



Cultural Legacy in Luci Tapahonso's poem: "A Blessing"

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Published:1-12-2023

Keywords: Legacy,
Indigenous Identity, Social
Identity, Culture, and
Resistance

Abstract

This exploration of "A Blessing," a poem by Luci Tapahonso, focuses on its thematic significance in relation to cultural legacies. The poem functions as a moving story within Tapahonso's body of work, highlighting the tenacity and commitment needed by marginalized communities to overcome societal exclusion and marginalization. This investigation analyzes the intricate social dynamics and identity struggles encountered by Native Americans in comparison to the larger American culture. The poem comes through as an effective representation of Tapahonso's own ethnic identity and a recognition of the constancy required to overcome the challenges faced by disadvantaged populations. The research also emphasizes that Tapahonso's thematic exploration encompasses expressions of appreciation for the support and assistance provided by her people, highlighting the transforming power of identifying and helping individuals who have faced social isolation. In the end, "A Blessing" rings true as a monument to the ongoing cultural legacy of Native Americans and a plea to promote a more welcoming and equal society by honoring both individual success and group resiliency

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الملخص:

يركز هذا البحث لقصيدة "مباركة" للوسي تاباهونسو على أهميتها الموضوعية فيما يتعلق بالموروثات الثقافية. تعمل القصيدة كقصة مؤثرة ضمن مجموعة أعمال تاباهونسو، حيث تسلط الضوء على المثابرة والالتزام اللذين تحتاجهما المجتمعات المهمشة للتغلب على الإقصاء والتهميش المجتمعي. يحل هذا التحقيق الديناميكيات الاجتماعية المعقدة وصراعات الهوية التي يواجهها الأمريكيون الأصليون مقارنة بالثقافة الأمريكية الأكبر. تأتي القصيدة كتمثيل فعال لهوية تاباهونسو العرقية واعتراف بالثبات المطلوب للتغلب على التحديات التي يواجهها السكان المحرومون. يؤكد البحث أيضاً على أن استكشاف تاباهونسو الواقعي يشمل التعبير عن التقدير للدعم والمساعدة المقدمة من شعبها، مما يسלט الضوء على القوة التحويلية لتحديد ومساعدة الأفراد الذين واجهوا العزلة الاجتماعية. في النهاية، تبدو قصيدة "مباركة" بمثابة نصب تذكاري للإرث الثقافي المستمر للأمريكيين الأصليين ونداء لتعزيز مجتمع أكثر ترحيباً ومساواة من خلال تكريم كل من النجاح الفردي ومرونة المجموعة.

. The First Inaugural Poet Laureate of the Navajo Nation

Lucy Tapahonso a well-known Navajo poet writer and teacher, was born in 1953. She is the winner of the first Navajo Poet Laureate. She examines subjects like identity, spirituality, and the nuanced connection between the Navajo people and the United States. Furthermore, Tapahonso's work is poetic, evocative, and often centers on her upbringing in a traditional Navajo household and conveys the complexity and beauty of Navajo culture. Thus, she has received various honors for her contributions, like the Native Writers' Circle of the Americas' Lifetime Achievement Award.

In an interview with Joseph Bruchac in 1999, Leslie Marmon Silko, a Native American poet, praised Tapahonso's poetry and prose. Silko complimented her ability to effectively convey Navajo culture and experience in her writing. She described Tapahonso's work as being "very lyrical and very beautiful" and said that she liked how Tapahonso "seems to be able to move between English and Navajo very gracefully"(Lang, 1991 p.73).

The Dineh, like many native people, saw a connection between art and religion. They used art as a ceremonial tool to communicate with spiritual creatures they believed to reside in both the natural and supernatural realms. It was a means of gaining a closer relationship with one's ancestors as well as influencing supernatural entities to change the weather or heal the ill. For

these goals, the Diné possessed highly developed art and ceremonies (Des Jarlais, 2009, p.170).

