

The Temporal Structure of Trauma in Sophia K. Apple`s COVID-19: A Gripping Novel Inspired By Real Event

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Abstract

The temporal structure of trauma is the actual embodiment of the whole traumatic experiences which the traumatized individual passes by. That traumatic experience is passing by three periods; these are; Pre-traumatic, Traumatic, and Post-Traumatic. The present paper attempts to shed the lights on the representation of the major traumatic periods of the temporal structure of trauma in Sophia K. Apple`s novel, a novel whose major theme is COVID-19 pandemic and it`s experiences. Hence, the study is going to tackle the story from the traumatic point of view. In other words, the study is aligned within the theoretical framework of the trauma theory.

As for the application of the temporal structure of trauma upon the text, it is a case that is combined to each event thought to involve a traumatic senses, in this case that event which is surely experienced by an individual character, is going to pass by the whole traumatic periods of the temporal of trauma theory. Moreover, the traumatized character himself is going to experience that traumatic journey across the three periods, as if that experience has a start, middle, and an end, in accordance to those three periods.

Then, the study comes up to a conclusion summing up the whole major consequences the paper looks forward to find out.

Keywords: Trauma, The Temporal Structure of Trauma, COVID-19, Pre-Traumatic, Traumatic, Post-Traumatic Moments.

INTRODUCTION

Roger Kurtz in Trauma and Literature suggests that "to understand the temporal structure of trauma (a relation between an earlier event and a latter event rather than an experience residing in a particular event) as governed by fantasy" (Kurtz 28). In other words, the traumatized individual experiences a certain situation that is marked by uncertainty, a case that is unassimilated at the moment of it`s occurrence, though it is responded to whether consciously or unconsciously, but rather, this response which is a response to a haunting power, is going to be delayed till the moment it`s recalled

back later on. The temporal structure of trauma is the manner the traumatic experience is responded to belatedly, hence, consequently, that experience is going to pass by three periods, which are also listed within the key concepts of the trauma theory, these three traumatic moments are the major branches of the temporal structure of trauma, they are: The Pre-traumatic moment, The Traumatic moment, and Post-traumatic moment.

The pre-traumatic moment is the moment that precedes the direct confrontation with the real traumatic experience. The response to such a traumatic condition is relative, i.e. it is

different from one person to another. It depends upon the way the individual responds to that condition, in order to judge that it is deemed traumatic or not, it depends on the manner each one responds to that experience, as Caruth suggests "which may or may not be catastrophic, and may not traumatize everyone equally" (4). Thus, not any circumstance could be deemed as traumatic, because at the end, it is a matter of response, that some might be traumatized, while some others might not.

The traumatic moment, that is, the moment in which the individual definitely confronts the situation of fear that he is already scared of, and hesitated whether to confront it or not. This moment is marked by the direct confrontation between the horrible situation and the individual. In this period, the individual is directly in front of an overwhelming situation, an overwhelming experience. This period is the same period that couldn't be comprehended at the moment of its occurrence, so it is going to be either repressed or belated. To summarize the traumatic moment, it is the confrontation between the individual and the traumatic circumstances (Ibid).

The post-traumatic moment is the moment of the recalling back or the return of what couldn't already be assimilated. It is marked by the "belatedness" as it is termed by Caruth (Ibid 6). In this moment, everything is going to be remembered later on, this process of remembrance is fulfilled either willingly or unwillingly. Because as it is referred before, it is a matter of response, some practice that process of remembrance willingly, while some others not, they do it unwillingly. Those, who unwillingly do so, are going to be haunted by the overwhelming traumatic experience, which is reflected by any means of the traumatic symptoms; hallucinations, nightmares, amnesia, crying, anger and the like.

Here it is unavoidable to elaborate on what comes after the former moment. Because this period is determined by the individual who has been traumatized, whether to heal that wound or to repress, it relies upon the decision he intends to take; either to heal himself, or to repress that traumatic experience. So, if he is

going to repress the traumatic experience, he never leaves far away from the post-traumatic stress disorder, i.e. he will be haunted by the traumatic feelings forever. But if he takes his decision and intends to heal himself, this is a transformation to another period, this is the period of the healing process which is fulfilled by means of narrating everything had occurred, and doing so willingly.

