Journeying to a Third Space of Sovereignty: Explorations of Land, Cultural Hybridity, and Sovereignty in *Ceremony* and *There There*

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Journeying to a Third Space of Sovereignty: Explorations of Land, Cultural Hybridity, and Sovereignty in *Ceremony* and *There There*

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ABSTRACT

Journeying to a Third Space of Sovereignty: Explorations of Land, Cultural Hybridity, and Sovereignty in *Ceremony* and *There There*

by Jillian Eve Sanchez

In Native American literature, there is a discourse that solely focuses on the relationship between Indigenous people and the land. This relationship is vital to understanding the traditions, rituals, storytelling, and practices of Native Americans. The presence of settler colonialism changes the relationship, effectively changing the nature of cultural and spiritual relationships as well. Indigenous literature provides examples of the modern relationship Native people have with their land; an example of this is Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Ceremony* and Tommy Orange’s *There There*. Despite modernity, assimilation, and ways of life introduced by settler colonialism, Native people maintain a relationship to the land, whether on a reservation or in an urban space. The relationship, as well as their traditions and rituals, changes between *Ceremony* and *There There*. This research aims to illuminate the relationship in conjunction with the concepts of cultural hybridity, sovereignty, and a third space.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .................................................................................................................. IV

ABSTRACT ...................................................................................................................................... V

LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................................................................................... VII

1 INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................................. 1
   1.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................................. 1

2 A COLONIAL LIE: THE FRONTIER THESIS ............................................................................... 6
   2.1 The Wild West: American Freedom and the “Disappearing Indian” ............................ 6
   2.2 Manifest Destiny and the Eras of Indian Policies ............................................................. 8

3 REPRESENTATIONS OF NATIVE LAND IN LITERATURE .......................................................... 12
   3.1 Representations of Land ......................................................................................................... 12
   3.2 Mapping Native Land ............................................................................................................. 16
   3.3 Storytelling, Myth, and Ritual in Native Literature ........................................................... 22

4 CULTURAL HYBRIDITY .................................................................................................................... 27

5 SOVEREIGNTY AND A THIRD SPACE .................................................................................... 41

6 CONCLUSION ................................................................................................................................. 56

WORKS CITED .................................................................................................................................. 62

WORKS REVIEWED ......................................................................................................................... 65
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>Examples of Indian Policy Eras</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>Land Back Manifesto</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The relationship between Native Americans and their ancestral land is ever-changing. When reading Native American literature, academics analyze symbols, mythology, historical references, and relatability to Native culture\(^1\). All these components are what make Native American literature a powerful representation of a culture that endures despite attempts to eradicate it. Amongst a backdrop of American colonial rule and modernity, Natives are constantly adapting to new situations, and yet remain dedicated to their traditions, rituals, storytelling, and land. This research aims to illuminate the changing relationship between Native Americans and their ancestral land by examining literature that details this unique relationship and its complexities.

This research analyzes two works of Native American literature, *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko and *There There* by Tommy Orange. This research is organized into four sections; while the sections easily intersect, the differences in the novels provide an opportunity to examine certain concepts in-depth. The structure of this research is meant to reflect a loose timeline, beginning with the frontier thesis and U.S.-Indigenous relations, then shifting to the relationship with land. What these novels also share in common are their non-linear formats; *Ceremony* is written with mythological poems while *There There* is divided by three sections and different character perspectives. I heavily dissect *Ceremony* and *There There* in the last sections titled “Cultural Hybridity” and “Sovereignty and a Third Space,” which serves as a climax where ideas converge. This structure is intentional; I begin with Silko’s novel because of its scholarship and

\(^1\) See works reviewed for list of resources related to these topics
position as a foundational text in Native American literature and then juxtapose *Ceremony* with *There There* due to Orange’s firm stance on the topic of Native land. The goal is to examine how the novels approach the concepts of land, cultural hybridity, and sovereignty.

While exploring these pieces of literature, it is important to acknowledge the tropes, or assumptions, that all Native Americans live in tepees, practice hunting and gathering, and live cut off from modern society. These assumptions, while clearly extractions of historical and anthropological findings, represent primitive or dated knowledge of Native people. Today, Native people do not only exist on reservations; Native Americans can be found everywhere. The idea that Native Americans are extinct, or do not exist in large numbers, is an idea that stemmed from Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier thesis. This thesis promoted the western region of the United States as vacant and wild, open land for people to settle. Although untrue, the concept of the “disappearing Indian” became a popular assumption, and contributed to the many stereotypes developed today. Turner’s thesis frames the relationship between the United States and Native Americans, highlighting early moments between the colonizer and the colonized and how the colonized have maintained a connection to their land despite attempts to eradicate it during the westward expansion of the United States.

The relationship between Natives and their ancestral land can be found in many traditions, rituals, and storytelling. A vital component to this relationship is Native agricultural practice. The topic of Indigenous agriculture is important because Native groups have spiritual and cultural connections to nature and animals. The presence of settler colonialism changes how these Indigenous groups operate and therefore changes the nature of cultural and spiritual relationships as well. Indigenous literature provides examples of the relationship Native American people have with their land; an example of this is Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Ceremony*. Silko’s novel is a telling
about a half-Native man returning from war and dealing with PTSD. His journey to self-healing and becoming “whole” is dependent upon Pueblo Laguna storytelling and reconnecting with the agriculture belonging to his people. Yet, the agricultural practices of Native Americans are affected by the influence and dominance of American farming practices and this dominance is present throughout the novel. Silko makes brief, but essential references to the struggles Tayo’s uncle Josiah faces while raising cattle on the reservation. The novel hints at the importance of the land and how Tayo and the cattle are tied to it; the future of the spotted cattle parallels his development throughout the novel. Silko’s novel explores the relationship between Natives and their lands, while Tommy Orange’s *There There* explores a different relationship in which Indigenous people live in cities, dispelling the narrative that Native people only exist on reservations. Although agricultural practices are of great importance, it should be noted that over time, the relationship with land changes because of relocation and assimilation; because of this, new relationships form. Unlike *Ceremony*, *There There* pays close attention to “Urban Indians” and their relationship to the land, as Orange states, “our land is everywhere” (Orange 11) and provides us with examples of what it means to be Native in a settler-society. The deconstructed novel provides readers with fragments of the characters’ lives; some live on the outskirts of Native society, others dwell in between being Native and white. More importantly, the novel abolishes the primitive viewpoint that Native Americans only exist on reservations, and that in order to be “Indian enough” you need to live on a reservation.

The relationship Indigenous people have with their land, as well as their traditions and rituals, changes between *Ceremony* and *There There*. *Ceremony*, published in 1977, outlines how Native people manage their relationship with land and animals agriculturally, as well as their spirituality and rituals amongst modern forms of agriculture. *There There*, published in 2018,
provides an “updated” relationship, in which many Indigenous people navigate their relationships with being Native but living in urban spaces. Tara Ann Carter believes there are two waves of American Indian literature: “A First Wave is the return to reservation life and tradition, ceremony and ritual of tribal peoples; a Second Wave acknowledges the struggle of identity in America, but also asserts the need for life and interaction outside of the reservation as means to complete one’s identity” (Carter). Following these waves, Ceremony fits within the first wave while There There fits within the second wave, affectively designating these novels in separate categories but equally important in Native American literature.

Both novels highlight a very important topic that surrounds the relationship with land – sovereignty. This research is dedicated to surveying how both novels introduce the relationship with land amongst settler colonialism, but also illuminate examples and forms of sovereignty. For Natives, sovereignty is a complex and often painful topic. Tribal Sovereignty refers to Native Americans and Alaskan Natives governing themselves. Despite treaties and agreements with the United States, sovereignty is only “active” on reservations – land assigned by the United States. Considering how Tribal Sovereignty affects Natives, how does this apply to Ceremony and There There?

I argue that land is at the forefront of these pieces of literature and sovereignty, or the false choice of sovereignty, affects the outcome of the stories. Sovereignty brings attention to the topic of a third space, Homi K. Bhabha’s postcolonial theory which he explains is hybridity that which allows new positions of authority to emerge (Rutherford 211). While this explanation and application are feasible with regard to postcolonial theory, author Kevin Bruyneel poses in his book A Third Space of Sovereignty a different approach to Bhabha’s theory. Rather than call it a third space, Bruyneel suggests a third space of sovereignty, “[…] a supplementary strategy,
because it refuses to conform to the binaries and boundaries that frame dualistic choices for indigenous politics, such as assimilation-secession, inside-outside, modernity-traditionalism, and so on, and in doing so refuses to be divided by settler state boundaries” (Bruyneel 21). Taking Bhabha’s original concept, and Bruyneel’s application of it to Indigenous spaces, we can begin to unravel these attempts at sovereignty in *Ceremony* and *There There*. Bhabha and Bruyneel’s concepts are central to the argument surrounding land; although I reference several pieces of literature, Bhabha and Bruyneel’s comments on a third space are applied towards the end of this research.
2 A Colonial Lie: The Frontier Thesis

2.1 The Wild West: American Freedom and the “Disappearing Indian”

In the year 2021, it is safe to assume most individuals in the United States, especially on the west coast, have heard of or watched spaghetti westerns, played the game “cowboys and Indians,” and walked into a Southwest themed shop decorated with turquoise jewelry and Indian blankets. These shows, games, and shops are results of a long-standing narrative that Native Americans are part of the past – a narrative that is damaging and most importantly, incorrect. Even more damaging is the lack of knowledge surrounding the relationship between the United States and Natives. Historically, we could begin with Christopher Columbus, but for the context of this research, it would be beneficial to focus on the westward expansion, treaties, and court cases that ultimately defined and effected the relationship Native Americans have with their ancestral land.

The Wild West narrative produces ideas that the western region of the United States is a wild, untamable frontier – with popular “spaghetti western” films and TV shows proving to be dramatic and inaccurate representations of the area. Before film and TV, American historian Fredrick Jackson Turner developed a “frontier thesis” more commonly known as “The Significance of the Frontier in American History.” Written in 1893, the thesis claimed that true democracy was developed in the American frontier because of man’s right to reject European high society, as well as violence and control by the British. For all intents and purposes, the west was an area untouched by British rule – making it more “American.” Turner’s thesis claims the west to be “free land for the taking,” however, the Native population still very much existed during this
time. Turner briefly acknowledges the presence of Indian clearings and trails, but not the Native population as an existing group:

In short, at the frontier the environment is at first too strong for the man. He must accept the conditions which it furnishes, or perish, and so he fits himself into the Indian clearings and follows the Indian trails. Little by little he transforms the wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe, not simply the development of Germanic germs, any more than the first phenomenon was a case of reversion to the Germanic mark. The fact is, that here is a new product that is American. At first, the frontier was the Atlantic coast. It was the frontier of Europe in a very real sense. Moving westward, the frontier became more and more American. (Turner 2)

Overall, Turner’s thesis allowed for many to consider the possibility of migrating to the west and embracing a new understanding of “freedom.” The frontier thesis frames the west as a place for new beginnings, yet Maria Josefina Saldaña-Portillo points to the problematic ideas surrounding the frontier thesis: “In both popular and academic historiography of the United States, indigenous peoples are first inhabitants scripted to disappear, either fortuitously or tragically, while the physical territory of the United States is scripted as terra nullius in waiting” (Saldaña-Portillo 9). By Turner’s definition, the Wild West is aptly named because it is a “deserted” area, where wilderness exist, but Natives do not; Saldaña-Portillo confirms this idealization of the west by asserting that the frontier thesis thrives off the trope of the disappearing Indian and the west as abandoned land open for development (Saldaña-Portillo 9).
2.2 Manifest Destiny and the Eras of Indian Policies

The westward expansion of the United States had a lasting effect on Native Americans. It should be noted that “Manifest Destiny” predated Turner’s thesis and many anti-Indian polices began in the early 1800s. Reginald Horsman, author of Race and Manifest Destiny: Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism states:

The expansion of the United States in the years after 1815 rapidly brought intense pressure on federal commitments to the Indians. As settlers poured into the eastern half of the Mississippi Valley, the demand for land reached unprecedented heights. In the south settlers lured by the rich cotton lands in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi spread rapidly over all available areas, and Indian settlements were threatened by white frontiersman anxious to make their fortunes. (Horsman 192)

Horsman also suggests that Manifest Destiny was used by many American Anglo-Saxons to justify their belief that Native Americans were “inferior” and that economic control over Native areas was “necessary” (Horsman 189). Horsman’s explanation of the demand for land suggests Turner’s thesis is a variation of Manifest Destiny.

