

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Political of Trauma in Toni Morrison's *Sula* and *Beloved*

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By

Parbati K.C.

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

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Tribhuvan University

Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

Ms. Parbati K .C. has completed her thesis entitled “Politics of Trauma in Toni Morrison’s *Sula* and *Beloved*” under my supervision. She carried out her research from 27th June 2008 AD to 23rd Nov. 2008 A.D. I hereby recommended her thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Faculty of Humanities and Social Science

This thesis submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Parbati K.C. titled "Politics of Trauma in Toni Morrison's *Sula* and *Beloved*" has been approved by the undersigned member of the Research committee.

Members of Research committee:

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head

Central Department of English

Date: _____

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Dr. Beerendra Pandey

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ABSTRACT

The novels *Sula* and *Beloved* depict the effect of the patriarchal domination, bias, prejudice, and the dehumanizing outcome of the slavery system. *Sula* focuses on the fragmented traumatic memory of the characters. Being the traumatic characters their behaviors and activities seen in the form of enigmatic survival, distress and idiosyncratic behavior etc. the fragmented memory of the characters acting out from the novel *Sula*. Likewise, the novel *Beloved* is the representation of the traumatic experiences exploded through the activities of the characters. Most of the activities are dominated by the psychological and physical experienced of the characters due to the excessive exploitation the slavery system. The novel is the reality of the slave traumatized life experiences, the dehumanization of black people, the moral degradation of their masters, and ever-present violence. Cruelty, punishment, separation of the family member proved the slavery as an extreme form of the black's exploitation. The slave's broken body is a vivid evidence of the trauma undergone. Thus, the novels *Sula* and *Beloved* supports the traumatized voice of the characters to give them remedial power but their voices are under the shadow of the politics.

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Trauma Theory: An Introduction

Due to the psychological repression the term trauma is method of interpretation of disorder, distress and destruction. The effect of an event may be seen in many forms not obviously associated with the events. It approves for an interpretation of cultural symptoms of growths, wounds scars on a social body and its compulsive repeated actions. It is the modern perspective of the trauma theory is that the unrepresentable of the event or object destabilizes language and demands vocabulary syntax. Trauma shows the abnormality in reaction of any event. The abnormality is mostly psyche but is manifested in the physicality which became more stressful. The exposition phase of the trauma is not only the destruction but a enigma of existence.

The term trauma is derived from a medical term of Greek denoting a severe wound or injury and resulting after effects. Trauma became problematic when it is reflected in the repetitive action. Trauma theory category in which diverse fields such as physical, psychological, philosophical, ethical and aesthetic questions of traumatic events are included.

Physical trauma is taken as the response to the physical injury which depends on the degree and the suddenness of the injury and the previous physical condition of the victim. Physical trauma is related more too physical hurt and damages which affect vital organs leading to the serious condition of the patients. Though the body reacts against the physical stress, these defenses are believed usually to increases the tissues functional resistance to damaging stress, but they may overreact to trauma and cause early physical exhaustion. The physical trauma is *medic* that is serious injury or shock to the body, as from violence or an accident.

From the icon of Sigmund Freud the dynamic of trauma repression and symptom formation as the matter of hysteria. In the form of repetitive behaviors and somatic symptom we see the overpowering event.

The main explorer of trauma as a form of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud focuses on dynamic of trauma repress and symptoms formations. Freud forward that an overpowering event unacceptable to consciousness can be forgotten and yet seen in the form of semantic behaviors. Study the trauma theory related with Freud, James Berger writes concerning matter of hysteria and neurotic symptoms:

The initial theory of trauma and symptom become problematic for Freud when he concluded the neurotic symptoms were more often the result of repressed drives and desires than of traumatic events. Freud returned to the theory of trauma in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, work which originated in his treatment of world-war I combat veterans who suffer from repeated nightmares and other symptoms of their wartime experience. (569)

Here, the central idea for psychoanalysis is the traumatic event and its aftermath at the same time. But again Freud changes his focus from biological urge toward equilibrium which he then theorized as the 'death drive'.

Freud's extended the concept of 'latency' of how the memory of a traumatic event can be lost over a time but then reappeared in the different symptomatic form. In this way , "each national catastrophe invokes and transforms memories of other catastrophes, so that history became a complex entanglement of crimes inflicted and suffered, with each catastrophe understood that is misunderstood in the context of repressed memories of previous ones" (569) .

Regarding the significance of the historical event all Freud's thinking on trauma manifests the ambivalence. As Freud evoked in the first movements of each of his theoretical ventures or his conclusion of his second moves are events secondary to desire instinct or a form of genetic history? At the same place Dominick Lacapra, Cathy Caruth and Kali Tal all confront the Freudian ambivalence toward the event and in different ways regard events their aftermath and their representations as crucial to interpreting personal and social histories.

At the same time, why trauma theory has become popular and inevitable makes us look at the preoccupation with family dysfunctions, child abuse, incest spousal abuse in the media, most strikingly on the talk show circuit. The family is "damaged beyond hope" (570). The survivor is a kind of "black box", a source of final knowledge of authority those is the interest in family breakdown and violence comes the interest of enigmatic figure of survivor, the one who has faced the catastrophe and can tell us what it is like. Holocaust survivors, survivors of near-death experiences, victim of child abuse and so on has been an enormous growth in interest in eyewitness accounts and all kinds of testimonies over the past fifteen years.

The word "trauma" not only the word for disaster. The idea of catastrophe as trauma "provides a method of interpretation, for it posits that the effects of an event may be dispersed and manifested in many forms not obviously associated with the event" (570).

The wide area cover across the time so that the impact of the experience of event is produced only years later. "This representational and temporal hermeneutic of the symptoms has powerful implications for contemporary theory". In its emphasis on the retrospective reconstruction of the traumatic event, a traumatic analysis is both constructivist and empirical" (570). The importance of 'Trauma Theory' to study of

history and narrative it allows for an interpretation of cultural symptoms of the growth words, scars on a social body and its compulsive, repeated actions.

Trauma theory is a kind of discovers in which unrepresentable, of the event or object that “destabilizes language and demands a vocabulary and syntax in some sense incommensurable with what went before” (571). By creating a traumatic-sacred sublime these discourses often blur into each other in which historical complexity and historical pain are effaced or “redeemed.”

The traumatic symptoms aren't only somatic nonlinguistic phenomena, they occur also in language. One of the popular critic Dominick Lacarpa talks about the analytical controversies regarding Holocaust representation and to elaborate a theory of historical trauma and its transmission. In his theory of trauma focuses the three psychoanalytic topics acting out verses working through; the return of the repressed; and the semantic of transference. A traumatic historical event, Lacapra argues, “first to be repressed and then to return in form of compulsive repetition” (Berger 571).

By accepting the role of paradox and ‘aporia’, Lacapra emphasizes more in trauma’s nature which denies compulsively fixated. In this regard, Berger writes: “Lacapra wants to create a position that avoids both redemptive narrative and sublime acting out. He sets out to describe a way to work through trauma that does not “deny the irreducibility of loss or the role of paradox and ‘aporia’ but avoids becoming “compulsively fixated” (Berger 572).

Berger further extended that in LaCapra acknowledges certain value in acting out and says, “if there is no acting our at all, the resulting accounts of historical trauma will be that teleological redemptive fetishizing that denies the trauma’s reality it happened ,but it had no lasting effect; look ,we are all better now ,even better than before” (572) .

The most pervasive concerns of LaCapra's are transference. Transference is the occasion for working through the traumatic symptom. It is imperative therefore, "to recognize the symptom and the trauma as one's own, to acknowledge that the trauma still inactive and that one is implicated in its destructive effects" (573). The failures of German nationalist historian's and of the defender of deMan and Heidegger, their construction of various redemptive narratives, LaCapra argues, "ultimately is a failure to recognize their referential relations to their objects" (573). Here, LaCapra's points out two important implications of his view of historical trauma that the postmodern and poststructuralist theories should be practiced on historical ground as Foucault says everything is historical. LaCapra believes two important implications of his view of historical trauma. First, trauma provides a method of rethinking post-modern and post- structuralist theories in a clear historical context. As he goes:

The postmodern and the post-Holocaust became mutually entwined issues that are best addressed in relation to each other. This relation would include a new traumatic understanding of what he calls "the near fixation on the sublime or the most obsessive preoccupation with loss, aporia, dispassion and deferred meaning" (xi). (Berger 574).

