

I. Introduction

American Slavery: The Issues of Subordination and the Battle for Identity

A penetrating analysis of Frederic Douglass's autobiographical novel *Narrative of the Life of Frederic Douglass, an American Slave* (1845) explores Douglass's concern with the trauma of slaves in contemporary America. This research work is an attempt to analyze the exploitation of African slaves by their white masters. Douglass, the protagonist of the novel, and other characters portrayed in the novel, are brutally victimized by the white masters throughout America. The slaves have been involved in an age- long pathos of identity crisis as depicted in the novel. Slaves' identity has become the issue of several writers in America. Frederick Douglass, one of the slavery witnesses from South America, has delved into slaves' psycho-social realities and has successfully portrayed every vein of trauma of violence from body, soul and mind in his autobiographical masterpiece *Narrative* (1845). In this study, the novel is analyzed through the perspectives of identity politics, slave narrative and trauma theory. Douglass' *Narrative* is one of the widely read slave narratives. In recounting his life experiences before he was freed, Douglass offers a startling realistic portrayal of his abused history which he has undergone during slavery.

Trauma is an emotional shock or wound that creates substantial, lasting damage to the psychological development of a person, often leading to neurosis. In other words, it is an event or situation that causes great distress and disruption. "Traumatic events generally involve threats to life or bodily integrity or a close personal encounter with violence and death" (Herman, 23). Traumatic event produces

an excess of excitation in the brain. The brain is not able to fully assimilate or process the event and respond through various mechanisms to the shutting down of normal emotional responses. Douglass's *Narrative* (1845) has portrayed the trauma of violence in different ways successfully. The novel concerns the system where slaves are considered as the beast and discarded from the society in such a way that they do not deserve identity and status.

Trauma can be read as a wounded situation more particularly the pathos associated with it. In the novel, Douglass has highlighted the sexual abuse of female slaves, treatment of slave as property and ignorance of slaves as a tool of slavery. Slaves are doomed to witness the rape, brutal punishment to their friends and their selling as a commodity which ultimately brings them to the emotional breakdown. The trace of such emotional blackmailing can never be erased from their mind and haunts them constantly.

It is important to understand that trauma is not only a drama of past events but also a drama of survival (Suleiman, 280). In that sense trauma studies is very much aligned with identity politics as it is not merely another word for disaster. The novel has been developed with the rebellion of protagonist, Frederick, against the white chauvinism for identity of the slaves. He is involved in the identity politics leaving his disastrous life-events apart. In this light, it won't be wrong to claim that trauma leads one towards emancipation and energizes one to set up his or her own identity because when trauma reaches to the climax, the trauma victim revolts against the traumatizing factors to release his/her anger and get relief from age long agonies.

Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in Maryland as Frederick Bailey circa 1818. Douglass served as a slave on farms on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and

in Baltimore throughout his youth. In Baltimore, especially, Douglass enjoyed relatively more freedom than slaves usually did in the South. In the city, Douglass first learned how to read and began making contacts with educated free blacks.

Douglass eventually escaped north to New York at the age of about twenty. Here he reunited with and married his fiancée, a free black woman from Baltimore named Anna Murray. Uneasy about Douglass's fugitive status, the two finally settled further north in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and Frederick changed his last name from Bailey to Douglass. Douglass worked for the next three years as a laborer and continued his self education.

In the early 1840s, the abolitionist, or anti-slavery, movement was gaining momentum, especially in the far Northeast. When Douglass first arrived in Massachusetts, he began reading the *Liberator*, the abolitionist newspaper edited by William Lloyd Garrison. In 1841, Douglass attended an abolitionist meeting in Nantucket, Massachusetts, where he met Garrison and was encouraged to tell the crowd about his experiences of slavery. Douglass's spoken account was so well received that Garrison offered to employ him as an abolitionist speaker for the American Anti-Slavery Society.

Douglass continued to write and lecture against slavery and also devoted attention to the women's rights movement. He became involved in politics, to the disapproval of other abolitionists who avoided politics for ideological reasons. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Douglass campaigned first to make it the aim of the war to abolish slavery and then to allow black men to fight for the Union. He was successful on both fronts: Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on December 31, 1862, and Congress authorized the enlistment of black men in 1863,

though they were paid only half what white soldiers made. The Union won the Civil War on April 9, 1865.

Until the 1960s, Douglass's *Narrative* was largely ignored by critics and historians, who focused instead on the speeches for which Douglass was primarily known. Yet Douglass's talent clearly extended to the written word. His *Narrative* emerged in a popular tradition of slave narratives and slavery fictions.

Douglass's work is read today as one of the finest examples of the slave-narrative genre. Douglass co-opted narrative styles and forms from the spiritual conversion narrative, the sentimental novel, oratorical rhetoric, and heroic fiction. He took advantage of the popularity of slave narratives while expanding the possibilities of those narratives. Finally, in its somewhat unique depiction of slavery as an assault on selfhood and in its attention to the tensions of becoming an individual, Douglass's *Narrative* can be read as a contribution to the literary tradition of American Romantic individualism.

In the narrative, primarily through the character of Frederic, Douglass explores the position of slaves and trauma of violence in American slavery system focusing on the hardships and limitations faced by the slaves from abuse in childhood to servitude in adulthood. It is a subtle representation of a tormented and self-conflicting slave psychology and consequence in the life of Frederic which creates frustration and desire of revenge and emancipation. Therefore the research aims at projecting a picture of the conditions of the slaves who serve the white masters with no privileges at all. The thesis aims at not only disclosing the sexual discrimination, harsh treatment and bloody scenes but also how slaves in contemporary America dragged themselves through trauma.

The subject matter of novel is sexual abuse of women slaves as well. Frederick's mother herself was raped and he was the outcome of it. Frederick's aunt, Hester was abused and sexually exploited by Mr. Plummer, the overseer of Captain Anthony. Once Mr. Plummer took her into the kitchen and stripped her from neck to waist, leaving her neck, shoulders and back entirely naked. He crossed her hands, tied them with strong rope and led her to a stool under a large hook in the joist and placed her in for the sexual purpose.

Another dreadful scene of sexual exploitation is worth noting here. Frederick's wife's cousin, a young girl of about sixteen was brutally exploited sexually and then murdered when Mr. Giles Hicks' sexual thirst was quenched. The young lady was sexually harassed and abused in such a way that Mr. Hicks broke her nose and breastbone with a stick so that the poor girl expired in a few hours afterwards when she struggled to save her from his defilement.

Another dreadful insight brought into forefront by the novel is brutality. The slaves are treated in such a horrifying way that we begin to tremble when we just go through the punishment meted out to them. Mr. Austin Gore, the overseer of Colonel Lloyd, is one of such cruel persons who does not hesitate to take lives of slaves for no reason at all. Once, Demby, a slave of Colonel committed a small mistake. Mr. Gore then, without any consultation or deliberation with anyone, not even giving Demby an additional warning, raised the musket to his face, taking deadly aims at his standing victim, pressed the trigger and instantly finished off poor Demby.

Edward Covey is the cruelest villain of the novel. Mr. Covey is famous for physical punishment and psychological cruelty. He has acquired a very high reputation for breaking young slaves so he is given the title a "nigger-breaker". He is

“the snake” because he sneaks through the grass. This nickname is a reference to Satan’s appearance in the form of a snake in the biblical book of Genesis. The irony here is that he supposes him as a professor of religion—a pious soul—a member and a class-leader in the Methodist church but his evil actions reveal him to be a sinner.

Narrative (1845) has highlighted the pathetic situation of slaves in slavery. The novel portrays the heart-rending condition of those helpless in a crystal clear way. Douglass has narrated the story of those poor slaves in such a way that they suffered much from hunger but much more from cold. In the hottest summer and in the coldest winter, they were almost naked—no shoes, no stockings, no jacket, no trousers, nothing on but a coarse linen short, reaching only to the knees. No blankets and no beds for the slaves. The men and women slaves receive as their monthly allowance of food, eight pounds of pork or its equivalent of fish and one bushel of cornmeal and no food for the children who can’t do any work for their masters. Balanced diet and nourishing food was far away from their imagination. Alas! One who has to perform the most risky jobs has to work with empty abdomen.

Last but not the least; the novel has prioritized the necessity of the end of cruelty and the victory of suppressed. Confrontation is sure when brutality crosses its boundary. The same thing happens in the novel too. The emancipation is the ultimate goal of Frederick. Finally, he gets freedom as he is guided by the identity politics.

Narrative (1845) has received the attention of numerous critics since its publication. As the present research has been limited to the study of violence of trauma; the reviews of different critics based on trauma of witnessing the threaten, enslavement and vulnerability, psychological transformation of characters, exercise of power, necessity of confrontation for the redemption of slaves and the decadence of

old existing power and the rise of the new order have been cited to prove the relevance of the research.

