

Tribhuvan University

Traumatic Experiences in the Selected Stories of Katherine Mansfield

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Traumatic Experiences in the Selected Stories of Katherine Mansfield” submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus, by Ishwar Shrestha has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee:

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Abstract

The selected stories; "Fly," "The Woman at the Store," "Daughter of late Colonel," and "The Canary" vividly depict the traumatic life of Katherine Mansfield after the World War I and the periphery. The people were badly traumatized due to the loss of their near and dear, alienation and scarcity. In the time of Mansfield, the psychological life of the people was trouble. People were attempting to escape from the traumatic life. The memory and obsession had badly haunted them in their life by which their life was unable to run smoothly.

The characters of the stories suffer from the loss of their family members and relatives, betrayal, bad memories, alienation and suffering. They try to get out of the bad situation but their suffering does not get over, they cannot get relief from suffering and then they are beset with their traumatic experiences.

The present research on the selected stories attempt to show vivid portrayal of the traumatic experience of Mansfield and the English people in specific. The stories identify war and its destruction and frustrated life where spirituality is defeated in surge of the materialism leading toward the traumatic dread. Here, Mansfield portrays and explores the doomed way of human psyche and the dark side of human life which is reflected in the form of flash backs, nightmares and other repeated phenomena.

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Introduction: Trauma and Katherine Mansfield's Stories

Trauma is a unique experience that can and must not be generalized. Trauma refers to an emotional wound or shock that creates substantial, lasting damage to the psychological development of a person, often leading to neurosis. It is an event or series of events or context that is emotionally overwhelming and depressing. The individual feels helpless or powerless to control the event or situation. Trauma is used mostly in medicine and psychology. But, there is a current effort to borrow the concept of trauma from medicine and psychiatry and to introduce it into sociological theory and even in literature. Trauma leads to great distress and disruption. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* has defined the word trauma as: "A deeply distressing experience, physical injury, emotional shock following to the medic". The *American Heritage College Dictionary* defines trauma as:

A serious injury or shock to the body, a form violence or an accident” and relating to psychiatry the dictionary defines trauma as “an emotional wound or shock that creates substantial lasting damage to the psychological development of a person (1439).

Originated from the Latin, meaning ‘wound,’ trauma is widely used to refer to emotional shock following a stressful event or, more generally, to an experience that is deeply distressing. In this case trauma refers to a psychological rather than a physical wound. It overwhelms an individual’s ability to use normal coping mechanisms to adapt to a situation. It disrupts an individual’s frame of reference for example, beliefs about themselves and the world. Disruptive behaviors of the characters are presented as the

results of shocking events in their lives. Deaths and loss of their near and dear due to war, violence, and terrorism and so on are the primary causes of trauma. Caruth describes trauma as the response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flashbacks, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomenon. Moreover, about trauma, Cathy Caruth generalizes as: "Trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events, in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, and uncontrolled receptive occurrence of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (181).

Trauma results from the sudden and unexpected adversary events that threaten the psychic condition of people. The understanding of trauma has frequently been dominated by interpretations rooted in the psychoanalytic tradition. According to this approach, defense mechanisms are a key issue and successful therapy requires bringing the experience out into the open-its articulation. Furthermore, Robert Urnaso in *Measuring Trauma* shows as:

Psychological impact is discussed, not physical trauma or injury as such. However, the boundaries between events and their effects often overlap, and physical trauma that leaves a lasting psychological impact also qualifies in the context dealt with. To ensure clarity, it is important for the purposes of this study that a distinction be drawn between trauma and traumatic events (48).

Freudian psychoanalysis provided a model of traumatic subjectivity and various accounts about the effect of trauma and various accounts about the effect of trauma and memory. Feminism generated not only the crucial political context but also a model of community

for speaking about forms of physical and sexual abuse that have been borrowed by subsequent 'survivors' groups. The problem of trauma is not simply of destruction but also, fundamentally, an enigma of survival. It is only in recognizing traumatic experience as a paradoxical relation between destructiveness and survival that we can also recognize the legacy of incomprehensibility at the heart of catastrophic experience. Freud uses the term latency in "*Beyond the Pleasure*" to describe a painful event not inflicted to the body but to the mind: the psychical breaking of defenses becomes thus a psychic one. All Freud's thinking on trauma manifests the ambivalence regarding the significance of the historical events. Freud talks about 'sexual trauma' in *Studies in Hysteria* mentioning sexuality and sexual abuse as the causes of trauma. He also talks about 'War trauma' relating it with world war I. Freud's early theory that historical woman suffered from memories of sexual abuse did match the traumatic phenomenon of soldiers who too suffered from memories of an overwhelming event that they had been unable to cognitively register at the time it happened.

The trauma theory has aroused a vivid interest among the cultural and literary theorists. The reason behind why trauma theory has begun to drag the attention of theorist pushes us to look at popular culture and mass media obsessed by repetitions of violent disaster. The trauma theory has aroused a vivid interest among the cultural and literary theorists. The reason behind why trauma theory has begun to drag the attention of theorist pushes us to look at popular culture and mass media obsessed by repetitions of violent disaster. AS James Berger shows:

The successions of *Die Hard*, *Terminations*, and *Robocop's*, as well as *Nightmares on Elm street*, disease and epidemic films, and now the return

of the “classic” disaster films and of twisters and turbulence and the repeated sequence of miniapocalypses within each films at “real life” cop shows : and at the news itself, that never exhausted source of pure horror (571).

