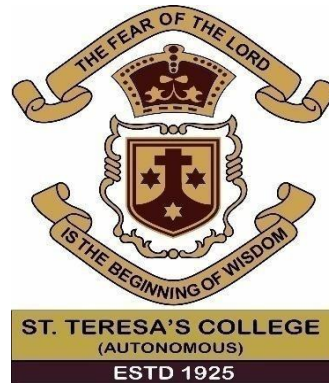


**Victims, Perpetrators and Survivors:
Narration as a Cure in *The Storyteller* and *The Choice***



Project submitted to St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS in English Language and Literature

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled, “Victims, Perpetrators and Survivors: Narration as a Cure in *The Storyteller* and *The Choice*” is the record of bona fide work done by me under the guidance and supervision of Ms. Athira Babu, Assistant Professor, Department of English and Centre for Research, and that no part of the dissertation has been presented earlier for the award of any degree, diploma or any other similar title of recognition.

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this project entitled, “Victims, Perpetrators and Survivors: Narration as a Cure in *The Storyteller* and *The Choice*” is a record of bona fide work carried out by Praveena K S under my supervision and guidance.

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An Abstract of the Project Entitled
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Trauma narratives look at the psychological and emotional impact of a traumatic experience. These narratives demonstrate the keenness of the pathological symptoms of a traumatic condition, as it can be procured through Freudian psychoanalytic talking cure. The emphasis on narration as a process of cure is seen through the novels *The Storyteller* by Jodi Picoult and *The Choice: Embrace the Possible* by Edith Eger. Traumatic experiences and recovery are being revealed through the above-mentioned fiction and memoir. The notion also furthers that literature, as such, creates an immense level of progress toward life by encompassing human emotions and life experiences woven together. On the basis of the mentioned novels, the introductory chapter focuses on the importance of narration as a way towards healing from trauma. The first chapter discusses the theoretical aspects of trauma. The second chapter looks at storytelling as a healing process in the narrative *The Storyteller*, and the third chapter focuses on self-narrative as a cure in the memoir *The Choice*, elaborating on the impact of narrating trauma towards recovery. The study concludes by focusing on how narration helps create a space to regain ease of mind from the shattered thoughts and memory of a traumatic experience.

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INTRODUCTION

Trauma narratives emphasise the shattered thoughts and experiences of the sufferer, where the writer focuses on the deeper psychological interpretation of the traumatised victim. Freudian analysis of trauma is based on psychoanalytic talking cure, which is an approach towards understanding the situation or event that the victim came across. "It is widely accepted, particularly within psychoanalytic approaches to trauma, that the most effective way of reducing the pathological symptoms of trauma in the survivor is to facilitate the conscious narration of the traumatic event, so that it may become lifted from the subconscious and integrated into conscious memory" (Kurtz,68).

Narratives do create a space to understand the victim's own self as in the Freudian theory of talking cure. In the case of a traumatic historical event such as the Holocaust, the individual act of self-narrative also carries the potential to become a public act, speaking to a collective memory that also struggles to situate its response to the event.

Jodi Picoult's *The Storyteller* and Edith Eger's *The Choice: Embrace the Possible* is analysed in the context of trauma narrative that leads to the understanding of trauma through self-realisation and as a process towards curing. *The Storyteller* is a story that portray the struggles of traumatic experience through multiple narration. It begins from the life of a lone baker, Sage who lives in the memory of her mother's death and of her scar that reminds her of the past. Minka, grandmother of Sage was a holocaust survivor and she reveals the painful past she spends in Nazi Auschwitz concentration camp after a long time in her life. Sage met with a grief group member Josef Weber who turned out to be a Nazi SS soldier in his young ages. He wished his

confession of guilt to a Jew and so he met Sage from whom he requests his only last wish to bring his death in the hands of a Jew. Josef wished to be cleansed from his sins. The Jews were exterminated in the name of being contaminated and within the concept of Aryan supremacy.

The Choice: Embrace the Possible is a holocaust memoir written by an acclaimed psychologist, Edith Eger. She wrote about her own past suffering as a holocaust survivor and it specifies how she came through or rather live through her terrific past memories, how she along with her sister Magda were entrapped in the concentration camps. The story unties the events from the beginning of the happiness of her family and eventually departure of them in the camps. The story reveals the survivor's consciousness, her distracted mind even after recovering from her physical ailment. Their parents were killed in the poisonous gas chamber. The past memory of the loss and absence of the loved ones will remain in the minds of the survivors.

“Psychological and psychiatric approaches to trauma also complement literary trauma theory in important ways because they offer significant perspectives on areas the field has unconsciously eclipsed or consciously excluded, including processes of narration, recovery, and healing” (Schönfelder,86). Trauma is a severely disruptive experience that profoundly impacts the self's emotional organization and perception of the external world. The lack of the person's ability to cope within the shackles of society.

The contents precisely looked upon in this notion of curing is through narration, which is focused on Trauma Studies: A Theoretical Framework. The Novels chosen for this analysis are *The Storyteller* by Jodi Picoult and *The Choice: Embrace the Possible* by Edith Eger. Both novels give insight into the emotional collapse seen

in the traumatized person, particularly in a catastrophe. This analysis concludes by bringing forth the impression that traumatic experiences can be eased through the process of narration and to further writing provides a space for self-awareness and self-discovery.

CHAPTER 1

TRAUMA STUDIES: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Trauma is a severely disruptive experience that profoundly impacts the self's emotional organization and perception of the external world. Psychological trauma, its representation in language, and the role of memory in shaping individual and cultural identities are the central concerns that define the field of trauma studies. It refers to a sudden intrusion of new and unexpected knowledge into someone's psyche, usually due to a sudden confrontation with violence or death. (MAMBROL)

The origins and effects of trauma is related to psychoanalytical theories that flourished nineteenth-century, especially in the study of shock and hysteria by researchers who, in addition to Freud, include Joseph Breuer, Pierre Janet, Jean-Martin Charcot, Hermann Oppenheim, Abram Kardiner, and Morton Prince. Freud's early theories in *Studies on Hysteria* (1895) written with Joseph Breuer, and especially his adapted theories later in his career in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), dominate trauma's conceptual employment by literary trauma critics today. The term 'trauma' originates from the Greek trauma ("wound").

The traumatic experience cannot be quiet easily remembered by the person. This happens as a result of minds ability to remove the terrific incident from the thoughts of a sufferer. It pushes a person to come out of that situation but this won't be completely removed. It has a tendency to come back to survivor repeatedly as in the form of dreams, flashback, hallucination and other events. Trauma theory has its roots in the Freudian studies of hysteria that had main focus in the sexual repression of women. Freudian analysis of trauma deals with the psychological aspects of the

study. The psychoanalytical talking cure must pass through the stage of transference that is where the patient talks about the traumatic experience. Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer emphasizes in the *Studies in Hysteria* (1895) that the memory of the psychic trauma as 'a foreign body which long after its entry must continue to be regarded as an agent that is still at work'. The sequential revealing of the incident will help cure the person from suffering. The theory is an offshoot of psychoanalysis and originated with Sigmund Freud.

