

Chapter Two

The Idea of 'Womanspace': An Explication of Space- Gender

Correlation in Fourth World Literature

The ideological notions of space and spatiality closely link with the concept of gender, indeed, the spatial comprehension and pragmatic spatial use of the woman. The chapter explicates gender variations in determining the spatial movements and sociality of space. The quintessential issue comes with the attribution of a man with a mind and a woman with a body and the idea of body-mind dualism makes cornucopia of mechanisms associated with the spatiality of gender. All experiences are being spatiality connected and controlled and it has greater strength in determining the mobility and liminality of a person. It is very pertinent in analyzing woman spatiality in connection with Edward Soja's view that body as a center or the 'first space' or 'the space of physicality' and it has associated with the notion of 'third space'. "Our bodies are the center through which we view, understand, and identify with others" (Jung 57). There are claims which associate women with nature and men with culture. Culture is depicted as a tool of design to prune the rudeness of nature and in this context, women are always been devalued and positioned in the lower strata of the order of being.

The spatial dimension of gender has four elements that relate to the sociality aspect. The spatiality makes affirmation in the affective dimension of women, that is, how individual and spatial experiences are interconnected, understood, and affected the rest of society. The next element is particularity; it colligates with the concept of uniqueness in each individual. The appreciation of the particularity of an individual is a key factor in acknowledging that person in society. The third characteristic affinity to women's experience to spatiality is a limitation, women are limited spatial

embodiment culturally and physically and they are obstructed by different agencies of power. Another feature is that spatiality determines our relation to others; it is an aspect of sociality too.

The mobility of women constitutes the central question of discussion. "Throwing Like a Girl: A phenomenology of Feminine Body Comportment Motility and Spatiality" is a groundbreaking article in the arena of women's spatiality by political philosopher and feminist Iris Marion Young. She put forwards certain terms which construct the pragmatic view of women's spatiality. 'Ambiguous transcendence' refers to identify "all transcendence is ambiguous because the body of a woman as natural and material, is immanence too" (Young 9). Women are not allowed to move within the prescribed domain. With this mental disposition, women take a task with 'inhibited intentionality' which obstructs her capacities to do it with a self-imposed "I cannot" (10). The more pertinent spatial concept is 'discontinuous unity' with both itself and its surroundings. Women try to locate their motion only in a part of the body; she negates the other part with immobility or motionless (Young 11). These concepts address significant issues of Fourth World woman spatiality and its further unending conundrums of the colonial legacy.

The distinction between the spatiality of genders marks the nucleus of this analysis and Young makes a distinction between 'lived space' and 'objective space'. For men, these two spaces merge; on the other hand, women stick to their lived space only. Men think and utilize 'outer space', but women focus on 'inner pace'. These attributions get associated with gender's anatomies – vagina and womb and phallus. The 'double spatiality' refers to the notion that women view their own body as an object and remains within her space and receives the action. Women remain

immobile, an enclosed space, and in fixity (14). She closes the article with the idea of the formation of enclosed self or womanhood.

Fourth World Literature in connection with the spatiality of women pronounces many instances of variant pragmatic philosophies that associate women as the center of power and resistance and as the victims of marginality, simultaneously. The spatiality of Fourth World women in literature and society identifies as problematic, especially in settler colonies like Australia, America, and Canada. Aboriginal literature depicts the reality of their life with a remote possibility of being distorted or ideologically unstructured. The space of women in the Fourth World has two statuses of existence, being an aboriginal and being as a woman.

The analysis of the selected texts on the fundamental concepts of the feminist viewpoint demands categorical demarcation of two types of feminism – Native / Aboriginal feminism and mainstream feminism. Though the modalities of treatment towards women vary according to time, space, and culture, the process of oppression has prolonged since the origin of society. In the case of Native women, they are doubly oppressed- firstly they are oppressed as Native Americans and secondly because they are women. The lack of representation of Native women in post-colonial studies made the possibility of exploring women in Fourth World studies.

A nation is not conquered
Until the hearts of its women
Are on the ground.
Then it is done, no matter
How brave its warriors.
Nor how strong its weapons

(Cheyenne Proverb)

The mentioned proverb indicates the role and status of woman in the process of colonial aggression and establishment and their resistance marks as a possible threat to colonial enterprises,

In early Native societies, women enjoyed land and property rights, and economical and political power. Women have balanced roles, and power in nature and Grandmothers play a significant role in transferring culture. They enjoyed the same privilege to be part of public space and activities as men during rituals and ceremonies. They smiled, laughed, sung, kissed, and hugged one another during rituals. But the status was immensely transformed with the advent of colonial rule and their lives were devoted to struggles and resistance against White. Labour was based on land until Europeans came and there was no private/public spatial marginalization since both males and females engage in agriculture. With the inception of colonization, the status of women was degraded culturally and morally that normalized the process of subjugation of women. Later efforts were taken to liberate woman space from colonial grip, *In Thresholds of Difference*, Julia Emberley explains that what is needed is a feminism of decolonization' which posits a different notion of gender formation within traditional Native societies (Emberley 4). Still, Fourth World societies address the same riddle of women's liberation and freedom.