Critic Vince Brewton has highlighted the significance of blood stained scenes in the novel. He has compared slavery as a hell. How the generations- long slavery doomed the slaves to remain in unconsciousness, he further posits:

The Narrative vividly depicts the “blood –stained gate” episode that included a small boy into consciousness of his bondage. “The blood –stained gate” through which Douglass was about to pass from innocence to self-consciousness is in fact his “entrance to the hell of slavery”. Borrowing a device from the genre of sentimental fiction, Douglass addresses the reader directly how a man was made a slave and how a slave was made man. (56)

The given extract describes the tormented life of slaves using the analogy of hell to compare the slavery. In addition, it depicts the transformation of slaves from ignorance to the self-consciousness. Douglass is tactical to capture the sentiment of the reader as he has borrowed the devices of fiction to heighten its effectiveness.

In regard to the exercise of power, white chauvinism, the about-to-decadence of brutality and the shining of new order; Michel Foucault comments:

Cruel performances confirmed the slaveholder’s dominion and made the captive body the vehicle of the master’s power and truth. The exercise of power was inseparable from its display because domination depended upon demonstrations of the slave holder’s dominion and the captive’s abasement. The owner’s display of mastery was just as important as the legal title to slave property. In other words,

representing power was essential to reproducing domination. These demonstration of power consisted of forcing the enslaved to witness the beating, torture and execution of slaves. (132)

The given review focuses on the misuse of power, white domination over the black slaves and forcing the slaves to witness the brutality within their own eyes. Its assertion is that all those extremities prepare the ground for the decadence of the existing power and the rise of new order.

Similarly, another critic Donald B. Gibson has talked about the private and public and private experience that has been successfully used by Douglass in his *Narrative*. He comments that culture is the phenomenon of both the class and the individual's. How Douglass has used the religious and mythological experience in his *Narrative*, Gibson writes:

It is significant that Douglass chooses to cast his highly private experience in more public terms. That is in grounding his experience in western religious and mythological traditions, Douglass transforms that experience to "public" experience insofar as a culture belongs to all who exist in it. The component of culture has reference both to group and individual, public and private experience. This sort of grounding occurs when Douglass makes reference on more than one occasion. (65)

The given excerpt highlights the individual and group experience in terms of private and public experience. This sort of foregrounding of Douglass is his intention to exemplify the cultural trauma that posited among the slaves.

Douglass's new status as a canonical figure originates not only in his race and class, not only in his position as a historical-political actor as well as writer; but also in the kinds of texts he produced and in the way they came into being. On this behalf, Gregory S. Jay further writes:

Douglass's *Narrative* must be situated in the literary histories of the sermon, the political stump-speech, the sentimental novel, the slave narrative and the reform lecture among others. Douglass's text is not simply mimetic but owes much to the required style and troops of the genres. His mastery transforms him from the dictated subject of ideology into the agent of historical change. His text is neither a predetermined automation of the symbolic nor a so called autonomous self freely creating its world. (228)

Gregory has talked about the incomparable contribution of Douglass in the literature. He opines that Douglass's work is worthy to be analyzed from any perspective. Douglass's *Narrative* is far from the superficial knitting of imaginary events and is based on the real events that the slaves had undergone through.

The life and writings of Frederick Douglass is far from forgotten. Douglass still receives the hero's treatment for his tireless battle for the freedom of his race and set up their identity. As a freedom-fighter, Douglass never bowed down his knees before the whites on the matter of liberation and the fight for freedom. In praise of Douglass, critic Diana Schaub further quotes:

Douglass's long journey towards full freedom is a vivid reminder that freedom cannot, properly speaking, be granted; it must be wrested and own. We tend today to talk much of opportunity-equalizing it,

providing it, extending it. But opportunity is like freedom, nothing to be given but rather a self-made thing, created out of imagination and keenness. Douglass was forbidden from everything though he aptly used the limited opportunities and reached to his destination. (103)

Here, Diana has emphasized the tireless battle of Douglass for the liberation of his class from the hell of slavery. Her point is that freedom does not come to knock the door of victim but the oppressed group must be united to overcome the existing dominating power. Opportunity does not come, it need to be created by the self without deviating from the goal even if there are life taking threatens.

By analyzing the above mentioned reviews, it is clear that the novel is a social document of nineteenth century slave trade in South America which was psychologically guided by the violence and treachery of whites. During the time, the slaves were suppressed in such a barbaric way that they had never been given chance to view the real humanitarian world and were kept under the dark shadow of violence. Violence was the tool of the whites to scare the slaves, and make them unspeakable with the terror of execution. Their mind was filled with terror, their mouth was forcefully closed, their eyes were made unviewable and they were emotionally blackmailed. , By urging the slave narrative, the narrator touches the preamble of the American constitution: right of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. This right has been fixed by the constitution of America for that Douglass fights both physically and mentally.

In short, this research is concentrated on the violence over slaves in South America by giving the reference of Frederick's *Narrative*. This research aims to find out African American slaves' position in America during the time of slavery. In

peculiar institution of slavery, physical and psychological torture to black slave was obvious. This research overviews upon the nineteenth century American society where there was the misuse of power and law had very strong negative effect in the lives of slaves. This study observes how the inhuman bondage of slavery harassed and exploited the slaves resulting to trauma and how the same trauma of violence guides the slaves to get release from the injustice and inhuman cruelties of whites.

The present research aims at setting the new ground through the analysis of this novel in the light of trauma theory with special focus on cultural trauma as posited by Jeffrey C. Alexander, Ron Eyerman, Dominick La Capra, Neil J. Smelser and so on.

The dissertation is mainly divided into four parts. The first chapter elaborates the statement of problem as well as hypothesis. To prove the hypothesis, it gives some general framework and the theoretical tool as well. Some critics are also brought in introduction part to introduce the whole thesis. The second part discusses the theoretical tools to be applied while analyzing the novel. The trauma is discussed from the perspective of different theorists. After the discussion of theoretical tool, *Narrative* is analyzed from the perspective of cultural trauma in the third chapter of this thesis with the help of different lines from the text. The research tries to prove the disintegrating impact of trauma in the life of slaves in South America in the light of violence, cruelty and loss of identity prevailing there. The last part of this dissertation concludes with the proof of traumatic disintegration of slaves in South America due to violence, loss of value and identity, white hegemony and the cruel domination of slaves in the contemporary time.

II. Theoretical Modality

Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery and its Everlasting Imprint

Trauma

Trauma is a kind of wound. The term "trauma" is derived from Greek where it refers to a piercing of the skin, a breaking of bodily envelope, relating to medic. *The American Heritage College Dictionary* defines trauma as "a serious injury or shock to the body, as form of violence or an accident," and relating to psychiatry. The dictionary further defines trauma as "an emotional wound or shock that creates substantial lasting damage to the psychological development of the person" (1439). Trauma as a psychic wound related with brain shows its direct relation in abnormal phenomena which becomes more uncommon and stressful. In traumatic situation, a person fails to maintain psychological equilibrium which creates mental and emotional disorder. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Sigmund Freud uses the term 'trauma' to describe a painful event not inflicted to the body but to the mind.

The trauma is an event which breaks through the protecting shield and overwhelms existing defenses against anxieties. The experience of trauma repeats itself, exactly and unremittingly, through the unknowing acts of survivor and against his will. Repetitive actions make the trauma problematic. Trauma is complex form of memory: the traumatic incident may be an accurate one but it is beyond the conscious recall and control of the human beings.

'Trauma' has both medical and psychiatric definitions. In medical discourse, 'trauma' refers to a serious or critical bodily injury, wound or shock. This definition is often associated with trauma medicine practised in emergency rooms and represents a popular view of the term. In psychiatry, trauma has been assumed as a different

meaning and refers to an experience that is emotionally painful, distressful or shocking which results in lasting mental and physical effects. It often leads to neurosis. The cause of trauma is an event or situation that causes great distress and disruption of human psyche.

Trauma Studies as a Discipline

Trauma Studies is an interdisciplinary form of scholarship that engages with the manifold dimensions of human suffering and its repercussions and representations. Trauma is typically considered as an individual experience, but trauma scholars argue that it can also be a shared, collective one: indeed, their model proposes a tight integration of individual and collective experience.

The term 'trauma' is applied in the work of fiction or in that kind of novel which conveys profound loss or intense fear on individual or collective levels. It transforms the self ignited by an external terrifying experience which illuminates the process of coming to terms with the dynamics of trauma. The external event creates an extreme response bound to a collective human or natural disaster such as war.

Trauma theory is a privileged critical category, which includes diverse fields, with its specific focus on psychological, philosophical, ethical and aesthetic questions about the nature and representation of traumatic events. These concerns of traumatic theory “range from the public and historical to private and memorial” (Luckhurst, 497). Trauma is intrinsically multi-disciplinary so it needs to displace older paradigms and attend to new configuration of central knowledge.

Trauma studies constitute a huge field today, keeping whole armies of theorists, philosophers, literary scholars and historians as well as clinicians very busy. It is because “trauma is not only a drama of a past events, but also, even primarily, a

drama of survival” (Suleiman, 280). In that sense it can be claimed that trauma is a multidimensional approach as it concerns about past, present and future.

