

Yellow woman (silko) tradition vs. change

Literature



Yellow Woman (Silko) Tradition vs. Change Yellow Woman (Silko) Tradition vs. Change The short story written by Leslie Marmon Silko entitled “ Yellow Woman” depicted a narrative discourse that delved on issues pertaining to perceived folklore being lived by an unnamed female narrator. Through the story of Yellow Woman, an ancestral lore that has been told to the narrator by her grandfather, she was apparently led by Silva, supposedly embodying “ the spirit from the north” (Silko, 2002, p. 1205) to run-away with him, leave her family, and defy conformity to preserving traditional values. Despite having a husband and child, the narrator knowingly and relentlessly succumbed to the desires of the flesh, with a man she only met by the riverbed. For traditional rural women, the actions and behavior of the narrator seemed to exemplify those of modern women who regard casual and intimate relations with acquaintances as part of life.

An example of modernization that could be significant in the story is the way modern families have eventually evolved to being completely independent from parents as soon as children reached adulthood and especially when they decide to get married. In the story, however, it could be deduced that the narrator’s nuclear family still lives with her mother, and even with her grandmother in one roof. It is therefore commendable on the side of the narrator’s husband, Al, that he is able to live in harmonious relationship with his in-laws and plays a crucial role in sharing with taking care of the child. Since it was apparent that the narrator had the leisure time and the benefit to walk along the riverbed, leaving the child with her husband, it simply indicates that the husband was not at all confining and restricting on her whereabouts, as well as on expecting full responsibilities in child rearing.

Reference

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Silko, L. (2002). Yellow Woman. In S. N. Lawall, & M. Mack, *The Norton anthology of world literature* (2nd ed.) (pp. 1204-1210). New York: Norton.