The Navajo people's tradition of governance is rooted in their clans and oral history. The clan system of the Diné is integral to their society. The system has rules of behavior that extend to the manner of refined culture that the Navajo people call "walking in beauty." Since then, the Navajo people have carried on evolving their conceptualizations of governance. The nature of the contemporary Navajo government and how it has changed to incorporate the institutions and economies of the "western world" are still up for debate among social, cultural, and political experts. Children get their social position from their mother and her family and are seen as being born into that family (Anghie, 2001, p.513).

Through her poetry, Tapahonso has explored and highlighted the practices, beliefs, and experiences that are particularized to her Navajo culture and this affirms her Native American identity in America. She does not forget her roots, as she documents this in many of her poems. She explores her upbringing and the profound influence that the Navajo language, storytelling, and spirituality had on the development of her belonging and worldview (Woods, 2010, p.31).

In a public reading on Tuesday, February 14 at the Donnelly Library. Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Brandon Kempner, said, "I've always found Dr. Tapahonso's poetry deeply moving for its insight into our region and our history." (Withnall, 2023) Tapahonso, using her poetry, does not only clarify misunderstandings and biases about Native Americans but also emphasizes how important it is to recognize and appreciate the diversity and richness of indigenous traditions. In the poem "Blue Horses Rush In." Tapahonso states:

"We are not all alike

We are not all dark

We are not all turquoise

We are not flat as the landscape.

We are mountains." (Tapahonso, 1997, p.24).

She strongly emphasizes the uniqueness and variety of Native American communities. In her words, she made the claim in the quotation, Native Americans are not a homogenous population; they differ in terms of appearance, culture, and identity. According to Duranton and Puga: "Homogenous¹ means alike, while heterogeneous means unlike or distinct from one another. Thus, a homogenous population has little variation" (2001, p.1460). Tapahonso makes an important spot about the richness and distinctiveness of Native American people and cultures by emphasizing their variety. The contrast to mountains, which remain put regardless of circumstances, therefore stresses the deep roots of Native American identity and culture. Mountains are eternal, and they stand in for Native Americans' cherished ties to their country, culture, and customs.

In addition, in "A Radiant Curve," as cited in Ten (2011), Tapahonso writes:

We are learning to walk in two worlds

Where the pace is not always equal,

¹Homogeneity is the level of uniformity among sampling units within a population.

Where the language is not always equal

Where the vision is not always equal

Where the power is not always equal." (p. 2)

She examines the difficulties of managing two different realities, and we, as readers, are learning to navigate two different universes. In such a community, individuals will find some kind of difficulty because of the cultural overlap that occurs in America between immigrants and the indigenous population, which makes the process of preserving the rights, sovereignty, and identity of any minority very difficult because of this diversity. Through her words, it becomes clear to the reader the need to struggle to catch up with others and to prove their identity among this mixture of minorities.

In his book *Blood Narrative* (2002), Chadwick Allen examines the narrative strategies employed by Native American writers and activists to assert their power and express their indignity. The book explores their resistance to

assimilation after World War II and the subsequent rise of political, cultural, and literary activism in the 1960s and 1970s. He focuses on two main themes: the struggle to define indignity and break free from settler's cultures, authenticity standards, and the significance of treaties in advocating for land and resource rights, as well as cultural and identity politics. According to Allen:

Individual standing alone, self-reliant and self-propelling, ready to confront whatever awaited him with the aid of his own unique and inherent resources. . . . His moral position was prior to experience, and in his very newness, he was fundamentally innocent. The world and history lay all before him. And he was the type of creator, the poet par excellence, creating language itself by naming the elements of the scene about him. All this and more were contained in the image of the American as Adam. (p.16)

Through her writing, Luci Tapahonso challenges conventional wisdom, affirms the depth and diversity of indigenous experiences, and emphasizes and supports Navajo culture in order to develop her indigenous identity. She believes that the moral lessons contained in the stories are transmitted from adults to the younger generations as a means of education. The history of the clan has traditionally been transmitted orally through poetry due to its lack of documentation at that time. In this way, the indigenous people of America can preserve their history by transferring the lessons they learned from their ancestors to the next generation. It also conveys moral meanings, knowledge, and social values of the Native American people to the universe. Most importantly, Native American storytelling teaches the new generation not to isolate, but rather invites them to communicate with themselves and with others to preserve their identity and spread their native culture (Saddam & Yahya, 2015, p.143).