Trauma is generally resulted from loss, denial, maladjustment, nostalgia and identity crisis of the characters. Characters’ anxiety is rooted in his painful past and the toxic relationship with family members. Traumatic past of the characters cannot be erased from their life as a result it has great effects in their present life. The cultural loss of the city is also related with its degraded past. They become selfish and selfishness and dissatisfaction becomes the main cause of their trauma.

Jennifer J. Freyd discusses about betrayal trauma. Betrayal trauma occurs when the people or institutions on which a person depends for survival significantly violate that person’s trust .When psychological trauma involves betrayal, the victim may be less aware or less able to recall the traumatic experience because to do so will likely lead to confrontation or withdrawal by the betraying caregiver, threatening a necessary attachment relationship and thus the victim’s survival. “The more a victim is dependent on the perpetrator, the more power the perpetrator has over the victim in a trusted and intimate relationship, the more the crime is one of betrayal ,Betrayal by a trusted caregiver is the core factor in determining amnesia"(1). She believes that traumas which involve betrayal leave serious wounds in the victims. That the traumas more likely to be forgotten are those in which betrayal is a fundamental component.

The concept of trauma itself originates from Freud's work in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, where he demonstrates that the patient's inner conflict, motivated by a traumatic event, would become an outer reality through the 'acting out' of internal stories. Furthermore, Caruth says:

In its most general definition, trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the responses to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena (156).

The recent level of the traumatic theory got due to the deviational transformation in the concept of Freud. Scholar Caruth has been success to put the trauma theory to this level. The trauma theory is now produced as more utilizing contemporary theory. To clarify more about trauma he says trauma as the result of overwhelming experiences that cannot be removed easily.

Sztompka defines cultural trauma in *Culture Trauma* as: "the culturally defined and interpreted shock to the cultural tissue of a society, and presents a model of the traumatic sequence, describing typical conditions under which cultural trauma emerges and evolves" (449). He further defines it as:

The condition of cultural disorientation, accompanied by social concern and expressed by intensified emotional, intellectual, organizational activism, provides a necessary background for the cultural trauma to appear. It is by no means a sufficient condition. Precipitating traumatizing situations or events, and cultural reinterpretations of these, are the next stages of the traumatic sequence. (456)

Assuming that collective trauma is a concept referring to very diverse traumatic events, one may albeit with reverse, agree with the statement that a given situation may be traumatic in one socio-cultural context and non-traumatic in another at least about the initiation of the reflexive process of memory. As Caruth says the cultural process of collective trauma is not restricted to the psychological dynamics of mechanisms of defense and adaptation – ‘dealing’ with trauma or ‘working through’ trauma. A traumatic event must be associated with a strong negative affect that accompanies defining a tragedy, shame, a collective catastrophe, in order for it to have a traumatic impact." (40–41). Furthermore Cathy says:

Trauma has these features: revolution, racial riots; forced migration or deportation, ethnic cleansing; genocide, extermination, mass murder; acts of terrorism or violence; assassination of the political leader, resignation of a high-ranking official; opening secret archives and revealing the truth about the past; revisionist interpretation of national heroic tradition; collapse of an empire, lost war (452).

Here, the central idea for psychoanalysis is the traumatic event and its aftermath at the same time. But again Freud changes his focus from biological urge toward equilibrium which he then theorized as the ‘death drive’. Freud’s elaboration of the concept of ‘latency’ of how memory of a traumatic event can be lost over a time is a challenging task of symptomatic event. Berger defines the term ‘latency’ as “memory of traumatic events which can be lost over time but then regained in a symptomatic form when triggered by some similar events”(3). If repression, in trauma, is repeated by latency, this

is significant in so far as its blankness-the space of unconsciousness – is paradoxically what precisely preserves the event in its literality.

By the same token of why trauma theory has become popular and inevitable makes us look at the preoccupation with family dysfunctions, child abuse, incest, spousal abuse in the media, the most strikingly on the talk show circuit. There appears to be the sense both that family is the only hope for curing all social ills and that the family is “damaged beyond hope”(571). The survivor is a kind of “black box”, a source of final knowledge of authority those is the interest in family breakdown and violence comes the interest of enigmatic figure of survivor, the one who has faced the catastrophe and can tell us what it is like. Over the past fifteen years there has been an enormous growth in the interest in eyewitness accounts and testimonies of all kinds: by victims of child abuse, holocaust survivors, survivor of near death experiences.

One of the popular critic Dominick LaCapra in *Writing History, Writing Trauma* talks about two related goals: to intervene in and clarify some of the recent public controversies regarding holocaust representation to the trauma theory and it's cultural transmission is extraordinarily lucid and insightful. In his theory of trauma focuses the three psychoanalytic topics: acting out verses working through, the return of the repressed and the semantic of transference. A traumatic historical event as LaCapra argues, “tends to be repressed and then to return in forms of compulsive repressed”(571). LaCapra is concerned primarily with the return of the repressed as discourse, rather than with physical returns such as the genocidal repetitions in Cambodia and Bosnia. Lacapra is a trauma theorist, who has proposed some of the essential constituents of trauma.