Secondly, though LaCapra has raised the issue of literary canonicity, he provides an original rethinking of the debates over the literary canon; he has not examined the relations between historical trauma and any text. Literary text might be the site of symptomatic combined with critical acting out or working through that Lacarpa says in this regard:

That a canonical text should not help permanently itself an ideological order but should rather help "one to foreground ideological problems

and to work through them critically” (25). Each text would be, in effect, site of trauma with which the reader would have to engage. (Berger 572)

Similarly, Cathy Caruth’s introduction *Unclaimed Experience; Trauma, Narrative and History*, is concerned with the traumatic past, experience in the literary text plays the role to prove the traumatic representation and reference and it concerned with how it becomes text and how a wound becomes a voice. Cathy Caruth, main focus is to explore the principles of trauma and its narrative history which describes the intersections traumatic narrative. Caruth argues that trauma as it first occurs in the form of incomprehensible. Then, the traumatic narrative occurs strongly referential but not in any simple or direct way. Berger cites Caruth where he intersections of the traumatic repetitions give path to the historical narrative. In this regard Caruth said, “the historical narrative arises from such intersections of traumatic repetitions, which history, like trauma, is never simply one’s own, that history is precisely the way we are implicated in each other’s traumas” (Berger 573) .

By the same token Caruth opens new ground on problematic explore by Geoffrey Hartman, Elaine Scarry, and Slavoj Žižek in the relation between pain and language, narrative, historical and ethnic dimensions in which Caruth focuses in the incomprehensible and period of latency that it can be placed in a narrative: “the impact of the traumatic event lies precisely in its belatedness in its refusal to be simply located” (Berger 575).

Cathy Caruth, as the critique of Paul deMan as well as defense of deManian method of interpretation. For Caruth, the narrative of trauma became delayed history and their aftermaths will not an immediate understanding. By relating the deManian theory of language, Caruth argues and proceed to a quite difficult

discussion of how events befall authors, how language falls short of perpetual reality while producing reference, through this fall and how reference ultimately “registers, in language, the impact of an event” (Berger 572). In this discussion Caruth seems to point out the text reflects either the writer’s own experiences of ‘repressed’ or the historical narrative which shapes the hanging methodological trend in writing. Though, it becomes literary symptom unconscious inevitable imprints of events on text in the form verbal tricks to tropes. Hence, Caruth comments on deManian interpretation that blurs at the end into an implied apology for deMan’s who is unable to describe the implications of wartime writing. Caruth employs trauma in order to read their conjunction as the outcome of the shock of experience and the belatedness of its realization in discourse and understanding, rather than arbitrarily departing history and theory.

An approach of Kali Tal’s in *Words of Hurt: Reading the Literature of Trauma*, Tal raises the voice of cognitive psychology and of feminist politics that identifies strongly with the testimonies of rape and incest survivors. In this context Tal is hostile to psychoanalysis and bases her view different from LaCapra and Caruth. Tal argues that the literature of trauma consists only of the writing of victims and survivors of trauma which is quite differing emphatically from psychologically oriented writers like Caruth and LaCapra. Tal’s main discussions deal with recent critical approaches to the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, literature produced by American Veterans of the Vietnam War and testimonies of women survivors of incest and child abuse. Her study is based on the systematic violence of woman and a sense of how traumatic literature might social change.

Berger defines Tal’s view on literature of trauma as the traumatic experience which is the identity of author where he argues, “Literature of trauma is defined by

the identity of its author. The weak of the critic of the literature of trauma is both of identity of its author. The weak of critic of the literature of trauma is both of identify and explicate literature by members of survivor groups, and to deconstruct the process by which the dominant culture codifies their traumatic experience” (576).

Kali Tal defines trauma is known as threat to life or bodily integrity or personally encounter with death and violence. Trauma as a life treating event that displaces one’s preconceived notion about the world.

In the field of literary studies, trauma theory has come not as a surprise. As Cathy Caruth point out in her introduction *Violence and time*. Traumatic survivals, relating the issue of trauma with the recent year’s psychiatry she said that the direct effect of external violence seen in the psychic disorder. It is the study of “post-traumatic stress of disorder”, which describe the uncontrolled repetitive occurrence of hallucinations, flashback, overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the effect of events has seen in the form of delayed.

At the same time, Cathy Caruth point out that general understanding of the traumatic disorders reflect the direct imposition on the mind of unavoidable reality of horrific event, “the taking over-psychically and neurobiological of the mind by an event that it can control” (24).

On the one hand trauma seen in the destructive form but on the other hand there is the paradoxical relationship between destruction and survival which is seen in the heart of catastrophic experience. In this regard Caruth says, “It is not only in recognizing traumatic experience as a paradoxical relation between destructiveness and survival that we can also the legacy of incomprehensibility at the heart of catastrophic experience” (24).

The intricate relation between trauma and survival arises not from the one expectation. Because of a seemingly direct and unmediated relation between conscious and life-threatening events, but from through the very paradoxical structure of indirectness in psychical trauma.

Caruth presents Freudian reference on trauma which is related to the psychic and argues and raises the question for consciousness to survive if the traumatic effect is not directly available to the experience. In this regard Caruth present Freudian reference and says:

If a life threat to body is experienced as the direct to body is experienced as the direct infliction and the healing of wound, trauma is suffered in the psyche precisely, it would seem, because it is not directly available to experience what it means for consciousness to survive? (24)

Freud in his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* talks about the psychic disorder that appears to reflect the unavoidable and overwhelming imposition of violent events on the psyche. Faced with the striking acutance of what were called the war neuroses in the wake of World War I.

Freud compares violent events to symptoms of another long problematic phenomenon, the neurosis accident. In this regard Freud states, “The repetitive experience of nightmares and reliving of battlefield events-that is experienced like a neurotic pathology and yet whose symptoms reflect, in starting directness and simplicity, nothing but the occurrence of violent events.” (Caruth 24).

Freud introduce in his *Beyond the pleasure principle*, that the formation of history as the endless repetition of previous violence. The reality of destructive force that the violence of history imposes on the human psyche. At the same time Caruth

argues that the close reading of Freud's description of the traumatic nightmare of the accident, we find more complex notion of what is missed and repeated in the trauma. In the description of the accident dream, Freud not only simply attribute the traumatic fight to the dream itself, but also give the description of its upon waking up. "Dream occurring in traumatic neuroses have the characteristic of repeatedly bringing the patient back into the situation of his accident, a situation from which he wake up in another fight" (Caruth 25).

Cathy Caruth brings the reference of Freud's later work, *Moses and Monotheism* which examines the delayed experience of trauma in the history an entire people. In this regard Caruth argues:

what I would preliminarily suggest here is that such a history individual or collective bears with it the weight of a paradox: that external violence is felt most, not in its direct experience, but in the missing of this experience; that trauma is constituted not only by the destructive force of a violent event but by the very act of survival. If we are to register the impact of violence we cannot, therefore, locate it only in the destructive moment of the past but in an ongoing survival that belong to the future. (Caruth 24)

Due to the violence inhabits ,incomprehensibly, their very survival of those who have lived beyond it that it may be witness best in the future generation to whom this survival is passed on.

Cathy Caruth examines the enigma at the heart of the Freud's work on trauma which sees in her article name *Parting words: Trauma, Silence and Survival*. The surprising emergence, from within the theory of the death drive, of the drive to life, a form of survival that both witnesses and turns away from the trauma in which it

originates. She suggests for understanding the insight of Freud that the study of trauma is focus on the theory of history and memory derived from the example of the nightmare and the theory that grows out it ,and writing on the child's game is not part of tradition of trauma theory but it is crucial.

Caruth saw the enigmatic move in the theory of trauma from the drive for death to the drive for life, from death to the drive for life, from the reformulating of life around the witness to death, to the possibility of witnessing and making history in creative act of life by reading the language of the child in Freud's text together. In this regard the two very distinct kind of language whose intertwining stands are at the heart of Freud's theory and in then understanding how Freud's text and the language of the child shed light upon each other. Though, the two languages are very distinct but whose intertwining stands for the heart of Freud's theory and its helps to shed light upon each other in the text and the language of the real child to whom she encounter in Atlanta where his friend was murdered in the street and he is interviewed by the friend's mother.

Trauma is not only the repetition of the missed encounter with death but the missed encounter with one's own survival. It is the incomprehensible act of surviving of waking into life that repeats and bears witness to what remains ungrasped within the encounter with death. The repetition of trauma is not only an attempt to know what cannot be grasped that is repeated unconsciously in the survivor's life.

