

## Chapter One

### Traumatic Feelings of Guilt of Shelley and Coleridge: An Introduction

The word ‘guilt’ simply defined as a feeling of responsibility or regret for some crime, violation, wrong doing etc., which gives unpleasant feeling of sorrow or sadness to doer regarding a past action. It occurs when a person does something against his/her moral, ethical and natural code, and realizes he/she has done something against his/her moral, ethical and natural code, or feels as if he/she did something wrong on someone. It creates trauma, pain and difficulty on guilty people affecting their attitude, daily actions and other life related activity. Similarly, ‘trauma’ too in simple level defined as a psychological, emotional response to an event or an experience that is deeply distressing or disturbing. It is generally understood either a wound or bodily injury in general. It is, for Willliam Cote and Roser Simpson, specific kinds of devastating shock or wound which always hunts, and causes lasting damage to the psychological development of a person. In the psychiatric literature, the term “Trauma” is divided in two forms: Psychical trauma and Body trauma.

A psychical trauma is a type of damage to the psyche that occurs as a result of a traumatic event that it cannot be assimilated by usual mental process, and body trauma is the trauma associated with physical trauma. The form of trauma this research focuses is psychical trauma which is the product of guilt. Trauma related guilt is the state of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), which refers to the unpleasant feeling of regret, and where a person regrets for his wrong doing and looks the way to lessen that trauma of guilt. Trauma and guilt are related with each other. Feeling of guilt leads to the recurring memories of the devastating events as it is called trauma. Guilt is a common response following loss and traumatic experiences with significant victimization. When events result in severe traumatic reactions,

multiple losses can occur. In addition to deaths, parts of one's own nature like self-confidence, generosity, love, hate etc. as well as resources, circumstances, and expectations can be altered. What is possible under normal circumstances, however, is often not possible under traumatic circumstances.

The emotion of guilt is associated with the realization of wrong doing "of having violated an important social, moral, or ethical rule" (Chaplin 47). He means to say that guilt occurs when someone violates social, moral or ethical which were not supposed to be violated. Sometimes, a person may feel guilty without being consciously aware of it too. Conscious and unconscious guilt may act as an underlying factor in behavior, emotions and relationships. "Conscious guilt is experienced as very real and unconsciously perceived guilt is 'imagined'. A distinction has been made between 'real' guilt and 'imagined' guilt" (Danieli and Lifton 25). Following traumatic events, an individual may experience "real" guilt for acts of commission or omission that resulted in the physical or emotional harm of others. 'Imagined' guilt includes the types of guilt that occur in the absence of having acted harmfully. Both types of guilt include self-condemnation, and either can result in harm to self or others.

Following traumatic events, guilt may be a complicated part of traumatic response. "It is among the symptoms associated with more pronounced traumatic reactions. Guilt may intensify or complicate trauma and grief reactions" (Nader 90). It also may result in hopelessness, depression and other problems such as self-harm, suicidal feelings, and substance abuse. Trauma related guilt refers to the unpleasant feeling of regret stemming from the belief that we could or should have done something different at the time a traumatic event occurred. The experience of trauma related guilt does not seem to depend on the type of traumatic event experienced.

Combat exposure, physical abuse, sexual abuse, colonialism, family problems, loneliness and the loss of a loved one have all been found to be associated with the experience of trauma related guilt. Feeling guilt after the experience of a traumatic event is serious, as it has been linked to a number of negative consequences as stated above. Trauma and guilt are complex and confusing. Although the traumatic feeling of guilt is complex and confusing state, the perpetrator tries to overcome through narrativization.

The two Romantic writers Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Mary Shelley with their respective texts, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Frankenstein* deal with feeling of guilt and trauma that it produces, and the attempts to be redeemed from the trauma. Victor Frankenstein and the Ancient Mariner suffer with situations that result in deaths followed by guilt. Both authors in their literature use the obvious Romantic and Gothic similarities; for example, Shelley was extremely influenced by Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, often using line for life in her novel. In these two different genres too, these writers have used same narrativization technique. Like them their protagonists Frankenstein and the Mariner play very similar roles, and other characters the Monster and the Albatross too are parallel, as well. The mariner's guilt and trauma are related to his killing of the albatross whereas the Frankenstein's guilt-induced trauma comes from his having built such a man-like Creature that creates chaos and confusion. These writers have presented characters' feeling of guilt and trauma in their individualities, colonial mentalities of the time, family problems and childhood experiences by using ample instances of such feelings in their texts.

Coleridge and Shelley have used their feeling of guilt in individual and national level. In terms of individual level they have used their personal trauma, which is 'real' whereas in national level they have expressed the trauma and guilt of

colonialism unconsciously as it was ‘imagined’. Their texts *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Frankenstein* dramatize the trauma of guilt. The obvious theme of Shelley’s *Frankenstein* is challenge of human being on nature. In the text, the Frankenstein created monster by performing the role of God, which is against natural or ethical code. We see the theme of imprisonment in not only the Monster as he is imprisoned by his wretchedness and away from Frankenstein, but that of Frankenstein himself, imprisoned in a world who he thinks will not understand him or the things he has done. Frankenstein is often seen as isolated and imprisoned in his own mind, unwilling to tell anyone his story except for a few characters throughout. The theme of religion is also even being directly recognized in the text. The idea that Frankenstein believes himself a higher power, such as God and the Monster as his creation, or Adam, Shelley recognizes the challenges that this brings and the burden that it has on everyone in the novel.

Similarly the obvious themes of Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* are challenge of human being on nature and colonial guilt. The Mariner killed the albatross, and compelled to wander the Earth repeating his tale of woe, narrates his story to a wedding guest whom he meets in a village street. The story he tells relates how, in his youth, the mariner had set out on a sea voyage to the Southern Hemisphere with two hundred other men aboard a sailing ship. During the voyage, the ship is shadowed by an albatross, a huge seabird considered an omen of good fortune by seafarers. For no good reason, the mariner shoots the albatross dead with his crossbow, to the horror of his companions. The non-harming creature represents innocent colonized people and nature whereas the Mariner represents the colonizer. In a short time, the ship is marooned, and soon all the crew members die of thirst except the mariner. Before the angry crew died, the dead albatross hung around the mariner’s

neck for his folly and later, stricken with the horror of his deed's consequences, the mariner spends his time watching the phosphorescent trails of slimy creatures that writhe and coil in the night waters in the ship's shadow. The most important aspect of the poem is that the mariner has feeling of guilt for killing the albatross and traumatized by that guilt forever. In short, Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner* seems to play out the drama of a traumatized self of colonial guilt.