After severe shock of a mechanical nature, railway collision or other accident in which has long been recognised and to which the name 'traumatic neurosis' is attached. The terrible war that is just over has been responsible for an immense number of such maladies and at least has put an end to the inclination to explain them on the bases of organic injury to nervous system due to the operation of mechanical force (Freud,8).

In the modern day, the various "war neurosis" have been renamed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Later Freud realizes that this happens not just in war or hysteria (in the case of women), it could happen to any moment of sudden unexpected overwhelming intense emotional blow or a series of blow assaults the person from outside.

Trauma can even affect negatively for long term effect as in the situation the person enchained to a past instance. This can create insecurity and confused thoughts. This can be caused due to various reasons but when a childhood instance is traumatic it could even lead to violent behaviour. Trauma should not be seen as a negative concept but rather a way to learn and move forward.

Trauma theory in literature began in 1990 through Cathy Caruth's book named *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* 1996. The term trauma began to occupy its space through Caruth's work. Caruth asserts that trauma studies have become universal and bewildering both as an experience and as a subject of study. Trauma can have a long-term effect which can create insecurity and confused thoughts.

The experience of trauma, the fact of latency, would thus seem to consist, not in the forgetting of a reality that can hence never be fully known; but in an inherent latency within the experience itself. The historical power of the trauma is not just that the experience is repeated after its forgetting, but that it is only in and through its inherent forgetting that it is first experienced at all. (Caruth,17)

Caruth believed that the trauma represses the psyche. Thus, it was only through a cycle of remembering and repression that trauma could ever be known. Freud and Caruth emphasized on repetition of the traumatic incidence as a way to understand and as a treatment for traumatic instances. Freud identified repetition as the way that patients interacted in psychotherapy, "He is obliged rather to repeat as a current experience what is repressed, instead of, as the physician would prefer to see him do, recollecting it as a fragment of the past" (Freud,18). Freud says that repetition of trauma is important even though remembrance of trauma is painful. In Caruth's essay "Violence and Time: Traumatic Survivals" she says that "Repetition...is not the attempt to grasp that one has almost died, but more fundamentally and enigmatically the very attempt to claim one's own survival" (Caruth,25).

Geoffrey H. Hartman, a German-born American literary theorist in his work “On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies” mentions that,

The knowledge of trauma... is composed of two contradictory elements. One is the traumatic event, registered rather than experienced. It seems to have bypassed perception and consciousness, and falls directly into the psyche. The other is a kind of memory of the event, in the form of a perpetual trooping of it by the bypassed or severely split (dissociated) psyche. (Hartman,537)

In the 1960s trauma was analysed as a survival syndrome based on the experiences in war and Nazi invasions. It was seen as a nervous breakdown in those times and later termed as post-traumatic stress disorder. Hartman states that trauma theory allows us to read the wound with the aid of literature. This points out the narration in healing trauma. It makes the unspeakable events to act through the words in books. Even if they had a first-hand experience or narrates a fiction, they demonstrate the traumatic event. It can be seen as a path towards recovery and liberation.

Trauma theory provides no definitive answers, “it stays longer in the negative and allows disturbances of language and mind the quality we give to literature. Literature is indeed one way to express whatever kind of memory the traumatic event allows: it appears in the form of perpetual trooping of it by the psyche, and is best phrased through figurative language. (Anne)

Judith Lewis Herman is an American psychiatrist, researcher, teacher, and author who has focused on the understanding and treatment of incest and traumatic stress. She mentions in her book that

Traumatic events generally involve threats to life or bodily integrity, or a close personal encounter with violence and death. A more neurologically based definition would be that a traumatic event—or “traumatic stressor”—produces an excess of external stimuli and a corresponding excess of excitation in the brain. When attacked in this way, the brain is not able to fully assimilate or “process” the event, and responds through various mechanisms such as psychological numbing, or shutting down of normal emotional responses. Some theorists also claim that in situations of extreme stress, a dissociation takes place. Psychological trauma is an affiliation of the powerless. At the moment of trauma, the victim is rendered helpless by overwhelming force. When the force is that of nature, we speak of disasters. When the force is that of other human beings, we speak of atrocities. Traumatic events overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection, and meaning.... Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life. Unlike commonplace misfortunes, traumatic events generally involve threats to life or bodily integrity, or a close personal encounter with violence and death. They confront human beings with the extremities of helplessness and terror, and evoke the responses of catastrophe. (Herman,33)

Traumatic experiences can even affect the memory of a person. This could make trouble in organising the thoughts that the person wishes to portray. The person has to accept the real event that happened in the past which has caused the terrible impact on the person’s mind. The rethinking of the event can help him to have an insight in the actual situation that he has gone through. The knowledge about the cause and action happened at that moment can lead to understanding of his own

suffering. This could be possible with the help of a medical therapist. A person to diagnosis the ill mind having traumatic syndrome. This can be made under the awareness of the person as this knowledge can provide him strength and power to move forward in life. “Memory fragments were pieced together to work out their origin. This coupled with changing the meaning and attribution of thoughts and behavioural experiments provided real symptomatic relief” (Morrison,57).

Trauma can even destroy the interactive capability of a person, which could develop an insecurity to be around others. Some feels the burden of being the self and create depression. The person suffering from trauma needs the care and support from others while at the same time he ignores interaction with others in the fear of being hurt by others. Effective interaction can empower the person. It would be difficult for traumatized person to begin new relations for which he can get the help of a therapist to reveal all the events. A therapist in this field can get a lot of troubled stories from the patients. The therapist can even suffer by hearing all the traumatized events this is known as vicarious traumatization. For this a therapist can work among other to get a self-support as this person could get terrorized with the shared grievances. “The most common form of behaviour therapy is exposure. In exposure therapy, one gradually faces one’s fears—for example, the memories of a traumatic event—without the feared consequence occurring” (Dillman).

The deepened feeling of guilt can be marked as a characteristic of a suffering person. Even though if the cause of trauma is not instilled by his own doings the person can be in a worse state to accept the self. He can find problem with interaction and be unsafe within his own body. The emotions might not be expressed properly and thinking out of control, some can even change to dangerous behaviours like self-harming, suicidal thoughts. A person experiencing these issues should be under more

care and observation. These suicidal tendencies can be seen in some of the survivors in the holocaust who came across greater suffering through the war and lost many lives in the way out of it.

