AVITAL GRUBSTEIN DE CYKMAN

MINORITY MULTIWORLDS: DIFFERENCE, TRAUMA AND THE BODY IN FICTION BY DIONNE BRAND, LORE SEGAL AND EDWIDGE DANTICAT

Tese submetida à Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina como requisito para a obtenção do Título de Doutora em Letras.

Orientadora: Prof[a]. Dr[a]. Claudia Junqueira de Lima Costa
Co-orientadora: Susana Bornéo Funck

Florianópolis
2019

Ficha de identificação da obra elaborada pelo autor,
através do Programa de Geração Automática da Biblioteca Universitária da UFSC.

Grubstein de Cykman (Gad), Avital
MINORITY MULTIWORLDS: DIFFERENCE, TRAUMA AND THE BODY IN FICTION BY DIONNE BRAND, LORE SEGAL AND EDWIDGE DANTICAT / Avital Grubstein de Cykman (Gad) ; orientador, Claudia Junqueira de Lima Costa, coorientador, Susana Bornéo Funck, 2019.
239 p.

Tese (doutorado) - Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Centro de Comunicação e Expressão, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês: Estudos Linguísticos e Literários, Florianópolis, 2019.

Inclui referências.

1. Inglês: Estudos Linguísticos e Literários. 2. Minorias . 3. diáspora. 4. interseccionalidade e corporealidade. 5. trauma. I. Junqueira de Lima Costa, Claudia . II. Bornéo Funck, Susana . III. Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina. Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês: Estudos Linguísticos e Literários. IV. Título.

Avital Grubstein de Cykman

MINORITY MULTIWORLDS:
DIFFERENCE, TRAUMA AND THE BODY IN FICTION BY DIONNE BRAND, LORE SEGAL AND EDWIDGE DANTICAT

Esta tese foi julgada adequada para obtenção do título de DOUTORADO EM LETRAS e aprovada em sua forma final pelo programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês: Estudos Linguísticos e Literários da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina

Florianópolis, 26 de fevereiro 2019

_____
Prof. Dr. Celso Henrique Soufen Tumolo
Coordenador do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês

Banca Examinadora:

_____
Profa. Dra. Claudia Junqueira de Lima Costa
Orientadora e Presidente
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina

_____
Profa. Dra. Susana Bornéo Funck
Co orientadora
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina

_____
Profa. Dra. Eliana, de Souza Ávila
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina

_____
Prof. Dr. Jaques Mick
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina

Profa. Dra. Leila Assumpção Harris
Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis represents a landmark in my academic and intellectual journey during the six years of research at the PPGI, Federal University of Santa Catarina. I appreciate the supportive environment.

Thankfully, Prof. Susana Bornéo Funck has accompanied me, inspired me and pushed me forward both during my MA and PhD studies. I have great admiration for her. Of her excellent teachings, I feel special affection for the utopian/dystopian class that has resulted in the beloved utopicas' group.

I should also thank Prof. Claudia Junqueira de Lima Costa for embracing my "cause" and believing in my work, even though I acted as the devil's advocate in her class.

In addition, I would like to extend my gratitude to the committee members, Leila Harris, Eliana Ávila, Jaques Mick, and Maria Rita Vianna. Their interest and brilliance made me challenge myself further toward the completion of the thesis.

I have been lucky to receive Pablo's, Noa's and Tom's love and encouragement during these years (well, always). As E. E. Cummings writes in the poem "[i carry your heart with me (i carry it in]" (*Complete Poems: 1904-1962*. George J. Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1991): "here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud and the sky of the sky of a tree called life." And, our health-related event of the year makes another line from the poem perfect for my husband, Pablo: "i carry your heart with me (i carry it in my heart)."

Finally, I would like to thank CAPES' financial support, for giving me the freedom to study.

In between, Liney, in between, as if your life could never see itself, blooded and coarsened on this island as mine, driven over places too hard to know in their easy terror.

(Dionne Brand)

I feel the loneliness after death,
Death that need not have been—I hear the muffled cry of millions.

(Flora Hendricks)

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relation between trauma and intersecting categories of difference in individual and global history and memory, including race, ethnicity, origins, exile, gender, and sexuality in contemporary novels written by minority female authors about the lives of minority female characters in exile. The concept of difference and the concept of trauma, in their application to literary criticism, interconnect with feminist scholarship, poststructuralism, postcolonial studies, diaspora studies, and decolonized trauma theory. Therefore, the portrayals of individual and collective lives within minorities subjected to a systematic threat, oppression, or persecution across history in Lore Segal's *Other People Houses* (1964) and *Her First American* (1985), Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones* (1998), and Dionne Brand's *At the Full and Change of the Moon* (1999) are analyzed within this interdisciplinary framework. This contextual, comparative study investigates the ways history and memory act within and upon the lives of minority people, especially women, in different parts and cultures in the world. Since history is inscribed on the body (Foucault 1977, Butler 1990, 1993), the corporeal literary representation of these lives reveals the nature of the oppressive discourses and their impact. In addition, special attention is given to the reactions of characters from colonized nations and characters from Europe and the US to traumatic events and continuous traumatizing situations, their manifestations of trauma and the possibilities of individual and social transformation within the relevant context. This comparative study challenges the universality of Western trauma theory, and addresses trauma in colonial and neocolonial lands and periods. It endorses Rothberg's theory of multidirectional memory (2008), suggesting that trauma legacies based on different histories of atrocities are not competitive memories but, rather, a subject of cross-referencing and an instrument of productive negotiation and change. While analyzing the common and the variant characteristics and workings of trauma in the selected novels, the investigation incorporates principles from traditional theories when applicable, and, otherwise, applies decolonized principles that allow it to indicate the specific conditions that advance individual and social breakthrough.

Keywords: Minorities. Diaspora. Intersectionality. Corporeality. Trauma.

RESUMO

Este estudo investiga a relação entre trauma e categorias de diferença que se cruzam na história e na memória individual e global – raça, etnia, origem, exílio, gênero e sexualidade – através da análise de romances contemporâneos escritos por autoras pertencentes a minorias sobre as vidas de personagens femininas, também pertencentes a minorias, que se encontram no exílio. O conceito de diferença e o conceito de trauma, em sua aplicação à crítica literária, estão relacionados aos estudos feministas, ao pós-estruturalismo, aos estudos pós-coloniais e da diáspora, e à teoria decolonial sobre trauma. Assim, analisa-se, a partir de um arcabouço interdisciplinar, a representação de vidas individuais e coletivas de minorias sujeitas a ameaças, opressão ou perseguição sistemáticas ao longo da história, em *Other People Houses* (1964) e *Her First American* (1985), de Lore Segal, *The Farming of Bones* (1998), de Edwidge Danticat e *At the Full and Change of the Moon* (1999), de Dionne Brand. Contextual e comparativo, o estudo investiga como a história e a memória afetam interna e externamente as vidas de minorias, especialmente mulheres, em diferentes lugares e culturas. Visto que a história se inscreve no corpo (Foucault 1977, Butler 1990, 1993), a representação corpórea dessas vidas revela a natureza dos discursos opressores e de seu impacto. Além disso, atenção especial é dada às reações das personagens, tanto de nações colonizadas quanto da Europa e dos Estados Unidos, a acontecimentos traumáticos e situações traumáticas continuadas, suas manifestações do trauma, e a possibilidades de transformação individual e social dentro de um contexto específico. Contesta-se a universalidade da teoria ocidental sobre trauma que aborda a questão em contextos coloniais e neocoloniais. A pesquisa endossa a teoria de memória multidirecional de Rothberg (2008), sugerindo que os legados do trauma a partir de diferentes histórias e atrocidades não são memórias competitivas, mas referências cruzadas e um instrumento de negociação produtiva e de mudança. Ao examinar as características comuns e as variações do funcionamento do trauma nos romances selecionados, a investigação incorpora princípios das teorias tradicionais, quando pertinente, bem como teorias decoloniais que permitam indicar condições especiais de superação individual e social.

Palavras-chave: Minorias. Diáspora. Interseccionalidade. Corporalidade. Trauma.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This study deals with contemporary novels written in English in three different decades, the 1960s, 1980s, and 1990s. Their authors are minority women who write about minority characters, mostly females, in processes of diasporic dislocation related to trauma. The term "minority" employed here is read as groups targeted because of their ethnicity, in particular those represented in the corpus selected for the analysis: African Americans, non-white Caribbean people, and Jews. In this regard, the concept of ethnicity refers not only to racial differences but also to groups and communities of a minority united by a common historical, cultural, referential, and/or religious past. The novels portray individual and collective lives within these target groups, or rather, within minorities subjected to a systematic threat, oppression, or persecution based on the predominant social system[1] across history and in the periods portrayed in the selected novels. Within these groups, my focus includes disempowered parts of society, such as colonized and post colonized women, women in diaspora, new immigrants, and working-class women.

I have chosen this complex topic, partly because of my own involvement with the issues of minorities, difference, history, memory, and trauma. Growing up in a family of survivors who fled from Poland to Israel, and from Austria to England and then to Israel after the Holocaust and living in the shadow of secrets and pain is a part of my second-generation-survivor-experience--or my "postmemory", as defined by Marianne Hirsch (2012). I have learned that fleeing to safer lands (or lands considered safer) does not mean a release from trauma and memory. Trauma appears through aftershocks of pain, fears, nightmares, a repetition of acts that evoke the past, guilt, shame, and/or an attempted detachment. The traumatic effect is also apparent in the reaction toward insidious or new layers of prejudice and oppression in the new land. Already on my own, I found that the transformation from being a native into an immigrant is not easy even in better circumstances. After immigrating to Brazil, out of option, I discovered that having a different nationality and religion from the majority and bearing external identifying characteristics, such as a foreign accent, may imply stereotypical assumptions and marginalization. Attitudes including a judgmental gaze, generalization of assumed characteristics, and universalization of local conventions remind foreigners they will

1 Kali Tal (1996) chapter 1, WEB.

always be outsiders. Clearly, there are also advantages in being new, starting anew, and learning the ropes of another society. Therefore, on the whole, my life as an immigrant has been an uneven experience. Among the good things, I count the opportunity to produce this study based on my familiarity with difference, minority, trauma, and diaspora combined with the academic field of literary criticism.

At the basis of my investigation lies the notion of difference, or rather, the impact of how it is defined and perceived and acted upon in society in general and in the communities considered different. The concept of difference, with all of its intersections in individual and global history and memory, has been examined by feminist scholarship since the 1980s, intersecting with poststructuralism and postcolonial studies applied to literary criticism as well. The concept deserves such interdisciplinary attention since it is a determining element in the oppression of fragilized groups and peoples. Clearly, difference exists among people and among communities, between dominant societies and marginalized ones. It is widespread, and yet marginalized. Based on this view and through this prism, my research investigates questions regarding the situation of women who are minority members and trauma survivors.

The relevance of migration, a common phenomenon in the chosen works--*Other People's Houses* (1964) and *Her First American* (1985) by Lore Segal, *The Farming of Bones* (1998) by Edwidge Danticat, and *The Full and Change of the Moon* (1999) by Dionne Brand--and in the world as a whole, is another fundamental factor in the study. Within it, the related concept of diaspora is essential as well. The difference between the two concepts is not clear-cut, as the review of literature demonstrates. In this regard, the work analyses how different characters in diverse novels deal with personal and collective consequences of migration. Basically, every migration transforms the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres of the destination-countries, while, at the same time, it transforms the conditions, culture, economy, and psyche of the minorities arriving there. Problems of emotional survival and adjustment, sequels of the past, persecution, and continued prejudice are frequent in such migratory processes. The possibility of going back "home" is or becomes illusory. The selected novels' characters live in the diaspora and go through mental, emotional, and physical difficulties, trying to handle hard circumstances and estrangement. Their lives, as described in the novels, reflect how diasporic mobility forces exiled people to try and come to terms with their past and with change in general in order to be able to live the

present fully and build a future. When exiled people cannot reconcile with their new situation, they remain tied to another time, place, and history while living another. Thus, difference and trauma are inherent to individual and collective lives of a minority in exile, and therefore they serve as a basis for the study.

All the above is connected to corporeality since history is inscribed on the body, as Michel Foucault (1977), Judith Butler (1990, 1993), Dionne Brand (2002), and Ann Kaplan (2005) argue. The corporeal literary representation of these lives reveals the nature of the oppressive discourses and practices regarding gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, and class, to mention a few of the categories, and their impact. Hence, the corporeal aspects of the characters, a part of their constructed identity, are explored within the context of their lives as they appear in the novels and the historical circumstances in which the selected novels were written. The literary display and analysis of an interconnected physical, mental, and emotional experience challenges the traditional binary dichotomy between body and mind and suggests a total experience. In this view, trauma is whole, just like the person, and therefore cannot be split between areas of the self.

As the examination establishes the socio-historical sources of pain and trauma in the selected novels, it also explores the resulting impacts of traumatic events and processes on each character's identity and life. The post traumatic effects are exemplified through the authors' descriptions of the characters' behavior and of the characters' perception of the world and of themselves, as reflected in their relationships with and through the body. The literary indication of forms of overcoming trauma through social and individual transformation, self-acceptance, resistance, keeping memory alive and/or other forms of healing based on the specific situation and culture are studied as well, in order to point out possibilities of change.

Within this frame, the investigated problem is how women marginalized on several levels, born to target groups and traumatized by repression related to difference in gender, ethnicity, race, class and/or diasporic mobility, deal with the prospect of change and emotional survival. The question requires a study of the female characters' reaction to traumatic events and continuous traumatizing situations, the ways their relationships with and through their bodies reflect their intersectional situation, and their manifestations of suffering, pleasure, resistance, acceptance and overcoming or surrendering to their situation. In addition, the ways each minority deals with trauma, memory, and history collectively and individually is investigated. By pointing out

variances among the authors, among the characters, and among the communities, the study takes on the feminist challenge to conceive difference in ways that are not restrictive but liberating in their cultural openness to diversity, and attempt at an intercultural comparison and multidirectional communication. The notion of intersectionality is also seen in its expansive view, or rather that coalitional politics aid in the interconnection among and within communities, since coalitions are created based on internal differences and similarities among individuals and groups and by internal and external power relations. This contextual, comparative literary study is intended to advance an informed understanding of the ways history and memory act within and upon the lives of minority people, especially women, in different parts and cultures in the world. In fact, without being overly naïve, I hope to increase the understanding of the boundaryless nature of life, while contextualizing each situation and character. Hence, I will analyze the characters' conflicts and quests -- for freedom, self-acceptance, equal rights, independence, communication, self-realization, social value, love and/or peace, among others -- in order to point out their similarities, differences, and specific challenges. I will show particularities, but will draw a map of resemblances, because otherwise each group, if not each person, requires its own theory, which sums up to an inability to have any theory at all. Therefore, the analysis refers to trauma as a concept, while giving each character and each situation their due contextual attention. Fundamentally, the study introduces the characteristics and the workings of trauma in each novel, the impact on the female characters and their communities, the possibility of raising the levels of social awareness to difference, repression, and trauma, and ways of transformation.

The conceptual basis of this research includes "difference", "intersectionality", "corporeality" and "trauma."

Within the theoretical framework analyzed below, this study focuses on difference, multi-ethnicity, and trauma, embracing and exploring the idea of intersectionality by deconstructing the female characters' embodied living in its revelations of acceptance and resistance, reaction, and passivity with respect to ethnic and gender-related paradigms that generate trauma. Since the study of trauma (with the assistance of the ever-dynamic trauma theory) is necessary for literary criticism related to fiction based on history and memory, atrocities, and continuous hard experiences, specified collective and individual traumas are observed as a spectrum through which the stories of characters from the target groups are examined, interplaying with

minority, diaspora, postcolonial, and gender studies to show the intersecting sources and layers of repression and its consequences.

The main corporeal elements in question include the characters' traumatic manifestations, sexuality and desire, procreation and the avoidance of it, motherhood, self-acceptance and self-rejection, lifestyle, and relationships involving the body perception. The books selected for analysis reflect contemporary concerns within a historical overview.

The specific research methods consist of interpreting and comparing the literary works *Other People's Houses* (1964*)* and *Her First American* (1985) by Lore Segal, *The Farming of Bones* (1998) by Edwidge Danticat, and *The Full and Change of the Moon* (1999) by Dionne Brand. The theoretical basis for the analysis includes essays of feminist literary criticism and theory and cultural studies by Judith Butler, Elizabeth Grosz, and bell hooks as well as Stuart Hall. It also explores trauma literature, especially by Cathy Caruth, Kali Tal, Laurie Vickroy, Dominik LaCapra, Ann Kaplan, and Michael Rothberg. Other scholars that direct this work are introduced in the theoretical review. The theories and conceptualization serve as a parameter to evaluate the influence of the social climate and historical context in which the books were written. The same analysis is applied to the characters in evaluating the effect of multi-ethnicity and trauma on their perception of the self.

In addition, the study investigates whether the characters are able to find cracks in the construction of their lives and identity, through which they can begin a deconstruction, or rather, an exploration of their psyche and history, and develop an understanding, a reconstruction, change, and a sense of liberation. The investigation of this aspect involves the question of whether belonging to a marginalized minority sharpens the perspective on society thanks to observing it from the margin, strengthens the need to fight against oppression, and empowers women, or, conversely, that belonging to a minority oppresses women through multiple paradigms, prevents them from seeing the gaps in the intelligibility of their history, and does not give them tools for resistance. Clearly, these conflicting influences can also exist side by side, interact, and create a different effect of women's perception of their bodies and their selves in every sphere of their lives.

The study of multi-ethnic elements on which the present study is based adds to the investigation of the female body in literature written by women by determining how diverse, intersecting backgrounds and power relations, especially those related to trauma survivors, shape the

doubly (or more) marginalized female characters' identity and corporeality. The proposed research will deepen the main themes of my MA thesis "My Body, My Self, and My Reading of Corporeality in Margaret Atwood's Fiction", involving the literary articulation of the problems of being female, of the relation between the biological body and the cultural concept of the body, of criticism of social representations of women, and the possibility of individual and social transformation. The interwoven study of the role of trauma in shaping women's identity advances understanding on how mental, intellectual, and physical spheres complement one another and aims to determine the attitude necessary to avoid causes for trauma, their reproduction, and continued injustice.

In providing a careful study of each work and analyzing its unique literary representations of characters dealing with repression, I hope to demonstrate the importance of literary studies of diverse literary works to the perception of the complexity and magnitude of violence and suffering in different target groups and different regions, turning the attention to the impact of memory and history, exploring the possibilities of healing and/or resistance, and showing the urgent need to prevent future violent events and relations. A special attention is given to different representations of history, memory, and trauma in these novels.

The main objectives of the research are:

-To analyze the situation of minority women characters in a process of dislocation through intersectionality, trauma, and poststructural postcolonial theories.

-To analyze how axes of difference such as race, ethnicity, gender, and class impact on women's experience of their bodies and of the world.

-To analyze how traumatic events and the resulting trauma manifestations shape minority women's identity, their relationships, and their sense of self.

-To analyze the contributions each author makes to the understanding of women problems and to finding ways of transformation.

In view of the novels and the theoretical framework, my hypothesis is that the female characters reproduce the cultural values of their specific social group, simultaneously receiving and assimilating hegemonic gendered and ethnic patterns attributed to them. Since their collective and individual history is traumatic, their trauma prevents an emotional involvement, full living, and coming to terms with their selves and their history, unless a breakthrough makes transformation

possible. The necessary transformation depends on social engagement, awareness, and support, on the place, time, and culture in which the characters live and in which the authors write, and on the possibility of each individual to break through the structure of trauma.

Contextualizing the Novels

In accordance with the above, the present section introduces the essential groundwork for the study of the unique context of each novel and the application of the fitting scholarly works. Segal's *Other People's Houses* (1964) and *Her First American* (1985) bind their main characters' individual history with general history through direct and indirect experiences of racism and exile, inscribed in the characters' identity. The novels present anti-Semitism as the main racial factor related to the ethnicity of Jewish refugees during and after the period of the Holocaust. The applied concept of anti-Semitism defines a biologically-based prejudice, a false assumption that people born Jews and/or descendants of Jews can be classified as bearers of inferior and/or hateful characteristics. This assumption leads to the automatic supposition that Jews are not an integral part of society, but a problematic minority that disrupts the "correct" universal order. As is the case with other sorts of discrimination, the classification of all Jews as one takes away their individuality, ignores context, and denies their humanity, turning the Jewish people into a target of hatred, abuse, and violence, as the historical documentation of marginalization, pogroms, genocide, limitation of liberty, and removal of basic civil rights proves. The Jews' forced migrations have been so constant in the history of the world that they led to the conceptualization of "diaspora." The original meaning of diaspora, according to Safran (1991), is "the exile of the Jews from their historic homeland and their dispersion throughout many lands, signifying as well the oppression and moral degradation implied by that dispersion" (21). Throughout history, not only the Jews following the Jewish religion, traditions, and/or culture have been targeted, but also assimilated Jews seeking other social, religious, and cultural identity. In this sense, their definition by external viewers and persecutors determines their "identity" and destiny, rather than their own self-definition and choices, thus denying them agency. The most horrifying outcome of anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, has been documented, registered, and told through texts, images, testimonies, legal decisions, cultural, and artistic manifestations, thus exemplifying and making public the brutal consequences of racism, (intersecting with other categories of discrimination such as gender, ideology, sexual

orientation, health, and nationality). Therefore, the Holocaust has become common knowledge and an iconized symbol of horror and trauma.

The political context of Ilka's story in *Her First American* as a Jewish refugee and a new immigrant in the US touches questions of shelter and exile, relevant nowadays as well. According to the Smithsonian (2015), "World War II prompted the largest displacement of human beings the world has ever seen—although today's refugee crisis is starting to approach its unprecedented scale. But even with millions of European Jews displaced from their homes, the United States had a poor track record offering asylum" (Web). The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 curtailed immigration with nationally-based restrictions and established the national origins system. In 1948, the USA Congress passed legislation to admit two-hundred thousand and two-hundred displaced people to the United States. Only about eighty thousands of these "DPS" were Jewish, even though their persecution surpassed any other at the time. According to The Encyclopedia of The Holocaust, President Truman called the law "flagrantly discriminatory" against Jews (Web). In the post war period, around the time the character of Ilka comes to the US, in 1950, the congress amends the law, and later reaffirms that system with the enactment of the McCarran-Walter Act in 1952 (Reimers 1). In a parallel observation of England's reception of refugees, *Other People's Houses* illustrates the limited acceptance of Jewish refugees escaping the Nazis, and their continued discrimination via domestic workers' visas. According to Tony Kushner (1991), about one third of the refugees came as domestic servants due to the English middle-class pressure and as a solution to override the trade union objection to bring in foreign labor.

Fundamentally, anti-Semitism and the related persecution are the cause of the most traumatic events the novels *Other People's Houses* and *Her First American* handle. The Holocaust is the reason driving Lore to her exile in England, and Ilka to her exile in the United States. The continued discrimination they suffer in their exile is accompanied by a developing self-hatred, or rather, their internalized anti-Semitic conventions. Both Lore and Ilka try so hard to become one with the majority that they are prone to erase their past and adjust their identity. Since they continue dreading the forces working against their minority, they seek a way out of the targeted collective by an attempt at social assimilation, and a split from the Jewish society and culture. However, ironically perhaps, the systematic persecution holds such a great historical, cultural, and psychological force that it raises Lore's and

Ilka's awareness of their roots and leads them toward an approximation to their minority, and, to a certain extent, to a Jewish self-determination. Other female characters such as Lore's mother, Ilka's mother, and Ilka's cousin self-define themselves as Jews from the beginning and resist anti-Semitism more than Lore and Ilka, as I will demonstrate in Chapter 1.

Her First American deals not only with Anti-Semitism but also with racism and segregation against African Americans. The external gaze, or the ways Jews and blacks are seen by others, appears as a recurrent reference to difference and exclusion. In regard to external signs that carry social meanings loaded with racism, the black skin, as Fanon (1967) emphasizes in "The Fact of Blackness" (82) is an obvious physical difference that has historically accumulated harmful implications. As for external signs of Jewishness, Jewish people are indeed characterized in Nazi caricatures and other anti-Semitic propaganda as having certain (distorted) physical traits. Yet, the Jews' varied looks, the result of their centuries of exile in different parts of the world, empty this claim from any substance except for hatred. Nevertheless, despite this difference, biology plays a part in both minorities' marginalization. A person born to a family with Jewish roots is consistently seen through the biological lens of his or her birth. Beyond the similar justification of oppression, a biological inheritance, however, each ideology of hatred has different history, context, and specificities. The touching points and the differences are discussed in Chapter 1.

The trans-Atlantic slave trade that transported over ten million Africans across the Atlantic to the Western Hemisphere from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, the one mentioned in *Her First American,* has been the most familiar slave trading studied in Western history. The political context and the racial persecution of Carter's story, as well as of the female character Ebony, starts in the eighteenth century with the capture and the passage of enslaved black people from Africa to the United States. In 1808, the United States criminalized the international slave trade, but slavery continued. In 1865, the end of the Civil War led to the declaration of slavery as unconstitutional. However, along with the abolition of slavery, the country issued restrictions on black people's freedom, and these lasted for a century of legal segregation, especially in the South. Civil rights struggles started in the 1950s and continued in the 1960s, the years in which *Her First American* takes place. In this period, civil rights movements demand to break the southern "Jim Crow" discriminatory system and extend the same civil rights to every citizen regardless of race. In 1964, thanks to

the social movements and to international and national political pressures, the congress passes The Civil Rights Act that forbids discrimination in education, employment, and public accommodation, and creates the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission. Subsequent acts ensure blacks' political participation and prohibit racial discrimination in renting or selling housing (Alba and Nee 2003, Skrentny 2002).

Racism based on difference and perpetuated by persecution, enslavement, and continued discrimination is a fundamental vector in Danticat's *The Farming of Bones* (1998) and Brand's *At the Full and Change of the Moon* (1999) as well. The two novels were written and published after the liberation of the colonized Caribbean islands Hispaniola and Trinidad, but they deal with historical events and their ongoing impact. Due to their focus on the impact of historical circumstances on individual lives, both books can be defined as postcolonial trauma novels, corresponding with the call to create an alternative canon of trauma novels, as Rothberg suggests in "Studies of the Novel" (2008). Such novels probe "the articulation of race and space; the uncanny historicity of colonial (and other forms of) violence; the intergenerational transmission of trauma; and the problem of unequal recognition of disparate traumatic histories" (226).

Nevertheless, Brand and Danticat differ in their strategies in regard to the formation of the characters' identity. Brand, according to Magali Sperling (2001), illustrates how "black identity is disintegrated since blacks are dispersed all over the world, which leads to an assimilationist strategy of survival" (4). Danticat focuses on a shorter period, and on individuals from one exiled minority impacted by historical powers beyond their understanding. Her characters are detached from the dominant part of society both in exile and back in their homeland. The main character, Amabelle, rebuilds her sense of identity and belonging by breaking through her trauma, revealing silenced memories that complement the collective memory of her nation.

The current traumatic experiences illustrated by these two novels are tracked back and related to the routes of slave trade operating between Africa and the islands of the eastern Atlantic. The following list of local colonization by different colonizers conveys the vastness of the undermined history of this part of the world. In the fifteenth century, Portuguese ships transported Africans to the sugar plantations in Cape Verde and Madeira islands, and, in the sixteenth century, Spanish ships transported African slaves to the Caribbean. Between the seventeenth

and the nineteenth century, Britain shipped over three million Africans to the plantations in British-owned colonies in the Caribbean. In the eighteenth century the French imported thirteen thousand African slaves to the French West Indies, now known as the Antilles islands in the Caribbean**.** By the middle of the eighteenth century, according to Thomas Kitchin's 1778 book, *The Present State of the West-Indies*, British Jamaica and French Saint-Domingue, now known as Haiti, had become the largest slave colonies of the region. In 1804, the French colony, settled in on Hispaniola and named Saint-Domingue, gains independence from France and is named Haiti, the Taíno name for the island. When the other colony, Santo Domingo, declares its independence from Spain, Haiti invades it for over twenty years. The Dominican Republic reclaims its autonomy in 1844, but submits to Spain again for four years, until recovering its independence.

The borders between the two nations on Hispaniola are established for the last time during the USA military occupation of Haiti between 1915 and 1934, and of the Dominican Republic between 1916 and 1924. According to Eliana de Souza Ávila (2014), these borders were established in order to deliberately repress any alliance between the twin nations: "[t]he occupation fed hostility across the Haitian-Dominican border, itself an emblem of the political instability invested in renewing economic and military intervention in the region" (22). The geographical borders, as Édouard Glissant (1989) points out, do not serve any local interests but a Western view and power. "History [with a capital H] is a highly functional fantasy of the West, originating at precisely the time when it alone 'made' the histories of the World" (64), he writes.

The traumatizing events of capture, deportation, forced migration, and slavery in this region have been discussed in contemporary trauma studies based, in part, on descendants' literary representations of the diasporic subjects of the slave trade in the Caribbean. *The Farming of Bones* and *At the Full and Change of the Moon*, both written by Caribbean female authors in exile, exemplify how collective memory bears implications for trauma, postcolonial, diaspora, and gender studies. However, as mentioned earlier, the original traumatizing event emphasized in *At the Full and Change of the Moon* is different from that of the Haitian *The Farming of Bones*. Brand's novel focuses on the consequences of slavery, while Danticat's focuses on the 1937 massacre led by Dominicans against Haitians. More specifically, *The Farming of Bones* takes place in the aftermath of independence but under the long shadows thrown over the Dominican Republic and Haiti

by colonization. The narrator and her community members are exploited laborers rather than slaves, but their oppression is an enactment, an echo, of their history of slavery. The narrative centers on the period in which Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, known as the Generalissimo, calls the Dominican Republic for a national cleansing, an extermination of the Haitians exiled there. Despite the Dominican Republic's need for laborers, which has originally attracted this foreign labor, Trujillo's radical nationalism determines that the Haitians deserve death as they threaten the Dominicans' peace and prosperity. The slain of Haitians includes small farmers, exiled workers and anyone pointed out as Haitian. Local priest and officials in Haiti have informed about over twelve thousand murders, but the number is probably greater, since the authorities demanded proof in paper from the testimonies in order to register murders. Years later, in 1994, Ramsey Clark, the USA Attorney General, who presided a negotiation between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, writes in *Haiti: a Slave Revolution: 200 Years after 1804* that the Dominican Republic acknowledged eighteen thousand dead, and restituted the sum of twenty-nine dollars per death, with Haiti's agreement. This agreement shows not only the Dominican Republic's lack of interest in real restitution, but also the lack of political and human interest of the Haitian authorities, just as the fictional character of Amabelle testifies. In her character and narration, Amabelle personalizes history and challenges this indifference. In fact, Danticat has accomplished the goal she has set to herself, as described in her 2002 interview: "I didn't want to lose track of the person who is having the experiences. The larger story already exists in history. I also wanted to reduce the massacre to one person, through whose eyes we can experience it" (Web).

Contrarily, Brand describes in detail the original trauma of slavery and the collective suicide. However, these traumatic events are hardly recalled by Marie Ursule's daughter, Bola, the only survivor of the collective suicide organized by her mother, since Marie Ursule does not speak with her daughter about their life and history. Nevertheless, representing the idea that history continues present forever, Marie Ursule expresses her belief that, despite the lack of actual memory in the subsequent generations, slavery will not disappear into thin air. According to Johnson (2004), "Brand decenters the primacy of a discreet, reality-signifying scene [the collective suicide] by showing how discreet events of desperation or brutality exist in a symbiotic relationship with other events, past and future" (7). Aside from the different focuses on traumatizing events, both books show how the

present situation of each character interacts and intersects with a past of multiple legacies. This is also a characteristic of Segal's *Other People's Houses* and *Her First American*.

The novels are, therefore, representative of the diverse forms of fictionalization of socio-historical processes and their impact on the lives of individuals belonging to different minorities. The following brief summaries introduce the most relevant elements in the corpus on which this study is based.

The Novels

Other People's Houses (1964) and *Her First American* (1985) were written by Lore Segal, a Jewish author born in Austria, who escaped to England as a child during the Holocaust and migrated to the US after the Second World War. Segal started writing *Other People's Houses* while living as a refugee in England. Later on, already residing in the United States, she serialized her refugee stories for the New Yorker. A few years later she used them for the memoir-like novel *Other People's Houses*. The narrative has many touching points with Segal's personal history: like Segal, her namesake and main character, a ten-year-old Jewish Austrian girl, the only child of a Viennese couple, takes the "Kindertransport", a child rescue train in 1940, ten months into the Second World War, with other few hundreds of children refugees escaping to England from the German and Austrian Nazi persecution. She is sent to several foster English families, one after the other, never finding peace. Since the families do not understand the gravity of the situation of Jews in Austria, the girl takes an initiative and sends pleas to the Jewish Refugee Committee and British authorities to bring her family to England. In the meantime, she stays with a wealthy orthodox Jewish family, then, with a working-class family, and, afterwards, with two conservative Christian sisters. The families do not recognize her loneliness, worry, and pain of separation and exile, and fail to understand her difficulties. They expect her to become a well-adapted English girl, instead of a nervous, secluded refugee. While living in their houses, she experiences and observes the English class system, social prejudices, and discrimination. She is grateful for the foster families' gesture of hosting her, but she dreads the limits of their good will. Her age, gender, ethnicity, and history mark her as an outsider and an observer and lead to a pained sense of reality. The story, told from the point of view of the girl, as recalled years later, shows how the war, Nazism, and the Austrian and English societies have affected her world view and self-perception, and how they have hardened and shaped her.

She survives the ordeal by defining and articulating the world around her, tracing its conventions and mechanisms. The original traumatic event, the persecution of Jews in Austria, leading to a family split, loss, and exile, takes its toll on her, her mother, and her father, each in different ways. The insightful descriptions of their struggle fit well into the study of difference, trauma, and ways of transformation.

Lore remains on her own even when her parents finally gain a permission to come to England. Their domestic work visa obliges them to work as servants despite their skills, education, and professional record, and, in addition, they cannot bring her to live with them or nearby. A sharp observer of the absurd, the fake, flawed, and unjust, Lore notices how refugees such as her parents are put in their "right place", which is never equal to the locals'. Her descriptions reveal her pain and frustration. At the same time, a deep gap opens between her and her depressed, sick father, who does not learn English and distrusts the new land. She is ashamed of his inability to express himself, and of his continuous complaints. In the same way that her foster families blamed her, she blames him for his failure to adjust. She is not satisfied with her mother's conduct either, because her mother accepts the domestic obligations with good will and takes care of the father with complete devotion. The parents' attitudes and obvious foreignness disrupt Lore's attempt to assimilate in the local society. She ends-up estranged both from the locals and from her own family.

Notably, despite the proliferation of refugee stories in the 1960s, this novel was hailed as different by literary reviewers such as Cynthia Ozyck, who writes:

> The scrupulously introspective tone, without a scintilla of self-pity, truthful almost to the point of matter-of-factness, could nevertheless bring on a wash of […] the kind of pity that is kin to wisdom and ignites new understanding. (Critical Mass Archives, Web)

Her First American gives continuity to the life of *Other People's Houses'* main character and her life, while also giving the protagonist another name--Ilka Wessnix--and more space for fictional narrative. The story that takes place in the fifties, in the US, is told by Ilka years later, allowing for a distanced perspective of the period. By then, the Jewish community has lost six million people in the Holocaust, and Ilka has gone through individual loss and pain and suffered the collective shock at the programmed murder and torture. At twenty-one, Ilka is an Austrian-born Jewish refugee just arriving in the US. She speaks English badly and does not belong anywhere, as she has no

longing for Austria and no sense of belonging to the US. She starts her new life in an ambivalent emotional state, as she is combative and suspicious, while also vulnerable and craving to belong. She is determined to find out how to "become American", and, in order to do that, she tries to find out what "being American" means. She starts with a train trip to get to know the country, and meets Carter, an imposing, intellectual African-American man in his fifties. She is attracted to him and to everything he represents in her view: a proud part of a minority, who is, at the same time, a "real American". Her perception of him as such does not change, although she learns that his brilliant journalistic career and his life in general are in decline due to his addiction to alcohol. She shares her history with him, and he shares his, and his perspective of his African-American community and the US society in these times of transition and historical mobilization. He contributes to the movement for civil and social rights with provocative articles and lectures that deal with the end of discrimination and segregation, and equal rights in job opportunities, education, and housing. His views affect his relationships as well, as Ilka notices when he becomes her lover and her compass for the new land. During their romance, the two explore their history, their lives as members of minorities, their demons, fears, hopes, pain, and traumas. The tension between the communities, their attempts of approximation, and their unique necessities and expectations are well traced throughout the novel, as they emerge in personal relationships and through codes of behavior. Ilka's mother, who joins her in the USA, still in shock from the event of her husband's death in the holocaust, represents an even more blatant version of a woman in trauma who struggles to survive. She becomes a source of pain, anger, and regret to Ilka. Their relationships are tense, as the two of them try to survive emotionally, each in a different way. The mother sticks to the past. Ilka turns to Carter for support, but he, too, is struggling, and Ilka has to find her way on her own.

The Farming of Bones (1998) was written by Edwidge Danticat, a Haitian-US author, born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and raised by her aunt and uncle for several years when her parents left for the US, until she joined her parents in New York, at the age of twelve. Her prose, interviews, and participation in documentary movies reflect her deep involvement with the cultural, social, and political aspects of Haitian history. She often writes about the impact of ongoing poverty and about human rights problems and repression affecting Haitian people. Her work, in a general manner, conveys how historical legacies and collective traumatic events operate in the lives of individuals. For

instance, Amabelle, the female narrator in *The Farming of Bones,* gives voice and shape to forgotten or silenced events and brings overlooked injustice into light, while embodying her memories and confronting her past. Accordingly, in an interview conducted in 2002, Danticat explains that her focus in *The* Farming *of Bones* is more on the testimonial aspect of the events. "The larger story already exists in history. I also wanted to reduce the massacre to one person, through whose eyes we can experience it" (Web), she says.

The novel is set in the 1930s, in the Dominican Republic, where a young Haitian woman, an orphan since the age of eight, Amabelle Desir, is a loyal houseworker for the local people who brought her to their home after the death of her parents. From the beginning, Amabelle focuses her story on her beloved lover, Sebastien, a Haitian cane field worker to whom she has just become engaged. They console each other for the pain threaded in their past and share strong passion and desire. Their lives are disrupted when the death of Sebastien's friend begins a series of atrocities aimed at killing all Haitians, as programmed by the Dominican leader Trujillo, known as the "Generalissimo." Amabelle makes an attempt to help Sebastien and his sister flee with her on a priest's truck, but she ends up separated from them, fleeing with Sebastien's friend Yves. Other exiled Haitians join them on the dangerous way back to Haiti, but by the end of the escape, of the whole group, only Amabelle and Yves survive, both suffering from terrible injuries and shock. Amabelle keeps perusing news about Sebastien's destiny from Yves's home. When she finds that Sebastien and his sister have been murdered, she continues living there, without finding solace. Her bond with Yves is never solidified, becoming a source of guilt and shame after one physical union. She lives to bear testimony to Sebastien's life and death, and to the massacre silenced by the authorities. The survivors are not well-accepted, as their story disturbs the local society. Years later, still inconsolable, she begins a journey into the past, following backwards the route she took on her escape and traveling to the place in which she lived in the Dominican Republic. Her chance to heal from her trauma and find peace remains in question.

At the Full and Change of the Moon (1999) was the second book written by the Caribbean author and poet Dionne Brand, born in the Caribbean island of Trindad in 1953 and immigrated to Canada in 1970. The novel introduces a neo-slave saga permeated by pain related to slavery and oppression. The narrative, characterized by lyrical language, reveals an intense connection to questions of social justice, diasporic experience, gender, and race. It runs from 1802, when Marie

Ursule, a black woman, enslaved in Trindade, initiates an act of suicide of all the slaves of her master, to the end of the twentieth century, when the youngest descendant of Marie Ursule, Bola (the second), is born in Amsterdam in 1982, and lives surrounded by the ghosts of the past. Pain passes from generation to generation, marking every character, and it is present in the body or through the bodies of all, evoked by collective memory. The novel invokes hereditary forces even on the most far-flung descendants. It begins as Marie Ursule, the Trinidadian slave, tries to wreck the master's economy and power. She sends away her young daughter, Bola, the only child born these years, with Kamena, a fugitive and probably Bola's father, who takes the girl to Terre Bouillante, a secret—or an imaginary--settlement of runaway slaves. Bola grows up on her own, as he is breaking down, lost. She stays at an abandoned monastery, feels one with the ocean and the land, and, when the islanders move to the area, becomes the mother of thirteen children, by nine men. She keeps some of them and sends others away, obviously affected by the trauma of slavery, abandon, and loss. Her goal is to keep her family safe, because together, they may all come to the same harm. Her sons and daughters and their descendants spread to Venezuela, New York, Toronto, and Amsterdam. In all of them, conscious and subconscious memories link them to the past and form their identities. Among the most memorable female descendants, Cordelia breaks the conservative structure of her family and life and fulfills her every desire for sensual pleasure. Another, named Eula, desires to reconstruct silenced histories of her family, and suffers a great disappointment as the scarce and illegible documents mostly reveal how her history is lost forever. Another remarkable character is the last descendant, Bola, named after her great-grandmother, who withdraws from the real world into a world full of ghosts. The individual and collective identities, a thread from the past to the present, emphasize the importance of memory as well as its unbearable weight for trauma survivors.

Segal, Brand, and Danticat chose to write in the language of the dominant colonial culture, although they are a part of minorities that speak other languages. Their choice of language is related to colonization, isolation, assimilation, and testimony. In the case of Brand and Danticat, they opted for a lyrical narration that reflects the literary tradition of the Caribbean. However, they do not use a nativized English, as that of islands colonized by the English, but the English of the countries they inhabit. The compromise of attempting a Caribbean-styled storytelling while maintaining the local English is ambiguous in the sense that it implies a mixture of pride in the Caribbean culture and a

tendency to integrate minority literature into the dominant culture. Segal's choice of language, English of the USA, is a reaction to her forced exile from her homeland and native language, a choice her characters make as well.

Despite their many dissimilarities, the chosen novels – *Her First American* (1985) and *Other People's Houses* (1964), both by Lore Segal, *The Farming of Bones* (1998) by Edwidge Danticat and *At the Full Change of the Moon* (1999) by Dionne Brand -- have in common the illustration of lives in a process of dislocation and/or diaspora after going through painful collective and individual traumatic experiences. The selection of the corpus started with *Other People's Houses*, which focuses on the Jewish diaspora. *Her First American* complements it in many ways. However, while *Her First American* centers on a Jewish female Holocaust refugee, as does *Other People's Houses,* the relationships and experiences portrayed in the novel deal not only with the Jewish minority in diaspora, but also with the black African American diaspora, history, and identity. The negotiation between these representations of minority people, their similarities, differences, and the tension between the two communities brought me to the conclusion that the analysis would benefit from the inclusion of books in which other minorities in disempowered locations are portrayed and dissected, revealing the consequences of their collective and individual traumas. This is how *At the Full and Change of the Moon* was included, bringing another view of slavery, colonization, and neocolonialism in the Caribbean. Since the Caribbean experience itself includes different communities going through different historical events, another main female character seemed necessary to add a broader view, and so I included *The Framing of Bones*, which deals with the Haitians exiled in the Dominican Republic and the 1937 massacre that drove them back to Haiti. In a further attempt to decolonize literary criticism that deals with gender, diaspora, and trauma, it is necessary to show where the works differ culturally. The postcolonial works by Danticat and Brand present typical Caribbean literary choices that include a lyrical narration, symbols such as a river marking death, rituals such as entering a cave, ghosts and haunting and discourses other than the linear and chronological. Conversely, a more linear, chronological narration dominates *Other People's Houses* and *Her First American,* and the literary devices are mostly irony, cultural analyses, a backstory in *Her First American*, and dialogues that reveal the characters' perception of body, self, life and history.

However, the relation between different diasporic experiences is undeniable, because mobility, forced exile, and immigration are common and present in world history, and the different communities share common experiences and locations, and therefore have a cultural exchange that impacts their members individually and collectively. This relation has been suggested, according to the 2007 James Procter's analysis of the concept of "diaspora" when the term, "originally used to refer specifically to the exile of the Jews from Palestine […] has been adopted and adapted by postcolonial scholars and artists to refer to the forced and voluntary migrations set in motion by empire" (60). In this spirit, it is necessary to explore and compare in literary studies different diasporas and develop a broad point of view that includes similarities and differences.

The four books deal with people living during and after global migrations, those following the processes of neocolonialism in the Caribbean islands, those fleeing from the 1937 massacre in The Dominican Republic, and those fleeing the Holocaust. The characters are confined in between cultures and identities, dealing with constant strife and struggle to survive their past and their present. While all the characters represent a traumatic experience, only one of the four novels, *The Farming of Bone*, bears an extensive testimony to traumatic events (though an indirect one), and the other three do not bear testimony in their most part although they relate the characters' lives in the face of traumatic events. However, all the novels dwell on forms of trauma-provoking discrimination, persecution, and prejudice through narratives about survivors and their descendants. They deal with the traumatic experience as a fundamental factor that shapes the characters' lives and identity. Therefore, the narratives, based on history and memory, atrocities, and continuous hard experiences of minorities are best understood with the assistance of a multicultural trauma theory. The established contextualization serves as a foundation on which the foregrounding theoretical framework acts as a tool of examination in the literary representations of minority characters, mostly females, whose ethnicity and other categories of overlapping difference have marked them as targets, and whose individual and collective memory of traumatizing history impact their identity, perception of body and self, and diasporic experience. The literary interpretations of trauma, or the wound (conceptually explained in the theoretical review) in *The Farming of Bones, At the Full and Change of the Moon, Her First American,* and *Other People's Houses* involve a complex notion of trauma beyond the physical sphere and across time and place. The

collective and individual traumas act as a spectrum through which stories of target groups are examined, interplaying with minority, diaspora, postcolonial, and gender studies in order to show the intersecting sources and layers of repression and its consequences. In the case of women, there is often an added layer of oppression.

The role of these novels as testimonial is based on the factual foundation of each of them, already acknowledged by governments and history studies and burned into the collective memory at least of the affected minority. "Traumatic knowledge," as Efraim Sicher writes in his 2011 article, "is accessed through literary narratives and the imagination, rather than the historical events" (189). Literary criticism, in this work and in general, however, cannot negotiate the accuracy of the historical facts present at the foundation of the narrative. This may be the role of historians. However, in case of doubt, comparing and contrasting fictional and non-fictional, direct and indirect testimonies among themselves will reveal differences and confer reliability. Since the text is a mediator, and therefore, its style and form, and any literary tools used in it should be analyzed in their relevance to the traumatic events and impacts in question. Furthermore, literary work like these four novels allows us the opportunity to observe how history and memory affect society and individuals in an interconnected world and through generations. Thus, the novels deserve a close study as they exemplify in fiction the impact of socio-historical conflicts and processes on the individual.

***

The present Introduction, which has outlined the background and objectives of the analysis, is followed by Chapter One, devoted to the review of literature, in which a theoretical framework is introduced, focusing on a coherent presentation of the most pertinent concepts, ideas, and theories. The analysis itself takes up the next three chapters, as explained below.

Chapter Two, titled "In Between: Minority Characters in Exile" determines the way characters from different target groups deal with two categories of the multiple oppression that affect them: racism and exile. These two categories intersect with gender and appear in the corporeal aspects of the characters' lives. It provides an overview of ethinicism, racism, and exile in the Jewish community, appearing in Segal's two selected novels, the African-American community present in the author's *Her First American*, the Caribbean minorities, descendants of slaves brought from Africa to Trinidad, present in Brand's *At the Full and Change of the Moon,* and the exiled Haitians in the Dominican

Republic, descendant of African slaves as well, who return to Haiti after the 1937 massacre. In addition, the study discusses the personal and social struggle with prejudice and/or the internalization of prejudice related to ethnicism, racism, sexism, and multiple oppression. Finally, the chapter expands upon the competitive way by which minorities deal among them with their respective legacies, and the alternative ways of handling different legacies in order to advance a fragmented yet internally allied social understanding of trauma memory legacy.

Closely linked to this, Chapter Three, titled "The Present Body", focuses on the gendered body and the embodied history of the characters. The chapter deals with corporeality, by examining in the novels the ways axes of difference such as race, class, nationality and sexuality (+other categories of intersectionality) impact women's experience of their bodies and their perception of body and self. In addition, the chapter inquiries into the characters' experience of other cultures through the body, including observations of body language. Additionally, the chapter observes the experience of the gendered body and examine the ways it affects the female characters' choices and their relationships with and through the body. Since the context of each novel and author is taken in account, the study aims to reveal what the female characters from the different cultures and characters have in common and what divides them in their relationships with their body and with the world. In sequence, the study examines how the authors write the specific problems of bodies marked by differences other than gender and how they point at possible transformations.

Chapter Four, titled "Looking through the Prism of Trauma", analyzes patterns of trauma in the characters' lives, thus adding yet another layer to their identity, memory and history, as it elaborates the different views of trauma and struggle in different minorities and across diverse characters. The chapter includes an overview the novels' role as trauma testimonies and the role of storytelling in each community (with an emphasis on postcolonial factors exemplified in Danticat's and Brand's novels). The contribution of each author to the understanding of trauma, history, and memory and relating it to female minority characters is at the basis of this analysis, divided by two groups of novels: Segal's novels with their European and American focus, and Brand's and Danticat's with their Caribbean focus. Within each group, special attention is given to the differences between the two included novels. Thus, the chapter further examines the relevant social patterns and views of trauma based on the time, place, and society in which each novel is set and is written. Most importantly, it studies the

manifestations of trauma in each female character. Complementing it, the chapter discusses the aspects of trauma unique to each minority, its culture, history and memory. The common individual manifestations and social structures that indicate trauma are taken in account as well. In addition, the chapter examines the benefits of multidirectional memory as opposed to competitive trauma legacies, exemplifying it by the interactions among minorities in *Her First American*. In each novel analysis, the relation of language and trauma and language and power are studied, with an emphasis on the linguistic aspects of the characters' ways of communication, and on the ways the novels convey trauma and pain. The related link between collective and individual trauma memory, and memory and identity formation, are discussed. Within aspects of collective memory, the representations of postmemory and intergenerational trauma are examined upon their relevance to each novel. The role of storytelling as a therapeutic and strengthening tool in minorities is examined especially in relation to *The Farming of Bones* and *At the Full and Change of the Moon* in the light of postcolonial studies. Other forms of overcoming trauma, separating the self from the traumatic history, resisting traumatic structures, and beginning a transformation are studied, as well as the question whether characters suffer from trauma without relief, or find ways to cope with life. All the above is developed based on the applicable psychoanalytic strategies and/or alternative approaches in trauma theory, involving resistance, unforgetting, and deconstruction and reconstruction of historical narratives and conventions.

In the Conclusion, the analytical chapters are brought together, having in mind the proposed objectives and hypotheses, as well as further considerations that may have arisen during the analysis.

CHAPTER ONE
Theoretical Framework: From Difference to Change
1.1. Difference

We absorb the world through constant comparisons between what we know and what we don't, between past and present experiences, and between expectations and outcomes. Each comparison results in similarities and differences, all of them variants in the fabric of life. Nevertheless, despite the consistent existence of difference, it does not serve as a reassuring aspect of life for both individuals and communities, and instead, it is met with resistance, fear, rivalry, and prejudice. The tendency to view difference as a flaw implies that the one gazing and judging knows better, or has been born better, and thus hierarchy is created.

This negative notion of difference has been at the basis of the binary structure of Western philosophy, splitting between body and mind, nature and culture, west and east, white and colored, women and men. Among other damages, the split has brought a demeaning idea of women and a glorifying one of men. Descartes' paradigms, the Enlightenment, and the evolutionist thought guided Western thought toward a separation of the human (or rather, the dominant white men) from other species, including in the category of the "other" anything considered animalistic and pre-modern, women, and all people from other cultures.[2]

Until the past century, therefore, literature written by women was denied its due place in world history and culture. As Virginia Woolf shows in *A Room of One's Own* in the beginning of the twentieth century (1929), there has been little literature by women, and these rare texts have often been written in and about interior spaces and have avoided any connection to the body. However, after the Second World War, with Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), and, later, with the feminist scholarship since the sixties, there has been a "critical disengagement from the Cartesian rationalism that had been so deeply rooted in modernism", as Miriam Adelman and Lennita Ruggi argue in the 2015 article "The Sociology of the Body" (2). With this ideological change, embodied stories written by women about female characters have appeared with growing frequency since the 1960s, matching and recreating a growing feminist openness toward the inclusion of manifestations and self-representations of the female body. Beyond the

[2] More about the binary division and its history is found in my MA thesis: Cykman (March 2014).

physical experiences of the body – involving sexuality and desire, suffering and pleasure –, the mental, emotional, and political aspects of the body, its negation, obsession, and discipline are also explored in depth.

In terms of postmodern feminist literary criticism, for which contextuality is a determining element, the spatial and temporal context in which the embodied narratives are written gives shapes and meanings to the textual representation of the body. The socio-cultural context becomes in itself a part of the various layers and meanings of the bodily experience, becoming a major element in the constant corporeal transformation. In fact, the characters' perception of body and self is permeated by individual and collective history.

Approaching the 1980s, a visible growth takes place in the feminist awareness of difference based on gender, race, location, education, and economic situation--among other factors--within society in general and among women in particular. This widening consideration of difference leads to debates regarding social fragmentation and the situation of minorities, non-white and/or third world women, working class, and immigrants. Social thinkers such as Michel Foucault (1979, 1980), Judith Butler (1990, 1993, 2004), Elizabeth Grosz (1994, 1995), Gayatri Spivak (1994), and Linda Nicholson (1989) discuss how the dominant classes universalize their own characteristics and values, stepping over any representation of difference and marginalizing different groups. With the deconstruction of enlightenment myths determining the position of women as inferior, the disciplined, oppressed female body stands at the center of the discussion of body politics dealing with discourse and performance in feminist literary criticism, as seen in Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Bodies that Matter* (1993). Bell hooks adds to this discussion, writing in her 1997 article "Female Sexuality in the cultural Marketplace" for *Writing on the Body* that since bodies are constructed as raced and gendered as a mechanism of social oppression, women and people from other races than the white have been associated with the body, its sensuality, sexuality, and lack of logic and spirituality. Therefore, black women are at least doubly-othered (113).

The reasons for such marginalization have been studied sociologically and historically in critical literary postmodernism. According to Stuart Hall's essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" (1990), the self-definition of the dominant collective develops in relation to its definition of the "other," as the comparison strengthens an elusive superior identity. This process of negating difference and expelling the

"other" does not take place only in regard to communities but also in relation to the individual. Using a different angle, Iris Young argues in "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference" (1986) that liberal individualism forges self-sufficiency, shunning empathy or solidarity, while the community denies difference by positing fusion rather than separation as the social ideal. The unifying liberal policy discourages an acceptance of groups and individuals who do not fit the mold (306-10). It is undeniable that a unified negative view of difference across different ideologies has been a part of the historical process of persecution and exploration of minorities.

Following this inclusive line of thought, feminist scholarship, in parallel with the evolvement of postmodernism and thanks to the interactive influences between both movements, speeds the process toward an acceptance of difference, social fragmentation, and alliances in order to transform the situation of minorities and other marginalized groups. In 1984, when Chandra Mohanty publishes her essay "Under Western Eyes", her voice fortifies the academic awareness of difference. Her essay manifests, much like Linda Nicholson's introduction to *Feminism/Postmodernism* (1989), that feminist scholarship has simulated the universalizing practices of hegemonic groups, failing to recognize the historic and contextual construction of their own assumptions. Accordingly, the existing assumptions reflect Western humanism, Eurocentrism, and white skin dominance, producing and reproducing an essentializing view of "third world Woman" or "the other." Mohanty claims that taking the course of essentialization has been a purposeful choice and a political discursive practice, "best seen as a mode of intervention into particular hegemonic discourses (for example, traditional anthropology, sociology, literary criticism, etc.)" (333). In this venue, Mohanty, like Spivak (1988) and Narayan (1997), all from previously colonized countries, criticizes Western feminisms for their assumptions about women and women's subjectivity, especially disapproving their claims to speak on behalf of all women. Since literature creates and recreates every aspect of culture, this "othering" of social groups has been extended to literary analyses. The postcolonial view reveals similar concerns.

The fierce conceptual debate regarding "othering" continues due to questions, such as Spivak's, regarding the powers that determine who is central and who is peripheral, and the danger of essentializing the "other" while defining what "otherness" or rather, "being the other," means. Spivak, like Mohanty, and like Butler and Foucault, postmodern thinkers working with language and identity, cautions that the

definitions of categories like gender, class, and race, and the consequences of difference for people's lives have been articulated, formed, and shaped by discourse. In Edward Said's 1978 book *Orientalism,* the concept of the oppressed subaltern is examined in relation to colonialism. According to Said, the Eurocentric interpretation of anything out of the Western culture creates a distorted sense of what the Orient, or Orientalism, signifies, thus building a socio-cultural justification of domination. The European conceptualization of the Orient, beginning with reports of travelers exploring Oriental locations, is constituted of savagery, threat, and mystery thriving in monstrous places. Such conceptualization deepens the sense of difference and divides hierarchically between the Western center and "the other," opening way for silencing and colonization. The "other" lacks legitimacy, independence and civility, and it is only in the power of the West to control, educate, and speak for this population. The notion of the West and its homogenizing is discussed below in relation to trauma. Basically, a binary division between the West and the rest is not favorable to any study or any socio-cultural process.