According to him, in the structure of traumatic experience the repressed is said to have

returned in an uncontrollably wild way. The victim of trauma while undergoing traumatic experience works as if he or she is a puppet of his hidden urges and impulses. He or she hardly becomes the agent of his or her own experience instead of pursuing for certain creative and fresh venture, the victim of trauma repeats the similar things as though he or she is too compulsive to do it.

The short story "The Fly" is deeply concerned with traumatic psychology of the main characters Woodsfield and Boss. This story has its awe-inspiring moments, its spectral moments' of fly that has fallen into inkpot. This moment in the life of the boss takes place just after the boss gets his son's photograph that died six years ago. He is not constant in his thinking and actions. He involves in death of fly which makes him forget trauma of his son. Though he is involved in business, he is regularly haunted by the memory of his son. 'The Fly' is a text haunted by an absence, absent of son, loss and isolation.

In another story, "The Canary," the narrator narrates her destitute and lonely condition. She feels so attached in love with the canary that she is unable to let him go despite his passing. She is rejected by her family and friends'. She atones her loneliness with canary. It is as though the narrator lived each day just to talk to the canary and hear him sing. She appears to live a relatively lonely life with very little or no company. The three men who stay temporarily with her consider her to be strange because of her affection for the canary but this does not bother the narrator. She is able to dismiss the opinion of others when it comes to the canary showing an internal strength. There is also no doubting that the narrator is exceptionally sad since the canary has passed away. His singing cheered her up and his presence took away the narrator's loneliness. She seems to

accept that she will be forever sad and lonely not only because the canary has died but because sadness and loneliness according to the narrator .She will inevitably always feel some type of sadness though she may not necessarily know what is driving the sadness. She tries to get out of her loneliness and trauma but becomes unable.

“The Daughters of the Late Colonel” is a story of Josephine and Constantia whose father has recently died. After living a lonely life dominated by one person, their father, they are now unable to run their life smoothly. They are in condition of isolation and uncertainty. There is no one to help them to find a boy for their marriage. They remember their mother badly who had died in Ceylon .They are in a pitiable condition to conceive of a new life, marriage, selling the house. Even getting rid of their maid is something, but seems unable to act on. Even though they feel they don’t need her any more. She too scares them. They suffer a lot to get rid from the trauma of their father’s death.

In the story “The Woman at The Store”, Jo, Hin and the narrator are riding horses, and then they stop at a store where Hin went four years ago and had experienced of different kinds of kisses. They are greeted by a woman who appears to be mentally unstable and tired. Jo and Hin joke about the woman referring 'how to kiss one hundred and twenty-five different ways'. They start to get drunk and Jo and the woman start 'kissing feet' under the table, slowly growing closer as they get more intoxicated. The woman seems to be fed up with her loneliness and has a pitiable life of being tired. As she gets more drunk the woman claims that her husband often beats her, forces sex on her, goes away often s for months at a time and that she is alone and isolated living in poverty. Her daughter threatens to draw the picture she's not allowed to and gets a smack

and a stern warning from her mother. This story reveals the condition of loneliness, isolation and traumatic status of the woman.

Different critics have analyzed the story from the multiple perspectives which preserves the universal appealing writing of Mansfield. However, she is claimed to be one of the truest story writer of the world but many critics like Peter Dave have given skeptic eyes on its trustworthiness. He says:

Throughout the work both Mansfield herself describes how courageous her characters are and how much they work for the existence. However, I didn't really see any evidence of this - as far as I could see characters were driven by their selfish self-interest and nothing else. In fact they come across as a selfish and not very pleasant personality (94).

Dave says that the characters in the story are more courageous rather than we find in the real life. He shows his skeptic view about the reality of the story. The characters seem to be driven by their own interest and wish. The characters are shown as the failure to cope with other members in the society.

Barry Lewis points out that many bizarre scenes in the story "Canary" embody displacement and condensation and he argues: "those psychological aspects of dream work are equivalent of 'metonymy' and 'metaphor' in the literature" (105). Lewis pinpoints abundant metaphorical examples of displacement in story. Regarding identity crisis, he further says:

Canary is about the elusiveness of identity and the treachery of memory, regret and the hope of redemption. Though its atmosphere is dreamlike, it

actually is hyper-realistic, portraying with enigmatic precision of a very high order "real" life as each of us actually experiences it. Like all truly important literature, it raises more questions than it answers (107).

Lewis explains the story "Canary" as the story of identity crisis and the memory of traumatic condition. He says that the story raises more questions rather than it answers. He may have noted to the traumatic conditions of the characters. He signifies the story as hyper reality.

Another critic Wexin Putush in *Searching for Femininity* makes a point about "The Woman at the Store" and analyzes as the traumatic condition of the woman. He analyzes the story from the point of view of feminism and show the pitiable condition of females at that time. He further says:

It does not matter whether you are a feminist or not, if there is a crime committed against humanity then as a human being you have to seal the fate of the oppressor and feel and try to assuage the pain of the oppressed. The woman becomes the victim of the wrong time, wrong place and wrong selection she made (101).

Putush analyses the story from the point of view of feminism. The characters are in big trouble due to the maltreatment by the males. The woman is in pitiable condition. She has wasted her youth. She provided different kinds of kisses but now she is not cared by anyone. She was just used as material and she is struggling alone in the society.

