

Chapter I

Identifying Individuals through Locations in *Things Fall Apart* and *Ceremony*

This project attempts to unfold Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and L. M. Silko's *Ceremony* from socio-cultural and eco-critical perspective; keeping the land at the centre. While doing so, it also focuses how the cultural disposition affects their characters' relationship with nature and their society with its varieties of stuffs.

Things Fall Apart is the story of Okonkwo; one of the heads of his clan of Ibo community of Southeastern Nigerian land. Likewise, *Ceremony* is the story of Tayo; a veteran of mixed blood ancestry and the representative of whole Pueblo Indians living nearby Laguna reservation. Where Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* deals with the setting of pre/early colonization, there, Silko's *Ceremony* presents the post colonial scenario during/after World War II. In both novels, land has been treated as an 'organic whole' with the fundamental eco-critical belief that land is not just the physical assimilation of our surrounding environment and all its fauna and flora, rather in depth, it encompasses native culture, religious practices, stories, myths, festivals, and knowledge. And, all these things together help to create the meaning associated with the land. These novels show how importantly and preciously these factors are interwoven with each other in order to shape the identity and guide the social performance of these tribal people.

Things Fall Apart (1958) is Achebe's first novel and taken as his masterpiece. From the day of publication it catches enormous attention. Actually, Achebe has strong dissatisfaction towards the way white writers have presented the exotic African land as dark, uncivilized and beastly landscape. And not surprisingly, the way *Things Fall Apart* presents the beauty of African landscape, its culture and life, and the terrific consequences brought by the European colonialism, is its major attraction to

discuss it in literary arena. *Things Fall Apart* deals basically with a painful reality; the humiliation, fragmentation and frustration emerged among the Africans due to colonialism. Achebe has shown the Ibo society in the time of transition where all the rooted cultural and traditional values are in conflict with an alien and importantly, more powerful culture that is going to tear them apart.

It is, basically, the tragic story of Okonkwo; the protagonist, and the down fall of whole Ibo culture due to the disturbance in their natural way of living brought by white missionaries. Throughout the whole novel he is trying to establish his identity in his society where the nature, their cultural rituals, stories etc. have profound role. Okonkwo is one of the respected and influential leaders within the Ibo community of Umuofia in eastern Nigeria. After defeating Amalinze the Cat in wrestling competition he earns tremendous fame and confidence as he dreamed from his early days. He decides to become a powerful and wealthy man in his community by winning the titles. Just opposite to his father Unoka who was gentle but lazy, Okonkwo is very determined, strong and hardworking. Unoka had borrowed money and squandered it on palm-wine and merry making with friends due to which his family often had to suffer from hunger and scarcity. He was taken as the failure and laughingstock referring as *agbala*; one who resembles the weakness and has no property. Unoka died a shameful death with large amount of debts only because he was deviated from the natural struggle and hard work which is necessary for survival. In order to get rid of his father's infame and weakness, Okonkwo tries his best to be manly. And somehow he is successful too. But this attempt over clouds him with the traits of harsh anger, pride and inflexibility. Okonkwo seems cruel and sympathetic at once who first appears as a role model and self-made man but gradually haunted by the fear of failure and frustration. Due to which, he finally commits suicide; the act

which the Igbo community considers as the most sinful act as “offense against the earth” (207).

Basically, all the tragedies with Okonkwo and whole Ibo community have brought by the new white missionaries who violate their strong bond of natural, exotic and uncorrupted way of living. Due to European colonization many Nigerian youths swept away from their traditional beliefs and values. The original native values and social code of ethics - which provide meanings in their identity making process - like keeping society above own self, communal harmony, reverence for achievers and respect for aged started to vanish with the advent of white culture.

Silko’s novel *Ceremony* (1994), in general, is the story of all Indian Americans, and of the colonized land, where the original values of non-white people were shattered ultimately making them uprooted and alienated from their cultural heritage and communal intimacy, compelling them to leave the natural way of living. Particularly, it is the story of Tayo; a veteran of mixed blood ancestry, and a representative of whole Pueblo Indians living nearby Laguna reservation. He returns to his tribal reservation from the city hospital where he was admitted after being injured in Second World War. He is treated in the White men’s hospital after the war but he can’t be cured there. Instead of feeling relieved, he suffers more since his problem cannot be diagnosed by the modern medicine. Time and again his past war memories appear as hallucination that haunt him continuously. He suffers from nightmares, hunting past memories and fragmentation of reality. Dissertation from his mother in early childhood, two contrary attitudes about land, animal and nature of White and Laguna people, racial discrimination etc. make him confused, helpless and alienated. The prevailed disharmony leads him to the state of ‘Lost’. For time being,

he remains in limbo with his fragmented identity. Neither he can identify himself with Pueblo root nor with Mexican legacy.

Psychological Trauma of Tayo is not diagnosed and cured by white doctors rather they term it as battle fatigue. Finally, in order to get rid of these traumatic memories, he decides to return to his previous natural world of his community. There he tries to reunite with nature but his past memories and mixed blood identity doesn't ease him to recover completely. Later, when his Grandma decides to give him their traditional healing, his real journey begins. Betonie; a tribal medicine man, gradually connects him with the nature through series of ceremonies, and pacifies his queries and doubt about the world, Whites, and nature. Actually, Tayo's struggle in the novel is the symbolic battle not only to revive the fundamental cultural values of his tribe but also to stand on his own rights of living harmoniously with nature.

In *Ceremony*, Silko has presented peculiar cultural practice of Native Americans. They do not have any space for either of the types of cultural contamination, particularly, the white contamination. To preserve the purity of their culture they have created very strong mythical stories which show the power of their cultural belief. Actually, their stories are associated with their communal identity through which they have treasured their cultural heritage. Giving the reflection of this distinct cultural practice Silko has presented two stories side by side; the first is their mythical story in verse and the second is tribal story in prose. All these stories enforce the essence of biocentrism and reciprocity. They teach people to maintain the mutual respect and dependency with nature. On the one hand, these stories function as the powerful and effective means to create and connect community by establishing 'I' and 'You' relationship between speaker and the listeners. On the other hand, such tribal-lore functions as the healing agent since it contains their ancestral legacy, their pride,

their belief on their cultural practices and its importance, by sharing it among each and every member of the community.

Human association with land is the crux of *Ceremony*. Throughout the novel, the intimate relation between land and nature with Pueblo people can be felt. Silko very vividly shows that for Native Americans how important is it to be in touch with their land. They never consider land as an individual property which can be owned and sold. For them, land is not mere physical landscape rather it includes the living environment and itself is the living entity. Their communal folktales and folksongs which are the integral part of their cultural heritage, teach them the fundamentals of living harmoniously with each other and with their land too. Their relation with land is relation-based rather than consumption based, responsibility-based rather than right-based. Thus, *Ceremony* points the finger on one of the today's problems of degradation of the land; cutting into pieces, sold and evaluated through monetary value. In *Ceremony*, where Pueblo people emphasize the 'wholeness' or the 'organic' essence of earth, there, White people are trying to break it into the pieces. This fragmentation of land and the disturbance in its 'wholeness' not only hampers the productivity of earth rather in serious mode, it results into the rootlessness of human being. The main reason of Tayo's suffering is also nothing other than his alienation with the essence of his native land.

In both novels, the life and living of both Ibo and Pueblo communities revolve around the occurrence of their land and society. The different objects of nature like rivers, hills, cave, trees, and stone are shown as the store houses of stories, myths and legends. Their rituals, ceremonies, stories and all the cultural and religious practices make the direct and sacred connection with the nature. But the arrival and settlement of white people and culture unravel the traditional life of both Pueblo and Ibo

community. The interference of powerful foreign culture gradually escalates the series of misunderstanding and conflicts between the Whites and natives which ultimately lead to the inevitable tragic end. From the very beginning of the novels, both protagonists are seen searching their self-identity in relation with their land and community. But, during the struggle for establishing their identity where the protagonist of *Things Fall Apart* moves away from assimilation to alienation with nature, there the protagonist of *Ceremony* travels from alienation to assimilation with nature.

This study aims to show how identity and existence of an individual is shaped and guided by the nature and culture, and its every component. When people get alienated from their natural way of living, land, community, culture, religion etc., they find their 'self' split and lost. Whether it is Tayo's first traumatic experiences or Okonkwo's latest tragic fatal end, in both of the cases, their connection and rapport with nature and culture is determining factor. Their ancient stories, ceremonies, myths, oracles, culture, religion, their community etc. have strong impact over their psyche and existence rather they have internalized these aspects as the integral part of their identity. And lack of these things makes them feel incomplete and broken. Keeping the fundamental belief of reciprocity, this study analyzes how the degradation of and alienation with nature and culture brings the crisis on the identity of an individual. This study is an attempt to analyze how nature and culture determine the identity of an individual. It does not attempt to analyze eco-criticism and cultural identity, and its cause and effect in general. Rather it is delimited on the natural and cultural/religious displacement in association with other particular facts related with Nigerian and Indian American people and land shown in *Ceremony* and *Things Fall Apart*.

There are some similarities in both of the books. Though *Things Fall Apart* deals with the life of African landscape of Nigeria and *Ceremony* does with the life of Indian Americans of north America. The setting is related with non white community. Both books vividly depict the relationship between nature and Ibo and Navajo people. The role of their landscape; mountains, hills, caves, rivers, animals, tribal stories, myths, oracles, religions, rituals, communal values, has profound role in their life. In both of the books, respect and importance of nature and farming is visible. Even the crops like 'corn' and 'yam, and the spirit of dead one strongly influence in their identity formation. Similarly, animals like deer and python have also profound role to highlight their cultural values. They are directly associated in the creation of the identity of the protagonists. And, due to the violation in that relationship with their land and its attributed meaning, both protagonists suffer from identity crisis. These are the stories of two non white heroes who struggle hard to establish their identity within their people and land. In both of the cases, Christianity tries its best to violet their harmonious bonding with community and nature imposing the essence of individuality and fragmentation that ultimately batters not only their identity but existence too. Both of the novels begin with verse. Where Achebe opens *Thing Fall Apart* with W.B Yeat's poem, there Silko does with her tribal stories. And in both of the cases it supports the thematic aspect of novels.

Despite these frequent similarities, there is a basic difference in these books. *Thing Fall Apart* presents extremely patriarchal society where hard work, physical strength, dedication to the social rules and values are presented as the identity setters. Ibo society and land have given specific meaning to these traits in a man. And its protagonist tries to search his identity in relation to these qualities. But *Ceremony* depicts the setting where the character searches the meaning of his identity in Puelob's

relation with land, animal, language and their ceremonies. In both novels, supporting identity markers are shown different though the land is the crux in both settings. During their journey to establish their identity in relation with their land, where Okonkwo moves away from assimilation to alienation, there Tayo comes to assimilation from alienation. On the one hand, due to the alienation with land Okonkwo commits suicide, but, on the other hand, due to the assimilation with land Tayo overcomes all his pain and worry. Though in both of the cases, Christianity plays the villainous role bringing disturbance and imbalance among people, the protagonists perceive the new change in different ways. Basically, this is the major difference between these two books. Where Tayo through Betony becomes able to internalize that change is essential to grow and it is unavoidable, there Okonkwo remains rigid towards those changes. Though people like his friend Obierika wants to aware him, his inflexibility claims his life. It is the Christianity that has made all those things- which he valorizes the most- fall apart casting a tribal hero as a criminal.

Literature Review

Both *Things fall Apart* and *Ceremony* have been analyzed and interpreted through multiple perspectives with varieties of radical and political dynamics, but very few attempts have been made to deal with the issue of identity in relation with its land i.e. identity politics in relation with eco-criticism. Particularly, this project will be different in a way when writer like Prof. Paula Gunn Allen who herself is Native American female writer shows her dissatisfaction regarding Silko's revelation of her native stories from restricted territory on which this project is based. Exposing her dissatisfaction, she says:

[Silko] is poignantly aware of the closure of village life of outsiders and depicts the pain such exclusion brings...yet she is unaware of one

small but essential bit of information: the information that telling in a way the old stories, revealing the old ways can only lead to disaster.

(62)

Her point, here, is that Silko's revelation of such tribal stories to the outer world can contaminate and devalue their worth and effectiveness.