All native women writers deal with the struggle of women to preserve land, nature, and cultural values. In the novel *Carpentaria*, Angel Day, the wife of protagonist Normal Phantom is portrayed as a resourceful person. She makes shelter out of all kinds of scraps left over by the settler Whites. The immense possibility of "physical space" is created through the activities of Angel Day. She is the person who creates a useful surrounding physical spatiality with the most worthless things. She makes a statue of the Virgin Mary that embodies all her hopes and futuristic visions.

The physical space she creates represents the “objective space” or “dream” she wishes to achieve.

The British Mayor Stan Bruiser, in-charge of the land Desperance, has the power to control everything there. His words give an idea of the spatiality of Aboriginal women especially, the sociality experienced by women. “If you can’t use it, eat it, or fuck it, it’s no use to you (Wright 41). He promotes the idea that the women have no mind and she confines to the entity of body only. When some women ignore him, the mayor chases them on horseback and catches them. The mobility part of women is denied and she has to surrender. He compares women to “all like a bunch of cattle” (41).

One day Angel Day tries to retort Mayor though he narrowly escaped. At that time

Angel Day came off the house with a billycan full of boiling water and threw it at Bruiser’s voice in the dark, but missed. She went back to the house and delegation could he back to the house and delegation could hear her stomping around the kitchen, throwing around, screaming out. She was looking for a sharp knife so that she could slit Bruiser’sneck from left to right(41)

Angel Day uses the space of violence as the space of resistance. Postcolonial black feminist writer bell hooks use the concept 'heterotrophic marginality as space of resistance'. She conceives marginality as a space of resistance and solidarity with the marginal can create shifting and hybridized boundaries of the acceptable, liminal or heterotrophic spaces in which different, often opposed, moral communities can intersect in a less threatening environment. Therefore through frequently identifies as a site of abjection, the heterotrophic margin can also be,

Space, in solidarity, erases the category colonizer/ colonized. Marginality is the space of resistance where lived spaces of representation act as 'real and imagined', 'material, and metaphysical' meeting grounds for struggles against all forms of oppression (hooks 152).

Angel Day's body represented the structure of all female bodies of the aboriginal world which are under constant threat, incarceration, and surveillance by the White settlers. In certain times, it acts as the space of resistance. In Foucauldian hegemonic relationships, the human body exists in space and such body must either submit to authority through incarceration or surveillance in a panopticism space or body exists in carved spaces of resistance and freedom from a repressive world. Angel Day inhabits at her home and spends the majority of her time in the kitchen that represents the limitation of her mobility to the external world and even to other spaces of the home. In the Althusserian concept, ideology orients people to move or not or to move from one space to another. Women are oriented with the ideologies of limiting their space to the home, kitchen, and other private places. Women's space is continuously shifted, contested, and formed by negotiations between different spheres of power and culture. It is less powerful and at the same time challenges, authority, and domination act as a counter-public. In *Carpentaria*, The successful Aboriginal is represented through the women character Angel Day. Her success assumes as unique under a regime of the white settler. Wright satirically depicts it as,

Her fortunes were growing out of hand, she possessed dozens of Heinz baked bean tins and pickle bottles full of nails, loose screws, and bolts. She became a genius in the new ideas of Blackfella advancement. Bureaucratic people for the Aborigines department said she had 'Go'.

She became a prime example of government policies at work and to prove it, they came and took pictures of her with a Pentax camera for a report. (Wright 16)

Even though she urges for success, it is not parallel to White's concept of victory. She becomes a figure of pathos despite all praising showered by the Uptownians and bureaucrats. They ask "why couldn't they have waited for a government grant?" (20)

Wright depicts the status of Aboriginal women and the societal attitude towards them through the character of Angel Day. The liminality of woman's space and activities are confined and conformed to society and the temporality of white success is drawn through Angel Day's life. She foresees the final cyclone, "she often spoke about the absence of God in Desperence and the need for him to make his appearance in Uptown to redeem the cursed with his light" (19). The final tragedy of Angel Day renders that women are the most suffered under colonial rule and white administration.

