Rethinking Indigeneity and the New Wave of Indigenous Studies in Contemporary English Literature: A Survey on Contemporary Indigenous Literary Studies*

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Abstract

Indigeneity has gained interest among scholars in many fields including literature. However, the interest mostly derives from those who have not experienced the life of the indigenous and are governed by different sets of ideologies and worldviews. In the field of literary studies, this problem is sometimes accentuated in post-colonial studies in a similar manner to Oriental Studies and Subaltern Studies; that is, the indigenous literary works are not only studied by outsiders but are also perceived as opposite to existing hegemonic norms, leading to the misconception of indigeneity offered by scholars to the public eyes. Therefore, this article aims to introduce examples of how experts and writers specializing in indigenous, region-based studies tackle the problem of representation. Methods used by scholars and writers in the field will be introduced to show how indigenous literary studies has developed.

Keywords: indigenous studies, indigeneity, Native American literature, Pacific literature, Maori literature

Introduction

Many international organizations and individuals have long attempted to define what "indigenous peoples" should mean as it is one of many terms that has been used rather arbitrarily to cover all groups of ethnic minorities globally, making it difficult for human rights organizations to find measures to aid the groups in accordance with international laws. In 1965, the term "indigenous peoples" was defined by United Nations as those who are "descendants of groups which were in the territory of the country at the time when other groups of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived there" and are now "placed under a state structure which incorporates national, social and cultural characteristics alien to theirs" (Das, 2016, p. 400). This broad definition, in other words, focuses mostly on political conflicts between the dominant and non-dominant units of societies, leaving out some other equally important aspects of indigeneity such as their cultural and social practices and local wisdom as well

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as the importance of self-identification that should have been the rights of the indigenous peoples. Later, the United Nations adopted the broader definition propounded by José R. Martínez Cobo, which is one of the most cited. Cobo proposes "indigenous peoples" refers broadly to those with "a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies" (The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, 2015, p. 4). The sense of "continuity" here, he suggests, can be appraised by looking at several factors, namely, the continuation of "occupation of ancestral lands", "common ancestry with the original occupants of [the] lands", cultural practices, and language system. In addition to the inclusion of many important aspects of indigenous peoples, Cobo also points out the significance of self-identification for indigenous peoples, meaning that what is deemed as "indigenous" should not solely been determined by others.

This recognition of diverse aspects of what can be included in the concept of indigeneity and of the indigenous rights to self-identification has clearly led to a much more careful trajectory of the definition of indigeneity. International Labor Organization (ILO), a United Nations' specialized agency, reidentified "indigenous peoples" in its 1989's ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples No. 169. It set the distinction between indigenous peoples and typical tribal peoples; that is, indigenous peoples, apart from having elements of "traditional life style", "culture and way of life different from the other segments of the national population", and "own social organization and traditional customs and laws" like tribal peoples, should also "liv[e] in historical continuity in a certain area, or before others 'invaded' or came to the area" (p. 7). At this point, ILO maintains the significance of "historical continuity" that has earlier been proposed by Cobo. However, this convention is the first international agreement which focuses on the rights to "self-identification" of indigenous peoples as the article 1.2 in the convention No.169 states, "Self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply" (p. 8). In so doing, ILO incorporates both the aforementioned "objective" (p. 8) criteria of the groups that could be identified as "indigenous peoples" and the "subjective" (p. 8) identification, allowing individuals and groups to actively claim an "indigenous" status.

It is true what international organizations have been doing for indigenous groups is well-intentioned, since the Western administrative system itself requires the inclusion of all political subjects so that the "citizens" can enjoy their political rights and receive protection and rights from law.[1] Indigenous peoples, with a political, social and economic system of their own, alien to the dominant unit of societies, are in a position which makes it difficult for government to provide help and protection. Comprehensible are the attempts of human right organizations such as the United Nations and International Labor

Organization to identify indigenous people both "objectively" and "subjectively" to determine how the peoples could be lawfully included to enjoy privileges from states despite different life style and social administration. The attempts, from certain perspectives, can be viewed as the right moves towards more justice for indigenous peoples. However, the approaches of these organizations, I propose, if carefully dissected, reveal important underlying problems of the existing relationship between indigeneity and modern, used today almost synonymously with western, logic. By tracing the development of the attempts by international organizations to promote indigenous rights, it can be seen that the position and the existence of the indigenous people are constructed as if intrinsically connected to, and dependent on, the modern worlds. From the first attempts to recognize and define indigenous peoples to the latest ILO Convention No. 169, the contradiction of the procedures to define or identify indigenous peoples and subsequently set the framework of what is included in the concepts of "indigeneity" is clearly presented. These concepts can be deconstructed from the level of the etymology of the word that international organizations have been trying to determine. To illustrate, the word "indigenous", the very adjective that is used to give qualities to "peoples," is derived from two Greek words: "endo" (within) and "genous" (birth/race), so the indigenous can be alternatively referred to as "the born-within" [2]. However, the term has always been defined or identified and then activated in the legal sphere by the norm, political authorities, or the dominant ethnic groups. Despite the good will of these major organizations, the term "indigenous" has become the quality given by the norm and used by the outsiders. This contradicting nature of the word "indigenous" — etymologically meaning the inside/local natives but mostly used by the outsiders/non-natives — points out that even though the term is meant to be used to give justice to the minority, it inevitably highlights the binary opposition, the pillar of western worldview and epistemology. Moreover, by having the outsiders recognizing the rights and the existence of the *indi-genous* people, those who use the word may unintentionally posit the ethnic minorities in the realm of the western paradigm, repeating the act of cultural domination and appropriation all over again. In other words, had it not been for the success of the intrusion of the outsiders, the term "indigenous" (the born within) would not be needed. Furthermore, paradoxically, even the casual, almost innocent use of the word "indigenous" implies that the born-within are reduced to a marginalized state while the born-outside turns out to be dominant, assuming the voices of the born-within, owning the autonomy to determine the course of events, the fate of the indigenous and even the definition of the actual born-within Other.

