagination and knowledge as postmemory because she is imagining the ancestral lands of hers in ancestral times.

In "Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears/The Dream of a Broken Field" Molly McGlennen claims that "Glancy depicts a variety of fractured characters and conditions (McGlennen, 2013, p.119)" while they are trying to adapt to the new territory. She admits that Glancy also depicts the quick recovery of the Cherokees after they lost their land. It can be argued that even though they progressed in their recovery, they still have issues with adapting to the new territory. While they are trying to adapt to the new territory mentally and physically, McGlennen also claims that they try to adapt their stories to the new territory (McGlennen, 2013, p.120). This can mean that the Cherokees accept the land and they are trying everything to connect to this new territory by adapting their old stories to this new territory. In a way, they are creating new stories from old stories which will lead them to the new traditions just like Tayo, Omishto and Cole. McGlennen also argues that Glancy uses the adaptation period of the Cherokees in this novel to create a narrative that depicts "the hope and rebuilding" of the new territory (McGlennen, 2013, p.120).

In "People and Place" Margaret Noori argues that the Cherokees have to change and find new connections to survive. According to Noori, "[Glancy's] characters become "indigenous immigrants," seeking connections between old and new spirituality, looking for ways to understand one another across differences in gender class, and experience (Noori, 2011, p.8)." In other words, they become the immigrants who had to migrate from their lands to the new territory and if they want to survive in this new territory, they have to create a bond with the land and between themselves. But of course, it is not an easy process. They have difficulty in ploughing the land because it is rocky and it is resisting. In a way, their lives depend on the bond that they create. Noori also claims that the Cherokees are forced to change as well as they are forced to move out from their lands. According to Noori, "the Cherokee were not simply moved; they were changed, against their will, in irrevocable ways that echo long into the future. The longing to stop, as much as the actual cessation of motion, leaves a mark on the men and women" (Noori, 2011, p.8). So the Cherokees need to create the bond which will connect them to the land and to themselves but they will forever carry the mark of separation from their original homeland.

In "Review" Erin Murrah-Mandril mentions the spiritual challenges and struggles that the Cherokees are facing in the new territory. According to Mandril, "Glancy explores the spiritual struggles of a nation undergoing Christian conversion in the 1830s. While Knobowtee remains skeptical, his wife Maritole turns from beliefs and regularly attends the sermons of Reverend Jesse Bushyhead" (Murrah-Mandril, 2010, p.313). In the novel,

there are two different views on spirituality among the Cherokees. Knobowtee is skeptical about searching spiritual relief in Christianity. It can be said that he does not accept Christianity fully and he does not internalize Christianity as well as he does with old traditions and spirituality. On the other hand, Maritole is quick to accept Christianity over the old traditions and spirituality and she is not practicing the old beliefs. In other words, she connects her spirituality with Christianity unlike Knobowtee. And the reader clearly sees the struggle and separation of spirituality through the characters' practices about their spirituality.

The Cherokees begin a ceremony for the first time after the trail (Glancy, 2009, p.96). They feel powerless because they lost their strength in the trail. Among other reasons, they are performing the ceremony to get their strength back. They perform their ceremony until they feel something. The ceremony is important here because it shows that they are reconnecting with the land. It can be said that they are performing the ceremony to get connected to the land and its spirit once again in a new territory. In order to call the new territory as home, they have to do this old ceremony to anchor themselves in the new land and in their old traditions. This way, they will adapt their old ceremonies into this new territory.

In "Removals and Long Walks" Stephanie J. Fitzgerald comments on a passage from the novel. In this passage, Maritole is giving up from her memories about the old territory. According to Fitzgerald, "by telling the metaphorical bear that represents her memories of the Cherokee eastern homelands to 'move over,' Maritole makes a space for the new land and the new narratives that come with it" (Fitzgerald, 2016, p.39). Fitzgerald uses the bear metaphor because to the Cherokees, the bear represents the struggles that they have to face in leaving the world behind. Fitzgerald claims that now the Cherokees can leave their struggles and memories of the old territory and they can begin creating new memories in the new land. In a way, they are now ready to accept and welcome the new territory while they bid their farewell to the old territory.

In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, the way Cherokees live can be considered as postmemory for the next generations. For instance, the Cherokees make a list of what they lost during the Trail of Tears, which happened between 1838 to 1839, and that list can be considered as evidence of postmemory to the next generations. Glancy uses historical documents to illustrate the history of this loss. Contemporary readers share the

grievances of the Cherokee generation that was forcefully removed from its land. Such details create snapshots to bring the hidden past back to consciousness. The list that Glancy provides to the reader and the historical information in the novel can be considered as images of destruction both expose and foreclose a tribe's history. In order to avoid destruction, knowledge is necessary for the next generation of Cherokees.

In *The Sharpest Sight*, Hoey also represents those Native Americans who were enforced out of their land. He says: "You know, I read about some tribes, like the Navajo and them others in Arizona and New Mexico, the Hopi, and some others, that's still living where they always lived. Some of them people live in houses a thousand years old, maybe ten thousand. You imagine how that must feel?" (Owens, 1991, p.19). The Choctaw nation, like the Cherokees, were forcefully evicted from their Mississippi lands and sent to Indian territory in Oklahoma. In *Pushing the Bear: After The Trail of Tears* and *The Sharpest Sight* Natives are longing for their ancestral ways of living. The characters are wondering what it would be like if they lived as their ancestors did in the old times and in the same house for generations. It can be deduced that they miss a time that they never lived. So, in two cases, we are dealing with groups who have been displaced from their lands. However, there is a difference between Tayo's and Omishto's and the other characters' cases. Tayo is living on the same land as his ancestors did but Cherokees are living on the new territory because of forced migration. The Choctaws in *The Sharpest Sight* also live on different land far from their home territory. So it can be deduced that Tayo is still had the connection between the land and his ancestors. But does Tayo see the land the way his ancestors did? Not until he climbs into the high lands and gets above the billboards and electrical wires. The land is still there but its original meanings are hidden behind technology and development. For Omishto, pollution and environmental degradation have made the Florida homeland inhospitable for the Native people and animals. However, Cherokees and Choctaws have completely lost that connection because of the removal. They have to imagine the lost connection with the land and they also have to construct their Native identities with this imagination.

According to Cole, everyone gets the land ownership from someone else (Owens, 1991, p.181). Cole mentions a land that used to belong to Morales' family. However, that is only half-true because they get the land from the King of Spain and he gets the land from natives. It can be said that the original owner of the land is Natives. So Cole tries to change Morales's mind about who owns the land because no one is fighting for that anymore. It

must be admitted that what is lost, is lost already so everyone wants to live in peace without fighting. For Morales, "You can't bring back the past, and you can't live on what your great-grandfathers had" (Owens, 1991, p.219) but can always move forward.

Creating a valid identity in the absence of one's traditional territories can be hard but it is not impossible. For achieving this goal, one has to imagine the traditional ways their ancestors had. In this way, Natives can build a strong identity also they can re-form or recreate a relationship with the land again. For instance, Cole is living hundreds of miles away from his tribe's hereditary lands. He goes back to Mississippi, the original Choctaw homeland, and finds about his identity as a Native American because in this process, he learns to think and feel like a Native. Moreover, he also finds out what it means to be a warrior after he goes to his tribe's hereditary lands. He finds out that if one accepts death instead of killing, one can be a true warrior (Owens, 1991, p.193). So his discoveries help him to find his true identity as a Native. Before coming to his tribe's hereditary lands, he has doubts because he does not resemble Native Americans physically. After returning to the site, it can be seen that being a Native American has nothing to do with physical appearance; it is about the connection to the land and the traditional ways of thinking and traditional worldview.

