



A Study of Historical Trauma and Survivance in Orange's There There

Amani Sharif¹, Ghulam Murtaza²

¹ Lecturer, Government College Women University Faisalabad, Pakistan. Email: amanisharif@gcwuf.edu.pk

² Associate Professor, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan. Email: gmaatir@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

For the past five hundred years, Native Americans have been subjected to bloodshed, violence, and dislocation at the hands of the Euro American colonisers. The trauma experienced by Native Americans over the years has been passed on to succeeding generations, leading them to resort to drug abuse, violence, isolation and suicide. They have resisted the onslaught on their culture and civilization by reclaiming their traditions and ceremonies. There There by Tommy Orange underscores the violent legacy of Euro-American colonization and the subsequent endeavours by Native Americans to defy absence and erasure and ensure their visibility and presence. Orange depicts the ways historical trauma impacts the lives of Native Americans and demonstrates various strategies of survivance they have adopted in the face of this trauma. The theoretical framework of the study is based on the theory of historical trauma by Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart and the theory of survivance by Gerald Vizenor. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart defines historical trauma as the collective emotional wounding that spans generations and leads to anger, suicidal tendencies and depression. Anishinaabe theorist Gerald Vizenor describes survivance as active survival in which modern-day Native Americans adapt to contemporary times while still adhering to their traditions and customs. The findings of the textual analysis of this research demonstrate Native American anguish and suffering as a result of centuries of colonization and their efforts to safeguard communal survival. The paper encapsulates the historical trauma experienced by modern-day Native Americans residing in urban locales and underscores their endeavors to preserve their culture despite obstacles.

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Corresponding Author's Email: amanisharif@gcwuf.edu.pk

1. Introduction

The ruthless colonization of the Americas by the European colonizers disrupted and demolished their way of life. This study strives to investigate ways in which traumas experienced in the past by Native Americans still impact their lives today and how they attempt to keep their traditions alive in the face of ongoing injustice and oppression. Trauma can be described as an emotional reaction to a distressing and frightful occurrence that leaves everlasting traces on its victims. People belonging to oppressed cultural groups are at the risk of suffering trauma collectively which they then pass on to succeeding generations. For the past five centuries, Native Americans have had to endure genocides, relocations, and erasure of their culture and traditions at the hands of Euro-American colonizers. Their suffering, suppression and subjugation continues as they still have not become a part of the mainstream society in America. Alexander (2004) describes trauma experienced by cultural groups as the result of being the victim of a dreadful occurrence that leaves permanent marks upon the people and alters their future identities. Kaplan (2005) cites the genocide of Native Americans to assert that groups at the receiving end of maltreatment and cruelty continue to suffer across generations. Anishinaabe scholar Lawrence W. Gross asserts that stress experienced as

a result of historical trauma is society-wide in nature (Gross, 2002). Thus, the modern-day Native Americans have not only inherited trauma from preceding generations but they are also victims of their current conditions.

Despite these harsh and brutal circumstances, Native Americans continue to exhibit resilience and perseverance by making constant endeavours to preserve their traditions and customs. Native Americans have traditionally been represented from the outside. Vizenor (1999) describes contemporary Native American writers as 'postindian warriors' who abandon victimry in their quest for cultural survivance. The contemporary Native American literature demonstrates the plights and predicaments of Native Americans residing in reservations and cities. The term 'survance', a portmanteau of 'survival' and 'defiance', represents efforts to preserve culture through the denunciation of assimilation. Survivance strategies such as storytelling and magical realism are deeply embedded in Native American culture. Stromberg (2006) asserts that survivance transcends mere survival to accept and acknowledge the vibrant and creative nature of Native rhetoric.

There There is a 2018 novel written by the mixed-blood author Tommy Orange. While working on a storytelling project at Native American Health Centre, Tommy Orange realized that stories about urban Native were invisible in the mainstream society. *There There* is his effort to bring Native American stories to the forefront. The novel is a compilation of stories about Native Americans belonging to different age groups and professions who are all planning to attend the Big Oakland Powwow in Oakland, California. The lives of these characters intertwine with one another and they are all affected by historical trauma as they strive to find a sense of belonging and identity in their Native culture and traditions. Orange employs grim humour to address grave and controversial topics and shed light on the maladies afflicting urban Natives today. Each chapter describes the history of a different character and explicates their reason for attending the powwow.