The bulk of this research focuses on the west/southwest because of the locations in Ceremony and There There; Ceremony takes place in New Mexico, while There There takes place in California. Historically, the locations were part of the westward expansion period. From 1789 to 1871, 300 out of 800 treaties were negotiated, with removal in mind (Bruyneel 15). The Indian Removal Act of 1830 was an act signed by President Andrew Jackson which authorized the exchange of lands west of the Mississippi for Indian territories. This relocation policy was met with resistance, and while few tribes agreed to it, many Cherokee were removed and forced to
march during the fall and winter months – which is known as the Trail of Tears (Drexler). Tragedies like these were common for Natives because the goal of the United States was to assimilate Indigenous people and appropriate their lands. Bruyneel argues that the government’s purpose was always to dislocate the Indigenous population, “The actual trajectory of U.S. Indian Policy during that era was focused less on domesticating indigenous peoples within U.S. political boundaries and more on appropriating their lands and extracting them beyond these boundaries” (Bruyneel 15).

It is important to remember these treaties and their outcomes because they shaped the relationship between Native Americans and the United States. Since the late 1700s, there have been “eras” of U.S. Indian policy that show how treaties and agreements go back and forth between recognizing tribal sovereignty or forcing assimilation. I suggest that the United States at certain times viewed tribes as sovereign entities because of the government’s “willingness” to draft treaties and facilitate negotiations. There are certain points in history that the United States has recognized tribes and their ownership of land however, the eras prove that the up-and-down relationship the United States has driven Natives to believe that their sovereignty is false. Bruyneel alludes to this idea in Third Space of Sovereignty with a timeline showing the different eras and what the U.S. policy entails at the time:
With this timeline of U.S. Indian policy eras, the intention was to assimilate Indigenous people. What is also interesting about this timeline and its relevance to our subject is the last era – the “Self-Determination Era” which begins in 1975. This is an important time that we will focus on for a few reasons; at this time, Congress passed the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975. This act allowed for the federal government and other agencies to enter contracts with federally recognized tribes and the tribes would have control over how funds were administered. This era also reflects a time when Natives attempted forms of sovereignty – the American Indian Movement of 1968, the Occupation of Alcatraz from 1969 – 1971, the Trail of
Broken Treaties which took place in 1972, and others. All these movements had a major goal in mind – to scale back the amount of control the government had over tribal affairs.

Bringing literature into the fold, this era is also known as the Native American Renaissance. All these treaties, dates, acts, and movements are in service of understanding the tense and unequal relationship between the United States and its Indigenous population. The Native American Renaissance brings that understanding to the table via literature. The renaissance began in the 1960s, although it should be made clear that Natives were producing pieces of literature long before this. The uptick in Native literature brought about an increasing interest in the relationship between Natives and the United States. Native American literature provides deeper, more introspective accounts into the colonization of the North American continent, as authors explore the “Wild West” concept, assimilation, and a range of other topics that directly affect the community. Some of the most notable authors of the renaissance are N. Scott Momaday, Duane Niatum, Joy Harjo, Louise Erdrich, and Leslie Marmon Silko. Their works have generated an increase in public interest in Native culture, Native communities, and activism to create sovereignty and civil rights.
3 Representations of Native Land in Literature

3.1 Representations of Land

Native American literature illuminates the connection that many Natives have to land. Land is an important topic because history and culture surrounds it. Earlier we discussed the history of land and the several policies that dictate Native rights to land, but the culture and idea of land changes over time. It is important to note that in this context, the discussion of land includes agriculture, the practice of cultivating plants and livestock, and is primarily applicable to Ceremony. In Ceremony, the main character returns to his ancestral land and repairs the relationship he has with it through a series of events and ceremonies. Silko’s novel shows the relationship on a reservation, and the bordering areas surrounding it. While this is an accurate representation, it only shows one kind relationship; we can regard this as a “traditional” relationship which is representative of Carter’s “First Wave of American Indian Literature.” It is also important to note that this relationship on a reservation is due to colonization; because of settler colonialism, tribes have been placed on reservations, and some relocated to areas they are not from.

Many of these relationships are cultivated through storytelling and tradition, however, Tommy Orange’s There There has a different approach. Orange’s novel, published in 2018, is a new representation of this relationship and part of the “Second Wave”; rather than exist on a reservation, Orange argues that Native land is everywhere, and Urban Indians have just as much of a connection as those on a reservation. The commonalities between these two novels are the
representations of land, the necessity of mapping these lands, and the use of storytelling, tradition, and ritual to keep the relationship alive. This section examines the three commonalities that help maintain this relationship.

Written in 1977, *Ceremony* focuses on Tayo, a World War II veteran suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and his return home. Tayo finds that returning home is rather difficult; his outlook on life has changed and his homeland is suffering from a drought thought to be caused by the desecration of sacred land, which he fears is his own fault. He has also lost his cousin and uncle while fighting in the Pacific. Tayo’s own suffering cannot be cured by Western medicine and his survival is dependent upon Pueblo Laguna stories and a traditional ceremony, which also tests his faith in his Native culture. *Ceremony* presents the reservation as a place of poverty, but the land is referred to as more than property or territory; the novel suggests that the land is a foundation which all beings are tied to spiritually. This connection is perhaps most apparent when Josiah explains, “This is where we come from, see. This sand, this stone, these trees, the vines, all the wildflowers. This earth keeps us going” (Silko 42). Pueblo Laguna stories are lessons in balance, which affect the agriculture and survival of the people. Tayo learns about these stories, which act as a guide that aids in his healing.

*Ceremony* does well to illuminate the issues associated with settler colonialism, particularly farming practices, and the survival of Native Americans amongst modernity. Much of the novel focuses on healing (land, animals, and Natives) and shows how the relationship is cyclical; each one affects the other, and in order for healing to begin, they must facilitate hybrid ways of operating so that they survive. The relationship with land changes at the end of *Ceremony*; Tayo carries out Josiah’s legacy of hybrid cattle (a new form of agriculture) but remains dedicated to life on the reservation. This narrative is just one among many kinds of relationships with land.
David Rice’s, “Witchery, Indigenous Resistance, and Urban Space in Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Ceremony*” discusses the limitations of Silko’s novel with regard to the traditional relationship we see present in the novel: “The true difficulty with Silko's vision is that her insistence on the primacy of Indigenous land bases as places of resistance leaves it unclear what is to be done in a largely urban and urbanizing world. One can’t realistically envision pastoral retreat as a practical mode of resistance for most people, Indigenous or not” (Rice 137). Although Silko’s novel has moments of cultural hybridity, life on a reservation is the main focus. For many Natives, this narrative could be difficult to relate to because not all Natives live on reservations; their relationship with land is different. Tommy Orange’s *There There* introduces an alternative narrative that explains the complex relationship between Urban Indians and ancestral land.

*There There* tells the stories of and interactions between several Native characters that navigate gentrification but also Indigeneity. Rather than focus on settler colonialism and the oppressor, Orange focuses on the stories of the oppressed and the fight against constructions of primitivism by introducing Urban Indians that exist within large cities and towns, drive cars, live in houses, and communicate through technology. By focusing on the oppressed, Orange creates a platform for Urban Indians to establish themselves as part of the Native community. This message is important because throughout *There There* characters experience traumatic events caused by settler colonialism; while the novel draws attention to the trauma and oppression, the focus is on how the characters navigate situations caused by the colonizers.

Native groups tend to be regarded as savage, uneducated, and primitive. Orange begins the novel with an example of the caricatures that plague the native community, “There was an Indian head, the head of an Indian, the drawing of the head of a headdressed, long-haired Indian depicted, drawn by an unknown artist in 1939, broadcast until the late 1970s to American TVs everywhere
after all the shows ran out” (Orange 3). These caricatures disparage many native groups and suggest that Natives are primitive and without progress, essentially contributing to the ideology that they only live on static reservations and away from modern life. Orange takes the distorted narrative that surrounds the Native community and uses the first few pages of his novel to educate readers on what it means to be an Urban Indian. The author uses the prologue to introduce a brief history lesson on Native Americans and the Indian Relocation Act:

We were not Urban Indians then. This was part of the Indian Relocation Act, which was part of the Indian Termination Policy, which was and is exactly what it sounds like. Make them look and act like us. Become us. And so disappear. But it wasn’t just like that. Plenty of us came by choice, to start over, to make money, or for a new experience. Some of us came to cities to escape the reservation. (Orange 9)

Although novel takes place decades after the Indian Relocation Act, the prologue is a reminder that the Native community still deals with the ramifications of it. While Orange admits that some wanted to escape the reservation in lieu of more opportunities in the city, pressure to assimilate served a purpose that did not benefit Natives. A result of the Indian Relocation Act and pressure to assimilate is the creation of the Urban Indian; Native children born in large cities and towns, raised in modern homes, who attend federally regulated schools, and grow up knowing that they are Indigenous. While the point of assimilation is to create “civilized” individuals, in the case of the characters in There There civilized does not mean to eradicate Native culture, but rather become a hybrid that carries Indigeneity into modern spaces.

There There introduces several types of Native people that exist outside the traditional viewpoint. What the reader comes across is a range of Native Americans that either associate with
or struggle with being Native American. Orange introduces what is called an Urban Indian defined as “the generation born in the city” (Orange 11). Orange’s description of an urban Indian lays a foundation for the characters. They each experience different versions of the same struggle: being Native Indian without the “Native” part (not living on a reservation). Orange ends his description of “urbanity” by stating, “being Indian has never been about returning to the land. The land is everywhere or nowhere” (Orange 11), indicating that Native people do not exist only on reservations; Native people exist wherever their land is – which is everywhere. The transition from Silko’s *Ceremony* to Orange’s *There There* shows how Natives grapple with the effects of settler colonialism and how relationship with land changes over time. In *Ceremony*, Tayo gains understanding of land and its importance, while *There There* introduces Urban Indians and how their relationship differs from the traditional relationship with landscape. Despite their different approaches to the land, both novels share similar messages regarding Indigenous resilience and the ability to thrive despite settler colonialism.