In "Connected to the Land: Nature and Spirit in the Novels of Louis Owens" Raymond Pierotti claims that "Owens explored what it means to be mixed blood, coping simultaneously with tribal cultures and traditions and those of the dominant American culture with every fiber of your being" (Pierotti, 2002, p.79). In other words, in his novels Owens uses the process of transculturation to explore the meaning of being a mixed blood. He also tries to represent the tribal culture and traditions in contrast and in combination with those of the dominant culture. Pierotti divides characters from the novel into three groups. One of them is Native Americans, another one is the white characters and the last one is elder characters, both Native American and Hispanic. Pierotti claims that every group gets its power from different sources. According to Pierotti,

the mixed blood Hoey along with Luther Cole and Onatima in *Sharpest Sight* are smart, competent people who draw their strength from their understanding of the land, and what they know of their cultural traditions. In contrast, the white characters are conflicted and their attempts to control situations only succeed in provoking violence and destroying their own need for peace and economic (and psychological) security. The Indian and Hispanic elders in *Sharpest Sight* are wise and empowered, and their primary goal is to assure that

their descendants remain as protected as they can make them from the destructive forces which have been set loose, while remaining aware of the traditions and connections that link them to the physical places from which they come (Pierotti, 2002, p.84).

In other words, all characters have different sources from which they draw their strength. These different methods and sources are also shaping their worldviews and how they see the land and the traditions.

As Chris LaLonde suggests that searching identity is a crucial point in Native American fiction. According to LaLonde, "what we might term the acts of reclamation and proclamation that are at the heart of this counteraction often hinge on the issue of identity, as Native writers explore the complex web of relationships fundamental to individual and cultural identity in twentieth-century America" (Lalonde, 1998, p.305). It should be emphasized that the process of achieving a Native American identity requires reclamation and proclamation. This clearly shows how Owens uses the postmemory moment to make a timely declaration about Indian identity. These traits are essential to create individual and cultural identity.

In "Steinbeck Country or Owens Country?: Indigeneity of California Fiction of Louis Owens" Susan Bernardin mentions the broken connection of the stories and the characters of Owens. According to Bernardin, "[Owens's] protagonists struggle to reconnect with their own culture's stories, stories that come out of particular places but that continue to carry meaning in their new or temporary homes" (Bernardin, 2008, p.43). For example, Cole learns what it means to be a Native American and a warrior from the elders and brings this knowledge back to the Pacific northwest in order to solve the mystery of his brother's death and to restore his bones to tribal custody. Even if the stories are created in a different place, the characters try to keep their meanings, which can be restored in new places. This makes the connection to the land a very fluid and renewable process.

Hoey's speech about the Chumash presence is important because he is giving information about the tribes that were there before his family came to the Pacific Northwest. And after that, Hoey says that the Navajos and Hopis are "living where they always lived" (Owens, 1991, p.19). It also seems that the Chumash are not there now. They may represent the negative possibility of life under a dominant culture: either a physical or cultural extinction. These absent figures underscore the need for a creative connection with the traditional past. In a moment, he seems to be lost in thoughts because he cannot

imagine what kind of feeling this is, living in the same place for all your life. He cannot even imagine the feeling because he lost the connection with his tribal land. When characters like Cole find their way back to their tribal ways and tradition, they can imagine how it feels to live in the same place for years. They just have to reconnect with the land and their traditions. This return creates a sense of continuity that is lacking for generations that are unable to engage the postmemory and imagine a personal and communal history.

In "Unearthing the Chumash Presence in *The Sharpest Sight*" Melody Graulich gives an example from the novel about Chumash presence. In this example, Attis and Cole found a "white stone doll... and arrowhead" (Graulich, 2010, p.53). They found these when they were digging a cave near their house. Graulich claims that these things that they found are really valuable to Cole after losing his brother in the war (Graulich, 2010, p.3). They are important because they remind him of Attis and the time that they spent together. Also Uncle Luther thinks of those things as medicine and wants Cole to wear it constantly (Owens, 1991, p.116). The things that Cole and Attis found are also showing the presence of Chumash. So in a way, it can be said that the author wants readers to "dig" and try to find information about Chumash. This "digging" part can be seen in *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tear* also. In this novel, the Cherokees put typeset language plates under the soil just in case someone comes and finds information about them. This is also unearthing the tribal memories to be reshaped and restated.

In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, there is a mention of a metal plate from a printing press and someone, an unidentified tribe member, states that "...maybe someone dug a hole and buried the type plates. Our words will be left in the soil of the old territory. Our language will always be there" (Glancy, 2009, p.167). They leave their memories and a part of their culture in the old territory just to remind the one who finds it that the Cherokee tribe once lived there. And also it can be assumed that they are leaving fragments of memory for the next generations to have information about them. They also try to protect their language by burying it. Because no one can change it or ruin it if they bury it. It can be thought of as a sign to keep them connected to the land. They may be exiled from their old land but they are still connected to the soul of the old territory. Language connects Native Americans to the past because Native American authors, who are studied in this thesis, are trying to construct a Native identity by imagining the old traditions which are lost now. This is how postmemory's narrative structure is put to use:

by contemporary authors who “dig up” the traces of the past and express them in a fresh way.

"You are a mixed blood and that's Indian" (Owens, 1991, p.21). Although in the novel these are Hoey's words, there is biographical evidence that they are actually Owens's words. According to this statement, it is clear that being a mixed blood does not change the fact that a person is Native American in Owens's understanding. According to Owens, "what matters is what you think about yourself"(Owens, 1991, p.21). This is an important point because the term postmemory is about identity formation. As it is shown in this thesis, for many Native American groups, tribal membership is not strictly about blood or race. It is about what one thinks about himself/herself and feels where he/she belongs.

Hoey admits that he does not know "how to be an Indian" (Owens, 1991, p.56) anymore. Then he talks about his memories when he was young. At that time, he did not think that "Indians act like this" (Owens, 1991, p.56) or "Indians look like this" (Owens, 1991, p.56). He also admits that he reads books and he is trying to "remember how it was before" (Owens, 1991, p.56) but he is aware of that the books are not helping him. Because how to be a Native American cannot be found in the books. Native American literature demonstrates that one can only find his (her) Native identity through following old traditions and memories and turning those into new ones.

In *Power*, Omishto's description of a road is really interesting. She says the road is "[s]tolen more than borrowed"(Hogan, 1990, p.5). The name of the road, The Fossil Road, too is suggestive of an association with the ancient past of the earth. Reverence for the older ages of life is strongly implied in it. White people steal the land and build whatever they want on it. It can be argued that when they build their road, they do not care about nature also. Natives have to endure not only the loss of their land but also the destruction of their land before their eyes. White people do not care for the land as Natives do. So it must be very painful to watch something so precious to you to be treated that badly. Their destruction and carelessness about nature bring the panther, the sacred animal of the Taiga tribe, to the brink of death. Because of their pollution and their greediness, the panther cannot maintain its life and the places that can be a natural home to the panther do not exist anymore.

The connection to the land is problematic in *Power*. Although the Taiga remain in their ancestral lands, like the Laguna people in *Ceremony*, changes to the land have

separated them from it in certain ways. In *Ceremony*, it seems to be development in general—roads, towns, buildings—that change the people’s intimacy with the earth. In *Power*, these changes plus severe pollution make it almost impossible to lead a traditional Taiga life. The panther, and indeed the people, are “endangered.” Ecology becomes both an environmental and a human rights issue. It can be said that the Taiga tribe is living on ancestral lands but it is severely polluted and it is really hard for them to create a connection with the land. It can be argued that even the panther that Ama kills is having difficulty in living there. It is not a surprise that the panther is in bad condition. The pollution of the land is apparently the cause of it. So it can be said that the panther sacrifices itself to bring healing to the land. After that incident, Omishto's life changes drastically. It can be said that she started to form her identity as a native after that incident. After the death of the panther, she claims that she believes in "prophets, old men, old women..." (Hogan, 1990, p.193). So it can be assumed that she is believing the traditional ways of her ancestors.