It is important to suggest here that, since the need to expand and increase the collaboration and understanding among diverse cultures in different geographical parts is obvious in such a fragmented world, the specificities of each culture should be considered closely and local studies should interact with a diversity of studies. This, of course, includes the definition of the "West". As Naoki Sakai points out in "The West—A Dialogic Prescription or Proscription?" (2005), "The West—(...), with its symmetrical opposite, the Rest of humanity—is such a category that clearly lacks in the rationality of conceptual coherence. It does not have consistent unity. Rather it presents itself as a putative unity and contains contradictions within itself" (177). Sakai also points out that "the West-and-the-Rest distinction can never be free of the aura of racism" (191). Endorsing Sakai's view, Michael Rothberg (2008) adds that decolonized trauma studies should demonstrate the internal heterogeneity of Europe, North America, and Australia, while, simultaneously, indicate the differences between the categories of colonizing nations and those of the societies they have colonized, without distracting from the hierarchy of power (Decolonizing 228). In the same way, attention should be given to local conditions, social structures, diverse forms of colonization, and the different impacts of colonization and neocolonialism in studies that refer to colonized societies and regions.

However, while the powers of the West have the power and the knowledge to represent themselves, one of the most debated questions in feminist, postcolonial and postmodern criticisms is whether a subaltern, excluded from multiple levels of empowerment, can speak at all. Feminist scholarship (as well as postcolonial and diaspora) cannot take for granted the availability of a contextual identity or a definition of difference if the voice of that disempowered individual or society is not raised. The concept of "speaking" or "raising a voice" in this regard is defined as self-representation, the act of expressing oneself individually or collectively in a form that is accepted, understood, and respected. This question regarding the subaltern has been reintroduced into the academic discussion by Gayatry Spivak, who proclaims it impossible for a subaltern to raise a voice in her seminal essay "Can the Subaltern Speak" (1985). As Hall reminds us in his 2002 essay "Ethnicity, Identity and Difference", the idea of a colonized or otherwise disempowered subject who manages to simply open his mouth and speak as if the act of self-representation is not related to power, has already been criticized and interrupted by Marx. Society constructs its members with their life conditions, always implicated by other people's practices and structures. (239).

Interestingly, in her forward to her 2010 translation of "Can the Subaltern Speak", Sandra Regina Almeida Goulart argues that Spivak does not deny the subaltern's capacity to speak, but rather, the incapacity of society for a dialogue (p. 12-4). Homi Bhabha, too, Analyzes the options available to the subaltern, asking in *The Location of Culture* (1994), "[i]f we contest the 'grand narratives' then what alternative temporalities do we create to articulate the differential (Jameson), contrapuntal (Said), interruptive (Spivak) historicities of race, gender, class, nation, within a transnational culture?" (172). In sequence, he argues that the subaltern has actually spoken, and "a properly symptomatic reading can recover the native voice" (177). According to him, the clashing narratives constructed from the authority position and from the position of subalternity have different cultural means and are produced to different historical ends, and these different forces emerge in displaced, or decentered strategies that may merge in an ambivalent, subversive signification. The manners of interacting with other discourses remain in debate. In *Loss, the Politics of Mourning* (2002), Greg Forter introduces two strands of postcolonial studies in his article "Against Melancholia: Contemporary Mourning Theory, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, and the Politics of Unfinished Grief." One, based on Lloyd (1959), advocates the return of the post colonized

to the precolonial past. Another, based on Durrant (2000), argues that the colonized has no access to the traumatic past due to the inclination to silence and forget unbearable painful history. A way to recreate a voice is to canonize elements of the colonized culture in order to function as a modern state. Fundamentally, neither of these arguments lacks problems. The first supposes that the voice of the colonized community has not been altered, suffocated, and perhaps forgotten through the period of colonization. This is a false assumption, because generations of colonized people live under the impact of the colonizer's discourse, social structure, and abuse, without having the necessary space to form and maintain the original culture. The second line may lead to problems of the colonized community's over-identification with the colonizers and their methods.

According to Joanne Sharp, acquiring the tools of the dominant forces is essential for survival. She argues, in *Geographies of Post Colonialism* (2008), that Western intellectuals disregard different forms of knowing that exist outside the Western world by treating them in their discourse as myth and as folklore. Therefore, a subaltern who cannot or will not use the Western forms of knowledge and language will not be able to transmit thought and will not be known and heard. The problem is that when the subaltern speaks with the voice of the colonizer, it muddles the original idea and knowledge. Emphasizing the need for communication in a rather transgressive manner, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin argue in *The Empire Writes Back* (2002) that if the subaltern develops political awareness based on access to knowledge and education, there is a chance for change. Under this condition, scholars and authors from colonized (and neo-colonized) countries are the most adequate to represent the subaltern, to indicate a subaltern's inability or limitation of crossing the line of silence drawn by Western world. Clear communication with other cultures requires tools the subaltern might have been denied for generations, as well as openness and adjustment of the dominant culture.

The interrelated subject of construction and/or reconstruction of national and individual identity after the colonized were affected by colonialism has been introduced with close attention to the traumatizing experience of the colonized. According to Sam Durrant in his introduction to *Postcolonial Narrative and the Work of Mourning: J.M. Coetzee, Wilson Harris* (2003), the possibility of traumatization is a fundamental establishing element of colonial, race-based relations, since these are necessarily relations of dominance, power, and control. In his words, "the potential for traumatization is a constitutive feature of

colonial (race) relations, inasmuch as these are always and everywhere relations of domination" (1). Therefore, as the upcoming section about trauma illustrates, memory, history, narrative and national identity have been affected by trauma and have determined the possibility or impossibility of self-representation. With the complexity of colonization and the processes of liberation (followed by neocolonialism) it is no wonder that the question of what constitutes the subaltern voice (if it exists/can be heard) and which part of the past and the present this voice transmits, remains debatable. This study reflects my best effort to avoid a distortion of the representations offered by the minority female authors born in colonized or invaded lands and living in exile.

The debate regarding self-representation reveals that while, theoretically, difference gains legitimacy, its characterization still provokes confusion. Feminist postmodernism has indeed taken a step toward alliances between fragmented groups (within fragmented groups), but it has also raised many brows due to the fundamental weight it puts upon social construction. Feminist postmodern scholars such as Judith Butler argue that the context of living in a certain society, time, and place is at the basis of identity formation. However, relating every concept to social construction– via discourse alone – makes a case for constant relativity, or abstraction. It raises the question of how social justice or even an understanding of a discriminatory condition can be approached, if there is no embodied fact and no solid basis to determine the situation. Thus, while the withdrawal from essentialism that predetermines social roles is positive, the abstraction introduces an obstacle. However, there are poststructuralist methods that give flesh to social conceptualization. Susan Bordo refers to the embodiment of difference in her 1989 article "Feminism, Postmodernism and Gender Scepticism", and argues that difference should not be merely noted as such but understood within a context based on specific circumstances (*Feminism/Postmodernism*133-157). In the same line as Mohanty, she argues that any abstract invocation of difference is a political act, and therefore can also be based on and used for counterproductive traditional values.

1.2. Intersectionality

The vast variety and difference in the characterization of women in literature as well as the varied definitions of difference bring about the concept of intersectionality, or rather, a correlation among the multiple layers of social relations that form identity. This notion lies at the core of postmodern feminist theory, as developed and explored by researchers such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Elizabeth Grosz, Judith

Butler, bell hooks and others. Kimberelé Crenshaw coins this concept in her essay "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color" (1989). She argues that determining a single category of difference, such as "woman" or "black" and so on, interpreted according to dominant conceptions (and misconceptions) of social justice and identity politics, without considering other categories, empties identity categories of any social significance. The term is later defined clearly by Kathy Davis in "Intersectionality as Buzzword" (2008) as "the interaction of multiple identities and experiences of exclusion and subordination" (67). Furthermore, according to her, the deconstruction of the way differences are defined and handled reveals how social relations intersect, interact, and contradict, and has the power to propel both theoretical and material change. As Anna Carastathis (2013) argues, intersectionality has been criticized as an open-ended concept that emphasizes identity categories, but it should be read otherwise. The concept "enables us to organize effective political coalitions that cross existing identity categories and to pursue a liberatory politics of interconnection" (942).

An example from Gloria E. Anzaldúa's seminal book *Borderland* (1987) illustrates the intersectional structure:

> La mojada, la mujerindocumentada, is doubly threatened in this country. Not only does she have to contend with sexual violence, but like all women, she is prey to a sense of physical helplessness. As a refugee, she leaves the familiar and safe homeground to venture into unknown and possibly dangerous terrain. (35)

In this text, the Mexican woman suffers a threat of sexual violence, as one of the pillars of her abuse. Since she is, usually, not as physically strong as a man, it is not only the threat itself, but also her physical vulnerability that make her a prey. Another element of helplessness and growing vulnerability emerges from her social marginalization as a refugee—or an exiled woman—who deals with unfamiliar and possibly dangerous new conditions. Poverty, lack of formal education, language restrictions, illegal status, and other difficulties would block her access to any position of power and complicate the situation further. All these entangled elements create an intersectional picture.

Without using the concept of intersectionality, Butler suggests to deal with difference existing on several fronts or sections in "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" (1988 and in Conboy 1997), to use the method of deconstruction, tracing the interests behind

practices and values that stand behind it. The discovery of contradictions between the theoretical and the material life is bound to form cracks in the ideological structure, allowing for a growing understanding and possible reconstruction and change. In addition, accepting certain boundaries, as Nicholson does, such as recognizing the body, or rather, embodying the situation with its contextual factors, helps to situate a perspective and to prevent all-encompassing, universalizing viewpoints, and draw ways for change to occur.

1.3. Migration and Diasporic Mobility

Among the multiple categories related to difference in the studied novels, exile, migration, and diaspora are frequent in the lives of most characters and therefore their definition is fundamental to the analysis. The identification of the elements that constitute diaspora has been widely discussed in Diaspora Studies. The traditional use of the term "Diaspora" was mostly used in studies of the Jewish experience. According to William Safran (1991), this traditional definition contains six determining features: dispersal, collective memory, alienation, respect and longing for the homeland, faith in the homeland restoration, and self-definition constructed based on the terms of the homeland. Since the 1960s the traditional concept has been stretched to include meanings and interpretations applying to other communities as well. Robin Cohen (1997) points out five categories of diaspora that have been applied to Jews, Africans, and Armenians, and should be applied to the Irish as well: victim, labor, imperial, culture, and trade. From the 1980s on, according to Safran, the term is used to self-describe or to confer upon groups of "expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities" (83). The notion includes at this stage many more groups, each with its history, memory, and experience in exile. Thus, the concept has been debated constantly due to the constant changes in a postcolonial world, and changing relationships of the exiled with their land of origin and the land in which they live.

Notably, while diaspora is commonly defined as a result of forced migration, the significance of what constitutes a forced migration is not clear-cut and therefore generates new studies as the situation in the world transforms. For instance, originally, diaspora refers to a community. However, if a collective does not immigrate due to one event in a short period, and, instead, moves out and away over generations, as the limiting socio-economic situation intensifies, then the mobility appears to apply to individuals and not to the whole

community. While this migration may not be defined as a diaspora, initially, a close look at the collective settled elsewhere may reveal that the categories typical of a diaspora are present. An isolation within the host country and the collective link to the home country, for example, are factors that constitute a diasporic situation.

Based on the importance attributed to contextuality, postmodernist scholars have expanded the concept of diaspora further and applied it to fragmented, constantly-changing historical, cultural, and social situation of individuals and collectives. As summed up by Mary J. Hickman, in *The Cambridge Companion to Irish Culture* (2005), according to James Clifford (1994), Paul Gilroy (1993), and Stuart Hall (1990), diaspora is a process of "unsettling, recombination and hybridization." The diasporic space "transgresses the boundaries of ethnicity and nationalism" (117-135). The diaspora is also characterized by the complex net of loyalties and affection to the home country and to the destination country. The tendency of the diasporic community is to maintain its sense of belonging to its roots, while also trying to adapt to the new country. The transformation is mutual: the new and the old mingle in the shared lives and are changed by it.

As a complement to the definition of diaspora, a fourfold model of acculturation strategies, crucial elements of settling in exile, has been introduced by Gudykunst and Kim (1995, 360-82). The manner of acculturation is highly affected by the historical process leading to the exile, the specific societies involved, and the weight of the past. The model is divided according to the extent to which the immigrant adopts or rejects the local culture on one hand and rejects or retains his or her original one. The application of one of the four alternatives: separation, assimilation, integration, and marginalization is determined upon the manners the element of difference is handled by the minority and by the majority. Clearly, the individual and collective diasporic lives are marked and defined by the ways difference is handled, tolerated, or rejected. Separation means a process of maintaining the original culture separated, assimilation means that the minority ignores the difference and adopts the local culture, integration means that the difference is acknowledged and accepted by both new and local communities, as they adjust, and marginalization means that the minority and whatever is considered different about it are repressed by the local society.

1.4. Difference and the Body

Difference in a minority in exile is formed not only by circumstance but also by the way history is shaped in the collective

memory and remembered in the individual memory. The collective narrative and its individual manifestations, closely related to trauma and the body, play a role in the formation of identity and the shaping of lives. Genocide, slavery, war, abuse, and other atrocities justified by an ideological rejection of difference (or differences) have a long-term influence on the survivors and on their descendants. A well-known example of the intersected relation of history, memory, trauma, body perception, and identity formation appears in Franz Fanon's 1967 autobiographical book *Black Skin, White Masks*. The scholar, born on the Caribbean island of Martinique and later living in France and Algeria, describes a memorable event that reveals how prejudice and stereotypes based on skin color and colonization cause a multidirectional impact from the present to the past, from the past to the present, and from the combination of past and present to the future. In the brief event, noticed mainly by Fanon, a child, accompanied by his mother on the same bus as Fanon, points at him and exclaims, "Dirty Nigger!" This is a crucial moment in Fanon's biography, an event that helps shape his world view and leads him to a lifetime of attempts to transform social conventions through the fields of postcolonial studies and critical theory. His rejection of the color line (meaning racism based on skin color) and his emotional survival are the result of his ability to recognize the falsity in the image of black people. He does not internalize the conventions, but, instead, investigates the reasons why these false assumptions are considered as truth, and how this discriminatory view may affect the self-definition of the discriminated people, when internalized. Sam Durrant (2004) explains this traumatic moment in Fanon's life through the relation between historical events to identity formation and difference. According to him, the moment illustrates the way colonized and enslaved groups are susceptible to events that continue generating trauma in sequence to and beyond the basic traumatic event. The original event in the link of Fanon's traumatic experiences is the combination of slavery and colonization, although Fanon himself has only gone through colonization.[3] Another angle of the same event is offered by Greg Forter in "Colonial Trauma, Utopian Carnality, Modernist Form: Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Arundhati Roy's *The*

[3] Durrant writes about the way slavery and colonization, defined as traumatizing historical events, strike light on current discrimination. He does not emphasize the weight of continued racism itself, but of the way memory stretches trauma to the present. (See the discussion about event-based trauma theory in the section about criticism of psychoanalytic trauma theory.)

God of Small Things" (2014). According to him, Fanon's text memorializes a traumatic event (the occurrence on the bus) because it defines him as a part of a race instead of as an individual. Like Durrant, Forter argues that Fanon's experience of racism on the bus cannot be integrated into a life history in a linear way, because it reenacts the original event, "denying the author a life history or the right to feel a part of the temporality of the human" (14). However, in his view Durrant should have separated the individual experience from the collective one. Even if the collective narrative silences horrifying events, an individual, like Fanon, may develop its own means for access, acknowledgement, and breaking through the traumatic impact.

When studying oppression and trauma, both original and insidious events of discrimination should be taken in account. A form of oppression can be tracked back to the past, yet often the discrimination goes on, and only social change can start remedying it. People of color and/ or other marginalized, dominated, and/or oppressed groups such as women, people with a disability, and/or minority ethnic groups suffer from repression based on external characteristics, biological difference, and hereditary origins. Every biological difference carries a social definition, or, in other words, the assumed meanings of the physical sphere of the body determine people's social value. In this regard, Galili Shahar's books and lectures (2012) offer critical literature analyzing literary representations of the body. For instance, he sustains that every literary text that translates the body into writing (he coins it as "corpus") and deals with the female body, represents the body's historical and cultural construction, and its relation to women's situation. Such a text expresses the experience of a specific body within the wide scope of history. Therefore, an undeniable correlation between body and text, expressed through the use of language, pacing, and other literary tools, reflects the physical aspects of the self, and the way history, memory, and trauma affect the self physically, mentally and emotionally.

Judith Butler holds the same position regarding the power of language to reflect—and perpetuate--a situation. She argues that in order to avoid perpetuation, we need to understand the social significance of gender and the body in the prevalent discourse. In *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Bodies That Matter* (1993), she suggests that the socially accepted body does not owe its acceptance or rejection to its biological characteristics but to cultural signs. In addition, she draws the concept of performativity in order to explain the way Western social order has maintained a binary gender identity as a universal truth. She writes, "Identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are

said to be its results" (*Gender Trouble* 24–5). While she uses her argumentation to deconstruct and criticize the centrality of heterosexism, she also opens the discussion, relevant to this work, of how body representations reflect and shape values, behavior, and identity.

Another important feminist critic, Elizabeth Grosz (1994, 1995, 1999), theorizes the relation between the body and gendered subjectivity, advocating the inclusion of the material body in the analysis of the representation of bodies. In accordance with the above-mentioned approach of Nicholson (1989) and Bordo (1989, 1993) to postmodernism, relativism, and abstraction, Grosz suggests to include the embodiment, the physical sphere of every situation. She holds the existential view, according to which the body itself is a situation, and, like every situation, is in constant change and does not have a specific, steady essence nor should it bear any preconceived meanings. From this standpoint, she writes in *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism* about the body as a social and cultural text, endorsing Beauvoir's concept of the lived body,[4] focusing on the situation of the biological body within the socio-historical context. Body representations are never universal but spatially and temporally constructed, Grosz says. Furthermore, she includes more sorts of difference than the traditional view of gender, arguing that the binary division between women and men is only one of the multiple categories of sexual differences such as race, class, history, and even bone structure or weight. In *Space, Time, and Perversion* (1995), in which she analyses how bodies and cities are correlated, she defends that the body should be defined in terms of a material organization through social inscription. According to her, despite the material organization of flesh, blood, organs, nerves, and bones, the body is organically incomplete. It cannot be seen independently as physical, since it "defines the limits of experience and subjectivity only through the intervention of the (m)other" (2). Thus, dominant socially coded meanings and significances are key structuring principles. As in Fanon's case, it is not the physical body but the social perception of body difference that becomes an ideological basis to justify abuse. The social meaning given to the body marks the way Fanon lives, thinks, moves and so on. When it occurs with a woman, the gendered body is yet another layer of oppression.

[4] "To be present in the world implies strictly that there exists a body which is at once a material thing in the world and a point of view towards the world" (Beauvoir, p.39).

In this regard, in *Unbearable Weight, Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body* (1993), Bordo extends Foucault's theory of power relations and the body to the feminist field. She writes, "[f]eminism imagined the human body as itself a politically inscribed entity, its physiology and morphology shaped by histories and practices of containment and control" (21). According to her, the gendered body is a site upon which the social disciplinary machine utilized by the dominant part of society exercises its power. Disciplinary practices subject the bodily activities to a process of surveillance and examination that enables control of individual conduct. The repression of the body, internalized by the acceptance of universalizing standards, provokes shame and guilt and generates obedience. Body disorders, in her view, are examples of the body as a direct center of power relations.

Also, in accordance, Chris Weedon points out in the *Concise Companion of Feminist Theory* (2003) that "Both liberal and radical feminisms in the West have been criticized for their assumptions about women, the subject and women's subjectivity and their claims to speak on behalf of all women (Spivak 1985; Mohanty 1991; Narayan 1997)" (130). They sustain that seeing the Western as universal silences the "other" and causes victimization and a denial of the specificity of the positions of women outside the West. Fundamentally, the lived, mindful, experiential, expressive body incorporates the biological aspect of it into the interrelated social and historical processes, without redacting it. In this regard, for the scope of this work, the postmodern view of identity as physical, mental, and emotional guides the analyses of the role of the body in the literary representation of minority characters. The mechanism of silencing has been developed across centuries in a variety of ways. Classifying people based on their disadvantaged situation, for example, defines them as one of the "other", with diminished value and minor culture. When linked to feminism, such a repression means a denial of the specificity of the positions of women who come from other cultures than the Western, and from other classes than the elite. In "Can the Subaltern Speak", Spivak extends the concept of "subaltern" to women, new immigrants, and working class. She analyzes texts by Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, and Marx and points at the Eurocentric nature of their discourse and the marginalization of anything outside the West -- a controversial concept in itself, as mentioned. Another discussion of the denial of difference and self-representation through universalization appears in Stuart Hall *Cultural Identity and Diaspora* (1990) in which he writes, "We cannot speak for very long, with any exactness, about 'one experience, one identity,' without acknowledging

its other side" (394). Thus, ignoring, avoiding, or silencing different experiences, concerns, and views is a distortion of history and memory.

Simultaneously with the development of feminist literary criticism, as pointed out in the Introduction, the growing field of embodied stories in literature written by women after the 1960s investigates the meeting point between difference and the body and reveals a wide range of female body experience. Differences in categories such as location, social status, skin color, culture, ethnicity, financial status, and sexual orientation mark the lives of women, determine their place in society, and form their identity as they act upon the existing power relations and react toward them. In fact, each decade brings more contextual, embodied prose, as Kum-Kum Bhavnani and Meg Coulson point out in *Concise Companion to Feminist Theory*, (2002). They write,

> Compared to the early 1970s, there is now a great body of work, much of it self-representational, which speaks out of the lives of women of many different backgrounds, identities and locations such that, if we choose to read across it, we can find an extensive literature on women and difference. (80)

In other words, the fragmentation of women's experience -- contrary to a supposed monolithic experience shared by all women -- in literature written by women is the result and the expression of different social, cultural, and historical contexts in which these books and stories are written, set, and read. The subject of pain caused by discrimination, persecution, abuse, and prejudice along with the resulting trauma or multi-traumas, often appears in its embodied, contextual form in books written by minority writers about minority characters.

As the above implies, novels by minority literary authors such as Dionne Brand, Toni Morrison, Lore Segal, Edwidge Danticat, and Alice Walker deal with history, memory, and trauma in their narratives of the Holocaust, genocide, slavery, and colonization. The traumatic experience is introduced as a fundamental factor that shapes the characters' lives and identity and acts upon the subsequent generations as well. The characters' suffering is caused both by catastrophic traumatic events and by an insidious abuse or threat, or rather, a structural, constant, and slow form of violence. The struggle for emotional and physical survival is the common ground for the literary and cultural study of minority literature, memory, and history.

1.5. Trauma

As is the case with relatively new fields, the conceptualization and studies of trauma theory have been rich in shifts, controversies, expansions, and developments in different directions since its resurfacing in the 1980s. During the 1980s, the concept of trauma and memory, especially Freud's trauma-related works from the beginning of the twentieth century, generated renewed interest within the community of clinical psychologists and psychotherapists. The causes of the resurfacing have been debated widely as well. Laurie Vickroy, a comparative literature scholar, writes in *Representing Trauma Issues, Contexts, Narrative Tools* (2002) that dealing with the effect of traumatic events has become necessary in the painful past two-hundred years, these "periods of unprecedented social, economic, and political changes, genocide, and disappearing cultures" (1). Conversely, Emmett Early (1993), a Jungian psychology scholar, argues that "The reason that trauma disorder has only recently been discussed as a problem [...] is not because it is more common now, but [...] It has only been in this century, in the past fifty years, that someone could reasonably hope to live a life without psychological trauma (In Tal, Chapter 2, Web). According to psychoanalyst Ann Kaplan, "[t]he modern study of psychological trauma [is] emerging from the dual 1970s events of Vietnam War [because of] veterans returning with severe post-traumatic stress disorder, and feminists demanding that domestic abuse of children and women be taken more seriously" (19).

The discussion in the US, regarding psychological trauma after the Vietnam War, led to a definition of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and made PTSD a part of the medical and psychological treatment in the USA and an inspiration for other countries. Other communities, such as survivors of the Holocaust, war combat, natural disaster, and/or sexual abuse, expressed their interest in the legal and medical definitions and treatments. Along with the growing international debate regarding the definition, PTSD received strong opposition from feminists such as Judith Herman in her book on *Trauma and Recovery* (1997) and Laura S. Brown in her 1995 article. Herman and Brown confront the definition's male bias, which they relate to Freud's studies of hysteria. In the same critical venue, female psychology patients suffering from symptoms of trauma provoked by child sexual abuse or domestic violence turn the public attention to the specificities of women's trauma and demand an appropriate adjustment of the definition and the treatment to include women's needs.

A new approach to trauma research emerges with Dori Laub's and Geoffrey Hartman's 1979-1981 Fortunoff Video Archive Project. The project initiates a series of interviews with Holocaust survivors, compiled for the sake of Holocaust studies. The interviewers do not interfere in any way, except expressing their empathy, and let the survivors speak on their own as much as they desire. Subsequently, Dori Laub's and Shoshana Felman's *Testimony* (2002) comments on the interviews and the value of bearing witness, and on how the interviews can be used for education. Cathy Caruth's foundational books *Unclaimed Experience* (1996) and *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995) explain the nature of trauma, based on Freud works, and offer an analysis of films and books dealing with trauma in order to demonstrate how trauma affects people's psyches and how a psychoanalytic framework helps understand and treat survivors. Thus, the list of trauma-related literature grows in the 1990s, reflecting and defining the shifts in research and understanding. Books by literary critics and psychoanalysts such as Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, trauma studies scholar Kali Tal, and historian Dominik LaCapra explore cultural, historical, clinical, psychological, and conceptual aspects of trauma, each in a different field of studies, that often intersects with another. Other trauma-related influential books in the humanities include works by Geoffrey Hartman (1995), Dominick LaCapra (1994, 1998), Kali Tal (1996), and Ann E. Kaplan (1999). In the 2000s, works by Michael Rothberg (2000, 2008) and Stef Craps (2008, 2010, 2013) stand out.

Before diving deeper into the history of trauma theory, and the involved controversies and the approaches, I will introduce the main issues debated in the scholarly works that investigate the unique nature of trauma, its manifestations, and the questions society needs to ask itself:

-How is trauma defined and what characterizes it?

-In what ways and to what ends do direct survivors, indirect survivors, trauma-related fiction and other forms of narrative represent trauma? What is the meaning of bearing witness?

-What is the nature of the relation between individual trauma, cultural representations of trauma legacies, and collective trauma?

-How does the interrelation between survivors and between traumatized communities affect the understanding of the event, trauma, and recovery?

-How is trauma deconstructed, handled, and treated; what are the possibilities of coming to terms, recovery, healing, resistance, reconstruction, and socio-political mobilization and restoration?

Since trauma is not an obvious injury, people are often suspicious about its existence and meaning. A person's claim of traumatic suffering may be perceived as false invention or an excuse to avoid responsibilities. Moreover, even traumatized people are not always aware of the nature of their suffering, or how a traumatic experience might have shaped their lives.

There is a wide scholarly consensus regarding certain characteristics of trauma among researchers of the psychoanalytic wing, during the 1980s and most of the 1990s, according to which a traumatic event cracks the flow of life, affecting the various aspects of the self, interrupting the mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing. Clearly, in order to sustain this view, the nature of a traumatic event should be defined as well. According to Caruth's trauma theory (1995,1996), an event is acknowledged as traumatic merely in its impact on the traumatized people, since the same experience may generate different reactions in different people, within and between societies. Therefore, trauma is read as the reception and perception of the event.

Tal (1996) argues that Caruth disregards and empties the subject of trauma, presenting an odd event that lacks a specific characterization. If it is understood as a belated result of a missed encounter, then trauma can be defined in terms of absence. The problematic aspect lies in the lack of a fact fixed in time and place, as it is unclear when the traumatic process has actually started. To lessen the abstraction, Tal emphasizes the necessity to embody trauma, and argues for the need to contextualize and specify the causes and the symptoms in order to accomplish a better understanding and develop affective manners of treatment and prevention of future horror. While Tal dismisses psychoanalysis, Balaev (2014) finds the suggested psychological technique of identification and analysis useful, but advocates the application of other techniques that rely on other factors beyond language. According to her, the traumatic experience is influenced by a variety of constantly changing individual and cultural factors that require attention. She writes:

> Understanding trauma […] by situating it within a larger conceptual framework of social psychology theories in addition to neurobiological theories will produce a particular psychologically informed concept of trauma that acknowledges the range of contextual factors that specify the value of the experience. (3)

Caruth, however, sustains her view regarding the subjective nature of an event, writing that trauma is not measured by the degree of violence or abuse inflicted on a victim, but in the "structure of experience and reception" (*Exploration in Memory* 2). Taking the same line, Kaplan (1999) points out that Freud has already said that the reaction to the traumatic event depends on the person's psychic history, memories, and fantasies of other events, the cultural, and political context in which the traumatic event takes place, and, particularly, how the institutional forces manage the reaction (1). However, she also states that "[a] more complex model than that of Caruth and many psychologists [is] needed" (36). Marder (2006), too, elaborates on the subject of defining an event, arguing that the overpowering event itself is not necessarily a violent experience since it often happens in the social world and has a political, historical, and ethical dimension. The event may be one of social humiliation, for instance, and does not have to involve physical abuse.

However, while a definition of a traumatic event is necessary, psychoanalytic trauma theory has been criticized for its event-based trauma definition, since it ignores insidious socio-historical circumstances. Laura Brown (1995) argues that an event-based theory is temporal, while it should acknowledge continued processes of oppression. The extent of trauma provoked by colonial oppression and suffered by minorities cannot be fixated on one catastrophic event alone. Her argument rightfully indicates the complexity of trauma in the lives of marginalized groups. As the event Fanon recalls in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967), the demonic black figure the boy "sees" through his prejudiced gaze turns Fanon's body into a "non-being" (109), causing a "psychic splitting" and "physical amputation" (112), therefore having a traumatic effect. The event is current but also recurrent, and the stereotype and the accusing gaze maintain white supremacy and a mechanism of oppression traced back to slavery.

A similar view is expressed by Visser's inspired words (2015),

> The metaphor of trauma often used in trauma theory is that of a sudden, sharp piercing of a membrane, as, for instance, by a sharp object implanted in the psyche, where it remains in its original form, hidden behind the screen of consciousness, but making itself known through a series of symptoms. The "sudden" or unexpected aspect of trauma is not the prolonged, cumulative hurt of long years of repression that constitutes the trauma of colonialism, with its repeated and cumulative stressor events. (263)

Basically, Caruth's discussion of disaster and trauma is done from the individualist aspect mostly, as Roger Luckhurst writes in *The Trauma Question* (2008). According to him, the traditional trauma theory does not address atrocity, genocide, and war in a non-textual, ethical way, and therefore the use of the theory for literary studies is too restrictive. In the same line, Craps (2010) states that if trauma studies are to "have any hope of redeeming its promise of ethical effectiveness" the socio-historic processes should be considered. Legacies of trauma of subordinate groups should be situated against the histories of dominant groups (53).

The definitions of trauma, the relation between trauma and the cause of trauma, and the variety of trauma manifestations have been largely debated. Psychoanalytic trauma theory scholars Caruth and Geoffrey Hartman (1995) emphasize a belated mental and emotional reaction to the original traumatic event, dissociation, and a blurred memory. According to Caruth, "[T]he impact of the traumatic event lies precisely in its belatedness, in its refusal to be simply located, in its insistent appearance outside the boundaries of any single place or time" (*Unclaimed* 9). Hartman argues that trauma "seems to have bypassed perception and the consciousness and falls directly into the psyche" (537). Moreover, Caruth notes in her introduction to *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* that "[t]he event is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it" (4). Additionally, psychoanalytic trauma theory determines that trauma occurs in a specific date or period and builds a long-lasting traumatic influence that cannot be cured like a physical wound, although a recovery can start in the body, as some of the female characters of the studied novels will exemplify. Since the impact does not occur simultaneously with the event itself or in a direct line of cause-effect, manifestations may appear a long time after the event takes place, continue, and even increase over time. The state of trauma is not static, since it is a process of perception and transforming. Trauma, then, is not about "being" but about "becoming." In the same way Grosz (1994) defines being a woman as a lived situation, dialoguing with time, place, and historical circumstances, so is trauma seen as a situation that always becomes or changes, and does not cease. The condition of becoming is further illustrated in her 1999 essay collection in which she relates the constant transformation to time and memory.

Typical trauma manifestations also include an unintended reenactment of the event and an obsessive recalling of an image or an

event. The recollection takes place in the form of repeated fragments and reenacted actions, since being traumatized means "being possessed by an image or event" (*Unclaimed* 4-5). In addition, based on Kaplan (1999), a traumatic event is registered in the body, marking the person in a different way than regular experiences. This view supports the continuation of trauma across periods, places, and generations**.**

The relation between memory, history, and trauma manifestations is examined further, in the light of dissociation and belatedness. Due to the temporal, mental, and physical separation between the traumatic event itself and trauma, or rather, between the cause and the effect, the conscious and the unconscious, as viewed by psychoanalytic theory, the clinical diagnosis and the social and historical identification of trauma in literary criticism and in related fields depend on research tools and not only on the dissociated perception of the traumatized individual or collective. According to Caruth, the traumatized person cannot introduce a clear account of the traumatic event, forgetting the details, and opening gaps in order to bear the emotional load and advance the possibility of survival. Her somewhat enigmatic conclusion that listening and speaking from the site of trauma does not rely on the known but on what we do not know yet, or, in her words, "[t]his truth […] cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language" (*Unclaimed* 4) lends the notion of trauma open-endedness. The connection between cause and effect is only assessed methodologically rather than noticed directly. Notably, while the theory may emphasize an inaccessible absence, it does not demean the significance or the existence of trauma, and it offers a serious attempt to understand and deal with trauma. Caruth introduces the representations of traumatic experience in fiction and cinema, and through their analysis, she suggests possibilities of overcoming trauma, introducing a psychoanalytic methodology of dialogue, exchange, and empathy for recovery. The somewhat abstract nature of the process, however, receives heavy criticism.

In addition, while many scholars criticize the event-based definition, typical to psychoanalytic trauma theory conceptualized by Caruth, an apparently contradictory problem occurs in regard to the lack of embodied, valued, articulated memory, and absence that lends the traumatic cause abstract. Notably, unlike Caruth, other scholars from the psychoanalytic wing, are opposed to the idea of unavoidable dissociation between the cause and the trauma, as they see the case of dissociation as a narrow view of trauma. Kaplan (1999), for instance,

argues that memory does work in trauma, writing, "[t]wo circuits happen at the same time: a circuit […] where the cortex is bypassed; and a circuit that includes the cortex, so that the trauma does find its way into memory" (38).

Another effect of trauma, according to Caruth, is the trauma-induced rupture in comprehension that causes a loss of linguistic coherence, or rather, the traumatized person cannot capture the horror in words. This "unspeakable void", says Balaev in her introduction to the 2014 collection, "became the dominant concept in criticism for imagining trauma's function in literature" (1). Balaev criticizes this traditional Lacanian approach for drawing from Freud a portrayal of the traumatic experience as a pre-linguistic event that universally causes detachment, disconnection, and alienation. Therefore, she negates the psychoanalytic view of "trauma as an unsolvable problem of the unconscious that illuminates the inherent contradictions of experience and language" (1), since it unnecessarily limits research to referential (spoken) language alone. Balaev, like Tal and like Langer in their respective works, argues that the undeniable connection between the psychoanalytic theory with postcolonial theory, gender, and other related studies reveal not one but diverse representations, contextually-affected manifestations, and individual and collective differences. Therefore, the disruption of language and/or memory may occur in some cases and be absent in others.

1.5.1 Bearing Witness: Testimony and/or Narrative

A related fundamental problem is the psychoanalytic emphasis on the survivors' inability to consciously access the causes of trauma and express them, and the assumption that a testimony is (only) a subjective perception, limiting the survivors' power to bear witness and register violence in any valuable legal and historical manner. The testimony is defined as narrative, as it is seen as the subjective perception of an event and not a precise recollection. Therefore, while Caruth's *Unclaimed Experience* (1996) announces its ethical approach aimed to renew our engagement with history, it also limits any political mobility, since, according to Caruth, in the meeting point of trauma and history, history is no longer "straightforwardly referential" (11). LaCapra (2001) makes the same point, when writing that "witnessing based on memory […] provides insight into lived experience and its transmission in language and gesture" (11). Indeed, direct testimonies are not necessarily similar to one another although they deal with the same event, because the survivor's point of view and the survivor's

traumatic process may be different. Based on such a view, Young (1995) and Langer (1993) define testimonies, even those given by direct survivors, as narratives and discursive representations. However, the (flawed) existence and the importance of the memory of a horrifying event are approved by Langer (1993), who argues that "[f]actual errors do occur from time to time, as do simple lapses; but they seem trivial in comparison to the complex layers of memory that give birth to the versions of the self" (xv). Tal sees the importance of testimonies, while, at the same time, she rejects the idea of reaching the "truth" through testimony, flashbacks, and an assisted assess of memories, arguing that,

> [t]he encapsulated memories are not, in fact, perfect records of actual events but are already interpretations, revisions, mediated images shaped or influenced by the perceptual framework within which they were received. Clinical studies might demonstrate that trauma survivors have precise memories; however, they cannot demonstrate that such memories always document historical events in a faithful fashion. (Web)

Unfortunately, the possibility of cross-examining and comparing testimonies is not taken in account often enough. A crisscross net of testimonies, along with testimonies of unharmed witnesses, and possibly testimonies of predators as well is helpful for the cause of reconstruction. Clearly, any narrative, both direct and indirect testimonials, constitute a political act influenced by the dominant discourse. Therefore, trauma should be decodified in context, based on testimonies and socio-cultural representations of the traumatic event. Notwithstanding, every testimony has meanings for the individual survivor, for the community of survivors to which the survivor belongs, and for society in general.

Thus, the issue of trauma representation still stands to a debate. The role of literature, especially fiction, has been widely debated. According to Caruth, literature, like psychoanalysis, is interested in the intricate link between knowing and not knowing. For example, in *Unclaimed Experience*, she discusses the repetitive characteristic of trauma through Freud's literary allusion to it. Due to his professional encounter with battlefield survivors, Freud found that the event appears to be reenacted independently of the survivors' acts or intention. There is a "peculiar and sometimes uncanny way in which catastrophic events seem to repeat themselves for those who have passed through them" (in Unclaimed 1). Freud illustrates the impossibility of simply leaving a traumatic event behind with a literary example in *Beyond the Pleasure*

Principle. In the romantic epic *Gerusalemme Liberata* by Tasso, the hero, Tancred, kills his beloved by mistake during a battle. Afterwards, frustrated, he slashes at a tall tree with his sword only to find that the soul of his beloved has been imprisoned in the tree. Tancred acts without being conscious of the reason he does it or the consequence, but it is present in his sub-consciousness. Based on this analysis, it appears possible and worthwhile to derive knowledge and understanding about trauma from any related literary text, no matter if the writer is a survivor or not.

According to Vickroy (2002), however, the identity of the writer does matter. Many writers, trauma survivors, feel the necessity to convey trauma by articulating and communicating it. Their writing attends to a strong urge and promotes painful dilemmas. Like her, Tal gives more importance to literature written by survivors than to literature in which trauma serves as a device for the story. She defines literature of trauma by the survivor's drive to achieve self-validation and catharsis through the exposure of abuse and atrocities. Such writers employ telling and retelling of the traumatic experience, introducing it as a part of the lives of both survivors and the whole community (21).

In another twist, Kaplan discusses writing by "victims of parallel but different traumatic situations", people who were not at the heart of the atrocities but suffered all the same. In order to define who has the right and the ability to represent trauma, Tal discusses the definition of a survivor. In her view, there are several degrees of survival from traumatic events such as the Holocaust, slavery, and other types of oppression. There is, of course, the physical survival, but there are also other forms of survival, that should be considered, including a cultural, historical, and corporeal inheritance. The scholar illustrates the problematic definition of a survivor with the examples of Elie Wiesel, a direct Holocaust survivor, whose life has been dedicated to history and memory, and Henry Kissinger, whose family was exterminated, while he already lived safely in the United States. "What happens when a survivor's story is retold (and revised) by a writer who is not a survivor?" (3), she asks. Kaplan, too, extends the concept of trauma to include "(r)elatives of internees or women and children living in terror because of World War II […] descendants of indigenous peoples in postcolonial contexts, who are also living in terror still after centuries of displacement and attempted annihilation" and others who are under the "impact of a major public event" suffering from what scholars refer to as "quiet trauma" (2).

The subject of silence has been introduced into the debate of self-representation, survivors and testimonies as well. Spivak (1985) refers to trauma and loss of history in relation to the doubly (or multiplied) oppressed subaltern, who cannot have agency. She writes: "If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow" (82-3). In her view, there is no testimony by those who actually need to testify. Somewhat less extreme, Edouard Glissant (1990), in his literary criticism of Caribbean diasporic historical narrative, calls the Caribbean consciousness "nonhistorical", a product of pain and trauma. According to Glissant, the collective consciousness cannot absorb the traumatic events, therefore forgetting them (Poetics, 62). Conversely, Brand (2002) introduces the possibility that memory passes through bones and gestures, in corporeal ways, from generation to generation, giving a certain access to the traumatic event and creating and recreating memory.

The role of fiction as testimonial has been debated as well. Brand (2002) and Danticat (2003) express their belief in the mission of their trauma-related fiction to break the silence, bring about the collective memory, and reconstruct history in order to deal with trauma. Fundamentally, fiction and nonfiction, as well as other artistic expressions, carry meanings to be interpreted and codified by a variety of audiences that construct diverse meanings. According to Vickroy's 2014 article,

> Although silence may accompany descriptions of the survivor's experience, fiction provides multiple perspectives that allow readers to meditate on the variety of human responses to shock. The various traumatic responses beyond the notion of the unspeakable cultivate the subtleties of experience, which are expressed through behaviors, bodies, provisional identities, and survival strategies. (130)

The interpretation of these artistic expressions can be dictated by the dominant fraction of society, but also arise within marginalized groups. According to Foucault's 1980 book, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977,* there is a political interest to "re-inscribe the narrative in social institutions, in economic inequalities, in language, in the bodies themselves of each and every one of us" (90). Indeed, trauma representations can be manipulated by the dominant socio-political mechanism, but the artistic expressions may also represent interests of weaker groups. Codifying trauma weighs into

the collective identity formation, and may become a tool in the struggle for political empowerment.

In a general manner, even though psychoanalytic trauma theory has generated a debate since the 1990s, as the above indicates, the debate does not challenge the psychoanalytic dominance until the 2000s. Finally, Caruth's claim in *Unclaimed*, that trauma theory suggests a new approximation to history is analyzed and criticized widely. However, while Caruth's promise to embody the history of trauma with ethical, political awareness through "new modes of reading and listening" (9) and to create means to mobilize ethical, political, and historical processes is questioned, there is hardly any opposition to the fact that the resurgence of trauma theory as a mode to break through survivors' solitude and suffering is, in fact, a solid beginning. Her encompassing approach, however, offers a unifying universal theory. She does not take difference in account, ignoring the fact that different societies treat trauma and recovery in different ways.

1.5.2 Cultural Representations of Trauma Legacies, Individual and Collective Trauma

Certain psychoanalysts, such as LaCapra, have treated the issue of collective trauma through psychoanalytic trauma theory, but the traditional approach is individualist and does not include a political and social study of trauma. However, the fields of minority, postcolonial, and feminist studies emphasize the need to adapt the theory to the political situation in the world. As Laura Brown (1995) argues, "only the members of a small privileged class […] can reasonably expect to live their lives without suffering traumatic stress" (105). Craps (2008, 2010) and Rothberg (2008) agree that the socio-economic conditions of a collective and forms of repression that oppress collectives should be equally studied. In addition, even though it is possible that an ongoing situation of oppression, threat, and violence leads to the abuse of some members of a targeted group, while others escape, the fear is general and the possibility of victimization is enough for each community member to suffer a traumatic experience.

Furthermore, beyond the horizontal widespread effect of trauma passing from individual to individual within a community and becoming collective, there is a vertical impact, as trauma passes from generation to generation, becoming historical. The connection between individual psychic trauma and cultural representations of the traumatic event has different theoretical explanations, depending on the field. Holocaust studies scholar J. Young (1995) focuses on the second-generation

holocaust survivors, or rather, the descendants of the survivors who physically escaped. He investigates the effect of silence, numbness, and other reactions, and also of testimonies. The historical events affect the second generation's sense of self and view of the world.

Another explanation, introduced in the work of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok (1994), speaks of the notion of the phantom in the individual psyche. The notion has been extended by Nicholas Rand (1994) to intergenerational diasporic experiences. The phantom of slavery, colonization or genocide, for instance, does not only rise from the individual experience, but also from the community, or, as Rand writes, from others' "psychic conflicts, traumas, or secrets" (166).

A different explanation for intergenerational trauma, common to Foucault (1977), Brand (2002), and Kaplan (1999), points at the inscription of history in the body. This notion, emphasizing the ways the body creates and recreates memory, passing it along, is presented in the following section. Interestingly, in Caribbean and African American literary works (by Simone Schwarz-Bart and Toni Morison, for example) the ghost of memory becomes a character, appears to the characters or is used in a general manner as a communicative conduit between the characters and their past, their pain and their trauma.

This contextual, intergenerational, collective approach leads to the question of how common is trauma, if a traumatic experience can be social, historical, ethical, individual, and collective. What does the widespread nature of trauma mean to its conceptual interpretation and to the place it occupies in the socio-historical situation of the world? According to Brown, even though the definition covering many layers of society and illustrating trauma as a general phenomenon may seem too inclusive, it is acceptable. Making suffering invisible, by tightening the definition, is an interest of the dominant classes, and should be avoided. Otherwise, the same social institutions will remain unchanged, perpetuating oppression.

Seeing history through memory, as well as problems of impaired memory, where consciousness cannot deal with horror, appears in Du Bois's autobiographical book *The Dusk of Dawn* (1940), in which Du Bois refers to a bond felt across generations. He determines that what connects generations of African Americans is the "(f)act of Slavery", or rather, "The fact that since the fifteenth century these ancestors of mine and their other descendants have had a common history; have suffered a common disaster and have one long memory." The biological link, he argues, "[is] least and the badge of color relatively unimportant save as a badge […] The real essence of this

kinship is its social heritage of slavery; the discrimination and insult" (76). In other words, race, ethnicity, and skin color are excuses for repression and not a significant connection for the minority itself. The connection lives in the collective memory that reconstructs history. According to him, his indirect memory of past horrors, along with his own suffering, connects him to his community and maintains the narrative and the memory alive. Since he is affected by trauma, his voice should be considered a survivor's testimony. His narrative interacts with other narratives and testifies to the causes of the individual and collective black minority's trauma.

Decades afterwards, in work related to the Holocaust, Marianne Hirsch (1992) coins the term "postmemory" as the intergenerational passage of memories and trauma from the direct survivors. The traumatic events, she argues, affect not only the generation that experienced them, but also the subsequent generation. Postmemory arises from the interrelation between the direct survivors and their descendants. When exiled Holocaust survivors, like other survivors of horror, deal with their trauma, they exercise their memory of the past, recall the horror and mourn the dead and the suffering in order to be able to go on. Some of them are unable to narrate their experience and communicate well with others. Their need to survive emotionally is afflicted by anger, despair, and rage, emotions that open a gap between them and their descendants, and between the first part of their life and the present. The second generation, plagued by the rift and influenced by the direct survivors' trauma manifestations, fills in—or rather, embodies-- the gaps in order to know, re-member, re-build, re-incarnate, replace and repair narratives, secrets, and broken structures. Thus, the trauma is not fixed in the past but exists in the present of each generation. The concept "describes the relationship that the 'generation after' bears to the personal, collective, and cultural trauma of those who came before, to experiences they 'remember' only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up" (103). Its importance is in maintaining a collective history and memory, bridging from generation to generation, and regaining a perspective that allows continuation. Postmemory, therefore, is not only the result of testimony, but also the outcome of relationships, collective memory, and history inscribed on the body. The second generation bears witness to the collective memory and to the ongoing trauma. Notably, each individual suffers a contextually-influenced impact and therefore manifests correspondent symptoms.

In the past decades, the poststructuralist and postcolonial discussion of difference and the growing drive toward multicultural respect in a fragmented world emphasized the context of time, place, and society for the definition, perception, implication, and handling of difference, body, and trauma. Fundamentally, we need to sort out differences in context in order to understand the socio-historical map that includes genocide, oppression, and trauma; in order to understand the survivors' experience through their cultural patterns, and in order to facilitate a transformation under the conditions of each specific community.

The problem with over-generalization and universalization lies in the assumption that we humans are the same everywhere, any time, and in whatever life conditions, and that the knowledge of a dominant power includes the knowledge of different and/or weaker parts of society. The assumption of similarity leads to the adoption of a unifying theory with no respect for contextual influences. Clearly, in comparative literary criticism trauma, diaspora, postcolonial and gender studies seen only through a Eurocentric framework misrepresents both its own history and the history it squeezes into its mold. A risk of universalization exists, for example, when survival, trauma, and memory are treated as an experience shared by all through an exchange of listening and telling, as Caruth suggests. Such a unique context, meaning, and consequence of trauma discards cultures that handle trauma in other manners. Clearly, basic assumptions depicted by dominant political interests will marginalize minority groups. Historically, problems of assumptions and silencing have surfaced in studies regarding minorities, ex-colonized, third world and immigrant women.

Back in 1944, Jean Paul Sartre already discusses the problem of universalization in his essay "Anti-Semitism and the Jews." According to him, "[a] democrat, in its most common meaning, recognizes neither Jew, nor Arab, nor Negro, nor bourgeois, nor worker, but only man […] by individual he means the incarnation in a single example of the universal traits which make up human nature" (39). This "universal" aspect, also present in the patriarchal system, does not acknowledge difference at all, and in the end marginalizes everyone outside the dominant part of society.

1.5.3 Diversification and Decolonization of Trauma Theory

Due to contradicting and intersecting approaches, research of trauma has become more interdisciplinary or, in some cases,

multidisciplinary after the 1990s, as the multifaceted nature of trauma is studied by scholarship spread over disciplines such as history, literary criticism, medicine, psychoanalysis, postcolonialism, diaspora, and sociology. These studies can complement one another, hold a constant negotiation of limits between (and within) the different fields, or deal with discordance. Stef Craps, a literature and cultural memory studies scholar, describes in her 2010 article a disagreement within literary studies as "persistent accusations that literary scholarship, particularly in its deconstructive, post-structuralist, or textualist guise, had become indifferent or oblivious to 'what goes on in the real world'" (51).

An additional tension between psychoanalysis and postcolonial literary studies is apparent in Craps's objection to the pronouncement of psychoanalytic trauma theory by psychoanalysts such as Caruth, Felman, Laub, and LaCapra as the main device for understanding the world and changing it. Indeed, the poor historical state of otherness and difference has led to such resistance to the psychoanalytic trauma theory outside the Euro-American community. Therefore, Craps criticizes the Eurocentric aspect of the humanities' version of trauma based on psychoanalysis and calls to decolonize it. Other scholars, such as Brand (2002), like earlier scholars such as Du Bois (1903), have already criticized the possible disconnection between psychoanalytic trauma theory and African-American or Caribbean trauma studies. Du Bois turns the attention to a doubling mental state that allows black people to live with trauma. This is a state and a strategy, a result of a different culture, hardly accessible by psychoanalysis, and better understood within a specific culture. In accordance, Tal (1996) argues that the psychoanalytic definitions cannot stand as the sole markers of trauma. According to her, definitions and studies conceived by minority, diaspora, postcolonial, and feminist scholars are better-fitting and more inclusive of the history and psyche of minorities and disadvantaged groups. For her, Caruth, Felman, and Laub have advanced research in trauma and memory scholarship, but have not taken in account the vast body of trauma studies done by minority scholars, thus universalizing their own studies and applying them to communities that will not relate to the practice. Their approaches, she argues, promote "fragmentation, multiplicity, simulacra and substitution as metaphors for ways of knowing the world and describing the (dissolution/impossibility of the) self" (Chapter 3 Web). Bell hooks (1990), too, calls for a wider involvement of black scholars in psychoanalysis, in order to adapt it to the specific needs of the African-American minority she discusses. Her words can relate to other non-Western cultures and other minorities:

> What we need is the kind of sophisticated explication of these materials that would enable us to take from them what is useful. We also need more black men and women entering the field of psychoanalysis in order to do more research and generate theory which is inclusive, sensitive, and understanding of black history and culture. (335-6)

Indeed, in the light of diversity and difference, the Eurocentric aspect of psychoanalytic trauma theory appears to be a narrow framework that distorts the discussion of history, memory, and trauma. Hence, studies produced by scholars from marginalized groups such as Franz Fanon, W.E.B. Du Bois, and bell hooks, among others, have been introduced or re-introduced into memory and trauma scholarship in the past decades. A greater amount and a wider range of literary works and literature studies produced by members of disempowered communities outside the West diversify the corpus of trauma. Thus, study of history, memory, and trauma is gradually expanded geographically, culturally, and across disciplines, rendering a fluidity of frontiers and avoiding a hegemonic universalist approach.

Nevertheless, as Rothberg (2008) notes, while on one hand we need to be aware of the danger of universalization, it is equally important, on the other hand, to avoid extreme particularism, nominalism, and historicism that make it impossible to form a theory. The acknowledgement of common or similar characteristics along with the different ones is necessary for a structural picture that informs and stabilizes theory in the study of ethno-racial traumas relations, including colonial, postcolonial, and Western-situated within literary criticism.

In the culmination of many calls to decolonize trauma theory further, or rather, to change the focus of trauma theory from psychoanalysis to include other fields of humanities and other cultures, the 2008, 1/2 issues of *Studies in the Novel* edited by Gert Buelens and Stef Craps feature a collection of articles corresponding to this challenge. Rothberg argues in an article that converses with all the others in the collection that an extended model of trauma and rethinking of historical trauma are relevant not only to colonial and racial traumas but also to 'Western' trauma such as the Holocaust, since it is hardly a singular event (229), a point which will be discussed again in regard to multidirectional memory.

The topic of the meaning of colonial trauma, at the basis of the collection, consists, according to Buelens and Craps, of "dispossession, forced migration, diaspora, slavery, segregation, racism, political violence and genocide" (2). Most articles bring together trauma theory

and postcolonial literary studies. However, their criticism of psychoanalytic trauma theory as Eurocentric, does not apply to basic aspects of trauma as conceptualized by Caruth, as Irene Visser indicates in "Decolonizing Trauma Theory: Retrospect and Prospects" (2015). "What remains undisputed […] is Caruth's notion of the enduring and ultimately unknowable and inexpressible nature of traumatic wounding," she writes. In addition, according to her, Caruth's debated focus on the impossibility of knowing "does not oppose or contradict the notion that narrative is curative, and that trauma victims may come to terms with their traumatic experiences" (264). In other words, the scholars participating in the collection stress the essential expansion and diversification of the theory in order to provide adequate alternatives for understanding trauma, recovery, and social change.

In this venue, deciphering the issue's different epistemological views, Rothberg comments that beyond the variances among the opinions, scholars agree that literary studies of difference, memory, history, and trauma in marginalized groups and locations accomplish a better intercultural understanding and a stronger political impact when trauma theory, as a tool of analysis and a means of change, provides a decolonized framework to the research of legacies of violence.

Rothberg continues developing the notion of decolonized trauma theory as an instrument that benefits the whole society. The collective memory of a community, he argues, is multidirectional, as it holds within it historical memories of other communities, and these memories interact and affect the way the community sees its own trauma, and the way society in general understands it. Clearly, his concept is relevant to literary criticism of works that include a combination of different minorities and their legacies of trauma. In the wide range of origins and time, authors who have placed collective memories of different minorities side by side, beside Lore Segal, include André Schwarz-Bart, a Caribbean author writing in French, who intersects in *A Woman Named Solitude* (1973) the memory of the slavery and colonization of black people in the Caribbean islands with that of the Holocaust. Marguerite Duras's 1959 *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (whose homonymous film adaptation Caruth analyzes in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History)* deals with the memory, trauma, and healing of a Japanese man traumatized by the Hiroshima bombing and the loss of his family, and a French woman traumatized by the death of her lover, a German soldier, and her subsequent post-war humiliation and imprisonment by the French. These novels do not deny

each history its context and particularities, and do not make a comparison that diminishes or elevates one in relation to the other.