The Temporal Structure of Trauma

As it is already elucidated previously, the temporal structure of trauma implies the three traumatic moments; (pr-traumatic, traumatic, and post-traumatic). Those three branches of the temporal structure of trauma are represented in the novel in one way or another, a case that is suggested by Tosone in *Shared Trauma, Shared Resilience During a Pandemic*, that "... the COVID-19 pandemic has a specific trajectory, which includes a beginning, a middle, and potential end, when a vaccine emerges." (Tosone 102). Accordingly, that trajectory of the pandemic represents the three traumatic moments. In this regard, the series of the events of the novel would pass by that trajectory, which is the temporal structure of trauma.

Roger Kurtz in his *Trauma and Literature* in which he gives his definition in accordance to Freud's concepts, that "to understand the temporal structure of trauma (a relation an earlier and a later event rather than an experience residing in a particular event)" (Kurtz 28). Thus, if to follow the way the temporal structure of trauma is represented in Apple's *COVID-19*, it would be as the following: linking the three traumatic periods with the journey of the pathologist Samantha who is planning to take her rotation of autopsy for three months. Before going any further, it is worth referring that within each case Samantha is called or asked to do autopsy for the infected corpses, she passes by the whole traumatic moments. That is, the moment that precedes the autopsy procedures when she waits, it stands for the pre-traumatic period. The direct confrontation with the dead body in the

morgue, this is the traumatic moment, and the moment she passes by, whether when she takes a shower, sleeping, or recalling the events back, this is the post-traumatic moment. The moments that precede her arrival to the hospital of Hart Island where she is going to be trained for the autopsy, stand for the first traumatic moment in the temporal structure of the theory, that is, the pre-traumatic moment, which is, as it is suggested by Cathy Caruth, that the pre-traumatic moment is the moment that precedes the confrontation with the real traumatic experience directly (Caruth 1). From the first chapter, it is apparently noticed how the narrator implies adjectives and questions that support the sense of panic Samantha has in mind, furthermore, even the five men with her on the boat when she was going there, they are deployed for the sake of worry and anxiety, in the sense that makes her takes fright of what comes after, they are depicted as "rough-looking men" "rough-looking guys" (Apple 15-16). Moreover, they both, Samantha and the five men, have questions in mind, each one questions mentally, for instance, they are "... wondering why an attractive young female was going to Potter's field, a burial site", then the narrator directly suggests that she has similar questions too, "That was the same question Samantha had in her mind Why did she have to go there ? what would she learn about autopsy there? Would she have a decent and safe place to stay?" (Ibid). All of these questions come to Samantha's mind before she reaches to Potter's field in Hart Island where she confronts directly with what she is going to do there. So, since she is afraid of what she is going to do before she arrives, these moments suggest the pre-traumatic period, but basically, what causes fear for her at the moment is the recent spread of COVID-19, and that is suggested in each chapter of the novel where each chapter and event are dated exactly with day, month and year. She realizes that she is going to deal with corpses of dead bodies, but she isn't sure whether they are infectious with the virus or not, that is the main reason that makes her in such a dreadful case, this case again, is the pre-traumatic moment.

The author deploys certain techniques and signs that shape the traumatic scene, like the deployment of the rain in the second chapter "The chilling rain was now pouring, adding to her misery" (ibid 22). This deployment adds a kind of traumatic and dreadful atmosphere to the fictional event in the novel. In *Trauma and Visuality in Modernity*, Lisa Saltzman and Eric Rosenberg insist on the matter of "metaphors of visuality and image, arguing that "these metaphors are unavoidable (carriers) of the unrepresentable" (Rosenberg and Saltzman xii). The very metaphor deployed in the present novel is the rain, which according to the argument of the two, works as a metaphor standing for the unrepresented situation of Samantha. What is unrepresented in that case, is Samantha's sense, thus the metaphoric deployment of the rain is an unavoidable carrier of it. Even Samantha's waiting for Dr. Falkner to come to the autopsy, could be regarded as a pre-traumatic moment, since she has no idea whom she would confront, she still has no imagination what kind of corpses she would do autopsy for, are they COVID-19 cases? Dr. Falkner himself, what kind of people he is, how would he treat her? A group of questions comes to her mind in a self monologue suggesting that she is in the pre-traumatic period which is depicted by Laplanche as "the first scene", i.e. the pre-scene to the real traumatic moment. Such a scene is experienced by Samantha throughout her journey that is full of the traumatic moments and experiences, each one is experienced aside and at its moment, hence the present scene is regarded as the pre-traumatic scene or "the first scene" as posited in Laplanche's statement (Laplanche 41).

