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Literary Rendition of Genocide in Cherokee Fiction

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English

By

Thir Bahadur Budhathoki

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Tribhuvan University

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

Thir Bahadur Budhathoki has completed his thesis entitled "Literary Rendition of Genocide in Cherokee Fiction" under my supervision. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva-voce.

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Prof. Dr. Beerendra Pandey

Supervisor

Date ……..

Tribhuvan University

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

M.Phil. Program in English

Central Department of English, Kirtipur,

Kathmandu, Nepal

This thesis entitled "Literary Rendition of Genocide in Cherokee Fiction" submitted to the M.Phil. Program in English, Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Thir Bahadur Budhathoki has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

_____ _____

Internal Examiner

_____ _____

External Examiner

_____

_____ _____

Head

_____ Central Department of

English TU, Kirtipur

Date : _____

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Abstract

This dissertation entitled “Literary Rendition of Genocide in Cherokee Fiction” is an exploration of the ways the two novels--*Pushing the Bear* and *Mountain Windsong*--delineate the harrowing experiences of the Cherokee removal process carried out in the second quarter of the nineteenth century was the result of both the federal government's obligation in the face of Georgia's claim over the Cherokee land as a matter of their sovereignty and the colonial mentality of the settlers of the European origin. This incident known as the Trail of Tears in American history is infamous for the violence, brutality, death, and colossal suffering of genocidal nature. Looking at the nature and gravity of the crimes committed in the process, the dissertation uses the concept of genocide as propounded by Raphael Lemkin and later endorsed and expanded by the UN Convention of 1948 as well as other genocide scholars who take genocide as the deliberate and systematic violence is perpetrated on a group of people primarily on the basis of their collective identity. Moreover, the concept of genocide is further discussed along the modernity-of-genocide thesis of Zygmunt Bauman that genocide is the by-product of the larger process of modernity and its components like nationalism, racism, bureaucratic rationalism, settler colonialism and its cohorts and the criticism of this thesis. In addition, a philosophical perspective on genocide that it is an evil act of atrocious nature embedded in the very nature of human being has provided a different point of view. With these concepts, the dissertation explores the representation of the genocidal acts of brutality, death, and inhuman suffering perpetrated on the Cherokees while being forcefully removed to the west of the Mississippi. By portraying such acts of cruelty and atrocity, *Pushing the Bear* and *Mountain Windsong* have not only represented their traumatic past and foregrounded the evils from the victims’ point of view but they have once again broken the silence about what these texts see as Native American holocaust.

Contents

Chapter One

Trail of Tears as Genocide

The Trail of Tears refers to the relocation process of Native American nations from the southeastern parts of the present-day United States to the Indian Territory that lies in the eastern parts of present-day Oklahoma. This removal process carried out by the US federal government is one of the most infamous episodes in the US history because it caused massive violence, suffering and death of a large number of Native who were made to march along some one thousand mile long trail during the cold winter with inadequate supply of food, clothes and other provisions. Although there are conflicting figures of total casualty, it is widely accepted that thousands of people belonging to the tribes like Choctaw, Chickasaws, Seminoles, Creek, and Cherokees. Although the removal process formally began when the Indian Removal Act was passed by the US Congress in 1830, a large group of Cherokee under the leadership of John Ross decided to resist the removal and continued to live in their territory. In 1838 they were forcibly removed from their homeland to the Indian territory in west of the Mississippi as per the provisions of the 1835 Treaty of New Echota signed by a group of Cherokee leaders—Major Ridge, John Ridge, and Elias Boudinot even though majority of Cherokees stood against it. This particular process of forceful removal tuned out to be highly catastrophic in which out of some 13000 Cherokees rounded up, more than 4000 died. Worse, the survivors were left blatantly bruised both physically and emotionally. The two novels *Mountain Windsong* (1992) by Robert Conley and *Pushing the Bear* (1996) by Diane Glancy have made fictional representation of this harrowing event of the Cherokee removal which is genocidal in nature.

Genocide generally means an intentional obliteration of a human group, normally an ethnic or religious minority. The dissertation, through an in-depth engagement with the problematic of genocidal violence, arrives at an ethical denunciation of the extermination which takes place in the form of deed—a postulation under which the literature of genocide concerning the Native Americans will be studied. The texts to be analyzed are Robert Conley's *Mountain Windsong* and Diane Glancy's *Pushing the Bear* .The dissertation seeks to examine the literary renditions of the Cherokee Trail of Tears in Conley and Glancy as American holocaust. These native writers, the dissertation claims, while representing the genocidal acts committed against the Native Americans, foreground the complicity of the Euro-Americans in the legacy of death and destruction of mammoth proportions. The Euro-American culture, the politics of settler colonialism, and the legal battle between the federal government and the state government of Georgia over the issue of sovereignty of Indian nations like Cherokee together created a complicated situation in which the mass exodus of the Native Americans was carried out. Unfortunately, this process turned out to be so cruel and inhuman that it is also referred to as a Native American holocaust, the ethical denunciation and traumatic representation of which parallels the excesses of Nazi harassment of the Jews.

Diane Glancy's *Pushing the Bear* travels chronologically through each month and location along the Trail of Tears. Glancy taps into an emotional and horrific yet historically accurate account of what many now refer to as American Indian genocide. Amy J. Elias's 1999 essay on the interpretation of the novel from the perspective of Coyote aesthetics, according to which the trickster aesthetics in *Pushing the Bear* is comparable to a concurrent Native deconstruction of speech/writing oppositions. She argues that towards the end of the novel, the opposition between the landscape

(natural word as spoken language) and writing become quite clear. When Cherokee finally reach Indian Territory at the conclusion of the novel, Knobowtee, after remembering the reflection of the trees in the water on the bank of a creek in North Carolina, wonders if the trees also mean something about words. He goes on to say that the spoken words are the real trees and that the written words are merely their reflection in the creek and lambasts writing as treachery, which the U.S. government has turned to serve its genocidal ends. According to Elias:

> Glancy's novel illustrates the significant difference between fragmentation as a formal technique in Anglo-European modernism and in contemporary Native American literature. Glancy's writing, and in particular her historical novel *Pushing the Bear*, in fact constructs a "coyote aesthetics," a narrative technique of fragmentation that both recuperates a living oral literary tradition based in non-European tropes and serves a specifically Native American postcolonial agenda. For a Native American historical novelist such as Glancy: coyote aesthetics would enable a retelling of history that would disrupt history--that is, reinscribe a sense of Native time into the European metanarrative of history itself. (191)

Thus, Elias looks at the novel from the point of view of narrative technique the writer has used. Instead of using the traditional narrative structure based on linearity and an authoritative narrative voice, Glancy has used the Native American resource of oral tradition embedded in the mythical figure of Coyote, a trickster who is ambiguous, anomalous, and polyvalent: the one that crosses between the borders of binary oppositions; and a collective narrative voice.

Moreover, Valerie Miner looks at some of the heart-warming episodes of the otherwise depressing saga of cruelty and human suffering. She believes that the whole process of Cherokee relocation in spite of being a harrowing experience of death and destruction served as an opportunity of soul searching and strengthening their ethnic solidarity, collectivity, and most importantly the universal bond of humanity. As she puts:

> Ironically, the arduous journey of displacement serves to renew the Cherokees' appreciation for the individual within the community and the community within the individual. In leaving their land behind, they come to recognize not only what they have lost, but what they still have in one another. When Maritole's milk dries up, another woman feeds her baby. Other generosities are less crucial, more spontaneous. (13)

Such spontaneous acts of kindness and concern not only show a strong sense of humanity and interdependence, but they also indicate an indomitable human spirit to find the ways to face hardships and challenges even in a most unfavorable circumstance.

Likewise, analyzing Robert Conley's *Mountain Windsong* and Wallace's *The Long Bitter Trail*, Beerendra Pandey, deals with the use of historiographic irony in these two texts and notes the references to genocidal moments in aside remarks. According to him, the novel like *Mountain Windsong* and other historical study of the Cherokee removal " imagine and emplot the stories they tell—stories that inherently and ironically mix fiction and facts in order to critique, among other things, an authoritative Western versions of history" (57). In addition, Howard Meredith observes the traditional Cherokee tradition and the way they perceived the world in

their culture to be an inseparable entity of the structure of the novel and the pattern of their traumatic experience of relocation in the following words:

> *Mountain Windsong* is an affirmation of traditional Oconeechee and Cherokee perceptions of order in the world as well as of ways of knowledge and power. Conley provides a changing form, the modern American Indian novel. His power as a writer comes where and when he loosens his strictures in writing fiction in keeping with styles and concerns of other contemporary American authors. The native cultures' long-standing relationship with the landscapes of this continent provides a logic of patterned endurance. In this novel it is clearly expressed that songs hold the world together. (868)

Meredith calls *Mountain Windsong* a modern American Indian novel that maintains a delicate balance between the important aspects of Cherokee tradition and current trends of fiction writing in the United States. He has praised the symbiosis of the American landscape and the experiences of the native dwellers reflected in the novel.

Finally, Mary C. Churchill also highlights the positive sides of this disturbing tale of separation, suffering, and degradation of humanity. She relates the multiple voices used in the novel to the characteristic of mutuality and coexistence found in Cherokee lifestyle and world view, and their expression in the novel. As she postulates:

> Through the variety of voices Conley employs, we come to realize the role of coexistence in the novel and in Cherokee life in general--the coexistence of Cherokees in two geographic areas, of Anglo and Cherokee versions of history, and of written and oral means of remembering. While the novel can be appreciated simply as a love

> story between a man and a woman, it suggests deeper questions about the love of a people for their homelands and the bonds maintained among a people of two fires. (131)

Churchill looks into the multiple narrative voices of the novel which, in her view, are analogous to the very existence of the Cherokees in different spatial and temporal zones, and duality of oral and written traditions.

As these reviews of literature show, there is no full-fledged treatment of genocide in the texts this dissertation seeks to analyze. Therefore, this dissertation claims that despite the presence of positive and heart-warming episodes and experiences of cooperation, generosity, mutual understanding, and genuinely human and ideal feelings of love, forgiveness and fraternity, these novels are the testimonies of the atrocities of genocidal nature perpetrated to the Native Americans, the Cherokees in particular, and the episodes and experiences mentioned above by Churchill are there as a part and parcel of the literature of genocide and trauma which, while foregrounding the extreme acts of inhumanity, does not write off the possibility of genuine human feelings, responses and initiations that resist and survive even the worst form of genocide like the Holocaust.

Chapter one being the introduction establishes a claim that the Trail of Tears—the relocation process of the Native Americans, the Cherokees in particular, in which a large number of Cherokees lost their lives and thousands others who survived the long cruel march had to go through the trauma and disorientation of being displaced in an alien land, is a genocidal act. In the second chapter of the dissertation concepts modernity, genocide, and evil and their interrelationship are discussed to see how the term as well as the concept of genocide came into existence, how genocide is different from other crimes and murders, and in what ways the process of modernity

and genocide are interrelated. The chapter also discusses the crimes like genocide as evil inherent in human nature and various ways of dealing and living with it.

In the third chapter textual analyses of the novel *Mountain Windsong* is offered in which the relocation process of the Cherokees is represented with a combination of fictional narrative and historical details and the heart rending tale of the characters like Oconeechee and Waguli narrated by LeRoy, the narrator to whom it was told by his grandfather exemplifies a typical Indian oral tradition and at the same time it delineates the horrible experience of human suffering--the separation of two lovers Waguli and Oconeechee, countless deaths and some of the worst forms of human suffering and brutality that the Cherokees had to go through clearly show that the crimes mentioned in the novel are of genocidal nature.

Likewise, in chapter four another novel of the Trail of Tears *Pushing the Bear* is analyzed with the focus on the atrocities of the same Cherokee removal campaign portrayed through the touching account of the trials and tribulations faced by the characters like Maritole and Knobowtee and the harrowing details of violence, deaths, and suffering of an epic scale in the form of multiple narrative voices that look like the testimonies of the people who went through it. Although the novel, like *Mountain Windsong*, ends in reconciliation and indicates a strong possibility of the ultimate triumph of humanity, the whole narrative is a disturbing tale of violence, torture, death and immense suffering the Cherokees as a group had to go through is analogous to the suffering of the Jews in the hands of the Nazi.

Thus, focusing on the genocidal nature of the Cherokee relocation process, the analyses of these two novels in the light of the widely accepted notion of genocide, the concept of genocide-modernity nexus, and the philosophical notion of genocide as an evil of worst form, the dissertation reaches a conclusion that the forceful

relocation of the Cherokee that resulted in the death of more than four thousand people (some estimates say more than ten thousand died) and suffering of thousands of others was a genocidal act about which the official history of the United States has observed an awkward silence. So the writers have attempted a literary rendition of these acts of genocide in the novels by creating fictional characters that resemble the real people in many ways, by using factual details of atrocity, real locales and names of people, and by juxtaposing the authentic historical documents with the narrative strands of the novels. In doing so, the writers have raised the issue of Native American carnage and have also foregrounded the traumatic experiences of the victims whose voices are not always heard in the public. Finally, the dissertation concludes with the reiteration of the claim that the Cherokee removal process is indeed Native American genocide.

Chapter Two

Genocide, Modernity, and Evil

The term "genocide" as such was first introduced by Raphael Lemkin (1900-59)—a Polish-Jewish jurist, a refugee from Nazi-occupied Europe. After a several-year-long effort, Lemkin settled on a neologism with both Greek and Latin roots: the Greek "genos" meaning race or tribe and the Latin "cide" meaning killing. Lemkin defined genocide in following words:

> By "genocide" we mean the destruction of a nation or an ethnic group […] Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations. (qtd. in Jones 10)

Lemkin defines genocide as the intentional destruction of national groups on the basis of their collective identity. For him, a most important question was the manner in which such campaign of destruction is conducted. If the campaign is deliberately and systematically arranged and executed, it is considered genocidal even if it does not result in the physical destruction of all or any member of a group.

However, Lemkin's emphasis on the collective identity rather than political group or social class as a defining characteristic of genocide has drawn some critical comments. Stephen Holmes, a US law professor wonders how Lemkin believes that "killing a hundred thousand people of a single ethnicity was very different from killing a hundred thousand people of mixed ethnicities" (qtd. in Jones 12). But Adam Jones defends Lemkin's emphasis on the collective as a target to be a correct reading of the history of the twentieth century's violence in which "[t]he link between

collective and mass, then between mass and large-scale extermination was the defining dynamic" (12). He offers the examples of the Nazi assault on Jews, Poles and Polish Jews for what they were to justify this claim.

Lemkin's concept and definition of genocide got further momentum in 1948 when the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide (1948) entrenched genocide in international and domestic laws. The UN Convention defined genocide as the "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group" and it also adopted a relatively more flexible stance that genocide is a crime "whether committed in time of peace or in time of war." This definition included the acts like killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing measures intended to prevent births within a group, forcibly transferring the children of one group to another group. According to the Convention, the acts namely genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, attempt to commit genocide, complicity in genocide are all punishable.

With the inclusion of genocide in the UN Convention, Lemkin's conviction that the genocide must be confronted regardless of the context was endorsed and the basic thrust of his emphasis on ethnic and national groups as genocide victims also survived well. However, the drafters didn't bother to define the terms like "national", "ethnical", and "racial" or "religious" groups precisely and thus such terms remained open to interpretations. Later, Rwanda tribunal (ICTR) came up with a definition of the group as "any stable and permanent group" (Jones 13).

The term genocide was not used so much in between the years of 1950s and 1980s. According to Adam Jones, public interest in genocide significantly grew in the

1990s resulting in to the growth of genocide studies as an academic field that "has spawned a profusion of humanistic and social-scientific studies, joined by memoirs and oral histories" (Jones 15). As a result a number of scholarly definitions have come to the surface, and this reflects the ambiguities inherent in Genocide Conventions and debates that surround it. However, the definitions of genocide can be divided in to two broad categories—harder and softer positions. According to Christopher Rudolph:

> Those who favor hard law in international legal regimes argue that it enhances deterrence and enforcement by signaling credible commitments, constraining self-serving auto-interpretation of rules, and maximizing 'compliance pull' through increased legitimacy. Those who favor soft law argue that it facilitates compromise, reduces contracting costs, and allows for learning and change in the process of institutional development. (659)

People supporting hard-law approach to genocide believe that the term 'genocide' should not be used carelessly because it might turn to be banal where as the ones favoring soft position fear that the rigidity in definition may exclude a host of cases that deserve genuine consideration. However, all the scholarly definitions address some common aspects of genocide such as agents, victims, goals, scale, strategies and intent.

Adam Jones "adopt[s] a generally soft and inclusive rather than hard and restrictive definition of genocide" (22). He has adopted a liberal attitude towards the definitions of intent, agents, strategies, and victim group. But he is more particular about genocidal strategy and considers "mass killing to be definitional to genocide" and subsequently arrives at a new definition of genocide (22). According to Jones genocide is "the actualization of the intent however successfully carried out to murder

in whole or in substantial part any national, ethnic, racial, religious, political, social, gender or economic group, as these groups are defined by the perpetrator, by whatever means" (22).