The setting of *Power* can be given as an example of the sense of place. Previously, The Fossil Road is introduced in this chapter. There is an interesting tree called the Methusela tree which symbolizes the rooted history. However, during the storm, that ancient tree is uprooted (Hogan, 1990, p.38). It can be said that the tree is uprooted because it does not belong to these lands, it comes with the Spanish colonies. In a sense, the storm is the starting point for change because after the storm everything changed. Omishto experiences the storm, the hunt, the trials, both government and tribal, and all those events changed her. They helped her to build a native identity by connecting her to the land and her ancestors.

In "An Ecofeminist Approach to Linda Hogan's *Power*" Balasaheb Sagade suggests that the relationship with Native Americans and nature is based on how to use natural sources properly. According to Sagade,

in *Power* women characters have practiced non exploitative use of natural resources and they are equal partners with men in the construction and maintenance of harmonious relationships among people, soil, animals, trees, water and plants. It shows that Native American women know how to use the natural resources properly. They take care of the land. They have the very valuable information about environment. That can be used to protect the environment from the various emerging dangers (Sagade, 2013, p.2).

Because of their special bond with nature, Native Americans know how to use natural sources effectively, compared to the waste and pollution caused by the destructive practices of the dominant white culture. Native Americans do not see the land as a source of material. On the contrary, they believed that it has a soul just like them and Native Americans care about their land and protect its soul.

In "Who May Speak for the Animals? Deep Ecology in Linda Hogan's *Power* and A. A. Carr's *Eye Killers*" Catherine Rainwater inquires about the reason for the environmental breakdown. According to Rainwater, "Hogan's novel underscores Eurocentric estrangement from nature that has resulted in environmental breakdown" (Rainwater, 2005, p.264). In other words, being distant from nature makes the dominant white culture has a tendency to cause environmental breakdown. It can be claimed that the dominant white culture does not feel the same kind of bond with nature or the land so destroying nature and the land comes easier to them.

Rainwater also claims that the members of the tribe are eager to punish Ama by sending her to the walk of death (Rainwater, 2005, p.267). However, there may be another meaning for this situation. Of course, they want to punish her because she acted independently by killing the panther and making that decision alone. However, it can be assumed that the members of the tribe send her to nature to mend the broken bond she had with nature because after she killed the panther, the bond must be broken. Ama has to kill her ally in order to show her tribe that the old traditions are not working and also put a stop on the misery that the panther lives through. In other words, by killing the panther, Ama lost her ally and she damaged the bond that she has with nature and the land. So her punishment can be assumed as her journey to fix the bond between herself and nature and the land also.

As Roland Walter claims that the stories Ama told about the origins of Taiga to Omishto, make Omishto understand the past and allow her to make connection with the past and present effectively (Walter, 1999). In the stories, humans and animals are living in harmony. As Omishto learns more about these stories, her understanding about the world and her ideas are changing. It can be seen that her ideas are initially under the influence of the dominant white culture, but after the stories about Taiga people, Omishto's ideas are changing and, as Walter claims, she begins to see the magic in this world (Walter, 1999, p.70).

In *Power*, Omishto is also searching her Native American identity and she longs for the tribal ways such as connection to the land and nature. She can feel the traditions of the tribe every time she looks at nature or spends time in nature. She sleeps in her boat: she wants to be out in nature, and, in particular, in water. This is because she feels safe in water like a whole continent (Hogan, 1990, p.7). In a way, Omishto is trying to bridge the gap between the past knowledge of her ancestors with the modern ways of life that she lives in by reconnecting to the land and nature. In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* and *The Sharpest Sight*, the connection with the land is broken by exile, either enforced or voluntary. This creates a detachment that is devastating to the characters' sense of identity. The relationship with the land forms people's character and identity. The loss of this intimate relationship is just as significant as the acculturation that claims the lost generations.

Using the "post-it" method, the journey that Cherokees experienced between 1838 to 1839 can be considered as postmemory for the next generations. Glancy's imaginative and well-documented narrative of the Trail of Tears evokes the feelings of the Cherokee as they were undergoing the traumatic event. Her portrayal details how, literally, they lost their land and were exiled from their original place. They built a new home for themselves in the new territory. It can be said that they took their memories with them to the new territory to be unearthed by postmemory generations. The journey experience that Tayo from *Ceremony*, Cole from *The Sharpest Sight* and Omishto from *Power* can be considered as bridging the gap between the past generations and the next generations. Moreover, they are using the journey experience as to reinforce the living connection between past and present as Hirsch suggests.

In *Power*, Omishto states that "one day someone will find this world, our world, our time, our pieces beneath a layer of limestone or silt" (Hogan, 1990, p.47). It means that the next generation will find the belongings of the old generation. It is possible to find their memories along with their belongings. It can be deduced that as a member of the next generation, Omishto can find the memories of her tribe's traditional ways of living. In other words, she can find the memories of the old generation because they are still there within the soil and within themselves. They only need to re-imagine the memories and the ways of their ancestors.

In addition to this, in *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, Bushyhead feels pain when he remembers the names of the old territory (Glancy, 2009, p.128). He admits

that he writes down the names of the places and memories. He tries not to forget the memories he had about the old territory. In a sense, he tries to protect the memories and he tries to convey these memories and feelings to the next generations. And when he remembers these memories, he just stops dead in his tracks because these memories are so powerful they just make him stop what he was doing. It is as if he can feel the presence of the memories around him. In other words, he simply misses the old territory and he can feel it even in his bones. It is significant that he uses writing to access memory. It can be argued that writing his memories connects him to the authors of this study.

In conclusion, it is a fact that the land is a precious source of living for Native Americans. They believe that the land has its own soul and as indigenous people, Native Americans also believe that they are connected to the soul of the land. Natives and white people have different their approach to the land. On the one hand, white people think of the land as commodity or a thing they can buy or sell. On the other hand, Native Americans think of land as a living being with a soul. It can be argued that because white people cannot understand the bond and the connection between Native Americans and the land, they attack the bond by destroying the land. The only obstacle between the land and white people is the bond between the land and Native Americans. Native American authors try to rebuild the connection between the land and the Native Americans in order to create a new Native American identity. In order to achieve that, they claim that they need to restore their connection with the land and nature. In *Power*, Omishto chooses nature and the land after trailing the panther. She comes to live with her clan in the swamps. In *Ceremony*, Tayo creates the bond between the land with the help of the ceremony that Betonie performed. In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, the Cherokees perform a ceremony to solidify their connection with their new territory. In *The Sharpest Sight*, Cole learns about his tribe and what it means to be a warrior in his tribe's hereditary lands.

IT SKIPS A GENERATION: RECONSTRUCTING NATIVE IDENTITY IN THE FACE OF CHRISTIANITY

To Native American authors who are studied in this thesis, reconstructing a new Native identity is essential. They adapt transculturation as a process for reconstructing a Native identity. However, it is not enough. In order to reconstruct identity and self, Native American authors use traditional ideas with the imagination of the past with the help of postmemory concept. Native American authors use traditional storytelling methods which contain spiritual elements and traditions. They use these traits against the dominant white culture's materialistic worldview. By means of these traits, Native American authors are able to reconstruct a new sense of identity which contains the traditions in an updated version. In this chapter, the effects of Christianity on Natives and their tribal ways and reconstruction of identity will be discussed through *The Sharpest Sight, Power, Ceremony* and *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*.

The process of acculturation through Christian proselytizing has a long history in North America. It begins with the earliest contact between Europeans and native people. In her article entitled "The Church of the Immaculate Conception: Inculturation and Identity among the Anishnaabeg of Manitoulin Island" Teresa S. Smith explains how Christian missionary works among Anishnaabeg of Manitoulin destroyed local beliefs.

Missionary activities have since been continuous and here, as elsewhere, have served not only to promote Christianity but frequently to deny the sacrality and legitimacy of Anishnaabe tradition. As was the case with the religion of earliest missionized Algonquians the Montagnais Anishnaabe beliefs, practices and symbols were not only replaced by Christian ones but were denounced as demonic in origin. (Smith, 200, p.145)

Basically what she says is that missionaries make Natives scared of their own traditions and symbols by saying that they are demonic signs. It can be said that missionaries threatened them not to believe in their spirituality. Missionaries also did not accept Native spirituality as sacred beliefs and they did not want to preserve the traditions of the tribes all over the country. It can be clearly identified as an act of assimilation against Natives.

