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Voices That Remember: Narrative Healing, Trauma, Memory and Historic Recovery in Morrison and Erdrich's Work

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Abstract: Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Louise Erdrich's *Tracks*, two renowned works that confront the enduring effects of slavery and American Indian dispossession, are explored in this study with a focus on what is central to storytelling and on how memory functions as a transformative tool. These narratives serve to navigate the emotional pain of remembrance and move forward in reclaiming one's cultural and personal identity, an emotionally challenging yet necessary process. As a way of creating a shared ritual of healing and expression that aids in the healing of racialised trauma, storytelling serves a dual purpose for African American and Native American communities. Through storytelling, suppressed histories are revived, fostering reconciliation and healing. Stories are used to heal in some regions of the world as characters revisit their suppressed pasts and blur the lines between the past and present. Morrison and Erdrich preserve a period when human history was destroyed by restoring histories that historians typically forget. Their stories reveal buried memories and offer psychological healing by illustrating how trauma affects Afro-Americans and Native Americans differently. Stories separate survivors from trauma, helping them recover. Both authors retain historical realities, strengthen beliefs and worldviews, and repair their communities' cultural memory, healing individual traumas, using narrative. In "Voices That Remember," Morrison and Erdrich employ fiction to promote resistance and remembering.

Keywords: Storytelling Process; Cultural Memory; Trauma and Healing; Narrative Therapy; Historical Recovery; Memory Functions; Silenced Histories; Literary Voice; Transformative Tool.

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1. Introduction

Among the most influential literary voices in contemporary American literature, Toni Morrison and Louise Erdrich have woven together not just their cultural similarities but also a shared aesthetic commitment that goes far beyond the idea of restoring silenced histories, uniting them. As an African American writer, Morrison comes from a lineage of African American narrative traditions shaped by violent conflicts over slavery, racial discrimination, and generational traumas. From his perspective as an Ojibwa/Chippewa who has seen colonisation, the theft of land, the forced assimilation of his people, and the erasure of their culture, Erdrich writes. It is important to note that their stories are not unique to their own communities but also symbolise a powerful collective belief: the power of storytelling. Storytelling in both *Beloved* and *Tracks* becomes something more than a

sequence of events; it becomes a collection of cultural memory, a means of transmitting history, a method of healing deeply buried trauma, and a way to resist dominant narratives that distort or erase marginalised voices and experiences [2].

Using the novel as a space to reinvent African American identity, Morrison draws on oral traditions, Black vernacular rhythms, and the nonlinear logic of memory to reinforce it. Rather than utilising standardised narrative styles, she creates a literary language that allows her to convey the trauma of enslavement that mainstream writers have avoided. As she noted in a famous essay, African American writers need to "remember" their histories rather than recall them, suggesting that the past is a powerful force that intrudes on the present until it is acknowledged. A characteristic of Erdrich's novels makes them fit within the Native American context in which they operate. Her work reinterprets the Ojibwa stories in a contemporary form, returning to the circular structure, multiple narrators, and mythic intertextuality that characterised early Ojibwa storytelling. In *Tracks*, storytelling becomes a weapon to fight cultural disappearance, a vehicle to document experiences that colonial history refused to document. Morrison and Erdrich write about different communities, yet both share the same experiences: displacement, cultural silencing, generational trauma, memory fragmentation, survival through communal narrative, and the reclamation of ancestral traditions. Both authors use storytelling as a form of political communication, a healing practice, and a way of preserving a sense of cultural continuity [4].

In this paper, researchers argue that *Beloved* and *Tracks* can be read as narratives that treat narrative as a healing force, restoring individuals and communities fractured by systemic oppression. Using a comparative lens, this study illustrates that storytelling enables characters to confront trauma, reclaim identities, and reconstruct cultural memories, all of which are crucial to resolving trauma. According to both novels, remembering—however painful it is or may be at times—is essential to survive. By using voices that have been silenced in the past, Morrison and Erdrich are expanding the language of memory, preserving cultural knowledge for future generations, and reestablishing important dialogues [6]. The field of literature related to Toni Morrison and Louise Erdrich is vast and rich, encompassing African American literature, Native American literature, trauma theory, memory studies, feminism, and postcolonial discourses. Both authors play a significant role in contemporary American literature because their narratives combine personal history and collective memory into a single narrative. Among its core features are trauma, cultural survival, storytelling, and mythic consciousness, all of which make its works fertile ground for exploring narrative healing in the context of trauma [18]. This review synthesises major critical contributions to situate the present study within the scholarly discourse [8].