The colonial guilt can be seen as the theme of both texts. The two main characters Frankenstein and Mariner are the representation of colonizer. As the colonizer, they violated natural law, and they regret for their wrong deeds. *Frankenstein* was written at a time when European expansion and rule over 'darker' places and races had long seemed part of the natural order to most Europeans — as aristocracy and monarchy had. While the inequities and exploitative hierarchies of aristocracy and the class system were being vigorously discussed, those of the West Indian slave system were also being interrogated on humanitarian and economic grounds, despite still generally unquestioned support of imperialism. C. Duncan Rice writes that in a period of about sixty years spanning the turn of the century, "slavery. . . passed from being a given factor on the [English] social landscape, to being incompatible with the beliefs of thinking men and women" (319). The historical moment of *Frankenstein* coincides with the anti-slavery and colonial movement: Shelley composed it between the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and the emancipation of slaves in 1833. Indeed, she began writing just after "one of the most violent and protracted slave rebellions to date" had taken place in May 1816 in Barbados (Baum 9), and at a time when black people were an increasingly visible presence in London. However, while readings of *Frankenstein* have historicized it

through a wide variety of contemporaneous phenomena, it has only once been linked to changes in England's cultural consensus about slavery.

Like *Frankenstein*, Coleridge's masterpiece was written in the context of the genocide of the Native American Cherokees at the hands of the whites under the presidency of Andrew Jackson. The Mariner's guilt of having killed the Albatross is allegorical of the genocide. This is the colonial guilt by which the Mariner is traumatized. The Mariner underlines the degree to which *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is a trauma narrative, specifically a post-traumatic narrative. Coleridge's Mariner exhibits textbook post-traumatic stress disorder. 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. According to the *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry*, the common denominator of psychological trauma is a feeling of 'intense fear, helplessness, loss of control, and threat of annihilation'" (Herman 33). Such feelings lead to the formation of traumatic memory:

in contrast to narrative memory, which is a social act, traumatic memory is inflexible and invariable. . . Traumatic memory is evoked under particular conditions. It occurs automatically in situations which are reminiscent of the original traumatic situation. These circumstances trigger the traumatic memory" or "the re-experiencing of the traumatic event." (Van der Kolk 163)

In these lines, he states that trauma begins after reaching into the certain stage of realization that triggers victim into the past evidence that had occurred in his/her life experience.

Transformation is one of the major themes in both texts. The main characters have been going through a transformation before our eyes. Frankenstein finally realizes that he has done wrong and eventually dies being almost repented. The Monster makes one of the most noticeable transformations as he gains not only knowledge of his surroundings and emotions, but also the knowledge of literature, language and so much more. Walton is also transformed through his letters to his sister, eventually going home at the end of the story. Mariner too is transformed into normal form by telling her story of killing albatross time and again.

These two texts clearly draw trauma of guilt and redemption that is thread link to dramatization and assumed that the protagonists of both texts are traumatized by the guilt of colonial crimes. And they narrativize their crime as the attempt to overcome from guilt. It is also taken as message to colonizer to overcome from yesterday's wrong deeds.

This dissertation aims to find out how Coleridge and Shelley create trauma of guilt through their works, and examines how the main characters Frankenstein and the Mariner suffer with the situation that result in death and why the main characters tells a story. Is it just the theme of guilt and redemption that is thread-link to the dramatization of trauma in the above two texts? Or is there another thread-link? Does Shelley draw upon the earlier text of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*? If she does, why does she do so? What is the moral message both these writers try to convey by attempts to overcome the trauma of guilt? These are some of the problems, this dissertation is oriented.

This chapter has focused on traumatic feelings in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Frankenstein* in relation to description of characters and text. The second chapter will concentrate on the general understanding of trauma of guilt, and how the

narrativization is the means of healing trauma of guilt. The third chapter will analyze Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and Shelley's *Frankenstein* in the light of the above theoretical modality. Both of these writers have used narrativization to lessen trauma of guilt, and in their respective works, the protagonist tells story to lessen their trauma. The Frankenstein in *Frankenstein* and the Mariner in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* tell their tale in order to lessen their trauma. The last chapter concludes that trauma colonial guilt can be lessened by telling tales. There will be discussion how these two veteran writers can represent narrativization as the tools of lessening trauma of guilt. More or less both of these writers have been successful to represent trauma of guilt that helps to reenactment of the trauma of guilt on the process healing trauma.

## Chapter Two

### Trauma of Guilt: A Theoretical Modality

The concept of trauma as it is known today was created toward the ends of the twentieth century, and the word 'trauma' has been derived from ancient Greek, the meaning of which is wound although the modern concept of trauma varies according to context and discipline. Trauma theory is a derivation of Freudian Psychoanalysis. The concept of trauma developed in mid 90s with Cathy Caruth's reinterpretation of Sigmund Freud. When Caruth published a short paper on traumas in April, 1993 entitled "Violence and Time: Traumatic Survival" it got recognition in the literary field as a separate domain of critical trend. This medico-legal concept "Trauma Theory" paved a way for new field of study in literary criticism with the turn of the century. It got significant privilege after the terrorist attack of 9/11. Every standard hospital in the world has a trauma center. In such centers two kinds of patients are treated; physically injured and mentally injured. We human beings have a blank space in the mind that is called "Amygdale". It is such space, which opens up in the mind when consciousness shuts to function. When we are injured physically, we lose our consciousness for the time being and our amygdale becomes active. It keeps the mental injury forever. Physical violence causes mental shock, fear and sense of guilt sometimes. This feeling remains in the form of wound in the mind. The sticking matter is that such kind of mental injury revives time and again throughout the life. This later arrival is called trauma in medical science.

This kind of mental injury needs psychoanalytical treatment. For this condition medical science has coined a term PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). This post stress is called 'delay' or 'belated sense' in Freudian psychology. Caruth, one of the pioneering figures of trauma theory, has theorized this delay. Describing the

relationship between physical injury and reverberation of trauma Caruth says that trauma study:

Describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occur in the often delayed and uncontrolled repetitive occurrence of hallucinations, flashback and other intrusive phenomena. As it is generally understood today, traumatic disorders reflect the direct imposition on the mind of the unavoidable of horrific events, the taking over-psychically and neurobiological- of the mind by an event that it cannot control. (205)

From this statement we come to know that any horrific physical event leads to the formation of mental wound which mostly comes later, after the recovery of physical injury. Any kind of physical challenge is liable to cause the traumatic experience of fear and guilt. Caruth is of the opinion that reflection of traumatic experience is a form of response to the physical injury caused by a horrific event. The trauma itself is a horrific event, which is not controlled by the human mind because it is a disorder. Because of being a psychic-disorder, trauma is incomprehensible. It can't be known even by the psychiatrics too since it is incurable.