Orange's portrayal of contemporary Native Americans is rife with histories of alcoholism, poverty and suffering. His attempt to narrate the stories of contemporary urban Natives can be viewed as an act of survivance. All the characters in his novel are striving to connect with their tribal roots in an urban environment.

2. Literature Review

Literature Review of the study encompasses reviews of works upon survivance and trauma theories and relevant critical writings on *There There*. Caruth (1996) describes trauma as a wound that is perpetrated on the mind and expounds PTSD as a set of symptoms that are experienced by people who survive calamitous occurrences. Trauma Theory is criticized for its tendency to promote Euro-American viewpoints and neglecting effects of traumatic stress on other communities. Andermahr (2015) points out that trauma theory favors the suffering of white Europeans and neglects the traumatic experiences of minority communities. Saunders (2007) emphasizes that while the theory of trauma originated in Euro-America, trauma itself is not exclusive to Euro-Americans. Trauma Theory has widened its horizon to include experiences of the colonized who have borne inextinguishable injustices and atrocities at the hands of the colonizers. Visser (2015) argues that trauma caused by colonization lasts for years, generating and tearing up the wound repeatedly as the oppression continues. Atkinson (2017) employs the term 'transgenerational trauma' for trauma transmissions that spans across generations. She labels transgenerational trauma as political since it affects everyone to varying degrees.

Historical trauma refers to trauma experienced by ethnic groups, tribes and communities as a result of subjugation, oppression, and marginalization. A number of scholars in Danieli (1998) International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma have examined transgenerational effects of trauma across survivor populations. They explicate events that lead to traumatic stress and have repercussions for multiple generations. The critics delineate historical trauma as the consequence of collective psychological wounding of a tribe over prolonged time which then affects generations succeeding them. This sort of trauma leads to outbursts and erratic conduct in the contemporary generation as well as the generations that follow. Tribes and nations that have experienced social shocks such as tyranny, slavery, and genocide are susceptible to historical trauma. These include African Americans, Holocaust survivors, and Native Americans (Danieli, 1998). Evans-Campbell (2008)

maintains that historical trauma is transmitted due to the emotional identification of descendants with the pain and suffering of their ancestors. Individual traumas perpetuate communal trauma and vice versa (Evans-Campbell, 2008). Erikson and Caruth (1995) compares a traumatized community to a damaged body. Kaplan (2005) describes trauma as a phantom that returns to haunt the present placing the concept in the context of indigenous people, emphasizing that trauma is carried through the generations. Van Styvendale (2008) asserts that trauma suffered by Native Americans is not the result of one single, abrupt occurrence.

Survivance is a chief concern of indigenous American literature because it signifies the continuance of a Native view of the world. The term alludes to constant resistance by Native Americans to prevail over centuries of oppression and domination. Vizenor (2000) declares the stories of survivance as active presence and opines that "survivance is an active repudiation of dominance, tragedy, and victimry" (Vizenor, 2000). Sergi (1992) asserts that without stories, people would be unable to comprehend and celebrate the experiences of their community. Storytelling "creates a chain of tradition that passes on a happening from generation to generation" (Sergi, 1992). Cederstrom (1982) proclaims that Native American writers constantly allude to the past in their quest to revive their traditions in the contemporary era. Strategies of survivance ensure that Native characters act *in* history rather than having history act *upon* them (Abbas, Kharal, & Shahzadi, 2021; Kirkpatrick-Matherly, 2019).

Critical works on *There There* focus on the urbanity of contemporary Native Americans and how they keep their culture alive despite their diasporic situation. Orange writes about urban indigenous life and explores ways in which contemporary Natives claim space within cities (Gupta, 2020). According to Krivokapić and Runtić (2020), Orange's text is staunchly rooted in Native American perspective and the diasporic situation of the protagonists allows them to invent new modes of cultural continuity. Riggio (2020) asserts that Orange challenges hegemonic conceptions of indigeneity with the aim to providing the Native Americans with strategies to be modern and relevant in today's world. To sum up, the review of the above-cited works provides ample foundation for the historical trauma and survivance study of the selected narrative.

