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الصدمة والذاكرة في الأدب المعاصر: دراسة لرواية أنام لأندريه داو

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Abstract

This scholarly essay explores the intricate connection between trauma and memory in modern literature by engaging in an in-depth exploration of the fiction work *Anam* by Andre Dao (2024). Based on the theory of trauma, and the definition of trauma as a postponed and unanticipated event as put forth by the author Cathy Caruth. In the analysis, it starts with the conceptualization of the notion of trauma as experience of deferral and incomplete experience beyond the event itself and its reappearance later in the form of repetitive and fragmented flashbacks, which is visible in the narrative structure of the novel. The paper discusses how the fragmentation of narrative, disintegration of time and memory between generations characterize the expression of the trauma in the novel. This paper has made the case that the novel is a case of modern fiction which recreates the effects of the historical trauma with the use of narrative techniques which aim at reducing the distinction between the personal memory and the collective memory. In this study, the focus is made on identifying trauma as a site of resistance. In the paper, the focus is on the application of narrative techniques to the text featuring the temporal dislocation, polyphony and transgenerational memory in order to represent traumatic experience in the postcolonial context. It also shows that novel not only re-enacts the trauma, but a reconstruction of the intersection between the individual memory and the collective memory. Thus destroying the divisions between the conventional distinction of the private and the public, as well as of the historical and the personal. The thesis of the study by *Anam*, memory is not an active memory of the past, but a dynamic process of reproducing meaning. Due to which the past experience is re-read in the present. Another aspect that is put forward in the study that the trauma is adapted in the text in place of resistance and reorganization of identity where it might be more so through the experience of the diaspora and colonialism. Finally, the study will contribute to the body of knowledge about the relevance of modern literature in showing trauma. It will endorse the notion that narrative is a site of re-locutionary memory, history and identity. It emphasizes the point that the concept of memory in the novel is not simply the remembrance, but a process of re-connoting the past.

Keywords: Trauma Theory; Memory; Contemporary Fiction; Postcolonial Studies; Narrative Fragmentation; Identity.

Trauma and Memory in Contemporary Fiction:A Study of André Dao's *Anam*

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الملخّص

تستكشف هذه الدراسة العلمية العلاقة المعقّدة بين الصدمة والذاكرة في الأدب الحديث من خلال تحليل معمّق للعمل الروائي Anam لأندريه داو (2024). تستند الدراسة إلى نظرية الصدمة، ولا سيما تعريف الصدمة بوصفها حدثًا مؤجّلًا وغير متوقّع كما طرحته الباحثة كاثي كارث. يبدأ التحليل بتصوّر مفهوم الصدمة بوصفها تجربة قائمة على الإرجاء وعدم الاكتمال، تتجاوز الحدث ذاته، وتعاود الظهور لاحقًا في صورة استرجاعات متكررة ومجزأة، وهو ما يتجلّى في البنية السردية للرواية. تناقش الورقة كيف أن تفكك السرد، وتفكك الزمن، وتشتت الذاكرة عبر الأجيال تمثل سمات أساسية في التعبير عن الصدمة داخل الرواية. وتذهب الدراسة إلى أن الرواية تُعدّ نموذجًا من نماذج السرد الحديث الذي يعيد تمثيل آثار الصدمة التاريخية من خلال تقنيات سردية تسعى إلى تقليص الفجوة بين الذاكرة الفردية والذاكرة الجمعية. كما تركّز الدراسة على تحديد الصدمة بوصفها موقعًا للمقاومة. وتتناول الورقة تطبيق تقنيات سردية مثل الإزاحة الزمنية، وتعدد الأصوات (البوليفونية)، والذاكرة العابرة للأجيال، بهدف تمثيل التجربة الصدمية في سياق ما بعد الاستعمار. كما تُظهر أن الرواية لا تعيد تمثيل الصدمة فحسب، بل تعيد أيضًا بناء العلاقة المتداخلة بين الذاكرة الفردية والجماعية، مما يؤدي إلى تفكيك الحدود التقليدية بين الخاص والعام، وكذلك بين التاريخي والشخصي. وتطرح الدراسة أن الذاكرة في رواية Anam ليست مجرد استدعاء سلبي للماضي، بل هي عملية ديناميكية لإعادة إنتاج المعنى، حيث يُعاد قراءة التجربة الماضية في ضوء الحاضر. كما تؤكد الدراسة أن الصدمة تتجلى في النص بوصفها فضاءً للمقاومة وإعادة تشكيل الهوية، لا سيما في سياق تجربة الشتات والاستعمار. وأخيرًا، تسهم هذه الدراسة في إثراء المعرفة المتعلقة بأهمية الأدب الحديث في تمثيل الصدمة، وتدعم فكرة أن السرد يُعدّ فضاءً لإعادة إنتاج الذاكرة والتاريخ والهوية. كما تؤكد أن مفهوم الذاكرة في الرواية لا يقتصر على التذكّر، بل يتجاوز ذلك ليصبح عملية لإعادة دلالة الماضي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: نظرية الصدمة؛ الذاكرة؛ السرد المعاصر؛ دراسات ما بعد الاستعمار؛ تفكك السرد؛ الهوية.