When trauma theory entered humanities discourse, it focused particularly on war victims, sexual abuse and female suppression. Trauma studies were very much aligned with a distinctly academic incarnation of identity politics as it was closely linked to political struggle. It was always inclined towards capitalization.

Trauma studies were ruined throughout the decades of the '80s and '90s. It was over politicized. Through the beginning of the new millennium; trauma has become the concern of scholars. It is not only limited in the war or rape but also in literature and film study, music and art. In addition, trauma studies have broadened its scope after the September 11 attack in the USA. While the authors of the ' Cultural Trauma' volume were finishing the last chapters, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 occurred. The publication of the book was postponed to include the "September 11, 2001, as Cultural Trauma".

Now the phenomenon of trauma seems all-inclusive trauma which can be defined from two approaches: Psychoanalytic approach and second cultural approach.

Psychological Trauma

Psychological trauma is a type of damage to psyche that occurs as a result of traumatic event. When the trauma leads to post-traumatic stress disorder, damage may involve physical changes inside the brain and to brain chemistry which damages the person's ability to adequately cope stress. Psychological trauma is an emotional or psychological injury usually resulting from an extremely stressful or life threatening situation. In Psychological trauma, the post-cult trauma is the intense emotional

problems that some numbers of cults and new religious movements experience upon disaffection and disaffiliation.

Psychological trauma may accompany physical pain or exist independently of it. Typical causes of psychological trauma are sexual abuse, bullying and domestic violence, the victim of alcoholism, the threats of either or the witnessing of either, particularly in childhood. Catastrophic events such as earthquakes and volcanic eruption, war or other mass violence can also cause psychological trauma. Long term exposure to situations such as extreme poverty or milder forms of abuse; verbal abuse can be traumatic though it can also potentially be traumatic as a single event.

Psychological trauma is the result of extraordinarily stressful events that shatter sense of security; makes feel helpless and vulnerable in a dangerous world. Traumatic experiences often involve a threat to life or safety but any situation that leaves feeling overwhelmed and alone can be traumatic even if it does not involve physical harm. It's not the objective fact that determines whether an event is traumatic or not. The more frightened and helpless the person feels, the more likely he is to be traumatized.

Cathy Caruth, Sigmund Freud, Kali Tal, Jean-Martin, Jenifer Freyd, Jacques Lacan and Earl Giller Jr. are some of the noticeable psychological trauma theorists.

Sigmund Freud, Trauma theorist and a main explorer of trauma as a form of psychoanalysis, studies dynamics of trauma, repression and symptom formations. He opines in his ground breaking work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* that "psychological trauma is an overpowering event, unacceptable to consciousness, can't be forgotten and yet written in the form of somatic systems of compulsive repetitive behaviours" (112).

Kali Tal in *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literatures of Trauma* takes an approach entirely different from those of others. Tal is hostile to psychoanalysis and bases her views of trauma on cognitive psychology and a feminist politics that identifies strongly with the testimonies of rape and incest survivors. Tal argues that:

The literature of trauma consists only of the writings of victims and survivors of trauma. Consequently we must be weary of how others interpret the survivors' accounts, especially when those are transformed into sacred texts (as with Holocaust testimony), mythic supports for some vision of national identity (as with Vietnam Literature) or medical cases, as happens with all these discourses but specially with the experiences of incest survivors. (144)

Here, Tal argues about the limitations created by the writers in psychological trauma. She further investigates the psychological trauma of rape survivors. Her main concern is to raise the hidden psychological turmoil which is always in the process to get outlet from its continuous haunting because of which one is dragged into the whirlpool of trauma.

Likewise, another trauma theorist, Cathy Caruth in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* is concerned principally with questions of reference and representation: how trauma becomes text and how wound becomes voice.

Caruth's introduction, "The Wound and the Voice" opens:

Trauma as it first occurs is incomprehensible. It is only later, after a 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." Traumatic narrative, then, is strongly referential but not in any simple or direct way. (8)

In the given excerpt, Caruth argues that trauma is extremely difficult to understand so the trauma that needs to come in narrative in right time comes lately.

As the present research is intended to study the cultural trauma in depth; psychological trauma and its fundamentals are simply discussed to connect it with cultural trauma. The following Chapter is a detail study of cultural trauma.

Cultural Trauma

Cultural trauma is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the life span and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences. Cultural trauma occurs "When members of a collective feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways" (Eyerman, 2). Moreover he adds, "Trauma is not something naturally existing: it is something constructed by society" (2).

When the effects of trauma get encircled, the moral responsibility comes to its members. The members of that community need to face the challenges commonly as they are common victims of traumatic events. The formation of that responsibility creates the horizon on which trauma expands because the community people share more or less similar experience. This process of expansion of trauma is known as cultural trauma.

Trauma emerges at cultural level. It deals with the collective representation of the traumatic events. It includes: the nature of pain; the nature of the victim; relation of the trauma victim to the wider audience and attribution of responsibility. The

cultural trauma model refers also to the institutional arenas where the trauma's meanings are produced. Six different types of arena are considered: religious, aesthetic, legal, scientific, mass media and state bureaucracy arena.

"As opposed to psychological or physical trauma, which involves wound and the experience of great emotional anguish by an individual, cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion. In this sense the trauma need not necessarily be felt by everyone in a community or experience directly by any or all. While it may be necessary to establish some event as the significant "cause", its traumatic meaning must be established and accepted, a process which requires time as well as mediation and representation." (Eyerman, 5)

Cultural trauma initiates in the following cases: Revolution (whether victorious or failed); coup defeat and racial riots; collapse of market, crash on the stock exchange; radical economic reform (nationalization or privatization); forced migration or deportations, ethnic cleansing; genocide, extermination or mass murder; acts of terrorism or violence; assassination of a high- ranking official; revisionist interpretation of national heroic tradition and the collapse of an empire.

Jeffrey C. Alexander, Dominick La Capra, Neil J. Smelser, Ron Eyerman and Piotr Sztompka are the trauma theorists who have penned a lot in cultural trauma. These theories are taken as advantage to justify the hypothesis of the present research that the problem of an individual is the problem of the class as individual's problem is the public problem. That is to say individual trauma is cultural trauma. Similarly, the existing power fades and it is replaced by the new order when the existing power crosses the limit.

In his book *"A Theory of Cultural Trauma"*, sociologist Jeffrey C. Alexander describes trauma as an act of significance. He portrays two approaches of cultural trauma:

There are two approaches of cultural trauma. One is a "lay trauma theory" that states that traumas are naturally occurring events that shatter individuals' or collectives' sense of well being. This approach is divided into either an "enlightenment" version suggesting that "trauma is a kind of rational response to abrupt changes" or a psychoanalytic version "places a model of unconscious fears and cognitively distorting mechanism of psychological defense between the external shattering event and the actor's internal traumatic response". (3)

Alexander makes it clear that since the people in the community have common sharing, they consider the cause of trauma to be equally shareable among them. When they realize that the suffering of others is also the suffering of their own; trauma expands and individual trauma becomes cultural. But, sometimes, the social groups refuse to recognize the existence of others' trauma and leave others to suffer alone and they fail to achieve moral stance.

Describing the social process of cultural trauma, Alexander further quotes:

For trauma to emerge at the level of collectivity, social crises must become cultural crises. Events are one thing, representations of these events quite another. Trauma is not the result of group experiencing pain. It is the result of this acute discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity. Collective actors "decide" to represent social pain as a fundamental threat to their sense of who they

are, where they came from, and where they want to go. In this section, I lay out the process that form the nature of these collective actions and the cultural and institutional process that mediate them. (10)

Here Alexander posits that collective trauma emerges when social crisis becomes cultural crisis. When one's identity is severely in crisis and that acute discomfort enters into the core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity, trauma is resulted. This is also because the collective actors see the social pain as fundamental threat to their sense of identity.

Alexander further relates the trauma and identity with sociological process. According to him 'experiencing trauma' can be understood as a sociological process that defines a painful injury to the collectivity, establishes the victim, attributes responsibility, and distributes the ideal and material consequences.

He then draws on psychoanalytical thinking and states that his approach places a model of unconscious emotional fears and cognitively distorting mechanisms of psychological defense between the external shattering event and the actor's internal traumatic response. When bad things happen to good people, according to this academic version of lay theory' they can become so frightened that they can actually repress the experience of trauma itself "rather than activating direct cognition and rational understanding, the traumatizing event becomes distorted in the actor's imagination and memory" (5).

According to Dominick La Capra, trauma as a whole is concerned with acting out and working through. One gets encircled with trauma when one is haunted or possessed by the past and performatively caught up in the post-traumatic acting out.

In that traumatic scene, the past returns and the future is blocked or caught in a melancholic mood.

In acting out, tenses burst inward making him feel like he was in the past reliving the traumatic past. In such a case, any duality of time is collapsed or productive only of aporias and double binds. It is related to repetition which is clear in the case of people who undergo a trauma as they have a compulsion to repeat something frequently. "They have a tendency to relive the past, to be haunted by ghosts or even to exist in the present as if one were still fully in the past with no distance from it" (143). Victims of trauma tend to relive occurrences or at least find that those occurrences intrude on their present existence for example, in flashbacks or in nightmares or in words that are compulsively repeated and that don't seem to have their ordinary meaning, because they are taking different kind of memory than working through-they are intimately related parts of a process.