### 3.2 Mapping Native Land

Each novel uses methods of mapping; *Ceremony* maps areas deemed safe versus dangerous, while *There There* maps areas that used to be Native land before it was colonized. The ways in which the novels map land serves a greater purpose in understanding the relationship to land and how it changes between *Ceremony* and *There There*. *Ceremony* is deeply connected with landscape and location, not only for visual representation but to show how Natives navigate sites of settler colonialism. In *There There*, mapping serves a different purpose; it shows how Natives have immersed themselves in urban areas while maintaining a connection to their indigeneity, and also recognizes areas that were once Indigenous land are now gentrified. *Ceremony* faces decolonizing their sites of colonialism, while *There There* battles the neo-colonialism of gentrification.
Gallup, a town in New Mexico, is one of the central locations in *Ceremony* and is an area labeled unsafe for Natives. Along Gallup is historic Route 66, which is lined with bars and referred to as, “going up the line” (Silko 22). These bars contribute to the alcoholism issue that plagues Tayo and his friends and is part of the witchery that he fights against in the novel, “I remember when we drove through Gallup. I saw Navajos in torn old jackets, standing outside the bars. There were Zunis and Hopis there too, even a few Lagunas. All of them slouched down against the dirty walls of the bars along Highway 66” (Silko 98). Silko hints at the destructiveness that Highway 66 causes, which is a colonial tool used to plough through land and leave behind bars that plague many Native groups. The encroachment of colonialism haunts many Natives in the area, and Tayo describes Gallup as a central place for tourists looking for the Native “experience” but ironically dangerous for Natives:

Gallup was that kind of place, interesting, even funny as long as you were just passing through, the way the white tourists did driving down 66, stopping to see the Indian souvenirs. But if you were an Indian, you attended to business and then left, and were never in that town after dark. That was the warning the old Zunis, and Hopis, and Navajos had about Gallup. The safest way was to avoid bad places after dark. (Silko 99)

Silko’s use of Gallup as a border town near the reservation serves a purpose in highlighting the issues that revolve around alcoholism but also the use of colonial mapping in order to assert areas that are “Native” versus “colonial.”

Unlike Tayo, there are others residing in Gallup that are plagued by homelessness and police officers storm a location called “shantytown” to clean up the area before tourist visits, removing children and taking them to the “Home” (Silko 100), which is also reminiscent of
relocation tactics used to assimilate Native children. Karen Piper argues that places like Gallup are under U.S. protectionism, which contributes to Indigenous alienation from land: “While Gallup is built on Indian territory and relies on the Indian tourism industry, its planners continually suppress the real presence of Indians […] The Indians who live in the shantytown are generally driven to Gallup by the instability of the surrounding reservation economies - due to drought, radioactive pollution, and an increasingly uninhabitable land base” (Piper 491). Silko maps areas around the reservation to show the disparities between Native life and life of the colonizers, and how Natives attempt to reconcile their relationship with land that has been heavily colonized. This kind of mapping is even more apparent later in the novel when Tayo is tasked with retrieving his uncle’s cattle from a white rancher’s property.

Tayo learns that his uncle’s cattle have wandered astray, and a white rancher as corralled them onto his property. While Tayo successfully retrieves the cattle, it is important to note how Silko maps the area. Although white ranchers refer to the area as North Top, Tayo remembers it differently via Native Laguna stories that depict a hunter and a mountain lion cub living harmoniously (Silko 172). While these stories depict a balance with nature, Tayo reveals that the land has changed because of logging, “All but a small part of the mountain had been taken. The reservation boundary included only a canyon above Encinal and a few miles of timer on the plateau. The rest of the land was taken by the National Forest and by the state which later sold it to white ranchers who came from Texas in the early 1900s” (Silko 100). As stated earlier, this is part of the US protectionism that Piper refers to. While the transaction seems “fair” given that there is monetary exchange, the selling of land near reservations creates a border that leaves many reservations with limited land. Aside from selling the land, the destruction of it comes from capitalist ventures:
In the twenties and thirties the loggers had come, and they stripped the canyons below the rim and cut great clearings on the plateau slopes. The logging companies hired full-time hunters who fed entire logging camps, taking ten or fifteen deer each week and fifty wild turkeys in one month. The loggers shot the bears and mountain lions for sport. And it was then the Laguna people understood that the land had been taken, because they couldn’t stop these white people from coming to destroy the animals and the land. It was then too that the holy men at Laguna and Acoma warned the people that the balance of the world had been disturbed and the people could expect droughts and harder days to come. (Silko 173)

This destruction of sacred land forces Natives to redefine their relationship with their ancestral homeland. The mapping that Silko does in the novel shows the many places surrounding the reservation that are representations of colonialism that encroach on the livelihood of Natives. While Natives near and on reservations deal with afflictions caused by border towns and private land holdings, characters in There There deal with gentrification of their Native spaces.

*There There* defines Native land as being everywhere. The central location of the novel is in Oakland, California and Orange uses mapping as a way to delineate gentrified areas. Unlike *Ceremony*, Oakland is not a reservation, and it does not border a reservation; Orange uses street names and locations to determine where Natives reside. Tony Loneman, one of the central characters in the novel, describes the discrepancies with regard to whom the land really belongs, stating that all the land once belonged to Indians, but the colonizers “[…] moved us off our land, moved us onto some shit land you can’t grow fucking shit on. I would hate it if I got moved outta Oakland, because I know it so well, from West to East to Deep East and back, on bike or bus or BART. It’s my only home. I wouldn’t make it nowhere else” (Orange 18). Although all of the United States is colonized, the spaces in *There There* that stand out as sites of neo-colonization are
the neighborhoods deemed “bad”; they are plagued by poverty, drug addiction, homelessness, and police activity, similar to the town of Gallup. Tony alludes to this when he describes traveling through one of the neighborhoods, “I rode my bike from the Coliseum BART Station. Octavio’s house was in Deep East Oakland, off Seventy-Third, across from where the Eastmont Mall used to be until things got so bad there they turned it into a police station” (Orange 22). Turning a mall into a police station signifies a need to mandate the area, same as in Ceremony when police show up to rid the area of the homeless and inebriated. The novel brings attention to specific communities that intersect; those that exist in the gentrified spaces and those that exist in the “bad” neighborhoods (or urban areas). It is important to remember the communities that occupy these spaces are different, but the areas are still colonized land. Cedric Johnson alludes to this intersection as the result of urbanization and policing urban areas:

While the postwar transformation of the urban landscape created physical distance between the new middle class and those left ghettoized in the inner-city core, the taking back of the city through gentrification and real estate speculation brought these disparate classes into direct confrontation—with middle-class urban pioneers, house flippers, large real estate developers, and tourists on one side and old ethnic neighborhoods, the unemployed, the itinerant poor, sexual minorities, and countercultural spaces on the other. (Johnson 177)

Johnson’s explanation of why these communities intersect provides insight into the neighborhoods in the novel. Areas deemed “bad” are urban spaces with ethnic minorities plagued by poverty, substance abuse, and heavy policing while gentrified areas have no police involvement. Although Orange does not specifically describe the gentrified areas, he explains through the voice of Octavio that, “There were certain pockets of uptown where people had nice cars and people like me and Manny could be seen without someone calling the cops right away” (Orange 177). The difference
in the areas are measured by the presence of police; the uptown area Octavio describes has little police activity because it is considered “nice.” Even though there is a lack of police activity, Octavio still carries a fear that they will be arrested and admits that once they enter their own community they will be safer (Orange 178). Tony and Octavio’s relationship with land is different from the traditional relationships in Ceremony; rather than exist harmoniously with the landscape, the characters have knowledge of the area they live in and acknowledge the dangers of the gentrified areas as well. This kind of relationship is standard for all the characters in the novel. The goal of the relationship is not to be one with the land but instead to learn how to navigate colonized spaces.

Mapping is a practice that illuminates areas that have been gentrified in Oakland and serves a greater purpose in understanding how gentrification is an act of colonialism. The title of Orange’s novel refers to Gertrude Stein’s comments about Oakland, which Dene Oxendene, another central character in the novel, explains is part of Stein’s Everybody’s Autobiography, “[I] found that she was talking about how the place where she’d grown up in Oakland had changed so much, that so much development had happened there, that the there there of her childhood, the there there, was gone, there was no there there anymore” (Orange 38-39). Development is often construed as progress, however, for Natives this means the destruction of their land. Dene becomes upset during a conversation he is having with Rob, a man who intends to gentrify a neighborhood in Oakland, about Stein’s comments and Dene explains, “Rob probably didn’t look any further into the quote because he’d gotten what he wanted from it. He probably used the quote at dinner parties and made other people like him feel good about taking over neighborhoods they wouldn’t have had the guts to drive through ten years ago” (Orange 39). The neighborhoods that Tony and Dene refer to are areas that Natives also reside in; gentrification is the reason a lot of these neighborhoods are in
such despair and police are used to contain the destruction to specific areas. Dene’s anger over the quote is not just about the misuse of its meaning, but also that what Stein is referring to is what has happened to Natives as well, “for Native people in this country, all over the Americas, it’s been developed over, buried ancestral land, glass and concrete and wire and steel, unreturnable covered memory. There is no there there” (Orange 39). The “unreturnable covered memory” is important with regard to gentrification; urban Indians navigate through areas of colonization and places that they cannot connect to in the same way some Natives on a reservation are able to. The land Urban Indians see are paved parking lots, condominiums, business centers, etc. Mapping is a tool that allows the characters to, in one way or another, become connected to the land; they know the area, can navigate the ins and outs of it, and have a deep connection despite the gentrification and development of it.

Because of colonialism, characters in *Ceremony* and *There There* redefine their relationships with land. Part of this redefining is the use of mapping. It is a tool that allows Natives to maintain a connection to their ancestral land, whether it’s on a reservation or a city. Representations of land and the use of mapping aid Natives in their constant battle against colonialism. Although these methods help enrich the relationship with land, storytelling allows these tools to be passed down through generations of Natives.

### 3.3 Storytelling, Myth, and Ritual in Native Literature

Storytelling is a powerful tool in the fight against colonialism and the practice of it is an act of resilience that enables Natives to keep their rituals and myths from fading. *Ceremony* and *There There* use storytelling as a guide that bridges the connection between humans and land. As discussed earlier, *Ceremony* represents a very traditional relationship with landscape, whereas *There There* is a modern representation. Although their approaches to land representation and
mapping are different, the storytelling is somewhat similar. References to spiders, the destruction of sacred land, and remedies for “Western” illnesses are in both novels, promoting the idea that although the landscapes are different, storytelling remains a powerful tool which represents the culture and strengthens the relationship to land.

Existing approaches to *Ceremony* focus on myth, ritual, and storytelling, all of which are important foundations in the novel. In order for the reader to understand the text, the reader must understand the culture. Silko’s novel is often regarded as a difficult text because of the complex myths of the Laguna tribe that are referenced throughout; instead of numbered chapters, fragments of poems depicting myth break up the novel. Carol Mitchell refers to the understanding of tradition found in myth and ritual, which is “[…] crucial for understanding the whole novel, for among Indians the spiritual world is one with the secular world; disharmony on the spiritual plane causes disharmony in the whole world and vice versa” (Mitchell 27). Understanding myth is important because of the significant number Silko references through the novel. Tayo experiences storytelling, ritual, and myth throughout his journey to healing; Ku’oosh, Betonie, Ts’eh, and the hunter all assist Tayo in rebuilding his relationship with land. Ku’oosh and Betonie are medicine men that introduce Tayo to ceremonies and tell him stories about the Laguna Pueblo people while Ts’eh and the hunter provide Tayo with knowledge about rituals that honor plants and animals.