2. Morrison and Cultural Memory

2.1. Remembrance and the Reconstruction of Narratives

Morrison [12] occupies a significant place in literary criticism through her concept of remembrance, first introduced in *Beloved* and further emphasised in her work. Many scholars, including McBride [11], posit that Morrison's narrative strategy collapses past and present to foreground the haunting persistence of historical violence. In Peterson's [13] view, Morrison's [12] remembrance opposes a linear understanding of history in favour of communal, living memories that cannot be forgotten or ignored. As Krumholz discussed in her book, Morrison [12] holds the belief that healing can only occur when trauma is spoken aloud in a group atmosphere.

2.2. Trauma in African American Literature

Beloved, according to critics, is literally an embodiment of historical trauma experienced by African Americans through generations. Morrison's ghostly narratives are often examined in relation to Caruth [3] and LaCapra [9] trauma theories, as well as the repetition and traumatic haunting associated with them. Scholars note that Sethe's trauma was not immediate but cumulative over the time of her enslavement, which makes her trauma a collective one [10].

2.3. Telling Stories as a Community

It has become widely accepted that Morrison [12] is credited with reviving African oral traditions - songs, community speeches, question-and-answer sessions, and cyclical narratives. For instance, Rosenblatt [15] explains that Morrison [12] uses oral forms not to enhance the decorative qualities of his work, but to restore African American cultural memory through structural means.

3. Narrative Traditions in Erdrich's Work

3.1. Tribal Stories and Memory

A great deal of attention has been given to Louise Erdrich's *Tracks* for its representation of Anishinaabe storytelling practices. In the study of Indigenous epistemologies, scholars such as Paula Gunn Allen, Gerald Vizenor, and Kimberly Blaeser place a

strong emphasis on spiritual, cyclical, and land-based dimensions. Indigenous stories hold healing power because they encode cultural memory, tribal ethics, and historical information that Allen has encoded in them. Interestingly, Blaeser asserts that storytelling is a form of survivance, an active resistance to the erasure of colonisation.

3.2. Colonisation Trauma

In consideration of *Tracks*, criticism is often centred on the cultural dislocation that has been caused by American federal policies, boarding schools, land dispossession, and missionary intervention over the years. In this story, Vizenor employs three key words to convey his concept of survival: adaptability, memory, and story, all of which contribute to his character's survival.

3.3. Multivocal Narratives

An extensive analysis of Erdrich's dual narratives — Nanapush and Pauline — is undertaken to illustrate the conflict between the two worldviews they represent. Among the Indigenous peoples of North America, Nanapush signifies memory and healing. A representation of colonial trauma and self-erasure can be found in Pauline, the story's protagonist. There has been an argument among scholars that Erdrich's polyphonic narration reflects the fragmentation of Indigenous communities that took place during colonial times, when encroachment was at its height. A similar fragmentation can be seen in the ways Nanapush and Pauline embody conflicting responses to colonialism. While Nanapush strives to preserve Indigenous traditions and promote resilience, Pauline's actions emphasise the psychological and cultural harm inflicted by assimilation and loss.

3.4. Morrison and Erdrich: Comparative Studies

While numerous studies have been conducted on both authors individually, comparative studies are surprisingly rare. Due to the thematic similarities in their works, such as identity, cultural heritage, and the interplay between individual and collective memory, one might wonder why there haven't been more comparative studies. To gain a deeper understanding of their literary contributions and shared influences, it would be valuable to explore these connections. A few critics, however, have drawn parallels between the oral storytelling of African Americans and Native Americans, noting that there are many shared values between the two groups. It has been noted that Morrison and Erdrich both construct narratives of trauma and survival that are centred on female characters. It will explore topics such as generational trauma, land, body, and memory; narrative as resistance; the intersection of history and myth; and communal healing practices, to emphasise specific themes. Consequently, the present study is justified, as there is no direct comparative research to support this claim.

4. Theoretical Framework

The focus of this study is on four primary theoretical frameworks: Trauma Theory, Memory Studies, Postcolonial Theory, and Indigenous Theory, all of which are developed from the trauma literature. In Morrison's *Beloved* and Erdrich's *Tracks*, researchers can use different conceptual frameworks to analyse narrative healing in each piece.

