

Troubled Childhood in Africa: The Example of Amma Darko's *Faceless*

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Abstract

The child has found expression in African narratives from its emergence, but critics have not paid sufficient attention to this subject as most of them seem to consider it trivial. There are several critical works on Amma Darko's *Faceless*, but the troubled condition of the child in society as demonstrated in this novel has not been given the needed critical attention. Thus, this paper seeks to address troubled childhood in this narrative. The paper examines the burden of African child particularly the traumatic effect of such ACE (adverse childhood experiences) on the child and society. In addressing the fate of the child, trauma theory is deployed in the analysis of the novel because the distressed child finds expression in the mental/emotional state of literary personages in the novel. The child in this society is treated as an object to be exploited and the exploitation of the naiveté and innocence of the child leads to incalculable human problems because the child suffers psychological pains from her ill-treatment. The psychological pains are often acted out in traits that are detrimental to society. These children often grow up to be criminally minded and irresponsible adults. From the novel, the way to build a good society is to avoid the dehumanization and exploitation of the child and nurture the child with love and care.

Keywords: Childhood, Trauma, Dissociation and Society

Introduction

Childhood as a phenomenon emerged during the Enlightenment period to denote a period of innocence, growth, and dependency, serving as the foundational stage of human development. Philippe Ariès' *Centuries of Childhood* is often cited as one of the classics in the discourse on childhood. The subject is deployed in literature for various purposes as some writers use it as a metaphor in addressing postcolonial concerns. The age bracket of a child varies from one society to another but the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) stipulates that a child is any individual below the age of 18 years. This period is a biological phase and a socially constructed space, influenced by family, community, and institutional structures. For many literary artists, the child is a means of questioning societal anomalies. Amma Darko's *Faceless* situates childhood within a troubled terrain, showing the lives of marginalized children who are abused, ill-treated, and exploited, in Africa.

Troubled childhood is a recurrent theme in African literary works. Modern African writers have effectively captured the place of the child in society. This speaks highly of the consciousness of the literary artists in African society, because they do not subscribe to the theory of art for art's sake as their writings often reveal the burdens of the African society. This is in line with Ernest Emenyonu's assertion that, literature must be "an imaginative recreation of a people's account of their

social, cultural, political and economic perspectives at a given time” (qtd. Nnolim viii). The condition of the child in Africa as represented in its narratives is worrisome for Nadine Gordimer sees the novelist as someone who is “in pursuit of truth beyond the guise of reasoning, has believed truth; however elusive, is the only reality” (19).

African novelists are distressed over the ill-treatment of the child as they capture daring issues in society through the plight of the child. There are very many of such novels. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Amma Darko’s *Faceless* and *Housemaid*, Nawa El Saadawi’s *Woman at Point Zero* and *The Hidden Face of Eve*, Chris Abani’s *Graceland*, *Becoming Abigail*, and *Sing for Night*, Tsitsi Dangarembga’s *Nervous Conditions*, Sefi Atta’s *Everything Good Will Come*, Sello K Duiker’s *Thirteen Cents*, *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*, and *The Hidden Stars*, Ken Saro Wiwa’s *Sozaboy*, Uzodinma Iweala’s *Beasts of No Nation*, Ahmadou Kourouma’s *Allah is not obliged*, and Emmanuel Dongala’s *Johnny Mad Dog* are few examples. These narratives depict the deplorable condition of the child despite its important place in society. By implication, troubled childhood in the African novel calls for urgent attention because “nobody prescribes to a writer; it is their response to exigent and urgent issues affecting society that is of paramount importance to them” (Ogaga Okuyade 4).

Amma Darko’s *Faceless* deals with the suffering of the street child. The story of Fofu, a street child who finds redemption in the hands of a charity organization, MUTE splits into different layers and reveals the pathetic existence of her mother and the complexities of family life in society. The narrative reveals her absent father, dead sister (Baby T), older brothers, and younger ones with her counterparts on the street. The technique of parallel narration is used to show, alternatively the debased family of Maa Tsuru and the secured family of Kabria. The organization that comes to the rescue of Fofu seeks collaborations to salvage as many children as possible from the harsh living conditions of the streets. The novel has enjoyed several scholarly interpretations, most of which favour the phenomenon of street children and other subjugated people in society who include women.