With the theory of trauma Freud had replaced the notion of the child and its central place in psychoanalytic theory. The child's repetitions of its mother's departure could be explained as the unknowing reliving of its mother's death, and the child's life as the unconscious reliving of what is not yet grasped with the mother's departure.

Freud's analysis suggests that the encounter with traumatic repetition requires a rethinking of psychoanalysis itself, which had previously focused its model of the mind on the notion of childhood as the site of the pleasure principle. Caruth focuses on the Freud shifting of psychoanalytic thinking from the individual struggle with internal Oedipal conflicts of childhood to the collective activities of history, and to make of childhood itself a reflection of a more obscure painful encounter.

Caruth encounter with a child in Atlanta, within the contemporary history of Urban violence in North America where the child shortly after leaving NewHaven and arriving in Atlanta when Caruth familiar with the group called 'Kids Alive and Loved', the group established member named Bernadetta Leite, whose oldest son was shot in the back one night when he was out with friends. The impulse for the group came witnessing the symptoms of anger and the violent re-enactment of trauma in the kids response to the death at the funeral and afterward but the peculiar language shows the traumatic symptoms in them.

Hearing the language of the children addressed only to their dead friend, Bernadette recognized the unresolved trauma of many of his friends in their inability to the living. She thus decides to allow the children to talk about their feelings to each other concerning the violence they had experience in weekly.

The experience of trauma is that the repetition of an originally departure from the moment in which the theory of repetition compulsion as the unexpected encounter with an event that the mind misses and then repeatedly attempts to grasp the story of failure mind to return to an experience but it had never grasped.

Caruth links the Freud's own theory in which he does not simply describe the death drive and its enigmatic move to the dative for life as the very language of the child that encounters, and attempts to grasp, the catastrophes of a traumatic history. To understand the entire theory of trauma in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* not simply as an explanation of trauma from the distance of theoretical speculation, but from the theoretical act of transformation of the story of the child in the very passage. The language of child's stammering is related to the language of trauma theory.

For the new kind of survival the language of trauma which is much like the child's stammering language articulates the very notion of the trauma and the role of death drive as the creative act of parting like parting from the real child, the psychoanalytic child or mere psychoanalysis of childhood toward an analysis of the collective catastrophes of death encountered in war. In this regard Cathy Caruth posits that the very notions of the trauma and of the death drive as a creative act of parting: a parting from the real child, and a parting from the psychoanalytic child or from the psychoanalytic child or from the mere psychoanalysis of childhood toward an analysis of the collective catastrophes of death encountered in war and towards the pressing cultural imperative for a new kind of survival.

The theory of trauma does not limit itself to a theoretical formulation of the centrality of death in culture but constitutes in Freud's and our own, historical experience of modernity, an act of parting that itself creates and passes on a different history of survival reinforce the fact that trauma can't be limited but accessible which passed on different history of survival.

Like other popular critics, W.Kansteiner in her article *Genealogy of a Category Mistake: A critical Intellectual History of the Cultural Trauma Metaphor* brings the concept of trauma as an employed at individual and collective levels

diggers significantly closely related to the identity and memory. The trauma is the occurrence of some serious real for imagined injury with long-term psychological, political and moral consequences. The presence of violence actual or symbolic is routinely conflated with the presence of trauma, the result of that violence are summarily turned into victims. Sometimes traumatic experience may be misrepresented and we can not better understand the exceptionally destructive combination of violence and identification so that trauma be first and foremost read from the perspective of the victim and only then carefully expanded to explore other borderline phenomena. In the regard W.Kansteiner brought the reference of Mitchell and said:

Obviously, it is sometime impossible to determine at what precise point political advocacy, emotional empathy or philosophical ambition beget metaphorical misrepresentation. The experience of perpetrators and some bystanders of violence may still fit the trauma concept but the pleasures of spectatorship can no longer be reconciled with even the most flexible notion of trauma. Moral honesty and conceptual and historical precision demand that trauma be first and foremost read from the perspective of the victim and only than carefully, expanded to explore other borderline phenomena. (Kansteiner 214).

The next leading figure of trauma theory Dominick Lacapra focuses on the psychoanalytical topics: transference, resistance, denial, repression, acting- out, and working through, in his article: *Revisiting the Historian Debate*. Among the topics his discussion focuses on distinguishing between acting out and working through, undercut the binary term and treating them as two additional interacting processes. What he seems to posit is that acting out means that trauma a can be only managed

through a constant playing out the traumatic event, where as working through is aimed at achieving to a closure of the trauma. In this regard:

Mourning works as a homeopathic socialization or reutilization of the repetition that attempts to turn it against the death drive and to counteract compulsiveness especially the compulsive repetition of traumatic scenes of violence by re-petitioning in ways that allow for a measure of critical distance, change, resumption of social life, ethical responsibility; a renewal. (81)

At the same token by taking the consideration of the memory-work especially the socially engaged memory work involved in working-through one is able to “distinguish between past and present and to recognizes something as having happened to one back then that is related to but not identical with, here and now” (713).

It is only through mourning, one attempts to assist in restoring to victims the dignity denied them by their victimizers.

In acting-out one had a mimetic relation to the past which is represented or relieved as if it were fully present rather than represented in memory and inscription. In psychoanalytic terms:

The acted-out past is incorporated rather than introjected, and it returns as the repressed. Mourning involves interjection through a relation to the past that recognizes its difference from the present and enacts a specific performative relation to it that simultaneously members and takes leave of it, thereby allowing for critical judgment and a reinvestment in life, notably social life with its demands,

responsibilities, and norms requiring respectful recognition and consideration for others. (81-82)

Generally, acting out and working through are intimately linked by analytically distinguishable processes. When he shows such intrusive link and analytical distinction between acting-out and working-through. He argues, “a requirement for desirable practice is to create condition in which working-through may counteract the force of acting-out and repetition-compulsion in order to generate different possibilities in thought and life” (82).

Judy Kelly views ‘psychiat’ type of trauma as the emotional wound which hampers the psychological development of a person. He says “an emotional wound or shock that creates substantial lasting damage to the psychological development of a person. The emotional trauma occurs when the psychological pain of traumatic events involves damage or threat of damage to an individual’s psychic integrity or sense of self” (1).

The traumatic destruction gives more challenges in the meaning of life but the stress leaves the more distress. In this case Root expresses the qualitative difference between stress and trauma. Judy quotes Root:

Negative stress or leave in individual feeling ‘put out’ inconvenienced, and distressed. These are eventually relieved with the resolution of the stressor. In contrast, traumas represent destruction of basic organizing principles by which we come to know self, others, and the environment; trauma would deeply in a way that challenges the meaning of life.

Healing from the wound of such an experience requires a restitution of order and meaning in one’s life. (15)

To sum up, since traumatic memory is politically contaminated the real traumatic experiences of traumatized people are never explored in their stark realism. When trauma occurs, it is unknown to the traumatized subject and when it is known and revealed, due to the network of politics the traumatic experiences are either added or subtracted. The discrimination and biasness which is preoccupied in the mind of the person who presents the traumatic experiences of the victimized ones. The prominent factor behind the distortion and exaggeration of testimony is because of authority and bias which itself is the politics that interfere the real traumas to be unveiled. So, the authentic traumas are never accessible. Because of the same nature of trauma, it seems paradoxical and peculiar kind of experience. And trauma survives in paradox. The oppressors do their best to normalize the catastrophic tragedies of people during the violent years and traumatic experiences do not get an outlet. Moreover, when chance comes even the oppressed or traumatized groups do not reveal the authentic traumatic experiences because of politics which is related to foregrounding and backgrounding that my study unveil.

I. Narrativization of Trauma in *Sula*

The novel *Sula* is a world defined by its blackness and by the surrounding white society that both violates and denies it. Physical violence and psychic violence is more dominant in the novel. The brutality of the social as well as racial violence depicted through the characters. In each and every character revolves under the periphery of the politics of trauma.