Smith Paplawaski opines about the story “Daughters of late Colonel”. He explores the traumatic condition of the daughters and says that the girls are traumatized due to the memory of their late father. He says:

There isn't really a plot? As such for the style, for it is a biography, so of course it just records her life. But her experiences are extraordinary for the western readers that this book was aimed at. It is difficult to say much about the biography itself and pick out examples of her experiences because these should be left to be discovered, by the reader. (75).

Here, Smith talks about the realities of the story writer that the plot of the story is relevant to Mansfield. In the story "Daughters of Late Colonel," the daughters are traumatized due to the loss of their dear father. Their dear father's death has caused a big traumatic condition in their life. They feel more traumatized because without their father, their life cannot go smoothly.

Wai-Chew Sim has written “Fly” is “most openly experimental story and most of the commentary on it is inflected with psychoanalytic concepts, although a, so to speak, full-fledged treatment has yet to be tabled” (134). John Carey describes “This is a story about stress, a problem of epidemic proportions in our culture that modern fiction largely ignores” (106). It is “a deep psychological investigation” (74). It is also praised for its creation of dreamlike different world in which people can enjoy forgetting their pains and sufferings.

As a victim of memory and past, characters forget everything and as a result they are obliged to live a traumatic life. Why the characters are not happy? Why they do not act normally? Why they are separated from their family members? Why they cannot talk normally? These are the some of the issues the researcher wants to give. These stories have not been touched yet by the trauma theory. So, the researcher tries to find out the solution of the above question utilizing the tool of "Trauma" limiting other sides than memory, betrayal and alienation.

Traumatic Experiences in the Selected Stories of Katherine Mansfield

The present research examines the representation of traumatic life of characters in "Fly" by Mansfield. The overall plot structure is tight together through the theme of trauma as all the characters in the story have to undergo traumatic condition of different enormity. It incorporates the frustrated activities of Boss during his conversation with Woodifield. As a victim of amnesia, he forgets everything and as a result he is obliged to live a traumatic life. He is in the wrong place at wrong time and he cannot cope the problems of his life and does insistent to commit suicide. Moreover there is misunderstanding among old and young generations. Parents measure their children through their achievement and success, on the basis of which they provide their love and affection. This becomes the sole cause of trauma not only for the family of Boss but also for the families of Woodifield. Thus, the story of Fly revolves around tension between and among characters and search for love and affection of the parents through personal achievement and success.

The character, Mr. Woodifield, is talking to his friend, referred to in the story as 'the boss,' a wealthy man whose son who died in the war. Woodifield is struggling to remember the reason why he came to talk with the boss, which he seems to remember after he drinks the fine whiskey he's offered. He then mentions his own deceased son and that of the boss. When Woodifield departs, leaving the boss to contemplate his dead son, the fly of the title finally enters the story. After the fly gets stuck in an ink pot on his desk, the boss helps the creature out, noticing how it dries itself. However, once the fly has recovered, the boss drops a blob of ink on it. After admiring the fly's courage, he drops another blob of ink on the insect. The boss watches the fly dry itself again, although with less vigor than it did the first time. By the third drop of ink, the fly has been severely weakened, and dies.

The very beginning of "Fly" arouses traumatic situation of the characters. Boss arrives at his office, which strikes him as "claustrophobic" and "gloomy". Nobody is there to welcome him. In the absurdist situation, he forgets his commitments and details of his stay at the house. The claustrophobic aura of the opening scene is supported by the rest of the text in which the protagonist finds himself either in gloomy interiors, narrow alleys or in empty, desolate spaces, which are shrouded in darkness. The setting is often endowed with elements of the gothic, such as the ubiquitous reign of darkness, forsaken sites, let alone the scenes set at the cemetery. The disturbing atmosphere of the house is intensified by the aura of an oppressive system which appears to be in control of it. These situations of the story also support the theme of trauma.

Trauma in "Fly" emerges with the character's past activities and their present responses. Their reaction to the unsatisfactory past hampers their present life. The present

plight and predicament of the characters is ridden with the sense of loss or some kind of torturous life they lived. Cathy Caruth describes trauma as: "a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event or events."(115). Trauma is inextricably linked with forgetting, as traces of the original traumatic experience often stay hidden beneath the surface of memory. The memory of trauma is narrated differently to conventional routes of recall, and often takes the form of "bodily sensations, behavioral re-enactments, nightmares, and flashbacks"(115). Trauma takes on a 'haunting quality' where it continues to possess the subject 'with its insistent repetitions and returns' (12). While trauma is often discussed in relation to violent events that have a harrowing outcome on the individual's body or mind, there are also traumatic experiences that deal with a more pervasive sense of absence or loss, and 'traumas of identity' that tell the subject that they are not who they think they are. Many of Mansfield's characters experience this more pervasive sense of loss, often compounded by occurrences of involuntary memories as well as their own acts of self-deception.

Theme of trauma in the writings of Mansfield is interwoven with the sentiments of loss, denial, maladjustment, nostalgia and identity crisis. These traumatogenic factors give haunting wound for people. The intensity of trauma in the story is very high. In an interview with Maria Antonaccio for *Wasafiri* in 1995, Mansfield talked about the link between a lost equilibrium in childhood and the imperative to express and address the lack of balance through art, and, in Mansfield's case, through writing stories as: "It's a strange thing to do to write stories. You don't, unless there's a very strong reason. . . . It's all about having some equilibrium that's been lost. Sometimes it's associated with some horrific thing, like being abused as a child, but often it's not as blatant. . . . Perhaps it's

because most of us do have something wrong that we're drawn to the arts, to books and films"(22-3). In the story , "Fly," we can find the characters in troubled due to the deep wound that has been rooted in their memory of their sons' loss I the war. The horrific things are the loss of their near and dear in their life.