1. Introduction

Trauma and memory is one of the main and significant axes in modern literary research. An aesthetic form or an imaginary world that is not connected with reality is no longer considered the literary text, but it has transformed to be a rich area in the examination of profound and multifaceted human experiences. Particularly those involving violence, displacement, persecution and historical fractures. Thus, the change in the role of literature is a qualitative change in the critical approach towards emphasizing on form and structure to emphasizing on human content. He explained that it was a manifestation of the injured self in its social and political situations. In this perspective, theories like trauma and memory have emerged as crucial analytical instruments in the interpretation of how the human experience is re-told in the face of crisis in literature.

Thus, literary studies have experienced a phenomenal growth in concern over what is termed as Trauma Studies since the late twentieth century. These works are informed by epistemological overlaps of literature, psychology, history and cultural studies. Such studies have aided in the redefinition of the connection

between event and narrative. The event is no longer considered a whole fact that can be understood at the time when it takes place, but is a part of a fragmented experience that transcends the boundaries of direct perception. The value of memory is evident here as a process of re-creating the event, but not restoring it, but creating a multifaceted narrative that is full of gaps, silence and fragmentation. In this respect, literature is, in itself, a reflection of reality, but it transforms it, with its representational means reliant upon language and narrative. Literary text turns into the place of a rewriting of the traumatic experience.

In the overlapping of times, voices become woven together and identity is redefined through the fractures it has been subjected to. Some critics have noted that the narration of trauma is marked by non-linear structure, marked by repetition, interruption and confusion of time. This indicates how trauma is in itself an experience that cannot be fully understood at the time of its occurrence. The *Anam* of Dao is one of the most recent literary examples in this theoretical paradigm because the author deals with the issue of the connection between history and memory in a post-colonial situation. This novel is a multi-layered story that shows the diasporic, the migration and the divided identity. By using characters who straddled the past and the present, homeland and exile. The novel reveals that memory is not a fixed storehouse, but a continuous process of dialogue with the past. Where personal experiences meet the stories of the collective, where personal memories meet with political history. Analytically speaking, one can say that the novel is based on the narrative framework of fragmentation and multiplicity. The voices of the narration are shared across generations and interchange between the past and present, and the complication of the traumatic experience of the postcolonial setting. The characters of the novel are not traumatized as a completed process, but a continuous state of being which influences the shaping of the identity and redefines the relationship with the self and the other. A very important role in the representation of this trauma is also played by language in the novel. It is expressed in silence, interruption, and repetition, which indicates the restrictions of the possibility to articulate the traumatic experience.

This paper relies on trauma theory as formulated by Caruth who is regarded as one of the leading theorists in this area. Caruth accepts that it is not something that a person experiences fully at the time of its experience but a delayed experience that is experienced later on in the form of compulsive and incomplete flashbacks. Here, she points out that: trauma is never completely felt during the experience, but returns later to haunt the survivor (Caruth, 1995). This feeling paves the way to the interpretation of literary narrative as a quest of an attempt to show what cannot be shown, or what cannot be said. It is through this theoretical framework that this study aims to examine the construction of trauma in the narrative text and how memory is re-constructed as a dynamic narrative process that transcends the boundaries of the traditional retrieval. It further seeks to

examine the connection between narrative and identity, and the role of traumatic experience towards restructuring the self, particularly, in post-colonial situations. At the intersection of personal experiences and a history of violence, colonialism, and marginalization.

Moreover, the research study concentrates on the story framework of the novel, in terms of employing techniques like temporal alternation, polyphony, and narrative interruption, as the means to depict trauma. It also aims to examine the place of language in creating memory and how language can both be a source of articulating trauma and a restraint to this articulation. The components that suggest the presence of experience that is beyond the powers of expression are silence, repetition, and fragmentation of language. This study is significant because it will help broaden the scope of our knowledge in the field of literature and human experience. By emphasizing trauma and memory as structural components in the creation of narratives. It also helps to illuminate on the contemporary literature as a place of reconsidering history, identity, and memory. In particular, in post-colonial situations where personal stories are bound to the significant political and social changes. Lastly, one can say that the trauma and memory examination of literature is not restricted to textual analysis. Instead, it transcends this to a greater insight into man confronted with his past, and of how he recreates himself in story. *Anam*, therefore, is a good example of such writing. It exposes the intricacies of the traumatic experience, and sets the stage of taking a multitude of critical readings that help expand the field of contemporary literary studies.

2.The Theoretical Framework: Kathy Caruth's trauma theory

Trauma theory is believed to be one of the most salient critical methods that rediscover the correlation of psychological experience and narrative form in modern literature. It has its foundation on the assumption that trauma transcends immediate perception, and presents itself in deferential forms of language. Although Caruth assumes that the peculiarity of trauma, its belatedness, is that the traumatic event is not assimilated at the time it happens, but is reappeared in the memory and narrative, by means of forced repetition. Caruth begins her theorization of trauma with the main assumption that the traumatic experience is actually not felt during the time when it is occurring, but instead reveals itself in a delayed fashion through memory and the story. She puts it in such words: the effect of the traumatic event is in its timeliness (Caruth, 1996).