The Phantom who had her soul in a bag, came sidling up to her again, Want a lift doll? She thought, Doll! Well! Precisely. That's more like it. She, leg-weary already, never gave it a second thought and she took the lift. Her fate, bizarre and twisted it seemed, had arrived out of hell, in the form of a shiny, black road train, hauled by a Mark truck (435).

Angel Day's character resembles the traits of women who are easily vulnerable to domination and exploitation under colonial administration. She allows the process of assimilation of White culture to Aboriginality, though it failed at the end. The clock and the statue of the Virgin Mary represent the intervention and exploitation of western culture and Christianity. The space of colonialism primarily

uses and exploits the spatiality of Aboriginal women in a damaging manner. Angel Day becomes a specimen of an Aboriginal strives to become like a White settler and it proved to be tragic. Her name itself is a mixing intertwining of religion (Angel) and the instance of time (Day). When she finds the statue of the Virgin Mary,

Now she had to carry the statue to home, for she knew that with the Virgin Mary in pride of place, nobody would be able to interfere with the power of the blessings it would bestow on her home, “Luck was going to change for sure, from this moment onwards”, she told the seagulls, because, she, Mrs. Angel Day, now owned the luck of the White people (22).

Angel Day is the actual victim of colonialism in the novel. Colonialism used Christian temporality as a tool to remove the epistemological system of Aboriginal knowledge and replace it with western ontology. Unlike other characters, especially male characters who resist colonialism with all its strength, Angel Day becomes an aspirant to western colonialism.

Kim Scott’s *Benang: From the Heart* brings forth certain concepts of woman space in connection with the policy of cultural assimilation and breeding out of color. Harley's grandfather wanted to make him the first successfully born White man in the family line, the word “man” means male.

It was Ern’s ambition to have the first White in the family line. And he was almost quickly successful because Topsy gave birth on 30 January 1936 to a child, Ellen. Unfortunately, from Ern’s point of view, Ellen – though legally white, was not a male (Scott 131).

The novel confirms the notion that Women are confined into their physical bodies where sex is offered and pregnancy is tested. The horrific scenes of racism and brutality come in the way with women. A.O. Neville writes.

One policy is to send them out into the white community, and if the girl comes back pregnant our rule is to keep her two years. The child is then taken away from the mother and sometimes never sees her again. Thus these children grow up as whites, knowing nothing of their environment. At the expiration of the period of two years, the mother goes back into the service. So that does not matter if she has half a dozen children (159)

The policy of Eugenics affirms that women are mere prostitutes and reproduction machines work according to the whims and fancies of the people who are in power. The agent of colonialism does not provide any subjective position to the concept of women and her identity and it is a rarity to find the glorified notions of childhood or motherhood in the case of Fourth world people. She is treated like a sexual laborer or bonded laborer and degraded to the status as the carriers of the 'white gene' to aid the process of culture purification. Women were always described in terms of their physical space and bodily appearance. Ellen is described as

the young half-blood maiden is a pleasant, placid, complacent person as a rule, while the quadroon girl is often strikingly attractive with her off times auburn hair, rosy freckled coloring, and good figure, or maybe blue eyes and fair hair (401).

Neville and Ern stand as sex abuser's all through the novel that indicates the patriarchal domination of White settlers in their spaces of colonial power. Women in

the colonies are acutely connected with mind-body dualism where they are attached to the body without any mental capacity. Fanny Benang is one of the female characters in *Benang* and she is an aboriginal woman with an utterly miserable life being black. Fanny and her son Sandy Two have suffered a lot due to racist ostracisation. She lives in such adversity that they have no money even to remove the dead body lying close to their living place. Fanny aids the procedure to trace forefathers of Harley and her miserable life makes Harley rewrite history. Fanny Benang is one of the names of the ancestors which means nothing, symbolizes the ancestry of Aboriginal women as worthless. The notion of 'nothingness' associates with the cognition of the rootlessness of space and land, historically and culturally. Women's liminal space is controlled and contracted by the patriarchal system and they fall into such relations elusive in nature. Fanny's life marks as the best instance for it, she is considered half-caste because of her mixed parentage and is forced to marry an English man whose whereabouts are unknown.

Another female image is Topsy, a notorious prostitute and her father's details are unknown. The lives of these characters are in the hands of the Protector, in charge of colonial authority, A.O. Neville is the sole authority to command over Aboriginal lives. The liminal space of women becomes fixed and definite and this aids the application of the project of Eugenics with the body of women as an object to fulfill the racial prejudices. Ernest Soloman Scat, Harley's grandfather, begins the eugenic program of controlling the breeding among Nyoongar woman.