Moreover, with a certain degree of veracity, it could be rightly claimed that international organizations have recognized that the indigenous peoples should have their own voice. Evidently, in addition to the existing characteristics

of indigenous peoples given by international organizations, the ILO Convention No.169 has added the rights of indigenous peoples to declare that they belong to the criterion of "indigenous" by themselves so that the laws and protections in this convention can be applied to them without force. However, as promising as it seems, through both international definitions and self-identification, indigenous peoples are still required to become subjects of the dominant paradigm, under a particular label that is understood by the outsiders, in order that they can receive protections from the states or organizations.

In the academic domain, the very area which theoretically aims to do justice for marginalized people, indigenous peoples, "the born-withins", are mostly, again, represented by outside agents in the large body of studies and debates generated by modern scholars, with, perhaps, good intention, are oftentimes done by the outsiders who belong to the dominant spheres. The nature of academia, with a great degree of resemblance to international organizations, ranging from being the arena of professionals, most of whom are ingrained with modern sets of knowledge and practices to being the area to which the standardized regulations and approaches are applied, has allowed for essentialized narratives and methodologies when talking of subjects in the debates[3]. Many studies that deal with indigenous peoples or other groups of minorities, thus, are read under Western literary critical theories, the equivalence of having the stories of "the born-withins", their identities and cultures analyzed by strangers until, in the worst case, they are incomprehensible to the people to which they belong[4]. The process of reading and explicating indigenous writings by employing literary frameworks, most commonly post-colonial analysis, cannot only be read as a procedure of what might be called well-intentioned re-colonization, but may also produce rather limited, even misleading, understandings of indigenous cultures. In other words, when examined through the eyes of Westerners or those who belong to the dominant sphere, indigenous peoples and their literature are studied and explained through the eyes of people who do not share the beliefs, background, and worldviews. Due to the problematic nature of the field, many accounts of indigenous peoples might be debatable.[5]

In fact, not only does this problem occur with the common definition, concepts and the studies of indigeneity, many existing fields that explore the minority or the non-West have already been pointed out as false, misleading, and Eurocentric as well. For example, in his groundbreaking book Orientalism, Edward Said has criticized the practice of Oriental studies as driven under the Western attitude towards the East. He proposes that what is deemed "oriental" is based upon its distinction with the Occident, and therefore:

> "a very large mass of writers, among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, "mind," destiny, and so on (p. 2-3).

With the binary opposition between what is deemed West and what is not West, the definition of the Orientals then comes not from the East, but is based from the west. Thus, the Orientals are likely to be falsely represented as inferior by the West, and simultaneously are forcefully included in the Western cultural hegemony of the discourses. Similarly, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak proposes in her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" that the well-intentioned analyses of modern socio-political issues in relation to the "subalterns" done by intellectuals are "essentialist and taxonomic" (p. 80), and that subaltern studies which are based on "the violence of imperialist epistemic" are studies in which the subalterns are defined essentially as different from the elites (p. 80). Spivak employs the two contrasting sets of interpretations of Sati, a ritual in which a widow commits suicide by immolating herself on her husband's pyre, to further elaborate how the interpretations of those within dominant discourses, in this case the British on the one hand and the post-independence Indian nationalist on the other, are equivalent to the silencing of the others. She explains the by either condemning sati as crime to grant freedom to subaltern women or praising the women for having free will over the legal prohibition of the British Empire, both parties do the act of speaking for the subalterns (p. 96-97). Here, the act of subaltern women becomes translated into the dominant language, deprived of the ability to speak for themselves. Spivak comes to the conclusion that the subaltern cannot speak.