It states that the actual trauma impact is the delay in its absorption. Caruth says that experience of the traumatic event is sudden and violent, to an extent that it cannot be held by consciousness. Which results in its reoccurrence later as compulsive memories or reiterating images in the narrative discourse. In this

regard, Caruth holds that trauma is too early, too unanticipated, to be well understood (Caruth, 1995).

This is why this experience is unconscious and incomplete. Rather than trauma being an event of the past. It becomes an open temporal form that still has an impact on the present and literary narrative is the means of re-enacting this event and attempting to make sense of it. Therefore, works of literature that address the question of trauma are usually non-linear, time-disrupted, and discontinuous in their narratives. These are characteristics that show what traumatic memory is all about. In addition, the theory that is associated with Caruth is the concept of forced repetition (repetition compulsion) which describes the repetition of the traumatic event in various forms in the story. The repetition in this case is not only a feature of the aesthetics, but that of the mind trying to comprehend what it could not comprehend at that time. It is what transforms the literary text into a place where memory and language meet, where words are a way of recalling that which is missing or repressed. In this regard, the narration is not only telling about the events, but it is also the interpretation process, trying to dismantle and reconstruct the traumatic experience. Of significance about the theory of Caruth is also the fact that it concerns itself with the issue of trauma and history.

First, Caruth holds that trauma does not just exist at individual level, but also can be applied at collective memory level. Particularly in the setting of war, colonialism and political violence. In such situations, literature is a way of passing such experiences between generations and this helps to create a collective consciousness relating to the past. Caruth now indicates that the story of trauma shows a disconnection between the occurrence and the manifestation. It is a vacuum that leaves the door open to a multiplicity of interpretations and re-evaluates the idea of historical truth.

In addition, one can observe the impact of the theory of Caruth in most of the modern literary works that are based on narrative methods which reveal the character of trauma, e.g. the repetition of flashbacks, time breaks, and multiple voices. Those techniques are not only aimed at giving a viewer an aesthetic experience, but aim to replicate the mechanisms of traumatic memory. As an example, it is possible to notice how language is applied intermittently or incompletely when making the characters unable to make sense of their experiences. This is what Carruth referred to as complete unrepresentability. The repetitive narrative representation of the traumatic event, in dreams, memories or flashbacks is a recurrent effort to reformulate the experience. This repetition is not always curative, but perhaps it can contribute to the further experience of inner segmentation, as trauma is a multifaceted experience, which is hard to keep.

In conclusion, we may add that the theory of trauma by Cathy Caruth offers to the world a critical framework of relationship between literature and the violent

human experience. It also discloses how narrative is involved in re-enacting and making sense of trauma. Rather than the direct reflection of the reality, this theory emphasizes the significance of the literary text as the area of reconstructing the traumatic experience within the complex time and language framework. Caruth theory can be used to read the literary text, particularly those about violence, memory and history through the concepts of delay, repetition and incomprehensibility.

3.Trauma as a Deferred Crisis

One of the concepts that are central in theorizing is the concept of delayed trauma. Such a method re-establishes time and psychological experience in the literary text. This conception can be summarized by the idea that the experience of trauma is not perceived as a finished experience during the time of its occurrence, but instead its meaning is developed in the future through the repetition and retrieval processes. The novel *Anam* by Andre Dao can be considered as one of the contemporary narrative models which can represent this vision. It is organized around recreating the past through a fragmentation of narratives that are independent of each other and which demonstrate the characteristics of traumatic memory.

Thus, the theory of shock presented by Kathy Caruth is grounded on the reality that the traumatic event cannot be comprehended at the very moment of its happening due to the abrupt nature of the traumatic situation. Instead, it manifests itself later as partial and fragmented memories. According to Caruth, trauma is perceived too soon, too unexpectedly, not to be known at all (Caruth, 1995). Meaning that we are not aware of the occurrence at the time of the event, and subsequently we reproduce it through memory and storytelling. Therefore, the notion of the deferred trauma is connected with the concept of delayedness. The real definition of trauma cannot be clear until a certain period of time. In the novel of *Anam*, this concept is reflected in the non-linear narrative framework which is based on the fragmentation of time and interconnection of the past and the present. The events surrounding the imprisonment and exile are not given as a normal sequence of events in history, but they seem to be in the form of flashbacks. They tend to be incomprehensive or disjointed.

This narrative fragmentation speaks of the character of traumatic memory that does not follow the usual time logic, but is founded on the abrupt appearance of images and scenes of the past without a clear logical sequence. Another observation that is made is that the characters in the novel experience a stark lack of a direct way of putting out their traumatic experiences. The consequences of these experiences are the emergence of these experiences as narrative gaps, or linguistic silences. This is in line with what Caruth suggests that trauma is something that cannot be easily understood and portrayed (Caruth, 1995). It

cannot be directly passed on via language. The text does not resort to direct and clear narration but uses such techniques as suggestion, interruption, and repetition. Which is indicative of the condition of internal division that the characters are going through.