As medicine men, Ku’oosh and Betonie explain to Tayo that the ceremonies of the past no longer work because times have changed. Ku’oosh was the first medicine man that attempts to help him but Ku’oosh admits the ceremonies he performs cannot compete with new age warfare (Silko 35). Because of this, Ku’oosh sends Tayo to Betonie, who is able to help Tayo in his journey. This aligns with the idea that the relationship with the land has changed as well, as Betonie explains that he has had to change the way he conducts ceremonies: “At one time, the ceremonies as they
had been performed were enough for the way the world was then. But after the white people came, elements in this world began to shift; and it became necessary to create new ceremonies [...] it has always been necessary, and more than ever now, it is. Otherwise we won’t make it. We won’t survive” (Silko 117). Betonie’s explanation of ceremonies and witchery provides Tayo with the understanding that in order to heal and spread that healing to others, it is imperative that a ceremony takes place. Rather than rely on Western medicine, which only furthers the colonial agenda, Tayo learns to rely on storytelling and Native ways of harmonizing with nature.

Tayo learns to harmonize with nature when he meets a hunter, an animal spirit who presents himself in both human and animal form, and Ts’eh, a sacred figure in Native cosmology who presents herself in the form of a woman. The hunter and Ts’eh help Tayo in retrieving the lost cattle but also show Tayo the importance of honor when taking something from the land, “When [Tayo] finally turned around, they were together, the hunter kneeling beside the woman, placing pinches of cornmeal on the deer’s nose, whispering to it” (Silko 193). The hunter and Ts’eh perform a small ritual for the deer before they consume it, which reinforces what Tayo already knows. Early on in the novel, Tayo and Rocky are hunting and kill a deer and Tayo covers the deer’s eyes: “Tayo didn’t say anything, because they both knew why. The people said you should do that before you gutted the deer. Out of respect” (Silko 47). While spending time with Ts’eh, Tayo also learns about herbs, how to repopulate the land with them, and nurtures the cattle back to health. Time spent with Ts’eh strengthens Tayo’s understanding of the natural world, and his relationship with the landscape deepens. Ku’oosh and Betonie’s stories, along with Ts’eh and the hunter’s knowledge of the land aid Tayo in rekindling his relationship with his ancestral land. By tying in storytelling, ritual, and myth, Silko shows how Natives cultivate and maintain relationships with the land. Betonie’s admission that because times have changed, so have his
methods are indicative of what happens to the characters in *There There*. Because times have changed, the characters in the novel must learn how to incorporate storytelling, ritual, and myth in an urban space.

Orange’s version of storytelling, ritual, and myth is presented in a modern way; rather than have the characters perform ceremonies or rituals, storytelling connects the characters to their Indigenous roots, despite living in an urban area. Traditionally, storytelling is oral knowledge passed down from generation to generation; however, in *There There* the characters take control of what stories are told. The novel presents storytelling as a tool used to keep Natives tied to their Indigeneity. Unlike *Ceremony*, the characters do not have run ins with medicine men or animal spirits, but rather they rely on stories as a way to remain tied to their ancestral land, which Orange deems is everywhere.

Dene takes on the responsibility of interviewing other Native people about their lives; how they ended up in Oakland, whether they were born and raised in Oakland, etc. (Orange 32). Dene’s main goal is to change the narrative about Natives, and he hopes to educate others around him about the Native experience, “That’s what I’m trying to get out of this whole thing. All put together, all our stories. Because all we got right now are reservation stories, and shitty version from out dated history textbooks. A lot of us live in cities now. This is just supposed to be like a way to start telling this other story” (Orange 149). Dene’s comment is essentially what this research is about, that reservation stories represent a traditional relationship with land but are not representative of all Native relationships. In this case, Natives tie themselves to their land, which is everywhere, by telling the stories of their people, where they come from, how they got here, what they feel it means to be “native.”
The use of storytelling is a theme in *There There*; characters like Dene try to keep stories alive by introducing new ones or retelling the same ones. Opal Viola Victoria Bear Shield is one of the older Natives in *There There* whose Indigeneity is also tied to storytelling. In an effort to gain sovereignty (another factor in the relationship between Natives and land), Opal Viola, her family, and other Native tribes participate in occupying Alcatraz. During this time, Opal Viola’s mother tells her that the government has been lying to them, and will try to take every piece of land they can (Orange 48). As a way to combat this, Opal is instructed to tell stories whenever she can: “And so what we could do had everything to do with being able to understand where we came from, what happened to our people, and how to honor them by living right, by telling our stories. She told me the world was made of stories, nothing else, just stories, and stories about stories (Orange 58). Orange illuminates the power of storytelling and how it affects the characters and their understanding of where they come from and the fact that the land they belong to is everywhere.

The occupation was unsuccessful, and Orange highlights the struggles the groups faces that ultimately leads to Jacquie and her family leaving, “There was no house or life to go back to, no hope that maybe we would get what we were asking for, that the government would have mercy on us, spare our throats by sending boats of food and electricians, builders, and contractors to fix the place up. The days just passed, and nothing happened. The boats came and went with fewer and fewer supplies” (Orange 57). This attempt at sovereignty is just one example of the countless efforts Native Americans have made to reclaim land. Although the occupation did not result in sovereignty, Orange’s use of it as a flashback gives us the opportunity to compare past attempts with current approaches to determine how this relationship with land changes over time.
4 Cultural Hybridity

The discussion of land and how Natives maintain their relationship with it despite colonialism brings into question the topic of cultural hybridity, which is centered around balance. Cultural hybridity refers to maintaining balance between customs and practices from two or more cultures: “In cultural hybridization, one constructs a new identity that reflects a dual sense of being, which resides both within and beyond the margins of nationality, race, ethnicity, class, and linguistic diversity” (Albert and Páez). Although it can be applied to other areas of Indigeneity, cultural hybridity is present in the lives of several characters in Ceremony and There There and contributes to how the characters’ view land. The protagonist in Ceremony, Tayo, is half-white, half Pueblo Laguna and his ancestry is at the center of his relationship with the landscape. In There There, most of the characters are Native, however cultural hybridity plays a role in their understanding of what it means to be Native. Because they were not born and raised on a reservation or with practicing family members, characters Blue and Edwin are challenged with reclaiming their Indigeneity. While this does not seem like much to do with land, how Urban Indians view land correlates with location and for Urban Indians this means a different kind of understanding.

Because the focus of this research is on land, sovereignty, and cultural hybridity, it is important to understand cultural hybridity and its relationship to the idea of a third space, both concepts developed by Homi K. Bhabha. In an interview with Jonathan Rutherford, Bhabha explains that the third space is part of a process of cultural hybridity:

But for me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the ‘third space’ which enables other
positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives […] This process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation. (Rutherford 211)

Bhabha's explanation of a third space implies that society must move past entrenched histories to create a new structure of negotiation, representation, and authority. Therefore, a third space and cultural hybridity somewhat overlap. Hybridity in terms of a third space plays an important role in the novels because the characters represent cultural hybridity in different ways but face difficulty in achieving a third space because of settler colonialism.

In *Ceremony*, Tayo’s view of the Pueblo Laguna landscape is affected by cultural hybridity because he spent time fighting a “white man’s war,” which leads to his view of land as skewed and lacking balance. Tayo is othered by his family because of his mixed ancestry and is often neglected by his aunt because of it (Silko 27). Despite this othering, Tayo actively decolonizes his mindset and creates a balance within himself, rectifying his participation in the war and becoming one with the land; he learns about Laguna stories, which aim to guide tribes in their fight to survive against witchery, endures a ceremony that takes him on a journey to rediscovering the importance of his relationship with land, recovers Josiah’s cattle from a white rancher’s property, and reclaims Native agriculture by living on the reservation and tending to the cattle, away from the colonized world.

Silko labels aspects of the colonized world as “witchery” and Tayo’s journey requires that he stop participating in its temptations, such as war and alcoholism. David Rice explains Tayo’s reconciliation as a means of survival, “Tayo must align himself with the traditional Laguna
landscape, and though he cannot forget his experience off the reservation, he must try to remove himself ideologically from the culture of urbanized Euramerica and all the ecological and social ills it breeds” (Rice 116). As Tayo does this, a new relationship with the Laguna landscape forms and his understanding of the cyclical relationship between humans and the natural world grows. As discussed earlier, Tayo does this with the help of Ku’oosh, Betonie, Ts’eh, and the hunter. Through his ceremony, Tayo becomes a representation of cultural hybridity while the cattle become a biological representation of hybridity. Silko ties Tayo’s survival to that of the cattle, which further supports the relationship between Tayo and Native agriculture. *Ceremony*’s main plot is the healing of Tayo from horrific experiences of the war and the reclaiming his indigenous identity. Yet an undercurrent in the novel is the hardship the family faces in regard to their land and cattle.

Josiah, whose death haunts Tayo after his return from the war, had struggled with a dilemma when he encountered issues keeping cattle alive and at one point considers creating hybrid cattle that would survive the drought: “They would breed these cattle, special cattle, not the weak, soft Herefords that grew thin and died from eating thistle and burned off cactus during the drought. […] These cattle were descendants of generation of desert cattle, born in dry sand and scrubby mesquite, where they hunted water the way desert antelope did” (Silko 68). Although Josiah’s plan to create a hybrid seems plausible, modern farming practices challenge his way of thinking. In order to gain a better understanding of breeding practices, Josiah studies modern texts and discovers its inapplicability to their immediate surroundings: “The problem was the books were written by white people who did not think about drought or winter blizzards or dry thistles, which the cattle had to live with” (Silko 69). This point in the text presents the reader with an example of the crossing of modern American agriculture and Native American agriculture; the
only reference materials have been written by those who do not have to survive on reservations. After learning that the modern practices will not help him, Josiah resorts to developing his own plan: “We’ll have to do things our own way. Maybe we’ll even write our own book, *Cattle Raising on Indian Land*, or how to raise cattle that don’t eat grass or drink water” (Silko 69). Josiah’s struggle to understand modern cattle breeding techniques and lack of resources that are applicable to Native Americans provides insight to the effects of colonialism on Native agriculture.