The problem of the studies in all three areas: indigenous studies, Oriental studies, and Subaltern studies, therefore, share at least a few obvious common traits. Firstly, the terms used to define (the indigenous, the Orientals, the subalterns) the targeted minorities and/or the non-white are based on limited, essentialized, generalized sets of categories, most of which signify the qualities opposed to what the whites believe they are. Secondly, because the three disciplines are mostly studied by Westerners or by the ones belonging to dominant discourses, these individuals or societies, then, are, through the process of research and analysis, put into a discursive hegemony, which could be read as a good-intentioned discursive recolonization. Thirdly, as definitions of the indigenous, Orientals, and subalterns are given qualities, the norm's concepts and understandings of the Other, then, are distorted in the first place. The voices that speak for the made-inferior groups are heard, then duplicated and spread, consequently contributing to the pervasive misconception among not

only intellectuals but also even the general audience. Most ironically, from what I have demonstrated, it is the intellectuals who, perhaps not knowingly, have been making contributions to the post-colonial Western cultural domination. With these problems of representation and identification, many scholars in the field, both those who are at home with Western discourses and the ones from indigenous cultures, have started to regain the right to self-representation and redefinition through various forms of writings, be it a manifesto, a theory, a critique of modern epistemologies or fiction.

Rethinking Indigeneity and the New Wave of Indigenous Studies

The aforementioned problems of representations which occur as Western scholars delve into the world of the indigenous people do not necessary suggest that the discipline should be demolished, nor do they discourage prospective learners from building on the existing studies. Rather, the recognition that indigenous people have long been presented in a misleading, limited fashion coupled with the realization that the lives and cultures of "the born-within" are being described through the perspective of the outsiders can contribute to the changing course of the discipline. Similar to ways in which the defects of subaltern studies and oriental studies have led such scholars as Edward Said and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak to try to question, rethink and reform the fields, indigenous literature has recently been approached in a different, more promising light. Out of many branches from numerous cultures, there are some approaches to the literary studies of indigenous peoples that have been particularly influential in academia.

One approach in the study of indigeneity focuses specifically on indigenous cultures, epistemologies, rituals, and practices as not necessarily linking to certain Western frameworks. This approach has contributed to the body of culturally specific research on indigeneity in recent decades. The focal point of the researches in this group is oftentimes to produce works in which the indigenous are regarded as the figure of authority, given autonomy to account for their own epistemologies and self-definition based on distinct indigenous cultures and beliefs. Unlike many schools of Western science, which have universal rules applicable for all cases related to their fields, each strand of indigenous studies may only concern a particular indigenous group, making the research in this category not only very detailed and specific in its scope but also contrasting to traditional approaches on topics related to the indigenous such as Michel Foucault's biopolitics or post-colonial studies. However, due to the characteristic of this approach which makes it difficult to generate a concrete summary that covers all the existing bodies of research, this article will provide only some studies that are directly related to two specific groups of indigenous peoples, namely, the Pacific and the Native Americans, since they belong to the groups that produce some of the largest amounts of indigenous literature written

in English. Also, for the sake of unity, it will focus on the role of indigenous knowledge in shaping indigenous literature in the particular regions, the characteristics of indigenous wisdom, practices, epistemologies and cultural products that are influential in contemporary indigenous literature written in English.

In general, some of the major obstacles that readers outside the indigenous cultures have encountered upon reading indigenous English literature are the inclusion of cultural practices and their influence on the plots and narratives, and the combination between folktales, myths, and local wisdom in the seemingly linear timeline of the story. Thus, many experts in the field of Oceanic literature and of Native American literature base their research and arguments on the region-based practices and beliefs in order that the works can be read more accurately and that the indigenous are not falsely represented, comprehended, and subsequently spoken for by "the born-outsides" who are likely to diminish many dimensions of the concept of indigeneity in the literary works. For example, concerning the concept of indigeneity and its influence in reading Oceanic literature, in his essay "Reconstituting Indigenous Oceanic Folktales" (2010), Steven Edmund Winduo, a prominent scholar and professor of Oceanic studies, proposes a way of redefining Oceanic "folktales", by discussing how the indigenous heritage is employed in the post-colonial contexts of the regions. He first establishes the term "folktales" as social, cultural texts, independent and free from the restriction of certain beliefs or sets of interpretation. He employs Raymond William's term, "structures of feeling," to highlight the fact that folktales are not merely abstract reflections of certain ideologies, but they include material aspects of people's experience as well.

Another important point in this essay is it demonstrates the influence of folktales or indigenous myths in the post-colonial, Western-dominated arena. Winduo claims that indigenous folktales are commonly used among Pacific writers as the tool to explain the experience of the locals in modern society. He lists several important writers, such as Patricia Grace and Haunani-Kay Trask, all of whom have employed local myths as the frameworks of their stories. In addition, concerning the role of myth in the post-colonial era, the period in which the convergence between native and Western cultures are inevitable, folk narratives can be used (together with Western stories) as a frame to explicate the changing condition of the modern world, a technique that many prominent writers have employed. These two major functions of folktales, thus, imply that folktales ultimately serve as a tool for indigenous people to reclaim the authority to establish their own sets of explanation of the world, history and incidents. Then, focusing on the impact of folktales in the political sphere, Winduo suggests that since folktales are the combined representation of both abstract ideologies, beliefs and concrete experiences, they constitute the foundation of cultural space for certain ethic groups. That is, folk narratives pave the way for

indigenous, minor culture to assert itself in the hegemonic space, allowing the minorities to contest the predominant discourses