Novel *Sula*, the second novel of Morrison which was nominated for National Book Award, begins with the description of the traumatic memory and the landscape beside the Ohio River of the United States. The high hill where the black people ate shifted is dry and unfertile which they called Bottom. The black people who call the hill as Bottom makes the white people surprise. They did not understand why the black people call the up hill Bottom and accept it as “A joke A nigger joke” (*Sula* 4). Sula, the protagonist of the novel who grows up in the Bottom is aware of this nigger joke and she observes the black people's suppression and their traumatized life experience. Even, Sula, although the novel is named for her is not strictly speaking a protagonist for she shares the novel's focus as well as a black identity with Nel, Shadrack, Nel's mother, Eva, and the community itself. Her multiple identities, ambiguities and enigmatic survival are reflected the communal characters of the community members. Almost all selves are multiple, divided and fragmented. Sula's birthmark interpreted by every other character in the novel as representing a variety of images and Sula's own multiplicity. Her mark is in fact a stemmed rose, a tadpole, a snake, an ash for her mother's burning body all represent the ambiguous living of the characters. Likewise the chokecherry tree scars on Sethe's own back represent the exploitation of slavery, victims literally and figuratively, physically and

psychologically. *Sula* pinpoints the racial oppression, slave exploitation, traditional societal norms and value which blocks their own way of living. Sula personal suppressed experience exploded in the form of chaos and destruction which breaks all the rules and regulation of the society, but only Sula, Eva the grandmother of Sula, Hennah, Nel all are suffering from the traditional social norms and value, racial exploitation which is under the politics of trauma.

Near the outset of Toni Morrison's *Sula*, the first paragraph of the narrative presented with an image of horror, gruesome, catastrophic violence which arouses the trauma in the life of the characters:

Wincing at the pain in his foot, he turned his head a little to the right and saw the face of a soldier nearer him fly off. Before he could register shock, the rest of the soldier's head disappear under the inverted soul bowl of his helmet. But stubbornly, taking no direction from the brain, the body of the headless soldier ran on, with energy and grace, ignoring altogether the drip and slide of brain tissue down its back. (8)

The violence involve in this elaboration. Not only the brutality of the scene but also used the brutality of the language to describe the brutal scene. In the surface level we see the disruptive action. The first and last of Shadrack's encounters with the enemy and the aftermath of the violence dramatically foregrounded which arouses the traumatic effect in the character.

In *Sula*, due to the traumatized life experience of Eva make her courage to see her own son, Plum burning. Eva in this particular event seems to be cruel enough with this heinous act, but ultimately she does justice to her blood and womb. She does not hesitate to take such a crucial and remarkable decision. Eva herself prepares fire and flame to burn her own son, Plum, which informs the following lines:

Eva stepped back from the bed and let the crutches rest under her arms. She rolled a bit of newspapers into a tight stick about six inches long, lit it and threw it on to the bed where the kerosene-soaked Plum lay in snug delight. Quickly, as the whoosh of flames engulfed him, she shut the door and made her slow and painful journey back to the top of the house. (Sula p. 47-48)

Later on, she hears the voice of a crowd including Hannah in an alarming way. When they step to the stairs, Eva opens the door and looks at Hannah's eyes. She seems no more hesitated neither fearing. Then she talks in a way as if knows nothing. "Is? My baby? Burning?"(48).

Regarding Eva's involvement in burning her own son, Plum is similar to the incident of killing Beloved by her own mother Sethe in the novel *Beloved* which indicate the following lines:

Simple: she was squatting in the garden and when she saw them coming and recognized schoolteacher' hat, she heard wings. Little hummingbird's struck their needle beaks right through her headcloth into her hair and beat their wings. And if she thought anything, it was NO. No. Nono. Simple. She just flew. Collected every bit of life she had made, all the parts of her that were precious and fine and beautiful, and carried, pushed, dragged them through the veil, out, away, over there where no one could hurt them. Over there. Outside this place, where they would be safe. (*Beloved* 162)

Eva burns Plum not with her cruelty and misunderstanding, but with consciousness and great understanding of reality. Eva in this regard neither loses her love, impassion and mercy, nor escape from her motherly duty but she is forced to burn his evil

hidden within him. This act of Eva against her son is exactly similar to Sethe's act to her daughter Beloved in *Beloved*. In *Sula*, Eva kills her son to protect from his evil where as Sethe kills her daughter to protect her from the torture of 'slavery'. Eva discloses the reality behind her crucial act and shows her full compassion to him just after his untimely death. Eva says, "But I hold him close first. Real close. Sweet Plum. My baby boy" (72).

The enigmatic survival of the Sula shows the traumatic effect on the character which split the self. Sula is more deterministic about one thing that she should not follow the convention which means her mother and grandmother. Being conscious of this, she tries to go away from them but her attempts become fruitless when she follows them unconsciously accepting as well as assimilating their way of behaviors. She, herself as a member of the society, can neither totally abide to her individual rules by rejecting the value system of society nor she can totally reject her individual rules. In the sameway, Sula is neither to maintain her relation with Nel nor with Ajax. This sort of her double movement makes her live with the split self

Sula was distinctly different. Eva's arrogance and Hannah's self indulgence merged in her and, with a twist that was all her own imagination, she lived out her days exploring her own thoughts and emotions, hiving them full reign, feeling no obligation to please anybody unless their pleasure pleased her. As willing to feel pain as to give pain, to feel pleasure as to give pleasure, hers was an experimental life –ever since her mother's remarks sent her flying up those stairs, ever since her one major feeling of responsibility had been exorcised on the bank of a river with a closed place in middle. (118)

The merging behaviors of her mother and grandmother and the experiment on it taught her new kinds of experience in her life which foregrounded her imprinted traumatic life experience and to come out from the past trauma she renounce all socially constructive things. Like self, ego, center, etc. Following line shows the renouncement of the self and everything:

The first experience taught her there was no other that you could count on; the second that there was no self to count on either. She had no center, no speak around which to grow. In the midst of a pleasant conversation with some one she might say, "Why do you chew with your mouth open?" not because the answer interested her but because she wanted to see the person's face change rapidly. She was completely free of ambition, with no affection for money, property or things, no greed, no desire to command attention or compliments –no ego. For that reason 'she felt no compulsion to verify herself-be consistent with herself. (118-119)

The disrespect of Sula towards the past and her root shows the traumatic experience of the past and root where she does not like to remember and return. She hates her mother to extend that she even does not go for rescue while her mother was burning, and just becomes a passive onlooker of the event. Eva insists that Sula watched her mother burning not with terror but with interest:

When Eva, who was never one to hide the faults of her children, mentions what she thought she'd seen to a few friends, they said it was natural. Sula was probably struck dumb, as anybody would be who saw how own mamma burn up. Eva said yes, but inside she disagreed

and remained convinced that Sula had watched Hannah burn not because she was paralyzed, but because she was interested. (78)

At the same disrespect we see in her action of kicking Eva (the grandmother) when she make her out from her own house and becomes the solely owner of Eva's house. She has no any sentiments for her grandmother which is the symbol of root and past.

Sula brings anarchism in the society the due to the effect of trauma which arouses from the society. Sula illustrates herself as a woman with no sexual boundaries. Her sense of sex becomes a part of intimacy and she does not mind even to sleep with her friend, Nel's husband. But the traditional woman like Nel takes the case so seriously that it alarms Nel and she nearly begins to create enmity with Sula. The act of Sula's intercourse with Jude is one of the remarkable events in the novel and it creates a sensation among the people in Bottom and they begin to despise her on the ground:

She was pariah then, and knew it. Know that they despised her and believed that they framed their hatred and disgust for the easy way she lay with men, which was true. She went to bed with men as frequently as she could. It was the only place where she could find what she was looking for: misery and the ability to deep sorrow. She had not always been aware that it was sadness that she yearned for. (122)

The sense of alienation comes under the politics of trauma. In the novel alienation play the most dominant role in the life of the main characters like Sula and Eva etc. Sula feels alienated under the presence of white people on one side and black male on the other. The sense of alienation we can easily observe with her feelings. She thinks to revolt against the oppression of white people and also defy the patriarchal system imposed upon the black women. As she said that she is neither the white nor the

women. The same mentality we found in the Eva too. Eva wants to alienate from her irresponsible husband Boyboy and without alienate and hating him she can not alive and happy. If she come attached with Boyboy her past remind her traumatized life experience where she never likes to return:

Hating BoyBoy, she could get on with it, and have the safety, the thrill, the consistency of that hatred as long as she wanted or needed it to define and strengthen her or protect her from routine vulnerabilities. (Once when Hannan accused her of hating colored people, Eva said she only hated one, Hannah's father BoyBoy, and it was hating him that kept her alive and happy). (36-37)

The following lines embedded with the background politics of trauma. Because, the reality of the Peace women affection or love maleness not because of the absence of male but their own sake:

It was manlove that Eva bequeathed to her daughter. Probably, people said, because there were no men in the house, no men to run it. But actually that was not true. The Peace women simply loved maleness, for its own sake. Eva, old as she was and with once leg, had a regular flock of gentleman callers, and though she did not participate in the act of love, there was a good deal of teasing and pecking and laughter. (41)

The politics of trauma not only dominated in the female characters but it is equally touch in the psychology of the male character in the novel. Like the horror psychology of the Shadrack demonstrate the traumatic feeling of the World War I. To come out from the horrific traumatic effect of the past, he institutionalized the "National Suicide Day", so that rest of the year would be safe and free. The story opens on ' National Sucide Day', a local holiday of Shadrack's own invention, which

evolved out his war and post-war trauma while in combat in France, Shadrack found himself next to a man whose head was blown off. As Shadrack watched, the man's body continues to run, even after his face disappeared under his helmet and his brain rendering him unable to confront or contain his physical morality. When Shadrack makes his way back to the Bottom, he creates National Suicide Day as a way of consolidating his fear for death and the unknown:

In the back of the wagon, supported by sacks of squash and hills of pumpkins, Shadrack began a struggle that was to last for twelve days, a struggle to order and focus experience. It had to do with making a place for fear as a way of controlling it. Knew the smell of death and was terrified of it, for he could not anticipate it. It was not death or during that frightened him, but the unexpectedness of both. In sorting it all out, he hit on the notion that if one day a year were devoted to it, everybody could get it out of the way and the rest of the year would be safe and free. In this manner he instituted National Suicide Day. (14)

Sula bring anarchism in the society. Sula illustrate herself as a woman with no sexual boundaries. The conventional society thought that the unions between a black woman and white men be a rape. For the black community it is unthinkable and digestive thing. Neither they think nor they do and tolerate. Sul brings the anarchism doing unforgivable thing by sleeping with the white men too:

She was guilty of the unforgivable thing –the thing for which there no understanding, no excuse, no compassion. [...] there was no way back? The dirt that could not ever be washed away.Sula slept with white men. It may not have been true, but it certainly could have been. She was obviously capable of it. In any case, all minds were closed to her when

that word was passed around. It made the old women draw their lips together; made small children look away from her in shame. (112)

Due to the trauma of the life Sul attends the agonizing spectacle, watching on with typical aesthetic disengagement as her mother burns, "Sula [...] watched Hannah burn, Eva thinks to herself, "not because she was paralyzed, but because she was interested" (78).

In the same manner, the disinterested interest in the spectacle of death that Sula manifests her ultimately extends to include even her own experience in dying:

While in this state of weary anticipation, [Sula] noticed that she was not breathing, that her heart had stopped completely. A crease of fear touched her breast, for any second there was sure to be a violent explosion in her brain, a gasping for breath. Then she realized, or rather she sensed, that there was not going to be any pain. She was not breathing because she didn't have to. Her body did not need oxygen. She was dead.

Sula felt her face smiling. "well, I'll be damned," she thought, "it didn't even hurt. Wait'll I tell Nel". (149)

Nel's experience of Sula's loss is portrait in this line. The relation to Sula and to the vanishing romantic individualism she presents. The development of characters and their relations represent the limitless sense of loss and its long term effect in their psychology. The felt experience of mourning and its circulating shows the traumatic living of the character within the circle which indicate in the following extract:

Suddenly Nel stopped. Her eye twitched and burned a little.

"Sula?" she whispered, gazing at the tops of trees. "Sula?"

Leave stirred; mud shifted; there was the smell overripe green thing. A soft ball of fur broke and scattered like dandelion spores in the breeze. "All that time, all that time, I thought I was missing Jude." And the loss pressed down on her chest and came up into her throat. "We was girls together," she said as though explaining something. "O Lord, Sula," she cried, "girl, girlgirlgirl."

It was a fine cry –loud and ling –but it had no bottom and it had no top, just circles and circles of sorrow. (174)

The history of Nel related to her cultural histori-political where nothing is existed but the circular traumatic effect is in the mind is existed. The discontinuities and disruption of the socio-political background arouses the circles of sorrow and it's after effect shown in the above extract.

Sula cut the tip of the finger shows her heroic work to save her friend Nel from white boy. This type of behaviors indicates the Sula's sense of self-sacrifices is blueprinted in her deep psychology which she learns from her grandmother Eva. The following line indicates the heroic deed of Sula:

Sula squatted down in the dirt road and put everything down on the ground: her lunchpail, her reader, her mittens, and her slate. Holding the knife in her right hand, she pulled the slate toward her and pressed her left forefinger down hard on its edge. Her aim was determined but inaccurate. She slashed off only the tip of her finger. The four boys stared open-mouthed at the wound and the scrap of flesh, like a button mushroom, curling in the cherry blood that ran into the corners of the slate. (54)

Even in her last breath Sula does not like to see anything which is attached to the past history. Though, she is using the Eva's own room. She tries to turn her face to the opposite direction from the boarded-up window, from where Eva jumped out of. She likes to be completely alone and separate in both physically and psychologically. This type of psychological reading indicates the traumatic past from which she likes to be separated but the more she tried to separate from the past but the more she attached even in her last breath of life:

Whether she should turn her cheek to the cooler side of the pillow now or wait till her face was thoroughly soaked and the move would be more regressing. But she was reluctant to move her face for another reason. If she turned her head, she could not be able to see the boarded-up window Eva jumped out of. And looking at those four wooden planks with the steel rod slanting across them was the only peace she had. (148)

In the novel *Sula*, the form and content is about gaps, missing, lacks, escape, ambiguous psychic state, all are symbolized the background traumatic effect on the characters and what present in the novel is the portrait of its effect and aftermath. All the traumatic voices are controlled by politics.

II. Representation of Trauma in *Beloved*

Beloved is a good example of representation of the traumatic experience in the characters. In it all the characters are haunted in the present by the frequently remembrance of the past. The novel portrait the Sethe's state of mind after Beloved's return. "Her mind was busy with the thing she could forget."

The novel *Beloved* is set in 1873 after the end of civil war, during the period of reconstruction, then the slaves either freed by emancipation or who had bought their freedom were trying to find out a place for themselves in a world where there was no bondage anymore. These ex-slaves were above all trying to reconcile and accept their free existence and the traumatic immediate past that incessantly haunted them. The novel shifts between the enslaved past of the characters and their present, immediately after the civil war. The readers get to know the story of the characters though their flashbacks. The characters in the novel Sethe, Baby Suggs, Paul D and Denver all are observed with their past and are more close to their past than their present. Sethe does not deal with her memories of the past until the arrival of Beloved. The novel is divided into three sections; unfold the traumatic and dehumanizing experience of the characters in fragments. Sethe does not discuss the past with her only surviving daughter, Denver who is forced to live in isolation. Sethe suppressed her memories of the past until the arrival of Beloved. *Beloved* treats slavery not on a general level but on a very personal and individual level. It studies not so much with the physical and material distortions but with the aftermath brought about by the institution of the psyche of an individual. The novel centers on the execution of a two-years old child. The story is not chronologically framed but we get information in

snippets as the characters decide what incidents they are to discuss confront. My research unfolds how the politics of trauma revolve around the novel *Beloved*.

The novel *Beloved* travels with Sethe through the traumatic experience in her life like denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. These five stages have also frequently been applied to the grief that a person goes through after the death of a loved one and these stages accurately fit the process that Sethe experience throughout *Beloved* while she learns to accept her daughter's death. "To Sethe, the future was a matter of keeping the past at bay. The 'better life' she believed she and Denver were living was simply not that other one" (42). This line reflect the future living of Sethe remains haunted by her traumatic and humiliated memories the things. Sethe's "brain is not interested in the future. Loaded with the past and hungry for more, it leaves her no room to imagine, let alone plan for, the next day" (70). At this point the novel portrait the real picture of the traumatic feeling and its psychological effect on the character. The traumatized life experience of the past can not be lead to the future. Sethe experience of the past includes the experience of slavery makes demands on the present that the present can never hope to meet; history remains at once an irrecoverable loss and a perpetually open wound, an alienation presence due to the traumatic haunting of the past event. However Sethe spoke:

I got tree on my back and a hiant in my house and nothing in between but the daughter, I am holding in my arms. No more running from nothing. I will never run from another thing on this earth. I took one journey and I paid for the ticket but let me tell you something, Paul D, Garner: it lost too much! Do you hear me? It cost too much. Now sit down and eat with us or leave us be. (15)

Beloved involves repression in this case of memory too painful to recall Sethe's murder of her own child but it speaks to and for the larger, more abstract traumatic memory of slavery, experienced by the slaves themselves the consequence of which continue throughout the novel. Sethe stands for all African Americans traumatized or destroyed by slavery.

