

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION OF TRAUMATIC REALISM IN EDWIDGE DANTICAT'S FICTION

Ganieva Orzigul Khayriddinovna

Associate Professor, PhD

o.x.ganiyeva@buxdu.uz

Akhmedova Aziza Azamat qizi

MA Student of Bukhara State University

a.a.axmedova1@buxdu.uz

Abstract

This article offers an in-depth analysis of the artistic expression of traumatic realism in Edwidge Danticat's work, "The Dew Breaker". The article highlights the ruthless activities of the protagonist during the dictatorship regime and impact of these activities on his current life, showing the echo of psychological trauma on both individual and societal levels. The study examines how traumas are represented in literature through psychoanalytic, postcolonial, and socio-cultural approaches. In addition, the contradictions between personal and collective memory, the past and the present, and the artistic expression of traumatic experiences are scrutinized in detail. Through the dynamic portrayal of the protagonist in Danticat's work, the concept of trauma is deeply revealed, and its role in literary art is highlighted.

Keywords: Traumatic realism, psychological trauma, trauma studies, psychoanalysis, postcolonialism, literary studies, memory, dictatorship, Edwidge Danticat, "The Dew Breaker".

Introduction

Traumatic realism in literature encompasses depictions of the brutal events, wars, genocides, or other severe injuries experienced by individuals or societies. Through this approach, the author does not merely record the traumas but also reveals how they have affected both individuals and the community. Danticat's work is distinctive in this regard. The contrast between the protagonist's past and his present life allows a deeper experience of traumatic realism.

Literature Review

The object of research and the methods applied are dedicated to the study of psychological traumas and traumatic realism in literary criticism, as discussed in the "Trauma Studies" chapter from the book "A Companion to Literary Theory". In this section, Mishell Balayev articulates that the reflection of psychological trauma in discourse, the role of memory in shaping personality, and issues related to cultural identity are the main directions of his research. When psychoanalytic theories of psychological trauma are harmonized with

postcolonial, socio-cultural, and poststructuralist approaches, the extreme experiences of individuals and their effects on the self and memory are analyzed thoroughly. This approach broadens the possibilities for the artistic expression of traumatic experiences. The concept of trauma or psychological injury emerges in literary art as a significant notion—a negative reality that deeply impacts human life. It significantly influences one's emotional state, potentially transforming one's worldview and relationship with the external world. In literary studies, this area is discussed under the terms "Trauma Studies" or "Traumatic Realism," with considerable attention paid to the analysis of characters' psychological conditions and the psychological, rhetorical, and cultural factors that give rise to trauma.

Results and Analysis

The protagonist's past is based on the ruthlessness of the dictatorship regime. He was a "dew breaker"—a secret agent who committed crimes on behalf of the regime. This role left a deep scar in his inner world and condemned him to lifelong torment. For example, in the first story of the work, the protagonist recalls the torture of political prisoners he once inflicted. This memory stands in stark contrast to his calm life today. On one hand, he is remorseful for his past crimes, while on the other, he strives to escape from himself. This contradiction strongly manifests traumatic realism. The protagonist lives in the United States as an ordinary immigrant. Although he yearns for a simple life, his past relentlessly haunts him. For instance, his daughter, Ka, is unaware of his past and only imagines him as a kind man. In this way, the author shows how a person tries to hide their identity and live with traumas. When Ka eventually confronts her father's hidden past, the family relationships become strained. Through these scenes, we can see that traumatic realism occupies an important role not only at an individual level but also within the family and society.

The connection between the past and the present is a central element of the work's structure. Each story illuminates different periods of the protagonist's life, thereby showing how past events affect his present. For example, the contrast between the protagonist's life in Haiti and in the United States creates a dramatic effect. The violent scenes in Haiti reflect more clearly in the present calm yet internally painful life. The tension between these two environments intensifies traumatic realism. Past experiences, particularly the violence during the regime, shape the protagonist's current suffering and internal conflicts. In one episode, when the protagonist recalls his life in Haiti, the traces of violence and crimes committed during that period continue to persist in his current life. For instance, due to his role as a "dew breaker," he constantly contemplates those he tortured and the fates of their family members. These scenes reveal how the impact of his past actions manifests in his present relationships and self-acceptance.

