

POST-INDIAN SURVIVANCE: VIOLENCE AND METAPHORS IN ALEXIE'S *FLIGHT*

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Abstract

This research studies the theme of violence as enunciated through metaphors by Sherman Alexie in his novel Flight (2007). Alexie uses metaphors with a flow of his unlimited imagination to demonstrate the transformations of his protagonist. The novel chronicles the experiences of Zits, an adolescent boy with a problematic history, who assumes numerous identities embarking on a imaginative expedition in time. Alexie uses violence as a perspective to explore questions of identity, historical trauma and the potential of endurance and survival in Native American individuals and community. Flight serves as a poignant reminder of the profound repercussions of violence while simultaneously providing a strong ray of hope for the Native American communities. Gerald Vizenor, a profound Native American critic and novelist, emphasized the use of imagination to dismantle the imposed subjugation by Euro-Americans through false presentation of Native Americans as Indian. Vizenor's concept of survivance brings forth the unsubduable Native Americans character in facing social, cultural and historical violence. This research investigates Euro-Americans violence to create an absence of Native Americans. The post-Indian survivance of Native Americans enable them not to be seen as victims but as example of survivance.

Keywords: Violence, metaphors, post-Indian, survivance.

Introduction

Sherman Alexie, a well-known Native American poet, writer, novelist and film maker has raised voice for the Native Americans to counter the Euro-American maneuvering for creating Native Americans absence. His fiction asserts the Native American presence with the help of Native American characters and culture. Alexie's *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* (1993), *Reservation Blues* (1995), *Indian Killer* (1996), *The absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (2008) displays the themes of identity, culture, historical trauma, racism, poverty, clash of civilization and manipulations against the Native Americans by the Euro-Americans. In his works, Alexie becomes a mouth piece for all Native Americans who suffered violence and stood against the legacy of violence throughout their lives with the help of endurance and resilience. This article examines Alexie's *Flight* from a postmodernist perspective specifically through 'metaphors'. Alexie celebrates the glorious heritage and rich culture of Native Americans by incorporating reality and fantasy together.

Violence

Violence includes physical, emotional and mental subjugation, threats, harms, injury, destruction and death. Violence can be against an individual or against groups and communities. Violence has different types such as physical violence, verbal violence, social violence, socioeconomic violence, sexual violence and psychological violence. It can occur due to extreme aggression and frustration. In return it causes extreme

aggression and frustration as well. Violent behavior towards others diminishes the capacity of people to meet and respect the basic norms of society which may also result in assaults, fights, killings and genocides. Emotional Violence includes isolation, verbal abuse, economic abuse, coercion, threats and intimidation (Pence & Paymar, 1993). The National Congress of American Indians declared violence against Native American, particularly those on tribal land as the most critical issue faced by the Native American (Matanmonasa-Bannett, 2013). Violence begets violence the use of brutal force against any one and specially against the suppressed communities cannot be justified on any ground “Violence only for violence sake will never change the world for the better. Moreover, the justification of brute forces highlights the suppressed angle of native Americans” (Antharjanam, 2022, p.218). Native Americans have faced violence by the hands of Euro-Americans in different ways and in various dimensions such as enslavement and imprisonment in shape of reservations. Cultural violence suppresses moral values, traditions and indigenous languages. Historical violence leads to traumas and oppressions related to historical events, such as colonial history, “a definition of violence in a line or two is absurd as it covers multidimensional perspective. Further, violence involves a cultural tradition...violence acts as an indicator of how relationships develop between two persons, communities, societies, culture” (Chakraborty, 2018, p. 298). Gender-based violence is the negation of humanity and disturbs the structure of a society. Spiritual violence causes emotional traumas through desecration of sacred sites or by forcefully oppressing individuals to adopt the religion of the masters.