In addition, the trauma that *Anam* has experienced is very much related to exile. Where the past is re-awakened in the present by means of memory. The characters are not traumatized as an event in the past, but rather a state of being that influences their identity and world-view. This is indicated by the overlapping of times. Narrative consciousness makes the past forever present. This helps to reinforce the notion that trauma is not an accomplished experience, but an open time form that goes on to constitute the self. Conversely, the splintered narrative structure of the novel also helps to establish a certain parallelism of the form and the content of the novel because this narrative structure manifests the inner fragmentation of the characters. Narrative gaps are not a lack in the narrative but rather a vital component of the trauma representation. It is what is not sayable or expressible. The silence as such, in this sense, is a sign of narrative itself, the utterances of the boundaries of language in the encounter with traumatic experience. The repetition in the novel is also significant in bringing out the character of delayed trauma. Certain incidents or pictures reoccur in various contexts, an indication of the constant effort to learn or sense them.

Nevertheless, this repetition does not seal the meaning, but on the contrary, it is open, and the trauma is not complete. This goes in tandem with the notion of forced repetition that Caruth is referring to. Where the mind recreates the traumatic experience in the process of trying to comprehend it, without fully comprehending it. In this case, one can add that the scenes of prisons in the novel are not recollected in a single context, but it can be observed that they are presented in the various passages, and they seem to be disjointed in time. Another manifestation of the experience of exile is a damaged memory that selectively remembers the past. Certain details are prominent and some are not presented which is a sign of not thoroughly understanding the experience. This is also dynamic in the language used. It is also condensed and suggestive instead of being described, which is due to the constraints of language to describe trauma.

The text is not aimed at providing a full and consistent description of the events, but the gaps that it leaves encourage the reader to become a part of the interpretation process, which contributes to the interactive nature of the traumatic narrative. Ultimately, based on this analysis, it is evident that the idea of deferred trauma is a critical axis to the interpretation of the narrative structure of the novel of *Anam*. The embodiment of trauma is the disruption of time, lapses in the narrative, and repetition. According to the theory of Caruth, one can say that this novel is not just a manifestation of trauma, but it is its reproduction in a narrative form that complies with its peculiarities of complex and delayed essence.

Literature is thereby a way of knowing what is not directly knowable and narrative thereby plays a crucial role in redefining human experience in the situation of violence and exile.

4. The representation of trauma in the novel *Anam*

This is a modern model of narrative that Dao employed in this novel, one that mirrors the changes in literature in dealing with the traumatic experience. Trauma is not given as a full historical experience, but as a discontinuous experience that is given back to us in the form of language and memory. With this in mind, the novel can be viewed as a text that attempts to re-enact trauma through undermining the conventional narrative framework and substituting it with the disjointed discourse that mirrors the chaos of consciousness. In fact, trauma in the novel of *Anam* is manifested in three main experiences:

- The prison
- Negation
- Uprooting from cultural roots

One of them is the uprooting of culture. However, these memories are not recounted in a linear or straightforward manner, but instead are revealed through bits of memory, snippets of documents, and passages of the story incomplete. This approach is indicative of what Caruth claims that trauma is unrepresentable (Caruth, 1996). It cannot be expressed in a coherent discourse of traditional narratives. Another element that the novel uses is what could be referred to as shock narrative, in which the chronology is disrupted and the past and the present are interwoven in a precarious fashion. The circumstances that surround the imprisonment such as those are not shown as a whole experience, but come in separate clips as they are psychologically bewildering to the characters.

It is pointed out that such passages are frequently presented as flashbacks, or momentary hints, which makes the time seem as it is torn into pieces. Such fragmentation is not only an aesthetic device, but it is also a mirror of the composition of traumatic memory that is not guided by a linear logic. Exile in the novel is discussed as an existential separatism. In a state of division between the past and the present, between homeland and exile, where the characters reside. This disjunction is manifested in the very language, because narrative voices are mixed, points of view are multiplied, thus the loss of the centrality of identity is displayed. Therefore, trauma is not confined to the external situation, but extends to the creation and destruction of the self. In the case of detachment of cultural roots, it is represented by the loss of the mother tongue, or the doubt of the possibility to say it. The use of language in the novel is not only a means of communication, but also an element of identity. In case this language is twisted or lost, it turns into a manifestation of a more profound trauma connected with the

loss of belonging. This causes the story to be based on unfinished or fragmentary language structures that demonstrate the failure of the characters to convey the full experience. The use of documents and letters as a part of narration is one of the most striking aspects of the representation of trauma in *Anam*. These documents are not offered as the reliable sources of knowledge, but as the pieces of disjointed memories.

These sections are associated with semantic vacuums and silences. In this respect, the document is not a reconstruction of the truth, but rather discloses the impossibility to reach it completely. It is thus in keeping with the conceptualization of trauma as according to Caruth as being something that cannot be directly represented. This aspect is also traced in the novel as there are passages that reveal the disintegration of memory and the impossibility to retrieve it in a logical manner. Indicatively, a single passage depicts a description of memory as parts that are not linked. It is emphasized that the past is not recovered as a whole story, but as fragments that do not want to fit into one narrative (Dao, 2024).