On the other hand guilt is also one of the sources of trauma, whether it is created by the physical violence or self-realization. According to Kubany and Watson, guilt is “an unpleasant feeling with accompanying beliefs that one should have thought, felt, or acted differently” (53). It is considered to be multidimensional. If any individual has to be exposed before the physical violence, he suffers from the sense of guilt. Furthermore, situational factors, such as direct involvement or harm caused to a close relationship partner, may contribute to guilt and account for the fact that individuals exposed to similar or even the same event experience disparate levels of

guilt. This sense of guilt is self-conscious emotion elicited by the same kinds of negative events. It involves a depreciation of specific behaviors, actions, or thoughts. Guilt is a common response following loss or traumatic experiences with significant victimization. When events result in severe traumatic reactions, multiple losses can occur. In addition to deaths, parts of one's own nature as well as resources, circumstances, and expectations can be altered. Guilt can occur not only in relationship to what we ought or ought not to do but in relationship to our views about what we ought to be. What is possible under normal circumstances, however, is often not possible under traumatic circumstances because trauma is a delayed response.

Because of having important role in the delayed response, traumatic experiences are not fully expressed. One the one hand the human mind can't recall everything as it had happened naturally and on the other hand the traumatized subject also deliberately distorts the real experiences. His distortion might have two causes, either he overemphasizes the event in order to draw other's attention or he undermines the real experiences because something is unspeakable for him because of the sense of guilt. However, this distortion is foregrounded deliberately and naturally. For example the Mariner in the poem *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* fails to grasp his own experiences, and cannot give an accurate or straightforward account of what really happened. There are numerous reasons not to accept his story as simple truth. He was most likely hallucinating during his whole experience, all evidences sank along with the ship, and there are no witnesses beside him. His tale repeatedly alludes to the fictional nature of stories through its references to myths. And moreover, the heavily mediated nature of his testimony also stresses the huge distance between the interpretation of the events and their actual occurrence. Despite so he repeatedly narrates the past event.

As we have already known trauma is always repeated time and again. In this repetition there are subtle changes in the fore grounded expressions too. The repetition of trauma helps to normalize the life of the victim. If the traumatic experiences are repressed, that causes severe mental disorders. The real beauty of the trauma lies in its setting of victim's life as it happens in its repetition. Borrowing the reference of Freud, Caruth asserts that sense of guilt in mind is not caused only by the physical injury but by 'fright' and the lack of preparation to accept physical violence. Giving immense credit for Freud, Caruth further defines traumatic repetitions:

If 'Fright' is the term by which Freud desires the traumatic effect of not having been prepared in time, then the trauma of the nightmare does not simply consist in the experience within the dream, but in the experience of waking from it. It is the experience of waking into consciousness that, peculiarly, is identified with the reliving of the, trauma. . . . the trauma consists not only in having confronted death, but in having survived, . . . Repetition, in other words, 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. If history is to be understood for the history of trauma, it is a history that is experienced as the endless attempt to assume one's survival as one's own. (25)

From this statement, it turns out to be clear that Caruth is reinterpreting Freudian concept of dream. How dream helps to lessen the repressed desires and tries to reduce the psychological problems caused by those repressed desires, in the same way the repetition of traumatic experiences helps to survive for the victims. This very survival of the subject is guilt ridden throughout the life. The manifestation of trauma helps to

lessen the psychological burden although its repression is more dangerous. Despite its repetition, traumatic guilt never leaves the individual.

The same kind of idea can be found in Dominick LaCarpa's definition also. His theory of trauma emphasizes on three psychoanalytical terms; the return of the repressed desires, acting out versus working through and the dynamics of transference. LaCarpa is of the opinion that the traumatic events tend to be repressed at first and then they return in to the recurring from. He doesn't believe in 'acting out' but 'work through' through repetitive quality, whereas 'work through' is a complete curative method. The third point LaCarpa believes is 'transference'. "Transference in psychoanalysis is itself a return of the repressed, or a past event or relationship in a new, therapeutic setting that allows for critical evaluation and change. Transference is the occasion evaluation and change. Transference is an occasion for working through of the traumatic symptom" (LaCarpa 509). If there is no return of the repressed, the traumatic subject is suffered from severe mental problems. The same case is applied in the case of feeling of guilt too. For example the mariner in the poem *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* recounts his memories of the event, which had happened during his voyage.

Following traumatic events, guilt may be a complicated part of traumatic response. It is among the symptoms associated with more pronounced traumatic reactions. Guilt may intensify or complicate trauma or grief reactions. It also may result in hopelessness, depression and other problems such as self-harm, suicidal feelings, and substance abuse. Resolution and acting in the best interest of both the guilt-ridden and the offended may require the help of a skilled individual. Unresolved guilt, whether for actual or perceived offenses, can result in a multitude of problems including mental health difficulties, negative responses from others, and disrupted

relationships. Guilt can immobilize. It can hinder or prevent well-being, trauma recovery and a normal progression through life, productive action and positive relationships. Recognized or unrecognized guilt can undermine relationships over protracted periods or affect the kinds of relationships a person attracts to him or herself. It can keep the guilt-ridden individual "stuck" in suffering, depression, and/or self-recrimination. The attitude and demeanor of guilt may elicit reactions from others such as ire, punishment, or victimization. Guilt can punish more than the guilty. It colors interactions and the quality of life for the guilt-ridden and for those whose lives are affected by their moods and behaviors and by the level of their support, goal-setting and productivity. So there is need of help for the guilt ridden traumatized subjects.