It will be distinct attempt again to analyze whether the journey of Tayo and Okonkwo is natural or not since critics like Allen raises the doubt over the impacts of their connection with their respective community and nature saying that "Sadly- and frustratingly –a human life isn't a television commercial or a novel; it seldom structures itself along classical lines of conflict, crisis and resolution" (63). Thus, this project tries to find out whether the nature/culture affects human identity or not.

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* has gained enormous literary attention from its publication particularly, for being as the first Africa based novel by Native African writer and its original way of depicting African landscape. Achebe's strong disagreement to the 'white way' of depicting his Native land has strong influence on his writings. Regarding this, David Carroll in his book *Chinua Achebe- Novelist, Poet, Critic* (1990), writes about Achebe's opinion as "art is, and always was, at the service of man...any good story, any good novel, should have a message, should have a purpose" (8). Achebe believes that work of art should present the things in their natural way because it has immense influence on human lives. So, it should have certain message, purpose and authenticity not the mere hypothetical description as white writers used to do. Particularly, Achebe has strong opposition to the way how Joseph Conrad has presented African land and people in *Heart of Darkness*; Africans as savage people nearly as non-human. Njeng, in his article "Achebe, Conrad, and Postcolonial Strain", also views Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* "was written against

Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*" (2). Achebe has used this novel as a tool to show that Nigeria had and has its own culture and civilization. They are neither primitive nor uncivilized. Regarding their enriched past Prof. Kalu Ogbaa states:

...it is in that sense that *Things Fall Apart* a casebook that makes the point that contemporary Igbo, Nigerian, and African social and political problems derived from the historical past of their societies-a past that was intact before the advent of the white men in Africa (1).

This novel is seen as the symbolic voice of all Africans to oppose the views of mainstream authors who without knowing the reality and beauty of African life and culture, try to depict it as dark landscape.

Just like Pueblo people of *Ceremony*, Ibo people of Nigeria have also the strong respect and affection for the land. In *Things fall Apart*, Achebe has portrayed the importance of the sacred relationship between the Ibos and their natural world, especially, with their land. Highlighting this aspect Franz Fanon comments that "For a colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all, dignity" (34). Ibos' relationship with their land/nature is beyond its physicality rather it is seen as another living character as they call it the "land of living" (122). Such practices of Ibo people related with their dead ones and their burial ground makes Deloughrey say that "this dynamic model of land extends genealogically from the past to the future "(6). Ibos have strong belief that their dead clan members become the part of their land. It is a kind of appropriation of nature including both living and non living of their community. The land for them does not belong only to the present generation rather to the dead one and to the upcoming generations too.

The identity of Ibos, in the novel, is directly associated with their cultural values and practices. But colonialism is shown as the powerful cause for the violation and degradation of Ibo culture. Remarking the cultural invasion of Britain over African land Alimi, in her article, writes that it is the story of the “collapse, breaking into pieces, chaos, and confusion” (121) of traditional Ibo culture. Violating their connection with nature, colonialism brings misfortune and disintegration among them and puts forth the challenge to Ibo people for sustaining their identity and existence unbroken; cultural resilience .According to Deborah Bird Rose, cultural “resilience ... referring to the capacity of groups of people to sustain themselves in flourishing relationships with their environment, to cope with catastrophe, and to find ways to continue” (7), demands flexibility in people. It is the capacity to undergo change, fall apart even without ceasing to exist. This is the greatest reason for the failure of its cultural hero Okonkwo since he lacks such flexibility, particularly, after colonialism. Otherwise they have sustained many environmental crises before colonialism like drought, starvation, locust, challenges of weather and sickness etc. But Okonkwo fails to overcome the challenge brought by colonialism. This is why Achebe in his interview with Charles H. Rowell mentions about the Okonkwo’s failure as the story of that man who is “... larger than life, who exemplifies virtues that are admired by the community, but also a man who for all that is still human” (179). Actually, when he was connected with his community he faced every challenge successfully but later, when he is alone and outcast from his land and community, he becomes hopeless, though he tries to fight back, tries to restore everything as previous, but he fails.

The first attempt of Christian missionaries in Africa is to devaluate the native African religious belief. It tries to shatter their age long faith over nature as god. Even colonizers claim that whatever Ibos are worshipping; the god of wood and stone,

snake etc. as insane practice claiming Christ as the single god of this universe. Gradually, their attempt starts to create doubt and faith too among some of the Ibos. Their attitude towards Ibos' religious value seems extreme when they provoke Oduche to kill the royal python for which Ibos call "Our Father" (1) as Achebe mentions in his another famous book *Arrow of God* saying it is just a snake not sacred but evil; "the snake that deceived our first mother, Eve" (48). This incident in the novel also exemplifies how the missionaries try to explain and execute everything according to their view and perception neglecting Ibos' emotion and faith. This is one of the major facts that makes Ibos feel stripped away, fallen apart as its title suggests.

Colonization tears the Ibos in two different groups confronting each other. The essence of their brotherhood and communal unity upon which the strength and beauty of Umuofia has rest gradually start to vanish. Describing this context, Ato Quayson in his article "Modernism and Postmodernism in African Literature", writes that *Things Fall Apart* has presented "the struggle between an organic esthetic ...indigenous to the culture and an esthetic...that comes with colonization" (833). It dramatizes the consequences that colonization brings on the vibrant land of Umuofia of Nigeria where every pre established culture, values and faith are battered by colonizers making Ibos feel fragmented, lost and cheated.

Silko's *Ceremony* has also received tremendous limelight since its publication. Nature has always played an important role in Silko's most of the writings. She has extreme respect for nature, particularly, for interdependence with human and nature as Stacy Alaimo asserts that she does "not distance native cultures from the nature that has been used to denigrate them, but instead, respect[s] nature from within [her] own traditions" (156-157). The tribal myths, stories, landscapes, rituals, etc. of Pueblo culture has been intermingled with the life and identity of the characters. Silko, in her

most of the writings, has shown that intimate relation of Pueblo with their land.

Focusing on that essence, Louis Owens writes how Pueblo “imagine themselves as intimately and inextricably related to every aspect of the world they inhabit and honor the responsibilities this relationship entails” (217). It is their culture that teaches them to respect nature; its stories of animals, plants, rocks and of earth, and to examine everything eco-critically. It also encourages them to be connected with their land by heart.

In *Ceremony*, Silko has presented landscape as living entity. Here, land is not a mere geographical foundation on which characters’ life fosters rather it affects their life as another powerful character. Regarding this relationship in her writings Schweninger asserts that “Silko uses nature not only to define the characters’ landscapes and show how those landscapes are symbolically linked to the hero’s regeneration but also to relate the very essence of human existence” (51). Silko creates the belief among her characters that their land is the strong foundation for their identity. She makes them believe that the sense of place does not mean only the human attachment to a geographical location rather a land widely includes people’s sense of belonging, identity, the self, and memories. This is the reason for which Native Americans treat land as alive with which they can interact. In this context, Karen Waldren in her essay analyzes that “Silko’s poems, essays, and novels manifest the relationship between the human being and his or her surroundings as one of the being rather viewing” (179). It means, if this harmony is violated, if the land is mistreated and considered as the unanimated dead object, then their existence comes under the threat of extinction as Reyes Gracia claims that “loss of place means genetic extinction; loss of the sense of place signals cultural extinction...histories and stories squandered” (51). Their rapport and treatment towards the land is one of the

major determinants of their existence and identity. If this connection is violated their being will be threatened.

In *Ceremony*, the relation with land and the stuff of their tribal stories, and its strong impact over Pueblo people have been shown particularly, through the characters Tayo and Betonie. Silko has brought forth the restorative and regenerating power of their language and narratives. Not only this, Pueblos believe that it is the major anchor of their cultural tie that binds them together with a same rope. In order to make people aware about the importance of their language, stories and narratives, Silko herself opines that “The stories are always bringing together, keeping this whole together, keeping this family together, keeping this clan together. Don’t go away, don’t isolate yourself, but come here, because we have all had these experiences together” (59). Her appeal for Native Americans to be connected with their language, stories and culture is manifested through Tayo’s acknowledgement of their importance. If this connection is broken then everything will be dispersed. Apart from this, such stories enable its people to view the world meaningfully, to think and perceive the things in a matured way because as Gergen in his foreword views “narrative is not only a chief means by which the individual self is defined, but it also exerts a formative influence on our understanding of the world about us” (vii). Stories are a kind of meaning making process of human life. Universality of such stories provides the guidance and crafts the perspective to understand the worlds. This understanding definitely reflects in realizing one’s own self.

Theoretical Insight

While analyzing *Things Fall Apart* and *Ceremony* in relation with the identity of their protagonists, the fundamental belief of environmental psychology will provide the insight. Under environmental psychology, the concept of place identity of

Prohansky, Fabian and Kaminoff will be a tool to examine how these protagonists' concept of identity and self is guided and influenced by their respective land and its other associative stuffs. Particularly, the associative stuffs of their respective land means their cultural practices and values, rituals, language, stories and ceremonies that directly affects in the formation of the identity marker of their respective societies. Likewise, the social identity theory of Henri Tajfel along with John C. Turner will also put light to show how the protagonists see and search their self-identity in their respective socio- cultural environment. Apart from these, the core essence of Aldo Leopold's *The Land Ethics* along with Lovelock's *Gaia* hypothesis will also provide necessary guidance to this project to show how the every organism on this earth does have equal importance to maintain the existence of each other. Further, Roy F. Baumeister's idea of self-concept, self-esteem and identity will be related to analyze how these aspects in relation with their societies' identity parameters affect the protagonists' identity.

Place identity is the core concept in the field of environmental psychology which says that identities are formed in relation to environments. The term is first introduced by environmental and social psychologist Harold M. Prohansky, Abbe K. Fabbian, and Robert Kaminoff in 1978. In the essay "Place- Identity: Physical World Socialization of the Self", these writers highlight the "social and cultural processes involved in the development of self-identity" (57). They state that "...place identity ... is a sub-structure of the self-identity of the person consisting of, broadly conceived, cognitions about the physical world in which the individual lives" (59). The cognition about the world consists of "memories, ideas, feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and conceptions of behavior and experience which relate to the variety and complexity of physical settings that define the day-to-day

existence of every human being” (59). It represents knowledge and feelings developed through everyday experiences of physical spaces.

Place identity is deeply rooted with place attachment and it brings forth how places reflect meaning and memory for the inhabited community and individuals too. Insisting that place identity involves more than attachment, Prohansky et. al (1983) describe it as a “potpourri of memories, concepts, feelings” (62). Place identity is based on interpretations, ideas and related feelings about specific physical setting. In the words of Prohansky et.al, “place –identity of the person mirrors in a broad sense the particular physical settings as well as the pattern of such settings that he or she routinely experiences and uses daily, that is, the home, work place, school, neighborhood, and play environments” (63). According to them, people not only experience the physical realities of a particular community but the social meaning and beliefs attached to it by its residents as well as those who live outside to it. And these experiences exert influence and assimilate values, norms, and attitudes defining person’s day to day existence which are woven into the “cognitive fabric” (62) of place identity. Ultimately, each of these factors contributes to an individual’s self-concept and prioritizes the personal meaning associated to individual’s neighborhood or place.

Place identity highlights the relationship between individuals and their physical setting. Prohansky et al (1983), describe this dynamic relationship between individuals and their physical environment which “reveals the nature of self” (61) as the reinforcing factor for self-identity. By place-identity, Prohansky et. al do not simply mean to only place –belongingness, emotional attachment to it, or identifying one’s home, family, neighborhood etc. but rather a cluster of cognitions in the form of images, memories, facts, ideas, beliefs, values and behaviour tendencies relevant and

directly related to the physical world existence of the individual. These cognitions are at the core to emerge and develop a person's identity and this contributes to place. Actually, "social roles and social attributes serve as the conceptual nexus for understanding the development of self identity via the socialization process that goes throughout the lifecycle"(80). Social roles and attributes in fact, are the creators of social identity markers because "the social roles and attributes that define who the person is, how he or she is to behave, and what he or she is worth" (80). Every individual, in order to confirm his or her identity in particular society or land should conceive these identity markers because they define the ways in which people connect to various places, and its effect in identity formation, place-making perception and other practices. Such cognitions help to understand why and where people feel at home, as well as why displacement- forced or voluntary- can be so traumatic for individuals and groups too.