Native American sociology concerning the real world, its applications, and its ramifications is abundant in folklore. In order for a society to operate effectively and enduringly, the most fundamental social structures as well as the most profound human emotions need to be highlighted and evaluated in Indian tales (Kroeber, 2008, p.6). Tapahonso underscores the practice of Native American people often sharing their common experiences among themselves, facilitating mutual learning and drawing valuable insights from their stories to inform their future pursuits. Luci Tapahonso states that:

The more I learned about poetics and theory, and the more I read what are considered the classics in poetry ... I realized there was a really strong connection between literary forms and the oral Navajo tradition ... Once that

revelation became clear to me, it was a freeing experience. I saw that the possibilities were really endless because I grew up in a home, like many Navajo homes, filled with storytelling. Prayer was a ritual-song and chants. Oration was part of our daily life. When babies are born, or someone dies, people stand up and literally orate. (2016)

Via her expressions, it is clear that a person's roots play a fundamental role in crippling his thoughts and attitudes in life, as it is difficult for the person to extract the beliefs on which he was raised, despite the racism and harm they were subjected to in their homeland.

In the book titled *Politics and Aesthetics in Contemporary Native American Literature: Across Every Border* (2010), Matthew Herman states that:

The story Tapahonso's poetry tells, subtly, is one of resistance to American assimilation. Rather than depicting Natives that forget their culturally-based identity, Tapahonso tells stories of American Indian individuals that cling to their culture even though they remain dislocated from their tribal homelands. The American city, because it is both heterogeneous² and dynamic, cannot guarantee the assimilation of American Indians. It is this facet of the city on which the American Indians in Tapahonso's poetry cling. (p.39)

In spite of being uprooted from their tribal homelands, the American Indian characters in Tapahonso's poems tenaciously preserve the cultural legacies of the indigenous peoples of America. The American city is represented as being unable to ensure the integration of American Indians. This is attributed to its variety and rapid development, which is not commensurate with the nature of their lives. Therefore, the American Indian characters in Tapahonso's poems adhere to this particular facet of the metropolis. This interpretation emphasizes Tapahonso's investigation of the intricacies and difficulties experienced by Native people in urban environments. Tapahonso's characters struggle against assimilation and the desire to fit in with mainstream American culture in order to preserve their ethnic heritage. When these people experience a conflict between their original identity and the urban environment in which they are forced to live, the city becomes a place of both challenges and resilience.

2. Unveiling Diversity: Strengthening Indigenous Voices and Identity in a Dominant Society.

Native American culture is more heterogeneous than that of any other ethnic group in the United States. The status of Native American tribal nations is

politically and legally unique. In addition, their situation historically and

² The opposite of homogenous, heterogeneous populations have higher biodiversity and higher species richness.

socio-culturally is in many respects different from that of ethnic minority populations. The complexity of indigenous identity in the dominant category of America is multifaceted and cannot be easily defined or simplified. Indigenous identity refers to the diverse cultural and ethnic groups that inhabited the Americas before the arrival of Europeans. These groups have distinct cultural practices, languages, and traditions that have been affected for centuries by colonialism, which dominated them and robbed them of their identity (Teuton, 2017, p.83).

Within the context of the dominant category, that describes America, the indigenous identity functions as both an in-group and an out-group. People who consider themselves to be members of indigenous communities and consider themselves indigenous make up the in-group. These people are frequently subjected to prejudice and marginalization at the hands of the dominant culture, which also seeks to eradicate their cultural history (Dennis, 2006, p.123).

