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Rape and Trauma in *A Time to Kill*

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Abstract

The novel *A Time to Kill* (1989) by a distinguished American novelist John Grisham presents a vivid portrait of how the violent rape of a ten-year young black girl by two white good-for-nothings implants a deep psychic and sexual trauma in the victim as well as in those associated with her through familial, racial and cultural ties. Any violent and forceful event like rape works as a key factor for causing disruptions, traumatic experiences, disorders in the psyche of the rape survivor, thereby rendering her subject to various Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSDs) including the physical, psychological aftereffects and other somatic symptoms. The rape victim Tonya Hailey suffers from terrible psychic and sexual traumas which surface outside in the disguised forms of eating disturbances, interrupted sleep haunted by nightmarish dreams, fear of darkness, aloneness, startling hallucinations, physical hysterias and so on. This is how, the traumatic past ridden with violent and painful memories poses a big challenge for her present existence. The novel, in a nutshell, is a recounting of sexual trauma of a young black girl, caused by the overwhelmingly brutal rape resulting in her vulnerable psychological and physical state, and the racial tension between the white and the black communities. And, it is only after the lapse of certain period of time, about nine months, that Tonya showed some signs of recovery and took to normal modes of life, as seen in most of the rape victims.

Contents

	Page
Letter of Recommendation	
Approval Letter	
Acknowledgements	
Abstract	
I. Trauma Theory: Psychic and Sexual Trauma	1-21
II. Sexual Trauma in <i>A Time to Kill</i> by John Grisham	22-43
III. Conclusion	44-46
Works Cited	

I. Trauma Theory: Psychic and Sexual Trauma

The word trauma is used today to describe a kind of psychological wound. What was once a concept reserved strictly for physical blows, injury, its meaning has, since the late nineteenth century, been psychologized. Yet psychic trauma only gained official recognition as a diagnostic category in psychological medicine by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) in 1980, with the publication of the third edition of its Diagnostic and Static Manual of Mental Disorders (APA 1980). The APA's formal acknowledgement of psychological trauma as a psychiatric disorder came largely as a result of what the medical anthropologist Allan Young has aptly dubbed "the DSM-III Revolution," a predominantly political struggle waged by Vietnam War activists, including war Veterans and professionals within the psychiatric community, on behalf of veterans suffering from war-related trauma.

But, "trauma" is not simply another 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. Moreover, this dispersal occurs across time, so that an event experienced as shattering may actually produce its full impact only years later. Thus, a concept of trauma can be of great value in the study of history and historical narrative and also of narrative in general, as the verbal representation of temporality.

The idea of trauma also allows for an interpretation of cultural systems- of the growths, wounds, scars on a social body, and its compulsive repeated actions. A theory of trauma in addition suggests ways of reconceptualizing important directions in critical theory itself. In particular, the recent crisis in poststructuralist thought brought on by Martin Heidegger's and Paul de Man's controversies seems to require a way of thinking about how events in the past return to haunt the present. Finally, theory of trauma will intersect with other critical vocabularies which problematize

representation and attempt to define its limits--discourses of the sublime, the sacred, the apocalyptic and the Other in all its guises. Trauma theory is another such discourse of the unrepresentable, of the event or object that destabilizes language and demands a vocabulary and syntax in some sense incommensurable with what went before.

Since the early 1990s, trauma's star has been rising within the academic firmament. If academic fashions and fascinations can be linked with publications then the growth of interest in trauma within the humanities can certainly be mapped by reference to the publication of particular texts that have since become seminal within the field: Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub's *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*, (1992), Cathy Caruth's edited collection *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995) and her monograph *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (1996). These are undoubtedly the books which have opened humanities to trauma. Discussing about trauma theory, Susannah Radstone opines:

One definition of trauma theory suggests that it includes both work around the experience of survivors of the Holocaust and other catastrophic personal and collective experiences and the theoretical and methodological innovations that might be derived from the work and applied more generally to film and literary studies. The clinical work that has shaped trauma theory is informed by a particular and specific type of psychological theory influenced by developments within US psychoanalytic theory and its relation to the categorization of, on the one hand, mental conditions and disabilities and, on the other, the ways in which these categorizations are taken up within the domain of the law. (10-11)

Within the humanities, deconstruction was one of the theories which, along with these clinical developments, most shaped the emergence of trauma theory.

Sigmund Freud, a trauma theorist and a main explorer of trauma as a form of psychoanalysis, studies dynamics of trauma, repression and symptom formations. He was of the opinion that an overpowering event, unacceptable to consciousness, can be forgotten and yet return in the form of somatic systems of compulsive repetitive behaviours. He returned to the theory of trauma in his groundbreaking work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* which originated in his treatment of World War I combat veterans who suffered from nightmares and other symptoms of their wartime experiences. Here, the traumatic event and its aftermath again become central to psychoanalysis, but again he shifted his emphasis from the event to which he then theorized as the “death drive,” i.e. thanatos. What is striking for Freud is the return of the event after a period of delay.

In the term “latency,” the period during which the effects of the experiences are not apparent, Freud seems to describe the trauma as the successive movement from an event to its repression to its return. Yet what is truly striking about the accident victim’s experience of the event and what in fact constitutes the central enigma of Freud’s example, is not so much the period of forgetting that occurs after the accident, but rather the fact that the victim of the crash was never fully conscious during the accident itself: the person gets away “apparently unharmed,” (qtd. in Caruth 7) as he says. The experience of trauma, the fact of latency, would thus seem to consist, not in the forgetting of a reality that can hence never be fully known, but in an inherent latency within the experience itself. In this context, Cathy Caruth forwards her reviews on Freud elucidating that:

The historical power of the trauma is not just that the experience is repeated after its forgetting, but that it is only in and through its

inherent forgetting that it is first experienced at all. And, it is this inherent latency of the event that paradoxically explains the peculiar, temporal structure, the belatedness, of historical experience: since the traumatic event is not experienced as it occurs, it is fully evident only in connection with another place, and in another time. If repression, in trauma is replaced by latency, this is significant in so far as its blankness- the space of unconsciousness- is paradoxically what precisely preserves the event in its literality. For history to be a history of trauma means that it is referential precisely to the extent that it is not fully perceived as it occurs; or to put it somewhat differently, that a history can be grasped only in the very inaccessibility of its occurrence. (6)

The repetition of battlefield horrors in the dreams astonishes Freud because dreams, in psychoanalytic theory, had always served the function of fulfilling wishes: of allowing the unconscious conflictual desires of childhood to find expression through the symbolic world of the dream. In the dreams of the returning veterans, however, the encounter with death and horror cannot be assimilated to the fulfillment of desire: rather than turning death into a symbol or vehicle of psychic meaning, these traumatic dreams seem to turn the psyche itself into the vehicle for expressing the terrifying literality of a history it does not completely own.

But the peculiarity of this returning, literal history also strikes him because it does not only bring back the reality of death, but the fright or unpreparedness for it: the dreams not only show the scenes of battle but wake the dreamer up in another fright. In this respect, Cathy Caruth comments on Freud:

If “fright” is the term by which Freud defines the traumatic effect of not having been prepared in time, then the trauma of the nightmare

does not simply consist in the experience within the dream but in the experience of waking from it. It is the surprise of waking that repeats the unexpectedness of the trauma. And as such the trauma is not only the repetition of the missed encounter with death, but the missed encounter with one's own survival. (3)

Throughout the last century, western psychoanalysis has become increasingly preoccupied with theories about the psychological effects of exposure to extreme experience. While such investigations can be dated back to Freud's investigation of the "shell shocked" combatants of the First World War, it is during the last 30 years, since the fall of Saigon which ended the Vietnam War in 1975, that trauma has become the subject of a fairly substantial body of theoretical and literary works.

Cathy Caruth in her *Traumatic Awakenings* describes trauma as the response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flashbacks, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena. Traumatic experience beyond the psychological dimension of suffering it involves, suggests a certain paradox that the most direct seeing of a violent event may occur as an absolute inability to know it, that immediacy, paradoxically, may take the form of belatedness. The repetitions of the traumatic event, which remain unavailable to consciousness but intrude repeatedly on sight, thus suggest a larger relation to the event, which extends beyond what can simply be seen or what can be known and is inextricably tied up with the belatedness and incomprehensibility that remain at the heart of this repetitive seeing.

Caruth further argues that trauma is not experienced as a mere repression or defence, but as a temporal delay that carries the individual beyond the shock of the first moment. The trauma is a repeated suffering of the event, but it is also a continual living of its site. The traumatic experiencing of the event thus carries with it what

Dori Laub calls “the collapse of witnessing,” the impossibility of knowing that first constituted it (qtd. in Caruth 10). And, by carrying that impossibility of knowing out of the empirical event itself, trauma opens up and challenges us to a new kind of listening, the witnessing, precisely of impossibility.

Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok’s theories of mourning in *The Shell and the Kernel* and Malcolm Bull’s interest in the effects of extreme historical and sociological events are aligned with Judith Herman’s theories in that they all acknowledge that trauma divides identity and creates a multiplication of self. However, while trauma theory tends to insist that such a division is pathological and must be overcome, the situation is more complex for both Abraham and Torok, and Bull. In this regard, Clair Stocks argues as:

The theories of mourning proposed by Abraham and Torok insist that the self is inherently formed through a series of what they call ‘incorporations,’ but that each incorporation must be repressed, creating a sense of singularity and completeness for the individual. Bull . . . suggest[s] that the complexities of the modern world create a self which is not only fragmented but that is only really fully acknowledged when its multiplicity is recognized. (72-73)

Bull’s theories, therefore, offer an alternative to both Abraham and Torok’s work and to the canonical trauma theory exemplified by Judith Herman’s writing and is arguably more relevant to the divided and fragmented identities produced by the pressures of postmodernity. Trauma theory has tended to posit the traumatized self as a particularly postmodern phenomenon, developments in theories of identity which have grown out of postmodernism or postcolonialism appear to have been curiously circumnavigated by trauma theory.

Stocks further elucidates that recent trauma theorists like Laurie Vickroy have begun to consider how trauma narratives critique culturally dominant views of identity, suggesting that those narratives dealing with the shattering effects of an extremely disturbing experience might explore and critique accepted definitions of identity. Vickroy sincerely admits,

“The narrative style and subject-matter of trauma literature can raise questions about how we define subjectivity, texts that deal with trauma ‘explore the limits of the western myth of the highly individuated subject and our ability to deal with loss and fragmentation in our lives’” (qtd. in Stocks 73).

Several key trauma theorists adhere to the notion that psychological trauma results from an extremely disturbing event, an experience which fractures the apparently coherent self, forcing a division in identity which healing ultimately seeks to overcome. Since trauma results in fragmentation, the traumatized self clearly poses a challenge to constructions of identity that insist on the unified singular subject.

After a traumatic experience, a victimized person comes to have the shattered self and the shattered world view. The rape survivor will hold a belief that she is never safe or the child abuse survivor’s belief that adults can’t be trusted. In the wake of a traumatic event, a victim’s emotional state is volatile, to be sure, as she undergoes intense personal suffering. But, the shattered self is only one side of the aftermath of psychic trauma. The other side is the shattered world view, the consequence of trauma on the survivors’ beliefs about the world. The shattered self and the shattered world view are, of course, connected but they are also discrete responses to a traumatic experience. In this line of argument, Karyn L. Freedman says:

After a traumatic event, a survivor experiences a kind of cognitive dissonance as she is faced with a whole new set of beliefs that have

cropped up, often very suddenly, which are inconsistent with previously held beliefs. She asks herself, am I really not capable of protecting myself against serious harm? Is the world not a safe place, or was I somehow incautious? Am I somehow responsible for the attack? Is it indicative of an individual failing, or a social one? The survivor struggles with the question, 'What am I to believe?' (111)

Victims of sexual assault often say that after their attack the world can never be the same. This sounds like a heavy ontological claim, signaling a kind of paradigm shift marking the shifting from a pre-assault world to a post-assault world. Over a period of time, the victim of a sexual assault learns certain loathsome facts about the world and the possibilities of human behaviour, and a worldview is shattered.

For the victim of sexual assault, it is not just that the world has changed but they feel that they have changed, too. 'I used to be' and 'my old self' are common refrains among rape survivors. Patricia Weaver Francisco explicitly mourns the loss of her former self in her memoir *Telling: A Memoir of Rape and Recovery* as:

She reflects back to the moments before her rape, over a decade earlier, and to the person she used to be: I am not sure I'd want to spend a lot of time with her, but I regret her passing. She is about to be lost, and I want to keep her with her notebook, her red pen, her young body, her happiness" (qtd. in Freedman 108).

Although there is no single response to a traumatic event, the effect of all such events is to inspire helplessness, fear and terror in the victim. As a result, within a traumatized individual the ordinary human responses to danger are shot.

If the critiques of referentiality derived from structuralism, post-structuralism, psychoanalysis, semiotics and deconstruction suggest, in their different ways, that representations bear a highly mediated or indirect relation to actuality, trauma theory

moves through and beyond that proposal by suggesting as Thomas Elsaesser explains that “the traumatic event has the status of a (suspended) origin in the production of a representation [. . .] bracketed or suspended because marked by the absence of traces” (qtd. Radstone 12). In place of theories that emphasize the conventional, mediated, illusory, deferred or imaginary status of the relation between representation and ‘actuality’ or ‘event,’ trauma theory suggests that the relation between representation and ‘actuality’ might be reconceived as one constituted by the absence of traces. In this regard, Radstone quotes Dori Laub saying “This absence of traces gives rise to his formulation of the actiology of trauma as an event without a witness” (12).

A theory of subjectivity is implicit within trauma theory. One context for this theory is the constant revising and re-reading of Freud’s seminal texts which has resulted in a plethora of different schools of psychoanalytic and psychological theory. Contemporary trauma theory is still struggling to resolve a contradiction that has underlain the US-based theories of trauma since their inception--the contradiction between a mimetic and anti-mimetic theory of trauma. Radstone mentions Ruth Leys arguing:

Whereas in the mimetic theory, the subject unconsciously imitates or repeats the trauma, in the anti-mimetic theory the subject is essentially aloof from the traumatic experience [. . .]. The anti-mimetic theory is compatible with, and often gives way to, the idea that trauma is a purely external event that befalls a fully constituted subject. (15)

The subject of trauma theory is characterized by that which it does not know and remember. This is not a subject caught up in desire, but a subject constituted by forgetting. The inner world of the traumatized subject is characterized not by repression of unacknowledgeable fantasies but by dissociated memories-- traceless traces. Though the subject of trauma theory cannot be restored to coherence through

acts of remembrance, a belated acknowledgement of that which has been forgotten is a possibility.

In the broadest sense, the experience of trauma can be said to lie at the heart of Freud's initial discoveries and so to inform his earliest psychoanalytic formulations. His *Studies on Hysteria* suggests, for example, that hysteria is caused by traumatic experiences that have not been fully integrated into the personality. Because of their intensely painful quality, such experiences are repressed and apparently 'forgotten,' the conscious mind remains more or less completely ignorant of them. They continue, however, to dwell in the unconscious where they achieve the status of what Freud calls "foreign bod[ies]" in the psyche: heterogeneous memorial kernels that threaten to unleash unpleasurable effect if the mind's associations approach them too closely. In the case of hysterics, such memories do indeed resurface, in the disguised form of bodily symptoms.

Describing the revisions Freud made to his theory in the second half of his career, Greg Forster says:

His early formulations in essence define trauma as sexual trauma, linking it to the dialectic between a pleasure principle seeking direct satisfaction and the repressions that give rise among other things, to the biphasic character of human sexuality. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* marks a significant shift in orientation. Here, trauma takes its place within the great, instinctual opposition between death drive and Eros: between the impulse of all living things toward (self-) destruction on one hand, and the impulse to perpetuate life by binding (cells, organisms, families, nations) into ever greater unities on the other.

(267)

Patients suffering from “traumatic neurosis” for example, shell-shocked war veterans and victims of motor-vehicle accidents, often report dreams in which they are forced to relive the experiences that traumatized them. Such dreams are hard to square with either these patients’ diurnal efforts to forget what has befallen them or with the ordinary, wish-fulfilling functions of dreams (according to which the oneiric activity of patients should offer symbolic and distorted representations of cure, not conjure memories of the trauma itself.

One of the most enduring functions of narrative is catharsis. From the ancient Greeks to the present day, the healing power of story-telling has been recognized and even revered. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle speaks about the purgative character of representation as a double act of muthos- mimesis (plotting-imitating). More specifically he defines the function of katharsis as purgation of pity and fear. This comes about, he explains, whenever the dramatic imitation of certain actions arouse pity and fear in order to provide an outlet for pity and fear. Analyzing multiple interpretations of Aristotelian pithy formulation of catharsis, Richard Kearney argues:

By pity (pathos) I think Aristotle was referring to the basic act of empathy evoked by an imaginative portrayal of human action and suffering. As Aristotle was addressing the role of tragic drama, the audience’s emotional response to the events unfolding on stage before them would have been central to the aesthetic experience. But left to itself, pathos risked becoming bathos. There was always the danger of a pathology of pity, a sentimental or histrionic extreme where the spectator loses his/her wits and becomes blinded by excessive passion. Empathy might veer towards an over-identification with the imaginary characters unless checked by a countervailing movement of distance and detachment. (51-52)

In *Structural Anthropology*, Claude Levi-Strauss writes of shamanistic invocations of ancient mythic stories to bring about therapeutic effects. In one particularly striking instance, he recounts how a village shaman rehearses a legendary battle between a hapless mortal caught in a cave and fierce monsters prowling on the outside, with a view to healing a woman dying in childbirth due to a blocked birth canal.

