

# Narrativizing Trauma: The Place of Silence in Rwandan Genocide Survivors' Testimonial Literature

Omondi, Danlence Codo, Ogone James and Mosoti Edwin

Department of Language, Linguistics and Literature, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of science and Technology

DOI: 10.29322/IJSRP.11.05.2021.p11384  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.11.05.2021.p11384>

**Abstract-** Through testimonies born from situations of violent conflicts, survivors are able to narrate, and bear witness to traumatic experiences, albeit subjectively. The subjectivity characterizing such narrations implies a process of editing and selecting, voicing certain aspects of the events and silencing other aspects. Although silence in speech implies absence of voice and therefore no communication, this paper maintains that narrativization of trauma is possible even in silence. Informed by textual data, the paper examines the place of silence in narrativizing trauma, exploring not only the binary opposition of voicing and silence, but also the meaning of the 'unspoken' during the narrativization of traumatic events. The paper exposes the multifaceted nature of silence in Rwandan post-genocide testimonial literature as depicted in Hanna Jensen's "Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with You", Immaculee Illibagiza's "Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Genocide" and Jean Hatzfeld's "Machete Season: Killers in Rwanda Speak."

**Index Terms-** testimonial literature, narrativization of trauma, Rwandan genocide survivor, silence

## I. INTRODUCTION

Psychological scars, following violent conflict situations, continuously linger in the survivors' minds time notwithstanding. Such is the case with the 1994 Rwandan genocide survivors in which ten percent of the population was killed in a matter of weeks (Richard Morrock 6), and survivors experienced over-whelming pain from extreme helplessness and terror (Judith Herman, ch. 2). These survivors have since reproduced their experiences in the testimonial literature, a genre which rose to prominence in Latin America in the 1960s (Kimberly Nance 1).

Testimonial literature arising out of the belated responses to such experiences of violent conflict (Marta Caminero-Santangelo 5) is an embodiment of trauma and its sequelae. The fragmentation characterizing these genre, is a demonstration of the impact of traumatic experiences on language and its subsequent narrativization. This is because calamities of extreme violence surpass limits of human imagination and expressibility (Maria Delaperriere 44), making speaking about violent events impossible. Subsequently, narrativization, which according to Lauren Shapiro refers to the process of developing traumatic life experiences into a plot or story "through the use of formal structural elements" (98), is characterized by subjectivity in which the survivor-narrator edits and selects aspects of the story to be

told (Robyn Fivush 88). The Rwandan genocide survivors' testimonial literature is characterized by the subjectivity, a process which perpetuates silence among survivors. In remaining silent over certain aspects however, the survivor-narrators continue to unconsciously project their fears and helplessness experienced during the genocide.

Since "talk does not always imply voice" (Fivush 90), communication of trauma is possible even in the 'unspoken'. Through intrusive narration, the audience is provided with running non-verbal monologue of characters' inner thoughts, feelings and motives, while stream-of-consciousness provide observed outer continuous thoughts, memory and feelings (Abrams 298). In written narrative though, the concept of voice is questionable since voice is a feature of oral speech (Seymour Chatman 161). How then does a written testimony express voice? This is possible through what Nance terms the "speaking subject" (167), and/or introspection which allow the inspection of the 'inside' of one's mind (Steup and Neta 55), thus providing knowledge of the unspoken. A psychoanalytical approach to reading these testimonial literary texts from the 1994 Rwandan genocide survivors is key in helping to unearth the unspoken part of the experiences. As the testimonies are characterized with themes, moods, and tones which do not only keep alive the psychological wound, but also reveal the pains of traumatic experiences.

The testimonial texts for this study are the 1994 Rwandan genocide non-fictional novels which were sampled for their varying perspective on trauma, and its impact on language. Like other testimonial novels, they are characterized with both collaborative writing and first-hand account of writers themselves. Illibagiza's *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Genocide* (2006) is a writer's own account. Hatzfeld's *Machete Season* (2005) is an edited interview of perpetrators accounts. Jensen's *Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with You* (2007) is a collaborative account representing child's experiences of genocide.

## II. THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

This paper was informed by psychoanalytic and trauma theories. Freud's pleasure principles and Laub's impossibility of telling were applied. Psychoanalytically, silence is conceptualized as expressing or acting out unconscious fantasies, in other words, re-enacting or leaving out fragments of an experience of the past (Robert Lane 1092). In leaving out fragments of an experience, silence functions to maintain repression, while in re-enactment, it functions to overcome repression by discharging the traumatic

tensions through speech. Trauma theorists on the other hand, conceptualize silence as a product of altered state of consciousness in which a survivor experiences atrocities with feelings of indifference, emotional detachment and profound passivity, coupled with distorted perception (Herman, ch. 2), creating a missing or absent witness thus impossibility of telling (Dori Laub 62).

However, silence enhances spiritual transformation of unconsciousness into the conscious, and psychological healing through active imagination, a visionary practice of dreaming with open eyes. Active imagination enables not only the formation of numinous figures which one can engage in dialogue, but also bring the affect and its content nearer to the consciousness thus, the unassailable emotions become “impressive and understandable” (Schlamm 7). In this way, active imagination enables coming to terms with trauma. In deploying the aforementioned theories to explore the place of silence in narrativization of trauma, the paper contributes to the growing field of psychoanalysis and trauma theory of testimonial literature.

### III. DISCUSSION

#### Defensive Silence in Traumatic Situations

Since the act of narrating traumatic experiences is perceived as an act of violence against oneself (Delaperriere 44), aspects of experiences that are emotionally too painful or humiliating to the ego are repressed. The egos attempt at warding off anxiety associated with conscious recollection of distressing memory may compel the survivor-narrator into silence (Davis Amber 19). Deployment of silence in an attempt to forget, deny and discourage the recovery of such memories constitute a defense mechanism, a set of unconscious mechanisms the ego uses to master anxiety (Joseph Palombo et al. 18). This subsection explores defensive silence in the aforementioned testimonial literary texts as manifest in conspiracy of silence, compelled silence, active forgetting, and poetic silence.

#### *Conspiracy of Silence in Narrativizing Trauma*

Violent and horrific experiences, on one hand, inspire the “poetic spirit” which drives survivors to creatively narrate their experiences (Cathy Caruth 45). Patrick Bracken concurs, observing that experiences that give rise to anxiety and terror serve as a source of “creative inspiration” (2). However, overwhelming traumatic experiences leads to silencing of senses hence loss of motivation to reconstruct and integrate trauma disrupted memory into testimony (Merwe and Madikizele 26). The selected testimonial texts are a representation of how narration of painful experiences is confronted with conspiracy of silence in which the compulsion to testify is suppressed by the desire to conceal the memory into the sub-conscious mind thus silence.