A theory of traumas will intersect with other critical vocabularies which problematize representation and attempt to define its limits- discourse of the sublime, the sacred, the apocalyptic, and the other in all its guises including guilt. When endangered, the body responds neuro-chemically to push us to defensive action. Survival becomes a neuro-biological as well as an emotional imperative. During and after traumatic events, individuals often must find immediate ways to survive. In the chaos, excitement, and impulsion to self-protect, actions may be taken that are later regretted. In the rush to escape or because of the nature of the event, people may be left behind; some who die. It may be essential to move quickly in order to prevent additional loss of life as well as to survive. This was true during and after the terrorist acts of September 11 where some narrowly escaped fires or debris that killed others standing near them. Not knowing how much time there was to flee or that the building would collapse, some people rushed toward exits leaving behind them slower moving individuals such as pregnant women and the disabled. With so many dead, not

knowing the fates of those left behind has resulted for some in guilt feelings. In contrast, others have struggled with the fact that their loved ones did stay behind to help others and were killed with those whom they attempted to save. Studies suggest that, after an event, “people overestimate their preexisting predictive knowledge of the event” (Fischhoff, Crowell & Kipke 27). This overestimation can lead to an inaccurate estimation of guilt as the feeling of guilt is unrepresentable. That might be the cause the Frankenstein has unrepresentable feeling of guilt for creating the monster as he loses his nearest keen.

When the death of someone close occurs even under normal circumstances, guilt is a common reaction at individual points in time. This is true even if the connection with the person was a negative one. Traumatic events can increase a sense of connection to those with whom the event was experienced or with people not well known before the event had happened. Previous interactions may become emotionally more significant including those with someone who was little known before a traumatic event who then died in the event. There are always regrets after someone dies. Under normal circumstances, the people whom we cared for or loved knew that we cared even if we aggravated each other. The death of someone close amplifies our awareness of the finiteness of our earthly lives and current relationships. Recognizing this is an opportunity to honor the deceased and others who are close to us by valuing life and relationships and behaving accordingly.

Some kinds of guilt, however, are more complex. “A sense of guilt may become entangled with other post-trauma issues such as an amplified sense of connectedness to others with whom the trauma was experienced and/or a disruption of trust and beliefs” (Nader 112). Traumatic stress shakes up “multiple relationships including with oneself, those closest, and the community” (Simpson 13). We may reexamine

and reassess our sense of meaning and belief such as the meaning of the event and the experience, issues of trust, connectedness to others, and the goodness and badness of human beings. 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. Trauma survivors may also experience a particular type of trauma-related guilt, called survivor guilt. Survivor guilt is often experienced when a person has made it through some kind of traumatic event while others have not. A person may question why he survived. He may even blame himself for surviving a traumatic event as if he did something wrong. It is however, not just the survivor, who may have the sense of guilt. The perpetrators of violence too suffer from a sense of guilt. The seeking sense of guilt may get deposited in the psyche as trauma, which gets continuously played out in their memory.

Frankenstein and the Mariner, two separate characters in the texts *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Frankenstein* are using narrativization, that is, speaking trauma through stories, helps to heal it. In this sense the story telling comes to the rescue. Both Coleridge and Shelley are trying to come to term with the trauma of colonial guilt through their respective stories- one through a ballad and another through a novel. As both writers come to the meeting point of healing the colonial guilt through storytelling, the protagonists the Frankenstein and the Mariner also appear to be similar, though their stories end very differently. Both Victor and the Mariner suffer through situations that result in death followed by guilt and both narrate their stories to sooth their feeling of guilt. The Mariner accepts her guilt directly and tells her that guilt-related tale to lessen his trauma and blame himself for the deaths that occurred whereas Frankenstein did not tell and accept his guilt in front of others, but he too tells his tale to lessen his trauma and blame himself for the deaths

of William Justin etc., that occurred because of his unethical action. Both writers and their protagonist in the respective texts are trying to overcome from trauma of colonial guilt through their respective tales.

## Chapter Three

### Trauma and Guilt in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Frankenstein*

*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Frankenstein* deal the feeling of colonial guilt and sense of trauma through their characters, and the attempts to be redeemed from the trauma. The Mariner from *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* symbolically stands for colonizer and albatross symbolically stands for innocent colonized people. The Mariner kills here albatross without any reason as colonizer kills colonized people, and his guilt is associated with his killing of albatross. He tells his tale of killing albatross to lessen his trauma of guilt. Like in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, the characters in *Frankenstein* are traumatized because of their work. Frankenstein's guilt related trauma comes from his having built such a man like creature that wreaks havoc and mayhem. And other characters the monster and Robert Walton too traumatized like Frankenstein, all of them sooth their traumatic situation by telling stories. Both texts have ample references of personally committed knowing and unknowing mistakes, childhood memories, effects of the scientific innovations, impacts of colonization and drawbacks of the then national policies. In order to lessen the psychological pain of above mentioned events, they have used literary writings as the surest means of expression. So, these two texts are key examples of the expressions of individual, social, colonial and national guilt and trauma as this dissertation tries to prove.

The texts, examined in this dissertation, reveal the process of grasping the incomprehensible which is central to trauma and testify the experience of acting out as tool for healing. The central characters the Mariner and the Frankenstein tell the fictional tales of the traumatic experience in order to heal. The Mariner suffers from the Christian paradigm of crime, guilt, confession, penance, purification, redemption

in his attempts to express his traumatic experience. He tells his tale even going against the will of his audiences too as he forcefully stops and tells them his story of the horror. The Mariner, who feels guilty for his crime, is both perpetrator and victim.

Shelley's *Frankenstein* presents grim reality in terms of creator-creation relationship. The creator and the Creature undergo through traumatic experiences, and constantly try to define themselves as they suffer through multiple kinds of traumas as the Mariner in Coleridge's poem. Casting the light in the same issue Caruth notes, "It is the specific point at which knowing and not knowing intersect that the language of literature and the psychoanalytic theory of traumatic experience precisely meet" (3). These lines state that the literature and psychic trauma connected each other on the way of lessening guilt. Like this concept, the Creature is situated at this crossroads of knowing and not knowing, which suggests that tracing his memory exposes the wound of his being and situates him as a central character in a trauma narrative that is demonstrated throughout the novel. Frankenstein feels traumatized from the sense of guilt for the creation and rejection of the monster too. Similarly, the Creature too feels helpless and alone after Victor's rejection and removes himself to the woods near Ingolstadt, where he slowly begins to develop a sense of self. In the forest, the Creature learns how to connect representation from the physical world into his self-cognitive one: "My eyes became accustomed to the light, and to perceive objects in their light forms; I distinguished the insect from the herb, and, by degrees, one herb from another" (Shelley 109). With this newfound ability to make connections, the Creature starts synthesizing previous unknown knowledge of self, or rather his absence of who or what he is, with that of external influences that begin to shape his current state of being. Hence, the awareness of his self-cognitive processes begins his journey of reconciling his memory wound with the known and unknown realizations.