"Fly" is an unusual tale of displacement, which presents the reader with a series of improbable temporal retentions and pretensions as Boss, the protagonist, negotiates the disturbingly permeable borders of past and present, self and other, in an imaginary, though ostensibly an unnamed Central American city. The story exemplifies the trauma fiction aesthetic in a number of ways: in its refusal of closure; in its discontinuous temporality; in its representation of the trans-generational transmission of trauma; and in its structuring of trauma as an unexpressive event only accessible through belated repetition as Caruth shows: "in the nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor" (4). We know from Caruth's definition what happens to victims of trauma, but "Fly" is a case study in the outcome for those who inflict it. Such infliction is traumatic in itself, the perpetrator equally incapable of processing the events as the survivor. Unwittingly suffering and storytically unable to turn, Boss constitutes an insulated mystery in plain sight. From the description of Boss's activities as stated by Barry Lewis traumatic life can be traced:

Boss, is the victim of an inexplicable amnesia. He arrives at his office, without a schedule. Boss grapples with the complications of his schedule, incidental characters--the son and Woodifield--impinge on Boss's attention until it slowly becomes evident that they are not wholly unfamiliar to him, that they are, in fact, his wife and clerks (104).

Mansfield's "Fly" insists upon the magnitude of power our traumas possess over our waking lives; whatever illusions of functionality we may impose upon ourselves and others, we are all always engaged in smoothing over the cracks where our traumas lie. To make matters worse, the characters populating the story are self-conscious about their own nostalgia, sabotaging even the security offered by an imaginary past.

Trauma refers to an event, series of events, or context that is emotionally overwhelming. The individual feels helpless or powerless to control the event or situation. Trauma, after all, is an incomprehensible event, and defies all categorization and representation. If there must be any kind of representation, Caruth calls for modes that are as unsettling as the event itself. Similarly, Walter Benn Michaels postulates that the horrors of trauma can only be expressed if language does "not [transmit] the normalizing knowledge of horror but horror itself" (268). Since trauma is defined as a radical break with previous references of which the symptoms make themselves known belatedly, LaCapra counts "writing trauma" as one of those potentially recurring symptoms. Gradually, writing trauma allows a victim to come to terms with the traumatic past and thus forms an elementary component of the healing process. In literary terms as Lacapra shows: "writing trauma can achieve articulation in different combinations and hybridized forms" (186). But the actual representation of trauma is impossible as it has multiple manifestations in the same situation.

Cathy Caruth points out in *Unclaimed Experience* that there is delayed effect to trauma, and through "its delayed appearance and its belated address" the wound attempts to communicate to us "a reality or truth that is not otherwise available" (4). It is interesting that the word wound was the original meaning for trauma (3). The delayed

mental effect of trauma leads to a haunting of the mind, where the wound of a memory persists throughout an individual's life. Both of them have spent a large part of their lives striving to fix the wound that still causes them pain and refuses to let them go, but they ultimately fall under the weight of public expectation that accompanies their huge ambitions.

The characters in "Fly", receive very little or no consolation by the end of the story. It is the memory of their own respective wounds and the need to fix the wound or make some kind of compensation to comfort the pain of the wound that drives them in their professions. Trauma seeks the disintegration of family relationships, culture and even civilization due to various reasons. It finds out the reasons and possible consequences of clash among family members when there is misunderstanding among family members mainly old and young generation:

Characters in "Fly" have some kind of emotional and psychological wounds or traumas to deal with. The son of the Boss, the aspiring young who is hampered by the burden of his parents' high expectations and their perpetual disappointment in him, longs to break free from the shackles of his parents and the limited city they live in to pursue his military training in a less stifling environment. Later he dies in the war. The fly can be seen to symbolise the young men who were sent to fight in the war and who like the fly died. The pen that the boss uses to drop the ink on the fly may also have some symbolic significance. It is possible that just as the boss uses the pen to drop the ink on the fly and finally kills it. It is important that despite the boss feeling sorrow about the loss of his son, later in the story when he begins to experiment with the fly, he easily forgets him.

"The Canary" is a simple story about an older woman who makes her living from cooking meals for three young men. The most important thing in her life is her pet canary. She is desperate and alone. She has lost her husband. She forgets her miserable past looking after canary. This small piece of domestic sadness is reinforced by the fact that she is aware that the three male lodgers call her "the Scarecrow", but reassures herself that "It doesn't matter. Not in the least". Nevertheless, without the bird in its cage, she now feels an inchoate sense of loneliness and sadness which she can neither articulate nor explain to herself.