3. Conceptual Framework

This qualitative research is a textual analysis of Tommy Orange's debut novel *There There* through the lenses of trauma and survivance theories by Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart and Gerald Vizenor respectively. Native American historical trauma theoreticians maintain that the traumatization of Native American peoples commenced with the colonization of the Americas in the fifteenth century. Millions of Natives lost their lives to disease and war. The benevolent imperialistic policy of Manifest Destiny then led white colonizers to strip the Native tribes of their ancestral lands and resources. According to Brave Heart (2003), Native American tribes had to endure multiple relocations which contributed to the dwindling of their population. The attempts to assimilate Native Americans into the white American society not only disrupted bonds within families but almost exterminated Native American culture, and these disruptions of their way of life continue to affect Native Americans even today (Brave Heart, 2003). Brave Heart asserts that Native Americans face higher mortality rates as a result of inclination towards criminality and mental illnesses. Historical trauma leads individuals to indulge in self-destructive behaviours such as alcoholism and substance abuse (Brave Heart, 2003).

The theory of historical trauma elucidates differences between Native American and white populations in terms of behavioural tendencies and social discrepancies. Brave Heart and DeBruyn (1998) describes historical trauma as collective psychological wounding of Native Americans that spans across generations. This wounding is the result of loss of lives, land and culture that occurred as an aftermath of European colonization of Native Americans (Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998). Native Americans consider themselves a part of nature and they mourn for people, animals and plants alike. However, white colonizers restricted them to expressing grief only for their immediate relatives. Native Americans experience disenfranchised grief since their encounters with genocide and loss are constantly disregarded by the white population. The unresolved grief of the Native Americans intensifies reactions such as sadness, vulnerability, rage and guilt as well as feelings of helplessness and shame

(Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998). The survivor's child complex among Native Americans leads to isolation and depression. Contemporary Native Americans also experience shame and guilt as a consequence of losing friends and relatives to alcoholism, suicide and homicide (Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998). The accumulative psychological wounding is experienced not only on an individual level but also on a communal level.

Gerald Vizenor devised the term 'survivance' in the 1970s to promote and preserve Native American culture and traditions. The term is a portmanteau of two words- 'survival' and 'defiance'- and denotes resistance against the dominant white culture. Vizenor (1999) describes survivance as assertion of presence over oblivion and the perpetuation of stories that defy colonial erasure and present Native people as more than mere victims. Vizenor (1999) also underscores the metaphoric presence of animals in indigenous literature. Episodes of magical realism stem from Native American heritage and play a significant role in counterattacking simulated dominance and endowing a sustained Native presence. Traditional stories and spiritual beliefs can be employed to exemplify an active presence of Native culture. Survivance stories reject victimry and reclaim agency for Native Americans. Vizenor renounces the destructive stereotypes propagated by white anthropologists. These terminal creeds portray Native Americans as the vanishing Indian and the noble savage. Vizenor (1999) proclaims that contemporary postindian warriors ought to assert Native presence through acts of survivance.

4. Analysis

The analysis of Orange's *There There* strives to explain the ways in which historical trauma affects contemporary urban Natives and how they endeavour to make their presence visible in a world that is determined to erase them. The experiences of extermination and deprivation continue to influence the present. High illness and suicide rates among Native Americans can be attributed to past traumas. Each character in the novel is traumatized due to their Native background. Unemployment, alcoholism and depression collude to thwart their lives. The plot of *There There* underscores the private tribulations of individuals as well as the collective trauma that has been transmitted through generations. In the two non-fiction sections of the novel, Orange sheds light on the violent history of the Natives. The prologue and the interlude refer to the massacres of Native Americans at the hands of colonizers and their subsequent uprooting from their ancestral lands. Native Americans have since led the lives of outcasts in the mainstream American society.

The challenging structure of the novel affirms Orange's position as Vizenor's postindian warrior. Orange demonstrates resolute resistance by opening a work of fiction with an essay. The non-fiction prologue of the novel informs the readers about the background of Native Americans. Orange opens the novel with a prologue in order to contextualize the anxieties and traumas experienced by various characters in the novel. He relates the innumerable ways in which white Americans have targeted Native Americans. This persistent persecution means that the trauma has been passed on to subsequent generations. Contemporary Natives are dealing with the adverse effects of historical trauma. The prologue describes in detail the atrocities that have been committed against the Native Americans since the white colonizers arrived in North America in the fifteenth century. Besides being subjected to barbarities and brutalities at the hands of white settlers, Native Americans have also been victims of genocidal and systemic violence. The colonizers have attempted to dehumanize Native Americans and there have been persistent efforts to appropriate and erase their culture.