Another mythological narrative that Levi-Strauss explores is that of *Oedipus Rex*. Here he identifies a transformational logic at work which attempts to resolve at an imaginary level certain fundamental human contradictions that cannot be solved in reality. He shows how this myth comprises a series of recurring oppositions revolving round the structural anti-thesis of under-rating and over-rating.

According to trauma experts such as Judith Herman, Dori Laub, and Bessel Vander Kolk, “trauma involves a delay in response” (qtd. in Griffiths 2). The emotional and physical responses not experienced initially are raised when the survivor perceives a potential threat in a new situation, causing the survivor to relive the terror of the original experience on a physiological level. The embodied memory is experienced without a direct link to the ‘story’ of the original experience. In this way, the experience of memory has been fractured. Traumatic memory exists in two distinct forms: the relentlessly recurring image, stereotyped and static, and the unconscious bodily response to conditions that bear psychic resemblance to the original experience. Recovery requires a reintegration of fractured memory forms. This reintegration occurs when the original trauma survivor processes the story with a willing witness, who assists the survivor in understanding the connections between the actual event and its impact on his/her life. However, failing to recognize the survivor’s experience on a cultural as well as individual level, reproduces traumatic experience.

In *Sally's Rape*, Jennifer Griffiths says that African American performance artist Robbie McCauley explores what it means to 'choke' on a repressed history. Centred around the rape of great-great-grandmother Sally, a former slave, McCauley's performance bears witness to surviving a traumatized personal and cultural history. Ann E. Nymann refers to *Sally's Rape* as a social experiment in which McCauley performs the black female subject out of victimization and further comments:

As McCauley stands naked on the auction block, she begins to describe the experience of being raped on the plantation and her feelings of deep, visceral connection to that history. She refers to "A TIGHTNESS BETWEEN HER THIGHS," bringing together the corporeal with a voice that speaks out and presenting a consciousness where there once was only an object. She describes nightmares that function as traumatic intrusions, interrupting her sleep in the present and forcing her into the violence of the past. (qtd. in Griffiths 16-17)

Nellie Mckay refers to rape as "the most direct common threat" faced by all women and continues by asking: "How then do we account for the fact that the most irreconcilable angers, jealousies, and hostilities plaguing relationships between women of color and white women have their genesis in the politics of sexuality and, to a large extent, in those rape?"(qtd. in Griffiths 10).

In *Sally's Rape*, Griffiths argues that McCauley uses the theater to create a new public space for the construction of an address to articulate the traumatic history and the complex cultural processes that keep this history muted. The public, interactive nature of live performance allows for the exploration of the process of bearing witness to traumatic histories. Jennifer Griffiths presents Karen Malpede, a playwright and educator who clarifies the efficacy of relating current theories on post-

traumatic response, particularly in relation to the intersubjective dynamic of witnessing that has been identified as essential to the survivors' process of making meaning as:

Because theatre takes place in public and involves the movement of bodies across a stage, theatre seems uniquely suited to portray the complex interpersonal realities of trauma and give shape to the compelling interventions that become possible when trauma is addressed by others who validate the victims' reality" (6).

The False Memory Syndrome (FMS) foundation is a group of parents who have organized to defend themselves against accusations of sexual abuse- accusations frequently based on the recovery of repressed memories in psychotherapy. FMS Foundation members charge that the role of therapists is a destructive and malignant one, in which therapists create false memories of abuse by parents. Many therapists who specialize in treating victims of abuse dismiss FMS as part of the backlash against feminism and the movement for children's rights.

The FMS foundation newsletters describe adult daughters as the 'primary victims' and accused parents as 'secondary victims,' with therapists cast in the role of perpetrators of falsehoods. One can hear in the anguished and angry responses of parents a strain of rivalry with therapists and helplessness over the loyalty therapists seems to inspire in these adult daughters. Beyond the specific allegations of who did what to whom is an outraged conviction that therapists have taken their daughters away from them.

Sexual trauma has a place in a moral economy where women's abilities to make demands and legitimately express their outrage depend on whether they can establish an unambiguous violation of sexual innocence. The accusation of incest also may provide a socially sanctioned basis for adult women to break from their families

in a way that other feminine grievances do not permit. The fact that women are all too commonly subjected to sexual violence grants them a certain moral authority in confronting patriarchal codes, but at a price. Confusion or ambiguity about the past, and its meanings may entail relinquishing this moral ground.

Child sexual abuse is the most heinous form of abuse, one that goes beyond other forms of abuse in its potential for trauma. This is implicit in much of the clinical literature that infers repressed memory of sexual abuse from a wide range of clinical symptomatology. In this regard, Janice Haaken elucidates:

Clinical discourse on sexual abuse is increasingly framed by the counterposing of two positions. One position argues that victims rarely misperceive abuse and that the task of psychotherapy is to recover the memories and validate the traumatic experiences of the victim-survivor. The other position often associated with classical psychoanalysis, views memory as an elusive and reconstructed account of events that is bound up in fantasy and unconscious defenses. While the first position centres the truth of women's experience in the content of emerging memories of sexual abuse as literal accounts of past event, the second position makes central the symbolic representations that underlie memory, and the dynamic interplay of memory and other mental representational processes. (124)

In depicting how a comfort woman respond to her sexual abuse, Silvia Schultermantl presents a Korean American author Nora Okja Keller who became captivated by a talk with a surviving comfort woman who had served as a forced sexual laborer during the World War II. Keller immediately recognized this testimony as an indication of a hidden part of Korean history and her incredulity that 'people didn't know about this' inspired her to address the legacies of the comfort women in a

fictional narrative. Initially she wrote the narrative of Akiko, the part of the novel that deals with female oppression in Korea.

In Akiko's narratives in particular, language exposes the abuse of the female body as a sexual commodity for Japanese soldiers. Sold into a military camp at a prepubescent age as her sister's 'dowry,' Akiko (this is the name soldiers gave her in the camp) at first becomes a servant to the comfort women, and later serves as a comfort woman herself. After two years in the camp she is able to escape and eventually leaves Korea and emigrates to the United States. Schultermandl describes Akiko's inability to escape the haunting memories of her traumatic experiences of repeated sexual abuse as:

Whenever I stopped for a beat, for a breath, I heard men laughing and betting on how many men one comfort woman could service before she split open . . . I heard the counting reach one hundred and twenty-four before I could not bear to hear one more number . . . I heard the grinding of trucks delivering more men and more military supplies: food, rations, ammunition, boots, and new women to replace the ones that had died, their bodies erupting in pus. (81)

Once the women's genitals were swollen shut, they were abandoned in the woods as "disposal commodities" (Keller 147). The sexual abuse of women in Japanese military camps makes apparent the correlation of wartime sexual violence against women and political warfare. Ruth Seifert asserted that, "Rape is not an aggressive manifestation of sexuality, but a sexual manifestation of aggression" (qtd. in Schultermandl 81-82).

The communicability of the political female body, however, comes with obstacles. Akiko's inability to speak about her past is limited by trauma and the complex process of recovery from trauma. Trauma is difficult to heal, not only

because the traumatic experience cannot be undone, but also because the actual “trauma is not experienced at the time of its occurrence but later as a haunting presence” (Kilby 217). Since trauma does not occur in the here and now, it is difficult to understand it in general. Explaining that trauma constitutes a double wound, Keller cites Cathy Caruth specifying as:

The wound of the mind, the breach in the mind’s experience of time, self and the world, is not, like the wound of the body, a simple and healable event . . . so trauma is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual’s past, but rather in the way that its very unassimilable nature . . . returns to haunt the survivor later on. (qtd. in Schiltermandl 83)

Rape trauma syndrome is the label attached to the post-traumatic stress disorder experienced by rape victims. As such, rape trauma syndrome encompasses the emotional, behavioural, and psychological reactions common to victims of sexual assault. Expert testimony on rape trauma syndrome is introduced in both civil and criminal trials. In civil actions, the plaintiff may introduce expert testimony on rape trauma syndrome to help jurors assess damages. The testimony educates jurors on “the nature of the trauma suffered by a rape victim” (qtd. in Luaderdale 1367). In criminal rape trials, the prosecution may introduce evidence about rape trauma syndrome to corroborate the complaint’s assertion that she did not consent to intercourse.