Similarly, Paula Gunn Allen's "The Sacred Hoop: A Contemporary Perspective" (2004) argues that for non-Indians to approach native American literature appropriately, they must understand fundamental concepts of native American epistemology, that are alien to typical Western logic Allen first points out two reasons behind Western scholars' general inability to understand Native American cultures. For one thing, it is critical for scholars to have cultural understanding "from which [the literature] springs" in order accurately to analyze literary works (p. 241). However, Western scholars have very little exposure to native American culture. Consequently, they have to make use of their distorted concepts of native Americans, based mostly on the Western worldview, to approach native American works. Therefore, they can grasp only the superficial aspects of native American literary texts, and falsely present them as "primitive, savage, childlike, and pagan" (p. 241). Secondly, since Western scholars have labelled native American literature as backward, they tend to read it as folklore, not knowing that for native Americans, while folklore belongs mostly to the folk, literature is the exclusive sphere for only professionals with a great deal of knowledge about culture, myth, and philosophy of their tribe.

Having stated the problems that general readers encounter upon reading indigenous Indian literature, Allen, then, explains two integral components that constitute the worldview of native American people. She states that the manner in which a native American person perceives him/herself in relation to other beings and universe is very different from the Westerners. To illustrate, while Christian people view themselves as separated from God due to the punishment following Eve's breach, native Americans do not think that they are separated from God, or what they call "All Spirit". Secondly, they believe that God has created them, not to banish them but to have them as "spirits" connected with all spirits of beings, animated and unanimated alike, and to "All Spirit" as well. Native Americans, then, think that they are interrelated with both "All Spirit", or God, and all spirits of beings in the universe. This aspect contrasts greatly with the Biblical notion that the Christian God has stratified all beings with men on the top and natural elements at a lower level.

For Allen, the Native American's concepts of self and interrelatedness are key elements that are absent in the Western worldview, but they play a great role in shaping native American literature. Consequently, Western scholars' inability to understand this fundamental concept, consequently, constitutes a misreading of native American literature. As Allen explains, the purpose of indigenous Indian literature, influenced by the idea of interconnectedness, is basically to "bring the isolated, private self into harmony and balance of its reality" (p. 242). Western literature, in contrast, influenced by their concept of separation, generally creates an individual expression separated from the

community. With these two radically different views, Western scholars, thus, fail to understand the logic of the stories in native American literature.

In addition, Allen further points out that Native American cultural products are roughly composed of "ceremony", the materialization of the Indian perception of the universe and "myth", the written prose that explicates the perception. Both "ceremony" and "myth" are likely to appear in all literature and cannot be studied individually. With Western research methodology, all elements are dissected, then individually studied, and those who are accustomed to this approach will not be able to understand Indian ceremonies for they are all interconnected, and thus, cannot be studied as if created individually as "one" cultural production by "one" individual in the universe. In other words, Allen points out that it is impossible for Western readers to understand Native American literature unless they familiarize themselves with the worldview of the indigenous people, for without it, the interpretation of indigenous cultural products will always be distorted.

The process which Edmund Winduo and Paula Gunn Allen employ has shed light on the more accurate and honest approaches to contemporary Oceanic and Native American literary pieces. Their research demonstrates that, for the indigenous peoples, factors other than trauma histories and socio-political conflicts shape storylines and how the literary works are crafted. With a deeper understanding, or at least the awareness of the differences between indigenous cultures and the Western mindset, scholars may be able to comprehend literature from indigenous cultures based on the eyes of "the born-withins", enabling themselves to see the true purpose and messages conveyed in each piece of art more clearly.

Still, while some critics have adopted the indigenous, region-based worldview in their studies in order to present ways (other than post-colonial) to read or understand indigenous literary works and arts as have Winduo and Allen, others have even gone further by establishing literary theories based on local epistemologies, and myths in an attempt to propose a method through which indigenous literature can be analyzed. Such methods indicate rather unprecedented, yet impressive endeavor of scholars to try to provide well-established theoretical frameworks that are established by indigenous scholars themselves who base their theory on indigenous knowledge.

In his article "Unwriting Oceania: The Repositioning of the Pacific Writer Scholars within a Folk Narrative Space" (2000), Steven Edmund Winduo places his focus on writing a theoretical framework as a product not of the Western world but of the combination and interaction between Western and Pacific cultures. He first identifies the problems regarding the stereotypical representation of Oceania in Western literature as void space, instead of an area alive with diverse cultures. This misleading image of the Pacific has allowed Western cultures to present Oceania, void as it seems for the West, as they wish

to conjure. Consequently, the indigenous identity and cultural aspects of Oceania have, throughout the centuries, been erased and overwritten by the dominant Western literature. Winduo calls this process of erasure and overwriting the act of "leaving out" because by not recognizing that Oceania is alive with diverse cultures, Western literature has also assumed that Oceanic literature does not exist, thus leaving it out when discussing Oceania. However, despite Pacific literature being left out, Pacific writers/scholars have tried to reclaim their cultural memories through the traces that have survived the process of overwriting and erasure. In addition to reconstructing cultural memories through the remaining traces, Winduo proposes that it is vital that Pacific writers/scholars create a literary framework based on indigenous knowledge to successfully represent their cultures by themselves, contesting the representation imposed upon them by the Western hegemonic structure.