If someone experiences a traumatic event and feels guilty they might reflect on his thought of, 'I should've...', or 'I shouldn't have done something. If they reflect on the reason for the guilt, they might realize they violated a value important to them and they may make a commitment to live according to that value going forward. The same thing is seen in Mariner. The Mariner realizes that killing of Albatross was guilt and he should not have done it, and he acknowledges that he had violated the course of nature. Similarly, Frankenstein realizes that making the monster was guilt and he should not have done it and he internally accepts as the responsible person for the death of William, Elizabeth etc. though he did not tell in front of others. They reflect on tales on what happened realizing the best they could to overcome from an unfathomable traumatic situation, when there were no good options available to them. The other option is that someone might feel guilt and the distressful feelings that come with it, but avoid reflecting on the guilt or the trauma. As we know, avoidance of the trauma memory is common following trauma and is a risk factor for developing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, substance use, and other problems. When the torturous event is narrated, it relieves the affected person. Coleridge's Mariner and Shelley's Frankenstein exist in some kind of a challenging position that is typical of the post-traumatic condition. "In coming to terms with issues of guilt, the survivor needs the help of others who are willing to recognize that a traumatic event has occurred, to suspend their preconceived judgments, and simply to bear witness to her tale" (Herman 68). Like in these lines of Herman, the audiences of the Mariner have been passive witnesses of the Mariner's tale. The Mariner has been telling her tale of killing albatross to overcome from trauma of colonial guilt, and he has been helpless in the sense that he cannot live without narrating his horrific past. In the same way, Frankenstein and the monster too are helpless. Victor Frankenstein was helpless

because he couldn't bring good result because of his creation and he couldn't keep that creation into control, and he tells his entire tale to overcome from his trauma of guilt. The monster too was also helpless when he was rejected by his creator Victor. When he was rejected from every side, he starts to develop own sense of self. The sense of helplessness is another important factor in trauma studies.

One of the determining factors seems to be the feeling of extreme helplessness at the time the trauma occurred. People who do not feel helpless are able to process the experience in their usual way. In language, they are better able to contain their experiences. When someone is overtaken unaware by a traumatic event, they cannot rely on their usual resources to process or contain the fear, anxiety, pain, etc. aroused by the event. To protect itself from this overwhelming experience, the mind erects a barrier against the memory, segregating it from other memories and emotions in a process of defense against it. The defense fails as the memory cannot be entirely excluded but continues to exert an extremely powerful effect. The paradoxical result of this effort toward off an overwhelming experience is to give it a lasting power to cause pain. In the normal course of experience, a memory would be brought into the "great complex of associations ... alongside other experiences" where it "is subjected to rectification by other ideas" (Herman 9). It means to say, a normal person would be able to dissipate any disturbing feelings through this process of association with other thoughts, ideas and memories.

Because of the helplessness, a person, after a traumatic experience or during PTSD, can re-experience the trauma mentally and physically. The state of helplessness and physical or mental trauma creates suffering, anxiety and pain on a person with the realization of guilt. In the same way, Coleridge's main protagonist the Mariner realizes the nature of his guilt after killing the bird in a cold blood and suffers

both mentally and physically. His suffering is created when he is punished by the natural world and the spiritual world. The suffering, anxiety and pain in the Mariner created out of punishment can be seen in the form of the Mariner's deprivation of natural elements: food and water, "Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink" (Coleridge 122). This physical and mental punishment makes him a living dead. He is under the bout of constant pain and has the constant urge to tell others his tales in order to momentarily relieve his pain, "That agony returns: And till my ghastly tale is told, This hurt within me burns" (583-85). These lines clearly state how he is continuously hunted by trauma of guilt and how he is forced to shelter on ghastly tales telling to overcome from burning trauma/anxiety.

Similarly, the Marine's pain, anxiety and suffering created out of his guilt of killing albatross which causes the death of his two hundred mates and his psychologically deranged and his tempt in PTSD is clearly visible in Part III of the poem lines too. The Mariner is frequently repeating his tales to whoever he met to overcome from his state of helplessness. The state of helplessness and entrapment is represented in the following lines:

And every tongue, through utter drought

Was withered at the root

We could not speak, no more than if

We had been choked with soot. (135-38)

Coleridge clearly in the above lines tells not only the helplessness situation of the Mariner rather he vividly describes the suffering of the entire crew. The entire crew members are punished and they neither can speak according to their desire nor can do other things as they, instead all of them are forced to remain in the state of entrapment

and trauma. The unethical act of the protagonist brings suffering in all, which traumatizes more and more to him after the realization of guilt.

The act of the Mariner brings problems in entire natural phenomena. When the problems spread everywhere, the helplessness situation increases more. The state of helplessness makes him realize his guilt and his trauma becomes intense. The same feeling of guilt caused by his own act of killing the bird is expressed in Part IV of the poem when the Mariner says, “For the sky and the sea and the sea and the sky, Lay like a load on my weary eye, And the dead were at my feet”(250-52). These lines are the evident for the feeling of guilt which convey the entrapment of the Mariner. The Mariner feels trapped and suffers from fear of everything. The psychological strain reaches its extreme limit when even the Sun appears to be behind the bars to the Mariner as he further states; “And straight the sun was flecked with bars, As if through a dungeon-grate he peered (177-79). The anxiety or irrational fear of hell traumatizes him. The mariner is frightened with each things and he cannot face any things naturally because of his guilt. The anxiety and irrational fear of hell created out of guilt traumatizes the Mariner makes him breathlessness, excessive sweating, dry mouth, nausea, feeling sick, heart palpitations, and inability to speak or think clearly, a fear of dying, a sensation of detachment from reality and an anxiety attack, which is in the following lines:

But oh! more horrible than that  
 Is the curse in a dead man's eye!  
 Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,  
 And yet I could not die. (259-62)

These lines clearly depict torment of the Mariner using vivid images of the weary eye. He cannot avoid the eyes of dead man, and accepts their curse. He is in pathetic stage;

neither can he die nor can he go away from their curse. The sin committed by him traps him and keeps him in horror of being sent to hell. So he accepts that he is the one who brought about this destruction.