The conspiracy of silence and its anxiety-laden impact on survivors is evident in the “Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with you”, through an episode of stream-of-consciousness, where Hanna Jensen depicts Jeanne’s, the main protagonist, compulsion to speak out and her desire to suppress the experiences of genocide. She observes that she has “...always believed that horrors can seal the mouth. And not only the mouth, but also the heart and mind, at least for a long time...” Evidently, memories of genocidal experiences sever Jeanne’s connections with

remembered past and lived present causing her intense anxiety which kills the whole story as observed by the narrator, Jansen, who has always believed, “That there are horrors that let all stories die because words refuse to come. But [Jeanne] wanted to tell. Me. And, with me, or through me, others too...” (p. 9).

Similarly, Jean Hatzfeld foregrounds an eerie silence that characterizes Rwanda during genocidal violence in “Machete Season: Killers of Rwandan Genocide Speak”. Rose Kubwimana’s, a character, introspective thoughts arouse her consciousness of a peculiar silence engulfing the marshes from where she has drawn water for domestic use for ages. The total silence reminds her of the commencement of aggression against the Tutsis which had begun three days ago, observing that, “In the more than twenty years that she has been coming to fetch the family’s water, she has never noticed this silence before. ...terrible cuttings were brewing and life would be all torn apart...” (“Early Morning”, para. 5).

The conspiracy of silence is not only experienced by victims alone, but also by the perpetrators. An introspective examination of perpetrators thoughts reveals difficulties in speech they face during and in the wake of the genocide, whenever the reality of their behavior dawned on them. Just like their targets, perpetrators struggle to express stories about their responsibilities on the heinous crime. While others try to inhibit the urge to confess their deeds, the impulsion to speak is so strong on others that they cannot suppress it despite the danger of stigmatization from their colleagues. Leopold, one of the killers, accepts that feelings of guilt compelled him into confession. He “...began being sorry out loud, paying no attention to the mockery spewing from [his] comrades’ mouths. In prison [he] told [his] whole truth. It came out freely...” (Hatzfeld, “Remorse and Regrets”, para. 41).

The guilt of surviving when others died, guilt about responsibility for causing others pain and loss, and the shame of how one behaved under overwhelming helplessness, suppress impulsion to speak thus inherent silence among survivors. Clearly, their conscience abhor revealing thoughts that are wished to be concealed in the unconscious mind. Consequently, the perpetrators downplay the fact that they suffer pangs of remorse in their dreams as can be inferred from Hatzfeld’s rhetorical questions about their dreams:

Do they fear being overwhelmed by their descriptions of these dreams, which might contradict or transform their narrative accounts, discredit them, or make them more heinous? Are they afraid that recounting these nightmares might reveal things they wish to keep hidden? Is their silence... a refusal to take a backward look, eyes wide open, for fear of what they might see about themselves? (“Bargaining for Forgiveness”, para. 18).

Silence during communication of trauma highlights the impossibility of testimony as traumatic events shatter narrative structures making language insufficient to express pain (Merwe and Madikizele 26). Through intrusive narration, writers of the selected texts demonstrate that what is silenced during communication of trauma manifests loss of coherence and inability to comprehend traumatic experience thus deepening horrific situations. Jansen emphasizes loss of coherence and incomprehensibility in a dramatic scene where Gatori, the herd boy of Jeanne’s grandmother who has run from Zaza, is warning Jeanne’s family of the impending attack on all Tutsis:

"You have to get away from here!"... "They're going to kill all the Tutsi. I know it! I was there when they got the weapons." And there followed a confused report of what had happened very early in the morning in his village of Zaza. Gatori kept interrupting himself, as if he had to struggle for words (Jansen 136).

The confusion and hesitation marking the herd boy's report of violence indicates incomprehensibility of genocidal events and loss of plot leading to struggles between impulsion to tell of the events, and loss of coherence because trauma has robbed him of words.

Similarly, Immaculee, Ilibagiza's main protagonist, tells of her experience about her return to her home village in the wake of genocide. Although she is in the company of heavily armed United Nations soldiers, the sight of shallow graves in which the remains of her relatives are buried, bring back heartrending memories of brutal reality which inhibits her language structure. Her wish is to ask her neighbours and the soldiers to help give her "...mother and brother a proper burial, but [she] couldn't speak." Instead a lump grows in her throat stopping her voice." So, she could only wave for the soldiers to take her back to the camp (Ilibagiza 222). The use of gestures to communicate to the soldiers illustrates loss of words, thus inability to express herself and communicate her wishes of giving a decent burial ceremony for departed souls of her mother and brother, Damascene.

In addition, these texts reveal that impulsion to speak is not only impeded by loss of coherence and incomprehensibility, but also pain inherent in recounting the unspeakable. Arguably, retelling of painful memory is an act of violence against self because narration of grim situations is synonymous with re-traumatization (Delaperriere 44). Gatori succeeds in passing out crucial information to Jeanne's family, albeit with a lot of difficulty, but becomes overwhelmed with the pain associated with the memory and "...at this point in his report, Gatori broke off because his voice failed him" (Jansen 136).

Further, Jansen through dramatic scene in "Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with you", highlight Jando's, Jeanne's elder brother, loss of speech having narrowly escaped death. The speechlessness is evident when his father asks the whereabouts of his younger sister, Teya. Instead of giving a voiced answer, only his lips moves and forms "...a voiceless no" (190). The texts therefore assert the limitation of language in communicating traumatic memory as narrative structure is destroyed forcing narrator into silence. Evidently therefore, conspiracy of silence has the ability to compel survivors into silence.

### *Imposed Silence*

Like the act of testifying, listening to traumatic events is painful as well. To avoid the pain associated with recounting horror, the audience may compel the narrator into silence to discourage further narration and subsequent influx of anxiety. Imposed silence could be overt or inferred. The texts highlight episodes of imposed silence to avoid listening to the narration of graphic scenes and avoid subsequent influx of anxiety. Immaculee in "Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Genocide", overtly imposes silence on the pastor by urging him, "Please, pastor, enough! Don't say any more..." as he is narrating about killing incidents in which a large number of Tutsis taking refuge

in churches have succumbed and their "...bodies piled up as high as [his] house and the unbearable stench..." (Ilibagiza 99).