Mental health professionals agree that rape is a stressful situation that may have an immediate and disruptive impact on a victim’s emotional and psychological state. Though mental health professionals recognize that individual reactions to rape may vary according to the victim’s age, access to supportive friends or relatives, ability to cope with disruptive events, and the circumstances of the rape, the

professionals have observed patterns of response in rape victims. They have identified these patterns as the rape trauma syndrome. Talking about the stages of response and recovery that rape victims experience, Helen J. Lauderdale argues:

Rape victims may display feelings of fear, anger, shock, and anxiety in an overt, hysterical fashion immediately following the attack, or may appear stable, calm or subdued. As they begin to deal with the aftereffects of rape, victims may feel afraid, humiliated, and embarrassed, as well as angry, vengeful, and blameworthy. During the first few weeks following the rape, victims also experience a variety of somatic reactions including physical trauma, skeletal muscle tension, gastrointestinal irritability, and genitourinary disturbance. (1370-71)

The recent studies conclude, as did the early studies, that rape has an immediate, profoundly disruptive effect on the victim's emotional and psychological state. The recent studies confirm that during the period immediately following the rape, victims commonly experience fear, anxiety and depression sleep and eating disturbances, guilt, shame, irritability, fatigue, and decreased libido are some characteristics of victim's depression. Recent findings also support earlier findings that victims typically begin to recompose themselves and return to normal levels of functioning between two to six months after the rape.

In addition, the recent studies empirically draw the early researchers' conclusion that rape produces long-term psychological consequences for victims. According to recent studies, rape victims continue to experience "nervousness, tension and trembling, . . . panic attacks, feelings of terror, feelings of apprehension and dread, and some somatic correlates of anxiety" for a long time following the rape (qtd. in Lauderdale 1373). A year following the rape, victims "are more depressed, get lesser enjoyment from their daily lives, report being more tense and fatigued and

report more interpersonal problems” than women who have not been raped (qtd. in Lauderdale 1373).

During the long-term process of recovery that follows a rape, a victim typically resolves her feelings about the rape by accepting the event, appraising realistically her complicity in the rape, and expressing her anger toward the rapist. Disruptive events, such as residence changes, upsetting dreams, and nightmares frequently accompany this period. As a defensive reaction to the traumatic circumstances of the rape, victims also develop phobias including fear of sexual relations, fear of crowds, fear of being alone, fear of people, fear of the indoors or fear of the outdoors.

As for Judith Herman, “the trauma survivor, whose seemingly unspeakable experience recurs repeatedly in the form of nightmares, flashbacks, and somatic symptoms, is healed by transforming her traumatic experience into a coherent narrative” (qtd. in Robson 117). This narrative, as she argues, is politically charged because society, like the individual represses traumatic events: Denial, repression and dissociation operate on a social as well as an individual level. This social erasure of atrocities negates individuals’ traumatic experiences, rendering it impossible for the individual to put her experiences into words.

The ‘narrative cure’ is, then, politically charged: by testifying to experience that society has negated, the survivor simultaneously takes control of her story and makes a crucial political statement that offers a basis for social change. In Herman’s words: “Remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims” (qtd in Robson 117).

The narrative cure as it is articulated in Herman’s work is more accurately a form of ‘narrative recovery’, a term which brings together “the recovery of past

experience through narrative articulation and the psychological reintegration of a traumatically shattered subject (qtd. in Robson 119). With regard to the gradual recovery from the traumatic experience, Kathy Robson puts forward Judith Herman further saying:

The survivor is healed by recounting her traumatic experiences completely, a procedure that resembles putting together a difficult picture puzzle, as though the survivor's traumatic memories can be fitted together to construct a complete, coherent narrative. This assumption that the survivor can remember and recount all of her traumatic experiences offers a fantasy of curative coherence and closure that the text offers as 'truth,' which raises important questions regarding the meaning of 'truth'. (122)

In a nutshell, many fields of psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and sociology have taken, since the Vietnam war, a renewed interest in the problem of trauma. The fundamental seed of trauma is the betrayal by the powers which a person believes will guarantee protection and security. Traumatic experience takes its root in the psyche of a victimized person when tormented by the members of the community of which s/he is a member, and when the family can no longer provide safety and shelter but remains a site of threats. The Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) encompasses the symptoms of what had previously been called shell shock, combat stress, delayed stress syndrome, and traumatic neurosis, and referred to response to both human and natural catastrophes. It has provided a category of diagnosis so powerful that it has seemed to engulf everything around it: suddenly responses not only to combat and to natural catastrophes but also to rape, child abuse, and a number of other violent occurrences have been understood in terms of PTSD, and diagnoses of some dissociative disorders have also been switched to that of trauma.

Events that carry a potentiality to germinate what we categorize today as symptoms of trauma generally involve force and violence. Often this is a threat to those people involved, their lives and integrity, as in rape, torture or child abuse, sometimes even in witnessing horrific deaths of others. The symptoms of victims of rape and incest are very similar to those of combat survivors. The rape survivors display hysterical physical and psychological behaviours like extreme anxiety, interrupted sleep, hallucinations, eating disturbances, fear of darkness, crowds or sexual relationship or aloneness caused by the traumatizing rape in the form of nightmares, flashbacks and somatic symptoms. But, after a lapse of some duration of time following the rape, the victims will slowly take to a normal life, remaining not completely recovered from the sexual trauma.

II. Sexual Trauma in *A Time to Kill* by John Grisham

A violent and brutal rape of a young black girl Tonya Hailey and its resultant sexual, psychic and racial traumas are the central issues around which the novel *A Time to Kill* by John Grisham revolves from the very outset to the end. Trauma can be seen at the individual, familial, psychic, societal and racial levels after two white good-for-nothings- Cobb and Willard - kidnap away a ten-year-old girl Tonya into the dense forest and rape so violently to her unconsciousness, bloody and beaten. The whole scenario in the development of the events in the novel turns out to be traumatic afterwards. She is kidnapped on her way home from the nearby shop by two white rednecks into a forest where the violent traumatic scene of rape takes place. It renders the rape victim into a vulnerable state of psychological disorders, mental tension, despair, revengeful anger, fear, hysterical behaviors, nightmarish startling dreams and so on. Even the family members, and other kiths and kins cannot remain aloof from overpowering aftereffects of the psychic and sexual trauma that Tonya was suffering from.

The mother of the rape victim Gwen Hailey is left devastatingly broken and hurt at heart when she sees her young daughter in hospital undergoing medical surgery. Her father, Carl Lee Hailey, becomes so furious like an angry lion wounded by a short or arrow after the heart-shattering news of his daughter's rape comes into his knowledge. He even goes to the extent of murdering the duo who raped his daughter brutally. Tonya's brothers remain sad, somber and helpless at the pathetic situation of their dear sister. The whole black community is seen silent undergoing a deep trauma in silence.

In the case of Tonya, she has been raped against her will with tremendous physical violence. Such a forceful event overpowers the mechanisms of her consciousness, rendering her incapable of knowing what actually is happening to her

at the time of its occurrence. She could not fully understand the degree of pain, suffering that the rape with severe brutalism brought to her. Due to the extremity of the brutal rape, it appears on the surface that the ordinary relations of her body and mind, reality and imagination, knowledge and memory no longer exist. Incongruity between and among them thus gave way to various post-traumatic symptoms in the rape survivor Tonya. The traumatic event of this kind remains as a perennial source of unassimilable, unrepresentable, uncanny psychic and sexual trauma in the persons of sexual violence and abuse.

The narrator, on the very opening page, describes how two white rednecks physically torment her before raping her severely in the following manner:

She was ten and small for her age. She lay on her elbows, which were stuck and bound together with yellow nylon rope. Her legs were spread grotesquely with the right foot tied tight to an oak sapling and the left to a rotting leaning post of a long-neglected fence. The ski rope had cut into her ankles and the blood ran down her legs. Her face was bloody and swollen, with one eye bulging and closed and the other eye half open so she could see the other white man sitting on the truck. She did not look at the man on the top of her. He was breathing hard and sweating and cursing. He was hurting her. (1-2)

It clearly gives a vivid picture of how two white men brutally rape a tender girl of only ten years of age. The nylon rope that binds her elbows together cut deep into them and causes bleeding down her legs and body. That the rape is so violent is quite obvious from the fact that her face is bloody and swollen. The white men are “hurting” (raping brutally) her with physical violence like beating, kicking, tying her legs apart with a rope to two trees: an act that surpasses those of what a devil can do. The girl can do nothing but bear all physical torture which is beyond her tolerance.