In this vein, Rothberg notes in "From Gaza to Warsaw" (2011) that a hierarchical approach to the register of collective traumas and a sense of exclusivity misrepresents history because "[c]ollective memories of seemingly distinct histories—such as those of slavery, the Holocaust, and colonialism—are not so easily separable" (524). Like Tal (1996), he notes that the different histories of extreme violence confront each other in the public sphere. The occurrence of events of destructive power such as the Holocaust to the Jewish community and slavery to the African-American community has generated a constant "competition" between memories. The communities keep a constant negotiation in their elaboration of their extent of suffering, after-effects, political meanings, and approaches to trauma.

In relation to the four selected novels of the present study, it should be observed that though the diasporic Caribbean community, also affected by slavery and massacre, is not mentioned, it has a similar role in this ongoing discussion regarding "competitive legacies." In agreement with Tal and Rothberg, as well as DuBois (1967) this work defends the view that political tension based on competitive memories does not benefit the minority nor the whole society, while exchanged experiences and shared interests favor understanding, increase the sense of empathy, and inspire collaboration regarding processes of recovery.

As Rothberg (2008) argues, decolonized trauma theory means a collective, spatial, and material notion, useful for society. This multidirectional, nonexclusive approach links memory of genocide, colonization, neocolonialism, occupation, slavery and/or other forms of violence. A compilation of intellectual and artistic counter tradition will provide resources for other groups to articulate their claims for recognition and justice. As such, trauma articulation, publication, and comparative research initiate an interaction between the center and the margin, theoretically oppositional social groups. It discourages competition and tension, and instead, recognizes similar and different patterns. The consequential better understanding of trauma turns the attention to the diverse political structures that generate them. In Rothberg's words,

> [m]emory works productively: the result of memory conflict is not less memory, but more—even of subordinated memory traditions. For instance, […] the result of the rise to prominence of Holocaust memory is not less public attention

> to the slave trade, but greater attention to it (even if that attention remains insufficient in many ways). (523-4)

Clearly, a decolonized trauma theory should release the hold of the category of trauma as it was conceptualized in the 1980s-1990s. However, when, in 2015, Visser publishes a study of the situation of trauma theory, she still recalls Rothberg's 2008 highlighting of the urgent concerns and the need for approximation between postcolonial studies and trauma theory. According to her, the problems are still "[t]rauma theory's Eurocentric, event-based conception of trauma; its too-narrow focus on Freudian psychoanalysis; and its deconstructionist approach that closes off other approaches to literary trauma." Despite the necessity of change, by "discarding or reconfiguring these elements," she writes, "there are further steps to be taken in order to fully accomplish the ideal of a decolonized trauma theory" (261).

In addition, the mentality of "who got it worse" and the idea that genocide should be quantified and qualified creates quite a grotesque race among minorities. For the sake of drawing a large map exploring difference, oppression, and trauma, there is an urgent need to explore each community's strategies for healing, recovery, transformation and/or change. Rothberg's question "When memories of colonialism, occupation, slavery, and the Holocaust bump up against one another in contemporary multicultural societies, must a competition of victims ensue? (523)" should be read as rhetoric. Therefore, my present work attempts to advance decolonization, comparing diverse literary representations and decoding different ways of handling repression and trauma, and referring to different/particular political interests.

1.5.4 A Wound Inscribed on the Body

The fundamental relation between trauma and the body has been pointed out by minority scholars. Dionne Brand points out that history is a structuring principle of the body. In *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (2002), she writes that the black body is a "space not simply owned by those who embody it but constructed and occupied by other embodiments. Inhabiting it is […] an international pastime. […] As well, there is a constant manipulation of its transgressive trope" (38).

She refers not only to skin color but also to gender. In her view, the sexual threat women suffer from colonizers and from colonized men turns the female body into an alien, a burden. Thus, as Foucault (1977), Bordo (1993), and Grostz (1994) also argue, the biological body is

exploited, judged, stereotyped, and repressed, affecting the subject's physical, perceptional, and behavioral relation with and through the body. Trauma, therefore, is a result of experiences lived, suffered, and perceived through, on and in the body. In addition, as Brand reiterates in her nonfiction and in *At the Full and Change of the Moon*, trauma may be passed forward through the body.

Tied to the embodied trauma, the physical and metaphorical meanings of the wound--the original sense of the word "trauma" in Ancient Greek--become an integral part of trauma representations in scholarly and literary works related to history and memory. Of course, as Elissa Marder (2006) notes, "[t]here is a general consensus that if trauma is a wound, […] it is a very peculiar kind of a wound." However, the undeniable suffering and the constant struggle to recover bears a parallel to a wound even if the body appears to be unmarked. Just as a wound has the nature of a cut, so does trauma as a wound split the life of the survivor, causing a clear rupture between the time before trauma occurs and the moment it starts. Thus, literary interpretations of the wound involve a complex notion of trauma beyond the physical sphere and across time and place. More often than not, the characters' mental and psychological experiences implicate physical manifestations of trauma such as changes in body movement, a changed body perception, or a troubled sexuality. Female characters avoid the body altogether, become obsessed with it, or study it as if they were not grownups yet.

The usage of the concept with respect to collective or intergenerational trauma becomes clear if it is understood as the painful memory that fractures the foundation of the community, modifies a familiar situation, and requires a process of healing. In accordance, as Brand, Kaplan, and Foucault sustain, the carrier of trauma from generation to generation is not only social and cultural, but, also, physical, biological, behavioral, and marked in the body. In "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" (1971), Foucault states that negating the lasting effect is a question of power and politics. He writes,

> The demagogue denies the body to secure the sovereignty of a timeless idea, and the historian effaces his proper individuality so that others may enter the stage and reclaim their own speech. He is divided against himself: forced to silence his preferences and overcome his distaste, to blur his own perspective and replace it with the fiction of a universal geometry, to mimic death in order to enter the kingdom of the dead, to adopt a faceless anonymity. (91)

In this vein, Kaplan (1999) states that trauma is indeed corporeal, since it "remains unprocessed—not 'knowledge' in the usual sense yet felt in the body" (147).

Brand (2002) points at the body as the site of repression and the place where trauma is inscribed, constituting memory. It acts as the bearer of trauma in the individual and from generation to generation. The scholar discusses a collective consciousness that exists across generations. She also refers to influences of one generation on the other through body gestures, muscle, bones, or bodily knowledge. Like Brand's texts, W.E.B. Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) explores individual and collective traumas retained in the body. According to him, the condemning gaze marks the body simultaneously with the inner eye that protects a black person from the gaze.

> The Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil and gifted with second-sight in this American world […] It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness, —an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in the same dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (xiii)

According to Du Bois, then, African descendants are born into a society that pre-defines them. Since they are an integral part of that society, and are constructed by its pressures, conventions, and definitions, this traumatizing judgmental gaze under which they live becomes a part of their perception as well. However, being aware that there is a certain distortion in this perception brings in another factor of identity formation. The awareness contributes a different view, a critical perception, to the self-definition of the individual, individually or within the collective of black people. The two simultaneous views -- the majority's and the critical one -- create a certain duality that should be taken in account in analyses in the field of literary criticism related to the African American and the Caribbean communities. Generations later, Brand, too, says that the way the Western world sees black people is shaped by history, shapes history, and affects the way the identity of black individuals and collectives is formed even in the present, despite their current freedom from slavery.

Based on the above, the body expression of trauma will be emphasized, and attention will be given to the embodied causes and

bodily manifestations that reflect the crack in the trauma survivor's life. Using such an angle for studying trauma through literary criticism, Caruth's 1996 analysis of the film "*Hiroshima Mon Amour*" a 1959 French New Wave film made by Alain Resnais and based on Marguerite Duras's screenplay, elaborates a number of relevant aspects. For example, Caruth traces the corporeal impact of war, the consequent trauma manifestations, and the body participation in the process of recovery. In this film, a Japanese architect and a French actress meet in Hiroshima after its destruction by the atomic bomb and have a long conversation about their experiences in the Second World War. They were lovers in an earlier period, but have become a-sexual friends. Their conversation digs into their wounds and opens them, while also setting off a healing process. Elle, the tormented French protagonist, is struck by the death of her German lover, a soldier in the enemy's army. She feels guilt for surviving him and still aches with the memory of the humiliation she suffered from the French upon the liberation of France. According to Caruth, Elle re-experiences the acute pain of loss and humiliation "through the refusal of sight and understanding. Her refusal is thus carried out in the body's fragmentation, in the separation of her hands from the rest of her corporeal self, and in the communion with her lover's death through the sucking of her own blood." Unable to handle it otherwise, "deprived of sight and understanding, and only as a fragment, […] the body can become, for the woman, the faithful monument to a death" (Unclaimed 30). Subsequently, she illustrates how recovery, too, takes place in the body.

1.5.5 Approaches toward Treating, Handling and Breaking through Trauma

Processes toward recovery may take place in different circumstances. According to Caruth, despite being a source of pain and dysfunction, trauma is a call for survival through new forms of contact with others. Living trauma, she writes, means an isolation both from history and from society, but having a listener allows for a rupture of this isolation. Moreover, the history of a trauma, split from the traumatic event itself, may only come to life through a listener (Explorations10–11). The listener opens a way to the subconsciousness of the person suffering from trauma and helps find where the true effect of trauma is lurking in the psyche (2). Thus, reflecting upon trauma with the help of another leads to the construction of historical, social, and ethical meanings. In addition, the dialogue is not limited to individuals as it also expands among cultures, "not as a simple understanding of the pasts of

others but rather, within the traumas of contemporary history, as our ability to listen through the departures we have all taken from ourselves" (11). The voice of the wound cannot be silenced.

Unfortunately, Caruth does not explain in an embodied, technical way what the listener contributes beside empathy. It appears that the listener holds or brings about knowledge or truth which the traumatized cannot bear to elaborate on their own. In her work, she defines the listener as the voice of "otherness" or, rather, the voice of a different perception, which enacts and facilitates awareness and deconstruction. It appears, although this is not clear, that the listener may be another traumatized individual or a psychologist in a psychoanalytic session. Tal (1996) reads Caruth's words "through the listening of another" as a psychoanalytic situation alone, and not as a recollection enabled through other types of communication. She writes that, according to Caruth, trauma reveals itself through a recall in the presence of a psychoanalyst, a fact that raises a problem when people from other cultures are involved. In my work, relevant dialogues between characters will be analyzed in this sense, in order to explore the possibility of recovery through an exchange. LaCapra (2011) interprets the notion of the listener's empathy as identification. However, he warns about the blurring of boundaries and of roles, with a careful definition of the concept. He writes, "[b]y identification I mean the unmediated fusion of self and other in which the otherness or alterity of the other is not recognized and respected (Writing History, 27).

Balaev brings about a negative aspect of empathy. According to her, Caruth's claim that "trauma is never simply one's own," and that "we are implicated in each other's trauma" (Unclaimed 24) distorts the assignment of responsibility. The involvement of an empathetic listener as an equal party imposes a wrong meaning to trauma as it involves the whole society, changes the socio-historical frame of trauma, and expands to the whole society the state of victimhood. These instigations make both actor and recipient of violence anonymous. The direct experience becomes indirect when everyone participates, confuses cause and effect, and blurs issues of responsibility and agency. Therefore, postcolonial theory with its intercultural, interdisciplinary research is an important enabler to find alternatives to "viewing literature as a closed psychoanalytic system" (5). In fact, Caruth does not necessarily imply that the weight of trauma suffering or trauma responsibility is the same for everyone involved in the process. She applies to the community, the collective, the ability to absorb and share the experience of trauma through empathy and communication. However, each trauma survivor

goes through an individual process of healing, learning to deal with the experience, unrelated to the suggested openness within one community or among communities. In the case of two trauma survivors from different backgrounds, Caruth's psychoanalytic method may be restrictive in some ways, but it does not necessarily evade roles when it suggests an exchange and mutual help. Clearly, the subject is complex and should be treated with utmost care and respect.

From the 2000s, however, the mobilization of scholars such as Craps, Buelens, Rothberg, hooks, and Brand from the strongly individual treatment to a parallel collective one weighs toward the inclusion of collective memory, life conditions, and political processes in trauma studies regarding overcoming trauma. Rothberg (2008) argues that articulating the pain, listening to it, and reading it may help heal the individual wound only to a limited degree. Trauma of a previously colonized region, or an impoverished refugee community requires a profound change of life conditions before the individual can heal. From this prism, the examination of the circumstances that allowed for violence to occur is necessary in order to accomplish recovery and transformation. Moreover, the social, national or otherwise collective trauma requires an adequate, repaired socio-economic situation for the whole collective as well as for the individual handling of trauma.

Moreover, empathy as a single tool, says Rothberg, may prevent a critical self-reflection and a socio-historical understanding by the traumatized person, preventing the survivors from recognizing whatever share of responsibility they might have had in the traumatic experience. If they were somehow implicated, performed an act of denial of danger, or collaborated to a certain degree even to a minimal extent, they would need to deal with possible guilt and shame, or rather, with the traumatizing impact of being implicated. Such self-reflection may be required, for instance, in the case of a Jewish capo in the ghetto. The Nazis had a clear interest to involve the victims in the Nazi system, and therefore they appointed a Jew to manage and organize the community, obeying Nazi's orders. Another example, given by Achille Mbembe (2010), regards a collective implication in decolonized Africa. He brings up the "entanglement of desire, seduction and subjugation; not only oppression, but its enigma of loss." According to him, the decolonized realize that during colonization they "have allowed themselves to be duped, seduced and deceived" (44).

Other notions of Caruth's theory have been criticized by LaCapra, who argues with the Freudian view that melancholia and fragility are inseparable and unchangeable crippling elements of the

post-traumatic stage. According to him, melancholia does not only enable the traumatized subject to recall memories through communication, but also to realize that one is living here and now with openings to the future (22). Visser adds that "for postcolonial literary studies, the implications of the crippling elements are problematic "if the aftermath of colonial trauma is by definition expressed only in terms of weakness, victimization, and melancholia, by which themes of social activism, recuperation, and psychic resilience are obscured". In the end, according to her, "Without negating the lasting, profound impact of trauma, postcolonial trauma narratives often also demonstrate that resilience and growth are possible in the aftermath of traumatic wounding" (263). It should be noted, however, that Caruth's 2013 book, *Literature in the Ashes of History*, demonstrates a swerve from the crippling effect of melancholia toward the possibilities of living fully and having a future. She discusses Freud's life drive, "by which Freud signals a mode of speaking and of writing that bear witness to the past by turning toward the future" (xi). Thus, she, too, directs her efforts toward transformation.

From another perspective, it has often been asked if gaining a new perspective--through a listener or otherwise--means a fundamental change that leads to recovery. This question becomes highly complex when applied to different groups of survivors. According to Caruth, a trauma survivor's contact with others, in new forms, specified in *Unclaimed Experience*, helps heal other trauma survivors, whether they have survived the same trauma or not, and whether they belong to the same culture or not. She writes:

> The final import of the psychoanalytic and historical analysis of trauma is to suggest that the inherent departure, within trauma, from the moment of its first occurrence, is also a means of passing out of the isolation imposed by the event; that the history of trauma, in its inherent belatedness, can only take place through the listening of another. (10-11)

Tal negates the possibility of recovery in this psychoanalytic sense. She writes with certain disdain that it is the business of psychoanalysis to heal people, and therefore, the field will not take in account an impossibility or even a different method. Trauma cannot always be resolved in the process of the talking cure, she argues. Instead of the psychoanalytic method she considers exclusive and abstract, she establishes a therapeutic model that works across the different targeted groups and survivors. According to her, despite the inner tension between the needs of each group (needs she recognizes with

vehemence), an artistic output empowers different victims and validates their unique voice. The historian LaCapra (2001), too, recognizes the limits of the psychoanalytic treatment and the psychoanalytic trauma theory. He, along with Holocaust Scholars Young (1995) and Langer (1991), holds the view that recovery is not always conceivable. Some atrocities can never be overcome. In a similar vein, Shoshana Felman writes in *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (1992) that it is not a past event but "a history which is essentially not over, a history whose repercussions are not simply omnipresent (whether consciously or not) in all our cultural activities, but whose traumatic consequences are still evolving [. . .] in today's political, historical, cultural and artistic scene" (xiv).

Other thinkers, such as Fanon, Durrant, and Brand, have noted the difficulty in applying psychoanalytic treatments for the non-white communities. Brand (2002) writes about the more culturally-adequate process in black communities, a process of resistance, memory, and prevention rather than recovery in the psychic sense. She uses the concept of "unforgetting," in which communication within the community, with the help of signals carried from generation to generation to treat trauma, passes knowledge forward. Thus, nothing of the traumatic events and their consequences may be forgotten. The embedded memory will serve as testimony and as a warning, awareness and a bonding link among the many consequent generations.

Literary scholar Myriam Chasy (1997) emphasizes the role of the body as a tool of recovery, self-definition, and empowerment, referring mainly to African Americans and Caribbean women in exile. According to her, since the female black body has been "the source of […] commodification in art, the site of physical and sexual abuse under slavery and neocolonial 'domestic schemes,' it stands to reason that it would be through the body that we might regain a palpable sense of our own identities" (123). Interestingly, despite the controversy regarding abstraction and generalization, Caruth (1996), too, presents the body as a tool and a place of recovery from trauma. For instance, Elle's body becomes her instrument of repossession as it reintegrates in the film *Hiroshima Mon Amour*: "[m]y hair is growing back. I can feel it every day, with my hand. I don't care. But nevertheless, my hair is growing back" (Unclaimed 30). The character recovers her sense of the body while recuperating her memory and perceiving her experience as a part of a larger history. Based on the above, this study applies the different approaches, utilizing the common ground in regard to recovery and

manifestations and pointing out the differences and the cases in which an approach is inapplicable.

Also discussing trauma, memory, and resistance in the black community, bell hooks analyzes, in her 1989 book *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist – Thinking Black*, the relation between feminism and subaltern pain. She suggests learning from the individual experience of pain, without exalting the notion of victimhood, as a way to resist the neoliberal and therapeutic culture she rejects. She bonds pain with the "overall education for critical consciousness of collective political resistance" (32). The knowledge of the past and the memory of pain are not the main determiners of identity but a necessary process from which the embodied self can learn how to release the hold of the pain and liberate itself.

Apart from the above, the process of dealing actively with trauma is closely related to writing and reading. According to both Danticat and Brand, their novels, *The Farming of Bones* and At *the Full and Change of the Moon*, respectively, have been written in attempts to deconstruct the collective memory, point out past horrors and their ongoing consequences, and reconstruct history and memory in empowering manners. Vickroy (2002) speaks about direct survivors' literature and asserts their need for sharing. In addition, she asks, while the survivors' motive is clearer, what is the benefit of reading about trauma, and why people are drawn to such a bleak subject? Her response introduces the view that the reconstruction of trauma engages readers in meditation on "individual distress, collective responsibilities, and communal healing," benefitting their own mental and social necessities. Another angle, indicated by Kaplan (1999), focuses on the importance of organizing pain into a narrative, giving trauma a shape that makes it clearer, and helping work the trauma through. In addition, she argues, writing helps the victims to be heard and give a testimony in place of silence. "The 'disturbing remains' of history inscribed in the memories of these writers," she writes, "show the effects of social disaster on the individual" (21). The authors develop different literary techniques in order to construct the impact of a traumatic experience, as if they translate the individual and the collective/political aspects in a literary recall. A recollection and its deconstruction are essential in order to trace and learn historical processes, open the way to change, and try to prevent future atrocities. The text, read within its contextual extent, helps analyze the political mechanism, power relations, and socio-cultural and ethical causes and impacts. Thus, literary trauma-related works illustrate and portray trauma, illuminating the structure of the

discussed injustice and the impact it has on the community and on the individual, and, hopefully mobilizing awareness, debate and transformation. Her call to prevent future atrocities and injustice is common to most trauma scholars present in this work.

To conclude, as the above implies, the major theoretical aspects related to difference, trauma and the body that will guide the study are the intersectional situation of minority female characters, deconstruction of identity formation affected by performativity, dominant values, and social construction, examination of the power relations among minorities, and between minorities and the dominant majority, especially in previously colonized regions, diaspora, in-between, acculturation, the corporeal experience of racism, the gendered body, the body as a carrier of memory and history, the body as a source of transformation, trauma as a reaction to events in the past and the present, trauma manifestations, handling trauma in different cultures and minorities, and deconstruction and reconstruction and possibilities of social and individual transformation.

A comparative literary study based on the theoretical framework follows the above introduction of the study and the selected novels, the elaboration of the socio-cultural and historical context of each novel and author, and the constitution of the theoretical foundation. The following chapter examines the sources of trauma, portrayed in each novel, through the study of the characters' connection to their history of racism, repression, diaspora, slavery, genocide and/or other oppressive mechanisms.

CHAPTER TWO
In Between: Minority Characters in Exile

This chapter will examine the diverse ways in which minority characters, mostly females, whose difference has marked them as targets of hostility and marginalization, deal with racism and diaspora, two categories of traumatic intersectional oppression. Like the subsequent two chapters in this study, Chapter 2 leans on the socio-cultural and historical contextualization introduced in the theoretical framework, in order to trace the connection between the characters, their history of oppression, memory, and—as will be elaborated in Chapter 4—the traumatic impact on their lives. Clearly, Chapter 3, in its study of embodied legacies, gender, and corporeality, is closely connected as well, since the trauma of persecution and diaspora bears characteristics inscribed on the body. The boundaries of the discussed subjects meet and interlace, and their flexibility reflects the multidirectional movement of diverse stories and trauma legacies.

Examining the characters' diverse experiences of racism and ethnicism, a common element for the four novels, this chapter begins with the investigation of the impact of anti-Semitism, persecution, and exile during and after the Holocaust on the characters in *Other People's Houses* (1964) and *Her First American* (1985). Subsequently, I will show how African American characters in *Her First American* deal with racism and segregation rooted in the period of slavery and still present in the individual and collective memory and current life. Advancing to *The Farming of Bones* (1998), I will show the circumstance and culture of the exiled Haitians in the Dominican Republic in the beginning of the twentieth century in the period of neocolonization (the undoing of colonialism) under the lasting effect of colonization, to illuminate the effects of racial exclusion, radical nationalism, and genocide. The situation of the Haitian characters as a target group in their exile is explored to a great measure through the narrator's internal and external journey. Next, I will analyze the complex return to Haiti, after the 1937 massacre, in the light of a double exclusion, and the situation of in-between both in exile and at the homeland. Finally, I will determine the different focus of racism and genocide in the several minorities present in *At the Full and Change of the Moon* (1999), a novel that emphasizes slavery as an intergenerational destiny and identity determiner. Since the stress on slavery in the Caribbean islands is greater in Brand's novel, the author's choice to represent trauma and repression in this region through this lens is studied as well. The analysis ends by pointing out how

historical legacies, pain, and memory of one minority dialogue with these of another. Since this aspect is best exemplified in *Her First American,* I will introduce the historical tension between Jews and African Americans in order to sustain the fictionalization of these relations, and indicate the existence and problematic nature of cross-minority empathy, a theme expanded in Chapter 4.

Lore Segal's novels, the first ones chronologically of the four selected novels, came at a time of emergence of Jewish authors exiled in the USA and writing about the tragic underground of culture, describing discrimination, persecution, and diaspora. At the time, Robert Spiller publishes an analysis of post war fiction in the USA after WWII in *In the Literary History of the United States* (1948) and observes that Southern novelists, Jewish writers, African American authors, and Beat pundits emerged from the tragic underground of culture as the true spokesmen of midcentury America.

2.1 *Other People's Houses*

The wider interpretation of the concept of diaspora applies to Lore from *Other People's Houses* since she has to escape the Nazis to a safer country than Austria. Thanks to her parents' effort to save her from danger, Lore takes the children's rescue train to England, where she stays for years. Notably, even though her exile is forced by political powers, the traditional definition for diaspora does not apply here, since the six accumulative, determining features of the concept: dispersal, collective memory, alienation, longing for the homeland, faith in the homeland restoration, and self-definition in the terms of the homeland are not complete in Lore's case. There is hardly any longing in her for the homeland, or any faith in restoration. However, the postmodern definition of the concept is more flexible, and, according to Hall, the notion of diaspora includes versions of mobility and dislocation even in the absence of some of the six factors above.

Despite a history of persecution related to religion and ethnicism throughout Jewish history, denial of discrimination and threat or, alternatively, naïve hope are wide spread in the Jewish community in the 1930s as *Other People's Houses* and *Her First American* illustrate. The impact of the consequent shock is deeply traumatic, as further elaborated in Chapter 4 of this study. In *Other People's Houses,* Lore is an "assimilated Austrian" (147) until the age of ten. Her family celebrates the High Holidays but is not active within the Jewish community and does not follow other Jewish traditions. They are liberal and open to other religions, and therefore, nobody objects to Lore's

choice to follow the Yom Kippur ceremony in the synagogue with a Sunday Christian procession. In fact, her mother tells her that she can choose whether to be Jewish or Christian. However, things change when Jews are expelled from their schools, jobs, and public places, and are forbidden to employ non-Jews, or to mix with people of other religions. The ten-year-old girl is shocked when Nazi law and the social climate in Vienna legitimize every kind of humiliation.

At first, however, she still absorbs the grownups' disbelief or--perhaps--denial. Obviously, the different opinions confuse the girl. "You're talking about a handful of lunatics" (3), her father says to Uncle Paul. Other family members join Paul in his certainty that the anti-Semites are dangerous, and therefore, the Jews who still can do it should flee. Paul cites a neighbor who said that the Jews sit and watch him load the gun he got out for them. Lore's parents, however, still hope the danger is temporary. They leave Vienna, since they believe it is the most dangerous place in Austria, and spend time in the distant grandparents' farm. To their alarm, the relief from the accumulating tension does not last long, as a growing part of the locals become Nazis, and men in uniform are seen everywhere. The remains of Lore's ingenuity disappear when local boys spit on her, and she realizes she is hated and abused for being Jewish, no matter how friendly she tries to be. Years later, when she describes this crucial event as the beginning of the decline, her discourse is detached, detailing simple facts without emotion, the way people affected by a traumatic event sound according to Caruth (1990, 1993). The shocking horror numbs her.

After Lore's arrival in England, the characteristic social pressure on exiled people to take on the local culture is related to religion. The events of separation from her parents and the culture gap she experiences are traumatic and, therefore, disrupt her life. Her vulnerability makes her more malleable, and, in addition, due to her young age, she is still in a phase of identity formation. The traumatic situation of a refugee strengthens the effect of the different discourses, as she is pressed to take on a religion both by the Jewish and by the Christian community. In fact, her foster families expect her to change by adopting the Christian religion or an orthodox view of Judaism, as if an exiled person is in a stage of transformation other than geographically and physically. "There had been a certain contest between the Jewish Committee, which saved me from Vienna, and the Church Refugee Committee, which had the care of my bodily needs in England. Each strove for my soul" (147), she says. Despite her early age, she is already aware that if she could have chosen Christianity over Judaism, she might

have escaped certain forms of hatred, but her religious/cultural/national identity does not depend on her, especially in this period of history.

Unexpectedly, her exile brings new forms of Jewish culture into her life, expanding her knowledge of her minority and Judaism. In London, when she is told that a potential foster family, the Levines, are Orthodox, she writes to her parents and asks what "orthodox" means. Before their reply arrives, she already moves in with the Levines. She goes on observing them as an outsider, just the way she will later observe a family of religious Protestants. Her family is so far removed from orthodox Judaism that her mother replies to Lore's letter, asking her to change from the orthodox family to another foster family. However, it is too late and too complex to change Lore's new home. Lore stays and becomes a "purist" Jew, following the family's example.

Nevertheless, as Lore's spiritual identity is still in construction, as is her ideological one, she keeps absorbing and trying on ideas and dogmas. She becomes a Socialist when staying with the Hoopers, and experiences Christianism when living with the Protestant sisters Mrs. Dillon and Miss Douglas. In truth, with each foster family, she adopts the family's way of life, following her craving to belong and be accepted. In the sisters' case, her only resistance to the sisters' suggestion to convert her to Christianism is based on her expectation for love and her sense of disappointment. She resents the sisters' attempt at conversion, because it means they have taken her into their home not out of an interest in her as a person, nor out of goodness, but because of their religious interests. In sum, her motives are emotional, and a loving family might have changed her mind and the course of her life.

Despite her resistance to both religions, Lore remains curious enough to explore both Christianity and Judaism. For a while, she raises rational questions related to religion with a priest and with a rabbi. To her dismay, both of them refuse to discuss religious principles and apparent contradictions, expecting her to have blind faith. While perusing her search for the truth she should follow, she meets Herta, a confused Jewish girl, who seeks her own spiritual way and opts for Judaism, then Zionism, and afterwards, Christianism. Lore watches Herta's confusion with interest and certain disdain, despite her own quest. When Herta ends up killing herself, Lore takes one step backwards and does not commit herself to anything. In fact, she describes the final result of the sisters' long pressure with the self-irony she has developed, a reflection on her symptomatic detachment, and says that the five years the sisters spent with her in their home did not

help them "bring a new soul into the Church of England, and, instead, turned out a temporary snob and an Anglophile forever" (168).

Lore's experience is an example of the cases in which discrimination against a minority group strengthens solidarity among the group members as a tool of survival and forces them to turn their attention to their marginalized culture and common values. Ironically, the oppression that equalizes all the members of the Jewish people leads Lore to a reconsideration of her Jewish identity more than any chosen spiritual and cultural way of life. The undeniable reality of the Holocaust, her family's suffering, and their acquaintances' disappearances, confirm her childhood's realization that she will always be a Jew in the eye of others. It is now, more than ever, that she considers what it means to be Jewish. The split from her homeland and estrangement in England cracks her geographical sense of belonging and empowers a more cultural one. In other words, her being an exiled Jew strengthens her sense of belonging to the Jewish people instead of belonging to a place.

In addition, the fact she has survived some of her beloved family members and Jewish friends adds a deep sense guilt to her identity. She feels the need to justify her survival, so rejecting her Jewish identity at this stage seems like a betrayal. When she meets new people in England, in her late adolescence, she introduces herself to them as a Jewish refugee.

2.2 *Her First American*

Segal's narration of the childhood and youth experiences of the exiled Jewish girl in *Other People's Houses* are complemented in *Her First American* with a narration of anti-Semitism and exile from the point of view of a young woman. Ilka, the main character, may be read as the grown version of Lore from *Other People's Houses*. In the case of Ilka, a refugee in the US, whose life was disrupted by her traumatic war experiences, and whose tendency toward assimilation, her manner of acculturation, is a reaction to this forced exile and marginalization, the more inclusive poststructuralist approach of diaspora applies, as in Lore's situation. Her memories of the Holocaust include how antisemitic laws and actions removed her family's apparent equality and respectful status in society, and re-locked them in a stigmatized, persecuted group. These memories along with her mother's horrifying memories of starvation and murder, and with the developing collective memory of the Jewish people are central to her urgency to leave the past behind and "become an American." She suffered so much during the war, she does

not long to return to Austria or to Europe in general, lacking any hope for a social restoration. In exile, although she does not seek the company of other Jews, she remains connected to the Jewish culture in the pre-war Austria and feels a strong bond with European Jews thanks to the collective memory and common past. However, stripped of her Austrian identity by the traumatic horror, she still inhabits her Jewish identity enough to hang onto it. Unfortunately, for her, being Jewish, initially, is mostly related to being persecuted and not to belonging to a worthy cultural power. It is Carter, her African American lover, who tells her about the Talmud teachings and not the other way around. "It is a greater sin to shame your neighbor with words than to defraud him of his property" (262), Carter says. She enjoys this insight into Judaism, and he goes on to explain that racial humiliation is like drawing off the life's blood of the humiliated, and also, like a call for murder. While she agrees, she dismisses her past, as if she could only live toward the future.

Ilka's foreignness and her struggle to assimilate are best exemplified by the subject of language. According to the author's interview in Literary Slut, her novels contain many components of her own life as a refugee and an immigrant. Therefore, a comparison between her history and her literary choices for *Her First American* helps the readers construct meanings. For instance: the protagonist was born in Austria, where she was persecuted by the Nazis, then fled Austria, and years later immigrated to the US in which she was naturalized as an American citizen. As for Segal, she mastered the English language before immigrating to the USA thanks to years of schooling in the UK. Unlike her, though, Ilka speaks broken English and struggles to communicate her thoughts and to understand her interlocutors. This difference calls for attention. The fractured English serves as a tool to convey the situation of Ilka as an unadjusted newcomer with an unsteady footing, who miscommunicates and fails to understand the locals.

Unlike Lore, Ilka does not recall a denial of the intensifying threat of racism in Europe, and, unlike her mother, she does not express her shock in relation to the horror. The mother's shock at the violence, especially at the death of her husband in a starvation march, leaves her so traumatized, she does not develop much hope for a better future. Her trauma is studied in depth in Chapter 4. As for Ilka, the mere fact of the US's acceptance of refugees like her constructs hope and anticipation for a good life. Nevertheless, at the same time, the country's set of laws and strategies for a socio-cultural fusion produces in her confusion and

suspicion, as it offers a conditioned shelter and not an embrace of difference and a warm home. As mentioned in the theoretical review, the manners of acculturation in a new country are the result of the diverse ways by which each refugee and each group relates the new country to the homeland and to previous expectations. Ilka, unlike the confused Lore, arrives in the US with the hope that her future there will compensate for her tortuous past. Simultaneously, however, like Lore, she is full of doubts rooted in the trauma suffered in her homeland and in other European countries through which she has escaped. Therefore, despite her motivation to restart her life, she is not fully optimistic. As Segal writes, "It had taken Ilka Wessnix more than a decade to get to the United States, of which she knew next to nothing and came prepared to think ill: Ilka was twenty-one" (5). Paradoxically, while Ilka does not expect much, she also expects everything.

Contrasting and comparing the homeland and its culture and the new country is an inescapable phase of learning the ropes of exile, as Ilka's first steps reveal. She observes and absorbs the dominant culture as a minority member, whose customs, language, and values are foreign to the place. While she is hopeful, fear and caution derived from traumatic past experiences restrain her optimism. Looking from the margins, she constantly compares Vienna before the war and New York. On her initial quest for emotional comfort, she is eager to find similarities. At the outset, she finds that the streets of New York are a lot like the streets she remembers from her childhood in Vienna. Yet, despite this impression she feels insecure, certain that the local people are different and inaccessible. As she studies them during her strolls, she develops both admiration of their confident behavior and a sense of offense verging on a reaction to rejection, even when the rejection does not occur in reality. Clearly, she feels marked and unwanted. Once, after commenting on a "real American couple, having an American conversation" (7), she finds in surprise that the couple in front of her is talking in her mother tongue, German. She realizes that her exclusion from the local scene has been her own wrong assumption, and her discovery clarifies to her how isolated and locked within her own expectations she is. Not only is she a stranger around Americans, but also around people who are German-speaking immigrants like her.

In addition, her real social exclusion, the primary traumatic event in her life, the legal racial persecution and genocide, followed by an escape from the Nazi occupation and the Austrian collaborative forces, haunts her in exile as well. She is afraid that the horror will take place again, even though reality does not match her dread. Ilka assumes

a person is a Nazi, when he says he is from Germany, only to find out he is Jewish like her. Her expectation to suffer from racism again is similar to Amabelle's in *The Farming of Bones*, (see the section dedicated to the novel below). Amabelle suspects that a local physician teases her with imaginary theories and with a false work proposal, when he makes an honest suggestion. Both characters are marked by persecution and live in fear of repetition, a strong manifestation of trauma. They feel alone even when in company, any company.

When Ilka tells Carter about her past, she does so in a matter-of-fact, detached manner, typical to trauma survivors (Caruth 1995, 1996). His reaction--a growing respect to the resourceful young woman who has been thrown out of her home, separated from her family, and traveled in horrible conditions in fear of being captured by the Nazis, and yet is fully motivated to start anew and live intensely--encourages her to keep trying to adjust and be respected by all. Ilka strays from people who remind her of her own family and acquaintances, without being aware of her motives. She says how comfortable she is in the company of people similar to her family, but she loses interest immediately. If we consider her reaction to anti-Semitic comments, it appears that she runs away from a mirror-reflection. In the end, however, she cannot run away from her old self and roots as if those have never existed.

This is a starting point of acculturation. She is determined to belong to the place that represents her future, but first she must find out what it means to "become American" in order to turn into one. Of the four categories defined by the model of acculturation strategies, according to Gudykunst and Kim (2005)--assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization--Ilka's tendency is to assimilate. It means she desires to take on the host culture and lose her own, but in fact, as the novel continues it becomes clear that she keeps much of her original culture and respects the people representing it. She keeps going in the direction of biculturalism, or integration, as if it is stronger than she.

She desires a complete assimilation, a metamorphosis, and therefore she decides to learn everything from scratch, assuming the position of a baby. Clearly, this position puts her under a certain threat, being so new and vulnerable, but she chooses to challenge herself anyway. She becomes the most devoted student of "American life" including the language, codes of conduct, the place, and its people. When she does not understand an expression or a scene, she stores it in her mind, and these pieces of information are available for her to join

them together with future information. Her survival strategies, of which she is fully aware, sustain her with expectation for a better future. Therefore, she puts all her psychic and physical energy into breaking her shell, learning and internalizing anything American.

Ilka is not aware that she risks her standing in society and in history by cutting her roots and having no other alternative. By negating the worth of her own culture, she has cut off the possibility of empowering herself. As Jean Paul Sartre argues in his 1944 essay "Anti-Semitism and the Jews", the external, negative judgement of Jews affects the members of the community in the way they see themselves in society. He writes: "The root of Jewish disquietude is the necessity imposed upon the Jew of subjecting himself to endless self-examination and finally of assuming a phantom personality, at once strange and familiar, that haunts him and which is nothing but himself — himself as others see him." Not only the external forces, however, but also the inner workings of Jewish society keep molding the minority. While the racial-based exclusion leads people to point out a Jewish child as different and hateful, Sartre writes, the child hears at home he should be proud of his roots. This is a source of ambivalence: "he no longer knows what to believe; he is torn between humiliation, anguish, and pride. He feels that he is set apart, but he still does not understand what sets him apart; he is sure of only one thing: no matter what he does, he is and will remain a Jew" (54). This text about duality brings to mind Du Bois's 1940 text about the dual nature of black people, who double their consciousness in order to deal with trauma (see Chapter 4). It also stands as another example--this time Jewish-- for recurrent traumatic events of discrimination that can be traced to the far past.

Unlike her cousin, even though Ilka becomes upset when hearing anti-Semitic expressions, soon afterwards she lowers her head in shame for being a Jew, internalizing the hatred. She dreads that a strong Jewish identity—or identification--may defy her assimilation. Despite her former experiences of lack of choice, she rather hopes to pick and stay on the safe side of society and history. She experiences her foreignness as a barrier and relates it to the difficulty in her incorporation into the country. Her quest for safety is the result of her fear from recurrent events of persecution. Therefore, she feels betrayed when discovering that her community, including the Jews born in the United States, is still a target of racism. Interestingly, while conscious of her roots, Ilka shows more interest in the African-American community than in the Jewish one. She investigates the situation of black people, their place in society, and their views. These are new to her, and the new

is preferable to the old. Moreover, there is a certain self-hatred in her positioning, as if the painful history of her people and the ideology behind it might be justified.

Intersectionality affects Ilka's reactions to a great measure. For example, Jews' guilt and/or shame in being Jewish, or rather, Jews' shame in belonging to a group represented socially through anti-Semitism, intersects with Ilka's guilty and/or shameful reactions to the social gaze that expresses patriarchal conventions. In *The Second Sex* (1949) Simone de Beauvoir argues that women live as objects for the gaze of others, not because of the biological difference but due to the meanings given to it by traditional education and social pressure. Susan Bordo has endorsed this view in *Unbearable Weight* (1993). The dominant discourse generates an impact on minority groups and their members, such as Ilka, as it recreates the same patterns over and over again, as if these were universal truth. Ilka could have derived comfort from her difference, had she recognized it as unique and worthy, but the process to self-acceptance is long and painful.

Although llka is sensitive to anti-Semitism, as I will demonstrate, the character who represents a higher awareness of anti-Semitism and its implications is her cousin, Fishgoppel. In fact, Fishgoppel is rather driven by it, acting against anti-Semitism in the different spheres of her life--domestic, professional, and intellectual--revealing a strong sense of personal and societal solidarity. Her academic thesis, entitled "Anti-Semitic Paraphrasis in Poetry in the English Language: The Jew from Beowulf to Pound" (26), is written from this angle as well. Her other efforts focus on helping refugees and Jews in general to understand the paradigms that defy their rights and stand up against persecution and discrimination. This determination fuels Fishgoppel's attempts to help Ilka and Ilka's mother settle in the US and find a relatively comfortable position in the local society. Since her backstory is not a part of the novel, the exact reasons for her unstoppable investigation and social activism are unknown. Her mobilization appears to be the result of the collective memory transmitted and reconstructed across the community and by every generation.

In addition, *My First American* deals with the contemporary impact of two major historical ethno-racial traumas: the Holocaust, through the perspective of Ilka and her family; and slavery and ensuing legal segregation in the United States, through Ilka's lover, Carter, and his African American friends and pupils. As mentioned, Ilka is a new immigrant, fleeing from a devastated Europe, and dealing with anti-

Semitism in her past and in the US. Carter was born in the United States to a poor family and is struggling against the continuous impact of slavery and racism on the lives of black people. Notably, at first, while Ilka shows empathy to Carter due to his own traumatic experiences. His bitter insights regarding the social and legal exclusion of his African-American community do not prepare her to the local anti-Semitism. However, toward the end of the novel, Rothberg's term "multidirectional memory" appears to be fitting these literary representations of the unexclusive capacity of human memory to absorb multiple relational histories, accept, intersect, and learn from the intersection about one's own memory and trauma.

The possible approximation among minorities is introduced though Ilka's wish want to belong with American society as a whole, but also with minority groups. The intersectional character of Ilka's situation: a Jew, a refugee, and a woman, places her in the boundaries of society. Therefore, while studying America in order to belong to its very center, whatever that may mean, she studies the margins, because this is where she stands. She is interested in the African American group and not only in the Jewish one, sensing that united minorities could play a more important role in the North American patchwork society. She hopes that a unified front will give everyone a better chance. She also seeks allies among women, creating strong bonds especially with her Jewish cousin always called by her last name, Fishgoppel, and the African American woman, Ebony.

In addition, Ilka realizes that even though Fishgoppel's sensitivity toward injustice is mostly related to her own minority, she is not insensitive to the history of others. The sight of William Rauschenquist's painting of a slave ship, for example, makes Fishgoppel exclaim, "That is the root of anti-Semitism" (122). Thus, she draws a parallel between the sources of racism, murder, and exploration of both minorities. This takes place once more, when Fishgoppel expresses her approval of Carter, saying that his storytelling is very Jewish. To her, anything Jewish is permeated with pain and perspective, and this notion forms her perception of self and others. However, a competition between tragedies storms between her, the Jewish woman, and the black Ebony Baumgarden (whose last name is her Jewish husband's). They only stop their argument when Ilka asks if there are no griefs "that aren't racist or anti-Semitic" (273). For a moment, they stare at her, and start competing again.

While Fishgoppel has a clear notion of racial characteristics, Ilka is not sure whether Carter is black, in the beginning. He is not

completely dark, and she has not met black people before. Therefore, when people speak to her about race, after seeing her with Carter, she does not get their point. "'We are not all white' was what Ilka thought one of the men in the booth had said" (19). She smiles "apologetically" and tries to hear him better, as if the problem is her hearing and not the content of his remark. When she finally realizes Carter is black, she asks him whether he thinks she is color blind. He replies that foreigners *are* color blind, and "promises" to open her eyes. With his characteristic irony, he tells her she is not looking down on him simply because she has not internalized yet the American conventions. If the reader is to take Carter's view, then Ilka does not lose her position as a foreigner up to the last page, because she is still "color blind" in her ideas.

Despite her view of Carter as liberal and open-minded, she also indicates he can be condemning and outright discriminating. It depends on the situation and on the quantity of alcohol he has had. For example, he teases a Jewish friend during a party, saying, "The best Jew of you all is nothing but a first-generation drunk" (29). Ilka hears this together with Carl, a Jewish immigrant from Europe. Interestingly, despite Carter's abusive comment, she still prefers to be on his side rather than on Carl's. She is indifferent to Carl's wooing, "unhears" his name or forgets it right away, struck by Carter. Later on, Carter reveals even more resentment, telling about a "Seder" (the Jewish Pesach dinner) he was invited to. "The colored maid had to carry the plates of canapés" (31), he says. He comments that the wine was served in the wrong glasses, to show he is superior to these Jews in their home court.

The animosity is clear. While Ilka does not stand up for herself or for her people, however, Carl asks Carter what he meant when he spoke about Jews and drinking. Carl also tries to distinguish the cultural differences that determine behavior within each community, saying, "While the Jew will not allow himself any relaxation of control vis-à-vis the world's chronic hostility, the Negro wants to obliterate it" (36). Carter replies with a cynical agreement. Subsequently, he makes fun of Carl's avoidance of saying the determiner "blacks." In Carter's view, when a person says "people from other races" instead of naming the race itself, it is because the person gives negative meanings to the race. According to Carter, as Ilka soon learns, you avoid names you consider shameful, such as, in this case, "blacks."

In fact, Carter usually speaks about the similarities between the Jewish and the black communities, but he denies the idea of similarity if a Jew expresses it. When Ilka argues in Carl's favor later, saying that Carl, too, has said that the destinies of these two people are parallel,

Carter reminds her that parallel lines never meet. However, since Carl is Ilka's suitor, Carter's motive may not be philosophical (263). Clearly, Ilka perceives the animosity between these two men as well as between the communities. In the feminist view, her situation in their eyes is of an object of desire, and their discussion has little to do with who she is or what she represents.

Later on in the narrative, after Ilka has already had long relationships with Carter, Carl calls again, and Ilka asks him to explain to her what he meant to say about blacks and drinking. Carter is clearly an alcoholic, she has no doubt now, and she wants to understand him through a historical-cultural prism. Carl tells her that black people drink because they live in an oppressive society (141). The conversation is not described beyond this point, leaving this statement as a climax. However, her attempt to understand Carter in this way has a downside. As she herself comes to realize, she has acquired certain words and labels to distinguish groups of people, at the cost of losing the ability to distinguish between the members of each group (142).

The complexity of relationships between whites and blacks is shown from several angles, especially during Ilka's stay on a farm, in which a mixed-race and mixed-religion group is staying. When Sarah, a white woman of no mentioned religion, wants to adopt a black child, the black people in the house feel humiliated, especially after she and her husband explain that fewer people adopt black babies. In return, the black people in the house become vicious and bitter. There, in his friends' company, Carter seems to Ilka to be more extreme than ever.

This occurs again when he suggests (according to her) or predicts (according to him) violence by blacks as a manifestation of frustration. He dictates her a text, when he is too sick to type, saying, "I am not alone comma nor are you alone comma nor are we unusual in our hatred of white people period the next time we riot in Detroit…" (103). She questions the hatred and the violence contained in these words, but he insists and goes on, "burn down Chicago comma or blow up New York…" In her view, such published words have the power to incite violence, and this strikes her old fears. To her relief, as he understands how uncomfortable she is, he relieves her of this mission. Interestingly, this is also the first time they have sex and it is done with a sense of communion and mutual understanding. After discussing their differences, there is contact, endearment, and affection.

The competitive memory of trauma is the reason communities suffering from racism and prejudice develop racism and prejudice against each other. Several cases of mutual hatred, suspicion, and

stereotyping between Jews and African Americans appear in this novel. Fundamentally, when minority characters have relationships or deal with other characters from other minorities, each of them represents the trauma legacy of a specific minority, and the dynamics between the characters is affected by the weight of history and memory. It should be said that the subject of competitive legacies of horror is relevant to *The Farming of Bones* as well, because both nations, the Haitian and the Dominican, have been colonized and carry characteristics of target groups. However, the burst of violence resulting from rivalry is at the heart of *The Farming of Bones.* The wars between the two nations recreate and intensify hatred, and the opportunity for understanding, identification, and combating trauma is not explored in the novel. Therefore, the novel that best exemplify the subject of competitive legacies between minorities is *Her First American.* Here, Ilka, Fishgoppel, Ilka's mother, Ebony, and Carter, Jews and African Americans share their perception of their respective legacies, compare, contrast, and study the other with a mixture of alternating empathy and competition. The novel reflects Rothberg's observation that historical dealings between communities such as African Americans and Jews are characterized by competitive memories and attempts to exclude or disvalue the other's traumatic experience. In the light of such a mentality, he introduces fundamental questions: "What happens when different histories of extreme violence confront each other in the public sphere? Does the remembrance of one event erase others from view?" (Decolonizing 226). The novel gives its own answers.

When Ilka perceives sarcasm in Carter's view of Jews at a friend's party, she asks him, "'Are you anti-Semitist?'

'Of course,' said Carter Bayou. 'Aren't you?'

'I am a Jew,' said Ilka.

'Then you know more Jews you cannot stand, no?

Then, he escapes this clear anti-Semitism by saying, "Just as I'm anti more Negroes. A matter of one's opportunity" (39). It seems rather odd that Ilka reveals no opinion or feeling after Carter's anti-Semitic remark. Her passivity may be attributed to her self-doubt regarding her identity, and her rejection of her roots. In addition, she reads Carter's resentment as fruit of his suffering over a lifetime and his extreme sensitivity.

As she befriends Ebony, his flamboyant, strong female friend, she notices Ebony's bitterness, and soon enough finds that it may hit her despite their friendship. Ebony, a provoker, speaks about "Wasp cooking", and apologizes to her Jewish husband for "beating the boy"

(172). Carter explains to Ilka that "beating the boy" is a black expression, meaning "comparing our bitty triumphs and monumental defeats in the white world." It signifies that a Jew who belongs to a community Ebony considers as better-off can take the sting. In fact, Ebony's husband enjoys her racial provocations, but Ilka is shocked. On a later occasion, as Ebony, whose Jewish husband has just passed away, makes another anti-Semitic remark, Ilka hides her shock and hurt and forgives her friend. It may be that Ebony's marriage to a Jew makes for a sort of redemption, in Ilka's eyes. Another plausible interpretation is that Ilka is so lonely, she cannot afford to lose a friend. Another alternative possibility is Ilka's sense of guilt. She is constantly surprised to find she is prejudiced as well. Based on Carter's comment, she suspects that when she refers to a black person to someone else without mentioning that the person is black, it means she considers blackness shameful. She wrestles with Carter's view, however.

"I want to be polite," she says.

"You mean it's impolite to be a Negro?"

"It means," says Ilka, "one is nervous. You must allow being nervous."

"Must I?" said Carter. (86)

The line between a racial definition of a person and a simple pointing out of difference is not always clear. This discussion exemplifies the complexity of the issue.

Over time, it becomes clear to Ilka that the power of Carter's memories of segregation and discrimination and the collective memory of slavery apparent in his social relations is affecting the emotional, intellectual, and behavioral aspects of his relationships with her and with others. However, it takes her a long time until she approaches the traumatic experience of his minority in a way of identification. Eventually, she finds that the past does not disappear, but still exists within them, and therefore, the way his memories affect her, her memories affect him. Their individual exchange is a piece in the puzzle of the interaction among different legacies and collective memories.

The last page of *Her First American* gives an excellent overview of the exclusive nature of minority communities. Ilka tries to bridge over the gap between herself, a white Jew, and Carter's African-American students, who are, like her, mourning Carter. She is trying with all her might to convey to the students the cultural fact that every minority is "nowhite," or rather, all the less powerful parts of society suffer and therefore need to unite. She tells them, "I told Carter Weissnix means 'Knownothing, but Carter said it meant 'Nowhite'

because I am a Jew" (287). In this way, she tries to clarify to them that the situation of the Jewish and African-American minorities is similar, despite any historical, cultural, or physical differences. Since Carter has always fought against discrimination, exclusion, and prejudice, she hopes that his words will put the students on her side just as she is on theirs. To her dismay, though the students observe her sympathetically, they turn around and go on with their original ceremony, ignoring her interruption. Notably, Carter, Ilka and Fishgoppel are the only characters who grasp the resemblance between the social positions of Jews and of African-Americans in the US.

2.3 The Farming of Bones

Danticat's novel introduces a representation of an individual experience within the collective trauma of exile, racism, and, later, genocide, emphasizing the complexity of the postcolonial relationships between colonized nations. The narrative follows one character's life as it connects with historical events and processes and touches other lives. It begins with Amabelle, the young black Haitian woman working in the Dominican Republic as a domestic worker, whose class and race are looked down at by the locals. The narrator observes stereotypes based on skin color and ethnicity, historical conflicts between the nations, socio-economic status, and gender. The exiled Haitians, a part of them generations away from the first immigrant of their family, and others, like Amabelle, a first generation in exile, reside side by side with the Dominicans. However, the racial, religious, linguistic, cultural and economic differences between the communities are obvious to all and carry social meanings.

Already in the beginning of the novel it becomes clear that the apparent simplicity of moving between the two geographical landscapes of the Hispaniola, as if the boundaries were flexible or inexistent, does not reflect the constant tension of the crossing and the following exile. The novel illustrates the discriminatory view of Haitians in their exile country, by exemplifying how the Dominicans maltreat them. Amabelle is especially conscious of their discriminatory view of the class of Haitian household workers and sugar cane cutters: "Many people who considered themselves clever found pleasure in frightening the household workers with marvelous tales of the outside world, a world they supposed we would never see for ourselves" (24). Still, despite this treatment, the workers find their extremely hard labor and lack of basic rights acceptable, assuming that the work guarantees them a minimal financial security they did not have in Haiti.

Notably, many of these Haitians have already been discriminated in Haiti because of their black skin and/or gender, and/or class, but in the diaspora, the discrimination takes different proportions. Here, in the Dominican Republic, prejudice intersects with the hatred between the nations, nurtured by their colonizers and continued after the independence. In the period the novel takes place, the beginning of the twentieth century, the Dominicans suspect that over time there is a disproportion between the number of Haitians and the need of laborers, and therefore the Haitians threaten Dominican prosperity. This, in addition to the collective memory of over two decades of Haitian occupation, leads to resentment and tension.

The lack of options for the Haitians determines the power relations in this neocolonial time and region in a clear-cut manner. The Haitians have to trust their security--literally--in the hands of their employers, as Amabelle describes: "Those who work in the cane mills, the mill owners keep their papers, so they have this as a rope around their necks. […] You have no papers in your hands, they do with you what they want" (61). Even the generation born in the Dominican Republic is discriminated, as one of them says: "My mother too pushed me out of her body here. Not me, not my son, not one of us has ever seen the other side of the border." Their situation is as intricate as their mix of languages, Creole and Spanish. The same character testifies that "To them we are always foreigners, even if our granmèmès' granmèmès were born in this country […] This makes it easier for them to push us out when they want to" (60-1). Like many others, Amabelle has no papers to show that she is a legal resident of the Dominican Republic. She does not have Haitian papers, either. This renders her, and others like her in her community, vulnerable and controllable. The manipulation through papers goes on for generations, and the denial of papers means a denial of basic rights. It separates those of Haitian ancestry from opportunities, education, and positions of power available to Dominicans, although the Dominicans in the borderland need their labor. Accordingly, a father says: "[t]hey won't put our birth papers in our palms so my son can have knowledge placed into his head by a proper educator in a proper school" (61).

The Haitians, including the protagonist of the novel, have arrived in their exile in the Dominican Republic in a diasporic mobility resulting from hard life conditions. Both Haitians and Dominicans are aware that the ongoing economic and political crisis in Haiti has brought thousands of Haitians to find exile and work in the Dominican Republic. In this spirit, Kongo, a Haitian cane worker, refers to the Haitians' lack

of options, saying, “we would have been beggars if we did not come here” (121). Another Haitian worker expresses the sense of being abandoned by Haiti in this postcolonial period, as he says, “They have so many of us here [in the Dominican Republic] because our own country--our government--has forsaken us” (178). Their situation corresponds to Robin Cohen’s conceptualization of diaspora (2002). As the scholar points out, when poverty drives people out of their country, their situation is defined as a forced exile and they live in the diaspora. Other defining factors that correspond to the traditional definition are the longing of most cane workers for Haiti, their loyalty to one another, their unique mix of languages, and their nostalgia. The community members compensate for the solitude and lack of safety by developing forms of communication touched by nostalgia and linguistic particularities that reinforce their bond with their homeland and with one another.

Notably, in the same way Lore in *Other People’s Houses* and Ilka in *Her First American* are pushed toward their Jewish roots by their discrimination as Jews, so does the exclusion of Haitians in the Dominican Republic strengthen the sense of national union and power. Amabelle, somewhat of an outsider to this community, comments that a large part of the community feels bound together by destiny, and therefore responsible for each other’s identity. “This was how people left imprints of themselves in each other’s memory” (63), she says. She also notes that the priest Father Romain makes “much of our being from the same place, just as Sebastien” does. In her view this solidarity and identification are a bridge between the past and the present, the homeland and the diaspora, or in her words, “[i]t was a way of being joined to your old life through the presence of another person” (63).