Furthermore, Thomas J. Morgan in his 1889 Annual Report states that

The Indians must conform to "the white man's ways," peaceably if they will, forcibly if they must. The tribal relations should be broken up, socialism destroyed, and the family

and the autonomy of the individual substituted. The allotment of lands in severalty, the establishment of local courts and police, the development of a personal sense of independence and the universal adoption of the English language are the means to this end. (as cited in Lee Irwin, 1997, p.40)

What Morgan is trying to say is the dominant white culture and people have tried to assimilate Natives and they will continue to do so. It does not matter whether Native Americans are willing or not. The dominant white culture believes that the assimilation of natives is best for all. Natives will have no other choice but to submit to them. It can be said that the dominant culture wants to keep Natives under control. However white people operate under a belief system that privileges the concept of individualism. In other words, they are theoretically alone and autonomous, unlike Natives. So in order to assimilate Natives and make Natives like themselves, they need to ruin the traditions of Natives and separate them from their tribes' beliefs and traditions.

Moreover, it can be said that Christianity is damaging to the natural environment. According to Keith Thomas in *Man and the Natural World*, it can be argued that the Bible gives humans every right to dominate nature and this situation leads to the pollution of Nature (Genesis 1:28). So in other words, he claims that humans are superior to nature and God only created nature to satisfy human needs (Thomas, 1983, p.17-50). It is obvious that the Natives' point of view towards nature is really different from white people's point of view. Natives do not feel that they are superior to nature. On the contrary, they are bound to nature and they have a connection with both land and animals. They try to live in harmony with nature. However, white people think that they are superior to nature and they will dominate it.

Along these same lines, William Cronon in "The Trouble with Wilderness" states that humanity's responsibility is "to tame the wilderness and bring order to it" (Cronon, 1996, p.85). It can be said that white people see Natives as wild beings and they need to tame Natives in order to make them civilized. In other words, it is white people's job to tame the wilderness inside natives and make them civilized like themselves. In this way, white people will restore order and start living in harmony with natives. It can be said that white people not only count themselves superior to nature, they also think that they are superior to Natives.

It can be claimed that Christianity leads to the land's destruction. Natives think the land as a sacred place but the white people think of the land as sustenance, something that can be bought, dominated and owned like a commodity. Of course, it is clear that many of these attitudes are historical and derive from contact many generations ago. It is certainly true that many of these beliefs have left deep scars on American Indian communities across the generations, but most white Americans nowadays would not confess to any hostility against native people. An attitude of ignorance or forgetfulness, or even a superficial admiration, replaces the aggression of previous generations. That is why the concept of post-memory is important while discussing Native American Novels. The Christian generation in these novels may metaphorically represent hundreds of years of assimilation and acculturation, though it is not literally a recent development. The authors have to creatively imagine what a return to "tradition" would look like. In many cases, the traditions are already dead and forgotten. So an imaginative new way to be "traditional" is required. There are always clues—small folkways and legends or stories that need to be told—that lead these novelists and their characters to reconstruct a Native American identity. In some cases, as with Tayo in *Ceremony*, the knowledge is there but the world has changed so much that even the old ceremonies have to be adapted to the new circumstances. The other main characters such as Omishto, Cole, and Cherokee tribe members also need to reconstruct their identities as Natives. It can be said that they can achieve this goal by using updated versions of old traditions.

In *Power*, Linda Hogan states that Natives accept the parts of Christianity which work for them and their beliefs. This is also called transculturation by Mary Louise Pratt. They question the other parts that they disagree with. In other words, Natives blend Native spirituality and Christianity so that they create a new way of thinking which includes both of them. For instance, Omishto sticks to the traditional ways of her tribe as much as possible but sometimes she cannot help but wonder about her mother's God. In the same way, her mother is a Christian but she still knows tribal traditions and she applies these traditions in her life when it is convenient for her.

In "Everything the World Turns On: Inclusion and Exclusion in Linda Hogan's *Power*" Jesse Peters explains the relationship with the dominant white culture and Native Americans. Peters suggests that the relationship with the dominant white culture and Native Americans is important while building a Native American identity because this relationship affects Native American identity. Peters claims that "conscious recognition of

how incredibly complex conceptions of what it means to be “Indian” actually are, is a central theme in much Native American fiction” (Peters, 2013, p.112). So because of the effect of the relationship between the dominant white culture and Native American cultures, Native American authors use the search of a Native American identity as a central theme in their novels. This is the aim of transculturation. Transculturation serves in the formation of complex new identities for Native American people.

While she initially accepts some of her mother’s beliefs, most of the time Omishto thinks that Christianity does not understand the tribal way of living. According to Omishto,

God receives us [...] pulled out of our element, held tight and helpless. He eats us, my mother’s God. The preacher thinks different from the Taiga way of thinking. He thinks a snake is the devil. The old ones think it is a god. He believes in angels, children with wings in the sky, but he doesn’t believe in what’s earth or birds; he says it’s all an illusion, this life on earth, a dream, a miserable place we will one day escape into the golden streets of heaven. (Hogan, 1990, p. 40)

It can be argued that Natives are having difficulty adjusting themselves to Christianity. In a way, they are torn apart because they have to choose one of them: Christianity or Native spirituality and tradition. It can be said that they cannot decide which one is worth it more. They do not want to leave their traditions and spirituality behind because leaving traditions and spirituality means leaving themselves at the same time. However, some characters are aware of the fact that they cannot exist comfortably in the white world if they do not choose Christianity. It is a tough call but Omishto decides which side she will be on after the storm. The Storm is a powerful event in the book. The storm might mean rebirth and a return to old ways in the book and after the storm, Omishto experiences acceptance as a tribe member and she returns to the old ways of her tribe. It can be said that she completely rejects the modern world as well as Christianity.

In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, it can be seen that Christianity and tradition are at war with each other. Knobowtee thinks that conjurer's magic and Christian faith are pulling the tribe apart (Glancy, 2009, p.35). Because apparently some members support Christian faith and others support conjurer's magic, which is the traditional way of their life. In a way, it can be deduced that Christian faith is dividing Natives because it separates them from their traditions and their way of living and also believing is what matters most to them in their life. It can be said that Christian faith also affects their relationship with each other. For instance, Knobowtee and O-ga-na-ya are brothers but

because of their differences in what they believe, they are constantly fighting with each other. They are always arguing about the way of life and beliefs. So, Knobowtee is right in saying that Christian faith is tearing the tribe apart and it also causes damage to the relationship of the tribe.

It is revealed that Bushyhead is converted to Christianity (Glancy, 2009, p.57). The reader notices this information before it is mentioned in the novel. However, it can be said that the writer seems to want to declare and officialize it by writing. It can be deduced that the writer gives this information in written form because Bushyhead is the only person who does not question where his faith lies up until now. He is arguably the only character who does not have any doubt about his faith. He becomes a good Christian leader to his tribe and leaves his tribe's traditional ways and beliefs. He tries to lead the tribe members to be good Christians and he also tries to help them rebuild their homes in the new territory. From this aspect, Christianity can be seen as acquiescence to new circumstances in the new territory. It signifies that the old traditions are left in the old territory. They begin their new life in their new territory with a new tradition.

It is clear that to see Knobowtee's frustration about Christianity and the concept of God (Glancy, 2009, p.6). Knobowtee is experiencing difficulty in faith because God lets the white people come and claim the land that belongs to Natives. The members of the dominant white culture force Natives to go to new territory and God does nothing about it. God also does not give any information about himself and Natives are expected to accept the information that is given about God without question. So it can be said that understanding the Christian God and his ways make Natives lose faith in Christianity. Knobowtee thinks that Natives need to walk out of church and pretend that God does not exist because they feel helpless and hurt about leaving their own land behind. After that, he changes his thought and decides that the suffering that they should endure, in order to be with him, God. It can be claimed that Natives love the Christian God but they also are resentful to him because they feel that he left them alone in their resettlement. It can be deduced that even though Natives are supposed to believe in God without question, Natives have second thoughts about God. It seems that they cannot trust the Christian God as they trust their traditions.