Trauma-related guilt refers to the unpleasant feeling of regret stemming from the belief that you could or should have done something different at the time a traumatic event occurred. For example, a military veteran may regret not going back into a combat zone to save a fallen soldier. A rape survivor may feel guilty about not fighting back at the time of the assault (Tull)

A better surrounding can create a better mind. It could include a safer place without getting stressed about further issues and having a good relationship and bonds with people. The help and support of others include listening to the persons sufferings and having a deeper understanding of the event. As the survivor summons her memories, the need to preserve safety must be balanced constantly against the need to face the past. The person should take care of his health by ensuring to get a better sleep, exercise and mental support.

Recovering the past experiences of the frozen time can even be as a narration of the events in a sequence. This can increase the memory of the person and allow to go through the process of healing. Reevaluating the events can provide the acceptance of the event and going further in life. Cumulation of trust in the process of healing can be seen in the person's life. Some of the survivors will further engage in social works as they have gone through the troubles and will be able to understand the suffering of others.

The insight into recovery process may also be gained by drawing upon the wisdom of the majority of the survivor worldwide, who never get formal

treatment of any kind. To the extent that they recover, most survivors must invent their own method. Drawing on their individual strengths and the supportive relationships naturally available to them in their own communities. Systematic studies of resilience in untreated survivors hold great promise for developing more effective and widely adaptable methods of therapeutic intervention. (Herman,241)

Traumatized characters can have memories and reminiscences in order to review their past so that they can create new ways of survival and existence. It can be from a striking incidence that have disorganised the pattern of thing for a person. By advancing in his thoughts and the capability to control the self can determine his way out through it.

Trauma creates distortion in mind, identity, memory and consciousness. The distortion of thoughts is made by human mind as a defence mechanism which liberates the mind from the situation which cannot be handled. Trauma arises from the intense stress that is developed within the person. A traumatized person can have experiences of the event happened as flashback, nightmares etc in his memory.

The past experiences influence the person and, in the time, it can change the perceptions while learning and developing. Traumatic experiences can be haunting in avoidance and rethinking. These can make a shattered memory. Sometimes they tend to avoid the events and the things associated with the terrific incident happened to them. It is as a self-protecting mechanism to move forward. The ignored memory can eventually cause trouble within the mind and can be associated with the dissociation.

Hartman says that “it is the role of the unconscious mind to protect us from danger, keep us alive and store and process everything that we experience with our

five senses” (Anne). Unconscious mind experience the troubled situation of a person and it reminds the self of the past hidden memories even though we cannot experience it directly.

The imbalance of the mind that negates the structure of our thought process restrains the person's ability to respond freely. Traumatic condition is relieved according to the understanding of the terrific past that haunts an individual. By identifying the consequences of the past on the person's mind he can be cured from the situation.

The work *Trauma and Recovery* addresses the manner in which survivors of traumatic events remember and how they tell the truth about their trauma, "prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims” (Herman,1).

Trauma therapy gives importance to telling once own story in order to perceive our own identity and in order to deal with the pain of remembering. Narration of the thoughts in a sequential manner will help the sufferer. As conveyed in the psychoanalytical approach in Freud’s theory which focuses on the communication as a restoration of the peace of mind. This deliberate analysis of the past helps to recollects the troubling memory in the person’s mind.

CHAPTER 2

THE STORYTELLING AS A HEALING PROCESS IN *THE STORYTELLER*

“There were dead people everywhere. You had to walk on them, sometimes, to get away. So, we saw things. A bullet in the head, there were always brains coming out, and it scared me. But a bullet in the heart, that didn’t seem so bad by comparison” (Picoult,213).

A Holocaust narrative of the past event can further the narrators or writers understanding of the terrible disaster that swept away the peace of many lives. “Traumatic events generally involve threats to life or bodily integrity, or a close personal encounter with violence and death” (Herman,33). Trauma and the memory of the past is lubricated through the narration which makes an ease of mind for the victim. Jodi Picoult’s narrative *The Storyteller* enumerates the suffering and pain of trauma. Minka a holocaust survivor reveals the painful past she spends in Nazi Auschwitz concentration camp to her granddaughter Sage after a long time in her life. Minka never spoke to anyone about the past incidents that haunt her of being under the oppression of the Nazi Regime.

Jodi Lynn Picoult is an American writer well known for her themes that covered wide range of controversial or moral issues, including abortion, assisted suicide, race relations, eugenics, LGBT rights, and school shootings. She has described her family as “non-practicing Jewish”. *The Storyteller* is developed as a tale containing multiple narratives. It begins with Sage a baker who is having a loner’s life. She has a scar on one side of her face which reminds her of the past. She lives a reclusive life, a fear of the guilt of having car accident while she was driving and her mother passed away. Josef a grief group member she befriended eventually turns to be

an SS Nazi commander in the holocaust at Auschwitz concentration camp. He wishes to confess his sins to Sage and wishes to kill him. Minka reveals the struggles she came across in the concentration camps to her granddaughter Sage.

The victim's narrative the very process of bearing witness to massive trauma does indeed begin with someone who testify to an absence to an event that has not yet come into existence, in spite of the overwhelming and compelling nature of reality of its occurrence. The emergence of the narrative which has been listened to and heard is therefore the process and the place wherein the cognizance the knowing of the event is given birth to. (Felman,57)

The vastness of violence that the Jews had to face throughout their life of being seen as contaminated and polluted and the racism prevalent in the minds of many German citizens were used as a tool to cheer the Fascism through the Nazi regimes of Hitler. The Jewish citizens were brought down to bare survival instincts as the only factor left to them as their existential choices. This profound impact is narrated through history and narratives to make people aware of the terrific history, of the truth. The listener of the traumatic event will partially have the experience of trauma. Here Sage slides from the life experience of Josef as a perpetrators guilt and later she sympathises with her grandmother's experience as a survivor. So, she comes across the intense feeling of the holocaust survivors, their struggles, confusions and conflicts. So Sage is one who witness the narration of the perpetrator as well as the victim of oppression of the Nazi reign.

“The conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of psychological trauma” (Herman,1). *The Storyteller* is equipped with the value of narration in the process of curing. Minka

being dragged from her peaceful life to the horrific realities of war find her way of escaping through writing. She develops an allegory of *upiory*(beast) in dark romance. This is how she delineates from the mental distress she came across. The Nazi regime took over the places where the Jewish family lived and there where streets in town that they could no longer walk. Not allowed to use public transport or to leave home after dark. Those were the initial changes that took place in Lodz, hometown where Minka resides.

The ordinary response to atrocities is to banish them from consciousness. Certain violations of the social compact are too terrible to utter aloud: this the meaning of the word unspeakable. Atrocities, however, refuses to be buried. Equally as powerful as the desire to deny the atrocities is the conviction that denial does not work. Folk wisdom is filled with ghosts who refuse to rest in their graves until their stories are told. Murder without. Remembering and telling truth about the terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims. (Herman,1)

The experience that are difficult to utter, the profound impact of trauma can conquer the person's ability to communicate. If the traumatized person creates difficulty to mediate his experiences to another person, he could use other methods to understand his trauma. Writing down the thoughts of a specific incident can encourage a person to understand himself. Provided it cannot dissolve the trauma entirely rather it can be seen as one of the processes of curing, if though not completely cured.