Theoretical Framework

Indispensable for contemporary cultural theory in Native American studies, Gerald Vizenor’s concepts of ‘post-Indian’ and ‘Survivance’ assert dynamic presence of Native Americans (Sarkowsky, p. 98). Vizenor’s work on the Ojibwa culture of Native Americans has changed the plots of Native stories and thus provided them new destinies. Vizenor’s term ‘Survivance’ coined in in *Manifest Manners* (1999) asserts Native presence against the cultural oppressions: “My narratives create a sense of survivance over manifest manners” (2008, p. 4). This sense of Survivance of post-Indians in Native American fiction deconstructs the ‘rhetoric’ of ‘Indianness.’ Vizenor’s survivance, “survival and endurance in a comic mode” (Lundquist, 2004) “deconstruct(s) the most destructive stereotypes of Native Americans created by the Euro-American imagination” (Pulitano, 2003, p.146). Native survivance is an active sense of presence over absence, “deracination and oblivion; survivance is the continuance of stories not a mere reaction” (Vizenor, 2008). He devised survivance as a liberating force of oral traditions. Survivance is “an active sense of presence, the continuance of native stories, not a mere reaction, or a survivable name, native survivance is renunciation of dominance, tragedy and victimry” (Vizenor 2008). Vizenor questions European enlightenment that views reality through scientific methods, a view diametrically opposed to Native perspective. This system dismantles other systems as inferior. Vizenor considers this scientificity unreal that constructed “Invented Indian” which is an absence based on simulations. Post-Indian survivance is the outcome of Natives’ reimagination of themselves through stories, a tool to deconstruct the stereotypes of Red Indian. It comprises cultural resilience and hybridity and stands against any essentialist definition of identity fixed by a foreign system. In *Ruins of Representation* (1993). Vizenor views Survivance as “Trickster

Liberation” (p.1). David Carlson (2011) links the term ‘survivance’ with “the act of being recognized” (p. 17). Survivance is “a presence that upsets and unravels discursive control over Native people” (Miles, 2011, p.41), or “a sense of Native presence over absence” (Vizenor, 1999, p. 40). Aware of the fact that the Euro-Americans are striving for the absence of the Native Americans from literary discourses, Vizenor questions the white idea that “[t]he Indian must disappear so that American can live” (Vizenor, 2008, p. 402). Post-Indian survivance results in the true character of Native American spirit of survivance. Post-Indian survivance ensures continuance of survival against any oppression. That is how a post-Indian warrior is born out of this difficult experience. The theoretical concepts of Vizenor and Owens suggest how the Native-Americans can save themselves from the suppression of the Euro-Americans that is still continued. With the remembrance of past stories Natives can gain strength by searching out their real identities. Post-Indian survivance comprises the “stories that mediate ... the literature of dominance” (Menon, 2018, p.163). They can recover themselves through their tales of survivance. Political and cultural dimension of survivance is that it initiates a repairing circle for the damage done to Native Americans by the Euro-Americans. Post-Indian Survivance creates a sense of presence through the practice of Native traditions, trickster hermeneutics and narrative resistance (Vizenor, 1999).

Literature Review

Native Americans have been facing violence by the hands of the Euro-Americans historically, socially, physically and psychologically. They have been subjected ruthlessly through the implementation of manifest manner “Manifest destiny would cause the death of millions of tribal people from massacres, disease and the loneliness of reservation. Entire culture has been terminated in the course of nationalism” (Vizenor, 1999, p.4). The presented history is full of lies and deceits by the Euro-Americans. They exerted their dominance and created simulations of dominance to sabotage the identity of Native Americans “these histories are now the simulations of dominance, and the causes of the conditions that have become manifest manners in literature” (Vizenor, 1999, p.4). Their violent acts were meant to create the absence of the Native Americans that is why in their pursuit of violence they created the ignorant Indian, “Simulations are the absence of the tribal real; the Post Indian conversion are in the new stories of survivance over dominance” (Vizenor, 1999, p.4). Native Americans are a reality, they cannot be ousted. Vizenor invented post-Indian identity to fight back the ignorant and invented Indian, “the Post Indian ousts the inventions with humor, new stories and the simulations of survivance: (Vizenor, 1999, p.5).