Bushyhead thinks about the book of Nehemiah. It can be said that he is comparing the rebuilding of Cherokees and the book because the book is about rebuilding (Glancy,

2009, p.137). Bushyhead also compares Trail of Tears to the Hebrews' march in the Bible. By drawing parallels between these kinds of situations, he tries to keep his faith and he tries not to get discouraged about their rebuilding. He tries to feel God by his side. It can be said that he tries to comfort himself by comparing the Cherokee resettlement to the Hebrew march. Bushyhead knows that there are some tribe members who have lost their faith in Christianity. It can be argued that he is also on the verge of losing his own faith because he always has to listen to his people's cries and he knows that they are unhappy in this new territory. So what he does can be seen as consoling himself actually because even Bushyhead cannot see this new land as a promised land. It is a strange land to live on. It seems that the soil, the part of the land that belongs to the Cherokee tribe now, does not accept them. In the middle of this, Bushyhead also feels the conjurer's magic more than his faith. So it appears that Bushyhead is also having second thoughts about his faith from time to time.

In the same novel, Maritole had a moment with her memories. In that memory, she was with her family and after that, she saw "the world that Cherokees created with their singing" (Glancy, 2009, p.184) and this memory connected to her conscience. This moment can be considered as a postmemory moment for Maritole. Because she couldn't possibly know the time when the Cherokees created the world just by their singing. It can be said that this moment was long before her but she can still feel the connection with the past and she can even see it in her consciousness. It can be assumed that Diane Glancy wrote this part as to show the mixture of spiritualism with memory. These memories, singing Cherokees, were not her original memories but she has these memories because she knows that old generations have this kind of memory and she imagines it that way. This moment can be considered as an example for postmemory because Maritole can clearly see and feel the memories that do not belong to her.

Power has the same issues about Christianity and tradition. In *Power*, the two sisters, Omishto and Donna, represent Christianity and tradition. Donna is in the same situation as Omishto's mother "who tries to pass for white" (Hogan, 1990, p.20). Donna and her mother try to be like white people because it is easier to exist in the white community than to be a Native and fight for their rights. In contrast to them, Omishto does not try to be a white person and she does not believe in Christianity. Omishto is the depiction of tradition in the whole novel along with her teacher in traditional ways, Ama. It can be said that Ama is the most traditional character in the book after the elders. Omishto

seems to make her choice among her mother and Ama. She chooses Ama and mostly stays with her. This means that Omishto chooses to stay in nature just like Ama. It means that she chooses her tribe's tradition, to live in nature, over Christianity.

After the storm, snakes try to enter the house because they are running away from the storm (Hogan, 1990, p.39). Omishto makes an observation comparing Christianity to tradition. According to her observation, Christianity counts snakes as a bad sign; even its preacher says so. On the other hand, tradition counts snakes as a sign of God or even regards snakes as God. It can be said that even though God created snakes, the preacher in the novel attributes negative qualities by saying: "this is a bad sign, snakes at a woman's feet" (Hogan, 1990, p.39). On the other hand, tradition counts all animals in nature as sacred and tradition respects all kinds, unlike Christianity. Moreover, Omishto states that her mother's god "eats Natives" (Hogan, 1990, p.40). Omishto thinks that the preacher does not understand the ways of Taiga people and the preacher's thinking and Taiga's way of thinking are not compatible. It can be said that Omishto sees the emptiness of her mother's belief and she disagrees with Christian faith.

However, in *Power*, Omishto's mother chooses Christianity over tradition but a generation later, Omishto chooses tradition over Christianity. It seems that her mother is not a person who has a strong will and does not defend her rights as a Native. On the other hand, Omishto has more courage than her mother. She is interested in the traditional part of her clan more than her mother is. This shows a process of restoring the "memory" of older generations after the lapse into Christianity for a time

In *Ceremony*, Auntie talks about the old traditional ways of life in the tribe (Silko, 1986, p.68). According to her, in the old times, only the clan name was enough. Every member of the clan knew what to do, what to say and how to behave. Auntie claims that every member of the clan knew this information even before their birth because it was their tradition; it was in their DNA. For thousands of years, tribes lived bound to those traditions and traditions became the rules of their lives. However, after white people's arrival in "New World", everything changed. Everything had two names: one was Indian, one was a white name. She claims that Christianity has torn them apart. Christianity made them alone and individual because Jesus Christ only saves individuals. It can be deduced that in this way, Natives are separated from their clan and their traditions so they are vulnerable. So the thought arises that Christianity separates the people from each other and it also

separates them from themselves because they become distant to their own traditions and beliefs. Auntie is practicing Christianity herself. However, her belief in Christianity can be like transculturation kind of belief. It can be said that she accepts the parts of Christianity which work for her. But she also knows about the old traditions. However, she opposes to Tayo's meeting with an old medicine man named Ku'oosh. She is judgmental about Tayo's mother because she couldn't save her and as a reason for that, her little sister brought shame not just to the family but to all of their tribe. Her shame is Christian because Christianity bans sex outside marriage. It can be said that she is also angry at herself because she couldn't save her little sister and she is taking all of her anger out of Tayo.

The Sharpest Sight has little information about Christianity. Mundo talks about an "idea of heaven" after looking at a beer box in the pub that he frequents (Owens, 1991, p.79). According to him, a man who is in a canoe on the sea with light waves can be counted as being in heaven. However, he also remembers what Hoey mentioned about the Indian dead. As stated above, the idea of heaven in Christianity imagines a person alone as an individual. However, this is not the case in the memory that Hoey mentioned. In the memory, Hoey says that Natives put their dead up in trees in canoes (Owens, 1991, p.79). So it appears that even though someone is dead, he/she still can be with his/her loved ones and not alone in the process. It can be seen that Mundo's vision about heaven is close enough to the Choctaw one, if one considers the canoe image.

Throughout *The Sharpest Sight*, there is little information about Christianity but there is information about Choctaw traditions. For instance, Cole goes to Uncle Luther to learn the traditions of his tribe because his father cannot teach him properly. It can be seen that Cole accepts his traditional ways over modernity. Cole did not follow his father or his brother in this matter. He also accepted the mission to find his brother's bones because, in their tradition, a person who died needs his/her bones. Even in the old times, when they were resettling, they brought the bones of their loved ones to their new territory because bones are important in their tradition and belief. In short, they made this country their home with their bones (Owens, 1991, p.98). That's why they need to get Attis' bones. It can be said that without their bones, Choctaws cannot connect to the land and the tribe, without which connection they cannot have a home in the country. And also without his bones, Attis' soul cannot leave earth. It can be said that he has to wander without peace if they cannot find his bones. His soul will be restless through eternity.

In "Two Interviews with Leslie Marmon Silko", Silko finds the process of Tayo's healing a little bit complex. First reason might be Tayo's need for two medicine men. But mostly, according to Silko,

Tayo's healing is connected to the faith which this old medicine man had, a faith which went back to things far in the past, the belief that it's human beings, not particular tribes, not particular races or cultures, which will determine whether the human race survives. But all people have to constantly be working, otherwise we will manage to destroy ourselves. (Seyersted, 1981, p.32)

From this perspective, it can be said that seeing the big picture instead of the little one, helped Tayo while healing. Silko also thinks that the evil and the good do not depend on ethnicity. They depend on humanity. She tries to depict in her novel that not every white person is bad and not every Native American is good (Silko, 1986, p.32-33). Paula Gunn Allen states that Silko injects "the experience of reality." With this, Silko "creates a bridge between different ways of being in the world-two different cultural perspectives" (Allen, 1992, p.65). Allen also claims that because of this "complexity, the reader experiences these different realities as they arrive in Tayo's consciousness" (Allen, 1992, p.65).