In the novel *Benang*, many woman characters use traditional ways of survival to make strong bonds with the past. With her daughter Harriette, Topsy rescues the children conceived in the rape of Aboriginal women and take care of their education. She becomes a strong center of traditional Aboriginal life by which everything

resolved and revolved. She acts as the cultural point to nourish and to transform the values of Nyoongar to the next generation. The spatial subjectivity of a woman becomes the agency of preserving Aboriginality. She sings with her grand children, draws a symbol in the sand for them, and teaches them how to hunt and to follow traces. She narrates stories during the daytime at the fire site to the children who are eager to learn the episteme of aboriginal truth by little funny tales. Despite imparting modern education to children, she thinks that she has “many other things to teach them also”(471)

Woman characters pass these stories from generation to generation and the orality of Aboriginal culture is survived through female subjectivities. This aspect conveys that the Aboriginal stories survive under adverse political and social circumstances as women are the carriers of Aboriginal textuality. Fanny narrates the stories of Aboriginal suffering, marginalization, and surviving since female spatiality or woman space is more affected by these processes of colonialism. Fanny becomes the receiver of firsthand experience “she witnesses how Aboriginals are shot and hung on a tree, she sees Aboriginals begging, 'huddled in-group' and slumped together” (479).

The space of women nominates a more poignant possibility to react against the marginalization. Fanny exposes the cruelties against the Aborigines without any botheration of legal actions and revengeful activities from the Whites. Fanny witnesses the process of elimination of her people. The space of a community is erased without any trace, memory, or signs. But later, Harley discovers the spot of Aboriginality through his great grandmother Fanny. Harley believes that he is saved by Fanny from falling to the jeopardized agony of cultural alienation. “She later saw me, looking for her and came to save me” (464)

When Ern came with his project of Eugenics, the life and plans of Fanny are completely distorted and ignored. To experience Aboriginality, Harley realizes the requirement to retrace his Aboriginal subjectivity by traveling like Fanny through the traditional Country and join Nyoongar people rather than backtracking his family through colonial paperwork. He finds certain symbols to identify Aboriginal invisibility. Harley describes the mirror Topsy employs as 'patchy' with increasing areas of blackness, more pieces missing her invisibility, and makes the suggestion of an invisible aboriginal woman and who becomes hidden by the centrality of White women stereotypes.

Both Topsy and Kathleen use Ern's patchy mirror to take a picture of themselves, but they got a distorted image with flecks and spots "increasing areas of blackness, more pieces missing and making invisible (163). This invisibility is directly addressed by Scott through the character of Harley's mother. "It may be that a reader is wondering about my mother, especially in such a story of men, with silent women flitting in the background" (400). The women's invisibility of mother identity is replaced by the subjectivities of White fathers who hold the generative power of procreation. As Harley states "my grandfather intended to be my creator!" (35).

Kathleen and her daughter Topsy became the victims of Ern's sexual desire and the project of eugenics. Kathleen is objectified through the eyes of Ern.

Once again, Enthought to himself; she is slim, she is young. A native woman, of course, but she wore shoes, and her faded dress was clean. Her hair shone. Ern sniffed and believed he could smell the soap and freshwater on her. He breathed all the more deeply because of it (75).

She is always constructed and defined by others and is muted in all senses. "When Kathleen found Ern embracing Topsy "...She could only give a little noise of surprise" (135). Her inability to bear Ern a son and with her eventual replacement by Topsy, as a useless body she is thrown out. The space of a woman can be easily replaced by another woman. Topsy is taught by Ern about the things connected to them as "native reserves, settlements and missions" (137). AS Bhabha argued Topsy becomes a practitioner of colonial mimicry of a White woman. Usually, mimicry is a voluntary act by the practitioner, but here it is a forced one for Topsy. The climax is the birth of Tommy who cannot be titled as 'first white man born' due to a change in law, Desperate Ern "...poured bleach into the hot water, placed his hand on the top of Topsy's head and pushed her under"(118).

Ernest Soloman Scat assumes that Harley's body becomes the product of the process of reproduction that is motherless, a miracle of masculine auto reproduction. The process of reproduction is illustrated not based on biological premises but on the cultural and moral responsibility attributed to it as a masculine endeavor to create a perfect man with the qualities of a White born. The female body acts only as of the incubator and storehouse of the fetus. A mother never affiliates with the education and nurturing of a child, but she becomes a passive observer to her child's growth in the culture of an absent/invisible fatherhood. This conceptual note is apparent in the case of Kathleen, Ern disposes of her once she gave birth to Topsy. He turns to Topsy and casts out her when Tommy is born.