Another passage also reveals the prison experience as an experience that cannot be well-described, where the words fail to capture what occurred within those walls (Dao,2024). Which is the failure of language to limit the traumatic experience. Within the negation we can also discover the mention of a loss of belonging, where identity is represented as a condition of dispersion as in the line: I belong neither here nor there, suspended between histories (Dao, 2024). This discontinuity comprises the existential aspect of trauma, in which it is not merely a memory, but a persistent state, that impacts on the way the self perceives the world. The repetition is also formed as a simple mechanism in the depiction of the trauma.

The text repeatedly uses some pictures or incidents, without any evident conclusion. This repetition is what Caruth refers to as forced repetition. Where consciousness tries to copy the traumatic event not being able to fully understand it. Thus, it is evident that *Anam* provides an innovative pattern of how trauma should be represented in modern literature. It transcends the classic narrative to acquire a disjointed narrative structure, which is indicative of the traumatic experience. The intermittent language, in the form of breaking the chronology, and through the use of documents. Trauma as an unfinished experience, which does not lend itself directly to representation, is also reproduced in the novel. According to the theory of Caruth, one may say that this narration style does not tend to introduce a final truth, but to show the boundaries of language and memory when confronted with violence. This added interpretive depth to the text which transcends the aesthetic aspect to a philosophical and human level.

5. Memory as a reconstruction of the past

The place of memory in the novel plays a central role because it is not a stable storehouse of events, but it is a dynamic process of interpretation that transforms the past in the light of the present. Here the narrative vision of the novel meets theeses concerning cultural memory. He underlines that memory is not a passive reflection of the past, but an active construction that is created in accordance with the needs and circumstances of the present. The theme of memory in the novel *Anam* is based on a critical view which denounces the notion of objective recovery of the past. He points rather that all appeals to the past are reformulations of the past. Here, Assmann mentions that memory does not merely reflect the past but is an active reconstruction that has been shaped by the needs of the present (Assmann, 2011). This concept aligns with the narrative pattern of the novel which recreates the happenings of history in a modern outlook.

The novel demonstrates that memory is constructed in certain ways within cultural and political frameworks. In which the reference to the past is not to be dissociated with the present circumstances. Characters do not remember their memories as some fixed facts, but as dynamic stories influenced by the place where they were exiled and by the changes which happened in their identity. Therefore, memory becomes the ground of contradiction between the fact and the narrative re-creation that is undergoing it, and this generates a continuous tension between reality and fiction. The novel is based on the overlap of various modes of narration, i.e. historical documents, letters, and first-person narration that represents the plurality of the sources of memory. But these documents are not shown as definitive statements of the past but as partial discourses which are interpretable in their turn. The text is not aimed to prove one historical fact, but emphasizes the plurality of the narratives and divergent perspectives that make the memory a process-open to perpetual reinterpretation. The subjective aspect of memory is also brought out in the use of personal narrative in the novel. The cross point between individual experience and collective memory. The characters, in addition to recalling their own, also have a way of producing a shared past that is associated with both imprisonment, exile and displacement. This intersect is what Assmann (2011) refers to as cultural memory. Which transcends the borders of the self to the group, and helps in the development of a shared identity.

Conversely, the novel brings to light the discriminatory character of memory. It is on highlighting certain events and shunning others and this is how the present comes to define what is reclaimed and what is forgotten. The traumatic experiences, e.g., can be presented in the form of fragments or incomplete references, which is caused by the impossibility to fully depict them. The concept of memory, in this regard, overlaps with the theory of trauma. The remembering itself is a part of the attempt to comprehend what can not be comprehended directly. In addition, the blurring of fact and fiction in the novel is a sign of the problematic portrayal of history in literature. The text does not particularly define what is realistic and what is fantasized, but instead puts them together as one

narrative structure. This assimilation is not a weakness of the story, but a deliberate approach to exposing the essence of memory as an interpretive tool. The novel is therefore not just an objective history, but a rewrites of the same history in a subjective manner that is a measure of the complications of the human experience. This impression is reflected in how the novel relies on the documents which seem to be objective, yet in the real sense, can be re-read and interpreted by the narrator. It is also found in personal narration which reinterprets events in the light of the present. Where memories meet with reflections, to make a hybrid text that is a mixture of the historical and the imaginative. There are also paragraphs which reveal the evocation of the past as a living experience in the present, which is being shaped, rather than an event that has been completed. It appears that memory re-creates the past all the time, which adds to its dynamic nature (Alexander, 2012).

The novel of *Anam* can be viewed as an argument of a modern conceptualization of memory as the process of remaking the past. Thus, there is a breakage between the individual and collective, the historical and imaginative - dimensions. On the basis of the theses of Jan Assmann, it becomes obvious that memory in the novel is not only the act of recalling, but an interpretative act which reinterprets the past according to the needs of the present. Therefore, the literary text becomes a place of rewritings history. When it is not a given fact, but a narrative form that is vulnerable to the plurality of meanings.

