



READING THE NEEDLE WORK OF PAIN IN THE CULTURAL TAPESTRY OF TRAUMA IN BERESFORD'S WORK *INVISIBLE THREADS*

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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Abstract

The paper aims to explore the cross-cultural interactions and its functionality in shaping trauma either exposing it or attempting for an agreeable arrangement with it mostly arriving for a partial recovering. The text on which the study is build is *Beresford's Invisible Threads*, the novel do get into the footsteps of Sara a NRI who is a psychological councillor by practice visits India or the east in quest of the truth related to her husband's Mike death which has remained a secret so far to her. This journey from the West to the East turns out to be both an instance of physical and emotional rootlessness. This shift stretching beyond the realms of cultural position lays trauma into an international substructure. The result of such positioning leads to convergence of individual loss with the episteme of violence contextualised in non-familiar socio-cultural circumstances. Cultural difference here is not essentially portrayed from a cultural exchange outlook rather cultural elements acts as a medium of reinterpretations both for her grief and for restructuring meaning. Strikingly, the work resists a simplified architecture of redemption with opening up of roads for healing via cross-cultural indulgements. Cross cultural interaction thus runs ambiguously and is ambivalent in their way out functioning as a place of fissure that intensifies trauma, and a s a delicate yet essential unit for resurgence and temporary recovery. The work lines up on the thought that how the text locate cross-cultural encounters to represent trauma through a dual lens of trauma theory and post-colonialism critique, and in what ways do these encounters simultaneously reproduce, mediate, and partially heal individual and collective trauma within uneven power relations at the global level? Does the novel ultimately challenges or reproduce neo-colonial frameworks its portrayal of trauma, healing and cultural encounter?

Keywords: *Cross-Cultural, Countries, Borders, Colonial, Neo-colonial, Trauma*

Introduction: Locating trauma Across Borders

Beresford weaves her plot within a transnational space where the narrative foretelling traumatic experience neither do get limited or bounded to an individual mind map nor get narrowed by geography. Instead it springs up in the form of a structured process layered with mobility, cultural interactions and uneven worldly dynamics. The narrative steps into Sara's life who is a British psychologist by profession who travel to the country only to seek knowledge of her husband's death and thus indulges with the country's narrative profoundly canvassing both her individual loss and shared pain. This paper jointly questions the ambivalent nature of functioning that the cross cultural encounters do present or bring forth. They operate on both level/ they have dual operations both imparting seriousness to trauma through movements and highlighting the unnoticed pains enabling the temporary recovery via relational and ethical indulgements. To unfurl this dual nature the paper assimilates theories of trauma with postcolonial substructures grouping together Cathy Caruth, Dominick La Carpa, Said, Spivak and Bhabha. The primary area of argument is that the novel chart down trauma as a transnational, relational and ethically loaded experiences, where healing is always partial and circumstantial through tolerating arch of power.

Theoretical Analogy: Trauma and Post-colonialism

Theories of trauma do essentially conceptualizes or think over trauma not as a one line programme but rather as an ongoing venture that goes beyond necessary or much needed acknowledgement or understanding. As Caruth do opines trauma gets identified by long tardiness returning or recurring fragmentative forms, illusions, might dreams and forceful recurrences(6). The

grief that Sara run into do run or work through falls within this structure where her sense of reality does get de-stable with the uncovering of the truth related to her husband's resulting in a break for the time being or temporary breakthrough.

Alongside, Dominick La Capra differentiated between the resurgence of trauma and navigating through the critical indulgence resulting in temporary recovery (142). Sara dwindles and travels to and fro these stages of trauma and recovery travelling to India mapping a change point or shift from absolute inactivity to partial healing or processing. The fiction also brings forth secondary trauma wherein observing the pain of the rests do generates or leads to psychological turbulence. The way Sara has been exposed to the trafficking and the rooted forms of violence in the country do problematises her intense grief stretching trauma into an area that is interdisciplinary in vogue (Felman and Laub 58).