Winduo demonstrates the way in which Pacific writers/scholars can create what he calls "folk narrative space", a set of Pacific-based narrative accounting for experiences of the indigenous. Pacific folktales, the cultural products of the region that are based on an indigenous oral tradition which, when adapted in written form of literature, become hybridized. In other words, written literary products are the result of the cross-cultural representation of the indigenous oral and Western literary customs. This state of hybridity in Pacific literature subsequently manifests a new, independent image of Oceania that suggests the development of this seemingly static culture. With its own strategic practices of self-representation, Pacific writers/scholars can contest against the opposite dominant discourses.

To use folktales as elements in literature alone, Winduo persists, is not enough for Pacific writers/scholars in their quest to challenge such dominant, universal discourses of Western culture. He proposes that Pacific writers/scholars should create "home-grown" critical theory in order to fight for their cultural survival. In order to justify the claim and demonstrate how such a "home-grown" theory can be generated and applied, Winduo comes up with the term "structure of viewing", a systematic structural analysis of folktales he employs as a framework to explicate Pacific experiences. He uses this structure to explain how the traditional myth of "the ogre-killing child" can be deciphered and applied as a method to point out the duty of Pacific scholars and how they can achieve their goal of self-representation Winduo tells of the story of a town, occupied by a giant ogre who is eventually killed by a boy left behind with his mother after the townspeople have abandoned the town. He proposes that when the story is interpreted through "structure of viewing", it signifies that the Pacific writer scholars are like this child — they are the ones to unwrite the distorted representation of the Pacific done by the white ogre/intruder. To succeed, they, like the child, have to learn about both ogre/Western alien discourses and their own traditional values, passed on by the mother/the traces

of overwritten, conquered culture. Equipped with both Western and traditional knowledge, Pacific writers/scholars then can complete the act of confronting the ogre/dominant discourses. To put it simply, what Winduo is trying to do is to demonstrate that apart from rediscovering the repressed such cultural heritage as folktales and using them to create hybridized narratives, Pacific writers/scholars also need to create their "home-grown" theoretical frameworks and use them to present the Pacific instead of borrowing Western, alien theories to account for local experiences. Ultimately, his very endeavor to explain the mission of Pacific writers/scholars through the use of both "folktale of the ogre-killing child" and the "structure of viewing" itself can be read as the epitome of how the process of unwriting Oceania can actually be practiced.

From New Mexico to the Pacific – Indigenous Literature in Focus

Many contemporary indigenous writers writing in English today recognize the power of the language and literary pieces as tools to help indigenous people explicate, based on their lives and beliefs, the experiences they have had and their perception of the environment and conflicts, and as means to expand these expressions to the wider, seemingly dominant populations. As mentioned, they tend to employ certain region-based myths and practices as cores to the understanding of the works in terms of both content and writing styles, making such an approach Paula Gunn Allen and Steven Edmund Winduo take essential. In addition to this, many of the novels written by indigenous writers are so specific that they require region-based frameworks instead of the more common ones. In this article, I have chosen two influential contemporary indigenous novels namely Ceremony (1977) written by Leslie Marmon Silko, a prominent Laguna Pueblo Native American writer, poet and essayist and Potiki (1986) by Patricia Grace, a Maori novelist, children's book writer, and a short story writer to demonstrate that these two texts, as indigenous literature, share important characteristics together despite its many unique features.

First of all, in both novels, the writers, as an act of literary activism, employ indigenous myths and knowledge to regain the autonomy to redefine their own indigenous cultures, history, and cultural identity. In Ceremony, a novel dealing with the life of a traumatized Native American WWII veteran who is healed by rediscovering his indigenous identity in contemporary society, Leslie Marmon Silko employs oral literature and ceremony to rewrite the history of Western invasion, and subsequent numerous racial conflicts between the Euro-Americans and the Native Americans — narrative techniques in Ceremony, the employment of oral tradition and the incorporation of myth, historical records, prose, and poems all play integral roles in reconfiguring Native American identity and Native American literature. For one thing, Silko employs her indigenous knowledge in order to transform typical novel, a