6. Fragmented narrative structure

Fragmented narrative structure can be considered one of the key aspects that differentiate modern literature, particularly, the works that address the traumatic experience. This form is represented in the novel *Anam* of Dao, as a direct manifestation of the turmoil of consciousness caused by trauma. In the place where time is destroyed, voices are multiplied and the logical flow of events is disorganized. This method is similar to what Vickroy notes that narratives of trauma tend to use discontinuous forms to reflect the mental disturbance (Vickroy, 2002). What makes the fragmentation of narratives a means of representation, which indicates the richness of the psychological experience.

The discontinuous narrative system in *Anam* is due to the dismissal of the classical model of linear narrative which is founded on a distinct chronological order. This model is substituted in the novel with a discontinuous model where times intersect and where there are multiple discourses. This is very much seen in the recurrent move between the past and the present. In those cases where events are not given in a logical chronological order, but in a discontinuous retrieval

which indicates the activity of traumatic memory. The discontinuity of the time in the novel is not only a stylistic device, but is strictly intertwined with the essence of the very trauma. The experience cannot be organized in a coherent time frame in traumatic awareness. This is affirmed when you realize that trauma is perceived in terms of its repetition, and delay and not in terms of its direct assimilation (Caruth, 1995).

Therefore, this failure to hold on to the experience in a consistent narrative form is manifested in the temporal fragmentation in the novel. Furthermore, the novel is based on various narrative voices. Where there is nothing like a voice dominating the text, but several voices, which represent various points of view intersect. Such multiplicity is not only meant to give different accounts of the events, but also the fragmentation and break-up of the self in the face of trauma. Both narrative voices possess an element of the truth, and cannot give us the entire picture, which adds to the partial and open nature of the narrative. The use of documents as structural elements of the text (letters, memoirs) can also be considered one of the most noticeable ways of narrative fragmentation in the novel.

Nonetheless, these papers are not merely utilized to provide a realistic or documentary quality, but they aid in intensifying fragmentation. It gives incomplete or conflicting information and the reader is left with the duty to construct meaning by joining these bits together. In this way, the text becomes an interpretive zone that involves the reader in the creation of meaning. This fragmentation is also reflected in the language itself in the novel. It is more compact and broken, and eschews descriptive discourse. Sentences can be brief and disjointed, or embodying the failure of language to capture the traumatic experience, they can be filled with semantic spaces. This is in line with the trauma studies which propose that language does not always reflect directly the traumatic event. This encourages the text to adopt other techniques like suggestion and repetitions.

Anam has a narrative fragmentation evident in the abrupt shifts between periods. In the place where the past comes in the form of a series of clips that are not connected to a definite time frame as in saying that the past comes as disjointed pieces, rather than as an unbroken narrative (Dao, 2024). This is a term used to indicate what traumatic memory is, which is unable to recall events in a coherent way, but in parts. The plurality of the voices in the novel also manifests itself in the intertwining of personal stories and documents. It is observed that both voices represent merely a partial truth and there are gaps that cannot be fully addressed. This is an indication of the inability to come up with a single explanation of what happened. Speaking of the utilization of documents, we discover that the text states that these materials are not able to fill the story but enhance its fractures (Dao 2024). This also supports the concept that

fragmentation is not a weakness, but should be considered a component of the narrative strategy. On the language level, efforts to manifest shock occur in a form of unfinished or interrupted sentences. This can be seen as what Vickroy (2002) wrote as a trauma narrative that manifests profound psychological disturbance.

Lastly, it becomes apparent that not only is the disjointed narrative structure of *Anam* an aesthetic decision, but also a deep exploration of the essence of traumatic experience. The text recreates trauma in a narrative format that is complicated and cannot be completely articulated through the destruction of time, the multiplicity of voices, the use of documents, and the discontinuous language. Basing on the theorizing provided by Vickroy and Caruth, one can say that this fragmentation is a key to comprehending the way in which trauma is manifested in modern literature. The very form of the narrative is a part of this meaning, not merely a tool of its expression.

7. Identity and Trauma in the post-colonial context

The identity issue in the postcolonial literature assumes a complicated aspect when it overlaps with trauma. The concept of identity is not stable and definite any more, but it becomes dynamic and shapes itself under the condition of the tension between memory, history and exile. This issue is reflected in the novel of Dao's *Anam* in the aspect of the portrayal of the self in a post-colonial space that is divided and fragmented. This construction can be interpreted through the prism of the theories, particularly, the notion of the third space. Who thinks that identity is not created in a definite duality (colonizer/colonized), but in an intermediate zone of hybridity that is marked by perpetual change (Bhabha, 1994). As *Anam* demonstrates, identity is not a given, but a process of negotiation and reconfiguration that must be ongoing. Particularly in the circumstances of exile, which divides the person with his cultural background.