The topic of cattle and Native agriculture mirrors Tayo’s healing throughout *Ceremony*. Tayo returns home from war and suffers what readers might assume to be PTSD however, “[…] army doctors told [Auntie] and Robert that the cause of battle fatigue was a mystery, even to them” (Silko 28). His sickness reaches full effect at the beginning of the novel; unable to sleep or eat, Tayo wades in and out of reality, often times confusing his dreams for real life. His condition cannot be repaired by Western medicine, and it is determined that Tayo must endure a ceremony in order to cure his illness. Tayo’s healing is parallel to the cattle’s survival; early in the novel, Josiah explains:

> Cattle are like any living thing. If you separate them from the land for too long, keep them in barns and corrals, they lose something. Their stomachs get to where they can only eat rolled oats and dry alfalfa. When you turn them loose again, they go running all over. They are scared because the land is unfamiliar, and they are lost. They don’t stop being scared either, even when they look quiet and they quit running. Scared animals die off easily. (Silko 69)

Tayo’s suffering is similar to the cattle Josiah describes; home becomes an unfamiliar place, and he is unable to eat much outside of blue cornmeal mush. The cattle represent more than livestock
and as the plot progresses, so does the importance of the cattle. Silko plants seeds that imply Tayo will eventually take over his late uncle’s job by tying much of Tayo’s emotion to the lost cattle, “[…] he could cry for Josiah and the spotted cattle, all scattered now, all lost, sucked away in the dissolution that had taken everything from him” (Silko 28). By tying the lost cattle to Tayo’s own feelings of being lost, the two subjects are now parallel in their survival. Essentially, the cattle returning home mirror Tayo’s own spiritual homecoming. The suffering Tayo experiences because of a white man’s war is mirrored when the cattle return. Tayo and Ts’eh notice marks on the necks of some of the cattle, “Rope burns left dark scabby welts in half circles. Strips of hide were missing around their fetlocks” (Silko 197) and Ts’eh explains that the marks are from steer roping. Although the cattle have suffered a white rancher’s farming practices, they endured and survived. This is similar to Tayo, who returned from a white man’s war with mental scaring. This parallel indicates that the cattle are more than livestock; their suffering and survival reflects Tayo’s journey of suffering to healing.

Early in the novel, Josiah reflects on how cattle must be free or else they remain “lost.” This commentary is an undercurrent that reflects Tayo’s journey. The cattle are left with Ts’eh and when Tayo returns to collect them, Robert comments, “They look real good, Tayo” […] Somebody’s been looking after them for you” (Silko 199). Although the reader would assume that their healing is partly due to Ts’eh, upon further reading it’s noted that Ts’eh as well as the hunter are gone. Contact with American agricultural practices (such as steer roping) were harmful to the cattle, and once they were rescued and left to roam the land freely, they healed. This sentiment is echoed through Tayo’s decision to remain on the secluded ranch and tend to the cattle. Tayo’s decision to remain on the reservation is not met without issue though, as Rice explains,
Silko’s vision of the healing potential of the reservation is complicated by poverty and despair. She sees the danger of the reservation, exemplified by the self-destructive activities of Tayo and his companions as they drink, drive, and fight their way from one bar to the next; life on the reservation becomes as aimless and potentially dangerous as life in the city. For Tayo to survive, then, a further retreat from the encroachment of the white world is necessary. (Rice 116)

This retreat is evident at the end of the novel when we learn that Tayo has decided to remain on a secluded ranch, away from the witchery and temptation of the colonized world. It is important to note that Tayo’s healing is challenged by his friends and family who are concerned that he is spending too much time alone on the ranch. This illustrates the new relationship that Tayo has created; he no longer feels the need to be part of the colonized world and is drawn to the healing that the traditional landscape brings him.

While Tayo’s story is a journey about reconnecting with the land, his retreat to a secluded ranch is a traditional representation of solutions for Natives; because of location, Tayo is able to revive his relationship with the land and avoid the temptations of the colonized world. Tayo’s retreat suggests a reclamation of tradition yet his newfound knowledge of witchery and Native agriculture suggests cultural hybridity. The cattle’s recovery was due to Tayo creating a balanced relationship with nature; he does not return to tribal ways of living but ends his participation in the white world so that he can harmonize with nature. The foundation for cultural hybridity lies in Tayo’s understanding of the colonized world; his experience with war, alcohol consumption, and PTSD provides knowledge about the witchery that Betonie and Ku’oosh discuss. Tayo takes his understanding of the white world along with the lessons from Betonie, Ku’oosh, Ts’eh, and the
hunter to rescue the cattle and properly care for them. I suggest this is a traditional, pastoral relationship with the landscape because of Tayo’s decision to remain on the reservation.

Along with Tayo, the cattle are another representation of hybridity. Silko describes how the cattle, “were tall and had long thin legs like deer” (69), “still run like antelope” (74), hunt for water, “the way desert antelope did” (68), and suggests they are “more like deer than cattle” (183). Silko’s comparisons suggests that unlike the Hereford cattle that cannot survive the droughts, these cattle are a combination of two worlds, the domesticated and the wild. Susan Blumenthal claims:

The spotted cattle are a cross between domesticated cattle and wild animals. The Indian people survived on wild game for thousands of years but contemporary white society restricted use of that food source. Native people turned to livestock as a means of maintaining self-sufficiency. Unfortunately, ranch-bred livestock are poorly suited to the harsh environment of the reservation. Survivors, such as Tayo’s uncle Josiah, must constantly seek ways to overcome even the seemingly insurmountable obstacle of cattle that die during drought. (Blumenthal 369)

Metaphorically, the spotted cattle are hybrids of domesticated and wild animals because of the comparisons to deer and antelope; although the novel maintains they are cows, their features and distinct breeding suggest they are different from American-bred livestock. What makes their hybridity multilayered are the comparisons to animals that are revered in Pueblo Laguna culture.

A particular practice that is repeated throughout the novel is the placing of gifts before the deer as a way of honoring the animal before consuming it. Our first introduction to this practice is when Josiah returns from hunting and Tayo sprinkles cornmeal to feed the deer’s spirit: “They had to show their love and respect, their appreciation; otherwise the deer would be offended, and they would not come to die for them the following year” (Silko 47). Tayo also explains that once they
bring the deer home, it would be placed on a Navajo blanket and decorated with turquoise and silver around its neck and antlers as a gift (Silko 48). We witness this practice later in the novel with Ts’eh and the hunter, who also honor the deer before consuming it. These practices reinforce the idea that the deer and the spirit it inhabits are special to the Laguna people. Blumenthal suggests that the cattle also represent retained tradition: “While the symbol of the spotted cattle as a hybrid survivor representative of Native Americans who have retained tradition and adapted to white culture is easily identified as a thematic element, there is also a more subtle symbolism involved. The spotted cattle are not only physical hybrids they are also spiritual hybrids” (Blumenthal 370).

Silko’s comparison of the spotted cattle to deer/antelope implies that the cattle also inhabit a spirituality; biologically they are hybrids created to withstand the drought but in terms of cultural hybridity, they inhabit deer/antelope-like features and behaviors, experience the harsh treatment of modern ranching practices (such as steer roping), and eventually thrive on reservation land.

In essence, the spotted cattle are livestock but possess deer/antelope spirituality, which makes them representatives of cultural hybridity. Part of Tayo’s healing is tied to the cattle, and an example of this is presented to the reader early in the novel. As Tayo lies in a hospital bed, the image of a deer comes to mind: “And if he could hold onto that image of the deer in his mind long enough, his stomach my shiver less and let him sleep for a while. It worked as long as the deer was alone, as long as he could keep the gray buck on an unrecognized hill; but if he did not hold it tight, it would spin away from him and become the deer he and Rocky had hunted” (Silko 6). This acts as a form of foreshadowing; Tayo’s need to hold onto the image of the deer implies there is a growing need to return to Native life. Throughout the novel deer are mentioned at certain turning points in Tayo’s life; because the deer spirit carries weight in Laguna mythology, Tayo’s healing is tied to his acceptance of traditional ways of living, which the deer represent. Together, the
spotted cattle and Tayo provide examples of cultural hybridity yet maintain very traditional aspects of reservation life, examples which differ from the kind of hybridity in *There There*.

The modern relationship Urban Indians have in *There There* differs from Tayo’s relationship in *Ceremony*; while both parties are challenged with reclaiming their Indigenous roots, the characters in *There There* are tasked with staying connected to their roots in an urban setting. Unlike his adoptive grandmother Opal Viola, Orvil Red Feather’s story represents a new age of Native; he attempts to belong and participate in the culture, despite Opal’s experiences of displacement and avoidance. Orvil’s curiosity about what it means to be Indian represents a generation of young Native Americans attempting to reclaim or navigate their way through the culture in an urban setting. A way for Orvil to discover his Indianness is to participate in the Big Oakland Powwow. Although he knows very little from Opal, Orvil’s determination is absolute:

> Being Indian didn’t fit either. And virtually everything Orvil learned about being Indian he’d learned virtually. From watching hours and hours of powwow footage, documentaries on YouTube, by reading all that there was to read on sites like Wikipedia, PowWows.com, and *Indian Country Today*. Googling stuff like “What does it mean to be a real Indian,” which led him several clicks through some pretty fucked up, judgmental forums, and finally to an Urbandictionary.com word he’d never heard before: *Pretendidian*. (Orange 121)

Readers might assume early on that Opal would educate Orvil about his heritage, but instead refers to it as just simply being Indian (Orange119). Because of his grandmother’s avoidance of the subject and the internet searches, Orvil has an urban view of what it means to be Indian; He was not raised on a reservation, and the only other Indians he knows are Opal and his brothers Loother and Lony. As a result, Orvil feels disconnected but aims to resolve it for himself, “There was so much he’d missed, hadn’t been given. Hadn’t been told. In that moment, in front of the TV, he
knew. He was a part of something. Something you could dance to” (Orange121). Orvil is an example of an Urban Indian; he knows that he is part of a large group of people but navigating the culture by himself. A similar situation arises for another character in the novel: Blue. Although she is a character that does not receive as many sections as the others, Blue’s story is important when discussing the Urban Indian.

Blue is the daughter of Jacquie Red Feather and Harvey (who is also Edwin’s father). Jacquie and Harvey met during the occupation of Alcatraz. The novel implies that Blue is a product of rape (Orange 56) and was given up for adoption. As an adopted child, Blue has no information regarding her parents. Blue’s background is important because while she is aware of her Indian heritage, she feels white: “Almost all I know about my birth mom’s that her name is Jacquie Red Feather. My adoptive mom told me on my eighteenth birthday what my birth mom’s name is and that she’s Cheyenne. I knew I wasn’t white. But not all the way. Because while my hair is dark and my skin is brown, when I look in the mirror, I see myself from the inside out” (Orange 198).

In an effort to feel like she belongs, Blue takes a job as a youth-services coordinator within the Cheyenne tribe in Oklahoma. Upon arriving and beginning work, Blue begins to learn more about her heritage. During this time Blue begins to adopt her Native culture and retire her white name in lieu of her Indian name, Ota’tavo’ome, which means Blue Vapor of Life (Orange 197). Although raised in a white home, Blue tries to be part of the Native community. Unfortunately, her efforts in Oklahoma turn sour after her father-in-law dies and her husband turns violent. Blue escapes this, and returns to Oakland, California. Blue’s story becomes an example of a fractured family; although she traveled to Oklahoma in search of her family with no success, she is unknowingly reunited with both her parents at the Big Oakland Powwow. Although the novel ends without Blue confirming that Jacquie and Harvey are her parents, Blue’s story shows that the
Urban Indian group also consists of adopted children in search of their heritage. Unlike Jacquie, Opal Viola, and Orvil, Blue’s only connection to her heritage is a name and her own efforts to belong.