From these observations, some common points of genocide come to the surface. Basically, genocide is a deliberate destruction of a particular group, which in most cases is a minority, of people who are often defined by the perpetrators themselves. Although the supporters of softer positions tend to be more inclusive towards the cases in which no mass killing is involved, genocide, I believe, is basically about the deliberate killing of a group of people –a group defined on the bases of ethnicity, religion, culture, caste, class or political belief and ideology. However, the strategies of killing may be different: direct persecution, torture, forceful displacement, etc. Likewise, the agents of genocide are always the ones who have some form of power and authority—state itself or other group/s backed by the state—to exercise over the weak and the vulnerable. The Cherokee removal process as represented in the two novels analyzed in this dissertation abounds with the graphic details of violence, torture, suffering, and deaths of the Cherokees in the hand of the American government is genocidal in nature.

In the modern era genocides of indigenous peoples have become an important area of genocide scholarship. At the center of it lies the impact of European invasion upon diverse indigenous peoples from Americas through Africa to Australia. But in order to understand this, we must have an acceptable definition of indigenous people. However, the task is not as easy as it may sound to be. According to a 1987 UN report by Jose Martinez Cobo:

> Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that

> developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the society now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve , develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems. (qtd. in Niezen 20)

From this definition, it seems that 'indigenous' peoples are inseparable from the process of colonialism and imperialism which consigned the previously dominant population of a colonized territory to a marginal status.

There is always "a nexus of indigenous identity and structural subordination" which as Jones puts "is generally held to persist today" (68). Exploring such nexus between the indigenous people and their systematic victimization and subordination as the inferior or the unworthy, Jones further says "the destiny of indigenous people in the Americas and worldwide cannot be understood without reference to the linked institutions of imperialism and colonialism [. . .]" (68). When we look into the institutional structures of imperialism and colonialism, it is found that the natives are considered to be the uncivilized ones who are unable to make best use of the resources they have. With such excuses and justifications European colonizers decided to shoulder the responsibility of utilizing the resources for which the incapable natives had to be displaced by the so called civilized and industrious white folks. And in most cases this process turned to be genocidal. It is one of the important reasons behind the Cherokee removal. Jones is right in his observation that the "policies of extermination and/or exploitation unto death were most pronounced in areas where Europeans sought to conquer and settle indigenous territories" (68). In

due course of such materialistic pursuits, according to Sven Lindqvist, "[g]enocide began to be regarded as the inevitable byproduct of progress" (123).

Since genocidal acts are perhaps the most serious evils modern people are bound to live with, it is no longer possible to view genocide just as somebody else's problem. Instead, it is something embedded in humanity. Claudia Card, in her book *The Atrocity Paradigm: A Theory of Evil* (2002) has developed a secular theory of evil which steps out from traditional models of theological and metaphysical theories. Card has developed a concept of evil in light of the historical experiences and as an important moral paradigm that can describe a specific kind of human action. She believes that evil cannot be defined in abstract terms because such concepts require interpretation and concrete examples. Neither wrongdoing nor suffering alone is sufficient to conceptualize something as evil. So both agency and suffering are equally important as emphasizing one over the other often leads to distortion. She has defined evil as "a harm that is reasonably foreseeable culpably inflicted and that deprives, or seriously risk depriving others of the basics that are necessary to make a life possible and tolerable or decent (or make a death decent)" (16). Unlike her predecessors who emphasized more on agency or intention of the perpetrator, Card gives equal (or even more) emphasis to suffering or the experience of the victim because regardless of what the perpetrator thinks, it is the suffering that really matters in making an act evil. According to Card, we do not need to know the perpetrator's mind to recognize the suffering produced. However, it does not mean that culpability is not totally disregarded even though "harm is what is most salient [in] defining atrocities" (9).

Unlike Raphael Lemkin who coined the term genocide to talk about the war crimes, Claudia Card in her essay "Genocide and Social Death", Card says that

"genocide need not be part of war, although it commonly is. But it can be regarded as itself a kind of one-sided war" (65) She further adds, "if genocide is war, it is a profoundly unjust kind of war, perniciously unjust, an injustice that is also evil" (65). By distinguishing genocide, as a serious evil called atrocity, from other forms of injustice and wrongdoings, Card further elaborates on the concept:

> Genocide is not simply unjust (although it certainly is unjust); it is also evil. It characteristically includes the one-sided killing of defenseless civilians—babies, children, the elderly, the sick, the disabled, and the injured of both genders along with their usually female caretakers—simply on the basis of their national, religious, ethnic, or political identity. It targets people on the basis of what they are rather than on the basis of what they have done, what they might do, even what they are capable of doing. (72)

This definition befits the relocation process of the Native Americans, particularly of the Cherokees, who were denied basic dignity and rights of human beings when the white Americans perpetrated brutal acts of violence and humiliation to chase them away from their native soil to the west of the Mississippi river, also called the Indian Territory. They had to bear a long process of intimidation, threats, violent wars, and finally the cruel and infamous Trail of Tears which resulted in the suffering and death of the natives at mammoth scale.

Although the term genocide was coined about a century after the acts of removing the Native Americans, these acts are also viewed as the atrocities of the genocidal nature. While it is very difficult to find consensus among scholars in the use of the term genocide in Native American context, it is needless to say that the atrocity of the removal process was a deliberately planned campaign orchestrated with the

view of eliminating the collective identity and existence of the native groups who, according to the perpetrators, did not fit the mold of their civilization. Consequently, a well-coordinated plan to get rid of such 'unworthy savages' was executed as an organized campaign to remove the Indians living in the territories east of the Mississippi by using both fair and foul means.

In the recent decades, after the 1980s, a group of sociologists broke away from the tradition of their fraternity to a neutral position by maintaining sufficient distance from the political issues of human condition and accepted genocide as the subject of their study. Such sociological perspective of genocide studies backs the claim that every act of genocide is a systematic and deliberate rather than coincidental. In doing so, sociologist like Zygmunt Bauman argues that there is something in modernity that is definitional to genocide. Considering the Holocaust as the representative case of genocide Bauman argues that even if the "modern civilization was not the Holocaust's sufficient condition; it was, however, most certainly its necessary condition. Without it, the Holocaust would be unthinkable" (13). He strongly believes that modernity became instrumental to the acts of genocide orchestrated across the world as the process of modernization took diverse course. Commenting on the modernity-genocide nexus, Adam Jones argues that Bauman's claim "revolved around four core features of modernity: nationalism, scientific racism, technological complexity, and bureaucratic rationalization" (289). And these features of modernity are found at work in the process of the relocation of the Native Americans, the Cherokees in particular, and the subsequent violence, death and suffering it caused.

Analyzing the concept of genocide further, Zygmunt Bauman in *Life in Fragments* claims that "[t]he modern era had been founded on genocide, and proceeded through more genocide" (qtd. in Marshman 75). According to Sophia

Marshman, departing from the common tendency of treating genocide "in sharp opposition to our civilized, humane, modern world", Bauman has pointed out "the uncomfortable truth that genocide and modernity were actually far from uneasy bedfellows" (75). In his view, genocide is neither an extremity nor any form of abnormality, but instead it is embedded in the modern civilization itself. Using a metaphorical expression, Bauman compares the image of the Holocaust with "a picture on the wall: neatly framed, to set the painting apart from the wallpaper and emphasize how different it was from the rest of the furnishings" (qtd. in Marshman 76). Sophia Marshman further argues that Bauman has "urged us to accept the genocidal potential of the 'ordinary' citizens of modernity" (77). She fears the fact that "we live in a type of society that made the Holocaust possible and that contained nothing which could stop the Holocaust from happening" (77). She argues that Holocaust is closer to our day to day activities of a modern industrialized society and not an exception. Thus, a parallel can be drawn between the process of producing goods in a factory and the process of systematic execution of the Jews in different concentration camps across Europe. It is very likely that "we shun the rational, 'everyday' aspects of the Holocaust because they reveal that Holocaust stands closer to us than we would like to think" (Marshman 77).

Bauman's thesis of modernity-genocide nexus is based on the four important aspects of modernity: nationalism, scientific racism, technological complexity, and bureaucratic rationalization. Nationalism, as a modern concept, is divisive by nature because it divides people into "we" and "others". Once people begin to have the notion of collective identity as a nation, they distance themselves from the groups they do not identify with. Worse, "the world tightly packed with nations and nation-states abhor non-national void" (Bauman 53). The sense of American nationalism

primarily comprised of European settlers who were committed to achieve their dream of material prosperity and to them the fertile land, favorable climate, and abundant resources in the east of Mississippi river were more important than any other things. They did not care about the fate of the Natives who had toiled there for generations to achieve what they had.

Likewise, scientific racism as another important feature of modernity has been equally pivotal to the genocidal acts and the Native Americans' relocation is no exception. Bauman considers racism to be "a modern phenomenon" that intensified "traditional, inter-communal antipathies with a veneer of scientific rationality and medical pathology" (61). In such situation, as Bauman posits, "[t]he only adequate solution to the problems posited by the racist world view is a total uncompromising isolation of the pathogenic and infectious race—the source of disease and contamination—through its complete spatial separation or physical destruction" (76).

Besides these four aspects of modernity, its other defining values like utilitarianism, commercialism, materialism are also intertwined in the process of settler colonialism, and these values are best personified in Andrew Jackson—the main architect of the Indian relocation plan. His personal view of the Natives went through a slow process of change over a period of time. As a land speculator, politician, and militia commander, his was very much critical of them. To him, as Anthony F.C. Wallace puts, "[t]he Indians were savage, cruel, bloodthirsty, cannibalistic butchers of innocent white women and children, and should be driven into submission or extinction" (54). It is a good example of a common tendency of portraying "others" in a negative light. Later, when he had to deal with Indians in the postwar land-cession treaties, he developed a new rhetoric that "the Native Americans were now a conquered and dependent people" and the government must "save them

from imminent extinction by removing them to the west far from the white settlements and of course in the process acquiring their lands" (55). Thus, Jackson never talked about exterminating Indians or using force to remove them. But, as Wallace says, he was clever enough to devise "conditions that would make those who chose not to remove so miserable that they would emigrate eventually anyway" (56). Here it is important to note that genocide is not just about killing people directly; it is also about creating the situation for it.

The process of Indian removal got intensified when The Indian Removal Act of 1830 was passed by Congress and signed by President Andrew Jackson. However, the efforts to remove the Indians had continuously been made much before the Act was passed, and Andrew Jackson was central to this process. As a commissioner to deal with the Southern Indians to begin the process of their removal, Jackson and "his fellow commissioners persuaded the tribes by fair means or foul, to sell to the United States a major portion of their lands in the south east" that included "a fifth of Georgia, half of Mississippi, and most of the land area of Alabama" (Wallace 4). Jackson also had his own financial interest in the purchase of some of the lands as he wanted to make profit out of them. Nevertheless, Jackson was but a representative figure of the common tendency of usurping the native territories and resources for financial gain—a tendency that defines settler colonialism and its genocidal consequences that often resulted into.

According to Wallace, "the source of his own and others' land hunger lay in larger process of economic change" that was taking place across Europe and the northern part of the United States where "industrial revolution was underway" and the hitherto unexploited resources of the territories occupied by the Natives were of great economic value. Likewise, there was growing demand for British cotton goods all

over the world because of which "the demand for American cotton was voracious" (Wallace 7). Because of such financial prospects, the removal process got intensified in such a callous manner that "the consequences of the trans-Mississippi removal of the Southern Indians, and to a lesser extent of the Northern Indians as well, were momentous" (Wallace 11). Millions of acres of fertile land were acquired in the process and it was sold at little or no profit at all with the view of expanding cotton industry. But "for the Native Americans who were relocated in the Indian territory, the removal was of course an immediate disaster, costly in lives and wealth" (Wallace 11).

In fact, the relocation process turned out to be such a disaster that never really ended. The US government continued to buy the Native American lands and relocate them in the so called Indian Territory west of the Mississippi—an area that was "a vast, poverty-stricken concentration camp for dispossessed Native Americans administered by a federal bureaucracy" (Wallace 11). In comparison to the original settlement of the Indians in which all the provisions for livelihood were available, the new settlement in the west of the Mississippi was so rudimentary and hostile to the new settlers that many Indians who had survived the hardships of the Trail of Tears died in the camps due to hunger, exposure, and diseases. The scale and intensity of suffering was such that it should have been an important part in the history of the evolution of the United States as a nation. But in the US history of the 19th century, as Wallace says, "the native Americans only appear briefly as tiny blips on the screen" and they are portrayed as "unfriendly but fortunately feeble opponents of the manifest destiny that Jackson and his colleagues worked so ardently to fulfill, scarcely slowing the inevitable march of the redeemer nation to the pacific" (11).

The callousness and cruelty displayed by the white intruders in their treatment of the natives can be understood from Zygmunt Bauman's discussion of the process of dehumanizing the victims by describing them as useless "weeds" or "unworthy" lives and thereby making them stand "at a conceptual distance from the rest of the society" (77). Once they are given a tag of unworthy others, any form of atrocity perpetrated upon them can be justified saying that they just deserve what they have got. The process of "dehumanization and negative classification" ultimately places the victims "outside of the moral order" where they "lose their right to a name, to a place within the realm of human and moral responsibility, to their very lives" (78). In such situation, victims are treated not as humans but as worthless, non-human entities that everyone despises and wants to get rid of.

Although the Cherokees tried to resist the removal plan, they could no longer do so as the federal administration shied away from the responsibility to defend the Cherokees from the interference of the state government of Georgia which insisted on exercising sovereignty over the Cherokee nations that were in its territory. Amidst the pressure created by Georgia's threat of walking out of the union, discussion and debate continued for a long time, and finally a deadline for the voluntary removal was set as May 23, 1838. But when majority of the Cherokee ignored the deadline and continued to live in their homes, the military started to use force to remove them. As a result, the removal process turned out to be very brutal as the soldiers arrived at the Cherokee households without any warning and began to drive them out at bayonet point leaving behind everything save the clothes they were wearing. They were "marched to hastily impoverished stockades—in language of the twentieth century, 'concentration camps'—and were kept there under guard until arrangements could be

made for their transportation by rail and water to the Indian Territory west of the Mississippi" (Wallace 93).

When the relocation process began in the hot days of summer in 1838, the Cherokees assembled in the stockades had to wait until the fall to start their journey. They began to suffer from malnutrition, dysentery and other infectious diseases. The journey started in October 1838 and the first group reached Fort Gibson in March 1839. Their journey turned out to be catastrophic because they had to spend the cold months of winter without any warm clothes. Wallace offers another graphic detail of the tragedy:

> But the total cost in Cherokee lives was very great. Perhaps as many as a thousand of the emigrants died en route (including John Ross's wife), and it is estimated that about three thousand had died earlier during the rounding and in the stockades. In all, between 20 percent and 25 percent of the Eastern Cherokees died on the "trail of tears" (94)

The scale at which people suffered and died clearly shows the brutality and indifference of the perpetrators. Although the main objective of the removal process was to occupy the lucrative land and other resources of the Indians, its consequences turned out to be genocidal.

Looking at the entire process of relocation process, it seems that the mainstream American culture has terribly failed to deal with the issues of the Native Americans. Instead of acknowledging their unique historical reality and cultural identity, the American settlers with their colonial mindset set out in a seemingly counterproductive project of civilizing them and assimilating them to the so called mainstream culture. It was an attempt to change them into something that they were not and they could never be. Such condescending and callous attitude of the Whites

led to the exploitation of the Natives which eventually resulted in the displacement, torture and the loss of hundreds of native lives. All these acts of violence and brutality of genocidal nature perpetrated on the Native Americans during the process of relocation can be viewed as the byproduct of the larger process of modernization. The growing sense of nationalism among the white Americans was an important factor to intensify the process of settler colonialism; scientific racism as the source of the sense of superiority complex based on the concepts like white man's burden, manifest destin, and the binaries of savage versus noble; growth of materialistic culture and utilitarian outlook all together had a cumulative impact on the way Native Americans were viewed and treated by the mainstream American culture.

According to Bauman, although the term genocide was coined by Raphael Lemkin in 1943, the acts of genocide like Holocaust are "merely the latest in a long line of examples of inhumanity and bloodshed" as the history of modern society is marred by violence, conflicts, and mass murders. He believes that Holocaust was to be "the most likely consequence of the modern drive for 'purity' and order"; and it "resulted from a unique fusion of the different key elements of modernity" (qtd. in Marshman 78). Expanding the argument further, Bauman posits:

> [M]odern genocide, like modern culture in general, is a gardener's job. It's just one of the many chores that people who treat society as a garden need to undertake … All visions of society-as-garden define parts of the social habitat as human weeds. Like all other weeds, they must be segregated, contained, prevented from spreading, removed, and kept outside the society boundaries; if all these means prove insufficient, they must be killed. (qtd. in Marshman 79)

It shows when a group of people are deemed to be unworthy but a potential threat to the purity of the society, people go to any extent to get rid of such threat and preserve their utopia. When such generalized form of hatred is adopted as a 'state policy', it becomes a 'genuine threat'. This tendency is found in most cases of genocidal violence including the relocation process of Cherokee people by the European settlers that resulted into the death in mammoth scale.

