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Rethinking space and time: Pueblo oral tradition and the written word in Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony

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RETHINKING SPACE AND TIME:
PUEBLO ORAL TRADITION AND THE
WRITTEN WORD IN LESLIE MARMON
SILKO'S CÉRÉMONY

GALBREATH

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RETHINKING SPACE AND TIME: PUEBLO ORAL TRADITION

AND THE WRITTEN WORD IN LESLIE MARMON SILKO'S CEREMONY
(TITLE)

BY

Lynn K. Galbreath

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

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IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1994
YEAR

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ABSTRACT

On his journey toward healing, Tayo, the half-Laguna/half-Anglo central figure in Leslie Marmon Silko's novel Ceremony, must unravel the entanglement of his story in relation to the land, to the people, to the history and to the mythic tradition in which he comes to envision himself. Tayo, whose illness represents, on one hand, the effects of colonization suffered by Native Americans and, on the other hand, the collective alienation of Anglo-American society, must re-vision the respective roles of himself, Laguna culture and Western culture as they intersect with each other. As Silko's primary goal is to erase firm definitions and boundaries, Tayo becomes a medium through which the reader can experience her own relationship to the respective cultures. Tayo is not a protagonist in the classical sense of the Western novel; instead, Silo presents him as a kind of guide through the intricate web that is Ceremony.

The web of Ceremony is spun by Thought-Woman, who is at once the Pueblo mythical creator and everyone's grandmother; she ties together, in the fabric of the universe, myth, cultures, time/space relationships and personal experience. Through the structure of Silko's storytelling event, we, as the readers, are able to witness this weaving process which combines Pueblo myth and Western experience in the twin media of written and oral narrative. In the novel, prose and mythic poetry meld into an on-going process in which the reader experiences Pueblo vision from the context of her own Western experience.

In Silko's presentation of myth in contemporary society, her narrative blurring of spacetime relationships surprisingly echoes the theories of what we in Western society have come to know as New Physics. Leonard Shlain, to whom I am greatly indebted in this work, offers in Art & Physics: Parallel Visions in Space, Time and Light, an exhaustive yet readily penetrable compendium of modern non-linear physics.

The structure of Ceremony empowers the reader with the ability to experience spacetime in the relevant, actual, everyday way of the modern Pueblo consciousness of which we become a part. The intellectual abstractions necessary to experience a similar spacetime under the discoveries of New Physics appear sterile and taxing by comparison. Silko does not force us to abstract from our culture, but draws us into the on-going process of the novel in order to construct a "living" location from which we can free ourselves to reexamine the scope of space and time.

DEDICATION

To my parents, Fred and Kay Galbreath, who have encouraged me from my earliest recollection to think and act independently. Their loving support has freed me to pursue my passions rather than to accept the ordinary.

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I wish to acknowledge Dr. Michael Loudon for the vast amount of guidance, insight, and time he has given me. Because of his unwavering patience and encouragement, I could complete what I thought I never would.

I wish to acknowledge Dr. Anne Boswell and Dr. Linda Coleman for serving as my readers.

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PREFACE

Before turning to my discussion of Leslie Marmon Silko's novel Ceremony, I want to pause here to describe in part the process through which this paper has emerged.

When I began collecting critical research for this thesis, I examined nearly every piece of biographical and critical work on Silko published at that time, including several recent feminist readings. While I knew I wanted to explore the way in which the pattern and process of oral tradition informed the linear structure of the Western conventional form of the novel, I found that the majority of work on Silko was of little or no direct use to my endeavor. I have, however, included this body of work in my works consulted because of its importance as a record of process. Much of the early work on Ceremony either concentrates on plot summary paired with biography of Silko, or identifies important single themes. While the interviews of and biographical information on Silko lend insight, the thematic criticism constricts the holistic, mythic sense of the novel.

I read and re-read the published critics on Silko in the hope of finding some way to weave this criticism into the broader sense of the novel. Instead of asserting my own authority, I clung to the academic responsibility to do something with critical viewpoints which left me wanting. To draw a metaphor from Ceremony, I condemned myself to stand like a Hereford cow blinking in the desert sun waiting for someone to bring me water. As we learn in the novel, however, those cattle die milling around the trough (82).

My problem as reader and critic is, like the Hereford, a question of limited perspective. As a Western reader, I am challenged by overcoming the axioms of space and time with which I have been conditioned. By chance, I picked up Leonard Shlain's Art & Physics: Parallel Visions in Space, Time, and Light in

which he argues that art works as humanity's "Distant Early Warning System" to changes in our systems of thought (18). As my head buzzed with his interpretive comparison of science and art, my imagination began to play between Shlain's comparisons and the structure of Ceremony which, I later argue, describes within the storytelling process, a working, self-contained model that attunes the reader to the Pueblo universe.

As a non-Pueblo critic, I do not wish to speak as an authority on Native American thought. My intention, rather, is better to understand evolution in classical Western thinking through the imaginative event Silko creates between the novel and Pueblo oral tradition--a tradition which has resisted incorporating Western paradigms of linear time and static space.

In Ceremony, classical notions of space and time are spun away between the narrative and its mythopoetic reflection. We learn through an accretive process that Euclidean vectors of space and time do not apply. We are asked as part of this process to suspend our fascination with logic, sequence, static space and linear time in order to respond to a language tradition which does not fully internalize these conventions. As readers, we are thereby attuned to respond to passages in Ceremony which put us in contact with the stars:

Distances and days existed in themselves then; they all had a story. They were not barriers. If a person wanted to get to the moon, there was a way; it all depended on whether you knew the directions--exactly which way to go and what to do to get there; it depended on whether you knew the story of how others before you had gone. (19)

The Western scientific community had, during a time of past colonialism, which paralleled the major advances in Western technology, all too easily been able to dismiss such mysticism as "savage" nonsense (Shlain 153).

Western tradition, in response to the discoveries brought about by New Physics, has admitted the mythic "nonsense" of centuries into the temples of science which we in the West are only now beginning to address and to assimilate.

Rethinking Space and Time: Pueblo Oral Tradition and the Written Word in Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony

On his journey toward healing, Tayo, the half-Laguna/half-Anglo central figure in Leslie Marmon Silko's novel Ceremony, must unravel the entanglement of his story in relation to the land, to the people, to the history and to the mythic tradition in which he comes to envision himself. Tayo, whose illness represents, on one hand, the effects of colonization suffered by Native Americans and, on the other, the collective alienation of Anglo-American society, must re-vision the respective roles of himself, Laguna culture and Western culture as they intersect with each other. As Silko's primary goal is to erase firm definitions and boundaries, Tayo becomes a medium through which the reader can experience her own relationship to the respective cultures. Tayo is not a protagonist in the classical sense of the Western novel; instead, Silko presents him as a kind of guide through the intricate web that is Ceremony.

The web of Ceremony is spun by Thought-Woman, who is at once the Pueblo mythical creator and everyone's grandmother; she ties together, in the

fabric of the universe, myth, cultures, time/space relationships and personal experience. Through the structure of Silko's storytelling event, we, as the readers, are able to witness this weaving process which combines Pueblo myth and Western experience in the twin media of written and oral narrative. In the novel, prose and mythic poetry meld into an on-going process in which the reader experiences Pueblo vision from the context of her own Western experience.

In Silko's presentation of myth in contemporary society, her narrative blurring of space/time relationships surprisingly echoes the theories of what we in Western society have come to know as New Physics. Leonard Shlain, to whom I am greatly indebted in this work, offers in Art & Physics: Parallel Visions in Space, Time and Light, an exhaustive yet readily penetrable compendium of modern non-linear physics.

The structure of Ceremony empowers the reader with the ability to experience spacetime in the relevant, actual, everyday way of the modern Pueblo consciousness of which we become a part. The intellectual abstractions necessary to experience a similar spacetime under the discoveries of New Physics appear sterile and taxing by comparison. Silko does not force us to abstract ourselves from our culture, but draws us into the on-going process of the novel in order to construct a "living" location from which we can free ourselves to reexamine the scope of our own cultural traditions.

When presented with a gap of understanding between cultures, the impulse exists within the dominant trends of Western culture to inform itself by taking what it sees as "real" culture and discarding, ignoring, withholding and ultimately destroying what cannot be understood or categorized within its existing schema. In The Delicacy and Strength of Lace, Silko speaks about the danger of labelling:

I think that there is a materialistic impulse in Western thought which says that if you don't have the 'real thing untouched unchanged' then you don't have anything of real value or meaning. (28)

For example, Elsie Clews Parsons, a white ethnologist "expert" on Pueblo culture, "wrote off" Laguna as a "lost cause" in 1930. Parsons claimed that Laguna was dead along with the "oral tradition because it [Laguna] had no kiva" (Seyersted 30). As an Anglo ethnologist on Laguna culture, Parson's evaluation exposes the boundaries of Western perspective, as it ignores the rich cultural complexity of Pueblo culture.

Part of our bias toward others, Paula Gunn Allen argues, is "unthinking" in that it is part of a system of thought which has been "fostered in the West for centuries" (15). The legacy of codifying and reducing reality to strict divisions of use, value and worthiness, feminist critic Elizabeth Meese points out, are learned products of those systems of thought which feed, protect and shelter "truths" for posterity by stasis and exclusion ((Ex)tensions 32). In this tradition of exclusion, all discourse is considered, claimed and quantified through a system whereby a sense of "otherness" appears as a restatement of Western paradigms. Within the dominant systems of Western thought, binary divisions between space and time, land and culture, written and oral, and male and female

are perpetuated and restricted to an imperialistic impulse to maintain firm boundaries between the axes of "insider" and "outsider." Meese continues: "But in any writing, one feels the force of the literary/institution's assimilative, neutralizing capacity to accommodate and de-fuse any contradictory narratives, to keep them from 'going off'" (32). Western imperialistic perspective limits our view as readers to a two-dimensional resolution which reduces the significance of an entire culture to the gap between what either can be accepted as "real" culture or what is dismissed, ignored or withheld as "primitive" mysticism.

These acts of separation force both the non-Pueblo critic and the "guardians" of Pueblo culture into a position of stasis where neither is prepared to approach Silko's work as an open-ended process. Beside the overt destruction of non-Western people, there come the ultimately more lingering effects of what Gloria Bird calls in her chapter, "Towards a Decolonization of the Mind and Text 1: Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony," the "continued colonization of the mind" (2). Bird writes, "the way has been fraught with contradictions all of which can be traced back to issues of colonization" (2). For Bird, the impact of Native American literature, particularly in Ceremony, is a process of "self-evaluation" (2). Bird reads Ceremony's importance in its identification of "those instances where we [Native Americans] have taken over that process of colonization interiorizing both the stereotypes and oppression" (2). Ceremony indeed shows us the stark images of destruction and despair in the Native American communities which rise from American apartheid politics. We hear Emo's war tales of glory and see his trophy of human teeth. We visit the "invisible" ones--half-breeds, who live sick-drunk in the doorways and under the bridges of Gallup, New Mexico. We meet Helen Jean and Tayo's mother, Little Sister, who are poisoned by shame and marginalized on the fringes of both the Indian or the White world.