Similarly, La Capra views working through "as a kind of countervailing force" (143). In working through, the person tries to gain critical distance on a problem and distinguishes between past, present and future. During the time, what happens in a person, La Capra further writes:

For the victim, this means the ability to say oneself: "yes, that happened to me back then. It was distressing, overwhelming, perhaps, I can't entirely disengage myself from it but I'm existing here now, and this is different from back then." There may be other possibilities, but it's via the working through that one acquires the possibility of being an ethical and political agent. (144)

The above quoted lines clarify that, in ethical sense, working through does not mean avoidance, harmonization, simply forgetting the past, or submerging oneself in the present. It means come to terms to terms with trauma, including its details and critically engaging the tendency to act out the past and even to recognize why it is necessary and even in certain respects desirable or at least compelling.

Another trauma theorist is Neil J. Smelser. He relates psychological trauma to cultural trauma by drawing on Freud as he puts forth:

The occurrence of the disorder results from "an accretion of excitation" caused by the trauma, first, blocked by repression, stored or expressed in a symptom, and then relieved by catharsis and verbal working through. We note that even this skeletal account involves reference to event, memory, affect and a cognitive process. (36)

Here what Smelser wants to point out is the relation between psychological and cultural trauma. He says that the traumatic disorder is resulted due to the accumulation of repressed excitation that can later be released by catharsis and verbal working. It is because this account is concerned with the event, memory, affect and the cognitive process of the trauma victims.

Then, he explains how sociological context of the affected society results in the emergence of trauma by setting forth the conditions for the proposition is that the status of trauma as trauma is dependent on the socio-cultural context of the affected society at the time the historical event or situation arises. a society emerging from a major war suffering from diminished economic resources, experiencing rampant internal conflict, or having shaky social solidarity is more trauma prone than others

that are more solid in these respects. Historical events that may not be traumatic for other societies are more likely to be traumas in afflicted societies.

Several definitional accomplishments must be made before an event can qualify as cultural trauma. It must be remembered or made to be remembered. Furthermore, the memory must be made culturally relevant, that is represented as obliterating, damaging or rendering problematic something sacred — usually a value or outlook felt to be essential for the integrity of the affected society. Finally, the memory must be associated with a strong negative effect, usually disgust, shame, or guilt.

As a system, a culture can be defined as a grouping of elements — values, norms, outlooks, beliefs, ideologies, knowledge and empirical assertion, linked with one another to some degree as a meaning system. From this perspective, cultural trauma can be defined as an invasive and overwhelming event that is believed to undermine or overwhelm one or several essential ingredient of a culture or the culture as a whole. This also makes it clear that cultural traumas are for the most part historically made, not born. This fundamental point leads us to the issue of the mechanisms and agencies involved in the process of making, to which we will turn presently.

A cultural trauma is, above all, a threat to a culture with which individuals in that society presumably have identification. To put it differently, a cultural trauma is a threat to some part of their personal identities. As such, this threat, if experience, arouses negative effects. If a potentially traumatizing event cannot be endowed with negative effects such as a national tragedy, a national shame, a national catastrophe, then it cannot be as being traumatic.

Another scholar Ron Eyerman relates trauma to slavery by seeking the notion of cultural trauma in the formation of African American identity from the end of Civil War to Civil Rights Movement. He states "the trauma in question is slavery, not as institution or even experience, but as collective memory, a form of remembrance that grounded the identity-formation of people" (60).

In his book *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity*, he has linked trauma with the slavery and formation of African American identity. He says that trauma is linked to formation of collective identity and the construction of collective memory. While exploring the meaning of cultural trauma, he quotes:

As cultural process, trauma is mediated through various forms of representation and linked to the reformation, collective identity and the reworking of collective memory. Cultural trauma is also rooted in an event or series of events but necessary in the direct experience of the victims. Such experience is usually mediated through different Medias which involve a spatial as well as temporal distance between the event and its experience. (3)

Here, Eyerman focuses on the identity and memory while clarifying the concept of trauma. He admits that cultural trauma is a process for the reformation of collective identity. He even extends that some of the events are so severe though the victims may not know its pain and effects. Here, his point is that cultural trauma is that which is linked with the whole class or race and is the common problem of all of them.

Eyerman goes further to define the cultural trauma. He opines that cultural trauma is connected with the struggle in accordance with the nature of pain and the nature of victim. Then he states, "Cultural trauma always engages a "memory struggle", grappling with an event that involves identifying the nature of the pain, the nature of the victim and attribution of responsibility"(3).

Another recent trauma theorist Piotr Sztompka in his book *Cultural Trauma: The Other Face of Social Change* opines the new approach of trauma. According to him, "Trauma indicates a specific pathology of agency. "Agency" is of course a concept with multiple meanings but in the theory of social becoming, it is understood as a complex synthetic quality of human collectivity allowing for its creative self transformation" (3).

Sztompka presents his postmodern view on cultural trauma. His argument is far more ahead than the others as he says that cultural trauma is the other face of social change. His ideas suggest that cultural trauma leads a class to the stage of social transformation. So it can be claimed that he has redefined the term "cultural trauma" and its significance.

Traumas are not confined within the western world. Cultural traumas have spread all over the world. The whole world is suffered with the catastrophic events like terrorism, massacre, genocides, racism, gender discrimination and domestic violence. Trauma theory was born in western society but it is non-western world that is suffered more from cultural trauma. Gypsies, Mayan Indians, American Indians and African Americans are some examples of affected group from traumatic events.

Because of cultural trauma, the group of particular society may lose its identity. The society is formed according to its cultural reference. But as trauma made

it difficult to live in peaceful normal life, society gets crippled down. Its course may backward not forward. Constantly hunted by the events of trauma, the life would be handicapped. It robs the joy of society and becomes tearful.

In this research, the tool of cultural trauma is applied. There are so many breath taking catastrophic events in the novel that create sufferings among the characters. All the characters in the novel are commonly suffering from trauma. The carrier factors of trauma in the novel are in various forms, such as lawlessness in South America, the death and sorrow, tragedy and accidents, sexual abuse and mental torture, family tension and white domination. All characters are suffered from these incidents. In order to support the text's availability of cultural trauma, the references from various critics have been taken.

The text is an epitome of the application of trauma. The violence practised over the poor black slaves, their miserable condition, brutal killing of the slaves and the double standard of state law provide the ground to search trauma in the text. The present text is the amalgam of psychological and cultural trauma. As almost all characters of the novel undergo through extremely stressful and life threatening situation, they suffer from emotional and psychological injury. Sexual abuse, bullying, victimization and threat of either or the witnessing of either occurs repeatedly throughout the novel. So, the text can be analyzed through the perspective of psychological trauma. Nevertheless, the novel is worthy to analyze from the perspective of cultural trauma as members of collective feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways.

Indeed, the present research brings the trauma of violence meted over the black slaves by their white masters in South America, highlighting the cultural trauma; taking the psychological trauma as an advantage for the development of the research. The characters in the present novel share more or less similar experience, the members of the black slave community face the challenges commonly as they are common victims of traumatic events; which ultimately lead them towards loss of identity and meaning resulting to a tear in the social fabric. Hence, the present research is the subtle investigation of trauma of violence.

III. Textual Analysis

Blood Stained Gate: The Entrance to the Hell of Slavery

Narrative by Frederick Douglass is the description of suffering of Black Americans during slavery system in the 19th century America. It is set in the American continent, especially in South America. Douglass portrays the real story of black slaves who have endured quite a lot of adversity and suffering from the hands of whites. This suffering and haunting memory gives the torture to be printed in their

mind which becomes traumatic experience of characters that turns out to be cultural one.

In *Narrative*, Douglas's description of slavery and misery of slaves is so horrible that the whole text is full of psychological traumatic experience that turns to the cultural dimension of trauma. We can find traumatic elements in terms of characters and plot. The novel is divided into eleven chapters. Almost all chapters depict the horror of cruelty keeping the protagonist Douglass in the centre. The structural framework of the novel shows how the psychological individual trauma gets transformed into the cultural one.

According to psychological trauma, an individual must go through the particular events that haunt their memory and kill joy. But when the individual trauma spread in large circle, it becomes cultural. In this stage, the previous traumatic memory of individual 'I' gets dissolved into the collective of 'we' in large scale. This research attempts to explore the culture trauma taking psychological as a developing tool as individual trauma becomes cultural trauma, individual's problem becomes the public problem.

Violence over the slaves, lawlessness, racial segregation, inhuman torture, brutal killing, rape and sexual exploitation of female slaves and the sell of slaves as commodity are the major issues that Douglass has tried to bring in the forefront. The same entities provide the ground to seek trauma in the text. The more the novel forwards, the more the heart-rending incidents increase. All the slaves in the novel drag through traumatic events. Not only a single character but the whole collective

suffer from the same psychological breakdowns so the individual trauma is the trauma of whole class, properly speaking, it is cultural trauma.