Nevertheless, it would be inappropriate to draw a straight line between genocide and modernity just because modern technologies have provided ample of provisions for executing the acts genocide because the moral distance is even more important. And this proposition is strongly evident in the relocation process of Cherokee people in which the inhuman acts of grabbing Cherokee land and the subsequent harsh journey of Trail of Tears killed thousands of Cherokee Indians under the nose of perpetrators. Moreover, we do not live our day to day life "according to Auschwitch principles" and the fact that "Holocaust is modern" does not mean "that modernity is Holocaust" (qtd. in Marshman 82).

There is still worse news that these acts of dehumanization and classification of the victims into some nonhuman entity might also occur on the bases of race, class, gender, and ethnicity, etc. And we should always be on our guards to avoid this. Regardless of any other thing, whenever the acts of dehumanization and classification take place in the society, genocide ensues as an inevitable consequence. Here, Bauman does not seek "to universalize the Holocaust" but he wants "to universalize the lessons of Holocaust to alert society" where "the 'I' and the 'we' continue to seek self-definition through contrast with the irredeemable 'other'" and in doing so "[t]he dominant groups in society continue to marginalize and reject comparative minorities even if no longer along only strictly 'racial' lines" (Marshman92). Moreover, the

process of “categorization of the Other, removing them from the realm of one’s moral consideration amounts to complicity in a process that can culminate in physical destruction” (92). And he also reiterates that genocidal acts are not as extreme and uncommon as they are portrayed to be, because genocidal acts can take place in seemingly normal situation as well.

However, the modernity-of-genocide thesis of Bauman has received some criticisms. Although the term genocide is relatively new and the Holocaust is widely agreed to be its paradigmatic instance, Raphael Lemkin, the person who first coined the term genocide to document German war crimes, believes that the practice of genocide is ancient. Instances of genocide as a war of national extermination, as Lemkin viewed it to be, was quite commonplace in the ancient Near East where Sargon of Akkad conquered Sumer around 2310 B.C.E., the Athenians’ annihilation of the people of the island of Melos in the fifth century B.C.E., and the ravaging of Carthage by the Romans in 146B.C.E. etc. according to Michael Freeman, Lemkin has made two important assumptions: firstly, although Nazi genocide was carried out by using modern technology, “ ‘genocide’ was a generic concept” because “there had been many genocides throughout history” (209). Secondly, despite the use of modern state apparatus and technology, “the Nazi case constituted a reversion to barbarism” (209). This assumption presupposed that there was a barbaric stage in the history when “tribal wars of extermination” used to occur; and from this point a gradual progress was made by human civilization towards international law. (209)

Likewise, the notion that genocide is a purely modern phenomenon has been challenged by the example of Rwandan genocide in which around one million people were killed in a relatively short span of twelve weeks. In Michael Mann’s words:

> The rate of killing exceeding by an order of magnitude was carried out by men and women armed with little more than guns and agricultural implements. And the killing was conducted face-to-face, intimately, and publicly, with no resort to the physical and psychological distancing strategies and official secrecy supposedly necessary for "modern" mass slaughter. (241)

Even if it could be argued that Rwandan genocide was carried out with the help of complex administrative structure which is supposedly modern, historical evidence shows that even bureaucracy is not exclusively a modern phenomenon as many of the ancient civilizations had functioning bureaucratic structure. The above description of the genocidal killings in Rwanda also implies that genocide is not merely a matter of external factors such as availability of the logistics and capability of the perpetrators to inflict harm on the victims; it is deeply embedded in people's way of thinking and their rationality. Therefore, rather than trying to understand the reason of genocide in a narrow context, it is necessary to analyze it from a broader perspective of the modern era in which genocidal killings have become commonplace.

Moreover, instead of trying to understand genocide in terms of ancient-modern dichotomy alone, we should look at it as an integral part of human psychology. It is a dark facet of humanity--an evil that defies all sorts of temporal demarcations, and has remained essentially the same throughout; it is only our way of understanding that has changed tremendously over time. If we approach genocide this way, we get a better sense of immediacy with it and develop a truly humane attitude towards it, which, together, enable us to view it as a problem of our own society even if we may not have genocidal history and experience.

Claudia Card uses the term “atrocity paradigm” to refer to the acts such as genocides, mass murder, ethnic cleansing, mass rape, slavery, apartheid, domestic violence, etc. as most serious forms of evil. According to Card, the murder of one person, even if itself a possible “paradigm of evil” is a lesser form of wrongdoing than a genocidal massacre, which in addition to multiplying murders is intent on extinction of a genus (9). In the same way, systematically produced poverty that deprives many children of developing countries of the basics needed to make life tolerable is a worse wrong than gender base wage discrimination experienced by many women in the developed countries. At this juncture, it is pertinent to look at the brutality of the removal process of the Native Americans and its deadly consequences as an exemplary case of atrocity because it comes under some of the rarest instances of paradigm of evil that is “foreseeable intolerable harms produced by culpable wrongdoing” by the white American government against the Natives (3). It is equally important to note Card’s emphasis on the suffering of the victims and their point of view rather than focusing on the agents who often overshadow the victims. According to Card, we need a definition of evil in which we can regard examples of actions “both suffered and perpetrated” (48). Needless to say, when both victims and survivors of the bitter Trail of Tears are allowed to have their say, a truer and more illuminating account of atrocities comes to the surface.

Card further talks about the ways of dealing with the atrocities like war rape, and contemplates a very severe punishment for such evil. The very act of classifying the evils into trivial, serious and intolerable logically implies the punishment that befits the severity of the crime. So, Card has expressed a fantasy of castrating the rapists in chapter 6 of *The Atrocity Paradigm*. But very soon, she reaches a point of realization that “whether to live with evils and their legacies is seldom a choice. The

question is about how to do it well, especially how to interrupt cycles of hostility generated by past evils and replace mutual ill will with good" (166). Here, we find her approach to be much forward-looking and, in Bat-Ami Bar On's words, it "is concerned less with punitive measures than with actions that might ameliorate and prevent wrongdoings" (195). It implies, while much graver offences should be punished more severely, the evils that are brutal ones should be prevented first. It is a remarkable shift in Card's emphasis from castration fantasy to reconciliation and forgiveness.

Although no past evil can be changed, we can and should deal with them in the best possible way. Rectifications and remainders are two core concepts of responding to evil. Rectification, as the term itself suggests, is supposed to make a situation better. It aims to correct imbalances, redress wrongs, settle scores, and put things right between two parties. It has two sides: punishment and moral power of victim. Punishment as such presupposes "guilt" and "verdict" as it is pronounced only after the guilt has been established and the verdict has been given by the authority. According to Card, "[i]t is also commonly thought to expiate guilt (the debt), to enable the offender to atone for the offense" (170). But punishment alone is not enough to respond to the past evils. Card further says that punishment is "truly a mixed bag" as it is "partially rectificatory" and at the same time "it takes on the project of prevention as well" (170). It is defended as retribution, is supposed to "enable the "offenders to pay their debts" and the "victims to let go of the past" (170). Moreover, it is "also defended by appeal to deterrent effects" but in each case of punishment "[b]oth rectificatory and preventive aims are compromised in an attempt to reach a set of penalties acceptable from both points of view" as it can't be hard and soft enough at the same time (Card 170).

Talking about the moral power of victim, it has two facets: blame and forgiveness. Blame is the negative power of victims and is associated with condemnation and resentment; it evokes a sense of guilt and obligation in the perpetrators whereas forgiveness is the positive power of victim that "can relieve burdens that may not be morally relievable in other ways" (Card 167). Thus, the fact that victims have power to blame, resent, or punish and also to forgive, to exact reparation and apologies, to pardon or show mercy places them in a privileged position like that of "creditor" or "benefactor", who can "release or hold perpetrators to obligation" (168) but the perpetrators can do "little to change their ethical status in relation to victims but remain morally dependent on them (or their representatives) for release" (168).

But, as a matter of fact, neither the perpetrators can repair the harm or compensate adequately nor can the victims release the perpetrators completely. At best, they "can communicate how they feel about what was done in ways that matter to the involved" (168). It is very important to have open discussion about the past evils among people directly or indirectly involved in them. In fact, it is the only way to come to terms with such traumatic past. According to Card, "[a]pologies, forgiveness or pardon (or the choice not to) and such responses as guilt, shame, gratitude, and resentment indicate how perpetrators and victims value what was done, and what was suffered" (168). It encourages people to be more realistic and open towards their past experiences and make a true assessment of their role in the past atrocities. It marks a shift from "escape, avoidance, and prevention to focus on living with and responding to evils" (168). We should not simply shy away from our past deeds because they are part and parcel of our life. It is equally relevtant to view the

entire relocation process of the Native Americans in which some of the world's most serious atrocities were committed.

No matter how hard we try, no response to the past atrocities can serve as the panacea. Consequently, remainders are left as an unavoidable consequence. Card defines remainders as "rectificatory feelings regarding what otherwise proves unrectifiable by our actions" (169). Guilt, shame, remorse, regret and often gratitude are the examples of remainder. Although the list looks predominantly negative, remainder is not always negative as "we acknowledge positive remainders in unplayable debts of gratitude" (169). In sum, the remainders, in general, are "emotional residues" that "acknowledge an unexpiated wrong, an unrectified shortcoming, or an unpaid debt" (169). Such acts of acknowledgement may appear to have very little practical value, but in the contexts of the past atrocities being unacknowledged by the society at large, as in the case of Native American relocation process, it can be an important point to begin the long process of redressing the wounds of the past. Card further says that "[r]emainders offer us a limited redemption in that they reveal our appreciation that all has not been made right or that not all is as it should be (or would be, ideally) between us"(169). It is very important in the societies where people do not open up about the uncomfortable past.

Since dealing with the past atrocities involves so much of complications, we cannot and should not advocate unilaterally for either punishment or forgiveness as the perfect solution. Both approaches have their own strengths and limitations. Punishment neutralizes resentment by acknowledging injustice and by removing at least some of the profits of the offenders but it alone cannot neutralize all the resentments completely. As a matter of fact, it does not "do anything to alleviate harm suffered by victims of the offense" (171). Moreover, punishment offers little room for

the victims to exercise moral power and it does not acknowledge the obligation of the offenders to repair the damage. Another problem with punishment is the difficulty of maintaining balance: if it is made irrevocable, it may become an atrocity in itself; if it is made too soft, it may leave many aspects of the evils unaddressed. But, as Card puts, even if "there is no question of adequate retribution, compensation, or restitution, trials can still be held to get at the truth" (172). It helps to verify and publicize the past deeds through truth commissions, makes the offenders apologize publicly, and let people know what they know about the atrocities.

Since punishment is not able to end all the hostilities and ill feelings, forgiveness can be a more viable option. According to Robin May Schott, forgiveness plays an important role in making victims and perpetrators move on and interrupt the cycles of hostility, a process she calls "ethical repair" (206). Forgiveness, unlike punishment, initiates a reciprocal goodwill that appears to be a promising substitute for the cycles of hostilities that punishment is unable to terminate. This is the reason behind Card's shift from castration fantasy to forgiveness.

Talking about the genuine case of forgiveness, Card uses the term "paradigm forgiveness"—an ideal case of forgiveness which "is interpersonal" and in it there is a "change of heart in the offended party regarding the offender" (174). The change consists of:

> (1)a renunciation of hostility out of (2) a charitable or compassionate concern for the (perceived) offender; (3) an acceptance of the offender's apology and contrition; (4) a remission of punishment, if any, over which the forgiver has authority or control; and (5) an offer to renew relationship (to "start over") or accept the other as a (possible) friend or associate. (174)

Card has clearly laid down the requirements for a perfect instance of forgiveness which is not merely empty words but instead a total transformation in the way of thinking about what has happened.

Forgiveness is generally offered as a gift, so it can be accepted or rejected. When a person accepts forgiveness, it evokes a sense of gratitude and places the recipient under new obligations. But it is not necessary that forgiveness is always accepted readily. If an offender does not acknowledge wrongdoing, they may find its offer outrageous. However, “for offender who accepts it ,forgiveness lifts or eases the burden of guilt, much as forgiving a debt relieves the debtor of an obligation to repay” (Card 174).

Although the concept of forgiveness sounds very ideal, it cannot be taken as all-time solution to every case of atrocities. Commenting on Card’s concept of paradigm forgiveness, Robin Mary Schott, argues that it may not refer to an empirical pattern of human behavior because it does not always represent the most commonly met patterns in empirical behavior, moral ideal of interpersonal forgiveness, or philosophical concept that may or may not have a moral appeal. Forgiveness, thus, may not have the primary position. Other factors such as “forming safe networks of interpersonal relations not based on communication between perpetrator and victim, remembrance, mourning, reconnection with the world”, etc. must be taken into consideration. (Schott 207)

There are other philosophers who have focused on witnessing rather than forgiving as a key to understand the ethical implications of atrocities. Witnessing is also a complex process, as Giorgio Agamben puts, "[t]he survivors bore witness to something it is impossible to bear witness to" (13). It makes the very act of witnessing paradoxical. This paradox, according to Schott, “suggests that testimony is

inadequate, that a gap always exists, an ungraspable dimension of atrocity, which, however, does not diminish the necessity of bearing witness" (209). Such gap in the act of witnessing, as Ardent believes, baffles human power and eventually makes forgiveness inadequate. It shows that forgiveness, though a better option than punishment falls short of untying the complicated emotional knots of past atrocities.

Card further says that the power to forgive also includes the power to withhold forgiveness. However, its use is not as cut and dried as we wish it to be. It is not easy to say "whether some atrocities are unforgivably heinous" but "[i]t may be that some breaches of trust or goodwill can never be mended, that nothing the offender could do would be sufficient to provide others with good evidence of adequate reliability" and therefore, "some elements of forgiveness are wisely withheld permanently from some of its perpetrators" (Card 181). But if an ungraspable element of atrocity always exists and if the act of witnessing is always paradoxical, offering and withholding forgiveness is of little importance. Here, ethical work on the interpersonal level is very crucial to make sure that both victims and perpetrators coexist in civil society as they did in South Africa. It is important to note that the perpetrators cannot control how morally burdened they remain nor can the victims release the perpetrators completely.

Moreover, sometimes the real decisions to not to forgive, can be helpful in going ahead and there are some perpetrators who never regret their misdeeds, never think of apology and do not even welcome forgiveness. It proves that forgiveness is never absolute and always partial to the extent that within the single act of forgiving some elements of forgiveness can be withheld or suspended by the forgiver. All these arguments reiterate the need of interpersonal discussion of the past atrocities in a

candid and systematic manner to come to the terms with the traumatic past so that the cycle of such evils could be broken.

After discussing the moral powers of victim, Card shifts her focus to the perpetrators' burden even though the line between victim and perpetrator is not always clear. While "victims' powers of forgiveness and blame are basically concerned with offender's culpable wrongdoing," the perpetrators' burdens and obligations "are concerned not only with acknowledging but more with repairing the harms done" (188). In course of dealing with the evils, victims focus on perpetrators' culpability whereas perpetrators focus on the harms done to the victims, and because of it, "they are most likely to distort or fail to appreciate" (188). So, it is essential to pay attention to correct the perception and ensure better interaction in the future.

Although, guilt is perceived negatively perceived as 'debt', it can play a constructive role with respect to atrocities like genocide, torture, mass murder, etc. On the negative side of guilt, there are "pain of self-blame or self-condemnation, a hostility that is grounded in the sense of one's culpability for wrongdoing" (200) whereas on the positive note, it motivates "reparative and restitutive actions" (201). Guilt makes the offender feel a sense of owing others something, try to compensate for the harm, acknowledge the wrong and apologize, mend broken relationships and end hostilities. Card further says, "[e]ven when full compensation is not possible, steps can usually be taken to alleviate hardships […] medical bills, psychiatric bills, and elder care can be paid. Children can be cared for and educated" (200).

Card discusses another type of guilt in which the feeling of guilt is not "based on the belief that one was truly morally at fault in having committed an offense" (202). It is supposed to be irrational and is widely known as blameless guilt. Since it is irrational feeling of guilt, it should be transcended because it cannot be expiated. It is also a situation in which actual wrongdoing has taken place though it is not one's

own. Herbert Morris, a philosopher of jurisprudence has classified blameless guilt into three:

> (1)Survivor guilt, which may be a form of guilt over involuntary, unjust enrichment, which is involuntarily benefiting from injustices done to others by others. (2) Guilt over acts of one's country or other groups to which one belongs(such as one's family) and to which one remains loyal even though one had no effective say over these acts, and (3) Guilt for feelings and desires that one did not act upon. (qtd. in Card 202)

Card has categorized the blameless guilt in which one has not involved directly into three types: getting directly benefited from others' wrong deeds, sharing the guilt of one's country or community, and ill feeling bad about what one did not or could not do.

