

Environmentalism and Native American Writers: An Eco-critical Study

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Eco-critical Study**

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ABSTRACT

Title: Environmentalism and Native American Writers: An Eco-critical Study

In the Native Americans' worldview, nature holds a special place; for this reason, in our contemporary concerns about environment and its degradation, the Native American literature has been attracting specific critical attention. They not only identify themselves with nature but also have a life sharing bond of interdependence with it. The European colonisation displaced the Native Americans from their homeland. Their natural resources have been mercilessly exploited since then; resulting into fatal diseases and poverty. Hence, environmental degradation continues to marginalise the Native Americans perpetually. Compelled by abject poverty, they have been left with no options but to sell their native land and animals. They have been enduring great pain due to the loss of nature; even have lost their very identity. This research work is the analysis of Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*, *Ceremony* and N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* and *The Ancient Child*. The novels depict the distinguished features of the Native American's cultural and spiritual vision rooted in nature. The destructive activities of the European colonisers wreaked havoc in the Native Americans' life by separating them from their beloved environment. This not only made them impoverished but also destroyed their mental peace. Keeping these issues in view, Silko and Momaday offer a depiction, in their works, of the importance of restoring the Native Americans' lost identity by challenging the Euro-Americans' relegation of nature and the Native Americans to a lower stratum to be destroyed and dominated. Finally, the present research reveals that nature is an integral part of the Native Americans' lives and destruction of it is detrimental to their very existence. The research findings indicate that the selected texts neutralise the Euro-Americans' misrepresentation of the Native Americans' intimacy with nature and expose the European devastating activities for colonising purpose under the guise of development and civilisation.

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DEDICATION

**I dedicate this work to my parents
who have supported me in throughout my work.**

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the rise of science, there has always been an urge to make progress which continues to be detrimental to the survival of the natural environment and mutual co-existence of all beings. Industrialisation and scientific development have shown a reckless disregard for nature. “The scientific revolution was one cause of the death of nature; the rise of industrial capitalism was another” (Huggan and Tiffin 205). The environmental crisis has always been a great problem for the Native Americans since the European colonisation. The Native Americans’ concept of nature is based on a clear understanding and appreciation of nature. Their life and the natural world are interconnected in a delicate manner. For them, “the mother earth, the four legged and wings of the air appear to be relatives” (Neihardt 55). They regard the earth with great veneration and call it mother. They believe that being the progeny of the single mother earth, human and non-human beings are all like family members. They are interlinked and cannot lead life in isolation. Before the arrival of Europeans to the Americas, millions of people had been living in the American continent in perfect harmony with nature. “The Chippewa Native name Anishinabe or Anishinaabe (pronounced ah-nish-ih-NAH-bey), meaning “first people,” is becoming widely used” (Waldman 66). Since long the Native Americans had been practicing farming; they used plants and herbs for medicinal purposes. Nature is an animate being for them and turns out to be more important when it becomes a part of their religion. They perform religious ceremonies and traditional rituals at the natural sites.

The Native Americans' beliefs and norms are either overlooked or misrepresented and the natural land is exploited by the lustful colonisers. "The first colonization of the area was by Don Juan de Onate, who mounted an expedition northward from New Mexico to look for mines and to Christianize the Indians. He brought with him 400 colonists, 10 Franciscan missionaries, 7,000 head of cattle, sheep, and horses, and founded the first Spanish colony in New Mexico" (Merchant 10). The European settlers treat Native Americans brutally, and destroy their natural environment at a large extent. Such unbridled exploitation results in fatal diseases and poverty. "Disease, starvation and war had greatly reduced the numbers in these native cultures" (McAvoy 392). There is a strong connection between the "marginalization and impoverishment of human communities and exploitation and degradation of the environment" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 16). The natural world is transformed into industrial or urban sites and the Native Americans are displaced from the natural landscape to the reservation. On the one hand, the reservation is a deserted area where they cannot perform their religious ceremonies and cultural rituals; on the other hand, they suffer from spiritual sterility and "higher rates of disease and illness" (U.S. Commission ix) in their new unnatural surroundings. The Native Americans' harmonious relationship with nature has been disturbed. As a result of it, they have faced both social and environmental subordination. Environmental injustice "relies on keeping out of sight and out of mind the harm being done to the bodies of poor women and children's bodies and the poisoning of their local environments" (Adamson et al. 208). This injustice is manifested through the misuse of human and non-human life coupled with the inequitable distribution of the natural resources between the European and Native Americans.

Euro-Americans are always looking for the ways and means to control nature; in other words they are bent on destroying it. They do not derive any spiritual power from the natural environment. They are in competition with nature. Both Native Americans and the European colonisers hunt animals but with dissimilar points of view: "Aware of the power of animal spirits, native hunters treated their prey with respect and performed rituals defined by reciprocity ... But notions of domination and subordination were central to the English, who believed that the act of hunting epitomized the divinely sanctioned ascendancy of humankind over animals" (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 10). For

the Native Americans, all the natural creatures have right to live freely and man has no authority to deprive them of their basic rights. They get permission before cutting trees and also pay “respects to the chief [of trees] by making an offering” (Boyd *Rolling* 9). They do not prey more than their requirement and do not waste anything; all the parts of animals’ body are used. On the contrary, Euro-Americans kill animals for adventure or pleasure. Their alienation from nature caused hostilities and divisions between them. Their violence against the Native Americans results in despair and hatred. European incursion into the Native Americans’ regions resulted destruction of fauna and flora: “Every day they had to look at the land, from horizon to horizon, and every day the loss was with them” (Silko 169). They have exploited nature and this exploitation reached its climax during the World War II. Euro-Americans’ insensitivity to the natural environment deters them from having a soft corner in their hearts for non-human life; by turning a blind eye to the deterioration in the natural environment, they are leading themselves on the path of self-destruction.

Unfortunately, the colonisers’ mission is not limited to the possession and destruction of the Native Americans’ natural resources; they have distorted their identity as well. Apart from their sufferings and poverty, they have also lost their very identity with the greater loss of nature. The term ‘Indian’ is used for the Native Americans to show that they are not the natives of America, although the term, ‘Native American’ was suitable for them but they have accepted the label, ‘Indian’ for themselves. They know that the title: “Indian” is a misnomer, but we have made it our own, just as we have made “American Indian” and more recently “Native American” our own” (Riley 8). They have become aware of the bitter truth that Euro-Americans even “did not want us to be Indians. . . . They wanted us to be ashamed of being Indians” (Vickers 45). The European settlers want the Native Americans to forget their tribal beliefs and culture. On the other hand, the colonisers tend to undermine the importance of nature as a legitimate source of the Native Americans’ survival and are unwilling to appreciate their association with nature. Their natural way of life is portrayed as “backward and primitive” (Adamson and Ruffin 178). On his second voyage to the American continent, Columbus writes back to the Royal Court in Madrid that the Native Americans are “more simple and harmless to those who land for the purpose of making investigations” (Major et al. 76). The Native

Americans' simplicity is taken for granted. They are stereotyped as untamed and brutal "who wasted time with hunting and also failed to domesticate animals obviously needed to learn how to exploit properly the abundant fauna" (Ashcroft and Tiffin 11).

The European culture is exemplified as sophisticated and glorious in the Euro-Americans' canonical literature from the perspective that "because of the inherent superiority of European American Culture" (Adamson and Ruffin 178) they have right to occupy the Native Americans' homeland. Along with their literature, their Hollywood cinema also has done disservices. The European movies like *Stage Coach* (1939), *The Born Losers* (1967) and *A Man Called Horse* (1970) depict the Native Americans as barbarous, animal-like and uncultured who need proper guidance to be able to contribute to the modern civilised world. They are represented "less than human, animalistic, and lacking any conscious or moral motivation" (Vickers 5). Such misrepresentation "justified the dispossession of Indians from land and provided a framework for their eventual civilisation or a rationale for their extinction" (Lewis 12). There have also been efforts to rationalise their religious beliefs and culture "under the guise of assisted modernization" (Huggan and Tiffin 28). Such imperialist policies lead to different types of discrimination against the Native Americans and result in their expulsion from their native land and the natural environment.

The present research work is an attempt to analyse the problems of the Native Americans in relation to the loss of the natural world and highlights the significance of restoring their misrepresented environmental ethics and cultural norms. The study also brings to light the Euro-Americans' exploitation of nature in "abstract view of development" (Huggan and Tiffin 29). Leslie Marmon Silko (March 5, 1948-) and N. Scott Momady (February 27, 1934-), the selected novelists are the early renaissance Native American writers:

Leslie Marmon Silko's 1977 *Ceremony* was written during a time of significant revitalization of Native American culture. N. Scott Momaday's Pulitzer Prize winning novel *House Made of Dawn* (1966) paved the way for a new awareness of indigenous culture, and issues regarding religion, sovereignty, and the social plights of many Native Americans. (Ames 74)

The renaissance in the Native American literature began with the publications of *House Made of Dawn* and *Ceremony*. *House Made of Dawn* is considered the first major work of the Native American Renaissance. *The Ancient Child* by Momaday (published in 1990) is also an attempt to revive the Native American tradition and beliefs through ancient Kiowa myth of a boy who turned into a bear. Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* published in 1992 five hundred years after the arrival of Columbus on the American continent. It covers the five-hundred-year history of Euro-Americans' domination and the Native Americans' struggle against colonisation and exploitation. According to Rachel Stein, Silko knows that opposition between the European and Native Americans is on the basis of their different attitudes towards nature: "When Europeans arrived in America, two conflicting stories about the human relationship to nature were thrown into confrontation, and the European story of human dominion over nature authorized white settlers' ruthless subjugation of the Indian peoples, who viewed themselves as kin to the spirits of the land" (131). The selected novels are analysed from the perspective of the following eco-critical approaches;

(i) Eco-cosmopolitanism, the major aspect of Ecocriticism that interprets human environmental experiences with respect to their relationship with ecological networks and transcends local determination. It examines the problem of the rapidly deteriorating situation of environment "by the increasing awareness that the environmental problems the world now faces are quite unaware of national and cultural boundaries" (qtd. in Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 81-82). Theory of eco-cosmopolitanism transcends the limitations of a particular culture or nation in the favour of global concept of attachment. The concept of eco-cosmopolitanism reduces the boundaries and barriers created by man; man is considered part of the whole ecosystem.

(ii) Environmental Justice. According to Lawrence Buell, environmental justice is a movement which started in the United States in 1980 as a resistance against "the siting of waste dumps and polluting industries that discriminate against poor and otherwise disempowered communities, particularly minority" (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 141). It is compatible with the basic needs of the poor and marginalised sections of society. Environmental justice calls for equal rights of all individuals to live in pollution free environment and use natural resources.

(iii) Critique of Development. Development is “little more than a disguised form of neocolonialism” (Huggan and Tiffin 27). The exploitation of the natural resources and technological development are in harmony to fulfill needs and desires of the wealthy people. It is based on injustice, competition, marginalisation and class distinction. The Native Americans’ natural land is exploited as well as their traditional values are ignored in disguise of development and civilization. For the purpose of materialistic gains and colonisation, the Native Americans are declared “socially and politically ‘backward’” (Huggan and Tiffin 27). Their native land is usurped and they are bound to live on reservations.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Since global environmental changes and their consequent impact have become an international human concern, the creative writers across the globe have taken up this issue in their apocalyptic narratives. The present study is an investigation of the environmental exploitation and its impact on the Native Americans’ life. Their life being reliant on nature, the exploitation of the natural world threatens their very existence. The European colonisers destroyed the Native Americans’ natural environment and educated them that their tribal culture and religious beliefs were primitive. In the guise of development and civilisation the colonisers’ ulterior motive was to colonise the Native Americans and their fertile lands. With the loss of their mother earth the Native Americans not only suffer from poverty and fatal diseases but they have also lost their tribal identity. From the perspective of these issues, this study presents Native American writers’, particularly Silko and Momaday’s, depictions of the Native Americans’ beliefs in nature and response to the Euro-American ecocide of the Native Americans.

1.3 The Research Objective is to demonstrate how the selected novels expose the ulterior motives of the European colonisers behind the policy of development and civilisation as well as to neutralise the colonisers’ stereotypical presentation of the Native Americans as primitive and uncivilised by presenting the Native Americans’ strong religious beliefs and cultural values that are rooted in nature.

1.4 Research Questions

This research has been conducted to answer the following questions:

1. In what ways the concepts of Eco-cosmopolitanism, Environmental Justice and Critique of Development are addressed in the novels of Silko and Momaday?
2. How do the selected novels highlight the importance of restoring the Native Americans' lost identity in relation to nature by correlating their issues of race, gender, class and power with their environmental problems?
3. How do Silko and Momaday respond to the Euro-Americans' maltreatment of the Native Americans and their environment?

1.5 Chapter Breakdown

Chapter 1 introduces the research topic and provides background of the study. This chapter also presents the theoretical framework, research objective and the research questions of the study. The chapter concludes with the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 gives the review of literature. It deals with three parts. The first part deals with a brief overview of ecocriticism leading towards the eco-critical approaches applied to the present research work. The second part deals with the Native Americans' environmental issues and the third part highlights the existing eco-critical scholarships on the selected novels.

Chapter 3 includes theoretical framework and research method of the study.

Chapter 4 elaborates on the analysis of the two novels of Leslie Marmon Silko, *Almanac of the Dead* and *Ceremony* from the perspective of the selected eco-critical approaches. It is divided into three main sections consistent with the research questions. Each section is further divided into sub-sections according to the requirement of the analysis.

Chapter 5 analyses two novels of N. Scott Momaday, *House Made of Dawn* and *the Ancient Child* on the basis of the principles outlined in chapter 3.

The conclusion of the dissertation sums up the context of the Native Americans' environmental beliefs, issues and their reaction against the environmental degradation reflected in the selected works.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

To highlight the fact that the Native Americans have well-organised norms and strong beliefs in nature that have been misrepresented or destroyed by the European colonisers the present research work focuses on Leslie Marmon Silko and N. Scott Momaday's master pieces of work. Silko and Momaday are the early renaissance Native American writers. Their novels are the true representation of the Native Americans' association with and beliefs in nature, as well as depict the Native Americans' response to the European colonisers' devastating activities. To achieve the research objective the present study is delimited to the following four novels of the respective writers:

- i- *Almanac of the Dead* by Leslie Marmon Silko
- ii- *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko
- iii- *House made of Dawn* by N. Scott Momaday
- iv- *The Ancient Child* by N. Scott Momaday

1.7 Significance of the Study

This research is important as it aims at attracting the attention of readers to the environmental problems facing the Native Americans. It demonstrates how the subjugation and marginalisation of the tribal communities is being carried out through the deceptive garb of development. In the academic perspective the significance of the research is that it highlights the Native Americans' oppressed and misrepresented cultural values and religious beliefs rooted in nature. The illustration of the Native American writers' challenge to the dominant paradigms and their contribution to the movement for environmental justice has significance in the cotemporary globalized world to detect and control the emerging environmental problems as well as to secure the endangered non-human life. Moreover, the research findings indicate that poverty, water crisis, and the rates of fatal diseases like cancer and disorders have risen steadily in recent times due to different developmental projects and industrialization. Such problems are higher among the poor and unprivileged communities. The present research work advocates the cause of the environmental justice and creates awareness, as redressing measure to these problems, among the environmental activists and future researchers about the harmful

consequences of the disproportionately located hazardous waste, incinerators and municipal landfills.

1. 8 Relevance to Pakistani Context

The present research work depicts that the large-scale ruination of the natural world in the name of development results in the loss of the Native Americans' tribal identity. "Development, understood this way, is a classic example of the self-privileging discourse of neocolonialism, as put into practice by people and governments primarily interested in exploiting others in the name of the noble cause" (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 30). Somewhat similar situation can be observed in Pakistan, especially in the tribal areas of KPK and Gilgit Bultistan where developmental work is being carried by government and non-governmental organisations. Although, the organisations go in with human intentions but they also take along new culture and tradition which directly or indirectly replace social and cultural norms of the particular areas. There is dire need to highlight such problems that the indigenous people of these tribal areas are receiving modernisation at the cost of their own socio-cultural values. Secondly, like Native Americans, Pakistanis are also under McDonaldized dietary malpractices that are escalating health issues of Pakistani youth and increasing obesity and the related issues. Media with its seductive presentation is making this unhealthy food industry inevitable need and sign of progress and status. The Native Americans have the highest ratio of diabetes in the world and now this disease is on the rise in Pakistan as well. This research can also be helpful to Pakistanis in understating their present and future cultural crisis that may emanate from their loss of good old traditional values and ways of life. The study of Native American literature and therefore this research as well can contribute to

the development of respect for the traditional cultural sensibility for the revival and preservation of psycho-social and cultural health. This research can also teach Pakistanis how to fight against the present New Liberal onslaught on our cultural ethos.

This research is relevant to Pakistani context in academic sense as well. American literature is taught in Pakistani colleges and universities almost at all levels but only traditional canonical white authors are included in the syllabi except Toni Morrison. Inclusion of Native American literature in the syllabi of Pakistani universities will help raise our academic consciousness about latest developments in literature.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter has been divided into three sections. Section one deals with a brief overview of ecocriticism leading towards the eco-critical approaches applied to the present research work. Section two is the study of the Native Americans' environmental issues as presented by the native and non-native writers. Section three comprised of the existing eco-critical studies on the selected novels.

2.2 Genesis of the Various Waves of Ecocriticism

This section contextualizes the whole backdrop of the study by tracing the progress of ecocriticism. It is further divided into five sections. The first section deals with the background to ecocriticism and the second, third and fourth sections depict the gradual development in the field of ecocriticism, called the three waves of ecocriticism. The thesis approach is presented in the last segment of this section.

2.2.1 Background to Ecocriticism

The term ecocriticism is derived from 'Ecology', i.e. 'Eco' comes from the Greek word 'oikos' that means 'house'. Ecology is then a "branch of biology that deals with the relationships between living organisms and their environment" (Johnson 7). Ecocriticism brings to light the critical study of environment. It deals with the issues that affect environment, such as deforestation, chemical pollution, overpopulation and industrialisation, etc. In 1960s, such environmental issues were called the "greenhouse

effect, the gradual warming of the Earth's atmosphere due to emissions of heat-trapping gases later came to be referred as "global warming" or "climate change" (Heise 205). Concern about environment over the past quarter century has become a hot topic in literary studies. With the advancement of human civilisation the depletion of the natural resources also continues as forestland has been exploited to run the wheel of industrialisation. The march of human development has also caused a colossal change in climate. Rudimentary concepts of the theory grew in the 1960s and the 1970s: "As a separate movement or school of literary criticism, ecocriticism started developing in the 1990s" (Tošić 43). With the publication of Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* in 1996, Ecocriticism gained depth and recognition amongst the critics and academics. With the publications of literary critics of the twentieth century as Lawrence Buell and Joni Adamson, ecocriticism gradually received acceptance and professional legitimacy.

In spite of development in the field of ecocriticism "a few critics raised the questions whether the literary movement would sustain itself for a long time" (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 6), the theory faced many challenges at initial stages. Lawrence Buell states: "Ecocriticism faced four types of challenges professional legitimation, organizational, defined distinctive model of inquiry, organizational and significance beyond the academy" (qtd. in Weidner 96). Despite its recent establishment as a literary theory, ecocriticism has its roots in ancient times. According to Buell, "If environmental criticism today is still an emergent discourse it is one with very ancient roots" (*The Future of Environmental Criticism* 2). Buell is of the view that present-day ecocriticism has a long history predating the Romantic period and the interest in recent ecocriticism is the product of the primordial history.

2.2.2 The Different Waves of Ecocriticism

Lawrence Buell categorised the development of ecocriticism into waves. His division has been adopted by other critics as well. Buell uses the word: "Waves" (qtd in Weidner 195), for different stages of ecocriticism. Scott Slovic also uses the term: "Waves" (Slovic 4) with reference to ecocriticism. Ecocritics divide the theory of ecocriticism into three different waves called first wave, second wave and third wave of

ecocriticism. The eco-critics “diverge widely in their views,” (Heise 506) but there is no clear line among the different phases of ecocriticism. Buell apologised for the use of the term wave to categorise development of ecocriticism:

No definitive map of environmental criticism in literary studies can therefore be drawn. Still, one can identify several trend-lines marking an evolution from a “first wave” of ecocriticism to a “second” or newer revisionist wave or waves increasingly evident today. This first–second distinction should not, however, be taken as implying a tidy, distinct succession. (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 17)

There is a seamless transition from one phase to the other. Slovic states: “Many critics still publish scholarly articles using a first wave approach (5). In the same way, some critics of the second wave developed their thought during the early stage of ecocriticism. For example, Cheryl Glotfelty presents human beings as a part of nature, which is the concept associated with the second wave. The division of ecocriticism into the acceptable waves simplifies the theory and makes it easy to understand the development of thought at different phases of the theory.

2.2.3 The First Wave of Ecocriticism

The first stage of ecocriticism developed in the 1970s and the 1980s and transformed into a distinct school of literary criticism in the 1990s. And it is substantiated by the following view: “It is appropriate here to stress that it was only in the 1990s that ecocriticism emerged as a separate discipline” (Tošić 2). When Ecocriticism came into view there was already a discussion going on about environmentalism. Some critics prefer to call it “literary environmentalism, literary ecology or green cultural studies” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 12). It is a traditional concept of nature which comprises wilderness and non-human objects as separate entities from human beings. According to some scholars, the first stage of ecocriticism strengthens the literature of traditional nature writings. For other scholars, ecocriticism challenges the development of industrialisation. In this sense many ecocritics of the first wave consider nature “victim of modernization” (Heise 508). The first wave ecocritics focus on a piece of work to indicate how it represents the ecosystem of a particular landscape and

highlight the representation of fauna and flora excluding human nature. According to Lawrence Buell: “first-wave ecocriticism’s analogous emphasis on the local and regional” (*The Future of Environmental Criticism* 115). For example, Barbara Harrell Carson analyses William Williams’ novel, *Mr. Penrose: The Journal of Penrose, Seaman* (1969), from the perspective of Williams’s representation of nature. Williams describes fauna and flora from the point of view of his own experience in the Caribbean community. According to Carson, the Caribbean community has always been “increasingly threatened by civilization” (479). The natural description is a “clear emphasis on the writer’s experience” (Carson 483) who considers man a destructive force against his environment.

In the same way, the emphasis on a particular place limits the range of ecocriticism and renders it incapable of comprehending the environmental issues at global level, as Greg Garrard says, “Sustained attention to the idea of place as locale has provided us with no sense of place of the whole Earth in contemporary culture” (178). At the beginning of the first wave, ecocriticism was entrenched in limited areas, it did not address the issues of globalisation; it was restricted within the borders. Ursula K Heise says that initially the focus of ecocriticism was on local subjects “but which subsequently made it more difficult for ecocritical theory to take the step toward transnationalism” (383). The critics of the first wave ecocriticism did not deal with the issues of environmental injustice. They lay emphasis on the presentation of physical world rather than human world. “First wave environmental criticism concerns itself with nature writing and conservation-oriented environmentalism” (Adamson, “Environmental Justice” 12). The goal of ecocritics was to “preserve the ‘biotic community’” (Coupe 4). The first wave ecocriticism primarily disregards the effects of the relationship between environmental and social issues. According to Lyn White Jr., the Western tendency to consider humans as a separate entity from nature is due to their Judeo-Christian beliefs that we are not “part of the natural process. We are superior to nature, contemptuous of it willing to use it for our slightest whim” (12). In such male dominant perception, non-human beings are declared inferior to human beings. Michael Cohen states: “Traditional theories of representation are under attack because of narrowness of their interests” (29). In response to such type of eco-critical approach that is declared narrow and limited some

eco-critics broaden the scope of the theory during the late 1990s. They brought forth a new perspective in the field.

2.2.4 The Second Wave of Ecocriticism

The first wave ecocritics offered a narrow view of nature; they exclusively depicted the pastoral dimension and wilderness that did not include urban areas. They preferred an isolated place away from populated areas to wild sites. To them, the true nature remains beyond human interruption. Nancy Easterline observes that the ecocritics of the first wave “typically resort to standard dichotomies that sever humans from nature” (6). They do not consider human beings and urban life as a part of nature. Laurence Coupe also disapproves of the first wave ecocriticism by arguing: “We must avoid reducing complex linguistics performance to the level of merely pointing at things” (2). The second wave ecocritics assert that Nature is correlated with human beings; we affect it and are affected by it. According to Barry, ecocriticism basically represents nature, incorporates such concepts as “growth and energy, balance and imbalance” (264), and focuses on the external world with the presence of human beings and their relationship with environment.

The second wave ecocriticism “covers multiple landscapes, cityscapes and mindscapes, demonstrating how constructions of nature have profound cultural, political, social and environmental impacts” (Campbell 6). From the perspective of the second wave ecocriticism a text is analysed to reveal the fact that the destruction of environment directly affects human life. Laurence Coupe analyses literature and culture from the environmental point of view. He alludes to Kenneth Burke who opines, “Men victimise nature in fact they victimise themselves” (430). Burke lays emphasis on the need to know how to treat nature properly. He uses the word: “Hellhaven” (qtd. in Coupe 430) for this “technocratic approach” (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 29) of development that has stretched to the firmament of success at the expense of destroyed forests and polluted water and air.

According to Michael Bennett and David W. Teague, the critics of second wave challenge the limited “conceptualisations of nature, culture and environment built into many ecocritical projects by their exclusion of urban places” (4). From the perspective of the second wave ecocriticism, nature encompasses both urban and pastoral environment.

As Kovacik states that the critic of second wave is not only educated man but studies nature “with all its elements, whether it be elements human or non-human, in an environment urban or natural” (58). In stark contrast to the preceding wave, the second wave ecocriticism gives not only prior attention to non-human world but also relates pastoral life to urban inhabitants. The first wave of ecocriticism is removed from human culture. In separation to human life wildlife is “represented by the narrowly defined genre of nature writing. In contrast, the new wave of ecocriticism is interested in the interconnections between urban and non-urban space, human and nonhumans, traditional and experimental genres, as well as the impact of race, class, gender, and sexuality on how we use and abuse nature” (Adamson et al 208). The first wave ecocriticism maintains duality between nature and culture by ignoring urban spaces and populated areas. In contrast to traditional concept that focuses on non-human world, the second wave ecocriticism knits humans and non-humans into a single being reliant on interdependence. Ecocritics of the second phase believe that a text is the product of a writer’s cultural and environmental influences.

The main difference between the first and second wave eco-critical approaches is the redefinition of nature that includes human and non-human beings. The shift from the first wave to the second wave is actually a reflection of the changes in the meaning of nature. This redefinition of nature “move away from anthropocentric view of the world,” (Weidner 190) and serves as a serious blow to such a human-centred perspective on environment. Unlike the eco-critical approaches of the first phase, the ecocritics of the second phase give humans and animals a proper place and space to live. They call for the comprehension of non-human nature and the expansion of the scope of the theory. They focus on a broader analysis of how human and non-human relationship is depicted in a text. Darwin’s theory of evolution has implications for the second wave eco-critical concept of nature in which “human, as animals are subject to evolution and therefore are considered a part of, rather than apart from nature” (Goldsmith and Zimmerman 1). The ecocritics of this phase re-conceptualise nature that consists of both human and non-human beings.

According to Glen A Love, through “interdisciplinary work between human and science” (47) the traditional concept of nature employed by the first wave of ecocriticism

can be changed. Love explains ecocriticism as an “interdisciplinary movement” (561) which serves as a bridge between science and humanity. Like science, it investigates and sorts out the solution to the environmental problems like deforestation and pollution, etc. The second phase of ecocriticism is a growing need to understand human interdependence on the physical world around them. For Love, both ecological study and literature increase the sense of the interrelationship between human and non-human world. Love is an advocate of the evolutionary approach; he believes that evolutionary theory replaces the binary opposition of nature/culture associated with the first wave ecocriticism and underlines environmental issues. According to Love, relying on the lens of evolutionary approach critics can analyse humans and non-humans equally (23). Another second wave ecocritic, Easterlin also discards divisions between nature and culture; she focuses on human relationship with the earth and its creatures. According to her, in representation of the physical world, personal and cultural factors are involved (8). Whatever a writer perceives in his surrounding he depicts it through his literary works. Lawrence Buell combines the eco-critical approaches of both Love and Easterlin. Buell’s eco-critical approach manifests an interest in a piece of literature that rejects the legitimacy of the boundaries between nature and culture. Buell says, “Conceiving place not in simply in the light of imagined descriptive or symbolic structure, not simply as a social construction, not simply as ecology but all of these simultaneously” (*Ecocritical insurgency*, 707). Buell’s approach tends to realism; he believes that a place is culturally constructed in literature; further, it is the product of human relationship with other human beings as well as with non-humans.

Ecofeminism and environmental justice are the two important aspects of the second wave ecocriticism. Acholonu admits, “Since the past thirty years, the world has been experiencing unprecedented interest in matters concerning women on one hand, and ecological issues on the other” (199). The second wave tends to address that there is a close relationship between women and nature. In a patriarchal society, a deeply imbalanced situation prevails in which “the men not only try to dominate the nature outside but it is also the nature of women and nature as woman which must be tamed” (Halkes 12). In the male dominant society, women are considered equal to nature; there is a close association between the subjugation of women and nature. As a result of this

relationship, both nature and women are equally exploited. According to Enger and Bradley, environmental justice provides equal protection to all humans and non-humans from environmental dangers regardless of any difference. It depicts that environmental justice is intertwined with social justice. This definition of environmental justice supports Bate's notion "ecological exploitation is always coordinate with social exploitation" (48). Bate's postulation points to an indivisible link between environmental degradation and social problems.

In *The Future of Environmental Criticism*, Buell declares, "Second-wave ecocriticism has so far concentrated strongly, for example, on locating vestiges of nature within cities and/or exposing crimes of eco-injustice against society's marginal groups" (13). Hence, literature is used as an effective tool to raise the voice of the marginalised race beyond social and cultural boundaries. Buell uses the term "vanguard" (*The Future of Environmental Criticism* 13) for environmental justice, which expands the notion of ecocriticism and helps in fostering an understanding of environmental and social problems. Buell's literary criticism does not content with the traditional concept that nature is poisoned by pollution. He further raises the questions how and by whom environment has been polluted. Contrary to the first wave ecocritics who believe nature "is assumed to be a location removed from culture" (Adamson et al. 191), Buell's eco-critical approach opens a new avenue to literature that links environmental destruction to racial, gender and social issues. This broader approach of ecocriticism enables the readers to know the importance of a healthy environment and recognise their place in that environment.

2.2.5 The Third Wave of Ecocriticism

Since the development of ecocriticism, literary critics raised many questions about the early concepts of nature. As Michael Cohen inquires, "What does a literary critic mean by saying that environment acts in a work of literature, when academic convention requires that literature be treated as a human not natural or divine-construction" (16). The first wave ecocriticism has been criticised for its anthropocentric and narrow definition of nature that does not consider humans as a part of nature. In response to such type of criticism, ecocritics put forward a broader concept of the theory

that is called the third wave ecocriticism. This phase of ecocriticism emerged in 2000, and it is still in a developmental stage. An ecocritic, Slovic identifies the following characteristics of the third wave ecocriticism: “‘Eco-cosmopolitanism’, ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’, ‘the global soul’, and ‘translocality’... post national and post-ethnic visions of human experience of the environment...eco-feminism...and the concept of ‘animality’” (7). The third wave ecocriticism develops a relationship between nature and culture, whereas nature has always been looked at as an entity largely victimised by human society. Here nature and culture are correlated. The third wave ecocritics believe in cultural diversity and they have a constructive approach.

The same point of view is further extended by Joni Adamson in nascence third wave ecocriticism. Adamson breaks down the existing boundaries between nature and culture. Her eco-critical theory is associated with the third wave ecocriticism that “recognizes ethnic and national particularities and yet transcends ethnic and national boundaries” (Adamson and Slovic 6-7). The third phase of ecocriticism brings in a broader concept to represent and experience the environmental conditions of various cultures around the world. It deals with the trans-local and trans-national concepts that expand the field of ecocriticism. Here “ecocritics have tended to agree with the notion that writers, readers, scholars and teachers have access to resources that might counter linked social and environmental injustices” (Adamson, “Environmental Justice” 12). The third wave is connected with the first and second waves but it goes beyond the scope of the preceding waves. Buell’s ecoglobal approach and Huggan and Tiffin’s vision “to protect the global environment” (1) are the key points of the third wave ecocriticism. The theory of ecocriticism is developed into the concepts of human attachment with nature and “in more cosmopolitan and global terms” (Buell “Qui Parle” 100). Buell’s approach of ecocriticism transcends national and ethnic boundaries in relation to environmental concern. The eco-critical approaches of third wave were anticipated at the emergent stage of ecocriticism in the 1990s. It was predicted that in future ecocriticism would be expected to be “new nature writing, traditional and innovative scholarly approaches to environmental literature” (qtd. in Glotfelty xviii). Indeed, presently ecocriticism is multi-ethnic and raises diverse voices; it is no more “confined in its Romantic legacies” (Oppermann 8). It considers humans and non-humans as a community that is bound by

the ecological web of relationship. From an environmental point of view, it transcends all the boundaries and explores human problems from the environmental perspective.

2.2.6 Thesis Approach

This dissertation analyses the selected works from the eco-critical perspective of Lawrence Buell, Joni Adamson, Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin. The applied eco-critical approaches are based on the accepted idea of both the second and third waves of ecocriticism that human and non-human beings are interdependent with a further point of view “that environmental sustainability and economic development are ‘compatible, attainable and mutually inseparable’”(qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 67). These eco-critical approaches investigate the connection between social and environmental concerns. In the light of the selected eco-critical approaches, the dissertation points out the interrelationship between the Native Americans’ issues of survival, identity, race, gender, class and environment and calls for environmental justice. Moreover, the present work examines how nature is appropriated by Euro-Americans to spoil it and how the Native American writers expose “the imperial civilising mission” (Huggan and Tiffin 206) and challenge the stereotypical representation of the Native Americans’ “nature-oriented” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 7) culture through counter-narratives. The present research work has important implications for the eco-critical approaches of the selected theorists that help in recognising the environmental concern of the Native Americans.

2.3 The Euro-Americans’ Treatment of the Native Americans and their Environment

Since European colonisation, the Native Americans have been facing different environmental problems. They have been drifted out of their homeland; they have been “distilled, dissuaded, disbanded, dug up...” (Howe, Gordon 117). The colonisers have exploited the natural resources of the Native Americans, seized their homeland and they are also forced to abandon their natural way of life. Euro-Americans are bent on wiping out the Native Americans’ identity and they are convinced that their tribal beliefs are

dead. The ecological concept of the Native Americans is not analogous to the European ideology that perceives “nature instrumentally” (Mark 87) and exploit it for materialistic purpose. The Native Americans have a cosmological philosophy that man and his physical environment are inseparable. They have a profoundly ethical relationship with the mother earth and believe in “the principle of the ‘right’ of all individuals to be protected from environmental degradation” (Bullard 34). The predominant feature of human beings is their obligation to other creatures of the planet. Owing to such a strong relationship with nature, they also have robust ties with their ancestors. Because of their love of the mother earth, they feel a deep regard for their ancestors who laid the foundation of the tradition deeming all the natural entities the parts of one whole and set the pattern for their future generations. They have an eco-friendly culture; they treat nature respectfully as an equal partner of humans. On the other hand, in Euro-Americans’ “too competitive and materialistic” (Temple and Velie 107) world there is no credit for this strong bond of association between the Native Americans and their environment. The colonisers advocate individual approach rather than mutual relationship with nature. “Moreover, the colonists’ distinction between ‘domesticated’ and ‘wild’ was obviously quite unfamiliar to Native Americans” (Huggan and Tiffin 10). The difference drawn by the colonisers between wild and domesticated animals is antithetical to the Native Americans’ beliefs; it also dented their reciprocal relationship with the natural environment.

2.3.1 Euro-Americans’ Competitive Approach Caused Trouble for the Native Americans’ Reciprocal Relationship with Nature

The Native Americans’ religion and tradition are founded on the conviction that “there is no line between nature and human. People, animals, plants, and landscapes are equally valued” (Temple and Velie 109). They are directly involved in nature, they talk to it and get back the response; nature “itself in its own way” (Boyd, *Rolling* 222) responds to them. For them, everything on the earth has the meanings of life; they believe that there is a bond of interdependence between human and non-human beings. Nature is not out of the reach of human beings; humans’ health depends on their environment. Similarly, the environmental problem is a human problem. The relationship between the Native Americans and the natural life represents an intimate reciprocity. Animals and

plants are “living relatives” and “symbol of life” (Boyd, *Mad* 50) for the Native Americans. The destruction of nature is the “rape of the Earth,” (Boyd, *Mad* 152-153) which is extremely offensive act. This mutual relationship with nature suffers due to European exploitation. As in Louise Erdrich’s *Tracks*, tribal leader, Nanapush laments over the end of the tribal peoples’ relationship with nature and “refused to sign the settlement papers that would take away [their] woods and lake” (2). According to him, Euro-Americans should be held responsible for exploiting animals and plants. The colonisers proved “greedy, inconsiderate, destructive” (Boyd *Rolling* 62). They kill a large number of animals only for pleasure and adventure and dead bodies of the animals are thrown in open air that harms the entire environment. They take nature as a scenic device or framework. They are involved in the nefarious manoeuvres of ostracising the Native Americans one way or the other. The Native Americans are shocked by the rapid obliteration of nature and afraid that soon there will be “no grass or sagebrush or trees or anything” (Boyd *Rolling* 43) due to ecological destruction. Through the character of Pauline, Erdrich presents clash between the European and Native American approach to nature. Pauline is the representative of the European colonisers. She says that she likes European way of life: “I saw that to hang back was to perish” (Erdrich 14). She has the tendency for the Euro-Americans’ approaches to life and nature. She looks doubtfully at her tribal peoples’ mutual relationship with nature and wants to identify herself with her mother’s English lifestyle. She does not like to speak her native language as she tells her father in English that she wants her house with doors. Erdrich praises the Native Americans who do not enclose themselves behind doors; they lead their free natural life without divisions of doors. They love to migrate from place to place and usually live in camps. Euro-Americans are interested in confining the Native Americans to the very walls and doors of cemented buildings, but the Natives are not satisfied and they always miss their natural lifestyle. “They are homesick, they are going to the camps, they are camping” (Momaday, *Three Plays* 10). They get inspiration from the earth, animals, plants and all the expressions of nature.

Despite several attempts to create harmony between the European and Native American ways of life, there are grievances and conflicts on the basis of environmental problems. “Europeans and then the United States could use...agreements as diplomatic

maneuvers to divide Indian nations” (Johansen and Pritzker 24). The Euro-American side moves to create a climate for negotiations are diplomatic in essence; these manoeuvres only aimed at reaching informal agreements. As Euro-Americans manage to consolidate their hold and position, the agreements are revoked; a large number of forests are destroyed and the livestock are ruthlessly exterminated. The Native Americans are debilitated in every respect; they are not left with the basic necessities of survival. They have been afflicted by the obliteration of nature and their displacement from their native land.

The European colonisers’ approach to America initiated great changes in the history of the world. Their ecological imperialism destroyed the natural world. Whatever is sacred for the Native Americans has been exploited by the European settlers. Euro-Americans’ abhorrence for nature has created an unbridgeable gulf between the Native Americans and their environment. Euro-Americans have no feelings of mutual understanding with non-human life. Nature is no more than commodity for them. They plunder the natural land in search of “yellow metal” (Boyd, *Rolling* 177). The loss of the tribal identity, diseases, poverty and displacement all are the result of the environmental destruction. The Native Americans’ cultural values and religious beliefs are based on “human connection with nature and the rest of organic life” (Love 8) since all the creatures consume the resources of the earth that provides them with strength to survive. The Native Americans’ alienation from nature gives them a sense of powerlessness and cultural estrangement. They do not believe in competition and conflict; they are closely associated with their environment as ones’ mind and body are interconnected. One cannot “purify the body without cleansing the mind” (Boyd, *Rolling* 98). In the same way, one cannot lead a peaceful and healthy life by polluting environment: “Man’s inner nature is identical with the nature of the universe” (Boyd, *Rolling* 81). They find peace and tranquillity in their natural environment.