The rape is a violent, overpowering incident that later resulted intrusively in a series of hysterical, psychological and somatic disorders in a young girl-victim. Such acts of force and violence are key factors behind a deep wound, which we call psychic and sexual trauma, in Tonya Hailey.

The two rascals not only abused her sexually but also poured racial anger into her by attacking on her tender body like wild animals on a carcass. The narrator further narrates how they slap and threaten her during the rape scene:

When he finished, he slapped her and laughed, and the other man laughed in return, then they laughed harder and rolled around the grass by the truck like two crazy men, screaming and laughing. She turned away from them and cried softly, careful to keep herself quiet. She had been slapped earlier for crying and screaming. They promised to kill her if she didn't keep quiet. (2)

They keep on hurting her one after the other with the wildest animalism. Because she is confined at a place with a rope, she bears what they do on her. Their wild screaming, laughter disturb her psyche in such a way that she is later haunted at night by frequent horrible sounds which actually did not take place. She shrinks, shivers with fear and behaves hysterically at the slightest sound produced inside the house. Their threatening to kill her deeply implants in her a strong sense of fear, terror that she remains terrified and scared of possible encounter with them again. Although she has knowledge of the fact that her father has shot them to death as they step down the stairs in the court-house, she is still terror-stricken that they can break into her house and take her away to the forest for the same traumatic event. She accompanies her father to the court several times for a hearing due to his crime for killing the rapists, but she is not completely convinced of the fact that her rapists have already left this world for eternity. It happens in the rape survivor and other victims of war,

earthquake, riot, accidents because they are haunted by the traumatic past events which pose threats for their survival in the present.

The two white rednecks also give vent to their racial biases, hatred while they take on an evil thought of raping a young black girl. They would not have done all these brutal acts if only Tonya had been a girl of white origin, culture and race.

Whatever the reason behind the rape, the rape survivor encounters once with death and remains terrified by this horrifying experience for life-long duration. It later becomes a seed of racial trauma resulting from deadly clash, riot between the black backed up by the NAACP and white communities supported by the Ku Klux Klan.

The following excerpt clarifies how prejudiced the white rapists are in raping Tonya:

Willard asked Cobb if he thought she was dead. Cobb opened another beer and explained that she was not dead because niggers generally could not be killed by kicking and beating and raping. It took much more, something like a knife or a gun or a rope to dispose of a nigger. Although he had never taken part in such a killing, he had lived with a bunch of niggers in prison and knew all about them. They were always killing each other, and they always used a weapon of some sort. Those who were just beaten and raped never died. Some of the whites were beaten and raped, and some of them died. But none of the niggers.

Their heads were harder. Willard seemed satisfied. (2-3)

Willard and Cobb were racially biased in sorting out a black girl and raping her brutally. Their racial prejudices, anger and hatred further victimize Tonya as she is from a different race, culture and community other than the white world. All human bodies are made up of flesh and blood which remain unchanged in all regardless of their caste, religion, culture, race and so on. But, the white rapists think that the niggers do never die from raping, beating and kicking which may, on the contrary,

cause death to the white ones. It typically represents their racist ideology and works as a fuel to the severe victimization of Tonya beyond her power of tolerance.

The victim of sexual assault cannot fully understand the degree of a disastrous and violent act like rape at the time of its occurrence. What is even more tormenting is frequent haunting of the catastrophic past to the present status of the victim, as it happens in the life of Tonya Hailey. Any forceful event like rape begets a volatile physical and psychological condition in a sufferer who undergoes through fear, terror, extreme pain, hallucination, panic attacks. The rape victim, Tonya, desperately struggles for her rescue by her father from the clutch of two white rascals who were beating, slapping, urinating at the same time raping her; in hallucination “[s]he looked out through the woods and saw something – a man running wildly through the vines and underbrush. It was her daddy, yelling and pointing at her and coming desperately to save her. She cried out for him, and he disappeared. She fell asleep” (3). Tonya reaches a hallucinating state due to the monstrosity of the rape event. The mechanism of her mind failed her to grasp what was happening to her and in the surroundings. This symptom overrules the rape victim during and after her rape to an overwhelming extent. The victims of rape and other domestic violence like Tonya suffer from physical hysteria and somatic behaviour like hallucination following the incident of trauma and suffering. In the post-assault world, she often hallucinates as if the duo are hiding upstairs in the attic to get her and hurt her again. She hallucinates that they are roaming around the house at night; she hears the faint screaming and laughter of theirs. She is horrified to hear something like the sounds of cowboy boots which touched hardly on her mouth and other body parts. She pleads her uncle and brothers to check out every room of the house many times as she feels like her rapists are tiptoeing up and down the stairs and on the floor.

Tonya oscillates between unconsciousness and a sudden return to consciousness. She has been more than a fragile piece of straw which can be blown or shattered into many fragments with a little gust of air on the returning of the traumatic past and its memories as she reaches a physically vulnerable state. For any sort of post-traumatic stress disorders, the intrusion of an external forceful violence like rape has a great role to play. The victim suffers from what we call a psychic and sexual trauma, resulting in various PTSDs with associative, in some cases, even non-associative syndromes to the traumatic incident.

The terrible experience of any kind caused through physical violence remains as a traumatic memory in the victim and returns as a haunting presence for a great length of time in the future. Tonya is the victim of terrible rape under severe physical circumstances, as a result of which she cannot ward off the traumatic memory of the past from entering into her psyche with disruptive impacts. The overpowering occurrence of rape implants a seed of trauma in her so powerfully that she displays all hysterical symptoms similar to the victims of sexual abuse. The narrator further describes how rape full of violence takes place and works to disrupt her later:

Willard asked what he planned to do now that they were through with her. Cobb sucked on his joint, chased it with beer, and said he wasn't through. He bounced from the tailgate and staggered across the small clearing to where she was tied. He cursed her and screamed at her to wake up, then he poured cold beer in her face, laughing like a crazy man He was hurting her again. (3)

The white duo not only raped her to the extent of causing bleeding from her secret part but also attacked on her tender body with physical violence; it thus remains as a perennial source of traumatic memories forceful enough to torment her in multiple forms. The psychological terror seen in her later is one of the results of this terrible

rape which makes its home in the psyche of the rape victim, Tonya. Consequently, she is quite scared of any possible attack from her sexual abusers though they were already dead.

She was so vulnerable during and after the rape that it took her a long time to walk on her own. She was accompanied and supported while she was being taken to hospital and back home. Her physical vulnerability and weakness can be noticed crystal-clear as in:

When she awoke one of the men was lying under the tailgate, the other under a tree. They were asleep. Her arms and legs were numb. The blood and beer and urine had mixed with her dirt underneath her to form a sticky paste that glued her small body to the ground and crackled when she moved and wiggled. Escape, she thought, but her mightiest efforts moved her only a few inches to the right. Her feet were tied so high her buttocks barely touched the ground. Her legs and arms were so deadened they refused to move. (3)

This kind of violent or terrible event shatters the victims' self and causes various psychological, physical and other somatic disorders. It can be forgotten for a certain duration of time but its returning with greater shock than before is what makes her miserable and hysterical in many forms. Tonya is raped, beaten up, urinated and threatened: all terrifying things with their potentiality for a deep trauma in the victim. Though she thinks of an escape, she is bound to the tree with a rope and her body can move not more than an inch due to heavy intrusion of violence. Her limbs have gone numb and unresponsive.

Rape imparts a painful experience to Tonya Hailey, on the one hand, and physical brutality adds salt to her psychic wound, on the other. All these physical violence penetrates so powerfully into her psyche and haunts her as an unforgettable

tormenting event. Terror has gripped her all over. She falls unconscious and again wakes up to bear next moment of suffering. She expresses her trauma through sobbing, suppressed fear and low yelling. She remains quiet and still under clouds of threats to be killed by the villainous duo because “Cobb slapped her and threatened to kill her if she did not lie still and keep quiet. He said he would take her home if she stayed down and did a told; otherwise they would kill her” (4). Such a terrible event cut deep into her consciousness and she sustained life-long hysterias, fear, anxiety, nightmarish dreams and other phobias like fear of being alone, darkness, insecurity and the like.