Silko, however, neither limits the resulting "mental bondage" nor the "self-evaluation," of which Bird speaks in reference to the colonization of the mind, to Native American experience. The destruction and self-defeat spreads beyond the boundaries of insider/outsider, Anglo/Native American. These waves of destruction, described as "witchery" in Ceremony, are more than an occasion to remember and lament death and loss of Native American people and culture (Ceremony 200). The barriers erected by Western logic as effectively limit the Western intellectual horizon as they erode that of the Native American.

As Betonie, the medicine man who helps Tayo but is suspect to many of the Pueblo because of his non-traditional ceremonies, tells Tayo, "There are no limits to this thing" (138). The legacy of denial, deception and destruction to which Betonie refers is only partly described by the Native American experience: "They only fool themselves," Betonie says of the Anglo-American (134). The narrator tells us, "The liars had fooled everyone, white people and Indians alike" (199). At a point of convergence in his journey back to health and wholeness, Tayo retrieves the Mexican cattle which were stolen by a white rancher as part of his cycle of restoration and survival. It is these cattle, his uncle Josiah had hoped before his death and Tayo's departure to fight the Japanese in World War II, that would reintroduce the survival instinct vital for the desert environment into the bloodline of the domesticated Hereford. Tayo recognizes that "he had learned the lie by heart" (199). Here, Silko identifies the issues of imperialistic thought which speak directly to the mind of Anglo readers as Tayo, who is of mixed white and Laguna descent, cuts away at the white rancher's fences--a barrier which we can see as a metaphor for what Bird calls the "colonizer's mental bondage" (2). This metaphor applies equally to the colonizer as to the colonized; Western linear thought creates a barrier through

which it becomes questionable who is being kept in and who out. "If," the narrator tells us, adopting Western syllogistic language,

the white people never looked beyond the lie, to see that theirs was a nation built on stolen land, then they would never be able to understand how they had been used by witchery; they would never know that they were still being manipulated by those who knew how to stir the ingredients together: white thievery and injustice boiling up the anger and hatred that would finally destroy the world: the starving against the fat, the colored against the white. [emphasis added] (199-200)

In the best tradition of Western sophistry, Silko uses classical logic to isolate the weakness of all Western paradigms, the truth of the original premise.

Conventions of language at once form the cornerstones of our experience of reality and impede our imagination in the transition between what we have internalized as "truths" and our recognition that those "truths" are in fact conveniences which too narrowly confine our need for understanding. In Ceremony, we are told that the domesticated Herefords will die where they stand around their empty water trough during a drought waiting for the person who brought them water every day in the past. We as readers, like the domesticated animal, must rethink the premises upon which our system of thought rests.

Bertrand Russell, the twentieth-century philosopher, makes this point:

The 'Law of universal causation' . . .
[is an] attempt to bolster up our belief that what has happened before will happen again, which is no better founded than the horse's belief that you will take the turning you usually take.¹

Unthinking, the Hereford cattle are conditioned to wait for death as opposed to the wild Mexican cattle whose instinct leads them on their own search for survival across the desert. We can extend the image of the cattle as an allegory for the blinders on Western culture, through which we are told in Ceremony, we become the victims as well as the victimizer:

The destroyers had only to sit back to count the casualties. But it was more than a body count: the lies devoured white hearts, and for more than two hundred years white people had worked to glut the hollowness with patriotic wars and with great technology and the wealth it brought. And always they had been fooling themselves and they knew it. [emphasis added] (200)

The novel leads us to the question: why have we been doing this? Why are we compelled as individuals and as a society to perpetuate a system of thinking which is destructive to both self and other? Silko lends a beguiling answer within the body of the novel.

Tayo finds his return to health and wholeness through the recognition of the patterns in the Pueblo storytelling process:

He cried the relief he felt at finally seeing the pattern, the way the stories fit together--the old stories, the war stories, their stories--to become the story that was still being told. [emphasis added] (258)

Western culture has become largely uncritical concerning the original premises of its paradigms in its love for the process of universal causation. We scrutinize the symmetry of the syllogism rather than the truth of its component parts. As we strive to build our towers of thought ever higher, we grow further from the need to evaluate basic assumptions and values from which we started and grow ever hostile to other systems of thought which do not easily assimilate to our own. Marshall McLuhan, in The Gutenberg Galaxy, notes that the process by

which information is exchanged, whether oral or written, profoundly shapes the "content of that information."² "The process more than the original quality of information," Shlain adds, "ultimately has a greater effect on the civilization's art, philosophy, and religion" (30). As William Blake warns us about worshipping the Western idol, reason, "they become what they behold"(Keynes 674)--individuals who are reduced to moving cogs in our own machines. We are told in Ceremony that the effects of our blind rationality are buried within our culture:

But the effects were hidden, evident only in the sterility of their art, which continued to feed off the vitality of other cultures, and in the dissolution of their consciousness into dead objects: the plastic and neon, the concrete and steel. Hollow and lifeless as a witchery clay figure. And what little still remained to white people was shriveled like a seed hoarded too long, shrunken past its time, and split open now, to expose a fragile pale leaf stem, perfectly formed and dead. (213-14)

We let our machines roll, fascinated by the efficiency of the system and the illusion of wealth and power that it brings us both as a culture and as individuals. Like the story of the Cy'o'ko magician, who dazzles the people so completely with his bag of tricks that they neglect Corn Woman's altar, we too, "have fallen under the spell of our own creations" even as we watch ourselves become victims of our own illusions (Shlain 94).

Here, we, like Tayo in Ceremony, must turn to evaluate ourselves and the paradigms of our culture as the vital chaos of each of our voices is "drowned by the music" of occidental spheres in motion (Ceremony 5). At the beginning of Ceremony, Tayo hears the "loud, loud music from a big juke box" with "flashing red and blue lights" that pull "the darkness closer" (5). Silko identifies the full global import of our destructive power as a culture at ". . .the point of

convergence where the fate of all living things, and even the earth, had been laid"; Trinity Site, with all its ironic apocalyptic and religious symbolism, gathers humanity in a "circle of death" which, as the narrator tells us, "reunites us in a single clan" (257-58).

Further, Silko identifies our self-destructive impulse as individuals bound to a system of laws, morals and self-denial that rejects personal desire through Night Swan's, the old Mexican cantina dancer's, story. "Whore! Witch! Look what you made me do to my family and my wife," Night Swan's white lover blames her for his weakness as he shakes with his desire for her; "but you will always prefer the lie," she responds, "You will repeat it to your wife; you will repeat it at confession. You damn your own soul better than I ever could" (89).

The narrator explains:

She could have accepted it if he had told her that her light brown belly no longer excited him. She would have sensed it herself and told him to go. But he was quitting because his desire for her had uncovered something which had been hiding inside him, something with wings that could fly, escape the gravity of the Church, the town, his mother, his wife. (89)

Or, Silko might have said, escape the law of gravity imposed by his own culture, escape his identity as a defined white man. But, to escape his constricted self, he would have to accept the dissolution of the white line that separates him from her. Although this realization would be the will to real power, the gratification of his sexual desire as a human, it would mean accepting the loss of the illusion of power vested in him by his status in the community. For a second, he glimpses himself in eternity's mirror, but shrieks back preferring the illusion to the rush of the void:

He grabbed her shoulders; his mouth was twisted open and the breath was hot and short; but it was his own body not hers, which shook. Then his hands went limp and fell with their own weight from her shoulders. "We will run you out of this town," he said.

"People listen to me. I'm somebody in this town". (89)

Faced with the choice of fulfilling his personal desire with the consequence of acting alone, embracing the whole and with it his own death or rejecting life for the safety of remaining an impotent part of the culture to which he clings, Night Swan's white lover chooses symbolic castration--sacrifice of self in order to perpetuate the system. The narrator tells us, "That night she danced he was already a dead man, a living dead man who sucked life from the living, desiring and hating it even as he took it" (89). Feeling for the first time the potential of his primal power, Night Swan's lover allows his inner demons to trample him to death. That same night, his wife is awakened by his screaming to find him dead in the corral, trampled by his own horses (90).

We, the colonizers, both culturally and individually, must look for the sources of original premises which we no longer seem to grasp. For the Pueblo, we learn in Ceremony, the process of rethinking is vital to continuity, growth and survival: "And there would be no peace and the people would have no rest until the entanglement had been unwound to the source" (72). In our own scientific exploration, we have discovered that our beloved process will get us no further if based on incorrect premises. As Shlain argues, dualistic reasoning, "while imperative to our advancement," has "for a very long time impeded our climb" (36). The problems we have when trying to envision other planes of expression, within Native American literature or the discoveries of our own scientific thought, find their source in the conventions of language.

When the Greeks invented vowels, they completed their twenty-four symbol, "easy-to-use" alphabet which, when assembled in a horizontal line, became readily usable (Shlain 30). With this alphabet, the Greeks began a process of linear "(de)coding" which Shlain writes, "reinforces the idea that one thing follows another, and thus ever so surreptitiously alphabets impose the causality upon the thinking processes of those who use them" (30). Western logic and reason are the progeny of the process of unraveling the multiple veils of meaning of pictorial writing and codifying them.

Indeed, this process of sequencing and rationalizing provided the tool by which Euclid could mentally abstract, organize, and measure space and Aristotle could "wrestle mythical time away from everyday time" by demythologizing the three Daughters of Necessity; myth is, after all, the basis for tense:

These three Fates were Lachesis, who guarded what had been, Clotho, who guarded what is, and Atropos, who oversaw what is yet to come. By excluding the possibility that mythical time had anything to do with everyday time, Aristotle transformed the tree Fates into the past, the present, and the future. (Shlain 32)

The three fates, tenses, have thus imposed upon our culture a chronological linearity which condemns us to forever view the relationship between space and motion through the narrow tunnel that is the illusion of time. With abstract, linear and continuous time and space Western civilization could demystify and destroy the curtain between itself and the oracle's precognate magic to reveal a standardized system of truths (Shlain 32). Rational doubt led to the fracture between the realm of science and the realm of magic. Through this schism between truth/illusion, the world assumed an order--an order which was and is quantifiable. Rational thought was elevated to supremacy over feeling and

intuition; it was Socrates, Cicero argues, who first "split the mind from the heart" (Shlain 140). Hence, we arrive at the vital role of non-Western people to our ability to re-see and re-act.

Western philosophy has continually stressed critical rigor concerning the process of reasoning. The formulation of the original premises, however, is a question of ethics or aesthetics. These are arrived at not through the process of reason but through the spiritual, or at least through an artistic, creative sensitivity--an area that Western thought has held inferior. Obviously, a syllogism is only meaningful if its premises are true. Thus, for Western thought to function as a system, the truths of the original premises, or its system of ethics, must continuously be tested. Because we have no scale by which to measure our ethics, we have neglected this area--save for some aspects of the feminist project to critique paternalistic ethics. As we cannot quantify ethics, ethics cease to convince us as holding meaning. As a culture, we pretend to base our society on a combination of old religious ethics which we have widely rejected and on a body of legislated laws which form no coherent system of values. Our ethics have in fact been replaced by one single value--that which perpetuates the system is good.