To heal the effect of trauma the community as in the efforts led by Baby Suggs work together utilizing rituals –songs, dance, storytelling etc. “Baby Suggs holy, having devoted her freed life” (171).

The sermon reestablishes a sense of self-love. Baby Suggs's reliance is not upon Bible, but upon her own lived experience and recovery of self in her post slavery life. Sethe says:

Love your hands! Love them. Raise them up and kiss them. Touch others with them, pat them together, stroke them on your face cause they don not love that either. You got to love it, you! And no, they ain't in love with your mouth yonder, out there, they will see it broken and break it again. What you say out of it they will not head. What you screm from it they do not hear. What you put in it to nourish our body they will snatch away and give you leavins instead. No, they don't love your mouth. You got to love it. (88)

The past which has been either denied or utilized as a means of imprisoning us, can begins to function as a haunted things. Likewise in the novel *Beloved*, Sethe tried to forget the things but the more she tries to go far, the more she come near the haunted things. However:

Sethe walked over to a chair, lifted a sheet and stretched it as wide as her arms would go. Then she folded, refolded and double folded it. She took another. Neither was completely dry but the folding felt too fine

to stop. She had to do something with her hands because she was remembering something she had forgotten she knew. Something privately shameful that had seeped into a slit in her mind right behind the slap on her face and the circled cross. (61)

Due to the terrible life experience Sethe had no time to evaluate her decision nor to think about the consequence of her action. Sethe's act of infanticide was impulsive and spontaneous and a result of what she did not want for her children. Sethe later explained to Paul D and says, "It ain't my job to know what's worse. It's my job to know what is and to keep them away from what I know is terrible. I did that" (165). The traumatic event tried to bury but the characters are not so away without remembering it. Paul D arrival the invasion of the unconscious into the conscious of Sethe. Sethe's tucked away memories start to reveal despite her attempt to suppress them. Sethe even shows her anger towards Paul D as he reminds her of all her traumatic past which for so long she able to keep "at bay".

Sethe monologues shows her intense desire to explain her action to her dead daughter. Sethe narrates:

Beloved, she my daughter. She mines...she had to be safe and I put her where she would be. Paul D ran her off so she had no choice but to come back to me in the flesh ... I won't never let her go. I' too explain to her, even though I don't have to. Why I did it. How if I hadn't killed her she would have died and that is something I would have died and that is something I could not bear to happen to her. (202)

Sethe reconstruct her past by living her past the way she must have wanted to and in the process heals herself. Paul D's arrival forces Sethe to confront her past life as a slave and the most traumatic memory of her past life.

All the female characters have a painful memory of sexual abuse. Life for them was doubly difficult as compared to male slaves. The memories of being sexually exploited kept on haunting them even after being freed. They simply could not bury their bitter past and it kept on coming back to them disturbing them mentally. The incident of rape and forced prostitution in *Beloved* which arouses the unexpressive trauma in the life of the character. These incidents haunt the female characters particularly Sethe is haunted by her memories of the past. Sethe repeatedly refers to her abusers as 'mossy toothed' boys. Sethe is not able to forget the whipping she suffered at the hands of her masters. The memories frame Sethe's psyche arouses the traumatic effect in the present life. Sethe does not wish to discuss the past though the past experience haunted every time. She represses of her mind. Everything associated with the past painful memories and it hurt and she had decided not to speak about it. However:

It became a way to feed her. Just as Denver discovered and relied on the delightful effect Sweet thing had on Beloved, Sethe learned the profound satisfaction Beloved got from story telling. It amazed Sethe because every mention of her past life hurt. Everything in it was painful or lost. She and Baby Suggs had agreed without saying so that it was unspeakable; to Denver's inquires Sethe gave to replies or rambling incomplete reveries. (58)

The past that Sethe wishes to forget keeps on resurfacing and does more so with innocent enquires made by Beloved. The past is not just Sethe's she shares it with the rest of the characters as well. Stamp Paid, Ella, Vashti and Paul D with whom she had worked at Sweet Home also share the pain of the slave life. The novel's essence lies

in the way in which Paul D and Sethe come to terms with their memories. They share their pain and speak what has not been spoken so far.

In the novel *Beloved* the slave holder gave the irremovable torture and exploitation to the slave. Because of this irremovable torture they can not move their life freely. The chokecherry tree shows how the traumatic past remain in the form of unrecoverable scenes which arouses the trauma in the life of the Sethe. When, Sethe and Amy Denver met in the way, Amy describes the traumatic figure of the Sethe back:

“It’s a tree, Lu. A chokecherry tree. See, here’s the trunk-it’s red and split wide open, full of sap, and this here’s the parting for the branches. You got a mighty lot of branches. Leaves, too, look like, and dern if these ain’t blossoms. Tiny little cherry blossoms, just as white. Your back got a whole tree on it. In bloom. What God have in mind, I wonder. I had me some whippings, but I don’t remember nothing like this. Mr .Buddy had a right evil hand too. Whip you for looking at him straight. Sure would. I looked right at him one time and he hauled off and threw the piker at me. Guess he knew what I was a –thinking. (79)

The presence of mysterious ghost brought Sethe’s memory back. She is talking about the time and place where she passed here more than half life in inhuman condition. To get out from the traumatic memory which she repressed, Sethe speaks out:

“I was taking about time. It’s so hard for me to believe in it. Some things go. Pass on. Some things just stay. I used to think it was my rememory. You know. Some things you forget. Other things you never do. But it’s gone, but the places, places are still there. If a house burns down, it’s gone, but the place- picture of it – stays, and not just in my rememory, but out there, in the world. What I remember is a picture floating

around out there outside my head. I mean, even if I don't think it, even if I die, the picture of what I did, or knew, or saw is still out there. Right in the place where it happened." (35-36)

By portrait the picture of the traumatic memory Sethe mention the impossibility of getting ride from the traumatized life experience. At the same token of the traumatic memory baby Suggs thinks back to the ttime that she and the ten-year old Halle arrived at Sweet Home because she had hurt her hip, Baby Suggs and her young son had been sold at a cheap price .she could not speak to anybody about her hurt hip. Halle saw how painful it was for his mother to work with her bad hip. She remembers her sweet child Halle who gave her freedom from slave exploitation. Now she is unknown about him that increases her hurt furthermore. Baby Suggs narrates:

Her hip hurt every single say-but she never spoke of it. Only Halle,who had watched her movements closely for the last four years, knew that to get in and out of bed she had to lift her thigh with both hands, which was why he spoke to Mr. Garner about buying her out of there so she could sit down for a change. Sweet boy. The one person who did something hard for her: gave her his work, his life and now his children, whose voices she could just make out as she stood in the garden wondering what was the and coming thing behind the scent of disapproval. Sweet Home was a marked improvement. (140)

When the Sethe and Paul D ate alone, their conversation again drifts towards the traumatic past. Sethe explains that she feels Halle mistreated her by deserting her and the children. She tells how Halle failed to be where he said he would be on the day of the escape. Sethe narrates the traumatic memory:

Sethe was pacing up and down, up and down in the lamplight. “The underground agent said, By Sunday. They took my milk and he saw it and didn’t come down? Sunday .they took my milk and he saw it and didn’t come down? Sunday came and he didn’t. Monday came and no Halle. I thought he was dead, that’s why; then I thought they caught him, that’s why. Then I thought, No, he’s not dead because if he was I’d know it, and then you come here after all this time and you didn’t say he was dead, because you didn’t know either, so I thought, well, he just found him another better way to live. Because if he was anywhere near here, he’d come to Baby Suggs, if not to me. But I never knew he saw.” (69)

The above narration portrait the excessive exploitation of the slavery system and effect of the exploitation. The slavery system compelled to male or the husband watch the assaulted and did not come to her aid rather than going on insane.

In the novel not only the Sethe but the husband of Sehte Halle suffering from the unspeakable things that makes him insane. By seeing the intoleratable scene of assaulted exploitation Halle going to be an insane. In this case PaulD narrates the incident and says, “Last time I saw him he was sitting by the churn. He had butter all over his face” (69).