The violent and forceful rape not only renders the victim into the traumatic circumstances of depression, physical suffering, skeletal muscle tension, embarrassment, sleep and eating disturbances, guilt, fear, shame but also traumatize psychologically those who are intimately tied up with the victim through familiar, racial, societal and cultural relations. The mother Gwen and the father Carl Lee Hailey sense something horrible in the absence of their daughter at home from the shop. After a long frantic search, they found their daughter home covered with wet towels, and surrounded by the crying relatives. Gwen gave way to body-shaking wailing and sobbing. While Carl Lee Hailey was overcome by anger, revenge, hatred for the white rapists who set fire in his heart for revenge through a heinous act of rape. The whole family members are troubled because of Tonya’s miserable condition on hospital bed.

Carl Lee is so furious that he wants to take revenge upon his daughter’s rapists by shooting them dead. He even makes his intention to avenge them public to Jake Brigance who is a young lawyer, beginning his profession as obvious from the following conversation:

“Don’t do anything stupid, Carl Lee.”

“Answer my question. What would you do?”

“I don’t know I don’t know what I’d do?”

“Lemme ask you this if it was you little girl, and if it was two niggers, and you could get your hands on them, what would you do?”

“Kill them.” (47)

The arousal of the feeling of murder in Carl Lee Hailey’s heart is the by-product of a brutal rape of his daughter. Every father feels like doing this in such circumstances. Feelings of revenge, anger in Carl Lee are the results of a horrible incident like rape which renders him unable to take a right decision. He reaches a state of insanity following the rape of his daughter. Carl Lee is extremely traumatized by the terrible event of his daughter’s rape. His dilemma-- to kill or not to kill the tormentors-- reaches a definite point of finishing sexual abusers as it is obvious in the narrative below:

When Cobb reached the second step from the floor, and Willard was three steps behind, and Looney was one step of the landing, the small, dirty, neglected, unnoticed door to the Janitor’s closet burst open and Mr. Carl Lee Hailey sprung from the darkness with an M-16. At point-blank range he opened fire. (72)

The on-the-spot murder of two rapists by the victim’s father is the effect of a deep wound, suffering, hatred that worked as a cause in his heart and mind for taking justice into his own hands.

The mother Gwen is equally participating in her daughter’s sufferings and pain. She sobs, wails at the pathetic condition of her daughter. Tonya’s rape puts her mind in deep turmoil and makes her suffer from it. She is always together with her daughter giving her motherly company, love, care that help Tonya, to some extent, to

fight against her traumatic past. The narrator narrates how Gwen cares and empathizes with her daughter while she has been hospitalized as:

Carl Lee had difficulty sleeping on the couch in the waiting room. Tonya was serious but stable. They had seen her at midnight, after the doctor warned that she looked bad. She did. Gwen had kissed the little bandaged face while Carl Lee stood at the foot of the bed, subdued, motionless, unable to do anything but stare blankly at the small figure surrounded by machines, tubes, and nurses. Gwen was later sedated and taken to her mother's house in Clanton. The boys went home with Gwen's brothers. (26)

It substantiates the fact that the mother Gwen is very apprehensive and restless for the miserable condition of her daughter. She shows all motherly love and care during her daughter's intensive treatment period at hospital and afterwards.

Rape victim's emotional state becomes quite volatile during intense personal suffering on the wake of a traumatic memory of the past like sexual abuse. Tonya undergoes a great degree of physical and psychic pain in recovery period following the rape. The rape survivor, Tonya, was quite fragile, unable to talk, eat and walk on her own:

At noon Thursday Tonya was removed from intensive care and placed in a private room. She was listed as stable. The doctors relaxed, and her family brought candy, toys and flowers. With two broken jaws and a mouthful of wire, she could only stare at the candy. Her brothers ate most of it. They clung to her bed and held her hand, as if to protect and reassure. The room stayed full of friends and strangers, all patting her gently and saying how sweet she was, all treating her as someone special, someone who had been through this horrible thing. The crowds

moved in shifts, from the hall into her room, and back into the hall,
where the nurses watched carefully. (50)

Tonya, a young girl, after sexual abuse has been shattered both physically and psychologically. Physical immobility, lack of interest in daily affairs and eating disturbances are some dominant aftereffects perceptible in a rape victim like her. Due to brutal rape and physical violence, she is immobile without any stamina to move her body parts or show gestures. While in the intensive care, she just stares at the presents that her relatives and friends bring for her. On the wake of violent physical pain, she gives way to heart-breaking cries and wailing.

As Freud argues that any violent or terrible event can be forgotten but yet returns back to haunt the victims in the form of somatic systems of compulsive repetitive behaviours, Tonya faces the same challenges. She suffers from various after-effects of the rape. The actual trauma of the rape is seen less in the time of its occurrence in Tonya but more in its belatedness. After the lapse of some weeks, she has nightmares in her dreams, which startle her up in the middle of the night. It is clear from the way her mother tells about her:

“The nightmares are getting worse,” Gwen said, interrupting the silence. “I have to sleep with her every night. She dreams about men coming to get her, men hiding in the closets, chasin’ her through the woods. She wakes up screamin’ and sweatin’. The doctor says she needs to see a psychiatrist. Says it’ll get worse before it gets better.”

(222)

It is obvious that Tonya goes through the traumatic situations of the rape but cannot get rid of its disruptive aftereffects on her physical and psychological state. The rape victim may forget the actual event of rape but she can never shake off the intrusive memory of that event which haunts her repeatedly later on. She displays different

psychological and somatic hysterias like interrupted sleep disorders, sweating, screaming, terrible nightmares resulting from the original traumatic occurrence. She is consequently afraid and scared. Most of the time she feels insecure alone. The overpowering scenes of rape like men coming to grab her away, hiding in the closets, frequently haunt and traumatize her. As Cathy Caruth says, “[T]he trauma of the nightmare does not simply consist in the experience within the dream but in the experience of waking from it,” (3). Her real traumatic experience erupts to the surface in the succeeding experience following a terrible wake from the nightmarish dream. Such a nightmarish experience poses a threat to her identity, consciousness, and survival.

Fears of aloneness and darkness grip Tonya when she attempts for sleep after waking up from the startling dream. She is in need of care, support, love and empathy from her family members. The mother reports about the family care given to her as:

They have been great. They treat her special. But the nightmares keep them scared. When she wakes up screamin’ she wakes everybody. The boys run to her bed and try to sleep unless the boys slept on the floor next to her. We all laid there wide awake with the lights on.” (222)

Tonya gets special care from her family members and other relatives. When she is in a terrible situation being haunted by the nightmarish dreams, panic attacks, her brother, uncle, parents help her a lot recover from the traumatic experiences.

Hysterical behaviours and somatic reactions as responses to sexual abuse, Tonya is scared of pitch dark nights and does not sleep on her bed alone until there are her brothers sleeping on the floor next to her. She is firstly scared by the nightmares and scares others in the family, too. The main reason for her being scared is that her self and the world-view have been shattered. Now, she has no faith for her security from any of the family members. During the violent rape, she hallucinates her

father Carl Lee running wildly through the woods for her rescue. It is indicative of her belief on her father for her protection in the context of a pre-assault world but in the post-assault world after the case of rape, she has lost her faith upon the family members.

After the terrifying experience of the rape, the worldview of the rape survivor (Tonya) gets shattered and changed; she now gains new knowledge and insights about the indecent and heinous human behaviours in the same society of which she is a member. Her perspectives to look at the world and herself have undergone significant changes. This is how, her consciousness is now in the conflicting zone between a new set of beliefs (in the present) and the previously held beliefs (in the past). She finds a vast contradiction between her present self and the old self. It has thus resulted in deep psychic trauma in Tonya, thereby making her subject to many phobias like fear of darkness and aloneness.

The rape survivor or the victims of any violent encounter cannot, as Caruth says, fully grasp the event as it occurs, but they continuously suffer from it which returns in the form of flashbacks, nightmares and other repeated phenomena. The two rednecks wrecks and ruins Tonya's body and mind so violently that she can never have children. She remains fear-stricken feeling insecure in and around the house. The scene of violence frequently visits her mind and troubles it on and on. This is the reason that she cannot put her mind off the traumatic event. Therefore, she often imagines the rapist hiding near the fence of the house for her or waiting in closets to take her away again. Despite the fact that they have been murdered by her father, she hallucinates them alive trying to make another encounter with her. Such phobia is the direct impact of the violent rape that she underwent. The sexually abused victim experiences even more painful suffering by the returning traumatic memories. It becomes a challenge for her to resume a normal life like other girls who have not been

raped. Tonya's struggle to embrace a normal life is more than a deadly battle as explicit in:

It was impossible to sleep with the light on. Tonya refused to go near the bed unless every light in the house was on. Those men could be in the dark, waiting for her. She had seen them many times crawling along the floor toward her bed, and lurking in the closets. She had heard their voices outside her window, and she had seen their bloodshot eyes peering in, watching her as she got ready for bed. She heard noises in the attic, like the footsteps of the bulky cowboy boots they had kicked her with. She knew they were up there, waiting for everyone to go to sleep so they could come down and take her back to the woods. Once a week her mother and oldest brother climbed the folding stairs and inspected the attic with a flashlight and a pistol.