Conversely, anything which tends to undermine the system or is not protected by the realm of logic and reason is labeled "insane." An imbalance is thus created, enobling the left or rational hemisphere of the brain and demonizing the creative and emotional right hemisphere of the brain. Silko creates an elegant play on the hemispherical dichotomy of the brain in symmetry with the cultural dichotomy between Laguna and Western thought in the story of half-Laguna/half-white Tayo.

Tayo, in Ceremony, suffers under an "insanity," in part, because he cannot reconcile himself to the gap between his persistent knowledge that he saw his uncle Josiah's face in the face of an executed Japanese soldier during World War II and the logical impossibility of the old Laguna man being in the Philippine jungle on that day.

Tayo, as a half-Laguna/half-white, occupies a space in between the Western realm of reason and the Pueblo realm of thought, which is "essentially mystical and psychic in nature" (15). In contrast, Tayo's cousin Rocky, who has more fully internalized Western concepts and culture, tries to convince Tayo of the impossibility of his vision: "Rocky had reasoned it out with him; it was impossible for the dead man to be Josiah, because Josiah was an old Laguna man, thousands of miles from the Philippine jungles and Japanese armies" (8). Rocky and the white doctors who treat Tayo's "illness" are unwilling to recognize the possibility of other planes of experience which fall beyond reason's grasp.

It is at this juncture that we arrive at the importance of oral tradition in the structure of Ceremony. Through this structure, Silko weakens the boundaries of Western causality and the roots of classical thought. The structure of Ceremony forces the reader into a relationship with the text which suspends our expectation of what we know to be "real" and moves us toward adopting a process which instructs through active participation and recognition of patterns. Ceremony disrupts linear visions of time and space, through the weaving of myth and narrative, not allowing the reader to restrict the scope of the novel with Western definitions. Ceremony's cross-cultural significance rests in Silko's ability as a language artist to construct a structural bridge by which Pueblo and non-Pueblo may traverse the chasm between written and oral culture. In this process, Silko works like a Hopi artist by approaching her work from all directions which ultimately defeats our impulse to locate the novel in purely Western terms.

Certainly, there are many examples in Western literature where the worship of the rational to the exclusion of all else is recognized as creating an imbalance. For instance, in The Brothers Karamozov, Dostoyevsky bemoans

such an intellectual uneasiness; it is as if the impulse to accept the "unreasonable" is an ever-present, ever-denied impulse:

And therefore I tell you that I accept God simply. But you must note this: if God exists and if he really did create the world, then, as we all know, He created it according to the geometry of Euclid and the human mind with the conception of only three dimensions in space. Yet there have been and still are geometricians and philosophers, and even some of the most distinguished, who doubt whether the whole universe, or so to speak more widely the whole of being, was only created in Euclid's geometry; they even dare to dream that two parallel lines, which according to Euclid can never meet on earth, may meet somewhere in infinity. I have come to the conclusion that, since I can't understand even that, I can't expect to understand about God. I acknowledge humbly that I have no faculty for settling such questions, I have a Euclidean[sic] earthly mind, and how could I solve problems that are not of this world?³

Dostoyevsky's voice exposes a vital nerve of Western self-doubt which sends tremors of uncertainty through our dominating systems of thought. The West, Allen argues, is only now responding to the strength of its paradigms by "beginning to yield to masses of data" which counter the culmination of centuries of thought (15). In her article, Allen hints at the shift coming from within Western thought toward establishing a scientific

recognition of Native American perspective of the universe. She points to Einstein's "understanding of matter as a special state or condition of energy" as an example of modern developments in physics which open Western intellectual thought to recognition of Native American thought ("Sacred Hoop" 8). Benjamin Lee Whorf agrees:

Just as it is possible to have any number of geometries other than the Euclidian [sic] which give an equally perfect account of space configurations, so it is possible to have description of the Universe, all perfectly valid, that do not contain our familiar contrasts of space and time. The relativity viewpoint of modern physics is in such view, conceived in mathematical terms, and the Hopi Weltanschauung is another and quite different one, nonmathematical and linguistic. (378)

The scientific concepts which were born out of Einstein's theories bring a valuable language tool through which a Western audience can explore its traditions even as it watches the "truths" of some of its most well-guarded notions about the nature of the universe topple.

Taking a closer look at these changes, for example, we discover the trickle of opposition to the tide of Western logic at work. David Hume (1711-76), among others of his time, reacted to the tower of scientific thought when he wrote: "Note, we never perceive `causes` or `laws.` We only observe events that occur in space in certain sequence. Sequence, however, should not be confused as a `law` of causality."⁴

As Leonard Shlain discusses throughout Art & Physics: Parallel Visions in Space, Time, and Light, artists, like Gaugin and Dali; writers, like Blake, Coleridge, and Joyce, to mention only a very few, created works of art and literature which resisted the West's fascination with right angles, linear time and

the supremacy of logic over the mind's precognitive intuitions. Einstein published his Special Theory of Relativity in 1905. After these scientific discoveries many scientists, like physicist Edward Harrison, begin to sound mystical--as in his descriptions of the world of spacetime, where mass is interactive and time is a function of the speed of the observer: "In one heartbeat one could traverse the universe."⁵ Or, Werner Heisenberg who, in Physics and Philosophy, writes:

The real problem behind these many controversies was the fact that no language existed in which one could speak consistently about the new situation. The ordinary language was based upon the old concepts of space and time.⁶

And, as Gaston Pawlowski explains, the realm of spacetime demands an insight alien to everyday Western experience:

The vocabulary of our language is in fact conceived according to the given facts of three-dimensional space. Words do not exist which are capable of defining exactly the strange, new sensations that are experienced when one raises himself forever above the vulgar world. The notion of the fourth dimension opens absolutely new horizons for us. . . even when they appear contradictory; and one understands that there is an intuition easier to perceive directly than to justify in our language. . . ."⁷

Aristotle's classical doctrine of "tertium non datur," which declares that extremes cannot be resolved through the middle, exposes the quandary of the Western intellect: "One could not (cannot) get from one extreme to the other by gliding through the middle, simply because `no middle exist[s]'" (Shlain 240). Unlike the

Eastern concept of Yin and Yang, where each contains a bit of the other, Aristotelian opposites can by definition not contain any of their respective opposite. Hence, each is isolated, and no bridge or access from one to the other is possible.

Silko's art as Pueblo storyteller and novelist emerges as she uses the event of the Western novel as the journey toward creating an aesthetic middle path. Meese includes in a chapter titled, "Crossing Cultures: Narratives of Exclusion and Leslie Silko's Ceremony," an important exploration of the relationship between texts and readers; Meese describes how we, as readers, have the power to keep the meaning or the "use" of a text fully open as we are challenged to rethink our system(s) of thought (35). The "cure" for being "in-between" or "half-breed," among individuals both male and female and among races and cultures--who are not in the position to accept either/or solutions to problems which force them to reject one part--becomes a process of resisting marginalization (Meese 29-35).

Silko discusses spiritual androgyny in the same terms she discusses a synthesis of race and culture. In essence, she mends the splits the Western mind creates between the respective individual and everything around her. Silko takes each of her characters back to a mythical time and place before the split created artificial barriers; however, as the Laguna sense of time is non-linear, mythical time becomes here and now.

Ceremony is a synthesis of two established aesthetic forms--Pueblo oral tradition and the Western novel. Silko uses the event of the Western novel as a space through which she overlays a storytelling landscape. Through this landscape, the structure of the novel, Silko enables the reader to participate in language from the Pueblo oral tradition--a perspective which evolves from a particular place and people. Part of Silko's "gift" to her readers is that she constructs a storytelling event in which she believes, as Pueblo storytellers do, that "a great deal of the story is believed to be inside the listener" ("Language and Literature" 57). Each individual has the creative intelligence to imagine the story.

In Ceremony, Silko continues the pattern and process of Pueblo oral tradition through her use of interwoven prose and narrative poetry which disrupt the linear progression of the novel. These cycles of stories she in turn implants with alternating visions and echoes of colors, places, dreams, memories and feelings which waft through the fragments of all the stories: mythically, as in the tale of Sun Man and the Cy'o'ko magician; historically, as in Betonie's and Night Swan's stories; or contemporarily, as in Tayo's and Helen Jean's stories. Like a sand painting, the structure of Ceremony, which does not have chapters or headings, emerges from many narrative locations creating a structural landscape which retains distinct patterns but defies boundaries and eludes limited perspectives.

The idea of language in Ceremony integrates oral tradition and the written word as distinct forms of expression which enhance rather than exclude one another in a paradoxical duality. Silko addresses this inclusive approach to language not only in Ceremony, but also in her critical and other creative work. For example, Silko emphasizes the Pueblo experience of language which focuses on "the ear for the story and the eye for the pattern" (Jahner 382).

In Ceremony, we find that concepts of people, place and time become superimposed through a unifying process, Pueblo storytelling. By introducing traditional Pueblo myths in her own "voice" as continuous narrative poems which are disrupted by and likewise disrupt the novel's development, Silko recreates a storytelling event within the on-going framework of oral tradition. This structure, she notes, is complementary to the aesthetic form of the novel:

People ask me about my use of the novel; they assume that the novel is not a natural form for the Indian. But the cycles of stories in the oral tradition were like a novel, I just continue the old storytelling traditions. (Jahner 385)

Although Silko sees the form of the novel as an inclusive part of the Pueblo plane of expression, she also examines the difficulty of making a transition between writing and the oral tradition. In order to continue this discussion on the actual aesthetic influence of oral tradition on the structure of the novel, we must first distinguish the problems of writing from the oral tradition and then take a close look at the changes Silko makes in English as a language for literature.

In her interviews and articles, Silko often points out the limitations for assimilating writing into the oral tradition. Silko comments that writing reaches a wider range and number of people:

... I think it's one reason I'm very anxious to try to get the novel out during 1976. I just want to make sure that during this year when all of this sort of celebrating is going on, that Americans can be reminded that there are different ways to look at the past 200 years. (Seyersted 24)

While a novel has the potential to introduce many to other cultures and other ways of thought, Silko realizes that the written text removes the audience from the people and the place from which the Pueblo oral tradition come. In Ceremony, therefore, Silko invokes the form and function of Pueblo storytelling as the tenuous thread to understanding the inclusiveness of the Pueblo plane of expression. The importance of the Pueblo myths Silko uses in Ceremony is not centered on prior knowledge of Pueblo mythology or culture. The structure of Ceremony creates its own context, as it attunes the reader to a process of listening to the dynamic of a story in relation to the people, the event and the spirit in which the stories are told, in contrast to gathering information as truth which can be categorized and therefore limited. Silko refers to the problem of using information taken from the old Bureau of American Ethnography (BAE) reports: "I was never tempted to go to those things. . . . I also knew the attitudes of people around here to those reports, you don't know how accurate they are" (Seyersted 30). Silko mentions that often "outrageous lies" were told to the white experts as a mixture of prank and subversion (Seyersted 30).