4.1. Trauma Theory

Trauma Theory emerged prominently in the work of Sigmund Freud, who emphasised trauma as repetition and repression, Caruth [3], who stressed the notion of unclaimed trauma, LaCapra [9], who emphasised the distinction between structural and historical trauma, and Judith Herman, who described trauma recovery as being a three-stage process – remembrance, safety, and reconnection. Considering trauma theory, it is argued that trauma disruption results in the formation of gaps, silences, fragments, and haunting repetitive patterns of memory following traumatic events. In the context of trauma treatment, storytelling is most often used to heal the wounds caused by trauma partially. A narrative can be used to enable victims to deal with trauma for a variety of reasons, such as expressing unbearable pain in words, reclaiming agency, and moving from haunting to meaning-making. The same story embodies this therapeutic narrative function as Morrison's remembrance and Erdrich's tribal tales. Morrison's remembrance and Erdrich's tribal tales are two examples of therapeutic narratives that embody this therapeutic narrative function in the same way. It is through these narratives that individuals can confront their pain, reconfigure their understanding of the past, and ultimately find a path to healing and resilience.

4.2. Memory Studies

There is a controversy in the field of individual vs collective memory: key figures include Maurice Halbwachs, whose theory holds that memory is social and collective. Schreiber [16] argues that memory is a place, and Jan Assmann believes that cultural memory is preserved through generations. Both authors illustrate an interplay between culture and personal memory. Interplay like this illustrates how social and cultural contexts influence memories, while cultural symbols and narratives often shape collective memories. Both perspectives emphasise the complex interplay between individual experiences and culture in the

creation and preservation of memories, as well as the dynamic relationship between them. Memory is a powerful tool for resisting oppression; in oppressed communities, it preserves suppressed histories. There is a counter-narrative to the dominant narratives of different nationalities. This enables silenced communities to regain their dignity. In Morrison's writing, enslaved voices are revived.

In Erdrich's work, researchers are resurrected, their work erased by colonisers, and the tribes' history is erased. By reclaiming their narratives, challenging erasure, and asserting their identity through memory as a form of resistance, marginalised communities have a better opportunity to do so. The preservation of suppressed histories allows memory to become a tool for fostering social justice and solidarity, and for inspiring future generations to stand against injustice and demand reparations. It is well known that trauma can collapse time: the past invades the present and may even become part of it. This could explain both Morrison's [12] ghost-filled narrative and Erdrich's cyclical tribal temporality. Throughout the book, researchers see how the effects of past trauma play out in the present, emphasising the long-term impact of historical injustices and the persistence of trauma. Throughout their writings, both authors illustrate how memory serves as a bridge between present and past events, enabling communities to understand and heal their collective pain and overcome their collective hardships.

4.3. Postcolonial Theory

It explores power, dominance, and the violence of colonialism, cultural erasure, and language politics, as well as identity formation under oppression, with a focus on narrative resistance. The key theorists are Tate [19], who studies hybridity and cultural negotiation, Frantz Fanon, who studies psychological violence resulting from colonisation, and Gayatri Spivak, who studies the representation of subaltern voices. The story of the *Beloved* portrays colonisation because of slavery. During the *Tracks*, land is taken from the natives, and they are made to assimilate into Christianity. Postcolonial theory suggests that there are three main reasons for the silence of African American and Native American voices: how colonial ideologies were internalised, and how identity was reclaimed through storytelling. There is no doubt that the painful effects of colonisation on marginalised communities are vividly illustrated in these narratives, as well as the struggle to reclaim identity and resist the gradual erasure of cultural heritage. Through storytelling, these voices challenge dominant ideologies and assert their memories, experiences, and struggles as acts of defiance and empowerment in the face of systemic oppression.

4.4. Indigenous Theory

An Indigenous Theory identifies relationships, the interconnectedness of the land, spirit, and people, narrative as a ceremony, and oral knowledge systems as universally shared. Among the key theorists used in this study are Vizenor [20]. The term "survival" in Vizenor's book combines the concepts of survival and resistance. In Erdrich's *Tracks*, survival is expressed through humour, storytelling, a sense of connection to the land, and ancestors' memories. In indigenous cosmologies, healing is not regarded as something that occurs to an individual but rather as a communal process, memory is passed from one generation to the next, and stories are medicine. Considering Nanapush's narrative role within this framework adds new meaning to the analysis. These two theoretical frameworks, when combined, illuminate the key insights of your research: Trauma Theory provides the fullest account of psychological wounds. Stories are explained in Memory Studies as a way of preserving cultural history. According to the Postcolonial Theory, these traumas are the result of systems of oppression operating behind them. In addition to cultural healing practices and oral traditions, Indigenous Theory emphasises oral history. Their relationship illuminates Morrison's and Erdrich's use of storytelling not only as a means of artistic expression but also as a tool for narrative healing when together.