In the third narrative, Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*, Angela is one of the major women characters who make a charged shift in the narrative mode of the novel. Angela comes from Los Angeles, so she is considered an outsider in Walatowa. Though she is an outsider, she possesses the power of an invader and vision to know

the superior world view in comparison with Native Americans. She is not a Native woman and lives in a large white house with the adjectival phrase connected to her as 'pale', not indicative of her illness, but her white shade of a non-native woman. In the first encounter, Angela treats Abel with the contempt that is born out of her racist supremacy and cultural superiority. Later she finds a sexual attraction towards him even though he is doing a menial job for her.

With the albino's episode, Angela becomes a completely transformed woman. Her white big house' becomes the spatial reflection of her enlarged vision of humanity. This indicates the power of Aboriginal rituals in transforming a person's perspectives and the mode of thinking. Abel's sexual encounter with Angela takes place at a critical moment in his life. Though Angela is a cultured woman with all polished aspects and attitudes to life, she prefers a Native man with a very different attitude on life and sex. Abel was thoroughly demoralized by many incidents and he constantly failed to connect himself with the community living, he meets Angela at this point in life. The sexual intimacy between them takes the instance of healing power to the conundrum of his life. The sexual act with Angela becomes a symbolic ceremonial game that possesses a particular capacity for spiritual healing. Those incidents of sexual desire are described with ceremonial overtones.

Oh no, oh no! She thought but he knew what he was doing. His tongue and tips of his fingers were everywhere upon her, and he brought her back so slowly, and set such awful fire to her flesh, that she wanted to scream. At last, he rose and she set herself for him (64).

These lines underscore the process of healing, it suggests his self-confidence and even his self – esteem is reawakened. Abel's spaces of sexuality with Angela become the spot of ceremonial order where the healing process from alienated spirit realized.

Abel lost his connection with Walatowa tradition by the death of his mother and the incident shows the capacity of a woman to continue one's values of tradition and the spatial bonding to the land. The lack of a familiar bond, especially a relation with the motherhood, makes a disastrous association to the land and tradition. Even though the grandfather provides enough psychological motivation to Abel, it is not intensive enough to make him stick to the Pueblo land and community. He was caught in between two cultures – the tribal tradition and the western modernity. Later this dislocation was erased with his reconnection to Angela. In an April 1986 interview with Dagmar Weiler, Momaday says,

Angela's role is to be a kind of foil to Abel. She represents the antithesis of the Pueblo world. Yet, she and Abel can relate to one another on one level although they are opposed in most of their cultural attitudes. So she enables us, I think, to see the Pueblo world and Abel in a particular way in which you would not otherwise be able to see in his traditional context (118-126).

In their relationship, Abel is powerless in the initial phases and Angela is aware of it. "There he stood, dumb, docile at her pleasure, not knowing, she supposed, how even to take his leave" (31).

The novel *Ceremony* centers on the concept of morality, for it presents women characters in highlight. Silko carries here Laguna tradition and culture with a long line of womanhood. In the arena of orality, women play great roles in transforming the

stories and songs or the traditional knowledge to the succeeding generations. Since orality is the base of Fourth World life and literature, the indispensability of analyzing the role of women in Native American Literature is significant. Silko imbibed this traditional knowledge on Laguna culture from her grandmother Lillie, her Grandfather Hank Marmon's sisters-in-law Susie, and great grandmother Marie or Amoah. With the liminality of woman space, the Native women act as the great sources of energy and traditional knowledge, the mode of transmission is oral.

Silko was completely against the anti-fascist policies of the United States as it advocated the separation of children from their mother's bad influence. She foregrounds her childhood experience and the influence of women through storytelling and other cultural transformation to emphasize the influence of women. Silko introduces Pueblo's creation of mythic structures through a plethora of feministic images, such as goddesses, nymphs, and other mythical figures. Stories are created out of 'Thought Woman'; Silko presents the novel as the product of a creative spirit called Thought Woman. The first story is narrated by Reed Woman and Corn Woman explains the drought which has a resemblance to Tayo's alienation and suffering.

The majority of native women writers depict the aspect of woman's struggle to preserve their land, nature, and families. With the advent of colonialism, the status of women changed from tribal leaders to basic farmer and caretaker of home and children. Matriarchy was disintegrated, women were neglected from the public spaces, government treatise, etc. The hybridity of their life was exposed since biculturalism marked as the basic trait of mixed blood. Silko believes that writing literature means finding internal integrity with a woman's self within her own identity. Not all woman characters are presented as the followers of Laguna Pueblo culture,

Tayo's aunt, Auntie possesses some inclinations towards Presbyterian belief, tries to deviate him from his liberated sense of the Laguna religious system and impose the thoughts of guilt and shame on him.