The idea of language which Silko calls upon is that her writing is not designed to exclude the non-Pueblo reader. Entanglement with "others," Silko emphasizes, is part of the Pueblo plane of expression:

Things about relationships. That's all there really is. .
. . That's all I'm interested in. You have to come to
terms, to come to some kind of equilibrium with those
people around you, those people who care for you,
your environment. . . . Relations are not just limited

to man-woman, parent-child, insider-outsider, they spread beyond that. (Jahner 387)

Meese describes a similar "human space of response and reciprocity" in her discussion of Ceremony as an "unending circulation of gifts" (32). For Meese, the central questions of a text's value become a "self-consuming process" of asking, "Who am I in relation to these gifts?" (35). She writes:

The narrative desire I hold for feminist criticism, and for literary criticism in general, is to create a space for the gifts of respect and reciprocity which have no place in the present economic/political/linguistic systems as they prohibit liberating, egalitarian relationships in favor of a closed system of narcissistic individualism and cultural imperialism. (35)

In her discussion, Meese introduces us to Baudrillard's concept of "use value" which she describes as the political/economic value of a text to our culture (35). Western culture being inherently tautological, it defines what it needs and then quantifies how well a given piece lends itself to the perpetuation of the system. As we learn from Meese,

. . .the system of labor and production constructs our understanding of `use` just as it does the `needs` to which we believe use responds; thus, use value is no pure untainted alternative to either exchange or surplus value, but is, instead to some indeterminate degree, their product or effect. Use value bears the marks of our romanticized idealized forgetting, in a masquerade of `naturalness`. (35)

To the Western mind, the usefulness or value of a text is dependant upon its function within the Western thought process; it has no value standing alone. The act of writing represents the permanent definition of the written content and its preservation for posterity. Writing, with all its religious, political and legal significance, is in our culture an ultimate act. As Bernard A. Hirsch points out, the problem with writing is not only that "it is static," but that it also "removes the story from its immediate context" (1). Writing, or more importantly the process of writing and its effect upon the makeup and mind of Western culture, represents a long tradition of confusion and rejection in regard to non-Western peoples.

In Pueblo culture, a text's meaning or value, like a sand painting, which is soon taken by the wind, is not preserved for posterity. A text's meaning can be understood in its value for the moment; a Pueblo sand painting's value does not depend on its future; value can be as transitional as the unlimited number of people who encounter and remember the work--each encounter with the work being an event bearing independent meaning.

In Ceremony, we find that the visual, thematic and structural design of the prose and mythic poetry hold together a structure through which the reader must react and act. Through a network of accretive episodes in Ceremony, Silko "set[s] aside basic approaches" to the structure of the Western novel ("Language and Literature" 54). As Silko informs her audience at the start of her speech, "Language and Literature from a Pueblo Indian Perspective," the structure of Pueblo expression is not linear (therefore sequential), but like a web "with many little threads radiating from a center, criss-crossing each other" (54). "This pattern," she continues, challenges the audience to "listen and trust, as the Pueblo people do, that meaning will be made"(54).

The prime deities of classical Western thought are male (Zeus, Apollo, Dionysus), and the realm of thought and structure is firmly attributed to the male

world of emotionless reason. A central deity of Pueblo culture, Thought-Woman, is the matriarchal figure that ties all consciousness together. Structure in the Western tradition is based on definition and drawing of dividing lines between oneself and all of the elements of existence. Thought-Woman spins her structure on a different principle; her consciousness is a web connecting all of the elements of the universe and spanning the gaps that are to Western culture unbreachable. Her web consists of the non-linear fibre of the universe interconnecting the people, the places, the animals; the past, the present, the future; the mythical and the I in an indivisible construction that cannot be represented on two dimensions. As Silko tells her audience in her speech "Language and Literature from a Pueblo Indian Perspective": "In the beginning, Ts'its'tsi'nako, Thought Woman, thought of all these things, and all of these things are held together as one holds many things together in a single thought" (56).

The Pueblo creation story is the invocation of Thought-Woman's consciousness, the order of her universe, and the order of Leslie Marmon Silko's novel Ceremony. Unlike classical Western narrative which moves along points on a time line as on a geometer's ruler, Thought-Woman moves as spider constructing a web of stories. Through the power of Thought-Woman's consciousness embodied in the voice of a narrator, Silko relies on the vehicle of the Western novel through the process of the story which is now being "told."

Ts'its'tsi'nako, Thought-Woman, Grandmother Spider provides the transition between the disparate fragments of consciousness that pass through her into the all-inclusive story of the Pueblo universe. Visually, thematically and structurally this beginning poem seeks a center, a center through which the entanglements of the novel--Anglo and Indian, stasis and change, real and unreal, written and oral, marginality and wholeness, linear time and circular

time--elude boundaries of simple binary opposition to meld through a continuing process of recognition and renewal.

"Ceremony"

The title of the novel Ceremony itself suggest a ritualistic space--a space where those who enter must pass through the centering order of Thought-Woman's story. As Silko points out, Thought-Woman's power of creation, along with her sisters, includes the recognition of entanglement and otherness. She writes:

The reason I go back to that story is because it is an all-inclusive story of creation and how life began. Ts'ist'tsi'nako, Thought-Woman, grandmother spider, by thinking of her sisters, thought of everything which is, and this world was created. And the belief was that everything in this world was part of the original creation, and that the people at home realized that far away there were others--other human beings.

("Language and Literature" 55)

In this invocation, the poem tells us that the creation of the universe is not removed to some forgotten point on a time-line; it is now. In the opening three stanzas, Silko propels us into mythic time as we are introduced to the Pueblo

creator who, along with her sisters, creates(ed) the universe by a language power of thinking and naming:

Ts'its'tsi'nako, Thought-Woman,
 is sitting in her room
 and whatever she thinks about
 appears

She thought of her sisters,
 Nau'ts'ity'i and I'tcts'ity'i
 and together they created the Universe
 this world
 and the four worlds below.

Thought-Woman, the spider,
 named things
 and as she named them
 they appeared. (1)

Each stanza informs the reader with a unique, vital element of Thought-Woman's consciousness which attune us as readers to Pueblo notions of space and time.

In her speech, Silko alludes to a holistic temporal process: "I come to ask you to see language from the Pueblo perspective, which is a perspective that is very much concerned with including the whole of creation and the whole of history and time" ("Language and Literature" 54). As readers, we are informed by a narrator in the last stanzas that we are in the mind of Thought-Woman as the present storytelling event expands to include all time and all people who become one in She:

She is sitting in her room
 thinking of a story now

I'm telling you the story
 she is thinking. (1)

Silko uses the short space of the poem to involve the reader in a recursive pattern which suspends the process of relating information sequentially as the poetic structure bends to unite its own beginning and end. Silko provides a language bridge which unites contrary points--beginning/middle/end, myth/past/present, creator/storyteller/listener--into a seamless, endless loop which converges inside the relationship between teller and listener, text and reader. This pattern attunes the reader to a more complex recursive structure of prose and narrative poetry which continue the novel--the structure which unravels through the encompassing invocation of "sunrise," which gathers the beginning (4), Tayo's prayer in the middle (190) and the end of the novel in a never-ending cycle (275).

The recursive structure and the process of attuning readers to Pueblo notions of space and time are gathered together by the invocation of sunrise. The prayer to the Dawn People at sunrise splinters light into the spectrum of colors that Silko uses to paint the descriptions in the novel. The creation poem, as illustrated previously, works to dissolve the linear order of the novel and, as we will discuss later, describes to the reader the visual pattern and process of the novel. Here, we will note that it is through the invocation of sunrise and light, however, that Silko invokes another level of consciousness through the complementary form and function of color.

Through color, Silko uses the very paradox of light and color which led twentieth-century physicists to the key to unlocking the nature of the universe. In his experiments using light, Niels Bohr discovered that light exists as "both wave and particle," going on to illustrate that opposites are not always contradictory (Shlain 24). And, Werner Heisenberg, one of Bohr's contemporaries; explains the impact of his close associate's theory when he writes:

The common division of the world into subject and object, inner world and outer world, body and soul, is no longer adequate. . . . Natural science does not simply describe and explain nature; it is part of the interplay between nature and ourselves.⁸

We may extend Bohr's and Heisenberg's theories to include the dichotomies of non-Pueblo/Pueblo, masculine/feminine, observer/observed which exist in Ceremony as reciprocal pairs that somewhere merge together in holistic unity.

Part of Tayo's journey toward wholeness emerges as his consciousness raises through his participation in making the physical and mental transitions between reciprocal dualities. Tayo's sexual encounters with Ts'eh, for example, describe both physically and symbolically his need to reconcile the differences between masculine and feminine forces--like the meeting of earth and sky.

Ts'eh offers Tayo her hand as he climbs to the top of the mesa:

Coming over the edge, the canyon and the rock of the cliff seemed suddenly gone as if he had stepped from the earth into the sky; where they were, the sky was more than half the world; it enclosed the mesa top were they stood. (233)

It is here, on top of the mesa, that Ts'eh tells Tayo her name, "I'm a Montano" [emphasis added] (233). Through their lovemaking, Tayo is able to recognize

that Ts'eh's love exists both in its physical immediacy and in a larger sense which is not limited by boundaries of propinquity or time (232-33).

Light, according to Einstein, is the source of space and time; his special theories are based on what Shlain calls "two deceptively simple postulates" (121). "The first," is that "there is not one privileged inertial frame--or place in ether--that is at absolute rest" (133-134). Space and time, in other words, depend upon the speed of the observer. Two individuals, for example, traveling at relativistic speeds in different directions can logically come to two different conclusions as to the sequence of events they observe. One can claim that the events happened in sequence, while the other can claim with equal conviction that the events happened simultaneously. "The second [postulate] is that the speed of light is constant for all observers regardless of how fast and in what direction they are moving" (133-134). Spacetime occurs all at once. Edward Harrison explains this idea best when he writes:

Spacetime is constructed in such a way that the distance traveled by light rays is always zero. Light rays. . . travel no distance whatever in spacetime. In the world of spacetime we are in contact with the stars.⁹

In Ceremony, Tayo recognizes this holistic unity as Betonie's star map, the stars painted on the old war shield and his meetings with Ts'eh converge (224):

He had arrived at the convergence of patterns; he could see them clearly now. The stars had always been with them, existing beyond memory, and they were all held together there. . . . The transition was completed. . . . The ear for the story and the eye for the pattern were theirs; the feeling was theirs: we came out of this land and we are hers. (267-68)

While Einstein's thought experiments seem extraordinary to our everyday experience, Tayo's journey toward healing and wholeness is dependent upon his ability of seeing himself in connection with spacetime continuances as he begins not only to see, but also to feel the power of each day, "in the instant of the dawn. . .which in a single moment gathered all things together--the last stars, the mountaintops, the clouds, and the winds" (190).