5. Narrative Healing and Cultural Recovery in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

Morrison's [12] *Beloved* 1987 stands out as an inspiring novel that explores trauma, memory, and the reconstruction of identity through storytelling. As the novel's core theme, it explores both the psychological and cultural consequences of historical violence on African Americans and their communities, highlighting both the long-term effects and long-term consequences of slavery. The writer situates the process of remembering-the act she calls "remembrance"-as a driving force in narrative healing, showing how chronic trauma can be faced and processed when witnessed and rememorized, facilitating a recovery process for the individual and for the community at large. Throughout *Beloved*, Morrison uses fragmented and nonlinear narrative structures that, when read in sequence, reflect the disjointed and cyclical nature of traumatic memories, a characteristic of his writing. Throughout the novel, the reader experiences Sethe's recollections alongside the narrative unfolding in the immediate timeline of the novel as Sethe's memories alternate with those from the past. In many cases, such structural choices are deliberate: they reflect the way trauma often surfaces unexpectedly, intruding on an individual's daily activities and requiring an acknowledgement of its existence.

This narrative technique is one of Morrison's most effective tools because it invites the reader to take part in the story; they must piece together the fragmented histories and stories of her characters, much as Sethe herself must reconstruct her identity

from fragments of her past. Consequently, reading can be seen as a way to witness the past together and contribute to the memory of historical events. A collection of Sethe's past experiences is a good example of the mental burden that slavery imposes upon victims as well as the difficulties of dealing with unspeakable traumas. To protect herself from reliving her violent past, which also revealed the loss of her two children, she initially repressed these memories as a protective strategy. Morrison writes: *"Every mention of her past life hurt. Everything in it was painful or lost"* [12]. *This* repression is externalised in the novel through a ghostly embodiment, *Beloved,* who marries Sethe and her dead daughter and represents the unassimilated, haunting memories that cannot be ignored, made more powerful by *Beloved's* ghostly presence. *Beloved's* presence, both physical and mental, emphasises something very important about our modern society: the idea that the past continually disrupts the present when unacknowledged and unresolved.

Therefore, Morgan's narrative suggests that healing depends upon confronting and articulating trauma to heal, which echoes with contemporary trauma theory. Judith Herman's model of trauma recovery emphasises the importance of bearing witness and sharing painful experiences in a supportive social context as a prerequisite to healing [7]. Furthermore, Morrison emphasises that healing is a collaborative process that involves many people. Through the ritual at the Clearing, created by Baby Suggs, the novel demonstrates how collective storytelling, song, and movement can facilitate emotional release and social reconnection in a deeply moving way. There is a collective acknowledgement of grief and trauma in this scene: *"Laughing children, dancing men, crying women… and then it got mixed up"* [12]. In the context of this dialogue, the active physical convergence of bodies, voices, and a shared experience embodies Herman's proposition that "the collective sharing of information heals the individual-and the collective" on both emotional and physical levels. The story Morrison portrays in his book tells of the often-unwelcome arrival of personal trauma into African American communities, where it becomes intertwined with collective history, enabling individuals and the community to reclaim agency and reconstruct identity through memory and storytelling.

Throughout *Beloved*, Morrison uses the idea of remembrance and, in so doing, further illustrates his innovative use of both narrative and history to convey a therapeutic and historical message. Reintroducing the characters to their cultural heritage and historical consciousness helps them reestablish connections with their past by revisiting it and expressing suppressed experiences. The support that Paul D provides, for example, enables Sethe to express herself as she wishes. Morrison writes: *"Jump, if you want to… 'cause I'll catch you, girl. I'll catch you before you fall. Go as far inside as you need to. I'll hold your ankles. Make sure you get back out"* [12]. Paul D's witness empowers Sethe to navigate her painful memories safely, and it illustrates how the emotional healing process is more successful when there is both relational and communal support. Morrison's work transforms language itself into a means of cultural survival and recovery. By regularly employing African American vernacular, call-and-response structures, and oral storytelling techniques, Morrison challenges dominant, colonial linguistic norms that historically suppress the voices of African Americans. Through this stylistic choice, African American experiences are validated, and traumas can be expressed authentically, creating a strong bond between the two cultures.