The narrator details the massacre of Native Americans by the colonists, who butchered and beheaded them and then mutilated and quartered their bodies. The narrator evokes the transmission of Indian Head test pattern on American television during the black-and-white era. The broadcast featured the illustration of a Native American's head in the midst of "circles that looked like sights through riflescopes" (p.1). "The Indian's head was just above the bull's-eye, like all you'd need to do was nod up in agreement to set the sights on the target. This was just a test" (p.1). The narrator relates the brutal murder of Chief Metacomet by Benjamin Church to depict the violence Native Americans have been subjected to at the hands of European colonizers: "Metacomet was beheaded and dismembered. Quartered. They tied his four body sections to nearby trees for the birds to pluck" (p.2).

The narrator demonstrates the barbarity of the colonists by narrating how thanksgivings were "celebrated by kicking the heads of Pequot people through the streets like soccer balls" (p.2). The narrator suggests that violence can be of many kinds. Besides the murder, massacre, and mutilation of Natives, white Americans have also partaken in the misrepresentation, alteration and commodification of Native stories. The narrator recounts a Cheyenne legend that relates the story of a man who discovered his wife's liaison with a water monster. He slaughtered and sliced both his wife and her lover, and served them as food to his children. During dinner, they found a head rolling into the house, and despite their best attempts to evade it, it kept trailing them in all places. The narrator addresses the depiction of Native rituals in Hollywood movies, citing the example of *Apocalypto*. White people have thus been employing Natives as "logos and mascots" (p.3).

The narrator negates the notion of "massacre as prologue" (p.5) and observes that the stories of ruthless violence faced by Natives still affect the lives of Native Americans today. Orange asserts that the pain and plight of modern-day Natives is the result of violence and genocide Native Americans have suffered in the past. They are enduring the consequences of a brutal history. White people have endeavoured to erase Native American culture and the relocation of Natives from reservations to urban locales is one crucial step in this project. The narrator asserts that the Natives have been defiant and resistant in the face of persecution. They have made the cities theirs and established a sense of kinship and community with one another. They have defeated white Americans' attempts to erase and eliminate their culture: "Being Indian has never been about returning to the land. The land is everywhere or nowhere" (p.7).

The narrator notes that the urban experience can be alienating for the Natives who have to acclimatize themselves to a life that has been orchestrated for them by the white Americans. They have to assimilate and accommodate in a world that is entirely alien to them. "Everything is new and doomed" (p.7). The narrator points out the alienation of Native culture from its origins as a result of forced relocation to reservations and then to urban locales: "Getting us to cities was supposed to be the final, necessary step in our assimilation, absorption, erasure, the completion of a five-hundred-year-old genocidal campaign. But the city made us new, and we made it ours (p.5). However, the Native Americans found solace in one another: "We found one another, started up Indian Centers, brought out our families and powwows, our dances, our songs, our beadwork (p.5).

When the white hipster Rob quotes Gertrude Stein's quotation about Oakland, Dene becomes infuriated because to him, Rob does not understand how the quote is relevant to Native American life. Gertrude Stein's quote acquires a new meaning when viewed through the perspective of Native American people. Their lands were violently usurped and they were deprived of their "there" forever. Rob is unable to understand Natives' pain and plight and is viewing Stein's quote from a superficial point of view: "Rob probably didn't look any further into the quote because he'd gotten what he wanted from it" (p. 28). Opal and Jacquie's mother takes them from their Oakland home to live with other Native Americans on the islands of Alcatraz: "We stayed on the island because there was no other choice" (p.42). This relocation is a reference to the factual occupation of Alcatraz Island by Native Americans as a protest against the treatment meted out to them across America. The island is devoid of supplies, food and electricity. They live in the cells of prison building as a means of protest against the metaphorical cells of contemporary American society. Most of the Indians, including Vicky, succumb to addiction and spend their time drinking on the island.