Further, Native nations have distinct cultures and languages. Nonetheless, the cultures of North American Indigenous share some traits. They include identifying with and believing in the sanctity of the land, valuing families and working together to supply life's essentials, and participating in ceremonies to connect with the spirit world and celebrate the seasons and one's own life. Native American poetry predates European contact. Modern Native American poets are influenced by their traditions, and present concerns, as well as by the larger body of English-language American poetry.

In Carolyn Sorisio's, *Introduction: Native Americans in American Literature: Writing and Written*, Native Americans have always been "written" in the area of contact that is now known as the United States; they frequently appear as the romanticized, demonized, and doomed subjects of conquerors' works. However, some Native Americans were writing long before the Native American Renaissance of the late 1600s and early 1770s, sometimes in styles related to their native cultures and other times in the languages of the colonists that they would eventually adopt (2006, p.5). According to Joshua David Bellin, there is an intercultural link between how Native Americans are portrayed in texts written by members of dominant

cultures and how Native Americans—as well as all other Americans—appear in works written by members of indigenous cultures. According to Bellin's definition of interculturalism, cultures interact not as "monolithic, self-contained, necessarily opposed entities," but rather through the "complex, intricate, and even indeterminate interrelationships among their diverse members" (2012). Intercultural literary criticism "views texts as taking shape through, and shaping in turn, these cultural interrelationships." It acknowledges that Native Americans have always had a structural role in much of the literature produced by members of the dominant American civilizations, both physically and textually (Sorisio, 2006, p.7).

The Constitution, more than 300 treaties, and more than 200 years of Federal law recognize Indian tribes as domestic-dependent countries with varying degrees of sovereignty inside the boundaries of the United States. American Indian or Alaska Native is defined by the U.S. Census as "A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment." This term includes those who have ancestry in an indigenous American group or who identify with a certain tribal community (Skibine, 2019, p.16). It recognizes the various indigenous populations' diversity as well as their ties to certain tribes or tribal groupings historically and culturally.

It is worth mentioning Arnold Krupat's insistence that "in varying degrees, all verbal performances studied as 'Native American literature,' whether oral, textualized, or written, are mixed or hybrid; none are 'pure' or, strictly speaking, autonomous. Native American written literature in particular is an intercultural practice" (Murray, 2005, p. 76). The argument emphasizes the intricate historical and cultural forces that influence Native American writing. Oral storytelling is a rich tradition in Native American tribes that extends back to before European explorers arrived in the Americas. Nevertheless, because of colonialism and subsequent interactions with European cultures, Native American literature has changed, been adapted, and even hybridized. Native American written literature has been significantly influenced by outside sources such as European languages, literary styles, and notions. Native American authors frequently interact with and respond to both the effects of the preeminent Western literary canon as well as their own indigenous cultural traditions. The interaction of many literary and cultural traditions adds to the hybrid form of written Native American literature.

It was not until the 1820s that Native Americans began to dominate English literacy in order to fight racism, create indigenous nations, and keep their territory. Around this period, a nonliterate Cherokee silversmith named Sequoyah created the first native alphabet in North America (McCarty, 2013, p. 184). Apart from using English, Cherokees quickly started producing their own literature. Elias Boudinot, John Ridge, and John Ross assisted in founding the first Native American newspaper, the Cherokee Phoenix, which was published in English and Cherokee in 1828 (Wisecup, 2017, p. 45).