pervasive, most common type of Western literary works, into the one that can reflect Native American identity. For example, there are many oral poems, told according to oral tradition, throughout the novel to explain the event in the linear storyline describing Tayo's life such as the poem about the life of WWII soldiers (57) and about Tayo's aunt and mother (68). These abrupt changes in form work as a tool to transform human events into stories. Based on Native American belief, their culture lies in the preservation and the continuation of stories not in the written historical records. Also, some critics even point out that the inclusion of oral narratives, usually associated with Native American ceremony as the name of the novel and as Paula Gunn Allen's "The Sacred Hoop" suggest, has redefined the meaning of novel and the act of reading as well. To illustrate, in Susan Berry Brill de Ramirez's article "Storytellers and their Listeners-readers in Silko's 'Storytelling' and 'Storyteller'" (1998), the author argues that based on Sliko's stance to view herself more as a "storyteller" than merely a "writer", her works, including Ceremony, transform readers from "passive recipients of the told stories" into "co-creative participants", playing a part in the events in the told stories (p. 334). This process encompasses myth and reality, past and present, and even readers/listeners and narrators/storytellers. In effect, the roles of writers as oral-traditioned "storytellers" and readers as "listener-readers" have incorporated readers into the "stories", expanding the web of relation of all beings. In other words, what Leslie Marmon Silko has attempted to do in her process of writing and plotting the novels is to put her readers in the position of participants in ceremonies in order that readers become parts of the web of relation, or rather, regain the lost relationship with other existence in the world, according to Native American epistemologies. Thus, in the case of Ceremony, the listeners-readers are in the same position with Tayo, the protagonist, who is a listener of Betonie the witchdoctor's stories and a co-creative participant of the ever-growing web of relationship. As a reader/listener of the stories packed within The Story, one actively participates in the act of patching together many connected storylines, as does Tayo in his mission to complete the ceremony. For example, by reading the oral poem about Shush (p. 128) and Pollen Boy (p. 141), together with the ceremony performed to Tayo by Betonie (p. 142-144), a reader is required to actively pay attention to the connection of these three events, some of which deemed unreal while others are, and only after one does what they should, they will get the glimpses of how stories develop from the past, where people who are lost can be brought back to the world, to the post WWII, where ceremony alone cannot bring back the lost Tayo.

The act of connecting stories in the novel together plays a role in making a reader break the binary of oral/written, past/present, real/unreal by him/herself actively, as Tayo has been doing all along. A reader, thus, like Tayo, learns to heal him/herself from being clouded by witchery which curses humans to "see

no life", unable to see stories/Story, and subsequently living a life whilst "see[ing] no life."

In Patrcia Grace's Potiki, a novel which describes events circulating around the conflict between the Maori locals and the Pakeha, the White Europeans, over land dispute in a Maori community, Maori indigenous epistemological knowledge of spiral temporality is employed 1) to re-conceptualize trauma history that the indigenous have suffered and 2) to demolish Western binary opposition that governs the modern society. Looking at Maori – White conflicts from the perspective of the Western post-colonial framework, the Maori indigenous are of the defeated race, dominated by the Western settles. This has automatically set the initial conditions of the Maori as inferior. However, the employment of Maori spiral concept, the angle of the history has change. In the novel, the creation myth is used to open the story. The chapter entitled "The Prologue" offers a story of lives emerging from the realm of the nothingness "[o]f not seen / [o]f not heard" situated in the "centre", moving to "an outer circle" (Grace, 1995, p. 7), yielding the connotation that the lives of the characters in the novel are not under the hand of the white Pakeha land developers; rather, all events spring up from the nothingness Te Kore, as Roimata, one of the major characters, comments that the stories of Maori people, both of past and future including the events during her lifetime, are located in "now-time" that is "centred in the being". In brief, it might be said that the so-called "now-time", the center of being, is the initial nothingness. But since all events, creations and times are from the nothingness, in a sense, then, now-time is every time, past, present and future merged together. By setting this creation myth as temporal concept of Potiki, Grace breaks typical post-colonial conflicts of native against non-native that seems to suggest clear-cut beginning and ending down into fragments of event circling in the spiral movement around the center. Also, the image of spiral process introduced together with the creation myth suggests similar sense of interrelation between events, to specify, of the mythical reality and physical reality as well as of past, present and future. Thus, in contrast with some existing post-colonial interpretations, the role of spiral mode of time does not limit to the arrangement of events in the novel and to how the characters perceive the linear incidents of the encounter with the issue over the land dispute; instead, it encompasses all events, stories and myths together. In other words, myths that appear in the stories, ranging from the myth of creation and the myth of Maui, when analyzed through spiral temporality as a framework, will become sets of actual events happening at certain point in the spiral timeframe, which, when connected to Grace's initial attempts to redefine indigenous culture, works as a very important apparatus to converge the binary opposition of myths and realities, a concept originally familiar to indigenous cultures.

Second, unlike how many Western scholars view indigenous writings as heavily specific, backward and lacks multicultural qualities, Ceremony encourages the multi-ethnic, contemporary definition of indigeniety whereas Potiki, despite having been presented as if not inviting the non-indigenous whites, accepts development, changes, and non-indigenous worldview both in terms of political activism and at an ontological level and the structure of the novel itself also suggests that one of many purposes of this work is to invite "the born-outsides" to the world of Maori people. In Ceremony, mixed-raced characters, instead of the pure-blood, are set to play all significant roles in restoring the cosmic order and in the completion of indigenous ceremony. Furthermore, the mental recovery of the WWll veteran protagonist comes from his recognition of his hybridity and its role in his personality and life. Through the process of reconciliation, Tayo's mental illness and drought, the major problem happening to Laguna community Tayo lives in are resolved. Holly E. Martin's essay "Hybrid Landscapes as Catalysts for Cultural Reconciliation in Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony and Rudolfo Anaya's Bless me, Ultima" (2006) further argues that not only is the state of hybridity of main characters important, hybridized natural landscape is the core factor that leads to the cultural reconciliation of Tayo, an offspring of cultural conflicts between Native Americans and whites. She points out several important passages in the story that explain the cross-cultural, hybrid qualities of landscape, such as the battlefield in the Philippines where Tayo went as a soldier in the Second World War as superimposed with the land in the reservations back in the United State and the Pueblo reservation area with Jackpile Uranium Mine. As Martin explains, these landscapes are the keys to the understanding of Tayo's identity conflicts. They represent the present conditions of nature, Native American identity and Tayo himself; all consist of the combination of whites, as the destroyers, according to the myth, and the non-whites, as the victims of such destructions. Tayo, natural landscape in the native American community and contemporary native American culture have both the element of the whites' culture and of nature. Thus, in order for Tayo to be completely healed, he has to recognize and subsequently reconcile his hybrid state, through his profound understanding of the landscapes of which the conditions resemble Tayo's.