The moment Dr. Falkner announces that they have a problem at that moment is a claim that Samantha is confronting a kind of direct traumatic experience, it suggests that what they are doing isn't such an easy job, it might be deadly. That is, any traumatic scene or experience is something unique and exceptional, a statement which is suggested by Cathy Caruth in her comment upon Freud's concept: "traces a significant itinerary in Freud's thought from trauma as an exception, an accident ..." (Caruth 104). In this regard,

what Samantha and Dr. Falkner do, is an exceptional job resulting in traumatic senses. The scene of the trenches and coffins is the starting point of her confrontation with the real traumatic action, that is, the first step for the traumatic moment she is undergoing. Then, the scene when the two guardsmen put the dead corpse on the table of the morgue, this particular scene includes the whole branches of the temporal structure of trauma; the pre-traumatic is represented in the moments that precede the autopsy process, because it is still covered with the plastic bag and zipped up, so she is still not touching it. The traumatic period is represented at the moment when Dr. Falkner asks her "Are you ready?" then he commands her "Open it". This is a starting point for the traumatic moment when she directly confronts it. Then, later on, the post-traumatic moment, it is represented in the way she recalls back all those events while taking a shower:

"... she just stood there happy to be under the water spray, even it was cold she began to cry while the hot water was hitting her face, and soon the crying led to sobbing. She couldn't control herself. She thought about all those people who died with the disease, and no one claiming the bodies for proper funerals. How futile life was ... people were dying left and right regardless of their age, young and old alike, and she lamented for the futility in life and the miserable condition she was facing..." (Apple 31).

Such a personal monologue Samantha has with herself while taking a shower, is a representation of the post traumatic moment for the traumatic experience she has just had. She is recalling back the misery she has just experienced with corpses died out of COVID-19. She is recalling back the events, meditating the miseries and death as consequences of the wide spread of the virus. It seems that she willingly recalls and remembers since "she just stood there happy", she is happy, being enjoyed in crying out of interest and fun, then sobbing, such senses suggest that she is remembering the previous events willingly and consciously. So since she willingly does so, in this case she is attempting to heal herself from such a traumatic experience by means of recalling back and

remembering everything, and then narrating them to herself in the form of a dramatic monologue. All what has been going on is considered as a traumatic experience that has been experienced by one individual, Samantha, then later one, she starts recalling back that experience. According to Larkin and Morrison in *Trauma and Psychosis*, PTSD occurs as a consequence of an experience no more no less, that is, it is mainly based on the kind of the experience that might result in a sense of trauma. In this sense, Samantha's post-traumatic period is basically based upon a traumatic experience. In other words, whatever events and experiences she has passed by, they are all participants in shaping her trauma (Larkin and Morrison 61).

In chapter 3 in the novel, the events reach to a point that is the exact direct confrontation with the traumatic experience that increases the sense of anxiety and fear when Samantha is in front of two sources of fear that may result in trauma, they are; she is in front of dealing with a dead body (corpse) and such a particular scene by itself is quite adequate to make a sense of fear and trauma, though it is part of her job. Then what is most dangerous and dreadful that this corpse died infectious out of COVID-19, that is, a COVID-19 case which is deadly and contagious. As if that moment is the climax of fear and traumatic experience. Consequently, dreadful thoughts are blowing up into her mind since all the next bodies she will work on are COVID-19 cases, touching them, doing autopsy for them, she might get infectious, or she might be dying as a consequence. A variety of thoughts and questions that would get her traumatized since Dr. Falkner commands her for "counting, identifying, tagging ..." (Apple 26). During her residency in the morgue, more accumulating sources of fear added to the confrontation with the COVID-19 cases in the case that shapes the whole traumatic scene, as if they all share to result in the traumatic experience, such sources like dead bodies, all men including Dr. Falkner are all inmates, then the (serosanguineous fluid) dripping out of the corpse, because this fluid is thought to be full with coronaviruses. The following quotation suggests the manner that Samantha is in direct