The theory that revolves round Post-colonialism necessarily questions the power relation that remains deeply rooted in the inter-cultural interactions. Edward Said's theoretical take in Orientalism do reflects the construction of the East featuring it as a place looking for some interruptions and required changes, alongside wild, exotic and backward (25). Sara's primary interpretations of the East was/ is definitely loaded with this light as she comes in interaction with marginality and social backwardness and gender exclusion (Beresford 82). Spivak argues in her seminal work "Can the Subaltern Speak?" is especially important to look at in the given context(287). There are characters like/ including Priti do map down the subsidise voices whose experiences of abuse counterattack Sara's claim on psychiatric interpretations. The novel do pint out some grave ethical thoughts regarding Sara's understanding capacity or re-narrating these abusive experiences without subscribing any of the structural colonial narrative (Beresford 74)

In the meantime, Bhabha ideology of hybridity and third space do bring in a structure for interpreting the cross-cultural interactions as a location of agreement instead asserting authority. The relationship that Sara builds in the Country does build such spaces where there is a co-construction of meaning rather than meaning being merely thrust upon (56).

Cross Cultural Displacement and the Intensification of Trauma

The journey of Sara is out and out psychological by nature and not simply physical. Displacement essentially breaks her identical way of interpretations multiplying her precarity. Trauma which is already fragmentary and unstable in forms do turns out to be serious when made to go through non-familiar cultural situations. The sensory pressure that a new physicality do impart with its sounds, colours and social realities do picturise the rupturing quality of experiences that are trauma ridden. This close relationship between the physical or outward de-configuration and inward chaos do unveil how the cross cultural disposition can lead to traumatic compounds/inflame trauma (Beresford 72).

In the country, Sara encountered/ exchanged herself with structural ways of exploitative specifically targeting the women and the children. These ranges from the trafficking and cultural practices those are exploitative by nature, which definitely let her to meet with the shared experiences of trauma that goes beyond the measure of individual anxiety and suffering. From the analytical point of understanding revolving or centering round traumatic lens this interaction with the collective form of trauma which is known as ore termed as secondary trauma(Felman and Laub 58) Sara turns out to be a major witness to painful events that remains beyond the limit of complete processing resulting to the emotional exhaustion. Her identity in the professional form as a therapist would further intensify this emotional saturation because of her trained capability to resonate yet do she is left in a powerless position (Beresford 95).

The kind of interaction that takes place in the cross-cultural level do generates a shock that is ethics ridden Sara is made to encounter the limitations that is posed on her own understanding and acknowledgements of inappropriate or insufficient worldview that she bears previously or in earlier times. This moment do comes in together with postcolonial criticism of western structure of epistemic authoritative claim. The shift reflects Edward Said's critique of the Western gaze, which builds the other as an object of knowledge (25). Sara gets ethically awoken as she turns out to be conscious of the power relations that make up her observations (Beresford 110). Rather than coming up with transparency the interaction aggravate ambivalence. Trauma is not supposed to treat for any time as personal plotline but rather as a global scenario structured by indifferences and pains percolated since prolonged period of time conjoining the history.

The narrative vividly portrays the psychic dislocation that is essentially the product of geographical movement. The vivid sensory graphics that accompanies Sara's route to the country capital with evocative depiction of heat, noise, crowded corners and roads repeatedly elaborated as the fragmented almost completely engrossing insight / refractions. This broken perspective reflects what Caruth calls the unaccountability of trauma with her environment that seems beyond interpretations, like her grief challenges understanding. Her sense of rooted conformity marks an ending with her moment of realization about her inability to interpret the cultural environment that surrounds her in the country into which she travels. This incorporate day to day conversations or spatial interventions externalizing her mental breaking apart after looking into the fact of her husband's death that has been kept a secret from her . She repeatedly compared and contrasted the two locations one her native foreign homeland and the location that she comes in India which do work out as a compelling operating drive going together with La Capra's notion of performing denying her stability in either of the spaces.