The ceremonial undercurrents in the novel are very pertinent in constituting women's spatiality. The novel *Ceremony* begins with the myth of "Tseitsi"nako, the Spider Woman / Mother Creator. When disagreement of Tayo's psyche is apparent, it is made visible through the mythic representation of Corn Woman and Reed Woman. In Laguna's belief system, the constant bathing of Reed Woman makes Corn Woman outraged and drove her away, later it marks as the cause of draught. The whole story is presented as a poem. In the novel *Ceremony*, Silko uses certain deliberate symbols, the novel begins with the myth of the Spider Woman/ Mother Creator who 'thought' the universe into being. Even though the novel centers on the premises connected to a male Tayo, it makes a strong basis on the concept of female spirituality.

According to modern feminist theorists the space of women is weakened and controlled by patriarchy and created boundaries between women's space as private and men's as public. In the oral tradition and native culture, the encouragement is given to cross these boundaries and create a more liberated space of their own. In *Ceremony*, all the processes of creation and thought of ritualistic actions are done by these feminine images. Tayo's life is controlled and modified by feminine images like Ts'eh, Laura, Night Swan, Grandmother, Betonie's grandmother, etc.

Patriarchy and white domination takes a problematic position in connection with native subalternity and proceeds with the same tools to silence the others as a proper way to control them. The voices silenced are the voices of ecological affinity, land rights, conservation of nature, etc. that give a strong sense of Nativity for women.

Tayo lacks the presence of such a strong woman voice when he came back from the war front and he comprehended that the cause of Native womanhood makes as invisible in the white patriarchal scenario. This invisibility is reflected through the image of barren land and later it is damaged due to uranium mining, this leads to drought.

Land - person harmony is central to the concept of spatiality; it is reiterated through myths and rituals in the novel *Ceremony*. Silko employs a gendered perspective of myths that have hitherto been analyzed in terms of the male principle only. Ecological awareness and spatial reclamation make his retrieval possible. Silko proposes a kind of eco-therapy for Tayo and respects the interdependency of man to nature. In the system of spatiality, both women and nature are attributed to the secondary level in hierarchical order. The Eco feminist's concerns of the novel are very important since Silko raises a strong voice against the loggers and ranchers to objectify nature, the soldiers and businessmen see women as only servants or prostitutes and the miners take uranium from the earth for atomic bombs. When Tayo comes back, he feels everything disentangled.

The imprisoned cloud and rain the abused land, the stolen cattle, and the fallen peers. All these destructive forces press him to be invisible and make him vomit (15, 18)

Silko makes a very staunch stand against the White American nature of treatment towards women, nature, and minorities. Silko questions the patriarchal mode of muting or silencing the subaltern to make them inferior. Tayo's culture and identity become altered and redesigned when he confines to the walls of White's hospital.

There are characters variant from the so-called anticipated native religion and culture as Tayo's mother and Helen Jean are the characters who internalized the White notions of Christianity. They believe the stories of

Holy missionary of white people who dedicated their lives helping the Indians by exposing the deplorable ways of the Indian people and urging them to break away from home (68).

Christianity does not make any moral or ethical up-gradation for its native believers, instead, they are caught by inferiority complex and desperately run to look like White by applying fresh lipstick or curling and cropping their straight Indian hair. The term 'breakaway' indicates the notion of divulging from their native religion, land, culture, and self. This issue also addresses the novel *Ceremony*.

The novel *Halfbreed* by Maria Campbell foregrounds the concept of 'woman space' and the liminality of space executed for the production, construction, and exchange of the meaning of the concept of women. Being an autobiography of women, it touches all the aspects and dimensions of multiplicity, plurality, and 'heteroglossia' of women identity, culture, and narrative. Woman autobiographies in the Native literary discourse bring forth certain statements on the conundrums of silenced voices from the liminal space with limited possibility of education and as a part of the Stolen Generation.

Halfbreed centers on women subjectivities and the vitality of womanhood constructing other subjectivities depending on them. Maria's life turns into jeopardy when her mother dies, the vacuum space created by the demise of her mother remains unfulfilled with that incident, she loses her ardent supporter her grandmother Cheechum and later the instance of marriage turns to be disastrous, she marries

Darrel, a white man just to keep her younger children from sending foster homes. A very personal instance of marriage becomes a meager instrument to satisfy the political demands of the society. At the age of fifteen, it happens, but her political plan does not work as such since her husband reports the news of six younger children to welfare people. The chaotic space of marriage later leads to more demeaning activities like alcoholism, prostitution, and drugs.