Minka eventually realizes that writing can sooth emotional pain. As such she wished to become a writer. As said in the story "We wish to move together to London

and live in a flat, and Darija would work at a publishing house and I would write novels” (Picoult,222). Darija Horowicz was her best friend who also accompanied her in the labours assigned by the soldiers. Minka writes a short fiction set in a village about a girl named Ania. Ania and her father the baker and also of the monster who invades their town by masquerading as a common man. Josek Szapiro a friend of Minka reminds her of her tale being an allegory.

The *upior*y, they are like Jews. To the general population, they are bloodsuckers, a dark and frightening tribe. They are to be feared and battered with weapons and crosses and Holy Water. And the Reich, which put itself in the side of God, has commissioned itself to rid the world of monsters. But the *upior*y, they are timeless. No matter what they try to do to us, we Jews have been around too long to be forgotten, or to be vanquished. (Picoult,231)

Minka through her writing reveals another world and thoughts which seems to be beyond its elements of fantasy, it touches the true human nature of human beings as itself as *upior*y the blood sucking beasts. Her story is seen as synonymous to the lives of Jews according to her friend Josek Szapiro whereas, Franz (Josef Weber) a Nazi soldier under whom Minka was destined to work finds it similar to the soldiers who kill the Jews. The guilt of the perpetrator is revealed through the character Josef/Franz in the story. He feels a sense of loss or deep anxiety about his life experience of being a Nazi soldier. It emerges as a dominant emotion on the character. The traumatic experience of being a soldier haunts him throughout his life. He listens to the story as similar to his life. After many years the guilt of perpetrator and the cruelty towards Sage’s grandmother is revealed by Josef. As being a perpetrator Franz has taken part in the bloody acts of the Nazi soldiers. He along with his brother has led their life tied to the brutality of the Nazis. They lived a simple life before the war

with their own family. He was studious in his youth and wished to become a poet. While they were also instilled with the dislike against Jews looking upon them as devaluing the system of governance. They seem to accept the agenda spread by Hitler and his troop. Most of the Germans began to follow the rules instilled by the Nazi German authorities. Even though Franz is encouraged to act violently, he at times feel sympathy towards the victims and always feel that what the Nazis regime imposes as rules are against humanity. Here he finds a true understanding of his own life when he compares himself as the bloodsucking *upiory* in Minka's story. Her writing is appreciated and understood by Franz the Nazi soldier.

Writing is a process through which emotions are revealed and it gives a space for self-expression. The individual psyche of a protagonist represents the collective emotional experience of a social group. A fiction can provide multiple perspective of the traumatic experience of different individual characters. The response to trauma can be understood by framing them in social and situational trauma. It helps to sustain the mental health of a person as it reduces stress. By writing one can express the deeper hidden thoughts which are unspeakable. Narrative become a practical means for communicating thoughts and ideas. Narratives are used as tool for psychotherapy as it reveals a sequence of happenings in the story.

“Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life” (Herman,33). Minka develops a deeper understanding of the lives of people under the political and economic oppression. They suffer both mentally and physically in the Nazi enforced laws that treat them as distinct creatures. Rather than writing a self-narrative Minka uses a fiction to reveal her thoughts. She says that everything had changed, as if the earth had tilted slightly on the axis, ashamed of the sun, so that now we would have to

learn to live in the dark. Writing is seen as a move towards recovery from the wounds she experienced in the camps to delineate herself from the terrific events. Minka says “Death walked next to me as I trudged down the street, whispered into my ears as I washed my face, embraced me as I shivered in bed” (Picoult,304). Her loss of family and the horrific situation she came across creates a shattered memory and a sense of her loss of conscious. While she thinks of her thoughts of being free, she is free to think even in the fences of death and struggle.

The story about Ania is aligned to the survivor’s inability to tell their personal story of survival. The reader and Sage are eased into learning Minka’s full story. Minka and her family were forced to move out of there place. The Nazi German soldiers build a new wall, a fence, a detour that created a huge divide from the Germans in the city and the Jews. Later they were forced into the Old Town and shoved from Lodz. The soldiers began to slaughter men, they hanged three men and were removed from their later. The Jewish burial according to the religion was meant to happen quickly while they laid the body for two days. At first, she felt safe being around her family and friends in the ghetto. In night they were to face with the freezing cold without any protection. They were completely ripped out from their existence and made invalids. The children were torn apart from their happy childhood memories as Minka mentions “There were none left in this ghetto, really. We had all grown up by default. Even a baby like Majer was not a child, because he would have no memory of a life that wasn’t like this one” (Picoult, 266).

When the victim is already devalued, they may find that the most traumatic events of their life take place outside the realm of socially validated reality. Their experience becomes unspeakable. The study of psychological trauma must constantly contend with this tendency to discredit the victim or to renderer invisible. Minka says

when she compares her past with the terrible situation after Nazi invasion “I had written once about a girl who woke up and found every trace of herself erased from the world as she knew it: a family that didn’t know her; a school that had no record of her; a history that had never happened” (Picoult, 276). When Darija talked about the Gas chamber she says “I thought I was the fiction writer” (Picoult, 285). She believed that the wildest tale had some truth to it as some were transported in the belief of a free meal.

“From around the time of the Second World War to the present, the concept trauma has been increasingly medicalized but also and importantly linked into wider political frames: survivor narratives, responses to persecution and prejudice, and to the Holocaust and other acts of mass atrocity and genocide” (Buelens et al, 1). Trauma theory has been seen as a response to the impact of Holocaust. “Trauma theory is perhaps, at root, an attempt to trace the inexhaustible shapes both of human suffering and of our responses to that suffering” (Buelens et al, 7).

“Although there was nothing written on the pages, I pulled words from my core, like silk for a spider’s web, spinning a make-believe life. That’s why we read fiction? To remind us that whatever we suffer, were not the only ones.” (Picoult,247). She made words that vanquished the chaos of the unpleasant surrounding that entrapped her. It didn’t last for long as they took her apart from her family one by one were taken to the concentration camps. Later she worked under the Nazi soldiers. The story shows the extremes of violence that has happened.

After her departure from all her family members as of death or unknown to the fact of their existence she was carried from concentration camps to another in order to work. Buried away all the passions she created for life as left in the barren space.

Later she met her best friend in one of women's camp later their struggle to survive is shown in the story. Once, they were said to collect the belongings of people who were suffocated to death in the gas chambers of concentration camps. There she found her father's suitcase that which indicates his death which contained the sweater that her mother knitted. Here her mind goes back to the past memories the things belonging to her father she felt that his belongings shouldn't be taken away by any others. So, she says "I couldn't let any someone else wear this, someone who didn't know that every inch of it told a tale. This yarn lived up to its second meaning a tale with every knit and purl part of the saga of my faith" (Picoult, 327).