Sara's meeting or coming in contact with the past experiences of Priti's abuse is the central point from where the enactment of shifts begins. The slowing down of the plot depends not only on the event but rather on Sara's inefficiently to generate adequate response. This dilemma is fundamental and elementary: it picturises secondary witnessing, where trauma gets transferred via engaging as listeners rather than having experiences in direct manner. Descriptions of network of trafficking and ritualistic abuse (practices like Devdasi) are not available as separate incidents but as structures that are normal. The text abruptly locates

individuals who are trapped within the violent structures stretching trauma from the singular to collective manner of registering. Sara's official knowledge that she perceived as a therapist becomes inactive within these sense marking as failure of her clinical knowledge system thus signifying the limitations that canon of western therapeutics bear when met up with trauma that is encoded in a cultural manner.

Sara ultimately realizes and gets ethically aware being aware of her own social position which acts as a privilege other wisely. She identifies with the idea of truth that reveals her with the knowledge that it is not her presence that is not sufficient for helping out. Her initial urge to help and to step forward do get met with rejection or complications. The tone of the narrative changes from understanding to self analytical with her ethically awakening self. This collab with Said's piece of criticism Sara started with implicit reading or interpreting India as a physical location that lacks although but eventually identifies this as a build-up way of looking. The lack of luxury that she experiences when started to read the pain of others marks the starting of moral consciousness rather than any kind of determination.

Relationality and the Possibility of Healing

Cross Cultural indulgence brings out a lot of destability and alarming consequences alongside it also clear the blockages in the paths that lead to healing or recover. Relationships shared with people like Priti and Hemant do results in the birth of spaces of kindness fostering bonding. The concept of working through as been forwarded by La Capra is much present here/ very much visible (143). Healing comes not through isolations. Sara's way of communication does help her to restructure or consolidate her grief within a larger human backdrop. By listening rather than breaking through, Sara takes part in an inter subjective conversation that smoothens her path to temporary recovery (Beresford 128).

The novel or the fiction brings forth the transcendental quality of empathy which crosses all the differences based on cultures though not without much constrain. Sara's increasing bout of knowledge regarding suffering of others creates a sense of collective human identity. But not to miss the empathy is none the less complex. It asks for active hearing, humility and a will to face one's own limited paths of knowledge. The process is spontaneous and mostly tiring or not so comforting, shedding light on the complex relations of cross-cultural knowledge and understanding.

Recovery is more about the process of constructing of the meaning making mechanism and is less about the determination. Sara starts to re-indulge and interpret her individual crisis assimilating the singular pain to a larger spectrum of connectivity and collective load sharing (Beresford 140). This method do matches the theories related to trauma stressing/harping on the making up of narrative as a coping mechanism. Yet, the work does provide a resistance to conclusive endings, laying down the nature of the trauma/ marking the running nature of trauma.

The language in which Sara speaks with Priti is less formatted to be categorised as the therapeutic sessions and more as the collaborative set of thoughts exchange. The plot line diminishes structural gap, asking for a change of role from observer-subject to the one who can indulge or engages relationally. The patience that she exhibits features the compactness that she possess of which is worth to be noted. Lacarpa's idea of working through is something that goes as per Sara's attitude where trauma begins to be processed not through domination rather through admission and observation. Hemant plays an important role as a cultural interlocutor who breaks Sara's certain misconceptions and smoothens her idea of knowledge without minimising the narrative scope of cultural differences.

The change of the narrative voice is prominent with Sara's evolving emotional harmonization. The tone of narration seems to be empirical and overtly physical, while the depictions from the latter half of the novel internally reverberates with the miseries of the others. An important example is when she starts to decode silence as a particular way of articulation that is culturally exclusive. This transit brings out a departure from western canons of communications directed towards a more composite kind of empathy. However, the primary text rejects emotional determination, Sara's feeling that is core and rooted get interrupted at regular interval by doubted moments and misrepresentation establishing the goal of fragility.

Postcolonial Tensions: Ethics of Representation and Power

Position of Sara as a witness from the west do locates the inherent/intrinsic power dynamics. Her ability to move in a random manner taking a note of things and the power of disseminating runs paradoxically with the limited lives of those people who she meets up in her travel way. This equations posits a resulting what Said recognizes as the colonial eye. The novel admits this duality and conflict hindering the formulations of a narrative build on saviourism that too typically western in feature or character. As Said notes such representations are shaped by structures of power that position the West as normative (25).