The influence of Cheechum follows Maria as an unending spirit to help her to come out of the shackles of society. When Maria is spatially and psychologically dislocated with marriage and moved to Vancouver, her condition becomes miserable and pathetic with the abandonment of her husband, she is compelled to take the role as a prostitute to raise her daughters. The space of commercialized sex leads to more illegal activities of alcoholism and drug addiction. Suffering from a lack of self-respect fostered by her ambiguous cultural tradition, Maria is pulled into the underground of White urban society, acting out her role as a 'no good' Indian and destroying her body through alcohol and drugs. The spatial dislocation from Native place and community brought all the tensions,

I began losing weight and had no appetite, finally, a doctor prescribed tranquilizers and sleeping pills for me. So I was back on pills along with whiskey they kept me going for a while (139).

The frustration and depression force Natives to follow self-destructive behavior such as alcoholism, drug abuse, and suicidal attempts.

All the troubles of dislocation get resolved only by reconnecting to Native land and culture that shows the real women with strength and courage. The spiritual

and spatial predictions are always done by the stereotypical figures of Native womanhood like Grandmother Cheechum. Maria Campbell observes this,

Once when we were all planting potatoes and she and I were cutting out the eyes, she stopped in the middle of the sentence, "Go get your father, tell him your uncle is dead. I ran for Dad and I can remember word for word what she told him. "Malcolm shot himself. He is lying at the bottom of the footpath behind your mother's house. I will prepare others. Go (21).

Her predictions proved true when the father had reached there. Grandmother Cheechum is such a lady who always made claims on asserting woman space and individuality, she says

Never forget that my girl you always walk with you heads up and if anyone says something then put out your chin and hold it higher(36).

It is only one instance but there are many instances of foretelling misfortunes, deaths, climate changes, etc., the power of Native spirituality manifests in the instances of such premonitions. Even Maria predicted her own mother's death in a dream and Maria inherited her grandmother's sense of spirituality to a certain extent. Unlike other Indian Native women, Métis women are more talkative and noisy.

The status of half-breeds/ mixed blood is pathetic and the process of ostracisation is apparent in all public and private places from society. In the case of women, the intensity of control and exploitation is at its peak. Campbell says,

Indian people went to school, my people didn't because we weren't allowed to go to school until 1951. We couldn't go to the Indian

schools and we couldn't go to white people's schools because we didn't pay taxes we aren't landowners (51)

The native women are often bothered by the whites and always face the threat of rape and the native men also make their frustration on native women by physical torture. The concept of spatial marginalization and the concept of degraded identity revealed by a visit of Halfbreeds to town,

The town's people would stand on the sidewalks and hurl an insult at us. Some would say, "Half-breeds are in town, hide your valuables". If we walked into stores the white women and children would leave and the storekeeper's wives, son, and daughters would watch that we didn't steal anything (36)

The ethical implications of racial consciousness are apparent in these incidents and the half-breeds are degraded by society. When feminist theorists speak of 'male gaze', in the case of half-breeds the 'white gaze' becomes an obvious instance of objectification. Whites came to the First Nation reservation to shoot and to take pictures of Half-breed's locale, events, and the body. The space of the Aboriginal body became the spot of the object on looking and Natives were forced to dress and to act according to the whims and fancies of Whites. Though women were treated with veneration in Native cultures, the incidents of violence against women were common in the interaction between whites and the Native community and the instances of domestic violence also increased after the contact with Whites. The victimized Native men imposed all their frustration with White society out on their wives and they used to beat, ripped clothes, hit them, and knocked them till they fall unconscious state. On the other side, Grandmothers were the agents of cultural transmission and the sources

of imparting wisdom and knowledge from generation to generation being reservoirs of traditional knowledge.

The half-breeds or Métis do not have a choice to decide whether they are Indians or whites or in between and the White or mainstream society define them as members of the native community and still does today. 'Métis' is the term adopted by whites since they consider half-breed as vulgar expression. While all Native experience racism, Native women suffer from sexism as well racism and sexism find in the colonial process have served to dramatically undermine the status and value of women in aboriginal cultures leaving them vulnerable both within and outside communities. Before the inception of colonialism, Native women enjoyed a higher status of economic equality and power in the familial system. The status of women was degraded with the introduction of material culture. The European settlers made criteria according to their cultural standards as women are subservient to men. Maria addressed the degradation of women to liminal spatiality in a serious manner.