confrontation with the traumatic moment "I am not ready to do this. I know I am supposed to go to a morgue for autopsy rotation for a month, but this is not what I expected", here she expresses her shock that she never expected to deal with the COVID-19 cases, a case that suggests how she is in confrontation with the traumatic moment. Then the omniscient narrator's comment on her speech, once again suggests that "She did not sign up to be a physician, a pathologist when she had to put her life in danger by taking the risk of getting infected with COVID-19" (ibid 28-29). Here, linking Samantha's case to the temporal structure of trauma, or the traumatic moments she passes by, Samantha is going to be regarded as a survivor and a traumatized individual at the same time, as it is suggested by Cathy Caruth in a comment on Freud's claim, Caruth states that "Freud's difficult thought provides a deeply disturbing insight into the enigmatic relation between trauma and survival: the fact that, for those who undergo trauma, it is not only the moment of the event, but of the passing out of it that is traumatic" (Caruth 9). Holding Caruth's phrase "passing out" would be an enough evidence that Samantha does pass by the whole temporal structure of trauma, that is, the whole three traumatic periods, and that what the literary text of the present study suggests in accordance to COVID-19 which is the central pivot of the traumatic senses. Moreover, Caruth's claim suggests that the individual who undergoes the traumatic experience inevitably must pass by the whole traumatic moments.

Despite she has spent the first day there, but still she has no idea what she would do in the next days " ... she hardly had an appetite since she was worried about the unknowns in the day ahead of her"(Apple 30). The speech gears up the reader's mind that what comes next is also something traumatic, thus it suggests that the preceding moment is a pre-traumatic moment since "she was worried about the unknowns"(ibid). The aforementioned quotations of the text suggest that the traumatic experience is something inevitable to the traumatized individual who is Samantha in that context, since she indulges within the

dangerous area, being close to death and the deadly atmosphere, she never escapes the stage of being traumatized or passing by the traumatic experience which is depicted by McGowan in *Out of Time* as an "inescapable" one, claiming that "the nature of trauma ... reveals the inescapable" (McGowan 232). Thought it seems that it is mysterious whether to live that experience or survive it, but according to McGowan's statement, she no doubt will experience it.

As for chapter 5 in the novel, from the very beginning, throughout the title "Panic", it makes the mind gets ready for fear and anxiety. It already seems that the chapter must do include traumatic experiences and dreadful senses, it gives an impression that what comes next is something related to traumatic moments and experiences. For instance, when Dr. Falkner left her alone in the morgue at night, she settled alone with dead bodies about to decompose around her everywhere, time is dark night, all such factors make an atmosphere of fear and anxiety suggesting that she is in the middle of the danger, "She could not believe she was actually amongst the dead" again the line depicts her state that she is indulged within the traumatic sense raised out of fear and danger, hence it is worth referring that each kind of fear and trauma she experiences is raised as a consequence of the most dreadful factor of fear, that is, COVID-19. (Apple37). Samantha is in the middle of danger, that is, she is in a direct confrontation with the real traumatic moment, which means she must pass by the post-traumatic period, according to Cathy Caruth, the traumatized individual who confronts directly with the traumatic moment, he must pass by what she calls as "an absolute numbing to it" _the traumatic moment_ which is going to turn into what she, herself once again, calls "belatedness", i.e. the post-traumatic moment which is reexperienced once again, (Caruth 6). In this regard, what Samantha is going to experience in the coming events that follow the real traumatic moments belongs to the post-traumatic period, or what is referred to by Cathy Caruth as "an absolute numbing".