Later, Immaculee meets Jean Paul, an acquaintance and fellow survivor, at the French rescue camp. Jean Paul begins to recount the deaths of her parents and siblings one after the other, from the father, mother, younger brother, Vianney, and finally Damascene, her favorite. Although the words describing her father's death "...pierced her heart like a spear" and those of her mother's "...a torture", she manages to suppress an outburst of emotions and "...pushed him to tell... more" (Ilibagiza 162-163). However, the news of Damascene, her favorite brother's death, is too much to bear striking her "...like a bullet..." Immaculee therefore stops Jean Paul from further narration for she "...didn't want to know any more". She stands up and staggers a few feet away telling him "...leave me alone..." This imposes silence on Jean Paul who walks "...away to the other side of the camp, taking his silent brother with him" (Ilibagiza 164).

Jeanne's mother, Florence too, overtly imposes silence on Gatori after listening to the horror at Zaza and cannot take in any more. She springs to action and physically distracts him just as he is about to repeat the report about the deaths of Ananie's sister-in-law and her children. She grasps "...Gatori by the arm and [keeps] him from saying anything more" (Jansen, 2007, p. 137). This implies that a narrator's abrupt silence amid a narration, could as well be an imposed silence by his audience through acts of distraction.

Inattention or refusing to believe to avoid being traumatized by painful stories, can also silence a narrator. Although implicit, the narrator may infer from the behaviour of listeners that his/her story is causing discomfort. This is depicted in Ananie's, Jeanne's father's, demonstration of inattention to Gatori's story on asking almost inaudibly, "What's happened to Josephine and the children? Have you seen them...?" yet the report clearly states that all Tutsis in Zaza have been killed (Jansen 137). As soon as Gatori leaves, Ananie registers his disbelief of the report which according to Jeanne, is too inconceivable to be real. He questions credibility of the story, "Do you know him well enough?" asked Ananie. "He's Hutu, isn't he? So can he be trusted?" (137).

Moreover, the texts depict a self-imposed silence in form of regression, a defense mechanism in which traumatized individuals return to childhood level where language has not fully developed (Fenichel 104). In a conversation between Jeanne and Annonciata, an RPF female soldier who has taken custody of her, on their way to a former hospital now turned a refugee camp, the limitation of language plays out in monosyllabic responses. This is manifest when Annonciata begins "...asking Jeanne a few questions. How she had done in school and whether she liked living with the rebels. But Jeanne only answered monosyllabically..." (Jansen 318).

The conversation largely inquiring about her past and present experience cause her pain and anxiety. In an attempt to ward off the pain associated with the memories, Jeanne discourages Annonciata from further interrogation through monosyllabic answers. Similarly, in her encounter with Alain, the three-year old boy she had rescued when the massacre began at the camp, and his mother, Esther, she responds to their questions with simple sentences and dumb gestures, indicating a limitation of language typical of children:

“But Teya, you’re dead! Who killed you? I’ll kill him too! When I’m big, I’m going to be a soldier!” he announced with a serious expression. She smiled, but it hurt. “I’m not dead, Alain!”... “Dede...how are you?” Esther cried joyfully. She grasped Jeanne’s arm with both hands and pressed it. “Dede, that you survived...where are you living now and with whom?” “With the rebels in the Chinese House.” “... Come by sometime and we can talk...” Jeanne nodded dumbly. She could say nothing. She was happy for Alain and yet...it was hard to bear (Jansen, 2007, p. 319).

Evidently, the responses, which are in monosyllabic and simple sentences, do not only discourage conversation, but also demonstrate limitation of language, typical of a child, in expressing traumatic experiences. This state of language limitation therefore, enable survivors not only to discourage intrusive memories of a grim situation, but also discourages others from prying into their inner thoughts which may elicit anxiety.

Moreover, self-imposed silence is employed deliberately to avoid sharing traumatic experiences with certain audiences due to belief that they may not understand or care for one’s predicaments. Jeanne who has been watching “...everything around her with hyper clarity...” notices the uncaring attitude and lack of understanding of “People, the majority of them Tutsis who had fled to neighboring countries years before and lived there until the war... came back to reclaim ‘their’ country.” The returnees grab property, “...empty houses...” without feelings of guilt, “It seemed to disturb no one that they claimed strangers’ property for themselves” (Jansen 340). This portray the returnees from exile as exploitative, mean and trivializing suffering of survivors.

Due to the demonstration of uncaring attitude and lack of understanding among the returnees, Jeanne is compelled into a state of silence in which she selectively talk to people around her. She freely speaks with fellow survivors, Chantal and Carin. When the two girls leave to find their kins, she locks herself into perpetual silence in the presence of the returnees, including her rescuers, until one day she meets Immaculee, a former pupil of her father who also survived. Surprisingly, they both have a warm chat together, Jeanne marveling “...at how matter-of-factly words crossed her lips again” (Jansen 348).

The desire to move on as fast as possible further imposes silence on survivors. The post-genocide returnees push for speedy normalcy is manifest when schools re-open. *Afande* Brian, a leader of the RPF living with Jeanne, insists that she has to go to “...her old school. ...” Despite her open “...resistance...” the “*Afande* ...insisted on it”, arguing that, “School is important. It’s about time to return to normal life again...” (Jansen 342). Once back to school, the new government encourages survivor’s silence through avoidance of genocidal history in school curriculum. Historical lessons taught attempt to erase the recent history as “...not one word about it” is said. “There was a time before. Now was the time afterward”. Indeed, the “time in between was a deep abyss of a wound that no one wanted to touch.” (Jansen 343).

Perpetrator survivors, on the other hand, are compelled into silence on account of their dread for punishment, not being understood and forgiven by their victims. This explains why perpetrators who have not been convicted and are out of prison have completely gone silent over the genocidal event. The “...freer the Hutus were on their land, the less free they were with their words.” Comparatively, their compatriots behind the prison

wall share their genocide experience more freely. As “...a killer who has not yet lived at liberty, can or will tell his story.” In other words, the thicker the prison walls, the more these narratives were encouraged.” For the walls protected them from the “victims who might recognize a name and condemn them, from colleagues and neighbors who might accuse them of betrayal, and from children who would feel ashamed of them” (Hatzfeld, ‘Penitentiary Walls’, para. 10).

Self-imposed silence however, has the consequence of imposing silence on others as well. This is demonstrated in Jansen’s “Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with You” where, by keeping silent, Jeanne imposes silence on James, Dusabe and other new acquaintances met after the genocide. James tries “...to find access to her and break through her silence, but her stony behavior and the hatred that blazed at him from her eyes finally compelled him to retreat once and for all” (Jansen 339-340). Nonetheless, James and Dusabe infers the unspoken world of Jeanne and they keep off from her.