Cheechum is always a figure of strength and capacity, dies at the age of a hundred and four years reflecting the true identity of a Metis woman. Native women actively participate in the process of healing and writers like Maria consider writing as an activity of healing. It can be considered as an extensive struggle of native women to represent and to mark their identity and they became strong campaigners of Native rights. Maria says towards the end of the novel,

I have stopped being an idealistically shiny-eyed young woman I once was. I realize that an armed revolution will never come about. I believe that one day very soon people will set aside their differences and come together as one. Then together we will fight our common enemies. The

change will come because this time we won't give up. There is growing evidence of that today(184).

She achieves a kind of spiritual awakening at the end of the novel. Her narrative dismantles all the stereotypical views on Native women of mixed blood and provides a more spiritually awakened set of women in the course of *Half-breed*. It illustrates the hegemonic role of power systems on the progress and growth of Canadian First Nations, especially on the 'second sex'. It focuses on the problems regarding race in the pluralistic Canadian society. The practice of racism and the phenomena of poverty are intractably connected and it has densely affected women in a grave manner rather than men. She introduces a new conceptual framework for other writers to articulate a better picture of Metis women. She honestly presents herself as she is a dark-skinned lady wearing an ill-fitting dress and maintains a particular hairstyle. She feels that her parents had been unfortunate to have such a bad looking daughter.

The novel *Indian Horse* portrays different generations of women- pre-colonial, colonial, and decolonized phases of social life and political reality. Saul's grandmother Naomi represents the pre-colonial woman with all her traditional values, disciplined way of life, political vigor, and cultural integrity, on the other hand, his mother represents the paradigmatic shift that happened to the status of women during the colonial period. His mother, for instance, resembles a zombie devoid of all substance and will. When she is drunk, she dances around the fire casting horrific and skeletal shadows on the skin of the tent. In her empty eyes, the residential schools hover like a ghostly presence as she endlessly tries to drown her misery.

Naomi stands as an ardent supporter and aid to the ailing children and she undertakes some healing ceremonies to re-link their Aboriginal selves to their roots. The precise action encounters in the novel that Naomi is the only adult in the group able to pass the myths and the stories of the clan to her grandson. Being the only member of the family not subjected to the process of acculturation at work in the Indian residential school system, she is still an apt storyteller. The sacred stories she tells Saul act as many talismans that protect him from the surrounding dangers and violence: “Naomi told me stories, kept me away from the adults when they were in the grips of the drink” (*Wagamese*14).

Yet, for all the efforts Naomi makes to hold the group together, the scars left by the boarding schools on Saul’s parents are so deep that disintegration and dismembering cannot be avoided. As they vanish in the distance on the lake, carrying away Benjamin’s dead body and leaving Saul and Naomi to fend for themselves, the divergent lines in the wake of their canoe further epitomize the final dissolution of the group’s social and cultural fabric. *Wagamese* insists on the state of extreme humiliation and deprivation in which the women are left. In the end, not only lose their identity, but they also lose their dignity as a human being and are treated as if they are carpets. Unable to react, the young Indians and women are survived as mere objects to make their lives merely counting days and nights. They become the passive spectators of the horrors they are forced to witness.

No one was about except for one girl I did not know, wiping down the walls with a sponge. She was nine, maybe ten, but the smock sagging to her knees and her dark stockings and shapeless shoes made her look like an old woman. I coughed, and she looked for a moment. There was no recognition on her face, no expression except surrender. When

I made a small wave she raised her chin an inch or so, gazed at me with dark, empty eyes, and then reached down to squeeze her sponge again. (97)

The novel draws a clear picture of alcoholic addiction among the dislocated parents and how their children suffered due to this. Predictably enough, Naomi's death has a profound impact on the narrative. Saul's ability to tell his story gradually dwindles as Naomi's voice fades away in the winter storm and as her stories are scattered by *Keewatin*, the cruel winter wind. Her passing away is reported in a rather dry and unemotional tone, a news-writing style of sorts, that not only reproduces Saul's inability to cope with her sudden loss and the alienation it entails but also marks the beginning of a long stasis which freezes the narration of Saul's story until one spring, years later, when he decides to return to Manitouwadge and face the truth of his experience.

Afterward, the young boy withdraws into the little space he manages to secure for himself at St. Jerome's, learning to collapse the space he occupies and becomes a mote, a speck, an indifferent atom in its peculiar orbit, retreating in his chrysalis of silence. Since his true story has now celebrated in an illustrious manner, he starts imagining alternative narrative modes, forged or adapted memories to produce an effective narrative. This is a common strategy enacted by the human brain when the real experience is too hard to believe and cope with.