Fryed opines about "Trauma of betrayal". A victim finds out he has been lied to, manipulated, or exploited by someone else. What he believed to be true is false. The betrayer hurts someone who is loyal to him. A bond forms between the two entities. Fear keeps the victim in the relationship because of perceived losses, if he leaves. This can be the loss of a job, money, status, affection, protection, security, long-term relationships, the admiration of others, and the loss of self-respect. She further states:

The role of betrayal in betrayal trauma theory was initially considered an implicit but central aspect of some situations. If a child is being mistreated by a caregiver he or she is dependent upon, this is by definition betrayal, whether the child recognizes the betrayal explicitly or not. Indeed, the memory impairment and gaps in awareness that betrayal trauma theory predicted were assumed to serve in part to ward off conscious awareness of mistreatment in order to promote the dependent child's survival goals (1).

Many people who face First World War suffer from alienation. Crisis of identity remains in them; they are suffered from nostalgia, and inferiority. The woman, as a consumer of her own pain in her old age, explains that she has a “pain not and emotional pain or wound of heart bout simply a wound” (84). Her condition is mentioned as:

I loved him. How I loved him ! Perhaps it does not matter so very much what it is one loves in this world. But love something one must. Of course there was always my little house and the garden, but for some reason they were never enough. Flowers respond wonderfully, but they don't sympathies. Then I loved the evening star. Does that sound foolish? I used to go into the backyard, after sunset, and wait for it until it shone above the dark gum tree (60).

The woman's trauma is associated with her psychological pain after the death of her husband. She got never ending and never healing pain due to which her mental as well as psychological pain is increased. She is emotionally paralyzed, physically exhausted and psychologically tired. Her hopelessness is paralleled with that of caged bird. She imagines the reconciliation with other people .This imagination is resulted from her frustrated mentality. Her only way to solve his problem is to improve her relationship with the people and live a peaceful life.

Freyd argues trauma as never ending psychological wound. Past trauma can make one more vulnerable to being betrayed. After a while, the needs and well-being of the betrayed is sacrificed for the happiness of the other. Addiction to the betrayal bond can develop. She writes, “Betrayal becomes trauma when fear and terror are present and the

body shifts into an ‘alarm state.’ (20). The person betrayed feels unsafe and anxiety is produced as he remains in the relationship. To stay creates pain, to go creates more pain. She further claims: "Some experts say that the hostage regresses to, perhaps, a state of infancy; the captive must cry for food, remain silent, and exist in an extreme state of dependence. In contrast, the perpetrator serves as a mother figure protecting her child from a threatening outside world, including law enforcement’s deadly weapons" (56).

Trauma is a *betrayal* in the sense of breaking trust and revealing. When it comes down there is a betrayal of trust that threatens rationality as expressed as national or family belonging turns out to be unreliable.

The woman becomes wounded throughout her life and at the same time her psychological trauma becomes even deeper. She is not just lonely, though she is plenty lonely. People can be lonely without also being alienated. The loneliness is not the cause of her aloneness. She makes a conscious choice to be alone from other people and, ultimately, it is clear she has made a conscious choice to alienate herself from her mother. The consequence of that choice is her belief that there is only one way out of being alone for the rest of her life

Another critic Donna Fromberg in the text “Trouble in the Family” argues that Betrayal attacks the very foundation that makes us who we are. It damages our bodies, our minds, and our spiritual beings. A parent teaches a child all about good relationship skills, that the world is a safe place most of the time, and goodness can be found around him. This builds the basic building blocks for a successful life. When a child is sexually abused, his sense of security, safety, trust, reliability, goodness, and self-identity is

severely damaged. He learns that pain occurs often for no good reason, that no one cares for him or his needs. She further asserts:

The challenge is living with the conflict between the love of analysis and the harm it can do when there is sexual misconduct. I love analysis—it is beautiful, elegant, and poetic. It captures aliveness about human experience that few other theories or practices capture. Although we may wish to only look at the beauties of the theory and the work at its best, our task as practicing analysts and 193) therapists require us to take responsibility for all aspects, both the good and the bad (163).

In “Canary”, the different clusters of families play various roles as extensions or variations of the woman’s history. She has never really had an opportunity to define her identity on her own. She has always either been the woman or the cooking lady. By not establishing a strong identity of her own, she has made unwise choices in the effort to create some semblance of self. This lack of identity results in a Diasporas which steadily increases her entire dissatisfaction with life. The obsession of the woman as is reflected in the following lines:

I remember one night. I had had a very awful dream—dreams can be dreadfully cruel—even after I had woken up I could not get over it. So I put on my dressing-gown and went down to the kitchen for a glass of water. It was a winter night and raining hard. I suppose I was still half asleep, but through the kitchen window, that hadn't a blind, it seemed to me the dark was staring in, spying. And suddenly I felt it was unbearable that I had no one to whom I could say (67).

The woman desperately wishes to make up for what she has lost, and the presence or rather the absence, of her family members, haunts the story. The family members are forever hovering in the background, though almost always in unhappy episodes of her memories, which are replayed through equally anguished relationships between children and her parents.