2.3.2 Subjugation of the Native Americans through Colonisation of their Homeland

The European colonisers build imperial power against the natural life of the Native Americans and consider it their duty to enlighten them. Under the guise of development, the colonisers conquered the Native Americans’ homeland “which will

bring them bread, and above all dignity” (Fanon 90). Land is a source of sustenance for the Native Americans and the possession of it results in devastation of the natural resources and makes them economically dependent. The exploitation of nature by occupying the fertile land is one of the strategies of the European colonisers to impose their imperial hegemony over the Native Americans. The colonising policy is in harmony with the destruction which the colonisers inflict on nature and its inhabitants. Because of the natural annihilation the Native Americans start suffering from different “European diseases smallpox, typhus, influenza, diphtheria, and measles” (Lundquist 21). The loss of the natural world results in long-term suffering and diseases.

The effects of exploitation of the natural environment; “increased stress, which heightens the risk for alcoholism and abuse; unsanitary conditions; and higher rates of infectious disease” (U.S. Commission 114). The European colonisers proceed to plunder the Native Americans’ healthy environment consequently many diseases like smallpox, measles, malaria, diphtheria and dengue “often silently preceded and largely made possible the colonisation of the Americas” (Alan 7). The colonising mission is not simply supported by the exploitative tools of plundering and looting to capture the indigenous resources; the fatal diseases which accompanied them also pave the way for them to annihilate and subjugate the indigenous people. Disappearance of the natural world “has led to a sudden appearance of diabetes, heart disease and obesity, maladies unknown in Cree communities until the 1980s” (Churchill 306). These diseases are new for the Native Americans who are afraid of the strange diseases as well as the strange colonisers. The primary cause of such problems is the destruction of nature. “New diseases also stalked the region, severely affecting both human and animal populations” (Johansen and Pritzker 24). The Native Americans have no protection from “the imported diseases” (Byrd 25) that the colonisers have brought with them. Consequently, “there is some amount of increased risk of harm-here, risk of death from cancer-to humans ... the increased risk of harm to the non-human members of ecosystems” (O’Neill 378). Exploitation of the natural world results in highest rates of death and extreme impoverishment. “The average life expectancy of a reservation based Native American males is 44.6 years, that of females about three years longer” (Churchill 348). The Native Americans suffer from diseases at rates far higher than Euro-Americans. The polluted

environment and alcoholism are the main causes of fatal diseases among the Native communities. The great majority of diseases recurrently suffered by the Native Americans are directly related to alcoholism, poor nutrition and pollution.

The Native Americans “were moved, forced to assimilate, exterminated, or suffered from warfare, slavery, disease, and uncharitable public policies” (Lundquist 1). The European insensitivity to the natural environment cannot appreciate the real worth of the Natives’ life sharing bond with nature. The Native Americans are shifted from their ancestral land to “a desolate place where about half of them died of disease, exposure and starvation in barely two years” (Churchill 135). In this stationary existence and alien land containing non-indigenous food, they suffer mentally as well as physically: “their lands were desired by Euro-Americans. The journeys of these tribes (from 1831 to 1838) were scarred by disease, starvation, and exhaustion; thousands died en route and others after arrival. This "removal" is known as the Trail of Tears” (Lundquist 23). With exploitation of human and non-human beings the traditional culture has quickly collapsed. Euro-Americans have destroyed nature, causing different fatal diseases. On the other hand, the blame of infectious diseases is conveniently shifted “on to the bodies of women of color and poor women around the world” (Adamson et al. 209).

The Native Americans are considered foreigners in their own motherland: “Eventually newcomers regard themselves as locals” (McAvoy 385). Pollution and waste are allowed to damage the ecology of the Native Americans as well as local gathering places are converted into commercial areas. At reservation areas, the Native Americans suffer from severe depression and depletion of food stocks. Consequently, they are involved in drug abuse and violent activities. The possession of their land gives birth to many negative things such as diseases and poverty. In consequences of the European colonisation policies, land became “sites of direct colonial encounters” (Blackhawk 58). The agricultural land has been turned into a wasteland in order to marginalise the Native Americans’ farming and animal life. The forced settlement of the Natives in the reservation is hampering their efforts to fully meet their farming and grazing needs. This settlement phenomenon has put their existence in jeopardy. Because of this forced settlement: “Many conflicts between the Indians and settlers have occurred” (Lewis 57). The conflicts between the Native Americans and the European settlers break out because

of the loss of the natural environment. “As Euro-American settlement expanded across the continent and as individual communities grew, the surface of the land was cut down, torn up, heavily grazed, or plowed under” (Ryden 36). In order to protect themselves from the European settlers the Native Americans attempt to secure agricultural land. They try to defend their land and the natural resources from further destruction.

The exploitation of nature and the unequal distribution of the natural resources have resulted in the marginalisation and subjugation of the Native Americans. “European colonies display significantly higher levels of land inequality” (Frankema 12). They believe the earth is property of the people and can be treated for their benefits. They do not admit the fact that “Indians preferred holding their land in common” (Vickers 23) and have no intentions to own it. For the Native Americans, land is a part of their existence; they themselves are land and everything on the earth has some meaning for life. Their mode of living is characterised by unification and harmony with their homeland. Sherman Alexie gives the same point of view in his poem, *Gravity*, from *First Indian on Moon* (1998):

We were bound each
To our planet by gravity,
by gravity by a love
that forced us. (69)

The Native Americans physically as well as spiritually associate themselves with their native land: “A site where plants, land, and waters may possess healing powers” (Roe and Irene 72-73) has great significance for them.

The European colonisers have not only colonised the Native Americans’ land, “but have also altered it widely and exploited it for their own luxury and benefit” (Afzal 14-15). The fertile land attracted millions of people “who go there for recreation and tourism” (McAvoy 383) as well as for materialistic purpose. Some of them entered the Native Americans’ region with the purpose of fur trade. “The fur trade, though, began the process that incorporated Western ecologies into global economic systems, disrupting existing human ecological regimes” (Mark 215). These traders considered nature just a product to be traded. They have exploited the natural land to grab its resources: “American Indian lands are estimated to include nearly 30 percent of the nation’s coal

reserves west of the Mississippi, as much as 50 percent of potential uranium reserves, and up to 20 percent of known natural gas and oil reserves. These lands also may contain rare earth minerals, increasingly sought after for use in manufacturing” (Grogan et al. 7). The colonisers have treated the land as a commodity. “There has been active uranium mining on Indian lands” (Grogan et al. 7). In pursuing their own interests and greed the colonisers show no respect for the natural environment and do not take care of others’ welfare. Greed and jealousy drive them to the Americas where they have subjugated the indigenous people, violated their pure environment and disrespected the mother earth. Since the arrival of the colonisers, the sanctity of the earth, tribal communities and animal life have been ignored.

2.3.3 The Native Americans’ Reaction to the Stereotypical Presentation of their Association with Nature

At different points in history, The Native Americans have been fighting against the European colonisers to resist the contamination of their environment and the usurpation of their land. But they have always been on the receiving end, since they do not have enough power to protect themselves and their environment. “Dead men and horses and wounded Indians were scattered” (Neihardt 10). Both humans and non-humans have suffered equally from the devastation caused by the colonisers’ dominant culture that is antithetical to the Native Americans’ conviction of cooperation and compatibility. The Native Americans have been leading an independent life for thousands of years, while the United States declared its independence in 1776. Such as “Christopher Columbus has been referred to as the “discoverer” of the Americas. Since there were already millions of people living in the Western Hemisphere, the term is misused” (Carl 22). Gerald Vizenor in his novel, *The Heirs of Columbus* (1991), presents the Native Americans as the inheritors of the American continent and debunks the Euro-Americans’ concept that Columbus discovered America. He also opposes the Eurocentric view that Columbus was the first person who arrived in the American continent. Vizenor presents Columbus Maya, not British who has come back to his race that has been living in America over round about 60,000 years. According to Vizenor, “the truth is in our genes...we are the tribal heirs of the great explorer” (10). He rewrites the history by presenting Columbus as a native of America and his native tribe as a civilised nation that

has its own doctrines and cultural values. Conversely, Euro-Americans are presented a savage nation that brings death and destruction to the Natives' peaceful natural environment. Vizenor believes: "Columbus escaped from the culture of death and carried our tribal genes back to the New World" (*The Heirs* 9). He gets satisfaction in his tribal natural environment. Columbus suffers from physical deformity as he "had a twisted dick, he inherited a curse like the twisted mouth of the evil gossip" (Vizenor, *The Heirs* 74). The Native medicine woman, Samana cures him with the help of natural medicines: "She was a natural healer" (Vizenor, *The Heirs* 4). He is healed by the natural plants and herbs that have always been a source of sustenance and peace for the Natives.

Vizenor presents the Native Americans as honest and down to earth and their four legged animals are even considered better than human beings: "We created humans, put them on two legs to slow them down, and then they pretend their blood and bone is the survival of the best" (Vizenor, *The Heirs* 18). Here, Vizenor opposes the conventional concept of Euro-Americans in which animals are "often regarded as mere objects, instruments of a greater human purpose" (Huggan and Tiffin 151). The animals inherited the earth; then human beings were created by virtue of animal blood. "Mongrels created the best humans; we had that cross blood wild bounce in our blood" (Vizenor, *The Heirs* 16). It is the natural environment that gives strength to the Native Americans; even the inanimate object like 'Stone' is given weightage in Native culture. "Stone is known the richest cross blood on the reservation" (Vizenor, *The Heirs* 17). Vizenor gives living qualities to stone that is the central character in the novel. According to the Natives' beliefs, stone is the base of the earth and origin of the earth. "There are tribal stones, and the brother of the first trickster who created the earth was a stone, stone, stone" (9). Vizenor says: "The last trickster was a hard stone" (*Dead Voices*, 25). Plants and animals are born with the stone that is their home. All the natural elements are treated with respect in tribal culture.

The European colonisers are bent on eradicating the Native Americans' tribes from the American continent through different ways. Their colonial approach is vividly resented by William S. Yellow Robe. Jr. in his play, *The Council* (2000); in the play, the Native Americans are presented in the form of animals, while Euro-Americans are presented as human characters. When man comes to the earth he is helpless and does not

know how to get food and live in a community. Animals give him food and teach him how to lead life. But after learning the art of surviving through thick and thin, man starts violating all the rules of communal life; he attacks his fellow animals and gets control over their property and even exterminates them. Man bits the hand that feeds him, although animals believe in the concept of peaceful coexistence; they enrol man in their community. Despite man's callousness, animals believe that they have to take care of him. "Because he comes from the earth just as we do" (Yellow 77). Because of man's relationship with the earth, he has great importance for animals and the animals do commitment to cooperate him. They take care of man like their kids, as panda bear says: as we teach and protect our cubs in the same way "we have to protect this new being until it has to develop its own skills and build its strength" (Yellow 78). After fortifying his position, man endeavours to enslave animals:

The first law is man can kill for food, to protect, to secure his property, and when he feels the urge. Second, all animals are beneath Man and should obey and serve Man. Third Man has the right to use the trees, waters, air, and ground to enrich life for himself and his family. And finally, Man has the right to enter any territory or home that belongs to animal and make it his property. (Yellow 111)

Man has colonial mind-set like the European colonisers who believe in enslavement of the Native Americans after having control over their homeland. Animals treat man very kindly; feed him; provide him with shelter; and teach him the rules to live in a community. Later on, man starts living under the delusion of considering himself superior to animals. He employs different tools to dominate animals. The description of man and animals' relationship is a harsh criticism on the European colonisers' policies of discrimination towards the Native Americans and their environment.

2.4 Existing Eco-critical Studies on the Selected Novels

In Elizabeth Keila's point of view, "Momaday and Silko grapple with the issue of literary de/colonization, bringing to literary modernism and to newly emergent Native fiction the myths and storytelling traditions that allow them to explore varied and complex understandings of contemporary Native American identities" (104). According to Rebecca Tillett, Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* is "an epic of the 500 years since

European-American contact, it is ultimately an epic of occupation” (5). *Almanac of the Dead* is comparatively longer than *Ceremony*; it spans the long history of over 500 years of European colonisation. In Tillett’s point of view, *Almanac of the Dead* focuses “on environmental exploitation and degradation” (5). Tillett analyses the novel from the perspective of the negative impact of the scientific development: “In *Almanac*, it becomes chillingly evident that it is science’s arrogance that justifies its right... to cause misery and suffering on a global scale. By emphasizing science’s belief that its own destructive nuclear project is divinely sanctioned, Silko exposes the intrinsic role of the scientific project” (167). Tillett notices that Silko exposes the disastrous effects of scientific development in the name of economic and technological uplift. According to Jason Waterman, in *Almanac*, Silko presents “the ecologically destructive nature of capitalism” (43). Since the European characters of the novel are involved in destructive activities. Through depiction of “humans’ ill will towards nature”, Silko promotes “awareness of environmental issues” (Waterman 53). According to Simon Dalby, *Almanac of the Dead* “suggests that the fate of modern states is now tied directly to the fate of environments around the world” (29). The European colonisers’ activities are no more than “environmental degradation” (Dalby 34). Ja-mo Kang notices that in order to maintain their hegemony the European colonisers exploited the Native Americans’ homeland. *Almanac* depicts “oppressions and exploitation of people and land are inextricably linked” (Kang 737). Kang points out that the occupation of the Natives’ land is the main concern of the novel. According to Alex Hunt, *Almanac of the Dead* elaborates the subject matter of *ceremony*: “Yet in starkly different manner *Almanac* succeeds in its anti-colonial and pro-environmental politics by provoking horror rather than empathy” (Hunt 257). This “monstrous novel is important because of its anti-colonial performance of representation” (Hunt 272). It exposes the multiple issues of the marginalised classes to the readers. Hunt calls *Almanac of the Dead*: “[A]n ambitious novel” (258) that deals with multiple issues.

Silko’s *Ceremony* led her to receive the highly esteemed Mac Arthur Award. Barbara Brommer says, “*Ceremony* and *Almanac of the Dead* constitute compatible and interconnected messages of Native American presence and sovereignty” (6). According to Allan Chavkin, Silko’s *Ceremony* “is one of the most realised works of fiction devoted

to Indian life that has been written in this country, and it is a splendid achievement” (18). In eco-critical analyses of Silko’s *Ceremony*, Nelson also focuses on Euro-Americans’ exploitation of the natural landscape as he notices “the land has been most deeply and visibly wounded by the mining operation” (25). The colonisers have destroyed everything only “the mountain outdistanced their destruction” (qtd. in Nelson, *from Allan Chavkin* 12). According to Paula Gunn Allen, *Ceremony* presents “the mechanistic death force of witchery” (119). In analysis of Silko’s *Ceremony*, Allan Chavkin notices that it is “the existing paradigms of science that promote Western domination of nature and of native peoples” (207). Chavkin focuses on Silko’s critique of scientific development which has resulted in European hegemony over and destruction of the Native Americans and their natural environment. According to Allan Chavkin, in *Ceremony*, Silko presents “the fundamentally different attitudes of American Indians and whites toward animals” (8).

Momaday's Pulitzer-prize winning novel, *House Made of Dawn* indicates “the arrival on the American literary scene of a matured, sophisticated literary artist from the original Americans” (qtd. in Owens 58). In his eco-critical analysis of *House Made of Dawn*, Cheng Yueh-Chang observes, “It is because of the encroachment of the white colonisers that not merely inflicts the ecological disaster but change the contour of their land” (253). The Native Americans concept of the land is shattered with the arrival of the colonisers. Chang examines in “Momaday’s *House Made of Dawn* tank machine that ran through the land...represented such intrusion of the mechanical forces into the natural world, ravaging the land destroying the peace of nature” (252). Chang notices Momaday’s portrayal of the environmental disaster caused by growing industry and intrusion of machine, affecting human relationships and behaviour. In this mechanized environment the protagonist, “Abel in *House Made of Dawn*, for instance, found himself excluded and secluded because he was not able to see mountains as it stood so for” (Chang 255). Abel suffers in a hostile urban environment, as he is alienated from the natural world. From this perspective, Nicholas O. Warner observes; “*House Made of Dawn* often underscores the negative themes of alienation and the racial obliteration of the American Indian” (21). According to J. G. Ravi Kumar, in *House Made of Dawn* “Modern man’s plight, his disturbed relationship to nature is illustrated by an Indian [the protagonist of the novel, Abel]” (160-61). Abel wanders helplessly in European

environment due to his alienation from the world of his forefathers which is closely linked to nature.

In Alan R. Velie's point of view: "*House Made of Dawn* and *The Ancient Child*, written twenty-one years apart, reflect to an extent the shift back towards traditional religions" (136). In depiction of the Native Americans' tribal religion and culture both the novels raise the issue of the colonisation of the Natives' motherland. In Paula Gunn Allen's viewpoint, belonging to their forefathers' land is a basic assumption for the tribal people and Momaday's *The Ancient Child* "places this question at the center of the narration" (11). According to Susan L. Roberson; "Ceremony, an important aspect of healing, repositions the alienated individual in a web of connections, as Silko's *Ceremony* and Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* demonstrate so effectively" (39). Roberson further observes: "Leslie Marmon Silko's monumental *Almanac of the Dead* ends with Sterling returning home to Laguna in the last chapter, entitled appropriately enough, "Home." Likewise, Scott Momaday's latest novel, *The Ancient Child*, plays out the paradigm of return to the tribal landscape and return to the self" (pp. 31-32). Silko and Momaday illustrate not only a quest for the Native Americans' identity that involves journeying through geographic and psychic terrains, but they also imply that self-identity lies in the shadows of the past and infusion of nature. Their presentation of the Native Americans' attachment to nature is vast.

Many scholars and critics could not pay attention to present the Native Americans' religious and spiritual relationship with nature as Mark Stoll observes: "Scholars saw Native cultures as too primitive, too few, and too backward" (19). With the passage of time scholars and critics recognise the Native Americans' true identity and their ecological knowledge. In the same way at the beginning, Garcia views Angela, a female character in *House Made of Dawn*, as insensitive and unfamiliar with human world: "As alternately cold and vicious in her designs on Abel" (Stoll 62). Later, he realises that Angela is wise enough to understand Abel's problem and knows the importance of nature in the Native Americans' lives. She realises that Abel's mental and physical disease can be cured by bringing him back to the natural world. With reference to Mary Douglas' perspective that the "lines of structure, cosmic or social, are clearly

defined,” (114), Susan Scarberry criticises Angela on the basis of her physical relationship with another person when she begins love affair with Abel.

According to Kathleen Donovan, Angela is “alien to nature and also as a loathsome natural representation, the attraction to her physical beauty by Abel and Father Olguin is dangerous” (100). Momaday presents the indigenous women as unfamiliar to nature and tribal tradition as well as betrayals who use their sex “to control men” (113). Angela notices signs of disaster and hopelessness in nature; she is dissociated from nature and “sexuality betrays Abel by removing him from the healing possibilities of ritual and landscape” (Donovan 102). She keeps Abel away from nature as well as sexually manipulates him. Momaday is misogynist as his both the novels (*House Made of Dawn* and *The Ancient Child*) are “linked in an underlying misogyny” (Donovan 94). His association of the indigenous women with inferior animals is to present them weak and inferior. Through such misrepresentation, “Momaday subverts sacred stories” (Donovan 137) relevant to the indigenous population. Momaday: “Consistently represent[s] contemporary women as negative forces” (Donovan 94). He devalues the indigenous women and subverts the tribal sacred cultural values. They are presented “strong, independent women on a superficial level, but they also have a fundamental impulse to subservience, sexual and otherwise, to a man” (Donovan 114-15). In Donovan’s point of view, a strong woman earns money and helps her partner but the female characters in Momaday’s novels are unable to support their men as they are weak and inferior to their husbands therefore “they must be objectified and commodified” (Donovan 137).

Most of the existing eco-critical literature on the selected works focuses on the critique of scientific development and industrialization that resulted in exploitation of nature. The issues of environment and colonisation are analysed with special focus on the European colonisers’ occupation of the Native Americans’ homeland. The indigenous women are viewed weak like the natural objects as well as such insensitive beings who always perceive nature indifferent to human beings (Donovan 100). The present research work serves as a rejoinder to fulfill the existing gape. It presents that the Native Americans’ environmental problems go far back into the history to the onset of the European imperialistic tactics and their adverse consequences in the form of war, alcoholism, poverty, the loss of flora and fauna and stereotypical presentation of the

Native Americans' intimacy with nature. But the existing literature on the selected works could not pay attention to explore the vitality of the Native Americans' relationship with nature and the colonisers' ulterior motive behind the misrepresentation of the Native Americans' traditional lifestyle "as evidence of their backwardness" (Huggan and Tiffin 9). The present research work is an attempt to present the untold history of the indigenous peoples' peaceful days of close intimacy with nature. Emphasis lies on depiction of the indigenous women's vast knowledge of their tribal socio-cultural values and their shared relationship with nature that has always been misrepresented by the European canonical literature and media. It is examined how nature and tribal people are appropriated by the dominant Euro-Americans to spoil them and how the Native American writers challenge such stereotypical representation through their narratives and underscore their contribution to present the true image the Native Americans.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of theoretical framework and research method. Joni Adamson, Lawrence Buell, Graham Huggan, and Helen Tiffen are the key theorists for textual analysis to depict the Native Americans' environmental sensibilities and harmful effects of the European colonisers' exploitation of the natural world as well as the Natives' resistance response to the colonisers' devastating activities. The method of the research is textual analysis proposed by Catherine Belsey.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

This dissertation analyses the selected works from the eco-critical perspective of the above mentioned influential ecocritics. According to Lawrence Buell, the theoretical study of ecocriticism has developed over the last two decades according to the requirement of the time. He uses the terms waves for the developmental phases of ecocriticism: "first-wave nature-writing-oriented ecocriticism and for second-wave urban and ecojustice revisionists, whatever their disagreements" (*The Future of Environmental Criticism* 30). The eco-critical approaches applied on this study have developed in last phase of ecocriticism that "takes issue with and builds upon earlier ecocritical practice" (qtd. in *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 138). The present eco-critical study helps in recognising the Native Americans' beliefs in nature, their environmental problems and exposition of the Euro-Americans' policy of development in "disguised form of neocolonialism" (Huggan and Tiffen 27). In so doing, the study neutralises the European

colonisers' stereotypical presentation of the Native Americans as primitive and uncivilised. Essentially, the present research is carried out to give voice to a subject that has so often been oppressed or misinterpreted from the perspective of the following eco-critical approaches:

3.2.1 Eco-cosmopolitanism

According to Lawrence Buell, "Eco-cosmopolitanism develops a spirit of cooperation and commitment with nature and physical environment" (Berry 252). It presents human beings and the natural environment as interdependent and mutually constitutive. In such a mutual relationship between man and his environment boundaries get erased and cultures merged up. Man is considered a citizen of the planet or world ecosystem. It is a movement towards a planetary perspective and globalisation in ecocriticism that constructs human relationship with nature in a global perspective and depicts human environmental experiences across the boundaries. It gives a holistic view of the relationship between human beings and their environment. As Adamson and Ruffin in *American Studies, Ecocriticism, and Citizenship Thinking and Acting in the Local and Global Commons* (2013), give a reference of the international organisation, La Via Campesina that declared:

We must go beyond the anthropocentric model. We must rebuild the *cosmovision* of our peoples, based on a holistic view of the relationship between the cosmos, Mother Earth, the air, the water and all living beings. Human beings do not own nature, but rather form part of all that lives...[We must] alert the social movements of the world about what is happening on the planet to defend life and Mother Earth, because we are defining the model for future generations. . . . We call on humanity to act immediately to rebuild the life of all of nature, applying the concept of "life in balance." The small farmers, peasants, and indigenous agriculturalists from the four corners of the Earth hold in their hands thousands of solutions to climate change. . . . [We support] the people's solutions to defend life and Mother Earth. (204)

Eco-cosmopolitanism gives a holistic view of the relationship between the cosmos, the mother earth, and all the living beings. In order to develop eco-global environmental

consciousness it is essential “to think of the planet earth as our *home*” such an ecological consciousness needs to “begin at home” (Adamson and Ruffin 206). This ecological consciousness is based on a shared morality and mutual respect that consider all the earthly creatures as world citizens regardless of any difference. Adamson and Ruffin lay emphasis on the eco-global vision to the developing ecological problems:

I am interested in the recent popular attention to the problems of global warming and climate change in particular because I believe that these large-scale environmental problems require an environmental perspective and imagination that have the capacity to cross scales. One could presume we might see evidence of multiscalar, local/global thinking (or grassroots ecocosmopolitanism) engaging with a problem that is arguably the greatest threat to life on earth. (207)

Eco-cosmopolitanism presents individuals or human groups as part of the natural environment. It establishes the bond of association between human culture and nature and encourages awareness how such bonds promote local and global forms of identification. It further investigates how an individual and groups of people imagine themselves as a part of global sphere. Eco-cosmopolitans are interested in natural and cultural circumstances; in this regard, they spread awareness that goes beyond the local and national boundaries. They assume that humans' association with environment springs from their multiple living experiences at different places.

There is need to think beyond the territorial limits of one's own place, nation, or region. Lawrence Buell calls for taking into account the planetary ecological systems for introducing an environmental ethic. He develops interest “in ecology, in planetary endangerment, in environmental ethics, in humankind's relation to the nonhuman world” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 56). Buell has coined the term eco-global in order to float his idea of the environmental ethic which deems individuals or human groups as part of the planetary community of both human and non-human beings. Human existence is not only closely connected to a specific environment but also to the environment of the entire globe. The existence of environment and human beings is directly proportional to each other's survival. Environment is being transformed by the production and reduction of the natural resources.

Postcolonial studies “marked a further stage in the integration of discourses about the local and the global... postcolonialist approaches tended to focus on transnational and cosmopolitan webs of connection” (Buell et al. 421). Postcolonial eco-cosmopolitan approach is not limited to local or national level, it is a global approach:

Postcolonial studies has tended to favour the cosmopolitan and the transnational. Postcolonial concerns such as cosmopolitanism, transnationalism...migration, trauma and affect, and border studies are now more pronounced in ecocriticism; similarly, animal studies, bioethics, and trans- and post-humanism are more prevalent in postcolonialism than they have been in the past. (Mason et al. 5)

These types of considerations for regional and global relationships form a strong cooperation among humans living all around the world for understanding and appreciating man’s association for the environment. Postcolonial eco-cosmopolitan approach tends to “stress tensions and disruptions between local and global frameworks of experience” (Buell et al. 422). It is not a mere projection of harmonious relationship between man and nature from local to planetary level but also explores issues of colonisation and ecological destruction simultaneously. From the perspective of the theory of eco-cosmopolitanism the present research work highlights the Native Americans’ environmental ethics as well as explores the environmental problems which they have been facing since European colonisation. For the Native Americans, each place has central importance “...in which settings for the constitution of social relations are located and with which people can identify (qtd in Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 63). The Native Americans’ environmental ethics are grounded in eco-cosmopolitanism with the view that the earth is the centre of life on which humans and non-humans live communally and its natural resources are created for the benefit of all beings not only for human beings. Unlike the theory of cosmopolitanism, the concept of eco-cosmopolitanism deals with “more-than human world” (Heise 61). Eco-cosmopolitanism does not focus only on human world, it progresses towards the sphere of non-human world and also emphasises the relationship between animate and inanimate classes.

3.2.2 Environmental Justice

Eco-cosmopolitanism is dedicated to pursuing the environmental justice movement. Environmental justice “would require that they [weak community members] not be disowned and deprived of collective biological, cultural, and ecological heritage in the “commons” or victimized by (environmental) colonialism and/or corporate globalization” (Buell, *Ecoglobalist Affects* 160). The European colonisers’ devastating activities result in exploitation of the natural environment, conversely the responsibility of the impending problems of environmental destruction and catastrophic climate change has shifted from ecologically destructive people to the poor women. This “focus on the global threats of poor women’s fertility has also justified the design and implementation of aggressive and coercive population control mechanisms and contraceptive technologies that restrict women’s reproductive rights and endanger their health” (Adamson et al. 209). Adamson points out environmental injustices that link environmental destruction with the exploitation of the marginalised groups. Environmental justice not only demands the protection for all human beings regardless of their gender or racial differences but also for every inch of the earth:

Despite environmental justice criticism’s grasp of place as more a human than a natural construct and its greater attention to the production of localities by institutionalized macrosocial forces, it has taken a special interest in narratives of representative endangered communities...If every place on earth were cared for as we like to think a “protected” reserve is cared for, then perhaps the health of planet and people might be secured. (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 68)

The predominant feature of human beings is their obligation to the poor and weak communities of the planet as all living beings have rights to live in a pollution free environment.

In order to second his views, Buell further quotes Leopold’s point of view that ecocriticism deals with the concept of “the land ethic, with its ascription of rights to nonhuman life forms [for him a community includes] soils, waters, plants, and animals: a biotic community in which humankind is one of thousands of accretions” (qtd. in *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 100). In this ‘biotic community’ the Native Americans

live in reciprocal relationship with non-human beings. Federal government proposes unjust livestock reduction policies: “The federal government refused to recognize the relationship of Navajos to their stock herds and gendered patterns of stock ownership” (Adamson and Ruffin 54). For Buell, the wilderness and human society are not separate: “one can even speak plausibly of finding a place or “home” in “wilderness”— as a therapeutic refuge” (*The Future of Environmental Criticism* 67). The physical environment consists of human and non-human life and human relationship with animals and plants should be maintained on equal basis.

According to Adamson, “the most influential environmental writing rests on the belief that true sense of place cannot be built on superficial contact with one place or another, but that it requires deep, contemplative familiarity with the flora and fauna geologies” (*American Indian Literature* 70-71). Adamson addresses the crux of her eco-critical concept that human beings and all the other species are one community; their life is interconnected as well as interdependent. This concept of communal relationship between human and non-human beings is further strengthened with reference to the Native Americans who have kinship relations with fauna and flora for millennia. Adamson and Ruffin refer to Winona LaDuke (Anishinaabe) who explains in *All Our Relations* (1999) the role of the non-humans in Native Americans’ life in the following words:

Native American teachings describe the relations all around—animals, fish, trees, and rocks—as our brothers, sisters, uncles, and grandpas. Our relations to each other, our prayers whispered across generations to our relatives, are what bind our cultures together. . . . These are our older relatives—the ones who came before and taught us how to live. Their obliteration by dams, guns, and bounties is an immense loss to Native families and cultures. (108-9)

The above discussion shows that the Native Americans’ relationship with non-human life is based on strong foundations. They believe in environmental ethic: “For those concerned about environmental ethics, no phase of modern western thought has been more consequential than the steady, albeit uneven, extension of moral and sometimes even legal standing to wider circles of human and nonhuman community” (Buell, *Writing* 225). Human beings are defined in terms of their relationship with animals: “There are

only two kinds of people...Humans and animals” (qtd. in Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 99). Buell supports the principle of reciprocal relationship between humans and their non-human environment.

In *Writing for an Endangered World* (2001), Buell further explains his point of view through Darwin’s statement regarding human relation with non-human beings in the following words:

As man advances in civilization, and small tribes are united into larger communities, the simplest reason would tell each individual that he ought to extend his social instincts and sympathies to all the members of the same nation, though personally unknown to him. This point being once reached, there is only an artificial barrier to prevent his sympathies extending to the men of all nations and races . . . Sympathy beyond the confines of man, that is humanity to the lower animals, seems to be one of the latest moral acquisitions. It is apparently unfelt by savages, except towards their pets. (226)

The criterion of civilization advancement lies in extension of respect to minor classes and animals and human beings are accountable in their relation with their physical environment.

Buell views nature as intertwined with human culture; a complete ecosystem contains the ideal adaptation of human beings, animals and plants to their environment. He highlights the issues of animals’ exploitation and believes that humans’ notion to consider animals lower and different to human beings results in discrimination of other human beings also. There is no concept of distinction between human and non-human beings as well as between regions as pollution spreads without any concept of racial differences and limitations of borders. “Common resources cannot be walled off only for the rich and privileged but must be equitably shared if we hope to create an ecologically fair world for all the planet’s citizens” (Adamson and Ruffin 158). The environmental justice movement; “calls for the fair treatment of all people and freedom from discrimination by the systems that create climate change and perpetuate structural discrimination against indigenous or ethnic minority groups” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 159). This broader approach of environmental justice views environmental issues as integral to problems of social inequality and oppression.

3.2.3 Critique of Development

In the light of the presentation of environmental justice, man-nature relationship and ethical values that enable a man to know his responsibility to nature, the present study is indebted to Huggan and Tiffin's postcolonial eco-critical approach of 'development'. Huggan and Tiffin call development 'myth' as it is "taking false support from ideas promiscuously linked to the Enlightenment ideology of progress and the Darwinian survival of the fittest" (28). Under the colonisers' process of development the main problem for the indigenous people is to meet the basic needs of life and to protect their environment for the future generations. In Gustavo Esteva's point of view: "development and the progression it implies is better understood as a form of 'colonizing anti-colonialism' in which the poor countries of the world are simultaneously seen as socially and politically 'backward'" (qtd in Huggan and Tiffin 30).

Postcolonial ecocriticism contests the issue of colonisation as well as provides "viable alternatives to western ideologies of development" (Huggan and Tiffin 27). It is an attempt to dissuade the colonisers from exploitation of nature. Huggan and Tiffin suggest that the European colonisers should accept the indigenous people's concept of environmental ethic in which sanctity of man-nature relationship is preserved and land is "not as separate from those individuals and groups who inhabit it but as integral to them" (72). The European colonisers' approach of development in which human beings are deprived of their territorial rights and spontaneous freedom is "little more than a disguised form of neocolonialism" (Huggan and Tiffin 27). With European colonisation gap is generated between the 'First Worlds' and 'Third Worlds'. The poor have lost their native land and the settlers get richer. In consequences of the developmental activities, the precious natural resources are exploited and majority is leading less than normal life. It is a step for expansion of destructive technology and exploitation of the natural world. Exploitation of the natural resources results in poverty and helplessness. In Escobar's point of view, the colonisers' approach of development is "characterised by a 'top-down, ethnocentric, and technocratic approach' in which people and cultures are treated as 'abstract concepts, statistical figures to be moved up and down [at will] in the charts of 'progress'" (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 28-29). This effort of economic growth is an attempt to dismantle the tribal communal values. The Native Americans are made subject

of development that has dismantled their mental peace. In response to 'ethnocentric and technocratic' concept of development, Greens notices "it is the exponential economic growth experienced during the last two centuries which is at the root cause of the current environmental crisis" (qtd. in Burchill, et al. 237). A real development that "provides a catalyst for the promotion of civil society and human rights (Huggan and Tiffin 36) is not possible in endangered environment; it is an indispensable part of a balanced ecosystem.

Walter Rodney's concept of development as quoted by Ikejiaku, "as a process of increasing the ability, capacity and capabilities of a people to exploit the resources of their environment, so as to satisfy their needs at any given time" (34). During this process indigenous population, particularly the "Indigenous women [whose] lives have been ignored" (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 57) have suffered a lot. The poor women are considered responsible of the forthcoming environmental problems (Adamson et al. 209). This deceitful justification for development is a strategy of colonisation. "The concept development is lacking or even meaningless if it does not project women's concerns and relevancy in the mainstreams of development activities" (Ikejiaku 31). The indigenous women play pivotal role as a producer of the basic needs to the tribal communities. Their role cannot be ignored in development of the tribal communities. The concept of development in the Native American context is important to know whether they are developing or not, particularly since World War II. Is there "expansion of human freedom" (Huggan and Tiffin 29) on the Native Americans' territory after European colonisation? The consequences of the Western development are such devastating that develop unbridgeable rift between the colonisers and the colonised. C. Ake notes that "development also involves equality" (qtd. in Ikejiaku 36). Prosperity, equality and freedom are the basic outcomes of development. But problem here is that the Native Americans are victimised of social and environmental injustice. Development provides life sustaining necessities, raises standards of living and reduces fear. Contrarily, the Native Americans are deprived of certain basic rights, such as rights to shelter, food, health and social participation, even their very tribal identity is snatched from them in disguise of development.

3.3 Research Method of the Study

The nature of the present research work is qualitative and the research method of the study is textual analysis (content analysis). According to Catherine Belsey: “Textual analysis is indispensable to research in cultural criticism, cultural history and cultural studies, as well as any other discipline that focuses on text or seeks to understand the inscription of culture in its artifacts” (Griffin 157). A text has no unified meaning on its own, it is connected to on-going cultural and social practices. Intertextuality “gives the work its resonance, its layers of meaning” (Belsey, *A Future for Criticism* 47). Meanings and structures of a text are not specific to itself: “texts owe more to other texts than to their own makers” (Chandler 201). A text is interlinked with other text that provides contexts for interpretation. In Julia Kristeva’s point of view: intertextuality is “a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (qtd in Allen 39). Intertextuality generally refers allusions to other texts that develop internal relations within the texts. It blurs the boundaries of physical structure; a text cannot be limited to the boundaries: “all texts are potentially plural, reversible, open to the reader’s own presuppositions, lacking in clear and defined boundaries, and always involved in the expression or repression of the dialogic ‘voices’ which exist within society” (Allen 209). A text does not confine itself to the boundaries of discipline and geography. Intertextuality elaborates author and his products as the outcome of system and culture. According to Daniel Chandler, “intertextuality would normally be used to refer to links to other texts, a related kind of link is what might be called ‘intratextuality’ – involving internal relations within the text” (251). It brings up the relations which bind a text to other texts. There are various links in form and content between the texts.

“Poststructuralism offers a controversial account of our place in the world, which competes with conventional explanations” (Belsey, *Poststructuralism* 6). It is a challenge to the traditional concept of language and culture. “Poststructuralism, which breaks with structuralism by emphasizing difference, we can see how interpretations come to differ from each other” (Griffin 165). Meanings of the text are recognised differently; poststructuralist readers are conscious about allusion, pun, paradox and irony as well as shift or break in tone. “Any serious textual analysis depends on a grasp of how meaning

works” (Griffin 163). Grasp of meaning and vocabulary depends on acquiring knowledge which leads a reader to think with clarity and brings fine distinction. “Poststructuralism claims that the conventional antithesis between subjective and objective doesn't hold, because the subject is produced outside itself” (Belsey, *Poststructuralism* 73). A subject does not make sense in isolation, it is not the origin of its own ideas. In the same way, there is no absolute objective knowledge.

The present research focuses on the following two aspects of textual analysis proposed by Catherine Belsey:

- (i) Historical background.
- (ii) Specific culture.

As “any specific textual analysis is made at a particular historical moment and from within a specific culture” (Griffin 166). Text presents not only the important events but also socio-cultural values and the circumstances in which it is written. Textual analysis interprets the meaning and message of any text from the perspective of its existed environment and historical background. “No text can ever compel its readers to view it in a particular way” (Griffin 163). Text does not determine its readers to analyse it in some specific perspective but provides conceptual framework for research: “The text itself also engages in dialogue with the readers” (Griffin 163). This relationship between the text and the readers strengthens the readers’ understanding of the socio-cultural and historical impacts that provide base to the text. In analysis of a text a critic discovers the meanings that have been ignored by the common readers.

Textual analysis also helps answer the research questions: “It is the textual analysis that poses the questions which research sets out to answer ... And since the project of cultural criticism is to understand the texts – or rather, to read the culture in the texts – or since, in other words, the texts themselves constitute the inscription of culture... once the knowledge is lodged in your mind, it becomes part of what you bring to the text” (Griffin, 167). The selected texts are analysed to depict the importance of nature in the Native Americans’ lives as well as to present their problems with reference to the context. The environmental issues not only result in diseases and poverty but also

cause the loss of the Native Americans' tribal identity. The present research accentuates that environmental problems are interlinked with social issues; the devastating consequences of the colonisers' actions influence the Native Americans as an undying detrimental legacy generation after generation. The history of the Natives' life sharing bond as well as "the history of imperialism, in which some people become the property on others" (Griffin 170) are the driving force for the development of the analysis.

Belsey addresses "a question posed by the text. Where are its sympathies? What historical differences does it present?" (Griffin 170). In portrayal of the historical background the present research work depicts the history of the fatal hostility between the Native Americans' profound relationship with nature and Euro-Americans' indifference to and exploitation of the natural world. This historical survey depicts that the fundamental disagreement between the European and Native American cultures is based on their divergent outlooks on nature. The Native Americans' socio-cultural history is presented to pose a challenge to the domination of the European colonisers. Sympathising with the oppressed and marginalised communities of the Native Americans, Silko and Momaday give an account of historical description of the Natives' struggle to affirm that they are an independent nation having its own socio-cultural values. In order to understand the Native Americans' beliefs in nature and their environmental problems, it is required to examine them historically. The present eco-critical study "leads outwards into...cultural and political history" (Griffin 169). In analysis of the Native Americans' environmental concern the history of their reciprocal relationship with nature as well as Euro-Americans' exploitation and domination is presented. The European colonisers declare the Native Americans as savage and the "term 'savage' has often been deployed, not just to signify an animal, but also to impute the human, albeit in a primitive form" (Huggan and Tiffin 149). Contrariwise, Euro-Americans declare their "own example as a superior counterculture" (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 121). In disguise of development, "a vast technocratic apparatus designed primarily to serve the economic and political interests of the West" (Huggan and Tiffin 27). The concept of development is wrapped in the politics of dominion and exploitation.