Various types of atrocities can be the source of blameless guilt. Although it is quite natural to shrug off the blameless guilt as something resulted without personal involvement, some forms of reparative actions or corrective measures are desirable because "[s]imply trying to "get over" the guilt or dismiss it as irrational may be irresponsible" (Card 202).

We may not necessarily self-blame in cases of 'involuntary unjust enrichment', but we definitely find our "good fortune morally tainted" and also feel that our "joy over it is inappropriate" (203). Such sense of guilt is felt by many Anglo-Americans "because of how the North American continent was colonized and developed by [their] European ancestors who were responsible for the death and displacement of most of its indigenous peoples" (203). In such cases, though it is not practical to reject the benefits but one may "feel a responsibility to use all or some

portion of them to aid those whose unjust treatment made the benefits possible" (203). Even if the survivors of the particular atrocity cannot be benefitted, it may be possible to help other survivors of similar atrocities or the descendants of the victims can be benefited by the acts of reparation and correction which may include "fight against the kind of injustice or evil involved in producing the benefits" or any other activities that promote social justice and harmony (203).

Here, it is very important for the present generation of the White Americans to realize the involuntary enrichment they have had due to the relocation process of the Native Americans carried out by their ancestors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and therefore, must be ready to acknowledge their responsibility to do something substantial for the reparation and healing as Card believes that "[a]voiding the burdens of guilt is not necessarily the most humane option", instead, "[i]t may make better sense to assume the burdens of guilt for benefiting from atrocities and do what one can to prevent future atrocities" (204).

In the context of past evils, whenever there is blame or guilt, there is also resentment but the very existence of resentment implies "room for the possibility of forgiveness" because people "who can resent or blame can certainly undergo the change of heart central to the paradigm of forgiveness" and by the same token, "where there is self-blame, there seems also room for the possibility of self-forgiveness" (205). The descendents of slaves and Native Americans such as the Cherokees "might understandably resent the greater advantages" being enjoyed by the descendents of the perpetrators until and unless they "apologize for the evils from which they have profited and take responsibility for working toward a more just use of those profits in the future" (205). Even a seemingly insignificant act of apology like an article ran by the *New York Times* in July, 2000 on the apology by the

Hartford Courant, Connecticut's largest newspaper, for having published advertisements for the sale of slaves in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, elicited a great amount of positive responses from the African American communities. This is just a case in point; there are countless cases of atrocities like the Trail of Tears for which such candid expressions of acknowledgment and apology have long been overdue. Reiterating the same point, Card further says:

> Resentment is somewhat neutralized when beneficiaries use at least a part of their ill-gotten gains to fight the underlying injustice or compensate victims, or when they publicly appreciate and deplore the injustice or apologize for it, as in the case of *Hartford Courant.* What is resented is the failure or outright refusal to acknowledge any debt or responsibility. (205)

It shows that realization of one's past evils and sincere attempts to redress the wound one has caused are always important no matter how insignificant they may appear to be. Even an act of sincere acknowledgement and appreciation can bring about ripples of positive feelings.

Moreover, repentance, regret and remorse are other alternatives to guilt. Repentance is a "change of heart whereby a transgressor becomes contrite or remorseful for major offences" (208). Card says, like guilt it can motivate constructive steps, focuses on regeneration rather than repayment but it is more self-absorbed than guilt. It serves as the first step towards seeking forgiveness and like shame it also has element of humility. However, it is not always an asset for repairing wrongs. Remorse, on the other hand, "is intense, often lasting, moral regret regarding one's own conduct" (209). It is an act of "emotional gnawing at oneself over one's wrongdoing" (209). But it focuses the offender's "attention on the deed rather than on

what can be done about it, and on how the deed wronged and harmed others" (209). Although its purpose may not be self-punishment, but its effect tends to be. Moreover, remorse, like shame, is not relieved by forgiveness. Talking about the importance of dealing with the wrongdoings, Card further says:

> Appreciating the wrongness has a certain value in itself, even when it does not help repair relationships and even if it is not accompanied by regeneration. It reveals something of the perpetrators' values and standards. Victims take some satisfaction just in knowing that perpetrators appreciate the wrongness of what they did and how it might feel to the victims' position. It aggravates moral dissatisfaction to know or believe that perpetrators do not adequately acknowledge or appreciate what they did. (209)

Card strongly believes that the acts of acknowledgement and appreciation play a very important role in making the victims feel better even if such acts do not always mend the broken relationships.

It is very much true of the Native Americans' experience of the entire relocation process and most importantly the Trail of Tears in which thousands of Native Americans suffered from almost every possible forms of injustice such as humiliation, torture, exposure, hunger, disease, fatigue, and so on; and hundreds of them died during and after the relocation process. Moreover, this process caused a great crisis of cultural disorientation and fragmentation of communities and their way of living. But still, such acts of evils have not been acknowledged and appreciated by the mainstream culture of the United States.

Thus, Card has offered some useful ways to deal with the tumultuous past of atrocities and traumatic experiences in a more rational and practical manner. Past

evils are not the ones we cannot wish away nor can we reverse the course of time. What is at stake is the more feasible way to come to term with such unpleasant residues for which open and candid acceptance of past mistakes and owning up responsibility is the first point to begin with. Though paradoxes, anomalies and inadequacies abound the process, there is no respite other than this. It is with these suppositions are the literatures of genocide and trauma are studied. The two Cherokee novels namely *The Mountain Windsong* and *Pushing the Bear* the dissertation seeks to analyze recount the tales of atrocities of the Trail of Tears. However, the importance of these narratives does not end in their aesthetic pleasure or historical accuracy. More importantly, they foreground the gruesome but touching details of atrocities perpetrated on the Native Americans in course of their forceful relocation to the west of the Mississippi. The entire process is filled with the deliberate acts of destruction, violence, brutality, deaths and murders which can be termed both as genocidal acts perpetrated on a particular group of people on the basis of their collective identity and horrendous evils called atrocities that are foreseeable and culpable and they also deprive people of the basics necessary to make their life or/and death decent. It is very significant that such pieces of literature let the fictional characters, who may have historical resemblance as well, open up about the evils both suffered as well as perpetrated, the writers have led the readers to the point of ethical denunciation of genocidal violence with a heightened sense of awareness to break the cycle of hostility and promote goodwill. This is not an easy thing to do. Even to a perpetrator, Card remarks, “[a] certain measure of self-forgiveness may be both possible and required for continued self-respect” so as to go ahead in life (210) There are “some breaches of trust [that] cannot be healed by reparations and apologies” but still “doing

as much as one can may help to make possible constructive new relationships with others" (210). So, it is just a beginning of a long journey.

Chapter Three

Representation of Genocide in *Mountain Windsong*

Mountain Windsong (1992) by Robert J. Conley is a historiographical novel with the subtitle "A Novel of The Trail of Tears". It is set against the tragic events of the Cherokee removal from their traditional lands in North Carolina to Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma) in between 1835 to 1838. Conley gives this infamous mass exodus of epic scale a human touch by focusing on the story of Oconeechee, daughter of a famous Cherokee chief Junaluska, and Waguli (aka Whippoorwill), a young man she loves. Separated by the genocidal march of about thirteen thousand Cherokees including some Negroes out of which more than twenty five percent died en route to Oklahoma, the pair spends much of the novel searching for each other. When they were about to get married, Waguli is captured by the federal soldiers and, along with other Cherokees, taken to the west of the Mississippi river. Though more than one fourth people die on the way, he survives the bitter trail only to end up being addicted to whiskey the white merchants sell to the Indians. On the other hand, Oconeechee, among the few Cherokees who remain behind hidden in the mountains, undertakes a courageous journey to find her lost love, Whippoorwill, and is finally reunited with him with the help of a veteran Cherokee warrior Gun Rod who, despite his old age, takes this mission as an opportunity to do something for the sake of genuinely sacred love.

The novel is narrated by a young Cherokee boy named Le Roy aka Sonny related to him by his grandfather who calls him 'chooj' meaning boy. The narrator asks his grandfather about the wind song he hears when they are out in the hills of the reservation of North Carolina where his grandfather lives, and his grandfather tells him that it is the love song of Oconeechee and Whippoorwill; and then tells him their

story to let him know about their traumatic past and thereby makes his grandson familiar with their time honored oral tradition of storytelling.

Conley acknowledges the inspiration of Don Grooms's Cherokee song "whippoorwill" which, like the novel itself, is enriched with mixed cultural connotations that reflect the tumultuous period of the Trail of Tears. The book is praised for the depth and authority of the author's knowledge of the Cherokee lives and their culture, importance of family and other human relationships depicted in the novel and most importantly the defiance of Anglo-American fad of the concept of historical perspective with an overwhelming sense of cause of effect of enlightenment obsession with history. By blurring the line between the fictional characters and events and the historical content and context, the writer has achieved a new feat in amalgamating traditional Cherokee skill of oral tradition of storytelling with the factual details of the historical documents and texts such as the texts of the 18 35 New Echota Treaty, a letter from Ralph Waldo Emerson to president Van Buren, and passages from James Mooney's *Historical Sketch of the Cherokee*, etc. to create a new powerful, resonant and moving narrative. However, while considering these brilliant aspects of the novel, this dissertation focuses on the way he writer has represented the genocidal acts perpetrated upon the Cherokee people, the way he has broken silence about it, and the way he has foregrounded the connection between the euro-American culture and the politics of settler colonialism and the genocidal atrocities of Native Americans. The novel is viewed as an attempt to end the period of indefinite and awkward silence maintained by the American establishment regarding the brutality of the Cherokee relocation process.

The novel begins with the typical Native American Cherokee oral tradition of storytelling by grandparents to their grandchildren. The narrator Le Roy recounts the

time he first heard the windsong in the misty hills above Bigcove in North Carolina and asked his grandfather about it. His grandfather's reply that it is the love song of Oconeechee and Whippoorwill marks the beginning of the story. Grandfather also tells him that the events took place at the time when the "Cherokee nation was real big" (7). He further talks about Oconeechee's father Junaluska, a prominent chief of Soco Gap, whose original name was Gul kala ski meaning He Keeps Falling Over. He had saved General Andrew Jackson's life in the battle of Horseshoe Bend during the creek war in 1813and also turned him victorious. Jackson, feeling grateful to Junaluska, became his friend and promised that their friendship would last forever. "as long as the sun shines and the grass grows, you and me are going to be friends, and the feet of the Cherokees will be pointed East" (8). But, Jackson was elected president in 1828, partly due to the credit of the Creek war; he signed the Indian Removal Act in 1830 the execution of which resulted in the massive suffering, death, and disorientation of thousands of Native Americans. With the memory of his friendship and his friend's promise still fresh in his mind, Junaluska went to meet Jackson but was denied entrance. This particular incident has a historical resemblance as well. When he came back, he told his friends "detsinu lahungu, I tried and I failed" and that was how got the new name—"Tsunu lahun ski, He Tried But Failed. Junaluska" (8).

This particular instance shows the unreliable nature of the white settlers like Andrew Jackson whose only aim was to get all the Indians out of the east of the Mississippi so that the land and the resources could be used by the whites. Whatever may the explanations and justifications have been offered. Such ironic gaps abound the whole process of the Cherokee removal commenting on the whites of the matter was the hunger of the whites for the land of Indian people. While discussing the use

of historiographic irony in *Moutain Windsong*, Beeredra Pandey, differentiates it from Wallace's *The Long Bitter Trail* in the sense that it is a ""false document"—a document which does not lose its credibility because it is primarily a product of the narrative imagination" but "Conley weaves the tale in such a way that the excruciating suffering and stoic endurance of the Cherokee are highlighted on the one hand and the savagery of the rampaging Euro-Americans is ironically exposed on the other hand" (64).

When the young narrator naïvely asks his grandfather why the whites wanted all the Indians to go the west of the Mississippi, the grandfather answers him with the same sense of naivity but his answer is loaded with irony:

> Well, it's kind of hard to say. They thought that a white man was better than an Indian. They thought we were savages. I'm not too sure what that word means, that savage, but I guess it just means that we didn't live the same way they did. They said savages steal and kill people. But they stole from us and they killed our people. So I don't really know what they really meant by that. But they said that Indians were savages, and they didn't want savage neighbors. But mostly, I think, they just wanted all our land. I think that's why they wanted to kick us out. (10-11)

The narrator's grandfather's explanation of the reasons behind the removal is loaded with irony as it exposes that the whites who called the Indians savage were proved to be savage themselves.

The execution of the Removal Act was not so easy. There were different groups of Cherokees living in different areas and a large group Cherokee were unwilling to move. Waguli (Whippoorwill) sees Oconeechee bathing in the creek

when he is on the way to Soto Gap where he is going as an official visitor to gather information about the struggle between the Cherokee nation and the U.S. Junaluska, as the man in charge tells Whipporrwill that "they went two times to the highest United States courts" and won both times "[b]ut Jackson commands the army and they say that he will ignore the court" (18). Though it is a fictional representation, the event that Andrew Jackson disregarded the decision of the Supreme Court was a historical fact. In 1835, two Cherokee representatives Major Ridge and Elias Boudinot signed the infamous treaty of New Echota agreeing to move west of the Mississippi. The novel depicts various opinions of people as to why they changed their mind to accept the offer of the Whites; the truth is still elusive. They must have agreed to move as it was the best option they had. Further resistance would be more destructive or they may really have betrayed their Native brethren.

The Georgia government passed more anti-Cherokee laws giving more freedom to the whites to plunder the native resources and used the same laws of punish the whites who were sympathetic to the natives. Despite the fact that the Treaty of New Echota was already signed, Chief John Ross was against the idea of removal. He was trying to convince that the U S Supreme Court was in favor of the Cherokee. It was the meeting of Red Clay where Chief Ross was convincing the people to stick to their own land arguing that "we're going to stay right here, because it's our land we've got the right" but Chief Ross also urged that "he didn't want anyone to fight" (31). In the meeting Whippoorwill was also there watching people who kept talking endlessly purposelessly repeating the same thing over and again.

The period of confusion uncertainty prolonged as there was no clarity in the policy of the federal government regarding the removal of the Native Americans from Georgia. The government of Georgia was determined to push the natives to the west

of the Mississippi whereas the policy of the federal government kept changing along with the change of presidency. Each time a new president was elected. However, it was obvious that they wanted the natives to be relocated in the west; it was only a matter of how and when. Despite the use of both fair and foul means to make the Cherokees both in and out of Georgia move, very little success had been achieved before 1928, the year when Andrew Jackson was elected the president. Right from the beginning of his tenure Jackson intensified the process of relocation in a Machiavellian manner yet appearing to be sympathetic to the Indians at the same time. In 1829, a Cherokee delegation visited Washington “to lay their grievances before president Jackson, but they found the Executive entertaining opinions about their rights very different from those which had been held by his predecessors” (qtd in Conley 42). From his arguments, the Cherokees got a clear message that Jackson was not going to protect them from the Georgians who wanted to exercise their sovereignty inside their territory within which the Cherokee nation lay and seemingly washing his hands off the matter. Covering up all the worst intentions Jackson gave directions to "suspend the enrollment and removal of Cherokees to the west in small parties" and warned that "if they (the Cherokees) thought it for their interest to remain, they must take the consequences" because "the Executive of the United states had no power to interfere with the exercise of sovereignty of any State over and upon all within its limits" (qtd in Conley 42). This shows the dual nature of Andrew Jackson’s character who forgot all his past promises and decided to remove the Cherokees at any cost even though he always tried to appear friendly to them all the time.

The president displayed his true diplomatic maneuver in creating a compelling situation to make the Indians go to the west of the Mississippi. He stopped the

“pervious practice of paying their annuities to the treasurer of the Cherokee Nation” to be distributed “among the individual members of the tribe.” He further issued orders "to prevent all persons, including members of the tribe, form opening up or working any mineral deposits with their limits” (qtd in Conley 44). All these moves implied that the US federal executive was determined to send the Cherokees off.

Unfortunately, the most anticipated division among the Cherokees, as the white government came to the surface in 1835 when “two rival delegations, each claiming to represent the Cherokee Nation arrived in Washington” (qtd in Conley 44). The one headed by John Ross strongly and consistently opposed relocation whereas the other led by John Ridge, “though formerly of the same mind with Ross, had begun to perceive the futility of further opposition” and perhaps with the hope of gaining some political advantage over his rival John Ross he agreed to "treat with them upon the basis previously laid down by president Jackson of a cession of their territory and a removal west" (qtd in Conley 44). Hence, the infamous Treaty of New Echota on 29th of December, 1835, the execution of which resulted into the Trail of Tears--a genocidal march of thousand of Cherokees from North Carolina to Indian Territory. The full text of the Treaty of New Echota kept in the novel has given a strong sense of authenticity of history though at the cost of smooth narrative flow.