Ignorance as a Tool of Slavery

Douglass's *Narrative* shows how white slaveholders perpetuate slavery by keeping their slaves ignorant. At the time Douglass was writing, many people believed that slavery was a natural state of being. They believed that blacks were inherently incapable of participating in civil society and thus should be kept as workers for whites. The *Narrative* explains the strategies and procedures by which whites gain and keep power over blacks from their birth onward. Slave owners keep slaves ignorant of basic facts about themselves, such as their birth date or their paternity. This enforced ignorance robs children of their natural sense of individual identity. As slave children grow older, slave owners prevent them from learning how to read and write, as literacy would give them a sense of self-sufficiency and capability. Slaveholders understand that literacy would lead slaves to question the right of whites to keep slaves. Finally, by keeping slaves illiterate, Southern slaveholders maintain control over what the rest of America knows about slavery. If slaves cannot write, their side of the slavery story cannot be told.

The novel depicts the ignorance of slaves. They are kept in such blindness that they are even unknown about their parents and birthdates. They are unable even to identify themselves whether they are the human beings or other creatures. The opening lines of the novel exemplify the know-nothing situation of slaves as Douglass puts forward:

I was born in Tuckahoe, near Hillsborough about twelve miles from Easton, in Talbot country, Maryland. I have no accurate knowledge of my age, never having seen any authentic record containing it. By for the larger part of the slaves know as little of most masters within my knowledge to keep their met a slave who could tell of his birthday.

They seldom come nearer to than planting-time or fall-time. (1)

The excerpt highlights the ignorance of slaves. It is the trauma of not-knowing the age and birth. The case is similar in all the slaves. So it is cultural trauma as whole the class of black slaves suffers from the same blindness.

It is customary to state here that slaves are quite unknown about their parents too. How painful is it to survive without knowing the parentage? Douglas's following lines clarify their real situation as he further writes:

I had overheard that my master was my father. My mother and I were separated when I was an infant - - before I knew her as my mother. It is a common custom, in the part of Maryland from which I ran away, to part children from their mothers at a very early age. Frequently, before the child has reached its twelfth month, its mother is taken from it, and hired out on some farm a considerable distance off, and the child is placed under the care of an old woman, too old for field labor. (3)

Another most traumatic situation that the slaves go through is that none of the slaves got chance to see their mother. Neither they got motherly bliss nor they got chance to bury them after their death. The following lines reflect the same situation as Douglass puts forth:

I never saw my mother, to know her as such; more than four or five times in my life, and each of these times was very short in duration, and at night. She was hired by a white, who lived about twelve miles from my home. She made her journeys to see me in the night, traveling the whole distance on foot. I do not recollect of ever seeing my mother by light of day. The upsetting moment of my life is that I was not allowed to be present during her illness, at her death or burial. (2-3)

The extract underscores the real picture of slavery and the pathos of slaves. It enhances the family break up and the violation of rights to be mother and to get motherly bliss by the child. It highlights the traumatic situation of slaves. The situation is applicable to the case of all the slaves so it is the best example of cultural trauma.

When Douglas was about eight- year- old, he served in Captain Lloyd's plantation in Maryland and he was sold to another master Hugh Auld in Baltimore. Mrs. Auld kindly commenced to teach him A, B, C. After that, she assisted him in learning to spell words of three to four letters. Just at this point of his progress, Mr. Auld found out what was going on, and at once forbade Mrs. Auld to instruct him further telling that it was unlawful, as well as unsafe, to teach a slave to read.

It makes clear that whites want to use ignorance as a tool of slavery. They want to keep the slaves verbally mute and away from the ability to write. Such a strategy of Mr. Hugh Auld has been highlighted by Douglass as he further goes on the original speech by Mr. Auld. Mr. Auld says:

[...] to give an inch to a nigger is to take an ell. A Nigger should know nothing but to obey his master - - as he is told to do. Learning would SPOIL the best Nigger in the world. If you teach that nigger how to read, there would be no keeping him. It would forever unfit him to be a slave. As to Nigger himself, it does him no good, but a great deal of harm. It would make him discontent and unhappy. (36-37)

The given excerpt reinforces the strategy of whites not to let them come in the forefront with power of knowledge. It highlights the psychological breakdown of Douglass and the individual trauma. As the matter is applicable in the cases of all slaves it turns out to be cultural one.

Embodied Subjectivity and the Regime of Race

Throughout the *Narrative*, Douglass is concerned with showing the discrepancy between the fact that slaves are human beings and the fact that slave owners treat them as property. Douglass shows how slaves frequently are passed between owners; regardless of where the slave's families are. Slave owners value slaves only to the extent that they can perform productive labour; they often treat slaves like livestock, mere animals, without reason. Douglass presents this treatment of human as objects or animals as cruel and absurd.

Douglass presents the American slave trade through his narrative. Slaves were brought by buying from shareholders and used in plantation as the workers. Douglass wrote this novel in the same circumstance where slaves were sold like an animal in a public place on the basis of their physical strength and attribute. After being sold,

slaves had to work hard to satisfy their master otherwise they were tortured mercilessly.

Douglass, the protagonist of the novel, was sold and rented to different masters. He served Captain Anthony's plantation in Maryland in the beginning. At the age of seven he was given to Hugh Auld in Baltimore. After the death of Captain Anthony, he was taken back to serve Thomas Auld, Captain Anthony's son-in-law in Maryland. When Thomas Auld found him unmanageable, he rented Douglass to Edward Covey for a year. After his year with Covey was over, he was next rented to William Freeland for two years. Finally he was again sent to Baltimore to serve Hugh Auld.

This shows the trend of slave trade in contemporary South America. Douglass is a representative character; the condition of all the slaves is similar. Douglass writes, "My mother and I were separated when I was an infant - - before I knew her as my mother" (2). It is because of slave trade, he was separated from his mother. Douglas further quotes, "Before the child has reached its twelfth month, its mother is taken from it and hired out on some farm a considerable distance off" (2). This quote also justifies the existing slave trade system. It reinforces the trauma of separation among the slaves.

Racial discrimination is another important issue raised by Douglass. The whole text from top to bottom revolves around racial segregation. Colour biasness is the main cause of individual trauma. As it exists among the whole class of slaves, it turns out to be cultural trauma. The racial division is so deeply rooted in the

contemporary South American society that whites keep the blacks in the position lower than that of their pet animals.

Douglass's profound ambivalence about his role as embodied slave witness can be connected with the historical relations between the black body and "scopic regimes of modernity" in western culture. Slavery ultimately reinforces the historical relationship between the African American subject and the scopic regime of race in the West by making the black body once again an object of scrutiny.

Black slaves are discriminated for their colour. Black people are suppressed in a very inhuman way not for their mistakes, not for their disloyalty but for their dark complexion. As whites are guided by "racial politics", they want to squeeze the blacks into a narrow vessel. They want to make blacks believe that they are born to be discriminated, to be trained by whites and to be taught about the values of their life by their white masters. Whites have developed the phobia among the blacks that it is a great sin to disobey the whites; it is their ultimate duty to obey the whites as they are their God and whatever the God orders has to be silently followed by his children.

The text has many glimpses of racial discrimination. Whites use the word 'nigger' to discriminate them. This is the example of verbal discrimination by whites to the blacks. It is the strategy of whites that blacks should be verbally discriminated to bring them under their grip. They threaten the blacks that 'to be black is to be an evil'. Such type of racial turned cultural imperialism proves the trend of colour biasness in the contemporary South America.

One of the most explicit themes of the *Narrative* is the appropriate effect of institutionalized racism in the form of slavery in the southern United States.

Throughout the narrative, Douglass provides striking examples of how slaves are brutalized, mentally and physically, by slave holding system. His narrative provides numerous examples that add up to a powerful indictment of the dehumanizing effects of slavery.

Douglass himself was a victim of racial discrimination. The illegitimate child born from the bondage of white master and black women slave were discriminated more than the pure blacks. They were beaten mercilessly, ordered Herculean tasks and were sold in a very small age. Douglass has written about racial biasness that was in practice at that time. "It was a common saying, even among little white boys, that it was worth a half-cent to kill a "nigger", and a half-cent to bury one" (28).

Douglass faced such discriminating events recurrently when Douglass was sent to Baltimore to work in Hugh Auld's plantation, there too he was discriminated. The sense of racial discrimination is clear when Mr. Hugh Auld says, "If you give a nigger an inch, he will take an ell" (44). This also justifies that racial discrimination was in peak at that time

It is of significance that Douglass chooses to cast this highly private experience in more public terms. Douglass transforms that experience to "Public" experience insofar as a culture belongs to all who exist in it. The components of culture have reference both to group and individual, public and private experience. The term "racial discrimination" has also similar implication.