The journal documented customs, reported on or criticized government Indian policies, and connected Native people with the rest of the world. Around this same time, William Apess, a Pequot pastor, started preaching around New England to Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans equally. He also wrote in support of individuals he presciently referred to as people "of color." Others, including the Seneca activist Maris Bryant Pierce and the Cherokee missionary student Catherine Brown (Wisecup, 2017, p. 52) wrote national histories and conversion tales. In his *book Indian Science Fiction: Patterns, History, and Hybridity* (2020), Suparno Banerjee indicates that:

Native Americans in this era mostly modified nonfiction genres to meet certain political objectives. Native authors created histories, articles, speeches, and editorials while preserving or even stifling their oral literatures and advancing western learning to progress diplomacy. In the west, where the North American empire's hold was still tenuous by the middle of the nineteenth century, indigenous people started working with translators and amanuenses to create a number of autobiographies. Native Americans wanted to share their history with the world. (p.47)

That means the action of Native Americans is seen as an illustration of self-assertion, and racial identity, which may be a powerful tool for people who have been stripped of their roots. Throughout history, a number of social movements have emerged when individuals or groups have struggled to regain their rights and gain respect. For instance, individuals and groups demanding equality, asserting their identities, and rejecting repressive institutions, propelled the civil rights and anti-slavery movements.

The problem becomes more complicated when poets make sincere endeavors to employ ethnographic materials and make them accessible by highlighting their aesthetic elements. These white writers assert that certain manifestations of Indian culture could communicate with other cultures on an aesthetic level by calling their works literature, which meant that

something transcended their particular form and language and could be communicated in the new versions.

What becomes evident to us, as readers who came after these authors, is the extent to which they were essentially reiterating their culturally rooted understanding of what constituted the poetic and the universal. They then asserted that this similarity to other forms served as evidence of its universality! Historically, it was deemed acceptable to present a specific creation from an individual as a Navajo or broader Indian poem because such works were viewed as communal and anonymous, with one part representing the whole.

Therefore, Native Americans found that the best way to raise their voice is through partnerships and cooperation with organizations, institutions, and scholars interested in the history and culture of the indigenous population. They broadened the reach and impact of their shared heritage through collaboration with external parties, disseminating Native American history without reservation. They also fostered unity among indigenous communities by weaving together their traditions and customs, creating an interwoven tapestry of cultural richness. In this way, the world would gain from having a more complete and accurate grasp of Native American cultures and history.

3. The Assertion of Indigenous Ethnicity in Luci Tapahonso's poem: "A Blessing."

In November 2016, Luci Tapahonso engaged in a conversation with Patricia Grace at Victoria University of Wellington, about this, Antonella Sarti Evans says:

Tapahonso's voice was a mere pleasure to listen to; her poems are deep and enchanting, though the truth they reveal is so 'hard to take'. I was fascinated by the amalgam of mysticism and realism in her writing and telling, by the melodic beauty of her native Navajo idiom and the tragic irony about American contemporary and past history. The spirituality inherent her poetry is rooted within Navajo myths and ceremonies as well as in the idea of the feminine as a source of power and balance in the world (2018, p.1).

In the poem "A Blessing" (Tapahonso, 2008, p.45), Tapahonso honors academic success and offers a greater comprehension of social identity dynamics in underserved areas. The statement of Tapahonso's ethnic identity

may be seen from the perspective of social identity theory. She acknowledges the resiliency and resolves needed to overcome the difficulties experienced by minority groups by expressing gratitude for the assistance of "parents, grandparents, children, family members, and friends". Figuratively speaking, traveling signifies the arduous path to accomplishment. The metaphorical trip represents the difficulties, sacrifices, and resolve faced on the way to realizing one's objectives, much as actual travel necessitates serious effort. It demonstrates how important the people's efforts were and how strong they had to be in order to overcome challenges and reach their desired destination of success.

In a society where social categorization creates one's identity, it becomes important to recognize and claim one's social identity within a minority group. Examining the statements made by Luci Tapahonso, a member of a minority group in America, She expresses her thanks and recognizes the accomplishments of students who have received higher degrees. Her confirmation of the ethnic identity within a backdrop of marginalization and social exclusion is reflected in her words. The Tajfel and Turner-created Social Identity Theory sheds light on how people obtain a sense of self and a social identity from the communities to which they belong (1982, p.9). This idea contends that individuals want to preserve high levels of self-esteem by associating with important or good organizations that help them highlight their role in their communities through race, gender, religion, and others.