In "An Ecology of Mind: A Conversation with Linda Hogan," Hogan talks about *Power* and her other novels. In this essay, Hogan tells the real story of the panther killing which can be counted as an inspiration to her for writing about that incident (Stein & Hogan, 1999, p.116). She states that

When I heard about this case I was obsessed with finding out what really happened. I had to know. So I went to Florida and did research at the court house, went over the transcripts. What basically happened, and I think he should have admitted it, was that he and his friend were drunk, went out late one night and spot-lighted. They ended up shooting a Florida panther. After that the script gets tricky because before they went back home with the panther, they stopped at other houses to see if anyone had a camera to take a picture of Billie with the dead panther, which they then published in the tribal newspaper. The police and the Department of Wildlife showed up to arrest him and they found other endangered species parts in his house. Billy and his friends had barbecued the panther and eaten it. They had joked about its genitals. It was not a sacred taking of an animal. Even the judge was biased on his side. When the case started the judge said, "I don't see what the big deal is; it is just a cat."(Stein & Hogan, 1999, p.116)

Hogan clearly feels that there is irreverence in the killing of animals. She has to re-imagine the killing of the panther as a part of tradition. It can be assumed that because she does not

support the careless destruction of animals, she has to create a new tradition based on an earlier sense of reverence for them. She wrote about the killing of the panther to demonstrate that killing the panther is a wrong thing to do. Maybe Ama killed the panther so that Omishto would be able to experience a new and purified sense of ritual.

As Roland Walter claims that "in Native American oral traditions words are a vital part of the poetic process of creation, transformation, and restoration" (Walter, 1999, p.72). So the power of oral tradition cannot be underestimated. Because, as it is said before, the oral tradition leads to creation, transformation and healing. Oral tradition provides healing not only for Omishto, it provides healing to Tayo and Cole as well. Without the stories they learned and the ceremonies, it is clear that they will never be able to heal again. With the application of oral tradition, it is possible to say that Native Americans create a connection with their ancestors and the way their ancestors had lived.

In "Who May Speak for the Animals? Deep Ecology in Linda Hogan's *Power* and A. A. Carr's *Eye Killers*" Catherine Rainwater claims that Omishto identifies with her "Taiga kin" instead of her "assimilated mother" (Rainwater, 2005, p.264). Omishto mostly identifies herself with her aunt, Ama. Rainwater claims that Omishto also identifies herself with animals especially the ones that are abused (Rainwater, 2005, p.265). It can be said that Taiga tribe members believe that they are descendants of Sisa, the panther. So that is why they identify themselves with animals. Rainwater claims that Hogan uses animals because she wants the readers to imagine animals as people. As it is said before, Native Americans see animals as another tribe that lives on earth just like Taiga tribe. According to Native Americans, animals resemble human tribes. Hogan tries to incorporate this idea into her novel.

Rainwater claims that by killing the panther, Omishto and Ama show the old traditional ways are not working (Rainwater, 2005, p.266). These old traditions cannot adapt themselves to the present. In other words, if they want to survive in the modern world, the traditions have to be adapted to the present circumstances just like in *Ceremony*. In *Ceremony*, Tayo has to face the same process. In order to continue the bond with their tribe and the land, Omishto and Tayo have to change old traditional ways by adapted them to new traditions.

In "Removals and Long Walks" Stephanie J. Fitzgerald admits that "the emphasis on 'a different place' is a term that reoccurs" (Fitzgerald, 2016, p.38). She also claims that

the preservation of old traditions is uncertain. According to Fitzgerald, "there are signs that certain cultural and religious practices, such as the stomp dance, will continue in Indian Territory. The future of other practices, especially those of Cherokee religion, remains unclear" (Fitzgerald, 2016, p.38). In other words, in this new territory, it is not assured that the old beliefs will survive. These old traditions might be abandoned because of Christianity or it can continue as a part of Christianity. That part is uncertain because it can be said that Cherokees are not decided about their spirituality as Mandril discussed earlier. Some of them still seem to have doubts about Christianity and some of them just accept Christianity. There is a separation in their views of spirituality. Because of this separation, the future of their old traditions and spirituality is unclear.

Cole tells himself that he is a half-breed. He claims that he is "three-eighths breed"(Owens, 1991, p.10) because his mother is "a quarter Cherokee" (Owens, 1991, p.10). After that he mentions what he learns from school and T.V. According to those representations, half-breeds are "killers, betrayers, and can't be trusted"(Owens, 1991, p.10). He repeats this information to himself "like a ceremony"(Owens, 1991, p.10). So it can be claimed that at the beginning he mistakenly believes half-breeds are killers, betrayers etc. He believes this because this is what the dominant white culture portrays in its representations of mixed blood people. At this point, he is cut off from the wisdom of previous generations. He does not have access to their life style and traditions. He also lives far away from his tribe's hereditary lands. These all affect Cole's perception of how to be a Native American. After the encounter with his Uncle Luther and his tribal culture, his thoughts change. It can be said that Cole is a half-breed just like Tayo and both of them have difficulty placing their ideas before they learn about their culture. They need illumination from their culture. Both characters engage the creative operation of postmemory, after which can they begin to develop a sense of identity that connects with ideas from the past.

According to Uncle Luther, white people do not know how to grow up and they do not want to grow up (Owens, 1991, p.109). However, as Leslie Marmon Silko suggests, in *Ceremony*, "things which don't shift and grow are dead things" (Silko, 1986, p.126). Native Americans believe that in order to survive in this world, it is necessary to grow. It seems that Owens agrees with Silko on this subject. He claims that "there ain't nothing more dangerous than a man or woman that digs their heels in and won't grow up" (Owens, 1991, p.109). The dominant white culture always puts pressure on Native Americans to behave in

certain approved ways with regard to the concept of maturity and to accept only certain types of stories as true and valid. When Native Americans stop believing in growing up and adapting their stories to the times, it will be easier for them to become assimilated within the dominant white culture and to forget their Native identity.

Onatima explains the concepts of shilombish and shilup to Cole. Shilombish is an inside shadow "that's kind of like what white people call the soul (Owens, 1991, p.110). Shilup is an outside shadow and "it's similar to what people call ghost" (Owens, 1991, p.11). This part is important because Onatima explains and teaches the Choctaw's spiritual beliefs to Cole. She is informing him because he does not know about his own tribal culture and traditions. Because of this Native spiritual belief, Cole has to bring Attis' bones back to put his shilombish and shilup in peace. This part is important to show transculturation. Onatima has to use terms from the dominant culture in order to explain the Choctaw concepts. As a part of the hybrid world in which Native Americans live, the form of instruction has to reference the white "reality."

Similarly, in *Power* after the storm ends, Omishto feels that this is a beginning and an end of something" (Hogan, 1990, p.73). The storm shows that the old traditions have to end and the old Taiga beliefs must transform themselves. They have to start with new beginnings and new traditions. After the storm, Omishto believes that "the storm opened a door" (Hogan, 1990, p.95). So, the storm is here to change things. It can be said that the storm can be another element to show the reader that the old traditions are not working any more. They need adaptation to the new orders of the world. Omishto also believes that "storm creates life and a beginning" (Hogan, 1990, p.95). So actually Native Americans can still hope that they can build a new Native identity out of old traditions and ceremonies.

Omishto claims that "sometimes [she] see[s] things as they were before this world, in the time of first people" (Hogan, 1990, p.83). This statement clearly shows that she is having postmemorial moments. She can see what people before her lived through. She can describe what she saw clearly. According to her, she can see the times "before we had canoes and torches and moved through the wet night like earthbound stars" (Hogan, 1990, p.83). All these things happen in her imagination. It means that Hogan tries to imagine the traditional life many generations ago and she creates Omishto to express this idea.