Metaphors are frequently used by various writers to forward idea in a language to bring forth meanings, “metaphors are persuasive in language, thought and action” (Vizenor, 2009, p.91). Metaphor further adds in our ordinary conceptual system. In terms of what we think and act is fundamentally metaphorical in nature and not merely matter of language (qtd George Lakoff, Vizenor, 2009). Metaphor helps to comprehend emotions and practices, “Metaphor is one of our most important tools for trying to comprehend partially what cannot be comprehended totally: our feelings, aesthetic experiences, moral practices and spiritual awareness (Vizenor, 2009, p.91). Native American writers have used metaphors to proclaim their presence and signification, “Metaphors create a sense of presence and natural reason... metaphors provide a more expansive sense of signification and literary survivance” (Vizenor,

2009, p.91-92). Metaphors are suggestive in nature, “metaphors is that figure of speech whereby we speak about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another” (Janet Martin Soskice, qtd, Vizenor, 2009, p.92). Metaphors are associated with the dynamics of survivance. They are able to create presence of the Native Americans. Silko has used metaphors “Leslie Silko encircles the readers with mythic witches, an ironic metaphor of survivance in ceremony” (Vizenor, 1999, p.93). Metaphors are used to subvert dominance and victimhood by the hand of the Euro-Americans. “the hard hearted witches invented white people in a competition, are distinctive metaphor that resist the simulative temptations of mere comparison of natives with the structural extremes of dominance and victimry (Vizenor, p.93). Metaphor acts as elements that construct meaning and enact reality. This relationship between thought and concepts creates a structure of perceptions and actions. This linking also suggests ‘transference of implicit meaning’ (Postma, 2015, p.50). Botha (2009, p.441) suggests that through metaphors we create a world through words which in return open ourselves to the world. Costandius (2007) points out a close relationship between metaphors and stories of African cultures. Cameron (2010) considers that metaphor is not only a stylistic device rather it acts like an instrument that provides meaning to literal categories. Metaphors of violence in *Flight* express continuous struggle of the Native Americans. The novel features disjointed, fragmented and nonlinear sequence of events. Alexie blurs reality with fiction and employs metafictional elements in the novel. Readers get engaged in its narrative structure due to its complexity and inter textuality. *Flight* explores different identities and reflects its postmodern preoccupation with fluid and multiple identities. Postmodernism makes the *Flight* a narrative which offers various perspectives and invite readers to question the established norms. In *Flight* metaphors examines colonization which shapes experience of violence. Metaphors of violence that perpetuates social and historical hierarchies. They help to explore the power dynamics related with violence against the Native Americans. *Flight* is about the experiences of Zits. *Flight* explores violence in the after math of 9/11. *Flight* is a narrative that shows dream and fantasy intermingled with reality. Aslam Yar *et al.*, (2022) points out the gruesome retaliation of hero against the society in *Flight*. Alexie, through symbolism has “restored the forgotten culture of indigenous” (p.286). Jahanavi Anand (2022) in Portrayal of Social Realism in Sherman Alexie’s *Flight* finds social realism, Anand considers that *Flight* is about psychological conflicts and violence, trauma and poverty of Native Americans resulting in violence and injustice. Zits transportation in different bodies of other people helps him to understand hatred and racism of history lurking around him. Ibarrola *et al.*, (2013) highlights the figurative journey of Zits that dig deep and shows the motives behind various conflicts.

Textual Analysis

In *Flight* use of metaphors reflects the true picture of hidden planted issues. Reference to ‘turbulent weather’ stands for internal turmoil and chaos in the emotional lives of characters. Metaphors of ‘eagle’ represent predatory nature of violence as well as the potential for transformation. ‘Gun’ serves as metaphor of destruction that is harmful for the surroundings. Even the ‘mirror’ becomes a metaphor of introspection and reflects inner violence that needs healing and reconciliation. ‘Fire’, stands for destruction but also shows potential for renewal and rebirth. ‘Stormy seas’ represent Zits mind, ‘thunderous’ thoughts of Zits describe the intensity of his inner violence,

‘biting cold wind’ acts as a metaphor that mirrors the challenges faced by various characters, the description of ‘scorched earth’ stands for devastation, and ‘poison words’ reflects verbal abuses. Metaphors also suggest instability within families. ‘Thorns of betrayal’ represent the pain of broken trust, ‘bruised souls’ and metaphor of ‘bone crushing pressure’ shows overwhelming of violent intensity of emotions. All the examples clearly show the demonstration of metaphorical language used in *Flight* that evokes various dimensions of violence.