The social identity theory is proposed by British psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1979. Both of the writers publish many papers and books in joint venture as well as independently being focused how a society of a particular land creates individual's social identity. Their theory completely rests upon the concept of inter-group and in-group relation in a particular society as Henry Tajfel in *Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* says " A group can be defined as such on the basis of criteria which are either external or internal" (2). According to them, the individual identity is a part of their social identity. This social identity theory actually believes that a person's sense of self is based on their group membership. This membership is based on the culture, religion, caste, nationality, home, neighbourhood etc. It functions as the source of pride and self esteem which directly affects the identity of an individual. It helps to develop a sense of belongingness to their

particular social world. Basically, Tajfel and Turner's concept of social identity is based upon inter-group and in-group behaviour and relation about which Tajfel in writes that "In this respect, this project tries to analyze their protagonists' identity in relation with their communal groups behaviour and relation.

Tajfel and Turner, in their essay "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior" opine that in the process of establishing identity in relation with particular social group, at first, the self-image is highlighted with the enhancement of the status of own group. In this sense, it is quite discriminatory, since it divides the world into 'we' and 'they' through social categorization. Tajfel and Turner coined this distinction as "in-group" (15) and "out-group" (15) which creates "subjective" (12) and "objective" (12) differentiations among the social groups. And according to Tajfel and Turner, "the aim of differentiation is to maintain or achieve superiority over an out-group on some dimension. And such act, therefore, is essentially competitive" (17). Tajfel and Turner state that this "intergroup categorization leads to in-group favoritism and discrimination against the out group" (14). This social identity theory says that in-group always tries to discriminate against out-group to enhance their self-image focusing on the negative aspect of out-group. Doing so, the particular group members are confirming their group acceptance and acknowledgement.

Tajfel and Turner (1979) say that there are three mental processes to identify an individual's self in relation to aforementioned in-group and out-group. They are; "social categorization" (13), "social identification" (13), and "social comparison" (13). Firstly, social categorization divides and affects people into a particular group. In his book *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations*, Turner asserts that this categorization is based on "four variables including extreme similarities between people, common fate, shared threat and physical proximity" (25). By finding the

belongingness in particular or sometime many social groups, an individual 'self' searches its identity. Such categories are formed on the particular social parameters like religion, gender, nationality, culture etc. Being based on these parameters it creates certain identity markers for specific groups. Thus, Tajfel and Turner say that such categories are "cognitive tools that segment, classify, and order the social environment and thus enable the individual to undertake many forms of social action" (15-16). Every member should internalize such in-group similarities and out- group differentiations in order to confirm their own self in their society since "they create and define the individuals place in society" (16). Under this categorization, as Tajfel and Turner opine that people perceive "themselves as similar to or different from others as individuals" (14). Thus, it is purely based on people's cognition because Tajfel puts forth that "... it is related to some value connotations" (2).

Secondly, Tajfel and Turner views that in the process of social identification people adopt the identity of the group they have categorized themselves as belonging to because "social groups ... provide their members with an identification of themselves in social terms ...social identity" (16). There is an emotional significance to their identification with a group, and their self-esteem becomes bound up with that group membership. It directly affects the "individual's self image derived form the social categories" (16). Tajfel and Turner bring forth the idea that individuals always "strive for positive self-concept" (16) and this is the reason why they are continuously trying to "maintain or enhance their self-esteem" (16). They further mention that the social identity may be "positive or negative" (16) according to the "evaluations" (16) of those groups which have contributed to construct an individual's social identity. This positivity and negativity, further is based on the social comparison done with different groups.

Thirdly, through social comparison the individual self tries to maintain its self-esteem since it depends on particularly on “favorable comparisons” (16). If your self-esteem is to be maintained, boosted, then your group needs to compare favorably with other groups. Therefore, in order to establish their identity, the group members may seek positive distinctiveness through different competition with the out- group. This notion can be understood with the help of Tajfel’s concept of “Power and Status in Intergroup Behavior” (16) where he claims that social psychologists concern in “experimentally induced effects of intergroup power relations, the effects of status on intergroup attitudes, and the role played in intergroup behavior by the perceived illegitimacy and/or instability of social differentials” (17). Thus, the core essence of distinctiveness is based on social comparison whether positive or negative. In relation to place and social identity, Turner believes that social groups adopt those behaviors which their environment has shaped as the norms for a particular place. The influence of place on identity is reciprocal; people affect places, and places influence how people behave and see themselves. In the light of these aforementioned ideas of social identity, in this project, the issue of identity is analyzed in reference with the protagonists’ society, land and culture.

While analyzing the identity issues of the protagonists of the novels, Donelle N. Dreese’s ideas about how Indian American identity is associated with their land and culture in various Native writers’ work will be considered as another guideline. With reference of many famous Native writers like N. Scott Momaday, Linda Hogan, Wendell Berry, L. M. Silko, Paula Gunn Allen etc., her book *Ecocriticism: Creating Self and Place in Environmental and American Literatures*, tries to define an Indian American ecocritical and environmental literary practice which is harmonized to the complex and ever shifting relationship between Native people and their land. In her

book she claims that colonial relationship in North America is fundamentally expressed by relationship to the land. Regarding the knowledge of 'self' in relation with "Sense of Place" (1) and "Reterritorialization", she says that "in order to know who you are you must know where you are" (1). It means the sense of place is a sense of knowing and of being a part of a particular place. In the development of individual's identity nothing is more influential than the place where he or she grows up because Dreese views that "The sense of place within each of us is very sensual. It engages all of our senses on a daily basis until we may hardly be aware of what we see, smell, hear, or feel in the place we call home" (2). The sense experience of an individual of local culture, belief, language, history, social practices etc. connects him or her with the physical landscape.

Dreese, through her book, has put forth the perception and interpretations of Native ecological relationship especially with land. In reference with Paula Gunn Allen's writings, Dreese opines that "most American Indian cultures have evolved from a tradition that cares for the landscape with respect and reciprocity that which is taken is returned through prayer, ritual, and ceremony to maintain the delicate balance upon which all life rests" (7). It conveys the belief of Native people that if land is abused or treated wrongly, it inevitably disrupts the balance resulting pain and destruction to the life of its inhabitants.

Another major point except sense of place that Dreese talks in her book is "reterritorialization" (1). She has interwoven the effects of postcolonization on individual self and sense of place as "part of the postcolonial condition is a loss of the self, a cultural alienation involving an eradication of cultural traditions, a history, and national character" (15). Reterritorialization is not physical rather it means reestablishing the lost identity due to alienation with native land and culture. Thus, it

is “retrieval of a lost identity” (15) caused by colonialism through “nostalgic reflection and imaginative construct” (15). Further, Dreese explains that “the retrieval of a sense of origin and place is central to construction of identity” (17) in different American cultures. However, it also fits in European cultures too. Actually, she brings forth the notion that identity is a political process keeping place in a political environment.

Land ethic, the term first coined by Aldo Leopold (1949), is a philosophy about how ethically human should regard the land. Leopold offers an ecologically – based land ethic that rejects human centered views of the nature in order to create biotic community as he states ‘The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively; the land’ (39). Leopold’s plea, here, is to create an inclusive community where, every constituents of nature has equal importance.

Leopold’s vision of land ethic is based on the concept that the relation between people and land are intertwined. It is a moral code of conduct that is grown out of this interconnectedness. His land ethic “... changes the role of *Homo sapiens* from conqueror of the land –community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such” (39). It requests human beings not to treat land as their commodity/possession nor to evaluate it through its utility value rather to internalize it as their own community member. While describing about “the land pyramid” (42), Leopold describes the land as a “biotic mechanism” (42). And his point here is that as every mechanism needs its every part work harmoniously, the land pyramid mechanism also demands smooth relationship among its every constituent. But human beings’ violation of land ethic is breaking down this mechanism directly. In this pyramid, he has kept soil at the bottom

on which all the life fosters. He sees it as “Land, then, is not merely, soil; it is a fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants, and animals” (43).

According to this land pyramid, possibility of every life existence is solely rested on the rich and stable land. That’s why people should treat land in a very sensitive way.

Interconnectedness of every micro to macro organism to make our planet as a single organism is the crux of Gaia hypothesis formulated by James Lovelock. As ancient Greeks called their Earth goddess as ‘Gaia’, this hypothesis being based on that foundation also considers our Mother Earth as the source of the all living and non-living entities on it. Focusing on this interdependency Lovelock defines Gaia as “... a complex entity involving the earth’s biosphere, atmosphere, oceans, and soil; the totality constituting a feedback or cybernetic system which seeks an optional physical and chemical environment for life on this planet” (250). This hypothesis refers the best available scientific understanding of earth as living system with cultural understanding of human society.

Emphasizing the coexistence of organic and inorganic compounds on this earth, it says:

... entire range of living matter on earth, from whales to viruses, and from oaks to algae, could be regarded as constituting a single living entity, capable of manipulating the earth’s atmosphere to suit its overall needs and endowed with faculties and powers far beyond those of its constituent parts. (249)

This hypothesis sees all the life forms of this planet are part of Gaia. It believes myriads of diversified lives on the earth have coevolved and are contributing interactively to produce and maintain the suitable conditions for the growth and prosperity not only for themselves, but also of the larger whole; Gaia.

Apart from these, Roy F. Baumeister's idea of self, self-concept and self-esteem in relation with individual's identity will also provide guidelines to analyze the characters of *Things Fall Apart* and *Ceremony*. According to him, 'self' is used in many different ways referring many parts of a whole set of "experiences and thoughts" (247). It is "...the totality of you, including your body, your sense of identity, your reputation (how others know you), and so on" (247). Actually, he has assimilated both aspects; the physical self and the self that is constructed out of meanings, in order to define one's self. The concept of identity is not fixed because it "...rests on two notions, sameness (continuity) and difference" (248). Since the social context is variable and obviously, the meanings to the contexts it provides also gets affected by its changing nature. This is the reason why Baumeister finds 'self-concept' and 'self-esteem'; the major aspects of identity formation, also not fixed. For him, self-concept "...is the individual's beliefs about himself or herself, including the person's attributes and who and what the self is" (247). This self-concept is formed by the difference between one's own body and rest of the world. So, it is not fixed rather the immediate social context affects it. Baumeister sees:

...the self-concept is like a large, complex set of files, and current events cause people to pull out one drawer or another of these files. People may "scan" their files in different ways depending on the immediate context and recent experiences. (252)

Thus, surrounding social context and meanings provided by the society compels individuals to seem important and major or unimportant or minor.

Self-esteem is the notion that how one evaluates himself or herself. It is an important part of self-concept. Baumeister defines it as "...not merely an abstract summary or notion of the self, but it is full of evaluations, that is, of perceptions of the

self as good, bad, or mediocre” (248). It is the broadest self evaluation of individual .The parameters of evaluating and judging one’s self-esteem is also not the same and fixed since it is directly related with the different domains of one’s society and land. High and low self-esteem of one is the product of his or her surrounding context and its components of value judgment. It can be taken as “*sociometer*” (263), which measures how well one is connected to other human beings. And, how their good or bad rapport with other members of the society affects their self-esteem.

This project tries to relate how all these aforementioned ideas of different theoretical domains affect the identity of an individual. It tries to find out the meaning making factors of a particular culture and landscape and their function as the identity markers in limitation with the settings presented in *Things Fall Apart* and *Ceremony*.

The first chapter of this dissertation has focused on presenting the issues of identity of the characters in relation with their land and culture in *Things Fall Apart* and *Ceremony*. It presents their intimate relationship with their society, land and culture. It shows how they are stripped away, fragmented and isolated when they are away from their society, native land and cultural value. Apart from this, how other prominent writers and critics have seen these texts along with precise theoretical framework will be included in this chapter. In the second chapter attempts have been made to relate the social identity markers and its role to construct individual identity in *Things Fall Apart*. It focus on how an individual feels identity crisis when he or she is not able to achieve such social identity markers. This chapter tries to bring forth how the land; socio- cultural values and practices, language creates meanings in the process of identity formation. Further, it also depicts the discord brought by colonialism that violets Ibos’ social harmony resulting threat over their identity. Similarly, the third chapter of the dissertation is focused on dealing with the identity

issues of the characters of *Ceremony*. In this chapter, it will be analyzed how the protagonist Tayo tries to reestablish his lost identity following Pueblo's cultural connection with nature and land. It deals with the struggle of the protagonist to revive of the lost social rapport with land, interconnectedness between collective identity and individual identity. The final chapter will be the conclusion of this dissertation that advocates the core concept; the sense of place creates the sense of self. Doing so, it claims that it is the land that creates site for identity formation; both collective and individual, through various identity markers.