In a particular scene in the novel, suggesting that Samantha is traumatized, and how she is recalling back the traumatic experience by means of dreaming "Samantha fell asleep in an infant position with her parka overcoat and blanket warming her head and body. She dreamed about the heavy, dead body falling onto her in the middle of the night"(39). It is apparent through the position she sleeps "infant position", that as if she is attempting to run away from the miserable consciousness into the unconsciousness, but still, in this regard she is repressing her traumatic sense rather than confronting it. The way she sleeps in an "infant position" is a representation of the post-traumatic moment. Since she has experienced the traumatic moment, she is now experiencing the post-traumatic one, which is a recalling back of the real traumatic period that is an experience which has been lived subjectively. (Scheller-Grikey, G. et al 69). Furthermore, the moment Samantha has been dreaming about the dead, is a representation of the PTSD moment, in which according to Cathy Caruth "... the overwhelming events of the past repeatedly possess, in intrusive images and thoughts, the one who has lived through them." (Caruth 151). Within that regard, the one who lived through those overwhelming traumatic events, is Samantha who had been possessed intrusively by those images and thoughts in the form of dreams.

As for Ed Liu, Samantha's boyfriend, he and his staff of the scientists who work in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the US. Ed and the other scientists at the CDC are elected to go to China, Wuhan, to make investigations and searches about the virus and its origins. This trip represents the pre-traumatic moment, they are in front of a mysterious experience and have no idea about what they would deal with, the magnitude of danger in their waiting, their approach from the most dangerous point which is the market center of the virus, so they are still not in the direct confrontation of the traumatic experience they are about to face, that is, they are in the pre-traumatic moment preceding it. In a certain claim raised up by Cathy Caruth, suggesting that the period preceding the direct

confrontation with the real moment of trauma includes a kind of "inherent latency ... temporal structure, the belatedness ..." (ibid 17). Linking that statement to the progress of the events of the present text, it posits a situation that would work with the action series in which the manner the characters of the novel react with the traumatic experience belatedly, whether before or after the occurrence of that traumatic experience. So, Ed and his team's reaction to what would they confront is done belatedly, i.e. before the direct confrontation with the real traumatic moment.

On the cruise ship when they travel to celebrate their 50th anniversary in their wedding, Emily and Robert, Samantha's parents, start noticing the symptoms on themselves, indeed they are doctors, Robert said "Maybe we are all infected with COVID-19" she replies "Honey, don't say that I am scared. What do we do then? This is what Samantha was afraid of"(Apple 58). Such conversation between a wife and a husband who are doctors, that is they are the most familiar people with diseases and viruses, it raises the fear and anxiety, then Emily directly confesses her fear, this point, particularly for them on the cruise ship is regarded a traumatic moment, since they are now in a direct confrontation with the experience, in other words, with the virus which is the most dangerous source of fear and trauma in the novel. While the following quotation depicts how the crew on the cruise ship are still in the pre-traumatic moment "Many of the guests were disappointed and did not know how bad the situation on the ship was, nor the magnitude of the COVID-19 situation globally. Secluded from the realities of COVID-19, many people did not care that much because it was not on their own reality" (ibid 61). In other words, at this moment, they still feel that they are still away from the point of danger of COVID-19. Furthermore, they still have no idea what it is and to what extent it might be deadly or dreadful.

Having the sense that she is infected out of touching the dead cases out of the virus, Samantha while coming back from Hart Island on the boat, the fresh air blowing her is the