Flight is a history of a common Native American, who is not a renowned philanthropist but a native American boy. His flights are basically different stories. These stories develop into more stories focusing on historical, social and psychological perspective. Vizenor and Owens both look forward to stories rooted in their culture. Owen looks for stories of middle-class working people. Vizenor looks for stories of Native Americans who experienced the white subjugation but never became a story of victimry (victimhood) but a story of survival embracing post-Indian survivance. Alexie never expounds on anything hallow, he wants to introduce how local individuals live in postmodern world. “Alexie explores the struggles to survive between the grinding plates of the Indian and white worlds” (Hossain, Sarker, 2016, p.389). The novel presents the picture of two worlds. Hossain quotes (Qurik,2023, p.3-10) “ Alexie asks three questions across all of his literally works: what does it mean to live as an Indian in this time? What does it mean to be an Indian man? What does it mean to live on an Indian reservation”. These questions are related with the existence of native Americans and the situations faced by them.

Violence in *Flight* is a narrative tool to examine identity and the potential of Native Americans in two-edged transformation. One transformation is the endurance of this violence which creates post Indian survivance. The second transformation takes place due to the potential of Native Americans through history to preserve their social, historical and cultural Native American identity. The novel commences with Zits on the verge of preparation of robbery in a bank. His body thrusts him into a sequence of temporal body exchanges. The initial grounding of the act of violence is a clear expression of Zits’ internal conflict, as well as a mirror of the violence that he has acquired from society and history. Alexie employs this particular incident not just to forward the storyline but also to dive into the depths of the character's mind. He evaluates how a recurring pattern of mistreatment and disregard has shaped Zits’ perspective of the world. Native children were treated like animals in the foster homes. The ‘White manners’ were not taught with love and respect rather kids were humiliated and were threatened as Zits’ foster father says, “And if you don’t return the favor you don’t get to eat breakfast” (*Flight*, 2007, p.15). As a reaction Zits’ reply in response to his “good morning” was “fuck you” (p.14). This state of affairs is very alarming. The hunger politics was brutally played in order to teach white manners to the native kids. This psychological state of affairs created a sense of dissatisfaction in Zits. He indulges in fist fights and visits Juvenile Jails. Zits wishes for getting a Television in his room but was deprived of it in all foster homes. The Trauma of Zits is identical with the trauma of Jhon Smith in Indian killer “who was taken away from his mother as a child and was placed into a white family...he experiences the feelings of rage and desires to kill white people” (Antharjanam, 2022, p.219). Alexie shows erasure of cultural heritage and suppression of cultural practices as strategies of Euro-Americans to create violence. Loss of language, loss of traditions and loss of culture