Chapter II

Land and the Identity Marker in *Things Fall Apart*

Turning and Turning in the widening gyre

The falcon cannot hear the falconer,

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;

Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. (1)

Achebe has opened his novel with W.B. Yeats's poem *The Second Coming*, in order to show how colonialism seizes the power of African people casting them marginalized. Achebe's citation of Yeats's lines seem very meaningful to show how Christianity makes their Native voice unheard, how it stripes away every cultural bond causing everything fall apart, how it germinates anarchy and disharmony in the Nigerian land and youth, and ultimately, how it snatches the essence of pride and dignity of Ibos.

Just opposite to the European misconception about African culture, Achebe has presented the detailed social structure of the village Umuofia- not a savage landscape at all- its beliefs and cultural values, its exchange system, and its beautiful agricultural practices. And, importantly, the Ibos are shown to have the ability to maintain the special relationship with nature particularly, with their landscape in order to establish their communal as well as individual identity. Particularly, the Ibo's political identity that consists of the cultural and traditional Council of Elders (Ndichie), the Oracles and their Chief Priests who link up the people on the land and the god, Council of Masquerades (Egwugwu) have profound role in shaping the individual identity of Ibo people because they have completely identified themselves with these aforementioned executive bodies of their land. In the novel, these bodies set the laws, social codes and parameters directly affecting the lives and psyche of Ibo people.

In *Things fall Apart*, Ibo society is shown completely patriarchal and certain identity markers of Nigerian land has powerful role to shape individual identity of their male members. Male power, hard work, sense of duty, honor for the land and social rules, social hierarchy and achievements, are the most important identity markers that are set for the Ibo men in this novel. Regarding identity of Ibos Uzoamaka Azodo explains; “In the Umuofia of *Things Fall Apart*, Igbo men are constrained to achieve achievement and flaunt [male superiority], in order to be seen and respect” (50). In the novel, Okonkwo is also blindly driven by these social identity markers. While analyzing the characters, particularly, the issue of Okonkwo’s identity, these identity markers set the path. This analysis tries to see how meanings from these identity markers are associated with the identity of the characters being based on the opinion of Prohansky et al that asserts “Social roles and social attributes serve as the conceptual nexus for understanding the development of self-identity” (80). It means individual’s concept of identity is directly associated with those identity markers which get meanings from social context of their native land.

Actually, the concept of individual identity is formed on the basis of collective identity. And that collective identity is based on the values and practices of a particular community of particular geography. In the novel, Okonkwo's embodiment of Ibo value is perfect illustration because as Tajfel and Turner opine that individuals “strive to achieve or maintain positive social identity” (16). Okonkwo also bases his quest for identity on his quest for manliness; the positive social identity in the context of his land. From the very beginning of the novel, Okonkwo; the protagonist of the novel, is shown desperate to establish his identity among his tribal people. A kind of hunger for getting fame always overwhelms him. Okonkwo’s hunger is nothing other than Dreese’s “powerful interior effect” (1) to “long for the particularities” (1) of his

place. In this respect, Okonkwo's psychology can be identified with Dreese's view as "not an uncommon human experiences to long for the particularities of a certain place that have had a powerful interior effect on their human psyche" (1). Okonkwo knows very well what are the particularities of his land in relation with individual identity and social respect. Therefore, he longs for the success desperately. This hunger enables him to achieve name and fame among all the clans' men along with two greatest titles of his clan among three even at the age of eighteen. Regarding his success Achebe posits:

Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages of Umuofia and even beyond. His fame rested on solid personal achievements. As a young man of eighteen he had brought honor to his village by throwing Amalinze the Cat. Amalinze was the great wrestler who for seven years was unbeaten, from Umuofia to Mabino...It was this man that Okonkwo threw in a fight which the old men agreed was one of the fiercest since the founder of their town engaged a spirit of the wild for seven days and seven nights. (3)

Defeating Amalinze is one of the greatest achievements for him. His achievement is not just limited to the defeating of the most powerful wrestler rather it is associated with the victory of their village; of their land. Though it is Okonkwo's victory, it has brought the fame, pride and identity for his whole community where "achievement was revered" (8). They all celebrate it and feel happy for him. This context exemplified what Tajfel and Turner claim as "the group members may seek positive distinctiveness through direct competition with the out group" (20). Though it is Okonkwo's individual victory, it brings equal fame and respect for his in-group members too. Okonkwo's individual fame and identity is established through the

parameter of communal concept of success and achievement. Relating his identification as the powerful and successful man of his land Ifeoma Onyemelukwe puts forth:

[Okonkwo] is the man who was able to resolve his identity crisis in late adolescence. At age 18 he had developed self-confidence, a high self-concept, self-esteem and had high achievement motivation as typical of the average Igbo man. The consequence of this is his reverberating achievement and celebrity. (37)

The poor family condition and his father's failure as a true Ibo 'man', make him more determinant and committed to achieve what his society says 'success' from his early days. Because he knows that Ibo land and people have not respect for them who do not meet their 'success criteria'. That is why, he always keeps his self-esteem positive and self-concept focused in order to maintain his self-confidence.

In the novel, Okonkwo is shown as the man of strength as he has earned the reputation of powerful wrestler admired by the people even of beyond his village. His "...fame had grown like a bush fire in the harmattan" (3). At the age of twenty-one, he has already brought the fifth head of the killed victims with two titles along with other physical property. His wealth that includes two barns full of yams, three wives and two titles, all symbolizes his success. In the novel, it is clearly noticed that Okonkwo spends his whole life trying to achieve those things which the society highly praises and recognizes. His effort is to fit in the social parameters of success in order to confirm his identity among his people. Through these early successes, Okonkwo has proved his physical strength as of a macho man which Ibo society sees as the marker of identity.

Though Okonkwo, throughout the whole novel, is trying to appear as courageous and brave warrior, a deep fear is always haunting him; the fear of not being accepted as a 'man' in his community. Through the character of Okonkwo, Achebe has brought forth the epitomized notion of male power in Ibo society. The narrator says:

His whole life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and weakness. It was deeper and more intimate than fear of evil and capricious gods and of magic, the fear of the forest, and the forces of nature, malevolent, red in tooth and claw. Okonkwo's fear was greater than these. It was not external but lay deep within himself. It was the fear of himself, lest he should be found to resemble his father. (13)

The reason behind this intense fear is the identity politics of Ibo society. Okonkwo knows that his society valorizes only the manly quality. And, his fear has emerged due to his father's 'non man' like behavior. Since 'manliness' is the identity setter in Ibo society, Okonkwo fears for being categorized as non-man, in his context, fear of being what Tajfel and Turner say "out-group" (13). His childhood suffering is letting out in the form of both fear and hatred for his father.

Since social identification and collective perception of Ibo people as of 'man' is brave, fond of war, courageous, protector and provider of his women and children. The Ibo society hates and discourages the effeminate one just like Unoka; Okonkwo's father. People who lack such qualities remain unheard and unseen. Actually, Unoka is a musician and singer who loves singing and playing flute in moonlit nights. But music, for Okonkwo and most of the Ibo people, is the matter of feminine quality. In fact, Okonkwo's fear has emerged from his father's sensual personality which he thinks weak. Under the shadow of his father, he suffers throughout his whole life.

Unoka has not achieved any title for himself even he is unable to feed his wife and children. Though he has extreme respect for their god and land law but what he lacks is hard work, sense of duty and physical power. Once he goes to consult with the priest; Ani, about his ill fate and some remedies. He explains her that” Every year... before I put any crop in the earth, I sacrifice a cock to Ani, the owner of all land. It is the law of our fathers” (17). But instead of showing sympathy, the priest warns him to follow the essence of their land in order to get ‘manly’ success and no doubt, that essence is hard work which Unoka lacks from the very beginning. She says to Unoka:

You, Unoka, are known in all the clan for the weakness of your matchet and your hoe. When your neighbours go out with their axe to cut down virgin forests, you sow your yams on exhausted farms that take no labour to clear. They cross seven rivers to make their farms; you stay at home and offer sacrifices to a reluctant soil. Go home and work like a man. (17)

Unoka has no veneration within his community except large amount of loan and hatred because he does not have the strong sense of duty, hard work and manly physical power which are the parameters through which an Ibo male’s identity and dignity is judged. He has been an example of failure and laughingstock among his clan’s men even his son Okonkwo, from his early childhood days “had resented his father’s failure and weakness. Even now he still remembers how he had suffered when a playmate had told him that his father was “ *agbala*...another name for woman... mean a man who had taken no title” (13). In order to get rid of the shame of having such father, Okonkwo starts to hate “everything that his father had loved. One of those things was gentleness and another was idleness.” (13). From the very beginning of the novel, the deep effect of Unoka’s character over Okonkwo can be

noticed clearly. He seems worrying how people see him, whether he is considering to be weak or not like his father; awareness about” negative social identity” (16) as Tajfel and Turner say. Therefore, he learns to become rigid. Though his hatred and denial towards his father is seen quite awkward and rude but in depth, he is trying to establish his “positive identity” (16) as Tajfel and Turner view in their essay.

Okonkwo’s effort to dislike his father’s ‘failed’ identity can also be analyzed through Baumeister’s concept of “continuity and differentiation” (269). He tries to be different from his father in order to give continuity with communal identity. Such effort of continuity and differentiation helps to create a strong sense of identity. This is the reason, he is rejecting his father’s failed activities and attitude. His effort of being different from his father accelerates his sense of duty; another identity marker. Due to that reason, Okonkwo, in Onyemelukwe’s words “even as a little boy...realizes that he has got to work extra hard to make it in life. And he desires to be a success” (39). Examples of his praiseworthy achievement even in his early days, exemplifies that he is obsessed to recapture his identity.

Just contrary to Okonkwo, his father Unoka’s failure is nothing other than his failure to embrace the Ibo’s social code of ‘man’ that defies the musicality, soft heartedness and emotion in a male. Though he finds peace in music, his society denies to accept it as a manly task to be engaged and entitled him as ‘agbala’; a man with womanish quality. Since he lacks strong physical power and warrior attitude, his whole identity and existence is kept under the great question mark. And Okonkwo’s fear and rejection to be like his father is his rejection to be unknown and unadmirable as his father is. In fact, he is trying to confirm his self-identity in his locale being harsh and tough as their community demands. Tajfel and Turner’s idea of “differentiation” (17) is quite appropriate to link this context of Unoka and Nwyo’e’s

too. Ibo society continuously disagree to accept Unoka's behaviour as normal and manly. It tries to differentiate him from other members of the society. The reason behind is as Tajfel and Turner say "The aim of differentiation is to maintain or achieve superiority over an out-group" (17). Though Unoka is not out-group member, his 'non masculine' characteristics out-grouped him. The society wants to establish its superiority over such non in-grouped members.

Regarding Okonkwo's fear, it is associated not only with his father but also with his son Nwoye. Most often parents seek their resemblance in their offspring. Obviously, Okonkwo is also not an exception though this logic seems illogical in the case of his father and him. From the very beginning, Okonkwo has seen his eldest son Nwoye escaping from hard work; the most essential quality to be a perfect Ibo 'man'. Okonkwo scares of his laziness and being idle exactly resembling his grandfather. Since Nwoye "was already causing his father great anxiety for his incipient laziness. At any rate, that was how it looked to his father" (13), Okonkwo constantly nags and beats him. In doing so, he thinks that he can over shadow his son from his father. Just opposite to Okonkwo who is called the "Roaring Flame" (145) amongst his clans men, Nwoye is calm, soft hearted, and tender. Okonkwo who tries his best to diminish his father's shameful image amidst his people by his extreme courage, success and wealth, now can clearly see that his own son is not following his footsteps, instead, of his grandfather. Once again Okonkwo feels threat over his established identity. Moreover, in extreme despair when Nwoye joins Christian Missionaries, he doubts whether Nwoye is his own son and thinks "How then could he have begotten a son like Nwoye, degenerate and effeminate? Perhaps he is not his son. No! he could not be" (145). Since "Nwoye resembled his grandfather, Unoka" (145), the brutal and terrific aspect of masculinity of Ibo land never lures him rather

emotion and affection always overwhelm him. And that is the thing that stings Okonkwo very deeply and painfully. He has foreseen his son's failure to match the definition of 'man' of his community. Thus, he expresses his dissatisfaction with his friend Obierika about his son's nature as;

Nwoye is old enough to impregnate a woman. At his age I was already fending for myself. No, my friend, he is not too young. A chick that will grow into a cock can be spotted the very day it hatches. I have done my best to make Nwoye grow into a man (62).