The mariner takes the responsibilities of his crime and remembers the invisible creator or God or supernatural spirits to help him, and at that miserable state, he utters, "from the land of mist and snow" (134). As soon as he starts loving and respecting the God or the creator, he wanted to consult with them. He uses the words mist to represent their invisibility. Although they are invisible, he respects and feels his mistake of challenging natural law developed by them. In his poor state, he calls them from the land of mist to rid up from trauma. The Mariner suffers from the anxiety of justice, death, punishment which traumatizes and makes him victim of different phobia, which he expresses:

"God save thee, ancient Mariner,  
From the fiends that plague thee thus!  
Why look's thou so?" -"With my crossbow  
I shot the Albatross." (79-82)

The cause of the mariner's trauma of guilt is depicted in the above lines. The Mariner shoots and kills the albatross without any apparent motive or reason, which is the cause of his trauma. These ending lines of part I allegorically reveal Mariner's act in many ways: a simple violation of hospitality, a recreation of Adam's fall in the Garden of Eden etc. The Mariner feels that the spiritual world is reprimanding him, holding him responsible for the death of the sailors, and his sufferings multiply by being forced to watch his crew being released. He wants to transform himself from the state of helplessness and repeats events. As soon as a spiritual transformation in him occurs in him, he is able to see the true beauty in all the 'ugly creatures' and

'slimy things'. He blesses them "a spring of love gushed from my heart" (284). Now he manages to pray, the albatross falls from his neck and his guilt is partially expiated. The ship with dead bodies, possessed by good spirits, steers back home and sinks in a whirlpool. The Mariner is left behind. As penance, he wanders around and narrates his story to teach, preach and come up from trauma.

We can trace out some other symptoms in the mariner like paranoia, anxiety disorder, depression or elation, and depersonalization. Mariner's reactions are beautifully portrayed from the psychoanalytic point of view. With his careful craftsmanship, fear psychosis is relevantly produced. The mental stress of a person under a crisis has remarkably been evoked in the poem. This incredible piece of art expresses how the realization of divine love within oneself has the power to heal pain and suffer and to come out of the sense of trauma of guilt too. The sense of guilt in the Mariner in the poem is allegorically the effect of the colonization which is exposed through the realization of the Mariner. The Mariner suffers from his real experience of colonial guilt. As in colonial project, she killed to the albatross, which symbolically stands for innocent colonized whom colonizers killed without any reason. The Mariner tells her real experience of killing albatross in order to overcome from his colonial guilt of trauma. The same kind of suffering is seen in Shelley's *Frankenstein* too.

In the novel, the Frankenstein undergoes traumatic experiences that reflect a condition that relates to understanding one's self throughout the novel. And he is constantly trying to define himself as he suffers through multiple traumas. In psychoanalytical terms, a trauma always comes "second" time. In other words, trauma does not exist until a second traumatic event awakens the first and thus is recognized or known as trauma. The traumatic figures the Mariner and the Frankenstein recall the

past event frequently after recognizing their guilt. Trauma theory therefore recognizes that trauma comes into being by the sudden intrusion of a person's essential being that distinguishes them from others. It is also considered as the object of introspection or reflexive action. Trauma here refers to an experience that punctures the psyche, thus creating an unnamable absence in memory. Memories cannot be remembered by the consciousness. In addition to trauma theory, literary analysis helps us hear this intrusion through tracing the unknown memory and in doing so brings forth the allegorical trauma narrative. As Caruth notes: "It is the specific point at which knowing and not knowing intersect that the language of literature and the psychoanalytic theory of traumatic experience precisely meet" (3). The Frankenstein and TheMariner are situated at this crossroads of knowing and not knowing, which suggests that tracing their memory expose the wound of their beings and situate them as the major characters in the trauma narratives.

The treatment for the patients of traumatic memories by encouraging them gradually to revisit the painful emotions stirred up by the trauma and to reintegrate their memories of their experience into normal consciousness. For example, Frankenstein, while rotting in jail for the murder of Clerval, contemplates; "At one time I considered whether I should not declare myself guilty, and suffer the penalty of law, less innocent than poor Justine had been" (Shelley 184). Frankenstein compares himself to the pure Justine, considering him innocent. He says that "poor unhappy Justine was as innocent as [him]" (189). Though he does not accept his guilt directly, his partial recalling of the past helps him to lessen the psychological pain. He often develops avoidance and avoidance of processing emotions related to the memory and the trauma. Here, in addition to habituation and trauma processing, repeated exposure

to the trauma memory and avoided stimuli also allows for the development of an understanding of the full context of what happened.

The female character Justine in *Frankenstein* is condemned for a murder she does not commit and loss her life because of her unproven innocence. She is not guilty for the murder of young William. Instead, the monster's hands are the ones who strangled away William's life, and Frankenstein too is consequently guilty. Frankenstein created the very monster that resulted in the death of his brother, Justine, and Clerval though he does not accept it directly. He rather tries to avoid the detail memory of his guilt. After trauma, people who develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder tend avoid thinking about the memory in enough detail to really look at the full context of what happened. They have snippets of the memory, of what they believe they did wrong, and what they wish they had done differently. But, they don't really look at the full context. The same Frankenstein is doing. He is recalling Justine only but does not recall his process of creating the monster was mistake. And, just allowing themselves to retell the story over and over, gives them that context, which can be incredibly helpful to understand what and why they did, and why things turned out the way they did. When people feel guilt, they tend to overestimate their role and responsibility in the negative outcome. So, having a chance to remember more aspects of what happened can be extremely helpful to reducing guilt. In light of trauma theory, Frankenstein has remembered Justine only at the critical time of his own life. He also has an equal amount of blood on his hands as the monster and unfairly equates his guilt with Justine's though Frankenstein does not tell it directly and finally he has been helpless like the Mariner, and he tells his tales to Robert Walton. Frankenstein recognizes that he indeed played a part in the deaths of his loved ones. This guilt he feels after realizing what he had contributed to lead to his ceaseless

search for the monster. He after realizing his mistake determines to kill the monster and destroys the female partner demon he designed. When Frankenstein's fight was terminated by death, his monster visited his coffin asking for his forgiveness. He explains that "evil thenceforth became [his] good" and he, although he felt guilty, "continued to kill to prove his point and get revenge on Frankenstein" (218). The creature realizes his guilt and contribution to the ultimate death of Frankenstein, but also realizes that he is not the only monster in the situation. And he further says, "Am I to be thought the only criminal, when all human kind sinned against me?" (219). The monster directly causes the deaths of the innocent people and Frankenstein plays his part as well, but society is also guilty of driving them to this madness through pressures, judgments, and expectations. Though the peoples' hands do not physically strangle the victims, guilt can be found in all. That's why both Frankenstein and his monster are suffering from the sense of guilt and the very trauma of own deeds. The Mariner in Coleridge's poem is also no less wretched from the feeling of guilt associated with trauma .Coleridge's Mariner does not escape his feelings associated with trauma, and express how she relieves from trauma of guilt in the following lines:

at an uncertain hour,

That agony returns:

And till my ghastly tale is told,

This heart within me burns. (582-85)

Like Frankenstein, the mariner too is responsible for guilt. The difference between them is; the mariner takes the responsibility of her guilt directly and repeats events repeatedly to overcome from her guilt whereas the Frankenstein does not take directly the responsibility of his unethical act though he tells to lessen his trauma.