The condition of the entrapped human beings in the concentration camps was miserable, many died in the extreme cold weather outside and some were torn apart from the physical and mental abuse they came across. Being a woman in the concentration camp was more miserable. They were made to work till they exhausted and many died in the extreme violence and of the cold weather. "The hiddenness, death, or absence of a radically transcendent divinity or of absolute foundations makes of existence a fundamentally traumatic scene in which anxiety threatens to colour, and perhaps confuse, all relations" (Buelens et a, 23).

The first concentration camp in the Nazi system, Dachau, opened in, March, 1933. By the end of World War II, the Nazis administrated a massive system of more than 40,000 camps that stretched across Europe from the French-Spanish border into the conquered Soviet territories, and as far south as Greece and North Africa. The largest number of prisoners were Jews, but individuals were arrested and imprisoned for a variety of reasons, including ethnicity and political affiliation. Prisoners were subjected to unimaginable terrors from the moment they arrived in the camps; it was a

dehumanizing existence that involved a struggle for survival against a system designed to annihilate them.

Enslavement of the Jews are equally experienced by the readers of *The Storyteller* through the descriptions given by Jodi Picoult. Life in the concentration camp for a woman is too terrifying and Minka in the story has to leave her home town as the law imposed on them by the German guards. She later finds how the closed ones and how her parents are detached from her as of their death. Alone she strives to survive. An emphasis on the depletion of humanity at the time of world war is elaborated through the narrative. This is seen through the eyes of readers and they sympathize with the characters. Her pain and slavery draw the readers to catharsis.

The traumatized individuals in a frame of survivor hood allows for trauma victims to function not just as an embodiment of human vulnerability but also an embodiment of strength and endurance. This wounds culture, in other words, testifies to a widespread fascination with stories of suffering, pain, and trauma as well as with the struggles to overcome these crises.

(Schönfelder,311)

Through writing people can express the things they wish to share to others as well as the thoughts they fear to speak out in the world. So writing is a way of self-expression. That which encourages people to move out and speak for themselves. The history is preserved through the very act of narration. It is the historical writings that helps define the past. Holocaust narratives are a source to the history that points to the terrific event. While speaking about history the main focus is on the facts. While the novels and the fictions draw the lines towards the problem of the people the situation they live in and more specifically the mind set of people that belong to a time period.

Psychotherapy deals with the understanding of the persons thoughts through talking. The approach explores how the unconscious mind influences our thoughts feelings and behaviours. The therapist tries to understand the patients past experiences that contributes to the current experience and actions. Freud described the unconscious as the reservoir of desires, thoughts, and memories that are below the surface of conscious awareness. He believed that these unconscious influences could often lead to psychological distress and disturbances. While when a person analysis his own past experiences there he memorizes the events in a manner. This understanding is a knowledge of himself which leads to accept what has happened and move forward. Also helps the therapist to understand the root cause of the problem.

Minka reveals to Sage about her life starting from her peaceful life before the Nazi invasion till her escape from the brutality of the German soldiers. She talks about the freedom she had before and how the Jew were enchained to the slavery. Josef also talks to Sage of his life being cursed for being a Nazi SS officer. He is unable to live out from the crimes that he had committed earlier, from the sins that lay inside of him and wishes to be cured by Sage who belongs to a Jewish community. Josef wished to be forgiven from the crimes he committed before his death. He talks to Sage as in a form of confession.

Sages approach to the understanding of their life stories can be seen as a psychoanalyst's approach towards patient. Storytellers unchain the events through the thought of the narrator, which strikes her from a real incident or from imagination. It could be an instance from the past as Jodi Picoult has mentioned about the holocaust in her story. The process of storytelling unravels the thoughts in the writer's mind. Through writing the narrator liberates from the restrictions bound around her. It

focuses on the instances of the novel with realistic portrayal. So, the writer itself goes through the incidence mentioned in the work.

The Storyteller is a novel which embraces the process of narration and its importance in life. The narrations also dwell on the impact of their choices that came through the life of multiple narrators. Sage being a lone baker advances from her reclusive nature by adopting to change work as a baker happily and finds her partner Leo who finds her beautiful with her scars. She is the one who hears the thoughts of a holocaust survivor (Minka) and the perpetrator (Josef) who wishes to live away from their guilt and suffering. The life experience they shared to Sage can be seen as a psychologist analysing the pathological condition of the patients. She empathises with their life, even with a regret towards Josef she understands his situation of having a simple life after having a Nazi soldier past. For seventy years, Josef Weber has been hiding in plain sight and seen as a respect person in his local community. While he is a murder who committed crimes as a Nazi SS soldier. When Josef decides to confess, it is Sage Singer, a young woman who trusts him as a friend but while hearing his hands were blood wound in being the follower of Nazism her mind trembles as of the everything, she thought she knew and believed. Minka and Josef finds their peace through their narration and leads to a peaceful death. Death is considered as the resting place from all the burdens of life and they find cure through narrating their terrific past to Sage. Trauma narratives looks upon the notions of the sufferer to inculcate the emotional and psychological aspects. "As Sage uncovers the truth from the darkest horrors of war, she must follow a twisting trail between terror and mercy, betrayal and forgiveness, love and revenge". Picoult as a storyteller deal with the shattered thoughts about a traumatized person and provide the memory of a lost generation in the holocaust through her novel. Her story is said from multiple

narrators and furthers the narration with the emotional collapse from the perspective of traumatized person. She reaches her readers through touching on the importance of narration as well as writing a creative work (as done by Minka to liberate her mind from the barracks of suffering and trauma) to curb the mental and emotional stability.

CHAPTER 3

SELF-NARRATIVE AS A CURE: *THE CHOICE* BY EDITH EGER

The Choice: Embrace the Possible is a holocaust memoir written by Dr. Edith Eger on her experience as a holocaust survivor. She is an internationally acclaimed psychologist whose patients include soldiers and survivors of abuse. She was in her teenage while she was destined to suffer in the concentration camps along with her sister Magda. Her memory of the family together before the catastrophe is of happiness and togetherness. She used to be a quiet child and developed herself out of the restraints as she gained her identity as a Ballet dancer. Her sisters, Klara was a violin prodigy and Magda was a pianist. She says “Maybe every childhood is the terrain on which we try to pinpoint how much we matter and how much we don’t, a map where we study the dimensions and the borders of our worth” (Eger,18).