Anderson [1] observes that Morrison reclaims cultural identity through his use of vernacular and oral tradition, as well as through his presentation of a record of historical suffering. *Beloved* is a deeply engaging story, and its rhythm, intonation, and participatory nature help accomplish its dual purposes: it is both a means of self-reclamation for the characters and a way of preserving the community's culture through a sense of continuity. Throughout *Beloved*, researchers see the interplay between individual and societal memories, showing how narrative plays a restorative role. The act of remembering, articulating, and witnessing trauma is the distinct and essential aspect of Morrison's novel, integral to the healing process—it is through this process that characters can reclaim their humanity, restore community ties, and reconstruct historical consciousness. Throughout Morrison's narrative, she not only preserves historical truth about slavery and its enduring psychological effects, but she also models narrative as a tool for empowerment and cultural continuity. This enables her to represent slavery in a sensitive yet authoritative way. There is a powerful convergence of memory and narrative in *Beloved* that perfectly illustrates the central theme of the research, Voices That Remember: It is about healing, recovery, and affirming the stories silenced by oppression and erasure.

6. A Study of Narrative Healing and Cultural Memory in Louise Erdrich's *Tracks*

Erdrich [5] *Tracks* and her subsequent books have established themselves as compelling explorations of trauma, memory, and cultural resilience within Native American communities. Toni Morrison's treatment of African American trauma in *Beloved* parallels Erdrich's investigation of the long-term repercussions of historical oppression on Indigenous peoples and their communities, including the dispossession, forced assimilation, and cultural erasure that resulted from colonial occupation. Storytelling plays a central role in Erdrich's narrative strategy. He uses it as a tool to heal the wound of identity loss, to reconstruct identity, and to preserve the memory of a culture. The novel argues that, for psychological restoration to occur, the present must be deliberately engaged with the past, and that ancestral knowledge must be actively transmitted to the future. A significant portion of Erdrich's storytelling is inspired by Ojibwa oral traditions, employing nonlinear chronologies, multiple narrators, and overlapping storylines to convey the fluidity and sense of community characteristic of Ojibwa oral storytelling.

As shown in the narrative structure of this book, Indigenous epistemologies are those in which knowledge, history, and cultural values are passed down through collaborative transmission rather than through a strictly linear historical account.

As Winnie and Rebecca [17] describe it, *Tracks* documents Indian storytelling while also chronicling the historical struggles of the Chippewa people as they fight to preserve their lands and culture. It is through this interpretation of storytelling that Erdrich positions it as both an artistic technique and a cultural practice, with the potential to be both therapeutic and historically significant. A large part of *Tracks'* narrative is framed by Nanapush, the patriarchal trickster who tells the tribe's story in the form of a narrative. There is an aspect of Nanapush that articulates the dual roles of cultural memory keeper and healer. There is a ritual element to his storytelling, meant to defend, instruct, and sustain both individuals and the wider community. As Erdrich illustrates in Nanapush, narrative can serve as a bridge between generations, enabling historical knowledge to be passed on to new generations as well as conveying communal values in a way that facilitates healing on both a personal and collective level. By re-telling the story, researchers can re-establish continuity, which has been disrupted by forced displacement, forced forced boarding schools, and colonial violence. The mother of Lulu, Fleur, lives on as a living example of what cultural memory and resilience mean in our society.

As a character, she exemplifies the reclamation of both one's own past and a collective past through her actions and experiences. When the lumber company encroaches on Fleur's ancestral land, she does not accept it passively; instead, she causes the trees to fall, sending a symbolic message that the indigenous people own the land and are responsible for respecting and protecting it for future generations. The essential theme Erdrich makes apparent through the character of Fleur is that reclaiming cultural memory is inextricably linked to the struggle against erasure and asserting one's presence within the historical narrative, as well as the connection between individual agency and communal survival. This narrative, based on Fleur's memories relayed through Nanapush's storytelling, is essential to Lulu's reconstruction of her identity. As she learns about her mother's struggle, Lulu also sees this as an opportunity to reconnect with her broader tribal heritage, illustrating that the intergenerational transmission of history can empower future generations and build resilience. Despite the narrative's multivocality, it is emphasised that assimilation and cultural dislocation can have complex effects. Pauline, for example, illustrates how the destruction of cultural ties has psychological implications, demonstrating how internalised colonial norms have fractured self-identity and disrupted communal continuity. It is clear from Nanapush's narrations that memory is collaborative: by sharing stories, residents can regain their identity, preserve historical knowledge, and ensure their culture survives into the future.