(254-255)

The wound of trauma caused by rape is very difficult to recover or heal as in the case of Tonya because she has been experiencing and re-experiencing the actual trauma, not only at the time of its occurrence but later as a haunting presence. Her psyche and consciousness are so profoundly overwhelmed by the original event that her mind cannot accept the death of her rapists. Terror, hallucination, fear of darkness, loneliness, anxiety capture her on the wake of the first traumatic event. She displays fears for the similar second encounter by them, and still hears their voices in hallucination beyond the window. She visualizes their bloodthirsty eyes peering into her room and watching her. Such abnormalities are representative of a rape victim as we see in Tonya.

Similarly, her mental disturbance makes her hear something like noise or footsteps of the bulky cowboy boots which touched her hard on her mouth, buttocks,

and even sensitive body parts. She feels like they will come again to take her to the woods and ‘hurt’ her as before. This phobia of insecurity demands that her family members surround her around her bed at night. Sometimes, she would ask her uncle to stay with a gun by the window of her bed-room. Such terrible after-effects of fear, anxiety, hallucination torment her more here and now in the present than what the original event did upon her in the past.

The narrator recounts an incident of hysteria that Tonya displays one night while sleeping with her mother as:

She slept with her mother, who held firmly for hours until the demons faded into the night and she drifted away. At first, Gwen had trouble with the lights, but after five weeks she napped periodically through the night. The small body next to her waggled and jerked even while it slept. (255)

Physical hysteria and sleep disturbances at night are visibly realized by Gwen on her sexually victimized daughter. Tonya does not have sound and comfortable sleep at nights following the rape as in the past. She is tremendously fearful to sleep alone until and unless there is her mother together embracing her firmly. Interrupted sleep: sleeping at a time and waking up with fright at another moment with a terrible experience of haunting past, is a typical post-traumatic symptom in a rape victim as it is seen in Tonya. Her little slender body is subject to involuntary wiggling and jerking from time to time during sleep without her knowledge. As such hysterics in the disguised form of bodily symptoms surface and resurface commonly on the rape victim together with heart-shattering turbulent past memories, Tonya is no exception to this rule.

Fear of darkness gives constant trouble and pain to the rape victims. They garner a feeling of fear that the evil hands may intrude into darkness to repeat the

same painful past event upon them. Such psychic volatile state leads them into a miserable situation which does not permit them to enter a normal everyday-life. Tonya cannot sleep in the presence of slight darkness as the evening dawns slowly with a maturing night. She desperately demands that all rooms of the house should have bulbs on throughout the night. Besides, someone else of the family is required to assure her that s/he is on vigil for her protection and safety. The narrator, in this regard, says, “One night, as she lay wide awake next to her mother, a light in the hall burnt out. She screamed violently until Gwen’s brother drove to Clanton to an all-night quick shop for more bulbs” (255). She is in such a condition that she has no complete faith upon her family members, as well as on her rapists who, she thinks, may attack her at any time again. Tonya, following the rape, needs extra care, attention, protection from the family members. Unless she is assured of safety, she does not sleep at all.

An utter silence is another dominant symptom in the victim of the sexual abuse. She lacks the strength to speak out her trauma to others. The main reason behind it is that she is fearful of the negative responses from the society or further sexual abuse of similar kind in the future. Tonya remains silent for most of the time because of her inability to understand the traumatic event of rape: she does not understand why she has been raped. She broods in silence, being shocked by indecent, evil human behaviors of which she is unaware beforehand. She has not expected such an encounter in her life. An overwhelming deep wound devastates her mind so adversely that she is incapable of getting across the present circumstances befalling her. She casts her blank silent looks at every happening around her.

Old self of the victim stands contrary to her present self. A contradiction between the past self in the pre-assault world and present self in the post-assault world results in the deep wound, suffering of the person who undergoes a terrible

experience of rape. Remembering her sweet, carefree and happy bygone days, Tonya bursts into tears many times. She now regrets for what she lost following the violent scene of rape. Such feelings of regrets and lamentation for the loss of what she had in the past are seen dominant in the rape victim as in the case of Tonya. The old self gets fragmented into several parts which create identity crisis, threats for present existence. The contradiction between 'what I was in the past' and 'what I am in the present' results in psychic and sexual trauma which paves way to intermittent suffering as clear in: "She wanted Uncle Willie to sit under the window with his gun and the boys to sleep on the floor around the bed. They took their positions. She moaned pitifully for a few moments, then grew quiet and still" (255).

During the sleep at night, several nightmares associated with the traumatic event intrude into minds of the rape survivor or the victim who has experienced a terrible incident like warship, railway accident, communal feud, gang-fighting and so on. In the case of Tonya, she comes across various nightmares which function as traumatic intrusions, interrupting her sleep in the night and compels her to suffer once again with the frightening memories of the violent past. The rape victim cannot shake off the past which dwells in her deep unconscious with a strong foundation, thereby intruding into her consciousness with tangible hysterical behaviours. On the wake of such traumatic experience, the rape victim like Tonya helplessly cries, screams and shivers with great fright. The narrator vividly elucidates how she wails and screams with paramount pain and suffering in:

Around midnight, Willie took off his boots and relaxed on the couch.

He removed his holster and placed the gun on the floor. He was almost asleep when he heard the scream. It was the horrible, high-pitched cry of a child being tortured. He grabbed his gun and ran to the bedroom.

Tonya was sitting on the bed, facing the wall, screaming and shaking.

She had seen them in the window, waiting for her. Gwen hugged her. The three boys ran to the foot of the bed and watched helplessly. Care Lee, Jr., went to the window and saw nothing. They had been through it many times in five weeks, and knew there was little they could do. (255)

It is thus tangible that Tonya is in sound sleep until the memory of the violent rape does not awaken her on the verge of psychological collapse and psychic abnormality. She suddenly gets up in the middle of her sleep and yells a high-pitched cry. Agony that finds its expression in heart-rendering wailing has its origin in the deep wound caused by the sexual abuse, i.e. rape against her acceptance. Because it was only five weeks past, there was very little help that other family members could do for her because it takes a period of six to nine months or even more depending upon the persons for a rape victim to recover from her trauma and to return to normal activities as before. A complete state of helplessness rules over her. Tonya has been too fragile to withstand the overpowering surges of terror, shivering, nightmarish hallucinations.

Child sexual abuse, among the worst crimes, is the most heinous form of abuse with its terrific potentiality for trauma. The child rape victim gets tormented by some uncanny feelings of pain and suffering. She can do nothing but suffer every moment of her life. After a short traumatic experience of rape, she finds herself in the midst of several waves of sufferings, tension, fear, anxiety and other somatic behaviours. What is more traumatizing than the original violent event, rape, is its frequent haunting to the victim in the here and now. As a result, she relives the terrible experience time and again thousands of times in multiple forms. She gets hurt every second of her life. The pain she feels in finding answers to innumerable questions (which erupt in her mind) is very profound beyond measure. Her psychic trauma is profound when she learns that she can never have children. Her queries

remain unanswered when she asks her mother why she cannot have children. Deep sufferings get further intensified when she cannot understand why she was raped. The degree of psychic and sexual trauma is more tremendous and greater especially in a child rape victim as Tonya. In this regard, Jake, the lawyer who was defending Carl Lee Hailey in the court of law against his possible death penalty reports in the courthouse as:

With murder the victim is gone, and not forced to deal with what happened to her. The family must deal with it, but not the victim. But rape is much worse. The victim has a lifetime of coping, of trying to understand, of asking questions, and the worst part, of knowing the rapist is still alive and may someday escape or be released. Every hour of every day, the victim thinks of the rape and asks herself a thousand questions. She relives it, step by step, minute by minute, and it hurts just as bad. (482)

The rape survivor finds it very hard to cope up with her present life-situations and suffers more than what she got from her first violent event. She is hurt for only once when she undergoes violence but she is repeatedly traumatized, haunted later on for hundreds of times.

It is difficult to express in words how a child rape victim like Tonya gets traumatized by the sexual abuse. She sees no bounds of psychic trauma when she gets to know that she cannot give birth to babies in the future. Her deep wound remains unexpressed as she does not get answers to the questions: Why cannot I bear children? Why was I raped? Such uncanny traumatic pain haunts and torments her till the last moment of her life.