Victor O. Ogbeide, views the novel from the perspective of the street child. In his essay, “Streetism as a Social Tragedy in Amma Darko’s *Faceless*,” he highlights some of the reasons why children are found on the streets of metropolitan cities in Africa. He considers parental negligence and the economic condition of people occasioned by migration as the causes of street child syndrome. This is closely related to Koffi Kra Jerome’s assertion as he appraises the innocence of the child in society. He distinguishes his stand from other scholars by grouping the causes of the street child as internal and external. To him, the internal factors are issues related to the family, the society, and the failed states, while the external factors have to do with the influence of modernism. Having said this, he sees the use of space as a reflection of the living conditions of the street child. He

avers that the family, NGOs, and the state are the different homes for the street child.

Philomena Yeboah Okyeso equally deals with the figure of the child in the novel. She examines the reaction of the child to his/her situation by stressing that Maa Tsuru as a mother fails in her responsibilities. Okyeso identifies two forms of mothers as seen in the novel from the characters of Maa Tsuru and Kabria. The two forms of mothers defined in Okyeso's article are the concern of Akambi Fatiou Raimi's essay as it deals with the aesthetics of the novel and its use of the word 'street' by the novelist. The critic observes that the beauty of the novel manifests from the word 'street' as it is used in contrast to the regular family of Kabria. The essay points to the kind of life the writer considers as street life. Kabria and Maa Tsuru represent the two opposing forms of mothers in the novel.

Florence D'Souza departs from the issue of street child in her appraisal of *Faceless*. In her article, "Contemporary Portrayal of Women by Women: Comparing India and Ghana," she examines the way male characters are portrayed by female writers in their literary works. Undermining the ruthless and grotesque image of Maa Tsuru as a woman who recklessly sold her children to be devoured by the street lords in the novel, D'Souza holds a different view on Maa Tsuru's attitude. The critic is sympathetic of the situation of this female character as she sees her actions in the light of the social implications of being a woman without a husband in African society. Commenting on the position of women in the novel, Koumagnon Alfred Djossou considers the manner with which Darko dismantles male hegemony in this patriarchal society. The novel achieves this through role swap. The lead roles in all the families in the novel are given to women, thereby reducing the importance of men and their supposedly dominant role in the family.

Following the above, Juliana Daniels Ofuso addresses the burden of women in Ghanaian society. She identifies marginalization, stereotyping, discrimination, and domestic abuse as some of the issues affecting women. To her, because they are women, they are expected to have children, if not they are branded as barren by society. Ofuso notes that women suffer different forms of ill-treatment because of their culturally assigned roles in society. Dele Maxwell Ugwanyi sees the depiction of the male characters as feminist authors' way of dismantling patriarchal hegemony in African society. To him, these writers are interested in presenting male characters that have failed in their responsibilities by placing the women in a pitiable state as they play dual parent's roles in in society.

Critical appraisals of the novel are tilting towards street child and women in Africa. The burden of the child on the streets seems to be the interest of critics but the current paper is interested in revealing the psychological pains of childhood in society. The paper seeks to fill this gap by analysing Darko's *Faceless* using literary trauma theory.

Literary trauma theory focuses on the wound individual suffers and the effects of such wounds on the individual and/or society. The concern of trauma theory is often seen in the psychological impact of such wounds on the individual

and society. The postulations of this theory and its application, which became evident in the 1990s with the pioneering works of Cathy Caruth's *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* and Kali Tal's *Words of Hurt: Reading the Literature of Trauma* can be traced to earlier theories, particularly Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytical Theory. Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* and *Beyond the Pleasure Principles* provide the background for Caruth's conceptualisation of trauma.

The theory holds that trauma is developed from a repressed earlier experience that wounds the psyche of the affected person. This wound can be from sexual assault, war, the demise of loved ones, oppression, or one's relationship with society, which is accompanied by intense fear, terror, helplessness, and significant distress in most people. Nasrullah Mambrol quoting Freud asserts that the original experience that leads to trauma does not create the pain but the recalling of this experience is what inflicts the pain. In a similar vein, Caruth believes that the cause of trauma is not the incident itself but the:

... shock that appears to work very much like a bodily threat but is in fact a break in the mind's experience of time *as it is* [...] not locatable in the simple violence or original event in the individual past *but can only be identified through* the way it was precisely not known in the first instance—returns to haunt the survivor later on". (6 Emphasis added).