Omishto claims that "two worlds exist" (Hogan, 1990, p.97). The simple meaning is that one world is conceived by Native Americans and the other one is manifested by the white dominant culture. It can be claimed that the two worlds are separate and one has to choose one in which to live. Omishto also lives in two worlds. One is the dominant culture's side and the other is traditional side. The key to the identity formation lies with synthesizing the traditional world with the dominant culture's world with the help of transculturation. So hybridity is a reality for forming the Native American identity. Another point of view can suggest that the two worlds can symbolize the world of humans and the other one is the world of spiritual guides or animals. Omishto claims that she exists in both worlds just "like [she is] two people" (Hogan, 1990, p.97). She also contrasts "now and then" (Hogan, 1990, p.97). Now and then part suggests that postmemory is still with her. Because what she means by saying now and then can only be explained by postmemory. She is living in "now" but she can see and exist in "then" also. She can exist in both worlds as a Native American.

In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, the Cherokees face significant changes in Oklahoma. The orators are missing in the new territory. They could not survive the trail (Glancy, 2009, p.48). It means that their stories are gone with them and the Cherokees cannot bless their fields with the help of orators. However, Bushyhead suggests that he will ask God's blessing on the new territory (Glancy, 2009, p.48). It means that they are changing their traditions and beliefs. It also shows the end of the orator tradition. So in a way, the author experiences postmemory herself. She is using her imagination for how her ancestors lived, but a historical reconstruction of an entire lost culture at the moment it is being torn away. She also researched and documented this lost culture to a very great degree. When she moved to Oklahoma, she felt "the presence of that unknown history" (Glancy, 2009, p.187). After she visited Cherokee Heritage Museum and while she was passing over the land, she started to hear the voices of the people in her imagination. This is exactly what the concept of postmemory suggests. She does not live in that period of time but she can hear the voices and she can feel and imagine that time like it is her own memory. But this is a creative and imaginative process, not a mystical one.

According to Hirsch, returning to the place of memories is impossible:

What if several generations pass? What if traces are erased deliberately and forgetting is on those who are abducted or expelled,... stories of "return" to places not visited before attempts to reclaim some form of memory or connection to the objects and places of the

past, it is only while making evident the irreparability of the breach. Narrative incongruity in fictional accounts may well serve the purpose of signaling the fractures underlying both home and return in the autobiographical and fictional accounts of postmemorial generations that have inherited immeasurable loss (Hirsch, 2012, p.213).

This statement can also be counted as true for Native Americans. All of the selected books for this thesis support the idea that several generations had passed since the first encounter with colonizers. It can be said that some Native Americans are assimilated in the white society and they seem to lose their ways as Native Americans in the novels. For instance, in *Ceremony* Rocky and, Attis in *The Sharpest Sight* try to pass as white men. In *Power*, Omishto's mother doesn't acknowledge her tribal identity and pretends to be a white woman. In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, Knobowtee tries to adapt himself to Christianity as does Bushyhead. It can be argued that all of these characters are assimilated in the white society and they have lost their connection with their origins. Moreover, it can be said that the traces of Native American identity that they had are erased knowingly because the dominant white culture tries so hard to assimilate Native Americans.

In conclusion, most of the characters in these novels lose their connection to their ancestors to some degree by the imposition of Christianity. So reconstructing a new Native identity is essential. In order to achieve reconstructing a new Native American identity, one has to use traditional ideas and the imagination of the past with the help of transculturation and postmemory. So they have to synthesize the dominant culture and Native American traditions to reconstruct a new sense of identity by imagining the past. In other words, to exist in the both worlds, they have to use their hybrid identity which contains the dominant culture's traits and the old traditions of the tribes. In *Power*, Omishto achieves this hybrid identity by staying in nature but also existing in the modern world that she lives in. In *The Sharpest Sight*, Cole also learns his tribe's stories both in Choctaw language and in English. In *Ceremony*, Tayo also defeat witchery and his PTSD by applying the old traditions into the modern world. In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, the Cherokees try to adapt their old traditions into the new territory by mixing the rules of Christianity into their new experiences.

CONCLUSION

It is a known fact that the dominant culture's oppression of Native Americans caused trauma in Native American tribes. They lost their land, culture, and traditions. However, it can be said that they can bridge the gap that is forming for generations with the help of the concept of postmemory. They can mend the gap by trying to reconstruct Native American identity out of their traditions especially of storytelling..

In "'Settling" History: Understanding Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, *Storyteller*, *Almanac of the Dead* and *Garden in the Dunes*' Denise K. Cummings comments on Silko's storytelling. According to Cummings, Silko's storytelling resembles reclaiming what was silenced or forgotten (Cummings, 200, p.74). Silko's storytelling can be identified as reaching out to ancestral memory and reclaiming those memories (Cummings, 2000, p.74). In the same article, Cummings claims that stories can be the power of resistance and healing at the same time (Cummings, 2000, p.75). In other words, resistance starts with stories and the dominant white culture is aware of this. That is why the dominant white culture wants to destroy the stories or they want Native Americans to forget their own stories (Cummings, 2000, p.75). In this way, it will be easy to colonize Native Americans because they will lose their source of healing and resistance power when they forgot their stories.

Silko writes about the preeminent value of stories. According to her, stories are not just for entertainment they are also to "fight and cure illness" (Silko, 1986, p.2). She claims that only stories can resist evil things and that's why witchery threatens to destroy the stories and make Native Americans forget their own traditions. In this way Native Americans will never fight off the mistaken worldview of the dominant white culture and they will never be able to cure themselves. This part is also where Silko expresses the importance of oral culture. If a culture has its own stories, that culture can maintain its traditions. Silko tries to reinvent them, as postmemory literature shows. In other words, postmemory is not an ism or an idea but a process, a way of remembering, an imaginative reconnection with the past. These qualities make it a natural phenomenon of storytelling. Postmemory is a way of re-telling the story from the perspective of the younger generation dealing with a changed world.

In *Ceremony*, Tayo goes to hospital after the war because of his sickness. At the hospital, just as he prepares to go out, he feels something. and he says "[i]t's more than that. I can feel it. It's been going around for a long time... I don't know what it is, but I can feel it all around me" (Silko, 1986, p.53). It can be said that Tayo is feeling witchery but he is not aware of it yet. He is feeling it because he has Native American blood in his system even though he is a half-breed and even though he is not practicing the old ceremonies or traditions. It can be argued that he still has a deep connection with the land and his tribe's traditions. Moreover, Claudia Eppert claims in her article entitled "Leslie Silko's *Ceremony*: Rhetorics of Ethical Reading and Composition" that Tayo's "trauma resides in a deeply entrenched Native American legacy of oppression and alienation from Native culture, mythology, and history. The effects of oppression are symbolized in the drought that has been afflicting the Laguna region for six years" (Eppert, 2004, p.729). According to Eppert, Tayo's trauma is deeply connected to the oppression and alienation of Native Americans in the white culture, not just the after-effects of the war. It can be said that by oppressing Native Americans, the white culture causes Native Americans to lose their identities. It is clearly seen that Attis's trauma is also connected to oppression and alienation that native people have experienced their whole life. This also brings the idea of postmemory because even though Tayo never practices his tribe's traditions, he can still feel the effects of witchery around him. He is able to feel it because of his strong connection with his ancestors and land by their memories. According to Eppert,

Betonie insists that Native ceremonies must change if they are to defeat evil: "That's what the witchery is counting on: that we will cling to the ceremonies the way they were, and then their power will triumph and the people will be no more" (126). The lesson is clear. If Tayo is to cure the witchery, he must radically and creatively reconfigure his education to meet his contemporary needs. (Eppert, 2004, p.730)

Because Tayo needs to find the old traditions, which are transmitted through his ancestors and their memories in himself, and he needs to mix it with new traditions. Tayo is simply mixing old and new traditions in order to create something new and redeeming out of them.