Trauma theory documents that the only means to long-lasting relief from trauma is to engage in a dialogic process of witnessing with an “authentic listener” (Laub73) or a “survivor by proxy,” a term introduced by Robert J. Lifton, a psychoanalyst who has treated survivors of the Holocaust and Hiroshima, among other traumatic experiences. In an interview with Caruth, Lifton, speaking about the psychotherapeutic experience from the point of view of an analyst argues:

That you must in some significant psychological way experience what they [survivors] experience. You can never do that quite. But it's being a survivor by proxy, and the proxy's important. You're not doing what they did, you're not exposed to what they were exposed to, but you must take your mind through, take your feelings through what they went through, and allow that in. It's hard, it's painful, and yet you know you must do it as you come into contact with it, and the people who have done the best therapy with survivors and who have written the most importantly and movingly about survivors have had to do that. (145)

In Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* the Mariner, a survivor of the horrendous event, narrates the horrific past experiences as a therapy for the traumatic memory. His “crisis of witnessing” (Felman and Laub xvii) is compounded by the fact that not only are his listeners limited, but he suffers the same conceptual limits, specifically he suffers from the Christian paradigm of crime, guilt, confession, penance, purification, redemption in his attempts to frame his traumatic experience. In telling his tale, the Mariner is up against what all severely traumatized people are, “the insufficiency of any known system of explanation” (Herman 178). And on top of the limits manifest within the tale, readers are subject to their own conceptual limits.

In this regard Frances Ferguson says, “It seems that a reader can only read the texts that say what he already knows” (72). For example, the Mariner is both executor and sufferer, and when he tries to stop his listener, listeners at first are reluctant to listen to his tale because of conceptual limit because they are not familiar with the Mariner’s tale as stated by Ferguson. Sometimes, these conceptual terms are inadequate and misleading to trace trauma of guilt. Coleridge’s Mariner feels guilty for his crime frequently, and exists in some kind of Levian “gray zone,” “poorly defined, where the two camps of masters and servants both diverge and converge, challenging our need to judge” (Levi 42), a challenging that is typical of the post-traumatic condition. In coming to terms with issues of guilt, the survivor needs the help of others who are willing to recognize that a traumatic event has occurred, to suspend their preconceived judgments, and simply to bear witness to her tale” (Herman 68). The main protagonists Frankenstein and the mariner of both texts look for other’s help and judgment in their Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder stage.

The Mariner, like many trauma survivors, is compelled to tell his story, because it remains indecipherable, un-integrated and incomprehensible, like an anomaly demanding a new or alternate paradigm of thought. In Chapter I of *The Drowned and the Saved*, Levi states that “the memory of a trauma suffered or inflicted is itself traumatic because recalling it is painful or at least disturbing” (24). He tells story upon which to build a new paradigm of thought capable of integrating and accounting for the indecipherable. The guilt and shame associated with survival is compounded by the fact that he is “not [one of] the true witnesses” (24). The Mariner is articulating his “discovery of the ways in which understanding breaks down” (Caruth 155) and speaking for those who cannot speak about that which cannot be spoken about. Coleridge’s Mariner lacks the capacity to transcend his own

paradigmatic limits. The Mariner judges himself, as do his fellow crew members, by altogether inappropriate terms, something the reader becomes aware of as he or she witnesses him or herself becoming a survivor by alternative. Coleridge's Mariner never himself encounters a survivor by proximity or alternative and is destined to repeat his surreal tale of horror and death to individuals, who are unwilling and incapable of really listening. Dialogic process goes on even with unwilling Hermit and Wedding-Guest. About this dialogic process, Michael Macovski in his chapter on "Rime" in *Dialogue and Literature* outlines:

The auditor contained within the poem . . . becomes a synecdoche for rhetorical resistance, for poetic agonist. It is this resistance on the part of an incorporated auditor that ensures that the poetic speaker will continue to respond, endeavoring to answer an interlocutor's protests and queries. In this sense, agonism serves to perpetuate dialogue. (97)

Indeed, this agonistic relationship perpetuates a pathological retelling of the tale of trauma. However, it does not provide a relationship necessary for the victim of trauma. In this case, the Mariner integrates the pre-and post-traumatic selves. The Mariner must therefore go on reliving, at uncertain times, and in largely dissociated terms, his tale of woe. For this, Bessel A. Kolk states that, "Lack of proper integration of intensely emotionally arousing experiences into the memory system results in dissociation and the formation of traumatic memories" (163). The only way trauma theory suggests for the victim of trauma to integrate the pre-and post-traumatic selves, if it happens at all, is for there to be a fully affective dialogic act of witnessing between the teller of the tale and an "authentic listener" (Laub 73), not an agonistic one. The trust in this dialogic authentic relationship enables the survivor to reconnect with the previously dissociated emotional content of the trauma and thus reconnect

the shattered. As trauma theorist Bessel van der Kolk notes, ‘there is absolutely no controversy about the significance of constructing a trauma, and telling it to an empathic other in recovering from trauma’ (O’Loughlin 203). This is essentially a communal mourning process that can lead to “the holy grail of an integrated personality” (202). In constructing a trauma in this manner, the survivor and ‘survivor by proxy’ create and sustain, however temporarily, an alternate paradigm or conceptual and ethical space through which to frame and decipher the indecipherable.

Unknowingly, the Mariner, while seeking to be shriven, is searching for an integrated personality, unfortunately, he needs to do so in a different conceptual and ethical dialogic space that does not resist or attempt to expiate extreme feelings of shame and guilt, but rather seeks to get at their source. As many critics suggest, the Mariner in the poem is seeking to alleviate or absolve himself of the guilt of shooting the Albatross. The Frankenstein feels sense of guilt for creating the monster and the monster feels the sense of guilt for being rude to his creator, and both of them are seeking way to alleviate their guilt. Guilt is centrally a transgression, a crime, the violation of a specific taboo, boundary or legal code by a definite voluntary act. Through the various shadings of meaning “there is the sense of the committing of a specific offense, the state of being justifiably liable to penalty. In the usual definitions there is no self-reference as there is in shame” (Lynd 23).