For Potiki, it can be seen that the conflicts between those who avoid and support political activism, the storytelling techniques, and the characterization of Toko as the only character with possibly mixed blood all point out that Grace, to a great extent, expands the world of the Maori to include the non-indigenous, and also admits the significance of the inclusion of the western life style and worldview for the survival of Maori communities. Some of the most solid evidence regarding this claim is the characterization of two major characters, Roimata and Tangimoana. These two characters are given important deeds in the novel for the survival of Maori identity and community respectively. For

Roimata, she is the one telling, retelling and recording stories, which according to Maori belief, is essential for the survival of the ethnic cultural identity. However, she is the character who displays concerns over the old, traditional ways Hemi, her husband and the chief of the community deals with land disputes and openly suggests the importance of change. Similarly, Tangimoana is the character depicted as outrageous and aggressive. She is viewed by her community as the one not following traditions and Maori's peaceful ways of life. However, the active role of Tangimoana who stands against white Pakeha developers in bombing the construction site and her knowledge of Pakeha's law have led to a new beginning of the community. In addition to this, one prominent critic Eva Rask Knudsen in her essay "On Reading Potiki" (2011) employs the concept, meaning, and function of wharenui, a Maori meeting house, to decipher the plot and the logic behind Grace's choice of narrative voices as well as the arrangement of events in the novel. Knudsen argues that despite the attempt to redefine itself and regain authority in self-representation, through the use of the wharenui concept, Potiki does not bar non-indigenous readers from reading and interpreting the text. Rather, a novel as a wharenui actually invites non-indigenous readers to try to comprehend the worldview of the indigenous Maori.

Conclusion

Writing as the born-within authors, Leslie Marmon Silko and Patricia Grace, like Paula Gunn Allen and Steven Edmund Winduo, region-based, indigenous scholars, has utilized their crafts to redefine "indigeneity", providing one of many definitions of what it means to be "indigenous" in a contemporary society. In doing so, the two scholars, on the one hand, and the two writers, on the other, have been doing what Cobo said is integral – they, co-existing with the modern world in the Western paradigm, find a way towards "self-identification". Paula Gunn Allen has outlined basic assumptions of Native American indigeneity as different from conventional Western perspective as well as explicating indigenous worldview, using the English language as a means of communicating to larger groups of audience and to the changing population of indigenous peoples, who may be used to English. In similar manner, Steven Edmund Winduo comes up with methodologies to re-appraise indigenous Pacific literature. He hybridizes Western and indigenous frameworks to, as Allen does, make the theory more applicable to contemporary indigenous Pacific works than typical pure Western, universal ones – the action which can also be perceived as a way to make Pacific studies "home-grown" yet contemporary. Through such hybridized theoretical frames as "folk narrative space" or "the structure of viewing", Winduo manages to redefine Pacific Indigeneity as a growing, developing culture. Also, the act of elucidating indigenous concept and establishing literary theories used specifically to

approach indigenous works, they have attempted to reclaim the scholarly voices in reading the "born-within" texts. Thus, readers today will have more theories and ideas to base their analyses on when approaching indigenous literature.

The two "born-within" writers, Leslie Marmon Silko and Patricia Grace, similarly, redefine indigenous struggle by reclaiming the voices of the "born-withins" back from those who have been assuming their voice. By employing the concept of ceremony and the accompanying indigenous oral tradition and practices, Silko succeeds in establishing a revisionist history, reducing influences of European invasion in the land of the indigenous Native Americans. Also, having transformed passive readers to active listeners as demonstrated, Silko is able to redefine the way Western mode of storytelling can be utilized by the indigenous, and, in turn, how indigeneity can be employed, here to heal cursed modern men, in the contemporary society. For Patricia Grace, she, as a "born-within" indigenous, presents Maori culture as proud, yet elastic. Spiral temporality highlights that the indigenous Maori are not "looking back, all the time" (p. 92) as Dollarman, the Pakeha land developer, accuses. The community of the "born-withins" merely views "progress" (p. 90) differently. The spiral concept indicates the redefined notion of time to view Maori history as not linear, with the past struggle between the dominant White settlers and the lost race of Maori, nor as circular, a completed process that is repeated over and over without changes or development – a static state. On the contrary, Maori people, at least as presented in Potiki, view history as circle but with loose end. Therefore, history may not repeat itself in the same fashion but is ever being developed. Based on how spiral timeframe works, at many points, there occurs the overlapping of many sequences of time – encompassing past, present, and future, an idea reflected in the conversation between Dollarman, who cannot understand why the Maori decide not to remove their wharenui to build an income-generating travel complex, and a Maori who answers that by refusing Western "progress", they are not "looking back" to a nostalgic past, but are "looking to the future" (p. 93). For them, destroying their ancestral heritage is a disruption against a fine spiral movement, and if the continuity is interrupted, there may happen a significant change during the overlapping of the times in the spiral now-time.

