

**Tribhuvan University**

**Tayo's Quest for Cultural Identity in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony***

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in English**

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**2009**

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This thesis entitled "Tayo's Quest for Cultural Identity in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Madhav Adhikari has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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**Letter of Recommendation**

Mr. Madhav Adhikari has completed his thesis entitled "Tayo's Quest for Cultural Identity in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*" under my supervision. He carried out his research from June 2008 to August 2009 A.D. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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## **Acknowledgements**

I am profoundly grateful to my respected teacher Sarad Chandra Thakur, lecturer at the Central Department of English, T.U. for his insightful suggestions, constant encouragement, and painstaking guidance. This thesis would not have come to the present form without his assistance. I know, my words of thankfulness may not suffice to express my gratitude to him.

I wish to extend my gratitude to Prof. Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, the Head of the Central Department of English, for granting me an opportunity to carry out this research. I am equally grateful to those teachers who offered me invaluable suggestions for the completion of this research. Similarly, the suggestions and cooperation of my friends can be never forgotten. I am equally grateful to them.

I am heavily indebted to my family members and relatives for their constant encouragement and strong support not only for this research work but for whole of my studies. Finally I am thankful to Miss Savitri Sharma of Creative Cyber and Communication Centre, Kirtipur who assisted me in typing and formatting this dissertation.

Madhav Adhikari

August, 2009

## **Abstract**

In this research, an attempt has been made to analyze protagonist Tayo's quest for his cultural identity in Leslie Marmon Silko's novel *Ceremony*. Tayo's is a story of contact with attractive but non-Laguna forces, departure from Laguna, and eventual return to Laguna with the acquired knowledge of how to live with those forces. Being abandoned by his mother, and humiliated by his Auntie and friend Emo for his half-breed heritage, Tayo has an acute sense of alienation, cultural dislocation, loss and discrimination. Consequently, he makes his quest moving from one culture to another culture. His quest journey begins with his leaving home to join the World War II, and ends in his homing-in. Unlike his expectation, the war gives him a traumatic experience, which results in his psychological illness. After the failure of the white doctors, he returns to the native culture for his cure. There, firstly he is assisted by a traditional Laguna medicine man, old Ku'oosh and then completely cured by a Navajo healer, Betonie. Tayo performs a ceremony in a renewed native context, which helps him to reconcile with the native land and the spirits. With this reconciliation, Tayo retrieves his cultural position and identity in old Laguna culture. Thus, Tayo's quest for his cultural identity and his discovery of it is the main idea, i.e. thesis of the novel, which has been inquired and explicitly approved in this research work.

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