reason that "She was wishing all the COVID-19 viral particles in her lungs would be replaced by the fresh air" (ibid 70). Such a particular scene stands for a post-traumatic moment since she has just overcome the most traumatic moment represented in the direct confrontation with the infectious dead bodies in the morgue, but now she is leaving Hart Island on the boat coming back from there towards Bronx. She has a feeling that her lungs are now full of the viruses, such sense is raised as a result of her fear due to the traumatic experience she has just experienced. Accordingly, since narration or the written text doesn't go far away from cinema, for indeed the cinema is an adaptation of a written text, which is the scenario, J. Hirsch claims that the aspects of the consciousness of the post-traumatic moment are reflected on "the post-traumatic cinema" as it attempts to do, to quote Hirsch, "formally reproduce for the spectator an experience of suddenly seizing the unthinkable" (Hirsch 19). What happens, that Sophia Apple attempts to do the same in that particular scene, it is an attempt to represent the "unthinkable" that Samantha has experienced, which is the traumatic experience, but later on, thus it is a reproduced experience reflected on the post-traumatic consciousness of Samantha. At the moment while riding on the boat, the present moment Samantha experiences, is impaired by the thoughts and images of the previous traumatic period intrusively, that is, representing the post-traumatic moment that follows the real traumatic moment of the direct confrontation with the traumatic experience, as it is suggested by John Krystal, that in the post-traumatic period, the traumatic moment is "reexperienced". Hence, Samantha is reexperiencing that moment while she is on the boat coming back from Hart Island. (Krystal 6).

Returning back to Ed and his team who are still now at the pre-traumatic moment before to arrive to China. While their arrival to China now at the Wuhan Institute of Virology/ (WIV) laboratory, the moment they arrive there represents the traumatic moment, since they are now in direct confrontation with the danger of COVID-19 whose major source is China, Wuhan in particular. In that regard, the danger

of COVID-19 is regarded as an extraordinary experience, hence it is a traumatic experience for it overwhelms their consciousness to the extent that exceeds the ordinary manner by which the human adapts life (Herman 33). thus, their experience is considered such an extraordinary or an exceptional one for they have the impression that China and Wuhan are no longer ordinary places, henceforth, they are the very source of danger all over the world, that's what results in making their experiences their such extraordinary traumatic events.

"Every day. The passengers and crew members alike receive a nasopharyngeal swab test and waited for a day or two for the results" (101). The period of their waiting to get the results of the swab test is the pre-traumatic period, since they don't know whether they are really infected or not, if they are, so what to do, what their feeling would be, they might start remembering whom they touch, with whom they ate and so on. In a certain definition of trauma, Cathy Caruth in her *Unclaimed Experience*, defines it as "... the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that isn't otherwise available. This truth ... cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language" (Caruth 4). In this regard, the period when the members of the ship waiting for the results of the swab test is itself what Caruth posits as the "unknown". Consequently, such a stage they are passing by could be regarded as the pre-traumatic period which is marked by the temporal structure of trauma. Since they aren't sure of what is coming or what the results of their swabs would be, such a statement "remains unknown" in their action and their language. What seems in the text is that their action belongs to the unknown, and the whole fictional action in that particular scene is part of the unknown. Furthermore, what shapes their very anxiety is their fear of being infected with the virus, and that is the very traumatic experience they live during that case. According to Al Doory's statement, she claims that "Traumatic experiences of civilians are different from that of soldiers". If that comparison is to be taken into consideration, all of the characters in Apple's novel are civilian

individuals, including the crew members on the cruise ship and the like. Thus, civilians also pass by the traumatic experiences as well as the soldiers do, as it seems on what the passengers pass by as a pre-traumatic moment of anxiety and uncertainty. However, Al Doory concludes that dialectic comparison of the traumatic experience of soldiers and civilians in the following "trauma, be it of civilians or soldiers, implies a thread of continuity that links the past to the present and thus constitutes a whole traumatic history" (Al Doory 4-5). Accordingly, the civilian characters in Apple's novel are part of that "traumatic history".

The phone call between Emily and Samantha comprises the whole temporal structure of trauma, that is, the whole three traumatic moments. Emily attempts to inform Samantha about her father's death infecting in COVID-19, but she couldn't end the sentence fully, and this makes Samantha more afraid, thus till this moment Samantha is still in the pre-traumatic extent, while the moment Emily spits it out telling her that "your father died last night" (102) here is the traumatic moment, since Samantha is confronting with the case directly, then "there was a silence after this" (ibid) this silent moment after the shocking storm of grief is the post-traumatic moment. Such a period of silence is the period that couldn't be represented nor verbalized at the moment of its occurrence (Caruth 60-61). As Xuan (Jossie) Duan suggests, that "the victim's consciousness misses the chance to grasp what just happened" (Duan 102). Accordingly, the line "there was a s silence after this" is a representation to Duan's statement. It gives the impression that creates an atmosphere of numbness during that moment. According to the line above, both are victims, Samantha and her mother, since they both experience that period of silence which is the climax of perception that goes beyond the frame of language. Thus, their consciousnesses both misses the chance to grasp what happened, and that what makes the silence.