Discrimination is not limited only in race and colour. It has been practiced in privileges, wages and allowance of food. It is undoubtedly their strategy to suppress the black and rule over them. The exploitation of slaves is the matter of their social

prestige so either in this or that way they want to set their regime over the innocent slaves. Slaves work for them leaving their emotions in side but they themselves are forbidden from food and clothes, the basic fundamental needs of a person. On this behalf Douglass quotes:

The men and women slaves received, as their monthly allowance of food, eight pounds of pork, or its equivalent in fish, one bushel of corn meal. Their yearly clothing consisted of two coarse linen shirts. One pair of linen trousers, like the shirts, one jacket, one pair of trousers for winter, one pair of stockings and one pair of shoes, the whole of which could not have cost more than seven dollars. The children unable to work in the field had just two coarse linen shirts per year. (11)

The given extract shows the meanness of whites and their domination of blacks in allowance of food and clothes. This proves the dominating mentality of whites. They suppose that the more they dominate blacks the more they have quality of a master. They want to terrorize the blacks with the fear of lack and hardships. They warn the blacks to survive with the limited privileges.

Slaves were discriminated in wages too. Douglas himself was its victim. When he got permission from Master Hugh Auld for the privilege of hiring his time, he was allowed to find his own employment in the condition that he had to pay three dollars to Mr. Hugh Auld at the end of each week in turn of his limited liberty while his weekly income was just two and a half dollar. Douglass searched employment and began to earn additionally with investment of his extra time. He exchanged his sweat with money though he was badly cheated by Mr. Hugh Auld. Knowing the cheating

also he was unable to take action against him. The following lines represent Douglass's enagement at Mr. Auld and his economic exploitation:

I contracted for the job myself; I earned it with my own labour; it was paid to me; it was rightfully my own, yet upon each returning, Saturday night I was compelled to deliver every cent of that money to master Hugh. And why, not because he earned it, - - not because he had any hand in earning it, - - not because I owned it to him, - - nor because he possessed the slightest shadow of a right to it; but solely he had the power to compel me to give it up. He turned to be a pretty robber. (99)

This excerpt shows the real picture of exploitation and discrimination of slaves in American slavery system. Slaves were not only discriminated and exploited physically but also mentally. It is solely against the right to freedom. Whites used the blacks as the coin of carrom board and utilized them according to their convenience. It is traumatic to all the slaves. It is not the case of individual trauma but the trauma of collective so it can be connected with cultural trauma.

Lawlessness is another alarming issue raised by Douglass. The southern people can come up to such cruel step to dominate the blacks that we cannot imagine what dreadful treacherous acts they can commit. It seems as if they are born to victimize others, whites are another form of cruelty. They have no moral fear, no repentance for their acts and no feelings towards other human beings rather than their own. No law can bound them, none of the religious terror can threaten them, and none of the human rights movements can touch them. They are stubborn in their strategy,

no external power lift them an inch far from their strategy of suppressing the black. They suppose themselves the law maker and what order they give and do is legal. Truly speaking, whatever they do with their conscience is the ultimate truth; whatever order they give is the legal order.

Blacks are doomed to bend their back and bear the physical vulnerability on their back. They have to bear such brutality until their physical body exists. They get emancipation from their life when their breath stops forever. Their cry of unbearable pain is not heard, there is no meaning of cry for the life, and no one comes to assist them even when they are vandalized. The echo of their roar causes counter echo, the vales and mountains tremble with their pathetic crying though they remain helpless, no god comes to save them, and nobody shows sympathy to them. Somebody comes there is the group white suppressor laughing and clapping in their agony, taking pleasure from their miserable condition.

Douglass has vividly presented lawlessness in his narrative. Throughout the novel, Douglass presents lawlessness that was prevailed in then American slavery. Mr. Austin Gore, the overseer of Colonel Lloyd's plantation killed a boy called Demby mercilessly for no reason at all. It was against the set norms and rules though he was untouched. In this points Douglass further puts:

[. . .] his horrid crime was not even submitted to judicial investigation.

It was committed in the presence of slaves, and they of course could neither institute a suit, nor testify against him; and thus the guilty perpetrator of one of the bloodiest and most foul murders goes

unwhipped of justice, and uncensured by the community in which he lives. (26-27)

The above excerpt proves the lawlessness in South America. To murder others is a legally offensive crime. One who commits such crime of murder is to be punished. Unfortunately, Mr. Gore is untouched; he is not made to stand in front of the court for his inexcusable crime. It proves that there is no law for the whites. Any such offensive crime is licensed by the state law.

Douglass has presented many such events in his *Narrative*. He opines that there are courts and communities to practice the law and keep the laws effective but they are not for the practical implementation but just to show. In this regard, Douglas further quotes:

Killing a slave or any coloured person, in Talbot country, Maryland, is not treated as a crime, either by the courts or the community. Mr. Thomas Lanman of St. Michael's killed two slaves with a hatchet, by knocking their brains out. He did so laughingly, saying, among other things, that he was the only benefactor of his country. He was quite happy for his deed as he was successful to finish off two "niggers" at the same spot without any deliberation. (27)

This excerpt highlights the victorious feeling of whites after killing the bare-handed black slave. They kill the blacks for pleasure and feel proud of themselves. One cannot laugh when he/she in the process to commit a crime. It is because of lawlessness, whites kill the blacks giving them excess tortures similar to that of kill of a rat by a cat.

Mrs. Giles Hicks, murdered Douglass's wife's cousin breaking her nose and breastbone. The offence for which that girl was murdered was that she did not pay attention towards the baby and let the bay cry longer. Douglass goes on to describe this terrific murder in this way:

[...] she, having lost her rest for several nights previous, fell asleep and did not hear the cry of baby. They were both in the room with Mrs. Hicks. Mrs. Hicks, finding the girl slow to move, jumped from her bed, seized an oak stick of wood by the fire place, and with it broke the girl's nose and breastbone, and thus ended her life. [. . .] there was a warrant issued for her arrest but it was never severed. Thus, she escaped not only punishment, but even the pain of being assigned before a court for her horrid crime. (28)

The quoted lines symbolize the glimpse of horrific murder scene. It also shows that how a woman can take life of another woman and how the murderer got chance to get freedom for her crime. It is due to lawlessness the criminals get chance to roam in the free air with no feeling of guilty.

Douglass himself was the victim of lawlessness. It is said that law looks equally to all. It is not formed to create discrimination but to dissolve discrimination. Law is against the force labour. Labour law says that none can force anybody to do the work without worker's consent. Similarly, it is illegal to force one to do hard labour during illness as every individual has right to get treatment, it is inalienable fundamental right. But Douglass was forced to do the work by Covey during illness.

How he was physically brutalized by Covey even in his physical weakness, Douglass further writes:

I was sick so I could not do the work. I crawled away under the side of the post hoping to find relief by getting out of sun. At the moment, Covey came to the spot and after looking at me a while, asked me what was the matter. I told him the reality. Suddenly, he gave me a savage kick in the side, and told me to get up. I tried to do so, but fell back in the attempt. He gave me another kick and again told me to rise. I again tried but staggered and fell. While down in this situation, Mr. Covey took up the hickory slat and gave me a heavy blow upon the head, making a large wound and the blood ran freely. He again told me to get up but I couldn't make any effort to do so. (70)

The cited lines are the clear manifestations of suppression and exploitation of slaves. Mr. Covey had to come under the grip of law for his brutal treatment that he practiced over a sick slave. Unfortunately, he was not given any punishment and was not fined for his crime by the court. Can't it be the best example of lawlessness? Obviously, it was against the norm of law though the white law found no ground to punish Covey for his act of harassing a slave even in illness.

Eye Witness to the Cruelty

Douglass's *Narrative* presents incidents of Southern violence in which the slave Frederic Bailey is doomed to be a witness and a participant. These scenes portray the development of Frederick's identity as a witness in the South and culminate in the antislavery testimony of Fredrick Douglass in the north at the close

of the narrative. The narrative's editorial apparatus implies that to be a southern slave is not only to be denied physical autonomy, forced to perform black-breaking labour, and subjected to arbitrary violence but it is also to be a silent witness to such physical suffering.

In the South, enslaved eyes see black bodies beaten; whipped, raped and murdered, but enslaved tongues remain silent. It is because the task of the slaves is not to speak but to "stand, listen and tremble" (FD, 12). The fact was that those who broke this code of silence were punished by being beaten and sold. Douglass explains, "Had the effect to establish among the slaves the maxim, that a still tongue makes a wise head" (FD, 22).

In Douglass's account, the pervasive silence of the plantation is broken only by the inarticulate screams of tortured slaves, screams that are met with yet more silence. In the Narrative's first portrayal of southern violence, Frederick receives his initiation into slavery through an act of witnessing. In one of the most frequently cited scenes in the *Narrative*, Douglass describes how, as young boy, Frederick witnessed the flogging of his Aunt Hester by their master, Captain Anthony:

I have often been awakened at the dawn of day by the most heart rending shrieks of an own aunt of mine, whom he used to tie up to a joist, and whip upon her naked back till she was literally covered with blood. No words, no tears, no prayers, from his gory victim, seemed to move his iron heart from his bloody purpose. The louder she screamed, the harder he whipped; and where the blood run fastest, there he whipped longest. He would whip her to make her scream, and whip her

to make her hush; and not until overcome by fatigue, would he cease to swing the blood-clotted cowskin. (6)

From the beating of Aunt Hester, Frederick learns that to be a slave is to be a silent "witness" to arbitrary yet authorized brutality. It literally opens his eyes to the meaning of slavery and established his position as an "eye-witness to its cruelty". In the context of slavery to objective such violence is to be downed to be both "a witness and a participant."