“The Daughters of the Late Colonel” is an account of the activities and thoughts of two sisters during the week after the death of their dictatorial father. Although the sisters think of themselves as having been extraordinarily busy that week, it is obvious that most of their efforts have been psychological. Naturally, the sisters are preoccupied with the death of their father; they find it difficult to believe that he is really dead and not somewhere waiting to criticize them. In the third section, they are haunted by the deathbed scene, particularly by the fact that he opened only one eye before he died. Accustomed as they are to assuming that everything their father did was significant, generally involving blame for them, the sisters cannot dismiss that single-eyed glare. In fact, they torment themselves with thoughts of his reappearing to scold them for burying him and to go into a fury about the expense of the funeral

Dominick LaCapra says that there are two ways of dealing with mental disturbance one is *acting out* and another is *working through*. If we deal with the term with the way of acting out it is related with recurrence as he says that trauma is a kind of obligation. It is a behavior which the patient repeat compulsorily. People relate the past to present and become unhappy and disturbed. Because of something unpleasant events in their past, they become mentally disturbed and tortured. One event in one situation takes

is connotative meaning. One kind of event gives torture to another episode or situation as he comments:

There are two very broad ways of coming in terms with transference, or with one's transferenceal implication in the object of study: acting out; and working-through. Acting-out is related to repetition, and even the repetition-compulsion - the tendency to repeat something compulsively. This is very clean in the case of people who undergo a trauma. They have not yet fully moved from the past to exist in the present as if they were still fully in the past, with no distance from it (233).

Here, time and again the traumatic events are repeated and gives tortures to us. Those bad dreams are like our wound which gives us pain for the time being. After sometime that fact wound becomes heard. Jessie's trauma is also like this nightmare especially the nightmare of losing the love and his position in the world state. She has the extreme fear of losing the status of the world state. People who have been severely traumatized, it may be impossible to fully transcend acting-out the past. In any case, acting-out should not be seen as a different kind of memory from working-through -- they are intimately related parts of a process. Acting-out, on some level, may very well be necessary, even for secondary witnesses or historians. On a certain level, there's that tendency to repeat. (2)

LaCapra is concerned with historical trauma and how societies come to terms and make sense of these traumas: "A crucial issue with respect to traumatic historical events is whether attempts to work through problems, including rituals of mourning, can viably come to terms with...the divided legacies, open wounds, and unspeakable losses of a dire

past” (698). While LaCapra is not explicitly analyzing performance, societal attempts to repair the social fabric inevitably occupy the space of performance at some point – rituals of mourning being just one of many kinds of performance.

Neither of two sisters could believe that their father wasn't coming back. At the cemetery Josephine had a moment of panic when the coffin was being lowered into the ground. They had not asked their father's permission to do so and she knew he would find out about it and be furious. She thought she heard his walking stick thumping against his bedroom floor in irritation. “You two girls had me *buried!*” (56). Everyone else at the funeral seemed to see the burial as a natural turn of events but Josephine knew her father would find a way to blame her and Constantia, even for his death. The two women's work is made harder by the people in their house. Nurse Andrews looked after their father up to his death. After a day or two they realize what a chore it is to have a guest at this difficult time: "But it was a bother. It meant they had to have regular sit-down meals at the proper times....And meal-times now that the strain was over were rather a trial." They also have to cope with their maid and cook, who is disrespectful as well as bad at her job. When they ask her to put jam on the table, "Kate knelt and burst open the sideboard, lifted the lid of the jam-pot, saw it was empty, put it on the table, and stalked off"(87). They also have to respond to sympathy letters. "Josephine had replied to them all, and twenty-three times when she came to "We miss our dear father so much" she had broken down and had to use her handkerchief..."(87). This shows us how difficult it is for them to grapple with everything that is happening, leaving them no time to simply grieve and accept his death.

Josephine relives and repeats her traumatic familial past through her relationship with neighboring. Her original trauma must remain undisclosed and unrepresented. As

Cathy Caruth writes, “Trauma is a repeated suffering of the event, but it is also a continual leaving of its site. The traumatic re-experiencing of the event thus carries with it the impossibility of knowing that first constituted it” (10). In the story, this abandoning of the traumatic site is also figured in part through Josephine’s excessive fear, as she makes her way through the intoxication of fear of her father. Although the story is focalized through Josephine, it would be erroneous to imagine that Constantia, and others are projections of a consciousness desperate to work through a childhood trauma. Rather, it is the trauma that speaks first and that is the central subject of the story.

In the story “The Woman at The Store”, Jo, Hin and the narrator are riding horses, then they stop at a store where Hin went four years ago, joking that a blue-eyed blonde lives there. There they are greeted by a woman who appears to be mentally unstable and disheveled with missing teeth. Jo and Hin joke about the woman referring to how she knows 'how to kiss one hundred and twenty-five different ways'. They start to get drunk and Jo and The Woman start 'kissing feet' under the table, slowly growing closer as they get more intoxicated. The Woman's daughter claims to be drawing a nude picture of the Narrator, saying she watched her bathing earlier. The Narrator is unsettled but the picture is not revealed. As she gets more drunk The Woman claims that her husband often beats her, forces sex on her, goes away often shearing for months at a time and that she is alone and isolated living in poverty. She then leaves and comes back and then goes off again. Her daughter threatens to draw the picture she's not allowed to and gets a smack and a stern warning from her mother.

Trauma can become a condition of everyday life where the subject’s residence in a city that had experienced wars, terrorist attacks, ethnic or communal violence can

trigger a series of narrative repetition of the violence and the traumatic memories associated with it. Memories of a violent past can often obscure the fine line between reality and imagination actuating a sense of confusion and incomprehension. Eyewitness accounts of genocides and other ethnic and communal conflicts testify to this state of delirium indicative of the pervasiveness of assault that stretch beyond the realms of physical to the psychological and cultural.