According to Değirmenci [14], Erdrich's narratives capture extended family networks and integrate audience participation, allowing communal identity to emerge through storytelling and thus capturing the audience's imagination [14]. Thus, the novel illustrates the collective healing, memory, and reaffirmation of cultural values that take place within communities through its interwoven voices and their depictions. Additionally, Erdrich examines the relationship between narrative, memory, and temporal consciousness in her exploration of the theme. Throughout *Tracks*, researchers are treated to a nonlinear, episodic style that emphasises the persistence of trauma in the present and its cyclical effects.

For characters to fully inhabit the present, they must confront their pasts; in other words, memory becomes both a site of suffering and a source of restoration. In Nanapush's insistence that she tell Lulu stories about her people's struggles, she illustrates the therapeutic power of narrative. As Lulu discovers her mother's history and the plight of her people, she begins to put her fractured identity back together. A story isn't just a means of imparting information; it is also an instrument of survival, a survival that is both psychological and cultural. Many stories are told in *Tracks* to resist the erasure of historical records. In Erdrich's book, she reclaims Native perspectives suppressed or distorted by colonial records and uses them to restore Native narratives. By intricately layering myth, individual history, and communal memory, the Chippewa experience is preserved in its own terms, preserving the way it was experienced.

Tracks is an excellent example of Voices That Remember's research theme of how narratives can serve as tools of healing, the restoration of historical memory, and the dissemination of cultural identity, in ways emblematic of that theme. Throughout the story, a person's memories transform trauma into a survivable past, allowing them to reconnect with ancestral knowledge and the wisdom of ancestors. Finally, Erdrich's work underscores the important relationship between the healing of individuals and groups.

Nanapush's stories support his community, Fleur's actions strive to sustain cultural continuity, and Lulu's acceptance of these narratives facilitates the reclaiming of her identity through the remembrance of Nanapush's stories. He believes that healing cannot be separated from the preservation and transmission of cultural memory, which Erdrich sees as integral to healing. It is through the experience of narrating the past, as well as its losses, traumas, and resistances, that the characters in this play reaffirm fractured selves, restore ties of connection among communities, and assert Indigenous presence against the forces of historical erasure. In addition to offering this intricate narrative web through storytelling, *Tracks* fully explores the concept of "*Voices That Remember*," emphasising how storytelling is both a living museum and a means of psychological recovery.

7. Narrative Healing in Morrison and Erdrich: A Comparative Analysis

A compelling case study in literary analysis is Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Louise Erdrich's *Tracks*, in which two prominent narrative writers demonstrate how literature can be a powerful medium for narrative healing and cultural recovery. Though each author describes a different historical context, a unique legacy, and a specific trauma, they share one thing in common: they use storytelling as an effective means of confronting, preserving, and transforming previously painful memories. Comparing their narrative strategies reveals that they share a similar thematic concern, formal techniques, and ethical commitment to representing silenced voices in writing.

7.1. The Role of Trauma and Memory in Healing

Both Morrison and Erdrich emphasise that trauma is at the centre of both of their narratives, emphasising that the wounds experienced in the past and still being felt today impair the well-being of individuals and communities alike. Throughout the book *Beloved*, Sethe's trauma is associated with her experiences as a Black woman in the chattel slave system, particularly the psychological and physical abuse she experienced as a victim of that system. Morrison conceptualises memory as a dynamic, participatory process characterised by reliving, confronting, and integrating past experiences back into conscious awareness - rememory. Setting he faces the memory of her daughter's death with both pain and a sense of urgency to take back control of her life after she lost it. Similarly, in *Tracks*, Erdrich depicts Native American trauma arising from forced dispossession, cultural erasure, and institutional assimilation. Characters like Lulu and Fleur confront the psychological and historical violence inflicted upon their community by settler colonialism and the U.S. government. Erdrich emphasises that healing requires a return to memory and the conscious transmission of ancestral knowledge. Nanapush's storytelling is central to this process, allowing the younger generation to understand their cultural heritage and reclaim their fragmented identities. Regardless of the case in which narrative is used, it acts as a therapeutic intervention in both instances. The concept of healing is not about forgetting or escaping trauma, but about developing a framework of understanding in which trauma is reflected on, captured, and narrated in a way that is universally understood. According to Morrison and Erdrich, storytelling transforms suffering into a survivable historical narrative, providing both a healing experience for those who suffer and the empowerment they need to go on.