In the wake of genocide, each group of survivors is silenced by silence of the other. Intuitively, none of them is willing to talk about what happened. “They dread facing the consequences of the genocide, and never inquire about what they might be”. On one hand, the perpetrator survivors “...are afraid to learn the reasons and motives behind the upheaval and see no point in trying to understand it”. Consequently, “...forcing memory back into... innermost thoughts and the disastrous broodings of childhood ... a mind can lose itself that way” (Hatzfeld, ‘A Noble Bearing’, Para. 24). On the other hand, victim survivors fear reopening old wounds. This leads to silence among survivors in the wake of genocide.

At the family level, imposed silence is depicted as a form of denial where parents, both victims and perpetrators, downplay eminent violence before and during the genocide. Older members of the Tutsi community, having either witnessed or experienced targeted violence, sometimes escaping by a whisker, avoid speaking of their trauma in the presence of children. In this way, silence plays a central role in protecting the loved ones from the painful truths of the political reality thus, shelving the younger generation from transferred trauma. The silence to protect loved ones from painful political reality is manifest in the manner in which Jansen’s protagonist, Jeanne, and Ilibagiza’s, Immaculee, comes to learn about the cruel reality of negative ethnicity bedeviling their country. In her opening statement, Immaculee says she was “...born in paradise” (Ilibagiza 3), a portrayal of how comfortable their parents had made her home environment. However, the comfort is short lived for when she goes to school, the bitter truth of tribal divisions is revealed. As a young girl, all she “...knew of the world was the lovely landscape surrounding [her], the kindness of ... neighbours, and the deep love of [her] parents and brothers.” She further tells of how in their home, “...racism and prejudice were completely unknown. [She] wasn’t aware that people belonged to different tribes or races, and ... didn’t even hear the terms Tutsi or Hutu until ... in school” (Ilibagiza 3).

Likewise, Jeanne first encounters cases of ethnic division, a subject that was not discussed at their home, when she goes to school during roll call taking exercise. Indeed, “Without lists, she would never have known who belonged to what tribe.” Therefore, Jeanne kept wondering “...why it was so important to always label

the people in Rwanda by their tribes.” As the topic “...was never the subject at their house. Just the opposite ...clearly that talk that led in this direction was quite consciously avoided” (Jansen 116). Self-imposed silence to protect loved ones from painful realities of negative ethnicity is further emphasized when Immaculee recounts an occasion when her father is wrongly accused, arrested and tortured by orders from his old friend, Kabayi. Her mother, Rose, acts as though everything is okay in order to shield her loved ones from the pain that would be caused by the injustice. Consequently, she does not mention Immaculee’s father’s arrest to her children as “...she always shielded [her children] from unpleasantness, and [Immaculee] could see that she would never change” (Ilibagiza 32). Likewise, her father, Leonard, avoids any discussion about the unjust arrest and torture with an understatement, saying, “It was a mix-up. Kabayi was just acting on orders; it wasn’t anything personal. ... Let’s forget about the whole thing”... “No, no, you’re overreacting – everyone is safe. Things are better than they used to be... Don’t you kids worry...?” (Ilibagiza 33). The understatement suppresses any attempt of further discussion thus imposing silence on Immaculee and her siblings despite their knowledge that their father’s old friend, Kabayi, had ordered the arrest. This prevents painful emotions that would be aroused by the reality.

Immaculee further recounts how the pastor in whose house they hide lies about having no knowledge of the death of her relatives just to cushion her against further influx of pain. Immaculee has already overheard some people talking about horrific murder of a boy, whose description matches her own brother’s, and has been anxiously waiting “...for pastor Murinzi to come...” so that he confirms. However, when the pastor finally opens the doors hours later, she tells him what she has “...heard and asked him point-blank if the people had been talking about Damascene’s murder”, he gets uneasy with the question and Immaculee notices that his eyes wouldn’t meet hers as he responds, “No, no, not at all,” (Ilibagiza 125). The denial of knowledge of the death of Immaculee relatives discourages any conversation about the issue thus, silence and stops subsequent influx of pain.

The perpetrators too do everything possible to protect their families from the truth of the killings during and after the genocide by remaining silent over the event and as calm as possible whenever in the presence of their family members. This is demonstrated by Joseph-Desire Bitero, a leader of the *interahamwe* during the genocide, who would come home in the evenings, leaves the machete outside and would not show “...the slightest temper anymore in the house, he spoke of the Good Lord. He was cheerful with the children, he brought back little presents and words of encouragement”. His silence and calm manners in the house silences his wife, Marie-Chantal, who knows “...the disturbing gossip [that] he was a boss, but... asked him nothing (Hatzfeld, ‘Women’, para. 10).

In the wake of genocide, both Immaculee and her only surviving brother, Aimable, are silent on any discussion about the deaths of their parents and siblings. When they meet face-to-face for the first time after the violence, they are very cautious not to cause each other pain. The reunion “...was tentative, as if [they] were guarding [their] hearts. [They] hugged and kissed, but cautiously, for [she] was afraid of his pain and he of mine”. Fearing the emotional outburst which could erupt, they “...found

it difficult to look each other in the eye, knowing that if [their] true feelings surfaced, [they] would be unable to control them”. However, the suppressed emotions erupts later as Immaculee confesses, “...when I was alone in my bed, I cried my eyes out. I’m sure he did, too” (Ilibagiza 233).

The fear of reprisal by genocidaires also imposes silence on anyone who would want to publicly rebuke their sinister plans before commencement. Immaculee and other passengers in a bus witness a horror scene where the militia gang, *Interahamwe*, violently molest members of public with impunity in broad daylight. They surround “...a middle-aged Tutsi woman casually took the poor lady’s purse, pulled her jewelry, stole her packages, and knocked her down. Then they yanked off her shoes and ripped off her dress”. The incident happens as everybody watches helplessly, but no one intervenes, “...everyone just looked the other way” for fear of aggression. Immaculee’s attempts to rebuke the event is stopped by her friend, John, who restrains and warns, “...don’t say anything, you don’t want to get mixed up with those guys – they will kill you” (Ilibagiza 39).

Intimidation is more pronounced during the massacres. Besides the militia gang, ordinary farmers turned killers would intimidate each other at the slightest show of hesitation or for simply showing sympathy to their targets. Consequently, anyone who hesitates to kill because of feelings of remorse, has to absolutely maintain silence. The perpetrators “...did not speak of it beforehand because it was the business of the intimidators and was being prepared outside of earshot. We did not speak of it during” thus, the massacre was carried out in silence (Hatzfeld, ‘Words to Avoid Saying it’, para. 27).

Evidently, compelling silence enables trauma survivors to sustain considerable stability between repressed impulses striving for discharge and defensive forces preventing the discharge. However, the more one suppresses pain and anger in silence, the less free energy he/she has at hand to master newly arriving excitations from cues that evoke painful memories (Fenichel 104). For instance, Jeanne who has been silent all the while cannot hold her anger any more at the sight of a girl wearing her piece of clothing. She impulsively approaches the girl and pulls “...on the poncho with all her might, trying to pull it over the girl’s shoulder and over her head”. When the girl resists and hits her back, “Jeanne hit back, weeping, her hands striking everywhere, in blind rage that could no longer be checked” (Jansen, 2007, p. 321).