The *Narrative's* second witnessing scene powerfully illustrates how the very act of observing violence inflicted upon others reinforces both the silence and embodied subjectivity of the witnessing self. Douglass describes how an overseer, aptly named Mr. Gore shoots and kills a slave named Demby for openly resisting punishment. In the middle of a whipping by Gore, Douglass explains:

[. . .] Demby broke free and plunged himself into a creek and stood there at the depth of his shoulders, refusing to come out. Mr. Gore told him that he would give him three calls, and that, if he did not come out at the third call, he would shoot him. The first call was given. Demby made no response, but stood his ground. The second and third calls were given with the same result. Mr. Gore then, without consultation or deliberation with anyone, not even giving Demby an additional call, raised his musket to his face, taking deadly aims at his standing victim, and an instant poor Demby was no more. His mangled body sank out of sight and blood and brains marked the water where he had stood.

(26)

The quoted lines present the slaves forced to be passive witness to the violence. Mr. Gore wants to make other slaves see the death of their fellow-workers in front of their eyes and wants to sow the psychological threaten of death penalty in the minds of other slaves so that rest of the slaves would be mute and he could sustain in their mind in each second. Demby's body serves as a surrogate for these of his fellow slaves. Here too Douglass is once again silenced by the trauma of witnessing.

Narrative's another eye-witness scene is horrible. It presents the extremity of cruelty shown by the whites over innocent blacks. Whites use the cruelty to threaten the whole class of slaves by mistreating one slave among other slaves. Colonel Lloyd harasses his slaves for minor causes and no causes at all. He believes that a slave must stand, listen and tremble when they come closer to him. Douglass further writes how Lloyd shows his demon like character: "I have seen Colonel Lloyd make old Barney, a man between fifty and sixty years of age, uncover his bald head, kneel down upon the cold, damp ground, and receive upon his naked and toil - worn shoulders more than thirty lashes at a time" (20).

Blood Stained Scenes

Narrative has many horrible blood-stained scenes. It vividly depicts the "Blood-stained gate" episode. Captain Anthony's severe beating to Douglass's own aunt, Aunt Hester; Mr. Gore's killing of Demby; Mr. Thomas Laman's killing of two slaves Mrs. Gile Hicks's killing of Douglass's wife's cousin, Covey's whipping to Douglass are the blood-stained episodes. All these episodes represent blood-stained gate, the entrance to the hell of slavery. These terrifying and horror-stricken scenes

valorize the real picture of American slavery and bring the level of power-demonstration and extremity of exploitation in the forefront.

As many blood-stained scenes have already been discussed above, for instance, the physical torture meted over Douglass is mentioned under this heading. Douglass was hired by Edward Covey for a year where he dragged through immense suffering, physical torture and mental turmoil.

Covey represents Douglas's nemesis in the narrative. He is a typical villain figure and in that his cruelty is calculated. Covey is skilled and methodological in his physical punishment of his slaves, but he is even more skilled at psychological cruelty so is famous as a first rate overseer and Negro breaker. He is "the snake" because he sneaks through the grass.

Mr. Covey forced his slaves to work in all weathers. It was never too hot or too cold, it could never rain, blow, hail or snow, too hard for them to work in the field. Work, work, work was scarcely mere the order of the day them of the night. The longest days were too short for him, and the shortest nights too long for him. If somebody denied following his command, he would be beaten up to death. The following lines show the cruelty of Covey in Douglass's own words when he denied working in such excess pressure:

[...] upon this he rushed at me with the fierceness of a tiger, tore off my clothes, and gave me a severe whipping, cutting my back, causing the blood to run and raising ridges on my flesh as large as my little finger. My head was all clotted with dust and blood, my shirt was stiff

with blood. I suppose I looked like a man who had escaped a den of wild beasts, and barely escaped them. (71)

The citation represents a blood-stained episode. It shows the devastating situation of Douglass due to the cruelty meted over him. The situation prompts the dehumanizing treatment of slaves. It shows the Pathos Douglass on the surface but the situation of all the slaves is identical. It shows the psychological trauma of Douglass which is ultimately the trauma of whole slaves hence it is a cultural trauma.

Douglass, the principal character of the narrative undergoes through similar brutalization in many instances. When he is motivated for his freedom and the liberation of slaves, he fights with Covey and gets victory over him. As he escapes towards North, he encounters similar cruel beating en route. He suffers from hardships and terrible encounters with slave traffickers in the shipyard.

The Shipyard beating scene differs from the other "Bloody scenes" in the *Narrative* in that, Frederick, no longer merely a witness to the violence inflicted on the enslaved blackbody, becomes its direct target. In context to the Covey episode, however, this scene produces in Frederick a heightened awareness of the inescapability of the slaves embodied subjectivity. Douglass introduces the shipyard scene with a series of reference to disparate bloody parts that links the ruthless exploitation of the black body to the violence of southern slavery. Douglass continues to focus on body parts in his description of Frederick's beating, associating the labor of the shipyard "humid" with the violence to which white "hands" ____ and "fists" ____ are prone:

They at length combined, and came upon me, armed with sticks; stones and heavy handspikes and came in front with a half brick. There was one at each side of me, and one behind me. While I was attending to those in front and on either side, the one behind ran up with the handspike, and struck me a heavy blow upon the head. It stunned me. I fell, and with this they all ran upon me, and fell to beating me with their fists. One of their numbers gave me, with his heavy boot, a powerful kick in the left eye. My eyeball seemed to have burst. When they saw my eyes closed and badly swollen, they left me. I still could hear the voice "Kill the damned nigger! kill him ! kill him !" (96)

The excerpt mesmerizes the antagonism of whites. This sentimental scene of slave holding paternalism reminds the excessive use of power. This also exemplifies the forced legal silence of slaves: bear, bear and to bear the pain. It is the tendency of whites to suppress blacks and remain in upper hierarchy constantly. It shows the autocratic regime of whites and the miserable condition of the poor blacks in the contemporary South America.

Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

Narrative has presented many instances of sexual abuse and exploitation. The white masters play with the body of female slaves to quench their thirst of lust. Mostly, the young females have been either harassed or defiled by their masters. More often, the master or the white man who instigates sexual activity with slave women succeeds in violating them completely. The whites give no option to the female slaves

except being brutally raped. Slave women either give up their bodies to the desires of the white man or refuse submission and face certain physical abuse. Sexual abuse and exploitation simply characterizes the daily reality of many female slaves. Slave women were highly used in plantation and among them also, the active slaves were selected for domestic work by observing their performances on plantation. These slave girls were used as sex toy by the whites. The female body was taken as a means of entertainment by the white masters. Most of the girls were abused by their masters because their husband could not save them from the abuse of white master. Merciless abuse made them ill and mentally disordered.

Women often appear in Douglass's narrative not as full characters but as vivid images - specifically, images of abused bodies. Douglass's own mother Harriet Bailey, Aunt Hester, Henrietta, Marry Caroline and Henry for example, appears only in scenes that demonstrate master's abuse of them. Those are the representative characters, the condition of almost all black female characters is same, and they are brutalized sexually. Douglass's depiction of the women's mangled and emancipated bodies are meant to incite pain and outrage in the reader and point to the unnaturalness of the institution of slavery.

Female slaves were not limited only in slaves; they were used by the white master as a sex puppet. None of the young female black slaves were able to preserve their chastity due to evil eyes of their masters; they were defiled. It was the recurring event. The female slaves were raped and brutalized since generation. The following lines highlight the sexual defilement:

[. . .] the children of slave women shall in all cases follow the condition of their mothers; and this is done too obviously to administer to their own lusts, and make a gratification of their weakened desires profitable as well as pleasurable; for by this cunning arrangement, the slaveholder, in cases not a few, sustains to his slave double relation of master and sex partner. (4)

The given excerpt portrays the real scenario of sexual abuse of female slaves. Physical brutality and sexual defilement both have been meted over them. It shows the double sides of whites as they rape the slave women without hesitation. It is customary to state how those slave women bore the double cruelty.

Among all, Aunt Hester was sexually harassed and abused in the highest degree. She was a woman of noble forms and of graceful proportions; having very few equals and fewer suspicious in personal appearance among the colored or white women of the neighbourhood. Colonel Lloyd was very much attracted towards her sexually. He had ordered her not to go out in evenings and had warned her that she must never let him catch her in company with other young men. He had even warned her that she had to be present when he desired her presence.