The protagonist's relationships with his family also reflect the connection between the past and the present. His daughter Ka, having idealized her father by not knowing the truth about his past, faces a severe conflict when the truth is revealed. These episodes unveil the complex emotions that arise when a person confronts their past. The ruthlessness and violence in Haiti have left deep scars not only on the protagonist but also on other characters. In this way, the author shows how traumatic experiences affect not only individuals but also the future of an



entire society. For example, the relationships between the regime's victims and their subsequent generations are a clear example of this connection.

Traumatic scars occupy a central place in "The Dew Breaker". These traumas play a crucial role in shaping the protagonist's inner world and self-acceptance. In every story, traumas appear in various forms and invite the reader to reflect on the complexities of the human psyche. For instance, the protagonist's attempts to justify himself are aimed at concealing his traumatic scars. In one story, he lies to his daughter about his past, but this lie exposes his inner struggle and his desire to escape from his own truth. Furthermore, through the lives of individuals who have been tortured and lost their loved ones during the regime, Danticat depicts trauma on a societal level. For example, one of the regime's victims tries to rebuild his family, yet the scars from the past do not allow him peace. Through this narrative, the author illuminates the complex process of living with trauma. Traumatic scars also play an important role in the process of self-forgiveness. The protagonist refuses to ask for forgiveness for his crimes because doing so would require him to face his past head-on. This, in turn, results in constant inner torment. Through such scenes, the author provides a deeper portrayal of the complexities of the human mind.

Conclusion

"The Dew Breaker" novel by Edwidge Danticat stands out as a brilliant work in the portrayal of traumatic realism. Through the interplay of the protagonist's past and present, Danticat reveals the intricacies of human psychology. In this work, traumas are not only painful memories but also a fundamental force that shapes both individuals and society. The conflict between the past and the present, along with the internal struggle and the complexities of interpersonal relationships, provides a profound exploration of the subject. Each story helps the reader to experience the deep drama of human life and the complex process of overcoming trauma.

REFERENCES

1. Danticat, E. (2004). *The Dew Breaker*. New York: Vintage Books.
2. Conniff, B. (2021). Critical commentary on characters in "The Bridal Seamstress" chapter of *The Dew Breaker*. *Journal of Haitian Literature*, 13(2), 105-119.
3. Georges, J. (2009). Transgenerational haunting: Trauma and literary genre in Edwidge Danticat's *The Dew Breaker*. *Journal of Caribbean Literatures*, 5(2), 115-128.
4. Nyawalo, M. (2019). Indirectly speaking: Techniques for conveying character in modern diasporic fiction. *African Literature Today*, 35, 77-92.
5. Pasquet, C. (2015). Embodiments of personal and historical trauma in Edwidge Danticat's "The Dew Breaker." *Brújula: Revista Interdisciplinaria Sobre Estudios Latinoamericanos*, 13(1), 78-85.
6. Bailey, E. (2011). Wounds of history: Intergenerational trauma in Edwidge Danticat's *The Dew Breaker*. *Caribbean Quarterly*, 57(2), 5-17.
7. Sheller, M. (2012). *Citizenship from below: Erotic agency and Caribbean freedom*. Duke University Press.



8. Desmangles, L. G. (2018). The nightmare of history: The silent and articulated dreams in Danticat's *The Dew Breaker* and *The Farming of Bones*. University Press of Mississippi.
9. Khayriddinova G. O. "EAST OF EDEN" ROMANIDA QAXRAMONLAR XULQ-ATVORIGA JAMIYAT FIKRINING TA'SIRI //SCIENTIFIC REPORTS OF BUKHARA STATE UNIVERSITY. – С. 146.
10. Ganiyeva O. K. H., Rajabova Z. T. The Analysis of Loneliness theme in of *Mice and Men* //Miasto Przyszłości. – 2023. – Т. 31. – С. 157-159.
11. Ganieva O. K. H., Aminova N. B. JOHN STEINBECK'S "DISCONTENT" OVER THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS //Gospodarka i Innowacje. – 2022. – Т. 23. – С. 146-148.
12. Ganieva O. K. H., Aminova N. B. FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN JOHN STEINBECK'S NOVEL "EAST OF EDEN" //Евразийский журнал академических исследований. – 2023. – Т. 3. – №. 5 Part 4. – С. 247-249.