Theorising trauma in literature, Caruth states that traumatic experience is said to be repeated. It is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in an attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available. This truth, in its delayed appearance cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language.

Traumatic experiences always haunt victims and it is difficult to express these pains because the consciousness of the victim is distorted. This makes it impossible for the victim to have a direct representation of the experience in language because the damaged psyche is fragmented and the experiences are never directly known but through references. Repetition then becomes the hallmark of events that lead to trauma and it is seen because the victim cannot express the experience in language due to dissociation. This prevents traumatic experiences from being in the normal narrative consciousness of the victim. A notable departure of her theory from earlier propositions on the concept of trauma is her consideration of trauma to have societal effect. Michelle Balaev contends this proposition by asserting that; "... trauma occurs to actual people, in specific bodies, located within particular periods and places" (7). In furtherance to his assertion, he is of the opinion that associating trauma with everyone in society "... runs the risk of including everyone as perpetrators" (7). Barry Stampfl equally deviates from Caruth's take on the unspeakable in trauma studies. Rather than considering the unspeakable as the inability of language to express trauma, Stampfl is of the

opinion that the unspeakable is “... merely a stage in the process of traumatising, not its predetermined endpoint” (16).

The Caruthian model of trauma theory is deployed in this paper because it helps in the interpretation of the psychological imprint of the literary personages. The troubled childhood of adults who were once children determines the way they treat children in society as shown in the novel.

Troubled Childhood in Darko’s *Faceless*

There is a glitch in nurturing children as suggested in Darko’s *Faceless* and this is shown in the way adults treat children in society. The novel presents adults and parents who are interested in exploiting the innocence of the child, thereby preventing them from enjoying childhood privileges of care, love, attention, provision and protection. A look at some of the adult characters in the novel reveals that society progresses when responsible parents and adults consider the delicate position of children and their importance to the continuity of life. The trouble children experience as they navigate their existence in society begins with the family.

The family is the first space of the child where protection, care, love, provision, and the right directions on how to live a worthy life is given to the child. From the novel, the responsibility of the family in connection with the child is missing. Critics such as Ogbeide O. Victor, Koffi Kra Jerome, Philomena Yeboah Okyeso, Akambi Fatiou Raimi, and others have talked about the street child in this novel drawing inferences from Fofo and Baby T. Here, the interest of the current paper is to reveal the childhood of the two generations of children in the narrative, Maa Tsuru and other adults being the first generation while Fofo, Baby T., and Odarley represent the second generation. The revelation of the literary personages of the first generation in the novel speaks volumes of the kind of childhood they experienced. Identifying with these characters, one encounters a child who knew no love in her growing up, is cursed at birth by her mother, and is left to the angry jaws of society and at the mercy of relatives. Such a child is bound to lose direction in her relationship with people of the opposite sex. This is the character of Maa Tsuru and it informs her traumatised state and the different levels of abuses she endure in acting out her troubled childhood in her adult life. The adverse childhood experiences of Maa Tsuru are neglect and rejection. Kabir Ahmed’s “Trauma in African Literature: Culture and the Phenomenon of Mental Distress in Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* and Kilanko’s *Daughters who Walk this Path*” reveals a similar but distinct childhood traumatic experience following the neglect and familial shame Achebe endures as a child.

This paper argues that Maa Tsuru’s attitude towards her children is derived from her troubled childhood as she did not experience childhood care and love and as such, she cannot properly raise her children because she cannot give what she does not have. This makes it difficult for her to love and care for her own children at the expense of her desires. Kwei is able to misuse and maltreat her because of her deformed upbringing. Even when her aunt cautions her against Kwei, she did not listen because he (Kwei), to her, is the first and only person that has shown her

love and care even if it is for the purpose of exploiting her innocence. She, in her naiveté equates love and care to sex and it accounts for the four children she had for him. The longing for love and care which she lacked explains her decision to allow her children to leave the house so that she could have time for her own lover. Her loveless and ignorant upbringing determines her wrong choices.