Despite of the reaffirming community ties among themselves and with Haiti, however, Amabelle is rather detached from her roots. In addition, she does not make any steps toward acculturation, since she is affected by the historical tension between Haiti and the Dominican Republic and the Dominican discrimination of exiled Haitians. Instead of investing in a national identity or identification, she identifies with the definition of exiled Haitians as vwayajés (wayfarers), as she does not belong in or crave for either country. When Sebastian says, “They say some people don’t belong anywhere and that’s us,” she comforts Sebastian with the intense force of her individual love. Sebastian, too, feels vulnerable when a friend of his is killed. Despite Sebastian’s strong Haitian ties, he feels the lack of the homeland’s interest and protection against danger. He goes on to explain that his and her lack of home has

brought them together, giving their similar dis-belonging a meaning: "This is why you had to travel this far to meet me, because that is what we are" (50). Both of them see the strength of love as a grounding force for people without a land of their own.

Amabelle has been a part of the Haitian minority in the Dominican Republic since the age of seven, after which she grew up under the influence of local conventions. Amabelle lives in between the two decolonized nations that still suffer from the aftereffects of colonization, and the continued manipulation by powerful countries. Both states are exploited and marginalized, struggling to reconstruct their identity. In the Dominican town of Alegría, where Amabelle lives, Dominicans and Haitians live side by side, but there is a clear class hierarchy. "[T]hey say we are the burnt crud at the bottom of the pot," Amabelle says to her lover, Sebastien, when she speaks about the way Dominicans see the Haitian cane cutters and housemaids, the wayajés. Descendants of Haitians living for generations in the Dominican Republic the "non-vwayajé Haitians" seem to the poorer Haitians, such as Amabelle, as a more privileged class class of Haitians, composed of wealthier "landowners, farmers, metalworkers, stonemasons" (68).

Initially, Amabelle was offered shelter, and, in exchange, she kept company to Valencia, a child her age, and attended to her needs, serving at the rich household until the age of nineteen. While she identifies with the Haitians workers' suffering, she does not blame it on the Dominicans she knows. Thus, in the beginning of the novel, Amabelle is a conciliatory person who tries to understand the point of view of the Dominican bosses and the standpoint of the Haitian houseworkers and sugar cane cutters. Losing her parents and moving as an orphan to a foreign country where she is considered inferior are so traumatic, she tries to secure every bond she has with others, including the harmful tie with the Dominicans. Being an observer helps her avoid personal conflicts, and connect with people from different parties. She craves harmony, and therefore, she is also a peace maker between rival groups and people. However, her denial of danger turns out to be dangerous, as she is not aware of the hostile political powers hovering over her life.

The way Lore from *Other People's Houses* loses her sense of safety when boys spit on her, and realizes in shock that violence against people of her ethnicity is real and legitimized, so does Amabelle loses her tranquility as the threat of violence against her minority solidifies. First, she feels the intensification of the tension and threat, upon

observing the Haitians born in exile, who are supposedly in a safe social position: "[t]he children who were being taken to school looked troubled as they glanced up at their parents' faces […] I found it sad to hear the non-vwayajè Haitians who appeared as settled in the area as the tamarind trees, the birds of paradise, and the sugarcane—it worried me that they too were unsure of their place in the valley" (61).

While trying to look away from the danger, her narration of the birth of the Dominican twins born to her mistress reveals a gradually growing consciousness of racism in her environment, at the Dominican house in which she has lived since her childhood. While she has grown side by side with Valencia, there is a definite hierarchy between them. She calls Valencia "Senora Valencia" while Valencia calls her "Amabelle". In fact, Amabelle, like most minority characters portrayed in the selected novels, is surrounded by prejudiced people, among them those dear to her, like Valencia. She is still calm when she hears, after helping Valencia to give birth, the new mother's racist remarks. Valencia's scrutiny of her newborns' skin color already conveys the dominant racial ideology. She does not appear to criticize the social meanings produced for each skin color, as she discusses her baby, asking Amabelle, "My poor love, what if she's mistaken for one of your people?" (12). Her choice of words reveals her awareness of the suffering of people of color and her worry that her twins may be considered part of a minority. In addition, her reference to "your people" while speaking to Amabelle is a signifier of marginalization in regard to the group in which Valencia desires no part for herself or for her family. She turns to Amabelle for reassurance that her daughter has the *right* skin color, without noticing the irony in such a request. Her liberty in sharing her worries implies an assumption that Amabelle knows and passively accepts that other skin colors than the Spanish's white or the Indian Taino's red carry a stigma of inferiority and servitude. Valencia tells Amabelle that the twins are a Spanish prince and an Indian princess, procuring respected ancestries to fit her babies' skin colors. The Indian ancestry is a wishful thought rather than a historical fact, but Valencia seeks reassurance even in legends. Amabelle does not condemn it. She narrates the scene without expressing any objection, just the way she lives without turning her attention to racial, gender, or class issues.

Next, Amabelle relates, without a comment, that Valencia's father, Don Ignacio, tells the doctor that his wife's Spanish identity is traced back to the Conquistadores. Don Ignacio implies that any possible black African identity must belong with Pico's family. Pico, however, is

the most radical racist of the family. The Haitian workers comment that he talks against them openly and says that they "don't belong anywhere" (56). Accordingly, when Valencia is affectionate to Amabelle after the birth, her husband enters the room in his sleeping robe, and, Amabelle says, "she quickly dropped my fingers" (41). Valencia is the closest Dominican person to Amabelle, and yet, even though Valencia admires Amabelle's skills, trusts her, and has nostalgia about the times they spent together as children, she sees her as a part of an inferior minority. Her surrender to Pico's demand of distance is not only due to fear but also to acceptance.

Amabelle may refrain from judgement, but her absorption of her employers' racial prejudice foreshadows a greater understanding. Notably, she *is* happy for Valencia and proud of her own part in the process of birth. However, not long afterwards, she relates the details of the baby boy's death and Valencia's sorrow with a surprising detachment. She describes how the grieving Valencia appeals to her affection, to no avail. Valencia says, "Amabelle, today reminds me of the day Papi and I found you at the river […] Do you remember that day?" All Amabelle says is "I did." Valencia tries again:

> After my mother's death […] We went to the river and there you were, a bony little girl with bleeding knees. You were sitting on a big rock, watching the water as if you were waiting for an apparition. Papi paid one of the boys by the riverside to interpret for him while he asked you who you belonged to. And you pointed to your chest and said, yourself. Do you remember?

Amabelle replies laconically, "I remember" (75).

The reason behind Amabelle's reservation may be traced to the death that took place on the night of the birth, as Joel, a Haitian cane worker, her lover's friend, and Kongo's son was killed. The alleged car accident is portrayed by the Haitian workers as the abandon of a wounded man to his death, or even an intentional murder done by Pico. At first, Amabelle considers it improbable, but she starts suspecting Valencia's husband, when he shows no remorse whatsoever. Valencia's father, Don Ignacio, who witnessed the death, is in shock, and this, too, clues Amabelle to the nature of the incident. She finds that Pico drove too fast, hurrying home to see his babies' birth. He hit Joel and forced the other two men, Sebastien and Yves, into the ravine on the side of the road. Joel dies while Pico's son and daughter are being born.

The male baby's eventual death, within days, introduces a cruel symmetry Amabelle rejects but other Haitians celebrate. Due to her

sense of justice and love of peace, she tries to be fair, and wishes well to those who did nothing harmful. She used to wish for the beautiful, blessing light she saw at the cave in which she and Sebastien made love for the first time to fall upon her parents' grave. Now, she wishes it also illuminated the graves of Joël, the Haitian worker, and Rafael, Valencia's dead baby. Moreover, when Sebastien expresses his indifference to the baby's death, or even, she suspects, a sparkle of pleasure, she says, "It would not be right […] We would not have wanted them to rejoice when Joël died" (87).

Amabelle explains to her lover that "The señora and her family are the closest to kin" (87) except for him. An orphan, she might have suffered a lonelier and poorer destiny than living with a prejudiced, discriminatory family. Therefore, she hesitates to cut the bond, however suspended, between her and them. In reply, Sebastien says she would have to choose between him and them. She refuses to make any drastic change. Yet, this is a turning point, as Amabelle begins separating her self and her destiny from the Dominican family's. The violent act turns a different light on racism and changes her view of the family with whom she has spent all the years since the loss of her parents.

At this stage, Amabelle has become so familiarized with discrimination, she expects it. When the local doctor speaks about cases of fetuses who become disappearing twins, she suspects he is fooling her, and waits for the moment his attempt of humiliation would emerge. Only when the doctor tells her she should be a midwife in Haiti where such a professional is highly needed, her resistance and defenses disappear, and she is surprised and pleased. Her constant anticipation of discrimination, as exemplified in this case, illustrates how a painful, traumatic life experience forms views of hierarchy, perceptions of others and self, and patterns of thought, emotion and behavior. Like Ilka from *Her First American,* Amabelle sees racism even where it does not exist, because it holds a constant presence in her life.

However, Amabelle ignores these forms of discrimination and the hidden evils, perhaps obeying her father's orientation to avoid playing with nightmare-inspiring shadows. He said that the shadows she liked might cause "seeing voices twirl in a hurricane of rainbow colors and hearing the odd shapes of things rise up and speak to define themselves" (4). According to Ávila, Amabelle's choice to close her eyes conveys "not only a naïve characterization of her, but also a characterization of the unthinkable horror of racism" (27). When the racial exclusion ends up with torture and death, comes out of the shadow, and turns into a palpable reality, Amabelle tortures herself with

the thought that if she had been more attentive, she might have been able to define the danger on time. Clearly, this is a call to the readers as well to stay alert and avoid similar horrors. In Chapter 4 of this study, the subject of disbelief and of denial, also explored in Segal's novels, is further investigated in relation to trauma.

As mentioned before, Amabelle does not hold a sense of longing for her homeland, although many others from her community do. However, after her reassertion of a certain connection with Haiti, thanks to Sebastian, she becomes aware of the gap in her identity and life caused by her dread of the past. Now, in the shadow of racial and national persecution, she sees Haiti as an alternative to the Dominican Republic, or rather, a home with a door forever open. Her faith in Haitian justice weighs in favor of Haiti against her growing estrangement in the dictatorship of the Dominican Republic. She says, "I had no papers to show, but it was probably recorded some place that the land was once my father's and mother's and—even though I hadn't been there for a long time—was still my birthright" (138). When she considers her escape, she trusts the easiness of the return to Haiti: "I knew precisely what I would do when I crossed the border. I'd exchange the pesos for gourdes and look for a little house to rent on the citadel road, where I had lived as a child" (138). She assumes that by returning to the exact location of her childhood house, all will be well.

Her worst fears materialize, as the unfounded Dominican dread of Haitians is encouraged by the government due to political interests and a power race, and the massacre starts. A priest tortured by the Dominicans during the massacre goes mad and later repeats the racist comments he heard while jailed, "We, as Dominicans, must have our own separate traditions and our own ways of living. If not, in less than three generations, our children and grandchildren will have their blood completely tainted unless we defend ourselves now, you understand?" (260-1). Trujillo sustains that "[t]hey [the Haitians] once came here only to cut sugarcane, but now there are more of them than there will ever be cane to cut, you understand?" (260) and turns this fear into destructive violence. Now, it is not only her individual trauma of loss, but a collective trauma that disrupts the life of a whole nation.

The narrative links the horrific murder of thousands with the process in which the subject of language, already a dividing element between the two nations, becomes a racial determiner of death. The linguistic cleansing Trujillo conducts reflects and imposes a generalizing racial bond of all Haitians as one enemy. In the process, the suspects are subjected to the persecutors' test of pronunciation of "perejill" (parsley),

since Haitians cannot "trill their 'r' and utter a throaty 'j'" (114). If the suspects are unable to pronounce it in the Dominican manner, they are identified as Haitians and murdered. This scene of language determinism is foreshadowed by the epigraph to the novel, a biblical citation dealing with the Gileadites, who identified the Ephraimites based on their difference pronunciation of the word "Shibboleth" and murdered them.

The racist request to pronounce the word during the massacre draws different reactions from the fugitives. Amabelle could have pronounced it in the Dominican way, as she has learned to do in Alegria, but she remains silent, out of resistance to humiliation, or shock, and is choked and suffocated by parsley forced into her mouth and throat, devoiced literally and figuratively. Her companion to the escape, Odette, goes even further, with an act of resistance and pride. She utters "[w]ith her parting breath […] 'pesi' […] as if demanding of the face of Heaven the greater meaning of senseless acts" (203). Danticat illustrates the racial foundation of the cleansing in the scene in which Amabelle describes a black Dominican, who speaks only Spanish, and despite his nationality is judged to be Haitian, an enemy, because of his skin color.

The sense of inbetweeness is exemplified again in *The Farming of Bones* from the angle of a homeland devoid of a home for the returning citizens. The narrative goes on to illustrate another kind of marginalization: the minority of Haitians exiled in the Dominican Republic is now an excluded minority in Haiti, their homeland. The traumatic experience, then, has two recent foci, beyond the historical trauma of colonization and slavery. Their current difference as a group is defined by their survival from a racial genocide, as if the trauma suffered by this group threatens the peace. The local Haitians refuse to acknowledge the survivors' suffering, respect their survival, and accommodate them in Haiti. The makeshift hospital is full of massacre survivors who urge to tell their story and testify to the genocide. Like many of them, Amabelle seeks the official organization supposed to help the survivors and hear them. Instead, she finds herself isolated by walls of indifference, rejection, and even blame. The Haitian survivors do not receive the attention and the political support in Haiti, nor an economic restoration from either government. Clearly, this attitude provokes resentment. Amabelle's sense of belonging to the Dominican Republic has never been strong and is now inexistent, and her sense of belonging to Haiti, still in reconstruction, is damaged by the negative attitude of the locals and the political institutions. As a result, she does not try to assimilate, but lives as a living dead, according to her own admission.

Years later, she recovers her sense of belonging through the dead, and not through the living, as Chapter 4 will discuss.

2.4 At the Full and Change of the Moon

The literary representation of racism and exile that dominates Brand's novel has a different focus. *At the Full and Change of the Moon* states the centrality of slavery in the lives of slaves' descendants and goes on to portray how it affects the following generations, even though their physical identifiers such as skin color vary, and they spread to different places across the world. In this sense, Brand unifies the actual experience of a black Trinidadian slave, Marie Ursule and her historical legacy with the insidious discrimination, the intersectionality that affects people of diverse minorities. The author characterizes each female character, Marie Ursule, Bola, Eula, Cordelia, Maia, the second Bola, and each male character, as an individual with a particular world, and in this individual sphere, the characters suffer discrimination based on multiple categories according to their circumstance. However, the shadow of enslavement by colonizers is introduced as the unsteady ground on which all of them keep struggling to stand erect.

Seeing the novel as a work structured to construct meanings, one soon realizes that the signature of memory and pain is consistent in the textual body. The structure of the novel testifies to the broken link among exiled generations. The chapters are linked to one another, but there are spaces and silences of the unsaid that reflect what cannot be said or what has already fallen out of the collective memory. The obscure part exists not so much in the dialogues, as in the behavior descriptions. The sharp cut from one life to another, each in one chapter as a protagonist, and some in one more chapter as a minor character, and the frequent mentions of recurrent dreams and traumas, convey the presence of hereditary pain. In addition, the lyrical text regarding the expansive nature of memory implies that the intergenerational and collective passage is an undeniable part of life. The fragmented text afflicts just like the conscious and subconscious memory, sometimes releasing but generally limiting the continuity and flow of history.

In another relation to language, the characters in the novel acquire a language according to the place in which they are born and raised, and to the place to which they drift due to the diasporic mobility the novel introduces. The loss of a common language as a tool of communication among community and family members reflects the dissolution and the desolation of society as a result of slavery and poverty. Marie Ursule communicates equally well with nature through

her thoughts, with the group of slaves brought from Africa and with the slave owners. Unlike her, her daughter, as detailed below, loses the language of words and learns the language of her body as a part of nature. She recovers her language to communicate with her nine lovers and thirteen children, but she does not use it much, nor does she pass on her knowledge and history. Her children, spread among several countries, lose the possibility of connection and communication among themselves and/or with anyone from their homeland, as each of them settles in a different place and culture. Even when a character, such as Eula, writes letters, she articulates her sense of solitude and misery. The unique structure of the novel, a saga divided by characters, requires a study of exile and racism based on this fragmentation. Therefore, following the analysis of the diaspora definition in relation to the novel, the reactions of each traumatized character to exile and racism are examined in regard to their specific pattern in each life and not as a physically collective situation.

The ghost of slavery affects the characters with such a sense of unease, that no matter where they are, they go elsewhere due to their need for a release from the past that imprisons them. Thus, the characters are driven to exile by history, memory, insidious oppression, and lack of opportunities. The related question of a community in the diaspora is irrelevant, since each of them is alienated and isolated. However, based on the poststructural approach, their forced migration is a determining factor for a diaspora.

Fundamentally, this novel is characterized by the combination of an external and internal exile, based on external and internal motives. Apart from the continued physical and geographical displacement, the characters are both inherently and externally compelled to continue the diasporic mobility among the Caribbean, Canada, Venezuela, the United States, and Europe, or, in fact, everywhere. Beyond the ongoing poverty and discrimination, the constant movement continues across generations, indicating an intergenerational restlessness and anxiety, and lends a unique dimension of exile. As Johnson (2009) argues, Brand "throws exile into relief as an existential condition that results from their inheritance of their ancestors' traumas—their phantoms" (5).

While the consequences of racism, or of slavery, exile, and oppression appear in a different manner in each portrayed life, a common thread of affliction based on internalization binds most characters, except the matriarch Marie Ursule. Fundamentally, the novel deals with racism not only as a justification given by manipulative political powers for the enslavement of black Africans, but also as an

already adopted guiding principle in the lives of free people of color in Trinidad. The passage dedicated to the wife of De Lambert, the slave owner, for instance, demonstrates the twisted social meanings constructed around race. She is a free woman, "who you could hardly see was colored and who never faced the sun directly" (12). She is afraid that her tan will put her in an inferior social status. This phrase alone is sufficient to convey to the reader that she has either internalized the conventions of the time regarding the inferiority of the none-white people, or, if it is not her own (internalized) view, she is afraid the conventions would be applied to her, and she would be discriminated if she is not careful about deepening the color of her skin with a sun tan in order to keep it as light as possible. "One good sitting in the sun and the African in her would come out" (13), the slaves tell one another, aware it will make a difference. Ironically, the dowry her incestuous, abusive father gave to her husband for the wedding is composed of ten slaves.

However, Marie Ursule, the proud, enslaved woman, does not believe in any moment she is inferior to anyone of any race or that her destiny is to serve. Moreover, she cannot accept that with such a backdrop of incest, racism, and greed, De Lambert's wife and, especially, her father, still consider themselves superior to the slaves. De Lambert himself is "mercifully removed from any black blood" (13), a sentence which expresses an ambiguous point of view. It can be either his or an ironic omnipresent narrator's. Either way, what Brand offers here is a sharp definition of the absurd. Marie Ursule cannot and would not deny her freedom and her self-worth. On several occasions, the slave owners mutilate her, when she resists them: "this is where Marie Ursule had her ear cut off, and got her iron ring for two years, and her thirty-nine lashers" (13). The disciplinary machine does not bend her, however. She does not internalize the notion of inferiority dictated by the dominant colonizers, patriarchal society, and/or Western values. Her related choice of self-sacrifice and death as an instrument of resistance and liberation is analyzed further in Chapter 3 in regard to corporeality and in Chapter 4 in relation to trauma.

As Marie Ursule predicts, other generations continue suffering because they cannot detach themselves from the horror of slavery. Her daughter, Bola, born into slavery, expelled from the only home she knows, and separated from her mother, feels in exile wherever she goes. She does not long to speak other people's language, the way Lore and Ilka do in England and the US respectively, as she does not settle within a community until a late age. Nor does she stick to her mother tongue in moments of despair, like Amabelle. Language, in this novel, is a tool of

communication the characters own or lose in their exile. As Bola leads a daily survival struggle, carrying the memory of slavery, and of an unattainable mother who sent her away with no explanation, she drops her original form of communication based on words. She wanders in the land, surrounded by ghosts of the imagination. Kamena, her rescuer and alleged father, departs to seek the promised land for runaway slaves, leaving her alone for days and weeks. As time passes, she loses her language: "The nature of the tongue became directions and sighs" (55). Her turn into the language of muscles and senses is further explored in Chapter 3.

Other reactions to racism are introduced through another character, Cordelia, Marie Ursule's great-granddaughter. The daughter of a Caribbean black mother and an indigenous father, she is considered a hybrid. Since she suffers from intersectional oppression since her childhood, she is aware of the vulnerability of being a woman of color. However, she is one of the only characters in this novel who is proud but afraid to look different. Her inner conflict between vanity and fear of prejudice is expressed in the description showing how she "tied her hair [...] to show and to conceal her origins at the same time" (108). She acknowledges her own beauty and worth, but she is aware they are unnoticed or even discarded by the dominant paradigms.

As a young woman, she dreams about leaving her hostile home. Her gender, poverty, and vulnerable status in a violent society draw abusers like her stepfather and other men, and she suffers a lot. She dreams about going away with her boyfriend, but when she becomes pregnant, she finds he has not been loyal to her, and she chooses to have an abortion and leave without him. Next, before splitting from her home, she steals her mother's rings as a means to escape a life of misery and violence. She believes that her mother would understand her motives and realize Cordelia had no other means to finance the escape. She is aware that her mother accepts women's abuse as an unchangeable rule of life. Her mother did not and would not flee—despite having the economic means. Unlike her, Cordelia has surpassed the power of tradition and women's obedience. While she believes that her mother would understand her, she also knows that her mother will be angry and will not forgive her for the theft and for her escape. Accordingly, her mother, now in an even worse position without her jewelry, exclaims as she hears her leaving, "If I could get away with it I would kill you" (110).

Cordelia continues experiencing racial prejudice, as she moves to a small town in Venezuela. In fact, she is aware of these racial

conventions, as she comments about the men who appear at the shop in which she works in copying accounts, “red men who thought for sure Cordelia with her color would want them, married or single” (112). Cordelia rejects all of them, fearing their hierarchy of color. She, too, believes that color makes a difference, and therefore, dark skin implies intelligence and command. She seeks “a good life with a good man […] not a man who could pull color on her, so not a red man, a dark man” (112).

In any case, she acts in the unavoidable struggle of a woman of color within the society of her time and place, using survival skills that require intelligence and command. She is determined to accomplish financial security and social stability with a man who will respect her and know she prevails in all matters. She ends-up marrying Emmanuel Grieves, a “quiet, decent, devoted man” (99), an unknown relative, for his reliability. Until she turns fifty, she lives a quiet life and raises their three children to become perfectly fit to a modest and conventional life.

Another story of intersectional repression takes place with Bola’s great-great- granddaughter, Eula. While Cordelia knows no shame and guilt, Eula represents these attitudes. Her chapter starts with her as a seemingly calm woman, leading a quiet life in Canada. However, she reveals her suffering in a letter to her deceased mother, in which she writes how she hates the collective past and present. She writes, “[w]e are a tragedy, Mother, being miserable or not. [...] standing in a cracked world” (258). Her family history, their silenced stories of slavery and colonization, poverty, and abuse, fill her with guilt and shame. Sex makes her even sadder than she already is, she says, because she cannot be seen the way she is, or rather, the fact of her blackness is an identifier of a past she cannot bear. She is certain no man will accept her with her luggage of history. More than that, she is afraid of what may appear during the time of intimacy. These “things” are bad secrets, an unbearable shame. She is so ashamed, she does not consider dating a man with a similar history, as if it may only increase the load. She does not hope for anyone’s understanding, not even people from her own minority. The gaze of others, in her view, is always condemning. Her fear grows so acute, she stops her studies at the university to escape other people’s stares.

Beside these female characters, two of the male characters should also be mentioned here in order to complement the canvas of racism and consequences Brand introduces. The first represents disillusion in the face of ambition, internalization and complete abandon of agency. Marie Ursule’s great grandson, Sones, or in his Anglicized

name, Samuel, grows up in India, where he creates a bond of childhood friendship with a rich white boy. He is certain he can lead the same successful life as his friend, and in order to make a similar progress, he joins West India army. His grandmother, Bola, now very old, laughs aloud at the impossibility of his ambition. As her laughter foreshadows, he is not sent on mission with the white soldiers, but is ordered to serve them, including his childhood friend. When he disobeys, and, enraged with indignation, tries to kill the old friend, he is sent away. Back at home, he remains resentful, but he also sustains rage at himself for holding a naive hope. He lives under a "lower" tree called Tamarindus Indica, feeling the pain as venom within the body, a reminiscent of Marie Ursule's anger and indignation, and of the poison she has produced for the collective suicide.

The second male character tries to get away from his destiny in a racist, sexist society, but surrenders. Adrian, Bola's great-grandson, is the grandson of a man who burned to death when working in an oil field, when trying to organize the colored workers. His father continues working in the oil field, anyway, expecting Adrian to follow in his tracks. But Adrian is not willing to work in this dangerous place or to fight for his rights, like his grandfather did. He is rejected by his patriarchal father and indifferent mother. His sensitivity and his secret homosexuality make him a target of disdain. He cannot wait to run away from home, from the destiny of people of color working for the rich white people. However, as is the rule in Brand's novel, he cannot escape history. He loses himself in dreams, just like his great grandfather, Bola's father, Kamena. Later on, he becomes addicted to drugs.

Competitive minority legacies do not appear in *At the Full and Change of the Moon*, because only the great matriarch has any identification with her legacy. The focus is on the effect of slavery on the descendants of slaves, no matter the geographical, temporal, or ethnic distance from those of slavery. Brand does not go into the specificities of racial conventions, as she builds them around the racial ideology and history of slavery.

***

This chapter has observed diaspora and racism through a multidirectional prism. It has taken contextuality and intersectionality in account in order to comprehend the minority characters' history and struggle. The concept of diaspora has been applied to the four novels, and in all of them has been found adequate, thanks to the postmodern definition. The suffering of the characters from past and/or present discrimination has been established through the illustration of situations

of exploitation, manipulation, and violence, thus also establishing the main historical traumatic event in their lives. The chapter has also demonstrated the diverse attitudes and reactions to oppression. The novel that best exemplifies the diversity of reactions is *At the Full and Change of the Moon* due to its many characters, generations, and situations. However, despite the diversity in attitude among characters and among the novels, the main attitudes include denial, awareness, and the stages between the two, resentment, and suspicion toward people from the dominant group, unity within the minority, active or emotional resistance, internalization of degrading conceptions, duality of identity based on the internal sense of worth in conflict with the social perception, and a transformation toward either a growing sense of self-worth or a complete dissolution of identity. The exiled minority characters are frequently observers of the local society, as they live on its margin. Local pressures to adjust to the new culture and forget the past appear in *Other People's Houses* and *The Farming of Bones.* Danticat's main character resists this pressure. Segal demonstrates her characters' attempts at assimilation. Characters who are always in between identities and/or loyalties are illustrated mostly in *The Farming of Bones* and *At the Full and Change of the Moon.* Another fundamental factor in the lives of the marginalized minorities is language in its relation to identity. It is a matter of life and death in *The Farming of Bones*, and characters either stick to their own out of pride or surrender to death or to luck. Segal's main characters, especially in *Her First American*, learn the local language in an attempt to unify their identity with what they perceive as the local one. In *At the Full and Change of the Moon*, two characters' fractured identity is illustrated by their abandon of language altogether for the sake of the language of the ghosts of the past or to the language of the bones and muscles, the body language. The body, or the corporeal aspects of the minority characters, complements the elements of otherness and difference appearing in this chapter. Therefore, it will be discussed in depth in Chapter 3. Ending with the competitive legacies, the subject of difference, its denial or rejection, and the consequences of intolerance are clear in relation to the collective and each individual.

CHAPTER THREE
The Present Body

This chapter will focus on corporeality, investigating the literary representations of the ways the minority female characters experience their bodies and their perception of body and self under the impact of intersectionality and trauma. The chapter will also inquire into the characters' observation and absorption of other people and cultures through the body and body language. It will include their experience of the gendered body as a part of their axes of difference, and examine the ways repression affects their choices and their relationships with and through the body. The study is based on the context of the novels and the authors in order to reveal points of similarity and of difference between cultures and characters. This examination of literary representations of corporeal experiences will reflect upon the specific socio-cultural atmosphere and historical processes. In addition, the chapter will examine the authors' ways of showing the specific problems of bodies marked by differences other than gender, and how they point at possible transformation.

The basis of this chapter -- the corporeal aspect of life, the sense of embodiment, and the experience and observation of other bodies -- involves human perception. Fundamentally, since the limits of our perception of life are set in the body, the biological, mental, and emotional elements of identity and experience are interconnected and inseparable. Therefore, traumatic events and social patterns are absorbed by the body, reflected by it, and impact self-perception and identity. Moreover, the body does not only live and reflect a person's history, but it is in itself the person's corporeal history in constant change, an intersection of the individual, intergenerational, and multidirectional memories and legacies. Therefore, the study will include an examination of corporeal elements such as self-acceptance and self-rejection, lifestyle, and relationships involving body perception, sexuality and desire, procreation and the avoidance of it, motherhood, and traumatic manifestations. These elements will be studied in relation to social construction and identity formation. The next chapter will complement this one with its emphasis on trauma and survival.

Fundamentally, the female characters in the selected novels represent minority women's struggle for emotional and physical survival during and after traumatizing historical events. Each of these characters was born to a history of socio-political repression justified by discriminatory meanings related to axes of difference. However, each

novel illuminates the situation of exiled women in a specific period in history portrayed by the authors from their contemporary point of view. The characters' relationships with and through their bodies, their manifestations of suffering, pleasure, resistance, acceptance, overcoming and/or surrendering communicates to the testimonial role of fiction related to historical events and to the feminist objective of social transformation. In addition, the novels dialogue with the feminist embodied examination of the relation of language, patterns of signification, difference, and power relations to the specific oppressive system. In any event, it is necessary to start the analysis with the contextualization of the narratives with theories and scholarship of the time, especially gender and postcolonial studies.

The main historical atrocities discussed in Segal's *Other People's Houses* and *Her First American* take place in the 1930s and 1940s. However, they differ in the periods in which the narrative is set and the novel is written. The story of *Other People's Houses* is set in the period of the Holocaust, and was written in part in these years and in part in the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s. In this era, modernism is set to fight against classic culture and notions. Women, many of whom replaced men in their jobs and social roles during the war, resist going back to their traditional backseat roles, and the feminist movement is in formation. *Her First American* is set in the 1950s and 1960s and was written during the 1980s. Thus, both novels start with a Western patriarchal society at a time of crisis-- if not a collapse-- of Western culture. During the years the author produced *Her First American,* feminist postmodernism examines and questions the power relations and mechanisms sustaining social structure. Therefore, the struggle of African Americans for equal rights, the struggle for sexual liberation and for women's control over their bodies are components of *Her First American*. Due to the relation of the protagonist's story to the horror characterizing her past, she is an outsider, an observer consciously trying to adopt the new country's patterns of thought and behavior. She is hardly aware of, or rather, she tries avoiding, the power of social patterns constructed during the time lived in Europe. Either way, patriarchal discourse is dominant in both continents and her lacking body perception, dependence on the masculine gaze, interpretations of social situations, all elements discussed below, reflect it. Due to the period in which the novel was written, it dialogues with questions of gender and difference brought by feminist poststructuralism as well, since the story seems to be settled on the turning point from the feminist initial interest in the liberation of the repressed and mythologized body

toward the subsequent growing attention to gender, language, and identity issues. Fundamental elements of feminist poststructuralism, such as difference, cultural construction of meanings, performativity, or rather, the reproduction of social values based on the predominant discourse are extremely relevant to the following literary criticism.

The non-white female characters of *Her First American*, *The Farming of Bones*, and *At the Full and Change of the Moon* are othered due to their race, gender, and lives in exile, involving several elements of marginalization. Their marginalization, based on the construction of bodies as raced and gendered, serves a mechanism of social oppression similar to what bell hooks writes in her 1997 essay, "Female Sexuality in the Cultural Marketplace": they are associated with the body, its sensuality, sexuality, and its supposed lack of reason and spirituality. As Brand (2002) points out, the black body is stereotyped as a wild animal, inferior to the white body, exotic and in need of restraint. The fact of the characters' blackness or any other skin color than white makes them easily visible and exposes them to the predatory and exploitative political mechanism constructed by Western empires. Their gendered bodies have been signified in a sexist manner both by their own minority and by the dominant majority. Brand's and Danticat's novels demonstrate how "otherness" is undeniable in the life circumstances of women of color, continuously related to the trauma of slavery, exploitation, lack of opportunities, and poverty. Clearly, each novel has its specificities.

The Farming of Bones concentrates on the1937 massacre as the main horror, and follows the protagonist's traumatic exile in the Dominican Republic, where she is pushed to the margins of the Dominican patriarchal and hierarchical structure, then, portrays her horrifying escape to Haiti. Observing the period Amabelle lives in the Dominican Republic, through her point of view, Dominican women, too, are repressed due to their gender (and—sometimes--skin color), but they are considered superior to exiled Haitian men and women. Thus, the protagonist lives at the bottom of the social ladder from the age of seven, when she loses her parents and is offered a place to stay in the Dominican Republic. Her marginal placement allows her certain distance from the local culture, but she is affected by its values and conventions, since discourse and performance produce and reproduce the ruling values in the whole society, including all its fragments.

Amabelle, the narrator, tells her story twenty years later, in the 1950s, and describes her life from childhood to old age. She refers to gender roles and to race based on the dominant culture in the Dominican

Republic and in Haiti. However, Danticat wrote the novel in the 1990s, dialoguing with postmodern feminism (or the combined approach of postmodern and post-structuralist theory) and postcolonial theories as well. The author wrote the novel in the United States, where she has lived since the age of twelve, after spending her childhood in Haiti. Her work, therefore, reflects colonial, patriarchal discourse in the Caribbean islands, as they are expressed in the character's dependence on a man for self-affirmation, her negation of the body after the massacre, and her coming to terms with her traumatic past through her body. Additionally, Danticat's writing brings Western notions of difference, intersectionality, and identity, and mirrors her deep interest in human rights issues in the neo-colonized Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Notably, she places a woman at the heart of the story, thus giving a voice to a multiply-othered character, telling history from her point of view, and turning the readers' attention to women's ignored roles in History.

Also set in part in the Caribbean Islands, starting in Trinidad, *At the Full and Change of the Moon* discusses slavery in the beginning of the nineteenth century and portrays the following generations, all affected by it, until 1982. With a strong emphasis on an intergenerational impact of trauma, the novel examines difference and its impact through the prism of the body. Pain marks all the generations through collective and individual memory, expressed in myriad ways according to the time and place in which each character lives. Brand dialogues with feminist poststructuralism, postcolonialism, and intersectionality in a somewhat parallel manner to Danticat's dialogue in *The Farming of Bones* due to the period the novels were written. She, too, is interested in exposing injustice and oppression against people of color and fighting it. In this light, she emphasizes the impact of continuing sexism and racism on the life of her characters. Mentions of sexual abuse and sexism within the family are present in the stories of Cordelia and Maya respectively. Motherhood is portrayed in most female characters' stories outside the typical roles of devotion and sacrifice Western culture attributes to it. The characters struggle to overcome the hardship of their lives the best they can, usually in uncommon ways, such as having thirteen children with nine lovers in the story of Bola, becoming a prostitute in the story of Maya, or communicating only with ghosts like the second Bola. The novel is characterized by characters making extreme life choices, forever dealing with an accumulating load of trauma expressed in their corporeality.

This extreme characterization emphasizes the absurd of racial and sexual repression and condemns it.

Fundamentally, due to their diversity of periods and societies, the four novels portray different notions of body and self. Therefore, the following investigation, divided by novel, will explore the characters' diverse approaches. The similarities and the differences will be summed up briefly in the end of the chapter and more in detail in the conclusion of the work.

3.1 Other People's Houses

Other People's Houses introduces Lore as a self-observer as well as an observer of her surroundings. With her constant observation, she maintains a critical distance from the flow of life even at the age of ten, when she finds refuge from the Nazis is England. Her detachment, a common trauma manifestation (Caruth 1995, 1996) becomes an armor supposed to help her survive emotionally in her forced exile. Clearly, she does not choose this consciously, but after her early separation from her parents and as a result of persecution, she activates this mechanism of self-defense in order to avoid any further pain. Unfortunately, her detachment also stops her from having healthy relationships and getting as involved with the local society as she wishes.

The traumatic crack in her life, the change, cuts into the initial process of her identity formation. Her experience of persecution, separation, escape and continued discrimination sets her life in a new direction, and therefore, her notion of her body and self is affected by diverse discourses. The changing social status and family situation add to her confusion regarding her place in the world. She feels bound to satisfy and impress everyone, as if it could guarantee her safety and comfort. In order to do that, she tries to see herself through the way others see her and in harmony with the way they expect her to be.

Her detachment and unstable situation are also related to body alienation. While she maintains a strong sense of her high intelligence, she does not have any confidence in her physical appearance, and she observes herself in the mirror with reluctance and shame. She is so alienated from the image she sees in the mirror, she wonders how people such as Gwenda and Mr. Hooper, members of her foster family, can be fond of a girl with such a "sharp and narrow face" (108), so thin and charmless. She feels the need to improve her looks just the way she improves her language, and to change herself in order to fit in. This drive toward perfection dictated by the dominant body standards is pointed out by Bordo in her 1993 book. According to her, the constant

dissatisfaction is created and recreated by an oppressing social mechanism supported by the media. Society, in a general manner, requires unifying and almost impossible bodily standards from women. In the case of Lore, the foreign society makes her, the female newcomer, feel inadequate on account of more categories of difference. She wishes that her tight light curls could uncurl and turn "black fine and silky and would fall in a tragic way" about her face. If it will not be good enough, she hopes, at least it would draw people's sympathy and sorrow. Trying to adjust, she aches to accomplish the locally accepted beauty and manners, and in order to do so, she imitates the girls she sees around her, especially Gwenda, whom she admires.

In addition, she is not only self-critical, but also critical in relation to others who do not correspond to the expected bodily standards of youth and beauty. Age, in her view, makes people weak and unloved. In an emotional turning point, when she finally overcomes her resistance to Mrs. Levine and feels affection for her, she comments that Mrs. Levine is old and ugly, but "I could love her forever, even if nobody else did" (68). Later on, when her parents arrive in England, her father's illness and the resulting disability revolt her. She tries to compensate for her coldness by helping him and her mother, but she continues judging him as inadequate.

Her difficulty in adapting to the new country and accompany bodily patterns is related to body movement as well, as illustrated in a scene in which she is expected to participate in a folkloric Jewish dance. The other children, who danced before, dance with ease and pleasure. She envies them, as she recognizes the social gain of the occasion: the dancers please the ladies in furs, the children's potential sponsors or foster parents. The meaning of the dance, as Lore perceives it, is completely derived from its power to please the powerful observers, and her survival instinct indicates it as a necessary means. However, dancing, any dancing, at this point, seems impossible. She cannot flow with music, because she is rigid and awkward in the new situation. As for the Jewish root of the dance, any idea of celebration regarding Judaism seems inadequate when the rest of her family is unsafe. Clearly, the rigid tone of the woman who asks her to dance with the others does not tempt her to try dancing either. The pressure makes her feel oppressed by expectations, and her body denies her even an attempt at a dance. She sinks into her coat, and, in this improvised shelter, feels "warm for the first time in days" (43).

Her body remains alienated from her as it does not accompany her decision to be mature and impress the local grownups on other

occasions as well. Worse, it becomes an expression of her lack of control. When she fails to find common ground and ways of communication with Mrs. Levine, her first foster mother, the tension is so unbearable, she starts wetting herself at night. She feels guilty and ashamed, exposed in her vulnerability and immaturity. Her failure to control her body troubles her both because of the infantile image it renders and because it projects her helplessness in other spheres of her life. She becomes painfully aware of her powerlessness in regard to the persecution of her family in Austria. She tries to accompany her parents' daily routine in her mind, as a way of stabilizing the connection and feeling the safety of a familiar life, but she realizes she is unable to do so because the war must have prevented them from doing the things they always did and meeting people who are now missing.

The arrival of her parents in England does not bring the burst of joy her foster family expects to see. However, her relief changes the way she feels about her body, as a huge weight is lifted from it. She says, "I was busy noticing the way my chest was emptying, my head clearing, and my shoulders being freed of some huge weight that must […] have been there all this time without my knowing it." For once, she is one with her body, feeling the synchronicity of all the elements of the self. This liberation is temporary, however, because her struggle to fit in continues, and her body reacts against the continuous pressure. At that moment, though, she feels the difference: "Just as when the passing of nausea or the unknotting of a cramp leaves the body with a new awareness of itself, I stood sensuously at ease, breathing in and out" (73).

Lore is never completely satisfied with her looks, but when she starts looking like an English teenager, years into her exile, assimilating the local codes for dressing and speaking, she feels more confident, as if her missing pieces grew back and fell into their place. However, her adjustment is incomplete and requires a high emotional and relational cost: she avoids her parents, who she feels hold her back in the old and irrelevant culture of her childhood. After all, her detachment continues as she goes on being self-conscious and is never really involved or living with all her might. She is more English than before, but she occasionally slips into her foreign history and her former way of speaking or thinking.

3.2 Her First American

Her First American exemplifies a similar sense of body alienation and a tense relationship with the mirror reflection. At the time the novel begins, Ilka is unable to recognize the corporeality of her body

and self. Her insecurity in relation to her standing in the world in general and in the US in particular is reflected in her misperception of her body. In fact, she feels so inadequate, it makes her feel invisible, as if she does not exist without the confirmation of an observer. As a solution, she tries to become an observer of herself by checking her mirror reflection. She studies her reflection in order to get a sense of herself, and later on, when she wonders what others see when they look at her, she recalls her mirror image. Such portrayals of women and their view in the mirror as a reflection of identity have been frequent in literary representations of women's sense of their corporeal selves (Margaret Atwood's *Cat's Eye* comes to mind, especially the scene in which the protagonist looks at the mirror and sees a transitory, blurred, ageless, and ever-changing reflection. She has to reconnect with her self in order to be able to see a clear image.) The mirror is a figurative and a literal manner of self-confirmation as well as a form of constant examination. According to John Berger (1972), "the real function of the mirror [...] was to make the woman connive in treating herself as, first and foremost, a sight" (51). Like Atwood's character, who finds her image deceptive, Ilka, too, hardly recognizes herself in a mirror. Moreover, later on, she is busy recalling the mirror image in order to ground herself in life instead of living another moment with full presence. This occurs as she joins strangers' conversation in a party, trying to practice her English, and imagines herself smile "the self-conscious smile she knew from the mirror and regretted." Clearly, the recollection of a reflection she rejects is destructive for her self confidence in the company of strangers.

Social surveillance, a technique of discipline studied by poststructuralist scholars such as Butler (1990, 1993), Bordo (1993), and Grosz (1994), affects Ilka's bodily situation and leaves her constantly unsatisfied with herself. Once she reintegrates in society, after years of escape, she seeks a complete correspondence to the existing body standards. Now that she can live as a free young woman, she keeps testing herself against the world's expectations, measuring her social and sexual power in her surroundings. She judges her body as lacking, and only a man's admiring, desiring gaze may prove otherwise and extend her the affirmation she covets. Since she does not attract much masculine attention, glares, or flirting, she feels bodiless. Interestingly--and understandably, due to her existential confusion--she experiences both fear that nobody will desire her, and a worry regarding what will happen if someone does. Her inexperience with sex or any physical contact comes into play as she wonders "how people got from sitting in

chairs, talking […] to lying together in a bed. How did the bed cover—how did their clothes—get to have been taken off?" (71).

One of the principal factors in her sense of inexistence is her "imperfect" body. Even later, when her lover, Carter, helps her feel better about herself, she goes on examining other women as better samples of her gender than herself. She keeps worrying that she does not match the desired standards of beauty and conduct, especially American standards. Like Lore in *Other People's Houses,* her sense of exile and her difference as a minority member add a layer to her sense of inadequacy. The method she utilizes in order to transform into an attractive, knowledgeable American woman includes a study of the American female types. Several women, or even concepts of women, impress her as the types of women she would like to become. When Carter says that his ex-wife Georgia is a bitch and a looker, "Ilka thought *that's* what she wanted to be—a bitch and a looker. Think of the opportunities!" (52). The humor in the description is the result of the distant perspective she acquires later on, when she tells about the experience.

The women she wants to resemble have in common the US as their place of birth, and according to Ilka, look typically American. Looking American weighs even against beauty and youth in her view. On one occasion she craves to be like an "emaciated older woman in a minimal black dress that exposed her thin breasts […] Her stick legs were crossed […] her right hand […] held a cigarette in a long silver and black holder" (46). The woman's comfortable and elegant presence entices Ilka. Another woman, a young bride, with whom Carter has had sex in the past, matches Ilka's notion of the American girl: "wide mouth, neat nose, good jaw, a fine color and long, straight blond hair" (31). This definition causes certain uneasiness, as it echoes the way the Nazis judged similar features as racially superior and life determiners. Notably, the woman that strikes Ilka most is Ebony Baumgarden, whose African-American looks are as powerful in Ilka's view as Carter's. Ilka ponders what makes the "very black woman in a black dress" (90) so unique. Ebony's clothes, jewels, and narrow hips seem to Ilka to hold and/or hide the secret of Ebony's true self. She thinks there is more to Ebony than prettiness and wonders what is it that makes "her eyes shine with luster rather than simply glare" (90).

Ilka's wish to be like other women indicates her lack of confidence in her own sexuality. As a result, she suspects any expression of sexual attraction toward her as dishonest. When Carter tells her for the first time that he wants to make love to her, she considers the

proposal a courtesy and a polite compliment rather than a real declaration of desire. Even though she is insightful in her observations of other people, when it comes to their desire or passion for her, she discards it immediately, as she does not believe it possible. She feels the need for improvement (as does Lore in *Other People's Houses*) centered on achieving traditional/local patterns of femininity.

In addition, Ilka observes closely her cousin Fishgoppel, whom she does not wish to resemble, despite her love and admiration for her. Fishgoppel remains less than intimate to the readers throughout the book, always called by her last name, despite her constant appearance and the cousins' affection. In her traditionally-designed clothes, she represents conservative values that dictate hiding the body and negating eroticism. Possibly, her conduct is a representation of religious Jewish set of values, in which "All honor [awaits] the King's daughter within" (Bible, Theelin 14). Fishgoppel is so "bodiless" Ilka reminds herself to check if her cousin has a waist, breast, legs, but Fishgoppel wears clothes that deny the presence of a body underneath them. Another example of body negation, and a woman Ilka does not want to imitate, is Ilka's mother. Ilka is annoyed when her mother is ashamed to expose her body even in a hospital. The mother refusal is literal, yet also figurative. She retreats into herself and her past and avoids exposing herself to the life that continues despite the horrors. The refusal to be naked is linked to her fear of everything. A further examination of this appears in Chapter 4 in relation to trauma manifestations.

While still disembodied in her self-perception, Ilka sees herself as a kind of a baby, although her physicality of a young woman is a contradiction. Her craving to learn the social codes—trying to construct a feminine American identity by study and imitation--is understandable in the light of the forms of racism, marginalization, and persecution she has suffered. For years, she has had to hide herself like a prey, an insignificant being. However, her need for masculine approval for the sake of feeling visible and present indicates an additional, fundamental cause. Her gendered self is related to discriminatory views of women that render women invisible unless they posit themselves in a submissive role to men and adapt themselves to the dominant body standards. Therefore, it is plausible that her urge to be guided and taught in a general manner, but mainly by a man, is gender-based and not only the sense of a new immigrant. Her identification with the condition of a baby, a naïve newcomer, makes her an apprentice of her lover's "teachings." Her sense of invisibility and dislocation is rather constant

until Carter confirms her visibility and corporeality. Only his desire will convince her--to certain extent-- she is a worthy, corporeal human being.

Thus, when she gets his attention, she seeks his approval of her as a means of self-affirmation. Her neediness requires his constant presence and attention, and therefore, she feels lost and confused when alone. Once, when she finds herself without him in a social gathering with wealthy, educated people, his acquaintances, she asks herself, "Where am I? Which is north? Where is the Fifth Avenue?" as she looks around "for him whom her soul would immediately recognize." She has no doubt that he, unlike her, is fully present and visible, grounded and belonging wherever he is. In her view, he possesses such immeasurable power, she has "the sense that the man [Carter] had conjured up what was in front of her eyes" (28).

The link between this state of confusion and longing and her past suffering in the war is further emphasized as the two different terrains -- that of her past and that of Carter's body -- become close together. This occurs, as her past catches up with the present in the form of her reunion with her mother. As the long period of separation and fear for each other's life ends, everything takes shape including love making. The traumatic separation and despair release their tight hold on her. Only then does she discover Carter's "actual chest" (75), actual body, heat, breathing, and trembling. Consequently, she develops her sense of her body and self. She is moved by the easy combination of her thin body and his big one.

However, when waking up together in the morning, she resents his indelicate non-stop speaking that reveals a touch of triumph. Her critique implies she has a potential independence and agency despite her seemingly complete disintegration in favor of an identity reconstruction. She may want a teacher, but he must fulfill her expectations from his role, or rather, he should be mature and humble. Her resentment of his conduct displeases him, and he replies, "'I don't enter you in triumph! […] With happiness, with elation, with gratitude…'" (107). Still vulnerable, she withdraws her comment immediately, blaming her limited English for the miscommunication. In this phase, she does not confront him about anything. She seeks a coalitional unity and is afraid to disrupt it. Clearly, any rejection on his part is bound to shake her fragile self-confidence and make her feel worthless. She still lacks the capacity to see herself in any other way but through the eyes of an American, or rather, an American man, and most specifically, Carter.

Once she finally believes in his desire, she asks Carter if their relationship is about sex. She is perfectly willing to accept a positive

answer, but she is afraid that her lack of experience limits her sexual performance and does not correspond with his need. She tries to measure and define her placement among all the women he knows in order to calculate her chance to be chosen. His reply that her potential is "incalculable" satisfies her, as it explains and justifies his interest in her. Another fear she discloses to him regards her looks. She comments she is not beautiful enough, and Carter, who never disguises his views, agrees she is not a beauty but softens the statement, saying that beauty is only a promise of happiness, whereas Ilka's body has given him actual happiness. He adds "'you have terrific legs,'" (111), and she laughs, but notes it mentally as an important piece of information.

Her feeling she is a baby in life or a pupil with Carter corresponds to the social discourse of the 1940s and 1950s. Women are educated to get married to a man who will care for them while they take care of him, their home, and their children. Ilka's wish to learn and Carter's love of authority mark their relations. However, their relationship is in constant movement toward the day she is ready to live fully. While she puts herself in his hands, she observes his behavior and finds his flaws and weaknesses. He is at least twice her age, a charismatic intellectual leader, a reputed lecturer and reporter, but his life and career are in decline due to his alcoholism. She notices his impulsivity and anger when his leadership is questioned during their vacation in some friends' farm, as if being a leader is his right. She marks these moments that will accumulate over time into a decision against the continuation of their pupil/teacher relationship.

The rude streak of his personality shocks her especially when he takes advantage of her foreignness and vulnerability. Usually he is sensitive to her occasional confusion and likes to explain the situation or the expression in length, but she cannot count on it. During one party, for instance, he goes as far as glorifying himself in a sexual manner while in company. He uses language she would not comprehend, saying to the other guests, "damned if we don't come up with a hard brick!'" referring to an erection he has because she sits next to him. She notices that the women and men in the room smile or look at her in a "friendly way" (130), and although he does not explain the meaning of his statement, she feels it was out of place. She looks it up in a dictionary, to no avail, to her frustration. As the narrative advances, she grows more independent of him and starts making her own decisions.

Her aforementioned detachment as an observer comes into play in their relationships as well, even while she still depends on him as her connection to her concept of "America." As she observes everything

without being fully involved, the distance allows her a process of separation from Carter. Once she feels more secure in the new land, she even manifests certain recklessness. She asks Carter about their mutual future, and if they will end up badly. When he asserts that they are certainly going to end up badly—it is already clear to the readers that he is embarrassed to be seen with a young, white girl, and thinks he is too old and sick for someone in the beginning of her grownup life--Ilka feels "the thrill of it." "'Of course,' she repeats after him with undeniable delight" (113).

The end of her dependence has a direct relation to the sexual body as a reflection of the whole self. His teachings and their relationships end when he and Ilka realize he has taught her all she needed to know about sex. After a wonderful act of love making, both of them feel the end has arrived. Notably, this takes place after Ilka's naturalization, as if it is a complement. This is an indicator of how much her body, sexuality, self and the world are connected. Now she has grown and become an adult and will stand up on her own feet. To her surprise, she feels the absence of sorrow upon the separation. It is a certain kind of power that will strengthen her against his attempts at love and for new loves that will appear in her life.

Following this narrative it becomes obvious that the element of language is closely related to corporeality in Segal's work. At first, Ilka is confused, estranged, and her language is suitable for a basic communication. While she works hard to accomplish a native-like English, in order to feel safer in the new land, she also uses her imperfect language in her favor when she wants to charm her lover, appearing to be struck by his greater knowledge. In fact, she pretends to be needy and obedient, expecting him to love her for her (forced) fragility. In addition, her bodily perception is strongly connected to the slowly-acquired English language. She starts thinking of the color of her eyes and hair as "khaki" after learning the word "khaki", as if the color has been undefined and unclear to her all her life, until the moment she pronounces it in English. In this aspect, America gives her names, creating and constructing her, the way the bible describes God naming everything in the world.

The issue of language appears in a different form from linguistic articulation and comprehension to reading the culture through body language. While studying her own body, Ilka wrestles with her confusion and dislocation by reading the body of others as a signifier and a grounding tool. Attentive like Lore in *Other People's Houses*, she observes closely the way people move, look, and behave, soon jumping

into conclusions about them. Her assumptions are related to bodily conventions. Her views of black people, for instance, permeate her first conversation with Carter and her thoughts during it, although she does not define him as black at this stage. Something confuses her, as she cannot classify him. In the end, trying to understand her own confusion, she says he does not look like a teacher. Oddly, her slight affronting makes her blush and feel she is flirting. When he asks what he looks like to her, she explains her confusion through an example: "That […] is what I am not understanding. When I walk on Broadway and see an old Viennese pair I understand even from behind" (16). As mentioned before, she did not capture the Austrian origins of the couple right away, and yet her mind goes back to the incident because once she recognized them as Austrians, she found they looked like her and her family and concluded she could understand them through this similarity.

Familiarity, in other words, makes her feel confident about her judgement, while everything else stuns her. Basically, when a physical hint strikes a familiar chord, she feels for a moment back at the security of her childhood home before the Nazi rise. The old man's back, for instance, "fit and failed to fit […] into the same suit Ilka's father used to wear…" The woman wears a dress made of material with a familiar design, and the hard fabric reminds Ilka of the clothes of many relatives and afternoons of "Kaffe and Gugelhupf" (17). The body, the clothes, and the language are comforting cultural representations.

Her observations show a rich imagination coupled with preconceptions. Notably, the proximity between racial conventions, body language, physical characteristics, minority groups and exile is an intersection of categories of oppression. Therefore, the following paragraph belongs with the chapter centering on the body as much as with the chapter centering on exile and racism. The analysis remains here, thanks to the accumulation of all these categories up to this point, as a basis of understanding the related trauma, as detailed in the next chapter. Principally, Ilka's sense of estrangement is clearly related to the perception of difference as alien. When two men entering the bar, in which she meets Carter, catch her attention, she notices, "they had ruddy arms and round heads and looked underdone, as if they had been taken prematurely out and put down in the world." It is only the Viennese, and perhaps other Europeans, who seem to her to be complete, done.

However, as she tears herself from the familiar to the unfamiliar, Carter's apparent differences attract and confuse her. "She meant [to explain to him] that she did not recognize his hair, and that the size of his mouth and his laughter did not go with the urbane way he

bent his wrist and closed his ankles." What Ilka reveals here is the depth of her prejudice in regard to African or African American culture. Whatever she attributes to it is different from Western culture, and the obvious proof that it is not as expected puzzles her: "the luxurious tweed of his jacket contradicted his flattened nose, with its small outgrowth of wild flesh at the bridge" (17). Colonial conventions she is not aware of direct her deciphering of the physical. Interestingly, she compensates for her sense of estrangement with a sense of endearment, reaching a conclusion that the extra swell of skin on Carter's nose was caused by "moving accidents his youth had suffered."

In another instance, when she joins Carter for a summer vacation in a farm full of people, she falls right away onto preconceived definitions based on the body: "she organized them into those first categories by which we fix strangers." The author's sarcasm regarding Ilka's observations is a forgiving one, but it is sharp all the same. Ilka's gender-related observation that Doris Mae sits on a low stool "like the effigy of an Egyptian wife who knows her proper size in relation to her husband" (214) reveals a certain view of far history, and, possibly, Ilka's traditional conventions regarding women's place and their status within a couple, despite her own "modern" relationships.