CHAPTER 4

AN ECO-CRITICAL STUDY OF LESLIE MARMON SILKO'S NOVELS

4.1 Summary of Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*

Almanac of the Dead is a massive novel comprised of six parts and nineteen books. The novel begins with a map that shows borderlands of the American Southwest. Tucson is shown as the center of a region where people of different cultures and background dwell. Part One, The United States of America, contains eight books. Setting of this section is in Arizona, California and New Mexico. The following major characters are introduced in this section; Lecha and Zeta; the twin sisters who have an ability to know the problems of their tribal people and the colonisers' policies. They play multiple roles in the novel. Yoeme, grandmother of the twin sisters, teaches her granddaughters a rich history of the Native Americans' tribe and also suggests them to read the book, *Almanac of the Dead*. The twin sisters and their grandmother transfer their ancestors' culture and religious beliefs to the coming generations. Calabazas (an old Yaqui Indian), Mosca (a dark skinned Mexican) and many other minor characters are also introduced in this section. Part Two, Mexico, is split into two books; all the events take place in Mexico and Tuxtla. Bartolomeo (a white Cuban) and Menardo (a Mexican) wish to assimilate into European culture and destroy everything that is out of their domain. These characters are imperialists in their sensibilities and subjugate the indigenous people. On the other hand, Angelita La Escapita (a wise indigenous woman) observes the destructive activities and warns tribal people against such exploitation. Twin brothers; El Feo and Tacho also lead a movement against the destroyers. Subjugation of the indigenous people

and their traditional culture by the colonisers as well as resistance of the tribal people continues in the section. Part Three, Africa, has three books. Here we are introduced to Trigg, a racist and alcoholic business man and Leah Blue, Max's wife, who have colonisers' approach to exploit nature. These exploiters misuse the poor and also like violence. Sterling (a Laguna Pueblo) is exiled from his community as he is charged with the production of a film in which nature is desecrated. Rambo-Roy and Clinton (war veterans) have a vision to overthrow the government with the help of other veterans. Part Four, The Americas, has two books and all the actions take place in Mexico. Here we are introduced to two major European characters, Serlo and Beaufrey who are proud of their European lineage and manipulate the poor people and their environment. They have created an earth unit for themselves, away from the poor population. All the European descendants are involved in different crimes against the weak races. They enjoy sexual videos and emotional manipulation. Death and destruction take place in this section. Part five, The Fifth World, has three books. In this part the twin sisters; Lecha and Zeta and twin brothers; Feo and Tacho play important role to resist the colonisers' policies and share their experiences with other community members. Violence, sexual abuse and fear of war prevail throughout the section. Awa Gee (a computer scientist) is a part of Zeta's plan; he attempts to hack the federal government. His destructive weapons prove harmful for the poor as well. Part Six, One World, Many Tribes contains one book titled "Prophecy". In this section two tribal leaders, Barefoot Hopi and Wilson Weasel Trial lead the tribal people to raise voice against manipulation and marginalisation. Their dynamic speeches provide sparks of hope.

4.2 Summary of Silko's *Ceremony*

Ceremony begins with poem that tells about Ts'its'tsi'nako, thought-woman, who created the universe with the help of her sister. The novel is the combination of prose and poetry. Protagonist of the novel, Tayo, a war veteran comes back from the World War II in post-traumatic stress disorder. His uncle, Josiah and cousin, Rocky are killed in the war. He cannot forget the horrific memories of the war. Being a mixed blooded he is under pressure of the European world as well. The European doctors cannot diagnose his problem. Finally, he has been treated by a Medicine man, Betonie who listens Tayo's

problem and reconnects him with his ancestors' culture and instructs him to search the lost cattle. Meanwhile, Tayo meets Ts'eh (an indigenous woman) who warns him of the forthcoming dangers. Following her guidelines, Tayo easily restores peace of mind. Tayo is further healed by a medicine man, Ku'oosh who performs healing ceremony to cure him. Tayo's sufferings increased due to his contact with Emo who hates him for his mixed breed. After death of his mother, Tayo has been raised by Auntie (Rocky's mother). Here at Auntie's home he is treated badly, even Auntie does not want him to call Rocky brother. Like Tayo all the Native Americans are tormented in their tribal values and European culture. The story of Tayo is interwoven with collective story of his tribal people. Subjugation of the Native Americans and their land is the main concern of the novel. The federal government throws the Native Americans away from their homeland and constructs atomic bombs on the very land. It is more ironic that the European colonisers exploit the Native Americans and also encourage them through different tactics to fight for country. The novel ends with a poem, which indicates that evil forces have been dissipated.

4.3 Introduction

This chapter critically evaluates Leslie Marmon Silko's two novels, *Almanac of the Dead* and *Ceremony*. It comprises three parts. The first part of the chapter deals with the Native Americans' concept of nature; the second part illustrates their environmental problems which they have been facing since the arrival of the European colonisers; the third and final part records the Native Americans' responses to the colonisers' devastating activities.

4.4 The Native Americans' Concept of Nature as Depicted in *Almanac of the Dead*

The Native Americans believe in environmental justice that advocates "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, sex, national origin" (Adamson and Ruffin 159). They disapprove of "environmental degradation and discrimination" (Buell, *Writing* 278) and plea for the rights of all the living beings to a healthy-living-environment. The Native Americans have been in a harmonious relationship with nature; they harbour no ambitions to dominate it. The earth

is home “of all life that is holy and is good to tell, two-legged sharing in it with the four-legged and wings of the air and all green things; for these are children of one mother and their father is one spirit” (Neihardt 1). Nature is a living being for them; they not only adore it but also derive “divine spirit” (Adamson and Ruffin 170), healing and religious inspiration from it. The natural resources like the sun, bear, feathers and eagle hold great importance for them from their religious perspective. They are never unmindful of the existence of their physical environment. *Almanac of the Dead* brings to light the Native Americans’ close relationship with nature in the context of their natural lifestyle and socio-cultural beliefs of their ancestors. The tribal culture and religious beliefs have been carried forward by the indigenous characters to the coming generations. Lecha and Zeta (twin sisters) translate the old almanac; they make the coming generations aware of the natural lifestyle of their forefathers. With the help of historical information, Silko presents the Native Americans’ attachment to nature and their strong faith in it.

4.4.1 Transformation of Knowledge from Almanac of the Dead to the Coming Generations

Almanac of the Dead demonstrates Adamson’s observation that the Native Americans are the “ancient people whose culture had developed over several thousands of years” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 137). The novel highlights a long history of the Native Americans who have always been part of nature. Their calendars and religious ceremonies depict their “naturalized histories” (Adamson and Ruffin 86). As Maya’s (one of the Natives’ tribes) almanac is translated into English in the following words: “Ik is three Ik is wind ... Kan is four. Kan is the lizard whose belly sprang all the seeds for grain and fruit” (Silko 572). Ik and Kan are the names of the days in the ancient Maya’s calendar. The days of the months are named after the names of animals and other natural elements. Five is named after “Chichan”, “a giant snake”; six is called the “owl’s day”, seven and eight are called the days of deer and dog (Silko 572-73). In the same way, there are days of monkey and earthquake, etc. Changes in environment are also linked to the certain changes in the animal life and vice versa. The death of a deer causes drought; dog also carries the spirit of heat and drought. Likewise, “Rain god sits on coiled snake enclosing pool of water” (Silko 574) brings fresh water and greenery. At times, the spirit of the ancestors appears in the form of butterfly and sometimes in the

shape of rain; these auras bring rain, storms, etc. The spirits of the dead people reach their native land through the branches and roots of trees. The land of the forefathers abounds with food and flowers.

Almanac of the Dead suggests that the Native Americans cannot afford to sever their relationship with the natural lifestyle of their ancestors. Sterling, a Laguna Pueblo railroad worker, only loves to forget his expulsion from his native tribe; he does not want to forget his tribal history. But it was not possible for him to let his departure from Pueblos (the Native American tribe) slip his memory without taking his mind off the Native Americans past stories. The characters who lose the sight of their past or ignore the tribal stories are doomed to failure. "The Acoma oral tradition encourages the people to remember and learn from the past" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 57). Sterling comes to know that the ignorance of the tribal lifestyle results in "violence and death" (Silko 754). By recollecting the beliefs of his forefathers he dreams the revival of the tribal values from uranium mines. He looks at "the direction from which the twin brothers and the people would come" (Silko 763) to restore the Natives lost tradition. Sterling was advised by the European counsellors to forget the past and adopt the European culture in order to get rid of depression. He tries to take his mind off his past but fails; he realises that his tribal culture is the only recipe to obtain complete satisfaction. Sterling has been rebuked by the tribal people "because he wasn't interested in what they had to say" (Silko 754). He has been scolded for not taking any interest in the tribal culture but later on he realises the significance of it and tries to connect himself with the tribal people. On his return to the reservation, Sterling wants "to remember more of the stories the old people used to tell" (Silko 759). Now Sterling loves to know about life stories of his elders; he also starts understanding the tribal people's objections to the Euro-American mining. He realises the uranium mines have destroyed the entire atmosphere. He looks at the vegetation and imagines the earth before the Europeans' arrival when there were plenteous natural resources.

Almanac of the Dead presents stories of time and events; with the help of the Native Americans' history, the novel prophesies that old days will return and the indigenous people will lead a free life closely associated with nature. "Without the Almanacs, the people would not be able to recognize the days and months yet to come,

days and months would see the people retake the land” (Silko 570). The almanacs warn the coming generations that the European invaders foster evil designs of ravaging nature as well as making them aware of their ancestors’ natural lifestyle. By the agency of early almanacs, the Native Americans also keep themselves abreast of the history of failure and success of their ancestors. The almanacs connect people to their past history and make them aware “who they were and where they had come from in the stories” (Silko 246). The history of the Native Americans strengthens their determination to revive their culture: “They had no fear of death; they were comfortable with their ancestors’ spirits” (Silko 736). They receive the beliefs and tradition of their ancestors from generation to generation.

Lecha and Zeta (twin sisters) translate the old almanac and transfer the knowledge to the coming generation. Lecha says: “Those old almanacs don’t just tell you when to plant and harvest; they tell you about the days yet to come-drought or flood, plague, civil war or invasion” (Silko 137). Lecha translates the old books for her people and teaches them through old almanacs how to know about the coming months and years. Transformation of ancient knowledge “permits a continuity between past and present” (DeLoria and Lyttle 245). The Native Americans believe that all the living beings are interdependent. There is circulation in life; time passes in circle like the natural elements not linearly. Life goes on in circles it does not have a linear motion, the ecosystem is an appropriate example of the circle of life in which one entity is dependent on the other; “everything an Indian does is in a circle that is because the Power of the World always works in circles and everything tires to be round” (Neihadt 150). The rule of cause and effect is implemented everywhere, thus to lead healthy and peaceful life, the only need is to be careful and sympathetic towards nature. Dates are not given any weightage in the novel since the Native Americans do not measure time in terms of hours; they take time as something that is always dynamic and alive. The novel reflects the history of the Native Americans in circular time that makes no sense to Euro-American readers.

4.4.2 Silko and Eco-cosmopolitanism

Eco-cosmopolitanism is a movement towards a planetary perspective and globalisation in eco-critical theory; ecocriticism has not only expanded its horizon but

also penetrated the global world (Adamson and Ruffin 206). It connects humans to the earth and non-humans; it also establishes a link between the local environment and worldwide ecosystem. According to the eco-cosmopolitan concept, environment is not considered distinct from human beings or anything else. It is where we live; it is our backyard. Eco-cosmopolitans deem the earth a home; it is the earth that feeds us; nourishes us; and provides us with all the basic necessities of life. Silko depicts here, “ecocultural particularisms... in more cosmopolitan and global terms” (Buell, “Qui Parle” 100) by increasing awareness of the global issues of environmental destruction. From Buell’s eco-critical perspectives the implication of local and global disaster are correlated. In *Almanac of the Dead*, Silko, with the aid of a map, shows the parts of the American continent where the indigenous people live regardless of boundaries. Lines between states of Texas, Arizona and New Mexico are omitted to show that the Native Americans reside inside and outside of the American borders. There is no concept of boundaries and borders, “except in the white man’s mind” (Silko 592). Calabazas (an old Yaqui Indian) addresses his tribal people and says: “We don’t believe in boundaries ...We always move freely” (Silko 216). Silko defies the geographical boundaries; she emphasises human interactions with nature, ignoring the frontiers of racial as well as geographical boundaries. The American continent is a new world for the European settlers but for the Native Americans it is like a community where human beings dwell in compatibility with nature.

Adamson declares that to solve the recent environmental problems, it is imperative to comprehend the environmental issues at global level and enable people to think about the sources of their food and energy. The local actions will encourage people to think globally (Adamson and Ruffin 206). Understanding the global environment is not possible without understanding the local environment. This global environmental movement is an effort for environmental justice that solves planetary environmental problems. Through the depiction of the eco-cosmopolitan approach, it is evinced that once the earth is polluted “all the earth’s beings, would similarly be destroyed” (Silko 718). Sterling recalls the atomic destruction which wreaked havoc in the whole ecosystem across the world. He realises that such ecological devastation mangles the life of all living creatures on the earth: “We must go beyond the anthropocentric model. We

must rebuild the cosmovision of our peoples, based on a holistic view of the relationship between the cosmos, Mother Earth, the air, the water and all living beings” (Adamson and Ruffin 204). With destruction of the natural resources of the earth all human and non-human beings suffer alike. By obliterating nature, man is digging his own grave; and a stage could come when “humans might not survive” (Silko 719). The Native Americans consider the earth their mother and its creatures their family members; by wrecking the natural environment, man is setting his own house ablaze.

Adamson sheds light on the human relationship with nature from the ecoglobal perspective that surpasses all the religious and ethnic limits to shelter humans and non-humans and gives a holistic view of the relationship between human beings and their environment. She refers to the international organisation La Via Campesina that declares human beings are part of nature and “the small farmers, peasants, and indigenous agriculturalists from the four corners of the Earth hold in their hands thousands of solutions to climate change” (Adamson and Ruffin 204). Adamson’s theoretical concept of eco-cosmopolitanism views all the living beings as part of the planet regardless of socio-cultural differences. The Native Americans believe in a strong association with nature which surpasses local determination. They are interdependent and interlinked with their environment; their merger bridges cultural differences and boundaries. They are attached to their homeland regardless of ethnic barriers and national borders. *Almanac* calls for ecological unity and “harmony with all the living things” (Silko 710). It affirms that all the species have equal rights to exist in a clean environment and to use the earthly resources alike.

Lawrence Buell gives an inclusive concept of ecocriticism that traverses the path of the whole journey from local to global level. The environmental activists propose that globalisation is an addition to the local settings. A growing awareness of the local environmental issues enables one to think globally and develop consciousness of environmental impact on one’s daily life. Buell’s ecoglobal perspective helps us understand Silko’s manifestation of the Native Americans’ binding relationship with the natural environment across the globe regardless of racial and class differences (Buell, *Ecoglobalist Affects* 232). It deals with the aspects of the environmental justice and human and non-humans’ positions in their environment. *Almanac* provides an insight into

the investigation of the same environmental issues which affect “humans and plants and animals” (Silko 657). Silko considers that it’s a collective responsibility of the people of all colours to defend the earth. The concept of one earth for all people negates “otherness, racism and miscegenation” (Huggan and Tiffin 135). In this eco-critical approach, non-human beings do not play their role as a merely framing device; all living beings are interdependent there is no dividing line between human and non-human life. This bond of interdependence is based on the concept of cooperation between man and his physical environment.

4.4.3 The Native Americans’ Communal Relationship with Nature

“*Commune* and *communal* were words that described the lives of many tribes and their own people as well... shared the land, water, and wild game. What was grown, what was caught or raised or discovered, was divided equally and shared all around” (Silko 314). The Native Americans live in community and share the natural resources with each other alike. Because of the lack of awareness of the significance of non-human life, the European colonisers do not appreciate the real spirit of nature. Angelita (wife of the tribal leader, El Feo) says that Karl Marx and his followers could not understand the importance of the communal life. It is the Native Americans’ belief in nature that allows them to live in community with all other creatures. Without spirituality this concept is meaningless. According to Silko, Marx and Engels fail to lead communal life because of their inability to have a spiritual relationship with the mother earth. “They had not understood that the earth was mother to all beings,” (Silko 749). The Native Americans’ culture and religion closely connect them to their homeland and their ancestors. There exists a web of relationship between their ancestral spirit, land and the living generation of the Native Americans that has “prepared the ground for an entirely new expression of Indian communal and corporate existence” (DeLoria and Lyttle 264). There is a spiritual as well as physical connection between the Natives and their environment. This web of relationship unites the Native communities and also presents them as an independent nation.

Mutual understanding between the Native Americans and nature encourages the earthly creatures like snake to take care of the indigenous people by keeping them aware

of the danger posed by the natural disasters and ecological catastrophes. The snake knows “humans had desecrated only themselves with the mine” (Silko 762). The snake brings a message that by polluting the earth actually human beings have ruined themselves. When Euro-Americans disturb the snake it disappears and leaves the earth dry and dead (Silko 762). Human beings cannot be separated from non-human environment; whatever human beings do affect all members of this community of human and non-human beings. Lecha and Zeta suffer due to their father’s apathy towards nature. Zeta gets disappointed with realization that “their father, the detached white man” (Silko 121) is dead. Their father suffers from moral and spiritual emptiness because he has destroyed the natural environment through uranium mines. He has lost interest in life because of his lack of interest in nature. The twin sisters know that “their father, the mining engineer himself, had dried up” (Silko 120) by destroying nature. Being a Euro-American, he does not know the reasons for his mental disturbance as once he says: “I am going to die. My life has never interested me much” (Silko 123). He does not understand that the mines and the excessive extraction and consumption of the animal products, minerals, water and wood will have toxic effects on the natural environment. He only realises his ignorance when he contracts cancer. He himself was responsible for his death as he “had violated the mother earth” (Silko 121). His ailment is an outcome of the ill-treatment meted out to nature. It is the response of nature to its destroyers. Silko’s portrayal of twin sisters’ father indicates that the destruction of nature mangles human life. The environmental exploitation and the Native Americans’ subjugation are the two faces of the same coin. In order to protect their environment, the indigenous people are determined to create a better community in which humans and non-humans can coexist. Adamson states, “Working for the environment must mean working with interested others for the entire social and physical community” (*American Indian Literature* 143). Division between man and nature gives birth to negative ramifications. As Barefoot Hopi (the Native Americans’ leader) says that his people face a great loss because of their displacement from their native land.

The earth is the source of life for all living beings; all humans and non-humans live communally on this planet. The earth is just like a home for the Native Americans where their “lives and ways of life are absolutely dependent on work and collective

cooperation” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 157). They listen to each other and their mother earth; they know that by polluting the earth “man only desecrated himself” (Silko 625). Despite deforestation and pollution, the mother earth still takes care of its creatures; it provides them with food and herbal remedies. Human life is dependent on the health of the earth; by destroying the earth, “human had been raping and killing their own nestlings at such a rate” (Silko 719) that soon this planet would stop offering any form of life. The Native Americans get together and “recognize a reciprocal relationship with the land” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 64). They take care of the environment in which they live that provides them sustenance and protection. The place is not mere a geographical location but the Natives’ culture and experiences are attached to it. According to Lawrence Buell, a true sense of place requires a contemplative familiarity with human and non-human life (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 92). Sterling is bewildered and confused in an alien environment. At the end of the novel, he returns to his homeland from which he was exiled. At his homeland, he moves freely in fields and cultivated corn. His return to his tribal people and his stay at the sheep farm indicate his communal heritage and also suggest that for a better future, it is imperative to reinvent the natural environment where the indigenous people live like a single community and help each other. Environment is “where we live, work, and play” (Novotny 722). The story of Sterling's return to his native land shows that an individual cannot survive in isolation and he cannot afford to ignore non-human existence at any cost. Sterling’s association with Maahastryu, which is a giant sandstone snake, depicts that human and non-human life is interlinked. Sterling comes back to his ancestral land and Maahastryu’s re-emerges from the uranium mine with a message that there is a reciprocal relationship between man and his physical environment.

4.4.4 Environmental Justice and Indigenous Feminism

The theory of the environmental justice expands the concept of environment from the perspective of gender, race and class. In the analysis of literature, environmental justice theorists analyse the exploitation of nature in relation to the oppression of gender and race (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 68). Silko equates the indigenous women with nature and elevates their role along with the importance of nature. “Indian

women often encouraged hawks to help protect their corn crops; but the absence of the European distinction in Indian culture formed much of the basis of the conflict and misunderstanding” (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 10). They are strong characters which protect nature, in other words save their race from destruction. As the four major female characters of the novel; Yoeme (Lecha and Zeta’s grandmother), Angelita and the twin sisters, Lecha and Zeta protect their native land from ruin. By defending their native land actually they defend their tribe from ruination; the Native Americans’ survival is not possible when the natural resources are ignored. Angelita laments over the European colonisers’ failure to know “the earth was mother to all beings” (Silko 749). She denounces Euro-Americans’ misuse of the mother earth and believes that human beings have such a reciprocal bond of relationship with the mother earth that transcends “ethnic and national boundaries” (Adamson and Slovic 6). She believes no one can own the earth “it was the earth who possessed the humans” (Silko 749). She is intelligent and has strength to fight against personal as well as the environmental violation.

Environmental justice “calls for the fair treatment of all people and freedom from discrimination by the systems that create climate change” (Adamson and Ruffin 159). Through speeches, Angelita urges the indigenous people to unite and fight against the natural degradation and resist the long period of oppression. She reminds her tribal communities: “Within history reside relentless forces, powerful spirits, vengeful, relentlessly seeking justice” (Silko 316). As a result of her teachings the tribal people raise their voice against oppression, torture, rape and genocide. Angelita fights for a pollution free environment where her tribal communities can perform their religious ceremonies and cultural rituals. She is engaged in several activities to facilitate her tribal people by raising funds and travelling to different foreign countries to present her people as a society dominated by the European colonisers. Angelita realizes: “The issue of self-representation is key to the still emerging environmental justice movement” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 158). She resists gender and class differences; she cannot see her people being victimised by others.

Lecha and Zeta also get foreign aid, speak different languages moreover remain in touch with the modern world in order to save their tribal culture. They have mental strength and intelligence to protect their native land and tribal race from devastation;

Lecha has an ability to herald the calamities before they happen in the same way Zeta has good experience to understand indigenous problems and their solution. By interpreting the almanac they convey the message of their ancestors and also give the prophecy of future: “Through the decipherment of ancient tribal texts of the Americas the Almanac of the Dead foretells the future of all Americas” (Silko 14). Lecha explains the almanacs to help her people know about disasters like flood, plague and war. The old almanacs “tell about the days yet to come- drought or flood, plague, civil war or invasion” (Silko 137). Lecha has an ability to connect the young generation to almanacs that help them resist the colonisers and keep alive their culture which is at stake. Through the almanac, she saves her people from destruction, poverty and violence. She also assists them in learning the art of enhancing their physical and spiritual strength by establishing a strong association with the natural environment. She defines human beings with reference to “non-human life forms. That much they share in common” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 101). Human beings and the natural environment are mutually constitutive. Lecha warns her tribal people that as long as they are victimised by the European colonisers this mutual relationship will be destroyed and they will be afflicted by diseases and hunger. Through stories, Yoeme also narrates the history of oppression of the tribal communities. Her stories strengthen the tribal communities’ determination to neutralise the colonisers’ nefarious plans; she knows that power resides in old stories: “This power ensures the story to be retold, and with each retelling a slight but permanent shift took place” (Silko 581). Yoeme explains the almanacs to her people to protect their social and cultural values from declining further. In order to preserve old tradition, she asks the twin sisters to reconstruct the fragments of the almanac.

The female characters in the novel are sensible enough to understand the problems of their tribal people; they have also the potential to suggest the solutions to those problems. They not only help the Native Americans in the restoration of their identity but Euro-Americans also consult them for their mental and physical problems. The violent actions of the European colonisers have psychologically and emotionally disturbed them and for their mental treatment, they consult Lecha. Through the agency of her psychic powers, Lecha reads between the lines that the colonisers suffer from the monster of emotional instability due to their apathetic attitude towards the earth:

Affluent, educated white people, upstanding Church members, sought out Lecha in secret. They all had come to her with a deep sense that something had been lost. They all had given the loss different names: the stock market crash, lost lottery tickets, worthless junk boards or lost loves ones; but Lecha knew the loss was their connection with the earth. (Silko 718)

Lecha warns the European colonisers that with the destruction of the earth all the earthly creatures desperately suffer. If the weather of the earth is disturbed, the clouds will disappear and the terrible wind will bring deadly diseases. Yoeme also informs them the earth has the spirit to survive through thick and thin; thousands of years ago it was purified. The colonisers have “violated the mother earth” that results their “gaping emptiness” (Silko 121). The earth has been enduring all these evils since the European arrival. But if human beings do not refrain themselves from further damaging the earth, a time would come when nothing is alive on it.

The giant snake appears and warns humans against the dreadful time in which human survival is impossible. When the snake appears “none had understood the meaning of the snake’s reappearance; no one had got the message” (Silko 703). No one knows the reason for the arrival of the snake but the twin sisters, Lecha and Zeta and their grandmother, Yoeme understand that the arrival of the snake signifies the hard time of pollution and drought. They lament the emergence of the snake since they know that the snake bodes ill for their future. The appearance of the great serpent is a cautionary tale for those who have been plaguing the environment of the earth. She transmits the ancient knowledge to Lecha and Zeta and makes them aware of the importance of nature in human life as well as warns them against the negative effects of the destruction of nature.

In the foreseeable future threats, Yoeme gets married with a European coloniser, Guzman, in order to prevent him from violating the land of her tribe: “Why do you think I was married? For fun? For love? Hah! To watch, to make sure, he kept his side of the agreement” (Silko 116). Yoeme at first gets married with Guzman on the agreement that he will protect her tribal land. Later on, she joins the guerrilla force to prevent the silver miners' vicious rape of the mother earth. However, being disillusioned with Guzman’s colonial approach, she leaves him because “there had been a terrible fight. A fight involving big cottonwood trees” (Silko 116). Lecha and Zeta are confused about their

grandmother's separation from their grandfather despite his love for trees as Guzman has planted cottonwood trees with the help of the slaves. They ask their grandmother, "Why did you fight over the trees?" (Silko 116) Instead of replying about trees, Yoeme says that Euro-Americans have been killing the Native Americans, exploiting the natural world to find gold and silver. The colonisers "consume tribal resources but do not contribute to tribal well-being" (qtd. in Temple and Velie 38). Yoeme informs her granddaughters about her marriage with Guzman from the colonial perspective. The twin sisters want to know whether their grandmother left their grandfather "because of trees" or as "Grandpa Guzman's family didn't like Indians" (Silko 116). Guzman's hatred for the Native Americans and love of trees are discussed side by side in the novel. His love of trees is not actually love for nature; it is his colonising approach to control nature and to change the natural world into a domesticated environment. The colonisers' "modernising strategies...often increase the strain on rural women, who were previously responsible for carrying out most of the agricultural work" (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 52). The indigenous women are packed with resolution to save nature and to attain environmental justice. They sacrifice their personal life to protect their native land from exploitation.

4.5 The Native Americans' Concept of Nature as Represented in *Ceremony*

The Native Americans attribute their divine and healing power to the natural elements even the minor objects of nature have great significance for them. They are in direct communication with the natural entities which are their helper and provide them with sustenance. When their tribal leader; "Rolling Thunder spoke of herbs and he called them helpers" (Boyd, *Rolling* 99). Nature is their religion; a source of their survival; a centre of their social and religious practices. An important example of such beliefs is Silko's *Ceremony*; Tayo, the protagonist of the novel, after mental trauma and physical disorder recovers his health and identity in close association with nature. In his relation to nature, Tayo is able to recognise the significance of his tribal culture and the vitality of man-nature relationship (Silko 133). By reconnecting Tayo with nature, Silko reaffirms his relation with his tribe. Nature has consoling power for him it provides him with mental peace and cures his physical diseases. Silko interlinks environmental and social

issues and pays attentions to recognise and solve the environmental problems that directly affect human and non-human life. She considers it necessary for human beings to recognise their relation with “ecosystem that transcends national boundaries” (Adamson and Ruffin 13). She brings human culture and nature at the same platform.

4.5.1 Historical Survey

Silko reaffirms her belief in “human and nonhuman webs of interrelation” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 137). During Tayo’s healing this principal is repeated again and again. For Tayo’s healing, Betonie, who is a medicine man, climbs the hills where his ancestors used to practice their ceremonies from the beginning of their history. Betonie brings Tayo back to his heritage: “I will bring you back . . . return to long life happiness again” (Silko 133). The medicine man recites prayers to bring Tayo back to his ancestries and strengthen his weak spirit. He guides Tayo to come back to his ancestors’ natural world that is his home, his belonging, his life and happiness. Betonie tells Tayo “his cure would be found only in something great and inclusive of everything” (Silko 116). Betonie realises that Tayo’s cure is possible through learning the tradition of his ancestors that is inclusive of all human and non-human beings. In case the Native Americans break off their relationship with their mother earth and the natural lifestyle of their ancestors, they are afflicted by different kinds of fatal diseases. Tayo suffers from mental breakdown due to his alienation from nature. “He is invisible. His words are formed with an invisible tongue, they have no sound” (Silko 14). Tayo feels that he is unable to speak or think coherently. The disjointed ideas of his mind are connected through ceremonial cure. The celebration of the “ancestral ‘ceremony of belief’” (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 125) not only communicates and preserves old tradition and culture to the coming generations but also has the healing power. Through transformation of such knowledge the Native Americans’ tribal cultural values and religious beliefs are still growing.

The Native Americans carefully preserve their sacred stories; they share these clan yarns with the coming generations. Through their tribal culture, they come to know who they are and how strong their relationship is with nature. In order to maintain their kinship with nature, it is imperative for them to not only preserve their ancestors’

worldviews but also share them with the coming generations. As a storyteller, an indigenous woman, Ts'its'tsi'nako recalls the stories of her ancestors and shares with the coming generations. She shares socio-cultural values of her ancestors with her people to make them acquainted with their heritage. With the help of the stories of their ancestors, the present generation of the Native Americans come to know:

Long time ago
 in the beginning
 there was no white people in this world
 there was nothing European....

This world was already complete. (Silko 122)

Before the European arrival, the Native Americans deemed the world complete; they lived in the form of a single community. They had their own cultivation system and they used to pay regards to whatever they got from their land. Europeans' arrival "meant displacing the indigenous inhabitants and expropriating their land" (Deloria and Lytle 25). The European settlers exploited nature and seized the Native Americans' homeland.

Silko shares the tribal stories and relates incidents from the ancient social and cultural experiences of her ancestors to justify their legal rights to their native land. At his ancestral land Tayo declares happily:

I am walking back to belonging
 I am walking home to happiness
 I am walking back to life. (Silko 133)

Tribal stories are not narrated for the mere purpose of entertainment but they reflect the strong association of the Native Americans with nature. The Native students tell their class fellows about the yarns that have been shared by their parents or grandparents; these stories are about their ancestors bunking off their schools or speaking the forbidden tribal language (Silko 181). Such stories encourage the tribal people to resist the colonisers' hegemony over the Natives and their environment. The Native Americans are guided through the old stories of ancestors about the importance of the natural environment in their lives. On the other hand, the colonisers "try to destroy the stories let the stories be confused or forgotten" (Silko 133). Despite the colonisers' efforts to make the Native Americans oblivious of their history, the Natives' recount their tribal history. Silko urges

her people to stay committed to their culture and remember the history of their forefathers who have been oppressed by Euro-Americans. Silko revives the tribal history to strengthen the Natives' communal natural way of life. The true sense of life lies "in the old days" (Silko 34) when human beings led healthy life in pure environment.

4.5.2 The Native Americans' Territorial Identity

Adamson says: "It has become almost a truism in Native Americans studies to observe that contemporary American Indian writers examine the relationship between humans` and the land" (*American Indian Literature* xvi-xvii). The Native Americans have a close bond with the earth; their identity is interconnected with their native land. Because of the harmonious relationship with the native land, Tayo is reconnected with the cultural values of his tribe. It is his association with his native land that enables Tayo to communicate with his people and to understand differences between Euro-American and the Native culture. Tayo is physically as well as spiritually connected to his motherland. For the Native Americans, "natural elements (landscape, flora and fauna, etc.) [are] self-standing agents, rather than support structures for human action, in the world" (qtd. in Hugg an and Tiffin 13). Because of such a close rapport between man and land, the land itself becomes a character in the novel and called "mother earth" (Silko 23). Buell defines place by its physical and social features as a living being: "A place is seen, heard, smelled, imagined, loved, hated, feared, and revered" (*The Future of Environmental Criticism* 142). Land is not a stranger for the Native Americans; it is a living thing for them; all the natural creatures like animals and plants are the essential parts of their culture.

The salvation of the Natives' problems is based on a "deep understanding of, commitment to place" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 75) as Tayo's connection to his native land is essential for healing and recovery. He fell ill because of his separation from his ancestral land and heritage. Despite the trauma caused by the war and the death of his uncle and beloved cousin, Tayo manages to restore his health and identity by reconnecting himself with "ancestral homelands" (Hugg an and Tiffin 57). Tayo memorialises the time he spent with his uncle; he points out the place and says: "This is where we come from, see... This earth keeps us going" (Silko 42). Tayo identifies himself

with his native land, its sand, stones, trees and the wild-flowers. His healing process is completed through his journey towards the natural landscape. He develops mutual relationship with the natural environment around him. Although, Tayo has lost physical and spiritual strength, he realises that he can regain health and spiritual power by the virtue of his connection to the mother earth and its inhabitants. There is a strong bond of interdependence between the health of Tayo and the health of the earth: “What makes this environment so rich and hopeful is the deeply felt sense of connection between the people and the land” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 17). It is the earth that protects him and also blesses him with health and restores his peace of mind.

Initially, when Tayo was alienated from his homeland by Euro-Americans, he was influenced by their teaching and culture that disturbed him much. Once he was influenced by Emo who rejected the Native Americans beliefs and cursed their mother earth. Betonie brings Tayo back his identity associated with his ancestral land with the help of ceremony:

Come home, happily
 return belonging to your home
 return to long life and happiness again
 return to long life and happiness. (Silko 133)

The natural landscape of his ancestors is home and a source of peace and pleasure for him. Euro-Americans and the Natives’ relationship with the earth is presented in description of the funeral of Tayo's friends, Leroy and Harley in the following words: “Two big flags covered the coffins completely, and it looked as if the people from the village had gathered only to bury the flags” (Silko 240). Here two different types of identities are presented: the flags signify Euro-Americans’ identity and the corpses symbolise the Native Americans. The shrouds used to wrap their bodies temporarily signify Euro-Americans but their bodies are connected to the earth. The Native Americans “cannot practice their traditional culture without a land base” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 132); they identify themselves with their homeland. Tayo’s regaining cohesion with the land enables him to appreciate the vitality of the earth. “It was a world alive, always changing and moving” (Silko 88). The earth is living being and has great significance for Tayo; it connects him to his ancestors and helps him retrieve

his lost identity. When he looks at the mother earth his ancestors' history is revealed to him, how his people defended the earth against the federal government.

Tayo is worried due to the drought and the changing weather; in fact, it is his alienation from nature which makes him anxious. Tayo's uncle, Josiah is satisfied because of his close relationship with the land; neither the European way of life detracts him from his ancestors' culture nor the swings in the mood of weather disturb him. Josiah teaches Tayo to respect the mother earth and take care of the animals and other creatures. Josiah instructs him never complain the changing seasons, rain and drought. The sun, the sky, the wind, rain and dust all are part of human life. Josiah reminds Tayo that we are from the earth and whatever happens on the earth all of this is the result of our activities. He advises Tayo to never curse nature because "droughts happen when people forget, when people misbehave" (Silko 42). Tayo forgets this lesson during the war when he curses the jungle rain and prays for dry air. Living away from nature and his uncle Josiah, Tayo forgets the lesson never to curse or blame nature. He considers the jungle rain against human beings and pounds it as a result suffers from long drought.

4.5.3 Man-Nature Relationship

According to Adamson, the division between nature and human culture as well as separation of human beings from wild places "elevate and stir our souls" (*American Indian Literature* 16). All the living beings work simultaneously to keep balance of the ecosystem. The alienation of man from nature means to separate man's soul from his body. The Native Americans live in concord with nature; they pay regards to nature and get back the positive response. Tayo's sense of alienation from his tribal communities caused mental syndrome in him. It does not rain for long after Tayo curses it during the war. He shows repentance; he blames himself for the drought which shows that the Native Americans have a strong mutual relationship with nature. They believe that the mother earth feels resentment towards the people when they wreak havoc in nature; rain stops for long; animals and plants disappear and people starve to death. The flies sought "forgiveness for the people. Since that time the people have been grateful for what they fly did for us" (Silko 93). Unlike Euro-Americans, who believe that flies "are bad and carry sickness [the Native Americans] do not believe in that kind of nonsense" (Silko 93).

The Native Americans consider the flies a necessary part of their life and sacred beings who beg for them and bring back the natural life.

Man and nature are interlinked and interdependent like “spider webs woven across paths through sand hills where early in the morning the sun becomes entangled in each filament of web” (Silko 32). The symbol of the spider web shows interconnected relationship between all the living creatures. Tayo’s close relationship with nature is his journey towards wholeness. Through the process of integration with the natural remedial properties as the bear-paw prints, blue corn pollen and the ceremonial hoops, Betonie cures Tayo’s disease. The repetition of the natural elements in the novel such as sun light motif and cloudless sky portray the cycle of the natural life, which is a series of interacted events, and purging of Tayo’s diseases. A small square of sunlight on the wall separates harsh memories of his past from the comforts offered by the indigenous natural way of life. The sun light and the natural landscape are found during the course of ceremonial healing which helps Tayo accomplish wholeness. In relation to these natural elements, Tayo travels towards wholeness. All “these relations are honored in ceremony” (Adamson and Ruffin 108). Tayo is spiritually and physically poisoned by the dangerous technological environment. Eventually, he finds divine satisfaction in nature.

“The places in which we live, work, play and worship” (Adamson et al. 4) are called environment. A place where human beings live and work makes an environment. The Native Americans call the earth their mother that feeds them and takes care of them; the sky is their father that provides them with shelter; whatever is between the earth and the sky they call it their brothers and sisters. All creation is considered as “the children of one mother [the earth]” and “their father is one spirit [the sky]” (Neihardt 1). *Ceremony* explores the causes of pollution in the Four Corner area where the Pueblo peoples have been living for centuries. Ku’oosh, a medicine man, teaches Tayo: “This world is fragile,” (Silko 32) in which no one can live alone. All human and non-human beings are interconnected in a kind of a spider web. Suffering of a single living soul disturbs the equilibrium of the web of relationship. Every individual should be held accountable if in any way he is involved in the evil process of the destruction of the web of relationship. The Natives’ mutual relationship with the earth does not mean that they only live in the natural environment but they have had mental harmony with nature. When Tayo is

alienated from nature, he suffers from mental trauma and the sound of rain, splashing leaves and water get louder and disturb him. The sound of rain strikes him like daggers and the air saturated with water appears to him heavy. This situation highlights Tayo's loss of contact with the natural landscape. Through ceremonial healing, he is reattached to the land and his tribal communities.