At Soto Gap, amidst the uncertainty of the future of Cherokee Nation and disgust to the treacherous treaty of New Echota, the relation of Waguli of Oconeechee takes a decisive turn when Waguli’s concern that he and Oconeechee were of some clan and therefore they can’t marry is finally addressed with Junaluska's explanation that Oconeechee’s mother was not a Cherokee and that “she belongs to the wolf people of her mother's tribe" (67). In fact, Waguli had started to avoid Oconeechee when he knew that she was a wolf clan too, even though he had already lost his heart

for her. Now, there was no obstacle in their way to a happy conjugal life, and Junaluska also approved of it as he wanted to hand over his daughter to be relieved of the responsibility and embark on a journey to the other world where, he believed, his wife was waiting for him. However, there was something different awaiting the young pair.

Then Waguli went back to old Town, his place and in the meantime Oconeechee's father Junaluska died. The Narrative flow is once again ruptured by Ralph Waldo Emerson's letter to President Martin van Buren, written in 1836 to oppose the unjust Treaty of New Echota 1835. Emerson pleads the president to act wisely with due respect to humanity and justice. But it was not enough to change course the United States had taken. Oconeechee's loneliness in the absence of her beloved father is aggravated by the realization that " [h]er clan was the Wolf Clan of her mother's people, but she didn't know her mother's people. She did not speak their language, she was alone" (80). She wanted to go to Old Town to find Waguli but in the mean time in the month of May 1838, "seven thousand united states soldiers under the command of General Winfield Scott arrived in the Cherokee nation with orders to remove the Cherokees by force" (qtd in Conley 80). It was the beginning of the forceful removal of the Cherokees who did not approve of the 1835 treaty of New Echota.

The soldiers spread throughout the Cherokee country, stockade forts were erected, and a massive manhunt began to get all the Indians to the stockade from every possible place to be marched to the west of the Mississippi. Conley offers a graphic detail of the search operation from James Moore's *Historical Sketch of the Cherokee, 1900*:

> Families at dinner were startled by the sudden gleam of bayonets in the doorway and rose up to be driven with blows and oaths along the weary miles of trails that led to the stockade. Men were seized in their field or going along the road, women were taken from their wheels and children from their play. In many cases on turning for one last look as they crossed the ridge, they saw their homes in flames, fired by the lawless rabble that followed on the heels of the soldiers to loot and pillage. So keen were those outlaws that in some instances, they were driving off the cattle and other stock of the Indians almost before the soldiers had fairly started their owners in the other direction. Systematic hunts were made by the same men for Indian graves, to rob them of their silver, pendants and other valuables deposited with the dead. (81)

These acts not only exemplify the deliberately imposed violence on the group of people on the basis of their collective identity and financial greed of settler colonialism but also the greed a paradigm of evil which is “reasonably foreseeable culpably inflicted” and that deprives or seriously risks depriving others of the basics that are necessary to make a life possible and tolerable or decent (or make a death decent)” (Card 16).

Almost in the same manner, Old Town, Waguli’s hometown, was also invaded and its inhabitants were captured. Though Waguli tried to fight and flee, he was arrested eventually; and “his hands were tied behind his back and a soldier was pulling him to his feet” (83). He saw that "people were all lined up, men, women and children. He was on the line, too, behind a soldier’s horse." The cruelty of the soldiers is displayed in their treatment of the Cherokees who were captured: "When the

Indians did not begin immediately to walk, soldiers pushed them and nudged them with bayonets. Waguli was pulled by the soldier on the horse holding the rope. They were headed down the mountain. The long walk had begun" (83). When Oconeechee reached there with the hope of marrying Waguli, she found the town totally empty. She called out Waguli but "[t]he only answer was the mournful bark of the hidden dog" (84). It was the beginning of the long bitter trail of the Cherokees.

But not all the Cherokees were captured by the soldiers. Some of them managed to flee to the mountains to hide there. Some other also resisted the atrocity of the soldiers and fought back. The narrator's grandfather tells him about an old Cherokee named Tsali who, along with his wife, sons, brother and his family, was being taken to the stockade. But his wife could not walk as fast as the soldiers wanted her to and "one of the soldiers kind of prodded the old woman in the backside with his bayonet" (87). Tsali could not take it anymore and he told his brother and sons to get the soldiers while "he jumped on that soldier that had jabbed his wife" (88). They grabbed all the guns away from the soldiers and knocked then down. There was great panic after one of the soldiers was killed. So the others took to their hills. Later Tsali and his family hid in the mountain with other Cherokees but soon a little white man named Wil Usdi, who could also speak Cherokee, came to the mountain with a message that "if Tsali and his brother and his sons would surrender, they would stop hunting Cherokees. Those few who were hid out up there in the hill could stay there, at least for a while until the government figured out something to do with them" (89). What followed this move is something very horrible:

> Tsali, his brother and sons decided to surrender or maybe they were handed over to the soldiers who "put four stakes in the ground to which each four of them were tied leaving Tsali's little boy who was

> too young. Then they got some Cherokees out of the stockade and they made them into a firing squad. They made them shoot Tsali and the other. (89)

This episode exemplifies the brutality of the act of killing people in the presence of their near and dear ones and also making other people to commit such heinous crimes. The brutality of such crime is almost unparalleled and it definitely is the atrocity of genocidal nature.

The narrator's grandfather further tells him what he thought was the reason behind this summary execution of Tsali and his family. He thinks they did it "so that the Cherokees would know that they was absolutely whipped. Couldn't do nothing. Couldn't say nothing. Just do as they was told-- like dogs" (89).

On the other hand, when Waguli reached the stockade he was surprised to see that "[t]here was nothing but people, Cherokee people, men women, and children of all ages. They were crowded into the foul-smelling compound. Women wailed and children cried and screamed out of fear and hunger and physical discomfort" (90). He had covered a long distance to arrive this "temporary prison" in which "he was overcome with an instant horror at the inhumanity of his captors, their cold indifference to human suffering, their casual acceptance of so much misery and terror, and their ready participation in its creation" and it was so horrifying that "[t]he horror led to a nausea, a great dull sickness deep in his guts and his hearts" (90). Waguli decided to run away from the stockade at any cost. Since "[t]he white men had treated him like a dog", he decided, "he would dig like one" to make an escape. (90) Finally, by the night time he made his way through the hole he had made with so much of difficulty. But the white soldiers went after him to arrest him again. Due to the torture he was given, "he staggered and fell to his knees. He huddled there while the blows

continued to lacerate his back" until an officer gave command to stop. And "then he felt his arms wrenched behind his back, felt the rough ropes being wrapped around his wrists and pulled tight, felt them again tear into his flesh" (93). This sort of cruelty and inhuman treatment of fellow humans is definitely an act of atrocity which is deliberate and it deprives others of the basics necessary to make their life or death decent.

In the stockade, Waguli "tried to concentrate on his own pain and hunger" but "a screaming child would force him to open his eyes, and he would see the human misery around him." He also "saw the soldier bring the bottle of whiskey and entice the young Cherokee woman outside the compound. He saw her return later, too long gone to have satisfied just one man, staggering drunk from the white man's crazy water and white man's lust" (95-96). Waguli, with his hands still tied behind his back, saw a "child sick with dysentery screaming in its helpless mother's arms, he later saw it dead" (96). He also saw a "young woman who had drunk the whiskey in a pathetic attempt to escape the pain lying passed out in her own vomit" (96).

The graphic details of the suffering of the Cherokee captives in the stockade Conley has offered through the experience of Waguli--a main character of the novel, gives an impression of the description of Nazi concentration camp which is notorious for the inhuman treatment of the Jews who were made captive en masse and were exterminated in cold blood. Alhough the scale of casualty may be smaller than that of the Holocaust, the nature of atrocity and callousness displayed in the behavior of the perpetrators have made such comparison more probable. The following description of the stockade as viewed by Waguli reinforces the claim:

> He heard the crying children, and he heard the mothers' wailing because they could do nothing to ease the pain and hunger and fear felt

> by their little ones. He heard the groans of the old men and women as they valiantly attempted to suffer with patience. And he heard the laughter and the cursing of the soldiers, and he thought that he would swell and burst with his fermenting rage. But of all the physical horror, the pain of its wounds, the clangor of terror in his ears, the ghastly sights before his eyes, the worst were the smells. Fetid odors of human waste, the stench of sickness, the scent of death, the rank smell of rotten meat, the general rankness of unwashed bodies crowded together in too close proximity, all combined to produce a suffocating, mephitic assault on his nostrils and lungs and a savage and virulent affront to the dignity of humankind. (96)

All these details offered in the novel definitely project the atrocities perpetrated on the Cherokee people to be grossly dehumanizing and unjustifiable. Moreover, these acts of injustice are deliberately carried out and the victims are denied human dignity and respect.

When the actual journey began, Waguli's "hands were once again bound behind his back" (103). There were "some wagons and some horses, but not even enough for the very young and the very old and the very sick" (103). So, many of them had to walk. Waguli walked with his hand tied behind his back while the soldiers rode beside them "mounted on horses, carrying their long rifles with attached long knives, carrying their long ropes, the kind they had whipped him with" (103).

There were more stockades on the way from which more Cherokees were added to the group. Seeing this, Waguli wondered how many of such prisons the white men had for Cherokees, how many Cherokees were penned up like animals. The march continued for several days and it was getting harsher day by day. Once

Waguli wandered out of the line of he was pushed into the line by a soldier. Then he heard “an awful waling. It was the sound of death. It was a Cherokee female’s piercing mourning cry.” There was a “body of an old man” at the side of the trail and “a woman knelt beside the body” while “two young Cherokees stood with shovels, watched by a soldier sitting in his saddle, holding his rifle” (105).

On the other hand, those Cherokees hiding in the mountains also suffered from the scarcity of food and other basics. Though they tried to sneak back to their homes to gather their belonging, most of them found their homes looted or burned. Oconeechee too goes to the mountainside with Wild Cat and stays there for sometime sharing with all the limited food they could manage there. Though she was a strange among those Cherokees, she was treated warmly like a member of their group and was advised not to risk her life in her search of Waguli because anything could happen. But she was so determined to find he lost love that she was ready to face any challenge.

Waguli and people of his group were being marched continuously. He almost lost the sense of time and viewed himself as a ghost moving ahead in a group. It was a strange sense of oblivion-- a state of being lost somewhere not able to differentiate between dream and reality. But death was always there with them marching along with the unfortunate bunch of Cherokees who had left everything behind to go to the land of uncertainty and challenges. Waguli continued to walk maybe because there was no other thing to do, or perhaps the soldiers wanted them to walk. The sense of frustration and horror of the march is captured in the following words:

> People around him were dying. He had lost count of them, too, the dying ones. He remembered seeing old one and little ones being buried beside the trail while the rest of the ghosts kept moving. The dying

> didn’t seem to matter. They were all dead already. Some of them, like Waguli kept moving for some unknown reason, but they were all dead. (110).

This description shows how death and suffering became so common along the trail and how people gradually lost sensitivity and began to accept it as if nothing was happening.

However, amidst the long details of brutality and cruelty, there are some instances of genuinely humane acts of kindness and sacrifice that balance the readers’ otherwise depressing experience of reading this saga of human suffering. In fact it is an important feature of literature dealing with genocide and trauma. Such instances prove that humanity has resilience to survive even the worst time of inhumanity. When Oconeechee, with strong determination, gets ready to leave in search of Waguli, Wildcat introduces her to Grasshopper, who was with Waguli in the stockade before they ran away. He takes her to another place where other free Cherokees were hiding. When they reach the cave, they are warmly welcomed. Although those people didn’t know Oconeechee and therefore wanted to ask many questions about her, “true to tradition and in spite of the fact that they had little, the people first prepared a meal to share with their guests. It was a meager meal, and all ate sparingly, but all ate” (111). Although the people living in the cave didn't have new information about Waguli's whereabouts, they showed genuine concern and sympathy toward Oconeechee, and gave her “a place to sleep in the cave, promised her provisions for the trail in the morning” as she was leaving in the search of her lost love even though she didn’t know where she would find him. (112).

It's definitely a heartwarming detail of genuinely humane relationship, which debunks the widely held belief that hardships and troubles make people more selfish

and self-centered. It also shows the difficulty of representing the violent events of the past with a proper balance. As Waguli's journey continues towards the west, he meets a person named Pheasant and they become friends. Pheasant not only makes his wife cook Waguli's ration but also convinces the soldiers not to tie his hands to the back. He assures them that Waguli won't run away. The kind of relationship Waguli builds with Pheasant, his wife Sally and their child, is a good example of the victory of humanity.

The next phase of journey was to be made by water. The Cherokees were loaded on large boats that would float downriver. It was a very rough journey floating down along with the river. They floated downriver for days and then they boarded another huge boat named after a great Cherokee inventor Sequoyah whom the white Americans called George Guess. After another day's journey, "they camped again and in the camp an old woman died. They buried her there, and some Cherokee sang a few strange songs overt the grave" (114). Then they were loaded in a train. Waguli could not feel comfortable even on train. Because "[a]gain he had the powerful sensation that he was being hurled into the Darkening land"(121). His suffering got worse when he saw his friend Pheasant and his wife Sally who were sitting beside him were "wailing in despair and grief and holding between them the lifeless body of their young son, Yudi was dead" (21). The following morning they buried Yudi in a strange land, not far from the iron road of the fire-carrier. Later in the morning, they discovered that "Yudi and another child had died during the night" (122).

Moreover, Waguli also overheard a conversation about the hideous scream "someone had heard back at the beginning of the journey on the road" when "a man had fallen under the wheels of the fire carrier" (120). Waguli didn't hear anything more about the man. He never heard his name never heard where he had been buried

or when or even if he had been buried" (122). Such series of deaths continued to punctuate the traumatic journey of Waguli to the west-- the direction most Indians believed to be of death and annihilation. After they reached the next camp, they spent six days there. "During the first night in this new camp, two more small children died; it seemed as if all the children were sick. And the old were sick as well. And the sickness was spreading. Many of Waguli's age were catching" (123).

Again they journeyed by water. The weather became very violentwith lightning, rain fall, and wind. People continued to die. A Cherokee died at the place where the boatmen gathered more woods for the boat. When it rained, most people were the open decks "exposed to the fury of the pounding wind and the slashing rain" (124). They continued to ride *Smelter* for a few days. Waguli did not keep track of the number. "He did know that three more children died" (124). Then they stopped at Little Rock, Arkansas, and were loaded on Tecumseh. After a day's ride, they began over land journey. As they marched along with the wagons loaded with sick people, some of whom were left behind to be picked up by other wagons that would come later. The narrator gives a graphic detail of the situation:

> The very air in this place, this Arkansas, was sick, Waguli thought. Flies, gnats, and mosquitoes tormented animals and humans, sick and well. Waguli noticed with a sense of horror that the children were no longer crying. They were too sick to cry. Waguli trudged along listlessly; he thought beside Pheasant and Sally. He wasn't sure. The dust from the wagons ahead was too thick. It was too hot even for the soldiers. About noon they called a halt. They would wait, they said until early morning, before sunup. Three had died that day. Waguli assumed that they had been buried. (125)

It is yet another vivid detail of horrifying experience the Indians were having given from Waguli's point of view. It helps the readers gauge the magnitude of suffering the Cherokees had in course of the relocation process.

The next day all the wagons carrying the sick left behind joined them and they moved ahead. But Waguli didn't know how many days they walked as he had already lost the sense of time and place but "he knew only that each day three or four or five died along the way. One day, somewhere in the middle of the trip one of the ones to die was Sally" (125). Waguli helped Pheasant, Sally's husband, to bury her body beside the road. Finally they stopped and someone said that they had reached their destination. Waguli heard the statistical detail of the trail of his group out of which "70 had died, and 203 had escaped. The soldiers had left with 675 Cherokee captives of whom 603 remained. Of those about 200 were sick" and then "Waguli looked around at the strange country and the rabble of wretched immigrants of whom he was a part" (126).

Besides this fictional depiction of the horror of the bitter trail, there are extracts from the historical documents, such as James Mooney's *Historical Sketch of the Cherokee, 1900*, Charles C. Royce's *The Cherokee Nation of Indians, 1887*, juxtaposed with the fictional narrative in the novel. Such documents provide more exact details of the cruel march. In James Mooney's document it is stated that "[t]his removal in the hottest part of the year was attended with so great sickness and mortality that" the Cherokee leader Ross and other chiefs "submitted to General Scott a proposition that the Cherokee be allowed to remove themselves in the fall, after the sickly season has ended" (126).

However, the journey this time was not easy either. When they reached Hopkinsville, Kentucky, "the noted chief White Path in charge of a detachment,

sickened and died. His people buried him by the roadside" (127). The journey continued and “[s]omewhere also along that march of death--for the exiles died by tens and twenties everyday of the journey--the devoted wife of John Ross sank down, leaving him to go on with the bitter pain of bereavement added to heart break at the ruin of his nation" (127).