When she hears that Ebony's husband, Stanley, is Jewish, she tries guessing if he is the "pink, smiling, wizened little man, like stick figure" (169). She also wonders if it is possible for him to be with such an "ample" woman like Ebony. Eventually, she questions her own standards and beliefs. She chats with Carter about a couple in the vacation house, asking why a white woman would marry a much older, black man. She does not realize that this couple could be seen as foil to her and Carter. Instantly, however, she becomes aware of her prejudice and cries out, "I'm a racist!" (186). Carter takes it lightly, saying that some of his best friends are racist. The conversation ends here, giving the readers space to ponder about it.

She observes her African-Americans friends with curiosity and interest. When she sees Ebony wearing a flashy swimming suit, she is mesmerized by Ebony's body, finding Ebony's breast and hips "astonishing" and her narrow waist "improbable." She also notices Ebony's ambivalent attitude, as Ebony asks everyone not to look at her, or not to look at her for too long, in Ilka's case, while she is "glimmered and blazed with leaping silver lights" that make her skin look "the sheerest black" (210). Carter explains Ebony's motive to be daring, by telling a story about a black soldier who won a medal at war. When the soldier was asked why he did the brave advance beyond his orders, he

said: “Two things I know to do: I can take my ass AWOL or I can take it where I *know* they going to shoot it. Onliest thing I cannot is wait one other minute” (212). Ebony, too, despite her resistance to being judged, prefers to test the situation and challenge the world instead of being passive.

Indeed, the character of Ebony knows she provokes excitement and curiosity, and she encourages it, while also scolding the curious gaze. When the gaze seems violent to her, who is so conscious of prejudice, she confronts it by raising her extraordinary looks to heights that make the onlookers look at their own mundane expectations, their ordinary looks. She does not give in, but rather “shows them.” Like Carter, she is full of acid in regard to discrimination related to racial body definitions. “Because a fine white lady […] is what every man, woman and child would really like to be” (91), Ebony comments as she gives a one-woman show to the laughing black people and thinly smiling three white women (including Ilka) around her.

As in the case of Ebony, on occasion, Ilka feels that the physical appearance of people does not help her access their inner worlds. When she does not ask Carter for explanations, she sometimes makes wild guesses based on wrong assumptions in order to avoid the feeling of dislocation. She assumes, for instance, that one of the other guests on the farm, Victor, is a German Nazi because he says he is from Berlin. She goes further and uses the Arian description to tell herself she is right about his identity: “she had known it all along—had known by the blueness of his eye and his naked chest at table” (176). When she eventually discovers that Victor is Jewish, she questions him about his criticism of Jews, as if only a Nazi could have expressed such criticism. He replies that it is fine for Jews to criticize themselves. She lets it digest, still astonished. Later on, when he and his wife Sarah leave, he hugs Ilka and it seems to her, “she had always known that he was Jewish. One could tell from the temperature of his embrace” (222). She feels at home with him, now that he has broken the image she’s made of him. One wonders how she would have felt about the embrace, had he not revealed his identity to her. Is it the temperature of the hug, or her association of warmth and family in regard to Jews? Either way, Ilka is attracted to the sense of security family-like people transmit, but soon afterwards she escapes from the familiar into the American culture she still tries desperately to determine and assimilate.

3.3 The Farming of Bones

Like Ilka in *Her First American*, Amabelle is detached from her corporeal presence in the world, feeling invisible and weightless. While Ilka describes this detachment as a phase in her past, for Amabelle, this is the situation from which she is narrating her story as she begins to break the shell. Her alienation from her body in this stage is the result of trauma, of being cut from life by violence and abuse. However, the lack of embodiment has occurred already in her youth. At the time, still in the Dominican Republic, the death of her parents, the grief, and the loss of any good prospect for the future contributed to her sense she hardly exists. Only her lover's approval and love make her aware of her body presence and power. The differences of place, time, and origins between Segal's and Danticat's narratives suggest that for centuries, women from different corners of the world have judged themselves invisible and disembodied unless recognized through the masculine gaze. According to Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), and endorsed by later feminist scholarship, women experience their bodies as objects for the gaze of others not because of their anatomy-based gender characteristics but because of their education and surroundings. This is the reason Amabelle's sense of self is bound with Sebastien's view of her. She says,

> Thin as he says I am, I am afraid to fold in two and disappear. I'm afraid to be shy, distant, and cold. I am afraid I cease to exist when he's not there. I'm like one of those sea stones that sucks its colors inside and loses its translucence once it's taken out into the sun, out of the froth of the waves. When he's not there, I'm afraid I know no one and no one knows me. (11)

She absorbs Sebastien's views, just as Ilka absorbs Carter's in *Her First American*. In another common ground with Ilka's perception of self, she portrays herself as a pupil to her lover's teachings in regard to the body and self.

Another relation to oppression and another reason Amabelle, a descendant of slaves, needs someone else's affirmation of her existence, as if her body alone is not a proof of life, emerges not only as a construct of gender conventions but also as a consequence of slavery in the history of Haiti. The whole existence as a human being becomes relative when the body is not an element of the independent self but the masters' property and working tool. This situation is fixed in the collective memory, affecting Amabelle's sense of self. Another aspect of relation of dominance and the need to overcome their damage, is the view of

clothes as obstacles. She says, "Sebastien has made me believe that it is like a prayer to lie unclothed alone the way one came out of the womb" (77). Nakedness means taking off uniform, clothes chosen by others, or clothes bought within their meager means. According to Sebastien, their true selves exist underneath these symbols of hierarchy. He says, "Your clothes cover more than your skin. You become this uniform they make for you. Now you are only you, just the flesh" (11).

The impact of Amabelle's memories of passion, revealed in her narration three decades afterwards, can be traced to her surprise in and gratefulness for Sebastien's enchantment. She, who has never received love since she was orphaned, comes to see her whole self through his eyes and embrace all the fragments of her identity, reaffirmed through love. His tenderness and warmth, and his admiration toward her body affect her life, as they fulfill her need for love and acceptance. After having lost so much, her love for Sebastien is the only thing Amabelle considers her own. Before meeting him, her relation to the world and to her self has passed through loss and lack since the loss of her parents in her childhood, her loss of a loving surrounding, and her loss of belonging once she moves to the Dominican Republic. She takes pride in this emotional possession, considering how it weighs against the other parts of her life. "Nearly everything I had was something Señora Valencia had once owned and no longer wanted. Everything except Sebastien" (42).

As for the related question of body standards, the standards may be different among communities, but the elements of beauty, health, and youth, all necessary for social approval, are consistently present in all four novels. The power Amabelle's body holds over Sebastien appears as soon as the book begins, as he says in the first scene, "Look at your perfect little face […] your perfect little shape, your perfect little body, a woman child with deep black skin, all the shades of black in you, what we see and what we don't see, the good and the bad […] Everything in your face is as it should be" (3). He connects the seen and the unseen, the palpable and the unpalpable, when he refers to her perfect body, and he tells her she should not fear fleetness, implying that this perfection is unchangeable. As Heather Hewett points out in her 2017 article, Sebastien's definition of Amabelle's beauty is characterized as "perfection and able-bodiedness" intertwining "gender […] with able-bodiedness and youth: to be feminine is as much defined by the presence of certain traits (youth, innocence, and beauty) as it is by the absence of others (markings, deformities, disability)" (128-9). Amabelle's dependence on her lover's admiration for the construction of her sense

of self is the reason his words become her guiding light. Thus, the meaning and importance of 'perfection' will be forever connected in her mind to a woman's worth.

His definition and her absorption of it indicate and foreshadow that bodily harm and aging will change her sense of identity and make her feel unworthy. Once she is not a locus of youth, health, and beauty, the changes limit her possibilities of self-acceptance and recovery. Unfortunately, she disregards her nakedness as a worthy form of authenticity. Had Sebastien lived, he might have transformed his definition of her beauty over the years and she would have adapted her expectations to his. Now that he is gone, she is trapped in his past view of her. Disabled during the massacre, she feels that her deformation and—what she perceives as--ugliness, render her unfit for pleasure, intimacy, and passion. Although she is more mature and experienced at the time she tells her story than at the time she lived with him, she is lonelier, suffering physically and emotionally, and locked in the past. Thus, she is not equipped to come to terms with her self and her body. The traumatic accumulation of loss and pain, and the balance of her sense of self hold her back.

Since the strong bond between Amabelle and Sebastien passes through the union of their bodies, it is only natural that she experiences her grief for him through the body his love has made so significant to her. She says, "I am hoping to feel the sweat gather between the cement floor and the hollow in my back […] so that there will not be a drop of liquid left in me with which to cry" (77). She refers to her body mostly as her connection with Sebastien. According to her, she wouldn't have minded her injuries and change in her looks, had she not expected to reunite with him. She says,

> Thinking of Sebastien's return made me wish for my hair to grow again— which it had not—for the inside of my ears to stop buzzing, for my knees to bend without pain, for my jaws to realign evenly and form a smile that did not make me look like a feeding mule. At night, lying next to Yves, I grew more and more frightened that Sebastien would not recognize me if he ever saw me again. (169)

She was young and healthy when he helped her obtain a sense of belonging to life, history, and society through her bond with him. Therefore, she can only imagine their reunion through the unity of their perfect bodies, and her disability hurts. Her injury pulsates inside her, her knee is rigid and cannot bend freely, her ear buzzes, and her jaw is misaligned. Since she cannot come to terms with her physical self in the

present, she has no anticipation for the future. She says, "I knew that my body could no longer be a tempting spectacle, nor would I ever be truly young or beautiful, if ever I had been. Now my flesh was simply a map of scars and bruises, a marred testament" (227). Her body, then, is a historical site.

Since without Sebastien the role of motherhood, too, makes no sense to Amabelle, she denies herself any prospect of family, and only her testimony may outlive her. Although she is a midwife, and she is clearly moved by the birth of her boss's twins, motherhood is irrelevant to her. However, she refers to motherhood's role in a woman's life in her observation about the elder servant, Juana. Unlike Amabelle, Juana sees the female body as a baby carrier, a functional tool that otherwise is useless. She tells Amabelle, "At this moment in life, a woman asks herself: What good is all this flesh? Why did I have this body?" (33). Juana sees her barrenness as God's punishment of her for declining to live as a nun and choosing the love of a man. As for Amabelle, she knows that she is the one denying herself motherhood, and not God. The idea of castigation may apply to her merely as self-punishment for surviving Sebastien.

Clearly, her view of disability, deformity, and old age as limiting elements to the self is not related solely to Sebastien's words but also to social discourse and performativity. With Amabelle's story, Danticat endorses Lennard Davis's view in *The Disability Studies Reader* (1997) that people who manifest signs of disability, old age, and/or a mutilated body are marginalized in society. Their apparent difference interrupts the visual field of the uniformly acceptable, reflecting the transitory aspect of youth, power, health, and beauty. The "inadequate" body manifesting a form disability is socially de-valued, de-eroticized, and, at times, de-humanized.

In this light, and as Amabelle's story implies, the questions of age and disability are related. Much like Brand's Marie Ursule, the women working in the sugarcane fields in *The Farming of Bones* carry bodily marks, scars and pain that are the result of abuse and oppression. Amabelle, the narrator, describes these women as "ancient enough to be our great-grand-mothers": one of them is missing an ear, other two have lost fingers, another's cheekbone has been cracked in half with a machete as she ran away. They have become too sick, crippled or weak to work in a house or on the fields, and they are too poor or disabled to return to Haiti. Their poverty obliges them to spend their days digging for wild roots, otherwise dependent on the charity of their neighbors (61). Their bodies, each a historical site, tell their story of slavery,

repression, discrimination, and marginalization. In fact, history has affected them to the extent they have hardly any agency to represent themselves, raise their voice, and demand social justice. These women are the subaltern Spivak writes about in "Can the Subaltern Speak" (1985). Society could have recognized in these scarred bodies the inflicted injustice, social evils and their horrifying consequences. However, as the novel illustrates, the dominant fraction protects itself from change by avoiding an examination of the shortcomings of its values.

In terms of bodies inscribed by history, the narrative conveys how history is literally engraved in Sebastien's body as well. The lyrical description of the specific signs the labor has left on Sebastien's body brings to life the situation of the sugar cane cutters. Their lives are painful and long before the coup takes place.

> He is lavishly handsome by the dim light of my castor oil lamp, even though the cane stalks have ripped apart most of the skin on his shiny black face, leaving him with crisscrossed trails of furrowed scars. His arms […] are steel, hardened by four years of sugarcane harvests. "Look at you," he says, taking my face into one of his spacious bowl shaped hands, where the palms have lost their lifelines to the machetes that cut the cane. (10)

Amabelle's sensorial memory of uniting their bodies through the net of his hard life marks suggests that she sensed his whole self through his body, the way he sensed her whole self in hers. "I can smell his sweat, which is as thick as sugarcane juice when he's worked too much. I can still feel his lips, the eggplant-violet gums that taste of greasy goat milk boiled to candied sweetness with mustard-colored potatoes" (11). Her awareness of the significance of each sign makes her wonder about the strength he manifests and assume his vulnerability. She says, "I'm never sure whether he is only laughing or also crying at the same time, even though I have never seen him cry" (11). He embodies symbols of slavery, exploitation, and poverty but transforms them into strength through his ability of love. The scars, marks, smells, and tastes do not diminish him but testify to his resistance.

In another aspect of a split from the body, and a reminder of Marie Ursule's decision to commit suicide as described in *At the Full and Change of the Moon*, analyzed below, Sebastien considers death a possible exit from a life of misery. Amabelle notices that he is almost envious of his friend, killed by the owner of the land, because death liberates from working in the sugarcane field. She says, "I knew he

considered Joel lucky to no longer be part of the cane life, *travay tè pou zo*, the farming of bones" (49-50). The expression in itself makes the reader stop and wonder about the unusual combination, and the parallel of this expression with the massacre. Sebastien's sister, Mimi, shares the same view of death as a liberator. She says, "'I don't want to live so long […] I'd rather die young like Joel did'" (54). She, too, resists that urge to terminate the suffering through death. Later on, both Mimi and Sebastien go on living until their lives are cut short by those who robbed them of their lives while they were still living.

Amabelle's testimony, her storytelling, raises the subject of language in the novel. As the case of the expression "farming of bones" and other uses of language indicate, language has multiple roles in this novel as well. The fragmented narration and the changes from past to present and back convey the a-temporality of the Caribbean fragmented memory and storytelling. Amabelle's memories of her time with Sebastien are separated into short fragments, written in the present tense to emphasize their continued relevance and their intense impact on her. In these fragments, the narration is lyrical and erotic, clarifying how their union led her to discover her power and beauty after years of self-denial. She learns to celebrate and trust her body, as it "knows better" than herself (100). When he dies, however, the celebration of life dies as well.

The importance of language appears both in the form of the narration and in its content. The corporeal aspect of language is as obvious during the massacre as are the mutilated or extinguished bodies. As Chapter 2 of this study demonstrates, language becomes a tool of control for the predatory governing forces and a matter of liability to the victims. The characters' survival depends upon their ability to pronounce words the way the majority does, and they are denied their right to live if they cannot master this form of pronunciation. These victims—dead because they are not a part of the majority--need the voice of the survivors to represent them.

When Amabelle tells her story, the story of the victims and the survivors, she has already acquired enough self-confidence to believe in the power of her words of testimony to give voice to the silenced people. At this point, she helps build the Haitian collective memory, telling how individuals among the murdered and the survivors were impacted by the historical event, the massacre. If she did not do that, the dead might be forgotten, in her view. Her storytelling is both her bodily expression and an expression of their embodied identity. The storytelling also corresponds to Beauvoir's 1949 explanation of what it means to be

present in the world, as it "implies strictly that there exists a body which is at once a material thing in the world and a point of view towards the world" (39).

As Danticat clarifies, the locals deny the view of the massacre as a part of their history, and marginalize the survivors in the community. The subject of deliberate forgetting emerges several times. Amabelle, as a wounded survivor, complicates the local community's attempt of forgetting by the site of her body alone. Although she is badly hurt when arriving in Haiti, as her knee and jaw are broken and she cannot talk, she "does not look bad as some" (206), according to the medical team that takes care of the survivors. However, her disabled body is a permanent reminder of the collective and individual history. It is clear to her that it is necessary for the community to witness the outcome of the massacre, the injured bodies. The sight in itself condemns avoidance. In addition, since the rejection of this part of history and its survivors by Haiti and the Dominican Republic is unacceptable, Danticat lets her character persist in her testimony so the book serves as a reminder in its reconstruction of history.

3.4 At the Full and Change of the Moon

More than in the other novels, the pained, gendered, enslaved, disabled, and tortured body appears in *At the Full and Change of the Moon*. Since this novel dedicates one chapter to each character, each of the female characters is studied on the basis of corporeal subjects relevant to her, to illustrate how corporeality is affected by circumstance, and to avoid out-of-context corporeal issues. Similarities are pointed out as the character analyses accumulate. In addition, two male characters are studied, as their specific corporeal issues characterize consequences of discrimination against minority people and they complete the picture the novel paints.

The first character, Marie Ursule, the matriarch slave leader, refuses to endure slavery any longer and organizes a collective suicide of the slaves, because she is certain that body oppression can lead to the enslavement of the soul**.** Her insight finds a theoretical parallel in Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1979), in which the philosopher argues that the body plays an important role in the interrelated physical and mental manipulation exercised by the dominant fraction of society. The authorities survey, mark, exclude, punish, and discipline as an instrument of domination. He writes,

> One would be concerned with the 'body politic', as a set of material elements and techniques that serve as weapons,

> relays, communication routes and supports for the power and knowledge relations that invest human bodies and subjugate them by turning them into objects of knowledge. It is a question of situating the techniques of punishment - whether they seize the body in the ritual of public torture and execution or whether they are addressed to the soul - in the history of this body politic. (28)

Unlike the passive survival strategy of most slaves, Marie Ursule's way to deal with the enslaved, violated, used, and abused body passes through anger, hatred, and rebellion. While the same forms of suffering have disciplined many other slaves, they have built in her the resolution to kill this object of manipulation and exploitation: the body -- and in the process, die. She confronts the authorities, the slave owners, by orchestrating a collective suicide at De Lambert's house. Her choice to commit a suicide is not surrender but a provocation. The aspects of rebellion and revenge emerge even more strongly when she stays alive, after all, in order to confront the owner and watch him raging and despairing during the days of torture until her death.

She is not shaken with the brutal violence inflicted on her now as a punishment, because pain and suffering have already become an integral part of her life. Thus, she goes to the limits of physical suffering, remaining alive for the horrible torture, because she disdains bodily pain, and wants to give her mind the pleasure of witnessing the reaction of the master of slaves to the suicide. While tortured, she keeps saying that the torture is "but a drink of water" (20). Thus, she provokes her torturers by informing them that even the worst physical pain is nothing to her in comparison to slavery. The brutalized body is a minor issue in the light of history. Death is an end to suffering and pain, as the body regains its due respect.

The split she makes between the body and the mind is an outcome of her personal and collective history. Her body has been used as an object of procreation and labor, assaulted, and punished with physical pain. Her ear was cut off as a reaction to her rebellion, and she was condemned to spend two years "shackled to a ten-pound iron" (5). As a consequence of the punishment, she suffers from a continuing sensation of carrying weight around her ankle, even after being released from the iron itself. She dreads having the destiny of the former leader of the slaves, who was sentenced to carry an iron ring over her leg all her life and went mad when it became unbearable. The split appears clearly when, despite her resolve to die, Marie Ursule deals with the resistance imposed by her body. "Her flesh felt heavy. She could not lift

herself from her seat. It was as if her body was tied tightly by the wooden house like a hammock" (3). She ignores the urge to live, thinking it only exists in her flesh and not in her mind.

The split between body and mind is not only Marie Ursule's, nor is the wish for liberation at the cost of life. "They [the other slaves] knew that the body was a terrible thing that wanted to live no matter what. It never gave up, it lived for the sake of itself. It was selfish and full of grid" (17). Due to their estrangement from the body, they wrestle with it, while preparing for the suicide. The text reports that they "had given the mind this mystery to work out, how to ignore the body, how to reach the other shore" (17). Based on their history of slavery, the body can be owned. Therefore, in order to free it, they try to liberate themselves from the body boundaries. They trust that this annihilation will allow their minds to live in peace.

Contradicting her call for a collective suicide, however, Mary Ursule releases her young daughter from the act. She believes that memory is installed in the body forever, lodged in the bones and in the muscular gestures of all its descents. She foresees that the future generations of her descendants will spread throughout the world and will experience exile, violence, prostitution, drugs, and other ills. Still, she considers the continuation worthwhile. From her point of view, all generations are a line that sustains, supports, and incorporates painful memories and consequences of slavery. A further discussion of this theme is introduced in Chapter 4 in relation to trauma. Thus, sparing her daughter is an act of constructing a collective memory that reveals and fights injustice. As the succeeding saga chapters convey, pain is indeed etched in the body of her descendants, accentuated by a continued racial and sexual discrimination. Her view regarding the continuous body reaction to a historical horror corresponds with the ideas of Foucault's 1991 essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." The scholar writes,

> The body is the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a dissociated self (adopting the illusion of a substantial unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration. Genealogy, as an analysis of descent, is thus situated within the articulation of the body and history. Its task is to expose a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history's destruction of the body. (Web)

Due to the sudden crack in her life story and her dissimilar circumstances, her daughter, Bola, has different relationships with and through her body from Mary Ursule. While Marie Ursule wrestles with

her body and is alienated from it, Bola is body-conscious and sensuous. Her circumstance starts leading toward body-consciousness when Kamena, her alleged father, takes her away and hides her from the slave owners. He often departs to seek the "promised land" of runaways, leaving her alone for days and weeks, without anyone with whom she can speak. Even when he is around, he is not communicative, and "[h]is brooding silences almost made them both lose the very act of speech. The nature of language became all directions and sighs" (55). Subsequently, Bola does not develop her language skills enough to articulate her experiences. Instead, she lives through her senses: "Picking up stones and broken trees to keep pieces of the crumbled house together […] growing tall, thin, broad-shouldered, slim-hipped, seeing her blood, she walked into the intelligence of her muscle" (58). In the end, her closeness to nature, her necessity of being self-reliable, and the lack of parenting figures inspire a growing body consciousness and a self-confidence that aid her in her survival in the wilderness.

The silence, solitude, hunger, and danger, as well as her load of "the ruins" remaining of her mother, mad father, and the ghostly nuns she sees require the formation of survival skills and determination, and form a strong personality consumed by intense and ephemeral desires. She is egocentric, fascinated only by her own thoughts and sensations. She studies nature, or rather, she becomes one with "nature". Seeing it through the author's feminist stand, Bola's forming identity is not a deterioration into the historical role of woman as a lesser human being, but a sad result of being excluded and isolated, consoled by her connection with nature. When settlers start filling the region, she takes lovers, one after the other, as she abhors emotional intimacy.

Another of Marie Ursule's descendants, her great granddaughter, Cordelia, resembles Marie Ursule and Bola in the traumatic experience of her body as an object of violence and exploitation in her childhood. While Bola escaped human violence as a runaway, Cordelia suffers all through her youth. The local men she runs into are sexist and brutal. Consequently, her experience is limited to violence and abuse, a short-lived passion, and a resulting pregnancy, heartbreak, and abortion. These years form her view of the world, especially of its masculine part, as a threatening place she has to outsmart.

However, it appears she sees family men, unlike her stepfather or lover, as reliable and protective of their wives, fulfilling their traditional role. Therefore, she believes that only a conservative marriage will protect her and her future children from harm. In her view,

the options and opportunities for a poor woman of color are too limited, and only a respectable marriage supplies the necessary economic and social means for security. Accordingly, her decision to raise a respectful family is a survival strategy.

Nevertheless, while this rational choice may solve a part of her problems, it does not allow her to express her needs and live fully. After marrying, she restrains her desire and allows herself the limited range of sensuous pleasures her husband is able to give. "She knew his [her husband's] skin as if it were her own and held him like she would her own elbow if it were aching" (102). Her husband, the hard-working, obedient man she has chosen, tries to satisfy her desire by following her instructions for their intercourse, although her commands make him feel small and exploited. This relationship seems to reverse the patriarchal standard, since he is the submissive one. However, this relationship exists, in fact, because she has picked a man she could rely on, as the only means she knew to protect herself from racist and sexist oppression. Nevertheless, it is intriguing to observe the hurtful consequences for the husband: the hierarchy and her lack of respect for him are just as damaging in an upside-down binary split.

Until turning fifty, Cordelia lives "in her body as in a never-ending bitterness" (122). Her own view of herself as a family woman lacking vivacity and imagination is shared by her children when they become adults. They "came to visit with pitying in their eyes—how old their mother was, how without anything like wanting to caress flesh" (102). When she turns fifty, however, this devoted family woman, loyal to her husband, becomes focused on her desire and sensuality in a way that reminds of Bola. Tired of fulfilling her exhaustive role in the private and public sphere, she disrupts the traditional bubble and lets her lust become the center of her life, as lust "exploded in her mouth like a fat orange" (99). She takes lovers, a man and a woman, and does not care anymore about anyone's opinion. Her shocked and frightened husband asks their grown children to help him, and they end-up taking him to London to live with them. She does not care, as she is not interested in any of them any longer and all she wants is to lead an intense sexual life. Her sexual liberation makes her feel "the enjoyment of her body clear and free" (121).

Primarily, the body is introduced as a place of suffering--at least for a while—in the lives of Marie Ursule, Bola, and Cordelia. However, in the narratives related to Bola and Cordelia, the body becomes a locus of pleasure and passion, leading to a sense of release. Cordelia draws a great pleasure from hers although she suffered abuse in her youth and

could have become terrified with body-related pleasures. Her mother has treated the body as an enemy, but Cordelia does not. Yet, as Bola and Cordelia focus on the sensual body alone, their sexual urges and sensual pleasure control them and lock them within themselves. Their trauma-induced emotional detachment prevents any possibility of intimacy and layered relationship, reflecting and reproducing their fear of people. In their parallel characteristics, the egocentric life revolving around the sensations of the body means an intensification of the denial of pain, memories, and social bonds.

The only time Cordelia considers to reverse her choice occurs when she is tempted to return to the church. Her moment of hesitation, however, is a reminder of how hard it is to make a real change. Even as she submerges herself in a sensual life, she still finds the conservative call of church appealing. As Butler points out in *Undoing Gender* (2004) nothing is done in a social vacuum. The ongoing social values and patterns are constructed into the identity in a way that allows for a gradual departure but never a complete one. Cordelia walks by the church, hears the wonderful voice of a priest (a man nicknamed Padre, a cruel character, related to her) but decides that sex is "deeper than god" (128).

A generation later, Maya Dovett, Marie Ursule's great-great-granddaughter, is another character whose childhood is marked by sexism and repression. Like Bola and Cordelia, Maya resists emotional pain by detaching herself from any close involvements. Still, she and her homosexual brother Adrian suffer from their father's sexist discipline and from their mother's concentration on the father alone. In addition, the story of their grandfather, who burned to death in the oil field while trying to unite the non-white workers weighs on them as a negative prospect of life. As soon as her father dies, Maya leaves her home and travels to Amsterdam, leaving her mother and brother behind. She works for a while at a hospital, but hates dealing with the decay of diseased bodies. Instead, she chooses to work as a prostitute, exposed in a red-light window. Both jobs deal with the body of others, but, clearly, the difference is in the emphasis on sickness and assistance in the first, and on sexuality and service (or exploitation) in the other.

At first, Maya feels self-conscious while exposing her body, but soon she learns to ignore the predatory gazes, concentrate on her body sensations and enjoy its physicality or interacts with her surrounding and behaves as if she were alone at her home. In this period, she appreciates the rewards of the job. Her own sensuousness hypnotizes her, as she stands at the window, contemplating "the phases and forms of her body"

(220) and concentrating on her appearance and sensations. Like Bola and Cordelia, Maya celebrates her body and her desire. Also like them, she dives into the sexual and sensual acts in an unemotional way. There is an element of exaggeration, perhaps even obsession, in these characters' letting go of emotions in favor of body pleasure. In comparison, the celebration of the body in *The Farming of Bones* is connected to passion and emotion in Amabelle's sensuous memories of Sebastien's revelations of love.

For a while, Maya lives under the impression she has complete control over her life. She realizes that the brothel manager, Walter, is explicitly sexist, just like her father, once he says, "pussy was wasted on women. A man would know how to work that shit" (209). Yet, while resenting his treatment of women, she believes she can handle him. In order to do that, she challenges herself to show him she can attract and obtain more clients than he considers possible. Soon, she masters the art of performance. However, her peace of mind is rapidly troubled, as she feels a growing threat in the eyes of her observers and becomes aware of disguised violence. The combination of the commercial and sexual gaze becomes dangerous: "Sex, Maya discovered, was lethal." She has to ward off violence even from "the meekest-looking men" (210). At this point, she cannot bring herself to look at the men looking at her, so she chooses to stand with her back to the window, a position that attracts even more predators.

Feeling vulnerable, Maya tries to ignore the threat and relax into a full absorption in her sensations. Her involvement with her body and detachment from the people around her reach such a degree, she does not know how she got covered in Walter's blood. Violence is both outside and inside her, she realizes. She hurries to her home to collect her savings and run away, but she finds that her brother, Adrian, stole her money to buy drugs while staying with her. Her subsequent solution resembles Cordelia's in Cordelia's youth. She chooses a marriage with a wealthy client as the only means to secure her life and guarantee stability.

Another analogy, regarding the role of motherhood in the characters' lives, emerges among Marie Ursule, Bola, Cordelia, and Maya. Marie Ursule sends her daughter away in order to guarantee the continuation of the family, but while sparing her, she actually abandons her through suicide. Bola spreads her children to different places and people and remains with a few, without being emotionally close to any of them. Cordelia raises her children to fit society, but is completely alienated from them once they grow up. As for Maya, when her

daughter is born, she does not feel suitable to mother anyone. While she is afraid to be like her own mother, she is also afraid to be different from her and fail anyway. In a general manner, the passage of life lessons and memories is broken, as each mother avoids any intimacy with her children.

***

This chapter has examined the characters' corporeal experience in the four novels, in the light of each character's context of time, place, and trauma legacy. Quite a few characters from different minorities and different novels have been found to be emotionally detached and alienated from their bodies, trying to control them with the mind. Lore, the Jewish girl refugee from *Other People's Houses* uses distance as an armor against pain but finds herself alienated from everyone around her. In *The Farming of Bones*, Amabelle's detachment from her body is rooted in slavery, as the collective memory still holds that the body does not belong to the slave but to the slave owner. Clearly, *The Farming of Bones* and *At the Full and Change of the Moon* exemplify the impact of slavery on the connection with the body and through it. Amabelle and Sebastien take off their clothes in order to become their authentic selves, as their clothes reflect the oppressive society. The slavery-related sense of guilt and shame in the black body emerges in Eula's and the second Bola's stories, especially. Their bodies are a reminder of a horrible past, and they cannot come to terms with them. In addition, the characters from *The Farming of Bones* and *At the Full of Change of the Moon* do not have role models to imitate nor a society into which they want to assimilate.

Lore tries and fails to adapt her body and self to the social expectation of conduct, looks, and skills. Both she and Ilka, the young Jewish refugee from *Her First American,* use the mirror reflection to measure their social worth as a girl and a woman respectively and find themselves lacking. They strive to have the adequate body in order to assimilate into the local society and open a distance from their traumatic past. Lore imitates English girls she idolizes, and Ilka studies the American women around her. Ilka, at twenty-one, cannot establish contact with her body and self on her own and depends on a masculine affirmation to help her unite the parts of her self. Ilka's quest for a masculine guidance in the world finds its parallel in Amabelle, the nineteen-year-old Haitian houseworker in the Dominican Republic from *The Farming of Bones*. Both Ilka and Amabelle are affected by social conventions regarding gender, according to which they need the protection, affirmation, and wisdom of a man to complement them and

give them a sense of their existence. Two other characters, Cordelia, a young woman of mixed race, living in Venezuela, and Maya, a black woman from the Caribbean, exiled in Amsterdam, both from *At the Full and Change of the Moon*, turn to the safety of a conservative marriage, believing that a good and steady family man, who supports the family, is their only option out of a life of intersectional discrimination and abuse. Unlike Ilka and Amabelle, they do not admire the men they choose, but believe they would benefit from the men's traditional role. In the case of Cordelia, however, her repressed desires burst when she is fifty and feels that her sons have already grown up to be safe.

The related subject of liberation from trauma and pain through the body appears in the four novels. Lore, a child, feels one with her body when she unites with her parents after a long separation. Ilka feels her body and the body of her lover the way she has never felt before after his affirmation of her attraction, when her mother, who has been missing since the beginning of the Holocaust, joins her in the US. Everything falls into place and her body reacts to it. The relation between mothers and daughters is an assertion of womanness, an affirmation of survival and continuation despite everything.

A different sort of corporeal liberation is represented by the matriarch Marie Ursule from *At the Full and Change of the Moon.* Since she believes that oppression of the body leads to the oppression of the soul, her solution is to get rid of the body even at the cost of death. Her descendants, Bola, Cordelia, and Maya experience yet another sort of liberation, as they follow their sexual and sensuous desires, and each of them, even if for a while, has a sense of great release. However, their focus on the bodily pleasures comes at the cost of lack of intimacy and the denial of their emotions. Unlike them, Amabelle from *The Farming of Bones* connects with her body and feels passion and freedom with her lover, as he releases her from the grasp of the past. After his death, this memory is one of the only reminders of what life could be.

The shame and guilt affect also the role of motherhood in the characters' lives. While Segal's characters do not think about motherhood at all, possibly because they are considered to young to be mothers, the other novels bring about this complex subject. Danticat's main character would have become a mother, if her lover had not died. She conditions motherhood with raising a family with a beloved man. Therefore, she disagrees with an old colleague who sees motherhood as a woman's role in life. Brand's characters, Bola, Maya, and Eula are distant from their children emotionally and, in some cases, physically, when they part with them. They appear to try to avoid a repetition of

their own lives and of the pain that runs in the family. They deny themselves any pleasure in their motherhood and take care of their children by keeping them apart from them.

Finally, the relation of language to the body is expressed differently in each novel but is present in all. In Segal's novels the characters crave to assimilate, and so they study the spoken local language as if their lives depended on it. Both of them also observe the body language of everyone around them in order to get to know the culture and the locals better as a means of survival. In Danticat's novel, the language is a determiner of life and death in an expression of power relations. Amabelle does not make any attempt to pronounce the words like a Dominican and is abused so violently she becomes disabled. In *At the Full and Change of the Moon,* the loss of a common language shows the dispersal of the family, broken by oppression, and its lack of ability to unite and communicate in any way.

The following chapter deals with trauma, a complementary and an umbrella element in the stories of these minority characters. The chapter will apply the definition of trauma to the characters, utilize decolonized views of trauma based on recent trauma studies, show the relation of memory and history to the way the characters live, examine trauma manifestations, and investigate possibilities of recovery, healing, resistance, and transformation.

CHAPTER FOUR
Looking Through the Prism of Trauma

This chapter focuses on trauma, history, and memory applied to each of the four selected novels. The literary and cultural theories relevant to the study of trauma, mainly trauma theory and postcolonial theory, reflect the fragmented and interconnected history and memory in the studied literary representations of trauma. Based on the diversified framework of trauma studies, with its multidisciplinary and multicultural research, the traumatic events and/or routines represented in the novels are examined within their historical, political, and geographic contexts, taking in account relevant socio-cultural trauma representations. Fundamentally, the aim of this comparative study is to advance the understanding of multidirectional trauma legacy memory and contribute to the process of decolonization of trauma theory within literary studies. The previous chapters dealt with intersectionality and the way minority characters perceive their selves under the impact of exile, racism, sexism, colonization, slavery, and genocide. This chapter reveals the impact through the essential lens of trauma, establishes the problems that collective and individual trauma inflict upon the characters and their communities, and points out the possibilities of change each novel illustrates. The analyses will deal with each group of novels (the Jewish and the Caribbean) separately.

Although the selected works are defined as fiction and do not correspond to the classic definition of testimonial as a direct trauma survivor's testimony, this chapter demonstrates how fictional works carry the load of reimagining horror that is otherwise silenced by shock and/or by political power relations. Most importantly, the fictional texts of the four selected novels do not deflect the attention from traumatic events, but, on the contrary, avoid forgetfulness and silencing and promote awareness. The books studied here are the fruit of a collective memory and an individual reflection, and their study serves as a tool of inspection over power. Accordingly, this chapter demonstrates how the selected novels draw pictures of individual lives affected by socio-historical processes and traumatic events, going from the macro to the micro without boundaries.

Among the four novels, Segal's are closer than the others to being a direct testimony, since Brand's and Danticat's are more related to collective memory and historical events the authors have not gone through. Since all the authors are exiled minority female writers, however, all of them create fiction in the light of the multiple and

continuous forms of discriminating for which they are direct witnesses.

Starting with Lore Segal, she is a survivor of the Holocaust, writing about Holocaust survivors. She lived in the time and place in which *Other People's Houses* and *Her First American* are set, including England and the US, respectively. Still, as a refugee child, she has not gone through the horrors experienced by her family members and the other Jewish Austrians. In this aspect, she is an indirect witness. Her two novels differ: the story arc in *Other People's Houses* is closer to her own experience, following the route she took, while *Her First American* takes more liberty in its portrayal of the main character's biography. Other characters than Lore in the first book and others than Ilka in the second represent the collective memory and other legacies such as the African-American. In this sense, Segal writes about a legacy other than her own. Her novels offer both direct and indirect testimonies that illuminate the experience of trauma from several angles. The novels are situated in historical events and emphasize trauma more than they do the specificities of the genocide. The narrative allows for the reader to contextualize the trauma and identify with the suffering.

Brand and Danticat are descendants of the direct trauma survivors of the original traumatizing event, slavery in both novels, and the addition of the massacre in Danticat's. *At the Full and Change of the Moon* and *The Farming of bones* go back to when the authors, subsequent generations of the survivors of the Trinidadian slavery and the Haitian 1937 massacre, draw from collective memory and history. Brand and Danticat give voice to their communities and reconstruct silenced histories and forgotten horrors. As Danticat says in her 2002 interview, "The slaughter is the only thing that is mine enough to pass on. All I want to do is find a place to lay it down now and again, a safe nest where it will neither be scattered by the winds, nor remain forever buried beneath the sod" (Web). Basically, the two authors constitute postmemorial artistic expressions. In addition, the ongoing impact of the events, the transference of trauma, and the continuous intersectionality are present in their lives, since they are exiled minority women born in colonized countries. In this light, Brand's contemporary characters experience discrimination, exile, and oppression from which her target group still suffers.

Accordingly, the three authors reconstruct traumatic events and traumatic insidious abuse within the collective memory of each minority, avoiding a dissociation with the past. In this function, the novels re-member, embody, and store narratives through stories of

individual minority characters across generations and nations, showing the formation of individual and collective identities, and perpetuating memories. To illustrate the above, the following sections analyze the characters' traumas in each novel.

4.1 Segal's *Other People's Houses* and *Her First American*

In the earliest of the four novels, *Other People's Houses,* trauma has been built over years. After running for her life, separating from her family, and becoming aware of growing danger, Lore still fears for her safety, her family's lives, the lives of other Jews, and, in a general manner, for the world she knew and trusted. The constant fear, a frequent manifestation of trauma, is unavoidable, as Segal explains in "Body Terrors", published after the September Eleventh 2001 terror attack: "And what is the fate of a war-traumatized child? […] not to be surprised by a terror event. Instead, to always expect more terror, and relaxing when they are able to identify the shape, sound [,] time and place where this or something else was always going to happen" (96). Although the article was written in the aftermath of a specific horror, the way she analyzes children's trauma is relevant to Holocaust survivors as well. Children, such as Lore, carry their memories all their lives, expecting emergencies and catastrophe to happen. In the same vein, Ann Kaplan describes in *Trauma Culture: The Politics of Terror and Loss in Media and Literature* (2005) her own trauma in a parallel situation: "Ever since experiencing World War II as a small child in war-torn England, I have been ready to jump at any unexpected sound" (3). As a psychonalysis scholar analyzing trauma, Kaplan dissects the experience with trauma theory tools. She writes that beyond the crisis in the family, the experience of political and military disasters have an impact, usually less noticed, of shattering the identity. As for Lore, she fears to lose her parents the way she has lost other family members, as she continues expecting calamities to occur. For instance, she reflects on the times her father had fallen ill in the past, thinks she had predicted each time, and hopes she can des-predict herself in the future. Therefore, she observes her parents, "imagining their bodies under the skin, rather like the intricate anatomical drawings […] remembered from Paul's medical books" (134-5), picturing their inner parts wrongly in order to avert predictable health problems. Sticking to esoteric beliefs, she hopes that having wrong perceptions of their bodies' organs will protect the real organs, and her parents. She is aware it is fear guiding her, but she cannot stop applying this strategy continuously. Unfortunately, her

constant imagination of her parents' sickly bodies only intensifies her constant sense of alarm.

Lore's full consciousness of the danger starts at the age of ten, when she is shocked to find that the place she considered hers in society and in her country has been an imaginary haven. She realizes that she cannot choose her religion, nor decide upon her life as she assumed she could, because her biological genealogy is considered by the authorities as the only determiner of her identity. In the name of these standards, she and her family are threatened, legally deprived of their rights and their belonging, and violently attacked. This shock in the face of broken trust provokes trauma, as Jenny Edkins indicates in *Trauma and the Memory of Politics* (2003): "[w]hat we call trauma takes place when the very powers that we are convinced will protect us and give us security become our tormentors: when the community of which we considered ourselves members turns against us or when our family is no longer a source of refuge but a site of danger" (4). Both Edkins and Judith Herman (1997) emphasize that trauma is caused by deceit and betrayal even more than by acts of violence. In Lore's case, the shock leaves her continually suspicious, and therefore she becomes defensive and watchful, afraid of the repetition of such a treachery. The continuous persecution and violence confirm her fear, and she does not recover from her fear throughout the novel.

The shock of betrayal is soon followed by the shock of separation. When Lore's parents cannot overlook the signs of persecution any longer, they send her away on her own to a foreign country as a measure of despair, and without any guarantee for their own safety in Austria. The same type of parental separation occurred in several countries during the Second World War. A recent study aiming to explore the long-term outcomes related to separation from parents in childhood among members of the Helsinki Birth Cohort observes the large compilation of data sixty years later and advances the study of the long-term mental health consequences of parent-child separation due to wartime adversities. It also observes that "today, among the 9.2 million refugees throughout the world, there are thousands of unaccompanied children living in different conditions, such as in detention centers, refugee camps, and foster families" (Web).[5] The relevance to current

[5] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2004 global refugee trends: overview of refugee populations, new arrivals, durable solutions, asylum-seekers, stateless and other persons of concern to UNHCR, 2005 Geneva,

events emerges in the comparison to the parental separation of the children who took the Kindertransport like Lore. According to Iris Guske's 2009 psychological study of Kindertransport-related trauma, these children suffer from accumulated trauma, or rather, from an intense experience during a long duration of time, that involves psychological and social dimensions, as it surpasses the capacity of individual and social structures to respond adequately. According to her, "The violation of their civil rights, the loss of their former socio-economic situation and human dignity were aggravated by suffering the breakup of families, the all-pervading fear caused by living under an existential threat and in a sense of hopelessness in the face of high immigration hurdles" (20). Thus, Lore is torn from her loving, admiring family, from familiarity, and warmth, and her childhood ends brusquely.

Understandably, Lore is relieved to escape the danger and the bad conditions in Austria, while at the same time she is in pain because of the separation from her parents, the shock and the humiliation suffered in Austria. According to Guske, such mixed feelings, typical of the Kindertransport children, evoke an added sense of guilt. Indeed, Lore feels guilty about being ambiguous, and about leaving her parents behind. At ten, in the new land, she is lonely, confused, and lost. Despite her young age, she takes every measure to contact the authorities in order to get her parents out of Austria. Even when they join her many months later, and a part of her guilt is lifted, she enjoys only a temporary relief from her anxiety. The separation and exile have shaken both her internal and the external world.

Moreover, to Lore's disappointment, the daughter/parents' bond has changed. Upon the parents' arrival, Lore notices that they are fragilized, are discriminated in England, and cannot give her a home. Therefore, she hopes that local, protective people she meets will be the ones to help her carry the heavy load of accumulated stressors: the separation, her foreignness, and her loneliness. According to Guske, a warm, comprehensive reception helps indeed dealing with the trauma. The girl tries her best to charm local people, but her awkward attempts, her mentioning of her intelligence and knowledge, or her imitation of their manners, do not conquer their affection. When Lore starts wetting herself at night, a manifestation of the anxiety caused by her failure to find an affectionate form of communication with her first foster mother,

---

Switzerland, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. http.//www.unhcr.org/statistics

Mrs. Levine, the situation worsens further. She feels humiliated by the exposure of her withdrawal to assumingly early childhood behavior, and guilty of her lack of self-control.

Another aggravating aspect for Lore's attempt of acculturation is her condition of drifting in-between languages and cultures. The resulting alienation brought by miscommunication renders her lonely. She cannot transmit her thoughts in English nor understand commonly-used cultural figures of language, the way she would have liked to. When her father starts recovering from a stroke at a hospital, she asks her mother with distress, "What does the doctor mean about Daddy having a heart like an ox?" (139). Her confidence is shaken because she is not even certain whether the expression implies good or bad news. Her linguistic estrangement grows as she notices the growing gap between her and her mother tongue, German. "German was uncomfortable in my mouth" (162), she says in surprise. In addition, she finds that the old manners learned in Austria seem odd and inadequate in England, while English manners leave her in constant confusion. She does not manage to act naturally, to flow, because she is continually self-conscious. She acts, trying to mimic the perfect child, in order to be accepted, but she constantly fails. Clearly, her emotional and social uncertainty make for a stressful combination.

Additionally, a less studied aspect of trauma appears in the novel in regard to the family's implication in their own destiny. There is no doubt they are preys to anti-Semitic predators, and the process of becoming aware does not put responsibility for the genocide on the prey nor liberates the predator from accountability. Although Segal's characters, Holocaust survivors, victims of a systematic repression followed by genocide, are not and should not consider themselves responsible for the criminal act of the Nazis and their collaborators, there is room to ask whether they are traumatized by actions of their own, their reactions to the horror, and/or the horror. According to Rothberg (2015), the victims' process of recovery requires an increased awareness of their trauma and an examination of all the involved factors including the uncomfortable acknowledgement of the victim's possible implication. LaCapra (1998), too, refers to "one's own implication in the problems one treats" (8), although, unlike Rothberg, he binds it with psychoanalysis. He uses the term "transference" (36), a concept meaning the observer's examination of his or her part in the observed. For instance, Lore's parents' initial negation of dangerous ethnic discrimination and oppression until the situation got out of control is a factor in the direction their lives took. In the beginning, since they feel

Austrians, they are certain that their rights as Austrian citizens exist even in the face of anti-Semitism and the rise of a racist government. They are so confident that the Nazi madness will soon pass, they do not try to take any real measures to protect themselves. Only when the Jews are expelled from schools, jobs, public places, the company and the employment of people of other religions and ethnicities, do they recognize the danger. They manage to send Lore away at the cost of fracturing the family and sending a young child to a foreign country on her own, clouded by the uncertainty of her destiny. Lore's father is deeply affected by the separation, suffering from depression. The mother feels stronger, so she tries to counterbalance his collapse by relieving him from all of his responsibilities. It is hard to conclude from the narrative whether his trauma derives from a sense of guilt and/or sorrow. The ensued trauma may well be formed of heart ache and anxiety, along with a doubt as to whether there might have been a way of saving the family and remaining together. In any event, the parents need to come to terms with their possible part in the traumatic event.

Shame, another trauma manifestation, emerges in Lore's and her father's psyches, as a consequence of humiliation. Lore resists the external humiliation (acts inflicted by others with a purpose to humiliate), the discriminatory laws, and the loss of security and status, by emphasizing her intellectual abilities. When she wets herself at night, however, this armor becomes useless, and she is deeply ashamed. Her father suffers from the loss of his socially-respectable work and the passage into the situation of a refugee and domestic worker. Like Lore, he tries to defend himself by clinging to his skills and abilities. However, his sense of superiority only enhances his disappointment in his current situation, and the humiliation ends up in his emotional and physical collapse.

The different responses to potentially traumatic factors of each one in the family are common in trauma studies, as Caruth (1995, 1996) points out. The mother copes with the sequential traumatic events, while the father remains shattered even after their flight and reunion with Lore. Suffering with the added shock of exile, he cannot recover and collapses into depression, while the mother accepts the hard circumstances until she is broken—temporarily--by the father's death. Based on LaCapra's 2001 conceptualization of the Freudian term "working-through," Lore's father has not worked-through his memory and his melancholia but, instead, immerses himself in them. They trap him in the past, and therefore he cannot move forward. Working through trauma requires overcoming the resistance to deal with the pain and with

the past. In sequence, according to psychoanalysis, the listener, or the therapist, should let enough time and dialogue pass in order to obtain a gradual healing.

An additional trauma manifestation portrayed in the novel is the emotional cut and detachment. This manifestation is probably the most common in all four novels. Lore's characterization reflects the Lacanian approach, drawing from Freud, that a traumatizing event causes disconnection. Lore remains as an observer from the beginning to the end of the novel. When she tells about an incident in which she did not respond to the boys spitting at her, due to her horror, she describes the terror coolly, as if it happened to someone else. Her manner of dealing with the crack in her life is a constant attempt to ignore her history and behave as if nothing has happened. Her negation of the past spills into her relationships with her parents, in whom she sees reminders of unwanted culture and reality. In her desperate attempts to assimilate into English society, she pays more attention to acting like a local than to her emotions and relationships. While she clings to appearances in order to feel safer, however, she never lets herself live fully. Her suffering in the present clarifies that without acknowledging and dealing with her trauma, she remains cut from her core. In order to connect with her self, she has to accept that traumatic events have marked her and affected her identity. By identifying the reasons that hold her back from life, she can start living. Toward the end of the novel, her self-description as a snobbish young English woman applying to college, as well as her report about the passionless affair with a young man show she still values appearances and remains cut from emotional flow. She has become strong enough to build herself a solid future work-wise, but her trauma still impacts her.

However slowly, slight changes indicate that Lore may have begun a process of conciliation with the past and a connection with her feelings. After her father's death, she still manifests anger toward her mother, but gradually her anger gives way to compassion. Her attempt to understand her mother's grief and to give her mother comfort reflects Lore's growing ability of empathy. Her detachment from others goes on, but her care for her mother implies an access to her own feelings. In addition, we learn that Lore starts identifying herself as a Jewish refugee on occasion. This acceptance of her origins and her status as a refugee is a bridge to the past and, perhaps, an acceptance of her own difference. Her trauma does not hold her back anymore in the pragmatic sense of life as well. She manages to cope with the demands of life and becomes an excellent student with a bright future.

Like Lore in *Other People's Houses*, so did Ilka in *Her First American* suffer a war-related separation from her parents at a young age. Clearly, the early split from her parents and the protective environment they provide is traumatic to her. In addition to the early separation, the two characters have in common the sequential trauma, which, in Ilka's case consists of the combination of the long separation, life threat, a decline in life conditions, discrimination, and uncertainty in regard to the destiny of her family. Such conditions are considered acute, according to Guske, since there are no available psychological and social structures prepared to deal with them.

Ilka's pragmatic thinking and goal-focused conduct indicate her standing as a calculated, detached observer. Like Lore, Ilka is active intellectually, but detached emotionally. She considers it essential to remain rational rather than emotionally involved, and this effort stands on her way to create safe, trustful bonds. Ilka, however, as a twenty-one-year-old woman, has better tools than Lore for observation and survival. The distancing prism with which she observes the new place and the local people helps her determine the place she may take in the local society and the women she would like to observe and imitate.

Notably, the difference in the characters' ages at the separation from their parents, the two characters' different routes, and the parents' dissimilar situations lead to a difference in the formation of the characters' identity and in the structure of their trauma. Ilka is separated from her Austrian parents when she is thirteen, while Lore is separated as a younger child. Also, unlike Lore, who spends the war as a refugee in England, reasonably protected from violence, Ilka drifts across Europe during the war, crossing borders illegally, and escaping anti-Semitic perpetrators. During the war and for a long period afterwards, she does not know whether her parents are dead or alive. Her life as a refugee in the US is an official shelter, but the shelter does not save her from the traumatic reality she has been living. She struggles hard to move on, to learn the language, and to become similar and equal to the local people. However, this desperate clinging to the present and her attempt to detach herself from her history keep her trapped in her past suffering. Instead of confronting and deconstructing her past in order to break through her trauma, she observes everything through a filter, and tries to stay in control over her memory. Therefore, she nurtures a few selected memories of good moments with family members, while avoiding memories of suffering or death.

Fundamentally, even though Ilka distances herself from feeling the absence of her parents and the uncertainty regarding their destiny,

she cannot stop thinking about them. Her detachment is not a good enough armor against the persistent need to reunite with them. However, she tries to stay aloof pushing the insistent pain away. She speaks about their absence as if it is simply another subject among other equally-important ones: nodding off on a train, being interviewed for a job and so on, without admitting the depth of her desperation. On one occasion, she arrives in the organization that localizes Jewish people and asks in her fractured English for help, speaking unemotionally with the attendant, Mrs. Apfel. It is Mrs. Apfel, and not Ilka, whose eyes "glaze over with tears" (23). Nevertheless, the obstinate search conveys the importance Ilka attributes to finding and rescuing her mother. She does not give up until her mother is found, and does not settle until her mother arrives in the US.

Unfortunately, Ilka's denial of the past and her roots, a common trauma manifestation related to the emotional detachment, affects her capacity to flow with life. When her mother tells Carter about the Holocaust, Ilka censures her, saying, "They [the black people] have their own stories, Mutti. They don't need our nightmares" (151). She uses Carter's trauma legacy as a reason to silence her mother, but it is obvious she is pained and in panic, hearing about the horror. Filtering nightmarish traumatic incidents is supposed to protect her from pain, but the filter, in the end, creates and recreates a distorted sense of reality.

Ilka's story is locked inside her. At first, she uses her language difficulty as an excuse to avoid opening up and telling Carter about her past. She explains that she would not care telling him her stories because it is tiring to find and use that many words. "I think Fishgoppel thinks I don't tell her because it is too terrible, but it is because it needs so many sentences" (74), she says. However, Carter does not accept the excuse of language and starts asking specific questions about her war experience. She opens up, eventually, and finds herself caught in her narration. "Recollection produced recollection and now nothing could stop Ilka" (75). Language does not stand on her way, now, and she makes Carter "comprehend the words missing from [her] vocabulary" (75).

Despite the exchange with Carter, however, Ilka feels disconnected from the traumatic experiences of others and believes they cannot understand hers. After sharing her story with Carter, even though she creates certain intimacy with him, she still does not feel fully-comprehended, and concludes that understanding another life and suffering has its limits. Nevertheless, as an observer, she is aware of the pain of others. About Carter, whose drinking they discuss, she says: he "let his head drop into his hand like a piece of luggage he had carried a

moment past his strength" (72). When he tells her about his childhood, "[i]t was Ilka's turn to try, as Carter had tried, and mainly failed—as one is bound to fail—to construct a biography out of a friend's stories" (112).

As a result, Ilka does not confide enough in anyone else. When people reveal their interest in her life story, she detaches herself from emotional communication, and, instead, tells her history in anecdotes composed to affect her listeners without letting them enter her psyche. She builds her stories according to her listeners' preferences and not to her necessity to confide in them. In the narrator's words: "In the years to come Ilka learned which parts of her history affected her hearers and made good anecdotes; the rest remained untold" (130). This is another facet of Ilka's trauma-induced detachment. Her world is solitary.

The traumatic impact of the early separation from her parents becomes more painful to Ilka in the light of her father's murder. In her study of the Kindertransport, mentioned in relation to *Other People's Houses,* Guske (2009) argues that children whose parents sent them away to safety and did not survive, suffer an extra shock permeated with guilt when they learn about the loss. They feel disloyal to the parent for not being there to help or for leaving them to their death. In Ilka's case, she learns about her father's death from the letter she receives from her mother. She is relieved to find that her mother is alive, but at the same time she learns that her father was shot by the Nazis in the last week of the war. The mother writes that she left him on the road to Obernpest during the death march, a phrase she will repeat in Ilka's ears over and over due to her own traumatic process.

Ilka cannot make sense of her mother's story and the horror englobed in it. According to Langer (1996) and Young (1998), such an inability to digest the horror is a typical trauma manifestation among Holocaust survivors since the genocide is out of any accessible or acceptable proportion. Ilka calls Carter and tells him in a rather stunned manner, "That I don't understand" (126). The facts are detailed in the letter, but they are of such horror, her mind cannot capture them and her emotions cannot cope.

Fundamentally, the lack of clarity in Ilka's perception occurs not only due to the measure of the horror, but also because of her difficulty to absorb the present without blocking it with past experiences and images. Her confusion conveys that time is not linear for her: the past exists in the present without any boundaries. As a result, the meeting between her and her mother is almost surreal. Ilka's memories hang "like a ghost" (65) in her mother's presence, adding layers of past

images to the present one. To Ilka, her mother seems transparent against the reality of the street. Thus, the past is so alive in her, the present in which her mother arrives seems inaccessible. "It wasn't the added years only; events accrued to her that Ilka did not know anything about that made her a stranger" (144). Now that the past blocks her access to her mother, she fights the blocking division trying to reintroduce it into the present. She watches her mother closely until she feels she is seeing her as the person she is now.