People are scared of getting infected with the virus. They feel that they might be infected by either the health care workers whom are thought to have touch with the positive cases.

In such a mysterious situation, they aren't aware of what they would confront when they visit hospitals and other health centers, but since they "... were also afraid to come to hospitals" (Apple 135) this is regarded a pre-traumatic moment. "...due to fear of getting the second wave of COVID-19 infection" (ibid138) such a line is considered a pre-traumatic moment too, since they are once again afraid of the second wave of the virus.

" she did not want to keep any items to be reminded of those memories" (159). i.e. she is traumatized because of the dead bodies she has just done autopsy for. By means of attempting to get rid of those memories, she is attempting to repress that traumatic experience she couldn't verbalize at the moment of its occurrence. Since the elderly dead body of the 80 year lady is a COVID-19 case, in this case it results in trauma. Even the smells of the decomposed bodies are still stuck in her brain and her hair. Thus the way she attempts to cut her hair, is metaphorically a means of getting rid of that traumatic experience. Within the progress of the events, it would be noticed how Samantha is a traumatized individual, she suffers a kind of a mysterious trauma that is deployed "... not in the forgetting of a reality that can hence never be fully known, but in an inherent latency within the experience itself". (Caruth 17). Such an enigmatic traumatic sense is going to be reflected upon her general behavior, represented in the manner she calls back all that experiences later on, like for instance in the shower scene in which the traumatic event is going to appear in the form of the "awaking memory" as it is suggested by Caruth "... the return of the traumatizing event appears in many respects like awakening memory ..." (ibid).

As for Samantha's boyfriend, Ed, he has just come back from China after a long trip, he was busy with carrying the virus from China to the US, Dr. Shei gave it for him to take it with him there for preparing the vaccine. Consequently, he was traumatized of transporting the virus, that is, the fear of carrying the virus in the luggage resulted in a traumatic experience for him. So it is a traumatic moment which accompanies how to deal with such a deadly

dangerous virus. Accordingly, at the moment when he comes to Samantha's house after that long journey, after carrying the virus from China to the US, it is apparent how Ed keeps knocking at the front door yearningly, such a state is regarded as a "delayed response to a powerful jolt to his system" (Storr 57). What Storr depicts as the "powerful jolt" is what Ed has experienced during that journey, but he couldn't represent that traumatic experience at the moment of its occurrence, but later on he reacts or responds to it belatedly, thus it is a post-traumatic period.

The preparation for developing the vaccine is regarded as a pre-traumatic period, or in other context, the whole process of the vaccine and the preparations for it, is a traumatic process, since they are approaching a moment of fear, they aren't sure, what kind of risk they might confront, to what extent it would work, would people be persuaded to take that vaccine, even the team of the scientists themselves, would they agree the idea, or they might refuse that idea regarding what Ed does as an illegal deed. As for the fields that result in the traumatic senses, Miller and Tougaw state that "the appreciation that it may be caused by a whole spectrum of events (not just warfare), and the fact that different individuals respond differently to the same events" (Miller and Tougaw 2). That is, traumatic sense occurs as a result of COVID-19. Hence, it suggests that the traumatic experiences aren't only confined to warfare, but rather they could be caused by many other events and experiences, so COVID-19 might be one of those events that cause the traumatic senses, if it is linked to the process of taking the vaccine and the stages before and after it. In addition to that, the manner of responding to the traumatic experiences depends upon each individual and the way he responds to it, as it could be noticed in the text, they deal with the process of vaccine as something traumatic though it isn't a warfare, a matter that meets with the statement of Miller and Tougaw.