In the novel Sethe in not only one who has been living a reduced emotional life due to repressed trauma. Paul D has his own frightful memories. He thinks about how he fled from Sweet Home in Kentucky, to Georgia to Delaware, and then to Ohio. When Sethe mentions going to Jail, Paul D turns away for it causes him to think about his painful time in Alfred, Georgia when he trembled in box underground. His treatments in the Georgia prison camp is horrid and dehaumaning. He was forced into

a chain gang in Georgia as punishment for threatening to kill Brandywine, the man to whom schoolteacher sold him. Paul D remember all the traumatic incident including he was often forced to perform oral sex on the brutal prison guards and even they communicate in songs and gestures. Paul D narrates the horrific traumatic experiences:

Nor eighteen days after that when he saw the ditches: the one thousand feet of earth –five feet deep, five feet wide, into which wooden boxes had been fitted. A door of bars that you could lift on hinge like a cage opened into three walls and a roof of scrap lumber and red dirt. Two feet of it over his head: three feet of open trench in front of him with anything that crawled or scurried welcome to share that grave calling itself quarters. And there were forty-five more. He was sent there after trying to kill Brandywine, the man schoolteacher sold him to.

Brandywine was leading him, in a coffle with ten others, through Kentucky to Virginia. (106)

At the same token Paul D express his traumatic life experience before coming in 124 to get healing from the trauma:

When all forty –six were standing in a line in the trench, another rifle shot singled the climb out and up to the ground above, where one thousand feet of the best hand –forged chain in Georgia stretched. Each man bent and waited. The first man picked up the end and threaded it through the loop on his leg iron. He stood up then, and shuffling a little, brought the chain tip to the prisoner, who did likewise. As the chain was passed on and each man stood in the other's place, the line of men turned around; facing the boxes they had come out of. Not one spoke to the other. At least not with words. The eyes had to tell what there

was to tell: me this mornin;’s bad”; “I’ m a make it”; “new man”;
“steady now steady.” (107)

At the same healing speech he explains his physical free life but he is in dilemma about where to go but he choose the North without knowing destination the traumatic suffering blocks their proper destination. He further explains:

Weeks later Paul D was the only Buffalo man left- without a plan. All he could think of was tracking dogs, although Hi Man said the rain they left in gave that n chance of success. Alone, the last man with buffalo hair among the ailing Cherokee, Paul D finally woke up and, admitting his ignorance, asked how he might get north. Free North. Magical North. Welcoming, benevolent North. The Cherokee smiled and looked around. The flood rains of a month ago had turned everything to steam and blossoms . (112)

After repeated episodes of physical and mental torture, Sethe run away from the Sweet Home during her pregnancy and she explain her traumatic psychological memory of how and when she gave the birth of Denver. In conversation Sethe explains her memory:

“eighteen fifty-five. The day my baby born.”

“you had that baby, did you? Never though you’d make it.”

He chuckled. “Running off pregnant.”

“Had to. Couldn’t be no waiting.” She lowered her head and thought, as he did, how unlikely it was that she had made it. And of it hadn’t been for that girl looking for velvet, she never would have.

“All by yourself too.” He was proud of her and annoyed by her. Proud she had done it; annoyed that she had not need Halle or him in the doing.

“Almost by myself. Not all by myself. A white girl helped me.” (8)

Sethe's story about her own mother shows the traumatic experience begin not only from her escape from Sweet Home but from the very begging when she was taken from her mother by the system of slavery that regarded the children as property and the adult as working animals that had no time for raising children. Due to the lack of language Sethe can not remember about her childhood because she can not understand the Nan's language or words that she spoke to her. She remembers her traumatic child experiences with her mother lap too that is very unbearable she narrates:

She didn't even sleep in the same cabin most nights I remember. Too far from the line-up, I guess. One thing she did do. She picked me up and carried me behind the smokehouse. Back there she opened up her rib was a circle. and a cross burnt right in the skin, she said, 'This is your ma'am. This and she pointed. 'I am the only one got this mark now. The rest dead. If something happens to me and you can't tell me by my face, you can know me by this mark.' Scared me so. All I could think of was how important this was and how I needed to have something important to say back, but I couldn't think of anything so I just said what I thought. (61)

At the same memory Sethe unfolded the story of her mother and Nan come as slave from Africa. Being women they had to endure unbelievable torture, for they were raped innumerable times. The female slaves were also cruelly branded on the chest in

order that their owner could always recognize and claim them. Sethe remember the Nan story:

Her mother and Nan were together from the sea. Both were taken up many times by the crew. She threw them all away but you. The one from the crew she threw away on the island. The other from more whites she also threw away. Without names, she threw them. You she gave the name of the black man. She put her arms around him. The others she did not put her arms around. Never .Never. Telling you. I am telling you, small girl, Sethe.” (62)

The end of the painful story of her mother, Sethe explains that she was hanged and left on the ropes to rot. Why they finally lowered the body, nobody could see the circle and the cross on her chest, even though Sethe looked for it. Sethe says, “Hung. By the time they cut her sown nobody could tell whether she had a circle and a cross or not, least of all me and I did look” (61).

Sethe has not had the luxury of planning for eighteen long years. In fact running away from Sweet Home was the only set of plans she made. No search for luxury but search for her own human status where she likes to take breathe going far from inhuman exploitation. Sethe says:

She remembered Denver’s interpretation: plans. The morning after the first night with Paul D, Sethe smiled just thinking about what the word could mean. It was a luxury she had not had in eighteen years and only that once. Before and since, all her effort was directed not on avoiding pain but on getting through it as quickly as possible. The one set of plans she had made –getting away from Sweet Home- went awry so completely she never dared life by making more. (38)

The horrified Sethe's action to kill her own children reflects the horrific traumatized life in the slavery system. Due to her past experience makes to kill the children rather than live in slavery. Her traumatized life acted out in the following incident:

Inside, two boys bled in the sawdust and dirt at the feet of a nigger woman holding a blood-soaked child to her chest with one hand and an infant by the heels in the other. She did not look at them; she simply swung the baby toward the wall planks, misses and tried to connect a second time, when out of nowhere- in the ticking time the men spent staring at what there was to stare at-the old nigger boy, still mewling, ran through the door behind them and snatched the baby from the arch of its mother's swing. (149)

Sethe has the brutal experience of the slave life. Like, raped and beaten by the whites who ruled her, Sethe does not want the same thing to happen to her children. So, she thinks it is better to kill them.

Sethe's past sharing with the Denver that plantation slave, ran away from Sweet Home while she was pregnant was pregnant with Denver. During the journey she almost died. Sethe accepting the death rather than living in the Sweet Home indicate the suppressed traumatic experience which shows the following lines:

How see the was walking on two feet meant for standing still. How they were so swollen she could not see her arc or feel her ankles. Her leg shaft ended in a loaf of flesh scalloped by five toenails. But she could not, stop, for when she did the little antelope rammed her with horns and pawed the ground of her womb with impatient hooves. While she was walking, it seemed to graze, quietly-so she walked, on two feet meant, in this sixth month of pregnancy, for standing still.

Still, near a kettle; still, at the churn; still, at the tub and ironing board.

Milk, sticky and sour on her dress, attracted every small flying thing from gnats to grasshoppers. (29-30)

At the same memory Sethe shares her past experience with Denver and the activities of the mosey teeth, an appetite who gave her severe torture in her journey. She remembers the following incident:

Sethe had not heard the walking, but suddenly she heard the standing still and then heard the walking, but suddenly she heard the standing still and then she smelled that hair. The voice, saying, “Who’s in there?” was all she needed to know that she was about to be discovered by a white boy. That he too had mossy teeth, an appetite. That on a ridge of pine near the Ohio River trying to get to her three children, one of whom was starving for the food shed carried; that after her husband had disappeared; that after her milk had been stolen, her back pulped, her children orphaned, she was not have an easeful death. No. (31)

The traumatic memory of the Paul D at the day of escape. He traveled away from Sweet Home with Sixo and Three-Mile woman, but the men were soon caught by Schoolteacher. He remembers the horrific heart rending incident of the Sixo put up a fight that resulted in his later being burned alive. The burning incident of Sixo blocks the present way of Paul D as he narrates, “finally one of them hits Sixo in the head with his rifle, and when he comes to, a hickory fire is in front of him and he is tied at the waist to a tree” (226) .