As I propose, the act of "subjective identification", has been uniquely exercised by many indigenous scholars and literary figures. However, the difference between the act done in academic literary domain and the attempts of international organizations such as United Nations or International Labor Organization should be noted. In political sphere, both the "subjective" and "objective" identifications should be made, meaning that the act of subjective identification may have to correspond with its objective counterpart. Also, by saying objective, it refers to the established notion of indigeneity of major political units. Therefore, to compromise both categories, subjective

identification is still needed translating into dominant language. With slight differences, self-identification in academic domain is rather a response to misconceptions towards indigeneity and the urgency felt by the "born-withins" to redefine their own cultural identity, done not to gain rights, acceptance, or protections from any sector in particular. In other words, without the need to compromise with dominant political unit in the act of writing, it is not required that their products be necessarily understood by the norm. The texts and theories may welcome outsiders to use or to try to understand, but they are not crafted to be understood, hence, in the academic field, the larger degree of autonomy is enjoyed and celebrated than in the political arena.

In conclusion, from the time non-western writers started to craft literature written in English to the eyes of the Western world, literary field have expanded, and scholars as well as students are exposed to non-western literary works. Growing varieties of literary texts mean more possibilities for the non-Westerns to represent themselves with their own voices to replace or at least counter the misleading images of them[6]. Also, in academia, this emerging trend has allowed for the popularity of the field post-colonial studies, developed to help readers decipher this body of literature appropriately. However, at the bottom line, the school itself has a clear reference point to the western influence from the inclusion of the term "colonialism" as a starting point to the way in which the texts have been conventionally analyzed. The development of the indigenous, region-based studies in any kinds, ranging from the recognition and the inclusion of alternative/indigenous practices to its mainstream counterpart in the academia, the uses of indigenous, culturally specific knowledge to read texts, to the attempt to create region-based literary framework, therefore, contribute not only to the more fluid, accurate readings of a number of literary texts but also to the more opportunities to put the right people, "the born-withins" in the conversation in the field.

Notes

1. Giorgio Agamben has proposed in his book Homo Sacre: Sovereign Power and Bare Life the nature of western politics has required a human being (zoe) to enter the political realm, transforming itself into a bios, a political subject in order that one receives recognition from state and acquires political, qualified life. However, the life as bios also requires one to abide by laws of state. In other words, in order for a subject to receive protection from the state, under the logic of the modern law and order, it also has to become "a subject" to the sovereign power as well. In the case of indigenous peoples here by being labelled and recognized by the state as "indigenous peoples", the indigenous then are automatically subjected themselves to the power of the state in order that they are recognized and protected by laws. Yet, ironically, by subduing to the state, indigenous peoples are in the position vulnerable to the exception and injustice that laws can impose upon them as well.

2. In this article, the words "the born-within(s)" and "the born-outside(s)" will be used interchangeably with the indigenous people and the Westerners in order to highlight the problematic nature of the indigenous studies having been studied and accounted for by outsiders.

3. For example, unlike what M.H. Abrams argues in *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953), indigenous literature may neither work as a mirror reflecting reality nor stand as a lamp, a means through which an individual expresses his or her perception of the world. On the one hand, indigenous literature is never a "pure self-expression" as the Western concept of literature because "the private soul at any public wall" is "alien" (p. 242) to indigenous cultures whose social structure encourages communal unity. On the other hand, a large body of indigenous literature does not claim to explicate the indigenous lives and experiences as a whole or show universal political or social concerns. It recognizes the cultural specificity of different tribes and communities — although these tribes may share similar experiences, worldviews, ontologies and rituals, each of them has its own unique culture and thus thwarts generalization. In other words, how literature is normally perceived and taught may lead to misleading way of looking at conflicts of the stories, translated into the languages that are easily understood by the norm.

4. Many critics, for example, tend to associate "post-modernism" with indigeneity because of the school rejects major grand narratives and ideologies that aim to explicate human conditions. Its distrust in monolithic narrative, absolute truth, and objectivity are what also appear in many of indigenous beliefs and its cultural productions. However, we may be able to say that by associating "post-modernism" with "indigeneity", one may not only include indigenous practices and belief into the western paradigm, perceiving indigeneity as entangled to Eurocentric philosophical development, but also politicizing indigeneity for postmodernism is arguably political in its essence.

5. It is true that post-colonial theorists today reject this assumption I demonstrate. However, this is a strong and prominent perception that is still governed the majority. Therefore, it is important to take note of its impact over indigenous culture.

6. Such as that they are backward and primitive

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