When the author James Mooney visited Tahlequah, the capital of Indian Territory in present day Oklahoma, he found that the old men and women still had the memory of the halt at the Mississippi River, totally frozen in the middle winter. They could still recall the “miseries of this halt beside the frozen river with hundreds of sick and dying penned up in wagons or stretched upon the ground with only a blanket overhead to keep out the January blast” (127). At last their destination was reached. They had started in October, 1838, and it was now March, 1839, the journey having occupied nearly six months of the hardest part of the year” (127). It is difficult to find actual number of fatalities in the absence of authentic records. However, the official figures show that “those who removed under the direction of Ross lost over 1,600 on the journey” (128). More statistical figures of casualty are recorded in Mooney’s document:

> Hundreds died in the stockades and the waiting camps chiefly by reasons of the rations furnished, which were of flour and other provisions to which they were unaccustomed and which they didn't know how to prepare properly. Hundreds of others died soon after their arrival in Indian Territory from sickness and exposure on the journey. Altogether it is asserted, probably with reason, that over 4000 Cherokee died as the direct result of the removal. 128)

These factual details give a sense of authenticity to the novel in which a different type of opportunity is created for the interaction of fact and fiction in the same text. However, both the details make it clear that the impact of the removal process was essentially destructive. Claudia Card's notion of evil that is "reasonably foreseeable" and "culpably inflicted" is very appropriate here because the whole process of removal was carried out with proper planning and intention of getting rid of the so-called uncivilized barbarian Indians (9).

The story continues with the narrator's response to the story he has been told by his grandfather. He recalls the details given on a page of his school book in which the Trails of Tears is included as "a dark page in the history of the United States because the government had made all the Cherokees move out west and some had died along the way" (130). This is a good example of downplaying the atrocities perpetrated on the Native Americans especially during the process of their relocation. Le Roy, the narrator says that when his grandfather finished telling the story, he "felt sick, kind of" and he "didn't know what to say" and felt "tears building up" (131). This kind of emotional response with a feeling of empathy gives a strong evidence of an urgent need for the ethical denunciation of such atrocities. Unfortunately such genuine human response to the injustice imposed upon the Native Americans has long been due. However, the novel with its double narrative i.e. the grandfather telling the story to his grandson Le Roy who narrates the story to us in turn has broken the long maintained silence about the evils of the Cherokee removal process.

Even after reaching the Indian Territory, Waguli and other Indians who had survived the long bitter trail continued to suffer. While their old places like Soto Gap and the Old Town were being occupied and plundered by the white intruders who not only grabbed their land and other valuables, but also violated the sacred space of

graveyards. When Oconeechee, after much struggle and suffering reaches the Old Town—Waguli's home town with the hope of finding him, she hears the white marauders were talking about finding " the graves" and digging "them up and see" what they could find (135). This act was motivated by the belief that Indians tend to bury valuables along with the dead. But it exemplifies the worst from of greed the white Euro-Americans had for the wealth and that they were ready to do anything for it. More importantly, this is an act of evil that deprives people of the basics to make their death decent. This episode ends with Oconeechee's clever maneuvering that arranges the encounter between those two white marauders and the two Cherokees Badger and Mouse, who were following her with an intention of rape, ends in killing the two marauders and Mouse on the spot and leaving Badger seriously injured. Oconeechee moves leaving Badger to suffer and realize his misdeeds but she also leaves the food she was carrying for her journey, and gives the white man's gun to use as crutch. This episode too adds some more deaths and bloodshed to the already too bloody narrative.

On the other hand the survivors of the trail blamed the Cherokees who had signed the treaty namely Major Ridge, John Ridge and Elias Boudinot for all the suffering they had to bear. Grandpa continued to tell Le Roy about the aftermath of the trail:

> They could not start a war with the United States or against the whites, not one they could win, so they went after the treaty signers. They called them traitors and they blamed them for all the suffering. So then on top of everything else that had happened, there were Cherokees killing Cherokees out there in the west. (145)

It shows how most of the Cherokees felt deceived by the leaders who had signed the Treaty of New Echota and how violence begets counter violence when it is not addressed properly. Entire Cherokee community was divided in two groups: who supported the treaty of New Echota and moved voluntarily and there was one who refused to accept it and stayed back until the forceful removal was carried out.

This was another sad episode of violence begotten by the long cycle of atrocity and desperation. This narration of the violence is further recorded in the historical documents of Charles C. Royce in which he comments “John Ridge, Major Ridge, his father and Elias Boudinot, were murdered in the most brutal and atrocious manner" (145). Such extension of violence and brutality is strong evidence that evil begets evil unless it is dealt with properly in the way that both victims and perpetrators could come to terms with. It was no surprise that the murderers of the treaty signatories were also killed later

The effect of the relocation was so devastating that the survivors like Waguli, Pheasant could no longer spend a day without taking draughts of whisky, which they called wisgi, to make their heart numb. It was another strong evidence of deprivation of the basics to make their life decent. They were so helpless that even the ration provided by the government or per the agreement to feed them for a year, they exchange or sell to get whisky. Interestingly enough, the whiskey sellers were the whites who had entered the Cherokee land much before the removal process, to ease the process of fraudulent land dealings, continued to sell whiskey to the Cherokees made captive along the trail and even afterwards in the Indian Territory. Such acts of selling whisky to the penniless Indians can be taken as the best example of greed. The impact of the relocation on the survivors is often worse than death and it is best described is Waguli's experience:

> He had not felt like he was alive since his recapture at the stockade. He was not afraid of death. He thought he would even welcome it. Sometimes he wondered why he did not just go ahead and kill himself and bring it all to an end. Why did he continue walking through the shadow existence, enduring it with the help of *wisgi?* He couldn't answer that question. (161)

This detail of Waguli's experience of frustration and numbness represents the traumatic experience of entire Cherokee nation that was relocated in the Indian Territory. It also shows how life goes ahead regardless of the situation one is facing at the moment.

On the other hand, Oconeechee was helped by a white man named Wil Usdi who told her that Gun Rod might know about Waguli's whereabouts. Wil Usdi is a character who proves that all white people were not necessarily bad. He goes to Washington demanding the compensation of the land of the Cherokees hiding in the mountains and buys land in his name. He wins the Cherokees' heart by admitting the evils perpetrated by the whites saying: "I know that it's difficult for you to accept the word of a white man after all that has happened" and he further assures them saying "believe me, I've only your interest at heart" (167). He struggled hard to make the government decide in favor of compensation. In fact, "some of the congressmen were softening on the issue" (168).

Oconeehee meets Gun Rod in his cabin at Horseshoe Bend, a place where her father Junaluska aka. Gunarod had fought the famous battle. Gon Rod, a widower now, showed fatherly love and concern to Ocoeechee of promises that he will bring Waguli back and sets out to the west. On the other hand, wil Usdi returns with the news that the land has been registered in his name and the Cherokees hiding in the

caves could live there freely and use the land as their own. In fact, it was because of the legal provision that denied registration of land in a cherokee's name made him buy the land in his name.

Gun Rod acquired information about Waguli and went towards the west to find him. Although he was a white, he was very sympathetic to the Cherokees. He rode a horse for four days and reached a place called Gunter's Landing where he sold his horse and started a new journey by water on the boat called Lucy Walker. His sense of empathy is evident in described in the following words:

> He felt suddenly overwhelmed by the perplexing ironies of life. He found a deck chair and sat down to fill and light his pipe, and he felt a wake of smoke behind him which trailed in the air above the large and more insistent wake below. He was conscious that he was also traveling in the wake of the Cherokee's bitter trail of sorrow" (189)

Gun Rod's feelings towards Cherokees, as expressed in these lines, are genuinely human as they transcend all the boundaries of race and culture. The way he feels sympathy for the Cherokees and becomes ready to help Oconeechee indicates the victory of humanity over the divisive forces.

The overall situation was so complicated that no general explanation could be made. The activities of the whites made no sense at all to any rational being because the reasons they offered for the removal were far from convincing. As the narrator comments:

> There was no way to make sense of any of it: whites moving Indians west because they didn't want savages in their midst, then turning the Indians' land into a haven for thieves, cutthroats and harlots; white men who wanted to live like Indians, and Indians who did live like

> whites-- only better; a president whose life had been saved, whose political career had been at the least greatly aided by the Cherokees, coldly masterminding the malevolent removal of those very Cherokee people. He stared back to at the churning wake of the Lucy Walker and secretly, silently, he wept. (190).

This description is noted for the ironical contrast between the whites and the Indians, the ambiguities and ambivalences in their relations and also for the genuinely human concern and sympathy of Gun Rod for the Indians and their suffering. It shows that what we need is truly human feelings to see others' suffering as our own.

As the boat churned its way towards Ohio River Gun Rod encountered a man named Southerner who was bragging about his bravery to a group of rather gullible audience. But When he gave a fabricated details of the battle of the Horseshoe Bend of which Gun Rod himself was a participant, Gun Rod could take it no longer and he strongly objected to his Gun Rod was offended the most by the remark that at the crucial moment of charging the opponent "the cowardly Cherokees" he blamed, "ran away and hid" (193). Gun Rod knew it pretty well that it was Oconeechee's father Junaluska who had saved Andrew Jackson's life by killing a Creek, Indian. This detail shows how the historical events are represented with lots of fabrication and distortion. It might be taken as an indication of the unreliability of the historical details we are offered.

Finally, Gun Rod finds Waguli and convinces him to go back to Oconeechee. Although Waguli was totally addicted to whiskey being sold by the white sellers, his love for Oconeechee encourages him to leave this life of alcoholism behind and start anew. On the way, Gun Road has somewhat difficult time to bring him back to normalcy. He lets him drink limited whiskey after each meal and gradually decreases

the quantity till a point when Waguli himself says he no longer wants it. Though Gun Road dies after they have reached his cabin at Horseshoe Bend, Waguli meets Oconeechee and settles with her in the house near the pool where he first saw her. The land was registered in Wil Usdi's name and he had allowed Oconeechee to use it as her own.

Thus, the novel concludes on a positive a note of reunion of Waguli and Oconeechee who start a new life even though the memory of the past and its echoes continue throughout. The healing process of Waguli from alcoholism stands for the process of coming to term of our traumatic past. It is a process of healing that is so crucial to deal with the past atrocities no matter how horrendous the past may have been, there's no option but to embrace it and to have an open discussion on it. Denial and neglect do not lead us anywhere instead the wounds of the past evils just fester. This is what has been the case of Native American genocide about which the official historical discourses are either tightlipped or unfairly inaccurate. The author of this novel has broken this long period of awkward silence by discussing the issues of relocation process by bringing together the factual details and fictional maneuvering to the text. Most of the events delineated in the narrative and evidenced in the historical documents are in the most part genocidal in nature. Moreover, these events can also be called the paradigm of evils that deprive people of the basics needed to make their life or death decent.

Chapter Four

Portrayal of Genocide in *Pushing the Bear*

Pushing the Bear, as its subtitle says, is a novel of the Trail of Tears that chronicles the brief and dissonant segments of testimony from a large number of Cherokee, forced to march 900 miles from North Carolina to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) during the winter of 1838-39. The novel, through its multiple narrative voices, offers vivid details of the cruel march of some 11000 to 13000 Cherokees who did not abide by the 1835 Treaty of New Echota signed by some leaders of Cherokee nation agreeing to move to the west of the Mississippi. It was really a cruelest thing possible to round up all the villagers without any prior notice and make them leave all their possessions behind and go to a strange land during the coldest part of winter with insufficient provision of food and clothes. Although the young and physically fit people could endure the hardship, it was the children, the old, and the sick who really suffered a lot from such a hell-like situation that was far worse than death. Bordering on the fact and fiction, the novel with its "fragmented story line keeps readers in the painful present of the Cherokee ordeal" (Miner 13).

Although the novel has multiple narrative voices, the most prominent one is of Maritole--a young Cherokee woman farmer, from whose details we get into the deepest experience of the trail. As the group of some eleven to thirteen thousand Cherokees marched for four long months of winter, more than “one quarter of these people disappeared or died from starvation, disease, violence, madness, and despair. Clearly this massive removal was a form of genocide" (Miner 13). The harrowing details of the removal are obviously of genocidal nature as per the UN convention's definition of genocide as "the acts committed with intent to destroy in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group."

Moreover, the removal process of the Cherokees can also be viewed as a by-product of modernity which, according to Zygmunt Bauman, has four features namely "nationalism, scientific racism, technological complexity, and bureaucratic rationalization" (289). Such view considers the process of settler colonialism and greed for resources to be the important motivating factors of genocidal crimes. Likewise, form a philosophical point of new, such acts of cruelty and inhumanity can also be viewed as the paradigm of atrocity. Claudia Card defines the paradigm of atrocity as “a harm that is reasonably foreseeable, culpably inflicted and that deprives, or seriously risks depriving others of the basics that are necessary to make a life possible and tolerable or decent (or make a death decent)" (16). The fictional representation of the atrocities perpetrated on the Cherokee plays an important role to play to foreground the genocidal intent of the actions of the perpetrators and to let the victims have their say. Moreover, the novel also takes the readers to a metaphorical journey of the Trail where they can see, hear, and feel both the vices and virtues of the characters, their pain and suffering, dreams and aspirations. It allows them to appreciate the acts of genuine love, kindness, humanity, and make ethical denunciation of hatred, cruelty and inhumanity.

The novel opens with Maritole's account of the circumstance in which they were rounded up by the soldiers without any prior notice. They came “with their rifles and bayonets" and her husband Knobowtee told her to carry the crying baby because they "were going to a stockade in Tennessee" (1). It was the place where all the Cherokees were being gathered to be marched to the Indian Territory. The suddenness of the seizure was made more painful by the fact that the Cherokees were made to leave behind all their land, house and other possessions to which they were so deeply attached. The banishment from North Carolina was not just an act of relocation as it

appeared to the white settlers, but it was, as Valerie miner puts, also "dislocation from the climate, diet and seasonal rites central to the agrarian people" (13). It was also the matter of their cultural root that they valued more than anything. So Maritole protests:

> They couldn't remove us. Didn't the soldier know we were the land? The cornstalks were out grandmothers. In our story of corn, a woman named Selu had been murdered by her sons. Where her blood fell, the corn grew. The cornstalks waved their arms trying to hold us. Their voices were the long tassels reaching the air. Our spirits hung to them. Our roots entwined. (4)

Her protest expressed as an emotional outburst clearly shows how deeply attached the Cherokees are to their land. The Native Americans instead of viewing land as their possession they identify themselves to the land and say that they belong to the land, not the land belongs to them.

Then Maritole's husband Knobowtee tries to reason why the whites were removing them from their own land. He believes that "the white men were still angry that [they] had joined the British during the revolutionary war. The gold was discovered in northern Georgia near Dalongah, and the white men wanted it. They also wanted our farms" (4). He smells a combination of political and economic interests behind the massive relocation of the Cherokees.

The narrative strands get more diverse as the more members of the trail share their own versions of testimony. The soldiers' words like "Corporal, there's another cabin in the trees", "Don't let 'em get out the back" clearly show how determined they are to get every single Cherokee out of their territory (5). The Cherokees know, as Quaty Lewis's husband says, that "[a] whole nation would move" to the west of the Mississippi and it is evident that it was an act of atrocity perpetrated on the basis of

their group identity i.e. who they are rather than what they do. It's the cultural arrogance of the Euro-Americans that deemed the Cherokees to be savage people incapable of exploiting the abundant resources available there and therefore unfit to live close to the settlements of the civilized whites. This process of removal was full of terror and cruelty from the very beginning. Nobody dared to ask any question to the white soldiers because they didn't understand each other's language but more importantly due to the terror created by the soldiers who didn't think the Cherokees deserved any human treatment. As they march toward the stockade, they witness numerous acts of brutality. Quaty Lewis narrates an act of cruelty in the following words:

> The soldiers beat an old man on the road. He bowed under the weight of the bundle on his back. This turban fell. This legs wobbled as he tried to stand but couldn't. The soldiers beat him harder with the whip to make him get up. The women cried, but the Cherokee men looked away. The soldiers didn't stop hitting him. No one could do anything. The old man struggled once more to get up but fell back to the ground. The soldiers told the Cherokee to walk around him and pushed the Cherokee with their bayonets. (10)

It is a disturbing account of atrocity imposed on a weak, old Indian who is beaten mercilessly. It also displays the helplessness of other Cherokee men who have no option but to be the silent spectators of the injustice and cruelty.

Their journey continued with more acts of cruelty and heart-touching cries of children and women like Maritole who had so many questions to ask but there was no answer. The soldiers didn't even allow them to cry. As Maritole says, "[t] he soldiers ordered us to be quiet with words we didn't always know. They walked among us and

poked with bayonets"(11). But Maritole wondered: "How could we be quiet when we were torn away from everything we'd known?"(11)

She further mourned the fact that "children had been separated from their parents by accident. Wives could not find their husbands. I could not find my parents in camp. Where was Thomas, my younger brother? Tanner and his family?"(12). She looks for her family members but doesn't find anybody there. The violence continues. In the night Knobowtee reports" [t] he soldiers killed someone" and "in the morning a soldier was sentenced to ten lashes" because "[h]e had stabbed [a] woman with his bayonet" (12).