Nazism is the ideology and practices associated with Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party (National Socialist German Workers Party) in Germany. “Nazism is a form of fascism, with disdain for liberal democracy and the parliamentary system. It incorporates fervent antisemitism, anti-communism, scientific racism, and the use of eugenics into its creed” (“Nazism”). Within the power structures they decided on devaluing the life of many, especially the Jewish community by reducing them to mere existence. Jews from all over Nazi-occupied Europe were systematically evacuated to concentration and extermination camps, where they were systematically evacuated to concentration camps where they were either killed or forced into slave labour.

In the novel as mentioned by Edith the Nazi German soldiers stormed into their house and they were forced to move to the concentration camps. Keryermezo was an internment camp, where they did forced labour. While working there they had hope to believe that in the end of war they would return back and everything would be back to normal. Eger and Magda were departed from their parents and send to work in the camps. Later they came to realize that their parents were killed with poisonous gas in the concentration camp. Her mother said before “Dicuka she says into the dark one night, listen. We don’t know where we’re going. We don’t know what’s going to happen. Just remember, no one can take away from you what you’ve put in your mind”. (Eger,34). In the concentration camps Jews were suffering with starvation, rape, torture, violence, and mass extermination. The anti-semitism and racial prejudices towards a particular community by inculcating the agenda of purification, for they were seen as contaminated and polluted with the motive of representing them as threat to society. The Nazi government led by Adolf Hitler and an ideology of cleansing the German nation was their motive. They controlled territories of non-Aryans, developed camps for mass murder and forced labour. Jews weren’t the only group placed in the concentration camps. They also placed Roma (Gypsies), Africans, homosexuals, and communists in camps for forced labour and extermination.

“Our childhood memories are often fragments, brief moments or encounters, which together form the scrapbook of our life they are all we have left to understand the story we have come to tell ourselves about who we are” (Eger,12). In “Beyond the Pleasure Principle”, Freud describes trauma as a mental disturbance of survivors of devastating events which involve a risk of life, such as railway disasters, accidents, or the terrible war which has just ended (Freud, 104).

Edith was a more reclusive child, while her sisters had their identity of being musicians of which she thought of herself being the invisible one in their home. She was convinced of her inferiority complex. Klara, her elder sister has been playing violin all her life. Eger says “I realize the cost of her extraordinary talent: she gave up being a child. I never saw her playing with dolls”. (Eger, 16). Instead, she played the violin for the audience. Edith had an eye surgery to fix her crossed eyes at a young age. “Magda is the first born, she reposts the world to me. She brings me details, often troubling things, to study and ponder. In 1939, the year that Nazi Germany invades Poland, the Hungarian Nazis—the nyilas—occupy the apartment below ours in Andrassy Palace. They spit at Magda. They evict us. We move to a new apartment, at Kossuth Lajos” (Eger, 20). Edith began to develop her identity as a ballet dancer from which she gained her strength and courage. She was selected for the Olympics but got rejected as she belonged to Jewish community. “I think of the kids who’ve spit at me and called me dirty Jew, of Jewish friends who have stopped going to school to avoid harassment and now get their courses over the radio” (Eger, 25). She befriends Eric who becomes her lover, she later lives through his memories as a hope in life to survive through the violence and victimization in the concentration camps. Her grandparents were killed and all she along with her family were forced to leave their home to the concentration camps.

The isolation of the concentration camp prisoners and the process of dehumanization enforced on them within the barriers created a world in which there was no possibility of another to address and no means of identifying oneself as a subject in opposition to that “other,” given the reality that “The Holocaust created in this way a world in which one could not bear witness to oneself” (Kurtz, 72).

“The psychoanalyst Paul Russell conceptualizes the emotional rather than the cognitive experience of the trauma as the driving force of the repetition compulsion. The person’s feelings are analysed to repair the injury.” (Herman,53). This is to look upon the feelings to know more and understand the situation. These emotions are more different from ordinary fear and anger, it encompasses a deeper struggle in the consciousness of a person. The recognition of trauma and the decision to move forward. The first approach is to understand and talk with patient. W.H.R Rivers, a physician of wide range of intellect who was a professor of neurophysiology, psychology and anthropology made a cure study about trauma on more liberal point of view. Siegfried Sassoon was an English war poet, writer, and soldier. Best remembered for the angry, compassionate poems that chronicled World War I, British poet Siegfried Sassoon became internationally famous for his satiric tone and his anti-war beliefs. Siegfried Sassoon was one of W.H.R Rivers distinguished patients he encouraged Sassoon to write and talk about the incidence happened during the war and kept a bond with the patient. “He devoted himself to writing and rewriting his war memoirs, to preserving the memory of the fallen, and to furthering the cause of pacifism” (Herman,32). “Thematizing extremes of the human experience and exposing readers to existential crises, struggles for survival, and quests for reconstitution and recovery, trauma novels encourage us to reflect critically on the phenomenon of trauma, its reasons, effects, and contexts” (Schönfelder, 24).

The struggles they faced in the camp were unbearable for human beings. Eger talks about her state of mind in the camp as she couldn’t keep herself steady in a place where the only steadiness is in the fences, in death, in humiliation, in the steadily churning smoke. Her parents are transformed into the smoke killed in the concentration camp. Along with them many others are killed brutally, some are shot

to death and others include with mental distress and physically injured. They are set to act according to the orders given by the soldiers. Eger's only hope is to be with her sister. She says, to survive is to transcend your own needs and commit yourself to someone or something outside yourself. She was made to dance in front of a Nazi soldier and she did, which allowed her to grab the bread that he threw to her. In the emptiness of their life "Just as athletes and musicians can become better at their craft through mental practice, we were barracked artists, always in the thick of creating. What we made in our minds provided its own kind of sustenance" (Eger, 42). There were faiths to which people hanged on but the days in the camp extended, having threat to life.

These women are in a horribly vulnerable position. They are considered vermin by people in power who would like to see them dead. That stakes can't get much higher than this. The women are therefore traumatized, and we can deduce this trauma has been going on for a long time over years. The story portrays the traumatic events of the holocaust and reveals its physical and psychological harm to the survivors. Eger, her sister Magda and other women along with them are destined to be prisoners to the Nazi. Their every moment is determined by the soldiers. They were made to carry granites to build Hitler's fantasy city, a new capital for Germany, a new Berlin. They have to work watching all the corpses killed or sickened to death.

"The bodies are everywhere, in heaps. Bodies crooked and splayed like pieces of broken fence. Bodies so skeletal and disfigured and tangled that they barely have a human shape. We stand in a line on the white stairs" (Eger, 57). There was a death march from Mauthausen to Gunskirchen. it was the shortest distance yet they were so weakened that only hundred out of thousand will survive. There they had no food

Eger depended on the few grasses that grew in the place. Many choose to eat the flesh of the dead ones and a lot sick to death by the diseases that caught them. Diseases passed into and between our bodied. Typhus. Dysentery. White lice. Opensores. Flesh upon flesh. Living and rotting Where Eger was diseased laying barely alive.