Immaculee who has been suppressing her anger in silence for fear of being found by her aggressors, reaches a breaking point and cannot hold it anymore when the pastor accuses her father of being “...a very bad Tutsi” and allegedly helping the RPF rebels (Ilibagiza 108). Her efforts to maintain her composure is broken, anger boils inside and without controlling her temper, [she] raised [her] voice for the first time since he’d locked us away in the bathroom”. Impulsively, she retorts, not caring about their safety anymore as “...pastor Murinzi abused [her] father’s good name... (Ilibagiza 109).

Compelled silence evokes anxiety and impulsive actions in the aggressors too. Their wish is to push memory of their actions into the unconscious and forget about them through silence. However, the guilt of not speaking, creates anxiety which can only be reduced by speaking as Leopold confesses that he has “...felt calm since he spoke up...” and he is waiting peacefully to go home to his land not fearing “...any problem returning to work in the

fields beside the neighbors on the hill” (Hatzfeld “Remorse and regrets”, para. 41).

#### *Active Forgetting among Survivors*

In an attempt to avoid intrusive traumatic memories, survivors resort to active forgetting. Active forgetting involves inhibitory processes where selective retrieval of distracting memories is practiced (Anderson 202). The texts highlight difficulties faced by survivors in the wake of genocide when they come into contact with cues that promote intrusion of undesired memories. Since these cues are not escapable physically, survivors have to learn the art of active forgetting, a mental process where unintegrated memories are suppressed as the desirable ones are selectively retrieved to help put distance from the cues.

Selective retrieval prompts survivors to voice aspects of life events that are non-traumatic and silence those that are trauma laden, a habit that inhibits coming to terms with grim situations hence unwillingness to remember and inability to voice the experiences. In “Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with you”, Jansen depict this selective retrieval-induced forgetting when James and Dusabe, both RPF child soldiers, leads Jeanne to her former home, now lying in ruins, to pick some fruits. The sight of her home brings back a stream of painful memories she has been struggling to inhibit. Instead of voicing her fear, she takes to her heels away from the sight that triggers the distressing memories without giving an explanation. Despite James persuasion for an explanation of the sudden change of attitude, “Dede, what’s the matter?” ... “[Jeanne] ran on”, demonstrating an inhibitory practice.

Since silence perpetuates trauma, Jeanne suffers a “distorted memory” (Laub 64). Although she is aware that James means good to her and all the other Tutsi survivors, she silently makes assertion that James is “...harmful. [His] friendship is a lie. [He] don’t know the difference between right and wrong. You smile and kill. ...And... simply take what doesn’t belong to [him] (Jansen 340). An irritated Jeanne “Didn’t want to see [James]. Hated him to the very bottom of her soul. He was a thief like all others. She never wanted to speak to him again. And with no one else, either. Never again! (Jansen 336). Clearly, she has selectively forgotten the events of the genocide choosing to transfer her anger and accusations towards James, and other returnees whose undoing is taking whatever was left behind, the latter is not as traumatizing.

Perpetrators too practice active forgetting where they involve themselves in selective retrieval of facts in their confessions. Whenever faced with questions about their responsibilities during genocide, the first response is to lie or remain silent. Pio, a member of the gang involved in Killings in the Commune of Nyamata, points out that “...there are some who pretend not to remember anything...” they only tell “...details of life after or even before the killings, but never during... They cheat... playacting a kind of madness. They forget their misfortunes...” (Hatzfeld, “Remorse & Regrets”, para. 16). Fulgance, his colleague, concurs observing that, “...certain colleagues tend to remember the grim and unfortunate moments, while others recall the good times, like the comfort and abundance...” (Hatzfeld, “Remose & Regrets”, para. 3), this demonstrates selective retrieval of information associated with active forgetting so as to avoid the wrenching memories.

Nonetheless, Jansen demonstrates that silence, whether a conspiracy, imposed or by active forgetting, enable a survivor, momentarily, succeed in getting psychological distance and rest from threats paused by cues that bring painful memories. As a result individuals are able to collect all the energy required to deal with belated mastery of the painful memories as they completely suppress unwanted ones into the unconscious. This is exhibited by Jeanne who maintains her silence. “Words no longer passed her lips...” (339). Evidently, defensive silence enables characters to temporarily cope in the face of adversity by directing their attention away from experiences that are too painful to admit into consciousness. In the process however, silence inhibits integration of traumatic pain into language in order to communicate it to others and work through the pain hence, disrupted chronology in narratives.

#### *Poetic Silence*

In order to gain narrative structure created by defensive silence and achieve coherence in testimony, trauma survivors have to be subjective in their narration. This is because subjectivity of testimony provides a “creative space” (Poole 1) in which communication of distressing memory is allowed through reconstruction of facts in which information is sieved and molded. Although silence during the narrativization of trauma is meant to suppress the recovery of traumatic memory, its aesthetic use fulfills the narrator’s didactic aims thus, complementing the telling of trauma disrupted narratives. The aesthetic use of silence in a way that evokes the reader’s tacit knowledge engenders “poetic silence” in which the communication of traumatic experiences is not only made cohesive, but also pleasurable to the audience’s ear. Poetic silence in the testimonial texts under study is enhanced by the use of euphemism, allusions and ellipsis, aspects of language which allow ambiguity and inference of meaning, when describing graphic scenes. While euphemism hides unpleasantness, allusion makes indirect reference, ellipsis on the other hand, leaves out parts of a sentence or event associated with graphic scenes thus, leading to silencing of some aspects (Abrahams 83, 9, 298). Nonetheless, their use not only disrupt the ordinary language and resist mentioning the unspeakable, but also invite inference powers of the audience thus, enable coherence when communicating trauma laden experiences.

The power of “poetic silence” in complementing coherence is visible in a dramatic scene where Jansen depicts Gatori’s desire to transform harrowing experience into plot and bear witness to a horrific scene. He employs euphemism when describing a murder process as, “separated his head from his body” (Jansen 136) which is relatively politer than saying ‘sever human head’. He further alludes to the story of Jesus Christ’s crucifixion on the cross to enhance cruelty of the event when he describes that “someone put a sign under the head saying, “I am the king of cockroaches. Let me be an example to you” (136). This not only highlight the unjustified murder on behalf of the innocent majority, but also juxtaposes the cruelty with the Biblical one which evokes tacit knowledge, subsequently, enhancing understanding of the graphic part of the testimony among audience of Christian faith. Similarly, Immaculee employs euphemism to subjectively recount a rape scene which she overheard Sembeba, pastor’s son, telling his friends. The description of the violent episode is so unimaginably disturbing that Immaculee masks it with a non-

embarrassing phrase to retell the same. The gang rape scene is described thus, "...they grabbed one mama, and all of them took turns with her" (Ilibagiza, 2006, p. 138). The phrase "...took turns with her", used here is a relatively less embarrassing one meant to downplay the gravity of the gang rape scene.