Until Tayo was under the treatment of the European doctors he was physically as well as mentally upset. In the hospital, he was continually vomiting in the alien environment. The main cause of Tayo's illness was his separation from the natural environment but the doctors could not find this problem (Silko 116). As a result, Tayo was afflicted with mental trauma; the excessive vomiting was a sign of Tayo's sufferings. Because of his mental problem, Tayo suffered physically as well as spiritually. As body and mind are gelled together in the same way man is inseparable from nature. Human beings need to know that animals and plants are "our older relatives—the ones who came before and taught us how to live" (Adamson and Ruffin 109). There is physical as well as a spiritual relationship between humans and non-humans. When Tayo realises it, he understands that humans need to live in amity with environment for their mutual benefit. His healing and transformation from traumatic memory into a peaceful natural life is integrated in viewing humans and non-humans as a single community. This transformation and healing is completed with the help of spiritual healers who believe that man can't sever his relationship with non-human world. As Josiah "died because there was no one to help him search for the cattle after they were stolen" (Silko 114). Josiah has such an association with animals that he no more lives after the loss of his cattle. There is no one to help Josiah find his stolen cattle; he expires when he finds his cattle untraceable. Josiah knows that animals are similar to human beings; if you separate them from humans and their native land they will perish. Josiah wants Tayo to look for his stolen cattle and bring them back to their native land lest they lose their lives; his sense of isolation caused by the loss of the cattle. Tayo remembers Josiah's point of view regarding animals and "wanted to leave that night to find the cattle; there would be no peace until he did" (Silko 145). Josiah's teaching cements Tayo's kinship with animals and enables him to bring back the stolen cattle to the reservation. Tayo breaks down the fence and let the cattle free. Breaking the fence has symbolically significance that the

Native Americans “make no distinction between nature and culture” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 143). In the Natives’ culture the gap between human and non-human worlds is non-existent.

Tayo cannot keep himself aloof from his fellow animals. The loss of the native land and cattle disturbs him physically as well as mentally. He “felt weak and sick; he knew why he had lost the feeling” (Silko 143). Even after the recovery of the cattle, he has not been completely recovered. He feels sickness and weakness in the deserted land. But after contemplation, he realises that such weakness comes from the earth he is standing on because of “nuclear testing in the region and the establishment of various resettlement and compensation mechanisms, much of the damage caused has been irreparable, with new forms of colonialism being practised under the guise of protective humanitarianism (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 54). This realisation allows him to abandon the European environment and step into the natural landscape that cares all the living beings and he needs to care it as well. Tayo escapes from uranium mining, which represents the European dominance over the mother earth and finds sanctuary in nature. He gets mental satisfaction when he manages to explore the cattle and lives on the natural landscape of his ancestors in the company of the animals. He pays regards to non-human world; it is his love for the animals that makes him honour the mountain lion that helps him in the search of the lost cattle (Silko 182). The Native Americans especially appreciate the animals while hunting. As Tayo and Rocky leave for hunting after killing the deer, Tayo “knelt and touched the nose” (Silko 46) with respect and love. Tayo pets the deer’s body and appreciates it for sacrificing itself to provide him with food and also covers its head with his jacket out of love and respect. On the contrary, having a European approach, Rocky is prepared to gut the deer; he pays no respect to it.

There exists a mental compatibility between the Native Americans and their environment. Different ceremonies and rituals are celebrated in the novel in respect of nature. The priest paints the picture of she-elk on a cliff each year and says, “A’ moo’ ooh! With you, the cliff comes alive” (Silko 223). This ceremonial painting is a symbol of man-nature bond and a reaction to the evil power that destroys this bond of relation. Silko presents natural landscape a common ground for human and non-human beings: “...because all the elements of human survival are extracted from the natural world”

(Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 85). Human relation to nature develops a sense of responsibility and strengthens human-human and human-nature relationship. The relationship between human and nature enables human beings to live in a community and to work together. Silko's presentation of human life in incorporation with non-humans blurs line between man and his environment.

4.5.4 Environmental Justice and Indigenous Feminism

Environmental justice revisionists proposed numbers of the principles of environmental justice as Lawrence Buell gives references to the first and final provisions. According to the first principle, the mother earth must be protected from destruction and interdependence of all its creatures need to be affirmed (*The Future of Environmental Criticism* 114). The final principle states:

Environmental justice requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth's resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and reprioritize our life-styles to insure the health of the natural world for present and future generations. (*The Future of Environmental Criticism* 114)

Euro-Americans destroy the natural resources of the earth and ultimately exploit the indigenous population. *Ceremony* is a "response to a Christian interpellation that marginalises women and animals" (Huggan and Tiffin 21). The indigenous women are assimilated into nature, and are equally destroyed. As Tayo's mother, Laura realises that being a Native American, she is looked down upon by Euro-Americans. Apparently they love her; she feels pleasure when they smile at her: "...she could feel the truth in their fists and in their greedy feeble love-making" (Silko 63). She realises that they use her as a sexualised object. Her affiliation with Euro-Americans makes her feel ashamed. For her mental satisfaction, she uses alcohol but loses her life.

Along with nature, Silko presents the role of the indigenous women to preserve and revive the tribal cultural values and religious beliefs by connecting the Native Americans with their favourable natural environment. The representation of femaleness and the mother figure has great significance; the earth is also personified in a feminine way as it is called the "mother" (Silko 163). When the Native Americans neglect a figure

like mother, human and non-human life is afflicted by drought. Nau'ts'ity'I, the indigenous woman, "took the plants and grass from them. No baby animals were born. She took the rainclouds with her" (Silko 45). The Native Americans suffer alike by neglecting the natural resources as well their guardian women. The female characters have great strength and creative mind. Ts'its'tsi'Nako has created the universe with the help of her sisters. She thinks of her sister "...together they created the universe" (Silko 1). She is known as Thought Woman or Spider Woman, she names the things of the universe whatever appears to her. She is also presented as the creator of the natural resources. Betonie gives the prophecy of the same mountain that is created by Spider or Thought Woman; he has seen "the cattle... the stars, the mountain and the woman" (Silko 155). Ts'its'tsi'Nako has strength and ability to accomplish exceptional tasks. She creates stories and also accepts the stories of her family. In the same way, Ts'eh, the spirit of the mountain, has such an intimate relationship with nature. The height of mutuality is that when she is walking in "the thick yellow light under the edges of the sun," her eyes also "shone yellow" as well as her hair caught "needles of light" (Silko 217). She is surrounded by yellow flowers as well.

The female characters not only help Tayo in restoring his lost relationship with nature but also perform their crucial role in healing him through natural remedies. After the war, Tayo is confused and detached from his tribal culture; Ts'eh repositions his life by connecting him with his cultural values. She heals Tayo by the agency of the natural elements and also warns him of "the climate change problem" (Adamson et al. 209) he will face in future. For Tayo, Ts'eh is a living animation of nature. She is not only a healer but also a teacher and protector of Tayo. Through her love and protection, Tayo manages to restore his health and faith. It is her love that enables him to reconstruct relationship with his ancestral land. Ts'eh guides him to appreciate nature and enables him to discover himself through oneness with the mother earth (Silko 211). Moreover, she takes care of him just as the mother earth nurtures, through her healing and love Tayo gets strength. Ts'eh represents the earth and animals as human beings; her love for Tayo is a symbol of connection between Tayo and the mother earth. She enables Tayo to consider "the relations all around—animals, fish, trees, and rocks—as our brothers, sisters, uncles, and grandpas" (Adamson and Ruffin 108). It is the result of Tayo's

relationship with Ts'eh who assists him in regaining a balanced relationship with nature and enables him to feel sense of belonging to his ancestral land. At his native land, Tayo reclaims the lost natural world and brings back the lost cattle. Ts'eh teaches him about different plants that keep the earth alive and bring rain. She introduces the plants that bring "the light of the stars, and the moon penetrating at night" (Silko 211). She also warns Tayo against the destroyers who "work to see how much can be lost, how much can be forgotten. They destroy the feeling people have for each other" (Silko 213). These destroyers want to smash the Natives' strong association with their natural world. Ts'eh advises Tayo that in order to defeat this evil, he needs to know and follow the religious and traditional values of his ancestors.

Night Swan, a mature Mexican woman, also plays a critical role in the process of restoration of Tayo's consciousness by reconnecting him with his tribal culture. She persuades him to remain in touch with nature in order to survive. Tayo's uncle, Josiah also likes her guidance and asks Tayo to say thank you to Night Swan for her help and guidance. Before leaving for the war, Tayo visits her home for thanks according to the advice of his uncle. Night Swan further guides him on his visit to her home how to tackle Euro-Americans who misrepresent and degrade nature and the indigenous women alike. Tayo tells her that he feels ashamed of his mixed breed because whenever Europeans "look at me they remember things that happened" (Silko 92). Euro-Americans look down upon Tayo's mother because of her relationship with a Euro-American and giving birth to a mixed blooded child. The character of mixed descent is faced with the conflict between cultures. For him, attaining a unified racial identity is impossibility. Night Swan condemns the European point of view in the following words: "They blame us, the ones who look different. That way they don't have to think about what has happened inside themselves" (Silko 96). Tayo does not want to share this problem with any other except Night Swan as he knows that she can lead him well. She encourages Tayo's hybrid identity and says that she loves the colour of his eyes and his mixed blood status. She advises Tayo never feel embarrassed about the colour of his eyes and skin because it is a sign of change as there is need to know "the changing relationship between people, animals and environment (qtd. in Hugg an and Tiffin 12). At the time of his departure, Night Swan gives him a message: "You don't have to understand what is happening...but

remember this day. You will recognize it later. You are part of it now” (Silko 95). Tayo remembers her words and realises that he is a part of the cosmos in which “our relations to each other, our prayers whispered across generations to our relatives, are what bind our cultures together” (Adamson and Ruffin 108). The concept of community has great importance for the indigenous women; their strength of life lies in cooperative and communal life that is not possible in individuality or separation.

There is close “connection between social injustices and environmental degradation” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 20). The environmental problems cannot be solved in presence of social inequalities; the movement for environmental justice is linked to social justice. In response to Euro-Americans’ ill-treatment of “the poor women ...and the poisoning of their local environments” (Adamson et al. 208), Silko presents the real image of the indigenous women and their role in tribal communities. All the female characters in the novel play a significant role in connecting the confused and disappointed protagonist to the natural world. They know Tayo’s problem and its cure; they heal him accordingly. First of all Tayo’s grandmother reconnects him with the tribal culture; she is proud of her Laguna heritage. She provides him with mental peace. Tayo “dreamed with her, dreams that lasted all night, dreams full of warm deep caressing and lingering desire which left him sleeping peacefully until dawn” (Silko 200). She respects the elders of her generation and honours their tribal methods for curing through natural ways. She has the ability to determine the family affairs and embodies the Native Americans’ spirit. Grandmother is also a storyteller; she loves to talk about the Native Americans’ culture and shares the “long ago, time immemorial stories” (Silko 95) with her grandsons, Tayo and Rocky. Through stories, she transfers the tribal culture from generation to generation. Night Swan urges Betonie to know Tayo’s problem and make him aware of his relationship with the Natives’ religious and social beliefs. With the help of Swan, Ts’eh and his grandmother, Tayo restores the spirit of life. From their teachings Betonie comes to know that humans and non-humans are interdependent; if a person breaks “delicate strands of the web” (Silko 27) of the cosmos all the living beings equally suffer. One can make this relationship stronger by following the ways and spirits of the indigenous women. Tayo realises that cure of his diseases lies in his relationship with the indigenous women’s sacred principles

present in nature. Through the female characters, Silko lays out her rationale that the women are not weak to be oppressed or distorted. They are part of this cosmic environment; they have the ability to protect the Native Americans and their environment.

4.6 Critique of the Euro-Americans' Treatment of the Native Americans and their Environment in *Almanac of the Dead*

Euro-Americans are in competition with nature; their response to nature is antithetical to the approach of the Native Americans who live in harmony with nature. In Brandon's point of view, Euro-Americans' lifestyle was "basically one of individual competition for the acquisition of property," (25). They have been trying to control nature and exploit the Native Americans' direct contact with their physical environment. Silko criticises Euro-Americans' policy of a cut-throat competition with nature. She believes that ecological alienation of man from nature causes not only the destruction of nature but it badly affects life of all the living beings. *Almanac of the Dead* is a sustained lamentation over Euro-Americans' destruction and manipulation of ecosphere. The colonial capitalists commodify the Native Americans' history, cultural practices and dismiss their beliefs in nature. For them "Indians were worse than insects" (Silko 474-75). Silko exposes the hypocrisy of Euro-Americans who "under the guise of assisted modernisation, re-establishes the very rift (social, political, economic) between First and Third Worlds" (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 13). The objective of the colonisers is to control the immigration of the Natives to their natural world and to appropriate them and their environment for colonial purpose. On one hand the European colonisers destroy nature but on the other hand, they blame and criticise the poor Native Americans especially the "women of color and poor women around the world" (Adamson et al. 209) for diseases and poverty. Throughout the text, the distinct viewpoints of the Native Americans and Euro-Americans about nature go cheek by jowl.

4.6.1 The Historical Roots of the Native Americans' Environmental Crisis

The Native Americans "have been writing and articulating their cultures and beliefs for hundreds and even thousands of years" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 133). In *Almanac of the Dead*, Silko presents the five-hundred-year history that sums up

Euro-Americans' treatment of the Native Americans and their environment. Silko uses the term "Death-Eye Dog" (251) for this period of violence and greed. Setting of the novel is in Tucson that has a notorious history because many famous people are ruined in Tucson. "Tucson had a notorious history. Besides Tom Mix, other famous people had met their downfall in Tucson" (Silko 39). Tucson is presented a "city of thieves" (Silko 610) and the nearby deserts of Mexico and Arizona. Where a dearth of water endangers the lives of living beings; the dry lawns of Tucson are like pavements. The existing water sources seem to be contaminated and polluted since they stink. The polluted landscape and the drought reflect the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of its people who have desecrated nature. There is a little greenery; only a few flowers are mentioned and they too are presented from the perspective of death. "A field of red shapes which might be peonies-cherry, ruby, deep purple, black-and the nude human figure nearly buried in these 'blossoms' of bright red" (Silko 108). When Menardo looks at vining purple, the image of "human intestines" (Silko 334) comes to his mind. Water, flowers and fruit which are the sources of life symbolise meaningless death. The European colonisation results in death and destruction of human and non-human life on the American continent; the gloomy tale of the *Almanac of the Dead* brings out the causes of environmental destruction and the Native Americans' resistance to the injustice of the European invaders. The corrupt politicians and dishonest judges exploit the indigenous people by all possible ways.

Through historical description, Silko recalls the stories of murder, rape and oppression. "European colonization of the Americas violently fragmented ancient, pre-Columbian cultures" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 139). In order to understand the Native Americans' problems, it is necessary to examine them historically. Certainly, the problems of the Native Americans' alienation from their culture and religion have deep roots. The tragic history of the European exploitation reveals the causes of environmental devastation in which millions of the Native Americans along with the natural life perished. This record of the five hundred years history depicts how the European colonisation destroyed the Native Americans' compatible relationship with nature. The description of the long history depicts conflicting points of view of Euro-Americans and the Native Americans respectively. The European capitalists destroy and

marginalise the weaker nation by getting hold on their environment. Their colonial policies have “destructive results” (Ashcroft and Tiffin 493). Brutality echoes a constant strain in the American history; a number of characters in the novel exhibit the emotional responses to Euro-Americans violence as well as their materialistic and capitalistic approach. *Almanac of the Dead* covers a long history of oppression, marginalisation and dissolution dominated by Euro-Americans. During this period, the Native Americans’ natural life that has been based on a strong relationship with their environment has been destroyed. The European colonisers did crimes of “the denial and attempted annihilation of tribal histories” (Silko 515).

The title of the novel, ‘*Almanac of the Dead*’ vividly depicts the history of violence, war and death-infused strain in the shape of colonialism. This colonising process labels the Native Americans as underdeveloped, inferior and primitive. As Angelita’s instructor, Bartolomeo presents the Native Americans from the colonisers’ perspective; according to his elite class knowledge, he says that the Natives are unable to present themselves in the world because they have no historical background. He has got “unconfirmed reports” (Silko 515) about the Natives. His dogmatic knowledge leads him to justify the colonisers’ representation of the Native Americans as primitive and uncivilised. When Angelita presents him before assembly of people for his crimes, Bartolomeo comes to know that his crime is the denial of tribal rich history. Silko revives the history of the Native Americans, although the European colonisers don’t want them “to know or remember” (527) their history. In their attempt to wipe out the long history of the Native Americans, Euro-Americans want to crush their true spirit. They want the Native Americans to become oblivious of the importance of their ancestors’ beliefs that are embedded in nature: “For hundreds of years, white men had been telling the people of the Americas to forget the past” (Silko 311). The European colonisers attempt to remove the Native Americans’ history so that they will not be able to understand and interpret the physical environment around them. Europeans arrived with exotic culture and environment, consequently, the Natives and their animal life “became more vulnerable to exotic grasses and weeds” (Stoll 62-63). They came with their own culture that they attempt to impose on the indigenous inhabitants of America.

Almanac presents the record of the history as dating from 1560. “The year of plague-intense cold and fever-bleeding... Small pox too had followed in the wake of the plague” (Silko 577). It is a dangerous period for the native population in which they suffer from sickness and death. During this period of death and destruction, the indigenous people “cry for help” (Silko 475). The European settlers rapidly destroy and pollute nature at a vast level through poisonous chemicals that cause fatal diseases and deaths number in the thousands. In “May 18, 1562-sickness and death” (Silko 577) increased at higher level. “In the sixty-seventh year after the alien invasion, on January 3, 1590, the epidemic began” (Silko 577) from which thousands of people died. The destruction of nature causes contagious diseases among the Native Americans. Due to environmental pollution, not only human and animals suffer but the whole ecosystem gets disturbed: “In the sixty- eighth year after the alien invasion, the face of the moon was covered with darkness ...Thus, September 3 ...there was an eclipse of the sun and the day became as dark as the night” (Silko 577-578). Sixty eighth years after the European colonisation, the web of relationship of the natural elements had lost its balance; consequently, face of the moon was faded and there was an eclipse of the sun and complete darkness even at day.

4.6.2 Colonisation of the Native Americans and their Ancestral Land

The extinction of the natural phenomena is “the colonizing effort to claim power over nature and society” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 144). Through different campaigns Euro-Americans attempt to suppress the “swarms of brown and yellow human larvae called natives” (Silko 545). For Euro-Americans, everything that is related to the earth is inferior. They consider the crawling creatures inferior and dirty because they are close to the earth. On account of their close relationship with nature, the Native Americans are also viewed as savages and uncivilised. In disguise of education and civilisation Euro-Americans have deprived the Native Americans of their forefathers’ land. European policy of development has resulted in “impoverishment of people, animals and their environments” (Huggan and Tiffin 136-37). The policy of Federal Government of the United States causes a historical trauma for the native people. According to the U. S. federal law, “the conquest of the Natives’ land is a social and

moral right” (Blackhawk 88) this manifests the superiority of Euro-Americans over the indigenous population. On the basis of this law, the Native Americans’ tribal identity and homeland are snatched away from them. The U. S. Supreme Court and federal law defend the seizure of the Natives’ land and exploitation of their environment. The feudal lords of the United States listen to complaints and “passed judgment on the serfs” (Silko 535). There is no justice available to the common people in the federal law. The Native Americans are viewed incompetent guardians of nature. They are forced to live on the reservations; where pollution and wastes are disposed of to damage the natural environment and places of local gathering are converted into industrial and commercial areas.

The colonisers’ incursion into the Americas results in the destruction of natural fauna and flora. “The white man had violated the Mother Earth, and he had been stricken with the sensation of gaping emptiness between his throat and his heart” (Silko 121). The colonisers are bent on shattering the Native Americans’ very identity; for this purpose, they get hold on their homeland. They neither take interest in the Natives’ religious and social beliefs nor entertain their grievances and requests. The concept of land has great importance for the Native Americans from the point of view of the protection of the natural environment and their ethnic identity. They suffer with the “loss of their land” (Said 77). The loss of the Native Americans’ land means the loss of their identity. The possession of the land is “an act of geographical violence” (Said 77). The novel is concerned with the subject of violence and destruction. As a result of the European colonisation, the Natives are unable to lead a free life on the natural land of their ancestors as an independent nation. As Sterling comments: “They had lost contact with their tribes and their ancestors’ worlds” (Silko 88). Since European colonisation the Native Americans have been living like slaves and leading a life severed from their own homeland. The Natives who have been alienated from the mother earth “would become obsessed with hungers” (Silko 251). During this period because of pollution “the sun had begun to burn with a deadly a light” (Silko 257). The heat of the injurious raises destroyed the ecosystem.

The colonisers like Baron Menardo, a Mexican businessman, are involved in ecologically destructive approaches. Menardo is indulged in anti-environmental activities

and “passes himself off as a white man” (Silko 274). He demonstrates the negative nature of the European colonisers by violating all the social and cultural values. Even he does not feel hesitation to tame jungle land in order to build “a castle of one’s dream” (Silko 267). The castle is built in a natural area where the “last hilltop of jungle trees and vegetation had persisted” (Silko 279). Menardo’s reshaping the natural landscape into an artificial environment is to obliterate the beauty of nature. The natural beauty of the forest is alien to Menardo. He tries to hide his racial identity and claims: “his fat, thick nose” (Silko 328) shaped like this in boxing fight. He is indulged in self-deception activities. He has become millionaire with the aid of gun running and insurance money. All his money is spent in anti-environmental activities; he turns a blind eye to the harmful effects of the environmental contamination. He uses his income to get hold over the natural environment and believes: “His money goes to a safe place” (Silko 328). He protects his assets to destroy the natural resources. His contribution to expand capitalism is harmful not only for non-human life but also for human beings. He maintains “a unit of five security specialists” (Silko 475) to threat the integrity of the natural environment and provides his clients with weapons. Menardo also runs the business through Universal Insurance Company to facilitate the colonisers in ruination of nature. His protection of the insurance company and extension of the capitalists’ power threatens human and non-human life alike. His capitalistic approach causes pollution and death that “filled the sky with facial dust in early spring” (Silko 313).

For the survey of petroleum in Alaska, Menardo considers the earth no more than a home of “frozen wastes” and notices that there is nothing in this land except “oil, gas, uranium and gold” (Silko 159). The insurance man makes these comments while flying in the airplane over tundra. Nothing is valuable to him except gold, uranium, oil and gas, etc. He goes in search of petroleum and gas and exploits the natural environment to gratify his rapaciousness. Land is used for mines, dams and other projects of the colonisers’ interest: “In the course of making over the newly found land they were joined by others engaged in conquering nature” (Barth xviii). The European colonisers have started wreaking havoc in the whole order of nature in order to mould it for their own profit. They have built a nation on new world to destroy the indigenous people and their natural environment. The indigenous people are often forcibly removed from their native

land and sometimes with the hypocritical policies of development: “This often happens when there are valuable resources on or under the land” (Henning 137). These policies have brought an end to the Native Americans’ hold on their homeland and deprived them of their basic rights to hunt and fish. On the one hand, these strategies prefer to convert public property into private; on the other hand, the fertile land is plundered for the precious resources like gold and oil etc. Euro-Americans misuse the land and its’ natural resources are made a product and their sale and purchase started. Because of their colonial outlook as the colonisers are too blind to perceive the importance of the earth that “embraced the soul of all who loved her” (Silko 736). They cannot realise that the “land was a living thing that had to be nursed ... the sun, moon and stars influenced both the human body and the earth body” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 143) and human and non-human life depend on it for their survival.

Being a coloniser, Guzman, in the guise of loving nature, destroys the natural world and gives it an artificial face. He does not know that tree like human beings cannot live without water and soil. He digs up the trees and moves them from one place to another “for terrible purpose” (Silko 117). The removal of trees from their native land by the coloniser severs the motherly relationship among the earth and its inhabitants. Land, water and trees are knitted together in such a way that lends them an existence marked by interdependence on each other; land nourishes trees as a mother treats her children. Guzman does not water the trees himself but he relies on the labour of the Native slaves to water them; he also employs the slaves to uproot cottonwoods. Drawing on the toil of his servants, he uproots the trees from the natural environment and transplants them around his house and mines. In cottonwood trees Yoeme had seen the dead bodies of the people of her clan but she could not recognise them as “they had all dried up” (Silko 118). In order to protect her tribal helpers from the colonisers, she took them with her.

Guzman, like Menardo has also a capitalistic approach; he has uprooted the cottonwood trees making use of the labour of “the slaves” and “carried them hundreds of miles” (Silko 116) away from their native land. The cottonwood trees are domesticated as they are planted in an artificial landscape. Guzman’s destruction of nature depicts different aspects of the European policy to annihilate the Native Americans along with their environment. First, the removal of the plants from their native place indicates the

Native Americans' displacement from their homeland to the restricted area of reservations. Guzman's ruthless act of tearing out the trees also depicts the colonisers' exploitation of the Native Americans and their environment. His spurious love of trees is a camouflage for the colonisers' action of stealing the Native Americans' homeland under the guise of offering them civilisation and enlightenment. Secondly, along with trees, the Native Americans and their sweet animals are also controlled by the colonisers: "All water went to the mules or to the saplings. The slaves were only allowed to press their lips to the wet rags around the tree roots" (Silko 116). As the cottonwood trees are deprived of the nourishment from natural water in their motherland, in the same way, the Native slaves are forced to get water from the roots of the trees for their survival. Most importantly, Guzman gives nothing to his slaves in return for their services. Likewise, the colonisers get gold and silver from the earth but in return pay nothing to it. In a much similar fashion, like the mother earth, Yoeme gave up "seven disappointing children" (Silko 118) to Guzman without being paid back. Euro-Americans came and killed the Natives and exploited their environment for their materialistic ends.

The European colonisers have painted a gory picture; they have been killing the Natives mercilessly. They work to steer their avaricious desire towards fruition by exploiting nature and having control over it. The devastation of nature at the hands of the colonisers and their control over it is tantamount to the subjugation of the indigenous people. The colonisers neither speak for nature nor for its inhabitants, but simply think how to get control over others and their resources. *Almanac of the Dead* makes it clear that Euro-Americans create violence under the guise of scientific development and call it progress. There is a strong "connection between human suffering and the degradation of the environment" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 17). In the wake of the possession of the Native Americans' land and exploitation of their environment subject them to the greater danger of fatal diseases.

4.6.3 Rift Created between the Native Americans and their Environment through Boarding School System

The European colonisers used the mother earth as "an inert commodity", and "unable to understand the language in which the earth responds to long term overexploitation-depletion, species extinction, pollution and famine" (Adamson,

American Indian Literature 144). The colonisers have created a division between the Native Americans and their environment. Federal government runs many institutes to restrain the Natives from the practice of their social and cultural values. Silko strongly criticises the boarding school system which has a historical background that goes back to 1879, when Henry Pratt propounded the idea of the “Carlisle Indian Industrial School” (Momaday *Three Plays* 124). It was the boarding school out of the reservation built in name of civilisation. In other words, “the imperial civilising mission and other authoritarian regimes and systems which, consciously or unconsciously, have abused humanity in humanity’s name” (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 22). In disguise of civilisation and development the colonisers’ mission was to keep the Native Americans away from their environment; even they were compelled to speak English, and thus their tribal identity was destroyed.

In *Almanac of the Dead*, Sterling is given education at a boarding school. As a result of this education system he “had never paid much attention to the old time ways because he had always thought the old beliefs are dying out” (Silko 702). He becomes oblivious to the importance of nature in human life. The European artificial environment creates a deep aversion in Sterling’s mind to the non-human beings, he is charged with the production of a Hollywood film in which outsiders desecrate the snake. The Hollywood crew treats nature in a ridiculous way which also influences Sterling who makes jokes at the stone snake and trivialises it. Later on, Sterling dislikes the boarding school that prevents him from learning his tribal culture. Sterling knows: “sending the children away to boarding school was the main problem” (Silko 87). The Native students need to know about their tribal culture and must acknowledge the fact that the boarding school system dissociates the whole generation of the Native Americans from their culture and language. Sterling re-examines his relation to his tribal culture and the physical environment. He begins to be reminded of his cultural past and he remembers the lesson taught by his aunt that the holy kachina (an ancestral spirit) come to human beings in the form of rain.

It “had been the policy of the federal government with Indians” (Silko 88) to convince them that their lifestyle is animalistic and backward. “Throughout western intellectual history, civilisation has consistently been constructed by or against the wild,

savage and animalistic” (Huggan and Tiffin 134). The government endeavours to integrate the Native Americans into European culture. The federal education system is used to rationalise their beliefs and family life etc. Rationalising their lifestyle means to disown their ecological citizenship. Euro-Americans try to imbue the Natives with the European colour by all possible means. They take the Native children to the boarding school to “teach them to do shameful things” (Momaday, *Three Plays* 116). The Natives are not willing to accept the artificial environment provided by Euro-Americans. This system of boarding education is a prison for them where they are kept under restrictions “away from their tribes and their ancestral land” (Silko 88). They are introduced to the new ways of life which prevent them from learning about their religion and culture. It is a type of laboratory in which their hearts are tested. The experiment of the boarding schools is done on the children and prisoners. They are taught English language and given European haircuts with the intent to Europeanise them. Euro-Americans’ objective is to convince them that in order to cope with the requirement of the new world they need to get European education.

In the European school system the Native children are also prohibited from wearing their traditional dress that depicts their culture. When the students are compelled to adopt the European culture and speak the English language they prefer to refer themselves in their indigenous languages through group names, Lakota (Sioux) and Dine (Navajo). Their group names depict that they are united by some common characteristics. They name their children after the names of the animals and the natural objects. The names of the days like ‘Chichan’, ‘a giant snake’ ‘owl’s day’, (Silko 572). The months of year are also named after the natural elements e.g. “the Moon of Falling Leaves” for November, “The Moon of Black Calf” (Neihardt 102) for September. The “children had to learn... the ways to pray or greet the deer, other animals, and plants” (Silko 87). But the boarding school educational system instructs them to forget their native language, traditional values and religious beliefs that are dying out. They are forced to speak English language and they are also given European names. Changing the names of the Native Americans serves to eradicate the marks of their tribal identity.

4.6.4 Devastating Implications of Nuclear Power and Uranium Mining

According to Roy, “nuclear war isn’t the kind of war in which ‘countries battle countries and [people] battle [people]’, but is rather an ecological war in which ‘our [eventual] foe will be the earth itself” (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin). The brutal business of mining for the production of nuclear weapons on the reservations severely affects humans and non-humans alike and proves destructive to them. As Sterling, moving from the mountains notices that uranium waste has destroyed the air, springs and rivers. Sterling has been driven out of his homeland; he mutely watches the acts of violence perpetrated by Europeans. His experience as a soldier makes him aware of the harmful effects of uranium mines that “may often be located in poorer communities, and toxic wastes may be shipped to low-income nations” (Massey 1). Sterling’s awareness of the destructive effects of uranium mining reminds him of the U.S. government’s nuclear testing near Laguna Pueblo. He comes to know “why the old people had cried when the U.S. government had opened the mine” (Silko 759). Walking across the mounds, Sterling has noticed that mines have devoured the entire atmosphere. The “miners invaded the surrounding hills in search of golden wealth” (Lewis 85). The European colonisers extracted maximum from the earth and they left nothing except pollution.

Sterling is surrounded by uranium mines and nuclear weapons that spread radioactive gases everywhere. He remembers “before the end of the war, the old folks had seen the first atomic explosion” (Silko 759). Nearly at the end of *Almanac of the Dead*, while moving towards Maahastryu, Sterling comes across the wasteland of uranium and notices: “Here was where life ended” (Silko 760). He feels uranium waste in the breeze and also in rivers and springs. In order to get rid of mental strain, he tries to forget the whole destruction. The colonising policies and destruction of environment reduced meadows and destroyed agricultural land that ultimately deprived the Native Americans of their sources of survival. A vast majority of their population had been wiped out by environmental pollution. The uranium waste spreads everywhere as “arthritis or cancer” (Boyd, *Rolling* 51) spreads in one’s body. This chemical pollution ignited the spread of different fatal diseases for both human and non-human beings. The Native Americans are forced to work in polluted areas and in silver mines. As a result: “Many indigenous peoples sickened or died of disease” (Adamson, *American Indian*

Literature 142). Nuclear mining has a catastrophic effect of industrialised development on the sanctity of the earth. The young generation of the Native Americans realises that “something terrible done to the earth” (Silko 34). Mines are dumped all around that destroy ecology in vast areas regardless of boundaries and limitations. The Native Americans realise that uranium mining is the policy of Euro-Americans to spoil nature that “poisoning our water with radioactive wastes, poisoning our air with military weapons’ wastes-those are acts of terrorism” (Silko 734). During the war, Euro-Americans need manpower and land, for this purpose, they offer attractive incentives to the Native Americans and in the armed forces they are given respect. In the same way their native land is used for the purpose of mining and warfare. Their lives, motherland, animals and plants are destroyed and water is polluted. The Natives “never trusted the water downstream from a white man” (Boyd, *Rolling* 49). In consequences of the colonisers’ devastating policies, the Natives never believe in anything that is coming from the colonisers.

4.6.5 ‘No Social Justice without Ecological Justice’

According to Huggan and Tiffin, “there is no social justice without ecological justice” (35). Environmental justice movement emerged in the early 1990s, out of the social issues. The ecocritics of environmental justice movement focus “upon texts that incorporate racial, ethnic, class, and sexual difference, and that emphasize intersections between social oppressions and environmental issues” (Adamson, et al 9). In *Almanac of the Dead*, Silko speaks about the adverse effects of the European colonisation on the Native Americans’ land and characterises the Euro-American era of dominance as a period of death and disturbance. The European colonisation results in: “the general problem of ecological denial or alienation through the lens of gender” (“Qui Parle” 109). The indigenous women have been oppressed since European arrival and the possibility of their survival depends on their capability not to feel. Beaufrey, the judge of the Federal District Court, harbour resentment against the women. He feels pleasure by physically injuring them during sex and gets excited to see “the sex videos on the club’s big screen TV” (Silko 657). A police chief also enjoys torturing the women sexually; he invests to arrange videotapes of tortured and sexually humiliated women. All the European

characters in the novel exploit the sexual relation and reduce it to the economic nexus. As nature is destroyed for materialistic gains and mere entertainment in the same way sexuality is used as a tool of manipulation and enjoyment.

As the earth and its natural creatures are considered inferior in the same way the indigenous women are considered just a commodity and used for sexual pleasure (Silko 116). For instance, Bingo and Sonny, sons of Leah Blue and Max, call their mother by her name; they do not think her their mother. Beaufrey's mother is afraid of abortion and Mosca's mother is considered incompetent and he is taken from her and pushed into foster's home. Even the civil institution of marriage has failed to provide the women with their rights. There are a few marriages in the novel but the partners have neither love nor respect for each other. Trust and compassion succumb to egocentric self-interest. Except Zeta all the other female characters are involved in sex with different partners but their relation is not based on love. The colonisers see the indigenous women and children contemptible earth-crawlers and vile (Silko 393). This malice against the women is figurative as well as literal; almost all the indigenous female characters in the novel are the victim of the European colonisers' cruelty; metaphorically the colonisers' contempt for women also reflects their hatred for the mother earth. The earth is referred as a mother and the word rape is applied to the earth and women alike. There is a connection between the sexual abuse of women and the destruction of the earth. Silko "links those who commit murder and sexual violence to those who do violence to the earth" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 158). The colonisers misogynous attitude also results in their separation from the earth. Serlo owns a vast area of land but he is not morally or emotionally connected to it because he is unable to keep the most basic relationship with women including his mother.

In the world tainted by the inequitable distribution of power: "Minority and low income populations are subject to environmental risks" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 52). There is the need for a reordered world in which all human and non-human beings are given their rights. The colonisers' apathy towards the Native Americans and their environment reveals that they use death as a tool of entertainment and manipulation. As the European aristocratic, Beaufrey feels pleasure in others' sufferings. He thinks only about himself; other peoples have no importance for him:

“Even as a child, Beaufrey had realized he was different from other children. He had always loved himself, only himself” (Silko 533). He keeps no sympathy for others therefore, he likes bloodshed and crimes pictures of blood and dead faces. He derives pleasure from blood and violence. He enjoys manipulating others as he tortures his favourite artist, David who is humble and simple and can be easily shattered and manipulated. Beaufrey presents Euro-Americans’ policies to get benefit from others’ weakness or simplicity. In this wasteland of cruelty and violence each European character is callous and unscrupulous. The brutality and unrestrained greed of these characters has manipulated the weak human and non-human beings. Violence, savagery, rap and self-absorption are the characteristics of Beaufrey’s theory. He considers himself sitting on the highest position and believes that it is his birth right to own everything. Beaufrey “realized there had always been a connection between human cannibals and the aristocracy” (Silko 535). Other than Euro-Americans have no importance for him he attempts to destroy others. The European aristocracy is inclined to cruelty and injustice; through violence, the European colonisers subjugate the Native Americans and their environment.

Beaufrey and his partner, Serlo consider themselves “entirely different beings, on far higher plane inconceivable to commoners” (Silko 535). They believe that everything is possible for them; they have an ability and power to control others. They do not abide by the socio-cultural laws. Serlo considers himself superior and believes that his genes show “the importance of lineage” (Silko 541). He believes that he belongs to the highest lineage that will never lose its wealth as David presents him as “pale, aristocratic, and passionless” (Silko 554). He believes that he is pure blooded and does not allow inferior blood to touch him. His behaviour is the representation of European policy; he elevates the significance of his aristocratic blood and also fears the time when the world might be “overrun with... natives” (Silko 545). Therefore, he calmly plans the Native Americans’ mass annihilation. He wants to control the natural resources of the earth by creating an alternate earth module. Serlo and his followers do not pay attentions to the common people who are afflicted by the contaminated environment. As Adamson says: “If we are white collar and middle class, working in some air-conditioned office, buying our groceries in a supermarket, we often have no sense of where our food, homes, heat, and

power come from” (*American Indian Literature* 87). Serlo does not take care of the poor; he has poisoned the earth’s clean water and air to an epic proportion. His destruction of nature and desire to escape from the polluted environment is the colonisers’ policy to extract the natural resources from the land and to leave it as a prison for its poor inhabitants. According to the Eurocentric point of view, one’s status is based on materialistic affluence that how much one is capable to get from the earth that is commodified for consumption.

Serlo is afraid that the developing population and scientific weapons will pollute the mother earth. Instead of solving environmental problems, he creates alternative modules in space. “The alternative earth modules had been designed to be self-sufficient, closed system, capable of remaining cut from the earth for years if necessary” (Silko 542-43). Scientific advances increase human sufferings by exploiting nature. Therefore, he dreams about an ideal world which would be free from pollution; but he ignores how his action in creation of the earth unit destroys nature. The research institute that launches Serlo’s earth unit also depicts how the ideology of displacement, removal and poisoning of nature and human beings is rooted in the Euro-Americans’ philosophy. Serlo is interested in the “rapture of the wide open spaces” (Silko 545). His disgust for weak people is based on his repulsion for nature. He has exploited the natural environment of the poor Native Americans and created an artificial environment for himself where he lives in the company of the members of the elite class. He has imprisoned the animals and grows plants in a glass enclosure. In the same way, Serlo and his followers escape from the contaminated environment inhabited by the poor. Their inhuman activities raise a question, “is environmental protection a priority only for the wealthy and an irrelevant...for the poor?” (Massey 1) They ignore the sufferings and poverty of the Native Americans and willfully regard the devastating consequences of the colonisers’ actions and their adverse impact on the natural environment. In pursuit of their own interests, Serlo and his followers conduct inhuman experiments on the earth as well as human and non-human species. By presenting the earth module of Serlo, Silko disdains Euro-Americans’ hierarchical ideals and their dominion over nature. Euro-Americans’ scientific development provides comforts to only a few people and exploits the rest of the population. Serlo’s earth unit reflects the colonisers’ ideology and goes against the

principles of the environmental justice movement that demands every part of the earth should be taken care of and not just the parks or conservation places: “What counts as a place can be as small as a corner of your kitchen or as big as the planet, now that we have the capacity to image earth holistically and modernization has shrunk the planet to the point that it is starting to seem possible to think of “global culture” or “global citizenship” (Buell Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 67-68). The environmental justice movement encourages people to think holistically not individually.

The colonisers destroy the natural resources as well as abducting the Native children. Silko calls each of them “vampire capitalists” (444). Trigg, the dealer of human organs, misuses the bodies of the homeless Native Americans. Due to abject poverty, the Native Americans sell their bodies. Trigg believes: “They were human debris” (Silko 444). On the one hand, Trigg exploits the Native Americans callously but on the other hand, he claims that he favours them. The characters of Leah Blue and Menardo are alienated from the earth and its inhabitants, human and non-human beings. Leah has a concept of European land developer as she plans to build “city of twenty-first century, Venice Arizona” (Silko 374) in the desert of Tucson surrounded by artificial water streams and transplanted trees. By destroying the natural resources, she constructs the artificial water streams and fountains. Leah’s planning to privatise nature is to destroy the real natural resources. Her disgust for ecology is clear as she clearly declares that she wants “in the real estate business to make profits, not to save wildlife or save the desert” (Silko 375). Leah believes that in her imaginary city the delicate ecosystem with water lilies, giant cypress trees and cattails will sooth the spectators’ eyes. She has colonisers’ approach to homogenise the landscape through the exploitation of nature. She exploits nature against the treaties made to save the natural resources of the indigenous people. She disrupts the entire ecosystem by designing artificial fountains, waterways and thousands of gallons of water are derived from deep well. Through the dams, the flow of water is controlled; consequently, it endangers human as well as animals’ life. Leah looks at the aesthetic beauty of the landscape; her mode of considering nature a private property is a real contempt for nature. She thinks: “Science will solve the water problem of the west” (Silko 374). Her belief in scientific development depicts arrogance of the colonisers.