The novel portrays different versions of Urban Indians, but the concept is not new. Donald Fixico suggests that relocation and assimilation produced the “Urban Indian” at a cost: “This cultural transition from reservation to urban living exemplified sociocultural adaptation at a high cost of cultural confusion. The off-reservation paradox represented a critical means of survival after relocation officials persuaded many individuals to take their families from dilapidated homelands to a presumed better life in cities” (Fixico 99). This identity that Fixico refers to is one that is familiar to readers of There There. Displacement haunts some of the characters that cannot connect to their cultural roots, with some believing they are not “Indian” enough. Edwin Black, a half-native young man living with his mother, struggles to be present in the world because he is unable to make a connection with his Native roots. When he contacts his father, Harvey, Edwin begins to question what being “Indian enough” really means: “For how many years had I been dying to find out what the other half of me was? How many tribes had I made up when asked in the meantime? I’d gotten through four years as a Native American studies major. Dissecting tribal histories, looking for signs, something that might resemble me, something that felt familiar” (Orange 71-72). Orvil, Blue, and Edwin have similarities in their respective journeys. Edwin and Orvil research what it means to be an Indian; Orvil uses the internet and Edwin uses his secondary education to learn more. Blue takes her “research” a step further and travels to Oklahoma to work within her tribe and find her mother. All three characters know they are Native, but there is a cultural disconnect that leaves them to navigate their journeys alone.
There There refers to Urban Indians as Native born in the city (Orange 11) and their view of land is different from Silko’s characters. While Tayo is out to save his homeland and cattle, the characters in There There are in search of belonging; they understand the landscape, have learned to navigate the area but have difficulty understanding what it means to be Native without the comparison to the “traditional” view. Characters in There There represent a different form of cultural hybridity and it affects how they view land. Orange describes Urban Indians and their relationship with the land:

Urban Indians were the generation born in the city. We’ve been moving for a long time, but the land moves with you like memory. An Urban Indian belongs to the city, and cities belong to the earth. Everything here is formed in relation to every other living and non-living thing from the earth […] we know the smell of gas and freshly wet concrete and burned rubber better than we do the smell of cedar or sage or even fry bread – which isn’t traditional, like reservations aren’t traditional […] Being Indian has never been about returning to the land. The land is everywhere or nowhere. (Orange 11)

Orange’s last comments, “reservations aren’t traditional” refers to relocation policies that forced many Natives onto reservations or land that was not home to their tribe. We view Ceremony’s relationship with the land as traditional in the sense that it takes place on a reservation, an idea that aligns with the viewpoint that all Natives come from reservations. It should be noted that historically, the area in Ceremony is the original land of the Pueblo Laguna people. Anthropologist-archaeologist Florence Hawley Ellis, who studies the migration patterns and history of the Pueblo Laguna people suggests that Laguna history does not start with the construction of the mission in 1699 but rather, the Laguna have a history with the landscape and migrating the area several hundred years before (Ellis 325). This suggests that despite narratives
portraying Pueblo Laguna history beginning with Spanish missions, the tribe has remained with their ancestral land for thousands of years. Although they were not forcibly relocated, the National Park Service’s project report on the Laguna suggests relocation programs were designed to help Native Americans find jobs and relocate to urban areas, if they were willing (Baer and Frej 16). *There There* does not undercut *Ceremony*, instead it provides an accurate representation of Native life in the 21st century. This research is designed to illuminate the changing relationships to land; not all Natives reside on reservations and reservations are not the only locations representative of ancestral land. The point Orange is making here is that reservations are not traditional and ancestral land is not limited to reservations; there is no land for Natives to return to because their land is everywhere. While it seems like Orange is refuting Silko’s version of landscape, the difference are their approaches.

Cultural hybridity plays a role in both novels but is depicted differently. *Ceremony* presents Tayo as a person struggling with his dual identity as both a war-ridden soldier and Native. Silko’s solution is to have Tayo end his participation in the white world and retreat to Native land for healing, signifying that Native people only suffer when they live outside the bounds of their ancestral land. Although Tayo’s healing is a major theme in the novel, Silko includes hybrid cattle that also represent cultural hybridity because of the spiritual essence they inhabit as well.

*There There* places cultural hybridity at the forefront of the novel, introducing Urban Indians as a sub-group of Native Americans. The characters in Orange’s novel experience the growing pains of hybridity in that they learn to navigate colonized spaces while staying connected to their Indigenous culture. Hybridity is important because it affects how the characters in these novels view ancestral land; Tayo views it as a sacred place of healing, while Urban Indians regard it as being everywhere, indicating that their knowledge of landscape goes beyond the reservation.
Hybridity is a key concept in the discussion of sovereignty, which also plays a role in the novels and their interpretations of tribal sovereignty and land rights.
5 Sovereignty and A Third Space

Land is at the forefront of novels *Ceremony* and *There There*, each with their own approach; *Ceremony* represents a return to tribal ways of living, while *There There* is a modern representation of Natives who live in cities. Earlier we examined the cultural hybridity of characters in both novels, and while *Ceremony*’s Tayo is half-white and half native, he rejects life in the colonized world and retreats to Native land. This does not reflect the cultural hybridity in *There There*, where characters navigate colonized spaces and reclaim their Indigeneity. Between *Ceremony* and *There There*, we see a change in the relationship to land as well as attempts at sovereignty. I argue that these attempts reflect a shift; rather than allow location and relationship with land to determine Indigeneity, Natives determine their Indigeneity based on their cultural experiences off the reservation.

A critical issue in *Ceremony* is its handling of sovereignty and Indian nationalism. The spiritual connection the Laguna possess in the novel are tribally specific and therefore are not representative of all Native relationships with land. As with many Native American writers, Silko molds a direct relationship between storytelling and ancestral landscape, providing the notion that in order to maintain a relationship with land, it is necessary to access geosacred spaces. Sharon Holm’s “The ‘Lie’ of the Land: Native Sovereignty, Indian Literary Nationalism, and Early Indigenism in Leslie Marmon Silko’s ‘Ceremony’” argues, “the historical continuity of territorial access and isolation that magnifies the symbiotic, generative relationship between oral stories and the land, while legitimating their place as markers of ‘verifiable identity,’ has also encouraged a problematic critical approach, particularly if issues of Native sovereignty and Indian nationalism
are considered” (Holm 244). This verifiable identity that Holm refers to is represented by Tayo’s decolonization of mind and spirit; in order to become one with the landscape, to be more “native,” Tayo ends his participation in the white world and retreats onto Native land. Ceremony’s version of sovereignty is living on sacred ancestral land and nurturing a relationship with the landscape. Although it would seem like the answer to all Indigenous problems is to retreat to Native spaces, the critical issue with this is the ancestral land Silko promotes is affected by “irrevocable socioeconomic and geophysical changes determined by the emerging ideologies of late capitalism in the form of mining and logging operations in the novel [that] are the tensions that both underpin and unsettle the view of the land and Silko’s visions of Native sovereignty in the text” (Holm 246). Because of capitalism, sacred Indigenous land is disturbed and the idea of harmonizing within a sovereign space is questioned.

Holm suggests that Tayo’s retreat is indicative of the time frame in which the novel takes place and when it was written. Tayo returns from fighting in the Philippines during World War II and the novel was published after the Vietnam War, which ended in 1975, “Many ex-vets turned to the solidarity and esteem building of pantribal Red Power activism and the American Indian Movement (AIM), motivated in part by the alienation from American society that returning Vietnam War vets (both Native and non-Native) experienced as well as the increasing antiwar feeling infusing the country” (Holm 253). Tayo’s retreat could be considered a luxury, given that many Native Americans who do not live on reservations do not have the option of harmonizing with the land in such a way that they are afforded a sense of peace while doing so. Further, the coin is double-sided; while Tayo has the “luxury” of retreat, reservations are notoriously neglected economically, with little to no financial opportunities in the surrounding areas. Silko addresses this in the novel when Tayo discusses the town of Gallup, “reservation people were the first to get laid
off because white people in Gallup already knew they wouldn’t ask any questions or get angry; they just walked away. They were educated only enough to know they wanted to leave the reservation; when they got to Gallup there weren’t many jobs they could get” (Silko 106). Although the landscape on the reservation is supposed to bring peace to those who learn to respect it, “reservation people” (as Silko refers to them) still attempt to leave for better opportunity, an idea that is remnant in *There There*; Orange’s narrative in his novel leaves the impression that many who end up in the city travel there in search of opportunity.

Because of the nature of reservations as territories assigned by the United States, *Ceremony’s* Laguna people cannot exclusively define their relationship with a specific territory. The luxury to retreat to Native land is afforded because, as previously noted, the Laguna people have remained on their ancestral land for thousands of years, with no indication of relocation to a different area (Ellis 369). The loss of land outside the reservation is not lost on Silko nor other Native Americans; however, reservation lands are considered “stolen” as well, with regard to the fact that the lands are no longer self-determined. Piper alludes to this in concurrence with the General Allotment Act that sought to privatize Native American holdings:

In this sense reservations are often “hybrid” environments, struggling for sovereignty in the midst of invasive legal and territorial structures. While reservations have been technically granted “sovereignty,” it is sovereignty only under the umbrella of U.S. protectionism. So even where Indians have occupied the same land, the mental mappings or cultural patterns that established the perception of the landscape have been reorganized. (Piper 487)
This reorganization of land is echoed in There There; Orange maintains throughout his novel that Indian land is everywhere and not limited to spaces designated by the government. Ceremony’s explanation of land and the relationship Natives have with it, while mystic and embedded with stories, shows how power, economic status, and sites of colonialism change it. Silko shows how these affect the relationship with land by labeling these aspects as part of the “witchery” that is responsible for the destruction of it; the reservation is surrounded by private landowners who have the means and status to purchase land around it, which then create sites of colonialism by policing areas such as Gallup and limiting job opportunities for Native people. Piper suggests that because reservations are gridded land, territorial lines and federal laws that determine where sovereignty applies:

Reservations, though located outside of the national grid system, may still be partially divided as gridded land. This land may be owned or leased by whites, or held tribally or in allotments by Indians […] This creates a great deal of dispute, both federal and local, over land tenure systems on reservations. Previous land divisions have largely undermined traditional land tenure systems, and the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that Indian sovereignty is non-territorial. That is to say, sovereignty is limited to functions within the territory but does not apply to the territory itself. Actual ownership of Indian land, therefore, is tenuous and complicated. (Piper 493)

Piper’s analysis of the dispute over sovereign land supports the critical issue with Ceremony in reference to what is geosacred spots. While the Laguna have maintained remaining on their ancestral land, the surrounding parts of it are colonized, and even its sovereign status is questioned because of federal grids. Ceremony’s position in Native American literature is cemented because of the symbolic relationship with land. The novel is very much a story of its time, bringing focus
to the issue of sovereignty and returning “home” that reflects Carter’s First Wave, which was mentioned earlier in the discussion about cultural hybridity. If anything, Silko’s novel provides us with the opportunity to question the connection to land through a postcolonial lens, wherein we analyze the different spatial relations to land between *Ceremony* and *There There*.