The woman's working through of his traumatic condition can be observed with her conversation with the narrator, in which her desire for redemption is reflected. In order to feel relaxed and get solace from her past and present traumatic condition, she obsesses with kissing:

No—look here. I can't make it out. It's four years since I came past this way, and I stopped here two days. The husband was a pal of mine once, down the West Coast fine, big chap, with a vo Coast—as pretty as a wax doll. The coach used to come this way then once a fortnight, that was before they opened the railway up Napier way, and she had no end of a time! Told me once in a confidential different ways of kissing!" (113).

Deciding finally to make a choice about her life, she calmly announces early in the story, "I'm going to kill myself" and then single-mindedly goes about the business of setting the household affairs in order (113). She explains the details of running the house to her mother, fends off the older woman's attempts to change her plans, describes how her mother should act after the suicide, and finally goes into her bedroom, locks the door, and shoots herself.

The story is about contemporary anxieties over relationships between private life and public space, individual and community, parents and children, wives and husbands, or even reality and unconsciousness, most importantly, it is about a characters' traumas and anxieties associated with dislocation and disorientation. Perpetually haunted by echoes from other times and spaces, orphaned exiles are thrust into unknown landscapes and communities with no hope of referring to existing codes, rules and customs.

The story dramatizes one of the great contemporary concerns – the neglect of family relationships, with special emphasis on the plight of children deprived of the love of one or both parents, and the aftermath in adult life of such emotional injuries.

Like the woman, her daughter is traumatized due to lack of attention and love from her parents. She too wants to regain his parents' love and affection. But she never becomes successful. Here, the distressing factor causing trauma for many of the characters is the notion that a child has to earn parents' love by means of achieving success. She feels neglected and excluded from her parents' love. The narrator describes her toxic relationship with the woman:

Oh, come on, don't be nasty!" wheedle the kid into showing repulsively vulgar. The creations of a lunatic with a lunatic's cleverness. There was no doubt about it, the kid's mind was diseased. While she showed them to us, she worked herself up into a mad excitement, laughing and trembling, and shooting out her arms "Mamma," she yelled. "Now I'm going to draw them what you told me I never was to now I am"(85).

In this way, this family of the woman is ruined and frustrated. There is no harmony and co-ordination among the family members. Neither there is good relationship between parents nor with their son. Though piano performance is taken as a means of solution, it does not work. All of them are equally traumatized.

Thus, "The Woman at the Store" is the story of unconcealed and unhealed traumatic account of Jessie and other characters, whose life becomes hellish due to loss, denial, maladjustment, nostalgia and identity crisis. There is not coordination, cooperation and mutual feeling among family members, mainly there is generational and conceptual misunderstanding that results conflict and clash and sets foundation for traumatic life.

Conclusion: Working through Trauma in Mansfield's Selected Stories

Trauma is an emotional wound that causes stress or shock. Trauma does not occur only to individuals but also to whole communities and entire nation. The selected stories deal with emotional, psychological, and physical effect and aftereffects of war. The stories sketch the trauma and identity crisis in the society of England. In this regard, the whole novel moves around memory, anger, anxiety and other traumatic phenomenon.

After thorough analysis and interpretation of selected stories from the critical perspective of psychological trauma theory, the researcher comes to conclusion that the present stories shows the traumatic life of people caused due to various reasons mainly the sense of cultural loss, betrayal, misunderstanding among family members, maladjustment to the changing situation, identity crisis and conflict. The stories interweave the traumatic psychology of characters. The traumatic situation of the

characters is supported by fragmented narrative along with gloomy presentation, where characters stay, the ubiquitous reign of darkness, forsaken sites, the scenes of the cemetery and so on. Moreover, the stories incorporate the activities of traumatic condition of the characters.

Selected stories show the strange story of characters who involve in different activities to forget their nasty past. The problems are never really revealed and neither characters involve to resolve it. All the characters try their best to avoid the traumatic situation in their life but they cannot do that. They are deserted from their family and society. They attempt to end detachment and aloofness throughout the stories. But remains same and at last. Woodiefield and the Boss in the story "Fly" cannot get the resolution of forgetting their sons and finally they become helpless. The woman of the store is neglected and alienated from the society and the family. She cannot spend her life smoothly. She is always haunted by the bad situation. She has now been worthless. Josephine and Constantia are frequently traumatized by the loss of their father and they think that their life is difficult due the absence of their father. Likewise the woman in the story "Canary" is also haunted by the alienated and neglected life. She has no one to care her and love her. She is totally alone and frustrated with her traumatic life. Overall the characters cannot improve relationship with family, friends, relatives and neighbors despite several attempts. In this sense, their trauma remains unsolved in the stories. They suffer from indifference, inattention and apathy. Memory of death of their relatives, their alienated, frustrated life, frequently haunts them. They enroll themselves in various activities to forget trauma.

To wrap up, the researcher finds that the characters in the stories are *working through trauma* as explained by Dominick Lacapra. In the process of trauma, the characters are compelled to select either *acting out trauma* or *working through trauma*. In *acting out the trauma*, the characters are compelled to end up their life. They cannot continue the life due to their traumatic life. They cannot tolerate the pain, anxiety and sufferings. Their ultimate way is only suicide. But in *working through trauma*, the character works through trauma. They make their traumatic life as usual and try to spend the remaining life smoothly. Nothing remains except accepting the trauma. So the characters in the stories are *working through trauma*.

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