Spivak have rightly counterattack and the logic finds to be particularly significant Sara's trial to decipher meaning and map the experiences of the other are accompanied with ethical challenges (287). The novel speaks of this by admitting claim to the characters like Priti, whose voices essentially have problematises the perspective of Sara. Yet, it is quite thoughtful and a problematic area that seek for a resolution.

Bhabha's dominant notion of hybridity do provides us with a passage to interpret the cross-cultural exchange reflected in the novel as fruitful rejecting the knowledge of hierarchies. These are a creation of third space where identities and meanings do get a place of communication. These areas do create to build new structures of knowledge, though it never tries to remove the impact of power differences (56).

Sara's initial journey in the land (India) is definitely marked with exoticization stressing on differences-poverty, disorder and spectacle. These depictions are not natural neither neutral rather they presents Sara's capacity to interpret and decipher meaning. Her movement get sharply opposed with the limited advocacy of regional feminine characters, undermining structural indifferences. The text politely counters this knowledge by lending scope to the other characters or by un-wrapping events that counterchecks her primary suppositions.

The narrative that Priti builds does never fully get subsidises with Sara's voiceover rather it complicates Sara's way of interpretation. This narrative technique indulges in a direct manner with Spivak's concern about representations. An instance where Sara attempts to interprets or craft Priti's way of knowledge often get in step by narrative confusion or formulations symbolising her limited authority. Priti's narrative is not fully accessible which is significant in sustaining the experiences of the subaltern, imparting an otherwise exclusiveness to it. (Beresford 150)

Trauma, Ethics, and the Limits of Healing

The novel denies the scope of absolute recovery and cure thereby ascribing a momentous nature to Trauma which seems to revive with time structuring the identity of Sara and figuring out her relationships shared with others. This is closely tied with theories related to trauma harping on the continuation of traumatic recollections. Healing gets reflected as temporary, non-uniform, conditional, irregular. The journey of Sara do leads the creation of an extended faculty that is lined up on ethicality or aims for responsible ethical outlook. Her knowledge related to the miseries of the world makes her role in the world (Kaplan 22). However, the novel/fiction tends to unfollow the act of suggesting water like solutions rather invokes for stressing on the necessity of acknowledging the complications that are present and defying the line of simple articulation.

The working title of the text does mark the relational threads that are symbolic of both power and weakness. These unnoticed weaves helps one to consolidate feelings (stronger) and interpretations but are easily inked by systemic and cultural inadequacies. Sara's reflections on grief even at the end of the novel remain ambiguous and open for interpretations on the part of the readers. Healing as a journey is a never ending process and avoiding straight line way outs. With the gradual consciousness and evolution that she achieves mentally does not impart her extra heroism rather makes her more restricted and thoughts friendly. She is now aware of the limitations that will interrupt her journey of healing and getting over. The cross cultural ties that the work portrays are fleeting by nature reinforcing the title yet they are highly impactful in terms of service, a kind connection that cannot missed yet cannot be sustained thus marking the partial or contingent nature of cross cultural recovery (Beresford 190).

Conclusion: Cross-Cultural Trauma as Relational and Political

The work renders as transcendental and global perspective of trauma that operate across the country's territorial dimensions. The Cultural exchange do work as both the location of breaking and have the potential or potency to heal displaying the adjoin juncture of the experiences that are humanly. By merging up theories of trauma and critiquing the postcolonial nature of it the novel do sheds light on the ethical complications of communicating with sufferings across the cultural maps. Healings does not get presented as an ultimate stage but rather as a process in continuation sized by realltionality, humility, and consciousness that is critical in outlook. The significance of the novel rests in its denial to achieve a conclusive ending and thus to eliminate these conflicts. Rather, it foregrounds the ambiguousness of indulgements that are cross cultural stressing on the fact that for seeking the knowledge of trauma asking for not only empathy but also an identification of power , history, and limitation of portraying.

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