Tapahonso's words "ordinary elements of our lives," highlight the interdependence of all organisms and the holiness innate in nature by recognizing the air, warmth of fire, bodies of water, plants, land, animals, and people. She urges us to stop, take in, and find appreciation in the basic yet sometimes disregarded components that support our existence through this acknowledgment. This serves as a reminder to treasure and respect the holy present in everyday experiences.

Another aspect that has been tackled by Tapahonso is the sense of gratitude for the homeland that thrives on the richness and diversity of its people, cultures, histories, and beliefs. The passage acknowledges the generosity of the Tohono O'odham, who have granted the land on which the community learns, celebrates achieves, and occasionally mourns losses. It highlights the mutual link between the land, the indigenous people, and the community's activities. By recognizing and expressing gratitude, Tapahonso says, "We are grateful for homeland that has always thrived/ on a glorious array of people and their diverse cultures, histories and beliefs." The lines

emphasize the importance of honoring and respecting the indigenous communities and their contributions to the collective experience and not ignoring their role in making civilization.

This indicates that Native Americans had a strong sense of reverence for their ancestors. They value the knowledge, wisdom, and experiences that have been passed down through the years. An ancestor's link to one's past, customs, and spiritual beliefs is viewed as an essential condition to cultural identity.

Indigenous people seek to preserve their cultural heritage because this gives them an incentive for continuity and to ensure that the knowledge of their ancestors continues from one generation to the next. Respect for the past is one of the indications of the individual's deep awareness of the intersection of her/ his past and present with her/his future. It also confirms the value of history and the continued existence of ancestral spirits in indigenous communities. Therefore, for the sake of the future, the indigenous people should "cherish" their "ancestors" and that their existence is a result of the ancestors' "prayers" and "faith."

Using some symbols, Tapahonso tries to embody the extent of the indigenous people's adherence to their past in America. Tapahonso referred to mountains in her poetry, reflecting the symbolic importance of these geographical features in indigenous cultures. For many indigenous groups, mountains have great spiritual and cultural significance. They frequently stand for power, tenacity, and the enduring bond between the land and its original inhabitants. She explains the importance of mountains by saying "We understand that, in Tucson, the Rincon Mountains are our inspiration for beginning each day." This means that the rugged beauty of the Rincon Mountains, with their towering peaks, deep canyons, and pristine wilderness, can evoke a sense of awe and inspiration simultaneously. The intensity of the bond between indigenous populations and the terrain they live on may, actually, "The Rincons" represent the strength of the bond between the indigenous people and the terrain on which they live. Mountains are considered eternal and always present. It embodies their cultural identity, spiritual values, and a reference to the actual landowner. It stands for the strong tie that exists between the people and their ancestral homelands.

Land is a living thing with its own inherent rights and soul, not just something that may be owned. It acknowledges the historical guardianship and custody of indigenous peoples over the land, highlighting their strong

sense of accountability and reverence for the natural world. It reinforces indigenous people's sense of identity, culture, and spiritual connection to the land by utilizing the mountain as a metaphor to represent the intimate bond they have with their ancestral homelands.

The idea of creating a rainbow represents a variety of ideas, skills, and points of view that come together in the human mind to create something as beautiful and distinctive as the colors of the rainbow. This means that each poet contributes his experiences, viewpoints, and abilities to write something beautiful that makes people happy. The white early-morning lights are nothing but a metaphor for the innocence and the beautiful beginnings of a person that begin each day. It represents the possibilities and opportunities offered by each new day in human life, where innovation and new ideas are nurtured as a blank canvas on which individuals draw their ideas and exercise their creativity in the morning light.