In addition, due to her denial of pain, only when she reencounters her mother does she become aware of the measure of her anxiety so far. During the meeting, "Ilka glimpses her fear about her mother that has grown so normal for so many years that Ilka became acquainted with it only now, by its having been taken away from her […]" (65). This phenomenon of sudden self-awareness and the accompanied relief resembles Lore's sense of body liberation on the occasion of her parents' arrival in England. In Ilka's case, the body does not play an immediate role, although later on her relief is expressed in the way she makes love with Carter.

As happened earlier, Ilka's openness for mutual listening and telling, feeling empathy, and helping to heal, as the psychoanalytic theory recommends, is limited in relation to her mother as well. "Ilka could sit beside her and put a blanket around her shoulders, but could not enter the horror inside which her mother was alone, shivering uncontrollably" (250). In other words, despite being both trauma survivors, and despite her mother's sharing, Ilka feels that they cannot penetrate the horror inside each other, the way they cannot feel what the other feels, nor dream what the other dreams. Thus, the empathetic listener as a healing tool as conceptualized by Caruth (1996) does not materialize in this relationship.

Both mother and daughter suffer from the manifestation of fear. While her mother fears the ghosts of the past, Ilka fears the repetition of catastrophic events. Her dread of war and violence comes to the forefront on several occasions in her everyday life, showing a lacking sense of security despite the change of place and period in history. She is afraid that political clashes are leading to horror events again, and her terror testifies to the extent of her disturbance. Her fear emerges stronger than usual on the occasion she reads a headline on a subway passenger's newspaper about tension between the Soviet Union and the US. Without thinking, she asks the passenger, "Will it be war?" (114), but learns he speaks only Spanish. As she gets off the subway in a state of anxiety, she falls out onto the platform, affected by the destabilizing information

brought by the news. Female Russian employees from the Soviet embassy hurry to help her, but she pretends to be fine, distrusting them because of their origins.

She runs from the station to her place of work, from where she calls Carter, appealing, as usual, to his knowledge and judgement. He, however, does not do anything to calm her down. Applying his characteristic irony, and imitating her English, he says, "'If it be not now, yet it will come.'" She is so alarmed at his reaction, her lips become paralyzed with fear. "'You sound happy!'" (114) she blurts. She cannot comprehend the gap between their responses: to him the possible clash is exciting, an opportunity of change, while to her it is a death threat. However, she accepts his invitation to accompany him to the United Nations and watch the discussion. As they enter the UN, she notices that Carter is treated as a well-known UN employee, journalist, and intellectual, and she concludes with admiration that despite his hard childhood, he refuses to be a victim. She is not capable yet to challenge the world, still feeling vulnerable, but her admiration for his attitude suggests she will try to overcome her inhibitions.

Like Ilka's inability to come to terms with past events, her mother's clinging to the past suggests a traumatic impact. Upon arrival in Ilka's home, she tells Ilka and her cousin, Fishgoppel, about her husband's death. She describes how the Jews marched until collapsing out of complete exhaustion or death. On the road in Obenprest, Ilka's father, Vati, sat down on the roadside, too sick and weak to go on. He told the mother to keep walking, and she did as he asked, because she was afraid of the Nazis' violence. Afterwards, she could not fathom how she had left him. This is a crisis of values and a source of great pain. When she asked the people who marched after her about him, one of them told her that a soldier shot a man with spectacles, who was peeing behind a bush, and she knew it was her husband. Her sorrow is devastating, involving grief, shock, guilt, and shame. "How howhowhowhowhow did I go on and leave him sitting on the side of the road!" she wails. She has not processed the event and has no clue as how to confront this part of her past. She retreats into herself and her past and avoids participating in the life that continues despite the horrors.

The trauma manifestation of anger and guilt implied by the mother's reaction to her husband's death evokes the crucial subject of implication and its place in understanding trauma. The mother continually resents her husband's plea for her to go on and his decision to stay behind, as she feels that this decision made her a collaborator in his murder. Clearly, she thinks that both of them must have known what

was coming, because the Nazis exterminated the sick. She does not take in account that she could not have prevented the murder, and might have been murdered too, had she stayed. In her mind, her decision to keep going seems like a crime.

Unlike Ilka, who deals with her trauma through a fierce adoption of the US, Ilka's mother cannot disconnect herself from the past, as she has not developed such defense mechanisms. The tension rises as Ilka's mother, unable to start anew, cannot bring herself to be a tourist and go out to the streets. To Ilka's desperation, her mother does not make any attempt to adapt to the new country and find her own way in it. Clearly, the mother does not find a comprehensive listener in Ilka, and Ilka, fighting her own demons, imagines herself elsewhere, with Carter. For Ilka, Carter is a shelter, since he symbolizes to her a mature, welcoming, sophisticated, though sick America. Her mother, however, does not have such a solace. She shares her discomfort and fear with everyone around her, but it does not exorcize her trauma.

In addition, Ilka's mother is tortured by nightmares, another trauma manifestation, as she dreams about ants becoming monsters, and about other violent and fearful episodes. The nightmares bond her with the horror and are, possibly, what LaCapra (2001) calls "traumatropism" (xiv) or rather, trauma as a stationary place. The survivor dares not leave this state for fear of losing contact with the past. Unlike Ilka, the mother accepts pain, and in order to endure it, she focuses on it. In a way, she starts cultivating pain as if the feeling works as a substitute of her husband, representing him in her. She says, "I've been wishing not to have the pain. That is not one of my choices. What I *can* choose is *how* to have it and what I'm going to do is to concentrate on having pain. Perhaps that is a way to bear it. I am going to fix exactly what pain is" (161).

The mother goes on exposing her soul to anyone around her, but she is very shy about exposing her body, even when she is hospitalized. Guilt-ridden, she has to hide from the judgmental gaze of others, because it may condemn her. The body is the proof she is alive while her husband is not. Ilka is annoyed with her, as always, as if what the mother goes through is too "close to home." She shouts, "You're afraid to be naked […] You're afraid to go out! You won't learn English"(148). Her mother ignores her, and sinks into hallucinations about her husband. She sees him with the police, the evil police. In her hallucination, he knows that three policemen are going to cut her but does nothing to stop them. She becomes confused about present events

as well. Once, she alarms Ilka, asking about Ilka's father as if he were alive.

Ilka sees her mother's behavior and eventual memory failures with daily logical thinking as the beginning of senility. However, it appears that while Ilka is able to push the past into a parallel channel to her present life, her mother lives in one channel alone. According to Judith Herman (1997), trauma cannot be integrated into a person's ongoing life story, and therefore, "the traumatic memory will be more powerful in the present in its dissociated state" (89). The memory disorder may be attributed to various factors, of course. According to Ruth Leys (2000), post-traumatic stress disorder is fundamentally a disorder of memory. Caruth, too, links disconnection and blurred memory to trauma. Based on this analysis, the terror and shock the mother experienced have caused a split and a dissociation in her psyche, since the regular psychological mechanisms of consciousness and understanding are destroyed by the inadmissible. She is unable to integrate her experience in ordinary consciousness, and therefore, intrusive traumatic memories haunt her. The traumatic experience is perpetually reexperienced, dissociating the present and her mental state. In Kraft's view (2002), this impossibility causes many trauma survivors to experience a double life: the past exists parallelly with the present. In his view, doubling is a near universal theme. However, it appears that Ilka's mother cannot even have a double consciousness, as she cannot live in the present, until the end of the novel, when her grandchildren awake her to life.

In yet another trauma manifestation, Ilka's mother reveals her disconnection with reality when she tells her story in German, unaware that nobody, except Ilka, understands her. Unlike Ilka, she does not feel the boundary of language, or of good manners, nor the need to be interesting in other people's eyes. She lives and relives her past and has an impulse to share it with others. When she feels "the cold knife" (153) of history in her body, she describes her pain, bitterly saying that this pain cannot bring back her husband, that it is not a sign he will come back.

In fact, the bond with Ilka is the last thing that grounds the mother in reality. She derives little solace from Ilka's presence, but it gives her a sense of relative safety. She isolates herself, depends on Ilka for everything, and does not show any intention of changing the situation. Ilka's anger flares up easily. She stays as much as possible out of her mother's way. "Whereas Ilka's mother counted the times Ilka went out, Ilka counted every time she stayed at home, and every time

she went out she felt she *ought* to have stayed" (148). Nevertheless, while Ilka becomes furious innumerous times, she never questions the mother/daughter bond. She was educated to be a good daughter and a decent person, and she feels guilty when she leaves her mother for more than strictly necessary. However, she cannot resist her need to escape the memories and their effect on her mother. Carter and Fishgoppel encourage the mother to speak, as they have the armor of distance Ilka lacks. When Ilka tells Carter she cannot listen to the story of her father's death over and over, he points out to her that her own sensitivity makes her feel this way. She refuses to look into her resentment -- or toward their memories and history -- and recognize the emotional load she has always carried since the war broke out. In this regard, Langer points out such differences between the generations in *Holocaust Testimonies, The Ruins of Memory* (1991). Although he speaks about parents, who are direct survivors, and their sons and daughters, who are indirect ones, the situation has noticeable similarities. The scholar illustrates miscommunication between the generations, writing that "Despite the presence of their children, the parents speak of being lonely and sad. The daughter [...] sees her parents as people who have 'managed to build a life afterwards and still have some hope'" (x). Clearly, the mismatched attitudes cause tension and miscommunication in the mother-daughter relationships. It should be noticed, however, that the hard relationships that form between Ilka and her mother have several other causes as well. They are a consequence of the long separation, the need to get to know each other as adults, the different horrifying experiences each of them has gone through, and of being away from each other in the hardest times of their lives.

When Ilka despairs from her mother's incapacity to move on, she decides, together with Fishgoppel, to take her mother for a visit in Austria, starting with Vienna. She hopes to help her mother overcome her obsession with the past, and, although she does not admit it clearly, she needs to go back in order to confront her own feelings. Both she and her mother are certain they remember everything, but Ilka discovers that she remembers "what she did not remember" (264), confusing directions and locations. She guesses what she will see on the next block and who she will see there, based on sensorial memories. The manifestation of blurred memory, connected to the rapture caused by the traumatic event, makes the life lived before that rapture seem distant and unrelated to the reality formed afterwards. Ilka realizes the difference in the physical perspective of a child and an adult, but the change in perspective is not

only literal but also figurative: things are different although they haven't changed. This is the "stuff memory is made of" (265).

The visit to what used to be their homeland, their city, and their home is harder on them than they expected. Instead of healing their emotional wounds, it frustrates and upsets them. There is joy in Ilka's reencounter with her childhood city, but there is much more anxiety. Her unease only grows during a sequence of awkward meetings. In the building in which the family used to live, for instance, a suspicious neighbor looks through the peephole, does not let them in, and says that their family is not there and is unknown to her anyway. Ilka connects the neighbor's behavior to the persecution and prejudice she suffered there before the war. Things go downhill from this incident. She and her mother recall acquaintances who could not obtain visas to leave Austria and therefore committed suicide. Acts of cruelty return to their memory, and they find no relief in the familiarity of the place. On their way to Obernpest, Ilka considers each person's age in order to calculate whether they were adults during the war. Her mother cannot eat at all. Upon arrival in Obernpest, the mother is shocked to find that places marked clearly in her memory, such as a large lake, are not located exactly where she remembers them. Thus, they cannot find the spot on the road where the father was murdered.

Still there, Ilka realizes she will never be able to love Austria again, because her homeland rejected her, killed her father, traumatized her mother, and drove people she cared about to death, exile, torture and/or a life of fear. If she expected to be relieved of her painful memories and find peace, she is sorely disappointed. The wound may have become a scar, but it is there and will never let her forget. Upon their return to the US, she decides it is time for her naturalization as an American. Her past is treacherous and she can count only on her future.

In addition to the above, the collective trauma of the Jewish community is represented through the portrayal of Ilka's cousin, the character named Fishgoppel, who has not experienced personally an anti-Semitic persecution, and yet her life revolves around a fight against anti-Semitism. Fishgoppel's focus on the cause to avoid any more Jewish suffering inflicted by anti-Semitism shows the connection between the individual and the collective. The scholars Brown (1995), Tal (1996), Langer (1996), and Young (1998) affirm, in this regard, that the effect of horrifying events on the community and its members does not depend on experiencing the event personally. Although Fishgoppel has been safe in comparison to her cousin, aunt, and other Jews in Europe, threats such as persecution, the Holocaust, and anti-Semitism

are a part of her life. In fact, the state of the Jewish community as a target minority group overpowers her individual history. Related to the Jewish intergenerational collective trauma, Caruth argues, in her interpretation of Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), that the Jewish collective trauma is originated in the time they were enslaved in Egypt, their exile, and in the traumatizing events that happened in the departure from Egypt. Another element Caruth introduces as traumatizing to Jews is the belief that the Jewish people has been chosen by God. While on one hand this belief in a great destiny helped the people survive through endless cases of persecution, it also takes their destiny from their hands and puts it in the hands of God (Unclaimed 10-15). This argument can be stretched to the Christian belief that Jesus is the son of God, and that God chose to relieve others' suffering through his son's. Interestingly, such a parallel implies that being God's choice infers pain according to both Judaism and Christianism. Either way, the assertion that collective memory goes back from current events to historical ones and back, and constructs meanings that are based on history and on the present is exemplified through this character. Ilka's view of her cousin indicates where the individual and collective trauma intersect.

The angle of collective trauma in the black community is also represented in *Her First American,* mainly by the African-American characters Carter and Ebony, through their recollection and social criticism. Notably, we read it through the point of view of Ilka, a white, exiled Jewish woman and Segal's alter ego. Ilka empathizes, but since she believes in the inability of one person to understand another through a trauma narrative, an identification is hardly accomplishable as she sees it. In fact, she believes that not even people who share the same legacy can understand one another unless they have gone through the same experiences. Later on, however, as detailed in the next section, we learn she does develop an identification.

The collective and individual black trauma, we learn, has been provoked not only by the history of slavery but also by lack of options in their childhood and by the continued experience of discrimination. The African-American trauma legacy can be better understood in the light of the power of a past event to shed light on current traumatizing events as illustrated in Fanon's 1952 book *Black Faces, White Masks*. Even though Carter and Ebony were born in the United States and have secured a respectable social position, she as a teacher and he as an academic and a journalist, they are affected by history. Their private jokes about white people's patronizing view of blacks suggest a sense of discrimination and a resentment at the insidious humiliation inflicted on

them. The black characters' unity in their judgement of white people who try to do well by blacks reveals that the whites' hope to repair historical injustice is not enough. They have to be attentive to the black community's expressed needs because, otherwise, they still appear to consider themselves as a superior community. "You don't get no brownie points from me" (209), says Carter, trying to clarify that mere good will or an empty gesture does not release the oppressor from responsibility. On another occasion he says, "The lamb lay down with the lion to induce the coming of the Peaceable Kingdom. The kingdom didn't come. The lamb got eaten up" (220).

Thus, the tension and the connection between minorities due to different legacies of trauma, and their similarities and differences in understanding and responding to trauma are present is the novel in the encounters between the Jewish Ilka and the African-American Carter, and their respective relatives and acquaintances. As I will show, by the end of the narrative, Ilka tries to bridge this gap. She realizes the importance of identification. Endorsing the importance of understanding, Glynis Cousin, an education scholar, and Robert Fine from the field of sociology write in "A Common Cause" (2014) that an integrated approach toward trauma reveals more of the mechanisms of social workings, and gives more tools to combat oppression. They argue that "prominent theorists of racism and antisemitism (e.g., Du Bois, Fanon, Arendt) have "[…] identified important connections between these fields of exclusion and persecution in the making of European modernity" (*European Societies* 166-85).

Also seeking similarities, as Ilka does in the novel, Paul Gilroy, a scholar of literature, tries to draw the similarities between the ways minorities deal with trauma. He argues that, despite the different historical circumstances and their consequences, in the case of the black and the Jewish communities--as the blacks are descendants of people who were brought to the United States against their will, and the Jews, on the other hand, escaped the horror elsewhere and came to the US by choice—it is important to look at parallel elements. The comparison serves much more than the lamentable competition of whose trauma is worse. It leads to a common approach when the Holocaust, slavery, and middle passage are studied together and in the light of one another. He adds that "dangers for both blacks and Jews in accepting their historic and unsought association with sublimity" (215-6) have to be taken in account. Tal (1996) notes that Gilroy's direct addressing and comparing black and Jewish responses to traumatic experience have been ignored by the Eurocentric trauma and memory scholarship. This is, hopefully,

changing with studies like the one offered here. In the literary field, *Her First American* is one of the few books successfully uniting the social issues of these minorities (New York Times Review, Web).

Although certain rivalry and prejudice exist on both sides in *Her First American*, the novel brings the issue into public debate, raises an informed consciousness of horrors born from racism, and activates social and constitutional tools that advance equality and, hopefully, prevent a repetition of such violence. Besides, the inclusion of female minority characters enhances the role of gender in this intersectional study of abuse. Segal's characters, Lore, Ilka, and Fishgoppel, represent a mostly interested and inclusive attitude toward the ethno-racial traumas of other minorities, although at times they elevate their own community and its history above others. Ilka's and Fishgoppel's experience with anti-Semitism reveals a mixture of inclusive and exclusive treatment received from Carter and his friends, members of the African American community. Carter gives a counterbalance to Ilka's story and history, as he pays attention to the intersecting collective memory of Jewish and of African American minorities in the US.

The controversy over the way the Holocaust is represented starts within the US Jewish community among right and left wings, liberal and conservative Jews, as analyzed by Tal (1996), but there is no controversy over the magnitude of the horror, the genocide, the traumatizing impact and the position of it as a paradigm for racial genocide. The tension between the African-American and the Jewish-American communities is based on fundamental discordances as well as on a comparison between the suffering in the history of each of these communities. For instance, according to Harold Cruse (1967), an African-American scholar, the location of the event is a determining factor for trauma definition. In the 1967 *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual,* he argues that since the Jews have not suffered in the United States, the Holocaust is not relevant, and requests for help or references to the Holocaust are empty manipulations (484-6). On the Jewish side, Tal points out that right-wing leaders have refused to treat slavery as a model of suffering and trauma, seeing the Holocaust as an incomparable paradigm of genocide.

Unlike Cruse, Du Bois expresses an opposite point of view in his article "The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto" (1967) after his three visits to Poland and the remains of Warsaw Ghetto. Based on his impressions, he argues that every history of oppression is composed of similar aspects, such as racism, beyond the question of color, and the

dissimilar aspects can still be understood better seen in the light of the history of the world. The result of his visits, he writes,

> was not so much clearer understanding of the Jewish problem in the world as it was a real and complete understanding of the Negro problem. In the first place, the problem of slavery, emancipation and caste in the United States was no longer in my mind a separate and unique thing as I had so long conceived it. […] No, the race problem in which I was interested cut across lines of color and physique and belief and status and was a matter of cultural patterns, perverted teaching and human hate and prejudice, which reached all sorts of people and caused endless evil to all men. (15)

Thus, Du Bois offers empathy and understanding resulting from the relation and intersection of different ethno-racial legacies. He points out the political structure of violence and oppression, world powers and how they work. This comprehension of the world cannot be reached without equating systematic oppression and genocide with one another. Notably, in *Her First American*, these two historical traumas are not compared, although each character is aware of the legacies of the other character's community. The novel reveals its historical layers through the dialogues about the changing legislation regarding new immigrants, the activism in the black communities, public atmosphere, and national and international policies. It is clear that, although racism is gradually becoming illegal, there are frequent expressions of it in the characters' everyday life, as I will detail below.

Both Ilka and Carter explore the relation between the past and the present the way they experience it and through the other's perception. Her direct and also indirect experience of the Holocaust, his indirect experience of slavery and his direct experience of segregation are shown, as they share their past. On several occasions, Ilka and her cousin Fishgoppel comment that all suffering has similar structures and therefore provokes similar impacts on individuals and communities. They express their feeling of proximity to the black community, expecting mutual understanding. Carter is compassionate on the individual level, when he is not drunkenly embittered, but he is more rigid than they are when it comes to the collective experience of the community. His affirmation of an imminent and justified violent black revolution, as he writes in an article during the time of riots, is a reflection on a nationalist or rather community-based ideology. Historical injuries inflict on decolonized communities the need to take a stand either with an inclusion of the oppressor's culture or without it. The need to strengthen the identity against past and potential colonizers

leads to an intolerance of any other culture (not only the oppressor's) in favor of affirmation of uniqueness and unity.

Moments of breaking through trauma take place throughout the novel, as Ilka struggles to find her footing. Although her perceptions and expectations have been formed by a trauma-affected self, they have not become an unsurpassable obstacle. After all, she has managed to start a life in the new country with courage and energy despite her trauma. Unlike many trauma survivors, who cannot cope with life, among them her mother, she leads a regular life from the moment she arrives. Clearly, the adjustment requires effort, and the effort is accompanied by anxiety and fear, but, nevertheless, her behavior and her choices are not counter-productive.

As mentioned in Chapter 3 in relation to gender, it is a man's love and the physicality of this love that help Ilka reconnect with life. She tells him about her history and the geography of the runaway years during which she "crossed and recrossed Europe to Lisbon" (75). Deeply moved, he takes her in her arms. At that moment, with this closeness, she feels like "someone who has been approaching a terrain—a mountain perhaps—across the intervening landscape". She mentions "the astonishment of his actual chest" (75), as if something has divided her from everything concrete beforehand. Once she breaks her shell, she connects to him, to his body, and to her own sense of lived reality. Later, it appears that she withdraws once more into her shell, but it already has a crack in it.

The end of her long separation from her mother makes for another bridge to life. Her mother's arrival fills Ilka with a sense of completion, and with a (brief) hope that life could return to be the way it used or ought to be. However, their adaptation to each other is complex. The Holocaust has robbed them of everything they had: a husband and a father, other relatives and most of their friends and acquaintances, their future, property, home, and sense of belonging. However, there is a palpable difference in the way trauma manifests itself in Ilka and in her mother. Ilka's approach to memory and history drive her to build a future in a land she sees as full of hope, while her mother lives within memory and history and rejects change.

A moment of transformation occurs, also, after Ilka's experiencing the fear of a war between the USSR and the US. She is affected by Carter's growing sense of hope when he finds that the US holds an advantage over the Soviet Union in the conflict. He conveys to her that victory is possible thanks to a political struggle. He extends this

empowerment to blacks, and she is comforted by the possibility of justice for minorities in a general manner.

Also on that occasion, in the United Nations, she stops listening to the debate and falls into a daydream in which she imagines herself preaching for justice, speaking English with perfect eloquence. Interestingly, feeling as if she had mastered the language plays an important role in the healing process. Since her limited knowledge of the language reflects, in her perception, the vulnerable position of an outsider, a perfect mastery signifies being in a position of power.

In a later section of the book, Ilka's pain catches up with her and she lets herself feel sorrow, anger and other emotions that scare her, to a point of catharsis. This takes place during their vacation in his friends' farm, when he speaks about an ex-wife with certain longing. This hits Ilka so violently, she cannot hold back her sobbing. She starts out crying out of jealousy, but this is merely a gate to her other restrained emotions. Her tears do not stop, and she "cries and cries" (215) for a whole day, without knowing the reason for her crying any longer. Now that she has an access to her emotions and exposes her vulnerability to others, the process of reconnection and self-acceptance is in motion.

As for other characters, the mother eventually finds enough strength to face the present, when her granddaughter is born. The newborn supplies the confirmation that the multigenerational link goes on despite everything. In addition, this recovery implies the power of love to heal her or at least to allow her a "remission". Ilka, always worried, is not sure the peace will last for long, however. She refers to her mother's nightmares when she says, "The burglars are letting her alone, for the time being" (284).

Carter, Ebony, and Fishgoppel take the road of resistance. Carter does it through his articles and lectures. Ebony insists on breaking conventions in her close circles. She does not let any hint of racial or sexist disrespect pass without her intervention. Fishgoppel is active in Jewish organizations and writes a scholarly work against anti-Semitism. These characters' chosen approach affects Ilka in the end. When Carter dies, she tries to convince his black students that one suffering minority should meet the understanding and compassion of another suffering minority. The students do not show any interest, but her internal power has grown and she struggles for justice.

4.2 Danticat's and Brand's Novels

The Caribbean memory legacies of trauma conduct the two Caribbean-based novels, Danticat's *The Farming of Bones* and Brand's *At the Full and Change of the Moon*. In both, the history of colonization and neo-colonization requires a decolonized trauma theory. The decolonized approach, however, has not yet established clear leading rules. While trauma theory has gradually opened to minority thinkers of the black diaspora since the 1990s, the mechanism is still rooted in the European experience and research. Thus, the examination of trauma does not always observe the socio-cultural patterns of postcolonial societies. In view of that, the following analysis of *The Farming of Bones* and *At the Full and Change of the Moon* attempts to point out what is overlooked by traditional trauma theory, and portray trauma not only as a psychological disorder but also as a cultural, political, and economic problem.

Certain literary tools, such as the fragmented narration typical of Caribbean storytelling, are employed in both novels. The fragmentation reflects the fragmented collective identity, formed and reformed across slavery, colonization, exile, and war. It also reflects the fragmented self of trauma survivors, whose memories are such a torture they cannot cope with all of them. Thus, the framework of fragmented narrative contains different experiences (and, especially in Brand's novel, diverse identities) formed across several discourses and historical events. It serves as a counter-discourse to the linear Western mode and its binary view of the world.

Clearly, the novels also differ. To indicate the multicultural aspect of the Caribbean islands, special attention is given to the differences between them.

4.2.1 *The Farming of Bones*

Fundamentally, the difference between *The Farming of Bones* and *At the Full and Change of the Moon* appears not only in the location and the time frame of each novel but also in the dislocation of the main cause of trauma from slavery to the 1937 massacre. As Martin Munro (2006) points out, "The great works of Caribbean writing have almost without exception addressed the historical legacies of the traumatizing, forced displacement of slavery" (81). However, Haitian literature, exemplified here by Danticat's, is an exception to Caribbean literature in its focus on traumatic events other than slavery.

In addition, the novel refers to the trauma legacy through Amabelle's personal history of pain and loss, thus accomplishing Danticat's goal to open room in literature and in the popular debate for individual stories, especially women's, within collective history. In the foreword to the 2001 essay collection *Walking on Fire; Haitian women's stories of survival and resistance*, Danticat illustrates the situation of Haitian women through a memorable image:

> Walking on Fire, this is exactly what many Haitian women do everyday. Whether they are pounding pots and pans against the walls of their homes to protest the latest injustice, […] singing by the river as they pound stones on the family wash, running a ministry dedicated to the status and rights of women […] they always seem to have one foot over burning coals and the other aimed at solid ground. (vii)

Danticat's work reflects her concern with the ongoing situation of Haitians in general and Haitian women in particular. Thus, *The Farming of Bones* takes the form of the testimony of a woman in regard to the 1937 massacre--and the complicated return to Haiti afterwards--, a primary traumatic event in the history of Haiti. In fact, the nonhistorical consciousness Edouard Glissant attributes to Caribbean narrative in *Poetics of Relation* (1990) finds its counterpoint in Amabelle's story, as the novel struggles with this tendency to underestimate traumatic events in the Caribbean history of slavery, colonization, and genocide. In addition, Glissant's suggestion to consider the Caribbean, and in particular the Haitian lived history as a steadily advancing neurosis sheds light on the collective backdrop of Danticat's novel. In fact, Danticat's novel echoes Glissant's view. Glissant defines the slave trade, in the name of Haitians, as

> a traumatic shock, our relocation (in the new land) as a repressive phase, slavery as the period of latency, 'emancipation' in 1848 as reactivation, our everyday fantasies as symptoms, and even our horror of 'returning to those things of the past' as a possible manifestation of the neurotic's fear of his past? (68)

While the collective consciousness, as Glissant argues, is unable to assimilate the traumatic events, therefore forgetting them (62) Danticat's narrative reminds the world that the events have an ongoing impact on individual consciousness and life. Amabelle's story recreates the horror of the 1937 massacre and the circumstances that led to it, allowed a genocide to take place, and later on silenced it. In this way, the reconstruction forces the local and the international community to

acknowledge and digest these facts. Danticat assesses history in order to possess it, despite the "erased memory" (161) of the 1937 genocide.

Moreover, *The Farming of Bones*, with its portrayal of individual lives, conveys the complex interaction between trauma and memory to erased historical events, and points out the double repression of the individual whose right to recall traumatic events and act upon them is denied by the community. With her first-person narration, Amabelle constitutes an example of Bhabba's argument in *The Location of Culture* (1994) that history invades the domestic sphere in complex, intersecting ways, and therefore, "the borders between home and world become confused; and, uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other, forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorientating" (9). The many individual forms of trauma, the personal narrations of traumatic events, and the social interactions of trauma survivors among themselves and with others recreates collective memory despite the ruptures and discontinuities of the past. Danticat extends to her character the important role of raising the awareness of injustice and stirring a debate about restitution, acknowledgement, and a constructive reassembling of history.

Another characteristic of the novel is the intersection of trauma and disability. As Hewett's 2006 article points out, "the novel presents a complex perspective on the meanings of disability and the relationship of disability to trauma" (123). This relation occurs in the period following the massacre, as traumatized survivors suffering from psychic and physical wounds return to their unwelcoming homeland, where they deal with further intersectional oppression. The detailed study of the body-related problems and trauma emerging from disability, and the possible ways to overcome them have been discussed in relation to the body in Chapter 3. However, it is essential to point out once more that the cross between disability and trauma, their intersecting impact on the individual and on the society of which the disabled individual is a member, suggest that the process of healing should include all the different factors of pain.

Notably, the fragmented narrative develops the issue of disability and trauma in a linguistic manner. Like the fragmented body and the compartmented memory that break the linearity of time, health, and life, so does the text break, skip from the past to the present and back, from exile to exile, and from loss to loss. Danticat's novel illustrates this disintegration of Amabelle's life: a black Haitian who has been exposed to the colonizers' discourse, the neo-colonized Haitian

discourse, Dominican discourse, and the changing Haitian discourse back in Haiti.

Another cultural representation of trauma beside the fragmented narration emerges with the haunting ghosts and folkloric characters that participate in the lives of the characters. In a general manner, the Haitian tradition of vodou and storytelling is traced back to the times of slavery. Therefore, the reference to these figures implies that history is a part of the Haitian identity, and that it is rich and worth-preserving and developing. According to Munro, "The [sugar] woman is in part a product of the initial, historical traumas of slavery, as becomes clear when she says that the muzzle she wears was 'given to me a long time ago… so I'd not eat the sugarcane' (132)" (86). In Amabelle's psyche, traditional symbols and figures act out as agents of her deepest emotions. She forms a bond between her dreams and Haitian folklore through the sugar woman, Metrès Dlo, the mistress of water, and the Legba, the guardian of the crossroads. Her identification with these cultural symbols comes to light when Generalissimo Trujillo is assassinated and, in Amabelle's mind, the sugar woman dances the folkloric dance named kalanda. Amabelle dances the same dance on the occasion. Thus, slavery is included in the narrative through culture, even though it is not referred to directly. The usage of such elements is a counter-discursive expression against the linear colonial/Western perspective of those who enslaved the black Africans turned Haitians. The narrative provides a glimpse at Haitian culture and folklore, as well as at the influence of these on trauma manifestations, and introduces trauma in a concrete cultural context. It also implies that colonialism has not erased local culture (with the exception of erased colonization-related traumatizing historical events) although it has clearly left marks on it.

Due to the painful memories, it is no wonder that trauma manifestations become an inseparable part of the characters' lives. Trauma caused by sudden losses of family members appear in Amabelle's, Sebastien's, Kongo's and Valencia's stories. Each of them carries grief as a part of the fabric of their selves. Like Segal's novel, *Her First American*, *The Framing of Bones* points to the possibility that suffering awakens the individual to the suffering of others. Amabelle identifies with Sebastien's loss of his parents, when, in moments of great closeness, he describes the scene of death. He says, "[y]ou can see it before your eyes, a boy carrying his dead father from the road, wobbling, swaying, stumbling under the weight. […] The boy trying not to drop the father, not crying or screaming like you'd think, but praying

that more of the father's blood will stay in the father's throat and not go into the muddy flood" (35). She absorbs his unhealed sorrow and describes it with care, saying, "[h]e imagines that the way pigeons moan is the same way ghosts cry when they are too lonely or too sad, when they have been dead so long that they have forgotten how to speak their own names" (28). His story of loss is as violent as hers. Both of them were children, helplessly witnessing their parents' deaths by nature. This identification of nature with tragedy is built up through their stories and remains for the whole novel. Amabelle also feels pity for Kongo, the old cane sugar worker, whose son was killed, when he takes his dead son's body away and refuses to go through the usual rituals. She comments that even Valencia, the Dominican boss whose husband is a military and the accident causer, shows compassion toward Kongo due to a symmetry of loss. Valencia loses her twin son, soon after Kongo loses his son. However, Valencia's trauma and her act of compassion take a backseat in Amabelle's narration, in the light of Valencia's passivity during the massacre.

Detachment and dissociation, common trauma manifestations, affect Amabelle as well. Her emotional distance develops after her parents' death, is flexed in regard to Sebastien, and becomes more acute after the massacre. In fact, her narration seems to be a story she has told herself or others over and over again. She has assembled every tiny detail of the death scene as if a careful observation could make sense of the horror. "Separated, they [her parents] are less of an obstacle for the cresting river" (47), she says. She goes on and fills the picture with details such as "I toss the pots in and watch them bob along the swell of the water, disappearing into the braided line that is the river at a distance" (52). Her despair is clear from the story, yet, it is not expressed with emotion. "I walk down to the sands to throw the pots into the water and then myself" (52), she says, again, emphasizing the sensorial experience.

The drowning of her parents returns to her in recurrent nightmares, as is common to trauma survivors. Caruth (1995, 1996) and Herman (1997), among others, point out that while the memory itself may be blurred or dissociated, it does not drop off the survivor's psyche but repeats itself through dreams or hallucinations. In this vein, Amabelle's dreams relive her memory as a child witnessing her parents' drowning. She is haunted by the pain of being cut from them, the horror of their death, the sense of her helplessness, her grief, and the guilt of surviving them. In the beginning of the novel, she tells her lover, Sebastien: "'I had my dream of my parents in the river […] I always see

it precisely the way it took place'" (49). He is willing to help her find her way out of this shadowy dreamland by changing her perception of her dreams and even by changing her dreams.

Later on, Amabelle suffers from recurring dreams about the sugar woman. The variations in the conjured-up woman, the folkloric Haitian figure, reveal Amabelle's emotional state. She is surprised to realize that the sugar woman in her dream is Amabelle herself as a suffering child. She says: "[t]he voice that comes out of my mouth surprises me; it is the voice of the orphaned child at the stream, the child who from then on would talk only to strange faces" (103). At other times, the sugar woman appears masked and estranged, however. The sugar woman's transformation into an alienated figure illustrates Amabelle's dread of other sinister changes life may hold for her. In one of these dreams, the sugar woman says to Amabelle that they are one. "'Told you before,' she says. 'I am the sugar woman. You, my eternity'" (103). The dream scares Amabelle the way her memories scare her. Amabelle's fear does not diminish as long as she withdraws from life and detaches herself from her surroundings. When she is ready to face her past, toward the end of the novel, the sugar woman becomes her bond with the collective memory.

The subconscious repetition of a traumatic event slides from dreams to reality. This occurs when Amabelle tries to cross the river with Odette, a runaway compatriot, to escape death. When they are in the water and Wilner, Odette's husband, is shot, Amabelle tries to prevent Odette from screaming and being killed, but fails to keep her above the water. Odette ends-up drowning, and her death intensifies Amabelle's view of the river as a determiner of life and death. Clearly, this is related to the death of her parents in it. She says, "Heaven—my heaven—is the veil of water that stands between my parents and me. To step across it and then come out is what makes me alive. Odette and Wilner not coming out is what makes them dead" (195). Later on, the river attracts her to challenge its power even at the price of risking her own life in it. The river, that death scene, the limit between two rivaling countries, and the gap between past and present must be outpowered.

Back in Haiti, Amabelle fights her own resistance to speak about the horror, because she is too angry and too full of the urge to share the experience and demand justice to remain silent. With many other survivors she turns to the Haitian church, in which the testimonies are supposed to be compiled. The survivors are trying to unburden themselves from the memories and the sense of helplessness by sharing the horror with a powerful entity. They recognize the importance of their

testimonies as a tool of justice, as well. As individuals, they lack the power to demand from the Dominican Republic an acknowledgement of the crime and an attempt at restitution. It is the role of the government to represent the survivors and negotiate the amends and the official apology. Sharing the horror with empathetic listeners, representatives of the local society, might have stimulated Amabelle's sense of returning home and of being embraced by her homeland. However, the survivors are required to supply proofs, as if the injuries do not convey their suffering, and as if there are no other techniques to verify the occurrences. Amabelle's account of the rejection conveys that the negation of the survivors' rights that delegitimizes their part in Haitian society and history. Their identity as members of the community is put in question, shaking their foundation. As Munro argues, "The undisclosed, denied, attenuated memory and the unspoken testimony are internal markers of a radical feeling of unhomeliness" (89). Amabelle's reaction to the authorities' denial of the magnitude of the horror and to the rejection of her testimony is to isolate herself, feeling an animosity toward her homeland, and surrendering to numbness. For twenty-four years she occupies herself with mindless activities. She says, "[a]ll I wanted was a routine, a series of sterile acts that I could perform without dedication or effort, a life where everything was constantly the same, where every day passed exactly like the one before" (193).

From then on, all the survivors Amabelle describes are given to trauma manifestations, as they are bound to be possessed by grief, guilt, fear, inability to forget, incapacity to move on, or impossibility of remembering and dealing with the memories. Amabelle describes Father Romain, a Dominican priest who tried to save Haitian workers and was arrested and tortured, and she says, "[t]hough still young, he had the look of those who no longer recognized anything, people for whom life was blending into one large shadow, their vision clouding over as they surrendered their sight to very old age" (191). His memories are so painful he is struck by amnesia.

Guilt emerges in the psyches of Yves, Sebastien's best friend, and Amabelle, who have in common not only the trauma of the massacre and dislocation, but also their "betrayal" in Sebastien's memory. Not only have they survived, while he has not, they have also turned to each other for consolation. Now, they remind each other of the night, after the massacre, in which they had sex. Their return to desire could have helped them reenter the flow of life, if they had not defined it as betrayal. However, they withdraw from each other for good. "For twenty-four years all of my conversations with Yves had been restricted

to necessary prattle. […] The careful words exchanged between people whose mere presence reminds each other of a great betrayal" (199), Amabelle says. Yves turns to his work as a manner of reconstructing his life, as Amabelle describes beautifully: "Now all he could do was plant and sow to avoid the dead season" (194). Unlike him, she cannot avoid or escape memory. "The dead season is, for me, one never ending night" (195), she says.

In addition to this, Amabelle's possible implication in the traumatic events generates further guilt in her. Surviving Sebastien and Mimi, people she loved, is enhanced by her role in their death. She hoped to save them and herself by taking a ride with the priest to the other side of the border, but Sebastien, Mimi, and the others who made it to Father Romain's truck were murdered, while Amabelle, who missed the ride, survived. She blames herself, although she acted rationally and out of love when advising them to take the ride. Clearly, the circumstantial conclusion that she was the one who sent them to their death weighs her down.

Another reason for her sense of guilt, according to her, is her behavior before the massacre. Her initial denial of the Dominican hatred and the danger becomes unbearable to her in the aftermath of the massacre, when her past optimism seems to her futile and shameful. She says, "I was never naïve, or blind. I knew. I knew that the death of many was coming…it must be known that I understood. I saw things too. I just thought they would not see me" (265). Looking back, she remembers her unwillingness or inability to connect the racist generalization and objectification of Haitian workers with people such as herself, whom the Dominicans could trust and employ for the benefit of their economic system.

> It couldn't be real. Rumors, I thought. There were always rumors, rumors of war, of land disputes, of one side of the island planning to invade the other. […] This could not touch people like me, nor people like Yves, Sebastien, and Kongo who worked the cane fields. They were giving labor to the land. The Dominicans needed the sugar from the cane for their cafecitos and dulce de leche. They needed money from the cane. (109)

At the time, her bond with the Dominican family with whom she had spent many years seemed safe. Relaxing into this illusory safety, she did not develop the tools necessary to evaluate the seriousness of the threat. None of these reasons to her blindness seems justified to her,

however. She cannot bear the memory of her lack of action nor can she forgive herself.

In order to escape the painful present, she clings to her memory of Sebastien, as her dreams reflect: "His absence is my shadow; his breath my dreams. New dreams seem a waste, needless annoyances, too much to crowd into the tiny space that" (207). The dreams' magic offers more emotional fulfilment than her life, therefore contributing to her continuous detachment from the people around her and from the current days. While her dreams about her parents' death used to lock her in a horrifying experience and prevented her from recovery, now her dreams lock her in the illusory company of her dead lover, preventing her from creating intimacy with anyone else.

The sense of overcoming trauma appears in the novel during two periods of time, separated by twenty-four years. The trauma of the exiled, orphaned young woman, suffering from oppression in the Dominican Republic is narrated in parallel with Amabelle's temporary relief that occurs thanks to Sebastien's love. According to Caruth (1995, 1996) and LaCapra (2001), empathy and/or identification are fundamental for the beginning of the individual process of recovery. Observing Amabelle's history, it becomes clear that she and Sebastien are each other's empathetic listeners. Sebastien is the only person able to calm her down when she wakes up from her nightmares. "He comes most nights to put an end to my nightmare, the one I have all the time, of my parents drowning" (1), she says.

Sebastien develops strategies of help. When she tries to stay awake in order to avoid dreaming, he caresses her body and whispers, "'Lie still while I take you back.'" She needs to reabsorb his meaning over and over. "'Back where?' I ask without feeling my lips moving. He says, 'I will take you back into the cave across the river'" (10). He manages to lead her out of her nightmare, out of her grief and fear, when saying, "Give yourself a pleasant dream. Remember not only the end, but the middle, and the beginning, the things they did when they were breathing. Let us say that the river was still that day." She relaxes into his words, his love, and his touch, and he continues as if he could change her life story and not only the nature of the dream, "They [her parents] died natural deaths many years later.'" She asks him questions, expecting him to find answers that indeed change history. "'And why did I come here?'" she asks. He combines their love story with a better reality than the reality she has lived, saying, "Even though you were a girl when you left and I was already a man when I arrived and our families did not know each other, you came here to meet me" (42). She

accepts his words like the gift of a new life. However, the comfort vanishes as soon as their ways split.

Back in Haiti, after twenty-four years of silence following the 1937 massacre and the rejection of her testimony, Amabelle's need to testify becomes deeper than her disconnection and distrust. Her state of mind changes, supported by dreams guided by folkloric Haitian view of water as life. She says, "I dream all the time of returning to give my testimony to the river, the waterfall, the justice of the peace, even to the Generalissimo himself" (264). Her renewed resolution to testify suggests she may be recovering enough from her trauma to face the world again.

As she recovers a sense of self-value, she realizes she is able to eternalize in the national memory the memory of those who were murdered. She holds a deep belief in remembrance. However, she wakes up to the importance of her testimony when people start treating her as an elderly person. Only then does she realize she has passed the years in a state of "living death" (310). Now, she feels the urgency to tell her story and the stories of the dead, for whom she feels responsible, before they pass away with her. Otherwise, her death will end not only her own life but also theirs.

Her resentment, readers learn, has not subsided, but has been numbed for years. In addition, her new activism implies that her attitude toward oppression has changed since the days of her conciliatory acceptance in the Dominican Republic. Back then, she did not believe that a minority or any marginalized person could rise against the majority. Now, she is more defiant than ever. She hopes that an acknowledgement of the crime and the circumstances that allowed it will help the survivors and prevent a repetition of similar events. She does not express any sort of forgiveness, any time, apparently expecting a punishment or at least a condemnation of the oppressors.

Her new persistence and awakening are in line with the postcolonial view of dealing with trauma. Now that she rises to action, her renewed power is less about individual healing than about resistance. As mentioned, traditional psychoanalytic scholarship does not adapt the theory to different communities and cultures, but there is a more current attempt for adaptation. According to LaCapra (1998), for instance, the original Freudian and therapeutic concept and technique of "working-through" should not be seen as a process of healing or closure, as the Western wing of trauma theory suggests, but as an acknowledgement of the pain of the past and a repositioning toward the future with hope. In his words, this re-signification means that working-through "counteracts the tendency to sacralize trauma or to convert it into a founding or

sublime event – a traumatic sublime or transfigured moment of blank insight and revelatory abjection" (*History* 123).

It is not only the Massacre River, viewed by Amabelle as a catalyst of life and death, but also other bodies of water that represent a possibility of change. Uniting with the Haitian mythic figures of water show that she feels a part of the culture of her homeland despite everything that has happened. History, memory, and postmemory, intergenerational trauma caused by capture, dislocation and enslavement, wars, colonization, exile, and genocide stream into one another and toward the ocean, becoming one. She also wishes to be buried "beneath the sod" (267), as an embodiment of her history and testimony. Surviving the river again may lead to an emotional survival. She first breaks her silence, giving a testimony to Metrès Dlo, the Mistress of water, in Alegria. On her way, a professor gone mad kisses Amabelle a kiss of blessing and release from the load she has carried with her since 1937. He materializes the Haitian mythic figure, the Legba, the guardian of the crossroads, who, according to Donna Weir-Soley's *Eroticism, Spirituality, and Resistance in Black Women's Writings* (2009), "controls chance, change and destiny […] the one who intercedes on behalf of humans before any action can take place" (207). When she reaches the river, she enters the water, "[p]addling like a newborn in a washbasin" (310), and deposits her memory and history in the water, as if it were the carrier and the guardian of Haitian history. However, there is certain ambiguity in the picture drawn at the end of the novel, when Amabelle submerges herself only partly in the Massacre river. In her 2002 article "Re-Membering Hispaniola: Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*", April Shemak argues that Amabelle ends-up in a state of in-betweeness, as her place is not in either of the countries on the two sides of the river or in only one history and one culture. In any case, Amabelle leaves the long period of a living dead as she regains her identity and embodied self.

4.2.2 *At the Full and change of the Moon*

Corresponding with *The Farming of Bones, At the Full and change of the Moon,* too*,* portrays individual lives impacted by a worldly-recognized traumatizing event*.* Even though words cannot represent horrors well enough, Brand does try to use their power in order to introduce forgotten or silenced history into collective memory. Following the story of a generation of enslaved Africans in Trinidad, especially the matriarch Marie Ursule, the novel runs a series of portrayals of descendants affected by past and ongoing collective and

individual traumatic events and their consequences. The fragmented narrative moves from one character to another, and from the present to the past, conveying trauma as an a-temporal unifying aspect. Its Caribbean characteristics, including the inclusion of folkloric storytelling techniques and figures, bring about the ghost of the memory as a part of the body, transmitter and fixer of history.

As scholars such as Brand (2002), Tal (1996), Paul Gilroy (1993), and Rothberg (2008) have pointed out, the Western elements of trauma theory as well as the psychoanalytic treatment do not necessarily fit every culture and every minority. The trauma manifestations present in the lives of Brand's characters, and their perception of the world correspond better with the parameters of a decolonized psychoanalytic trauma theory. The decolonization signifies adaptation of traditional concepts such as breaking through and dissociation, culturally interpreted views of trauma, and diversification. Thus, the conceptualization of Caribbean-based collective trauma requires a framework that applies to history-related collective trauma, aftereffects of slavery, and the reconstruction of memory in favor of social and individual recovery. Like Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*, Brand's lyrical, Caribbean-based, fragmented story-telling entails a study that acknowledges cultural and historical specificities while applying non-exclusively-Western tools of trauma theory. Among the Caribbean elements surfacing in the novel, readers encounter the ocean as a defining concept for inarticulate suffering, psychic and geographical exile, the Caribbean colonization as a backdrop, and the hybrid cultures of Caribbean characters in exile.

Opening the book with slavery and a collective suicide, and continuing with one oppressed and traumatized individual after another, across generations, indicate the importance these traumatic events hold in the descendants' lives. Thus, Marie Ursule's lyrical prediction, "[t]hey would come to whatever impulse gathered the greater in them, like threatened forest flowering" (20), is sustained by Brand's exemplification of trauma through nine characters among Marie Ursule's thirteen grandchildren. The characters include her daughter, Bola, Bola's sons and daughters-- and Bola's grandchildren. The narrative emphasizes those who suffer from trauma manifestations such as anger, fear, melancholy, dissociated memory, guilt, and/or shame through unconventional choices, behaviors, and emotions. The descendants, all of them people of color and of mixed ethnicities, continue to face the consequences of slavery, although they have not lived it.

The intergenerational trauma running through *At the Full and Change of the Moon* has its sources in the constructed, reconstructed, and transmitted memory. The saga demonstrates how the heavy load passes from one generation to another, surfacing through variable manifestations such as detachment, guilt, shame, fear, and/or socially and legally unacceptable behaviors. The characters' bitter present is filled with relatively minor traumatic experiences that further solidify the subject of insidious, collective, and intragenerational trauma. The characters cannot deal with intimacy, and so, they protect themselves from harm in ways that cause them harm, perceive reality through trauma, and are haunted by conscious and subconscious memory.

Brand, like Danticat, holds an important role in reimagining traumatizing historical horror. This is especially necessary in the Caribbean islands, according to Édouard Glissant (1989), due to the lack of passed-on information. For him, the suffering from the inter-racial relations of control and dominance experienced by the colonized Caribbean people led to a "nonhistorical consciousness," forgetfulness, and erasing, the result of "shock, contraction, painful negation, and explosive forces" caused by "the inability of the collective consciousness to absorb it all" (62). Glissant speaks in the plural form, explaining that the collective Caribbean experience is a "struggle without witnesses, the inability to create even an unconscious chronology, a result of the erasing of memory in all of us. For history is not only absence for us, it is vertigo" (161).

Thus, the characters who forget, deny, or fight their history are marked by trauma and trapped in a past they can only fathom through their continued minor traumatic experiences connected to history. Moreover, the unsettled characters cannot recover their peace and their voice unless they bring history to light without guilt or shame. Each one of the chapters illustrates through the portrayal of a different--yet always traumatized—character the need to reconstruct the past and deal with it. Silencing, denying, or hiding history does not work. As Erica Johnson's "Unforgetting Trauma: Dionne Brand's Haunted Histories" (2004) points out, Brand "addresses the extent to which the histories and individual stories of African diasporic experience have been stricken from written historical record" (4). The author's objection to silence and erasure lies at the heart of this novel.

Manners of access to history and memory are introduced, primarily, through Marie Ursule, the last of the line who experiences slavery. She does not discuss her memories and experiences with her little daughter Bola before sending her away, not even in a children's

jargon. Nevertheless, she is aware of the importance of memory and its a-temporal presence in the body and through voices from the past. When she is in the woods, considering the most adequate plants and technique for the slaves' collective suicide, she is alert to a voice within and around her, which is "the struggle of Caribs moving reluctantly toward memory" (3). Even though she does not sustain her daughter's memory by articulating history, she is certain that such history cannot be lost, as it is etched in the memory of the following generations forever. In fact, the memory of cruelty will shape their lives.

Marie Ursule's act of transmission of memory and prevention of forgetfulness is catalyzed in the act of release of her daughter from the collective suicide. As Johnson suggests, "Brand's unforgetting present[s] methodological possibilities which address the unrepresentability of trauma while at the same time claiming traumatic experience" (8). Thus, the lack of specific memories, words, and facts that represent the sources of trauma does not erase their mark. Keeping Bola alive means that the crucial mission of carrying the memory ahead is in effect. The subsequent representations of cultural and individual trauma in each generation construct meanings to memory according to the character, time, and place. The representations also suggest ways by which the experience of a past generation is never lost.

In the great matriarch's view, memory passes from generation to generation through the body, since memory becomes part of the flesh. Contrarily, according to Hirsch (2008), in her work about postmemory, the transmission of memories--and trauma--is interpreted as a psychological disorder that passes from one generation to another through dysfunctional relationships, emotional detachment, odd behavior, and other trauma manifestations. This aspect of intergenerational trauma has been widely researched in relation to second- and third-generation Holocaust survivors. However, the form of continuation through the body, expressed by Marie Ursule, is a pillar of the novel. Fundamentally, this can be read as a wholistic view according to which the body is inseparable from anything the characters go through, and it is a carrier of the experience.

According to Kaplan (1999), the acknowledgement of bodily transmitted memory exists in the psychoanalytic scholarship as well: "The trauma remains unprocessed -- it is not a 'knowing' in common sense but it is felt in the body" (147). In this line, Brand refers to memory carved into the body in her book of essays, *A Map to the Door of No Return* (2002). According to her, the bodies of the slaves and their progenies are formed in "virtuosity or despair, in the imminence of

both" (27). Also in relation to history, memory, and the body, Foucault's article "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" (1977) argues that "the body is the inscribed surface of events, and genealogy is situated within the articulation of the body and within history" (Web). In addition, as N. Kellerman (2013) argues, in the emerging field of epigenetics, uniting biology and neurology, research includes a transgenerational and intergenerational molecular/hormonal passage of trauma. The subject is complex, because placing the continuation of trauma in our chemical substances or in the effect of trauma on the DNA is a dangerous standpoint that can lead to discriminatory theories. The aspect of bodily transmitted memory and trauma is probably the most problematic and enigmatic of the trauma manifestations explored in the novel. Based on the novel, in any case, it is conceivable to conclude that the inscription of the trauma of slavery as experienced by Marie Ursule forms a memory that goes beyond language and is etched in the body of Bola and the subsequent generations. This passage of memories or the seeds of memories eternalizes the slaves' suffering. The descendants "come to be whatever impulse gathered the greater in them, like threatened forests flowering" (20). The signature of trauma exists across time and place, and across the narrative representation in the novel.

The story opens with Marie Ursule's preparations for a collective suicide of slaves she is organizing after a lifetime of violent oppression. The choice may raise the question of her ability to make a rational decision, or rather the question of whether such a decision is a result of trauma-impacted dysfunctionality. Undoubtedly, this self-destructive declaration of war against the slave owners and the slaves' preference for death over a painful life indicate how the trauma of slavery has shaped the collective identity of this minority. The collective suicide is the result as well as the indicator of this trauma. Rather than a testament to dissociated thinking, Marie Ursule's resolution and the other slaves' collaboration convey the measure of pain they have endured and the consequent disruption and irrelevance of what is considered a sane decision-making. The insufferable experience of slavery has affected the community and the individuals' sense of self and sense of the world, and the option to die deserves respect.

When considering an escape instead of a suicide, Marie Ursule assumes, with what may be considered "irrational" by colonizers and slave owners, that the impact of the traumatizing capture in the homeland, forced relocation, subjugation, domination, silencing, violence, and complete objectification have left such a wound in the slaves' psyche, including hers, that her generation is unable to overcome

it. Therefore, she refuses to consider an escape, even if the physical limitations could have been overcome. “[S]he, Marie Ursule, could not go herself because of her limp. And even more because of her heart, so skilled now, so full of wrath” (6). Her inconsideration of a flight reveals her view of herself and her companions as broken and impossible to fix.

While readers become familiar with some horrible elements of slavery and with the suicide through the narrative, the great matriarch’s belief in the either organic or magical existence of trauma memory renders her own words and stories unnecessary. The wound is transmitted in an intergenerational manner, shaping the lives of all involved. Despite the lack of actual memory-- due to the death of the individuals committing suicide--, the traumatic suffering of slavery, and the counter-instinctive suicide to which Marie Ursule’s body objects, will not disappear into thin air as long as a new generation is born. Subsequently, the narrative reveals that the wordless transmission of memory forms collective and individual trauma. Just the way the matriarch predicts, a close bond continues to exist between what the community of slaves remembers and experiences and their descendants’ memory and experience.

The character representing the link between the enslaved generation and the generations who are theoretically free is Bola, Marie Ursule’s daughter, the only survivor of the collective suicide. She was born into slavery, but as far as the narrative reveals, she was too young to be actively enslaved. While she does not hold a clear memory of the events, however, she is haunted by their horror. The trauma manifestations of fear and dissociation affect her at her young age. Kamena’s stories add to her feeling that she moves in a ghostly land among semi-real people. When he leaves her on her own, during his searches for a promised land, she remains connected to her mother’s psyche more than to his. “She only knows time in the memory of Marie Ursule now” (26). Time is illusory to her, and her memories of her mother come together with the fearful ghosts of the nuns who enslaved and tortured Marie Ursule.