The Native Americans, being the advocates of environmental justice, have tried to protect their environment that is a source for their survival. They derive their livelihood from nature but the unequal distribution of the natural resources exploits their living: “The conditions under which the poor and marginalized live and work in toxically contaminated regions are both socially and environmentally unjust” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 69). On account of their class and racial differences, the Native Americans are compelled to live in highly polluted areas, where they suffer from many physical as well as social problems. When Sterling comes back to his tribe after his long absence, he finds that his people live in a harmful, polluted environment and drink polluted water; consequently, they suffer from fatal diseases. Through the stories of Sterling and Serlo, Silko exposes the root of environmental injustice. By recounting such stories, Silko vociferously makes the point that it is necessary to oppose social and environmental injustice for the survival of indigenous people. She identifies the infectious core of the Euro-American materialistic approach that inflicted five hundred years of oppression on the Native Americans and separated them from their motherland. The European colonisers dug the earth, hunted and killed the animals for their material gain. A large number of race horses were used for pleasure and avaricious purpose: “The more horses that got hurt or just lay down and died the more money people made” (Silko 197). Euro-Americans' idea of development and success is based on the accumulation of wealth; “this financial apparatus merely increased the gap between rich and poor” (Hugg and Tiffin 29). For their selfish purposes, the colonisers manipulate the minorities, exploit the natural environment and harm animal life.

Environmental justice upholds the sanctity of the earth and the interdependence of human and non-human creatures. It affirms that all species have the fundamental right to use the natural resources and it opposes the exploitation of nature. All these characteristics are interwoven in *Almanac of the Dead*. The novel depicts a challenge to militarism and disapproves of environmental injustice in which both humans and non-humans suffer due to “the danger from within government and police owned by the fat cats” (Silko 393). The Native Americans' beliefs about nature are strongly associated with the: “Issues of environmental welfare and equity” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 112). For Silko, to defend nature means to protect its

inhabitants. In the same way, the manipulation of nature is another level of the exploitation of the Native Americans. In order to defend nature “The Nature Lovers Committee was composed of seven board members; six were women” (Silko 377). These “eco-defenders” (Silko 376) recognise their true place in their surrounding physical environment and lend it the central importance. On the contrary, Euro-Americans are determined to control nature; they acquire millions of acres of the Natives’ land and held a monopoly on it by means of technology, cut trees and control the movement of salmon. They support industrialisation that rapidly devastated the ecological environment. The European industrial technologies thoroughly disrupt the Native Americans’ ecology as well as economy.

4.7 Critique of the Euro-Americans’ Treatment of the Native Americans and their Environment in *Ceremony*

Silko criticises the European colonisers as they are blind to the Native Americans’ belief in and association with nature. The “dominant European discourses have expressed that dominance by constructing others – both people and animals – as animal both philosophically and representationally” (Huggan and Tiffin 135). Through promotion of such a false image the colonisers have destroyed the Native Americans and their natural environment. Through their hegemonic discourse Euro-Americans negate the Native Americans’ beliefs that they are the children of nature and their “mother, the earth is crying for [them]. Come home, children, come home” (Silko 163). On the one hand, they endeavour to have to control over and extract most from the natural resources that are the source of survival for the Native Americans. On the other hand, the Natives are stereotyped as primitive and underdeveloped nation, who are “part of a wild, untamed nature” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 132). The European colonisers have subjugated the Native Americans and exploited their natural resources in the name of development. The colonisers’ mission of development is linked to “Chatterjee’s satirical view of the development process” as quoted by Huggan and Tiffin: “Place all your prayers at the feet of the sarkar, the omnipotent and supremely enlightened state, and they will be duly passed on to the body of experts who are planning for the overall progress of

the country. If your requests are consistent with the requirements of progress, they will be granted” (45). This ‘myth of development’ results in destruction, poverty, engendering despair and hostility. *Ceremony* depicts the history of European destruction and exploitation of the Native Americans’ environment. The European war (World War II) has similarly destructive effects on indigenous peoples that is the main concern of the novel.

4.7.1 Exploitation of the Natural Environment in Disguise of Development

The European colonising approach endows them with the right to exploit the natural environment in “a ‘false’ face in which development supplies an alibi for the protection of strategic political and economic interests” (Huggan and Tiffin 35-36). By exposing the colonisers’ ulterior motives behind the claim of development, Silko depicts the destructive effects of the colonisers’ exploitative policies on the Native Americans and their physical environment. Tayo's grandmother remembers a time before Europeans’ arrival “when the people shared a single clan name” (Silko 62). Along with colonisation, the consciousness of unity is going to vanish, the world has entangled with the European tradition “all of creation suddenly had two names: an Indian name and a white name” (Silko 62). The European policy of colonisation in guise of development has destructively affected the Native Americans’ consciousness and shattered their age-old relationship with the natural environment. The colonisers have crushed the single clan name and teach the lesson to “compete, combat and die [contrariwise, the Natives] cooperate, cultivate and live” (Boyd, *Mad* 151) in harmony with nature. Euro-Americans believe in competition and give the lesson of individuality “because Jesus Christ would save only the individual soul” (Silko 63). The Native Americans cooperate with all life on the mother earth, cultivate plants and stand for the protection of all creatures. They believe that the earth is the mother of humans and non-humans, it nourishes all the living beings but Christianity does not give lesson of mutuality and communal life: “Jesus Christ is not like mother who loved and cared for them as her children, as her family” (Silko 63). The horrible consequence of the “colonialist construction of Western civilisation” (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 208) is the vast exploitation of human and non-human life. The nuclear weapons, gunpowder and mining result in pollution and

destruction. The earth which provides the Native Americans with sustenance is usurped. Instead of development that is “the expansion of human capability to lead more worthwhile and more free lives” (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 29), the Native Americans are deprived of a substantial source on which their existence depended.

According to the Native Americans no one can own the land rather it is the land that owns its inhabitants. As the medicine man, Betonie says that the colonisers are fool who consider the earth is theirs: “The deeds and papers don't mean anything. It is the people who belong to the mountain” (Silko 128). Euro-Americans’ agreements have no value to the Native Americans; these papers are nothing to them. The colonisers’ policies are to conquer the non-rational nature in order to ensure the superiority of man over nature. Being intoxicated by this unwarranted notion, they believe that it is their duty to civilise others. In the name of civilisation the Native Americans’ “lives and livelihoods have been placed at risk and [their] ancestral homelands have been ravaged by colonial powers” (Huggan and Tiffin 57). The colonisers justify the possession of tribal land; they claim that because of their cultural and social superiority they have the right to usurp the Native Americans’ land and harm their relationship with nature. The colonisers continue to pursue their unjust policies to maintain their control over much of the Native Americans’ land. “Theirs was a nation built on stolen land” (Silko 191). The Native Americans have lost their fertile land and hunting places and they have become confined to the life on the reservations that are unwanted polluted places of little agricultural values where they face many hardships. Their native land is seized by the European colonisers and sold to loggers for profit and animals are killed mercilessly for pleasure: “The loggers shot the bears and mountain lions for sport” (Silko 186). The loggers have come to cut a large number of trees and kill the bears and mountain lions for sport.

The enduring legacy of the European colonisation has not only deprived the Natives of their land and environment but it has also made them powerless socially and economically. Their beliefs and socio-cultural values stand in contrast to the European worldview. Euro-Americans fear nature and destroy what they fear:

They fear

They fear the world.

They destroy what they fear.

They fear themselves. (Silko 125)

Their estrangement from nature leads to their fear and enmity towards the Native Americans as well. In order to colonise the American continent the colonisers attempt to break the Native Americans' strong bond of relationship with their mother earth and animalistic life. For this purpose, "human individuals and cultures at various times have been and are treated 'like animals' by dominant groups, and both human genocide and human slavery have been, and in some cases continue to be, predicated on the categorisation of other peoples as animals" (Huggan and Tiffin 135). In the name of development the colonisers have exploited the Native Americans' communal relationship with non-human world and destroyed the natural world at large extent.

They will carry objects

Which can shoot death

Faster than the eye can see

They will kill the things they fear

all the animals

the people will starve. (Silko 125-126)

The Native Americans' deep relationship with nature that strengthens their tribal values is a great hurdle in the way of "European justification for invasion and colonisation" (Huggan and Tiffin 5). The colonisers use different tactics and tools to remove this hurdle. In order to rationalise their hegemony and exploitation, the colonisers have misrepresented the Native Americans as uncivilised, wild, indolent and regressive through their canonical literature. "The problem was the books were written by white people" (Silko 69). Resultantly the Natives' voice has always been oppressed and misrepresented. The oppression of nature means the subjugation of the Native Americans.

Silko narrates this "unwanted evidence of the inhumanity done to humanity" (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 208) in order to revive the Native Americans' misrepresented or suppressed social and cultural values. Betonie shares the history of the Native Americans' tradition and the European policies of colonisation and advises Tayo to recall the past for his mental satisfaction. As in veterans' hospital Tayo was invisible like smoke. In such a dense smoke, he is unable to recollect his past. The doctor asked him,

“If he had ever been visible,” (Silko 14) Tayo feels sad for not being able to recall his tribal identity. Being alienated from his tribal culture, everything appears to him to be dying. Consequently, he suffers physically as well as mentally. He is vulnerable to the evil forces of the colonisers who have walled off the natural resources “only for the rich and privileged” (Adamson and Ruffin 158) and exercised a harmful influence on the Native Americans’ relationship with nature and with each other. Betonie refers to Euro-Americans as “destroyers” (Silko 128) who ruin the ecology by making people forget their relationship with the planet and each other. He warns Tayo about the policies of the colonisers; Tayo also believes that the European colonisation causes the obliteration of his tribal culture and religious beliefs. Tayo comes to know that the colonisers’ purpose of progress is no more than “environmental degradation and the violation of human freedom” (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 29). When the colonisers started buying land, logging, mining, killing bears and mountain lions for sport, not for need, there would be “droughts and harder days to come” (Silko 76). The destruction of animal life is to enfeeble the Native Americans who live in perfect harmony with nature; their relationship with each other also flourishes in the physical environment. By devastating nature the colonisers “destroy the feeling, people have for each other” (Silko 229). All the ills afflicting the lives of the Natives are the result of the Euro-Americans’ ill-treatment of the natural environment. Exploitation of the Native Americans by capturing their environment is a dominant subject of the novel.

4.7.2 Critique of the World War II from the Perspective of Ecology

During the World War II such horrible bombs and nuclear power are used “that devoured the people in cities twelve thousands miles away” (Silko 228). The violent and destructive nature of Euro-Americans is directly linked with the World War II that wreaks havoc in the natural environment inhabited by the native tribes. Euro-Americans have misused the Native Americans’ natural assets and their lives during the war that result in “climate change and perpetuate structural discrimination against indigenous or ethnic minority groups” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 159). When the Native Americans are fighting in the war, they are given respect; out of the uniform, they are considered second-class citizens, ignored by the same people. When Tayo and Rocky

walk down the street in army uniform the European woman says: “God bless you, God bless you,’ but it was the uniform, not them, she blessed” (Silko 38). Actually, the Natives have never been accepted as human beings, but only soldiers. When they are in the uniform the European ladies smile at them, but their appreciation is not genuine. Before and after the war the European women do not even want to talk to them. But during the war the European women praise them and fight over them. The end of the war also heralds the end of social acceptance given to the Native Americans. Tayo, being a war veteran, is shocked at the annihilation of nature; the war results in drought, death and sterility. The war proved injurious to both human beings and the earth itself. Tayo is confused and psychologically shattered to notice the polluted environment of the reservation.

4.7.2.1 Nuclear Holocaust

In the opening chapters of *Writing for an Endangered World* (2001), Lawrence Buell represents the world drenched with chemical poison a “betrayed Edens” (37). Buell appeals for environmental welfare including the benefit of human and non-human life. Euro-American model of division and dominion culminated in the atomic bombing of the World War II. The pollution problems became worse during the war, “there was no end to it; it knew no boundaries” (Silko 228). Uranium was dumped in the reservation areas for the purpose of building weapons during the war. According to Louis Owens; “Nearly 100 percent of all uranium used in the production of nuclear weapons by the U.S. Government is extracted from Indian land” (230). The uranium mines are industrialised development against the sanctity of the earth. Several mining companies have dug up the fertile land for uranium mines. Uranium mining spreads radioactive dust and deadly gases and destroys the “Mother Earth, the air, the water and all living beings” (Adamson and Ruffin 204) regardless of boundaries and limitations. Consequently, the indigenous population suffers almost to the extent of extinction. The horrible lethal bomb blast and the terrible uranium mining ruin nature. Tayo notices while walking in the hills that the nuclear weapons have destroyed the natural environment everywhere. Green peace is destroyed through the war and violent activities, different chemicals used in the war caused environmental problems.

On one hand, these deadly acts kill human beings; on the other hand, they cause environmental pollution that is harmful to both human and non-human life. The atomic bomb causes instability both in human and non-human life and leaves “the people more and more vulnerable” (Silko 231). These environmental problems increasingly jeopardise the earth’s atmosphere as they cause the depletion of ozone layer and increase the frequency of acid rain. The violent and destructive actions of Euro-Americans become a causal factor of the war that ravages the natural environment of the Native tribes. The Natives experience the horrors of war; they participate in it and are victimised by its dreadful consequences. The war has destroyed nature; all around nuclear waste pollutes water and land. Nuclear power unbalances the whole natural order “that is arguably the greatest threat to life on earth” (Adamson and Ruffin 207).

During his ceremonial healing, Tayo realises the power inequality between the European and Native Americans and restores his relationship with nature. Tayo recognises “the destroyers... working for drought to sear the land, to kill the livestock, to stunt the corn plants and squash in the gardens” (Silko 231). The uranium mines on the reservation are a clear proof of the threat that the European agents of destruction will completely obliterate the Native Americans’ life through nuclear annihilation. This threat of nuclear apocalypse restructures the Natives into a new tribe that is united by a shared danger. The nuclear power exploits not only the “Trinity Site, where they exploded the first atomic bomb” (Silko 228). It causes diseases, starvation and reduces the indigenous population substantially. Euro-Americans exploit nature without realising that it is correlated with human life and its each element is a part of a whole functioning system. Along with human beings the animals and plants are also equally harmed. Consequently, the tribal people “would lose their hope and finally themselves in drinking” (Silko 231). The war destroyed their natural resources; consequently, farming and livestock went down.

“Nuclear bombs become ‘malignant indications of a civilisation turning upon itself’ (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 48). Nuclear power leaves catastrophic effects; all the living beings have been victimised by nuclear explosions, the destructive influence of which seems to engulf the whole world. It is the effect of the war that Tayo suffers from mental trauma and cannot explain his war experience to Ku’oosh because “it was all too

alien to comprehend, the mortars and big guns; and even if he could have taken the old man to see the target areas, even if he could have led him through the fallen jungle trees and muddy crates of torn earth to show him the dead, the old man would not have believed anything so monstrous” (Silko 33). The desperate response of Tayo shows that the destruction of the surrounding environment has terribly affected his mind. Silko depicts the Natives’ Laguna region that is the site of uranium mines and warns her people against its dangers. Euro-Americans’ war policies misguide the indigenous population and separate them from their native land and culture.

3.7.2.2 Paranoia and Seasonal Affective Disorder of the World War II

The war causes the loss of nature and persistently undermines the tribal people. Obliteration of nature is “an immense loss to Native families and cultures” (Adamson and Ruffin 109). Killing of the native population, their livestock and the destruction of their crops put an end to the Native Americans’ peaceful life. During the war, Tayo is isolated from his home and the natural environment; consequently, he is unable to get mental peace. Tayo returns to the reservation in a state of shell shock and confusion. “His head was level with the ground he would be lost in smoke again, in the fog again” (Silko 15). He comes back from the war with very distressing experience; he is emotionally stricken, unable to express his feelings and almost destroyed by the War. The experience of war makes him schizophrenic as he suffers from posttraumatic shock and returns from the war as a broken man. Tayo suffers from the dual trauma; firstly, he suffers psychologically because of his severance from the natural environment during the war and secondly, on his return from the war his sufferings increase to notice the “large-scale environmental problems” (Adamson and Ruffin 207). He suffers from mental instability and turns to a redeeming ceremony for his salvation.

At the beginning, Tayo is treated by a European doctor in Los Angeles Veterans' Administration Hospital where he feels himself invisible and dead. In the hospital his tongue is found “dry and dead, the carcass of a tiny rodent” (Silko 14). Under the scientific treatment, Tayo feels his stay in the hospital as an image of whiteness, even he is afraid of the white fog. Tayo is abstained the free natural environment, consequently his growth is blocked. The doctors cannot find the reason for his illness and their

treatment intensifies his sickness. The doctors advise him to think of himself and not of others. They give him lesson of “competition...and extinction of life forms” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 100). They cut him off from communal life. The process of healing shows the conflict between the European and Native Americans’ worldviews. The alien doctors and medicine have increased his trouble. Under the European treatment, it is not possible for him to enjoy the natural scenery of the foggy mountains. “He cries all the time. Sometime he vomits when he cries” (Silko 14). The doctors use alien medicine for Tayo’s treatment; foreign medicine and food compounding increase his ailment, and thus Tayo has lost his mental peace and become incapacitated. “Tayo suffers posttraumatic stress disorder as a consequence of the death of his cousin and the horrors of war and finds consolation in drinking” (Temple and Velie 8). On the other hand, European environment isolates him from natural life and the European doctors and medicines prove to be ghost doctors and disgusting medicines.

Tayo’s grandmother tells him about the horrible and destructive bomb blast: “I never thought I would ever see anything so bright again... Biggest explosion that ever happened” (Silko 227-28). Tayo’s experience of the war reaches its culmination point by witnessing the horrendous effects of chemical bombs; he becomes aware of the extremely destructive spirit shaping the European policy of dominion and division. During the war, Tayo, like Euro-Americans “grow away from the plants and animals” (Silko 130). Resultantly, he does not regard nature, which ultimately leads him to hate himself. Like Euro-Americans, he believes that animals are not “worth anything anyway” (Silko 23). He condemns flies; he considers them to be a bad thing and “slapped at the insects mechanically” (Silko 7). Tayo’s treatment of the flies is similar to the hurtful instinct which often governs the acts of European men. He kills the flies mercilessly that crawl over Rocky’s dead body: “He had smashed them between his hands” (Silko 94). The flies are now detestable creatures to him. Tayo’s hatred of animals leads him to even regard himself as a detestable being and he desires to die: “He didn’t care anymore if he died” (Silko 36). He considers himself a lifeless object, invisible and feels as if all humans and non-humans are “dead and everything is dying” (Silko 14). The war has destroyed everything, Tayo sees no life anywhere. In the destructive environment, Tayo feels he dies “the way smoke dies, drifting away in currents of air” (Silko 15). The air smells like

diesel and oil to him; he is unable to breathe in the clean air. Everything appears lifeless to him.

Tayo is confused and nearly mad because of the horrifying experience of the war. “Haunted by the war’s violence” (Temple and Velie 321) He vomits and desires to die. He is unable to forget the fearful and harsh memories of the war. He is completely lost and “had to keep moving so that the sinews connect behind his eyes did not slip loose and spin his eyes to the interior of his skull” (Silko 8). Such bad memories of the warfare debilitate his body and prevent it from functioning properly. He gradually recovers from his illness and tries to recall what his uncle, Josiah told him about the importance of humans’ relationship with nature. Josiah’s lesson is a source of relaxation for him which brings Tayo out of depression and disappointment. Later on, at home, Tayo feels himself “like a fence post or tree” (Silko 23) when he is waiting for a mule to ride on. On the mule, he wishes to enjoy nature in the company of Josiah.

4.8 Silko’s Response to the Euro-Americans’ Treatment of the Native Americans and their Environment in *Almanac of the Dead*

In response to the European colonisers’ devastating activities and hegemony the Native Americans’ “spirits are outraged. They demand justice! ... Sixty million dead souls howl for justice in the Americas!” (Silko 723). The Native Americans come together to defend their homeland and move forward instinctively following twin brothers; Tacho and El Feo who cautions the European colonisers about “the earth’s outrage if human continued to blast open their mother” (Silko, *Almanac* 618). Tacho and El Feo; “The Nature Lovers” (Silko 377) march hundreds of miles to reclaim the purity of the mother earth and attempt to restore its sanctity. The protesters; Clinton, Weasel Trial, and Roy fight against the destroyers to protect nature. The twin sisters and their grandmother also play a significant role to resist the calamitous activities of the colonisers; even they guide the male figures in their struggle against the colonisers. The colonisers are presented “the greedy destroyers” (Silko 156) of human and non-human life. “The roots of poverty, injustice, and environmental degradation lie at the heart of western culture’s favorite story about itself” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 21). There is no justice in the Euro-American competitive approach; in such a destructive

environment the Native activists have formed alliances with the environmentalist groups which criticise unbridled exploitation of the natural life and laid stress on the allocation of equal resources to all the species belonging to the earth. The protestors encourage their people to stand and fight for environmental justice and make the colonisers feel “shame of environmental injustice” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 133). Through the resistance response to the colonisers’ exploitation and mortification of the non-human life the tribal people are made aware of the significance of the non-human beings in their lives with reference to their ancestors who had been leading a life close to nature since long.

4.8.1 Diachronic Resistance of the Native Americans against the Euro-Americans’ Ecological Imperialism

Despite sufferings and warfare, Maya “continued to record their histories and to compile their almanac” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 138). History is not represented simply as a background but as a point of contest between two cultures; it paints the picture of both the colonial capitalist system and the Natives’ resistance to it. *Almanac of the Dead* gives a portrayal of the period of “hundreds of years earlier... when the blood worshipers of Europe” (Silko 570) colonised the American continent. Presentation of such a violent history of the European colonisation shows that the Native Americans would have been exploited to the point of extinction if they had failed to resist the colonisers. *Almanac* reveals not the history of years but of centuries. The depiction of the Native Americans’ lifelong reciprocal relationship with nature knits together past, present and future. “But western exploitation, both past and present, has resulted in the murder [and] displacement” (Huggan and Tiffin 136-37). Many characters in the novel embrace the history. Some of them like Bartolomeo, compare their past with the history of others. In the novel, some other characters such as Tacho, Barefoot Hopi, Clinton, Lecha and Angelita narrate their own histories.

The novel depicts five hundred years long history of oppression, struggle and resistance “by summoning spirit being through recitations of the stories that were also indictments of the greedy destroyers of the land” (Silko 156). The Native Americans express their grief and lend voice to it through their “stories of suffering, injuries, and death” (Silko 520). The present generation of the Native Americans realises the

sufferings of their ancestors that stimulate them to fight for justice and to raise voice against the devastating approach of the colonisers: “The most complete history was the most powerful force” (Silko 316). The description of the rich history of the Native Americans’ intimate relationship with nature and Euro-Americans’ annihilation of nature, possession of the Native Americans’ land and misrepresentation of their socio-cultural values are the driving force for bringing about a revolution. Stealing the Natives’ homeland and its natural resources is equivalent to robbing them of their history: “Each location, each place, was living organism with time running inside it like blood” (Silko 629). Euro-Americans do not want the Native Americans “to know their history, if the people knew their history, they would realize they must rise up” (Silko 431). To keep the Native Americans ignorant of their history means to ensure their subordination. The Native Americans recall the spirits of their ancestors and all the natural elements to rise up from their position of subordination. The spirits of the sky, rivers, mountains and “all the spirits of beloved ancestors” (Silko 425) assemble to support and guide the living generation of the Native Americans. The spirits of ancestors are sensed in nature; these spirits encourage the Natives to rise up from suppression and give life force to their existing generations. These spirits are interconnected with the living communities and the earth itself. Silko calls this chain of relationship the 500-year war of the Native Americans against the devastation of nature (290).

Wilson Weasel Trial, the tribal leader evokes the spirit of his ancestors through poetry. He believes, “Poetry would speak to the spirits” and “set the people free” (Silko 713). Weasel Trial calls forth the ancestors’ spirits, particularly who danced the Ghost Dance. The Ghost Dance provides a spiritual connection with the earth and protects the Native Americans’ religious beliefs and traditional values. According to Weasel Trial, the importance of the Ghost Dance has been ignored or misunderstood: “...the people became disillusioned when the ghost shirts did not stop the bullets and the Europeans did not vanish overnight” (Silko 722). It is believed that the Ghost Dance has no strength because it fails to drive Europeans away or fails to stop their encroachment on the Native Americans’ land. In fact, the Ghost Dance has great importance as it “belonged to the realm of the spirits” (Silko 722) and creates interlink between the Natives’ living communities and their ancestors. The Native Americans dance to honour the memory of

their beloved ones who resisted the “invaders and destroyers of the Mother Earth!” (Silko 722). The spirits are furious “to all those humans too weak or too lazy to fight to protect Mother Earth” (Silko 723). Those who cannot protect their native land from destruction are too weak and bad. The spiritual power of the ancestors warns the weak people that they will kill them for their being unable to resist the invaders who have destroyed animals and forests. The spirits continually chastise the Native Americans for being suppressed by the European colonisers and encourage them to resist the colonisers: “The spirits say die fighting the invaders” (Silko 723). The ancestors’ spirits are the sign of hope for the Native Americans to stand against violence of the colonisers. According to Weasel Trial the population of America was “more than seventy million when the Europeans arrived” (Silko 723), but due to environmental degradation and pollution thousands of the indigenous people died, “one hundred years later only ten million people had survived” (Silko 723). Millions of dead souls cried against “the sitting of waste dumps and polluting industries that discriminate against poor and otherwise disempowered communities” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 141). Euro-Americans fail to understand the significance of spiritualism. As Yoeme says that the Europeans are “against the spirits, the white man is impotent” (Silko 581). Euro-Americans show no willingness to listen anything about the spirit; their beliefs are based on arguments and reasoning.

Relying on the historical depiction, Silko connects the Native Americans with the spirits of their ancestors. Because of the European invasion “people everywhere had forgotten the spirits” (Silko 424). Through restoration of the forgotten knowledge the indigenous people will be able to realise the natural disaster around them. As a consequence of such realisation they will raise voice for environmental justice, they “never rested would never stop until justice had been done” (Silko 424). Five hundred years of ruination and oppression let them rise against injustice and exploitation. They harbour a deep resentment against Euro-Americans for their ignorance of the Natives’ beliefs and rich history. “The history of the Americas made revolution against the European domination inevitable” (Silko 290). A revolution happens only by resisting the European domination through the revival of the Native Americans’ past. As Angelita’s husband, El Feo says that the revolutionaries listen to “the voices out of the past, the . . .

voices of the ancestors” (Silko 513). Owing to their separation from their past “what had remained of what was Indian was in appearance only” (Silko 88) The indigenous people forget the spiritual values of their tribal culture as they have lost contact with the natural world of their ancestors. Their history has been distorted and their worldview has been misrepresented by Euro-Americans. The revolutionaries challenge the version of history that is presented by the European colonisers and save the true record of the history that keeps alive the Native American tradition and serves to elevate their present generation. They urge their people to organise and recount the history of their ancestors.

The historical representation indicates that some people resisted the colonisers and others surrendered themselves: “strong cases were made for their dying together” (Silko 246) in fight against the colonisers. The protestants discard Euro-Americans for their policy of brushing aside the indigenous history and endeavour to restore their oppressed past through their tribal stories. Bartolomeo is blamed for “disdain for history before the Cuban revolution” (Silko 315) and is punished to death for neglecting the rich history. Bartolomeo has the colonisers’ approach, he considers the Native Americans second-class citizens who have no historical background. In reality, the Natives have their own history; they remember their ancestors and get mental strength from the recollection of the old almanac. Contrariwise, Euro-Americans are depicted by Silko as intruders on the continent who have no history and tradition in America: “Europeans did not listen to the souls of their dead. That was the root of all trouble for Europeans” (Silko 604). They never remember the problems and achievements of their ancestors. Euro-Americans are jealous of “Native American slave workers who had risen up successfully against colonial masters without the leadership of a white man” (Silko 527). Angelita explores the Native Americans’ resistance against Europeans from 1500s to 1600s (Silko 15). Silko challenges the domination of the colonisers by rendering an account of the Native Americans’ socio-cultural history.

4.8.2 Reaction against the Subjugation of the Native Americans and their Environment

According to Buell, human beings are accountable for their relation with other beings as it is “an unlimited responsibility that exceeds and precedes my freedom” (“Special Topic” 9). The predominant feature of human beings is their obligation to other

creatures regardless of class, gender or racial differences. As Spivak writes in *Death of a Discipline* (2003): “To be human is to be intended toward the other” (73). The earth is like a community where all the living creatures exist as family members regardless of racial or cultural boundaries. Humans have no right to control other beings or ravage the natural environment. *Almanac of the Dead* exposes social injustice that creates a gulf between human and non-human worlds and denounces the exploitative policies that maintain it. In response to the Euro-Americans’ exploitative worldview, Calabazas gives lecture on their apathy towards nature. It is a “sarcastic lecture on blindness” (Silko 201). Calabazas exposes the destructive policies of the European colonisers towards the natural environment. He criticises the European civilisation because of its detrimental effects on the Native Americans; he also endorses the significance of his tribal beliefs and cultural values. Calabazas says that the exploitative material of Euro-Americans will not succeed them in their destructive mission. The European world will not last, “It would be swept away with a gust of wind” (Silko 235). For Silko, the European world of insatiable materialism cannot sustain its growth and through its exploitative and devastating policies it will soon destroy itself. The destroyers are excited by destruction, suffering and death.

The Native American activists challenge the European policy to appropriate the Native Americans and their homeland for colonial purposes. As Barefoot Hopi denounces Euro-Americans’ inhuman attitude towards nature, he says that the destroyers do not know about the consequences of their destructive activities (Silko 532). The earth burns from the injurious raises of the sun and millions of the creatures are dying because of the lack of water. The earth and its living beings hate them. Euro-Americans annihilate nature of the indigenous people and do not care about its harmful effects on the earthly creatures. They fail to realise that “all human beings belong to the earth forever” (Silko 734). Hopi warns the European coloniser against the negative effects of pollution that badly harms the earth and stir the Natives to raise voice against the colonisers’ destructive activities: “All the riches ripped from the heart of the earth will be reclaimed by the oceans and mountains. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions of enormous magnitude will devastate the accumulated wealth of the Pacific Rim. Entire coastal peninsulas will disappear under the sea; hundreds of thousands will die” (Silko 734). Due

to environmental pollution, the ecosystem will be unbalanced that may cause land sliding, drought and famine, etc. The Native Americans activists encourage their tribal people to hope for a better world which will announce the end of the destructive and brutal policies of the colonisers. They get together to resist the destruction of nature that if left unchecked, is ultimately going to annihilate all living beings on the earth. All the Native communities “would come by the millions” (Silko 736) to defend their natural world. The Native Americans come together for a common goal without any fear; they resist against the domination of Euro-Americans to acquire their rights.

Twin brothers, Tacho and El Feo, rebel against the Euro-Americans’ strategies through a peaceful march. It is a planned event: “Million will move instinctively; unarmed and unguarded” (Silko 735). The protesters came from all directions under the leadership of the twin brothers. Through a peaceful revolution against the colonisers they present themselves as a civilised nation that has its own religious beliefs and cultural values. They provoke repulsion and hatred for the cruel and insensitive destroyers, as well as sympathy for the marginalised race. These activists realise that the tribal people “forget the inestimable power of the earth and all the forces of the universe” (Silko 723). There is need to develop an intimate relationship with the mother earth. The survival of all the living creatures depends on the earth. Therefore, effective measures should be undertaken to stop the exploitation of the earth: “All they had to do was return to the mother earth” (Silko 710). They are hopeful that there must be no exploitation and destruction as “...no legal government could be established on stolen land” (Silko 245). The Native Americans are the real inheritor of the American continent. Their Army of Retribution and the Zapatistas of Chiapas oppose the European policy of trade agreement that is a great threat to the Natives’ economic and social position. The trade agreement endangers the Natives’ environment including animals, crops, etc. The Army of the protesters stand for the protection of the environment regardless of “man-made walls” (Silko 425) of ethnic and cultural differences. They are optimistic that in near future all the man-made barriers and differences will flatten and scientific technology will be “nothing in the face of the earth’s power” (Silko 425). The resistance response of the protesters will shatter the inventions of science and technology that create rift between man and his environment.

Almanac of the Dead presents two kinds of characters; the characters in the first category live in harmony with the natural environment and the characters in the second category destroy nature. Euro-Americans descend into the second category because they fail to recognise the importance of the earth and its relationship with human beings. They “wander aimlessly because the insane God who had sired them had abandoned them” (Silko 258). Opposition between the Native Americans and Euro-Americans is based on their conflicting notions of land usage and land occupancy and their different views about nature. In reaction to Europeans’ “depravity and cruelty” (Silko 316), the Native activists defy the European policy of exploitation and subordination of humans through which they justify the displacement of the Native Americans from their native land. Because of the cruel treatment of the colonisers, the Native Americans intend to retaliate by bringing down the U.S. government; army of the poor and homeless indigenous people rebels against colonialism. A ragtag army is shown to be alert to take over the U.S. military bases. These emotional army men assemble in a Tucson hotel and are determined to restore the natural environment. Euro-Americans’ oppression and the Native Americans resistance to it go hand in hand in the novel.

4.8.3 Encountering the Euro-Americans’ Possession of the Native Americans’ Land

To counter Euro-Americans’ actions based on injustice, the Native Americans realise that “the time has arrived to begin gathering an army and reclaiming their stolen lands” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 146). There is a close, nearly divine bond between the Native Americans and the earth. They struggle to restore their healthy natural environment. They also realise that no revolution can take place without sacrifices and it is not possible to “fight a war for such a big change without the loss of blood” (Silko 532). Barefoot Hopi advises all the war prisoners to unite and rise in revolt to save their religion and the mother earth: “Hopi claimed his religion included everyone; everyone was born belonging to the earth” (Silko 625). The tribal people become united to save the earth that is a source of their survival. At the end of the novel, they plan to rebel against the European government and openly claim their right to live on their motherland freely. An army of homeless soldiers congregates in Chiapas and marches towards the north to confront the European colonisers and attacks the military bases. The

army of the protesters marches hundreds of miles away to retrieve the sacred earth. These protesters are hopeful that “all traces of Europeans in America would disappear” (Silko 631) and they will retake their native land. They are committed to revolution and have strong faith in their beliefs and are passionate about reclaiming the natural environment. Primarily, the army of the protesters is organised to resist the misuse of their motherland. When Sterling comes back to his tribal people, he looks at the valley and imagines before the European colonisation, “the wild flowers had been belly high on the buffalo that had been occasionally wandered off the South Plains” (Silko 758). Sterling dreams of the return of the fertile land, plants, flowers and buffalo herds.

Weasel Trial says that dead souls of the Native Americans’ ancestors “howl to retake the land” (Silko 723) from hands of those who worship destruction. *Almanac of the Dead* is a cry to go back to the natural life and to reject the luxuries of Euro-Americans to show veneration to the earth. It is the power of the earth that encourages the indigenous people to fight against the European colonisers. Weasel Trial further says, “Give back what you have stolen or else as a people you will continue your self-destruction” (Silko 725). He has warned the colonisers against the possession of the Americas. The European colonisers have tried to rationalise their “takings of Indian lands and lives” (Blackhawk 3). A vast majority of the indigenous population has been wiped out by warfare and environmental pollution. They are driven from their motherland to the reservation where they suffer from different diseases due to pollution. The indigenous people are not willing to leave their motherland without fight: “Sixty million Native Americans died between 1500 and 1600” (Silko 15) in fighting for their native land and they will keep on fighting till the achievement of their objective. The indigenous activists recognise no borders; they seek nothing less than the return of their tribal land. They are in an “environmental struggle for land” (Huggan and Tiffin 44). They are deprived of their inheritance, their motherland and hence they fight to take back what belongs to them.

A widespread protest needs to be made against environmental injustice to attain the goal of a sustainable earth. Angelita and her husband, El Feo are the leaders of their people who rebel against the federal government in their attempt to get back their homeland. Angelita maintains links with Karl Marx as she often thinks that Marx knows

about the Native Americans' problems: "This old white-man philosopher had something to say about the greed and cruelty" (Silko 311). At first Angelita thinks that Marx's work is reliable but later on she warns her tribe against Marxists as she says that Euro-Americans do not want us to live on our native land. She is against all those who are not willing to return to their homeland. She criticises Euro-Americans and their followers who deprive tribal people of their rights. She further says, "To hell with the white man! We want our mother the land!" (Silko 519) Angelita is reminded by El Feo that the "earth's spirits wanted" (Silko 712) to go back to tribal people. El Feo knows about Angelita's affiliation with Karl Marx, but he does not believe in the European philosophy. He knows that with return of the mother earth there will be justice and peace on the American continent. The indigenous people and Marxists pursue the two divergent paths. The Marxists or capitalists intended to develop the earth industrially. Contrarily, the indigenous people take nothing from the earth; the earth is sacred to them. As they "agreed only on one point: they must retake their land despite the costs" (Silko 310). Silko acknowledges the fact that the Native Americans are the inheritors of the Americas; therefore, they must resist Euro-Americans' manipulation of the earth. The Native Americans fight for their native land where their prayers are fulfilled and where their ancestors practiced sustainable agriculture.

The theme of the land has been handled in relation to three aspects; to get back the land from the colonisers, to restore the sacredness of the mother earth and to protect the earth from extraction and capitalist industrialisation. Along with taking back the tribal land there is an intense need to re-establish the natural world that has been exploited by the European colonisers. The Native Americans cannot be Marxists as they "couldn't care less about international Marxism; all they wanted was to retake their land from the white man" (Silko 326). Marxists and industrial capitalists have similar points of view. They abuse the earth through mining and industrialisation that is a great crime for the Native Americans who cannot endure any harm done to the mother earth. For the Native Americans, their homeland has great importance as it "was their secret and the only 'truth' tribes could agree upon" (Silko 310). Silko criticises Euro-Americans for their inability to understand that there is an indivisible relationship of the Native Americans with their mother earth "separation from the land leads to disease" (Nelson 1). Removing people

from the natural world and consigning them to an unnatural setting can lead to many social problems as well. Europeans have “a sort of blindness to the world” (Silko 224), they cannot understand the importance of nature in human life. They cannot “recognize the earth was their mother. They are like their first parents, Adam and Eve, wandering aimlessly” (Silko 258) away from their birth place. Europeans left their countries and worked in a cunning way to conquer the Americas. The European colonisers are declared “the orphan people” (Silko 258) who cannot recognise the sacredness of the mother earth.

Barefoot Hopi promises to gather a force that “would counter destruction of the earth” (Silko 734). He gives the first priority to the land and inspires his community members to struggle against the destroyers of the earth. Euro-Americans offer assistance to Hopi through financial means to promote eco-terrorist activities. But Hopi strongly adheres to his cause that all human beings belong to the earth and secretly uses his amount to protect the mother earth and his tribe. Hopi collects money to exploit nature but uses it for the welfare of the indigenous people and their environment. He makes efforts to raise funds as well as defends the Native Americans’ “blood-ties to land” (Huggan and Tiffin 53). He gets the colonisers’ support but privately protects his tribal race and homeland. In the same way, Angelita keeps relation with Karl Marx to know his imperialistic activities and secretly warns her people against his policies. She knows that the European colonisers are against the Native Americans’ sovereignty therefore she tells lie to all of them and inwardly favors: “Struggling Indians fighting for their way of life” (Silko 513). The Native Americans struggle for the attainment of the dream of a peaceful reciprocal relationship with the natural environment. They live in company with non-human world and resist the Euro-Americans’ approach of competition and individualism.