in the *Flight* shows the imposed psychological, cultural and social violence on the Natives. Through ‘Reservations’ and Indian Boarding schools Natives were forced to adopt assimilationist policies that inflict violence on Native communities. These techniques were meant to create as Vizenor calls it invented Indian. The purpose of Foster parents is only “to cash government cheques every month” (p.8). In the discussion between Zits and white boy named Justice, Zits claims, “Indians have never been free” (p.25) and the white boy adds that, “the only good Indians are dead Indians” (p.25). This discussion displays that Indians were never respected and accepted by the Euro-Americans and death is the only source of their presence state of affairs. This discussion also reflects the frontier zone where cultures meet. Frontier becomes a place to exert once presence according to Owens. *Flight* exposes the presence of racial prejudice, inequalities and discrimination which resulted in marginalization. Zits’ interaction and encounter with certain non-Native characters shows racial prejudice as a source of violence. Zits experiences and learns about the unforgiving attitude of the whites against the Natives. At once he remembers different violent situations. He sees historical incidents in different perspective and a Native war: “So, Custer’s Last Stand was really the Indians Last Stand” (p.70). Zits remembers that in the battle, “A white soldier cut my throat” (p.75). Zits experiences violence in reality and in his flights from domestic to historical. *Flight* poses different questions on violence as it is a never-ending game “Did they deserve to die because of my loneliness?” (p.77). Actually, Zits alluded to the fact that in the body of a thirteen year Indian whose throat was once slashed by white soldiers. Zits was directed by his father to take revenge. “He’s a child and I’m a child and I’m supposed to slash his throat” (p.78). Here Alexie exposes the theme of violence and connects it with revenge. Revenge is one of the greatest causes of violence. “I feel the need for revenge... or maybe I’m only feeling my need for revenge” (p.76). Revenge creates conflict: “All around me, Indian men ,women and children watch me. They all want revenge” (p.76). Thus, violence both physical and psychological harms the people. It is very difficult to answer violence in the form of violence. In this way flight creates a balance between human thinking, violence and revenge. Zits discusses plundering, mass killing and brutality. He witnessed the murder of a small girl by the Indian who attacked a white camp. Revenge is seen through the eyes of Zits which is deadly and uncontrollable. The whites wanted revenge without knowing any detail, the motives or real facts. The US Army knows only how to take revenge without keeping in mind their own hostilities. The circle of violence and revenge is very vicious and it is impossible to escape from the criminal acts. Zits on seeing the dead soldiers on Custer’s Hills comments, “I feel sick in my soul” (p.72). Zits as a Native American maintains his native compassion when he answers his internalized violence and revenge “I don’t kill anybody. But I ride with killers, so that makes me a killer” (p.90). A white kid named Justice shows Zits paint ‘ball gun’ and a ‘real gun’ as metaphors indicating violence and tells him to threaten people by exhibiting guns as a source of violence. “Real pistol” (p.32) shown to Zits by the white boy is a symbol of violence and death. Native Americans were shown swords at the arrival of Columbus and again in the present age weapons of violence and death were again re-introduced by the white world to them. ‘Zits’ on the face of the protagonist damages personality as he was hated by people due to the “zit shame” (p.4). This physical ugliness causes in Zits an emotional and psychological violence and he never developed confidence in the beautiful world around him. “Half breed Indian” (p.17) refers to the Indians who are never given the status and identity of a true Indian that is why as a reaction they

become the people, “ who can’t do anything but spit and kick and punch”(p.17). Zits suffer emotional violence. He tries to “punch” (p.18) his foster mom. In the backdrop of violence, Zits suffers from identity crises and questions his real identity. “I had never developed a sense of citizenship” (p.5). His journey provides him a chance of self-discovery. Zits occupies several bodies over different historical periods, he directly observes the brutality committed against Native Americans and other individuals. Zits, a young Indian kid during the Battle of Little Bighorn and later a FBI agent participating in the civil rights movement, encounters many manifestations of violence, assuming both the role of victim and perpetrator. These historical incidents highlight the enduring influence of violence by Native American societies, as well as how it develops both personal and collective consciousness. Alexie fearlessly portrays the harsh truths of these historical events and uses them to emphasize the profound wounds inflicted by violence on both individual and societal scale.