Both Unoka and Nwoye are considered as feminine by their people and constantly cause the shame for Okonkwo. This rejection of community somehow is the latent but strong reason due to which they lack the attachment with their home and neighborhood. Tajfel's and Turner's concept of "differentiation" between in-group and out-group can be dragged here to analyze why Unoka and Nwoye is not feeling attachment with their home and why their society continuously attacks on their 'non-manly' quality. According to social identity theory of Tajfel and Turner, in-group discriminates out-group to enhance their self-image focusing on the negative aspect of out-group. Since Unoka and Nwoye both do not match the major belief of Ibo society, they are considered as out-group. This is the reason Ibo society continuously attacks on their so called feminine quality. This sense of belongingness to any particular group is the means through which individuals search their identity. The sense of belonging to the group makes one feel to be in home or connected with their land. It has strong impact over identity which is discorded in the case of Unoka and Nwoye.

In *Things Fall Apart*, Ibo society is shown completely patriarchal. Masculinity is set one of the major identity markers from past to the future generation. Achebe through Okonkwo brings forth in this way: "suppose when he died all his male

children decided to follow Nwoye's steps and abandon their ancestors? Okonkwo felt a cold shudder run through him at the terrible prospect, like the prospect of annihilation. He saw himself and his father crowding round their ancestral shrine waiting in vain for worship and sacrifice and finding nothing but ashes of bygone days, and his children the while praying to the white man's god"(144-145).

Sense of duty is another identity marker by which Okonkwo is driven committed. Though inflexibility and violence may be seen as the major flaws of the protagonist in this novel, but beneath these traits, his strong and honest effort to establish his identity in his community is laid. Okonkwo is trying his very best to do what his community and the Ibo culture regards as heroic and praiseworthy because individual identity is not the matter of individuality at all rather it is influenced by the factors outside himself, in his society and his culture. Most often, Okonkwo is shown shouting on and beating his wives and children that frame him as insensitive and strict human being however "in his heart Okonkwo was not a cruel man" (12). But in reality, he is trying to present himself as the perfect man in his society who has control over his women and children. Regarding this, the narrator posits "No matter how prosperous a man was, if he was unable to rule his women and his children (and especially his women) he was not really a man. He was like the man in the song who had ten and one wives and not enough soup for his foo-foo" (50). It shows that in order to be a perfect, respected Ibo male, one should have strong grip over his family no matter how harsh he seems physically.

Okonkwo's self-efficacy; his ability to meet the situational demands of his land, is the major essence that leads him to the desired success in his youthful days. Whether it is starved childhood days, terrific bloody wars or his exile from his land, none of the situations or challenges, ever can break his zeal to be a perfect man as

Ibos have internalized. His potential has already been felt by his father even in his early days. That is why when once the heavy rain washed off their whole crops and they were in extreme despair, he said to his son "...I know you will not despair. You have a manly and a proud heart. A proud heart can survive a general failure because such a failure does not prick its pride." (24) Not only his father rather his whole community and social environment facilitate his chosen activities due to which a kind of connectedness he feels with his home environment, with his land and in return, his land provides him tremendous respect and dignified identity. His success is the confirmation from his society that he is in-grouped; feeling of connected with own people. He is taken as the real warrior and tribal hero in side and out side umuofia. In Tajfel and Turner's view such "positively discrepant comparisons between in-group and out-group produce high prestige" (16) among the people.

In the process of identity formation, self-esteem plays important role where the character does the positive evaluation, and pays the special value to his own feeling and deeds. And to confirm and support his identity, the place provides a sense of pride or favourite setting. This idea can be linked with Dreese's opinion as it says "self knowledge and self-realization are simultaneously threaded in the fabric of where" (1). Same is the case with Okonkwo. Definitely, he is the man of law. He is fully committed and devoted to the rules and traditions of his society and of his culture. He follows them with full loyalty and never regrets on whatever he does. Whether it is reward or punishment he accepts in the same way and Umuofia has repays him by providing the status of one of the greatest warrior of their clan's history. In order to maintain that honor and social status, Okonkwo is ready to go beyond the limit ignoring and suppressing the emotion. When he kills the boy Ikemefuna- who was in his shelter for three years, calls him father and trusts him

blindly- ignoring the suggestion of the eldest messenger of their oracle, his friend Obierika explains to him that it "... is a kind of action for which the goddess wipes out whole families" (63). But instead of lamenting or feeling sad, Okonkwo defends himself saying that "the earth cannot punish me for obeying her messenger ... A child's fingers are not scaled by a piece of hot yam which its mother puts into its palm"(63). On the one hand, according to the rule of Umuofia, the boy must be killed, but, on the other hand, killing an innocent boy who is under his shelter is seen quite brutal. But Okonkwo does what the Ibo judiciary orders. Here, he remains rigid rejecting to be weak and emotional. As a perfect 'man' of Ibo clan he says that "the law of the land must be obeyed" (65). Moreover, the force that drives him is his fear of being coward; losing the identity. He knows in order to maintain his warrior reputation, he must be 'manly'; tough, hiding emotion. Though it seems violent and cruel, actually, these are the traits that have made Okonkwo as the hero of his clan's warrior tradition. Such social appreciation has boosted his self-esteem in order to strengthen his identity. Achebe has shown the strong connection between the male power, social rules and Ibo's identity. This is the reason why Okonkwo continuously attempts to strengthen his power.

Another powerful identity marker in *Things Fall Apart* is social hierarchy and achievements. The respect and acceptance that Okonkwo gets from his people and land as one of the greatest fighters, brave and labourious man help to germinate the feeling of pride and satisfaction inside him. Somewhere his inflexibility towards the traditional practices and values is the result of that honour and identification which he has dreamed desperately and achieved from his society. He might be scared of losing this identification which he has earned from his lifetime effort, if the deviation occurs in his behavior. His fear is not wrong at all. Though in the novel it is not mentioned

clearly that Okonkwo is one of the members of the Council of Masquerades; one of the highest executive body of Ibo community, in chapter ten, some hints are given as it says that;

Okonkwo's wives and perhaps other women as well, might have noticed that the second *egwugwu* had the springy walk of Okonkwo. And they might also have noticed that Okonkwo was not among the titled men and elders who sat behind the row of *egwugwu*. But if they thought these things they kept them within themselves. (85)

Okonkwo's rigidity, here, does not seem illogical and negative. Since he has got such great trust and respected identification of the highest hierarchy from his clan, his loyalty and devotion are somehow obvious. Rather it is beyond loyalty and devotion. Okonkwo's identification has already intermingled with this achievement, and his cultural and traditional values, and they are difficult to separate. That is why he never hesitates to follow the order of their Oracle, never thinks twice and about its consequences, neither he regrets over anything. His self has complete submission with his environment.

For the understanding of one's 'self', the significance of the place cannot be denied. Since place matters in the construction of 'self', the decline of the social ties and rootlessness directly affects it. Because place identity is the "sub-structure of an individual's self-identity" (Prohansky et.al 62). Individual identity is connected with place attachment to get meaning associated with neighborhood and home. And it has affected Okonkwo too. The greatest tragedy of Okonkwo's life is his exile that ultimately destructs his powerful identity and his existence. During the large funeral of Ezeudu: one of the greatest warriors and the eldest man of their clan, Okonkwo's gun go off, and kill Ezeudu's sixteen years accidentally. Though it is unintentional

killing which Ibos call “female” (117) kind of crime, it “...was a crime against the earth goddess to kill a clansman” (117). And as the punishment Okonkwo has to “flee from the clan”(117) and he can “...return to the clan after seven years”(117). Onyemelukwe sees his exile as “...it means loss of self-esteem, peace, happiness. His ego is obviously punctured, his fame transform into shame. His identity crumbles”(41-42). Though this incident shakes Okonkwo terribly, he still dreams to regain his lost position and identity among his clansmen. Okonkwo moves away from his native land with his family. Leaving everything behind in Umuofia what he has achieved till, he goes to his mother’s native village; Mbanta.

In spite of receiving warm welcome in Mbanta by his maternal uncle Uchendu; a village leader, the sense of ‘homelessness’ is always haunting him throughout his whole banishment. No doubt, Okonkwo is the man of hard-work and dedication, always ready to encounter the challenges as the perfect Ibo man. Even in his exile, he does hard labour and earns enough yams for his family. In some extent, the notion of being able to feed his family in foreign place has healed his shattered identity. But somewhere in depth of his heart, he has hidden a great pain of being alienated from his place and he sees “...everything had been broken. He had been cast out of his clan like a fish on to a dry, sandy beach, panting” (123). Showing emotion is always the sign of cowardliness and feminine as Okonkwo believes .So he tries hard to suppress his feelings inside him. But the old man Uchendu “...saw clearly that Okonkwo had yielded to despair and he was greatly troubled” (123). The hidden reason behind his sorrow, pain and restlessness is the veiled threat over his identity in fact. This threat over his identity is again related with Dreese’s idea that claims “a sense of emotional and physical dislocation involves a loss of the self” (17). Umuofia was the place which had given him tremendous fame and respect where his “...life had

been ruled by a great passion –to become one of the lords of the clan. That has been his life-spring. And he had all but achieved it” (123). There he had built a special connection with his community and its values for practices which in return, gave the confirmation of communal acceptance on that particular landscape. But in Mbanta, he feels uprooted; he lacks the connection with this place yet. Dreese’s idea of “place invariably involves differentiating that place from others and knowing its particularities” (115) fits with Okonkwo. He knows the role of his native land to satisfy his identity quest. He has to build new rapport with this latest place and environment even for the sake of survival where the previous fame and respect seem beyond his imagination. And, it is obvious too because humanness always seeks ‘placement’ as the foundation for security and survival.

Generally, ‘sense of place’ or ‘sense of community’ intertwines the symbolic connections of political influences and cultural heritage with each other. Thus, place and social ties encompasses the factors for attachment and identity. In the case of Okonkwo, he also has lost that attachment with his native place and Mbanta “...is not his clan... He is an exile, condemned for seven years to live in a strange land” (125). The exile for Okonkwo is not just the physical exile of his family and material property rather, it has extracted the essence of his life depriving him of his fame, pride and existence. Highlighting his pain, Achebe asserts:

He knew that he had lost his place among the nine masked spirits who administered justice in the clan. He had lost the chance to lead his war like clan against the new religion, which, he was told, had gained ground. He had lost the years in which he might have taken the highest titles in the clan (161).

It is an unmerciful casting of the greatest warrior to the state of criminal. For which Okonkwo dreams desperately, labours madly, tackles every challenges bravely and fights throughout his life; his respectful place in the clan, now has been alienated from him. This is the reason which is haunting and encroaching Okonkwo inwardly during his whole exile period. It is the pain of being out-grouped.

Okonkwo has lost the mutual trust, social connection and community values: major factors which construct one's identity, and is dying inwardly to reconnect those threads with his native place and people. To show Okonkwo's dream to reunite with his land, Achebe writes:

Even in his first year in exile he had begun to plan for his return. The first thing he would do would be to rebuild his compound on a more magnificent scale. He would build a bigger barn than he had before (161).

Actually, his dream of reconstructing his destructed home is not mere a dream of rebuilding his lost property rather is the desire of reconfirming and re-establishing his lost identity particularly, in the previous land but not in Mbanta. It is what Dreesse calls "psychic reterritorialization" (18) which is "not a solely physicalact but one that is deeply emotional" (18) too. Okonkwo has earned sufficient money that if he wants he can be settled well in Mbanta too but he wants to rebuild his home in Umuofia. Because he knows that his root is there in Umuofia..Okonkwo realizes the sense of home exactly as Dreesy does because "home not only encompasses the sense of place but also an environment in which people feel accepted and loved for who they are and where they are free from oppressive forces" (47). This is the reason for which Okonkwo desperately desires to return Umuofia. It is his desire to be connected with his original where he can live with profound dignity.