The nature of light and color led scientists like Kirchoff, Bunsen, and Huggins to conclude that the mountains of earth consist of the same elements of the solar system and the stars beyond: "The key to this dazzling discovery was the nature of color" (Shlain 178). In Ceremony, Silko permeates the episodic narratives with color. Both in the ceremonial scenes and in her descriptions of people, places and objects, she fills the pages of the novel with glimpses of hues which repeatedly submerge and resurface.

These repetitions of color at once add to the complexity of the patterns of the stories and provide visual images which evoke a link between thought and feeling. While color can be described as fact such as blue-lined note paper, yellow veins in rocks or morning-glories, "the color of the sky, with thin white clouds spreading from the center of the blossoms into the bright blue," it is also tied to emotion (191). Through the descriptive use of color, "observer and observed are somehow connected, and the inner domain of subjective thought turns out to be intimately conjoined to the external sphere of objective fact" (Shlain 23).

Appreciation or response to color precedes language. Infants, for example, respond to color before words. Our response to color suspends the imposition of the linear projections which separate thought and feeling:

The Western academic tradition, based on alphabet literacy and perspective, imposed upon the eye a

linear method of seeing the world. While the eye functions naturally to let light and color in from the outside, line and form derive from notions influenced by what we already know; they are then projected out from the eye upon the world--the opposite process for appreciating color. We have a name for almost every form and shape we see. In Sanskrit, the word for 'form' and 'name' was even the same. What we see is preconditioned by what we saw in the past, so that knowledge of the names of things prevents us from seeing new things afresh. (Shlain 172-173)

Silko's use of color works as a subterranean path which eludes the tight grasp of perception; it is an unconscious preparation for readers.

Night Swan, the Mexican cantina dancer who encourages Josiah with his idea to interbreed wild Mexican cattle with domesticated Herefords--and Tayo's first lover--is described as being timeless: "She did not look old or young to him then; she was like the rain and the wind; age had no relation to her" (103). Tayo senses a powerful mystery surrounding Night Swan--a mystery which he experiences through color rather than explanation. In her apartment, Tayo wonders what Night Swan keeps behind the billowing curtains: "He could feel something back there, something of her life which he could not explain" (103). Although Tayo does not have the language to explain the feelings which comprise his sexual attraction, he nonetheless knows the power of that feeling by its color:

The room pulsed with feeling, the feeling flowing with the music and the breeze from the curtains, feeling colored by the blue flowers painted in a border

around the walls. He could feel it everywhere, even in the blue sheets that were stretched tightly across the bed. (103)

With Night Swan, Tayo loses consciousness of himself as he remembers the womb and finds a part of himself which eludes words: "And he was lost somewhere, deep beneath the surface of his own body and consciousness, swimming away from all his life before that hour" (104). Color has the power to manipulate emotion so that it escapes the boundaries of form or logic. Although Tayo's response to color can be dismissed, denied or rationalized, the feeling which the narrator describes in relation to Night Swan remains tantalizingly or, in some cases, threateningly near to the people in the novel. The women of Cubero, New Mexico, for example, closely watch Night Swan's bright blue door as they imagine, "unspeakable scenes between Night Swan and their husbands or sons" (92). Even after Josiah starts seeing her and the women of the town laugh and shrug off their thoughts and intuitions, they still watch to make sure Josiah is with her every evening, "as if they knew the sensation in the groin of their husbands each time the men passed Lalo's and saw the bright blue door" (92).

Recall the story of Night Swan's youth in which her lover denies his desire for her because she had "uncovered" something inside him. He attempts to cloak and legitimize his desire in the ritualization of denial with lies. The women of Cubero, who try to laugh off her power, know the words they use to rationalize their fears are an illusion of the truth--the lies which inform a larger pattern of destruction and despair: "The destroyers had tricked the white people as completely as they had fooled the Indians, and now only a few people knew how the filthy deception worked" (213). Night Swan creates, from within herself, a primal power, reunifying the androgyne. Like the Maenaeds of Western myth,

Night Swan dances to ecstasy in order to become whole. Borrowing from Spanish culture, she becomes the twin icons of bull and matador, man and woman (89). The symbolism here is doubly complex, as the matador is at once the pinnacle of machismo and the most feminine of killers. "I knew nothing of minutes or hours," she explains of her dance, which simultaneously mirrors her white lover's death by trampling:

There were changes I could feel; the boards of the dance floor began to flex and glisten. The creaking of the wood became a moan and a cry; my balance was precarious as if the floor were no longer level. And then I could feel something breaking under my feet, the heels of my dancing shoes sinking into something crushed dark until the balance and smoothness were restored once again to the dance floor.' (90)

Night Swan finishes her story by pulling, "at a blue thread" hanging from the sleeve of her dress (90).

Part of Tayo's journey toward healing and restoration depends upon his reconciliation between the dreams, feelings, sexual attraction and love which were once awakened by Night Swan and remembered in Ts'eh--feelings which are linked to visceral dreams and to reactions toward color. To illustrate a universe in which everything is interconnected, Silko presents Night Swan as the mythopoetic "female giant" who feeds off the dreams of warriors (127). Night Swan takes from him (her white lover), who is unwilling to recognize his life force, his masculinity, and gives to him (Tayo), who wants to become whole again, her femininity; thus, she becomes both men, and both men are her.

Night Swan stopped to live in Cubero, because she liked the view of Mount Taylor, Tse-pi'na, the woman veiled in the clouds--the mountain which is a "dusty, dry blue color," the mountain from which Ts'eh emerges and calls home

(105). On the day Tayo visits Night Swan, the rain "was spinning out of the thunderclouds like gray spider webs and tangling against the foothills of the mountain" (100); she met him in "open-toe blue satin slippers" and blue satin kimono which "outlined her hips and belly"; he dreamed:

. . . it again and again, sinking and rolling with the light blue sheets twisted around his thighs and ankles, and the excitement of wet smells of rain, and their sweat. He wanted to lie like that forever.

(103)

Afterwards, Night Swan tells him:

'You don't have to understand what is happening. But remember this day. You will recognize it later. You are part of it now.' She turned her head and smiled at him. 'Ah, Tayo,' she said softly, and he felt that she cared a great deal about him. (105)

"Y volveré," and you will return, are the Spanish words Tayo, who was abandoned by his own mother and later orphaned, hears in the fever voices at the beginning of the novel. These voices are echoes of the "blue" music he hears playing loudly the day he re-emerges with the feminine power of Night Swan as lover, mother, earth mother.

Later, when Tayo is sick with the effects of the war and the witchery is upon him, we are told in the poem which interrupts the Scalp ceremony that, "The rainbow returned him to his / home" (151). The symbol of the rainbow, color and feeling, exists beyond the reach of words and has the power to restore the mind. As Tayo passes through the last hoop, he walks "back to belonging," "home to happiness" and "back to long life"; they "spun him sunwise / and he recovered / he stood up" (151):

The rainbows were crossed.

They had been his former means of travel

Their purpose was

to restore this to him. (148)

Tayo, as Pollen Boy, who symbolizes the continuing process of rejuvenation, sits under the crossed rainbows, in the center--inside--the white corn painting:

They made Pollen Boy right in the center of

the white corn painting.

His eyes were blue pollen

his mouth was blue pollen

his neck was too

There were pinches of blue pollen

at his joints. (148)

After this ceremony, Betonie draws Tayo the star map and Tayo meets Ts'eh--the woman/mountain spirit, who arrives from the Black Mountains to the South of Laguna, who is responsible for helping Tayo reclaim the lost cattle, who shows Tayo the plants which grow within their fibre the color of the sky and the light of the stars, and who is Tayo's other half (234-237).

In the novel, color attunes the reader to the feeling which unites thought and feeling within the individual. While we cannot claim to resolve what a specific color, like blue, means to every culture, we can, however, note that certain colors like blue work as visceral threads which tie together memories, thoughts and events without the need for categorizations or explanations. The feeling for the story, we are told, is "all we have to fight off / illness and death" (2)--feeling, we as readers can learn to acknowledge and to experience as a vital element of the novel through the experience of color.

In her descriptions of Night Swan, for example, Silko embodies the image of blue with context and feeling which we are able to recognize as the color

submerges and surfaces throughout the fragments of the novel, adding yet another level of consciousness and complexity. We begin to associate certain beings, acts and events with color. Associations, which elude the explanations of language, find their way into our descriptions of feeling which appear to be contradictory--descriptions which cannot seem to be described in any other way.

Nuclear energy, for example, is blue; "the dance of carbon's electrons. . . is the dance of life" (Shlain 185). It is the paradox which encompasses a color as it at once symbolizes the power of love, life and potential for destruction and death, which Tayo finds as he sees the convergence in Trinity Site, the testing ground for the atomic bomb:

Perhaps assigning gender characteristics to atomic particles such as negative electrons and positive protons is not so farfetched. After all, the act of copulation itself, with its implications of creation, is often referred to as blue. (Shlain 186)

As with her use of color, Silko weaves the mythic poems together with the descriptions in the narrative, like the Scalp Ceremony for Tayo, to describe a cyclical structure going into and coming out of the novel. The structure of Ceremony patterns itself after an order that,

. . . relates back to an ancient pattern of going out from a central point and then coming back with new insights that keep the home place vital. "It is all related back" and somewhere in it all we find the

points of convergence as we participate in the ceremony. (38)

The mythic poems also work to unite contrary experiences and to provide a focus through which the reader is able to recognize spacetime continuances that reoccur throughout the novel.

As the reader passes from the ceremonial center of the opening mythic poem, we gain instruction: "You don't have anything / if you don't have the stories" (2). There are voices to instruct us--voices of others who have gone through the steps toward attunement to the Pueblo plane of expression. These voices give the reader a means of recognizing the continuances in Tayo's story--a story which invokes the all-inclusive Pueblo storytelling process. "But you know, grandson," the old medicine man Ku'oosh tells Tayo, "this world is fragile":

The word he chose to express 'fragile' was filled with the intricacies of a continuing process, and with a strength inherent in spider webs woven across paths through sand hills, where early in the morning the sun becomes entangled in each filament of web. (36)

While color evokes silent response, it takes a particular experience of language to draw those experiences together. We are told:

It took a long time to explain the fragility and intricacy because no word exists alone, and the reason for choosing each word had to be explained with a story about why it must be said this certain way. That was the responsibility that went with being human, old Ku'oosh said, the story behind each word must be told so there could be no mistake in the meaning of

what had been said; and this demanded great
patience and love. (36-7)

Through the storytelling event, we are able to re-enact Tayo's story. When we as readers become part of this process, we are, like Tayo as Pollen Boy, "seated among the rainbow" ("Sacred Hoop" 17). This seamless unity gathers Tayo's story--beginning, middle, end--through time where the reader is able to re-enact Tayo's journey as a way of identification and instruction.