4.8.4 Dismantling the Euro-Americans’ Imperialistic Approach

The Native Americans resist the European colonisers’ “exploitation of tribal resources” (Deloria and Lyttle 258) and strengthen their traditional lifestyle and relationship with the natural environment. The restoration of indigenous homeland and the natural environment is possible in struggle to disentangle the natural world from the exploitative clasp of the colonisers. The novel exposes that the roots of environmental devastation lie in racial and class distinctions. The detrimental impact of Euro-Americans

on the natural environment has suppressed and misrepresented the Native Americans' socio-cultural beliefs. The Native activists realise that in order to reclaim their cultural, social and religious solidarity they have to dismantle the European imperialistic approach. They depict the Judeo-Christian tradition as cruel, bloody and irrational. Even the church, instead of teaching morality and human values, proves to be the source of immorality. The church has failed to stop the discriminatory treatment of the Native Americans. Yoeme says, "Even idiots can understand a church that tortures and kills is a church that can no longer heal" (Silko 718). Yoeme endorses the anti-Christian point of view, she presents Christianity "the betrayal of Jesus" (Silko 611). Like judicial system of the state church is also involved in eco-terrorist activities.

The Native revolutionaries packed with resolution to save nature and to attain environmental justice. They are determined to shatter the damaging influence of the European colonisation to restore their native land and natural life. As the eagle and the crow bring the message that army of the indigenous people is coming forth to defeat the colonisers. These activists are hopeful that in consequences of their resistance response they will be able to restore the natural world where the deer and the bear will be roaming freely. The snake brings the final message: "This world is about to end" (Silko 135). The serpent predicts the end of the colonisers' hegemony over the indigenous people and their environment. It proves to be the herald of an optimistic message that very soon the Native Americans will get back their homeland and they will be able to lead a free life in the natural environment. The snake cast a glance at the south where the twin brothers will come to dispose of Euro-American control over nature. Emerging from the slough of marginalisation and oppression, many individuals and groups of the Native Americans rise up and resist against injustice and phoney policy of progress. They are determined to blow up Glen Canyon Dam and the icon of American industry. They warn Euro-Americans against exploiting the natural environment and also criticise the devastating approach of scientific development by "pointing to the state and corporation committed to the scientific development and progress to the prime anti-ecological force in the world" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 172). The scientific development results in ecological destruction; it poisons both human and non-human life through uranium and nuclear power plants. In response to such exploitation the "mother earth would punish

those who defied or despoiled her” (Silko 632). In consequences of the global environmental disaster; “the very elements –the sky, the air, the land, the wind and water – will all turn against us. Their wrath will be terrible” (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 51). As a result of pollution animals and plants will disappear and human life will be impossible on the earth. In such threatened environment the colonisers are warned to “Leave our Mother Earth alone . . . otherwise terrible things will happen to us all” (759).

Roy, the totally disappointed Vietnam veteran, organised his Army against the government and police. He has a terrible sight before him of “women and children hungry, and sleeping on the streets.... Some- thing had to be done” (Silko 393). The government is owned by the European colonisers who have seized the tribal people’s homeland consequently the women, old men and children have been inflicted a perpetually damaging legacy. The subjugation of the women and minorities is a planned conspiracy of Euro-Americans to retain their hegemony. Another veteran, Clinton notices that the entire war in America is against the slaughter of the weak communities. Clinton, Weasel Trial, Roy and Barefoot Hopi fight against the destroyers: “If they didn’t fight, they would be destroyed and mother earth with them” (Silko 749). They believe that if they do not work together they will never succeed; all men and women are determined to die for the sake of their mother earth to protect their lives and their fellow animals and plants. The Native activists come together to fight against the colonisers as “this was the last chance the people had, and they would never prevail if they did not work together as a common force” (Silko 747). Clinton joins the army of the marginalised race and declares, “they died warriors, not slaves” (Silko 748). Tribal people, sensing danger everywhere, prepare their community to rise up against the exploitation of the natural world.

4.9 Silko’s Response to the Euro-Americans’ Treatment of Nature and the Native Americans in *Ceremony*

The Euro-Americans’ concept of environment or wilderness “create[s] blind spots in environmental movement that excuse us from thinking seriously about the consequences of our everyday activities in culture” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* xix). Euro-Americans have racial and anthropocentric attitude towards nature.

A work of literature in which human beings are given the central importance is considered the master piece of literature. The “literature in which nature plays a significant role is irrelevant and inconsequential” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 15). Silko denounces the boundaries that are imposed by Euro-Americans between man and his physical environment as well as human and non-human beings. In response to Euro-Americans’ competitive approach, she depicts the Native Americans working in unison to restore their relationship with nature. Silko makes her tribe aware of their tribal heritage: “Indians wake up every morning of their lives to see the land which was stolen, still there, within reach” (Silko 127). Despite living away from the natural environment in a predominantly European society, the Native Americans are instinctively inclined towards their native land. In reaction to Euro-Americans’ ruinous attitudes, Tayo comes back to his native tribe and declares the European culture dead and hollow that must be resisted.

4.9.1 Response to Commodification of the Non-human World

Lawrence Buell laments over the exploitation of animal life and dreams of a time when animals will enjoy equal rights with human beings:

The day has been, I grieve to say in many places it is not yet past, in which the greater part of the species, under the denomination of slaves, have been treated by the law... It may one day come to be recognized that. . . the question is not, Can they *reason?* nor, Can they *talk?* but, Can they *suffer?* (Buell, *What We Talk About When We Talk About Ethics* 226)

Buell focuses on the rights of non-human beings and highlights the issues of animals’ exploitation. Euro-Americans confine animals in corrals and fences so that they cannot move freely. Through depiction of humans and non-humans reciprocal relationship the European colonisers are convinced that if animals are kept “in barns and corrals, they lose something” (Silko 68). The Native American activists defy the treatment of humans and nature as merely the objects of economic value and elevate them to their proper status. They also appeal for an end to the exploitation of the mother earth and the restoration of its sanctity. Euro-Americans fail to comprehend the importance of the earth; consequently, they wander uselessly from place to place (Silko 258). Initially,

Tayo also behaves in the same way towards animals under the influence of the European culture as a result he suffers from mental trauma. Later on, when he comes close to nature and his people, Tayo realises the need to resist the European culture that is hallow and lifeless. He comes to know that in order to lead a peaceful life, he should resist the Euro-Americans' ruinous approach.

Euro-Americans' response to the Mexican cattle is destructive: "Knocking the animal unconscious and frequently injuring or killing it" (Silko 212). They kill scores of buffaloes and mountain lions only for enjoyment: "Ten or fifteen deer each week and fifty wild turkeys in one month" (Silko 186) are killed for enjoyment. Silko offers a word of caution to her people about the Euro-Americans' vicious attitude towards animals and nature who see no life in nature. They are hostile to nature and consider the natural elements mere objects.

The world is a dead thing for them
 the trees and rivers are not alive
 the mountains and stones are not alive
 The deer and bear are objects
 They see no life. (Silko 125)

Euro-Americans' hostile attitude towards nature and animals is based on "exploitation and domination" (Huggan and tiffin 206). The European colonisers are presented as the agents of destruction who consider the natural beings mere dead objects. Silko passes severe comments on the colonisers as they are blind to the importance of nature and cautions her people that they should never be deceived by the colonisers. As the natural world is a dead object for them, they see no life in the earth, the sun, trees and animals. They live away from the earth and all of its creatures. They devalue everything that does not belong to them. Nature is constructed as a laboratory in which experiments are performed to get control of it. As a European science teacher brought "a tubful of dead frogs" (Silko 181) for experiment. With the emergence of industrialisation and science; animal life and the earth become just a commodity to be misused. The indigenous female student called Jemez forbids the science teacher from killing animals as she is taught that the massacre of animals has been the cause of terrible floods (Silko 181). On the contrary, the European teacher teaches the Native American students to kill the insects

and animals because they are inferior and cause different diseases (Silko 182). Under the vile influence of the teachings of Euro-Americans once Tayo also proudly killed piles of flies for Josiah to see.

In order to lead peaceful and healthy life human beings ought to be aware of their relationship with the non-human world. When human beings fail to remember the importance of their relationship with the earth, they “face response and reaction” (Adamson and Ruffin 141). Euro-Americans’ mode of isolation from and dominion over nature causes violence and destruction. Their violent actions lead to the greater destruction that causes diseases and death. In consequences of such destruction and exploitation the Native American activists realise that “all we have to fight off / illness and death” (Silko 169). They criticise Euro-Americans on the basis of their violent and destructive temperament and declares them destroyers, drug dealers, arms dealers and kidnappers who feel pleasure in destruction and division. These activists revitalise their past and emphasises the need to restore the lost tribal values.

4.9.2 Macrocosm versus Microcosm, and Community versus Individuality

The Native Americans identify themselves with the earth and its beings such as plants and animal life. Contrariwise, the Euro-Americans’ approach is based on “ego boundaries” (Buell, *Writing* 107) and individuality. The Native Americans’ ethics are based on a communal relationship with non-human life, but the European colonisers present them in a dark light. Such misrepresentation of nature and the Native Americans perpetuate the colonisers’ suppression of the Native Americans’ rights. The Native activists “consistently resisted those representations, fought for their communities and lands” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 137). European culture is dead for Tayo and he considers himself also dead in that culture. On his return to his tribal people, Tayo realises that life can be truly experienced in relation to the natural world: “He wanted to yell at the medicine man, to yell the things the white doctors had yelled at him” (Silko 115-16). The doctors teach the lesson of individuality, rather than viewing man as a part of a whole ecosystem. They consider body as a microcosm rather than macrocosm. The doctors fail to understand that Tayo is ill due to his separation from the natural world. Later on, Tayo’s attitude is changed as he comes to know that it is necessary to deviate

from European teachings: “Things which don't shift and grow are dead things” (Silko 116). Tayo’s recovery from his mental illness is based on his changed attitude. He is restored to a healthy life when he realises “the importance of thinking globally” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 125). He disapproves the doctors’ teachings of individuality and competition and comes to know that “nothing was ever lost as long as the love remained” (Silko 220). That is the resurrection of communal and affectionate life in him. In response to Euro-Americans’ teachings of individuality, separation and competition, Silko exposes the real cause of Tayo’s illness and also points out its cure. During his traditional treatment with the help of medicine man, Betonie, Tayo realises his connection with his ancestral land and the importance of the mutual relationship between man and nature. This realisation offers him relief. After the restoration of his religious and socio-cultural beliefs in nature, Tayo is a transformed man who shows respect to and feels compassion for animals and insects. While walking on grass he is very careful lest the grasshoppers will not crush under his feet. Tayo’s friend, Ts'eh spreads her shawl to pave the way for ants to make “sure no ants were disturbed” (Silko 224).

Euro-Americans have been bent on developing a sense of hatred in the Native Americans for their tribal culture and teach them that if you want to succeed in life “don’t let the people at home hold you back” (Silko 47). Tayo’s mother, Laura is also encouraged by Euro-Americans to abandon her tribal beliefs and native land: “These people urged her to break away from her home” (Silko 63). Both Rocky and Laura suffered because of their association with the European world. Rocky joins the European world to become a hero but loses his life. The roots of disturbance and destruction lie in the imbalance between human and non-human realms. The Native activists keep alive their rituals and religious beliefs by resisting the colonisers’ teachings and culture. As Tayo “rubbed his belly, I keep them [religious beliefs and traditional values] here” (Silko 2). The stories of his ancestors keep on growing in Tayo’s belly. He cannot tolerate Euro-Americans’ teachings and way of life, in order to forget all this, Tayo starts vomiting. He has been told lies that the Native Americans’ traditional stories of a communal relationship with nature are baseless and “all superstition” (Silko 181). During the war, he is told lies by the soldiers who advise him to think of himself and to kill the insects and other creatures which are inferior to him. He is also told lies by the European doctors

that for his mental satisfaction it is necessary for him to ignore others (Silko 181). Tayo vomits out all these lies to lead a natural life in the company of his tribal people. His vomiting is emblematic of his instinctive reaction against Europeans' emphasis on individualism.

In order to demonstrate their tribal identity embedded in nature, the Native activists are not afraid to "make decisions, confront authority figures, and contend with violence" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 136). Tayo confronts the Euro-Americans' teaching of individuality and competition after coming back from the war. Auntie, the caretaker of Tayo, teaches the lesson of individuality and separation; she tells everyone: "They (Tayo and Rocky) are not brothers" (Silko 65). Even she does not allow Ku'oosh to help Tayo because "he's not full blood anyway" (Silko 33). Tayo loves his tribal culture and after the war, he returns to the land of his ancestors. He loves to live in close communion with nature but Emo, like Auntie, ridicules the mother earth to deny its sanctity: "Look. Here's the Indians' mother earth! Old dried-up thing!" (Silko 25) Tayo is angry at such comments. He condemns Emo and says, "all wrong" (Silko 25). Tayo believes that Emo is wrong as he shows no respect to the mother earth and keeps him away from his tribal communities.

CHAPTER 5

AN ECO-CRITICAL STUDY OF N. SCOTT MOMADAY'S NOVELS

5.1 Summary of N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*

The novel is divided into four parts and begins with a prologue in which the protagonist, Abel is running in the dawn. In Part I, The Longhair, Abel comes back from World War II to the reservation. Due to intoxication, he cannot recognise his grandfather, Francisco who has raised him after death of Abel's mother and brother. Grandfather also teaches him his tribal tradition. Abel meets Angela, a female character from Los Angeles who helps restore his relation with his tribe by sharing story of bear. At reservation he recalls the time he has spent with his mother and brother. Abel is defeated by Albino called "the white man" (Momaday 39) in a game of horsemanship. It develops hatred in Abel's mind. Consequently, he stabs the white man to death. Abel is imprisoned in case of murder. Setting of the part II, The Priest of the Sun, is in Los Angeles. Abel is released from prison after seven years and comes back to his tribal communities. He starts work in factory where he lives with another factory worker, Ben Benally. Abel develops relationship with factory workers, Milly and Ben Benally. Although, he has not recovered completely, he is strong enough to establish relationship with his community members. In part III, The Night Chanter, Abel is in train coming back to the reservation and shares his experience of Los Angeles. He is not feeling easy; he is too drunk to respond Tosamah, a tribal leader in a poker game. Now Abel becomes alcohol addict and borrows money from Milly and Ben in order to buy himself alcohol. Ben is tired of his behaviour and refuses to help him. On the other hand, Abel is also severely beaten by a corrupt policeman. In Part IV, The Dawn Runner, Abel comes back to New Mexico to look after

his grandfather who is seriously ill. Grandfather shares with Abel the stories of his youth and advises him to remain in contact with his tribal culture. At death of his grandfather, Abel performs his burial rites according to tribal culture and smudges himself with ash. At dawn while running to his tribe Abel begins to sing for his grandfather and himself.

5.2 Summary of N. Scott Momaday's *The Ancient Child*

The story of the novel circles round two characters, Locke Setman called Set (a middle-aged Native American artist who transforms into bear) and Grey (a young Native American medicine woman). This traditional tale of a boy's transformation into bear is a Native Americans' quest for identity. We are introduced to Grey at the beginning of the novel as she watches over the death bed of Kope'mah, her grandmother. She likes to be companion of Billy the Kid, the legendary outlaw. She also realises her power as a medicine woman. Set is sent to a Catholic boarding school at the age of seven year. Being an orphan he is reared by Bent, his adopted father. Set has started his career as a painter and leads successful life in San Francisco. At young age he develops relationship with Lola. She wants to win his attentions and purchases painting from him. Set is confused to receive a telegram from Grey about his grandmother, Kop'mah's illness who lives in Oklahoma because he has never heard of his grandmother. His grandmother had died before his arrival to Oklahoma. Here he meets Grey and falls in love with her. Set is convinced by his tribal people to stay with them for some time before coming back to San Francisco. At Indian gathering Grey offers Set a medicine bundle that is effective enough to change his body and soul. When he returns to San Francisco, his life is gradually shattered even his painting depicts his inner turmoil. He tries to console himself through his imaginative power of art but fails to get favorable environment for it. After death of his adopted father he is completely exhausted. Lola sends him to Oklahoma where Grey takes care of him. He visits with Grey to Lukachukai where Grey's family lives, soon he recovers and starts painting again. Set and Grey get married and lead happy matrimonial life.

5.3 Introduction

This chapter is comprised of an eco-critical study of *House Made of Dawn* and *The Ancient Child* by N.Scott Momaday. It deals with Momaday's representation of the Native Americans' fundamental concept of nature, the environmental problems that they have been facing since the European colonisation and the Natives' reaction against the exploitation of their environment.

5.4 The Native Americans' Concept of Nature as Depicted in *House Made of Dawn*

The Native Americans treat human and non-human beings equally; nature is a living being for them and has great significance in their culture and religion. In *House Made of Dawn*, Momaday depicts a phenomenal co-existence of nature and the Native Americans; the Natives' survival depends on nature. Their lifestyle is characterised by harmony and union with nature. Nature is not something external to be destroyed and subjugated; it is in a horizontal relationship with the Native Americans. This mutual relationship is "a culturally inflected process in which nature and culture must be seen as mutuality rather than as separable domains" (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 67). The novel suggests that the Native Americans like animals and plants live in perfect harmony with their physical environment; their socio-cultural values and religious beliefs are embedded in nature. They want freedom of religion and love to follow their traditional lifestyle (Deloria and Lyttle 252). The non-human environment is not simply a background but a dynamic part of human life. It is a source of survival and peace that moves the protagonist of the novel from chaos to peaceful tribal culture.

5.4.1 Retrospective Penetration of Nature

From Adamson's point of view, the eco-critical study socio-historically serves to legitimise the claim of social values of people. Momaday gives a picture of the Native Americans' heritage and the natural lifestyle of their ancestors to make the coming generations aware of the importance of nature in their lives. He observes that the people who lead natural life have "a certain strength and beauty that I find missing in the modern

world at large” (Momaday 189). Abel, the protagonist of *House Made of Dawn*, goes through a long troublesome journey to connect himself with his ancestors’ natural lifestyle. Abel’s link with his ancestors’ tradition and natural landscape serves to recover his lost identity. He considers his journey towards his homeland “right and beautiful” (Momaday 170). He re-establishes his identity by engaging himself with a ritual of his forefathers that enables him to know himself. He remembers the old time he has spent with his family members and thinks of hunting. His memories of the past rejuvenate his native culture and enable him to reclaim his lost identity. In the Native Americans’ worldview: “The strict categories such as traditional and modern, authentic and unauthentic, primitive and civilized, pure and tainted and natural and cultural no longer make sense” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 158). Abel realises that in order to secure his environment he has to revive and practice the traditional values of his ancestors.

Abel has been entrapped by the European culture; he was driven to alcoholism and violence. He recalls the “days and years without meaning, of awful calm and collision, time always immediate and confused” (Momaday 21). He feels sorry for his loss of connection with his ancestral land and tradition. He comprehends his relationship with the natural environment through sacred stories of the priest of the sun that enables him to realise his place in the tribal society. Abel recollects that his “grandmother was a storyteller” (Momaday 83). She tells him stories and also teaches him the traditional lifestyle of her tribe. These stories interlink Abel with his past and develop an imaginative vision in him to strengthen his relationship with other beings. He recalls the tribal stories that his ancestors shared with him. These stories have a healing power and give a sense of wholeness. The knowledge of the tribal natural way of life enables Abel to develop relationship with other living beings as well as assists him to recall the socio-cultural history of his ancestors. Through this realisation, Abel mends his rootless identity. Adamson emphasises the need to develop a concept of nature that is “rooted not only in deep, reciprocal relationship to the natural world, but in our diverse cultural histories, in our different relationships to colonial oppression, and in the consequences of class and race marginalization” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* xix). Awareness of the natural life of his progenitors balances Abel’s life. Consequently, he is happy with

the invigorating realisation. He is happy to see the rising sun behind the hills: “How the sun came up with a little wind and the light ran out upon the land” (Momaday 166). The first light of the sun is a symbol of hope and life, with the emergence of the new day, Abel experiences a spiritual awakening. His health is restored with the idea of going back to the natural world of his forebears. Like Abel, the other Native American characters such as Ben Benally and Tosamah also return to their grandfathers to regain a true sense of their tribal identity. It is the natural lifestyle of their ancestors that provides them with protection.

Abel’s grandfather, Francesco practices traditional values and participates in the religious ceremonies that give the lesson of community and unity. Francisco transmits all his knowledge to Abel about the Natives’ socio-cultural values and religious beliefs. He shares with Abel the stories of his youth and teaches him to remain associated with the tribal tradition that has an intimate connection with nature. Francisco knows that Abel suffers spiritually as well as physically because of his alienation from his past. As a result of his separation from the tradition of his progenitors, Abel cannot develop a harmonious relationship with his surrounding environment. When he comes back from the war, he finds his grandfather weakened and limp, his limpness symbolises the loss of the Native Americans’ way of life owing to “massive environmental disruption” (Buell, *Writing* 238). But Abel keeps on reviving his ancestors’ traditional values that have been transferred to him. After death of his grandfather, Abel performs the ceremonies of his ancestors and loves to embrace his forefathers’ tradition. His friend, Ben also advises Abel to go back to his ancestors’ world of nature as he says, “I prayed. He was going home, and I wanted to pray... And we were going together on horses to the hills” (Momaday 189). Abel finally finds out his destiny within the natural environment of his heritage. His connection with his tribal land enables him to know how his forefathers lived in communion with nature as well as contributes to healing him. Abel’s healing continues by remembering the past history of his forebears. The revival of his ancestors’ tradition strengthens his willpower and connection with nature. The Native Americans have an ethical and spiritual relationship with nature since long which predates the arrival of the European colonisers (Adamson, *American Studies* 161). They “dwelt upon the land twenty-five thousand years ago” (Momaday 52) in community with non-human beings.

5.4.2 Integration of Human Culture and Nature

Analysis of a literary work from the perspective of environmental and social issues is a broader concept of the environmental study that exposes environmental issues by “locating vestiges of nature within cities and or exposing crimes of eco-injustice against society’s marginal group” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 24). Buell’s eco-critical approach is a shift from the traditional concept of nature to the broader concept that embraces human culture and nature. In the Native American culture and religion nature has great significance; the natural environment cannot be separated from human inhabited area. *House Made of Dawn* portrays the Natives’ spiritual and moral vision that is rooted in nature. In pursuing his identity and homeland Abel walks on the snow; in “the snow-covered valley and the hills” (Momaday 85) Abel and his fellow runners get together. “The pale light grew upon the land” (Momaday 184) meanwhile it begins to rain. The pale light of the sun awakens the new day and in daylight Abel looks at the earth and other fellow runners. They can see the mountains, river and their community members busy in work. In such a pleasant environment they feel no exhaustion.

The Native Americans’ life depends on and interlinked with the natural life. For them, “humanity and all things of the natural world are always emerging, always unfolding” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 2). They believe that animals and plants have the central importance in human life and deserve moral consideration. Animals and trees are given respect and honour through ceremonies, stories and songs. The sight of the eagle and the snake arouses spiritual feelings in Abel’s mind. Abel is captivated by the image of “an eagle overhead with its talons closed upon a snake. It was an awful, holy sight, full of magic and meaning” (Momaday 14). The eagle has great significance in the Native Americans’ religion; the feathers of the eagles are used in religious ceremonies. It is assumed that eagle is the symbol of freedom and courage. During hunting, Abel has caught an eagle that is unable to fly; therefore, he prefers killing the bird over letting it live in captivity. The free natural life of the eagle has great inspiration for him. Although after killing the eagle Abel feels remorse because of his great respect and love for it. It is in the Native American culture that after killing an animal they give respect to it. Such principles of the Native American culture develop a

strong relationship between human and non-human beings as well as preserve their tribal tradition.

Human beings along with plants and animals are the part of the whole ecosystem. Buell quotes Kathleen Dean Moore's statement that if you cut my hand and eyes I will live still but if you: "Take away the sun, and I die. Take away the plants and the animals, and I die. So why should I think my body is more a part of me than the sun and the earth?" (qtd. in *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 23) An individual's survival is not possible in isolation from his/her physical environment. Momaday presents nature as a benign force to human beings and also stresses the importance of preserving death within nature. Abel remains associated with his tribal rituals to reconstruct his relationship with nature. He participates in different religious and healing ceremonies performed at the natural sites. As Abel's healing ceremony incorporates the natural elements when "the little holy wind blows through his hair" (Momaday 150) on the way towards the healing path Abel feels healthy and comfortable. While travelling on his "horse's back," (Momaday 150) the whole body of the horse seems to him to be made of the natural elements. He feels that the ears of the horse are made of corn, eyes of big stars and head is made of water and "the long rainbow is in his mouth for a bridle, and with it I guide him" (Momaday 150). On his horse back Abel thinks that as if he is in company of different other horses and sheep. This sacred journey of Abel is a way towards healing and wholeness. It reunifies him with his homeland and rediscovers his identity. These natural elements collectively transmit curing strength. The whole natural world contributes to restore Abel's health: "The drumbeats gathered in the room and the flame quivered to the beat of the drum and thunder rolled in the somewhere hills" (Momaday 107). The rising sounds of rainfall, rolling thunder and sliding rocks with the combination of colours are intermixed to celebrate Abel's recovery from his mental trauma. He enjoys the company of nature; the unsullied breeze refreshes his exhausted body. He feels revitalised on the beautiful natural landscape. The natural scenes in the novel are the source of spiritual inspiration for the Native Americans to strengthen their relationship with other beings. They utilise energy from nature and feel young and energetic.

Buell gives importance to both natural and human aspects in the environmental literature (*The Future of Environmental Criticism* 84). He believes that Human beings cannot live in isolation from their physical environment. Human relationship with physical nature is indistinguishable and their attention towards and care for non-human nature make the world better and peaceful for all the living beings. Environment is a part of human life because of “humanity’s ongoing interaction with the non-human forces in which our lives are embedded” (*The Future of Environmental Criticism* 15). There is something wrong with a person who does not feel the loss of place as Buell says that one acts and the consequences of one’s actions are determined by one’s surrounding environment. What you do and where you live are equally important. With the loss of your soil you lose your soul. The natural landscape is the Native Americans’ identity and home:

House made of dawn,
House made of evening light,
House made of dark cloud,
...House made of pollen,
House made of grasshoppers. (129)

The house that is made of the marvellous material found in nature is an image of life and peace; life emerges from its natural landscape.

5.4.3 Sense of Place and Identity

Buell lays emphasis on the centrality of the earth; the planetary system is interconnected and all the beings play their role to run it. All the living and non-living entities are part of the ecosphere and “without a complex knowledge of one’s place, and without the faithfulness to one’s place on which such knowledge depends, it is inevitable that the place will be used carelessly, and eventually destroyed” (Berry 67). The Native Americans consider the earth their mother; it is their identity, a caretaker and source of sustenance and peace. Abel’s relationship with his native land provides him with mental peace and serves as an aid to re-establish his lost relationship with nature. He discovers his identity by forming a connection with the mother earth. In search of his identity, he moves towards “the cultivated fields” and “the long rows of the foothills” (Momaday 27).

Then he looks at the sky, the green land and feels “the first breeze of the evening” (Momaday 27). Abel’s journey to reclaim his lost identity reaches its end in his homeland where he “could see his grandfather, others, working below in the sunlit fields” (Momaday 27). His life has been meaningless for long, but finally he arrives home of a green farmland where his relatives live and work together. After coming back to his native land Abel feels well and his relationship with his ancestors’ lifestyle is also strengthened. Human beings belong to the earth that requires their “custodianship in return” (Ashcroft and Tiffin 70). Nature rewards humans when they love it. Abel’s grandfather describes to him the stories of his forefathers’ close association with their mother earth and also reminds him of his heritage: “Right there in the centre of everything, the sacred mountains . . . where you had to be” (Momaday 157). In the mountains Abel goes through his healing experiences and performs his religious ceremonies. The mountains have a great importance for him in the sense that they provide shelter and sustenance to the wild animals like bear, deer, eagle and buffaloes. At these mountain areas Abel’s staggered mind is stabilised and his lost identity restored.

Abel is reawakened owing to his relationship with his heritage and homeland. He gets strength from the lifestyle of his ancestors and restores his health and leads a complete life. He “was alone and running” (Momaday 185) in search of company. While running he falls down and in the rain notices how his body is broken being separated from the natural environment. When he looks at the sky, mountains and the river, “Under his breath he began to sing... *House made of pollen, house made of dawn* (Momaday 185). Abel wanders meaninglessly finally; the trees and the sun light reunite him with the earth. As the light of the sun is the herald of the beginning of the new day, in the same way, the light marks Abel’s resurrection into a new life. His favourite natural environment reinforces his connection with his tribal culture as “place and society are fused as a unity” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 104). Abel recovers his self-knowledge in connection with the motherland. He supplicates the mother earth to:

Restore my feet for me,
 Restore my legs for me,
 Restore my body for me,
 Restore my mind for me. (Momaday 130)

In his native land Abel becomes spiritually united with the natural landscape and his tribal culture. He gets optimum satisfaction from the natural environment in which his body recovers and he claims: Happily I recover/Happily my interior becomes cool (Momaday 130). The natural environment of his mother earth bestows on Abel true peace; he derives profoundest mental peace from the natural landscape. Here he is physically healed as well as spiritually awakened. His union with nature is strengthened and he walks thus: “Happily, with abundant dark clouds” (Momaday 130). Nature provides him with self-knowledge and enables him to unite with his tribe. The plants, flowers and dark clouds bolster Abel’s connection with his native land. He feels pleasure to see the sky, the mountains and the whole valley. The entire natural world bears witness to his relationship with his tribal heritage; the sights of the green farmland support him and strengthen his relationship with his tribal people. In order to achieve the level of spiritual strength which is the characteristic of his community, Abel reunites and identifies himself with his surrounding environment. His life circle is completed when he comes back to the natural world of his ancestors. His naked body depicts his close relationship with the earth because it is made of the earthly elements itself.

Momaday treats the earth as an animate being which offers all humans and non-humans room to survive on it, where they live “[h]appily, with abundant...showers ...plants” (130). The Native Americans are not comfortable in the European environment, it is their native land that gives them peace and security. Their restored relationship with the natural landscape proves to be a panacea for all their sufferings and diseases. They have loyalty to the earth which continues to sustain them. They consider themselves “a plain member and citizen of the land community” (qtd. in Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 104). The earth is the only paradise of which they eat and drink and the only sin for them is the destruction of the mother earth. Their tribal stories are based on their tradition and religious beliefs and they consider their homeland to be the setting giving birth to these stories. The Native Americans’ identity is intimately connected with the earth that echoes with tribal stories. In their native land, nature and culture are inextricably bound together and they consider the place where they live a home to all the species.

5.4.4 The Native Americans' Vision of the Sacredness of Nature

The subjects of “vision, value, culture, and imagination are keys to today’s environmental crises at least as fundamental as scientific research” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 5). The Native Americans believe that nature has spiritual power; all the natural elements have their own significance in their culture and religion. Momaday links this rapport of the Natives with nature on the same basis as they develop a relationship with their family members. According to Momaday, the separation of man from nature cripples the human spirit. The description of nature at the start of the novel indicates that the natural elements have healing influence and spiritual power and connect all the living creatures on the same platform as the “geese fly through the valley and then the sky and the geese are the same color” (Momaday 5). Birds fly together in search of their food and freely on the earth regardless of any boundaries. During the summer due to hot environment: “Birds come to the tamarack on the river. The feathers of blue and yellow birds are prized by the townsmen” (Momaday 5). The townspeople get together to “take good harvest from the fields” (Momaday 5). They work in the field and enjoy the company of the birds. The movement of the birds and townsmen give a lesson of unity and mutual relationship between humans and non-humans. The Native Americans feel pleasure in the presence of birds in the harvest field under the moon where water flows to provide a life force to the natural elements.

The “sacred natural world that was uncontaminated by humankind” (Adamson, *American Studies* 72) provides mental peace to the indigenous people who live in a close association with nature; even they hunt in community. They prefer to hunt the old and ill animals for food and offer prayers before pursuing an animal. They also make “apologies [when] it is necessary to kill an animal for food or clothing” (Boyd, *Rolling* 9). Before hunting Abel goes to the river to wash his head in order to purify himself and begins to sing and offers prayers. The natural ceremonies are performed by the Native Americans to revive their religious beliefs and cultural values. As Tosamah, “The Priest of the Sun” (Momaday 77) enters with his sermon. He talks about Kiowa religious beliefs in the sacredness of nature which he heard from his grandfather. The ceremonies unite the tribal people on the same platform regardless of any difference and also strengthen their relationship with non-human beings. The Sun Dance Ceremony is performed in the

novel; it is a religious ceremony that is practiced by most of the Native Americans and unites them with each other and with the physical world around them. The observance and practice of such sacred ceremonies have been passed down from generation to generation. These ceremonies restore their lost relationship with their mother earth as they suffer physically and mentally on account of losing contact with the natural environment. Likewise, Abel, Ben Benally and Tosamah suffer because of their separation from nature; their mental peace is possible only through the restoration of their relationship with the natural landscape. Ben and Tosamah realise that their problems can be solved by consolidating their diluted relationship with nature. Ben knows that Abel's mental peace lies in his relationship with the native land. "In his pain and weariness [Abel] saw Milley and Ben running on the beach and he was there on the beach with Milley and Ben and the moon was high and bright and the fishes were faraway in the depth" (Momaday 111). It is the natural environment that gives him strength and peace of mind. Abel comes back to his native land to take care of his grandfather from whom he comes to know about the importance of man-nature relationship. The return to the native tradition also means to turn to nature for protection and peace. After coming back to his native land and his ancestors' tradition, Abel identifies himself with animals and birds that have great significance in the Native Americans' religion and culture.

In the Native American culture the figure four has great importance, mainly because it indicates four seasons and four directions. The tribal leader, Rolling Thunder turns his pipe to the four sides to extend invocation to nature for help and says;

To the East where the Sun rises.

To the North where the cold comes from.

To the South where the light comes from.

To the West where the Sun sets.

To the father Sun.

To the mother Earth. (Boyd, *Rolling* 19)

Momaday has divided the novel into four sections: "*The Longhair*", "*The Priest of the Sun*", "*The Night Chanter*" and "*The Dawn Runner*". The titles of the sections are also indicative of the Native Americans' association with nature. *The Longhair* represents their natural lifestyle that they love to keep long hair. "An Indian man isn't nothing

without his hair” (Alexie, *Smoke* 63). They are not willing to cut their hair that naturally grows. They want to maintain a natural lifestyle; they consider it a violation of nature to cut their hair. In the boarding school when the administrator of the school tries to cut hair a Native student, Plenty Horses, he resists and says: “I am a Lakota... I will keep my long hair” (Momaday, *Three Plays* 134). Hair is their identity; they do not allow Euro-Americans to touch their hair. The title of the second section, *The Priest of the Sun*, depicts the Native Americans’ love of nature; they worship nature and adore the natural sites. The sun provides them with energy as it is a regulator of the seasons. *The Night Chanter* illustrates the Native Americans singing songs in love of nature and their performance of different religious ceremonies and cultural rites at natural sites. The last section of the novel, *The Dawn Runner*, displays the significant theme that the Native Americans are in search of their tribal identity that has been misrepresented or oppressed by the colonisers. The unnatural and urban environment of Euro-Americans turns out to be a confining and dark atmosphere for the Native Americans, from which they desperately wish to escape and rush towards the world of “everlasting and peaceful” (Momaday *House* 150) environment.

5.4.5 Indigenous Feminine Principles and Environmentalism

Because of “the violent destruction of their herds,... [a Navajo woman] fears the loss of sheep...She thinks that by taking the sheep, we are taking the food out of the mouths of her children” (qtd. in Adamson and Ruffin 54). In spite of the European colonisers’ devastation of nature and misrepresentation of the Native Americans’ natural way of life, the indigenous women have remained stuck to their native culture. They are strong enough to preserve their tribal cultural values in the modern destructive world. Abel is disappointed with European environment. Later on, he restores his identity with the help of his grandmother who teaches him that to lead a peaceful life one needs to remain in contact with the natural life. As a result of his grandmother’s advice, Abel restores his lost identity and gets satisfaction at the natural environment: “I lay down with my grandmother and could hear the frogs away by the river and feel the motion of the air” (Momaday 119). In the company of his grandmother, Abel enjoys a complete life. It is his relationship with grandmother that unites him with his surrounding environment

and cures his mental and physical problem. The feminine principles are in a significant way the foundation of the connection between Abel and his natural environment. By following the guidance of the women Abel finds his correct place in the cosmos.

Angela restores Abel's lost identity by assimilating him with bear. She likes to "hold for a moment the hot blowing of the bear's life" (Momaday 29). She thinks of a bear in the context of her interest in Abel. She knows the problems Abel has faced and thereby reconnects him with his origin, the bear power. She knows that man is a member of community that "includes the human and the other-than-human, including biotic and geologic elements, beings, and forces" (Adamson and Ruffin 110) and Abel's sufferings increased due to disturbance of this community. She is shocked to see destruction and exploitation of nature. Even to see "the chips of wood which lay all about on the ground among the dark stones and weeds...She stood, remembering the sacramental violence which had touched the wood" (Momaday 31-32). Apparently, Angela notices the natural catastrophes and death around her but it does not mean that she is hostile to nature or Momaday presents her negatively. In fact, she is shocked to see the polluted environment and bewares Abel of the horrible consequences of the environmental disasters. Because of her love for nature, she notices destructive elements in her surrounding environment that have been ignored by others. After looking at the natural disasters, she finds a bear beside her because of love and sympathy. "She would have liked to touch the soft muzzle of a bear, the thin black lips, the great flat head" (Momaday 29). She knows that in the polluted environment both human and non-human life will suffer equally.

The Native Americans keep such an intense love for the females that even the female animals and birds are also given respect in their culture. As during hunting two birds are caught, one is male and the second one is female. Abel catches a female bird and celebrates hunting with pleasure. He takes pride in having a female eagle; it is beautiful and big as compared to the male eagle. In relation to the female bird, Abel is happy but when he finds, "the bird shivered...Bound and helpless" (Momaday 20) and cannot fly, he prefers to kill it instead of keeping it in prison. It is Abel's love for the female bird that he does not consign it to a miserable life in the cage. After killing the bird Abel feels regret, which shows he misses the company of the female bird. In his "reconnection with the tribal female community" (Adamson and Ruffin 170), Abel

identifies the tribal socio-cultural values. It is the indigenous women's strength that despite the environmental destruction and the European colonisers' hegemony, they stick to their native culture and strengthen their partners' relationship with nature.

With the purpose to depict the importance of female characters, at the beginning of the novel Momaday keeps Abel separate from the female figures. This alienation results in despair and confusion and also makes him aware of the significance of the indigenous women for a complete life. The female characters play an important role to re-connect the bewildered tribal people with their ancestral culture. By following "the indigenous (female) subject's ethical response to contemporary social and environmental injustice" (Adamson and Ruffin 171-72) Abel finds his correct place in the society. He appreciates non-human nature and simultaneously recognises the intersection between gender, race, and nature.

5.5 The Native Americans' Concept of Nature as Portrayed in *The Ancient Child*

Momaday's *The Ancient Child*, depicts the Native Americans' harmonious relationship with nature in which "the boundaries between humans and nature are permeable, and everything in the natural world is concerned to everything else" (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 106). Nature is presented as a web of interrelated systems in which all beings are interconnected and function collectively in a planetary system. Momaday gives the central importance to the earth and treats all its creatures equally by blurring the line between human and non-human beings. He explains human characters with reference to animals, trees and other universal elements. Set, the protagonist of the novel himself turns into a bear his seven sisters "came to the stump of a great tree, and the tree spoke to them... The seven sisters were borne into the sky, and they became the stars" (Momaday ix). The novel points to the chain of relationship between all the animate and inanimate organisms. Like other natural elements human beings are also a part of the whole ecosystem. They have no right to dominate or control nature. Nature moves in cycles in which all the things are interdependent. "Climate systems involve a complex web of interconnected events" (Adamson and Ruffin 160). In the Native American tradition: "nothing is unnatural" (Momaday 43). They identify

themselves in relation to their environment. They are represented as if they themselves are nature; “nature is part and parcel of Indianness itself” (Adamson and Ruffin 59). Their philosophy of life incorporates human and non-human life and even inanimate things.