"Now, what they needed was about 10 healthy volunteers..." (Apple 236). Such a line suggests that Ed and his team are now passing by the pre-traumatic period, that is, they are in

front of an uncertain stage, would those people accept to volunteer risking their lives getting new experiment of the vaccine, would the vaccine be effective and work on them, they might die, or they might survive. According to Kramer's statement, he posits a hint of hope that the vaccine might work "there is possibility of resurgence of the virus until an effective vaccine becomes widely available" (Kramer 142). Despite the potential proportion of possibility the aforementioned line consists of, It is still a dreadful period preceding the direct confrontation with the analytic assay. This is all in the US right now at the moment. China, too, "China was already in the process of testing a vaccine in 101 volunteer people. The results would be out very shortly" (ibid). This period of waiting for the results to be out is a representation of the pre-traumatic moment. Ed's situation is a pre-traumatic moment, since he isn't sure about the results of the vaccine he develops "Ed somehow landed in a situation where he had a heavy burden to carry out the responsibility to develop a perfect vaccine" (Apple 246). The quoted lines suggest how Ed is delving deeply in anxiety. "Ed was in deep thoughts" i.e. questions and thoughts blowing into his mind, not quite sure of the next stage he would confront, to what extent would the vaccine work, all such thoughts represent the pre-traumatic moment that is before the direct confrontation with the real traumatic moment. In *Shared Trauma, Shared Resilience During a Pandemic*, Carol Tosone states that coronavirus results in "an ongoing global trauma with negative societal and economic consequences, and without a viable vaccine, no known cure or end date in sight" (Tosone 348). Such a statement suggests that the period of preparing the vaccine is regarded as a pre-traumatic period, i.e. a moment of uncertainty. Accordingly, Ed and his team's situation during the during that moment was dependent upon the consequences of the vaccine and to what extent it might work. Tosone's words affirm that situation literally, depicting the statement as uncertain by means of the following line "without a viable vaccine, no known cure or end date in sight", thus it is still not quite apparent what consequences would result in, and moreover the vaccine itself is still not

"variable" at the moment, nor any kind of cure has been found out yet. All such statements suggest the pre-traumatic moment by which Ed and his team is passing.

Conclusion

The study finds out that all of the tackled key concepts of trauma theory have been represented in Sophia K. Apple's novel. The mostly concept which is represented in the text is the temporal structure of trauma, i.e. the three traumatic moments (pre-traumatic, traumatic, and post traumatic) for they are linked to the progress of the events in novel, furthermore, within the progress of time and events when putting them under the chronological order. Moreover, each sense and moment in which the pandemic is dealt with, is found out to represent the temporal structure of trauma. In other words, the moment of dealing with COVID-19 involves the whole three traumatic moments. It is figured up that most of the characters in the story have experienced the traumatic moments regarding to the experiences that accompanied the virus and its experiences.

All of the major arguments that have been raised within the statement of the argument are achieved in one way or another within the body of the study, that done by means of collecting the statements of the theory and linking them to the quotations and speeches quoted from the novel. The situations of passing by the three traumatic moments are necessarily confined to the beginning or the end of the whole story, rather they are related to the events that are relevant to the pandemic, i.e. as if they are revolving around COVID-19. Thus, each event implying the pandemic or related to it, should involve the representation of the three traumatic periods of the temporal structure of trauma. The classification order of the overlapping chapters in the novel too, it includes the separation of the traumatic periods, i.e. there are certain chapters that involve the pre-traumatic moment, others contain the traumatic period, while others are dedicated to the post traumatic moment and so on. The

traumatic periods according to the raised statements about the periods of the pandemic, they are combined to those periods witnessed across the stages of the pandemic spread, these are the same ones depicted by Roger Kurtz as the earlier and later events. In other words, the traumatic periods are stuck to the events of the pandemic. consequently, each event experienced by each individual character, it shapes the trauma of the former himself. Moreover, no traumatized character would experience a certain traumatic moment and not experience the others, once they experience an individual period, they must undoubtedly experience the others

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