The integration of Thought-Woman's act of creation in the opening poem requires that we imagine everything to be all here in an everlasting now. According to Shlain, Einstein described a similar space as the view standing on a beam of light in his Special Theory of Relativity (119-137). As one approaches the speed of light, Einstein illustrated in his Gedankenexperiments, or "thought" experiments, time slows. At lightspeed, the present moment contains all change, because at lightspeed the present moment encompasses the past and future. Shlain explains further:

When an observer achieves the speed of light, the space outside his frame of reference both ahead of him and behind merges so that the space he sees is infinitely thin. Front and back as well as sides can be imagined to be all here. This excruciatingly difficult mental exercise demands that the thinker imagine that all the points in space along the path of observation occupy the same location simultaneously. (188)

Similarly, we find that the design of the Pueblo creation poem bridges entirely different aesthetic forms, cultural experience and ways of perceiving reality; it

unites people, places and events that are far apart in space and time in the "mind" of Thought-Woman through a storytelling event.

Paula Gunn Allen describes this approach to literature as a "psychic journey" which, she explains, can only be understood "in the context of the consciousness of the universe" (15). For Allen, the storytelling process emerges through the "psychic journey" where "the spiritual and the commonplace are one" (17). In Ceremony, each distinct part or fragment of the mythic poems and prose works as a specialized component of a larger cycle of fragmentation which yields to interweaving connections and associations that undermines the linear order of the novel.

As Tayo approaches the transition to wholeness, for example, he is able to see the expanding present which encompasses all change:

The anticipation of what he might find was strung tight in his belly; suddenly the tension snapped and hurled him into the empty room where the ticking of the clock behind the curtains had ceased. He stopped the mare. The silence was inside, in his belly; there was no longer any hurry. The ride into the mountain had branched into all directions of time.

(201)

Tayo sees the illusion of time in the fibre of the Pueblo language which has no concept of tense:

He knew why the oldtimers could only speak of yesterday and tomorrow in terms of the present moment; the only certainty; and this present sense of being was qualified with bare hints of yesterday and

tomorrow by saying, 'I go up to the mountain
tomorrow.' (201)

And, he witnesses the everlasting now:

The cy'o'ko Kaup'a'ta somewhere is stacking his
gambling stick and waiting for a visitor; Rocky and I
are walking across the ridge in the moonlight; Josiah
and Robert are waiting for us. This is a single night;
and there has never been any other. (201)

This holistic view of time suspends the essential duality of Western reality and
the boundaries of the Cartesian notion of in here/out there.

In the classical sense of Aristotle, Bacon, Descartes, Locke, Newton and
Kant, the world outside "you" was not affected by "you." Within the malleable
matrix of space and time, "objective" reality assumes a "certain plasticity" as
Shlain explains:

The simultaneity or sequence of events, the colors of
objects, and the shapes of forms did not solely belong
to a world outside human affairs; instead they were
also dependent on the speed of the mind hurtling
through space that was doing the observing. (136)

As the perception of linear time is loosened, the individual is freed from the
boundaries of her own personal isolation and is thrust into a larger
consciousness. This view contradicts the Cartesian notion of in here/out there:

The self is a unity. . .it regards itself as one, others
treat it as one, it is addressed as one, by a name to
which it answers. The Law and the State schedule it
as one. It and they identify it with a body which is
considered by it and them to belong to it integrally. In

short, unchallenged and unargued conviction assumes it to be one. The logic of grammar endorses this by a pronoun in the singular. All diversity is merged in oneness.¹⁰

The distance between "you" and "I" narrows, however, as the concept of listener and teller become two distinct parts of an intelligent whole in the all-inclusive mind of Thought-Woman--the unitary She/you/I in the opening creation poem. Similarly, Silko is creating an allegorical process here for the relationship she seeks to establish between the text and the reader.

For Allen, this "mind" represents a special condition of energy which includes intelligence and "awareness" as a "by-product of existence itself" (8). She explains further:

Because of the basic assumption of the wholeness and unity of the universe, our natural and necessary relationship to all life is evident; all phenomena we witness within our outside ourselves are, like us, intelligent manifestations of the intelligent universe from which they arise, as do all things of the earth and the cosmos beyond. (8)

What is mind? As Allen points out, Native Americans do not limit intelligence to specific categories or ranks of life (8). In Ceremony, for example, a person does not rely on his reason alone but on his inseparability, through Grandmother Spider, from the rest of the intelligent universe. Western thought has a tradition of individualism. This conception of self is, in reality, a linear history of fission; the individual is split from his environment; the environment is sub-divided and categorized according to complex hierarchical systems. Finally, Western man declares his dominion over all of it--a dominion which may only be challenged by

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other humans according to another internal hierarchy. In Ceremony, the Pueblo are inseparable from the land; this oneness with the land is repeated in all of their stories: "The ear for the story and the eye for the pattern were theirs; the feeling was theirs: we came out of this land and we are hers" (267). The Pueblo vision of the earth, including the landscape, the flora and fauna, are inseparable from the self, community and myth. All of the separations present in the Western experience are breached in the traditional Laguna experience in Ceremony through the web of myth. The myth that Grandmother Spider spins is made up of everything in the universe reaching through time; however, as it is all one web, it is also here now in the "world alive"; the "world made of stories"; the world where, "if you knew where to look, you could see it, sometimes almost imperceptible, like the motion of the stars across the sky" (100). And, as we watch with Tayo, we see:

The spider came out first. She drank from the edge of the pool, careful to keep the delicate egg sacs on her abdomen out of the water. She retraced her path, leaving faint crisscrossing patterns in the fine yellow sand. (98)

With Tayo we "remember" the mythic stories about her--stories which are echoed in both myth and narrative:

He remembered stories about her. She waited in certain locations for people to come to her for help. She alone had known how to outsmart the malicious mountain Ka't'sina who imprisoned the rain clouds in the northwest room of his magical house. Spider Woman had told Sun Man how to win the storm clouds back from the Gambler so they would be free again to bring rain and snow to the people. (98-99)

As the creation poem that opens Ceremony informs us, we are part of all creation. As readers, we can understand our part in the Pueblo universe through the storytelling. Our ability to understand language or to follow a story does not position us on a higher level of being in the Pueblo universe. We learn, instead, that Thought-Woman also has another name, the spider--a name which makes her one with the land.

In contrast, materialists have believed that mind is a product of the brain's electromagnetic and electrochemical energy. Attempts to map the anatomical location of the mind in the brain have born out the conclusion that mind and brain may at best claim a tenuous relationship (Shlain 381). The questions of mind and the nature of intelligence lead to some fundamental questions about how Western civilization perceives itself in relation to other life.

Our ability to understand Thought-Woman's language art is only one part of understanding her intelligence. "I am, as it were, an eye that the cosmos uses to look at itself. The Mind is not mine alone; the Mind is everywhere."¹¹

Throughout Ceremony, we find an interdependency between humankind and animals, humankind and nature. On the journey toward healing and wholeness, Tayo recognizes that his power is only one kind of power, and, in order to survive, in order to be a person that the mother will remember, he must accept and call upon the power of all nature, both animate and inanimate.

The resolution of conflict in the Corn Woman myth and the tale of the Cy'o'ko magician is dependent upon the aid of animals; similarly, Tayo's escape from the white ranchers is dependent upon the appearance of the mountain lion (Ceremony 211). Likewise, Betonie shows Tayo how his journey toward wholeness is mapped in the constellations which Tayo later recognizes when he meets Ts'eh (Ceremony 187).

Ts'eh and Night Swan, two of the mortal/immortal female characters central to Tayo's story, are both closely associated with the power of the mountains, rain and the stars. Tayo's own grandmother inherits the qualities which symbolize the physical manifestation of Grandmother Spider's intelligence and feeling as she waits in places to assist those in need.

It is to his grandmother, to Grandmother Spider, that Tayo goes in his time of greatest need, and she spins the web that reattaches him to the universe and himself. In his youth, Tayo is aware of the contradictions between the white school's education he holds in his head and the Laguna myths he feels in his heart:

He knew what white people thought about the stories. In school the science teacher had explained what superstition was, and then held the science textbook up for the class to see the true sources of explanations. He had studied those books, and he had no reasons to believe the stories any more. The science books explained the causes and effects. But old Grandma always used to say, 'Back in time immemorial, things were different, the animals could talk to human beings and many magical things still happened.' He never lost the feeling he had in his chest when she spoke those words, as she did each time she told them stories; and he still felt it was true, despite all they had taught him in school-- that long ago things had been different, and human beings could understand what the animals said, and once the Gambler had trapped the storm clouds on his mountains. (88-89)

In World War II, however, the battle between the "monstrous twins" of his inner contradictions overcomes Tayo (71). He sees in the faces of the "enemy," Japanese soldiers, the faces of Laguna and particularly of his uncle Josiah.

Now, Tayo can no longer live with the two perceptions working inside of himself. Now, it is about killing his fellow humans; he must choose. According to Western thinking, seeing his uncle Josiah in the jungle is insane. However, Tayo is an ethical man, and he knows in his "belly" what he is doing is wrong, and in an interconnected universe, he knows why--the Japanese are distant relatives of the Pueblo (130). This fracture between thought and feeling causes him to be alienated from the universe, and white doctors cannot help him:

He [Tayo] had to get back to the hospital. Right away. He had to get back where he could merge with the walls and the ceiling, shimmering white, remote from everything. (33)

At home, Tayo calls to his grandmother sitting at her place by the stove, and it is she who comes to him with comfort and the suggestion that Tayo be treated by the medicine men instead of the white doctors:

He watched her get up slowly, with old bones that were stems of thin glass she shuffled across the linoleum in her cloth slippers, moving cautiously as if she did not trust memory to take her to his bed. (34)

After she comforts Tayo, his old grandma wipes her eyes and says, "I've been thinking, all this time, while I was sitting in my chair. Those white doctors haven't helped you at all. Maybe we had better send for someone else" (Ceremony 34).

Due to the Western illusion of time and place, Tayo's uncle being in the Philippines cannot be reconciled with a world of white reality. Newton held that time was an absolute forever flowing in one direction; he said, "Absolute, True, and Mathematical Time, of itself, and from its own nature flows equably without regard to anything external even if human experience perceives it differently."¹² Using Einstein's theories, Alan J. Friedman and Carol C. Donley in Einstein as

Myth and Muse refute this view, according to Shlain. They write: "...the present is a parochial concept, valid for each observer, but with a different meaning for any observer in any other inertial frame."¹³ The tyranny of logic and the universal moment in time dissolves under a counter-force of feeling and intuition.