In these terms, trauma is one of the key elements to deconstruct and reconstruct the traditional identity. Exile is described not as a physical movement, but an existential phenomenon resulting in a split of the self between a forgotten past and a precarious present. The so-called third space according to Bhabha (1994) assumes a form of cultural encounter where identity is redefined beyond the strict dichotomies. He notes that it is in the emergence of the interstices. That the intersubjective and collective experiences of nationness, community interest or cultural value are negotiated.

Here, the characters in *Anam* can be interpreted as existing in this space of hybridity. Neither is it part of the original homeland nor of the new society but is in between the two. This tension is reflected in the novel since identity is described as something that is in flux. It cannot be mounted in a single frame. Memory is critical in the process of redefining the characters as they always do so to develop

the self. This memory is however not a stable one, but one troubled with fragmentation caused by trauma, and thus the construction of identity is a partial process. Here, the memory collides with trauma to create what may be termed as trauma identity.

The self is a product of experience of violence and exile. According to Caruth (1995), trauma causes some sort of disconnection among the self, which leads to its being redesigned in unanticipated fashions. This is revealed in this novel by the characters who are affected by the sense of not belonging. Where she is not able to go back to her past, nor to become entirely part of her present. Another way in which the novel reveals that trauma does not merely result in fragmentation of identity, but may also generate new ways of belonging, is evident in the novel. Without traditional belonging, the characters are trying to create other identities with which they share a common experience of exile and uprooting. This conforms to the idea of identity as a process of unceasing negotiation by Baba. Where third space is the creation of new meanings.

Conversely, language is significant in this formation, because it is the expression of the conflict of various affiliations. Language can be a way of maintaining the original identity, yet it can also become a way of becoming a part of the new context. Linguistic tension, in its turn, is a manifestation of the inner split of the self. In the case of overlapping cultural identities that are not completely integrated. This aspect is realized in the novel by how it portrays the characters as living in a state of dispersion in that it mentions that I exist between languages, between histories that I do not wholly belong to either of them (Dao, 2024). It is a term that portrays the condition of suspendedness in the third space. The recreation of the self by the memory also manifests itself by the use of the past as a crucial aspect in the formation of the self and it is observed that the memory is the only place where a sense of self can be re-created. But this memory is broken by trauma, leaving the identity that arises not stable. When it comes to the trauma context, we discover that the experiences that are related to imprisonment and exile, play a role in reconfiguring belonging. It is mentioned that exile does not destroy identity, it simply changes it to a fractured and new one (Dao, 2024). This indicates the fact that trauma does not entirely annihilate identity, but only replicates it in other forms. The *Anam* novel can be considered an elaborate conceptualization of the interplay between trauma and identity within a postcolonial framework. The identity is realized as a dynamic process that is being shaped in a third space of hybridity and constant change. With the overlap of memory and trauma, the novel demonstrates that traumatic experience can destroy traditional identity.

Simultaneously, it paves the way to new types of belonging. Based on the theorizing of Bhabha and Caruth it is evident that identity here is never a given

essence, but it is a constant process of negotiation and reconfiguration. Providing the text with a critical aspect in reading postcolonial literature.

8. Writing as resistance

The writing in the modern literature transcends its representational role and moves to the resistance which aims to reclaim voice and redefine the memory. Specifically, in the trauma and postcolonial settings. Writing itself is present in the events of this novel as an instrument to face the silence of history. The text does not just document the traumatic experience, but instead endeavors to dismantle and re-read it in the context of a multi-layered narrative discourse. At this point, the novel overlaps with the theories that interpret narrative as the main mediator to comprehending trauma because it dictates that narrative is the way that trauma is known (Caruth, 1996).

The concept of writing as resistance is based on the fact that trauma is usually linked to silence or repression. On individual or group level. Imprisonment, exile, and political violence experiences are peripheral to official discourses. What makes writing a way of reclaiming these experiences, and making them part of the collective memory. Writing, in *Anam*, is a relentless effort at re-creating what has been lost or falsified. The text becomes a platform to speak what is not possible to do in the conventional structures. As the novel reveals, narrative is not a simple means of communicating events, but is, instead, an interpretive process with a goal of comprehending and restructuring trauma. Characters are not only written to study the past but to unravel it and re-read it through the lens of the present. This is in line with the conception of writing as coming to terms with trauma as proposed by Caruth. Only through retelling the traumatic event can it be comprehended. Therefore, writing in the novel is an act of knowledge like it is an act of resistance.

Furthermore, the text in *Anam* is also directly associated with the problem of power. It aims to counter the official histories of the past, which generally overlook victims. By rewriting history, the text involves the experiences of marginalized individuals and this allows the plurality of voices and visions to emerge.