The perpetrators too employ euphemism before and during the genocide. This is manifest in the appropriation of common terminologies in daily activities and imbuing them with specific meanings within the context of genocide. For instance, killing is euphemized as 'work', targets are indirectly referred to as cockroaches and snakes. Military expressions such as 'the terrible battle', 'made war with machete' are used to refer to genocide and use of machete to kill. For perpetrators, euphemism functions to create significant distance between them and the targets thus, reducing the target group not only to pests and animals, but also separating the 'self' from the 'other'. Therefore, euphemism and biblical allusion in the testimonies functions to not only silence graphic words, but also to create coherence to the traumatic memory, besides justifying unacceptable behaviours and absolving the 'self' of any wrong doing.

Just like euphemism and allusion, ellipsis in narration creates 'poetic silence'. It enables inferred but pleasurable communication of grim situations. Although ellipsis indicates the unspoken thus creating silence, the gaps it leaves in narration elicit tacit knowledge and help audience 'hear' the unspoken and infer implied meaning. Jansen highlights ellipsis in a conversation between Jeanne and Chantal in which comprehension is enabled even with the omission of some aspects. Chantal's question, "besides Jando have you seen anyone else from your family?" is well "understood immediately" by Jeanne who infers "what Chantal intended to say with those words". Jeanne's introspective understanding of Chantal's question which does not overtly state "That she had also been a witness to Jando's murder" demonstrates not only a tacit understanding between them, but also make communication of grim situations easier for "To speak about it that way made it easier" (Jansen 215), albeit a noticeable omission.

Ellipsis is further deployed in Jeanne's response to Chantal's question when she begins to report about her mother's whereabouts but switches to her father's amid her speech without overtly saying the fate of her mother. Jeanne narrates, "I saw my mother," she answered faintly. "Yesterday on the plaza of the community center." She swallowed. "My father was still with us this morning. He went to get us something to eat. That's what he said anyway. I haven't seen him again since then." (Jansen 215). Instead of saying her mother is dead, a scene she witnessed, "...she swallowed". This leaves a gap in her answer for the audience's imagination to fill, and indeed, Chantal understands her and simply "nodded silently" without prying further (215).

Through ellipsis, taboos surrounding certain topics such as rape are not overtly voiced. The stigma inherent in such topics is so enormous that narrators explicitly avoid voicing them. However, by leaving out ideas related to sexual violence characterizing situations of war, the audience is invited to make inferences. For instance, in her narration of their encounter with government soldiers at the commune center of Birenga, a camp they have taken refuge in when killings begin, Jeanne omits some aspect of the event. She recounts about soldiers who come daily to

pick teenage girls but does not mention what happens to them. In one of the incidents she narrates how the soldiers went for:

...older girls. Especially Madeleine, who was a beauty. "Hey, you over there! What's your name? I know you! Didn't we meet at the barricades in Butare? Words bawled across the room. To the very farthest corner of the office space, where Madeleine had anxiously crept every evening since the first incident of this sort. "C'mere, you! You can come with me. I want to marry you." A commanding beckon. Laughter from his buddies "Now, c'mon! What do you want here when you can get to be my wife on the spot!" (Jansen 168).

Although acts of sexual violence are not overtly mentioned in the above excerpt, the audience's imagination is evoked and inference can be made from the anxiety-laden behaviour of Madeleine at the sight of soldiers, as well as the blatant disregard of customs associated with marriages. The soldiers shamelessly mock and issue commands to the 'bride' in a manner that breeches well known protocols of marriage. Such an event is normally carried out with utmost respect and honour to both the bride and her relatives. Jeanne observes that "...you had to ask the father first. And give him something for the bride" (Jansen 168).

Evidently therefore, use of ellipsis reflects a common shame around the violation of sexual rights and by not explicitly voicing these concerns, she invites the reader to give meaning to the incident thus not only filling gaps in narration, but also helping break the silence characterizing sexual violence during violent conflict situations.

Perpetrators on the other hand, employ ellipsis to hide their sinister intentions of exterminating Tutsis and silencing any dissenting voices. Since the attainment of independence in the country, the organizers of genocide persistently incite and mobilize ordinary people based on economic principles, preparing them for impending genocide while "...taking care never to say it outright" (Hatzfeld "Words to Avoid Saying it", para. 1). However, to their audience, Hutu extremists, the encrypted messages are inferred, decoded, and clearly understood. The extermination messages are deduced from calls such as, "There's not enough land in this country for two ethnic groups, and neither one will leave, so it is up to the Hutus to solve the problem", which do not overtly indicate intentions (Hatzfeld, "Words to Avoid Saying it", para. 1). The power of poetic silence is not only visible in its ability to create coherence and make communication of traumatic memory possible, but also in how organizers of the genocide manipulate language to prepare ordinary people for massacres of their own neighbours without raising suspicion and feelings of guilt.

### **Adaptive Silence**

Besides defensive silence, the selected testimonial texts highlight the role of adaptive silence during harrowing experience. Adaptive silence enable one to endure suffering, physically, emotionally, and psychologically, with limited posttraumatic responses. In "Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Genocide" Ilibagiza through her main protagonist, Immaculee, demonstrates a psycho-spiritual escape mechanism, active imagination, an introspective act possible in absolute silence. Active imagination is a meditative technique involving the visionary practice of dreaming with open eyes, where psychological and spiritual transformation are associated with the

psychic creation and manipulation of divine images (Schlamm 7). The self-reflective mechanism triggers a dynamic confrontational exchange between consciousness and unconsciousness, where divine images created in the inner life of an individual are engaged in conscious dialogue.

Indeed, fear from eminent death facing the hiding women, is unendurable. Immaculee "...literally felt the fear pumping through her veins and her blood was on fire" (Ilibagiza 89). To ward off feelings of anxiety and horror, the women employ active imagination in which they "...form an image of God in [their] mind, envisioning two pillars of brilliant white light burning brightly in front of [them], like two giant legs. [They] wrapped [their] arms around the legs, like a frightened child clinging to its mother. [They] begged God to fill [them] with his light and strength..." (Ilibagiza 90). The meditative act enable them to completely dissociate themselves from both the physical and psychological threats the first time aggressors come in search of them in pastor Murinzi's house, their hideout.