The American soldiers came to rescue them and came out safe. Death of Adolf Hitler came to their awareness it was on 30th April 1945. The war didn't end with it and the anti-semitism. They came across the horrific fact that they made soaps from the extracts of the killed people. Even though they came out of the past the terror of the incidents began to haunt them. Even after their rescue people didn't happen to change. Though they escaped from the face of death. The reassurance of race division was based on Hitler's notion of Aryan Superiority. Aryan Superiority was the belief that a master race should control all other races and rule the world. True Germans had blue eyes and blond hair and they were better than others as well as the strong nationalism that delineated the bond between human beings. He forced Germans to stay pure by not marrying or having sexual relationship with Jews or people of other races or nationalities. Hitler believed that the Jewish people were responsible for many faults and were considered evils in the world.

The violence and victimization that they came across never stood easy to be removed from their consciousness and so, some instance began to make them to think about the past time being in the Nazi Camps. This threat encompassing both the body and mind causes an alert to the situation. It evokes intense fear and anger. Even though they came out of the past time spend in the holocaust their mind remains distorted in the recurring images of the past. She says "Freedom is sores and lice and typhus and carved-out bellies and listless eyes" (Eger,73). When they return, they

found Klara and she took care of both the sisters by doing violin concerts. Later they find solace in places away from the war. Eder got married to Bela. Later in her life she experiences the survivor's trauma in events that she experienced psychological trauma. "Traumatized people feel and act as though their nervous systems have been disconnected from the present. After a traumatic experience, the human system of self-preservation seems to go onto permanent alert, as if the danger might return at any moment" (Herman,35). "Eger came through those unnerving physical sensations racing heart, sweaty palm, narrowing vision that I experienced that day and that I will continue to experience many times in my life, even now, in my late eighties are automatic responses to trauma" (Eger, 135).

"Long after the danger in past, traumatized people relive the event as though it were continually recurring in the present. They cannot resume their normal course of life, for trauma repeatedly interrupts. It is as if time stops at the moment of trauma" (Herman, 48). Narrating one's own story gives a space to retell the incident as an element of identity formation. Susan J. Brison uses this formulation as the basis for her essay, "Trauma Narratives: Remaking the Self," citing Locke's identification of "the self with a set of continuous memories, a kind of ongoing narrative of one's past that is extended with each new experience" (Kurtz, 68).

There is a psychological approach in this story as it evaluates the traumatic experience of patients by an acclaimed psychologist and how she reveals her own trauma of survivor hood through her memoir *The Choice*. It is a detailed sequence of the sufferings she has gone through as a survivor in the concentration camp as well as how she overcame it or rather lived through it. Even though she tries to get out or to completely recover from the trauma of the past she is stuck in the past and later she

learns to live through it from her own life as well as from the learnt experiences as a psychologist. She learns to face her trauma, writing the novel can be seen as one of her ways towards recovery and healing, the storytelling is also a path to self-realisation and acceptance.

Trauma is entirely having a different approach to curing as compared to physical ailment. “Trauma generally involves a confrontation with human vulnerability a mortality, and so does seeing the visible marks of trauma. While many trauma victims suffer invisible marks of trauma” (Schofelder.288). One of the most remarked-upon features of this neurosis was the inability of the victim to recall the event that precipitated it, coupled with a simultaneous sensation of its recurrence in the present. “Since World War II (1939–1945), two major developments have affected trauma theory: the experience of mass or collective trauma, especially that associated with the Nazi death camps, and the recognition of delayed developments of traumatic symptoms, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)” (“Trauma”).

The narrative is based on the events that happened in the author’s life; it is a self-narrative. As a memoir written by the author it speaks about her own life. Which is also a way to analyse the identity of an individual as the author of a self-narrative looks deep into the narrators’ aspects toward life. Her narration gives a philosophical aspect towards life as of her healing therapy. It gives a number of accounts to the aspect of arising from the depressed state or traumatized state of mind. She goes into account of recognizing herself and the cure needed for her traumatic experience.

“The event is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it. To be traumatised is precisely to be possessed by an image or event” (Kurtz,67). The Jews where

prisoners and refugees to obey the orders of Nazis soldiers. They were made to work ruthlessly until to the extremes of suffering. They were made to march to the Czech borders and forced to carry tons of weight for construction. Hard labour made many sick and the weak ones were shot to death. Food was never provided to them. When she tried to grab food from the fields a Wehrmacht soldier caught hold of her and pointed the gun. Next day he provides a small loaf of bread. She says “he’s a proof that twelve years of Hitlers Reich isn’t enough hate to take the good out of people. His eyes are my father’s eyes. Green and full of relief” (Eger, 57).

“Traumatic life events engulf us in chaos and uncertainty. Often, as a coping mechanism, we shut out the world and withdraw within ourselves. In extreme cases, we become fearful of community and human contact. Trauma takes a heavy toll on our emotional and mental health, and continues to haunt us even when we have physically emerged from the life events that caused it. Trauma leads to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and manifests in the form of anxiety, depression, anger, exhaustion or oscillating emotions. For people dealing with trauma, writing – and especially life writing – can be very therapeutic. Over and above seeking professional mental health support, writing is a way to heal”. (Goswami)

Writing is a therapy towards self-expression, a phase to come out of the barriers that we create around our mind. Eger uses it as her way of telling the truth to the people of her struggles and how she came through it. Writers have long drawn on the experiences of war to examine themes such as race, power, democracy and human behavior under conditions of stress. The Nazi ideology consisted of ideas concerning

Aryan superiority, Hitlers Master Race, a country without the Jewish religion, established a dictatorship and financial strength.

The person who came across the hurting memory of the past remembers it through repetitions of the instance. When this occurs, it is a failure of conscious memory to fully account for and narrate the horror of the event at hand, thus the traumatic event remains “unassimilable to associative chains of meaning”. Narrative memory consists of mental constructs, which people use to make sense out of experience under extreme conditions existing meaning schemes may be entirely unable to accommodate frightening experiences. This creates a struggle to communicate the incident to others as well as to themselves.

Cathy Caruths theory came to be seen as the roots or beginning of Trauma theory in the 1990s. Caruths theory was based on Freudian theory defining it as “an overwhelming experience of sudden, or catastrophic events, in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, and uncontrolled repetitive occurrence of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (Caruth, 181). Freud and Caruths cure analysis is based on remembering the traumatic events in sequential manner by the clinician. Remembering the incidence is going through the repression and to think about the past that haunts the person., “He is obliged rather to repeat as a current experience what is repressed, instead of, as the physician would prefer to see him do, recollecting it as a fragment of the past” (Freud, 18).