Therefore, writing can be used as a means of resharing symbolic power. By whom a voice is given to persons deprived. This resistant aspect is also enhanced through the use of documents and letters in the novel since they are reused in a new story format which exposes their omissions and prejudices. The document, rather than such evidence of the truth, is an object of deconstruction. Where its weaknesses of reflection on reality are shown. This represents a critical consciousness of the kind of discourse that history is and underlines the fact that truth is not a given but a narrative and can be rewritten. On the contrary, language

is an important part of this resistance action since it is employed as an instrument to reclaim identity and challenge alienation. The effort to reclaim cultural belonging is reflected in writing in a particular language, or in a blend of languages. Simultaneously coming to the terms with the reality of exile. This language conflict adds to the obstinate nature of the text. In the place where language is negotiation between the past and the present, the self and the other. This opposing aspect can be traced in the novel where it is mentioned that writing is a healing process: writing is to recover what has been silenced (Dao, 2024).

The literary writing is emphasized as a way of bringing back to life that which has been silenced. The importance of narrative in interpreting trauma can also be illustrated by the fact that it is only through telling that the past can start assuming a form. This conforms to the fact that narrative is the channel in which trauma is familiar as stated by Caruth. Within the context of opposing forgetting, the novel shows that the memory is impervious to erasing in the form of writing, showing the role of writing in maintaining collective memory. Breaking down of documents is also present in the passages, which mention the drawbacks of the official story, stating that archives are not the repository of the entire truth, but rather the pieces constructed by power (Dao, 2024). What enhances the indispensable nature of writing as resistance to hegemonic discourses. It is made evident that writing in *Anam* novel is more than an act of expression, it is an act of resistance, which aims to reclaim voice, deconstruct trauma, and rewrite history. The narration helps restructure the traumatic experience out of silence into a discourse that can be interpreted, and the characters have the option of reconstructing themselves. According to the theory proposed by Caruth, one can say that writing is the main instrument of comprehending and grappling with trauma. It enables the text to be resistant to forgetting and recreate memory on a wider horizon of humans and criticality.

9. Results

The findings made of the analysis of Dao's *Anam* novel is a condensed version of the theoretical and practical framework as a whole. Which explored trauma, memory and narrative in a postcolonial setting. These findings indicate a complicated psychological experience/literary representation interaction. The findings can be condensed into a set of narrowed points that identify the nature of the research problem:

- Trauma is introduced as a delayed event, one that is not comprehended at the time it takes place, but is revealed by the recurring and intermittent flashbacks in the story.
- The memory is constructed as a dynamic interpretive process, founded on the reconstruction of the past in the light of the present, and has nothing to do with retrieving it.

- The novel highlights that memory is not an unchanging space, but a dynamic space that is subject to cultural and political circumstances. The disjointed narrative form, i.e. the division of time and multiplicity of voices, is the manifestation of the chaos of the psychological experience as the consequence of trauma.
- The novel connects both personal trauma and group history, personal experience is only a part of a general story of colonialism and exile.
- Writing is a form of resistance, and it is used to recover voice, rewrite history and form a new identity when faced with marginalization. Such conclusions demonstrate that the *Anam* is not confined to the representation of trauma, but it repeats it in an elaborate context of narration, where memory, identity, history converge to create a critical literary discourse, which attempts to comprehend the human experience in a wider context.

These results show that the novel of *Anam* is not constrained in its expression of trauma but it is replicated in the context of a complicated narrative, where memory, identity, and history intersect, creating a critical literary discourse that tries to comprehend the human experience in its larger context.

10. Conclusion

This paper has shown that the novel *Anam* by Dao is an advanced model of modern literature. Which deals with the issue of trauma and memory in a multi-level and complex narrative. This has been demonstrated in the analytical reading, based on shock theory. Trauma is not brought as an event happening in the past, but as a delayed experience that is reflected in memory in the form of flashbacks that are not in a linear manner, but occur intermittently. Which shows its character not at once digestible. It was also demonstrated in the study that memory in the novel is not a static retrieval mechanism, but a dynamic interpretive mechanism. Which revitalises the past with reference to the present, which makes it play a leading part in revitalising history.

The personal narrative in this regard overlaps with documentary forming a hybrid narrative space that rewrites history in other than official discourses. It shows the conflict between truth and fiction. In addition, the paper has pointed out that the discontinuous narrative framework, such as the disintegration of time, the multi-voices, and the loss of logical flow is a direct indication of the disruption of consciousness caused by the traumatic experience. This disjointing is not merely an aesthetic device, but an intentional storytelling scheme. Which tries to capture the intricacy of the human experience within the realms of violence and exile.

Conversely, the novel exhibited a strong interrelation between personal trauma and communal past. Where personal experience is incorporated into a wider story associated with post-colonial situations. In this respect, the identity is constructed at a precarious site, where there is a continual bargaining between memory and belonging. This is an indication of the vulnerability of the self before historical changes. Last, this paper affirms that writing in *Anam* is not just a tool of expression, but it is also an act of resistance that attempts to give voice back and break the silence of history.

The literary account of it does not simply reflect the trauma, it is an attempt to re-write it. And clearing new horizons of critical comprehension, which strengthens the place of modern literature as a place of re-evaluation of the relationship between the individual, society and history. In this respect, it can be stated that the novel of *Anam* is an example of the possibility of literature to understand deep human experiences. And replicating them in a narrative form that indicates their intricacy, which confirms the significance of critical research in exposing the concealment of the multifacetedness of literary work today.

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