7.2. Non-Linear and Multi-Voiced Narratives

A hallmark of both authors' works is their use of multivoiced narrative structures, characterised by a non-linear narrative flow. It is Morrison's use of fragmented storytelling, moving between multiple perspectives and different points of view in *Beloved*, that disrupts the chronological timeframe, conveying the disjointed nature of memory and its cyclical nature. Throughout the narrative, the reader is required to reconstruct the past alongside the characters, simulating the process of remembrance and shared participation in the past. Paul D, Sethe, and Denver each contribute a distinct perspective. Each contributes a unique perspective, emphasising the importance of collaboration in reclaiming identity and cultural knowledge. The multi-voiced narrative employed by Erdrich in *Tracks* is no different, with Nanapush's first-person accounts woven with Pauline's fragmented perspectives and other interlocking tales. A fundamental component of Indigenous oral traditions is polyphony, a means of transmitting knowledge communally and contextually through digressive layers of storytelling. There is an interconnectedness between the healing of one's and the healing of the community, reflected in the narrative structure. In both authors' papers, formal experimentation is used to express an ethical and epistemological choice rather than as a stylistic flourish. By demonstrating resistance to linearity, they show that the conventional narrative structure cannot adequately convey trauma, memory, and cultural survival.

7.3. Culture, Language, and Oral Tradition

Language plays a critical role in the narrative healing processes of Morrison [12] and Erdrich [5], making it a crucial part of both. As Morrison states in the essay, several African American dialects are integrated, along with call-and-response patterns and rhythmic dialogue, emphasising the importance of using culturally specific linguistic forms to communicate African American cultural memories and traumas. She attains this goal by rejecting the linguistic standards of the dominant culture, utilising language to conjure resistance, empower the individual, and nurture the community. Parallel to this, Erdrich [5] also incorporates Ojibwa oral storytelling techniques, mythic references, and communal speech patterns into *Tracks*. A letter in the novel serves to recreate the texture of oral memory, in which stories are passed down from generation to generation and from one individual to another. There is no doubt that storytelling is both a performative act and a restorative act; it serves to affirm Indigenous identity, even when historical erasure attempts to erase it. A powerful example of language's healing power across generations is Nanapush's intent to tell Lulu the tribe's stories for as long as she can remember. Stories transcend the boundaries of simple communication in both cases -- they can transform lives and foster a more meaningful engagement with the historical suffering of marginalised communities by preserving cultural memory, restoring identity, and enabling readers to empathise with that suffering.

7.4. Transference of Knowledge between Communities, Families, and Generations

It can be argued that Morrison and Erdrich share much in common, as they both focus on community as part of the healing process. *Beloved* explores the idea that trauma is socially mediated and that recovery occurs only through interaction with others, as evidenced by Baby Suggs' communal gatherings at the Clearing. These gatherings serve as the context for collective mourning and catharsis throughout the novel. In *Tracks*, Erdrich also illustrates the importance of extended family and tribal networks, demonstrating the intimate connection between Nanapush's storytelling and Fleur's acts of resistance, and how these are essential to the survival of a community. According to both authors, intergenerational transmission plays an essential role in maintaining cultural continuity. As a result of Wyatt's [21] encounters with their ancestors' histories, they can articulate the ethical responsibility that comes with bearing witness and preserving memory for future generations. Through listening and participating in the culture and stories shared within the family and cultural context, the younger generation gains access to a store of strength and resilience.

7.5. Resistance, Agency, and Narrative Ethics

Both Morrison and Erdrich illustrate, in the final chapters of their respective works, how narrative functions as a mechanism of resistance against political erasure. A New Testament reclaiming enslaved African American voices silenced in official histories, and a New Testament reclaiming Native American stories, often omitted or distorted in colonial records, are respectively part of *Beloved* and *Tracks*. Both authors, through their distinct narrative strategies, affirm the moral imperative to remember, authenticate, and preserve cultures. The authors' work suggests that storytelling is not simply a creative act; it is also an ethical act, granting agency to marginalised communities, asserting cultural presence, and promoting healing among historically marginalised groups.

7.6. Contrasts and Cultural Specificities

It is important to keep in mind that, while both overarching narrative strategies share similarities, they also differ due to the authors' cultural and historical backgrounds. There is a deep connection between Morrison's work and the legacy of slavery and racialised violence on African Americans, as well as the African American vernacular culture. In contrast, Erdrich's work addresses settler colonialism, dispossession, and Indigenous knowledge systems. Morrison's emphasis on remembrance and the haunted interiority of individual characters is contrasted with Erdrich's use of trickster figures, mythic motifs, and explicitly communal oral frameworks related to a trickster figure, as well as Erdrich's use of mythic themes. Many socio-cultural factors contribute to the development of narrative techniques and to the healing process grounded in culturally specific histories.