The visionary practice, evident in the unconscious mouthing of "...prayer after prayer while staring vacantly at the others...", leads Immaculee and her colleagues into a state of trance where they get increased psychic relaxation and freedom (Schlamm 7). For seven hours they become unconscious of their horrific surrounding until "...the pastor opened the door and found [them] all in a state of trance". Immaculee finds herself "...bathed in sweat, exhausted, clutching rosary in both hands, and oblivious of surrounding" (Ilibagiza 90-91).

Ilibagiza further demonstrates that when an individual consciously dialogues with images from active imagination, he/she learns to transform unconscious emotions and impulses into language. As Herman maintains, narrative integration of traumatic experiences helps relieve building anxiety thus contributing to recovery (Ch. 9). This is illustrated by Immaculee who confesses that their, "...anxiety about the killers' return was constant mental and physical torture." They would feel "...as if someone were stinging [them] with a cattle prod whenever the floor creaked or a dog barked. The mental anguish was even more intense." However, whenever they prayed, they "...immediately felt His love around [them], and the anxiety eased (Ilibagiza 95-96). Clearly, a conscious dialogue with numinous images created in active imagination, through intrusive verbal prayers, help Immaculee and her hiding colleagues discharge the traumatic tensions and get relief from anxiety caused by constant horror of being found.

The silence associated with visionary practice strengthens and widens consciousness thereby arousing awareness of the surrounding. It is during one of those intrusive beseeching moments that Immaculee notices how exposed they are to the killers and an idea of concealing the bathroom, their hideout, door flashes through her mind as she prayed soundlessly, "*Oh, God, ... Show me how to make the killers blind again.*" Just then "...a crystal clear image flashed through [her] mind. "I have an idea," [she] told him in a hushed but insistent voice. Can you push your wardrobe in front of the bathroom door? It's tall and wide enough to completely cover it..." (Ilibagiza 92-93).

Besides, Ilibagiza highlights how active imagination enables self-revelation, a knowledge Immaculee employs to help her distance herself from the terror. In her life of intrusive supplication during the difficulties, Immaculee discovers that her

purpose in life is taking responsibility over the whole humanity, an answer she actively gets through visionary practice of silent prayer and supplication in which she dialogues with the supreme being, getting an instant "...answer as clearly as if [they]'d been sitting in the same room chatting: you are all my children... It was such a simple sentence, but it was the answer to the prayers [she had] been lost in for days (105).

She begins to feel great compulsion to intercede for everyone including the perpetrators. Initially, praying for her tormentors looks impossible. However, as soon as she opens her heart to God, "...and He'd touched it with His infinite love. ..." she is able not only to take "...a crucial step toward forgiving the killers...", but also discovers that hatred and anger drains energy, a knowledge that relieves her of anxiety and pain, helping put distance from the horror, and for the first time since she entered the bathroom, she "...slept in peace" (Ilibagiza 106).

In the wake of genocide, silence is rife between victims and perpetrators due to repressed anger and guilt. None of the two groups is willing to break the silence and reach out for the other. Through religious beliefs and practices however, Hatzfeld demonstrates that spaces are created for narratives of reconciliation such as the belief that only the supernatural being understands and forgives. Believers therefore go to church and reverently supplicate to God not only to find meaning to events of genocide, but also to ask for forgiveness from the father figure as observed by Marie-Chantal, one of the killer's wives, "Guilty ones and victims sit shoulder to shoulder praying in the first pew as if they had forgotten... Now, many cling to prayers and hymns to get through this shattered life" ('And God in All This', para. 32). By depicting survivors as prayerful during the genocide and more so in its wake, the text manifest the role of religion in helping individuals not only relieve anxieties created by traumatic experiences, but also help break the silence inherent in repressed anger and guilt thus creating coherence in narration. Religion therefore, functions to create spaces in the psyche where expression of the self to a father figure through prayers in solitude is enabled.

Moreover, the texts manifest the extent to which silence is employed as a tool to facilitate dehumanization, senseless hatred and subsequent grotesque savagery on fellow human beings. Over time, the target groups experience loss of voice as they are unable to come up with counter narratives. Loss of voice of a group considered the 'other' in turn creates a fertile ground for trauma-embedded ideologies to be propagated and transferred to the younger generation unimpededly. Consequently, the youth gets brainwashed and wholly believes that the 'other' group deserve to die as highlighted by Ilibagiza in a discussion between Pastor Murinzi and his son, Sembeba, over the on-going killings:

What do you make of all this killings, Dad? Don't you think that it's good – exactly what we Hutus should be doing? I mean, they taught us in school that hundreds of years ago the Tutsis did the same to us... "Don't you think if they were still in power today they'd be killing us right now? So killing them is self-defense, isn't it?" (97).

However, being silent as a group creates a space where silenced members share a sense of belonging and get emotionally attuned. This manifest in "Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with You" where the three fugitives, Jeanne, Chantal and Carin hardly speak "...with each other... when they were by themselves..." not



only "...for fear of being overheard", but also because "...it wasn't necessary for them to speak, they understood each other without words..." (Jansen 274). Similarly, the shared silence between Immaculee and her hiding colleagues in "Left to Tell: Discovering God amid The Rwandan Genocide" enable them develop a sign language system only understood by themselves. This is manifest when two other girls who join them in their hiding place would not understand as they try "...talking to them in our sign language, but of course, they didn't know what we were saying" (Ilibagiza 121).

By portraying Jeanne, Chantal and Carin as well as Immaculee and her hiding colleagues as emotionally attuned to the extent that they understand each other even in silence, Jansen and Ilibagiza demonstrate the role of being silent together in the formation of a common identity based on the sense of victimhood.

Besides the formation of a common identity, shared silence provides space for creating narratives of resistance which focus on personally experienced suffering enabling the muted thoughts to surface and be shared among the victims (Fivush 92). For instance, having faced enough hatred and mistreatment in the hands of their aggressors in silence, coupled with rampant deaths, Jeanne, Chantal, and Carin begin to construct and tell stories of courage impressing upon each other to resist. In their stories, they share their fears thus, encouraging themselves to put an end to the suffering. Consequently, the three girls begin to resist their abductor's, Habimana's, orders. First, when they are sent to fetch water from a nearby lake and "warned not to dawdle", and leave immediately they see the RPF soldiers (Jansen 282). They deliberately waste time and warmly entertain the rebel soldiers they meet, explicitly showing their defiance of Habimana despite threats from Agnes as depicted below:

"Now hurry up and finish! We have to go back," she urged. ... "Ohhh, reeeaally?" Chantal asked, drawing out her words. ... "The rebels might come!" "So?" Chantal put her head on one side, looked at Agnes out of the corners of her eyes, and leered at her. "So what?" "They'll force you to join the army or kill you! ..." Chantal stopped smiling. "I've seen many dead in recent days" she said coldly (Jansen 284).