Disturbance and interference in physical settings often violate human dignity because such interference ignores those properties of the person which keep him chained with the social- organism. Such unfavourable environmental interference results in the loss of social control demoralizing the essence of satisfaction and human spirit. In *Things Fall Apart* also white missionaries are seemed as the violating agent. Those white man "...had not only brought a religion but also a government ... had built a place of judgment in Umuofia to protect the followers of their religion" (146-147). By the name of religion they gradually make their position stronger and effective in the Ibo society. The major thing they start to do intentionally is negating all the deeply revered Ibo values and culture. They ignored the spiritual bond of nature and human being gradually making the way inside the traditional life of Ibo society. Disrupting their age old belief and system they start to claim that "...they worshipped false gods, gods of wood and stone...all the gods you have named are not gods at all" (136-137). Their violent appearance was first appeared in massacre at Abame as the revenge of killing white man due to which "their clan is now completely empty. Even the sacred fish in their mysterious lake have fled and the lake has turned the colour of blood. A great evil has come upon their land as the Oracle had warned (131).Here, the blood lake signifies the violence and terror brought by the Whites as the fled fish means those who have been displaced due to them.

Nwoye along with other abominations of the society convert themselves into Christianity. Though in surface level it seems as the impact of missionaries on their society and Nwoye's escapist nature, but inwardly, identity politics has played the major role there. From the very beginning, Nwoye is shown different from his father. The typical social codes for masculinity always bother him. Okonkwo's dream of making his son a perfect man; just like him, shatters when he frequently notices

Nwoye's indifference towards hard labour and toughness hidden in their everyday life and cultural practices. Most often he seems to be avoiding such things. Here, Okonkwo is scared of his own son whether Nwoye will be a 'failure' as his father Unoka was. Okonkwo sees the hidden threat over his identity behind his son's 'cowardliness'; emotion, tenderness and idleness. Actually, he is scared of being laughingstock again due to his 'womanish' son as he used to be in the past due to 'agbala' father. Though he loves his son inwardly, he constantly nags and beats Nwoye to make him tougher. Here, he wants to secure his identity through Nwoye's solid status.

On the other hand, Nwoye hates his father, particularly, after when Okonkwo kills Ikemefuna. Nwoye, here, identifies himself with Ikemefuna. Due to continuous interference of his father, he starts to feel isolated and sees himself as the failure. His self is badly hurt. In such scenario, Ikemefuna comes and becomes his intimate friend. Ikemefuna talks and listens him too. His actions make Nwoye feel important and his self feels certain space. His individuality and existence are here accepted by Ikemefuna. But the incident of killing Ikemefuna by Okonkwo fuels Nwoye's hatred to him because Nwoye takes it as an attack on his 'self'. For Nwoye, death of Ikemefuna is "...to give way inside him, like the snapping of a tightened bow" (43). This killing is the killing of his 'self', again lacking the space for his identity that Ikemefuna had provided. After then his isolation accelerates extremely not only with his father but also with his society.

Though Nwoye's emotional alienation with his father is the visible cause of his changed religion, but his desire for conforming own identity and existence is the main cause hidden there. Actually, it is the result of conflict between the values of a society and the individual desire. When Nwoye is young, he likes the stories told by

his mother about earth and sky. But, Okonkwo says that such stories are for foolish women and children. For the sake of pleasing his father by showing manliness, he repressed his emotion and pretends as if he is enjoying his father's stories of fierce tribal wars. Nwoye's situation is likely to match with Drees's concept about knowing the self through differentiation which claims that "understanding the self requires an understanding of what the self is not" (2). If the self "feels uncomfortable or unlike home" (2), it travels "outside the area for comparison" (2). This is the reason he converts to the Christianity where Missionaries assures him of being equal; no comparison, no hierarchy. Tajfel and Turner's concept of 'positive and negative' (16) social identity is also meaningful to analyze Nwoye's condition. Nwoye lacks the "positive social identity" (16) in his community which is based on "favorable comparison" (16) because "negatively discrepant comparisons between in-group" (16) results in "low prestige" (16). Since he is not able to adopt the 'manly' qualities, he is not getting the respect in his society which he wants. Social rejection makes him rebellion.

Nwoye becomes unsuccessful to meet the criteria of a real and successful man of his society. Thus, to get rid of the rejection of his manly 'position' in the family and society, he decides to move into the next hemisphere where he is welcomed and identified. The missionaries, at first, show the lollypop to those minorities, weak and abominations of being equally respectful individuals. Since all of them lack the equality and acceptance in their society, Nwoye, along with others, also becomes lured by that. His greed again, here, is the symbolic protest against his dominating father and rigid social norms that rejected his individuality. In fact, it is his greed to confirm his place among his people. Same is the case with other conversions. In both of the cases, whether Okonkwo's blind and rigid submission to his social and cultural

values or Nwoye's symbolic revolt by shifting into new place and culture, identity politics is the strong manipulator.

Inflexibility is the greatest flaw of Okonkwo due to which he gets very pathetic end of his life as of abominations. From the very beginning, he is very much attached with his cultural beliefs and practices. Though some other title holder leaders including his best friend Obierika are seen changing with time and situation, Okonkwo remains stuck to his principle and practices. Okonkwo's failure can be linked with Stuart Hall's opinion mentioned in Drees's book that states "identity is ever-changing, a dynamic process unable to return to a pure prior state" (15). He is unable to understand that change is the natural law to grow. Nobody can stop it. If one wants to survive, he has to be flexible. Except inflexibility, being "unrealistically optimistic" (251) as Baumeister states is another great flaw of Okonkwo. She says "having an unrealistically positive view could lead you into wasting time and effort, not to mention failure or heartbreak" (250). Okonkwo throughout his exile dreams of getting back everything exactly as it was in the past. He believes that everything can be reestablished back. He can not understand that change is inevitable. Who tries to stop and reverse it, he himself collapses. But for Okonkwo, being changed means being away from own identity and existence which he proves by committing suicide.

Chapter III

Land as a Site for Individual and Collective Cultural Identity in *Ceremony*

The story of *Ceremony* puts forth the scenario of non –white cultural arena with post colonial setting where the physical, cultural and spiritual displacements are common as the consequences of exploitation and violence against nature and its people. The traumatic experiences of war have totally alienated him from his root and cast to the point where he can no longer claim place, peace and identity or self. Time and again his past memories appear as hallucinations that haunt him continuously. In order to get rid of these traumatic memories, he decides to return to his previous natural world of his community. Returning home for Tayo actually redirects his isolated individual energy to the whole community. This effort enables him to be connected with his estranged home; his land. To establish his identity in the natural world, he struggles hard. After meeting Betonie; a tribal medicine man, he starts to follow their ancient tribal ceremonies that help him to get recovered gradually. His recovery, here, is not just a health recovery of a sick person rather in depth, it shows the intimate and harmonious relationship of Laguna People with the nature, land, animal, community and whole environment. Donelle Dreese's concept which claims that "most American Indian cultures have evolved from a tradition that cares for the landscape with respect and reciprocity" (7), along with the essence of Gaia hypothesis; everything is connected with everything else, and of The Land Ethic; land should be treated as another communal member of our community, are at the core of this analysis.

In *Ceremony*, from the beginning, Tayo is suffering from fragmented identity. Whether he is inside his community or outside alienation, identity crisis and fragmentation have made his mind as battle field. Silko depicts Tayo's identity crisis

through three main categories; through the rejection of identity (mixed- blood) through the lack of language and access to tribal stories (silence) and lack of physical and emotional presence (migration/alienation). All these factors force Tayo to feel uprooted, displaced, alienated and fragmented, in Dreese's words, creating "the complexity involved in defining a sense of home" (1). Due to which he remains in limbo for a long time until he follows the traditional healing. It is analyzed how these factors affect Tayo's psyche in relation to the geography of and beyond Laguna reservation.

From the very beginning, Tayo suffers as the out-grouped member of his society due to his hybrid identity just opposite the idea of Prohansky et al that claims "A primary function of the self is thought to be integrative" (58). But Tayo lacks that inclusive feeling. No doubt, the concept of identity is rooted in the communal belief and practices. It is the society that gives meaning to the notion of identity as Tajfel and Turner assert that "social groups... provide their members with an identification of themselves in social terms" (16). From ancient time for Native Americans the existence of half-breed is the matter of challenge and disgrace for their purity and originality. This is the core reason that Tayo has always experienced as an outsider in his community due to his mixed blood identity. Not only the members of his community even some of his own family members continuously reject him. Auntie, who is the caretaker of Tayo in absence of his mother Laura, frequently reminds Tayo that he is not the real member of their family. He is with them only because "Many years ago she had taken him to conceal the shame of her younger sister" (29). From the very beginning of his childhood, he realizes that Auntie always discredits his authenticity telling everyone "...that's Laura's boy. You know the one" (65). That hurts him very badly rooting the feeling of alienation and not belonging to the home.

Not only this, in the early days, she tries to restrict Tayo to go outside and play with other kids. He is forced to believe that “The birth had betrayed his mother and brought shame to the family and to the people” (128). Thus, Auntie is worried about hiding his disgraceful identity among her people. Later, when Tayo returns to the reservation swinging between death and life, she seems worst when she denies Grandma to call Ku’oosh; the tribal medicine man to cure him. Instead of trying any means of Tayo’s healthy recovery, she still worries about what people say about Tayo’s breed like “Oh, I don’t know, Mama. You know how they are. You know what people will say if we ask for a medicine man to help him. Someone will say it’s not right. They’ll say, Don’t do it. He’s not full blood anyway” (33). Actually, the character of Auntie is the primary antagonist that works against Tayo’s identity confirmation.

Auntie is extra conscious about keeping the “distance” (65) between her own son Rocky and Tayo. She does not allow them to play and call brother each other. Auntie had always been careful that Rocky didn’t call Tayo “brother,” and when “...other people mistakenly called them brothers, she was quick to correct the error” (65). Though there is not any hatred and dispute between them, they feel wise to maintain the distance in front of Auntie. Auntie’s intention supports what Tajfel and Turner’s opine “The aim of differentiation is to maintain or achieve superiority over an out-group on some dimension” (17). Auntie is conscious enough to maintain that difference so that her self-esteem remains high making Tayo’s low. This is the reason Rocky has never accepted him openly as his brother before they leave for the war. There it “...was the first time in all the years that Tayo had lived with him that Rocky ever called him ‘brother’”. It makes Tayo feel very good because it is a kind of authentication of his identity nearing the previous distance. It shows Tayo the possibility of being in-group.

Except Auntie, Emo; Tayo's friend, is another character who from the beginning extremely hates Tayo for being half-breed. He never spares any chance to make Tayo feel ashamed for his identity. Whether it is their friends' gathering for drinking or it is the scene of killing Harley he shows his extreme hatred towards Tayo. In order to get revenge with Tayo, later, when he returns from the hill after meeting Betonie, Emo reports the White government that Tayo has gone crazy and dangerous for the society. And the white policemen are searching for him so that they imprison him again. In this case, when Harley is unable to give information about Tayo, Emo kills him. Just like an evil he shouts and vomits his contempt on that sandy bank of reservation after murdering Tayo's best friend as "Look at this, you half breed! White son of a bitch! You can't hide from this! Look! Your buddy, Harley" (252).

Whatever Tayo witnesses there reminds him again the same pain of witnessing Rocky's death. Feeling helpless and guilty for Harley's death he thinks he "...would rather die himself" (252). Once again, his mixed blood identity imposes huge burden of pain and sorrow on him causing the death of his friend. He even wishes for his death. His self-esteem which has started to boost after the ceremonial treatment of Betonie again collapsed there.