Alcoholism is a recurrent theme in the novel as Harvey remarks: "It's what we have to go to when it seems like we have nothing else left" (p. 84). Dene Oxendene lost his beloved uncle to alcoholism and Tony Loneman suffers from fetal alcohol syndrome since his mother refused to abstain from alcohol while she was pregnant with him. Jacquie resorts to alcohol in an attempt to escape the tragic experiences of her life. Thomas Frank suffers from a skin condition and finds refuge in drinking. He is traumatized by his mixed identity as he says to himself: "You're from a people who took and took and took and took. And from a people taken" (p.166). Thomas understands that substance abuse tore his family apart as all the family members resorted to substance and alcohol abuse. They are linked by trauma and escapism.

A large number of Native Americans have to battle the menaces of loneliness and isolation. Twelve-year-old Opal seeks solace and contends with loneliness by imagining long conversations with her teddy bear Two Shoes. Opal's conversations with Two Shoes demonstrate that she is merely replaying her conversations with her mother: "Why do I feel like Mom told us all this already?" (p.38) Opal's erratic mother is not able to give her the security and warmth she craves. Consequently, Opal seeks connection and comfort through Two Shoes. Edwin Black is an obese recluse who is addicted to the internet and social media. He remains isolated from the world and both his physical and mental health are in shambles. Edwin indulges in escapism and employs internet as a means to avoid facing the real world. He is so afraid of interacting with people that he stays caged inside his room at the cost of his health. Edwin struggles with a sense of belonging and questions his Native identity. Edwin has studied various tribes in Native American studies searching for clues about his own heritage. He is now aware of his tribal affiliation but still does not feel "Native enough" (p.53).

Loneman's mother is in prison and refuses to share the identity of his father with him. Consequently, he deals with severe loneliness and anger management issues. Loneman's cognizance of violence was acute even in his childhood games. The narrative he built during these games always involved "a battle, a betrayal, then a sacrifice" (p.226). Violence and domestic abuse constitute affect Native lives on a daily basis. Octavio's father died during an attack by the drug dealers on his house. Manny and Daniel's father abused their mother and one day Manny attacked him while defending his mother. They later violently removed him from the house (Orange, 2019). Mental illnesses are a result of historical trauma. Calvin Johnson's sister and mother both suffer from bipolar disorder. Opal's hypervigilance and reliance on "superstition she would never admit to" (p.121) also stem from past traumas.

The theme of the conference revolves around pain, trauma, and cyclical violence in Native communities. Jacquie's addiction to alcohol is a coping mechanism against past traumas. The first speaker at the conference discusses the afflictions facing Native youth comparing them to people trapped in burning buildings who have no option but to jump out. He says that these buildings have been set on fire by their community and ancestors (Orange, 2019). Powwows are meant to be a celebration of Native life, but they cannot be truly festive occasions as the wounds of genocide and trauma still linger and affect the Native life. The journeys of people making a pilgrimage to attend the Oakland Powwow represent "years, generations, lifetimes [...] beaded and sewn together, feathered, braided, blessed, and cursed" (p.103). The unnamed narrator in the interlude describes powwows as events that strengthen community by bringing Native people from all over America together and providing them with an opportunity to share their stories. The purpose of Powwows is to provide Natives with a place where they can hear each other and celebrate their customs and traditions: "We made powwows because we needed a place to be together. Something intertribal, something old" (p.103).

The narrator brings attention to the racism still experienced by the Native people and asserts that these problems will never disappear as a large number of people still benefit from structural discriminations. The narrator in the interlude reflects on the different ways in which "Native blood quantam" (p.104) has been employed for centuries to repress and persecute Native people. He compares the devastation and discrimination caused by colonialism to an unattended and untreated wound that has deteriorated and festered (Orange, 2019). Although Dene has devoted his life to help bring forth Native stories, when he turns the camera towards himself, he finds himself unable to utter a word. The weight of all the distressing stories has rendered him speechless and all he can offer to the camera is an "unflinching stare into the void of addiction and depravity" (p.184). He realizes that no response on his part can sum up the trauma he has witnessed.

The narrator treats the story of the novel as a cautionary tale about problems that afflict America, suggesting that they will lead to more trauma and bloodshed if they remain unaddressed. He describes the pain Native people experience when their suffering and trauma are minimized and dismissed. He details the systemic difficulties and disadvantages Native people face every day. He suggests that the ancestors of white people "directly benefited from genocide and/or slavery" (p. 105) and if they investigate their lineages, they will find them "paved with gold, or beset with traps" (p.105). The narrator suggests that the shooting is the

result of many unseen forces which include persecution, financial anxieties, and confused identities. He laments the tragedy of the shooting and comments, "The tragedy of it all will be unspeakable, the fact we've been fighting for decades to be recognized as a present-tense people, modern and relevant, alive, only to die in the grass wearing feathers" (p.107).