Edith found her way as a survivor who learnt to heal herself as well as others. She says she has learnt from her traumatic past to help others heal. She is called in to social service organizations and medical and military groups to treat patients with PTSD. She was also destined to talk in Berchtesgaden in Germany for military

audiences. She returned to Auschwitz as a cure to her own past as a remembrance to her parents who were killed in the concentration camp. Judith Herman views narrative as an empowering and effective therapeutic method in the treatment of trauma victims. Narratives of trauma, as an “organized, detailed, verbal account, oriented in time and historical content”, contribute to healing and recovery. In Caruths observation trauma narratives is seen leading to increased indeterminacy, denying the possibility of resolution and recovery whereas in Herman’s view, trauma narrative is therapeutic, enabling psychic integration and eventual resolution of trauma. Trauma Theory is the best method to understand Holocaust Literature as a cultural reclamation of identity.

Eger was one among the many who lost their dreams, she says while watching a movie based on ballet dancer “the one I would have gone on to live if there hadn’t been a Hitler, if there hadn’t been a war.” she pretends to be silenced she didn’t have the choice Hitler and Mengele chose for her. She developed her life from the difficult situations now being a renowned clinical psychologist. She develops or adapts the way of rethinking in the process of trauma. Dominick LaCapra an American historian defines trauma analysis in two different ways one is “working out” that is to go remembering the traumatic event toward the process of curing. In “acting out” one is haunted by the past and performatively caught up in the repetition of traumatic scenes – “scenes in which the past returns and the future is blocked or fatalistically caught up in a melancholic feedback loop... it is as if one were back in the past reliving the traumatic scene” (LaCapra, 21).

As a memoir the storyline focuses on the deeper aspects of Edith’s life which is incredibly empowering for others towards recovery. An inquiry into her own life,

on the matters that had happened, the choices she had chosen to move forward. It can be seen as an awareness to others, to heal and recover from the haunting past. As a psychologist she speaks to the world through her written work emphasising on the struggle she came through and how she overcame it. As a clinical psychologist and as a writer she influences others. The title of the novel suggests *The Choice: Embrace the Possible* creates an instance to choose one's own decisions for life. Through knowing her novel, the readers embrace her life as well as she embraces the readers to come out of the barriers that restrict them.

Writing about the events happened in the holocaust has been a collective grief for the Jewish community as well as the others who suffered in the war times. It creates a space for the survivors to share and shape their own existence. To live beyond the barricades of oppression. It enhances the knowledge about past about their existence and identity. Freudian war neurosis is currently termed as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. "After severe shock of a mechanical nature, railway collision or other accident in which danger to life is involved, a condition may arise which has long been recognised and to which the name 'traumatic neurosis' is attached" (Freud,8).

The Nazi genocide has created a huge threat to survival as well a mass murder that erased millions of lives. Eger has tried her way of removing the anti-semitism and the layers of discrimination that people lay in their mind. She has strived to create no more Hitlers in the world. As a work of self-expression and victimhood her memoir is an essence of how one can come out of the trauma. It is widely accepted, particularly within psychoanalytic approaches to trauma, that the most effective way of reducing the pathological symptoms of trauma in the survivor is to facilitate the conscious narration of the traumatic event, so that it may become lifted from the subconscious

and integrated into conscious memory. Van der Kolk and van der Hart argue that “traumatic memories ... need to be integrated with existing mental schemes, and be transformed into narrative language” (Kurtz,68). The narration of the events gives the past history to be spoken to reveal that which is denied or looked upon with fear. In the case of a traumatic historical event such as the Holocaust, the individual act of self-narrative also carries the potential to become a public act, speaking to a collective memory that also struggles to situate its response to the event.

CONCLUSION

Trauma narratives represents the emotional and psychological impact over the mind of the sufferer. It encompassed the sequential analysis of the traumatic experience. This deliberate knowing of the past by a traumatized person, if revealed as narration or through a creative work, like that of writing can help cure from the incident. For this study the novel *The Storyteller* by Jodi Picoult and *The Choice: Embrace the Possible* by Edith Eger are used to illuminate on the liberated thoughts from the restrains that are faced in traumatic condition.

Both the stories are analysed as the trauma narratives that culminates the process of writing as a way towards self-awareness and liberation from the long entrapping trauma they have faced in their life. The knowledge of the sufferer to come out of the trauma is depicted through these stories. Minka wrote her fictional story based on the blood sucking beast *Upiory*, which is synonymous to the life of Jews as well as to the Nazis. Her way of moving forward in the catastrophe is by illuminating her thoughts through writing stories. It also helps her to secure her life from a Nazi soldier (Josef/Franz) who wished to hear her story as similar to the frame narrative of Arabian Nights said by Scheherazade to her beastly husband Shahryar as an existential dilemma. Her stories help her rescue from the coldness in the camps as well as fetch her food as she helps the Nazi soldier in his work of typing. Minka eventually faces her death after revealing her past as a holocaust survivor to her granddaughter Sage. The peaceful death after narrating her story can be seen as a relief from her haunting past. Josef, the perpetrator is relieved from guilt by mentioning his past to Sage.

The Choice reveals the survivor's consciousness her distracted mind even after recovering from her physical ailment. Eger mention that a complete recovery isn't possible while one can choose to live a better life. Her past memory of the catastrophe is revealed through her memoir *The Choice*. Her life long struggle bleeds through her writing. The narration also provides her way of self-awareness and liberation. Through self-narration one looks deep into the matters of identity and acceptance.

The Nazi German ideology was to cleanse the nation, to remove the insufficient according to notions proclaimed by Adolf Hitler. They began to control over the life of Jewish community and placed them in the concentration camps along with Roma (Gypsies), Africans, homosexuals and communists with forced labour and extermination. "The holocaust created in this way a world in which one could not bear witness to oneself (Kurtz, 72). Along with the violence practiced they also burnt down the books those which were viewed as being subversive or as representing ideologies opposed by Nazism which were written by Jewish, communist, socialist, anarchist and others. Historical narratives provide the impact of a catastrophe that happened during the second world war.

"Thematizing extremes of the human experience and exposing readers to existential crises, struggles for survival, and quests for reconstitution and recovery, trauma novels encourage us to reflect critically on the phenomenon of trauma, its reasons, effects, and contexts" (Schönfelder,24). Trauma narratives expressed will be calamitous, exuberating on the choices to strive towards recovery. As Earnest Hemingway once said "All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed". Writers have long drawn on the experience of war that encumber the thoughts of human being through historical facts or through the historical narratives. Historical narratives provide an insight into the real events happened. It emphasises on the emotional as

well as a collective memory that belongs to an age. Narratives as such points to the particular notions of society pertaining to a given time. Holocaust narratives inculcates an understanding of the shattered thoughts and emotions of human beings. Narrating the traumatic incident can help cure and further recovery from trauma. The works mentioned are *The Storyteller* which is a fiction and *The Choice: Embrace the Possible* which is a memoir. So, literature as such through its different genres embrace the complexities of human emotion as well as the experiences of life through Psychoanalytical talking cure.

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