Maa Tsuru is acting out her childhood even in her adult life in her longing for security, direction, love and protection from society. Though she did not leave her family for the streets, she produces children that she sends to the streets. The burden of cyclical trauma is manifested in life of Maa Tsuru. This is the effect of ACE on society. The novel discloses that neglecting, abandoning and dehumanising the child either by parents or by other adults affect the entire society, because it often leads to the breeding of future criminals, as well as careless and loveless parents. Depicting the above, the novelist uses the cinematic description of a nameless character as a sampled situation:

A girl of about fifteen was sleeping on a piece of cloth on the floor. A baby of about six months was scrambling all over her in obvious search for food or attention or both. An unemptied chamberpot stood in one corner. Huge green flies were ravenously picknicking [sic] on its contents. (*Faceless* 156)

Informed by this deliberate depiction of the above nameless character in the novel and connecting this situation to other child characters, one is tempted to ask; “what is the fate of the child whose mother is equally a child and do not have any tangible means of survival or caring for her child?” Children face several situations in society that troubled their childhood in this society.

There are different feminist interpretations of the novel as the male characters seem to be demonised using the literary personages of Kwei, Kpako, Onko even Poison and Mancho but the childhood of some of these characters in the narrative is interpreted as the cause of their destabilised adult lives in this society. Poison, who the novel reveals as the most fearsome street lord and brute, had a dysfunctional childhood. His mother who remarries after his father left her, places him at the mercy of her new husband. The home is made uncomfortable for Poison as his stepfather enjoys beating him just for the fun of it and unleashing his anger and frustrations on him always. His childhood trauma is associated with the different physical abuses that he suffers in the hands of his stepfather. Narrating the ordeals of Poison using the third person narrative technique, the narrator says:

Poison ran away from home at the age of eight to hit the streets. Home was a two by four room in a compound house in an Accra inner city, which he shared with his mother and stepfather and five siblings. He was an extremely shy boy, very soft spoken and covered from head to toe in scars gained from several years of lashes with a man’s leather belt

at the stepfather's hand. The stepfather used to boast that he delighted in whipping Poison for the joy of it. (*Faceless* 169)

It is difficult to disagree with Poison's decision to leave home to fend for himself on the streets considering the harsh realities of existence in the home as a child. The expected better conditions that he seeks on the streets were elusive. He finds himself in a hostile world in which the shy and weak cannot survive. In trying to survive on the streets, he overcomes his fears and becomes very mean and brutal. These attributes can be explained in line with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) because certainly they defy childhood attributes of innocence and vulnerability. From the home to the streets, there is no available space or opportunity for the child in this society to exert his childhood because of the tough living conditions.

Children that experience torture and other forms of ill-treatment meted out to them find it difficult to overcome the trauma and show love to others. Poison, in a fit of recollection states that, since "his life was not on the right track and hell be his witness, but he would ensure that the life of others never landed on the right path either" (170). Poison as a flat character in the novel determines the trajectory of the novel because the novelist's effective characterization is revealed through his role. He is a threat to his society and the novelist reveals that society is 'poisoned' if children are not properly protected. The effect of the loveless and bartered childhood of Poison is manifested in his hostile attitude to other people. Madelaine Hron opines that, "[...] the child's quest for socio-cultural identity is [...] often manifested in the context of repression, violence or exploitation" (29). Poison, in trying to identify himself as a human being in the society tends to react to his malfunctioned childhood upbringing, violently. This is why Kofi Anyidoho avers that Amma Darko's novel "tell(s) one long disturbing tale. Sadly, it is a tale of a diseased society that seems to have lost its hold on the lives of its children" (x). Showing Maa Tsuru and Poison's childhood is the novelist's style of depicting the troubled childhood of a generation that produces another in its stead.

The generation that comes after that of Maa Tsuru's own experiences worse forms of abuse. The presence of Kpakpo in Maa Tsuru's life redirects the attention of the narrative to the generation of Tsuru's children especially, Fofo, and Baby T. Tsuru's children, like every other child that is placed at the mercy of the family and other adults in this society, experience a high level of exploitation in the hands of their parents. They are economically exploited as they take over the financial responsibility of the family at a very tender age after their father disappears from their lives. Tsuru allows Kpakpo into her life and practically evict her sons from the home. Maa Tsuru's action explain her psychological state and the degeneration of the moral values of adults who do not heal from their childhood trauma.

Maa Tsuru is considered morally sick because of her decisions to allow her sons to leave the house. Fofo as a child takes a superior moral stand in her relationship with her mother as she attributes her suffering to the moral laxity of her mother. Here, there is "... a terrifying reversal of the natural order of things.