*There There* is explicit with its theme of Native land belonging everywhere, rejecting the reservation narrative, and instilling a new representation of Native Americans. The novel can be categorized as part of Carter’s concept for a Second Wave, which sees Native American literature shift from the “traditional tribal” phase to the “cultural identity outside of the reservation” phase. As discussed above, relationship to land does not measure the amount of Indigeneity that exists in a Native person. Instead, *There There* examines the culture of Native Americans in an urban space. Attempts at sovereignty are highlighted in the novel but Orange shows how the attempts resulted in failure, most notably the Occupation of Alcatraz. Encouraged by the Red Power Movement, the protest group Indians of All Tribes (IOAT) occupied the abandoned penitentiary from 1969 to 1971, and claimed that under the Treaty of Fort Laramie (also known as the Sioux Treaty of 1868), any retired federal land was to be returned to Native Americans who once occupied it (Clark). Two of Orange’s main characters, Jacquie Red Feather and Opal Viola Victoria Bear Shield, participate in the occupation noting, “It felt like we were gonna stay out there for good, get the feds to build us a school and medical facility, a cultural center” (Orange 50). What Orange is referring to here is an attempt at sovereignty with a school, medical facility, and a cultural center. Returning to previous statements noted, sovereignty was thought to be provided to Native Americans via reservations but as we have learned, reservations and the plots that surround them are operated by private holdings or the government.
In *Ceremony*, the reservation is surrounded by land that has been purchased by mainly white ranchers, and Silko details this when Tayo must rescue the cattle from a bordering property. While this is an obstacle, it is minor in comparison to the poisoned water on and near the reservation. The US government intrudes on the reservation by mining for uranium; Silko explains that the US government closed the drilling site once they obtained what they needed but drilling resulted a mine collapsing and flooding, subsequently poisoning the water (Silko 226). This is reinforced by Tayo, who “scooped water off the top of thick green moss that clogged the steel water trough under the windmill. The water was still warm from the sun and it tasted bitter. He sat on the edge of the trough and looked across the wide canyon at the dark mine shaft. Maybe the uranium made the water taste that way” (Silko 227). Because of the drilling done by the government, access to clean water is limited, especially during the drought. Although this is a storyline in the novel, Piper informs us that this happened the year Silko published *Ceremony*:

The year that Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* was published was the year the Laguna tribe received a warning that the Rio Paguate, the main river that runs through the reservation, was contaminated with radium. It later became public knowledge that not only were all of the Laguna's wells highly irradiated, but that the tribal council building, community center, and reservation road system had been constructed with radioactive mining waste as well. These findings led to the suggestion by the U.S. government that the area be designated a “National Sacrifice Area,” so that further dumping could continue. (Piper 483)

Silko’s novel parallels real life examples of the effects of settler colonialism. Viewing the land as a sacred space is contrasted by the abuse and control of the federal government; although the land is Native ancestral land that the Laguna have lived on for centuries, it does not stop the government
from stepping foot on the land. This reinforces Piper’s earlier statement, “sovereignty is limited to functions within the territory but does not apply to the territory itself” (Piper 494).

Tribal sovereignty, at best, is a false choice for Native Americans. Bruyneel ascertains that tribal sovereignty is not a gift: “Indigenous tribes were self-governing peoples before European contact, and thus they were sovereign before the United States was founded. Therefore, the present limited nature of tribal sovereignty is a consequence of its diminishment at the hands of the American federal government, not a creation of and gift from the United States” (Bruyneel xiv). While many would agree with Bruyneel, countless treaties concealed as willful and complete agreements between tribes and the federal government establish a narrative that sovereignty is a privilege afforded by the United States. Eras of US Indian policy are reflected in Figure 1.1 from Bruyneel’s *A Third Space of Sovereignty*, which shows a pattern between Native Americans and the US government; often, one era of tribal recognition is either met with removal policies or followed by an era of assimilation and relocation. This lack of consistency with establishing sovereignty or tribal recognition suggests that treaties and policies created in the “interest” of Native Americans are not designed to benefit them because the US tends to rollback to assimilation, removal, and relocation. I suggest that the “trust doctrine” designed by the US, which claims that the federal government has a moral responsibility, “[…] to assist Indian tribes in the protection of their land, resources, and cultural heritage” (Wilkins and Kiiwetinepinesiik 339) also contributes to the narrative; it creates a false sense of trust when reservations are created and then abused for resources, which is depicted in *Ceremony*. Furthermore, this narrative is also supported by Horsman’s *Race and Manifest Destiny*, in which Horsman states, “The effort to create a formal Indian territorial model, with a degree of self-government and with the purpose of allowing Indians to emerge as equal citizens was, consistently blocked in Congress” (Horsman 204). Because of the
power and control the federal government has over Native American sovereignty, Native people resort to making their own attempts at sovereignty, which is shown in *There There* with the Alcatraz occupation.

Bruyneel’s work is mainly in postcolonialism, and on the topic of sovereignty he has drawn theories related to Homi Bhabha’s concept of a third space. Bhabha explains his concept as a space that is not physical but rather an “in-between” that bears the burden and meaning of culture:

Theoretical recognition of the split-space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture’s hybridity [...] the in-between space that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. [...] And by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves. (Bhabha 56)

Furthermore, we can regard the third space as a transition space without a hierarchy or a post-colonial power, which allows for the emergence of new positions of cultural identity and practices. Bruyneel’s use of this concept suggests a new relationship between the United States and the Indigenous population, “My effort to put forward a third space of sovereignty, not as something I have devised in a vacuum but rather as what I see to be an active feature of US-indigenous relations, similarly aims to resist the idea that boundaries stand as homogenizing or unifying impositions on identity, agency, and sovereignty” (Bruyneel xix). It should be noted that Bruyneel’s “third space of sovereignty” is a political concept; however, this concept serves a purpose in discussing the approaches to sovereignty in the novels.
With regard to literary representation, I refer to Bruyneel’s concept in conjunction with the discussion of *Ceremony* and *There There* because of their approaches to land, sovereignty, and hybridity. In the case of *Ceremony*, Tayo and the cattle represent cultural hybridity; Tayo with his understanding of witchery and the Laguna landscape, and the hybrid cattle that embody the deer/antelope spirit. This is what sets *Ceremony* apart from *There There*; Tayo retreats to Native land as a healing place, although he does not return to tribal ways of living. Retreating to a “sovereign” space is contradicted by the federally assigned locations of Indigeneity; such assignments necessarily limit the condition of sovereignty. Bhabha notes that one possible issue with hybridity is notions of cultural diversity that uphold norms of the dominant culture, “A transparent norm is constituted, a norm given by the host society or dominant culture, which says that ‘these other cultures are fine, but we must be able to locate them within our own grid’” (Rutherford 208). For cultural hybridity to exist for Indigenous people, we must create a third space in which Indigenous peoples can embrace their Indigeneity while existing in a metropole and not literally (or figuratively) confined to their “own grid” within the dominant U.S culture. Orange’s novel achieves a hybrid third space through this characters and their existence in between cultures; however, the need for a third space of sovereignty becomes apparent at the end of the novel.

*There There* includes several related stories, all tied to one main event at the end of the novel. Each character has a relationship with the powwow that takes place at the Oakland Coliseum. This powwow is an intersection for many tribes, a cultural hub of Indigenous groups. Orange dedicates a section in the novel to powwows and explains that powwows are a place for Indigenous people to gather and remind one another of the community (Orange 135). The powwow takes place at a sports arena and holds a great deal of significance; although the arena is cold,
empty, and modern, Indigenous people fill it with tribal songs, dance, stories, and culture. Orange highlights the resiliency of the Indigenous population and the dedication to the gathering:

We all came to the Big Oakland Powwow for different reasons. The messy, tangling strands of our lives got pulled into a braid – tied to the back of everything we'd been doing all along to get us here. We’ve been coming from miles. And we've been coming for years, generations, lifetimes, layered in prayer and handwoven regalia, beaded and sewn together, feathered, braided, blessed, and cursed. (Orange 135)

The meshing of the two draws attention to the idea of cultural hybridity being possible. The arena is a representation of modern culture and possibly designed with whiteness in mind. Although the Oakland Coliseum represents mass culture and capitalism, Indigenous groups manage to create a space within the stadium to celebrate their Indigeneity. Orange promotes hybridity for Indigenous peoples; it shows the combination of cultures by promoting a powwow in a modern sports arena. The meeting of cultures erases the idea that Indigenous people exist solely on reservations or have gone extinct. Orange has taken two original moments – a modern sports arena and a tribal powwow – and creates a third space, or a hybrid moment that allows Urban Indians to emerge. This third space consists of people who are Indigenous as well as people who are discovering their Indigeneity:

We Urban Indians and Indigenous Indians, Rez Indians and Indians from Mexico and Central and South America. We are Alaskan Native Indians, Native Hawaiians, and European expatriate Indians, Indians from eight different tribes with quarter-blood quantum requirements and so not federally recognized Indian kinds of Indians. We are enrolled members of tribes and disenrolled members, ineligible members and tribal council
Bhabha’s definition of a third space implies that while past histories should be acknowledged, they should not dictate how a third space operates, and Richard Lyon echoes the same sentiment by implying that Indigenous groups must create new opportunities for modern engagement: “[…] the next big project for Native American studies, and indeed for the indigenous movement as a whole, is to develop new ways of engaging with the irreducible modernity and diversity that inheres in every Native community and has for some time” (Lyons 297). Although the powwow and arena are moments that set up the opportunity for new positions to emerge, tragedy stops the characters from fully developing a third space.

*There There* explores the lives of several Urban Indians however, the novel also highlights the cyclical violence, substance abuse, and poverty the characters face. Despite some of the characters attempting to create a new space in the modern arena, the effects of settler colonialism set in at the gathering. Calvin, Octavio, and Tony along with their friends Charles and Carlos, enter the powwow, with intentions of stealing prize money awarded to the winner of the dances. Rather than do so quietly and unseen, the men enter with gun shots, injuring several characters. Orange alludes to the fact that some of the characters might be dead, while others are seriously injured. The importance of this is rooted in the idea that while Urban Indians attempt to create a third space in which they can emerge in positions of new authority, the effects of settler colonialism pose a threat. Cyclical violence, poverty, and substance abuse are all results of colonialism that Indigenous groups live with. Abilene Slaton, author of, “Federal Statutory Responsibility and the Mental Health Crisis Among American Indians” addresses the disproportionate affect cyclical violence and poverty has on the Indigenous population in the U.S.:
Specifically, American Indians are more likely than other U.S. demographics to face substance abuse, exposure to trauma, physical abuse and neglect, poverty, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Notably, among American Indians, the rate of poverty is two times the national average, and the numbers are similar, though even more extreme, for unemployment rates among Indians. In addition to these facts, the rate of violence is twice as high among American Indian communities. Forced relocation, cultural assimilation, and other historical causes of widespread American Indian suffering may be much to blame. (Slaton 74)

Slaton’s research for the *American Indian Law Review* illuminates the unequal balance of power between Natives and the after-effects of settler colonialism. Although *Ceremony* does not necessarily create a third space, cyclical poverty and addiction affects the characters in a similar fashion as those in *There There*, signifying that despite the time frame in which these novels were written, the effects of settler colonialism still plague the Native community as a whole. As we addressed earlier, it can be difficult to achieve a third space when one power dominates over the other. In this case, cyclical violence (a result of colonization) destroys the possibility of people like Edwin and Dene achieving their respective goals. Orange shows readers the effects of hybridity and the possibility of a third space; however, because of cyclical violence – achieving a third space is halted when thieves attack the powwow. The takeaway from *There There* is that Urban Indians exist in modern spaces, with connections to their culture and a third space is possible, but not easily achievable with the consequences of settler colonialism. The cyclical violence and poverty that Indigenous groups face make Bhabha’s third space seem incomprehensible for Indigenous groups.
For the Indigenous population, hybridity means eradicating the stereotype that Natives exist only on reservations, wear traditional headdresses, and live out of huts and teepees. In Orange's *There There*, Urban Indians live “in-between” cultures and a connection to the land, while important, does not define the level of Indigeneity the characters are. A spiritual relationship with the land is important to Native American culture, but for Urban Indians there is no land assignment or reservation to retreat to. Orange’s novel is representative of the hybridity Bhabha refers to as a third space in which new positions emerge. Rather than be defined as Native or non-native, Orange creates a hybrid in the Urban Indian: An Indigenous person who identifies as Native American but lives a very modern life. This does not suggest that sovereignty is no longer needed. Although Bhabha’s concept could be applied to *There There*, Bruyneel’s third space of sovereignty goes beyond the social concept of a third space. Instead of a social position emerging, Bruyneel suggests that a third space of sovereignty:

Seeks to rethink governance from below by seeking to secure and “arrange” multiple nodes of sovereignty in a multilayered political system wherein settler and Indigenous polities can coexist, overlap, and interweave jurisdiction […] It will require some degree of meaningful change in the settler-society’s institutional organization and ideational approach and the concomitant solidification of a location and form of indigenous sovereignty that is self-determined and thus not dependent on the settler-society […] I propose that the “third space” may well provide the vocabulary that both captures and helps to constitute a viable, increasingly sought after location of indigenous postcolonial political autonomy that refuses the choices set out by the settler society. (Bruyneel 218)
Although Orange has successfully created characters that represent a third space, they still operate within a settler-society that endangers them. Creating a third space of sovereignty allows political autonomy which is beneficial to Indigenous peoples.