One night, Aunt Hester went out for some reasons and did not return back. Lloyd desired her presence but she was not available. In reality, she had strong hatred towards him. She had not only disobeyed his orders in going out but had been found in company with other young male. That made Lloyd burst into anger and brutalized her physically and sexually in this way:

Before he commenced whipping Aunt Hester, he took her into the kitchen, and striped her from neck to waist, leaving her neck, shoulder and back entirely naked. He then told her to cross her hands. After crossing her hands, he tied them with a strong rope, and led her to a stool under a large hook in the joist, put in for the purpose. He made her got upon the stool and tied her hands to the hook. She now stood fair for his infernal purpose. After rolling up his sleeves, he commenced to run his hands over her body..... (7)

The citation probes the cruelty of physical vulnerability and sexual defilement of a young slave lady at the same time. It resembles like a rape scene of a low grade movie. It seems as if the cause of sexual harassment of the slave women is to have physical elegance. To give them the sparkling eyes and the alluring body is the mistake of the creator. Here is no word to condemn the cruelty of the white man; a heart rending episode, hard to believe. No lexical words will be sufficient to condemn this act.

In addition, narrative has presented another shocking scene of sexual abuse of female slaves. It is quite unbearable to any of the readers. It is the brutality of white master compelling his women slave to commit adultery. Mr. Edward Covey is that person who obliged his female slave Caroline to sleep with an unknown person for breeding. Covey hired a young male and ordered him to be involved in sexual intercourse with Caroline for a year to breed the children in order to add the workers in his plantation. The following lines present the barbarism of Covey:

Mr. Covey bought Caroline from Mr. Thomas Lowe, about six miles from St. Michael's. She was a large, able-bodied woman, about twenty years old. She had already given birth to a child, which proved her to be just what he wanted. After buying her, he hired a married man of Mr. Samuel Harrison, to live with him one year; and him he used to fasten up with her every night! The result was that, at the end of the year, the miserable woman gave birth to twins. At this result Mr. Covey seemed to be highly pleased, both with the man and the wretched woman. Such was the joy and that of his wife. (66)

The cited lines prove Covey a 'Satan'. Covey considers himself a real Christian and a sincere worshipper of the highest God. But his evil actions reveal him to be a sinner. He deceives himself and the God. He has crossed the boundary of brutality. Even in the regime of Satan, such debased defilement of females might not have taken place. So he can be called 'the demon among demons'. This act is not only against the human rights but also a black spot in the human civilization. No punishment will be sufficient for Covey for his heart-breaking treatment of the black slave woman.

Thus, Douglass, in his *Narrative*, with his brilliant and magnificent style of writing, shows how his characters are traumatized because of violence, poverty, racism, discrimination and how this individual trauma eventually turns out to be the cultural one.

Narrative by Douglass is back grounded in the slavery system in America in the 19th century and the plot is interwoven in the same setting. There was the regime of whites. The everyday life of slaves was horrible and unsafe. This horrible, unsafe

and painful life is responsible to the spread of individual trauma resulting to cultural trauma as all the slaves undergo through the similar pathos. Their common trauma can be viewed as cultural trauma.

According to cultural trauma, the manifestation of traumatic stress is diagnostic in the post traumatic disorder .The manifestation of trauma on the character is seen in the case of Frederic, Aunt Hester, Demby and Caroline. The notion of cultural trauma says that there is the expansion of circle of the traumatic person as they are in the same suffering and when the thread connecting them is loose. This gets encircled as all the characters have to fall from same fate, tragedy, suffering and ultimate death. In order to get relief from that traumatized effect, we must apply the diagnosis theory of post traumatic stress disorder as all the characters in the novel are being suffered and haunted by their dreadful memory.

In this study, Douglass's *Narrative* shows the trauma being experienced and faced by his characters first because of the undue pain, suffering, grief and disintegration of life they have to undergo and second the individualized trauma borne out of deep psychological injury and its resulting into the cultural one due to its communal effect. With the publication of *Narrative*, Douglass makes the individual traumatic event a public one. His concern is directed towards the alarming slavery system and to the whole human beings not to engage in such act of killing and violence which produces the traumatic effect in all.

IV. Conclusion

Tireless Battle: The Milestone for Liberation

Narrative by Frederick Douglass deals with the issues like violence, racism and discrimination, poverty and starvation, sexual abuse and exploitation and murder and beating that were prevalent in American slavery system. As the entire South American continent was crippled by these catastrophic events, the people were bound to suffer in one way or other. These events have caused the lasting psychic wound in the mind of slaves that can never be recovered. The individual trauma turns out to be the cultural one as all the characters in the novel have to undergo the same sort of suffering and pain which has the horrendous effect causing deep psychological injury that is never to be deleted from their mind.

Frederick Douglass's *Narrative* is a miserable tale of slaves in South America. It is the tale of the most neglected God's children awaken to a sense of their rights and of the injustice done to them. It is the story of 'how a man transformed to a slave and how a slave transformed to a man.' The setting is South America during 1940s and the plot is about the barbarism of white masters against their slaves. The events are narrated from the perspective of Frederic, the leading character of the novel. The novel describes the sufferings, hardships and the psychological breakdown of the slaves and the confrontation of the protagonist for the liberation. Displaced, disgraced, maltreated; Frederick builds a world of slaves to counter against violence. Lives are lost; men, women and children despair and no one can make sense of anything. A certain kind of dehumanization takes place - slaves have nowhere to turn and nowhere to go. They cry silently and often lose themselves and their minds. Through the trials

and tribulations of love and lives lost and gained, Douglass weaves a magnificent plot. These events have caused the severe psychological damage of all the characters that result into the cultural trauma.

It may, perhaps, be fairly questioned, whether any other portion of the population of the earth could have endured the privations, sufferings and horrors of slavery, without having become more degraded in the scale of humanity than the slaves of African descent. Nothing has been left undone to cripple their intellects, darken their minds, debase their moral nature, obliterate all traces of their relationship to mankind; and yet how wonderfully they have sustained the mighty load of a frightful bondage under which they have been groaning for centuries.

Douglass has very properly chosen to write his own narrative, in his own style, and according to the best of his ability, rather than to employ someone else. It is, therefore, entirely his own production; and considering how long and dark was the career he had to run as a slave, - - how few have been in opportunities to improve his mind since he broke his iron fetters, - - it is highly creditable to his head and heart who can pursue it without a tearful eye, a heaving breast, an officiated spirit, - - without being filled with an unutterable abhorrence of slavery and all its abettors, and animated with a determination to seek the immediate overthrow that execrable system, - - without trembling for the fate of co-workers in the hands of a righteous God, who is ever on the side of the oppressed, and whose arm is not shortened that it cannot save, - - must have a flinty heart, and be qualified to act the part of a trafficker "in slaves and the souls of men".

The story moves around Frederic. Almost all black characters are physically tortured. They have been victimized severely and some characters like Demby have been brutally killed. Out of them all, Frederic is tortured much. Female slaves have been exploited physically and sexually. They are used as sex toys by their white masters. Young female slaves are doomed to handover their body to quench the sexual thirst of their masters. Harriet Bailey and Aunt Hester are sexually harassed and abused. Frederick's wife's cousin is mercilessly killed for no reason at all. Female slaves are forced even for adulteration. They are used as surrogate mothers. Caroline is forced by her master Covey to be involved in adultery with an unknown person for breeding. Almost all male white characters are satans. Colonel Lloyd, Austin Gore, Hugh Auld and Edward Covey are the white characters who suppress the black slaves extremely. Out of them, Austin Gore's Killing of Demby; Lloyd's sexual defilement of Aunt Hester, Covey's ill treatment of Frederic and other slaves and his order of adultery to Caroline are heart trembling. Douglass has tried to show the traumatic effects in slaves through these actions. When those all ill treatments cross the limit, Frederick stands for his freedom and the liberation of slaves. With horrendous hardships and courage he deserves to be free.

The novel highly emphasizes the individual memory and its after-effects because it is based on personal experience of trauma, which contributes a sense of empathy with and possibly outrage at, the institutionalized violence the author presumably experienced. This novel plays an important role in representing historical totalitarianism, white hegemony, violence and its resulting into cultural trauma to be experienced by almost all the characters.

History of America is based on exploitation and abuse of black slaves. The novel shows the colonial mentality of whites and their underestimation of blacks. The strategy of whites is the use of absolute power, destroy the culture of black people and set up their dictatorship. In this sense, the novel is the better understanding of the effects of vandalism of whites. The dreams of slaves have been shattered, their freedom has been aborted, families have been scattered and they have been made know-nothing. It is the startling portrait of the on - the - ground live realities of lives of slaves in South America.

Cultural trauma is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the life span and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences. It occurs when members of a collective feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, “marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways”. The same thing happens in this novel too. The slaves from generations face the similar problem of identity crisis and cruelty. The problem of an individual slave is the problem of collective. Through what type of hardships one slave undergoes is applicable to the case of other slaves too. The trauma of violence is the cultural trauma as each member of the society is the victim of violence. Hence, the novel narrativizes the deep psychological wound in the form of cultural trauma that the community of blacks underwent during the heyday of slavery in the American society.

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