Not only has daughter's voice taken over with words of unassailable moral authority but also mother is forced, obviously by her own sense of guilt even the right to self-defense" (Anyidoho, xvi). Florence D'Souza sees the pitiable existence of Maa Tsuru and her defenselessness as she states that; "[...] she is unable to defend herself, through the awareness of her guilt, in the face of her daughter Fofu's accusations of having given birth to six children, without the slightest thought about their future" (4). This makes Fofu to stand as a moral instructor to her mother in the novel. Maa Tsuru's inability to react in this situation tells of her traumatised state. This is in line with Caruth's argument on the place of the unspeakable as an effect of trauma. Her condition is what Barry Stampfl considers "the inadequacy of language in a given case" (15). She is only reacting and acting out the effects of her troubled childhood in the series of childlike decisions and actions.

However, Maa Tsuru finds it difficult to tell her troubles to anybody within her immediate family. She isolates herself from the world by locking herself up in her room. She dissociates herself from society, an attitude Michelle Balaev sees as effect of trauma. The haunting of her loveless and cursed childhood only comes to traumatize her through the experiences of her children, which, in a way, are attributable to her irresponsibility. The agony of surviving with the money from the prostitution of her daughter (Baby T) worsens her situation, knowing that her daughter is suffering physically, emotionally and psychologically for her sustenance. This weakens her relationship with her children. Irene Visser attests that "[...] social fracture, alienation, and weakening of social cohesion [...] *are some of the features of trauma which are acted out by Maa Tsuru in the novel* (109 emphasis added). She is placed in a helpless situation because she believes in her cursed life and her poor state. From Naa Yomo's statement on the position of parents, Maa Tsuru's attitude towards her children can only be interpreted in the light of her childhood trauma as Michele Balaev sees the effects of trauma to include; "amnesia, dissociation, or repression" (6). The childhood pain of rejection disconnects her from humanity. Deploying the narrative tool of dialogue, Naa Yomo explains the state of Tsuru's mind to Kabria in their conversation:

The child with no mother and whose father and his lineage has just been cursed. A child, cursed by her own mother

"So Maa Tsuru thinks her situation is as result of the curse?" Kabria asked.

"Who knows? But something robbed her of her sanity." (*Faceless* 93-94)

There are several characters in society whose actions are determined by social anomalies. These characters struggle with one form of psychological wound or the other. Even the inhumanity of Poison in the novel is because of his distorted childhood. Some of the child characters in the novel take to the streets at their tender age in search of a better life. The novelist probes the memories of the adult

characters to reveal the form of childhood they experience. This shows the damaging effect of their debased childhoods demonstratively shown in their adult lives in the novel.

Tsuru's children are removed from their home due to exploitation of different kinds. Fofo leaves voluntarily owing to economic exploitation by the mother but Baby T is pushed to the streets for the financial gains of her mother and step-father. Maa Tsuru started trading with Baby T's body from the first day she had sexual encounter. She is raped by Onko at age twelve and instead of taking actions against the known culprit, she collects money from him and decides to be silent about the situation. This itself, tells of the psychological state of Maa Tsuru. The sad experience of rape launched her journey of prostitution that subsequently leads to her death in the brothel. Fofo takes to the streets to avoid same fate like her sister. Maa Tsuru loses the protective grip on her children. She thought sending them away will save them from being devoured by the rattling enemy within reach because in her split memory, her docile stay in the family that showed her no love and affection causes her pathetic condition but she ends up giving her children to the enemies on the streets. The experiences of her children in the family is a repetition of her own childhood and to avoid it, to her, is to send them away from the family.

Since the family has become a hostile space, the children prefer the streets as they believe that it is the only opening left for them to live as human beings. Unfortunately, the streets do not provide the needed succor because they encounter different troubling situations, as they have no one to protect them. So, the streets that is seen as the evil den is actually erroneously taken as a safe haven by the children because they feel they have escaped the angry and exploitative grip of their parents and other adults. Fofo affirms this as she gives her reasons for being on the streets:

"I led my own life on the streets. That was the first attraction. On the streets, I was under nobody's control. It was fun. The fun balanced the discomforts. I went to sleep when I wanted. I watched any film I wanted at the public video centre. Whatever money I made on the streets I kept for myself. All of it. And I spend it as and when I wanted. The time I used to go home to sleep, mother used to take my money from me. See? So as soon as I made a friend and joined a gang, I left home for good." (*Faceless* 102)