In the jungle, Tayo is able to listen and to understand the reason of why what he sees in the faces of the Japanese exists as a logical impossibility, yet he feels a truth which contains something larger even if he can not name it:

He shivered because all the facts, all the reasons made no difference any more; he could hear Rocky's words, and he could follow the logic of what Rocky said, but he could not feel anything except a swelling in his belly, a great swollen grief that was pushing into his throat. (8)

In Western tradition, truth is proven through reasoning which takes place in the head. In the Laguna creation stories, truth is determined through feeling, which is associated with the stomach. In the belly, "I keep them here," a voice in the creation poem says about the stories (2). Truth does not exclude the irrationality of feeling. On the contrary, feeling, as in Tayo's case, exposes a kind of knowledge which goes beyond the parochial notion of the present. Tayo sees the connection between the ancestry of the Native Americans in the faces of the Japanese; he feels the truth that physical anthropologists would verify through reason.

Einstein's theories of spacetime establish that it is possible to travel in time if one travels at light speed. To the Western mind, however, the experience of spacetime is limited to difficult intellectual exercises. Assuming the reality of the physical world, the human body is, as yet, unable to travel at light speed. If

we could travel in time as Shlain suggests, our experience of spacetime would expand as Louis de Broglie suggests:

In space-time, everything which for each of us constitutes the past, the present, and the future is given a block, and the entire collection of events, successive for each of us which forms the existence of a material particle is represented by a line, the world line of the particle. Each observer, as his time passes, discovers, so to speak, new slices of space-time which appear to him as successive aspects of the material world, though in reality the ensemble of events constituting space-time exist prior to his knowledge of them. (Shlain 426)

While these descriptions of spacetime illustrate the phenomena (what we observe outside ourselves) of spacetime, they do not internalize the concepts of spacetime in daily life nor the pain of uniting the extraordinary with the ordinary. The Laguna have, nonetheless, internalized time travel in their culture and in their conceptualization of the universe. In effect, Laguna are daily commuters in time. Ceremony requires the reader to consider an emotional reckoning of the individual's mind in daily life, in spacetime.

Tayo's story is the story of one man's journey toward internalizing the world of spacetime. This journey, we are told throughout the novel, is full of transitions, of change, of pain and of the feelings of patience and love which are central to healing:

He could still see the face of the little (Japanese) boy, looking back at him, smiling, and he tried to vomit that image from his head because it was Rocky's smiling face from a long time before, when they were little kids together. He couldn't vomit any more, and the

little face was still there, so he cried at how the world had come undone, how thousands of miles, high ocean waves and green jungles could not hold people in their place. Years and months had become weak, and people could push against them and wander back and forth in time. Maybe it had always been this way and he was only seeing it for the first time. (18)

In Ceremony, Tayo constantly struggles to unite what he feels inside himself and what he witnesses outside. Tayo must fit together how his sickness, his curse against the rain--the chant he makes in the jungle during the war (12)--and the drought parallel, in two intertwining parts, the Corn Woman myth and the Sun Man myth. In the Corn Woman myth, which is a story of remembrance and attunement, Corn Woman takes away all living things, including the rainclouds, because the people forget to show their respect to her because of their fascination with the C'y'o'ko manipulation. Tayo, as Arrowboy, depends upon rituals performed by several benevolent creatures to restore life and unity. Likewise, in the Sun Man myth, which is a story of resistance and return, the Gambler locks up the rain clouds, and Sun Man, with Grandmother Spider's help, must win them back by solving the Gambler's riddle. In the Arrowboy myth, Tayo reconciles himself, through ritual, to Laguna culture and to his feeling; in the Sun Man myth, Tayo recognizes the illusion of Western culture which internalizes reason. By internalizing the idea of an all here and everlasting now in the world of spacetime, Tayo is able to shatter the absolute "laws" of linear time--the sequential basis for "if/then" syllogisms and the step-by-step process toward logical thought.

Precognition, we observe, violates causality. As a result, the human experience of time is illusory. Time's grasp upon our everyday experience limits the leap of our imagination and leaves us in a quandary as to what lies beyond our sensory capacity. To modern Western minds, the idea of escaping the merciless illusion of the ticking of time is intellectually possible; but, after an instant, the barriers of logic rush back in to sweep away the "mind game": "For an instant! Shattering return to the misery of the human condition and to the tragedy of the experience of time."¹⁴ In Ceremony, Josiah informs us that this difficulty of warding off the illusion of time is the condition of being human:

Josiah said that only humans had to endure anything,
because only humans resisted what they saw outside
themselves. Animals did not resist. But they
persisted, because they became part of the wind.

'Inside, Tayo, inside the belly of the wind.' (27)

As individuals, our minds can experience the states of past, present and future. This experience of time, many researchers believe, has to do with the nature of sight, brain lateralization, and the nature of speech:

. . .the right side of the brain specializes in the
simultaneous coordination of information in space,
while the left side collates data sequentially
perceived in time. This arrangement forces on dual-
brained humans the illusion that reality is a series of
causal events that appear in three-dimensional
spatial extension in a specific sequence on a
conveyor belt of time. (Shlain 410-11)

As the boundaries of past, present, and future blur in the construct of the Pueblo creation poem, the narrator brings the inner self into the inclusive unity of the

Pueblo Universe. Thought Woman's thinking and naming exist as two parts of the same inclusive, creative process--a creative process which depends on the active participation of all her creatures, including tellers and listeners. Although Silko, who as the author is also Thought-Woman, does not cater to us, the readers, as Western fables are wont to do by spoon-feeding us each emotional response and each moral, she, nevertheless, draws us in and makes us a part of the mythology.

Here, the act of writing and the act of reading assimilate to the Pueblo plane of expression. Through the aesthetic form of the novel, the relationship between text and reader takes on the dynamic between teller and listener(s)--a relationship which does not differentiate to whom (Pueblo, non-Pueblo, male or female) the teller is speaking: "In the oral tradition, the myth teller speaks as many-to-many, not as person-to-person" (Carpenter 66-67). Silko explains that storytelling always includes the audience. In fact, she says, "a great deal of the story is believed to be inside the listener, and the storyteller's role is to draw the story out of the listeners" ("Language and Literature" 57). Through this process, Silko presents the reader with the story of a people in a spatially configured relationship to a particular place.

In the opening creation poem, Thought-Woman is given three names, a Pueblo name, "Ts'its'tsi'nako,"; an English name, "Thought-Woman"; and a name which represents her physical manifestation, "the spider" (1). Tayo's healing evolves from a renewed sense of the reciprocity between land, feeling, and ritual:

He remembered the black of the sand paintings on the floor of the hogan; the hills and mountains were the mountains and hills they had painted in sand. He took a deep breath of cold mountain air; there were no boundaries; the world below and the sand paintings inside became the same that night. The mountains from all the directions had been gathered there that night. (152)

Classical Western notions assert that the nature of space is flat and immovable; "Space [is] everywhere the same," according to Newton's laws; it is "homogenous and inert" (Shlain 120).

Just as space and time were separate, so were space and matter: "Space did not interact with objects placed in it" (Shlain 120). In Ceremony, however, Tayo believes the drought which plagues the land is the direct result of his disharmony with nature (58).

Tayo, by cursing the rain, believes that he has caused the drought. We are told in the Corn Woman myth that it doesn't rain, because people misbehave and forget that droughts happen (50). The myth relates that the Gambler once "really did" imprison the rain clouds in his magic house and that spider woman alone had known how to "outsmart" the Ka't'sina and told Sun Man how to get them back (99). In the Scalp Ceremony, Tayo sits in the center of the painting. He occupies a physical location in the myth as he becomes both art and artist, as his story becomes part of the painting. Tayo's physical presence, his mass, alters and informs the painting. The Scalp Ceremony, with its integration of art, artist and viewer, closes the cycle and allows the beneficiary to return--Y volveré. As part of this form, Tayo is able to unwind spacetime continuances of the stories to their source.

Magical thinking is difficult for an educated Western reader to accept. We hold the view that magical thinking is "childish" and "primitive," or we dismiss it condescendingly as "an anthropological phenomenon." In our culture, the realm of myth and magic, like talking to animals, for example, is usually relegated somewhere to the level of the child's mind, to cranks and crack-pots, and/or to fantasy. We find it extremely difficult to believe without hesitation that a ceremony can cure an epidemic, a sickness or a drought. In Laguna culture, however, we find that the health and wholeness of the land is directly related to the health and wholeness of the individual, to the health and wholeness of the community

Tayo's white teachers view space as dead and inert, thereby excluding the organic relationship between people, places and events--a view which is described as the effects of witchery:

Then they grow away from the earth
 then they grow away from the sun
 then they grow away from the plants and animals.

They see no life

When they look

They see only 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. (142)

Space, as described in Ceremony, is organic; space, like time, is malleable. Its plasticity is evident in the relationships between human and animal, human and

land, human and human. The land itself exists as a physical manifestation of this consciousness in the connection between place, color and story:

Dragonflies came and hovered over the pool. They were all colors of blue--powdery sky blue, dark night blue, shimmering with almost black iridescent light, and mountain blue. There were stories about the dragonflies too. He turned. Everywhere he looked, he saw a world made of stories, the long ago, time immemorial stories, as old Grandma called them. It was a world alive, always changing and moving; and if you knew where to look, you could see it, sometimes almost imperceptible, like the motion of the stars across the sky. (100)

The land itself is described as a living organism.

The work of scientists, early in the twentieth century, revealed that indeed empty space was "an invisible generative living tissue"; Shlain explains:

It came as a surprise, therefore, when early-twentieth-century Western scientists discovered that particles of matter can in fact be wrung out of a seemingly empty field by quantum fluctuations. From out of a desert-like vacuum can come a squirming proliferation of inhabitants from the particle zoo. This confirmation of the ancient Eastern idea that empty space is alive and procreative forced a reluctant West to rethink its ideas about space. (161)

If space, therefore, embodies organic qualities, we must reconsider our impulse merely to quantify and to measure it. The Pueblo see daily that the whites have

measured and fenced the land which was once their home. Betonie, however, tells Tayo that the fences, the highways, the deeds mean nothing:

“Look,” Betonie said, pointing East to Mount Taylor towering dark blue with the last twilight. “They only fool themselves when they think it is theirs. The deeds and papers don't mean anything. It is the people who belong to the mountain.” (34)

Unlike white ownership, which implies dominion over the land and with it the right to destroy, the Laguna, being part of the land, guard and nurture the land as the land guards and nurtures them. The Pueblo symbiosis with the land is not analogous to the geometry of the height, width or depth of a sum which can be bought, exploited or sold as a commodity.

Gaston de Pawlowski imagines a similar space in "Le Leviathan":

It is another thing much more complex, much more abstract, which would not be able to be defined in any manner in our present language. Let us suppose, if you will, that it is a different point of view, a manner of envisaging things in their eternal and immutable aspect, a manner of freeing oneself from movement in quantity in order to conceive only the single artistic quality of phenomena. . .