8. Conclusion

In Morrison's work, as well as Erdrich's, Morrison employs storytelling to heal narrative wounds, preserve cultural heritage, and reclaim identity. Through the interweaving of faith, memory, and voice, their novels demonstrate the importance of confronting historical trauma to promote psychological and cultural healing. In the same way, Morrison emphasises African American experiences of slavery and racial oppression. At the same time, Erdrich focuses on Native American experiences of dispossession and colonisation, and both authors show that narrative can be transformative, restorative, and ethically imperative when used appropriately. *Beloved* and *Tracks* provide examples of how literature can bear witness, resist erasure, and transmit collective memories across generations within the framework of Voices That Remember. As Toni Morrison and Louise Erdrich showcase in Voices That Remember, their narratives offer an illuminating glimpse into the power of storytelling in the healing, rehabilitation, and re-creation of our cultural identity, as well as the reclamation of our historical heritage. In their respective works, Morrison and Erdrich demonstrate that the act of remembering-whether through Morrison's "remembrance" or Erdrich's intergenerational oral storytelling-is an essential part of confronting trauma and restoring fractured identities in dealing with history. In their works, they demonstrate how trauma continues to haunt both individuals and communities when suppressed or silenced, yet can also foster resilience, solidarity, and cultural empowerment when articulated positively. A narrative in Morrison's *Beloved* can be described as the story of how African American survivors of slavery reclaim their psychological and cultural selves through communal storytelling, participatory narration, and the preservation of ancestral memory.

Several individuals, including Sethe, Denver, Paul D, and Baby Suggs, provide excellent examples of how confronting traumatic pasts within a supportive environment can enable the redevelopment of self-awareness and personal agency. Throughout Morrison's novel, African American voices are integrated into the narrative in ways that make a strong point about the cultural specificity of memory, best expressed through the various forms of linguistic and narrative expression appropriate to Afro-American experiences and histories. As a result of her work, she illustrates the inseparability between personal and collective healing, demonstrating that telling stories can transform and be ethical in their profound meaning. Furthermore, Erdrich's *Tracks* supports the notion that trauma and recovery within Native American communities are collective and intergenerational experiences. As Nanapush recounts her history and Fleur reclaims her past, the novel underscores the

significance of cultural memory, oral tradition, and the communal process of reclaiming identity through storytelling. As Erdrich demonstrates, he further reinforces the collaborative nature of healing through his use of multiple voices, a digressive narrative, and mythical allusions that mirror Indigenous storytelling practices and underscore the collaborative, participatory, and non-linear nature of healing. Throughout the novel, researchers learn how crucial it is to reconnect with one's cultural roots, historical knowledge, and communities to heal from the psychological and cultural damage caused by colonisation and displacement. The comparative reading of Morrison's and Erdrich's work reveals that neither author, despite their differences in historical and cultural context, lacks the willingness to maintain silenced histories and restore community solidarity.

These authors demonstrate that storytelling is not simply a literary device but an integral part of survival, resistance, and cultural preservation. The embodiment of memory through narrative simultaneously functions as therapy, testimony, and a means of resisting the erasure of the past. As Morrison and Erdrich focus on the perspectives of historically marginalised populations, they ensure that neither the past nor the present is forgotten or misrepresented, and that such concerns are not underestimated. It is important to note that their novels also emphasise the ethical responsibility of the narrative. For healing and cultural recovery to be possible, a community must recognise, listen, and participate. This means that storytelling serves both to empower characters and to awaken readers' consciousness. In doing so, it fosters empathy, ethical awareness, and a recognition of the lessons learned from systems of oppression, slavery, and colonisation that are still with us today. This exhibition affirms literature as a repository of collective memory, a space for narrative healing, and a bridge between the past and the present. As Morgan and Erdrich argue, reclaiming stories, preserving cultural knowledge, and confronting trauma are critical not just in restoring individuals and communities but also as a moral imperative to ensure that stories of suffering, resilience, and survival remain relevant for generations to come, not just to the individual and the community. It is clear from their novels, however, that telling a story creates a transformative process: it reintegrates the fractured psyche, preserves cultural identity, and gives voice to those who have been silenced. Storytelling is one of the most powerful ways to confront our past, reclaim our agency, and assert our identity as individuals and communities. There can be no doubt that literature provides a valuable platform for preserving and transforming cultures, as well as for allowing marginalised voices to be heard and their stories to stand as testaments to human resilience in an ever-changing world.

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