Rather than conflate a third space of sovereignty with that of postcolonial resistance in other nations, Bruyneel suggests a reassessment of sovereignty. In this sense, Native people would have the opportunity to emerge with new positions of power and authority without statism. Bruyneel’s concept of a third space of sovereignty suggests new political initiatives to be designed by Native Americans because of their ability to create “locatable alternatives” that are not created by a colonial power (Bruyneel 221). With this in mind, applying Bruyneel’s concept to There There, the powwow would not have a use for the modern coliseum; rather, they would have the authority and position of power to dictate places of celebration, possibly without the threat of cyclical violence. According to Bruyneel, a third space of sovereignty for Native people is possible, by reassessing U.S. and Indigenous structures of power. Keeping in mind the grid that Bhabha refers to earlier in this essay, Bruyneel echoes the same problem: “The settler polity is often deaf to the indigenous claim for a third space because this claim refuses to accommodate itself to the political choices framed by the imperial binary: assimilation or secession, inside or outside, modern or traditional, and so on” (Bruyneel 217). Bruyneel implies that the imperial binary stops a third space of sovereignty from happening, much like Bhabha’s discussion on diversity suggests that the center powerfully determines the expression of the diverse margins. Because a norm has been constituted by the dominant culture, other cultures can only exist on a grid that the dominant can locate. A third space of sovereignty poses a threat, because it is not fully constituted by the dominant society. Between Bhabha’s concept and Bruyneel’s supplemental strategy, the idea of a third space is not impossible, but it is difficult to achieve. Stories like There
*There* show the complexities of cultural hybridity and a third space; although the characters do not set out to achieve these goals specifically, symbolically their attempts to exist between cultures and gather in a modern space to celebrate tradition and ritual show allow readers to glimpse new forms of cultural becoming while recognizing the dangers of existing within a hierarchically organized social and cultural grid.
6 Conclusion

The beginning of this research began with Silko’s *Ceremony* and the intriguing relationship between Tayo, the landscape, and hybrid cattle. What grew from that was an interest in Native literature and stories of sovereignty, cultural hybridity, and Native relationships with land. Upon reading *There There* it became clear that not all Indigenous people view land the same and the relationship with land does not signify how Indigenous a person is. Overall, relationship to land brings into frame issues with sovereignty and how the subject of sovereignty has changed over time. To recap, *Ceremony* and *There There* depict the Native experience; one is on a reservation and the other is in an urban setting. Their approaches to land differ, with *Ceremony* describing a cosmic relationship that provides healing and restoration, while *There There* promotes the Urban Indian navigating gentrification. Although their approaches are different, common threads found in each are cultural hybridity and sovereignty.

Homi Bhabha explains that the third space is cultural hybridity; a space of “in-between” that allows for new positions and relationships to emerge. In the context of *Ceremony* and *There There*, cultural hybridity is represented through characters and their relationships to land, animals, and culture. The important question to posit is are they in a third space? The simple answer is no, they are not. While Tayo and the cattle represent a form of cultural hybridity, Tayo’s retreat to Native land for healing is contradicted by the dominant power that controls the reservation. In *There There*, cyclical violence and poverty stop characters from bringing together Native people for a large powwow in a modern arena. Bhabha’s third space implies there is no hierarchy, no dominant force and in these novels the dominant force has an invisible presence; we do not
necessarily see settler colonialism in the form of a character but rather the effects of settler colonialism, which creates unbalanced situations that do not allow for a third space to emerge. To complicate the issue further, Bruyneel’s concept suggests that the third space concept should be approached with reference to the overarching issue of sovereignty.

Sovereignty does not define the relationship between Natives and land but rather it facilitates the relationship without the overarching power of the United States. That is to say, sovereignty – true sovereignty – is not easily achievable because of the dominant power that exists. As outlined in Figure 1, tribal sovereignty is met with contention throughout history, creating a false sense of trust in the government. Bruyneel suggests that sovereignty, or the idea of it, is a false choice:

Over the course of American political history, indigenous sovereignty has been deemed something that needed to be denied – for example, through the codification of U.S. plenary power – and/or something that threatened the destruction of U.S. state sovereignty, as expressed, for instance, by contemporary anti-tribalism. The enduring presence of colonial ambivalence has maintained the parameters of this false choice, putting indigenous sovereignty and political life in a seemingly impossible colonial bind. (Bruyneel 220)

This colonial bind denies a third space, and complicates the issue of sovereignty, as well as Bruyneel’s concept of a third space of sovereignty. From a political standpoint, Bruyneel approaches sovereignty with the notion that a third space may provide the language necessary to help negotiations of what sovereignty means. This suggests that a third space of sovereignty would be a space in which there is no hierarchal overreach from the federal government because it is a transitional space. The flaw in this approach is that politically, the federal government has shown
throughout the course of their relationship with the Indigenous population that oversight of Native land is a right; examples of this are shown in the frontier thesis, as well as notions of Manifest Destiny. Although Bhabha is explicit in his explanation of a third space that past histories cannot dictate the space in-between, he does not deny the relevance of history in the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, which also complicates Bruyneel’s third space of sovereignty concept. Bruyneel acknowledges the complication, noting:

The political history of indigenous people’s refusals of the false choice set out for them indicate a persistent effort both to self-determine what sovereignty means to them and to expose the uncertainty and even impossibility of U.S. sovereignty as a totalizing claim to supreme, legitimate authority. In this regard, indigenous and U.S. or settler claims to sovereignty face the challenge of dealing with the instability of the term itself. (Bruyneel 221)

Some of the instabilities surrounding ideas of “sovereignty” are shown in Ceremony and There There, as relationships with land are complicated by the effects of settler colonialism; although there are notions of cultural hybridity, the third space is in constant flux because of the unbalanced power dynamic. The discussion of sovereignty and land remains a popular topic in the Native community and although attempts like the Alcatraz occupation were unsuccessful, what has risen from these discussions are organized movements aimed at creating a new kind of sovereignty.

The Land Back Movement targets issues that directly affect the Native community and echoes the problems in the novels analyzed for this thesis. The Land Back Manifesto outlines the conditions which the organization expects to be met. Land Back states the manifesto is, “a
reclamation of everything stolen from the original Peoples” and lists land, language, ceremony, medicines, and kinship as things they intend to reclaim. Most importantly are the demands:

![4 LANDBACK Campaign Demands —](image)

1. **Dismantle** — white supremacy structures that forcefully removed us from our Lands and continue to keep our Peoples in oppression.
   a. Bureau of Land Management, National Parks Service

2. **Defund** — white supremacy and the mechanisms and systems that enforce it and disconnect us from stewardship of the Land.
   a. Police, military industrial complex, Border Patrol, ICE

3. **Return** — All public lands back into Indigenous hands.

4. **Consent** — Moving us out of an era of consultation and into a new era of policy around Free and Prior Informed Consent.

Figure 2 from www.landback.org

The Land Back Movement echoes the same wants and needs as other movements before it; however what has changed are the approaches. We can consider *There There’s* Alcatraz occupation as an aggressive form of sovereignty; Orange depicts it as an uprising that ultimately failed because of a lack of resources, which also mirrors how the occupation ended historically. Because of technology and networking, movements like the Land Back Movement are able to reach farther, providing a sustainability that allows consistent calls for change. I argue that point four of the Land Back Manifesto echoes Bruyneel’s suggestion of a third space of sovereignty. Point four, consent, aims to move into a “new era of policy around Free and Prior Informed Consent.” As mentioned previously, Bruyneel notes that a third space of sovereignty suggests a space in which Natives are the designers of locatable alternatives for sovereignty. In this manifesto we see direct demand for “Free and Prior Informed Consent” which, “is one of the most important principles that Indigenous Peoples believe can protect their right to participation. It is embedded
in the right to self-determination. The duty of States to obtain Indigenous Peoples’ FPIC entitles Indigenous people to effectively determine the outcome of decision-making that affects them, not merely a right to be involved” (“Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples”). Although the demands in the Land Back Manifesto are not universally met, the recent nomination and seating of Deb Haaland as U.S. Secretary of the Interior gives hope to the idea of a third space of sovereignty.

Deb Haaland, a Pueblo Laguna and 35th generation New Mexican, is the first Native woman in Congress. Her nomination and seating signifies change for the Native community; Haaland’s seating is not only historic, but symbolic for Native people, “For much of its history, the Interior Department was used as a tool of oppression against America’s Indigenous peoples. In addition to managing the country’s public lands, endangered species and natural resources, the department is also responsible for the government-to-government relations between the U.S. and Native American tribes” (Rott). With a Native Pueblo Laguna and New Mexican as Secretary of the DOI, a Native voice is present in Congress. Issues that arise in Ceremony and There There, such as metallic water, gentrification, policing of Indigenous people, and Indigenous-U.S. relations in general, are not specific to the novels; these situations occur all over the United States and Haaland’s seating suggests that Bruyneel’s concept of a third space is sovereignty is slowly taking shape.

Overall, for Indigenous peoples, the topics of land, sovereignty, and cultural hybridity overlap. For the Native community, these topics are in constant fluctuation because of Indigenous-U.S. relations and the effects of settler colonialism. Ceremony and There There, although written with mystic storytelling, ritual, and tradition, reflect the reality of the changing relationship with land. The takeaway from these novels is that over time, the approach to land, sovereignty, and
cultural hybridity changes, from reservation Natives to Urban Indians, reservation life to urban life, and existing in-between as mixed-race Natives. The concepts of a third space and a third space of sovereignty, although complex, provide insight as to how we discuss and approach Native American literature. Because the genre often reflects Native life in a postcolonial setting, understanding the complexity of Indigenous-U.S. relations and sovereignty provides guidance to understanding the Native relationship with land and the many social, political, and cultural forces that effect it.
Works Cited


Works Reviewed


Greenberg, Joy H. and Gregory Greenberg. “Native American Narratives as Ecoethical