Native Americans assert their presence by covering their cars with stickers that proclaim: "We're Still Here"; "My Other Vehicle Is a War Pony"; and "Fighting Terrorism Since 1492" (p.103). Loneman reads stories to his grandmother in order to pay his gratitude to her for supporting and championing him. He appreciates the ability of stories to provide solace to people in troubling times. Thus, storytelling becomes a bonding experience for Tony and his grandmother. His grandmother comforts him by telling him that he is a "medicine person" (p.11). When he dons regalia for the first time, he forgets about his facial deformity and feels safe and connected to his roots: "The Drome. I didn't see it there. I saw an Indian. I saw a dancer" (p. 18). Thus, the only time Tony feels secure is when he has donned his traditional attire.

Dene takes up the all-important role of story-teller and weaves the disparate and dissimilar threads of Native American community residing in Oakland. He endeavours to become a lens for Native experience in Oakland by remaining on the sidelines and providing the urban Native Americans with a mouthpiece to speak for themselves. Dene explains to Orvil that telling stories can make a Native American youth like him "feel less alone" (p.91) and also aid in fortifying the Native community. Dene's project is about collecting stories from Native storytellers and paying them for sharing the traditional heritage. He wants to narrate "the Urban Indian story" (p.29) since he is repelled by the constant stereotyping of Natives in the media. He wants to bring visibility to what has "remained invisible" (p.29) for a long time. Dene believed his uncle Lucas to be a wonderful storyteller and was deeply affected by the discovery that his uncle was an incurable drunk. Dene is determined to preserve the Native experience even when it is distressing and painful. He films his grieving mother without providing her with privacy because he realizes that Native stories have to be told in their entirety even when they entail sorrow, trauma, and suffering. He also filmed his mother mourning Lucas' death despite feeling guilty about treating her callously during a difficult time. Dene explains to Orvil that telling stories can make a Native American youth like him "feel less alone" (p.91) and also aid in fortifying the Native community.

At the Big Oakland Powwow, Calvin informs Dene that he is unaware about his tribe since his father never addressed his Native identity. He does not identify with his tribal roots but feels a sense of belonging towards Oakland. Calvin tells Dene a story about the time he was robbed outside a powwow and could not attend the event. Calvin knows a lot of Native people who are unaware of their roots and heritage. Calvin himself is unaware about Native culture and history and confesses to not identifying with his Native identity. Calvin's cultural isolation and confusion are the reasons why he does not feel any guilt about betraying the Natives. Dene wants to depict Calvin's story as it is one of confused cultural identity and can resonate with a large number of Native Americans living in cities. Calvin's story can make urban Natives feel a sense of connection. Calvin's lack of access to stories like his has aggravated his sense of loneliness. Calvin's experience with being robbed and his plan to rob the powwow suggest that trauma and violence are recurring elements in the lives of Native Americans (Orange, 2019).

Two Shoes points out the significance of history and heritage by telling Opal how important it is to "know about the history of your people" (p.38). Although Octavio plots the powwow robbery, he has a Native heritage of her own and a strong connection to his family. Octavio's grandmother believes that he has been inflicted with a curse. She places a bowl of milk under his bed and lights a candle. She recollects the time her own father placed a braided lock of his hair under her bed in a bid to cast "some old Indian curse" (p. 131) on his pregnant teen daughter. Her abortion made her sick for a whole year. She was only cured after burying a badger fur at the western base of a cactus upon the instructions of her mother.

When Jacquie reveals her plans to abort Harvey's baby, Opal pleads with her to reconsider her decision. Jacquie is regretful about her pregnancy but Opal is adamant that they should honor and confront even the painful and distressing parts of their lives by

embracing their stories fully. She insists that the future baby is part of Jacquie's "story". Opal tells Jacquie: "One of the last things Mom said to me when we were over there, she said we shouldn't ever not tell our stories." Jacquie reminds Opal that the baby is not fictional, "It's not a story, Opal, this is real." To which Opal says, "It could be both" (p.45). Despite the fact that Bill is a minor character, Orange gives him his own point-of-view chapter. Orange's purpose is to bring visibility to the stories of people who are considered irrelevant and consequently, remain invisible in the society. Orange's depiction of Bill's disdain for Edwin suggests that even the people who are considered insignificant and irrelevant have feelings and significance of their own.