Since "Tayo is part white" (57), the question on his full identity is not prevailed only inside his community rather the Whites also make fun of it as if he is the result of that act something shameful. Tayo frequently remembers how "... the white men who were building the new highway through Laguna had pointed at him. They had elbowed each other and winked. He never forgot that" (57). All these activities around them make him feel that as if his existence is the outcome of something extremely disgraceful and unusual incident. According to Tajfel and Turner, social identity "becomes insecure when the existing state of affairs begins to

be questioned” (22). Same is the case with Tayo. Laguna society has kept his existence under the question mark. That raises extreme hatred inside him to the people around him and his heart aches severely. Due to his hybrid reality Tayo lacks proper group to belong; the ground to develop his sense of self identity. Tajfel and Turner’s idea can cast light to this context since they believe that social identifications are “relational and comparative: they define the individual as similar to or different from as “better” or “worse” than members of other groups” (16). Tayo is also seen as the member of out-group by both Pueblo and Whites.

Another factor that haunts Tayo very badly and compels him to feel foreigner and not assimilated with his land is the lack of power to understand the language. Tayo's inability to get these languages is related with Paula Allen's opinion that "When language touches the land it becomes the place" (66). It means when language is assimilated with the land it is able to create the meaning. In Tayo's case this meaning making process is lacking. Therefore, he feels not connected. Before meeting Betonie, Tayo does not know that, as Dreese mentions, “language is essential in protecting and saving the lives of the people” (29). In either of the situations whether he is with Whites or with his own community, he suffers from it. Not only in the war time but when he is in the hospital, in the train, in his home and even in his dreams he hears mixing of different languages; English, Mexican, Spanish, Japanese, Laguna and many others which he can’t differentiate. And whenever such whirl of sounds occurs in his mind, his fits aches him severely. He remains silent unable to verbalize what he has heard and what that means actually. In fact, these unclear voices have made him unheard and invisible. Even, once, when he was talking with a white doctor he hears the voice inside from him. The voice is saying that “he can’t talk to you. He is invisible. His words are formed with an invisible tongue, they have no sound” (15).

Whenever he can't get such voices in their exact meaning, his nausea excels and he vomits, screams, and cries as the release of inner suffocation. Even when Ku'oosh; the tribal medicine man tries to heal him chanting the "old dialect full of sentences that were involuted with explanations of their own origins... he was only there to repeat it. Tayo had to strain to catch the meaning, dense with place names he had never heard" (34). All these sounds make him perplexed more and more enabling the sense of alienation and estrangement since the loss of language means the loss of the identity.

Taking reference from Paula Allen, land forms the base for place by assimilating language. Pueblos' oral tradition is directly related with their language and landscape. And the place becomes "potpourri" (62), as Prohansky et al say, of memories and conceptions to create meaning. Even Dreese claims that "oral tradition describe specific landscapes from which a tribe derives its mean for survival, its cultural symbols, its sense of self, and its spirituality" (8). If one lacks to make connection with the foundation: the land and its language, then his memory becomes void and meaninglessness occurs because they carry "symbolic or spiritual significance" (8). Tayo's unfamiliarity with his language is nothing other than his inability to be connected with these memories and meanings. The sole reasons behind Tayo's unfamiliarity even with his native language, is again related with his mixed blood identity and what they call 'white witchery'. Due to his hybridism, he always remains in limbo, fluctuated, split and not accepted wholly. The strongest reason is the White encroachment over their land and culture too. Tayo has grown up with his Native American tradition that is embedded in his way of being but White practices do not accept these traditions. Just like the clash of two races inside him, outside, there is the clash between the belief system of two races; Native American and White.

Native American has strong belief on the land and nature which has originated from the stories and myths passing on the legacy of religion and fate. Actually, all these stories have strong impact on Tayo's way of thinking and perceiving the natural world around him. But he feels not woven in the "cognitive fabric", Prohansky et al (62), of meaning making process of place identity.

Just opposite to this, science is the story of Whites that tries to define natural occurrence in its own terms of fact and numbers. In the school, Tayo doesn't get chance to read about his ancestral stories instead he reads the science books because Whites think that Indians are insane to believe in those flora and faunas as human being instead of object. In fact, Whites try to "illegitimate intergroup differentiation ... they maximized differences in favour of the ingroup" (20), as Tajfel views. For the sake of their positive identity Whites intentionally keep their language as the superior one in comparison with Pueblos'. This contradiction between the two racial stories splits Tayo and makes him confused because he "...had believed in the stories for a long time, until the teacher at Indian school taught him not to believe that kind of 'nonsense'" (18). Here, his attempt to understand the world through his native stories is seen as invalid and illogical creating the confusion inside him about the validity of his own existence too.

Since language helps to locate the authority Whites try to impose their language and stories over Laguna people discarding their native one. This is why Tayo can't understand those fractured languages which ultimately heighten his sense of exclusion. Whatever he knows is just the fragments of languages not a whole. During the healing ceremony with Ku'oosh, he himself realizes that "His language was childish, interspersed with English words, and he could feel shame tightening in his throat" (34). The White contamination in the culture, stories and language is the

reason behind the failure of Ku'oosh's cure. Since "...all the names for the source of this growth were buried under English words, out of reach" (69), the pure Native way of healing has become ineffective. It shows the urgency of connection with something new that can heal such contaminated problems. Realizing this Ku'oosh suggests Tayo to visit Betonie; another medicine man who lives in the thick jungle of Mount Taylor. Dreese's claim that "retrieval of lost identity is a potent part of the postcolonial condition" (16) seems logical here. The dislocation; both cultural and geographical, caused by colonialism makes Tayo unfamiliar with his native connection. His attempt to understand the connection with his Native language, in fact, is his effort to 'reterritorialize' himself within the cultural identity.

Throughout the whole novel, Silko has intentionally interspersed the tribal stories in order to show their restorative power as in the beginning of the novel the mythical voice says "I will tell you something about stories...they aren't just entertainment...You don't have anything/ if you don't have the stories" (2). Such frequent stories and the voices in the novel, remind the reader the interconnection of native people to the nature and land just opposite to the American stories that shows the detachment from nature. Somehow Silko's presentation of fragmented language and interspersed stories symbolizes Pueblo's fragmented identity. Actually, those fragmented language are the violated "cognitive clusters" (63) of Prohansky et al, which carry the collective cultural memory. Further, this violated cognitive clusters create "cultural alienation involving an eradication of cultural traditions" (15), in Dreese's words. Whether it is Tayo's unfamiliarity with mixed language or the fragmented language used by Silko, they symbolize the violation in their Native culture that destructs the meaning it used to carry.

During his journey towards full identity, Tayo develops awareness about animals in the world around him. The essence of Gaia hypothesis seems applicable to analyze Tayo's awareness about animals. Because at the end of *Ceremony*, he realizes that on this land they have equal importance and contribution as human beings do have. He realizes animals are more than a part of living being on this land rather in depth, they represent the human spirit. Long ago, before joining American Army, Josiah once tells Tayo that cattle "... are like any living thing. If you separate them from the land for long, keep them barns and corrals, they lose something... When you turn them loose again they go running all over" (68). Later, while struggling hard to search and release Josiah's stolen spotted cattle, Tayo understands what Josiah has told. He realizes the fact that animal and human spirit has a direct correlation. He "acknowledges the mutually reciprocal relationship required for a sustainable ecosystem" (5) as Dreese claims. This acknowledgement has direct relation with his journey to self identity and healing. At that point, he understands the real meaning of Betonie's humming "butterflies darting from flower to flower" (123). His newly developed sense of animal characteristics, now, mirrors him his engagement with the land and animals. He gradually feels the interconnection with in every spirit. But, before embarking his journey to healing, Tayo believes in the White ideology of objectifying animals. His school system teaches him to disregard animal spirit just to the nature; both are objectified. He is taught that animals are merely objects made for humans' use or to destroy. Since the White stories and practices are guided basically from utilitarian philosophy, it does not sound strange as the science teacher in the school teaches Tayo to kill the flies saying "they are bad and carry sickness" (101). Believing in this, during war, when Rocky's dead body is covered with flies "Tayo ...slapped at the insects mechanically" (8). There he has brought out all his anger on

the flies. But now he realizes that it is the violence, pain and killing that hurt him the most and cause for his anger. His lack of respect for the animal, in turn, appears as the lack of respect for his own life. That lack of respect for animals has made him feel as inanimate, unconscious, and machine; traits of objects. Later, he realizes their importance that the land is sacred and if you want to renew your life, you have to revive the relationship with the land and with its being. He becomes able to perceive life on the earth, as in Drees's words, "as circular with transformations instead of conclusions" (75) His realization changes into faith when he encounters with Mountain Lion and does pray as "Mountain lion...mountain lion, becoming what you are with each breath, your substance changing with the earth and sky" (196). Later, he shows great respect even for the foot prints of Mountain Lion. He "...poured yellow pollen from Josiah's tobacco sack...into the four foot prints" (196) and touches with great respect as his cultural belief directs. Immediately after this, he becomes to locate his uncle's lost cattle which symbolizes his reconnection with his dead uncle's spirit. He relates it with the blessing of sacred Mountain lion.

When Tayo returns back to the reservation from the war, he is loaded with so many unsolved questions, so many voices whirling inside his mind, hollowness inside him, feeling of detachment, hatred, guilt, anger etc. At first, he tries to follow Western way of healing. But the modern science fails to diagnose his problem and his sickness heightens day by day. Western belief does not believe on the healing power of nature rather they try to impose man made solution to illness. Tayo is not healed by their medicine because they don't have medicine for damaged spirit. They even can't identify the problem of Tayo. They decide his illness as "battle fatigue" (8) and "malarial fever" (8) and try to drug him accordingly. But their "...medicine drained memory out of his thin arms and replaced it with a twilight cloud behind his eyes"

(15) making Tayo more panic. Tayo's problem is beyond their understanding. They can hardly understand that Tayo needs the healing for his spirit not for the body since they do not know that "nature is united with human life" (93) as Dreese posits. They never understand that Tayo needs the medicine not for his body but for his soul.

Before meeting Betonie, Tayo is very much suffered from and confused about his emotional and physical problems. Since the feeling of not belonging in any particular group, and discrimination of both in-group, (White and Pueblo), his self esteem is very low. His self-concept is quiet blurred and confused. The failure of modern medicine as well as Ku'oosh's traditional ceremony has raised the strong doubt in his mind. Until he meets Betonie his self-esteem is very low since all the surrounding situations are not in his favour. He is still unable to know that the attempt of neglecting Mother Nature is the main cause of the gradual distance from his native identity. Later, Betonie functions as the guide for him to understand the nature and the land.

This ceremony is the journey of Tayo to find out his lost identity; a journey from ignorance to enlightenment. And it begins when he meets Betonie. At first, Tayo hesitates to believe on Betonie's healing capacity after seeing his old instruments and after getting scared from his loud continuous laughter. But the first lesson that Betonie teaches Tayo is to trust. When Tayo thinks about running away from Betonie, he reads his psyche and in a threatening voice he says that if "... there was no one left to trust, then he had no more reason to live... If you don't trust me, you better get going before dark" (122-123). What Betonie wants here is to reawaken his human virtues that have been lost somewhere very far due to white "witchery" (126).

The most important reality which is forgotten by all the people of White and Navajo that Betonie reveals during the ceremony is interconnectedness of everything

on this world. Betonie tries to make it seen that “on earth from humans to ecosystems to soil microbes possess equal intrinsic value, values which exist independent of human needs and desires” (6) as Dreese. It means from minute particle to the largest beings of this world are the components of the same web. Disturbance and violence of one is equally harmful to the others same as Dreese states “abuse or poisoning of the land would inevitably lead to a disruption of that balance, which would, in turn, cause pain and suffering in physical and spiritual forms for the life which inhabits it” (7). When Tayo says “I’ve been sick...I don’t know about ceremonies or this things you talk about...I just need help” (125), then Betonie explains that his “...sickness was only part of something larger, and his cure would be found only in something great and inclusive of everything” (125). This inclusiveness is directly associated with seeing Uncle Josiah in the Philippine jungles; one of the serious and haunting confusions that Tayo is suffering from. In the war when Rocky encourages Tayo to overcome his fear and doubt about Japanese soldiers and uncle Josiah showing the dead body of the Japanese soldiers saying “Tayo, this is a *Jap!* This is a *Jap* uniform! ... look at the face” (8), but Tayo sees the face of Josiah on their faces and remains numb. He knows that it is impossible for Josiah to be there but he feels totally helpless at that time. Later, he can’t save Rocky’s life which he is supposed to do. That guilt is killing him inwardly. As well as he wants to know what the ceremony tells about it. Betonie puts forth the hidden reality of long genetic history of human civilization that it isn’t “... surprising you saw him with them. You saw who they were. Thirty thousand years ago they were not strangers. You saw what the evil had done. You saw the witchery ranging as wide as this world” (124). Here Betonie tries to heal Tayo’s guilt putting forth the essence of brotherhood. All the people on this world are the members of same human family of Mother Nature. It is the evil power

of human that makes them detached with each other creating the range, class, nation, border etc. it is so because witchery teaches people to focus on individuality.