Violence committed by the double agents, Mr. Elk and Mr. Horse in connivance with the FBI agents is quite astonishing. Both conspired and murdered the young Native American freedom fighter “His hands are tied behind his back. His mouth is gagged and his body is bloody and beaten” (p.49). Junior, the Native young activist, was near death when he was brought before the FBI agents from the trunk of the car. Two fingers of his right hand were missing. He was tortured in a primitive manner. Zits never shot a person with gun The idea of the burial of junior as per Native traditions is quite disturbing as Mr. Elk and Mr. Horse presented him to the murderer and they were discussing how he needs to be buried. The brutal face of FBI for the Natives appears more disgusting when ‘Art’ asks Zits (Hank), who is in the body of the white agent to shoot again on the dead body of Junior. As a Native American, Zits never became a part of this brutality. He showed the native American approach against violence. He never yields to it and endures the whole episode. Violence creates inner conflicts also. Zits in the body of old veteran Indian Tracker experiences violence. Zits became a tracker against his own people. He tries to explore himself in this traumatic conditions. His inside stands in a conflict as he became a traitor for his own people. “You see , I try to get lost. I try to lead the soldiers astray. But it doesn’t work that way”(p.85). In this journey, Zits lost his control over his thoughts and memories when he was experiencing the body of old man Gus, the Indian tracker identify himself with the weak and oppressed people. Gus realized that revenge is nothing but an oppression. Gus found that violence should eventually be stopped. There should be an end to violence and “deadly blow of justice” (p.85). Justice on either side should not be based on blood shed “when you’re a time travelling mass murderer”(p.85). Transformation of Gus taught Zits the unending violence on women. The unnamed soldier smashes the gun on the skull of an Indian girl. His hands were burnt but he does not feel pain. He “keeps hitting her until his rifle breaks in half” (p.90). The soldier also slams his horse into an old woman time and again and rides over her body. *Flight* connects the presence of violence to the questions about one's sense of self. Zits, a teenager of mixed ancestry, experiences a sense of isolation from both his Native American and Irish origins, which plays a role in his initial tendency towards aggression. He is compelled to confront his shattered identity and get a more profound comprehension of his position within a continuum of history and violence with each episode of violence he faces. In the face of violence there are some peace lover soldiers. The white soldier tries to save the bow boy;“ It can’t be true , but it is

true”(p.93). In the transformational journey, Irish Gus was killed . The suicidal crash of Jimmy is psychologically violent behavior, resulting from his dissatisfied family life. Jimmy wants to be killed by his wife but she refuses to do so and finally Jimmy is unable to stand the psychological pressure of fraud and cheating towards his wife. It leads to his suicide. Zits also mocks that a bird was taken to the emergency and the health services for the bird were carried on but the Native Americans were deprived of these services. *Flight* portrays violence as an intrinsic and intimate urge for Zits, originating from a background of neglect, mistreatment and internal conflict. Psychological violence occurs due to loneliness, jealousy and unfulfilled desires. Many times, Zits wants to come back into his ugly body to get rid of the loneliness: “Maybe I never left my body at all” (p.158). Jealousy creates anger in him. Zits wishes to be loved by his mother as he finds love of mother and children in his journey, “did my mother love me like that?” (p.158). Desires of Zits to be loved by his mother remain unfulfilled and that is why he starts hating the people around him, “I hate him for being loved so well” (p.158). Zits was bound to come back from the transformational journey. He quits the dream of any other child. All such scenes create a web of inner tortures and violence due to dissatisfactory circumstances created by Euro-Americans. Zits experiences physical violence by the boyfriend of her aunt, who molested him. Her aunt was never ready to trust Zits. Zits shouted “my mommy” (p.160) but his aunt slapped and screamed on him. Zits suffered a lot but finally he endured, “I learned how to stop crying, I learned how to hide inside of myself” (p.161). This physical violence leads to emotional violence, “They hurt us inside”(p.56). Overall, this plight leads Zits towards maturity and awareness against evils. He learns about his own potential and survives in the face of death and destruction.

Flight demonstrates violence in the historical and colonial violence in the shape of massacres, displacement, loss of land, forced migrations, poverty, alcoholism, depressions, destruction and death. Zits’ time travelling experience shows ongoing legacy of violence in the Native American communities and tells the tales of truth to the entire world. Zits in this atmosphere of violence raises to self-discovery and instead of bloodshed he decides to follow the policy of forgiveness, “what do I do? I close my eyes” (p.78). As a post-Indian, Zits understands the violence and realizes that war would lead to nothing. He says, “revenge a circle inside of a circle inside of a circle?” (p.77). Zits declares that violence will lead nowhere. The white people never understand. There is no end to violence as at the end of the novel Zits says, “I know the world is still a cool and cruel place. I know that people will always go to war against each other” (p.180). But after the long *Flights* Zits believes that he will change himself and the society if given a chance. Violence has robbed the natives of their real identities. Zits finds his identity with his different experiences and transformations.