Tapahonso's words aim to create a link between the power reflected by the Blue Mountains that surround her people, notably the Santa Rita Mountains, and the tribal people who come from the south in search of authenticity. The symbolism of the Blue Mountains here is strength, fortitude, resilience, and greatness that reflect a person's ability to overcome obstacles in his life's journey. A person can contribute to the world around her/him when s/he has the desire to learn to improve her/himself and prove who he is through his success and contributions to those around her/him. Through her words, Tapahonso described people in the West with the calm yellow glow at night and how they were abundant material for her writings. Their calm and sensitive nature and the images of twilight inspired her feelings of serenity, contemplation, and the passage from night to day.

The reflection gains depth with the mention of the Tucson Mountains, which are located west of Tucson, where indigenous groups have lived for many years. Therefore, this region is culturally important to its residents. In fact, these groups of people are called the ts'aa', meaning the basket of life, which means that they provide nourishment, aid, and knowledge to others. Through this Tapahonso emphasizes the value of family ties, synergy, and interdependence in people's lives through her description of the life of the people of Tucson Mountains. Families are interwoven and offer support, sustenance, and a sense of belonging; much like a basket is woven together. It is clear from this that Tapahonso seeks to motivate the people of her nationality to be intertwined to preserve their ethnic identity, especially since they belong now to a society full of different ethnic minorities.

" Hózhó nááhasdłíí'" is a Navajo phrase that is translated to " All is beautiful again" repeated in the last four lines of the poem. It is an exuberant expression that embodies the Navajo philosophy and way of life's beauty, harmony, and equilibrium of life through acceptance of the environment in which one lives. One can attain a renewed condition of beauty and health. By repeating, "All is beautiful again" at the end of the poem "A Blessing," the poet reinforces the message of seeking beauty in all aspects of life and happily embraces it. It serves as a reminder to approach life with gratitude, respect, and appreciation for the world around us.

The poem "A Blessing", reinforces the message of finding beauty in all aspects of life and embraces it. It functions as a reminder to approach life with gratitude, respect, and appreciation for the world around us. Restated at the last four lines for the sake of intensification, the repetition of "All is beautiful again" accentuates its significance and enables the sentiment to reverberate profoundly within the reader or listener. It inspires us to pursue a life replete with beauty, both in our interactions with nature and with others.

4. Conclusion

Luci Tapahonso's poetry has explored and highlighted the practices, beliefs, and experiences that are particular to Navajo culture. It affirms the poet's Native American identity in America. In several of her poems, Tapahonso explores her upbringing and the profound impact that the Navajo language, storytelling, and spirituality have on the development of her identity and worldview.

In addition, Tapahonso's poems clarify the challenges of being Navajo in the United States, particularly the historical and contemporary struggles of Native peoples to maintain their rights, sovereignty, and cultural identity as indigenous people. As a member of the minority community, Luci Tapahonso promotes her ethnic identity while appreciating her academic accomplishments and success. She reads the lines in tribute to the students' parents, grandparents, kids, and friends who have helped them along the way. The main reason for the success and failure of the individual is the social process that pushes the person to be marginalized in his society, and here the process of reaching success becomes complicated. However, Tapahonso is able to prove her presence and assert herself from the chance of success that she gets in a society, which is a mixture of ethnic identities.

Tapahonso emphasizes the extra work and dedication needed from minority groups to achieve in the face of marginalization and social exclusion by

recognizing the dedication of individuals who have traveled long distances to be present. Further, a deeper comprehension of social identity dynamics is offered in underprivileged areas. The statement of Tapahonso's ethnic identity may be seen from the perspective of social identity theory. She acknowledges the resiliency and resolve needed to overcome the difficulties experienced by minority groups by expressing gratitude for the help and support of relatives and friends. The poem "A Blessing," is a potent reminder of the value of recognizing and supporting people who have experienced social exclusion and marginalization while simultaneously celebrating accomplishments, helping to create a society that is more inclusive and equal.

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