15

The world of the fourth dimension expands beyond the confines of three-dimensional measurements. As Tayo stands near the old stone hogan, which is built as part of the earth, he sees the continuity of the land:

He could see no signs of what had been set loose upon the earth: the highways, the towns, even the fences were gone. This was the highest point on the earth: he could feel it. It had nothing to do with

measurements or height. It was a special place. He was smiling. He felt strong. He had to touch his own hand to remember what year it was: thick welted scars from the shattered bottle glass. (146)

Tayo begins to see the reciprocity between space and time, land and culture. As he becomes part of the sand painting, his story merges with the stories of those who went before him. He begins to make the interweaving connections between his story and the old stories. During the Scalp Ceremony, as discussed earlier, Tayo sits in the center of the sand painting. His body supplies both form and feeling. He exists as art and artist as he supplies the transitions between the threads of the stories.

Before the reader encounters the first written word in Ceremony, the eye encounters empty space (4). Before the opening creation poem, the reader passes over a symbolic field of philosophical, sociological and personal chaos. It is the place of white smoke that Tayo describes during his illness in the hospital: "For a long time he had been white smoke. He did not realize that until he left the hospital, because white smoke had no consciousness of itself" (14). The description continues: "He inhabited a gray winter fog on a distant elk mountain where hunters are lost indefinitely and their own bones mark the boundaries" (14). Before becoming part of the sand painting, Tayo does not imagine himself as a reciprocal part of the story. This space reflects a dualistic silence which forever balances the tension between isolation and stasis, personal and sociological fragmentation, and the in-here with the out-there. During his illness, Tayo had occupied a place where he tells Betonie that there were "no voices and no dreams" (129). When Tayo becomes part of the sand painting, his private self is thrust into the inclusive unity of Thought-Woman's universe.

Similarly, as we the readers participate in the recursive structure of the novel, we find ourselves within the landscape of the story. As the story is being "told" to us, we are drawn inside the inclusive unity of the Pueblo landscape as we occupy a space within the story. We are asked to make connections through the narrative shifts and interruptions. The novel becomes a "location" and a "painting" where the beholder must make missing connections which draw together the people, places and events of the stories.

While the pages are numbered sequentially, the physical text itself is differentiated only by how it is spaced on the page. The reader is often attuned to shifts in the narrative or between the narrative and mythic poems by varying patterns of indentation or space. This structure which folds back on itself becomes a place. In origami, for example, the artist, by folding a flat piece of paper in a certain sequence creates, "something of mass" (Shlain 163). In effect, an empty piece of paper can become a "thing" and, when folded in a pattern, "reveals a truth" about space and mass: ". . .that space is a matrix that is interactive with the mass of objects placed within it" (Shlain 163).

In the order of the novel, voices seem to fade in and out of the narrative. This structure attunes the reader to a type of visual landscape which reflects the Pueblo plane of expression. These changes in voices or in thought are distinguished by a shift to the center right with a wide space between the paragraphs:

They were all drunk now, and they wanted him to talk to them; they wanted him to tell stories with them. Someone kept patting him on the back. He reached for another bottle of beer.

White women never looked at me until I put on that uniform, and then by God I was a U.S. Marine and they came crowding around (41-42).

The poems, like the narrative, emerge, as they forever balance between left and right. When the Gambler speaks, for example, signifying left-brained dominance--logic and reason without ethical context--in the mythic poetry, the lines shift to the left:

'I tell you what
 since I'm so good and generous
 I'll give you one last chance.
 See that rawhide bag hanging
 on the north wall over there?
 If you can guess what is in that bag
 I'll give you back all your clothes and beads
 and everything I have here too--
 these feather blankets
 all these strings of coral beads
 these fine white buckskin moccasins.
 But if you don't guess right
 you lose your life.' (180)

When hummingbird tells the people the ritual that is vital to restoring life by appeasing the lost mother, the poem shifts to the right, signifying right-brained dominance--the intelligence, the feeling and the ritual attunement to the physical world:

Hummingbird looked at all the
skinny people.
He felt sorry for them.
He said, 'You need a messenger.
Listen, I'll tell you
what to do':

Bring a beautiful pottery jar
painted with parrots and big
flowers.
Mix black mountain dirt
some sweet corn flour
and a little water.

Cover the jar with a new buckskin
and say this over the jar
and sing this softly
above the jar:
After four days
you will be alive
After four days
you will be alive
After four days
you will be alive
After four days
you will be alive (74)

This shift in text is part of the transition necessary to maintain balance as the structure informs its own context and depends upon the never-ending reciprocity between teller and listener which centers the mythic poems. This visual attunement is prefigured in the opening creation poem:

What She Said:
The only cure
I know
is a good ceremony,
that's what she said. (3)

The Pueblo creation story that Silko writes into Ceremony is an all-inclusive story of creation which includes everything in the universe as a part of the original creation. Like the prophecy of white man, these visual shifts attune the

reader to the counter-balance of literature, writing and Western thought. This structure claims the novel as a vehicle into Laguna thought; as a medium, it describes how the novel creates its own context in the storytelling landscape of the novel. These shifts in the visual text are part of the transitions which are necessary to maintain balance as the interplay of text and reader becomes a neverending reciprocity between teller and listener, reader and text.

As we pass through the stories in the episodic structure of Ceremony, we can turn to look at how the fragments of stories fit together. Passages start to take on a reassuring familiarity. As readers, we participate in a storytelling event which melds with the aesthetic form of the novel. For non-Pueblo readers, the structure of Ceremony transforms our initial isolation from the people, places and events of a particular place and people and folds us into the center of the storytelling process where we learn, like Tayo, to recognize spacetime continuances in the stories.

When the transitions between myth, history and story--between past, present and future--and between space, time and light begin to converge, we can pause from this vantage point to reflect how those insights which inform the pattern and process of Pueblo oral tradition include our personal and cultural experience of language. As the relationship between reader and text opens up an "organic" space of response and reciprocity, the distance between reader and text narrows as we, like Tayo, come to make vital connections as both art and artist inside the storytelling landscape of the novel.

Tayo must complete the ceremony of survival on his journey toward health and wholeness by unraveling the elements of his personal story to their source by reclaiming the stolen cattle and resisting the urge to seek revenge in the final witchery scene. On the way toward healing, Tayo learns to pray. He is never certain if the words are right, but he feels that they are (190). While Tayo's healing is part of a holistic reality large and inclusive of everything, his final "cure" comes from unraveling the entanglements of his particular story in relation to the land and culture in which he envisions himself. One level of understanding is finding how Tayo's stories fit together. Silko gives us a novel which describes with "great patience and love" the pattern and process of oral tradition. Through this structure, we are given the "gift" of language which

allows us to unite contrary experiences between space and time, land and culture, written and oral, male and female in seamless unity. Another level of understanding emerges as we begin to think and to reflect how the Pueblo oral tradition informs us with means to revise the vision of our cultural paradigms through Ceremony's own "re-visioning" of literature, history and culture.

Through our recognition of Tayo's journey and the convergence of spacetime embodied in the mythic poetry, we find an experience of language with which we can rethink our relationships in our own experience of language, culture and history. In Ceremony, we are returned to a point where we have the power to make choices and to rethink our values and "truths"--to free ourselves from the "witchery" which has blinded one eye of our Western culture and anesthetized one-half of our mind.

The pattern and process of Ceremony constructs for us a "living" location from which we can enter to examine the scope of space and time. As we are involved in listening and acting, a multiplicity of events, conflicts and questions begin squirming out of our own culture and lives that seem to echo somewhere in the stories of the novel. These "voices" of convergence do not necessitate an imperialistic impulse to claim Pueblo culture for our own literary device; on the contrary, the stories and thoughts of the many peoples, the diverse cultures which are both prefigured and included in the novel add to an ever-increasing complexity of thoughts, ideas and feelings. As the Pueblo universe is all-inclusive, it comes as no surprise that Silko clearly states in the novel that we, as Western readers, are a necessary part of the story: "'This is the only way,' she told him. 'It cannot be done alone. We must have power from everywhere. Even the power we can get from the whites'" (158).

The importance of Ceremony emerges in a construct of language which does not demand demeaning choices between marginality, paternalism,

alienation or exclusion of person or culture. As illustrated earlier, Ceremony at once dissolves the linear sequence and disrupts the familiar binary resolution between cause and effect as Silko claims the novel as a new location of response and reciprocity.

From this vantage point, we can open the door to unlimited voices. From this context, we can look at the "discoveries" of some of our own philosophers, scientists and writers, like Einstein or Bohr, without the impulse to measure the use of their insights as a limit of their value or as a tool to prove our own cultural legitimacy. Instead, we are able to look at how our own traditions have informed our cultural and individual memories and ideas of the world around us in our everyday experience. In some cases, as with the view of spacetime, the boundary between the extraordinary discoveries of Western science and our everyday experience of time and space has the potential to develop into a cultural consciousness closer to the consciousness of the Pueblo. Ceremony's growing cross-cultural significance emerges as we begin to unwind the transitions and changes vital to survival as individuals, cultures and inhabitants of a multi-cultural, multi-faceted society and planet.

END NOTES

¹Bertrand Russell, The ABC of Relativity (New York : Merton, 1985) 141, qtd. in Shlain 89.

²Marshall McLuhan, The Gutenberg Galaxy (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1962) 160, qtd. in Shlain 30.

³Fyodor Dostoyevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, trans. Constance Garnett (New York: Vintage, 1955) 279, qtd. in Shlain 290-91.

⁴David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature ed. Peter H. Nidditch (London: Oxford UP, 1978) 282, qtd. in Shlain 89.

⁵Edward Harrison, Masks of the Universe (New York: Macmillan, 1985) 128, qtd. in Shlain 133.

⁶Werner Heisenberg, Physics and Philosophy (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958) 174, qtd. in Shlain 290.

⁷Gaston Pawlowski, "Voyage au pays de la quatrieme dimension (1) L'ame Silencieuse," Comoedia, 24 February 1912:.1, qtd. in Shlain 302.

⁸Werner Heisenberg, Physics and Philosophy (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958) 102, qtd. in Shlain 23.

⁹Edward Harrison, Masks of the Universe (New York: Macmillan, 1985) 150, qtd. in Shlain 133.

¹⁰Charles Sherrington, The Integrative Action of the Nervous system (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1947) xvii, qtd. in Shlain 382.

¹¹Rudy Rucker, The Fourth Dimension (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984) 247, qtd. in Shlain 380.

¹²Sir Isaac Newton, Principia: The System of the World trans. Andrew Motte (Berkeley: U of California P, 1934) 1:6, qtd in Shlain 71.

¹³Alan J. Friedman and Carol C. Donley, Einstein as Myth and Muse (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985) 11, qtd. in Shlain 134.

¹⁴Georges Poulet, Studies in Human Time, trans. E. Coleman (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1956) 85, qtd. in Shlain 188.

¹⁵Gaston de Pawlowski, "Le Leviathan", Comoedia, 24 December 1909, 1, qtd. in Shlain 302.

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