Alexie shows the strategies of resistance and survivance adopted by the Native American communities despite imposed violence upon them. Native Americans never let distress overpower them. Their culture and traditions are deeply rooted in their minds and blood. *Flight* shows cultural resilience of Native American communities. They use their spiritual practices and cultural heritage as a weapon against all malpractices against them. Indigenous people show resistance and struggle to maintain their culture in the face of violence. Zits by the end of *Flight* declares that native Indians hate violence: “Maybe you are not supposed to kill. No matter who

tells you to do this” (p.162). This vary step is post-Indian survivance. Zits undergoes a transformation of identity. Zits discovers that strength is gained through tolerance against discrimination and violence. Zits learns redemption after being cooled and violent. “I know children will always be targets... But I am beginning to think that I’ve been given a chance. I’m beginning to think I might get unlonely” (p.180). He as a post-Indian is ready to face the world. Zits’ exploration of these tumultuous incidents finally leads him to a profound learning of his own identity and his role in the world. He directly faces the anguish and distress experienced by his fellowmen. He starts to see the intricacy of human behavior and the profound ability of empathy and forgiveness to bring about change. The novel posits that harmonization with one’s past, regardless of its brutality or anguish, is imperative for individual recuperation and development. Zits encounters various events and learns about redemption and forgiveness. He learns reconciliation in suffering and endurance for survival. Zits understands the importance of community support for personal potential. Alexie through the character of Zits delve into various issues faced by Native Americans. “My punishment will not bring back the dead”(p.81). Zits learns the significance of forgiveness. This endurance is part of native American culture. The novel shows that only survival and endurance can disrupt the pattern of violence. The evolution of Zits across many temporal and spatial dimensions leads to a profound understanding of the essence of human existence and the immense influence of Native culture. Alexie argues that by recognizing our common humanity and renouncing violence can achieve healing and transformation. This thematic resolve is in accordance with theoretical viewpoints on restorative justice and the therapeutic power of storytelling, providing a positive alternative to the cycle of violence. Alexie challenges the notion of a stable and cohesive self by letting Zits travel through various bodies and historical periods. The fragmentation symbolizes the fragmented identities of Native American people as they navigate on the crossroads of the past and present. The story employs violence as a potent metaphor to illustrate the historical uprooting and cultural obliteration experienced by Native Americans. Every instance of violence that Zits observes or carries out in his various forms represents a different aspect of the struggle for survival and self-discovery in the presence of oppressive influences. Alexie employs a symbolic representation of violence to criticize the sanitized accounts of American history and draw attention to the enduring effects of colonialism on Native populations.

Conclusion

Flight unfolds endurance and survival of Native Americans in the face of violence. Zits experiences cyclical process of violence and shows the historical, societal and cultural context of Native communities. Euro-American’s invented Indian becomes post-Indian with the help of culture. Zits displays himself as an example of post-Indian survivance. He displays his endurance and survival in different situations and circumstances with his ability to withstand Euro-American subjugation. Alexie deconstructs the simple notion of violence though Zits. He discovers himself but confronts with his own violent impulses and questions his own identity. Zits the hero of Alexie’s *Flight* investigates road maps to come out of the official record that questions his identity. His healing is indicated through violence around him. He himself admits “Call me Zits ... my name isn’t important” (p.01). Journey of Zits with all inquiries, investigations, losses and gains represents the voyage of all homeless

Native Americans. A merciless pattern of ‘double crossing’, ‘humiliation’, ‘embarrassments’ finally taught him to defy the reality of brutality as it is grotesque. In *Flight* Sherman Alexie offers a sophisticated examination of violence, portraying it not just as a form of physical aggression but also as a manifestation of profound historical and personal manifest destiny for Native American by design. The novel offers a compelling analysis of the enduring impact of violence on Native Americans and the potential for achieving healing and peace. Alexie compels readers to confront the realities of violence and contemplate ways to develop empathy and compassion by intertwining Zits’ personal journey with significant historical events. Zits emerges as an example of post-Indian survivance in the violent experience of *Flight* through metaphors.

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