These children learnt nothing about the dangers of the streets. The street lords who assume the position of their parents that they are running away from continuously exploit them, Baby T, Fofo, Odarley and the other street children are victims of this situation. They are compelled by hunger and the need to survive to engage in different forms of criminal activities such as stealing, smoking, smuggling of drugs, prostitution, drinking, and several other crimes. They are often taken to be

criminals in the society but these moral and social vices serve as the only momentary escape for them from the harsh life that stole their childhood. The narrator explains that children are “sucked into life on the streets and reaching out to each new day with an ever-increasing hopelessness, *committing social and moral vices* where the ways they employ to escape their pain” (*Faceless* 1). They live a dual life—in a quiet and secured environment they live as children but on the streets, they act as adults, because it is believed that children are weak and weakness is not a feature of street life. Invariably, the troubling childhood experiences robbed them of their childhood. The need for survival compels the children to act like youths and adults on the streets, losing their childhood. The narrator says that:

... the harshness and complications on the streets can so hastily add to and multiply the aging looks and demeanour of a girl, and at such short interval that she can seem like a child one moment and look like a full-blown woman the next. (*Faceless* 98)

These harsh Adverse Children Experiences traumatised them. From the novel, it is revealed that there is hardly any one of them that is not involved in one form of crime or the other for survival.

Through the character of Kabria, the novelist proposes a way of addressing the problem of the child. The simultaneous depiction of the ‘diseased’ Maa Tsuru’s family and the secured family of Kabria is the narrator’s style of revealing the place of healing for traumatised children. But, even in the secured family, there are lapses in child upbringing, particularly in the area of sex education. Obea gives her mother the Planned Parents Association of Ghana (PPAG) pamphlets that deal with sexually transmitted diseases and the methods of avoiding them, a gesture that should come from the mother. The narrator reveals that Kabria “... felt inadequate about the pamphlets having come from Obea to her instead of from her to her daughter” (*Faceless* 70). Though there is a lapse, this family is presented by the novelist as a model where the child is given the opportunity to achieve all round development: mentally, psychologically, emotionally and physically to become a reasonable adult in society.

The rehabilitation of traumatized child is depicted in the novel as prime responsibility of the government but it reveals the inadequacies of the government in this regard. Fofu’s conceptualization of what government is shows that, government involvement is an easier way of attending to the needs of the children through programmes that are geared towards giving the child quality education and promulgating laws that will protect children from the hands of angry and wayward adults. However, since the “... Government itself has lost its priorities, its sense of direction ... [and] has become dysfunctional and deaf to the cries of the children” (Anyidoho, xvii), the novelist directs her attention to non-governmental organizations. The character of Kabria and MUTE illustrate the advocacy for society to pay attention to the plight of children. As at the time Kabria meets Fofu, MUTE’s interest was not Fofu and as such, she is not obligated to Fofu in any way.

Being a compassionate woman, she intervenes and from this encounter, she gets the others in MUTE to be involved in Fofu's situation. The problem of exploitation, marginalisation, alienation and deprivation of the child can be overcome with the collective effort of every adult member of society and the willingness of children to be saved from their troubled conditions. Only MUTE cannot tackle the situation so, it incorporates Harvest FM and its producer Sylv Po "to help save the situation" (Anyidoho, xvii).

Conclusion

Amma Darko revealed the predicament of children in Ghanaian society. The novel presents Maa Tsuru's character as a mother that experiences post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Other characters such as Poison, Macho, and a nameless young child-mother at Sodom and Gomorrah equally suffer from child trauma. These characters corroborate Cathy Caruth's analogy of cyclical trauma because adults who are not healed from their childhood trauma breed another generation of traumatised children. The depiction of certain adult characters explains, to a large extent, the kind of adults the children are fated to become. The lingering effect of childhood trauma makes society witness endemic criminality and other vices in the acting out of these characters because the unattended child has nothing tangible to give back to society. Society tends to breed prostitutes, rapists, armed robbers, petty thieves, drunkards, smugglers, drug addicts, corrupt and insensitive people if childhood trauma is not addressed because the novel points to the above as effects of trauma.

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