The difficulty in accessing the historical facts with clarity, instead of observing their haunting effect, is not limited to Bola. The silence, passage of memory, and access to the silenced history are characteristic of the community of Trinidadian slaves’ descendants. Brand (2002) reconstructs memory out of silence, and characterizes the haunting trauma as an insistent though elusive entity. She writes, “[t]hese things I knew before I knew they had something to do with the Door of No Return and the sea. I knew that everyone here was unhappy

and haunted in some way" (*Door of No Return* 11). According to her, there is no circumstance in which the haunting may retrocede. "All human effort seems to emanate from this door. How do I know this? Only by self-observation, only by looking. Only by feeling. Only be being a part, sitting in the room with history" (25).

Additionally, Brand's portrayal of the traumatized generations alludes to the existence of a phantom in the psyches of Marie Ursule's descendants. While the haunting and the ghosts are typical of Caribbean literature, they find a parallel in the concept of the phantom, as elaborated by Abraham and Torok (1994). The phantom materializes in Marie Ursule's, Kamena's and Bola's lives in the form of ghosts, voices, and other realities. For Bola, the ghosts have been absorbed from her mother's past and from what she hears from Kamena's stories of the ghostly Eden for runaway slaves. Subsequently, as Kamena loses his mental stability, his memories leave him, and haunt her. The phantom can be read as more abstract as well. According to Torok and Abraham, "[W]hat haunts are not the dead, but the gaps left within us by the secrets of others" (171). Regarding this theory, Johnson argues that, "Torok's phantom, the phantom emerges not only from an individual unconscious, but its points of origin are multiple and indicative of social as well as individual reality" (8). Thus, it is a net of memories.

Like her mother, Bola does not share her memories with her children. It is unclear whether she is unable to reconstruct them or has no interest in doing so. Psychoanalytic trauma theory, especially as articulated by its Western founders, deals with the inability to reconstruct traumatic events through memory as a symptom of trauma. Both direct and indirect survivors protect themselves unconsciously from the intense effect of the event by forgetting or blurring it. They avoid speaking, unless they are encouraged to do so by the right listener and circumstance. At times, they reconnect with the original event through minor incidents that are more accessible.

In the case of Bola, she is so focused on her senses, she excludes anyone else from her life, thus rendering memory and transmission unnecessary. Her behavior corresponds with Caroline Rody's 2001 view of the Caribbean literary archetypal figure, the mother-of-forgetting, whose colonized consciousness cuts her off from the collective. Glissant (1989), too, refers to the "forgetful" colonized identity, unarticulated traumatizing history resulting from relationships of dominance and silencing, that prevents the formation of a collective identity. While the collective identity does exist, it is distorted by trauma, and therefore does not offer a secure sense of community.

Bola's trauma is evident in relation to motherhood as well. The motherhood-related similarities between Marie Ursule and Bola, mothers who send their children away, are expressions of the pain engraved on the Caribbean body. Since the memory of her mother hurts Bola beyond endurance, she forces it out, and, as the years pass, Marie Ursule's centrality in Bola's psyche and memory diminishes. However, she still remembers her need for her mother's words, and her mother's painful rejection, telling her, "[w]hat you want from me […]?" (46). At the time, Bola used to feel incomplete on her own, with unclear boundaries, until her mother put it right by simply laying her eyes on her. Clearly, Bola knows the power of motherhood, and yet she does not repair the pain caused by Marie Ursule's behavior or absence by acting differently in her relationships with her own children, thus wounding them the way she herself was wounded. Her trauma, constructed by the memory of the primal event of slavery, the collective suicide, the split from her mother, and the painful escape leads to reckless reproduction, as if she conquers freedom by having many babies with many men.

Fundamentally, the theme of motherhood and detachment/estrangement marks almost all the mothers among the descendants of Marie Ursule. One possible reason emerges from the concepts of racism and sexism, that mark the slave woman as a body, a sexual object, and a fertile force. As a consequence, children are not necessarily the fruit of a relationship, nor are they welcome. Glissant (1989) writes about the related trauma of reproduction: "Even in his reproductive function, the slave is not in control of himself. He reproduces, but it is for the master" (122). Resenting their treatment as reproductive creatures, Marie Ursule and other women slaves aborted in the beginning of their pregnancies in the last years before the suicide, or killed the newborns. Bola, the only child who was born and left alive, does not get rid of the babies, but remains detached from them emotionally or physically.

Another problem is the fear fixed in the collective memory of having beloved children ripped from the mothers to be enslaved elsewhere, or of having the children witness the suffering of their mothers. Scattered, separated, and protected by others (who may be more powerful than the mother), they are more likely to survive. In addition, the mothers are bound to suffer from fear of a painful separation if they attach themselves to a son or a daughter. This fear rises from the collective memory of having the children either torn away from the mother forever, or being enslaved, both child and mother witnessing their mutual suffering.

Possibly, Bola's motives to send her children away are not fear for herself alone, but also fear for their destiny. By spreading them she may be protecting them from a bad destiny that might hit the whole family if they stayed together. She protects the children from herself as a carrier of catastrophe. However, since they are not conscious of such reasons (nor is she), she passes on her own suffering and the collective trauma through her indifference to her children and her abandonment of some of them. Trauma caused by slavery affects human relations in the long run.

Her detachment is evident in all of her relationships. Her active sex life has little to do with emotion, and, while it gives her pleasure, it is not only about pleasure. Both the sex itself and reproduction are linked with life and its perpetuation. However, while she continues the line of blood, she sees it "[w]ithout hopes-because *hope* was a word for the ignorant, and Bola was old before she was young" (68). Such a perspective of the world is undoubtedly related to the impact of trauma, as her traumatic experience leaves no space for anything else. The few children she keeps on her side grow "by themselves without her assistance" (71). The others, she spreads among people from faraway places, starting the diasporic mobility Marie Ursule predicted.

Her decision to maintain a child or not is based on sensations and impressions they evoke in her, and these are linked to fear. Trauma has affected her with the disruption of her capacity of accurately reading others, rendering her unable to recognize danger, or the other way around: to misperceive danger where there is none. Once, when a little son follows her, trying not to lose her out of his sight, but hiding when she turns around, she asks herself whether he is a loving son, or if all he wants is to erase the traces she leaves behind, delete the marks that define her existence. Suspicion wins over, and she ends up sending him away. She is ambiguous at other times, but her resistance to mother a child often weighs more.

The possibility of an interrupted passage of memory is introduced as well. For instance, Bola gives baby Eugenia to a strong woman who takes the baby in her fish basket. Afterwards, Eugenia's adoptive mother does not tell the girl about Bola. The connection with the past is maintained, possibly, through the memory of the body, but Brand mentions a possible loss, since Eugenia's unique gift of magical vivacity disappears with the untold memories. "As it was she forgot her power to keep dead things alive. Everything depends on memory" (115).

As seen in Chapter 3, through the prism of corporeality, trauma is intersectional through factors such as the sexual self, gender, and race.

Indeed, the novel portrays diverse patterns of bodily discomfort or body misconception based on related patterns of oppression. Bola, Cordelia, and Maya go on a quest for liberation from pain through a withdrawal from any sort of emotional intimacy in favor of body pleasures and adulation. Sebastien numbs himself from racial and homosexuality-related sexist discrimination with addictive substances and becomes a slave to his addiction. Eula and the second Bola retreat from sensuality, as Eula is deeply ashamed of the history her exposed body may reveal, and Bola negates physical existence and lives with ghosts. According to Sandra Almeida (2002), the confluence between race and ethnicity with gender emphasizes "the articulations of a doubly marginalized subject and a markedly degenerate, racialized and ethnicized body" (Web). In fact, there is not only double but multiple categories of oppression in the characters' lives.

Analogies related to motherhood and estrangement appear in Cordelia's story as well. Her motherhood is characterized as protective in the early years of her children's lives. Just as she chooses for herself a man who fulfills the traditional roles of a reliable family man, so does she defend her children in a traditional way. History has taught her that any difference may be an obstacle in the way to safety and wellbeing. Therefore, she lives a quiet life and raises their three children to become perfectly fit to a conventional life. Once they grow up and become good, stable citizens, the way she has educated them to be, she loses her interest in them, however. Her sharp split from them evokes a retroactive view of her limited affection for them since their birth. It becomes clear that she has been dispassionately loyal to what she considered to be her responsibility to prepare them for life, trying to avoid the repetition of misery. Due to this strategic thinking, and this profound detachment, after accomplishing her role in the linkage, she separates from them and from her husband without any sense of loss. All she sees in the mirror is "a woman asking for release from her sentence of abstinence, but Cordelia could barely remember her. And so this woman startled even her" (100). Finally, she liberates herself from any social restraint.

As the novel develops, the impact of the mothers' estrangement from their children, their silence, detachment, and hereditary memories forms and distorts the next generation's identity and sense of themselves and of the world. Without a stable bond of trust and affection, they cannot feel safe. They develop fear and suspicion and lack a sense of self-worth. Their solitude, otherness, and hard life conditions eternalize

the influence of the collective history and memory and mark each one of them and the people around them.

The same happens with the character of Maya Dovett. She reacts against sexism and dominance represented by her father, and against rejection and indifference, represented by her mother by dissociating herself from them. As mentioned earlier, after a failed attempt to work at a hospital, in which she finds she is incapable to dissociate herself from disease and decay, she chooses to work as a whore in an Amsterdam vitrine. Unlike Bola, who withdraws into her physical senses for life, Maya relaxes into her body and her sexuality merely for a short while. While enjoying it in the beginning, it does not take long before she starts feeling she is surrounded by predators, the men who look at her as if she were their prey. They do not threaten her, but she is certain they are violent. "Their concentration and efforts were agonized slashes of movements used for destroying things. Her or themselves" (210).

Interestingly, Maya's only experience with men, except for her brother, has been permeated by sexism. Yet, she positions herself as an easy target for men who see her as subjugated to their sexual and other physical impulses. By doing so, she reenacts the traumatic events of her past. The concept of unconscious repetition, introduced by Freud, has been discussed extensively by Caruth (1995), as the theoretical review clarifies.

In addition, Maya suffers from a complete lack of memory, when she finds herself beside the dead brothel manager, Walter, and her hands are bloody. The lack of memory regarding the event itself is an indication of a trauma-induced dissociation. She is unable to reconstruct the event of the murder, or even remember anything from the scene, since it is impossible for her to face the horror. In the debate whether trauma survivors are able to remember a traumatic event, Maya is an example of dissociation that involves loss of memory. Based on Walter's sexist declarations and his view of Maya as a profitable sexual object, readers may assume he crossed the line. What really happened, however, including the question of who murdered him, remains open to speculation. Maya escapes the crime zone and the danger by marrying a rich client to whom she bears a daughter.

Her emotional detachment is extended toward her baby as well, sustained by fears related to the role of motherhood. She is afraid to repeat the pattern of her own relationships with her mother, the distance between them, and her mother's rejection of her. Contrarily, she is also afraid to be different from her mother, because any other sort of

motherhood is unfamiliar to her, and thus may threaten her peace and her daughter's well-being. In fact, she repeats the pattern of mother/daughter alienation when she sends her daughter away.

The issue of mother/daughter relations is treated from the point of view of the daughter alone when Eula writes long letters to her diseased mother. In her letters she laments the lost and/or shameful family history. Her plea to her mother, after the mother's death, highlights a missing connection during the mother's life. It is, in fact, a lament, because the correspondence is one-sided. Only now does she feel confident enough to share with her mother her fears, sorrow, and shame. Possibly, it is not only the hole in her past she craves to fill up, and cannot, but also the emptiness her mother's death left in her. However, the past lack of communication and the haunting of the uncommunicated past, shows a repetition of the same problematic form of mothering.

Now that Eula is on her own, she does not know how to get rid of the hollowness inside her. She says, "I would like one single line of ancestry, Mama. One line from you to me and farther back, but a line that I can trace" (246). Her call echoes Brand's words in *The Door of No Return* (2002*)*: "Having no name to call on was having no past; having no past pointed to the fissure between the past and the present" (5). Eula, however, is afraid to learn shameful facts and events. She writes, "I would like one line full of people who have no reason to forget anything, or forgetting would not help them or matter because the line would be constant, unchangeable" (247). The shame of those who tried to forget passed on to her. She admits to having attempts of forgetfulness along with attempts of recollection. "Nothing is changing, we are just forgetting. I am forgetting you, but it is work, forgetting. […] No, I am exaggerating. I do not forget you at all. It's just that I am too lazy to go through all the emotions it involves. I will never forget you" (234), she writes. She reveals her hope to be involved and included, and then she tries to detach herself, in case reality does not conform to her expectation for fulfillment. "All the centuries past may be one long sleep. We are either put to sleep or we choose to sleep" (235).

Eula tries to find parallels in life in order to connect herself to her past and stabilize her in the world and give her a sense of belonging. She assumes she can recover the connection by learning about the family's original home in Culebra Bay, but she plans a return to Culebra Bay in a figurative way, by finding a similar village with a coastal landscape and "the certainty that when the moon is in full the sea will rise and for that whole time I will be watching what all my ancestry

have watched for, for all ages" (247). She is ready for a fairy-tale-like home, without realizing that if her recovery from solitude, shame, and fear depends on finding an ideal substitute for reality, her solution is illusory. However, possibly, her need to embody history through place and people reflects the beginning of reaching out and of a process of healing from trauma. She will try living where she can feel at home and seek a confirmation for her place in the world.

The next link in mother/daughter relations in Eula's life becomes present when she breaks her isolation, becomes pregnant, and bears a baby girl. Despite her own longing for her mother, she resists her own role as a mother with all her force. She sends her daughter away from Toronto to Terre Bouillante with the intention of never seeing her again. Her disturbed sense of maternity finds a parallel in Bola, who sent her children away. Her fear and disengagement repeat those of Bola's and Maya's. The generations are all marked by the destructive impact of trauma on relationships.

The last female character in the novel, the second Bola, the great-great granddaughter of the first Bola, is an extreme example of the inability of many trauma survivors to cope with life. The youngest descendent of the family, still a pupil, lives in a ghostly world, as if the world had slipped out of her subconsciousness into her everyday life. The analogy from the first Bola to the second Bola emerges in the loss of language and lack of communication. A letter arrives and the girl asks her mother to read it to her, but "[t]he words my mother read were in gibberish and I had to put the g's and l's back in to understand" (284). When she quotes the letter, with her corrections in it, the words are all distorted without any sense. Since embodied communication is useless in her perception, she connects with the people populating her family history and not with those around her. Subsequently, her trauma manifests itself through her denial of the present in favor of the shadows of the past. Like the other characters, she is detached from present emotional bonds, conveying the hopelessness of being trapped in the past.

Moreover, the memory that haunts Bola through the generations makes her afraid of permanent loss. This fear, a trauma manifestation, lies at the basis of her existence and her identity formation. The only way she finds to confront it is by maintaining her distance from the mundane life and the real world in general. She rejects the concept of death as the end of life because she does not feel strong enough to grieve the end without breaking down. When her grandmother--whom she calls "mother" because she raised her--dies, Bola believes she sees her in

other life forms, such as a ladybug that appears, unusually, at night and lands on Bola's slice of bread. The dust of ghosts appears for the second Bola, as it appeared for her antecessor, the first Bola, who saw the already dead and now dusty Ursuline nuns. The second Bola mentions dust as well when she sees the ladybug once more and says she sees "the sun pouring more and more dust out, spilling over as if my mother had disturbed the sun's dust with her wings" (263). She would rather live with the dead as if they were still present physically, than admit their loss. "After some years […] my mother came out and sat beside me on her grave" (266), she says. By clinging to ghosts as if to a safe haven, Bola retreats into her own world, in which her grandmother is alive and Bola is her well-protected child. She stops attending school, stays at home, and chats with the ghost of her grandmother.

Interestingly, even though ghosts are a part of Caribbean culture, other people, including her sisters, do not see her situation as normal. They say "[s]he's not in the world", but she believes she is in the only world that matters, where memories are alive. She is certain she is the one who is always in the world. "My sisters are forgetful but I remember everything" (289). She is aware of the tendency to favor forgetting, as she cites William Wordsworth's poem, "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting" (278). She notes that her grandmother "wanted a new life even as I wanted an old one" (269), and hears the ghost of her grandmother advocating forgetting: "'Father, you know how you get when you remember. Please Forget'" (280). In fact, Brand's second Bola's and Danticat's character of Amabelle's a-temporal view of life revives the dead and embodies memories. Both Danticat and Brand have constructed characters that disrupt the cultural structure and serve as vessels for the recovery of memory.

The obvious sense of being an outsider in the world implies that this character, too, has internalized exile. In her case, her dislocation is not about diasporic mobility, as it is about exile from the living world. Like most characters in her line of ancestry, she carries exile within. Her emotional need cannot be satisfied, as the emptiness inside her cannot be filled, and trauma eats through her life just as it has done to all the generations since Marie Ursule's.

This last descendant in the saga no longer tolerates what society values--she prefers to live within an imaginary and comforting world, thus maximizing the characteristics of detachment and withdrawal most of the other characters present. The ghostly nature of the phantom, that rather metaphysical knowledge transmitted from generation to generation dominates this last-born.

Based on the above, *At the Full and Change of the Moon* offers the readers opportunity to study the ways by which the black diaspora, with its defining sociohistorical backdrop, deals with trauma. Working through trauma takes its unique meaning here. For instance, the novel introduces a different approach to memory and trauma and does not emphasize a dead end, more typical of the Eurocentric psychoanalytic wing. Even though characters such as Sebastian and Eula are prone to melancholy, and the second Bola opts for living fully only with ghosts, the other characters have agency that potentializes change. In addition, Brand's introduction of the damage done by trauma in the lives of the melancholic characters becomes a call to find ways to overcome trauma.

Already in the beginning of the novel, the emergence/recovery of agency that presents resistance is introduced through the character of the great matriarch Marie Ursule. Notably, her premediated collective self-destruction has an ambiguous meaning and therefore can be interpreted either as resistance or as an act of giving in. However, her intention to infuriate the slave masters indicates a strong will and rebellion rather than surrender to existential despair. From this perspective, she survives her trauma by overpowering her own survival instinct and leading an extreme act of protest. The suicide communicates to the slave masters that the slaves refuse to go on as property and, for lack of better options, destroy themselves. The suicide act against the colonial law represents an antislavery pronouncement, and demonstrates free will. The slaves' bodies are imprisoned, but death shows their freedom as human beings. The irony, as Brand implies, is that Marie Ursule does not realize that the suicide generates a contrary effect. By destroying themselves, as an act of punishment, the slaves make the masters lament for the loss of property. This, clearly, contradicts Marie Ursule's intention. However, she dies, proud of her act.

The collective suicide as an active standpoint of resistance could have acted—despite the self-inflicting violence—as a reason for collective pride that would be transmitted through the generations. Recovering a sense of pride instead of suffering traumatic manifestations such as guilt and shame empowers the collective identity and the individual members. However, the intergenerational passage of memory, as we see it in each chapter, emphasizes shame and guilt, products of the memory of vulnerability, weakness, and subjugation. It appears that the empowering meaning of the collective suicide as an act of resistance is lost on Marie Ursule's descendants because the horror leading to it overpowers the act.

The manners of response to the trauma-inflicting horror are complex and sometimes contradictory. Cordelia breaks through the social patterns and conventions that have guided her—and trapped her---until she turned fifty. Maya believes she does the same, offering a rebellious attitude to fight the imposing past. Both of them turn to the body as a tool of liberation. Both of them also give up on intimacy and social relationships in order to be free to enjoy the senses without any limitation. In Cordelia's case, the sexual liberation offers no threat to her safety, and therefore, she enjoys the rapture. Maya suffers from threat and violence as a result of her liberation, and ends-up returning to the old social structure. Their acts of liberation, however, show an attempt to overcome trauma, and offer a temporary release.

Trauma appears differently, based on the context. The rather metaphysical form of haunting, common to most characters, however, is illustrated through the intergenerational passage of trauma and indicates a metaphysically-influenced way of understanding trauma and confronting it. Recovery, to a certain extent, may begin with the acknowledgement, exposure, and acceptance of the phantom. According to Abraham and Torok, "once known, understood, and exorcised, the phantom should go from our unconscious, vanish into the reality whence it had come, disappear into a bygone and vanquished world" (190). In fact, all trauma scholars recommend for a traumatized person and society to reconnect with the sources of trauma, face them, and recover from their effect. Abraham's mention of exorcism, however, places the process of healing in the subconscious, a meta-psychological term that opens the ghostly world of the traumatized person's subconsciousness.

If the recovery depends on accessing memory, however, the characters can do it only in ways that their trauma-induced identity allows them. Therefore, their reconnection to the sources of trauma may start with the events that appear as aftereffects of the original event. Brand constructs each event in a way that reveals a connection to previous events, so she introduces slavery as the primary event that evoked the repercussions. In Johnson's view, "the events with which the reader is presented signify an entire system of history in which the characters are ensnared" (8). While the repercussion of every oppressive event is traumatic, the traumatized individual or collective can relate better to the minor events because they are more accessible to memory. The recognition of the past is not fully accomplished by the characters, not even through the minor events. Once more, the narrative itself suggests doing so by showing how necessary the confrontation is. Therefore, while we do not find a character that actively confronts the

past with pride and courage, Brand extend this possibility to the readers, and thus to society. Through the memories the novel portrays, the collective memory of the Caribbean is reconstructed.

More than portraying characters that break through trauma related to memory and history, the novel in itself becomes a form of resistance to silence and forgetting. The saga illustrates that avoidance, forgetting, or silencing of memory can be done only at the price of great suffering. History and memory go on existing one way or the other, and therefore, they should be acknowledged, recreated, as Brand does, articulated, and faced.

Brand deconstructs and reconstructs Caribbean history, offering a different perception. Evidently, she laments the loss of memory because it is, as she writes in *A Map to the Door of No Return* (2002),"a rupture in history, a rupture in the quality of being" (5). The novel clarifies that the past still exists, and it is necessary to recognize it. This saga revives memory from the midst of silence. The act of "unforgetting" is supported by historical references, and by the portrayal of the intergenerational impact of trauma. Reading the novel is a step toward recovery and a warning against oppression.

***

This chapter has established the important role of the novels as direct and/or indirect testimonies. Since history and the collective memory of each minority are at the backdrop of each novel, its narrative has a significant social role in creating and recreating collective memory. The analysis has shown how the authors have contributed to the deconstruction of the past in order to construct a present and a future improved by social and individual change. Moreover, the chapter has examined social patterns of trauma based on the time, place and society in which each novel is set and is written. Psychoanalytic trauma theory, as conceptualized by scholars in the 1990s and developed during the 2000s, has helped in the determination of the trauma manifestations of each character. Postcolonial studies have provided the tools to read trauma within local culture in relation to African-Americans and descendants of slaves in Haiti and Trinidad. Other fields have also contributed to the study of intergenerational trauma, especially in relation to the saga *At the Full and Change of the Moon*. It has been established that certain trauma manifestations are related to local culture, folklore, and neo colonial narratives, while others, such as detachment, clinging to the past, or obsessively avoiding the past, exist in different societies and differs in the specificities of each life. In regard to the benefit of such a comparative study among diverse novels, the

chapter has determined the harm of competing trauma legacies and has pointed out the benefit of advancing a multidirectional memory and developing empathy, common interests of recovery, and a collaborative study.

In addition, the chapter has pointed out linguistic and literary characteristics of each novel, used to portray pain and trauma. The subject of language has been also studied in relation to each character, finding how language and power walk hand in hand, and therefore, a difficulty in linguistic communication pushes the minority characters to the margins of society. The relations between collective and individual trauma memory, and memory and identity formation have been also analyzed, showing the impact of the community and its history on each character, and determining whether a common history generates a sense of community. In this relation, Lore, Ilka, Amabelle, and Eula, one from each novel and for different reasons, withdraw from the community and negate their roots, but in the end, they return to it, either due to external pressures, or in order to testify and make their story a part of the collective memory. Collective memory has appeared as well in its representations through postmemory, indirect trauma and intergenerational trauma. Possibilities of recovery and change have been studied with care, since the goal of trauma studies is, in the end, to point out ways of overcoming trauma. It has been pointed out that while certain characters do not seem to develop agency and react, especially in *At the Full and Change of the Moon*, but also in regard to Holocaust survivors in *Her First American*, storytelling itself has the force to mobilize society through the readers and point out possibilities of change. Individual forms of recovery such as the reaffirmation of the self, the reconnection with the body, learning to cope with life, unforgetting history, contributing to collective memory, resistance against traumatic structures, and beginning a transformation have been studied in regard to each character.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has investigated four novels written by minority women about characters affected by traumatic events related to exile, race, ethnicity, the body, and other categories of difference. Taking up and unfolding into more detail the four general objectives that guided the analysis -- an interdisciplinary study informed by intersectionality, trauma, diaspora, feminist poststructuralism, and postcolonial theories -- , the following issues will be considered again in this conclusion: (a) the interdisciplinary approach, context, and decolonization; (b) novels as testimonies in regard to memory, history, and trauma; (c) theme-related linguistic aspects and the literary tools applied by the authors of these trauma-related narratives; (d) the manners by which the authors show the specific problems within the context of each female character marked by differences; (e) causes and aggravators of trauma related to exile, racism, and war; (f) similarities and differences among female trauma survivors of different minorities and situations in their relationships with the body and, through it, with the world; (g) the ways each author introduces collective and individual trauma, the transmission of trauma, and trauma legacies; (h) the restorative power of the novels in their handling of breaking through trauma, and (i) the contributions of each author to the understanding of female trauma and its transformation.

In a general manner, the study has confirmed the fundamental assumptions introduced in the hypothesis: across the four selected novels, most characters, female members of target minority groups, receive and assimilate hegemonic gendered, ethnic, racial, and other discriminatory socio-political patterns of thought and behavior. They are affected by power relations within their minority, among minorities, between their minority and the dominant part of society, and with society in general. Thus, trauma-affected female minority characters reproduce the socially constructed paradigms of the hegemonic society in relation to their perception of their selves and the world. They create and recreate individually and collectively hegemonic social conventions regarding axes of difference. In addition, they are affected by their socio-cultural roots, the specific history of their group, and their singular experiences as members of marginalized, persecuted minorities. Accordingly, the analysis has established the contextual nature of memory and trauma, and the resulting individual and collective survival strategies.

(a) the interdisciplinary approach, context, and decolonization:

The challenge posed by the wide scope and complexity of the subject has required an interdisciplinary approach informed by intersectionality, trauma, diaspora, feminist poststructuralism, and postcolonial theories. The interdisciplinarity introduced in the theoretical framework has allowed me to interpret the impact of different, sometimes contradictory social constructions, and to understand the representation of oppression, trauma, and breakthrough in each given time and place. In order to analyze characters who experience colonization and neocolonization, the analysis avoided a Eurocentric approach, and applied theory that includes culturally-based analysis and pointed out differences and similarities among minorities from previously colonized countries and from Europe. For instance, the analysis of trauma related to minority women has required the application of traditional, poststructural, and decolonized trauma theory, together with postcolonial theory, diaspora studies, and feminist poststructuralism. I find this approach to be helpful for the determination of possibilities of intercultural social mobilization, as it recognizes internal and external, individual and collective influences within each minority, and, simultaneously, offers a fragmented yet inclusive understanding of the necessary interconnected social changes.

As a starting point, after discussing the pivotal categories of intersectional oppression in the lives of the characters, among them gender, race, ethnicism, nationality, economic situation, war, colonization, and exile, the study raised fundamental questions asked by poststructural scholarship, as to whether each character is able to deconstruct and reconstruct her life, or rather, find cracks in the construction of her life and identity in order to be able to reach a transformative reconstruction. Essentially, most characters need a recovery, a transformation and/or change, since their trauma manifestations may include grief, guilt, fear, inability to forget, incapacity to move on, detachment, disassociation, or impossibility of dealing with memories.

In this regard, I took in account that a process of internal journey to the past through the individual psyche and history is affected by collective memory and culture, and demands strategies that can hardly be developed without a wide social attention and support (See Spivak, 1985). According to feminist poststructuralist and postcolonial studies, such as those by Spivak, Butler (1990, 1993), and Grosz (1994), only characters empowered by a sense of worth and intercultural tools of communication are able to deconstruct the link between their psyche, situation, and history, understand the mechanisms behind their

oppression, and become aware of their power to raise a voice and act against oppression. Thus, I observed the turning points in which characters start questioning the social structure, and, sometimes, working against it. Characters like Ilka, Ebony, Fishgoppel, and Lore in Segal's novels, Amabelle in Danticat's and Marie Ursule in Brand's illustrate the potential of an individual to oppose oppressive powers, and change their perception of their bodies, their selves, and the world. In the best case-scenario, such as in Ilka's in *Her First American*, the character gains a sense of liberation, at least in regard to certain aspects of her identity and life. Other characters, affected by genocide, slavery, and colonialism, such as most of Brand's, suffer from such a trauma-induced historical and cultural sense of guilt, shame, and shock, they can hardly rely on their own community to gain power in their own terms or on an intercultural net of support to rebuild their sense of self-worth. Not only hegemonic society but also the minority itself imposes different axes of oppression, complicating the process of liberation. However, most characters in the four novels demonstrate conflicting influences and perceptions, and represent diverse examples of women's power to struggle against trauma and repression.

Postcolonial, feminist, diaspora, and trauma studies helped analyze the ways by which the authors illustrate the specific problems of bodies marked by differences (other than gender). The novels display intersecting layers of oppression that affect how each character responds to trauma, memory, and history, and the manners in which each character perceives the body, self, and the world. All four novels point out that axes of difference impact women's experience of their bodies and selves. Of the four novels, *At the Full and Change of the Moon* is the one that best exemplifies a wide range of intersectional oppression related to slavery, including capture, dominance, racism, dislocation, humiliation, violence, and objectification in different locations, periods, and generations. Gender marks enslaved women in one more layer in comparison with men slaves. However, the other novels, too, display problems of bodies marked—visually or not—by difference related to gender, skin color, ethnicity, trauma, and disability, always dealing with intersecting categories of oppression. The range of the narratives and their context suggest that traumatic poverty, abuse, and discrimination do not necessarily include physical violence, yet, they are related to the body through biology-based social definitions, and are etched to the body that becomes the site of the struggle. Trauma and pain are manifested in body language, body perception, and bodily-affected behavior based on shame, guilt, and/or fear. All the above demonstrate

how necessary it has been to apply a decolonized interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of minority/trauma/historical literature.

(b) novels as testimonies in regard to memory, history, and trauma:

Since the novels are closely bound with historical events such as the Caribbean islands' slavery, the 1937 massacre, and the Holocaust, their status as testimonies becomes an important issue. Their narratives, a product of collective memory filtered through the singularity of the author's writing and experience, testify to individual, intergenerational, international, and collective traumas and their causes. As traditional trauma theory refers to testimonies given by survivors as narratives--due to the impact of trauma, disassociation from the atrocities and from life, and the individual way each person experiences a traumatic event--the parallel between historical novels and survivors' testimonies could not be overlooked. Endorsing LaCapra's view in *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (2014), according to which the meeting of history and trauma is evident in novels, the present analysis has used the opportunity offered by the novels to study the approximation and the meeting points of memory and history through literary representations of trauma. These novels fulfill the role of fiction in identity formation, awareness, and resistance in relation to historical occurrences. In fact, I would not have started this study without a profound conviction that fiction is a means to assess and process oppression and trauma, provoke debate, implicate readers, and generate empathy. The study has indeed confirmed the power of literature to deconstruct and reconstruct our perception of history, thus revealing opportunities for social transformation.

Common to the four novels is the reimagination of horror via fiction, which illustrates the reach and the impact of trauma on female minority survivors and their descendants. Thus, although the novels are defined as fiction and do not correspond to the classic definition of testimonials as a direct trauma survivor's testimony, the analysis has demonstrated they carry the load of reconstructing horror that is otherwise silenced by shock or by political power relations. The authors break the silence, the intended forgetting, and the miscommunication caused by alarm, inability to deal with history, cultural patterns and/or dominant politics. By telling individual stories, they reveal how individuals start acknowledging and confronting the past, despite the collective silence. Traumatic occurrences resurface and open space for reconstruction and resistance. Thus, literary criticism of trauma-related

novels serves as a tool of inspection over power and politics, an indicator of the need for change, and a voice to individual and collective identities and memories.

(c) theme-related linguistic aspects and the literary tools applied by the authors of these trauma-related narratives:

The study has also determined the power of language to portray and pass on -- or avoid passing on -- history. Segal's novels are an example of realistic, almost minimalistic storytelling, in its descriptions of the characters' interactions and perceptions. The clarity of the texts, the occasional slyness, typical of the voices of Lore in *Other People's Houses* and Ilka in *Her First American*, emphasize the inner worlds of the characters and creates an intimacy with their trauma-affected perception of their past and present. Danticat and Brand make a usage of cultural symbols and figures, and a fragmented storytelling typical to Caribbean literature. *At the Full and Change of the Moon* skips from one life to another, exemplifying the restlessness that exists in the foundation of these characters. *The Farming of Bones* interweaves extremely short chapters with somewhat longer ones, balancing between the past and the present, and implying in this way that the past is still a part of the present and has to be acknowledged. *At the Full and Change of the Moon* skips from one life to another, exemplifying the restlessness that exists in the foundation of these characters, who passed the door of no return (Brand 2002). The fragmentated storytelling is also a reflection upon a fragmented collective identity, created and recreated along events of slavery, colonization, exile, genocide, and war. Moreover, this tool mirrors the disjointed self of trauma survivors, whose life has been disrupted. Both Caribbean novels deal with mythical figures that symbolize life and death, such as the river and other bodies of water in Danticat's, ghosts like the dusty nuns in Brand's, and continued haunting in both novels. Thanks to these forms of writing, readers become more intimate not only with the characters, but also with their sociocultural backdrop.

Differently from the view of language in the other novels, in *At the Full and Change of the Moon* the linguistic notion is not necessarily a conventional form of communication. Marie Ursule, who hears voices from the past in the woods, believes that these voices heavy with memories are carried through the body to the end of time. Therefore, she does not tell the story of slavery, as there is no need for words. Imitating her, her daughter Bola does not tell her own story either. Bola learns the voices of nature, in and outside her, and speaks little with her men and her children. Later on, the second Bola goes even further. Language

becomes enigmatic to her and impossible to use. She is certain that the letters she reads are written in Gibberish, and when she quotes a letter, with her applied corrections, the words are all distorted. Since the letters represent the present, she retreats into a ghost-filled world in which the past is alive and the present is not. The resulting loss of a common language conveys a loss of history and common identity, and the need to reconstruct what has been lost.

In addition, each of the four novels illustrates trauma and stages of recovery through language. For instance, in *Other People's Houses* and *Her First American* the exiled characters struggle with loss and with the violence of the split from their homeland through an attempt to acquire the new language as a cultural tool of assimilation. However, they remain on the margin, since the subtleties of language remain out of their reach. Lore struggles not only with the acquisition of English, but also with an estrangement from her mother tongue, German. This isolation from both cultures intensifies her sense of alienation everywhere, her in-betweenness. Ilka becomes obsessed with the local language in all its forms. Beside learning English as a way of becoming a part of the center, she also observes the locals' body language, hoping to obtain it. When Ilka experiences a moment of breakthrough, she imagines herself speaking English eloquently and in public, since mastering the language and proving it to the local society symbolizes a victory against everything that held her back. The parents in both books--Lore's father and Ilka's mother--refuse to learn English, thus demonstrating their incapacity to move on from the past and create a new life. Trauma traps them and they withdraw from life. Moreover, Ilka's mother tells her stories in German, unaware that nobody, except Ilka, understands her, therefore deepening the gap between her and everyone around her. In *The Farming of Bones,* Amabelle acquires the local language in Alegria, during her years of exile, but she refuses to use it during her escape, even at the cost of being caught and tortured, as an act of repulse against Dominican violence. Thus, her resistance leads to a literal and figurative temporary loss of voice.

(d) the manners by which the authors show the specific problems within the context of each female character marked by differences

Within the examination of the intricate net of layers of oppression in the characters' lives, a special focus has been given to the circumstances of exile and diaspora, racism**,** ethnicism, and sexism. Notably, the characters' reactions toward each layer of oppression depend upon the character's power relations within and across other

layers of oppression. In this sense, each character's struggle to survive is informed by her singular situation, her standing in society, and the possibilities of breaking through oppression despite her placement on the margins. Or rather, just as traumatic oppression is multiple in the lives of most characters, so are the characters' reactions tied together in their relations to the intercalated categories of discrimination Thus, since the characters deal with lack of options, and carry the memory of horrifying events, their dealing with every category of oppression is simultaneously influenced by their dealings with other categories of oppression. Additionally, in the same way the self is whole, while constructed over several discourses, so is the character's trauma whole, yet changing constantly based on interactive effects. However, even though the fragmented self, with its constant change, contradictions, and conflicts, is often bent under the weight of trauma, as the authors illustrate, each novel introduces possibilities--however limited at times--to ignore, overcome, raise awareness, contribute to collective unity and/or fight the oppression and trauma.

The interrelated examination of the relations of exiled characters with their homeland, their new land, and--upon a visit or a return--their homeland again, has demonstrated diverse situations of in-betweenness. The contextually-related causes, impact, and manifestations of trauma emerge as constant elements across the novels, yet, each character makes her own journey based on her perception of her own difference and of the world's reactions to it. In *Her First American,* Ilka and her mother, now living in the US, return to Austria in an attempt to find solace in their homeland and come to terms with their past, but the memories of Nazi torture and persecution do not dissipate, and the women find that their sense of home has been lost forever. Upon their return to the USA, Ilka opts to be naturalized as an USA citizen, despite her sense of alienation, since she needs to build a new future. Her mother takes much longer to break through her shock and pain and start moving on. Amabelle from *The Farming of Bones* returns to her homeland as well, though in her case she is escaping persecution. She believes she will be well-received in Haiti, when fleeing, but she encounters personal and organizational rejection, and feels that the Haitian identity has lost its meaning, if this collective self has ever had one. In both Segal's and Danticat's novels, the identity of the characters is deeply affected by the homeland's animosity and betrayal. However, Amabelle has to stay in her homeland, where she accepts her difference as a mark of mutual alienation between her and the Haitian society. When she gathers enough force and motivation,

however, over twenty years later, she tells her life story, and the story of other Haitians, testifies against the executioners of the genocide, and eternalizes the memory of her beloved ones. By doing so, she helps reconstruct the collective memory and identity of Haiti, and her "difference" becomes a part of it, despite her pain.

Other effects of exile, racism, and ethnicism appear across the novels. Therefore, initially, while exile has been used as an umbrella concept for the diverse situations, the study has recognized that the four novels mostly portray characters in diaspora, as defined by the poststructural definition. While the traditional definition of diaspora (Safran 1991), based on the historical forced displacement of the Jewish people, could not be applied in each of the unique circumstances and characters, the poststructuralist definition (Hall 1990, Paul Gilroy 1993), characterized by the inclusion of lack of options in the homeland, the complex net of loyalties, and the diverse manners of acculturation in the new land, extends the diaspora definition to the Holocaust survivors sheltered in England in *Other People's Houses*, Holocaust survivors fleeing to the USA in *Her First American*, and the Haitian workers living in the Dominican Republic before the 1937 massacre.

Within the theme of exile, *The farming of Bones* is the novel that best highlights the effects of racial exclusion, radical nationalism, and genocide. Less intense in this direction, Segal's novels use these themes as a backdrop and a foundation for the portrayed lives. *At the Full and Change of the Moon* somewhat breaks from the common thread of the effects of diaspora as an externally forced exile, since it introduces exile as at once an intergenerational, external, and internal situation, as the characters do not settle anywhere permanently, nor ever find internal peace. The one exception in Brand's novel is the matriarch Marie Ursule, an African slave in Trinidad, whose situation corresponds to the more traditional definition of diaspora, and who is deeply connected to her roots. Otherwise, the novel illustrates racism not only as a philosophy that validates the enslavement of black Africans by the major political powers, but also as an internalized guiding principle in the lives of free people of color in Trinidad. The prediction of doom generated by the great matriarch Marie Ursule comes alive in the portrayal of the continued traumatic impact in all the subsequent generations, who spread over the world, become a part of a growingly hybrid race, and are still affected by slavery-related trauma and a sense of alienation everywhere.

The related problem of internalization of prejudice is relevant in Brand's novel to the slaves' descendants. Of the whole range of

characters, only Marie Ursule does not internalize the oppressors' views of her as inferior. Her planned collective suicide is not a fruit of self-loathing, but a last measure to end pain, react against the slave masters, and leave a mark in history. Loyal to her vision of the necessity of resistance, she lets her daughter Bola continue her line of ancestry, maintaining memory alive through Bola's existence. In her view, her daughter passes on the hereditary data of horrifying injustice. Most of the other characters in the novel do not have mental, emotional and physical conditions to deal with history and resist oppression actively. The lives of numerous characters represent the tragic consequences of trauma threaded by slavery and racism, each life in a different manner. Cordelia, for example, is proud of her hybrid appearance, but knows that her skin color, gender, and poverty provoke abuse and violence. Despite her confidence in her looks and in her ability to conduct her life to her best interest, she judges others based on an internalized racist gaze, and opts for a dark-skinned husband, assuming he would be more reliable than a red-skinned man. Thus, like the colonizers, she judges people based on their skin color, but, unlike the colonizers, she thinks that dark skin implies intelligence and command. Another character, Eula, corresponds with her deceased mother to tell her that the life of their minority is a tragic, cracked world. These characters have been traumatized by applied and internalized racial, patriarchal, and colonial conventions, and trauma cuts into their social relationships and emotional involvement. Silenced stories of slavery and colonization, poverty, and abuse fill them with guilt and shame. Their representations of self-destruction, loneliness, and internal and external exile testify to the horror integral to their collective memory. Their exile is not only a physical situation but also their perception of self, as they never feel at home, a part of a protecting collective, and are forever drifting.

In order to deepen the investigation of diaspora and racism as a part of the characters' formation, the study has applied these concepts to the characters' lives, also including in the experiences of exile and racism/ ethnicism not only primary traumatic events but also the insidious trauma of continued oppression. The minority characters portrayed in the novels are surrounded by prejudiced people, among them those dear to them. Therefore, "minor" events of discrimination occur as a routine and echo the primary traumatic event. These "minor" events are characterized as more accessible to the psyche than the primary one. For instance, as much as Lore from *Other People's Houses* tries to avoid facing the issue of racism and ethnicism in England, she is aware it exists and is dangerous, as she has already experienced it as a

young child in Austria. She is more perceptive, now, less optimistic, and better prepared to confront discrimination. However, she observes the majority's views of her and her minority from a careful distance instead of struggling with these views. The Nazi regime has already formed her perception of her difference as "defective" and unwanted, affecting her view of her embodied self. In certain turns of the plot, she tries to erase her difference and hide her foreignness, her family relations, and her past in order to assimilate locally. Her internalization of the socially-criticized intersectional set of otherness may result in the loss of the self in favor of appearances and imitation. Only eventually does she acknowledge her difference, her Jewishness, and her situation as a refugee, thus revealing a growing sense of self-acceptance, and a possibility of reacting against discrimination. In Segal's other book, *Her First American,* Ilka does not resent Judaism and does not internalize the racist view of Jews as consistently as Lore, but she, too, tries to assimilate in the local culture of the US, and lose the signs of her ethnicity, origins, and socio-cultural influences. In addition, she fights off the view of her gender as weak and dependent, and the view of mixed-race relationships as suspicious, and speaks up whenever her confidence is firm enough. *At the Full and Change of the Moon* illustrates clearly that while these "minor events occur" or rather, discrimination continues, the characters go on suffering from internalization of prejudice and trauma. The novel clarifies that change cannot come from within the characters alone, but in society in general. Only by changing the oppressive social structure, can the characters break through the destructive impact of hundreds of years.

(e) causes and aggravators of trauma related to exile, racism, and war:

In addition to the impact of exile and racism described above, other traumatic effects related to the categories of racism and exile and strengthened by war have been investigated in regard to the characters' lack of clear-cut sense of belonging, loss of collective identity, and life in-between identities and places. Stressful situations expand, recreate, and extend the oppression across a traumatizing history. First, the lack of free choice has been studied in regard to Lore from *Other People's houses*. As a girl, in Austria, aware of her Jewish ancestry, she felt free to experience both Jewish and Christian holidays in order to choose her religion and cultural identity. Upon her escape to England, however, she has already lost her trust in her homeland, where she is labeled as Jewish, and therefore inferior, based on biology—and consequently deprived of human rights. She doubts her liberty to choose who she is.

In England, as an unsafe outsider, she is still labelled as a Jewish girl, and, now, as a refugee as well. She still balances between religions, but she dreads being Jewish after her traumatic experience, and she cannot feel Christian. The traumatic impact of the series of events that brought her and, later, her family to England is emphasized by the fact of their immigration to another country, and then another, reenacting the struggle of an outsider in exile.

Ilka from *Her First American* is a refugee like Lore, but in the US. Unlike Lore, who is very hopeful, Ilka is ambiguous upon arriving in her destiny. She is full of anticipation, yet drained with doubt and distrust toward the US. She, too, tries to assimilate locally, but her endless study of what "being American" means creates and recreates her marginal situation. She feels safer when encountering familiarity in the company of other Jews, yet, like Lore, her dread of the consequences of being Jewish haunts her and she does not seek their company. The phantom of genocide and hatred resides in her, due to her traumatic experiences in the Holocaust, and as a result of the continued persecution in the Jewish history.

Amabelle's situation in *The Farming of Bones* bears a certain resemblance to Segal's characters in the sense of her taking shelter in another country. It is not a matter of choice, but of lack of choice: she is a seven-year-old orphan at the time, traumatized by her parents' drowning, and when a Dominican man offers her a place to stay, she raises no objections. Unlike Lore and Ilka, however, she does not run away from persecution and is not a political refugee. Clearly, at the time she has no idea that the two nations, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, suffer from the aftereffects of colonization in a time of neocolonization, and maintain a sense of rivalry between them. Later on, while she acknowledges the national unity of her exiled Haitian colleagues, she does not partake in their sense of collective identity until her lover becomes a bridge between her and the Haitian culture and history. On the other hand, she has no interest in assimilating into the Dominican society, possibly because Dominican culture discriminates against exiled women of color and has no respect for Haitians. This Dominican shelter is relative and temporary, as she finds. In the end, Amabelle leaves this "shelter" that has turned into a deadly trap to become a refugee in her homeland. After the initial attempt to be heard there, she withdraws into complete solitude. Only years later does she bond with Haiti through empowering folkloric figures that help her raise a voice and contribute with her story to the Haitian collective memory.

Of the four, the novel that goes further in history is *At the Full and Change of the Moon,* as it starts with the exile of slaves, in which no option and no free choice exists, not even an illusion of it. The narrative clarifies that after the liberation from slavery, the colonized land and the colonizers hardly offer any improved life conditions, or a change in racial views to the liberated slaves and their descendants. The postcolonial period does not bring much relief or change either. When the characters arrive in the West, leaving without regret their place of birth, they carry their history with them to the extent they do not ever feel hopeful nor do they see a prospect of acculturation. None of these characters chooses a destination country from a position of power, nor do these countries welcome them in any productive way. Although the novel does not point out the global political situation directly as much as the lasting effect of slavery and poverty, it impacts their lack of options wherever they are exiled. By showing their situation, Brand clarifies that change requires more than an individual process. The characters are so fragilized, only a transformation supported by social institutions and economic distribution, can also enable psychological tools.

Another element that appears in the four novels in relation to lives in the diaspora is the characters' relations with their minority. In each novel there are characters who are pushed back into their minority and their roots, drawn to their common history, and characters who stray from their origins and collective history in order to assimilate in the new land and society and achieve an assumingly better future this way. In Segal's and Danticat's novels, the main characters are almost forced back into their origins. Ilka, Lore, and Amabelle rediscover and recover their roots due to the persecution of their minorities. Lore in *Other People' Houses* resists the past and pushes aside her Jewish origins in order to join the majority. However, by the end of the novel, she realizes that her roots define her, too, and she introduces herself to new acquaintances as a Jewish refugee, accepting it as an integral part of her self. Ilka from *Her First American* resists the company of Jews, even though their presence makes her feel more confident, at home. Her sense of belonging to the Jewish community is affected by her dread of the past and internalized anti-Semitism. When she does define herself as a Jew, she often mentions that the Jewish and the black communities have both gone through horrors, and therefore they have a lot in common and should understand each other. This identification is not innocent of a backdrop of conventions regarding blacks, but she tries to establish an identity larger than her Jewish one, through empathy and common ground with other minorities. Unlike her, the African-American

characters, Carter and Ebony, display a strong sense of community based on a common history. The discriminatory actions, segregation, and poverty since the time of slavery in the US have shaped the African American collective identity and memory. Both Ebony and Carter balance between empathy for Jews and a sulking racist annoyance due to their sense of competitive legacies, a subject discussed in a following section. In *The Farming of Bones* the collective identity and memory of Haitians in exile is present among the cane workers, but do not apply to Amabelle, except for a short period of time in which her lover Sebastien draws her back to her Haitian roots. Sebastien, Kongo, and other cane workers are united together both due to their marginal situation in Haiti, and embrace the Haitian collective identity as an armor and comfort. Amabelle comprehends the Haitian solidarity and identification as a bridge between the past and the present, between the homeland and the diaspora, but remains more of an observer than a participant. Simultaneously, she does not connect with Dominican society, either, knowing that she occupies the low end of the local hierarchy. Thus, she exists in between cultures, nations, and identities—without any major reference. Interestingly, when the massacre starts, she expresses her certainty that Haiti would welcome her back and offer her safety. This is a dramatic moment of change, but it remains a moment, since Haiti does not correspond to the survivors the way a homeland should. Betrayed by both nations, persecuted, marginalized, and rejected, she suffers from a double shock. Only in the last pages of the book does she recover her sense of self and connects with the collective Haitian culture and history through local folklore and a reconstructive storytelling. A certain ambiguity brings her suffering as well. She is shown entering the Massacre River and floating there, as if she will live forever between identities and places. As for *At the Full and Change of the Moon*, its first character, Marie Ursule has a strong sense of the collective power to resist the oppressors, as illustrated through her initiative and execution of the collective suicide of the slaves. Here, the oppressors receive a collective reaction of rebellion from the oppressed. However, following this event, none of the subsequent characters manifests any affectionate connection to the collective culture and history, except for avoiding what they perceive as a dreadful or shameful past. Various minorities mix up across the saga, and yet, in no occasion do the readers encounter any sense of collective pride or identification with any of the involved communities.

As a result of the discussed problems of exile, ethnicism, and racism, the characters deal with related ongoing causes for trauma. The

four novels demonstrate how the primary traumatic events of war, genocide, and/or slavery, are still pulsing in the lives of direct and indirect survivors. Traumatic events create and recreate the shock, the hurt of betrayal and deceit, external and internal humiliation, and the question of self-implication in the traumatic events.

The shock is often related to scenes of separation of children from their parents. The traumatic impacts of the separation are introduced in the four novels, always indicating the children's consequent pain and trauma. Each novel demonstrates how the separation tears the child away not only from the mother or the parents but also from the sense of emotional and physical safety, thus marking the child's psyche with fear. Lore from *Other People's Houses* witnessed the beginning of the disaster in Austria, and now she is consumed with worry for the family she left in there when she left to England. Like other children who took the Kindertransport she suffers from accumulated trauma, as defined by Gustke (2009), or rather, from an intense traumatic experience during a long duration of time that involves psychological and social dimensions society has no structure to handle. While she is relieved to be safe, she feels guilty for leaving. This ambiguity causes her suffering as well. Finally, when her parents join her, months later, a part of her guilt is lifted, but this is a temporary relief from her anxiety, since nothing goes back to the way it used to be. She is estranged both from her parents and from the new land.

Ilka from *Her First American* suffers from a sequential trauma as well, due to the combination of a long separation from her parents, life threat, a sharp decline in life conditions, persecution, and fear for herself and her family. The difference in Lore's and Ilka's ages at the time of their separation from their parents--Lore is ten and Ilka is thirteen—and their different routes—Lore finds shelter in England while Ilka escapes across Europe—as well as the parents' different situations--Ilka does not know their destiny for years--leads to a different formation of identity and a different structure of trauma. When Ilka realizes that her father was murdered, she suffers more shock and guilt, as if she could have saved him, had she stayed.

In *The Farming of Bones,* Amabelle's parents drowned in front of her. This death implies a different sense of separation, since this is a situation of no return. The subsequent dislocation to a foreign country, where the Haitian Amabelle is discriminated, intensifies her fear and shock. According to Gustke (2009), a friendly acceptance helps overcoming trauma, but the Dominican Republic does not offer

Amabelle an empathetic reception, and the shelter is relative. Grief becomes a part of her psyche, body, and self.

Lastly, in *At the Full and Change of the Moon,* the trauma of the children who are sent away by their mothers is related to and is a fruit of the trauma of each mother as a rejected and discriminated daughter and to the primal traumatic event of slavery. Brand's novel illustrates how the mothers' estrangement, silence, and hereditary memories form and distort the subsequent generation's identity and perception of their selves and the world. None of the character feels safe in the world, and this is both the result and the cause for the lack of any stable bond of trust and affection. With their mothers' rejection, their sense of self-worth is affected, and their solitude and life conditions continue engraving in them the collective history and memory. When Marie Ursule sends her daughter Bola away before the collective suicide, Bola is very young; the separation hits her as a maternal rejection rather than salvation. The consequent death of her mother and the insanity of her father, along with the terrible conditions of her life galvanizes acute trauma. Unlike Segal's characters, whose parents send them away from external danger, and Amabelle, whose parents die, the death from which Marie Ursule spares her daughter is orchestrated by Marie Ursule herself. Although she saves Bola from slavery, the suicide is a form of maternal rejection.

The two novels that stand out in their elaboration of deceit and betrayal (often accompanied by shock) in the solidification of trauma are *Other People's Houses* and *The Farming of Bones*. In Segal's novel, Lore and her family feel safe and free in Austria, even in the initial period in which legalized persecution takes place. Once they realize the danger, they feel betrayed retroactively, as they understand that the Nazi occupation has simply peeled off the layer of apparent tolerance, exposing the extent of the local anti-Semitism. Lore is shocked to experiences hate incidents that prove that her biological origins put her in a disdained, and undeserving of human rights position in a place she considered a home. Her trust in the world is shaken completely, and from then on, she is always alert and suspicious. In *The Farming of Bones*, Amabelle trusts the Dominican family with whom she has stayed since her childhood. Due to this trust, she, like Lore and her parents, ignores the racist views and the threat against her safety until there is no way back. At this stage, she is shaken from her stupor, and she runs for her life. Later, she will go back and forth across her memories, suffering from the shock and punishing herself for misjudging the gravity of the hatred. In addition to this experience in the Dominican Republic, she

feels the shock of betrayal once more when the Haitian authorities decline to treat her testimony with respect and attention. Her anticipation of feeling sheltered and acknowledged crashes against reality. She withdraws into herself, and remains numb for a long time.

These novels, with the addition of *Her First American,* connect the shock of betrayal with the characters' sense of implication in their destiny. They need to comprehend their denial and forgive themselves, before they can overcome trauma. Lore's father blames himself for the denial of the threat and danger, since a correct reading of the political reality of the time might have allowed the whole family to escape together. When he and his wife send their daughter to England on her own, he breaks down out of guilt, shame, and fear for her destiny. In *Her First American*, Ilka's mother cannot tolerate the thought she left her husband to die on the road. Although she could not have prevented his murder, and might have been killed as well, her sense of self has collapsed and she reimagines the scene obsessively, trapped in her past. Like her, Amabelle from *The Farming of Bones* is tortured by her possible implication in the traumatic events. She cannot tolerate the idea she might have saved herself and her beloved ones, had she understood the extent of the threat correctly. Surviving Sebastien and his sister Mimi, and having sent them to their death (unknowingly) is an inexhaustible source of guilt. Her former calmness seems shameful, a luxury she should not have allowed herself.

Another source of trauma represented in the novels is humiliation. In fact, no character in the four books is spared of external humiliation inflicted by others, and several of them have an internal sense of humiliation, or rather, an echo to the external one. The characters who find ways to detach themselves from their feelings after incidents of inflicted humiliation, such as Lore after the boys spit at her, suffer from collateral effects of detachment in other fields in their lives. Another distant reaction to humiliation is introduced through Ilka, who is often more curious about expressions of humiliation, such as these used against Jews by her friends, than is hurt by them. Amabelle surrenders to humiliation for a while, but then, she struggles to testify about these episodes of humiliation and cruelty, such as the parsley pushed into her throat, as she becomes more angry about it than hurt. Only Marie Ursule of the whole characters across the four novels remains proud and strong always.

Among the characters who internalize humiliation, Lore's father feels such a deep sense of humiliation, it destroys his sense of self, and, as Lore comments, his body cannot deal with this trauma. Another

representation of internalized humiliation is present in *At the Full and change of the Moon,* in which Sones, the ex-soldier, lives under a tree and tries to peel off any signs of humanity. Eula sees humiliation in the unknown, silenced history, and dreads the secrets of shameful events and relationships. She hides herself from the gazes of others, and is especially afraid that her body reveals the shame of the past in intimate situations.