Next day the soldiers allowed some women to go back to their cabins to get whatever belongings they could carry, Maritole also went. But she reached her cabin only to find that it had already been occupied by the whites. Maritole couldn't believe her eyes! Back in the camp, she chocked to her parents and her husband Knobowtee that their cabin had been occupied by the white settlers. She said, "they were eating supper. I couldn't get any thing. The soldier pulled the cooking pot and blankets out of the cabin otherwise I would have returned even without them" (15). But unfortunately she couldn't get Knobowtee's musket which upset him very much because it was a symbol of his masculinity and identity. Though Maritole didn't do it on purpose, it soured their relationship very much.

As the multiple strands of narrative move ahead, new details of cruelty and betrayal come to the surface. Reverend Bushyhead, a Cherokee Christian priest moving to the west with other Cherokees, talks about how he consoled the Cherokee women like "the widow Teehee and Kee-un-e-ca after they returned to camp with nothing from their farms" because their cabins were either occupied by the whites or

burned down to ashes (24). He also knew that "Quaty Lewis's white husband had stayed behind on her farm and let her go to the new territory with nothing" (24).

After walking for several days, they reached the stockade at Rattlesnake springs. The stockade as Maritole describes, was open under the sky and inside it “seven clans of the Cherokee were crowded together row after row like corn in a field” (31). It was quite a strange sight as “[n] o one spoke. If a child cried, its voice cut the air like whippoorwill at dawn. Goats, chickens, and dogs made their noises. The stockade smelled of urine and fear "(31). It was the place where the Cherokees had been gathered in the summer but due to excessive heat the removal was put off till fall. The description of the stockade and helplessness of the captives echoe the Nazi concentration camp and the plight of the Jews trapped there.

All the narrators have their own saga of suffering and brutality. Maritole shares Luthy's description of a woman who had three small children, and “one of the children was on her back; the other two clung to her crying” but “suddenly she fell on the road. Dead! Her heart must have given out. The soldiers put the three screaming children in the wagon. They left the body by the road” (33). It is another heart rending detail of death and cruelty of the Trail of Tears. Tragic though the death of the mother was, more disturbing was the suffering of the children and their traumatic experience of losing their mother at such tender age. In this way people were dying and were being humiliated even after death. Their life was not decent, their death was more indecent. The number of people in the stockade was very high but there was only one physician, J.H. Hetzel, who shares his experience: "I spend my days tending measles, whooping cough, pleurisy, bilious fevers” on a regular basis but “[t]here’s upward of several thousand Cherokee in the stockade and one physician" (34).

The situation got worse because people "grieved for the farms and families they were leaving and the ancestral burial grounds"(37). It was equally important for people to conduct the last rites of their near and dear ones in a respectable manner. It became more pressing issue as people, especially the old, the children, and the sick continued to die in the stockade. But the white soldiers were not sensitive enough to consider their concern and grievances. An old woman died and was being taken out of the stockade when "someone argued with one of the soldiers about something, probably the old woman's burial"(37). Maritole further says that she "heard shouts and screaming. A warning shot was fired, but the men could not hold their anger. There were more shots and screams" (37). Many people lost their lives in this confrontation just because they wanted proper burial for the dead. But nothing could be done in protest because the soldiers had gun and they could do anything they liked. Tanner says, “some of the soldiers took girls into the woods at night", but nobody had courage to question them (41). They were quite carefree in their dealings with the Cherokee. In fact, they treated them like animals. Although they recalled General Scott’s instruction that there should be "no more injuries", to control them the soldiers would treat them very harshly like the act of a soldier who recklessly “kicked a man and hit another with the flat side of bayonet. The Indian cried out" (42). The torture continued as they walked ahead.

The group of Cherokee reached the Hiwassee River that they had to walk across. Maritole “heard a shout and turned to see a soldier push a man into the water" as if the soldier could do anything that pleased him (54). They crossed the river and continued to march. The weather turned cold and “[r]ain splattered all evening on the wagons", Maritole says and she cried when she saw her “people in wet moccasins” and some others “were without any covering on their feet. The rain plastered [their]

hair to our heads. One man walked without a shirt, his thin shoulders hunched" (58). It was very cold indeed and Maritole's daughter was suffering the most. A woman came and offered to breastfeed the baby because Maritole's milk had dried "but the baby didn't suck. The woman squeezed a few drops of milk on the baby's mouth and it swallowed" (58). It's a heart-warming act of humanity and motherly love that is rarely found in such saga of brutality and suffering. It was not just Maritole's baby that was suffering, there were many who had to spend cold nights outdoor without enough food, clothes and warmth. Even the adults like Maritole were having tough time. Maritole describes her experience in these words:

> The cold sat upon my bones. It was as though I had no clothing. It was as though I had no skin. I was nothing but a bare skeleton walking the path. I felt anger at the soldiers. I felt anger at the people in my cabin. They were using my plates and bowls. Sleeping under my quilts! I cursed them. There was something dark and terrible in the white men. (58)

These lines include Maritole's suffering during the cold days of winter and her feelings of rage at the white settlers who have robbed her of her possessions. Due to the suffering she is having now, mere thought of her cabin and other belongings being used by the occupants makes her curse them.

Death toll continued to rise. Luthy talks about an old woman who "had died during the day" but they had to keep her "body in one of the wagons until [they] could bury her" because "the ground was too rocky and there was no coffin" (66). There were problems everywhere. Maritole says "[t] here was not an outhouse for privacy. The soldiers rode here and there" (66). Though it seems to be an unimportant issue in the face of such sufferings, violation of one's privacy cannot be taken for granted. The

animals used for pulling the wagons and carrying people were also suffering a lot. In a sense their suffering paralleled the suffering of the Cherokee who were relegated to the same position by the whites. The wagon was to go up the hill and “the soldiers beat the animals to get them to pull the wagons up the steep land." when Luthy and Maritole got out of it because they couldn’t see the suffering. (66). And then, “[o] ne horse fell and broke its leg. A soldier shot it” (66). Such insensitive response to the suffering of an animal is identical to the suffering of the Cherokee and the response they would get from the white settlers.

As they moved farther, the condition of Martole’s mother and baby was getting worse and she knew they “were dying. It was only a matter of who would go first" (67). Maritole thought that she must let Knobowtee know that the baby was dying but his response was "[t] he better for her"(68). This uncommon response of a father shows the impact of the brutality of the removal process on the victims who have lost the all the human feelings and emotions. Moreover, it also sheds light on the intensity of the suffering of the baby that a father reaches a point to say that it is better for his daughter to die. In the evening Maritole fell asleep maybe, because of fatigue and when she woke, she found her mother had died. Her brother Tanner and his wife Luthy were crying.

On the one had people are suffering and dying day by day, on the other hand the soldiers are indulged in callous conversation. One of them says "look at that old bastard who can hardly stand” while another wonders, "Why don’t we just kill ’ em all right here?" and yet another adds, "Do the country a favor" (70). It shows what the real perception of the white government and its bureaucracy was of the Native Americans and their suffering.

Most of the Cherokee men were not able to fathom the complexity of the situation and were expressing their dissatisfaction at those 35 men who had "signed away land that belonged to seventeen thousand Cherokees "(75). They tried hard to figure out what they should really have done. They wondered, “we farmed to prove we were civilized then they took our farms" (75). This remark implies that the removal process was drenched in the greed of the settlers who were craving for the farms the Indians had been tending for so many years.

As they reached the north of the Cumberland Mountains in Tennessee, the snow turned into a blizzard. It was really difficult for them to bear the cold without sufficient warm clothes. “More people had died in the night", Maritole recounts, "[t] the men carried their bodies to a wagon, the soldiers wanted to leave the dead unburied beside the trail" (79). There was some argument over it but finally the principal soldier decided to carry the body along. People were getting more and exhausted but they had no option but to move. Maritole thought "[t] here was no reason to move" for "[t] here were too many wagons full of the dead” and they could not bury them because “the ground was frozen” so they “argued each day with the soldiers against leaving the bodies by the trail" (81). But even in such situation, the white men's greed for money was still the same. Maritole says, "[a] t nights the white men sold some of our men whiskey, and they were sick with it in the next morning" (81).

The situation was so horrible that selflessness was always punished and being selfish was the only way to survive a little longer. Maritole recounts the event of a cold night when a "woman gave her blanket to a child she saw shivering. She went back to a place in camp and sat against a tree in the cold. The next day she died of pneumonia as my mother and baby had done" (81). Having seen deaths so frequently,

Maritole began to think “[i] t was easy to die" (81). Indeed, it was easy to die for people like her who "owned nothing now but a brutal march through the cold with needles of ice hitting [their] faces" (82). As the march continued, the toll mounted up. Maritole further describes the horrific sitruafion in the following words:

> People continued to die every day especially children and the old ones. Soldiers brought wood from towns we came to. Sometimes more than one was buried in the coffins our men made. Sometimes there were no coffins at all. The next day more people had died, and more bodies were piled under a blanket in the wagons. It seemed we would never get them buried (84).

It is definitely a most horrible situation human beings can imagine themselves to be inwhen life is full of misery humiliation, and death is totally stripped of its honor.

The Cherokees had left all their land behind against their wish but on their way to the new territory they had to collect money to pay the white farmers who "want money for Indians walking through their land" (85). Knobowtee makes a sarcastic remark that "[t] hey think we will steal their stock. They say the top soil is disrupted. They want compensation. One Cherokee had been shot refusing to pay" (91). It is quite interesting to see the double standard of the white Americans and irony enbedded in it that those who wouldn't want their top soil be disrupted by the savage Indians have grabbed the land of the same Indians so greedily without any qualm.

But unfortunately the Cherokees are divided into Tennessee and Georgia groups and they even fight with each other. There was another feud between Knobowtee and Sergeant Williams who had been nice to Maritole since the beginning of the journey when women were allowed to go back to their cabins to collect their

belongings. Throughout the trail, Williams treated her a bit softly and helped her as and when it was possible. He is the only white character who debunks the generalization that all whites are necessarily evil. Instead, he has shown a possibility of having human feelings, concerns and relationships even in times of hostility. However, Knobowtee couldn't put up with this soldier's closeness to his wife Maritole, even if Knobowtee was staying away from her since she came back from their cabin without his musket. The situation became tense once again when "[t] the soldiers threw the bodies out of the wagon" not caring the feelings of the bereaved (96). At this point, Knowbowtee attacked "a soldier who threw a dead body to the ground" and Tanner, Maritole's brother "tried to stop Knobowtee, the two began fighting" (96). Maritole's father tried to stop them but could not. Finally, the principal soldier fired a warning shot and stopped them.

But such trials had some positive impact on the people who went through it. The fights among the Cherokee were mainly the expression of suppressed anger and resentment against the white perpetrators and those Cherokees who had colluded with them. The hardships and suffering ironically renewed their "appreciation for the individual within the community and the community within the individual" and with the painful act of "leaving their land behind, they come to recognize not only what they have lost, but what they still have in one another" (Miner 13). This tragic event provided them with a good opportunity of soul searching that made them realize that "[w] e become human beings through our trials" (99). It is a bright side of otherwise bleak and gloomy tale of human suffering and injustice. It must be such transformation of the victims that give a sense of optimism even in a overwhelmingly pessimistic scenario. This can be traced in Martole, who despite all the trials and tribulations she has had, believes that "[t] he Cherokee would come together as a

nation again no matter what Knobowtee said. No matter what turmoil came after the resettlement" (102).

As the temperature of the winter days was hitting low, the relationship between Knobowtee and Maritole too was also getting colder day by day. Knobowtee felt utterly dispossessed when he lost the land he was plowing, his community and cultural root, and his only possession in the matrilineal household of his wife Maritole's--the musket. Moreover, his sense of dispossession was heightened by the white soldier Sergeant Williams's romantic interest in his wife who seems to have reciprocated the soldier's feelings. Maritole seems to be in a state of confusion: whether to view the white soldier as the enemy of all the Indians or to respect his humane concerns and feelings. There are numerous instances of such dilemma among the characters who are confused about their own Indian spiritualism and the new religion Christianity. However, such state of disorientation is quite natural in the face of such traumatic experience of being uprooted from the land of their ancestors. Maritole is overwhelmed by the grief of the deaths she is compelled to watch as a spectator. To her even ["t]he earth seemed cleared away" and she thought that "the earth must be dying too" (107) However, Knobowtee has different thing to complain about. He seems to be better informed about the political things that were in the backdrop of the removal. He talks about the deception they were doomed to bear:

> We had been cheated out of our land just as the Cherokee were who had volunteered to go earlier. Families had been lost children ran into the woods Mothers were not permitted to get them. One deaf and dumb Cherokee had been shot because he couldn't understand the orders. (106)

This shows that the ones who had migrated earlier did not fare better than this group of Cherokee who had refused to abide by the treaty of 1835. It also shows that the government was not at all concerned about the well being of the Indians who opted for the migration.

To Maritole, the trail proved to be an opportunity to explore the different shades of human nature both of others and her own. She saw a large number of people from a town staring at them as they marched as if "it was alright to drive [them] from [their] land. Then it was all right to sit along the road and watch the spectacle of [their] march" (112). But at the same time, she also realizes "that dark thing was in all of us" because she was going on without her baby and whenever she missed her, she "thought how it was easier to walk without her" (112). She also questioned herself how she could "talk to the soldier whose job it was to push [them] from our land" (112). Although it seems to be unacceptable behavior on the surface, on a deeper level it was a victory of humanity in the sense that she was transcending the narrow boundaries to view others as fellow human beings. This bond gets further strengthened when Sergeant Williams offers her clothes to wear. Despite the objection from her father, brother and her husband Knobowtee, she cannot ignore the white soldier. She describes her experience of being helped by him in the following words:

> My father had told me it was wrong to bury the dead without their clothes. But the soldiers took my foot to pull up some trousers. I jerked my foot up and down so she couldn't get ahold of it. He was over me. I felt his weight holding me down. The way Knobowtee came over me when he loved me. When the soldier buttoned the trousers around my waist he pulled my skirt down. He put another shirt on me. Then a man's short coat. He wrapped me in a blanket. He held me in the dark.

> He rubbed my feet with his hands held them against his chest inside his jacket. He buried my face against him. For once the shivering stopped and I lay quietly against him. (117)

This description of generosity shown by Williams towards Maritole, though loathed by all the Cherokees marching along the trail, can be taken as a silver lining of the otherwise dark cloud of the removal process. Besides fostering positive feelings, it also shows the possibility of a human relationship even in a most troubled time.

Maritole also narrates the experience of being helped by the local people when they reach Hopkinsville, Kentucky. She says that "[t]he townspeople gave [them] blankets and boots. They gave [them] coffins. They cooked for [them] and at night there was shelter" (121). Williams showed his concern to Maritole as usual and told her to go inside and sleep comfortably but she thought the "old people and the mother with their small children needed it more" (121). Maritole's brother Tanner warned her to "[s]tay away from that soldier" but she reminded him that they were given clothes by him (121). When they left Hopkinsville, Maritole says "[t]heir kindness had been like salt on an open wound. There was something about it that stung" (122).It is a very touching detail of their traumatic experience of being hurt by the acts of generosity at a time when cruelty has become the norm.

But such pleasant moments of love and joy are by nature momentary. When they reached the Ohio River, it was full of ice and they had to wait on the river bank till the ice melted. But it didn't. One day, a man named Evan Jones said that "[they] would die unless [they] began crossing the river" and he assured that '[h]e had prayed and his prayer would hold [them] up" (142). Maritole describes the disastrous crossing of the Ohio in the following words:

> He started three wagons loaded with old ones and sick ones across a frozen place in the Ohio. One wagon almost made it before the ice

> gave way and the three wagons overturned dumping their passengers into the river. We heard their screams and watched them flail in the water before they sank. We cried out to them. One of the men from the shore jumped across the ice and into the cold water to save them, but they were gone. More people died in the cold waiting to cross. Even the pack dogs died of hunger. (142)

This disaster is but one in a long series of death and destruction that constitute the disturbing details of the Trail of Tears. It shows how the lives of the Cherokees were wasted as if they were not humans and their suffering and death did not mean anything to others.

After this disaster, they waited for several days and when the ice melted a bit, the rest of them crossed the river on the ferry, the rafts and small boats and continued their journey. But the Ohio was not the only river the group had to cross; there were others too. Like in the Ohio, there was snow in the Mississippi as well and they had to wait till it melted. Maritole says, "[m]any more of us died waiting for the ice to pass" (160). However, the journey didn't stop. It continued with more deaths and suffering and more revelations of human nature at the same time. Maritole talks about a soldier "Private Raburt, who had joined the march somewhere in Tennessee, drank and gambled with the Cherokee men and won whatever they had" not sparing the blankets they needed so badly in those cold days and later "he'd sell them to someone else"(165). Such example of meanness shows to what extent people can stoop low for their petty interests. But the survivors did not let the despair get better of them. They celebrated their "new year with the Keetoowah fire in the fall" and a leader spoke of their "legend of the Phoenix, who rose from the ashes like [they] would in the new land" (165).

