**Ceremony by Leslie Marmon Silko**

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**Introduction**

Ceremony by Leslie Marmon Silko is a novel based upon the ceremonial practices and oral traditions of the Navaja and Pueblo people. The novel follows Tayo's life, half white, half Pueblo, following his return from World War 2 with the notion that he is suffering from battle fatigue, also known as a post-traumatic stress disorder. A focus on both his present and past life experiences is highlighted in-depth inside the novel. The paper seeks to highlight the importance of culture and traditions and how they guide society. The various stories provide many teachings. This paper also highlights the lessons learned from the stories' education, how they connect, and showcase how they help Tayo during the healing process.

**Discussion**

The stories inside the novel portray a wide range of themes that highlights their importance to society. At the forefront, it shows the importance of storytelling. Storytelling also refers to the traditional way of Native Americans in the stories. Their oral culture, history, biology, and medicine are passed on to generations in the form of stories. Furthermore, tales of Tayo reflect on the original traditional stories of the community. Ceremony portrays different modes of storytelling, such as poems. Storytelling has the power to heal and contains rituals that cure individuals and communities. Interaction of different cultures and their repercussions are also highlighted. The contact between the white culture and Native Americans is showcased as primarily destructive. Ceremony presents the Native American culture's persistence to exist even as it changes and being contended with the diverse cultural landscape taking shape. Maintaining our cultural identity and staying true to the traditions that have guided society for ages is essential. Furthermore, these traditions, cultures, and beliefs give the community a sense of direction even when faced with destructive new rules that threaten our existence.

The stories highlight the importance of tradition. Preserving tradition is critical for the survival of Native Americans. The medicine man Ku'oosh cannot cure Tayo because the traditional healing ceremonies do not apply to modern illnesses. Traditions must be continuously reinvented to accommodate the ever-changing reality. Moreover, forgetting rules brings about calamities such as drought and disaster, as portrayed by the novel Ceremony. The dangers of adhering to traditions blindly instead of following their intent are seen. The importance of water is also displayed. Water is used for agriculture, livestock keeping, and human consumption. Tayo curses the rains, and after that, a drought strikes the desert land of Laguna. Storytelling teaches us to appreciate the process of communication. The elders used storytelling to pass their culture, beliefs, and traditions from one generation to another. As a result, the culture can be preserved. The interaction of different cultures teaches us to shine against cultural vices such as racism. The racist activities and remarks by the whites towards the Native Americans are unacceptable. The novel teaches us to accept all races and cultures to ensure peaceful coexistence. Furthermore, it teaches us acceptance.

Tayo being of mixed-race, struggles with accepting which culture to conform to, but in the end, he learns to appreciate both cultures as they make part of who he is. Another lesson learned is tradition forms the basis of our moral compass and existence (Silko’s, (2017). The constant reinvention of existing rules not to become outdated is vital to our daily life, such as medical traditions by Ku'oosh. However, ancient cultural practices should be done away with to ensure our humanity's continued preservation. Physical resources, such as water, should always be appreciated. No one should be deprived of these resources, and they should always be appropriately used, preserved, and not misused as nature always strikes back. As seen by the novel, stories have the power to heal. They do possess rituals that can cure communities and individuals. Tayo remembers and reenacts the old stories, and by doing so, recovers from the war trauma and brings rain back to land. He uses his vast knowledge in the novel to invent a rain ceremony that ends the drought. Spending the night in the mine marks the completion of the ceremony. Staying with Ku'oosh allows blessing by the spirits upon Tayo and the ceremony. Completion of the ceremony results in the drought ending and healing of Tayo.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion. tradition plays a crucial role in our lives. Tayo is damaged from the war and returns home to try and figure out his life. By being mixed-race, he is faced with which culture and tradition to identify and uphold. He curses the rains because of the floods, resulting in dire repercussions, which is the drought. In the end, medicine man Ku'oosh helps him in reconciliation with the offended ancestors. He goes and spends the night in the mine, stays with Ku'oosh to receive blessings from the spirits. In the end, the drought comes to an end, and Tayo is healed. Storytelling is the basis of communication through generations.

**Reference**

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