(f) Similarities and differences among female trauma survivors of different minorities and situations in their relationships with the body and, through it, with the world:

The role of the body has already been mentioned throughout the above. It is merely due to the necessity to analyze each element of oppression that the body has its own chapter in the study and its section in the conclusions, although it is interwoven with every other part of the work. Essentially, the four novels deal with traumatizing events resulting from biology-related social definitions of difference, and with bodily manifestations of trauma. Several elements are similar among the four novels, as the study has revealed. For instance, young age and health appear as basic required standards across cultures. The measures of the body, the color of the skin and the hair and other aesthetic details change from discourse to discourse, but generate a common effect of discomfort in the body.

Common to several characters is their alienation from the world and from their bodies. Both the feeling of disembodiment and the counter-aspect of concentration on the sensual body alone involve a sense of detachment. The four novels illustrate how detachment isolates people from life and emotions, and distorts the perception of the self. The tendency to remain aloof in order to escape an unbearable pain works to a certain degree, but it has a high cost. More than any of the other novels, *At the Full and Change of the Moon* is full of characters whose detachment from their bodies and their surroundings is a defense mechanism that does not protect the characters in the least. Marie Ursule sees a clear split between the body and the mind, as the body insists upon living even when she has decided that death is better for her, a slave, than life. Eula loathes her body, seeing it as an evidence of shameful historical secrets. She avoids intimate relationships, as they render her vulnerable. Lastly, the second Bola lives among ghosts and avoids human connection of any sort, as if the ghost world is the only reliable reality. Interestingly, in the same novel, another form of detachment binds characters with their bodies, desires, and senses alone. Certain characters, such as Bola, Cordelia, and Maya go on a

quest for liberation from pain through bodily pleasures and adulation, and distance themselves from everything else; and for a while this attitude soothes them. However, their withdrawal from any sort of emotional intimacy limits their life in every social and emotional aspect. Bola is connected to her body, while completely detached emotionally, and unable to form intimacy. Cordelia is detached both emotionally and physically until she decides to follow her desires, in which stage, she explores her sexuality but avoids any sort of intimacy. In Maya's story, it should also be noted that the character's only experience with men, except for her brother, has been permeated by sexism. Yet, she positions herself as an easy target for men who see her as subjugated to their sexual and other physical impulses. By doing so, she reenacts the traumatic events of her past in an "unconscious repetition", a concept introduced in the 1920s by Freud. She connects with her body temporarily, enjoying a complete immersion in it, until she realizes that her nakedness and profession make her vulnerable to violence. In *The Farming of Bones,* Amabelle cannot localize her embodied self in time and place. She springs from her body alienation while she is with her lover, but sinks back to it once they are apart.

Another body-related element, skin color, or rather, an obvious external sign of race, has a great impact on the characters in Brand's novel. The author portrays diverse patterns of bodily discomfort or body misconception based on related patterns of oppression. Cordelia has internalized racist conventions and therefore she keeps judging men based on their skin color. She is alternatively proud and ashamed of her hybrid look. Eula finds a direct connection between her naked, black body, and shameful, historical secrets, so she avoids public exposure and sexual intimacy. These characters of color are constantly exposed to gendered, ethnicist, and racist discrimination.

Segal's Jewish characters, too, have internalized the condemning gaze and see in themselves physical flaws, based on the discourse of the unfitting Jew. While their skin color is not a locus of discrimination, it is clear to them they do not correspond to the dominant social standards. In *Other People's Houses,* Lore's consequent critical distance from everything stands at the basis of her inability to love others and to receive love. Her attempts to copy the locals trap her in falsity and prevent intimacy, affection, and a process toward self-acceptance. In addition, she feels a growing sense of alienation from her body, when she thinks it betrays her and renders her helpless. This occurs when she fails to bond with her first foster mother, and because of her anxiety, she starts wetting herself at night. The way trauma

functions: worsening unless handled, the night wetting deteriorates Lore's sense of control over anything in her life. Eventually, the humiliation she feels leads to a stronger withdrawal from relationships. In *Her First American,* Ilka, like Lore, is a learner of her surroundings and an imitating observer of the locals. She covets the American women's looks, their sexuality, and their feminine social codes since she judges them to be better. She, too, feels the weight of lack, the mark of ethnicism, sexism, and difference.

Another trauma reflected and lived through the body appears in *Her First American* in the story of Ilka's mother. While the mother reveals her traumatic story compulsively, she hides her body from view with the same ardor. Even at the hospital she refuses to take off her clothes, as if a shameful secret could be revealed. Her living body contradicts the absence of her husband's, and she cannot stand it. Additionally, her shame and guilt for having split from her husband during the death march sustains her sense of inadequacy that includes her body.

In addition, a form of oppression that puts a distance between the female characters and their bodies in Segal's novels is the social pressure to correspond to the common standards of beauty. Both Lore from *Other People's Houses* and Ilka from *Her First American* feel that their bodies are inadequate and ugly. Lore and Ilka are exposed to the conventions of the European standards of beauty and female roles, the Western image of the prototype a woman has to perform. Lore finds her hair unfitting and her thinness uncomely. She feels split from the body because she cannot control its trauma manifestations. Ilka cannot connect with her mirror reflection, while, at the same time, using the image as an anchor, to remind her who she is when speaking with acquaintances. She observes her cousin's conservative clothes that reflect religious—and limiting--values, and her mother's shame in the body, and she desires to break free from the repressive view of the body, but this is a complex process.

The same occurs with Amabelle from *The Farming of Bones*. Interestingly, the common ground in regard to body presence is the strongest between the characters Ilka and Amabelle. Both of them feel disembodied, almost inexistent, until they receive an affirmation from their respective lovers. Amabelle feels she is so light, so thin, she is almost invisible, and any wind can blow her away. Ilka acts as if by learning from an American man and from the American women she observes, she can prevent any further effects of persecution and marginalization on her own life. She starts accepting her body and

becomes somewhat more confident, only when her lover, Carter, approves of her looks and sexuality. Moreover, being new to the country, to the culture, and hoping to restart her life, Ilka perceives herself as a baby in the sense of having to learn everything. Notably, Amabelle resembles her in her need for a masculine approval. She connects with her body through her Haitian lover's praises of her youth and beauty. His standards of beauty and femininity become hers, and when she becomes disabled, and older, she loses her sense of confidence.

Different discourses affect each of the characters. Beside gender conventions, the conventions of health, youth, and beauty as female definers are strongly related to the view of disability and the traumatic aspect of this view. The cross between disability and trauma is clear especially in *The Farming of Bones*, but it appears as well in *At the Full and Change of the Moon* in relation to a crippled woman who commits suicide, and the symbolic meaning of Marie Ursule's crippled leg as slavery's burden. In both novels, the fragmented narrative treats disability and trauma in a linguistic manner. In addition, Danticat's character Amabelle speaks about the marginalization of disabled, elder Haitian women in the Dominican Republic. Her compassion links old age and disability, and, indeed, she later connects them again, when she is both older and disabled. Since she is influenced by Sebastien's admiration of her flawless, youthful, capable bodiedness, she relies on these physical references as measures for her self-worth. This is, unsurprisingly, a trigger to her feeling of worthlessness when she becomes disabled and older. The significance of flawlessness will be always associated to a woman's worth. Of course, her perspective of signs of inability, deformity, and even seniority is a social construction, as argued by Lennard Davis (1997), since the public eye disregards or marks them as negative.

Also related to trauma and the body is the element of motherhood in the characters' lives. In fact, motherhood and estrangement appear to be inseparable in *At the Full and Change of the Moon.* Racism and sexism have marked the slave woman as a sexual object and a tool of procreation. As a result, the slaves' children are often the product of rape. Therefore, the fear fixed in the collective memory has to do with ripping children from the mothers in order to be enslaved elsewhere, or with witnessing the children's suffering. The mothers' solutions include spreading the children and hoping for their survival under the protection of others. The repetition clarifies that the separation is an expression of pain and the fear engraved on the

Caribbean body. Bola spreads several of her children among strangers. Her trauma affects her capacity to read other people's feelings, and therefore she is suspicious even of her young children's intentions. On the other hand, she also protects them from the recurrence of horrifying history, by sending each of the ones she gives away to a different place. Cordelia's motherhood is protective as well as long as her children are young and malleable. She raises them to be respectable and responsible, preparing them for traditional roles in order to guarantee them a safe future. Once they become independent grown-ups, however, she loses her interest in them. Her indifference evokes the idea she has never been emotionally attached to them, despite feeling responsible for their survival. Maya's emotional detachment is extended toward her baby as well. She is afraid to repeat the tortuous design of her own relationships with her mother, in which she suffered rejection and indifference. On the other hand, any other sort of motherhood is unfamiliar to her, and thus it may threaten her peace and her daughter's well-being. In the end, she sends her daughter away, repeating the same pattern of mother/daughter estrangement. In addition, Eula's longing for her mother does not interfere in sending her own daughter away from Canada to Terre Bouillante, as if the place from which most of the family immigrated is the baby's real home. Clearly, all the generations are marked by the damaging impact of trauma on relationships.

(g) the manners each author introduces collective and individual trauma, the transmission of trauma, and trauma legacies

The above causes and aggravators of trauma remain in the collective memory of each minority as a part of its trauma legacy. The novels bond historical legacies with individual lives, by exposing the relation between collective and individual trauma. The selected literary representations of the collective impact of oppression and trauma on individual lives include the possibilities and—at times--the impossibility of breaking through trauma and beginning a transformation. These potentials of change, as introduced by each author, can and should be traced to the character's unique situation, and to the condition of the minority, as well as to a multi-directional perception of oppression, trauma, and change. The differences among the novels and the respective cultures lie in their elaboration of the passage of trauma.

Notably, transmitted memories are deeply connected with the minority female characters' perception of others and of themselves. Current events of discrimination evoke the memory of historical events in a non-linear way, or rather, the meaning of each struggle is based not only on present difficulties but on history as well. In *Her First*

American, the character of Fishgoppel, an indirect trauma survivor, exemplifies how collective memory shapes her view of the world, her professional and intellectual occupations, and her sense of solidarity with persecuted Jewish people. In addition, her sensitivity to racism and persecution opens her to the suffering of other minorities, such as the African Americans, as she finds similarities in the impacts of oppression. Other than her, in the four novels, only a few characters consider the situation of people of other minorities, or view minorities other than their own as communities who suffer from similar forms of oppression. Therefore, each community represented in the selected novels is isolated not only from mainstream society, but also from different minorities.

As the above implies, the singularity of trauma legacy of each minority is strongly affected by socio-historical circumstances, and culture. However, the avoidance of most characters and communities of the trauma legacies of other communities reflects the problematic results of the lack of empathy and political unity against oppression. The identification with others' suffering or the lack of it makes a difference in understanding the structure of oppression. The novel that deals with this theme of competitive legacies most directly is *Her First American*, in which the Jewish and the black characters alternate between competitiveness and empathy on different occasions. Clearly, certain collective traumas have been brought to light more than others, and there is a reason to question the motives and reasons that led to this. However, instead of diminishing the importance of one trauma in relation to another, there is an obvious interest of all targeted groups to unite their political power and struggle for restauration, prevention, and solutions. Rothberg's 2009 theory of multidirectional and intercultural influences across history, and the weight of each traumatic historical event in the understanding of other traumatic historical events points out the importance of empathy and unification for social mobilization.

In *Her First American* two minority groups, the Jewish and the African American, and the complex relationships between them are introduced. Moments of tension, prejudice, and competitive legacies surface throughout the novel. On the other hand, Ilka and her cousin Fishgoppel comment that all suffering has parallel structures and similar impacts on different individuals and communities. They express empathy toward the African American community, and expect the same. Carter is occasionally empathetic to Jews, especially on the individual level. However, he also expresses prejudice against Jews, and emphasizes the uniqueness of the blacks' collective experience. His

nationalist tendency leads to his call for violence against the white community. The novel ends with Ilka's public comment about the similar impacts of oppression and about the common interest to eliminate racism and overcome trauma. In this line, Du Bois (1952), Gilroy, and Rothberg have similarly argued that there are connections between cases of exclusion and persecution, common historical patterns and certain similarities in the reactions of the different minorities. Thus, Segal illustrates that the understanding of common causes, harm, and objectives allows for a wider view of the systems of social workings.

The collective trauma transmitted in the black community is represented in *Her First American* mainly through Carter's and Ebony's recollections of oppression, their social criticism, and their activism. In fact, Ilka's observations of Ebony and Carter suggest that individual and collective traumas mingle in the African-American traumatic experience, provoked by the history of slavery and by the lack of options due to continued discrimination. Thus, Ebony and Carter demand justice, restauration, and acknowledgement. When white people's attempts to repair the historical injustice seem to be on these people's terms their acts are met with suspicion and disdain. The black community, represented by Carter and Ebony, demands to be consulted as equal in regard to the necessary measures, in order to avoid the continuation of the historical hierarchy.

Among the novels, *The Full and Change of the Moon* best exemplifies the concept of intergenerational trauma transmission among the descendants of persecuted people. As mentioned earlier, the book opens with slavery and a collective suicide, then moves from one traumatized individual to another, indicating the lasting effect of historical traumatic events. The sequence of descendants' stories sheds light on collective and individual trauma as an a-temporal and a-local history, while at the same time trauma is formed and understood under cultural influences characteristics to the time, region, and minority. Even though the enslaved matriarch Marie Ursule remains the only character who demonstrates a connection to her origins, and is the only one who experiences slavery "in the skin", the novel clarifies that the suffering is projected forward and affects every generation. We first learn that Marie Ursule is a conduit of history, in the scene describing her listening to voices from the past while preparing poison based on ancient knowledge. Interestingly, Marie Ursule does not talk to her daughter Bola about history, or about culture-related subjects, and yet, she has no doubt that the cruel history of slavery will never be lost, since its shadow is engraved in the body and therefore in the memory of the

subsequent generations. Brand (2002) sustains her view of the body as a transmitter in this fictional work. The form of continuation through the body, expressed by Marie Ursule, applies to the whole self, since the body is a site of conflict and trauma and an aspect of the self. Thus, memory does not disappear even if it is not expressed through oral language. The signature of trauma is present, and storytelling is needed mainly to re-member history and rescue the facts.

In addition, the intergenerational passage of trauma, originally referring to Holocaust survivors, and coined by Hirsch (2008) as "postmemory" appears in different manners in each of the novels. Here, the emphasis is on the interpretation of transmitted trauma as a psychological disorder caused by dysfunctional relationships, emotional detachment, and odd behavior of the direct survivors. As Langer (1991) points out, discussing this form of transmission, the effect of the past on each generation depends on the changing situation, and added direct and indirect traumatic experiences. In this vein, the four novels indicate that the passage of trauma to sons and daughters gains its own characteristics in these descendants. For instance, in *Her First American* Ilka's mother cannot let go of the past, while Ilka denies the past and concentrates on the present. In *At the Full and Change of the Moon* Bola withdraws into her sensuality and into nature, while her descendant, the second Bola, withdraws from society into an elusive world of ghosts.

Also with respect to the intergenerational passage of trauma, the haunting (and haunted) collective memory of each minority comes through in all the four novels, based, in each one, on the specific context. The elements that characterize the Caribbean literature dealing with history and memory appear in *The Farming of Bones* and *At the Full and Change of the Moon* through a traditionally Caribbean fragmented narration, stories of haunting ghosts, and folkloric characters such as the sugar woman or bodies of water (in Danticat's). As in *The Farming of Bones, At the Full and Change of the Moon* reconstructs silenced (ghostly) history through voices or ghosts of the past. While these ghosts may be interpreted as cases of disassociation from reality, as described by Caruth (1995), the ghosts are culturally-accepted beings in Caribbean literature, and therefore the analysis has connected them to the local formation and understanding of trauma. When Marie Ursule hears voices from the past, Bola sees dead, dusty nuns, Eula writes to her dead mother, and the second Bola dialogues only with ghosts, they integrate history into the present through a singular view of the world. In fact, in Brand's novel, the ghost of memory exists both as an integral part of the body of each character, and as figures from the past with

whom characters converse. In Danticat's novel, the ghosts appear through folktales and emerge in Amabelle's psyche as a form of empowerment and reconstruction of her self and her life. Her culture-related dreams reflect the way culture affects her life. The Haitian tradition of vodou-related storytelling, found in Danticat's novel, is traced back to the times of slavery, and therefore, demonstrates how history continues as a part of the present memory and identity. Thus, the authors' use of cultural elements represents an alternative to the linear colonial/Western perspective, conveying the culture of the colonized and not only of the colonialists.

Thus, the study has linked the ghosts in the Caribbean novels with the phantom of the memory, to a lesser emphasis. In this aspect, the wordless transmission of memory and trauma alludes to the phantom present in the collective psyche, as determined by Abraham and Torok's (1994) concept. It produces an invitation to understand trauma in a metaphysical manner, as well, but it is not a presence of the dead or the mythical but of memory. In this case, the characters may begin their recovery from trauma with a recognition and acceptance of the phantom. Once the phantom is "outed," it is embodied and easier to unarm. However, while the characters, in *The Farming of Bones* and in *At the Full and Change of the Moon*, demonstrate a variety of trauma manifestations that correspond with the parameters of psychoanalytic trauma theory, their specificities require a decolonized, diversified conceptualization of the theory in order to interpret fundamental concepts such as breaking through trauma or disassociation. The literary tools utilized by these Caribbean authors are not always in accordance with traditional trauma theory.

In the Western novels, Segal's, however, when the author refers to ghosts, it is more about disassociation from reality. In *Her First American*, Ilka cannot digest the horror of her mother's suffering and her father's murder nor make sense of her mother's story, and the reunion is rather surreal, as Ilka's memories hang like a ghost and her mother seems unreal to her. Clearly, the years of separation intensify her sense of estrangement. Her confusion emphasizes that in such a moment of crisis, trauma is a-temporal and not linear: the past exists in the present without any boundaries. Facing the past (or the phantom of the past) relies upon Ilka's acknowledgement of the painful past and her access to memory, but this access is interrupted by a trauma-instigated psyche. She begins to reconnect with her mother and with the present as she gradually embodies the ghostly mother, or rather, sees her the way she is now.

Other differences and similarities among the novels appear, when fear, constant in the lives of trauma survivors, emerges in the characters' nightmares. A repetition of the horror as in *Her First American* and *The Farming of Bones* sustains Caruth's (1995) and Herman's (1982) view that a blurred or disassociated memory may exist in the waking hours, but the survivor's psyche keeps repeating the traumatic incidents in dreams or hallucinations. In *Her First American*, Ilka's mother has nightmarish dreams in which she either re-lives the horror she has experienced or sees herself in scenes of disaster created by her feverish mind. Amabelle from *The Farming of Bones* re-lives the drowning of her parents in recurrent nightmares, from which her lover tries to lead her away. Later on, back in Haiti, her dreams are related to the loss of Sebastien and to the massacre, and are often related to folkloric Haitian figures. When she dreams about the sugar woman's transformation into an alienated figure, it testifies to Amabelle's dread of the repetition of horror. But, later, as her dreams project her unity with folkloric Haitian figures, they indicate an emotional transformation toward recovery.

(h) the restorative power of the novels in their handling of breaking through trauma

In order to understand the way each author presents ways to break through trauma, the analysis has determined how they introduce trauma within the context of their characters. Segal's novels portray trauma as a psychological and social disorder caused by persecution and genocide and their terrifying effects on the survivors. The glimpses readers are given into situations before and during the Holocaust supply a specific collocation of suffering and trauma. The ongoing problems exiled Jewish people encounter in England, and Jewish and African Americans face, respectively, in the United States convey the depth of historical injustice and prejudice. In the cases of Lore's parents in *Other People's Houses*, for instance, Segal illustrates the difficulty of refugees to overcome trauma, when discriminatory rules and marginalization are still applied to them. In a general manner, however, Segal conveys the characters' possibilities to react, form alliances within their group and with other minorities, obtain tools to gradually conquer ground in the local society, confront the past and get on with their lives. Of the diverse characters, including the Jews and the black ones, only Lore's father suffers from trauma without relief and ends up losing his health and then his life. The specific problems of women to fight intersectional discrimination and trauma, and their difficulties in doing so receive an illuminating portrayal of their relationships with and through their

bodies. Often, they react to history and memory with attempts to focus on the present and fiercely try to assimilate in the local society, and become excellent students, professionals, and thinkers. They feel the urgent need of proving themselves compatible with the locals. Only when they begin integrate into the local society do they make their origins and beliefs better known to others.

In Brand's and Danticat's novels, history weighs further on the characters as they trace their present and future. Both books reflect how slavery and insidious discrimination requires expansive social transformation in order offer the basic conditions to overcome trauma. The collective Caribbean consciousness, as Glissant (1989) writes, has dropped the traumatic events because of its incapacity to assimilate them, therefore forgetting them. However, Danticat's and Brand's narratives reconstruct them, bringing more awareness, acknowledgement, and help. The narratives of Trinidadian and Haitian works include the stories of the colonized as they are crashed under the economic powers, and the stories that are still present, though silenced in the collective memory. Amabelle in *The Farming of Bones* has to reconnect with the Haitian culture and its figures, in order to find and claim her own story. Brand's characters do not claim their history and culture, mostly, but the author does it, through the narrative of the novel itself.

Fundamentally, in Danticat's novel, trauma is a historical, social, psychological disorder. The characters' trauma starts with slavery and the impact is repeated and deepened with the 1937 genocide. *The Farming of Bones* conveys the relation of trauma and memory to erased historical events, and indicates how much the survivors suffer when the community rejects the testimonies of the traumatic events and declines to act upon them. In Amabelle's case, after succumbing to depression for many years, she finds her way of resistance and of overcoming trauma through rituals and figures unique to Haitian culture, while reconstructing and telling her personal experience. The Haitian culture is a device to convey the story and an objective in itself in its reconstruction. It is not only her story that opens new possibilities, but also her embrace of history and tradition in her story telling.

As for Brand, the author shows trauma as a psychological, cultural, political, and economic disorder. Her characters manage to fight trauma only at the cost of losing something else. For example, Bola, Cordelia, and Maya turn away from social conventions and immerse themselves in an embodied self, full of desires. These female characters act as best they can within the tight limits of their

intersectional situation. They obtain relief and a sense of liberation for a while, but do not conquer any social ground or better life conditions. The impact of their rebellion on their surroundings, however, reveals that when a repressed woman puts her own desires first, her act becomes a social announcement of freedom.

Common to the four novels, the manners by which each female character deals with her body illustrate how trauma often causes and is expressed through an alienation and detachment from the body and from the flow of life. Therefore, when they go through a breakthrough in their trauma, it is expressed through a closer relationship with the body and a growing sense of harmony among all the identity aspects. Lore from *Other People's Houses* feels one with her body when her parents join her in England after the torturous months spent apart. The reunion brings a relief from fear and guilt, and helps her experience lightness and pleasure in her body. Ilka from *Her First American* starts feeling a bit more in peace when reunited with her mother, after years of separation and lack of information. Her relief is expressed through the harmonious way with which she makes love with Carter. Moreover, a man's love and desire are continuously a thermometer of her state and a form of recovery as well. In *At the Full and Change of the Moon,* Cordelia's sexual liberation means breaking the social rules that have constrained her. While it is clear she is still detached from people, her body offers her pleasure and release. Unlike her, Maya enjoys a very brief period of pleasure, followed by a threat on her safety and, as a result, a return to the traditional structure of society. However, even Maya's case is a call for freedom, a disruption of the discriminating social order, and an attempt to break the mold and overcome trauma.

All four novels illustrate the need of facing memory and history and working through trauma in order to obtain an internal transformation. A satisfactory process involves an interior journey into the past, an understanding of the construction and passage of trauma, and a gradual self-acceptance. Since the necessities of each culture may vary, both LaCapra's colocation that the Freudian restorative process of working-through ought not be viewed as an affirmation of the pain of the past and a repositioning toward a future with hope, and the traditional trauma theory's view of it as a procedure of mending or conclusion, have been taken in account in the study. A complete recovery, mending and conclusions are not present in any novel, but possibilities of continued change are open. More than any other character, Amabelle from *The Farming of Bones* represents hope and transformation after working through her past. She rises from years of

apathy, finds her voice and tells about the past and the people in her life, ready to confront every rejection, make a mark on history with her individual story, and claim the Haitian narrative she claims as hers too. In *Other People's Houses* slight changes in Lore's attitude toward the end of the novel indicate that she has started a process of conciliation with the past and a reconnection with her feelings. Her anger toward her parents' foreignness mellows and gives way to more compassion. In addition, she realizes that being Jewish is an inseparable part of her history, and she introduces herself to new acquaintances as a Jewish refugee. Thus, she feels more at home everywhere, and manages to build herself a promising future. Interestingly, the main characters in Segal's and Danticat's novels correspond to LaCapra's view of the transformative way. Brand's characters construct a collective memory through their existence, more than through their acts. Thus, based on Marie Ursule's intention to keep the memory of slavery alive, their lives gain historical and cultural importance, but trauma continues to torture most characters.

Another similarity among the novels appears in their illustration of doubling as a form of handling trauma, while not actually overcoming it. The state of double consciousness discussed in the theoretical review in regard to Sartre (1944), Langer (1993) and Kraft (2002) is present in the characters who are haunted by traumatic memories of the past, while simultaneously managing to function well in the present. Both Lore in *Other People's Houses*, and Ilka in *Her first American* represent doubling in this sense. They live simultaneously in one channel for grieving the past, sometimes denying it, and in another channel for the present. This form of doubling is also represented in *The Farming of Bones,* as Amabelle relives the traumatic event of her parents' death in her dreams and thoughts, and, yet, is emotionally present enough to fall in love with Sebastien. When he is murdered, however, she stays trapped in the past for twenty-four years.

A related form of double consciousness, disregarded by traditional psychoanalysis trauma theory, has been introduced here through texts by hooks (1989) and Tal (1996) as a survival strategy for the African-American and other previously colonized communities. While discriminated people are aware of the condemning gaze of the majority, even in cases of internalizing the negative judgement, they are also aware of the uniqueness of their culture and history and/or are proud of their collective identity. *At the Full and Change of the Moon* is the novel that best exemplifies this kind of doubling. For instance, Cordelia is ambiguous in relation to her race, in a mixture of pride and

dread. She alternatively ignores and accepts racist conventions, planning her life as if her possibilities are limited. In *Her First American* the African American Ebony provokes once and again the society that judges her based on her skin color and gender. Her cynicism protects her from succumbing to demeaning conventions, and she acts as if she has nothing to lose one way or another.

Another manner of breaking through trauma according to traditional trauma theory--"the empathetic listener" --appears in Segal's and Danticat's novels**.** In fact, its healing effect is best represented in *The Farming of Bones*, through the relationships between Amabelle and Sebastien. The lovers help each other overcome childhood traumas of loss by listening, understanding, and supplying abundant love. Sebastien manages to soften the effect of Amabelle's nightmares, and to fill her with hope. *Her First American* contain a different perspective of the empathetic listener. Ilka does not believe that people can understand the traumatic experiences of others, since transmitting the specific horror one goes through is impossible. However, empathy and acts of kindness comfort her, her lover, and her mother, despite the extent of the unknown.

Moments of breakthrough appear in each novel. Mostly, such a moment relieves the huge anxiety, and lets the character realize how trauma has impacted her, but the process is long and cannot be resolved by eliminating one of the causes of trauma only. For instance, upon the reunion between Ilka and her mother in *Her First American*, Ilka feels as if life could return to be as it was before the war. However, her father has been murdered, her mother is in complete shock, trauma manifests itself in Ilka's mother and in Ilka, creating misunderstandings, and their adaptation to each other is complex. Accordingly, a real improvement requires a long process. On another occasion, Carter speaks to Ilka about the empowerment of black people, and she daydreams about possessing power as well, speaking perfect English in public, and about the possibility of justice for all minorities. This is a step toward a sense of empowerment that is built over time.

Fundamentally, the mark of a bigger step toward overcoming trauma is a reconnection with the emotions and the embodiment of the characters' existence, as they decrease their detachment. Such a turning point occur in *Her First American*, when a minor event of lovers' jealousy triggers Ilka's misery. All the accumulated sorrow in her breaks loose in sobs that last for long hours, as she lets herself experience her pain to a point of catharsis. Afterwards, she begins to stand on her own feet, relying much less on her lover's strength. In *The Farming of Bones*

Amabelle isolates herself in a bubble of mindless activities for twenty-four years after the 1937 massacre, her lover's death, and the Haitian government authorities' denial of the horror and rejection of the testimonies. However, like Ilka in *Her First American*, she lets her memories wash over her, and, triggered by a mention of her mortality, she comes back to life. Her awakened need to resist the powers that have held her back bursts with strength that illustrates how intense her frustration has been. She challenges the river, a separator between life and death, a symbol of the collective trauma legacy and of her individual loss, although she believes that challenging it risks her life.

In both cases, the characters begin to take on a responsibility for the pain of others, expanding the acceptance of their own suffering to an awakening to other people's suffering. Amabelle needs to outpower the river just as she needs to fight the indifference of the Haitian authorities with her testimony. She becomes too angry to continue her silence, and too eager to demand justice, acknowledgement of the horror, and help for the survivors. The Caribbean aspect of her transformation is an important element. Caribbean figures start appearing in her dreams and stories, as reminders of her belonging to the community, its history, and its memory. The conciliatory person she used to be in the Dominican Republic has matured into a woman aware of justice and injustice, and who knows that her voice is rooted in rich culture and background, and it can hold its own, important in itself as well. Back in the Dominican Republic she did not believe that a minority or a member of one had the power to make a difference, but now she is moved to try and bring change. She is going to unite her story with the streams of other stories, immerse herself, then float. In *Her First American* Ilka's resistance is expressed in public after her lover's death. When his students refer only to the African American legacy, Ilka appeals to the memory of her lover and to their sense of justice to see that their empathy could be extended to other minorities, including hers. Other characters show resistance too. Carter, Ebony, and Fishgoppel from *Her First American* do it, each in his and her manner. Carter writes articles and gives lectures. Ebony never bends to social conventions, and always speaks up her mind when she notices racism and sexism. Fishgoppel makes the fight against anti-Semitism her life work. Resistance is clearly relevant to Brand's character Marie Ursule, as well. While Western culture may consider the collective suicide a result of irrationality and disassociation, Marie Ursule's joint effort with the other slaves acts in ways of resistance. The act passes on the proportion of torment the slaves have suffered. The pain is so acute it becomes a basis for decisions other than those

considered sane. The slaves' sense of themselves and of the world is not passive but active. This is a way of deciding their own destiny, since they cannot do it in any other way. Marie Ursule discards the possibility of escape, since she believes that her generation is too rigid with wounds and scars to restart life. She releases her daughter, so the memory of slavery will go on forever, advance a process of unforgetting, and perhaps bring change. Another aspect of unforgetting, Brand's concept for resistance via reconstruction, is represented by the character of the second Bola in *At the Full and Change of the Moon*. Her trauma does not cease, but her refusal to let go of the past is a-typical to the Caribbean trauma-impacted culture of forgetting. As mentioned before, this act of breaking the silence is characteristic of Brand and Danticat as authors as well. By creating characters who embody a-temporal memories, they shake the existing cultural structure and contribute to the collective memory.

The Farming of Bones does not reveal whether Amabelle's resistance carries political fruit. Possibly, the Caribbean figures that appear in Amabelle's dreams also point out a symbolic world in which nothing is determined permanently. Ilka's call for empathy and unity of interests does not convince the listeners. However, the authors' descriptions of these attempts suggest that a collective transformation requires many similar attempts. *At the Full and Change of the Moon* defines the sociohistorical backdrop of trauma and introduces a different approach to memory and trauma. Sparing Bola from death means hope, and therefore the novel does not suggest a dead end. Certain characters are active enough to transform their lives and obtain change. Eula's attempt to embody history and live in a place that resembles the ancient family house may be a first attempt at feeling at home in the world and seeking a confirmation for her role in it. Cordelia takes a sharp turn away from her old life. The second Bola questions her dead grandmother's advocation of forgetting. Even though change is not necessarily beneficial in the ways the characters choose to have it, it is a link in a long thread that may, in the end, end-up with a better resolution of trauma. The saga proclaims that denial and silencing of memory takes place at the cost of affliction and continued injustice. Accordingly, history and memory ought to be recognized, reproduced, and confronted.

(i) the contributions of each author to the understanding of female trauma and its transformation.

All the above reflects the contributions of Segal, Danticat, and Brand, these female minority authors in exile, to the understanding of

minority problems, with an emphasis on women problems, and to point out possible solutions. The authors' works expand the place of minority literature and studies in our culture, since their novels sustain that lives held on the margins of society contain a different perspective from those of the center, the relations between the center and the margins, and the urgency of the need to acknowledge the consequences of oppressive relations and make social changes. In addition, Brand's and Danticat's novels demonstrate through their description of poverty, hardship, and lack of basic conditions how necessary it is to restore and supply life conditions that would liberate traumatized people to deal with trauma and seek transformation. Moreover, the authors illustrate through the message of their own novels, the importance of obtaining education, language, and other tools for a communication between marginalized groups and dominant ones. For instance, unlike Brand herself, who has been discriminated, yet has acquired the means to mobilize readers and society, her characters, such as Maya and Eula, have been continuously oppressed across multiple paradigms and are unable to find the gaps in the intelligibility of their history despite their deep sense of injustice. Therefore, their tools for resistance are lacking. In Seagal's work, the characters themselves advance the idea that by learning the language of the majority, they can be acknowledged and heard, while maintaining cultural elements of their own communities.

Furthermore, the authors portray characters affected by oppression and under the impact of trauma, contributing to the understanding of oppressive social mechanisms and structures, and the resulting trauma. They point out possibilities of breakthrough and overcoming trauma, as well as the impossibility of denying history and leaving it behind as if nothing had happened. Brand and Danticat are a part of the Caribbean mobilization to reimagine traumatizing historical events, so necessary in these lands of silenced stories. Both authors clarify that denial, rejection, or avoidance of the causes of trauma leave the characters trapped in the past, as they reenact, relive and pass on trauma. Segal does not shy away from tension among minorities, showing the need for unity despite the diversification, in order to accomplish change.

Each author focuses on ways of surviving trauma adequate to the context in which the characters live and in which the authors write their novels. The cross among the novels in their relations to manners of surviving trauma conceptualized by both Western and minority scholarship indicates that decolonizing trauma, or rather, expanding the studies in order to include and understand different groups and context,

benefits and applies to society as a whole and not only to previously marginalized groups, or only some of them. The similarities as well as the differences among the historical events, the minorities handling of the past and dealing with trauma are a multidirectional lesson to society as a whole.

The authors include, in different measures, strategies to combat trauma and injustice such as psychoanalytically-based recovery, resistance on individual and collective levels, deconstructing the circumstances that led to the horrifying events and to trauma, reconstructing the collective memory, acknowledging history, including the ghosts of the past, deconstructing and reconstructing historical images and cultural figures, and indicating the need for social and economic restitution that allows the individual to live in conditions that help overcome trauma.

##

WORKS CITED

Primary Sources

Brand, Dionne. *At the Full Change of the Moon*. Grove, 1999.
Danticat, Edwidge. *The Farming of Bones.* Soho Crime/Soho Press, 1998.

Segal, Lore. *Her First American.* 1985. New Press, 2004.

___. *Other People's Houses.* 1964. New Press, 2004.
Secondary Sources

Abraham, Nicolas and Maria Torok. *The Shell and the Kernel*, *Renewals of Psychoanalysis, vol. 1.* Edited and translated by Nicholas T. Rand, Chicago 1994

Achille, Mbembe. "The Colony: Its Guilty Secret and Its Accursed Share." In *Terror and the Postcolonial*. Edited by Elleke Boehmer and Stephen Morton. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, p. 27–54. http://www.mdpi.com/2076-0787/4/2/250/htm#B23-humanities-04-00250

Adelman, Miriam and Lennita Ruggi. "The sociology of the body" *Current Sociology*, vol. 64, no. 6, Sep. 2015, p. 907 – 930.

Alba, Richard and Victor Nee. 2003. *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration.* Harvard UP, 2003.

Almeida, Sandra Goulart. Introduction "Pode o subaltern falar?" Translated by Sandra Almeida Goulart, Marcos Pereira Feitosa and Andre Pereira Feitosa. UFMG, 2010.

___. "'Impossible Citizens' in the global city: Dionne Brand's discourses of resistance." *Ilha do Desterro, A Journal of English Language, Literatures in English and Cultural Studies*, no. 56, 2009, p. 119-136.

Anzaldúa, Gloria E. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza.* Aunt Lute Books, 1987.
Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, editors. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*. 2nd ed. Routledge, 2002.

Ashcroft, Bill; Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. "Post-Colonial Body". *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies.* Routledge, 1998. 183-86.
Atwood, Margaret. *Cat's Eye*. Bloomsbury, 1989.

Ávila, Eliana. "Decolonizing Straight Temporality through Genre Trouble in Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*." *Ilha Desterro* [online], 2014, n.67, p.21-36. http://www.scielo.br/pdf/ides/n67/0101-4846-ides-67-00021.pdf

Balaev, Michelle, "Literary Trauma Theory Reconsidered." *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory*. Edited by Michelle Balaev. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 1-14.

Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. 1949. Translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier. Vintage eBooks, 1989. https://uberty.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/1949_simone-de-beauvoir-the-second-sex.pdf

Beck, Magali Sperling. *Reconstructing Identities: a study of Toni Morrison's Beloved and Dionne Brand's At the Full and Change of the Moon.* MA thesis, University of Santa Catarina, 2001. https://repositorio.ufsc.br/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/80377/178825.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing.* Penguin Books, 1972.
Berger L. Alan. "Jewish Identity and Jewish Destiny, the Holocaust in Refugee Writing: Lore Segal and Karen Gershon." *Studies in American Jewish Literature (1981-)* vol. 11, no. 1, Jewish Identity: From Midrash to Modernity. Penn State UP, 1992, P. 83-95. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41205813

Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture.* Routledge, 1994. https://igarape.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Bhabha_Homi_-_The_Location_of_Culture.pdf

Bhavnani, Kum-Kum, and Meg Coulson. “Race.” *The Concise Companion to Feminist Theory*.Edited by Mary Eagleton. Blackwell, 2003, p. 73-92.

Bordo, Susan. *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*. California UP, 1993.

___. “Feminism, Postmodernism and Gender Scepticism” *Feminism/Postmodernism*. Edited by Linda Nicholson. Routledge, 1989, p. 133-157.

Brand, Dionne. *A map to the door of no return.* Vintage Canada, 2002.

___. “No languages neutral.” No Language is Neutral. Coach House, 1990, p. 66.

Brown, Laura S. “Not Outside the Range: One Feminist Perspective on Psychic Trauma.” *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Edited by Cathy Caruth. The Johns Hopkins UP, 1995, p. 100-12.

Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*. Routledge, 1993.

___. *Gender Trouble, Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge, 1990.

___. “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory.” *Theatre Journal,* vol. 40, no. 4, Dec., 1988, p. 519-531.

___. *Undoing Gender.* Routledge, 2004.

Caruth, Cathy. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. The Johns Hopkins UP, 1995.

___. *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. The Johns Hopkins UP, 1996.

___ *Literature in the Ashes of History*. The Johns Hopkins UP, 2013.

Carastathis, Anna. “Identity Categories as Potential Coalitions.” *Signs*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2013, p. 941–965. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/669573.

Chancy, Myriam. *Searching for Safe Spaces: AfroCaribbean Women Writers in Exile.* Temple UP, 1997.

Clark, Ramsey, Edwidge Danticat, Frederick Douglass, Ben Dupuy and Paul Laraque. *Haiti: a Slave Revolution: 200 Years after 1804*. International Action Center, 1994.

Clifford, James. “Diasporas.” Further Inflections: Toward Ethnographies of the Future. *Cultural Anthropology*. vol. 9, no.3, Aug. 1994, p. 302–38. https://wayneandwax.com/pdfs/clifford_diasporas.pdf

Cohen, Robin. *Global Diasporas*. UCL Press, 1997.

Conboy, Katie, Sandra Lee Bartky, Nadia Medina and Sarah Stanbury. “Writing on the Body: Female Embodiment and Feminist Theory.” *Writing on the Body: Female Embodiment and Feminist Theory*. Edited by Nadia Medina and Sarah Stanbury. Columbia UP, 1997.

Cousin, Glynis and Robert Fine. “A Common Cause.” *European Societies*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2012, p. 166-185. https://critantisemnetwork.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/finecause.pdf

Craps, Stef and Gert Buelens. Introduction: Postcolonial trauma novels. Studies in the Novel, North Texas UP, Ap. 2008, p. 1-12.

Craps, Stef. “Wor(l)ds of grief: Traumatic memory and literary witnessing in cross-cultural perspective”. *Textual Practice*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2010, p. 51– 68. http://www.stefcraps.com/wp-content/uploads/craps_-_magona.pdf

___. “Beyond Eurocentrism: Trauma theory in the global age.” *The Future of Trauma Theory: Contemporary Literary and Cultural Criticism*. Edited by Gert Buelens and Robert Eaglestone, Routledge, 2013, p. 63-80.

Crenshaw, Kimberle. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color”. *Stanford Law Review*,

vol. 43, no. 6, Jul. 1991. P. 1241-1299.
https://www.jstor.org/stable/1229039

Cruse, Harold. *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual.* 1967. Quill, 1984.
Cykman, Avital Grubstein. *My Body, My Self and My Reading of Corporeality in Margaret Atwood's Fiction.* MA thesis, University of Santa Catarina, 2014.

Danticat, Edwidge, Julia Alvarez, Junot Diaz, Mark Kurlansky and Anìbal De Castro. Letter. "Two Versions of a Dominican Tale." *New York Times,* 1st Nov. 2013, New York ed.: A30

Danticat, Edwidge. Foreword. *Walking on Fire: Haitian Women's Stories of Survival and Resistance by Beverly Bell*. Cornell UP, 2001, p. ix-xii.

Davis, Kathy. "Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful." *Feminist Theory*, vol. 9, no. 1, Apr. 2008, p. 67–85. http://fty.sagepub.com

Du Bois, W. E. B. "The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto." *Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America,* 1952.
https://pt.scribd.com/document/383195856/The-Negro-and-the-Warsaw-Ghetto

___. *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay Toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept*. 1940. Schocken Books, 1968.

Duras, Marguerite. *Hiroshima Mon Amour.* Translated by Richard Seaver. Grove Press, 1961.

Durrant, Sam. *Postcolonial Narrative and the Work of Mourning, J.M. Coetzee, Wilson Harris, and Toni Morrison.* Sunny Press, 2006.

Early, Emmet. *The Raven's Return: The Influence of Psychological Trauma on Individuals and Culture.* Chiron Publications, 1993.

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann, Grove, 1967.

---. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Constance Farringdon, Penguin, 2001.

Felman, Shoshana and Dori Laub. *Testimony: Crises of witnessing in literature, psychoanalysis, and histor*y. Taylor & Francis, 1992.

Foner, Nancy, and Richard Alba. "Immigration and the Legacies of the Past: The Impact of Slavery and the Holocaust on Contemporary Immigrants in the United States and Western Europe." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 52, no. 4, 2010, p. 798–819.

Forter, Greg. "Against Melancholia: Contemporary Mourning Theory, Fitzgerald is *The Great Gatsby*, and the Politics of Unfinished Grief." *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, vol. 14 no. 2, 2003, p. 134-170. muse.jhu.edu/article/45827.

___. "Colonial Trauma, Utopian Carnality, Modernist Form: Toni Morrison's Beloved and Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things." *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory*. Edited by Michelle Balaev. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 70-105.

Foucault, Michel. "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*. Translated by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, Cornell UP, 1977, p. 139-64.

___. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* Vintage Books, 1979.

___. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977.* 1st American ed.Vintage: 1980.

Forter, Greg. "Against Melancholia: Contemporary Mourning Theory, Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby, and the Politics of Unfinished Grief." *Loss: The Politics of Mourning.* Edited by David L. Eng, David Kazanjian and Judith Butler (Afterword). California UP, 2002.

___. "Colonial Trauma, Utopian Carnality, Modernist Form: Toni Morrison's Beloved and Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things." *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory. Edited by Michelle Balaev*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. P. 70-105.

Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle.* Translated by James Strachey. W.W.Norton,1961.

---. *Moses And Monotheism.* A.A. Knopf, 1939.

Gilroy, Beryl A. "Women of Color at the Barricades." *Winds of Change: The Transforming Voices of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars.* Edited by Adele S. Newson and Linda Strong-Leek. Lang, 1998. 145-53.

Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Harvard UP, 1993.

Glissant, Edouard. *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*. 1989. Translated by Michael J. Dash, UP of Virginia, 1999.

___. *Poetics of Relation.* 1990. Translated by Betsy Wing, Michigan UP, 1997.

Gross, Daniel A. "The U.S. Government Turned Away Thousands of Jewish Refugees, Fearing That They Were Nazi Spies." *Smithsonian*, 18th, Nov. 2015. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/us-government-turned-away-thousands-jewish-refugees-fearing-they-were-nazi-spies-180957324/#2rQvsrw6HU0e77kQ.99

Grosz, Elizabeth. *Becomings: Explorations in Time, Memory, and Futures.* Cornell UP, 1999.

___. *Space, Time, and Perversion: Essays on the Politics of Bodies*. Routledge, 1995.

___. *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Allen & Unwin, 1994.

Gudykunst, William and Young Yun Kim, "Communicating with Strangers: An Approach to Intercultural Communication." *Bridges Not Walls*, Edited by John Stewart, 6th ed., McGraw-Hill, 1995, p. 429-442.

Guske, Iris. *Trauma and Attachment in the Kindertransport Context: German-Jewish Child Refugees Accounts of Displacement and Acculturation in Britain.* Cambridge Publishing, 2009.

Hall, Stuart. “Cultural Identity and Diaspora.” *Identity*: *Community, Culture, Difference*. Edited by Jonathan Rutherford. Lawrence and Wishart, 1990, p. 222- 37. http://sites.middlebury.edu/nydiasporaworkshop/files/2011/04/D-OA-HallStuart-CulturalIdentityandDiaspora.pdf

___. “Ethnicity: Identity and Difference.” *Beyond Borders.* Edited by Randall Bass and Joy Young. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002, p. 228-240.

Hartman, Geoffrey H. *On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies*. New Literary History, 1995.

Hartman, Geoffrey and Dori Laub. *Fortunoff Video Archive Project for Holocaust Testimonies.* Yale University, 1981.

Heidarizadeh, Negin. “The Significant Role of Trauma in Literature and Psychoanalysis.”*Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences,* vol. 192, June 2015, p. 788-95. http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042815035648
Herman, Judith. *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence--from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*. Basic Books, 1997.

Hendricks, Flora. “Death That Need Not Have Been.” Poetry, vol. 53, no. 5, 1939, p. 244–245.

Hewett, Heather. “At the Crossroads: Disability and Trauma in The Farming of Bones.” *Melus,* vol. 31, no. 3, Fall 2006. P. 123-45.

Hickman, Mary J. “Migration and Diaspora.” *The Cambridge Companion to Irish Culture*. Edited by Joe Cleary and Claire Connolly. Cambridge UP, 2005, p. 117-135.

Hiroshima Mon Amour. Directed by Alain Resnais. Screenplay by Marguerite Duras. 1959. Criterion Collection, 2003.

Hirsch, Marianne. “The Generation of Postmemory.” *Poetics Today*, vol. 29, no. 1, Columbia University, 2008, p. 103-128. http://hemisphericinstitute.org/hemi/images/courses/spring-2009/hirsch_tgpm.pdf

Hooks, bell. *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist – Thinking Black*. Sheba Feminist, 1989.

___. Yearning: *Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics.* Routledge, 1990.

___. "Selling Hot Pussy: Representations of Black Female Sexuality in the cultural Marketplace." 1992. *Writing on the Body: Female Embodiment and Feminist Theory*, edited by Katie Conboy, Nadia Medina and Sarah Stanbury. Columbia UP, 1997, p. 113- 129.

Jaspers, Karl. *The Question of German Guilt*. Translated by E. B. Ashton. Fordham UP, 2000.

Johnson, Drew. *"An Interview with Lore Segal." Book Slut,* published by Drew Johnson, Dec. 2011. http://www.bookslut.com/features/2011_12_018403.php

Johnson, Erica L. "Unforgetting Trauma: Dionne Brand's Haunted Histories." *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal.* vol.2. no. 1, Spring 2004, p.1-16.http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1053&context=anthurium

Kaplan, Ann E. "Fanon, Trauma and Cinema." *Frantz Fanon: Critical Perspectives.* Edited byAnthony C. Alessandrini. Routledge, 1999, p. 147-159.

___. *Trauma Culture: The Politics of Terror and Loss in Media and Literature.* Rutgers UP, 2005.

Kellermann, N. "Epigenetic Transmission of Holocaust Trauma." *Isr. J. Psychiatry*, vol 50, no.1, 2013, p 33-39.

Kim, Young Yun. "Adapting to a New Culture." *Theorizing about intercultural communication.* Edited by W Gudykunst. Sage Publications, 2005.

Kitchin, Thomas. *The Present State of the West-Indies*. R. Baldwin, 1778, p. 21. https://www.wdl.org/en/item/4397/view/1/1/

Kraft, Robert. Preface. *Memory Perceived: Recalling the Holocaust.* Edited by Robert Kraft. Praeger, 2002.

Kushner, Toni. "The Impact of the Holocaust on British Society and Culture." *Contemporary Record,* vol.5 no.2, Autumn 1991, p.349-375
Langer, Lawrence L. *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory.* Reissue edition, Yale UP, 1993.

___. *The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination.* Yale UP, 1975.
LaCapra, Dominick. "Trauma, Absence, Loss." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 25, no. 4, Summer 1999, p.696-727

___.*History and memory after Auschwitz.* Cornell UP, 1998.

___. *Writing History, Writing Trauma*. Johns Hopkins UP, 2001.
Laramee, Michael. "Maps of Memory and the Sea in Dionne Brand's *At the Full and Change of the Moon*." *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal,* vol. 6, no. 2, Article 3, December 2008. http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/anthurium/vol6/iss2/3

Leys, Ruth. *Trauma: A Genealogy*. Chicago UP, 2000.

Lloyd, David. "Colonial Trauma/ Postcolonial Recovery?" 1959. Interventions, vol.2, no.2, 2000, p. 212-28.

Luckhurst, Roger. *The Trauma Question*. Routledge, 2008

Marder, Elissa. "Trauma and Literary Studies: Some Enabling Questions." *Reading On: Trauma, Memory, and Testimony,* vol. 1, no. 1, Fall, 2006. http://readingon.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/issue1/iss1toc.htm

Montgomery, Maxine Lavon. *Conversations with Edwidge Danticat.* UP of Mississippi, (2017).

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses." *boundary 2,* vol. 12/13, vol. 12, no. 3 - vol. 13, no. 1, On Humanism and the University I: The Discourse of Humanism, Spring - Autumn, 1984, p. 333-358. www.jstor.org/stable/302821

Munro, Martin. *Exile and Post-1946 Haitian literature. Alexis, Depestre, Ollivier, Laferrière, Danticat*. Liverpool UP, 2007.

___. "Writing Disaster: Trauma, Memory, and History in Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*." Haïti - Face au passé, vol. 28, no. 1, 2006, p. 81-98.

Narayan, Uma. "Contesting cultures: 'Westernization,' respect for cultures, and third-world feminists." *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory*. Edited by Linda Nicholson. Routledge, 1997, p. 396-412.

Nicholson, Linda J. Introduction. *Feminism/Postmodernism*. Edited by Linda J. Nicholson. Routledge, 1989.

Ozick, Cynthia. The National Book Critics Circle: Critical Mass Archives. "Lore Segal's '*Other People's Houses*.'" The National Book Critics Circle: Critical Mass Blog Archives. Nov. 2007, p. 1246.

Procter, James. "Diaspora". *The Routledge Companion to Postcolonial Studies*. Edited by John McLeod. Routledge, 2007, p.151-157.

Rand, Nicholas T., Introduction: Renewals of Psychoanalysis. *The Shell and the Kernel by Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok*. Edited and translated by Nicholas T. Rand, Chicago UP, 1994, p. 1–22.

___. "Secrets and Posterity: The Theory of the Transgenerational Phantom." *The Shell and the Kernel by Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok*. Edited and translated by Nicholas T. Rand. Chicago UP, 1994, p. 165–169.

Reimers, M. David. "Post-World War II Immigration to the United States: America's Latest Newcomers." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 454, no. 1, 1981, p.1-12.

Rody, Caroline. *The Daughter's Return: African-American and Caribbean Women's Fictions of History*. Oxford UP, 2001.

Rothberg, Michael. "Decolonizing Trauma Studies: A Response." *Studies in the Novel*. Special Issue: "Postcolonial Trauma Novels," vol. 40, no. 1-2, Spring-Summer 2008, p. 224-34.

https://michaelrothberg.weebly.com/uploads/5/4/6/8/5468139/rothberg_decolonizing_tra uma.pdf

___. "Introduction." *The Future of Trauma Theory: Contemporary Literature and Cultural Criticism*. Edited by Gert Beulens, Samuel Durrant and Robert Eaglestone. Routledge, 2013, p. xi–xviii.

___. "From Gaza to Warsaw: Mapping Multidirectional Memory." *Criticism*, vol. 53 no. 4, 2011, p. 523-548. https://michaelrothberg.weebly.com/uploads/5/4/6/8/5468139/rothberg_from_ga za_to_warsaw.pdf

___. *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization.* Stanford UP, 2009.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism.* Pantheon, 1978.

Sakai, Naoki. "The West – A Dialogic Prescription or Proscription?" *Social Identities*, vol. 11, no. 3, 2005, p. 177–95.

Safran, William. "Diasporas in modern societies: myths of homeland and return." *Diaspora*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1991, p. 83–99.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Anti-Semite and Jew*. Translated by George J. Becker. Schocken Books, 1948. http://abahlali.org/files/Jean-Paul_Sartre_Anti-Semite_and_Jew_An_Exploration_of_the_Etiology_of_Hate__1995.pdf

Segal, Lore. "Memory: The Problem of Imagining the Past." *Writing and the Holocaust.* Edited by Berel Lang. Holmes and Meier, 1988, 43.

___. "Baby Terrors." *Under Fire: Childhood in the Shadow of War*. Edited by Elizabeth Goodenough and Andrea Immel. Wayne State UP, 2008, p. 93-96.

Shahar, Galili. "How the Body is Written". Http://glz.fm/index.php?action=media;sa=album;in=94, Tel-Aviv. 1 Nov. 2012. Lecture.

___. "The Laughing Body." Http://glz.fm/index.php?action=media;sa=album;in=94, Tel-Aviv.1 Nov. 2012. Lecture.

Sharp, Joanne P. *Geographies of Postcolonialism*. Sage Publications, 2008.

Shemak, April. "Re-Membering Hispaniola: Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*." *Modern Fiction Studies,* vol. 48, no. 1, Spr. 2002, p.83-112.

Sicher Efraim. "Tancred's Wound." *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2011, p. 189-201.

Skrentny, John. *The Minority Rights Revolution.* Harvard UP, 2002.
Spivak, Gayatri, Chakravorty. 1985. "Can the Subaltern Speak". *Colonial Discourse and Post- Colonial Theory.* Edited by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. Harvester- Wheatsheaf, 1994, p. 66-111.
Spiller, Robert E., Willard Thorpe, Thomas H. Johnson and Henry Seidel Canby, editors. *Literary History of the United States.* 3d ed. Macmillan, 1963, vol. I, p. 862-77, 1490.

Suleiman, Susan Robin. "The 1.5 Generation: Thinking About Child Survivors and the Holocaust". *American Imago*, vol. 59, no. 3, Fall 2002, p. 277-95. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/182

Tal, Kali. *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literatures of Trauma.* Cambridge UP, 1996.

The Sugar Babies: The Plight of the Children of Agricultural Workers in the Sugar Industry of the Dominican Republic. Director Amy Serrano. Narrator Edwidge Danticat. Siren Studios, 2007.

R. Baldwin, 1778. The Library of Congress. lccn.loc.gov/02008613
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Refugees". *Holocaust Encyclopedia.*
https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/refugees

Van der Kolk, B. *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. Penguin Books, 2014.
Vickroy, Laurie. *Trauma and Survival in Contemporary Fiction*. Virginia UP, 2002.

___. "Voices of Survivors in Contemporary Fiction." *Contemporary*

Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory, edited by Michelle Balaev. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p.130-151.

Visser, Irene. "Decolonizing Trauma Theory: Retrospect and Prospects". H*umanities*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2015, p**.** 250-265. http://www.mdpi.com/2076-0787/4/2/250/htm#B23-humanities-04-00250

Weedon, Chris. *Feminism, theory, and the politics of difference*. Wiley-Blackwell, 1999.

___. "Subjects". *The Concise Companion to Feminist Theory*. Edited by Mary Eagleton. Blackwell, 2003, p.111-33.

Weir-Soley, Donna. *Eroticism, Spirituality, and Resistance in Black Women's Writings,* Florida UP, 2009.

Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own.* 1929. Harvest/HBJ, 1989.
Young, Iris Marion. "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference." *Social Theory and Practice*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1986, p. 1–26. www.jstor.org/stable/23556621.

Young, James Edward. *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust: Narrative and the Consequences of Interpretation*. Indiana UP, 1988.