Spider legs occupy a significant position in Jacquie and Opal's family's lore. Veho is employed to assert Native traditions and thus reiterate survivance. Tattoos that cover Jacquie's body include spider webs on both her feet. Opal informs Jacquie that her grandson's Orvil has "found spider legs in his leg" (p.75) and that the boys think this indicates "something ndn" (p.75). Spider imagery is significant as spiders can represent both "home and trap" (p.75). Opal writes to Jacquie and confesses that as a girl, she had also encountered the phenomenon of spider legs. Orange renounces victimry and insists that Native Americans are not broken beyond repair: ".to have survived is no badge of honor" (p.104). Although Edwin leads a lonely and isolated life initially, his connection to his community and culture invigorate him. The survivance of these Native characters is testament to the fact they have never been destroyed or erased. Thomas Frank's inherent love of rhythm reflects cultural inheritances other than oppression, trauma and conflict. Even as a fetus, he "swam to the beat" (p.161).

Powwows are places where Native people express their heritage without shame and reservation. Orvil explains to Lony that powwows are meant to continue "old ways" (p.98) ensuring that the Natives remain connected to their roots. The powwow serves as a place of healing and reclaiming space as Orvil declares: "They're all feathers and movement. They're all one dance" (p.178). A man in the locker room refers to dancing as the only way an Indian man can express himself and urges first-time competitors to regard their dances as a kind of prayer: "That dance is your prayer. There's only one way for an Indian man to express himself. It's that dance that comes from all the way back there. All the way over there" (p. 177). As Tony Loneman dies, he hears the sound of a Cheyenne song and reflects on his memory of being taught Native dance, which is an expression of both pain and pride (Orange, 2019).

Attempts by white colonizers to relocate Native communities and erase their culture in the process mean that many Native Americans suffer from a lack of authentic identity. Native robbers are apathetic towards the powwow because they are unable to feel a sense of belonging there. When the shooting commences at the powwow, Opal is not surprised because she knows that her people can become targets of violence anywhere. She views the episode as another bead in a long string of trauma and persecution: "Did someone really come to get us here? Now?" (p.216)

5. Conclusion

The analysis of the novel *There There* by Tommy Orange demonstrates the impact of historical trauma on Native lives. Native Americans were subjected to mass massacres and deprived of their land and property. They were forcefully relocated first to reservations and then to cities in an effort to assimilate them and rob them of their culture. These events had a devastating impact not only on the Natives experiencing them but also the generations that followed. Contemporary urban Natives are confronting the violent legacy of their past and also striving to make their presence visible in a society that actively stifles and suffocates their voices and stories. The study reveals the devastating effect of trauma on four generations of urban Natives. Many of them resort to unhealthy coping mechanisms such as substance abuse, violence, and isolation. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart's theory of historical trauma accounts for the self-destructive behaviours exhibited by contemporary Native Americans. She asserts that the traumatization stems from the time Europeans colonized indigenous people and is exacerbated by the losses that continue to occur in Native American community. *There There* by Orange is analyzed employing the delineated conceptualization.

The novel portrays the trials and tribulations of modern-day Native Americans who are cognizant, sometimes unconsciously, of their alien status in a country that originally belongs to

them. Their stories are unheard and invisible. Their fears and uncertainties, due to the traumatic past of their community, lead to a prevailing sense of despondence and pessimism. The analysis of the novel confirms the existence of historical trauma within contemporary Native Americans. Orange's characters experience trauma due to the sufferings of their forefathers and the present-day oppression in the form of stereotyping and dismissal. Despite the brutalities of the past and the injustices of the present, urban Natives are endeavouring to stay connected to their roots and keep alive their stories and traditions. Their resilience, endurance and the zeal to survive in a ruthless environment is testament to their strength of character and perseverance. Through multiple Native American characters, Orange affirms Native presence in urban locales and emphasizes that Native culture is still vibrant and flourishing despite all the obstacles it has encountered over hundreds of years. Orange can thus be viewed a postindian warrior of survivance.

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