Moreover, in course of the tough journey the kindness of Sergeant Williams towards Maritole drew them close to each other. Though all the Cherokees were against their friendship, Maritole couldn't resist the feelings of love and attraction she was so badly seeking from her husband, Knobowtee. She started to compare Knobowtee's callousness with the soldier's kindness and care in time of such hardship that was almost beyond tolerance. In one of the encounters, Maritole says "she let him touch and [l]et him enter" (167). She further admits, "I gave him my life in the dark" (167). This particular episode of intimacy is quite antithetical to the ongoing march of genocidal nature, yet it exemplifies the power of human relationships that survives the most trying experiences of life. But this episode of Williams- Maritole intimacy caused ripples on the otherwise somber march of the Cherokee. Knobowtee was the one to react most aggressively ending up fighting with Williams. Maritole says "later that day Williams was relieved of duties as easily as if he were an Indian removed from the land" (171). It was very difficult for Mantole to let him go. Knobowtee feels betrayed by his wife, cuckolded by the white soldier and disenfranchised by the United States government and realizes the power of the state and his helplessness as an individual. He ponders:

> The United States government had called itself mighty. It had a Declaration of Independence. A Bill of Rights. A Constitution. A President. A Congress. A Creed of Manifest Destiny. The God of their Father had heard their words. He had set spiritual boundaries over their country that couldn't be seen. A nation had been established. Hadn't the Cherokees felt it? Wasn't that why they were quick to farm, to form new government? (173)

These reflections indicate how the removal process was planned and carried out as per the systematic plan and policy of the government who had a complex structure of bureaucracy and other administrative as well as security apparatus at its disposal.

As an expression of growing discontent and rage, Knobowtee, O-ga-na-ya and other Cherokee men beat Private Raburt unconscious and later "[h]e died in the night" (177). With such sporadic cases of violent retaliation, aggression, and death and they continued to move. It was not only an external journey which was very harsh and fatal, but also a journey within that revealed many things to the people involved, those things they would never know otherwise. Referring to the central image of the title "bear", Maritole shares her contemplations:

> But deep inside myself where the bear walked, I felt my legs jump with exhaustion. I made a thought song. It was more than words. It was feelings woven with a command. It was the spark of firelight in the dark. The bear had once been a person. But he was not conscious of the consciousness he was given. His dankness was greed and self-centeredness. It was part of myself, too. It was in all of us. It was part of the human being. Why else did we march? No one was free of the bear. (183)

It was this realization that made the participants of the trail more human in the truest sense. It may be the reason for Maritole to identify her genuine feelings and real strength with which she wanted to live. She expresses her desire in these plain words: "I wanted my own life away from Knobowtee. I wanted the soldier but I knew I wouldn't see him again" (183).

The journey continued with some more cases of murder and the extension of the same suffering and torture. Quaty Lewis talks about the disappearance of Kee-un-

e-ca to which Anna Sco-so-tah says “[t]he soldiers took her into the gully and killed her” (190). On the other hand, Knobowtee gradually comes to term with the trauma of being cuckolded by the white soldier. He accepts whatsoever happened between Maritole and Williams and thinks that Maritole “was a reminder that [he] was always dissatisfied with life” (194). Nevertheless, it was the first step toward the change of his heart. And the change he is undergoing is reflected in the view of the trees in the creek that let him “see another view of the trees” and he wonders “[h]ow it changed the way [he] saw” (207).

Knobowtee recalls his childhood experience of fishing with his father. He remembers how he bit into the fish as soon as it was out of the fire” and now realizes that “he ate too much too quickly” and burned his mouth and when he tried to “cool it by taking cool breaths” he “had choked” so his father had to beat him “on the back to get [him] to breath”(207). He knows, “[h]unger could do that. Maybe the white man had a hunger that made him take more than he needed. Maybe it would choke him” too (207).

It was indeed a state of spiritual awareness that Knobowtee was experiencing. He took it as the Great Spirit’s lesson. He thought “[n]othing was [his]. [He] would receive and lose in the same breath. The burden the white man carried was that he didn’t know the lesson yet” (207). It was at this point that he thought about his baby daughter and felt he was choking again.

With Williams relieved from his duty, Knobowtee with a changed heart, and Maritole’s father’s effort to save her marriage showed a possibility of their reunion. But Maritole’s father died before he could make it happen. Once again Maritole was totally devastated. In the mean time Knobowtee's mother was also dying. So he called Maritole into his family camp. She began to think even though the soldier had been

close to her and Knobowtee "had too many eyes always on others" she was "Knobowtee's wife" and "[t] hat was legal" (216). When Knobowtee saw Maritole "take off the trousers the soldier put on her" he "sang a song for Maritole" (219). The month of their new year October was coming and Knobowtee told Maritole that she "got till October to hold her grudge" (221). He too reached the stage to identify with Maritole as he began to feel the presence of bear inside him:

> There was a bear larger than the one Maritole pushed. It was greed. *I'm going to have it all. I'm going to push them out of the way.* It stretched over the land. I knew it now because of all the farms I saw along the trail. They would even come into Indian Territory. Push the Cherokee over there, too. It would only be a matter of time. It was in the heart of man. (221)

It indicates a transformation in Knobowtee's way of thinking and it may the experience of other participants of the trail as well. It shows that the Trail of Tears was not only an external journey but it was a spiritual journey within that changed the way people viewed themselves and the world.

In the meantime, Konbowtee had a dream in which Maritole's father told him that "life was more than the trail"(221). He further asked Knobowtee to take care of his daughter. When he told it to Maritole and proposed her to start over in the new territory, they gradually began to reconcile. When they finally reached the Indian Territory, Knobowtee looked at the trees there and recalled the trees along the creek and in North Carolina. He thinks that "[t]he spoken words were the real trees. The written words were merely their reflection in the creek" and he lambasts all the written documents including the treaties between the US government and the Indians to be fraudulent and claims that "[t]hey had cheated with their written words" (228).

Finally, their group reached the Indian Territory and as per the promise of the War Department they were supposed to get “subsistence for a year after the arrival but the government contractors Glascaw and Harrison decided to make a profit and delivered inferior meat and flour. Many died” (230). Knobowtee and Maritole built a cabin where they had two orphans—a boy and a girl adopted as their children. The novel ends with Maritole’s description of new life in the new place: “At night the children slept against us, crying sometimes in their sleep. Knobowtee and I held them between us. Maybe someday he would touch me. Maybe someday love would come” (233).

Although the novel ends on a positive note of reconciliation of Maritole and Knobowtee after a long suffering and separation of the long bitter trail, it abounds with the graphic details of suffering, brutality, and death of a large number of Cherokee Indians. Opening with the incident of the Cherokee villages being rounded up by the soldiers, the novel moves ahead with the multiple narrators with their own testimonies of the atrocity perpetrated upon them, their feelings and responses, mourning and wishes, hopes and despairs expressed through the numerous narrative strands that defy the traditional pattern of linearity in plot. In a sense the structure of the novel itself is a strong note of dissent to the old ways of the civilized nation that operated on the basis of cold rationality and calculating attitude of financial gain that were at the heart of the settler colonialism. With their self-proclaimed notion of Manifest Destiny, the white Americans did everything to get rid of the Native Americans who, in their view, were savage people incapable of living a civilized life. Interestingly enough, the socio-cultural and political progress the Cherokees had made with their nation couldn't satisfy the white leaders like Andrew Jackson who carried out the removal process under his presidency The novel set in the background of such bleak and traumatic historical event, foregrounds the voices and experiences

of the Cherokee victims, mainly through the characters of Maritole and Knobowtee and shows that the Trail of Tears was a systematic campaign of the White Euro-American culture that is based on a self-asserted notion of superiority over other cultures and groups. Their campaign was primarily motivated by the greed of land and other resources although Georgia's threat to leave the union unless the Cherokees are sent to the Indian Territory played an important role in the Cherokee removal. However, the evil acts of violence, brutality and murder represented in the novel are the atrocities of genocidal nature.

Chapter Five

Conclusion: The Trail of Tears Genocide of the Cherokees

Pushing the Bear and *Mountain Windsong*, two American novels of the Trail of Tears analyzed in this dissertation represent the experiences of the Cherokee who were forced to leave their land and other possessions behind and go to the Indian Territory, to the west of the Mississippi. The removal process of a group of some eleven to thirteen thousand Cherokees, out of which more than one third died during the process, can be viewed as an act of genocide even though there is no consensus in the use of the term Native American genocide. However, on the basis of the basic concept of genocide as propounded by Rephael Lemkin, the definitions of the UN Convention and other genocide scholars, sociological perspective of genocide-modernity nexus and the philosophical understanding of such crime as an evil in its worst possible form, the fictional representation f the entire process of Cherokee removal including its antecedents and consequences represented in these novels, is genocidal in nature.

However, the American government, that mostly represents the perpetrators of the process, and the Euro-American culture of the United States considered as the mainstream culture, have not acknowledged the Native American tragedy as genocide. These novels analyzed in the dissertation expose the atrocities perpetrated on the Native Americans, the Cherokees in particular, in course of their forceful relocation process basically from the victims' perspective. The writers have used multiple narrative voices that tell us about the experiences of the fictional characters that also resemble the real people, and a combination of factual details and fictional renderings. These together have created a different type of historiographical novels with the advantage of freedom of imagination and authenticity of history at the same

time. The details of the events represented in these novels may not be taken as an authentic account, but they portray the evils perpetrated on the Native Americans to be genocidal.

The concept of genocide as such evolved in the context of Jewish Holocaust to differentiate the crime of such scale and nature from other crimes like mass murder. Raphael Lemkin first coined the term to refer to the deliberate destruction of a nation or an ethic group on the basis of their collective identity. The term and the concept it carried got international recognition when the UN Convention came up with a definition of genocide as an act of destroying a national, ethnical, racial or religious group whether in time of peace or war. It also includes the acts like killing the members of group, causing serious physical and mental harm, causing the physical destruction in whole or in part, forced sterilization and transferring children, etc. UN Convention stated that not only genocide but the conspiracy, attempt and collusion to commit genocide are all punishable. The violence and other forms of injustice perpetrated on the Cherokee Indians were not carried out on individuals' levels. They were targeted as a group, were compelled to leave their land and property behind and were marched to the west of the Mississippi.

When we observe the events of the Cherokee removal as represented in the novels *Mountain Windsong* and *Pushing the Bear*, we find that the native people were targeted as a group, were compelled to leave their land and properties behind, and were marched to the alien land called Indian Territory. Rather than the individual enmity, American government's concern was with the native Indians' collective identity and they dealt with them accordingly. Although we cannot say for sure that the American government had planned to exterminate all the Native Americans from the face of the earth in the way Nazi did with the Jews; from the way they dealt with

the Indians during the relocation process it seems that they would have had no regrets even if all the Indians had perished. The brutality and violence, the sense of callousness they displayed toward the women, children, the old, the sick, and the helpless people in general indicate that the US government was determined to get rid of the Indians regardless of its cost and consequences. Nevertheless, it is important to mention the difficulty of the federal government to deal with the complicated issue of sovereignty between Cherokee nation and the state of Georgia. The federal government bowed before Georgia's threat of declaring independence from the union if it is not allowed to exercise sovereignty over the Cherokees living within its boundary. However, this politico-legal complication alone does not suffice to exempt the federal government from the responsibility of the violence and deaths that took place in the Cherokee relocation process. The representation of the suffering in the lives of the characters like Waguli and Oconeechee, Maritole and Knobowtee exemplify the sorrow of the Trail of Tears.

It is evident that what the US government primarily wanted was land. They wanted to start and expand new settlements of the whites who they thought were more civilized than the savage natives who were occupying the land. In their view, the Indians were not able to utilize the land and other resources properly because they were still in the hunters' stage. So the US government made a policy of Indian removal to the west of the Mississippi river in order to grab their land. This process of settler colonialism—a byproduct of the larger system of modernity resulted in the death and suffering of a large number of Native Americans, the Cherokee in particular. Bauman's thesis of modernity-genocide nexus is, to a large extent, justified in the Native American context where the government turns its blind eye to the deadly consequences of the land-grabbing campaign that displaced thousands of

Native Americans in the name of relocation. The details of the relocation process, especially the Trail of Tears as represented in the novels *Pushing the Bear* and *Mountain Windsong* clearly show that it was a tragedy that could have been averted had the American government shown a little bit of conscience and humanity. The lives of the Cherokee lost in the relocation process are by no means less precious than the lives of the perpetrators. But the way those lives were wasted and the traumatic experiences the survivors had to go through show the extreme form of callousness and that the entire process was not less harrowing than the Nazi Holocaust.

When viewed from a sociological point of view, we find a nexus between genocide and modernity more specifically the politics of settler colonialism and its greed for resources had an ugly manifestation in the form of genocide. Similarly, the crimes committed during the relocation process of the Cherokee Indians can also be viewed from the perspective of Claudia Card's notion of atrocity paradigm. Putting aside the debate of whether or not to use the term Native American genocide, the torture and violence perpetrated on the Native Americans, the Cherokee in particular, should be treated as a deliberate act of evil that deprives people of the basics they need to have a decent life or to make their death decent. The removal process compelled them to leave their land and other belongings behind and go on a long, cruel march of the Trail of Tears that resulted in the death of more than four thousand people and massive suffering of thousands others. The literary representation of such evils of serious nature called atrocities, in which the crime of genocide is also included, is very poignant in the novels analyzed in the dissertation.

Mountain Windsong—a novel that recounts a heart-rending tale of two Cherokee lovers Waguli and Oconeechee whose scheduled marriage goes ashtray due to the sudden rounding up of the villages by the US soldiers and the subsequent Trail

of Tears that not only separates them, but results in the death of many Cherokees and physical, mental, and emotional torture, loot and burning the houses, sexual exploitation of girls and women, hunger, disease, exposure, exhaustion that constitute the core of the narrative. The writer has included the extracts from the relevant historical documents to create a sense of authenticity of the evils delineated in the novel. All in all, the novel offers heart-touching yet disturbing details of atrocities perpetrated on the Cherokee Indians just because they were deemed unworthy to occupy the land east of the Mississippi because the whites were craving for it. Although the presence of the characters like Gun Rod, Wil Usdi, Wild Cat, Grasshopper, and their acts of kindness and humanity as well as the ultimate union of Waguli and Oconeechee in the same locale of Soto Gap where they had first seen each other gives the novel some bright rays of hope, the details as a whole is a depressing saga of evils imposed upon the group of Cherokee.

In the same way, the novel *Pushing the Bear* also deals with the same historical event of the Cherokee removal. With the multiple narrative strands and voices, the novel begins with the unexpected arrival of the soldiers at Maritole's cabin where she lives with her husband Knobowtee, and their little daughter. The narratives are more like the testimony of the experience of the characters walking the trail.

In the novel, Maritole has occupied greater narrative space followed by her husband Knobowtee. Both of them undergo a great change in course of their journey. Their happy conjugal life comes under threat right after their journey to the stockade starts. Firstly, the very act of making the families living peacefully in a place embark on a long journey to a strange land about 900 miles is highly objectionable in itself, and it was more so to the Cherokees who love their land more than anything else

because they believed that their identity and existence were closely linked to the land where their ancestors had lived and died.

The sorrow of being removed from the land of their origin was made worse by the fatigue of the journey, hunger, torture, disease, desperation, and death. Since the moment Maritole returned from the cottage without Knobowtee's musket and blanket, he starts ignoring her. Their relationship continues to get worse along with the increase in the hardships of the trail. Their relation hits the lowest point when Maritole gives herself to a white sergeant named Williams who shows some genuine feelings of love and concern to her. Death and suffering continue along the journey, and Maritole and Knobowteee lose their only daughter first and then Maritole's parents and Knobowtee's mother die along with many other Cherokees who found the abode of death to be much more comfortable than the harsh and merciless trail. Although in the end Maritole and Knobowtee decide to let go of the past and start over in the new territory, the entire journey is full of pain, suffering, hunger, disease, torture, and overlapping of murders and deaths which overshadow the few instances of kindness and happiness.

Thus, both the novels analyzed in the dissertation, in spite of being the tales of some genuinely human feelings of love, kindness, cooperation, and forgiveness, are primarily the texts that represent the worst possible forms of atrocities orchestrated by the US government and the white citizenry upon the Native Americans who, in their view, were savage people and were not worthy enough for the federal government to risk Georgia's cessation from the union. Such a highly politically and financially motivated campaign of getting rid of the Native Americans was given a better-sounding name--removal process—that resulted in the death of thousands of Cherokee Indians and the suffering of the survivors of the Trail of Tears which can be compared

to the suffering of the Jews in the hands of the Nazi. These two novels analyzed in the dissertation foreground the violence, suffering, and deaths that occurred in the relocation process, expose the atrocities, offer a point of view to the victims and make a strong point that the Cherokee relocation process is above all a Native American holocaust.

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