Their courage is manifest when they hatch an escape plot after Chantal, who has been spying on Habimana, learns of a plan of either killing or holding them hostage as security in case the RPF soldiers gets them. They swear not to wait until the abductors decide on what to do. Besides, they do not "...want to go any farther with them!" (290). Despite Habimana's orders forbidding them not "...to leave the farm from [then] on" (Jansen 288), the girls who have by now become very bold, decide to make a daring escape taking advantage of a lapse in surveillance and leaving in different direction one by one following Chantal's advice that, "It's siesta now. Most people are sleeping. Habimana is in the house. The best thing would be for us to try it now. Each of us go in different direction. I'll wait just a little so that it isn't noticeable. ... Jeanne stood up. "I'm off," she said... (Jansen 290)

Clearly, the selected texts demonstrate how communal silence during difficult situations is capable of creating an identity based on shared suffering, and consequently creating and telling narratives of resistance not only to their aggressors who were made to believe lies about them, but also to the whole world who opted to remain silent until it was too late.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The paper depicts how the turbulence of genocide disrupts language structure leading to breakdown in communication of traumatic experiences that would permeate lives long after the violent conflict. Due to pain associated with telling and listening to trauma narratives, the narrativization of traumatic experiences in testimonial literature is characterized by a dramatic silence between the urge to testify and the inability to express the self cohesively. On one hand, the survivor narrator is compelled into silence in an attempt to deny, avoid and forget, if possible, any memory associated with past experiences of trauma. On the other hand, traumatic experiences evokes poetic spirit which inspires creative sharing of the experiences. Consequently, narrativization in testimonial literature is characterized by fragmented structure. Moreover, the paper underscores the centrality of silence during periods of suffering. Besides suggesting struggles to articulate experiences of genocide, silence creates a space for meditation thus, reawakening one's piousness and identity. In solitude silence, meditation upon religious dogmas and intrusive communication to a deity is encouraged thus, growth in faith. Being silent together too, creates identities based on shared suffering which lead to the emergence of narratives of resistance among the victims. From the emergent multifaceted nature of silence therefore, silence does not necessarily amount to the disruption of communication but it is itself a way of relaying one's unspoken and unspeakable feelings, enabling expressibility of otherwise experiences that are difficult to describe within traditional parameters of language.

#### REFERENCES

- Primary Sources
- [1] Hatzfeld, Jean. *The Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Trans.). USA: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005.
  - [2] Ilibagiza, Immaculee. *Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Genocide*. USA: Hay House, Inc, 2006.
  - [3] Jensen, Hanna. *Over a Thousand Hills I Walk With You*. Translated by Crawford, Elizabeth, D. Great Britain: Andersen Press Limited, 2007.
- Secondary Sources
- [4] Abrams, M. H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 7th ed. USA: Earl McPeck, 1999.
  - [5] Amber, Davis. *Contemplating Silence: A review of Understandings and Clinical Handling of Patient Silence in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*. (Master thesis). Auckland University of Technology, 2007.
  - [6] Anderson, Michael, C. "Active Forgetting: Evidence for Functional Inhibition as a Source of Memory Failure." *Journal of Aggression Maltreatment and Trauma*, Jan., 2001, pp. 185-210.
  - [7] Bracken, Patrick J. *Trauma: Culture, Meaning and Philosophy*. London: Whurr Publishers, 2002.
  - [8] Caminero-Santangelo, Marta. "At the Intersection of Trauma and Testimonio: Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*."
  - [9] *Antipodas: Journal of Hispanic Galician Studies*, vol. 20, 2009, pp. 5-26.
  - [10] Caruth, Cathy. *Empirical Truths and Critical Fictions*. USA: The John Hopkins UP, 1991.
  - [11] Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. London: Cornell UP, 1980.
  - [12] Delaperriere, Maria. "Testimony as a Literary Problem." Translated by Skotnicka Marta. *Institute of Literary Research Polish Academy of Science*, vol. 2, 2014, pp. 42-54.
  - [13] Fivush, Robyn. "Speaking Silence: The Social Construction of

- Silence in Autobiographical and Cultural Narratives.” Memory. Atlanta USA: Emory UP., 2010, pp. 88-98.
- [14] Fenichel, Otto. The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis. Taylor and Francis, 2005.
- [15] Shapiro, Lauren R. “From Knowing to Telling: The Development of Children’s Scripts, stories, and Personal Narratives”. Edited by Allyssa McCabe & Carole Peterson, Developing Narrative Structure, New Jersey: Laurence Erlbaum Associates, 1991, pp. 89-136.
- [16] Herman, Judith. Trauma and Recovery. New York: Basic Books, 1992.
- [17] Lane, Robert C. et al. “Silence as Communication in Psychodynamic Psychotherapy”. Clinical Psychology Review, vol. 22, April, 2002, pp. 1091-1104
- [18] Laub, Dori. “Truth and Testimony: The Process and the Struggle.”
- [19] Trauma: Explorations in Memory, edited by Cathy Caruth, London: The John Hopkins UP, 1995, pp. 61-75.
- [20] Merwe, Chris N., and Pumla Madikizele G. Narrating Our Healing: Perspective on Working through Trauma. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- [21] Morrock, Robert. The Psychology of Genocide and Violent Oppression. London: McFarland & Company, Inc, 2010.
- [22] Nance, Kimberly A. Can Literature Promote Justice? Trauma Narratives and Social Action in Latin American Testimonio. Nashville: Varnderbilt UP., 2006.
- [23] Palombo, Joseph, et al. Guide to Psychoanalytic Development Theories. London: Springer, 2009.
- [24] Schlamm, Loen. “Active Imagination.” Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion, edited by David A. Leeming et al., USA: Springer, 2010, pp. 6-7.
- [25] Steup, Matthias, and Neta Ram. “Epistemology”. The Stamford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Edited by, N. Zalta, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/epistemolo>.

#### AUTHORS

**First Author-** Codo Omondi Danlence, (BeD)

Email- [odanlence1979@gmail.com](mailto:odanlence1979@gmail.com), Contact: +254723280686

**Second Author-** James Ogone, (Phd), Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology

Email- [ogone07@yahoo.com](mailto:ogone07@yahoo.com)

**Third Author-** Edwin Mosoti, (Phd), Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology

Email- [emosoti2015@gmail.com](mailto:emosoti2015@gmail.com)