All the Blacks characters are suffering from the slave exploitation and their individual suffering increase the mass trauma. Like the excessive exploitation of

Stamp Pad's story about his wife emphasizes family destruction and the miserable condition of the slave children directly concerned the mass destruction of the slave family and children Paul D who is very much familiar with the slavery system and he raises the question about this and asks, "how much is a nigger supposed to take? Tell me. How much?" (253)

Paul D remembering the living and working status of the Sweet Home and says, "Grateful for the daylight spent doing mule work in a quarry because he did not tremble when he had a hammer in his hands. The box had done what Sweet Home had not what working like an ass and living like a dog had not drove him crazy so he would not lese him mind" (41) .

Due to the severe exploitation in slavery system Sethe accept the jail life instead return in the Sweet Home. She narrates, "Oh no. was not going back there. I don't care who found who. Any life but not that one. I went to jail instead. Denver was just a baby so she went right along with me" (42).

Sethe feels tender towards the young woman, because she is reminding her own dead daughter in name, age and appearance. With all matching activities Sethe can not go ahead from her past traumatic feeling and experiences. At the same remembrance, Sethe remember the past suffering and pain when she was giving birth to the child Denver in a boat. She narrates:

Right in front of its door she had to lift her skirts and the water she voided was endless. Like a horse, she thought, but as it went on and on she though, No, more like flooding the boat when Denver was born. So much water Amy said, "Hold on, Lu. You going to sink us you keep that up." But there was no stopping water breaking from a breaking womb and there was no stopping now. (51)

Though Baby Suggs tries to give heal from the traumatic life experience of Sethe by saying, “lay em down, Sethe. Sword and shield. Down. Down. Both of em down. Down by riverside. Sword and shield. Don’t study war no more .Lay all that mess down. Sword and shield” (86) ,yet Sethe could not go free from the psychological trauma about remembering “Halle’s face between the butter press and the churn swelled larger and larger ,crowding her wyes and making her head hurt” (86) . To come out from the mass traumatic experience of life, different kinds of activities can be performed like dancing, crying, laughing or mixed up all are going to be held in the preaching of Baby Suggs:

It started that way: laughing children, dancing men, crying women and then it got mixed up. Women stopped crying and danced; men sat down and cried; children danced, women laughed, children cried until, exhausted and riven, all and each lay about the clearing damp and gasping for breath. In the silence that followed, Baby Suggs, holy, offered up to them her great big heart. (88)

Sethe reflecting on her past. She thinks of both happy times and sad times. She realizes that she seems to suffer in cycle of twenty years, followed by brief burst of joy. Her time with Paul D was one of those pleasant times. Now that he has gone, she feels her life will by fill with misery again for many years. Sethe traumatic experience and aftermath seen in her voice:

Those twenty-eight happy says were followed by eighteen years of disapproval and a solitary life. Then a few months of the sun-splashed life that the shadows holding hands on the road promised her; tentative greetings from other colored people in Paul D’s company; a bed life for herself. Except for Denver’s friend, every bit of it had disappeared.

Was that the pattern? She wondered. Every eighteen or twenty years her unlivable life would be interrupted by a glory? (173)

Sethe believes her life will continue to run in cycle of approximately twenty years of misery interrupted by short-lived glory.

Sethe plans for the bright future, she still haunted by her past. The monologue reflect the murdering the Beloved and traumatic experience of life. Her monologue reflects:

BELOVED, she my daughter. She mine. See. She come back to me of her own free will and I don't have to explain a thing. I didn't have time to explain before because it had to be done quick. Quick. She had to be safe and I put her where she would be. But my love was tough and she back now. I knew she would be. Paul D ran her off so she had no choice but to come back to me in the flesh. I bet you Baby Suggs, on the other side, helped. I won't never let her go. I'll explain to her, even though I don't have to. Why I did it. How if I hadn't killed her she would have died and that is something I could not bear to happen to her. When I explain it she'll understand, because she understands everything already. I'll tend her as no mother ever tended a child, a daughter. (200)

The traumatic experience of the Sethe can't allow to her live better for present. The past is not shareable to all because of the repress trauma. But when Beloved requested her to tell the story about her past experiences Sethe remembered her bitter experience of her wedding ceremony. Even in her marriage day, the slave holder person can not give them to have a proper wedding ceremony and at least have a fitting dress on that very ceremony. Sethe's narrates here weeding day and the crystal that presented from

a lady where she worked for her. Sethe unfulfilled desire of marriage gave her painful life experience. Sethe narrates:

That lady I worked for in Kentucky gave them to me when I got married. What they called back there and back then. I guess she saw how bad I felt when I found out there wasn't going to be no ceremony, on preacher. Nothing. I thought there should be something-something to say it was right and true. I didn't want it to be just me moving over a bit of pallet full of corn husks. Or just me bringing my night bucket into his cabin. I thought there should be some ceremony. (58)

In the last part of the novel also the character Paul D is not free from his past traumatic experience. He goes back and feels hurts remembering different hurting things. Paul D narrates:

Paul D sits down in the rocking chair and examines the quilt patched in carnival colors. His hands are limp between his knees. There are too many things to feel about this woman.

His head hurts. Suddenly he remembers Sixo trying to describe what he felt about the Thirty-Mile woman. "She is a friend of my mind. She gather me, man. The pieces I am, she gather them and give them back to me in al the right order. It's good; you know when you got a woman who is a friend of your mind. (272-273)

The last word of the novel should truly relate to the politics of trauma. The name Beloved is working through the traumatic psychic of the character all those unfortunate souls who were lost to slavery and racism and who deserve to be beloved and at the same time she became the catalyst for Sethe, Paul D, Denver and the community to acknowledge their loss of culture, pride and life due to the injustices of

slavery. The novel *Beloved* not only the medium of expressing the traumatic feelings of the characters but also to get rid from the traumatized life experience and take healing breath in their beloved life.

Conclusion

Sula and *Beloved* is the timeless powerful book in the field of trauma study. Due to the rooted suppressed cultural exploitation, racial discrimination all the characters way of living is captured by their wound, suffering and anxiety. Their enigmatic survival, distress and idiosyncratic behavior show their traumatic life experience.

The novel *Sula* takes its name from a character Sula, who is absent until one fourth part of the novel. Due to the traumatic effect in her life she shows her individual way of being exceptional and unidentical woman in the community. Morrison has presented such a character that has under the show of the traditional society and dark stain of slavery. Working through the trauma Sula leaves the society but returns in the form of anarchist due to the cause of traumatic memory of her life. Besides Sula and Eva, Hannah, Nel, Jude, Hellen, etc. are also suffering from the traumatic experience. Shadrack declared the 'National Suicide Day' to come out from the horror of the past experience. Like other character Helen has traumatized life experience because of the exploitation from the white conductor. The characters are not satisfied in what they have due to the social exploitation which is the main cause of trauma. The protagonist fluctuates between the old value and her search from the new kind of freedom. Thus, the novel records the traumatic voice of the character but all the voice moving around the pivot of the politics.

Likewise, in the *Beloved* all the characters mind is full load of the terrible and agonizing exploitation both in physically and mentally. The present is nothing but only the traumatic experience of the past and what they speak is only their remembrance of traumatized past life which is not speakable but always haunted in different forms. In the novel, Beloved and Paul D act as a catalyst to activate Sethe's

rejected, suppressed thought and desires. Sethe tries to forget those traumatic moments and the circumstance under which she kills her child but the destructive activities could not give her free from the trauma rather reestablished in the haunted form. In the novel all the characters equally suffer from the different forms of trauma. The narrative itself moves to and fro between past and present. The power of the past dominated by psychological and physical activities of the characters. The novel has been so profoundly affected the horror of the past that even passage of the time could not undo its effect. The novel particularly focuses upon the ex-slave to deal with their painful past in order to heal themselves. The painful memories of the Sethe made to inflected to her child because she thinks that to kill them is to care them so that the afterlife has to be better than return slavery. Sethe born enslaved woman, suffered throughout her life due to the extreme form of slavery system. *Beloved* describes in detail reality of the slave experiences, the dehumanization of Black people, the moral degradation of their masters and ever-present violence. Cruelty punishment, separation of the family member proved slavery as an extreme form of black's exploitation. Their separation from the family members render the situation more miserable and heartbreaking.

Thus, the novels *Sula* and *Beloved* narrate the traumatic voice of the characters which is the outcome of social exploitation and excessive slavery system. To get ride of the trauma, all the characters share their suppressive memory but their voices are controlled by politics either in background or in foreground.

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