5.5.1 Return to Roots and Understanding of Man-Nature Relationship

Momaday offers a portrayal of the Native Americans’ beliefs in nature in respect to their heritage; the title of the novel, *The Ancient Child* depicts the Natives’ heritage and history. It demonstrates that the Native Americans are the ancient people who have been living on American continent since time immemorial. “Most likely, over 100 million inhabitants who spoke at least 1,000 languages inhabited the Americas before New World diseases wiped out up to 98 percent of them, beginning in the late fifteenth century” (Johansen and Pritzker 2). They have always been part of nature and realise the importance of nature through their reunion with their forefathers’ culture. Set returns to his native land with the help of his grandmother who begins to speak names: “Set-pago, Set-tainte, Set-angya, Set-mante. Set-mante. Setman. Set” (Momaday 35). The grandmother shares the names of Set’s progenitors to develop his relationship with his tribal history. These names show that Set has a heritage and strong ties with his tribal people. Set “stood in crucial relation to the grandmother and to the indefinite line of ancestors” (Momaday 174). His relationship with his ancestors recovers his spiritual identity and strengthens his socio-cultural beliefs. From the history of his progenitors he is able to know about the sacred rituals of his tribe and the outcomes of healing ceremonies. He comes to know about the importance of nature in human life. This illuminating notion cures him, leads him towards wholeness. His forefathers have a strong intimacy with the earth; it is his love for his forebears that derives him towards his homeland. At his homeland he realises “the richness” and “strength of the plains” (Momaday 221). He regains his identity through his relationship with the mother earth and his forefathers’ culture.

Momaday salvages the dismantled glorious history of the Native Americans’ natural life and heritage by presenting the Kiowa story of a boy’s transformation into a bear. This transformation connects Set with his native heritage and helps in discovering

his identity. Set suffered physically as well as mentally when he was severed from his Kiowa homeland “he had become sick and tired” (Momaday 38). Later on, he has overcome his problems by developing a close relationship with his land. His native land connects him with his forebears when he looks at the red colour of the earth the memories of his dead father come to his mind. On his return to the ancestral land Set realises that “there in the wild growth and the soft glowing of the earth, in the muddy water at his feet, was something profoundly original” (Momaday 64). Here the concern over being rootless is gone and he feels the love of his parents and the sense of belonging to them. The intimate relationship with the earth has awakened the feelings of inheritance and originality in Set. Set is obliged to the ancient tradition of his progenitors for the restoration of his identity. He saves his soul by adopting the tradition of his ancestors. He always recalls his dead grandmother because “she was the touchstone of his belief in the past... the spirit which drove his blood” (Momaday 45-46). With the awareness of the socio-cultural values of his ancestors Set comes to know about himself. This socially transmitted knowledge of the Native American culture teaches him to live in company with the other beings and enables him to know the place around him.

Grey, (an indigenous female character and life partner of Set) preserves her “grandmother’s possession” (Momaday 176) and loves to touch the objects belong to her. She wears masks of the “faces of animals and humans and spirits” (Momaday 176) in love of her ancestors’ tradition; the masks are the reflective of both animals and human beings. Grey knows that her forefathers “remained close to their traditions, holding ancient ceremonies to be of utmost importance to the future tribe” (Deloria 21). Her act of making and wearing the masks in her grandmother’s room reflects her love for the tradition of her forefathers who lived in a reciprocal relationship with non-human beings. “And when she put on certain mask, it was as if she put on the power of the spirit it represented, too” (Momaday 176). Wearing the masks arouses the spirit of her ancestors in her. These masks are made “with deep belief” (Momaday 176). They are not mere objects of art but the sacred objects of spiritual power. These masks embody the Native Americans’ strong beliefs in nature as wearing them they perform different ceremonies to show their great reverence for nature. The Natives’ antecedents used to engage in the

same tribal practices and ceremonies. This historical knowledge is not merely limited to tales but it furnishes Grey with such valuable experience that she must practically apply.

Nature has a spiritual as well as healing effect for the Native Americans; for the purification of their souls they visit the natural places. Similarly, to treat their physical diseases they prepare medicines from natural plants and herbs. The doctrine of healing through natural remedies has been transferred from their ancestors to the present generation. The Native Americans seek to preserve proper natural diet and medicines (DeLoria and Lytle 251). Grandmother, Kope'mah shares the power of healing through natural process with Grey and then this knowledge gets transmitted from Grey to Set. The healing power of nature is strengthened through different images of nature. With appearance of the light on the ground, sand, grass, grasshoppers and on the wings of the doves: "The two women caught their breath" (Momaday 34-35) with excitement to see the natural objects. The sounds and images of nature reinforce the power of healing ceremonies. The earth shines with sunlight and birds flap their wings that heighten the healing power of ceremonies. Grey notices that Set is "in confusion and pain a man severely wounded in his intelligence, verging upon collapse" (Momaday 247). She infuses power and a new life into his weak and fragile body through the remembrance of the stories "of hawks and horses, the sun rising, and clouds bursting with rail" (Momaday 247). Through ancient Kiowa stories, Grey bolsters the identity of Set and enables him to know his cultural values. The sacred stories of his tribe have a healing power for Set and their influence connects him with his surrounding environment. Grey's grandmother told stories to her. Likewise, Cate shares stories with his son, Set: "And Set remembered. It is an important story" (Momaday 118). The stories of the Native Americans' ancestors ensure their socio-cultural values and preserve the identity of their tribal communities. The preservation and transference of socio-cultural values and religious beliefs provide the coming generations with the means to know the importance of nature in their lives.

5.5.2 Land Based Identity

In *The Future of Environmental Imagination* (1995), Buell states that the earth is one's home that unites one's soul with the natural environment (94). The Native Americans attribute great respect to their homeland. Their religion is nature-oriented that presents the earth as an active participant that nourishes all the living creatures. It is the home to not only humans but all the living beings. "The developmentalist view, in short, is that land belongs to people, and can be traded or transformed to suit their immediate purposes; while the nativist view is that people belong to land, which holds them in their trust and requires their care and custodianship in return" (Huggan and Tiffin 70). The earth is a source of life for the Native Americans; it feeds them and provides them with shelter to live. They seek "land consolidation" (DeLoria and Lyttle 255) to renovate their tribal identity. The identity of the protagonist, Set, is restored when he comes back to his native land. In the European environment he was ignorant of his tribal culture and almost lost his mental peace. He suffered with the loss of the land; this lethal dispossession consigned him to the greater trouble "not just in terms of loss of land but deprivation of cultural connection and political sovereignty as well" (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 121). For his satisfaction he communicates with nature and brings together human beings and animals as well as re-establishes a relationship with his ancestors through painting. When he looks at colourful nature his artistic ability becomes aroused in him and "his placement of colors, and his blending of colors, were nearly perfect" (Momaday 216). Thus to secure his tribal identity he connects himself to the mother earth and to his ancestors through paintings that "were strong and simple" (Momaday 291). These paintings recover Set from emotional strain and help him develop an intimate relationship with his natural surroundings. Painting is not just a source of income for him but a mode to communicate with nature. Finally, he has restored to a peace of life on his ancestors' land, where Grey would reveal him to himself. "And he was sure it was the place of which Grey had spoken to him and the grandmother had spoken to her" (Momaday 311).

On the holy land of his antecedents, Set recognises the spiritual power of bear in him and develops a close relationship with nature. In search of his identity, Set runs after the natural elements; his transformation into the bear leads him to a state of wellbeing. The bear reunites Set with the earth and its inhabitants. He can hear the sounds of the natural elements that are inexorably blended: “The sound of the night is made of innumerable voices on the earth” (Momaday 202). These are the sounds of running water, endless wind, animals, birds and insects that give mental peace to Set and strengthen his relationship with the natural landscape. “Land was the means of recognizing the Indian as a human being” (Deloria 7). Set’s identity is inextricably linked with his native land that presents his heritage and leads him towards a complete life. He introduces himself in association with his homeland; the synthesis of the natural elements and heritage assist him in rediscovering his identity. Set is able to restore his identity and feels “[t]he richness of the Plains” (Momaday 221). He attains contentment at his motherland that is a peaceful destination for him: “The sacred ground . . . the destination and destiny of ancients” (Momaday 245). Because of his connection with the motherland, Set understands the importance of the relationship with his tribal people and their tribal tradition. He listens to the voices of his forefathers that give him a lot of vitality and refreshes his mind and soul.

Set develops a cosmological relationship with the earth; he recognises the earth’s power and the mutual relationship between all its creatures. Set “declined slowly to the ground” and felt “serene and refreshed in his soul,” (Momaday 301). He enjoys the changing seasons and looks with wonder and surprise at the stars at night. At early morning he is happy to see the day light. As his strength restored, “he began to run” at dawn and “listened to the winds and the birds and thunder rolling on the cliffs...” (Momaday 291). The natural elements are imbued with the “properties of healing” (Momaday 274) for Set. Different colours of nature give him physical and spiritual strength. The sounds of the birds and wind appeal to him like music “descending from every point on the horizon” (Momaday 292). All these natural elements are like the blood, flesh and bones for Set and treated with respect. In the same way, the wild sights of the earth have a healing and spiritual influence on Set; these sights enable him to recognise the power of the earth. He attains peace of mind in the heart of his native land.

5.5.3 Indigenous Women's Environmental Sensibilities

Adamson states that the natural resources must be equally shared among all beings regardless of gender and racial differences. The U.S. government policy is to reduce the livestock; no one is allowed to own the entire herd. The Federal government approves a proposal "by the all-male Tribal Council; women were simply not consulted by the federal agents" (Adamson and Ruffin 53-54). The indigenous women are considered to be mere flesh to be used for sexual pleasure. On the other hand, the women are given respect in their tribal culture even the indigenous people attribute the feminine characteristics to the earth. They look at the women as the preserver and conveyor of the socio-cultural values of their ancestors that tie them up with their environment. Through stories and different rituals, the indigenous women transmit their ancestors' culture and beliefs to the coming generations. As Grey "knows exactly how her parents and grandparents lived, and she knows how to live in the same way" (Momaday 272). She shares this knowledge with Set to restore his peace of mind. Set experiences mental breakdown as he is cut off from the natural environment and his family. Grey treats him physically and spiritually to pull him out of the slough of physical and spiritual breakdown. Set says, "I am sick, I have been sick for a long time, but I hope to be well and strong with Grey's help" (Momaday 295). Set has been groomed in a different environment, since childhood he is cut off from his tribal society. With the help of Grey, Set connects himself with his progenitors and shifts from a traumatic to peaceful life. It is Grey "who would bring him to his destiny" (Momaday 229). Grey gets instructions from her grandmother, Kope'mah and inspiration from nature to heal Set's problems: "In her dreams the grandmother instructed her" (Momaday 173). Even after the death of her grandmother Grey continues to get help from her. She is grateful to her grandmother and gives expression of her deep reverence for her grandmother through sacred ceremonies. She takes herbs and pollens to her grandmother's grave and speaks the words "that were sacred" (Momaday 174). Grey imagines that she turns into a turtle and communicates with her grandmother.

With the help of Grey, Set is able to inhale the fresh air of the mountains and touches the earth. Because of his contact with Grey, Set is alive and happy and finds himself stronger and energetic. He starts running and begins to cry with pleasure; he

enters into the natural world and runs with “the best expression of his spirit” (Momaday 296). Grey makes it possible for him to know himself; with her assistance, Set recovers his identity. She uses the natural medicines to restore his broken relationship with the socio-cultural values and religious beliefs of his antecedents. She knows the curative power of the “religious healing and proper natural diet” (Deloria and Lyttle 251). She is acquainted with the reliability of the natural medicines. The medicine she prepares contains feathers and crystals, pollens and herbs, a buffalo horn, and an eagle-bone whistle. Grey was born with extraordinary intelligence and unusual stamina that continue to influence her life as an enduring legacy. She harbours in her heart great respect for nature. She loves a complete life based on a strong relationship between humans and their environment. From her childhood the great feelings of womanhood are instilled in her with the help of her grandmother.

Set’s healing is attained owing to his close connection with Grey; she took him to the natural world where Set is “refreshed and invigorated” (Momaday 297). In this peaceful and purified environment Set has restored a balanced life. His convivial comradeship with Grey strengthens his spiritual relationship eventually as “they were married forever” (Momaday 299). The event of their marriage is a blessing for Set; it is their bond of life that helps Set to restore his lost identity. During the wedding ceremony the priest arranges: “herbs and pollens...feather fans, a bowl of water and an eagle bone whistle” (Momaday 298). The beauty of nature appeals to Set and Grey at such extent that they even look at each other occasionally, their concentration is on the ceremony that is celebrated in natural surroundings. Grey practises the ceremonies that are performed in the outer environment to show regard to nature. As she guides Set to praise the earth and smash the sand and snow over his body for a healing purpose.

Momaday creates Set’s “true self and identity by recovering and connecting [him] with various female indigenous figures who provide a link to the past and a history” (Dreese 61). Set goes through a long crucial journey; he is restored to his true self and brought back to the natural life by the indigenous women. Grey and grandmother who “wanted to live in the old way” (Momaday 65) are his mentors who instruct him and expose him his tribal tradition. Grey takes Set to her mother’s home for his treatment. Her arrival at her mother’s home helps Set in returning to his origin. Here she speaks

seriously and solemnly. She looks very beautiful in “pollen on her forehead and cheeks...with feathers in her braided hair” (Momaday 290). She wears no other makeup except pollen and feathers. In this natural wearing she brings Set: “into the rhythm of life at Lukachukai” (Momaday 291). Grey gets help from nature before leaving for Lukachukai in the company of Set. She bows down before the sun and offers prayers, in her prayer she pleads for having the knowledge of their destiny. After getting inspiration from the sun she draws a map on the ground and guides Set where they have to go. Lukachukai “is a place of great beauty” (Momaday 69) where Grey’s mother and sister live. In this beautiful ecosphere, Grey’s beautiful natural appearance strengthens Set’s relationship with his environment. On the way to Lukachukai the blue mountains, the sky and stones of different colours attract his attention. Set has not seen that place yet he can imagine its beauty in company of Grey and says, “Beauty is truth and truth is beauty” (Momaday 69). Grey explains her beautiful appearance with regard to the beauty of nature around her. As she says, “I like to see the sun rise and set, I like to hear birds singing and horses farting, wind and water running” (Momaday 69). Her beauty appeals to Set and he takes interest in her and her mother and sister as well. He asks her again and again to tell him more about her mother and about the natural place where she lives. On Set’s request Grey describes her mother to him in the following words: “She is Navajo woman and a traditionalist. She is a member of Water clan. She keeps the old way” (Momaday 272). From the teachings of Grey and her description of her mother Set derives great satisfaction and also comes to know “the beliefs and values of Native attitudes toward transformation and environmental respect” (Dreese 107). Grey speaks to him about her sister, Antonia who is thirty one years old. She is very intelligent and practical. She loves the traditional ways of life. She also has innate beauty like her sister and mother who love nature and adorn themselves with the beautiful objects of nature. Set feels better by listening about Grey’s sister as well and says, “Maybe I will fall in love with her” (Momaday 273). His journey towards Grey’s mother, sister and niece and the natural world fortifies his innate strength and mental peace. It is the journey embarked on for the sake of his wellbeing, and his being restored to a self well versed in tribal tradition.

Momaday presents “indigenous feminisms as a forum where indigenous issues can be articulated and configured” (Adamson and Ruffin 171). The indigenous women are conscious of the sufferings of the disconcerted tribal people and can empathise with them. As Set knows that his pain will recover by keeping contact with the women who are part of nature. Grey leads him towards the female characters and also guides him to stay in the fresh air of the natural environment: “Place your hands in the snow...Sing to the earth; it does you good” (Momaday 275). Grey assures him that he must get strength from this journey as she says, “The bear invites you, taunts you, and reminds you of its power” (Momaday 277). Grey practises religion that blends natural beliefs of the Native Americans’ ancestors. Her grandmother initiates Grey into Navajo and Kiowa religions. Grey always communicates with her grandmother and both of them plan to restore Set’s lost natural life through a metamorphosis. The grandmother gives Grey “a bag made from the whole skin of the bear cub” (Momaday 242). It contains medicine made of the natural ingredients. Grey is happy to get the medicine bag including the sacred elements. She feels that Set is getting well and she introduces her niece, Nanibah also to him who is an imaginative and irresistible girl. Now Set is happy and feels better.

By connecting Set with “the tribal female community, [Momaday] identifies the values of living” (Adamson and Ruffin 170). Guidance of the women remains a great source of inspiration in the life of Set. They also share the glorious history of their tribe as well as their problems with him. Set’s journey towards his self-identity begins when his grandmother calls him to “his genesis,” (Momaday 64) to the native land. At Oklahoma Set finds an “idea of himself” (Momaday 52). He has restored to his true self by recalling his dead grandmother because “she was the touch stone of his belief in the past” (Momaday 45). She has given him strength and it is her spirit that drives his blood. Even after her death he can visualise her existence. He gets comfort to think about her. Set does not know about himself what the grandmother and Grey know about him. They know that his identity lies in the natural world. Even after her death the grandmother communes with Grey when she asks her whether Set has restored his self being: “Is he lost? Is he free? What is his great pain? Does he know what he is” (Momaday 116). Nature is the channel of communication between Grey and her grandmother. When Grey enters the graveyard, she listens to the grandmother by placing her ear on the earth.

5.5.4 Significance of Set's Transformation into Bear

In the Native American religion and culture bear has great significance; it has a metaphorical possibility to strengthen human-animal relationship. It is a “bridge-maker” (Boyd, *Mad* 234) between humans and animals. *The Ancient Child* presents the Kiowa story of a boy, who turns into bear. The relationship of the bear boy with Grey is the central concern of the novel. In other words, it maps the transformation of Set and Grey from individual to communal lifestyle. The Native Americans call the bear by different names as it “wants to serve as a talker for man” (Jr 79). The bear exists in their minds as the emblem of awe-inspiring strength, a religious symbol and life force motif. The tale of the boy's transformation into the bear also gives a message that human life is intricately tied up with other human beings as well as the natural elements. The bear boy pursues his sisters who “became the stars” (Momaday 1) and gets married with Grey. By mentioning Set's transformation into the bear and the bear boy's relationship with his sisters and finally establishing his marriage with Grey, Momaday portrays that “all forms of life, nonhuman and human alike, are henceforth to be considered as citizens dwelling together in this great and virtuous republic” (Worster 111). This transformation restores Set to nature and to himself. Eventually he comes back to his origin, to his home. This last journey depicts the Native Americans' identity, and their cultural as well as religious values.

Through his transformation into the bear, Set becomes a part of nature and rejects the European culture. His course of life is changed when “he opened his eyes suddenly to the full moon” (Momaday 312). The natural world around him appears to him alive, he realises the sacredness of nature that is a source of strength and pleasure for him. As he looks at the stars “They became brighter and brighter, riding over the north edge of the rock tree, revolving down the sky” (Momaday 312-13). Being a bear boy, Set “heard things he had never heard before” (Momaday 313). He can listen distinctly water running and air splashing upon pine trees. He can listen to the sound of the falling leaves and the feathers of the flying hawks in the sky. Now he becomes a part of nature and his senses work so strongly: “It was as if he could detect each and every vibration of sound” (Momaday 313). He can smell and listen to all the natural elements as well as his sisters around him at a time. He can smell the fragrances of the wildflowers, the grass and

movement of animals and his seven sisters. With strong senses of bear even he can smell stench of the innumerable dead bodies in the earth. Set's transformation into bear is actually reflective of the shift from the European world to the natural region of the Native Americans. This transformational story "embodies the beliefs and values of Native American attitudes toward transformation and environmental respect" (Dreese 107). The tribal religious and cultural values penetrate Set's mind and body; consequently, he recovers physically as well as spiritually. He is imbued with a healing influence and great strength through his association with the power of the bear. His transformation from a human into a bear implies both physical and spiritual change. Through this transformation he is reunited with his native culture to which he truly belongs and now he begins to think of himself as well as other beings.

Bear is injurious for those who disrespect nature, but in the Native American culture and religion it has great importance, it is a sacred being and a source of life as well as peace. As Set says that we human beings have ceased to amuse God because of our destructive activities. God feels pleasure through the creation of the natural elements. He feels pride in the natural world because the birds, the eagle, the star and the whale admire Him. "He used both hands when he made the bear" (Momaday 39). The creation of nature gladdens God, particularly God is proud of the creation of the bear. The bear is given respect because of its association with nature and human beings. "The polar bear has claws and a fur coat to cope with its environment; we humans use our cultures to do the same" (Worster 37). The chain of relationship from human beings to non-humans is strengthened through this transformation. Like animals, the Native Americans live in the true spirit of nature. For them nature is not a phenomenon embodied outside them. There is a direct relationship between the Native Americans and their environment. The non-human environment is not merely a framing device but a part of their social life and religion. Buell uses the term, "reciprocal construction" or "co-construction" (*The Environmental Imagination* 158) for such a close association between human and the non-human environment. Set's changing into a bear indicates the interconnectedness of humans and non-humans. After his transformation into a bear his relationship with the earth and all its natural entities is further strengthened. The power of the earth emerges from the odours of "bear grease" (Momaday 242). Set realises the power of the earth

when he is close to it in the form of a bear. The Native Americans' spiritual and physical needs are fulfilled by a sense of oneness with nature and their religion centres on ecosphere.

5.6 Depiction of the Euro-Americans' Maltreatment of the Native Americans and their Environment in *House Made of Dawn*

Euro-Americans associate the Native Americans with nature to brand them savage and primitive-minded. From the colonising perspective, the Native Americans are dependent and brutal people who need to be developed and civilised:

Euro-American readings of the landscape have assigned "nature" to those mythical places untouched by human culture. At the same time human and non-human populations considered closest to nature and part of the "wilderness" landscape are deemed others who are in need of control and domination. (Adamson 85)

Euro-Americans have got a pretext for dominating the indigenous people by linking them to nature. Moreover, the indigenous people have been deprived of their natural world and heritage, resulting in the loss of their tribal identity. In order to usurp their natural resources, Euro-Americans have been making them alcoholics. In consequences of alcoholism, the indigenous people have been facing numerous problems like poverty, the loss of their tribal culture, epidemic of fatal diseases, and restlessness among them. Alcohol erases their memory and makes them oblivious of their cultural and traditional values. They spend almost all their "savings to maintain worthless alcoholic" (Buell, *New England Literary Culture* 299). The protagonist of the novel, Abel stops identifying himself with natural world and his tribal culture owing to mental stress that is caused by intoxication. On the other hand, the devastating experience of war heightens the level of his miseries and sufferings; the war has a detrimental impact on humans and non-humans alike. The mangled environment throws Abel for a loop; he is mentally shattered; he is alien to himself. Like Abel, Tosamah and Ben Benally are also extremely disturbed by the ruination of nature at the hands of Euro-Americans. The damage to the natural environment has caused the loss of their tribal identity.

5.6.1 Manipulation through Intoxication

The scourge of alcohol has been ravaging the race of the Native Americans. Because of the excessive use of “beer, whisky, vodka” (Alexie, *First Indian* 37) the majority of the Natives are losing control over themselves. Abel drinks too much as a result he lets his precious link with the natural environment slip through his fingers as well as losing his money and job: “He drunk about half the time ...and it made him worse. Right away his money ran out” (Momaday 142-143). Abel has lost all his money to get alcohol; he gets two or three dollars from Milley by telling lies that he needs money for bus fare, or new clothes. He suffers financially as well as mentally and physically yet “he wanted to drink; he wanted to be drunk” (Momaday 93). He has lost his consciousness and unable to perform the healing ceremonies because of too much drinking; his continued drinking shows his continuing suffering. “He was crazy drunk, and he couldn’t stay on his feet” (Momaday 140-41). Because of too much intoxication he cannot understand the meaning of his grandfather’s words that are still echoing in his mind even after his grandfather’s death: “The random words fell together and made no sense” (Momaday 175). Abel’s torment increases because of intoxication.

Owing to alcoholism, Abel has lost his relationship with his ancestors as well as native land; he even cannot recognise his grandfather who has raised him and taught him tribal values. He advises Abel to cultivate the sense of strengthening his kinship with nature, but Abel’s habit of excessive drinking prevents him from integrating himself into his tribal values. Due to intoxication, Abel’s mind is not stable; “he was lying in a shallow depression” (Momaday 88) consequently, he is alienated from the surrounding environment. Alcoholism leads him to the path of negativity and self-destruction. His failure to assimilate into the tribal culture is attributed to his drinking problem. He loses the control over his body; “He was in pain. He had fallen down” (Momaday 88) on the earth face down. In a state of unconsciousness, he is unable to establish his association with the earth. All his priceless assets and contacts are trashed; even he suffers the loss of the company of his well-wishers. He drinks alcohol for mental satisfaction but when its effect evaporates, he lives with a guilty conscience. When he gives up drinking alcohol, he attunes to life in the reservation and Los Angeles.

The evil of alcoholism drains the Native Americans' financial resources and means of earnings; they become economically vulnerable; in order to buy themselves alcohol, they are bound to sell their homeland and animals at throwaway prices. "Economic stability must be established and maintained if Indians are to survive as distinct and healthy communities" (Deloria and Lyttle 245). Euro-Americans, who deal in the fur and hide of animals, exploit the Native Americans' environment by killing animals which is antithetical to the Native Americans' religious beliefs; "Killin' the little four-legged peoples" (Boyd, *Mad* 148) is forbidden from the indigenous people's religious perspective. Selling the hides of animals is just like selling their own skins. Because they are "sick with alcohol" (Momaday 89) thus ready to even vend the hides of their animals in order to satiate their thirst for drinking; they are wrecking their own environment.

5.6.2 Critique of the World War II

War is one of the major issues highlighted in the novel; the loss of the natural environment is the grave consequence of war. "World War II drew away financial and human resources" (Johansen and Pritzker 118) of the Native communities. Abel is the war veterans; he is confused and looking for his real identity after returning from the World War II. He is psychologically shattered to see the "strange insinuation of the machine" (Momaday 22). With the loss of the natural environment he has lost his native identity. After his return from the war, he finds nature has been destroyed and therefore his notion of communal life is smashed.

Abel returns from the war with post-traumatic stress disorder, "he was restless, full of excitement" (Momaday 21). After experiencing an extremely destructive event of the war, he suffers from depression and anxiety. During the war, his experience of the European world is quite opposite to his tribal natural lifestyle. Abel's interaction with "representational vehicle for the new petroleum age" (Adamson and Ruffin 80) annoys him. "He had never been in a motorcar before" (Momaday 21) his departure from the reservation. In the European world, first time he has travelled in bus, the noise of the engine and wheels make trouble for him. His first experience of the European world disturbs him, he has never travelled in motor car and bus that create noise and air

pollution. As “the bus came over... its windows caught for a moment the light of the sun” (Momaday 8). To cut the light of the sun means to cut him from tribal culture. When Abel returns from the war his grandfather looks at the bus with surprise. The door swings open and Abel comes out of the bus and finds his grandfather wearing straw hat. Before Abel’s arrival his grandfather arranged a horse-drawn carriage to pick him. Abel’s journey from the natural world of plants and cattle to the industrial world of mechanism and then from the motor vehicle to the horse drawn wagon shows that finally he has got mental satisfaction by re-establishing his relationship with the natural world of his ancestors. While leaving for war, Abel looks at the fields and remembers his past; his war experience and memories of the reservation life baffle his mind: “He could not put together in his mind” (Momaday 21) the memories of the recent past.

The war has not only annihilated nature but also disturbed the bond of association between the Native Americans and their environment. Abel is unable to adjust himself after a long departure from his tribal people and the natural environment due to the war. “His body was cracked open with pain, and he was running on” (Momaday 185). He is a victim of mental stress as the war has broken his bond with the natural environment and the tribal communities. “Something frightened him” (Momaday 11). The war has left such a harmful effect on Abel that he is completely shattered and experiences difficulty in restoring his identity; he finds himself alien to the land of his ancestors. During the war, Abel was given respect, but after the war again he is considered a second-class citizen. In the military uniform, Abel was accorded veneration and honour but as soon as he doffs his uniform, he is publically disrespected. The military uniform kept Abel away from the tribal lifestyle and he was imbued with the European culture. When he returns to the reservation, he puts away the uniform and wears his tribal traditional dress: “A grey work shirt and a straw hat with a low crown and a wide, rolled brim” (Momaday 37) that manifests his tribal culture.

The earth from which life springs is sacred for the Native Americans but it is used as a commodity by Euro-Americans who have dug up mines during the war which damage the natural land. These mines alloy all the valuable natural resources; poison the earth and its people; turn the natural world into a hazardous zone. At such precarious environment Abel “could feel his heart beating and the sweet growing cold on his skin.

There was something like remorse or disappointment now that rabbits were still and strewn about on the ground” (Momaday 18). Green peace is destroyed through different chemicals that are used in the war. The war is a great environmental problem that increases the possibility of pollution. On the one hand, it eradicates human life while on the other hand it causes pollution that is injurious to all the living beings. Such environmental problems gradually ruin the whole atmosphere, resulting in “acid rain...ozone depletion, and global warming” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 98). The dangerous chemicals and injurious ammunition have a detrimental impact on all the living beings. “The earth was ashen and the sky on fire...the blood rise and flow” (Momaday 23). As a result Abel is disappointed and confused even he has lost mental peace and contact with his physical environment. He has been suffering from shell shock owing to the terrible and horrible war experience; he is spiritually as well as mentally broken. “He didn’t know where he was” (Momaday 21). There is only isolation and confusion for Abel; he has lost all the memories of the past and is suffering from mental trauma. He gets comfort from the horrible chemicals of the war among the leaves; he hides himself among the leaves while lying on the ground. Abel’s predicament is connected to the destructive chemical materials that are used in the war.

5.6.3 Forced Vacuum between the Native Americans and their Environment

Joni Adamson states: “The environment” must be defined as lived space, as the places where communities of people work and live and interact with the non-human world around them” (Tošić 2). Nature is an impetus to keep the Native Americans motivated and optimistic in their life; it is their religion and very identity. They draw sustenance from nature; survive on it; also worship it. Abel is forced to sever the relationship with his environment and his heritage and therefore he has lost his native identity. He considers himself “somehow foreign and strange” (Momaday 11) in the European environment. Under Euro-Americans’ influence, Abel suffers a lot; he is dazed and disappointed in alien world. On his coming back to the native world of his ancestors, he is happy and sings a song of pleasure:

Before me peaceful,
Behind me peaceful,
Under me peaceful,

Over me peaceful,

All around me peaceful. (Momaday 150)

The natural environment provides Abel with a pathway towards peaceful life; he restores his health and self-identity. In the natural world of his antecedents, different colours and sounds of the natural entities rise in prayers and cure his physical diseases and mental disturbance. The sound of rain, thunder rolls and sliding rocks echoed with sound of the drumbeats in the room. The repetition of these sounds summons the spiritual power of his people. His healing starts with the realisation of his relationship with his tribe. Abel recalls the lesson taught by his grandmother.

Abel is shattered after leaving his homeland and community; he stumbles meaninglessly in the European world and searches different ways to support himself. In the unnatural world of Euro-Americans, he is completely confused, even he does not know about his parents. “His father was a Navajo, they said, or a Sia, or an Isleta, an outsider anyway” (Momaday 11). He feels the ruptures of his tribal identity and feels that he is isolated from the world around him. Due to the loss of the natural environment, he has lost the sense of a shared community life. He realises that he has sunk into the quagmire created by Euro-Americans who misrepresent his natural lifestyle and make every effort to keep him from his progenitors’ culture. Abel’s discomfort increases with the fear of losing the native land. He is completely broken and feels lack of power because he “had lost his place” (Momaday 92). When he thinks of his own powerlessness, his body throbs with pain. He is mentally and physically tortured: “He wanted to die” (Momaday 88) instead of living in the European world away from the natural environment. His anxiety and pain heightens in the European environment. Owing to his isolation from the natural world, Abel suffers from the feelings of helplessness and cultural estrangement. The alienation from nature means an end to the existence of the established tribal culture. Ben feels that Abel is in great pain because of his alienation from his native land and his cure lies in his return to the natural world. In order to dispose of disappointments and sufferings, “he had drunk some wine” (Momaday 13). In the European environment, Abel feels culturally and socially estranged. This situation of meaninglessness leads him to self-estrangement and motivates him to search his tribal identity. Man has strong ties with his physical

surroundings and separation of man from nature causes “disaster, poverty, and dire disease” (Buell, *New England Literary Culture* 288). Abel represents his tribal people who suffer because of their displacement from their homeland. The Native Americans’ life, culture and religion are developed and interpreted from the perspective of nature. After losing their precious link with nature, they are tormented and incapable of making any progress in social spheres of life. Development and mental peace is only possible for them by achieving a harmonious relationship with the nature.

5.7 Depiction of the Euro-Americans’ Ill-treatment of the Native Americans and their Environment in *The Ancient Child*

The Native Americans’ life “serves as one story of human relationships with other species that need not trump any other in its details” (Adamson and Ruffin 108). The European colonisers have distorted the Native Americans’ communal life by obliterating the natural environment and presenting their life sharing bond with nature in a negative way. In *The Ancient Child*, Momaday highlights his tribal communities’ environmental problems that “lead to the Sin of Despair, thence to death and nothingness” (Momaday 39). The ruination of nature makes Set, the protagonist of the novel, unmindful of his association with his tribal people and native land. Set’s grief and pain surge up due to his alienation from the natural environment. Consequently, he remains confused about his identity and suffers from mental and physical breakdown to such extent that he “had been found unconscious in his studio. The studio stank of whiskey and vomit and urine, and it was in a shambles” (Momaday 39). He feels suffocated in the studio and starts vomiting. Set feels that as if he is lying in his own urine. In European environment Set “had suffered a great loss. He was dividing himself from the people around him” (Momaday 229). According to Buell, in their relationship with the earth and its other creatures human beings need to follow ethical values (Buell, *Writing* 186). All humans and non-humans live on the earth and have equal rights and they need to be given due respect. But with European arrival along with the natural environment, the Native Americans’ very identity is exploited “in the name of humanity” (Huggan and Tiffin 206).

5.7.1 Deliberate Attempts of Historical Assault

Joni Adamson laments over exploitation of the natural world in the following words:

All around us we see the dying back- in nature in our families in society ... One cause of this suicidal violence is greed. And that greed feeds on the philosophy that Earth is no our mother, but it can be used and consumed. ... History shows that when the people in power call the earth "it", they consider all connected with her to be its, too objects to be dominated, controlled, consumed and forgotten. (*American Indian Literature* 162)

The European colonisers consider the earth a commodity and destroy its natural resources for materialistic gain. The Native Americans have had a long history and socio-cultural values that are reflected in the natural lifestyle of their ancestors. Their relationship with their ancestors enables them to know the importance of nature in their lives. Euro-Americans attempt to dismantle the Natives' rich history so that they cannot practice their ancestors' tradition. As Set is kept ignorant of his tribal history and consequently he has lost contact with his homeland. Set's breaking up with nature causes confusion and anxiety in his mind. "He had never come to know where his father was buried, only an abstraction: out there where he came from" (Momaday 63). He is not aware of his own past, the past of his ancestors and his native land. After his arrival to the native land, "he began almost to feel at home" (Momaday 66) and became aware of his identity. The colour of the natural landscape reminds him about his forefathers; he comes back to his origin in the natural landscape of his ancestors.

Set is disenchanted due to the loss of the memories of his past. His healing journey completes when he returns to his forefather's land. His identity lies in his ancient tradition, but he is kept in dark about his past "through acerbity, alcoholism, and impoverishment" (Buell, *New England Literary Culture* 43). He is induced that his tribal beliefs and tradition are dead and out dated; "there were moments when he was absolutely convinced of it; there were such strange and disturbing visions in his head, such impulses to violence, such pain" (Momaday 214). In the European educational system, the tribal culture is presented in a distorted form and Set is never made familiar with their native culture and land in essence. "Education is so institutionalized most of it

is just rote memorizing. Where's the thoughtfulness? Where's the caring and the humanity?" (Boyd, *Mad* 220-21) Set says: "I feel that I am playing a part in a high school melodrama, among properties that are inappropriate, irrelevant, reciting lines that are at best poorly imagined, and I am fighting for my life that is the definition of my role" (Momaday 138). He feels humiliation in boarding school where he is bound to adopt the European culture. He is disillusioned with the alien European environment. "There were times when the disillusionment was so great that he wept" (Momaday 37). He is overwhelmed by his inner conflict and struggle. Here, Set recognises that nobody takes care of his feelings. Set and Grey are considered objects of exploitation by the European teachers in boarding schools. They are treated in such a way as if they have neither civilisation nor any cultural background. To look at Set, Grey observes: "a man in confusion and pain, a man severely wounded in his intelligence, verging upon collapse, a man in danger of losing possession of himself" (Momaday 247). Set is disenchanted; he has been left with no vision of his ancestors. Set is an orphan, additionally; he is also deprived of his motherland.

5.7.2 Coercive Crevice between Nature and the Native Americans

In order to make the Native Americans oblivious of their cultural roots, Euro-Americans keep them away for years from their homes and prevent them from wearing their traditional dress. The Native Americans dependence on the natural food and hunting is misrepresented by the European colonisers to "undermine the distinctness of the [tribal] culture" (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 96). They are displaced from their native land and forced to adopt the European environment. Momaday depicts the Native Americans' plight and anxiety due to the havoc wreaked in their natural world and socio-cultural values by the European colonisers. Set suffers from mental as well as physical torment when he takes his minds off his past. Owing to the alienation from nature, he fails to lead a peaceful life. While living in the European environment, he finds his life meaningless. He is socially isolated and culturally estranged since he is no more in contact with his native land. It is a "terrible mutation and suffering, a pain so great as to have become desperation and rage, and profound helplessness" (Momaday, *The*

Ancient 215). The scientific unnatural environment of Euro-Americans alienates him from his natural environment as well as past history.

Since his childhood, Set has not got the opportunity of being associated with his native land. In an alien environment, he has been a victim of sheer torment. At the age of thirty, he endeavours to get mental satisfaction in painting the natural elements but it is a temporary satisfaction. Although he becomes a darling of Euro-Americans because of his superb art of painting, he is asked to make a compromise by painting as per instructions. He is admired and invited to the clubs. His admirers “gave parties in his honour. Women took notice of him” (Momaday 37). They all revere him for his paintings to accomplish their mission. Set realises that this appreciation is not honest and sincere. “The dealers and critics were narrow-eyed and glib, and there were calculations in all their faces” (Momaday 37). Painting of the natural elements is the life force and a source of pleasure for him “that is what brought him to life” (Momaday 37). But he has to fulfil others’ desire to remain under their spell. The images of birds and trees excite him at such extent that he loves to paint them. He paints a bird and says with pleasure, “here, see. This bird I have painted, it is what I have seen in my soul” (Momaday 37). Set wants others to see the bird so closely with pleasure as he does. But in the shallow European environment, no one appreciates his feelings and love of nature. He calls a child and asks him to look at the different pictures and colours, for a moment the child is surprised and wondered as it is in his instinct to love nature. But the drab and tame “European culture” (Buell, *New England Literary Culture* 145) does not allow the child to praise the painting.

Set “found himself in a difficult position” (Momaday 37) in foreign environment where he remained upset. In such an indifferent environment he becomes sick moreover, he is unable to work freely; “he wanted to paint a tree but he was obliged to paint a house” (Momaday 38). He is not allowed to get mental satisfaction even through painting nature. He is kept under restrictions and pre-planned circumstances. As a result of such ill-treatment, he suffers from physical and mental trouble. Set is fully excited to think of the natural entities and loves to paint nature, but his talent is not appreciated and his desires remained unfulfilled. His desires are suppressed at such extent that he “was in danger of losing his soul” (Momaday 36). Numerous demands are made upon him and he is compelled to fulfil their demands. It is difficult for him to refuse them. He is kept

under restrictions away from nature. In isolation from his community and native land, he fails to understand himself. He is so confused that he asks himself: “Are you Set?” (Momaday 132) He looks at the mirror and asks questions to his image.

The Europeans’ ill-treatment aggravates Set’s grief of the loss of the natural landscape and he undergoes sufferings. He suffers from internal conflicts and says: “I have come to a dangerous place in my life. Something threatens me... It’s humiliating” (Momaday 138). He becomes aggressive and keeps no contact with others. Set’s love for his native land heightens his mental disturbance when he is away from “natural environment and aboriginal culture” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 125). This trauma and sufferings cause put “stress and strain” (Momaday 241) on his mind. Eventually, his quest for nature brings him to the bear and to himself. Set’ encounter with Euro-Americans has disturbed him to such an extent that he is unable to express himself. He wants his mind to speak but it does not happen. He considers it necessary to present his true identity in order to get rid of “helplessness to the level of speech” (Momaday 73). But he is unable to express his feelings due to the disturbed state of his mind; “he did not even know what he wanted to say” (Momaday 73-34). In the European environment, he is denied the access to the natural landscape belonging to his ancestors. On the other hand, he is not allowed to satisfy his senses through painting. Set feels he is “among the graves of the strangers” (Momaday 104). Euro-American culture is stranger and dead for Set even he finds himself dead and lifeless in that alien culture.