White encroachment on their land either in the name of development or in the name of religion has raised the strong feeling of hatred, anger, enmity, betrayal and many other vices among the Native people against Whites. White people after colonization try to divide the nature and people as 'we' and 'they'; in-group and out-group. These evil traits dragging them farther and farther from their natural virtue of innocence create the detachment with natural way of living lowering down their self-esteem. Their major problem has been associated with their land because everyday “... they had to look at the land from horizon to horizon, and every day the loss was with them; it was the dead unburied, and the mourning of the lost going forever” (169). The Whites, in order to establish the uranium mine, seize their land. The mine has made the land dried, useless, and unproductive just like their life. And the greatest irony is that they take out the uranium from their land and use it to kill their own people. Death of Rocky is its example. This feeling of being used has fueled their hatred and rage against Whites. Tayo is also suffering from that distress. For Native people, land is associated with their existence and identity because they know that, as Dreese says “in order to know who you are you must first know where you are” (1). But Whites interfere and reject their belief. For native people, it is sacred and a living being. But for the Whites land is just an object or property which can be traded and used for their economic benefit. Where Natives understand land as another member of their community there Whites treat them as commodity/ But people like Betonie understand that they can “... only fool themselves when they think it is theirs. The deeds and the papers don't mean anything. It is the people who belong to the mountains” (128). He tells Tayo that though Whites think that they have won and

commodified their land, it is their stupidity because land is something that is beyond someone's possession. And, especially, when one can't feel connected with it, it can't be theirs.

Due to White people's intentional encroachment and treatment, cultural imbalance and physical as well as emotional displacement have germinated in the land of Navajo people. They have learnt to drink alcohol and deviate their traditional way of behaving as natural being. They have gradually internalized that Whites are more powerful and superior. Even their individualistic attitude starts to grasp Native people. They learn to become selfish and self-centered forgetting the beauty and importance of pure soul. On the other hand, there are some people who still want to return back their previous social and natural harmony. But being unable to do so, they blame White people for destroying their land and culture exactly what Tajfel and Turner's concept of "differentiation" (17). Here, most importantly, Betonie makes Tayo look at White men in a different way in order to lessen Tayo's hatred to Whites. Betonie clarifies that it is the "trickery of witchcraft" (132) that makes Native people believe all White people are evil because that witchery deliberately wants them to;

... believe all evil resides with White people...They want us to separate ourselves from white people, to be ignorant and helpless as we watch our destruction. But white people are only tools that the witchery manipulates... It was Indian witchery that made white people in the first place. (132)

Betonie corrects Tayo's perception about White people that they are just the medium because it is not the human race that causes witchery; it is the act of humans themselves. Even it is the belief of Native people that they think White as evil, they themselves have allowed Whites to do so. So, it is meaningless to think that all the

White people are bad so as hatred towards them. When Betonie says that just like “you don’t write off all the white people, just like you don’t trust all the Indians” (128), Tayo accepts that “Nothing was all good or bad either; it all depended (11). Because witchery is just a witchery beyond any colour; neither white nor black. After realization of Betonie’s perception of creation of White man, his concept is changed about evil vs. good and White vs. Native in terms of those cursed by witchery and who are not. He comes to know that all the people are equal regardless of their race and colour. All are the strings of the same web.

During his journey to heal his spirit, Tayo encounters with another startling fact that ultimately soothes his wounded identity. Betonie teaches him that change is essential for life, for its survival. According to him “things which don’t shift and grow are dead. They are things the witchery people want. Witchery works to scare people, to make them fear growth” (126). Everything on this world should be changed according to the changing situation. Betonie’s idea here can be linked with Yarbrow-Bejarano cited by Dreese that says creating “binary dualisms and creating a third space, the in-between, border, or interstice that allows contradictions to co-exist in the production of a new element” (62). This third realm of consciousness creates the space for a more sensitive vision beyond the burden of cultural conventions or limitations. In the context of *Ceremony*, Betonie makes Tayo realize this fact that whether it is ceremonial practices, rituals, culture, stories or the way of living, it should be changed in order to survive and function. Basically, when changes on the land are so dynamic and varied. It has always been “...necessary, and more than ever now, it is. Otherwise we won’t make it. We won’t survive” (126). Ceremonies are just like this. People have mistaken that they should “...cling to the ceremonies the way they were” (126). But they are unable to realize that it is unnatural to stop the growth

and change. If they try so, the power of witchery "...will triumph, and the people will be no more" (126). Then Tayo understands why the ceremonial treatment of Ku'oosh has failed. Actually, Tayo's illness has emerged due to the present problems of destruction and loss of land, guilt and self-hatred. But Ku'oosh tries to find relief in his ancient tales and words which have been outdated for healing the spirit troubled with present day problems. Since he believes that the "...ceremonies must be performed exactly as they have always been done" (126), it seems insufficient to address Tayo's problem. On the other hand, Betonie has already taught about the necessity of this change by his Mexican grandma who sent him to study English in California. Since he knows that "...ceremonies have always been changing" (126), he integrates both healing equipments and stories ranging from past to present. This is why his ceremonial stories are effective and able to heal Tayo.

The most importantly, Tayo now becomes to encode what Night Swan has told long time ago. She has also told him about the 'change'. When Tayo expresses his sadness of being mixed breed as "Mexican eyes...the other kids used to tease me" (99), and regret for not having "dark eyes like other people" (99), then she tells him that they "...are afraid, Tayo. They feel something happening...and it scares them. Indians or Mexicans or whites- most people are afraid of change" (99-100). Here, Tayo is able to view that why people have taken him differently, why they hate his Mexican eyes. In fact, it is not the hatred towards him and his mother rather it is their fear of change. It explains Baumeister's idea of "continuity and differentiation" (269). According to him "Differentiation refers to the things that distinguish someone from other people. Being identified with certain family or organization... as distinct from non-members...helps to define identity" (269). It says that claiming oneself as different from other members of a group is also a part of confirming own identity.

Same is the case with Tayo and his people. By differentiating their colour of eyes and skin with Tayo's is just their attempt to make sure that they have not changed; what Baumeister says continuity. Their obsession for dark skin is just their confirmation that nothing has changed as Night Swan claims that they "...think that if their children have the same colour of skin, the same colour of eyes, that nothing is changing" (100). At that time Tayo couldn't get its hidden meaning, but now when Betonie is explaining him about the change in ceremony, he internalizes that those who hate him are actually "fools" (100) for blaming "...the ones who look different" (100). Betonie helps Tayo to know that in fact, it is their insecurity and fear but not the hatred towards him. It is their ignorance towards the changing traits of their ancient ceremony. Suddenly, he feels better realizing that it is not shameful at all. And, he is not different than any other person on this land.

Through the re-enactment of ancient mythic stories chants, and rituals by Betonie, ceremony accomplishes itself enabling Tayo (individual) to integrate in his community. Ceremony, actually, is not any celebration rather it is a journey towards enlightenment that ultimately enables people to overcome their vices like hatred, anger, fear, guilt, pain etc. By connecting ancient stories and natural occurrence with the life of people, ceremony enables them to live harmoniously on the land. When Tayo gets the reasonable answer to all his queries and problems, gradually, he feels light and calm. Previous hatred, guilt and pain have vanished somewhere. When he decides not to kill Emo as revenge, when he feels himself able to tell all the stories he has learned from Betonie to his people, and when he sees everything on this land has strong bond with each other, ceremony seems to be accomplished.

In the novel, Silko has used various symbols and metaphors like white fog on the Mount Taylor vs. white cloud, drought, rain, spider web etc. Among them

metaphor of drought and web are the most powerful one. Actually, the drought in the novel symbolizes Tayo's spiritual dryness. The rain for which the Laguna people are waiting for last six years is just not necessary for replenishing the land but also necessary for Replenishing for Tayo's spirit and for refilling his identity vacuum. Similarly, the spider web refers to the web of life on the earth. Just like every small string of a web is interconnected with each other, every minute particle to giant creation on this earth are interrelated with each other whether human or non human. And, just like the disturbance of any of the web strings causes tension on the other strings, the violation in any of the natural beings on the earth causes o destruction of others. Apart from these, where white fog on the mount Taylor symbolizes the life and intimacy with nature, there the white cloud refers the pain and suffocation that drains out life and memory "...silencing the sensation of living" (229). Likewise, Mount Taylor and Spider Woman symbolize the Mother Nature who has the power to revive and revitalize the life on the earth. Donelle Dreese's idea, here, concretizes Silko's message that "place and self are not separate entities" (115) rather it is like their own ancestors for them; an integral part of their being.

Chapter IV

Decoding Identity by Locating the Self in Place

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Silko's *Ceremony* revolves around the issue of identity in relation with native land. The former novel presents the scenario of during/early colonial Nigerian context whereas the latter deals with consequences of colonialism in postcolonial Indian American context of Laguna reservation. Yet, both novels highlight the importance of the connection with Native land and formation of identity in its presence and absence.

Things Fall Apart presents the clash between Nigeria's white colonial government and the traditional culture of the indigenous Ibo with the setting of 1890s. Contrary to the stereotypical European representation of African people as primitive, socially backward and language-less non-human like creatures of dark land, Achebe, in this novel, depicts how advanced and complex social institutions they used to have and how artistic and rich the Ibo tradition used to be prior to whites' contamination. *Things Fall Apart* attempts to show how Christian missionaries make all those things that tie Ibos from ages fall apart. Dramatizing the story of Okonkwo, it brings forth the consequences of colonialism in Nigeria that batters the identity and dignity of Ibos. Particularly, it shows when Ibos are made apart from their land and society they severely feel lost.

Colonialism, in *Things Fall Apart* is the major factor that breaks the intimate connection of Ibo people with their land and culture ultimately making them undignified and stranger in their own land. Okonkwo is the perfect example whose story tells the history of all Nigerian people. From the beginning Okonkwo is trying to establish his identity in his land. In doing so, he completely internalizes the social values and practices. Whatever the land of Umuofia and other clans have set as the

identity markers he desperately attempts to achieve. He has great respect and dedication towards his social codes and values which in return, help to establish him as a hero of their land with full dignity. But his exile brings the greatest loss in his life and for his whole clans too. On the one hand, isolation with his clan and mother land makes him feel un-homed and uprooted. On the other hand, interference of Christian missionaries has made their cultural and social values contaminated. After his return, he tries to reclaim his lost pride and dignity however, some of them are irreparable. Later, he realizes that the social tradition on which he was firmly rooted has been completely annihilated. And, this new society has been emerging with new values and practices in which he is unable to get back his previous identity. He sees himself without a sense of self and commits suicide. Whenever he is associated with the social values of his native land he feels dignified. However, alienation with and violation in such connection makes him unknown and helpless.

Similarly, the novel *Ceremony* shows that how its protagonist reestablishes his lost identity through the ceremonies of his native land. Those ceremonies enable him to decode the hidden meaning of his surrounding context. At first, he is confused and troubled completely unable to recognize and realize his identity. He searches his cure in white man's hospitals and company but it fails. Later, with the help of traditional medicine man Betonie who makes him connected with Pueblo's ancient tradition and cultural practices also enlightens Tayo's perception about the world. Betonie teaches him to get meaning from the land and nature in order to know his own identity. In the journey of regaining his identity, Tayo completes a journey from alienation to assimilation with his land just opposite of Okonkwo of *Things Fall Apart* who moves away from assimilation to alienation. Where Tayo is associated with his land he

reconfirms his identity, there Okonkwo due to the alienation claims his own life in an undignified way.

In crux, both novels reflect the desperate desire and struggle of their characters for establishing their identity in relation with their land. Deliberate cultural and physical displacement and exclusion caused by colonialism has emerged as the major factor for their identity crisis. Nevertheless, they feel their identity is addressed when they are connected with the values of their native land.

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