In her article, "Leslie Silko's *Ceremony*: Rhetorics of Ethical Reading and Composition" Claudia Eppert claims that "Ts'eh confirms the value of remembrance, and reveals how it is embedded in a creative dynamic or life force: "[A]s long as you remember what you have seen, then nothing is gone. As long as you remember, it is part of this story,

we have together" (as cited in Eppert, 2004, p.732)." This can be thought of as an example of postmemory. It can be said that if you can remember, nothing is lost from your life, it stays with you forever. Tayo also realizes this situation when he thought of the love he has towards Uncle Josiah and Rocky. Tayo realized that as long as he has a love for them, the memories of them always will be with him.

In his book *Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel*, Louis Owens states that "The recovering or rearticulation of an identity, a process dependent upon rediscovered sense of place as well as community ...is at the center of American Indian fiction (Owens, 1992, p.5)." Recovering and rearticulating native identity can be considered as a hard task to accomplish because of the oppression and assimilation that Native Americans have endured. They simply lost their traditions and customs so it must necessarily be difficult to put them back in place and create a Native identity.

In "Louis Owens and Anti-Colonial Ghost Dance" Joe Lockard claims that Owens tries to:

reimagine and re-narrate Native American literary history in ways that removed it from exclusive and exclusionary Euro-American historiography. This was an act of indigenous citizenship that contributed significantly not only toward establishing an autonomous field of critical inquiry but also toward establishing Native American literature as a necessary facet of self-understanding in US society and its educational institutions (Lockard, 2019, p.50).

In other words, reimagining and re-narrating Native American literary history can help Native Americans to develop their own independent critical analysis as well as creating their own voice and literature.

They will also need post-memory to reimagine the traditional ways of Native Americans. While they are constructing a new identity, they use spiritual elements such as the magical connection with the land and totem animals which guide them to be brave warriors for opposing the materialistic and rationalistic worldview and philosophy of the dominant culture. These four novels can be considered as examples of reconstructing the Native identity with traits of postmemory and spiritual elements.

To show these traits, the study is divided into four chapters. In "The Wounded Warrior" chapter, the concept of the warrior is introduced and demonstrated through the protagonists of the novels. Native American authors' method of constructing a new identity

by reimagining the traditions through storytelling is also shown in the novels by giving examples. The unique and inclusive concept of Native American spirituality is also shown through post-memory and storytelling. All of these concepts are necessary to reconstruct Native American identity combining new and old aspects because so many cultural elements have been lost and Native American characters in the novels have to re-imagine how it feels to be a warrior according to these concepts that are introduced and discussed briefly. For instance, Tayo from *Ceremony* and Cole from *The Sharpest Sight* can be given as warriors who manage to reconstruct their identities by reimagining traditional ways and combining that with updates from the present as postmemory suggests. Cole finally learns what it means to be a Native American and how to be a true warrior in his tribe's hereditary land. Tayo defeats his PTSD and the witchery by completing an ancient and ongoing ceremony. In other words, both Tayo and Cole are able to bridge the gap that is between the generations back and their generation by internalizing resent knowledge on the past experiences of the ancestors with the present day experiences of Tayo and Cole.

In "Big Cats and Other Totem Animals" chapter, the spiritual traits of the novels are shown. Animals are important for Native Americans because their life depends on animals on many levels. Animals help them, guide them and teach them throughout their life. Native Americans have deep respect for animals deeply because of these spiritual guides help them when they need it the most. It can be said that animals are also another concept for recreating an identity for Native Americans because totem animals are helpful and, when it is needed, they share their powers and wisdom with Native Americans. In order to reconstruct Native American identity, one must include the totem animals and their spirituality in the legends of the tribes. For instance, Omishto from *Power* and the Cherokees from *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* can be given as Native Americans who manage to reconstruct their identities by using animals as spirit guides and reimagining the traditional ways. Omishto chooses her clan over the modern world and finally she is able to understand the spiritual value of her clan through the panther. In other words, to reconstruct a new Native American identity, Omishto needs to reembody the traditions, the past experiences of the ancestors. In this way, it is possible to bridge the gap between the generations as postmemory suggests. In *Pushing the Bear: After the Tail of Tears*, the Cherokees adapt to the new territory by remembering bear stories to keep themselves determined enough to settle in the new territory. Of course, the next generations of Cherokees have to confront with the struggles of the past generations and

the next generations need to unearth the layers of the past as they dig up the plates that the past generations left on their tribal land.

In "The Lost Land" chapter, the idea of the land as an aspect of identity formation is discussed. Native Americans have a great and strong connection with the land. They believe that the land has a soul of its own and their souls are connected to the soul of the land. In order to take control of this desired land, the dominant white culture uses every way to obtain the land. However, the land does not yield to their destructive ways. So it can be said that Natives still have a strong connection with their land. However, in order to reconstruct Native identity, they have to remember the connection between the land and the knowledge of the ancestors of Native American tribes. They have to imagine what it feels like to live by the old traditions in their tribal lands and they have to combine these ideas with the new understandings of the present world. In *Ceremony*, Tayo does this in curing his sickness. First, he finds the old traditions and he strengthens his connection with the land, and follows his ancestor's ways and discoveries. After that, he mixes all of these with an updated version of ceremonies. Also, the Cherokees from *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* can be given as Native Americans who attempt to reconstruct their identities by reconnecting with land and its soul. By doing so, the Cherokees accept the new territory as their land and strengthen their bond with the land. By reconnecting with the land and traditions, Native Americans are exposing themselves to the past experiences of their ancestors which result in bridging the gap between generations and it also helps them to remember the forgotten experiences and traditions that their ancestors had.

In the last chapter, Christianity is discussed as a tool for oppressing the old traditions of the tribes and as a symbol of generations that have become disconnected from traditional practices. First, Christianity is discussed as a force of oppression. The dominant white culture wanted to assimilate Native Americans. So they pressured Natives to convert in Christianity. However, generations have passed since that time and it can be said that Christianity is a part of Native American life. Some of the Natives choose Christianity over traditional spirituality. They took what is working for them in the Christian faith as a result of transculturation. Because of transculturation, some of the Natives accepted Christianity such as the Cherokee tribe in *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* and Auntie in *Ceremony*. They left their old beliefs and traditions. Some of the Natives, however, still pursued the traditional ways and beliefs. For instance, the Cherokees from *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears* can be given as Native Americans who attempt to

reconstruct their identities by adopting Christian values into their traditions and reimagining the traditional ways. Cole from *The Sharpest Sight* and Omishto from *Power* can be given as examples on this matter too. Both of them adopt what they need from the dominant culture and combine them with old traditions. In this way, they manage to reconstruct their identity. Even though they accept the parts of Christianity, they have to be connected with their traditions and memories to form a new Native American identity. In order to achieve that, the characters in the novels need to internalize present knowledge along with the past experiences of their ancestors. As a result of this process, they will be able to bridge the gap between generations as postmemory suggests.

In order to reconstruct Native identity, it can be said that Native Americans should imaginatively reconstruct traditional ways and beliefs. In *The Sharpest Sight*, Cole goes to his tribe's hereditary lands. He learns the traditional ways from his Uncle Luther and he builds a new Native identity by re-imagining traditional ways and updating that knowledge into the present. In *Ceremony*, after returning from the war, Tayo goes to a healing process which will turn out to be an identity quest also. With this quest, Tayo exposes himself to the past traditions and ceremonies to get better and he also internalizes this recent knowledge about the traditions and ceremonies on the past experiences of his ancestors. In *Power*, after the killing of the panther, Omishto chooses her tribe over the modern world. In a sense, she confronts with her tribe's past and traditions and she reembodies that past knowledge that she obtains in her life. In *Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears*, Cherokees not only leave their tribal lands but they also leave their memories with the old land. In order to adapt to the new land, they create new ceremonies. They also leave their language plates in their old lands. The reason that they leave those in the old land because they want next generation to uncover the layers of the past and reconnect with the experiences of their ancestors. So it can be deduced that turning back to traditional beliefs will heal the scars of the oppression and alienation of the dominant culture's effect on Native Americans. In this way, Native Americans can gain their culture and traditional ways back.

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