Jake, emphasizing on the worst part of rape, further adds in the court that:

Perhaps the most horrible crime of all is the violent rape of a child. A woman who is raped has a pretty good idea why it happened. Some animal was filled with hatred, anger and violence. But a child? A ten-year-old child? Suppose you're a parent. Imagine yourself trying to explain to your child why she was raped. Imagine yourself trying to explain why she cannot bear children. (482)

During two to three months, she hallucinates the evil rapists hiding behind the fence of her house to get her and force her away into the dense forest where the terrible incident takes place. She undergoes feelings of fear, insecurity, panic-attacks, but now her consciousness accepts the event as it occurred. As the rape trauma syndrome substantiates, she overcomes, to a great degree, the tormenting feelings of rape and its aftereffects. Her acts like playing with friends in group and smiles on her face indicate her movement into psychic, physical recovery from the traumatizing world of fear, upsetting sleep, nightmarish dreams, terror of loneliness, darkness, strangers, and terrible hysterias.

After Tonya is brought home, she breathes a sigh of relief. It is a faint sign of her gradual recovery that she is slowly coming out of her physical and psychological injury. As the time goes by, the rape victim begins to recuperate as visible in Tonya in the following description:

The crowd hushed as [her father] carried her up the steps, through the door, and laid her on the couch. She was glad to be home, but tired of the spectators. Her mother held her feel as cousins, uncles, aunts, neighbors, and everybody walked to her and touched her and smiled, some through tears, and said nothing. (63-64)

Tonya is relieved gradually due to love, care, proper nourishment and medical treatment. She gets psychological strength to fight against traumatic surges of feelings within her from her family, neighbours and relatives.

As the recent studies have proved that the rape victim begins to recompose herself and return to normal levels of functioning between two to six months following the rape, Tonya also shows some signs of her return towards leading a normal life. When it is two weeks past after the rape, she starts walking on her own with slight limp and feels like running and climbing steps with her brothers. Her physical cuts get healed slowly and nicely. But, the wounds still hurt her and she cries in pain several times. The mental health professionals also put forward a fact that though the physical wound may heal across the passage of time, the rape victim undergoes an immediate, profound and disruptive effects on her emotional and psychological state. Tonya is gradually coming out of her physical suffering but it is still hard for her to recover from the psychic trauma sowed in her psyche by the forceful rape.

After the lapse of about nine months, Tonya shows some signs of recovery. She seems to resolve her feelings about the rape to some extent and resents realistically her complicity in it. At the end of the novel, she is found to be running and jumping in and around the yard with other young kids. "Tonya ran and jumped around the yard with other young kids" (514). The rape victim requires some weeks to recover from the traumatic wound of rape and to return to normal life as before when she was not raped.

To sum up, the rape victim Tonya Hailey displays various psychic, hysterical and other somatic post-traumatic stress disorders following the very terrifying violent rape ridden with physical beatings. She is subject to upsetting dreams, intermittent sleeps, loss of joy and interest in everyday life, agonizing high-pitch screaming due to

terrible nightmares, physical hysterias, fear of darkness, strangers, aloneness, feelings of anxiety, eating disturbances and the like. The terrible hallucinations and nightmares disrupt her psyche so powerfully that she remains hyper-tense and restless most of the time. She dreams frequently the scenes of the violent rape time and again; she is constantly haunted by the nightmares of being abducted by the demonic rapists into the forest. Such symptoms of being scared by nightmares and hallucinations are found to be common in the rape victims like Tonya in their post-traumatic period.

She is overcome by the feelings of insecurity and does not have faith on the world outside and even the family members. Her divided self results in her trauma posing threats for her daily survival and existence, thereby rendering her miserable and vulnerable. But, along the passage of time, she gradually heals from her traumatic past memories and experiences. She resolves her traumatic feelings of rape and somehow overcomes over them. Her complicity with the rape event and gradual healing from the physical and psychological wounds help her return to her normal life at the end.

III. Conclusion

This research is solely intended to analyze how the forceful and brutal rape leaves an indelible mark of a deep psychic and sexual trauma in the rape survivor, making her prone to multiple Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSDs) and other somatic symptoms. The violent event intrudes into the psyche of the victimized person and creates physical and psychological disorders. Due to tremendous violence during the rape, the victim of such sexual abuse suffers a perennial sexual and psychic trauma on the wake of the past traumatic memories which haunt her as a silent presence. The rape survivor Tonya Hailey cannot shake off and do away with the terrifying nightmares of the forceful rape on her but suffers silently in her present life.

The real intensity of the suffering is not seen in the rape victim during the time the terrible event like rape takes place but in the post-assault period when the rape survivor wakes up into another frightful moment haunted by the traumatic past. Rape occurs once but its disruptive aftereffects subject the victim of sexual abuse like Tonya to never-ending recurring series of pain and suffering. During the rape, there were times when she could not understand what was really happening to her. She had a terrible experience of being raped to her unconsciousness together with severe physical brutality. However, the deep wound, injury, or suffering that she goes through in the aftermath following the rape is even more profound and torturous. She participates in the life-and-death battle in the present for her existence.

The study substantiates the fact that the rape survivor is destined to suffer from various PTSDs like interrupted sleep, hallucinations, nightmarish dreams, depression, anxiety, fear of darkness, loneliness, physical hysterics, screaming and wailing and so on. Their survival in the here and now is even more painful than the possible death; when one dies, s/he is not subjected to suffer again. Unlike this, the rape victim dies several times in the face of past turbulent memories, negative social

responses, the irreparable loss of virginity, physical injury, and the like. She becomes a silent creature, unable to utter her wounds aloud. Her 'self' gets split into the two: the past happy and naïve self as opposed to the present shattered self. She now garners a different model of knowledge about herself and the world where she lives with other members of the society. Her beliefs with regard to the world get drastically changed. Feelings of insecurity, regrets, abhorrence, anxiety, depression, and terror dominate the whole realm of her psyche.

The body of the rape victim displays hysterical somatic responses to the reawakening of traumatic memories without her knowledge. Tonya's body jerks, moves, shivers with fear on the wake of the terrible nightmares which disturb her sound sleep in the middle of the night. Her sobbing, screaming, mental anxiety, eating and sleeping disturbances are common phenomenon in her post-traumatic life-world. She loses interests in her daily life. Her life is sandwiched in between life drive and death drive: she can neither enjoy life nor welcome death. In the aftermath following the rape, she frequently hallucinates her 'daddy' running wildly towards her to rescue her but in vain. She is startled into another terrible fright from the previous violent rape. In her hallucinating state, it is common for her to see her rapists, who were already shot to death by her father, roaming around the house-fence or tip-toeing up and down the stairs, in the corridors of her house.

Feelings of insecurity, regrets, and psychological anxiety overwhelmingly dominate the rape survivor. Tonya, after the rape, feels insecure and has lost her faith upon her family members for her protection. It is the reason why she does not sleep at night until all the electric bulbs in all rooms of the house are on throughout the night. She utters a high-pitch scream even at the slightest sound produced in the house nearby her. She fears to sleep if she is not hugged by her mother together with her in

the bed, surrounded by her brothers and uncle who sleep on the floor safeguarding her.

It is very difficult for the rape victim to get rid of her traumatic past which frequently haunts her as a silent presence. From two to six months, Tonya undergoes deep psychic and sexual trauma fueled by panic attacks, upsetting dreams, hallucinations following the event of brutal rape. It takes a certain lapse of time ranging from six to nine months to recover from the traumatic rape experiences for the rape survivor depending upon the person. Along the passage of time, Tonya shows some signs of recovery from her terrible past. In the later phase of her life, she seems to have resolved her conflicting feelings, overpowering past memories and consents her complicity in the traumatic event of the rape. She gradually take to a normal mode of life. This is evidenced through her participation in games with her young friend circles in the concluding part of the novel. She gives way to smiling, talking and visiting around as the time passes by. These evidences help prove a fact that the rape survivor such as Tonya suffers intensely during the beginning phase of the aftermath following the rape but improves gradually afterwards. However, complete recovery from the traumatic event like rape is not possible. In other words, the intensity of the traumatic event abates slowly but its profound scar left behind in the psyche of the victim traumatizes her from time to time. This is how, the violent rape with forceful brutalism as opposed to the will of the victim renders her prone to psychic and sexual trauma, thereby leading her into the post-traumatic world of different disorders and hysterias, and slowly recovers from the traumatic past memories only after the lapse of a certain period of time, ranging from six to nine months.

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