Momaday presents the Native Americans’ ritual of the Sun Dance in both of his novels, *House Made of Dawn* and *The Ancient Child*. The Sun Dance plays an important role in defining the Natives’ relationship with the natural environment. It has historical and religious significance. In *The Ancient Child*, the Sun Dance “held near the mouth of Oak Creek” (Momaday 21) in 1887. Grandmother, Kope’mah, receives her power from it to restore Set’s bear identity. She comes to attend it and she is given great respect among her tribal people. For Euro-Americans, the Sun Dance is outlawed and “out of time” (Momaday 299). They desecrated the Natives’ rituals and religious beliefs as well as devalue the natural elements. Grey knows that in consequences of the colonisers’ sacrilegious approach the ecosystem will get disturb: “The hail would damage the trees and fields...the rain would run in sheets and cut the traces of numerous lines and furrows

in the earth” (Momaday 250). She believes that when humans pay respect to nature in return nature also pays regards to them. In the same way nature gets angry with those who disrespect it.

5.8 Momaday’s Response to the Euro-Americans’ Treatment of the Native Americans and their Environment in *House Made of Dawn*

Since European colonisation “the bonds that tie all living things, human and non-human, into an interconnected web...have nearly been lost” (Adamson and Ruffin 202). In response to European destructive and hegemonic policy, *House Made of Dawn* raises voices in favour of environmental justice. A complete ecosystem consists of the ideal adaptation of human beings, animals and plants to their environment. With such an image of the ecological values, humans’ interaction with their environment is a code of “ethical obligation to human-nonhuman relations” (Buell, *Writing* 202). The novel helps decide how much and what type of human interference in nature is acceptable. It also decides what type of culture is considered favourable for the natural environment. Momaday does not reject progress and development but denounces the European interference that causes “unprecedented destruction of the earth and of indigenous ways of life” (Adamson and Ruffin 202). The indigenous people are strong enough to defend their mother earth and traditional ways of life. The strong people are “deeply involved in their traditional life, in the memories of their blood” (Momaday 189). Momaday’s response to the European devastating activities makes it easy to understand the Native Americans’ socio-cultural beliefs.

5.8.1 The Native Americans’ Religious Beliefs versus Euro-Americans’ Arrogant Views

The Native Americans’ association “with nonhuman life is interfused with all their thinking, spiritual belief, and behavior” (Love 81). Christianity rejects the Native Americans’ religious beliefs with a point of view “that the culture of the U.S. Anglo majority is superior to that of any other nation” (Adamson and Ruffin 181). Abel is inclined towards his tribal beliefs and cultural values. He is shocked at the loss of his tribal ancestors and their favourite natural environment. The most important question for him is to save and practice his strong beliefs in nature. To show his reaction against the

Christian teachings, Abel wears the traditional dress of his tribe and sings songs in remembrance of his grandfather who has taught him about the importance of nature and the tribal culture. By covering his body with ashes, Abel purifies himself since he feels that he has been contaminated by the evil of the European culture. “He reached inside and placed his hands in the frozen crust and rubbed his arms and chest with ashes” (Momaday 190). As a token of his protest against the European lifestyle, Abel rubs his body with ashes and runs towards the natural world to reaffirm his relationship with his tribal land. To rub ash on his body is a healing ritual that restores his health by connecting him with the natural world. “All of his being was concentrated in the sheer motion of running on” (Momaday 185). The running is a religious rite; Abel’s running at dawn provides him with physical as well as spiritual strength to resist the European beliefs and teachings. As Abel runs, he overcomes the evil and death and enjoys the natural environment. On the way he can see the river, the mountains, fields and the sky. The sacred scenes of nature clearly appear to him when he performs religious ceremonies. By performing the ancient religious rituals, he neutralises the evil influence that has been dominating him. He is “healed by a return to Native values and beliefs” (Temple and Velie 147). The effect of religious truths re-establishes his relationship with the natural environment. His religious beliefs not only enable him to discard the European arrogant religious views but also help him return to the ancient ways of life.

Abel has been sent to the boarding school so that he will forget his primitive and the natural lifestyle. He is provided with the European dress and also taught the European lifestyle:

They deloused him and gave him a lot of free haircuts and let him fight on their side. But was he grateful? Hell, no, man. He was too damn dumb to be civilized. So what happened? They let him alone at last. They thought he was harmless. They thought he was going to plant some beans... Oh, he was going to make his way, all right. (Momaday 131)

Euro-Americans serve Abel with all the facilities to instil the concept of European environment in him. They are well aware that Abel belongs to a humble background and he cannot avail himself of the luxuries and facilities provided to him. They believe that he will be happy in a comfortable environment offered by the boarding school and may

forget the natural lifestyle of his ancestors. But Abel resists the European culture; he has a burning desire to lead a traditional life and to remain touch with nature. He refuses to get his hair cut in a European hairstyle. Because of his long hair, Tosamah, a tribal leader, calls him by the name “longhair” (Momaday 131). Abel loves his tribal tradition and unwilling to assimilate into the European culture. Although he is called uncivilised and primitive-mind, he is not willing to leave his natural values of life. At the alien environment of boarding school he always dreams “to go on back home” (Momaday 140). Abel is alienated from his natural lifestyle and consequently he has lost his identity. Although the European colonising policy is shrouded in complete secrecy, the colonisers attempt to imbue the Native Americans’ natural way of life with the European colours in “the colonialist/capitalist logic of accumulation and development” (Huggan and Tiffin 100). But Abel can see through the Europeans’ game plan: “Something was wrong, terribly wrong” (Momaday 87). In reaction to this missionary education system, Abel finally recovers his self-being by reconnecting himself with his native land and tribal culture.

5.8.2 Reaction against Environmental Injustice

As all the universal elements are interconnected; environmental defilement spreads and pollutes the whole ecosystem regardless of geographical and socio-cultural boundaries. Environmental pollution is not a problem for a limited area or particular group of people:

Thus, when we talk about “justice,” we would not be talking simply about how specific environmental policies, events, and outcomes affect local minority communities or how these communities might be targeted for the placement of polluting industries and factories but rather how these groups are part of an entire planetary system. (Buell, *Ecoglobalist Affects* 160)

Environmental justice demands equal rights of all the creatures, no one is to be deprived of the natural resources or victimized by the colonisers. The whole order of nature is interconnected like a spider web and environmental pollution affects the entire ecosystem in defiance of all the limits. As a constituent part of the whole ecosystem the Native Americans know the significance of their relationship with their surrounding

environment. In his critique of economic exploitation, toxicity and militarism, Momaday appeals for protection of “every corner of the land” (169). Environmental justice opposes the exploitation of people and their land through military occupation or racial dominance. It demands the fair treatment of all the beings regardless of any difference by challenging the anti-environmental activities that threaten or endanger the natural world. It appeals for the fundamental rights of clean air, water, food, and land for all beings. The land is a prerequisite for the existence all beings and the allotment of communal land to individuals is against the Native Americans’ socio-cultural values. “To divide the lands was to invite every swindler in the West to rush in and cheat the poor, weak, and uneducated” (Alexie, *First Indian* 31). The Native Americans have a strong relationship with their land and interdependence of all the creatures as well as socio-cultural freedom.

The Native Americans and their natural world have been presented as “the empty land and a lot of old people, going no place and dying off” (Momaday 140). Momaday challenges such stereotypical presentation and makes it clear that most of the exploitation and murders in the United States have been executed by Euro-Americans. The European colonisers justify their modus operandi for exploitation by using the word “developmentalization of the Third World” (Huggan and Tiffin 28) for the ill-treatment meted out to the Native Americans and their environment. Consequently, a sense of hatred has developed in the Natives for Euro-Americans. The Native Americans’ abhorrence is the result of the “violence that has destroyed the Earth's balance” (Dreese 20). Their peaceful natural environment and social and cultural life are wrecked by the European colonisers. The ruination of nature is tantamount to the obliteration of the Native Americans’ very existence. Therefore, they severely condemn the colonisers’ activities; consider them their enemy and attempt to exterminate their very existence. Owing to certain reasons, a sense of hatred has developed in Abel’s mind against European colonisers and he has killed Albino whom he considers “an evil spirit” (Momaday 102). When the case of murder is referred to the priest, Father Olguin, he says, Abel has not killed a man but an evil spirit. Euro-Americans are considered enemy and evil spirits because of their destruction of nature. Tosamah presents Abel’s point of view in the following words: “He had killed the white man. It was not a complicated

thing, after all; it was very simple” (Momaday 90). Euro-Americans are the enemies of nature and the Native Americans, Abel will kill such enemies again if he gets the chance.

Even Abel hates white colour, the white colour of prison walls and dim whitish colours of machines annoy him. He is in trouble but he has “no real insight into his own situation” (Momaday 93). For his mental satisfaction, Abel looks at the sun and paints landscape with different shades. The rise of the sun and different colours of nature rejuvenate his mind. The natural sights, the valley and open fields give him mental satisfaction. He misses his past time when he used to hunt with his elders. Recollecting his past memories and living in natural environment make Abel feel relaxed; but when he thinks of his life in the European environment, he becomes upset and overcomes “with a desperate and loneliness” (Momaday 93). It is difficult for him to live in the city life. Searching a peaceful environment in the European world is a futile exercise and therefore he rebels against Euro-Americans. In contrast to the free natural environment of his ancestral land, in the European environment, Abel finds himself stranger. In the alien environment of Euro-Americans, he suffers from mental instability, and finally gets mental satisfaction through the ceremony of dawn run. He cannot adapt to the European culture that confronts the Native Americans' religion and culture.

The Native American environmental justice activists attempt “to redress the disproportionate incidence of environmental contamination in communities of the poor” (Adamson et al. 4). Momaday talks about the right of all the living beings to be protected from the environmental contamination. He affirms the interdependence of all creatures and ecological unity that are the salient features of the environmental justice movement. Abel represents the Native Americans who have a bitter experience after the European incursion into their land and react against the colonisers. In the European world, his instinct helps him return to his religion. In love of his natural environment, Abel sings the ritual songs of his tribe. “He got down on his knees and put his ear to the ground” (Momaday 91). In the same way like Abel, his friend, Ben also remembers his tribal socio-cultural values in the foreign world. Through reaction of Abel and Ben, Momaday depicts the Native Americans' response to the maltreatment rendered to their favourite natural world by Euro-Americans. There lies a great difference between the Native Americans' natural environment and Euro-Americans' artificial sophisticated world.

When Abel comes back to his native land, he realises the importance of the peaceful communal life of his tribal people. The Native Americans' encounter with the European world reveals them the real intentions of Euro-Americans behind the policy of development. Consequently, they realise that all the "boundaries need to be renegotiated in order to strengthen human-animal intercommunity" (Buell, *Writing* 219). Such realisation also reaffirms their association with the natural world.

5.8.3 Return to the Natural World

After having bad experience in the European environment, Abel returns to the "true or natural national identity" (Dreese 16) that is a life-driving-force for him. His return to the natural world where humans and non-humans live in harmony is indispensable for his existence. He completes the life circle by running towards the natural world. While running towards the native land, he sings songs in praise of its natural beauty. It is his love of nature that boosts him to run towards it regardless of physical exhaustion. "Once he could run all day, really run, not jogging but moving fast over distances, without ruining his feet or burning himself out" (Momaday 88-89). He loves his body that supports him to return to his homeland in which he has grown up. His journey to develop a close relationship with nature is emphasised by his naked body. Abel's remembrance of his beautiful body is symbolic of his life before the European colonisation. It is his love and desire for the natural life that stimulates him to shun the European world where he was completely shattered and upset. In order to get rid of mental trauma, Abel drinks too much and sleeps till the next day (Momaday 161). His getting up on the next day with the break of dawn symbolises the new life of Abel after the darkness of the European colonisation.

Abel's physical and emotional condition prompts him to return to the natural world where he hopes to lead a complete life. He gets mental peace when he realises the significance of his bond with the natural environment around him. He is so happy and declares happily:

With beauty before me,
With beauty behind me,
With beauty above me,

With beauty below me,

With beauty all around me...(Momaday 165)

Finally, he gets satisfaction and enjoys life completely at his native environment. When Abel gets better enough to travel, he moves towards New Mexico, where he comes to know that his grandfather is severely ill. Here in tribal culture, he knows what he has to do: he washes his grandfather's head with water and "placed at his grandfather's side" (Momaday 183) pollen and the sacred feathers. Abel cures grandfather by the agency of the natural medicines. On the death of his grandfather, Abel performs funeral rituals according to the tribal culture. He stops the burial rituals until the sun rises and keeps on waiting for the right time to perform the traditional ceremonies.

House Made of Dawn concludes with the final message that on coming back to the native culture, Abel succeeds in healing his physical and mental sufferings. He re-establishes his contact with the ancestors' culture that produces healthy environment for him, unites him with his people and encompasses everything that is good for his wellbeing. "He could see the canyon and the mountains and the sky. He could see the rain and the river and the fields beyond" (Momaday 185). The novel presents the purification of the natural life that Abel undergoes. He comes back to his ancestral land from alien world; it appears to him that his healing process starts with his departure from the European world to the natural environment. In order to save his life and tribal culture, he revitalises his relationship with the natural environment. After his return, Abel appreciates his native culture which proves to be a panacea for his pain and suffering. The novel begins as well as ends with the image of his running at dawn. Abel's running towards dawn is actually his movement towards wholeness.

Abel's struggle against the European culture of industrialisation signifies the conflict between the Native Americans' rustic lifestyle and the Euro-Americans' urban environment. In reaction to the colonising activities "he was going home...wanted to pray" (Momaday 166). He wants to take the indigenous people back to the natural world where they can interact with their elders to lead a healthy and complete life. The Native Americans suffer due to their isolation from their tribal people and the natural world that is a source of their survival. They have to return to their tribal culture for support and protection. Abel has lost his identity from the very early age when he was driven out of

his native land. In the industrialised world of Euro-American “the pain struck him” (Momaday 88). When he comes back to his native land “gradually he relaxed and the pain ran to his hands” (Momaday 88). He feels pleasure to look at his tribal people and recovers his lost identity.

After the war comes to an end, Abel adopts “age-old relations with the natural world” (Adamson and Ruffin 134); soon he realises the impact of the obliteration rendered to his environment by the colonisers. He feels “for a time the sun was whole beneath the cloud; then it rose into eclipse, and a dark and certain shadow came upon the land” (Momaday 7). Shadow on the natural world signifies the colonisers’ presence; because of this shadow, Abel is unable to enjoy natural beauty. From the very outset till the end of the novel, the shadow is still there to disturb Abel. But in consequences of the Abel’s response, “a shadow receding” (Momaday 314). Despite the indication of the shadow, there is a frequent use of the lights that symbolises that every cloud has a silver lining. Light is connected with the Native Americans’ spiritual concept. When Abel looks at the sunlight behind the mountains, he imagines that this is “where Creation was begun” (Momaday 117). The morning light not only re-establishes him with the natural world but also signifies purity. In the natural landscape, Abel sings songs at the break of dawn that is a sign of hope and pleasure for him after the dark period which he spent in the European world.

Abel has come back to “a house made of dawn. It was made of pollen and of rain, and the land was very old and everlasting” (Momaday 1). Ultimately, he achieves his destiny by reaching his house located in nature. In the natural environment he is physically as well as spiritually connected with his homeland. Here he can see his grandfather and other tribal people working in the fields. Now Abel is “inextricably tied to communal existence” (Temple and Velie 29). He appreciates the communal life of his tribal people and their collective efforts for prosperity. He loves to adopt the communal life of his ancestors and also realises the role of an individual in a society. When he looks at the mountains, the sky, the rain, the fields and the river he starts singing with pleasure and internalises his position in his surrounding environment. There is no sound of disappointment; “he had only the words of song. He went running on the rise of the song” (Momaday 185). Now he is no longer under others’ dominance.

5.9 Momaday's Response to Euro-Americans' Treatment of the Native Americans and their Environment in *The Ancient Child*

Momaday reacts against the “rape and murder” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 164) of the earth and its beings. Association of Set, Grey and Billy the Kid with animal life is a “grassroots reaction entails a vision for dissolving and alleviating the unequal burdens of environmental damage” (Adamson and Ruffin 159). Momaday negates the concept of the boundaries which split men and animals. In the European environment Set has almost lost his ethnic identity but yet not completely shattered. His very instinct pricks his conscience in bizarre environment and also stimulates him to leave for his “ancestral lands” (Deloria 38). In reaction to the ill-treatment meted out to Set by the European colonisers, he leaves the alien environment and re-joins the natural land of his ancestors where he is cognizant of his past history and himself. His native land connects him to his ancestors' tradition as well as with the natural environment. Set “had a strange feeling there, as if some ancestral intelligence had been awakened in him for the first time” (Momaday 64). He realises that he is not orphan and helpless; his ancestral natural landscape gives him parental love and a sense of belonging. He has got strength to react against the existed social set up in which his inner feelings are suppressed and his life has been directed by others. However, when he begins to understand himself, he reclaims his lost identity.

5.9.1 Recursion of the Native Americans' Historical Affinity with Nature

The Native Americans “rise up and claim their right to self-representation and self-determination” (Adamson, *American Indian Literature* 144). They are willing to discuss with politicians and other corporate executives their environmental issues. In order to guard their environment, they further cement their bond of association with the tribal ethnicities of their ancestors. Momaday depicts the broad history of the Native Americans' tradition and religious beliefs as “an extraordinary reaction” (Momaday 254) against the Euro-Americans' misrepresentation of the interdependence of the Natives and their environment. The Native Americans inherit the socio-cultural values of their forefathers and then they carry forward those values to their coming generations by virtue of the verbal tales as well as with the help of written literature. Set's survival depends on the transmitted knowledge of his progenitors. The rich history of his ancestors teaches

him to interact with the evolutionary natural world of his lineages and enables him to come to his own self-knowledge. When he gets the opportunity of visiting to the natural world: “He was taking a kind of strength from the journey” (Momaday 274) to resist the colonisers.

The Native Americans remain in touch with their past to revive the cultural values of their ancestors. In their culture, an individual cannot survive in separation from human and non-human beings. This communal lifestyle is a challenge to the European “means of competing for social position” (Worster 89). The Natives believe in the collective welfare of their communities and they despise the practice of individual achievement or personal gain; an individual is a part of the whole society which comprises human and non-human beings. Set’s separation from his tribal history renders his knowledge of life incomplete. Despite having “an incomplete idea of himself” (Momaday 52), he realises that in order to save his self-being he must discover his identity and inheritance. “He would give the best that was in him; but he would first and last be true to himself” (Momaday 38). In the European environment, Set is in danger of losing his native identity. Even after his coming back to the reservation his life is empty because yet he is unable to interact with the natural environment around him. He is unaware of the tribal cultural values that are based on the communal way of life and shared norms of survival. Set returns to the reservation in confusion and disappointment but “in his utmost humiliation” (Momaday 288), he gets satisfaction and declares happily: “Yes. I am *set*” (Momaday 312). His self-realisation forces him to react against the external social structure based on the boundaries between humans and non-humans:

An awful quit was in his heart...it was the vision he had sought...everything was familiar to him. He began to move towards the wood they were laughing...in the trees now, he gained ground...the confusion of sounds subsided, and he heard the things he had never heard before, separately, distinctly, with nearly absolute definition. (Momaday 312-13)

Set’s affinity with nature enables him to recognise the limitations of the European approach. He condemns the limited approach of the European culture in the following words: “With a lot of learning and a little talent, not to say luck, you can make something

out of something” (Momaday 55). His description of the existed culture is not just an imagination but it is what he experiences practically around him. After transformation into a bear: “His will’s power was unaccountably restored to him” (Momaday 288). He is beyond pain and weakness; now he is physically and spiritually strong enough to confront the destructive forces around him. Set comes to know about the importance of communal life. His tribal history has great influence on his life; moreover, the historical information paves the way to restore his identity.

Momaday’s presentation of strong ties between Set and his tribal culture is a positive response to Euro-Americans who attempt to keep the Native Americans oblivious of their ancestors’ tradition. Through religious and traditional ceremonies “Set’s story that must be told, and no matter how many times the story had been told in the past and would be told in the future” (Momaday 248). Such practices and transformation of the ancient tradition challenge the European colonising practices as well as reinforcing the need for adopting the tribal culture. Set’s conversion from weak, helpless and stranger human to a complete man who is “capable of violence” (Momaday 248) and has an ability to deny the European environment is the result of his sustaining a strong bond of association with his tribal tradition and religious values. His identity relies on his mutual relationship with non-human beings. Nature is sacred and has a cosmological significance for him; it provides him with a sense of belonging and secures his tribal identity. Set’s love for his forefathers’ land and his tribal culture is in his blood that compels him to re-establish himself by reacting to the European colonisation. Here in his ancestral land Set restores his identity and feels “exhilaration just in the going” (Momaday 274). He goes forth and back and wants to get rid of the previous feelings of disappointment and uncertainty. His journey from the European world to the native land provides him with security and sense of belonging. It is a journey towards self-fulfilment and self-realisation.

5.9.2 Response to the Stereotypical Presentation of the Native Americans' Religious Beliefs and Socio-cultural Values in Garb of Civilisation

Raymond Wilson states: "Native Americans in the twentieth century are no longer a vanishing race or a silent authority" (8). The Native activists attempt to sustain their tribal traditional and religious values that have been distorted. Momaday "challeng[es] the ecological Indian stereotype portrayed here and recogniz[es] widespread Native cultural values of ecological community" (Adamson and Ruffin 51). In the deceptive garb of civilisation, Euro-Americans attempt to undermine the Native Americans' religion and traditional ways of life. Through the transformation of the boy into bear which is given greater wisdom and potency, Momaday counters the Western philosophy in which "animals and the environment are often excluded from the privileged ranks of the human, rendering them available for exploitation" (Huggan and Tiffin 5). In order to challenge such insensitive assault on the Native Americans and their sweet animals, Momaday presents the bear boy as a symbol of wisdom and strength. "It was *his* [Abel's] bear power" (Momaday 213) that enables him to reaffirm his relationship with his tribe. The bear boy returns to his origin and "his genesis" (Momaday 64) and announces, "I am Kiowa" (Momaday 293). In response to "exploitation of animal (and animalised human) 'others' in the name of a 'human- and reason-centred culture'" (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 5), different symbols are used in the novel to reflect the influence of animals on the Native Americans' life. Billy the Kid symbolises animals like shark, eagle and bear. Set, Grey and Billy the Kid, all are associated with the bear. "She [Grey] and Set had touched together, and so they bore relation to the bear" (Momaday 230). Grey wears the mask of turtle, "It seemed indeed to be her head, her skull, well beyond the effect of the most masks" (Momaday 198). With this mask Grey confronts Dwight Dicks who had violated sanctity of Grey. By "looking into his stricken soul" (Momaday 200) in turtle mask, Grey convinces him that she has courage to take revenge of his violation and to undermine him. In animal masks she has the power to take her revenge and to lead Set to the path of restoration of his lost identity.

Euro-Americans' "Justification for dispossession and/or displacement was usually provided on one or more of three possible grounds: the self-accorded rights of 'conquest'

or ‘discovery’; the perceived inability of Native peoples to use land ‘properly’; and the still more skewed perception that the land was ‘empty’ and could therefore be occupied at will” (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 121). Set defies this deceitful justification by reaffirming a new commitment to his forefathers’ land where he finds his origin and says: “From this day on, I shall belong to this land, for it is truly worthy of my strength, my dreams, my life and death” (Momaday 244). It is a place that abounds in the natural sources where Set’s ancestors lived and celebrated their religious ceremonies. By connecting Set to his ancestors’ soil, Momaday saves his faith and soul from destruction. Here Set feels happy and relax as he says, “I feel good today...I feel better, better in my head” (Momaday 275). The environmental relegation is a great threat for the Native Americans’ religion, food security, sacred sites, land rights, their tribal identity and traditional ways of life. They communally defend their homeland and relationship with nature.

To pose a challenge to the European colonisers’ deceptive policies of development and civilisation, Momaday realises that it is necessary for the Native Americans to know about their religious beliefs and cultural values of their forefathers that have been “overlooked or suppressed” (Buell, *Writing* 46). Different ceremonies are celebrated in the novel; Set is an active participant of his Kiowa traditional and religious practices. Kiowa people perform many ceremonies of the bear, the buffalo, the Ghost Dance, and the corn pollen etc. Set restores his relation with his homeland and the lost identity through these powerful ceremonies. At the healing ceremony Grey is “singing softly, stirring the air over him [Set] with a grass broom and he sank into deep relaxation” (Momaday 296). Under the impact of this healing ceremony Set comes to know the importance of traditional values and “set his mind upon marriage” (Momaday 296). The ceremonies have healing effect for Set and help him restoring his identity. Grey knows that the natural ceremonies have spiritual and healing impact; this knowledge has been transferred to her by Kope’mah who continually participates in such healing ceremonies. Through these ceremonies the healing capacity of the natural world has been transmitted from Kope’mah to Grey and from Grey to Set.

These “ancient ceremonies” are usually performed at natural sites “to be of utmost importance to the future of the tribe” (Deloria 21-22). The ceremonies have been performed from generation to generation. With the help of the sound of the flashing

lighting, rain and insects, Momaday indicates the influence of nature in tribal culture and religion that helps Set regain strength. The repetition of the natural sound connotes spiritual and physical change of the protagonist. The repeated actions and sound of the natural movement also signifies Set's spiritual strength: "Light appeared as a crumpled surface of dark water on the grasses, then it deepened to sand" (Momaday 34-35). Sunbeams strike the surface of the earth, the colours of plants and birds' wings start shining. With different colours of nature, the sounds of the animals and birds mingle. The "instrumental reason that view[s] nature and the animal 'other' as being either external to human needs, and thus effectively dispensable, or as being in permanent service to them" (qtd. in Huggan and Tiffin 4) is blurred here in this sacred cycle of human and non-human that vitalises the healing mastery of nature. Set is connected to his ancestors' tradition through mingling with nature. He is known among the birds and animals as he is informed; "The eagle knows your name; the buffalo knows your name; the bear knows your name" (Momaday 258). Through presentation of such a vital connection between man and his environment, Momaday redefines "the life of the natural world that has been objectified, and...nonhuman creatures that have been negatively stereotyped" (Dreese 79). Vitality of the protagonist's life is presented in relation to the natural world that is the epicentre of the Native Americans' religious practices and socio-cultural values.

Set protests against the desecration of the sacred natural land and religious beliefs. He says: "I find myself struggling with something and the struggle becomes more and more violent" (Momaday 138). It is a type of his reaction against "federal conservation policies...[of] rationalizing not only Navajo soil and stock herding, but also Navajo family life and gender politics" (Adamson and Ruffin 51). The federal government's policy of civilization and development permits the merciless destruction of the sacred sites; the policy claims to protect the Native Americans' rights, but the situation is the other way round. The obliteration of the natural environment is the major problem that the Natives encounter. Set loves to enjoy the free natural life like his progenitors. He is obliged to the soil of his homeland that reinforces his faith and strengthens integrity of his religion and culture. He gives priority to the instinctive world of nature over the intellectual rational world of industrialization.

CONCLUSION

In answering the research questions and fulfilling the research objective, the present research work serves as a thorough analysis of the selected novels in backdrop of the following three eco-critical approaches: eco-cosmopolitanism, environmental justice and critique of development. Ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary approach that deals with multiple aspects (Jimmy 3). Development in the field of ecocriticism, on the basis of different phases and the existed eco-critical studies on the selected texts has been reviewed in the literature review section of this research. In order to provide background to the study, the secondary sources have been relied on. The Native Americans' environmental issues have been discussed by different native and non-native writers like David Rich Lewis, Dough Boyed, N. Scott Momaday, Louise Erdrich, Gerald Vizenor and Sherman Alexie. They have produced revolutionary works that depict the issues relating to the Native Americans and their natural environment. Their perspectives on the Native Americans' environmental concerns are presented in review of the related literature of the present research work.

From the perspective of the selected eco-critical approaches the remarkable feature of the analysed texts is the assertion that the fate of all the living beings depends on the mother earth for their survival (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 125). There is a food chain between human beings, animals and plants. Even the deceased bodies of humans and animals become the food of other living beings in "that way their lives aren't wasted" (Silko, *Almanac* 23). In this cycle of life nothing can be subjugated or conquered. The Native Americans' survival is dependent on the faith in the beliefs of their ancestors that human and non-human beings are interdependent and interlinked. They earn their modest living from herding cattle: "Cattle had become a major subsistence resource, incorporating some of the symbolic meanings of older parallel

activities and resources” (Lewis 67). These animals are not only source of food for them but also play the role of a ‘messenger’ and ‘assistant’ (Silko, *Ceremony* 182). It is because of their love for the animals that after hunting, Tayo offers prayers and pays regards to the sacrificial deer (Silko, *Ceremony* 46). Likewise, after killing the bear, Francesco smears his body with the blood of bear and shouts to call his fellows. The tribal people congregate and Francesco “gave them strips of the bear’s flesh, which they wrapped around the barrels of their guns. And soon the women came with switches, and they spoke to the bear” (Momaday, *House* 183-184). Francesco shows reverence to the bear by performing sacrificial rituals to appease its spirit and apologies to the bear for taking its life. The height of mutuality between humans and animals is that Set, the protagonist of *The Ancient Child*, is transformed into bear. The said transformation ultimately leads to the restoration of his relationship with the mother earth. Set is “restored to well-being” (Momaday, *The Ancient* 120) by his sudden transformation into the bear. Through the power of the bear, Set is cured and he rediscovers his identity as well as develops a harmonious relationship with his surrounding environment. This transfusion of power through sacred tales into Set’s body treats him physically as well as spiritually and enables him to get strength from his native land and the bear’s paw medicine. The Native Americans’ beliefs in nature are imbued with a sacred power based on the conviction: “God’s mystery can be found everywhere—the early morning mist, the rising sun, in the dense forests, on the vast plains, under star-filled skies, and beneath the changing phases of the moon. For the Native American peoples, regardless of tribe, spirituality cannot be separated from society or from any aspect of life” (Temple and Velie 342). Human beings are accountable for their relationship with non-human world. This moral lesson has been descended from the older generation to the coming generations. Nature is not simply the scenic background but it influences the Native Americans’ life and determines their actions. The natural environment not only offers them refuge from sufferings but also cures their spiritual crises and physical problems. Their association with non-human nature leads them to the experience of healing and hence they attempt to get the essence of their natural life back.

Ecocriticism, in Buell’s point of view, points to the mutual dependence of nature and culture on the earth. According to Buell’s “five-dimensional phenomenology of

subjective place-attachment,” (*Writing* 78) at the beginning the earth was space which later became inhabited. The earth is fused with human society and environment does not mean wilderness, a place out of human access, but it is a home where human beings live with non-humans. This description of nature does not follow the Euro-American concept of “the hierarchical separations between human beings and other elements of the natural world” (Elder 172). Human problems are looked at from the planetary perspective, under a holistic view in which all the creatures of the mother earth are treated equally. The boundaries get erased and cultures merged up. To solve the environmental problems it is necessary to “Think Globally, Act Locally” (Adamson and Ruffin. 206). One cannot solve global environmental problems without having a prior knowledge of the local environment. The present research work accentuates that there is need to connect the local environment with the global environment and to protect all the living creatures from the environmental hazards regardless of any difference.

The analysed texts are a composite of the environmental, gender-based, political and class-related issues. By depicting the reciprocal relationship between human and non-human beings, the present research exposes the limitations of both nature and human culture. At the same time, it illustrates the features related to the existence of human and non-human beings together. *Almanac of the Dead* is set in on the border of Central America and on the Mexican borders of the U.S.A. where people live and *Ceremony* points out the effects of nuclear infection on populated areas. In the same way, *House Made of Dawn* and *The Ancient Child* deal with the Native Americans’ environmental concern at the populated areas of New Mexico, Los Angeles and Oklahoma. The Native Americans’ issues of race, gender, class and power are correlated with environmental problems. The environmental degradation and social issues are inextricably linked (Novotny 722). The ruination of nature means the humiliation and conquest of the Native Americans. Similarly, the Natives’ removal from their homeland breaks the relationship between them and their communities. According to Halsey the Native Americans’ life is so simple that: “One must obey the kinship rules; one must be a good relative” (qtd. in Jaimes 65). The concept of a community has great importance for the Native Americans; their strength of life lies in cooperative and communal life that is not possible in individuality or separation. They share all they have and support each other. Nature is an

“inherent force which directs the world” (qtd. in Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 143). Nature is the Native Americans’ life; they cannot exist if it is subtracted from their daily life. They are in mutual relationship with the natural world that is a source of inspiration, protection and survival for them.

The present study gives a description of “environmental apocalypse” (Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism* 27), the environmental destruction at a large scale caused by the European colonisers. The Native Americans denounce the colonisers for “what they did to the earth with their machines, and to the animals with their packs of dogs and guns” (Silko, *Almanac* 201). The colonisers cannot gauge the level of appreciation and reverence accorded by the Native Americans to their natural environment. They term the non-human world ugly, “full of poisonous snakes, sharp rocks, and cactus” (Silko, *Almanac* 750). In the same way, the Native Americans are “often considered to be primitive or savage, and therefore backward and uncivilized” (Jaimes 95). The indigenous culture is deemed inferior and primitive consequently equally exploited. Particularly, the indigenous women become the direct victim of the European imperialistic policies; the women are not consulted for social matters (Adamson and Ruffin.53-54). Even the relations of mother, daughter and wife are abused. While highlighting the ill-treatment rendered to nature and the Native Americans by the European colonisers, the present study also raises the question how the colonisers view kinship between the indigenous people and nature. The colonisers attempt to convince the Natives that their lifestyle is primitive and it is Euro-Americans’ responsibility to make them civilised. The Native Americans’ children are sent to the European school system that is the unnatural environment for them; in this bizarre world, “many of the Apache children fell ill and died” (Silko, *Almanac* 234). These boarding schools are like prison camps for them where they are uncomfortable and consequently they fall ill and a few run away from this European environment. In the European world, they can neither practice their religious ceremonies nor cultural rites. It is an attempt to grow “the feelings of shame” (Silko, *Ceremony* 63) in the Natives at their tribal culture. The colonisers try to distort the Natives’ harmonious relationship with nature that is the foundation of their nationhood. Further, the Native Americans have been deprived of their homeland and its natural resources owing to the view that they are not “competent to rule over their own

lands” (Vickers 23). In the Euro-American civilised society there is no room for the Native Americans’ communal relationship with the natural life and their love of the mother earth. It is believed that they have made no contribution to the modern world of civilisation and progress.

In the illusive garb of civilisation and estate development, the Native Americans have faced serious environmental problems that stem from the loss of agricultural land and natural resources. The colonisers declared it their basic “right to control the land and resources” (Huggan and tiffin 53). The present research points out that the arrival of the European colonisers displaces the Native Americans to the reservations and their companion animals into wildernesses. In consequences of the European reservation policies, the fertile lands became “sites of direct colonial encounters” (Blackhawk 58). The fertile land has been turned into a wasteland in order to marginalise the Native Americans’ farming and animal life. The Native Americans are entangled in the web of facing different environmental problems in the form of infertile land and water and air pollution. Euro-Americans employ multiple kinds of tools such as war, uranium mining, reservation policy, alcoholism, misrepresentation of the Natives’ tribal culture to cause the ruination of nature. The present research highlights the detrimental impacts of the European imperialistic tactics on nature and the indigenous peoples. The indigenous people are physically as well as psychologically shattered due to alcoholism and environmental contamination. In order to get hold over the Americas the Native Americans are made alcohol addicts (Momaday, *House* 142). The curse of alcohol makes them land in hot water; they are displaced and deprived of the basic rights to live; they lose their culture and heritage. The effects of alienation from the traditional lifestyle and the natural world of their ancestors; “increased stress, which heightens the risk for alcoholism” (U.S. Commission 114) in the Native Americans. Satiating their raging thirst for alcohol becomes the prime objective of their life; they sell their motherland, animals and the natural resources for getting alcohol. On the other hand, the hazardous gases and the toxic chemicals used in the war harm the balance of the equilibrium of the whole ecosystem. During the World War II they are encouraged to fight for the betterment of country through deceptive appreciation and handsome packages. This “development process is crucially linked to technological know-how in the service of the state; and such

expertise, in the hands of the few, requires the self-sacrifice of the many” (Huggan and Tiffin 45). Instead of development the Native Americans’ very existence is jeopardized in terms of the loss of homeland, tribal identity, abject poverty and fatal diseases.

The present research not only fortifies the Native Americans’ beliefs in nature and their environmental problems but also reflects their response to Euro-Americans’ destruction and manipulation of nature. All the tragic factors relevant to the Native Americans’ miseries and sufferings have induced Silko and Momaday to raise voices against “the use/abuse of the environment and animals for the benefit of the settler” (Huggan and Tiffin 169). Both the writers oppose the ruination of nature at the hands of Euro-Americans; they also call for the need to restore the Native Americans’ free natural life. Their resentment springs from the destruction of nature at the hands of the colonisers. They react against the European colonisers since the colonisers “took everything! So let’s get our hands on white women” (Silko, *Almanac* 237). The Native Americans have emotional attachment to the earth and its creatures. In response to the unbridled exploitation of the natural environment they have launched environmental justice movement. Their aim is to reclaim their native land and to restore their traditional lifestyle. The present research brings to light the Native Americans’ concept of environment that rectifies “the disproportionate incidence of environmental contamination in communities of the poor” (Adamson, *The Environmental Justice* 4). The discriminatory activities of the colonisers are challenged with a view that the earth is the mother of all beings that need to be treated as family members regardless of racial and cultural boundaries. The natural resources cannot be reserved only for the rich people but need to be equally shared among all. The present research work depicts the Native Americans’ reaction against the colonisers’ approach to get refuge from environmental hazards by creating an unsustainable artificial environment for the elite class (Silko *Almanac* 542). The protestants consider it consecrated act to fight against “the deterioration of our earth’s ecological systems” (Adamson and Ruffin. 207). They resist the colonisers’ plan to endanger the delicate ecosystem for transitory luxuries.

Silko and Momaday have introduced the Native Americans’ environmental sensibilities in such a way that the readers feel their own association with nature as the Natives themselves perceive it. The Native Americans are presented as a sovereign

community having its own socio-cultural values and religious beliefs ingrained in nature. Nature is an integral part of the Native Americans' existence, it is their tribal identity and in policy of educating the "unschooled, unsophisticated" (Momaday, *Three Plays* 154) Native communities, Euro-Americans attempt to deprive them from their very identity. Still the Native Americans are not willing to abandon their tribal culture. They have never given up their tribal peculiarities; wherever their children are raised they never lose their tribal identity. "Anyway, the robins or starlings, whichever the nest belongs to, they raise the baby cowbird as a robin or a starling ...But when it grows up, the cowbird is still a cowbird" (Taylor 264). The Natives' communal lifestyle is "the proper way, because there is no other way to act" (Momaday, *The Ancient* 271). Euro-Americans' approach of civilisation is equivalence to fraudulence as Silko declares; "Shamed by what they taught...in school about the deplorable ways of the Indian people" (*Ceremony* 63). In presentation of the Native Americans' tribal culture and religious beliefs that are "stereotypically represented" (Huggan and Tiffin 67) by the colonisers, the present research highlights the importance of restoring the rich history of the Native Americans' mutual relationship with nature. The research finds out that the Natives' tribal culture carries such a valuable message that strengthens their relationship with their surrounding environment as well as enables them to interact with each other in a positive and supportive manner. The Native Americans strive for reinvigorating their relationship with the natural environment. The only panacea to regain strength and mental peace is "reconstituting an ancient feeling of sovereignty" (DeLoria and Lyttle 264). The socio-cultural beliefs of their ancestors help to restore their lost identity and provide them with the means to know the importance of their relationship with non-human world.

Recommendations for the Future Researchers

On the basis of this research, the following recommendations for the future researchers are suggested:

- i- The present research has been done on the literary works of the Native American writers from the perspective of eco-cosmopolitanism, environmental justice and critique

of development. This is what makes this research important. The same eco-critical approaches are required to be applied to other literary works to understand and get solution to the existing environmental problems.

ii- With the huge increases in air, water and land pollution in the past quarter century, the world we, the Pakistanis, now live in poses problems of health and water crisis for a large portion of the population. That is why it is crucial to realize that the natural world is strength of mankind and not just a property to be exploited. Research work from the perspective of Ecocriticism may help the mainstream generation understand this relationship dynamic between land, nature, and mankind.

iii- One possibility for future researchers is that the indigenous women's beliefs in nature and their responses to the environmental problems can also offer solutions to the environmental and women's problems being faced in Pakistan.

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