In the novel, Frankenstein and the monster are affected time after time by struggles, including the ghastly deaths of loved ones, persecution and rejection from society. Attributing each other as the cause of one another’s hardships, Frankenstein and the monster are bent on revenge. However, rather than dying at the hands of one another, the troubled characters sink to their demise in their individual pool of miseries. Shelley regularly employs the word ‘misery’ in the novel means a condition

of external unhappiness, discomfort, or distress, to describe the depressed sentiments of Frankenstein and the creature. This highlights the selfishness both exhibit and how drowning in one's own miseries can equate to self-inflicting physical and emotional pain.

The frequency of misery increases over the course of the novel as each successive death of Frankenstein's family member transpires. Frankenstein may feel remorse for the losses, but he also does not do much other than complain. After the death of his younger brother William, Frankenstein takes a couple days leave to dwell in the seclusion of nature in order to contemplate on William's death and "the misery [he] imagined and dreaded" (Shelley 77) will ensue in the future. Despite this, Frankenstein refuses to alert anyone of the threat the creature imposes. After Justine's unjust execution, Frankenstein again departs on a journey through magnificent valleys and mighty mountains while "indulging in the misery of reflection" (98). Frankenstein chooses to ignore how he had a chance to absolve Justine of all guilt by revealing the existence of his rampaging creation. His desire for his own continued survival outweighed his wish for Justine's pardon.

Frankenstein also never considers himself as the source of this guilt. Instead, he blames fate, inadvertently and his parents. Frankenstein states his future was "in their hands to direct to happiness or misery" (35) and mentions that if his father had not dismissed the views of Cornelius Agrippa, then he would not have taken a stronger interest in "natural philosophy" and end up with a "tale of misery" (40). To top off the chain of blame is the creature, even though he suffers greatly from his own string of melancholies. He is constantly denied any opportunity of friendship or intimacy because of his grotesque appearance. The monster is not completely cleared of having selfish and condemning tendencies. He points his finger at Frankenstein as

the reason for his “insupportable misery” (138). The monster laments about his birth—“Cursed, cursed creator! Why did I live?” (138) but believes achieving revenge in the form of murder is the rightful purpose of the remainder of his life.

Frankenstein and the monster consider themselves as the most miserable being of all time, which is stated, “No guilt, no mischief, no malignity, no misery, can be found comparable to” (223) to the creature’s and “misery had her dwelling in [Frankenstein’s heart]” (190). As a result of these perspectives, both push aside sympathy for others that actually deserve it and fight each other out of greed for pity. Specifically, Frankenstein completely dismisses the character of a poor woman nursing him to health by negatively labeling her as someone who will not sympathize “in sights of misery” (182). He has no right to assume she lacked a strict dose of miseries throughout her lifetime. The more Frankenstein and the monster despair, the more insensitive they become to the difficulties of others’ lives.

By the end of the novel, misery appears to be a major cause of Frankenstein and the creature’s deaths. Frankenstein succumbs to a fever of vengeance, hatred and misery while the creature decides to escape from a world of vengeance, hatred and misery through suicide. The two, however, fail to ever obtain a desire to try for reconciliation or repentance. They instead act on adverse emotions and thus deteriorate into beings with immoral and hateful mindsets. Guilt can be compared to the fire which the creature was once warmed and later consumed by: it grows and grows, kindled by an excess of the same severe unhappiness. Frankenstein and the creature did not bother to extinguish the flame when it started. In consequence, selfishness and intolerance cultivated within them, and they burned.

Like the misery of Frankenstein and his monster, the Mariner in the poem is also in the same miserable condition because of the guilt and shame. With shame, “the

exposure may be to others but, whether others are or are not involved, it is always . . . exposure to one's own eyes" (Lynd 28), and the eyes of the Mariner's dead crew members in the mind's eye of memory, are always upon him: "The look with which they looked on me / Had never passed away" (Coleridge 255/6). Judith Herman defines this guilt "is a response to helplessness, the violation of bodily integrity, and the indignity suffered in the eyes of another person" (53). He further defines the traumatic survivor has the feeling that he "might be alive in the place of another, at the expense of another" (29). The Mariner's "curse," is the curse of shame and guilt, "the curse in a dead man's eye," (132) the guilt stemming from the inability to prevent the deaths of others or to bring upon his own. "The curse is not simply a matter of guilt only or of survivor's guilt only" (White 823), and Coleridge himself knew this, at least about himself. "In his *Notebooks*, he speaks of an inexplicable feeling of causeless shame & sense of a sort of guilt" (Macovski 84). Indeed, Macovski goes further than any other critic in exposing the degree to which Coleridge needed to expose shameful parts of himself in his writings, "Coleridge's approach to this imminent 'Evil' ['causeless shame' or 'secret lodger'] is to expose it. To expose it, one must have 'sufficient strength of character'" (85). Moreover, as Harry White notes, "Coleridge believed men could be held morally accountable for their derangement because he thought the greater part of such misery still lay within the power of their conscious control" (815). White quotes Coleridge further as "'there is a feverish distemperature of Brain, during which some horrible phantom threatens our Eyes in every corner, until emboldened by Terror we rush on it and then why then we return, the Heart indignant at its own palpitation! Even so will the greater part of our mental Miseries vanish before an effort'" (815). However, the eyes of the "phantoms" that threaten us cannot be vanished and they will not vanish unless they are integrated

into a post-traumatic conception of self. It is not just enough to engage in a dialogic process with oneself. What is needed, says Lifton, is the dialogical exchange with another person willing to “take [one’s] mind through, take [one’s] feelings through what they [the victims of trauma] went through and allow that in” (Caruth 145). This kind of willingness is missing in the Mariner’s interlocutors, but it is something Coleridge’s readers may discover in the act of reading, and if they do, they are survivors by proxy. They are not just sadder and wiser. They have willingly engaged in an ethical and transformative process capable of being translated into human interaction.

The Mariner needs a survivor by proxy, but such a survivor is very hard to come by, even within the psychotherapeutic situation. In his interview with Caruth, Lifton characterizes the “therapist’s false witness to the survivor’s trauma” as an act of “taking the survivor on a false path” based on the therapist’s need “to deny death” (143). Caruth makes sense of this false witness in a way that characterizes those Coleridgean fictional post-traumatic witnesses, namely the Hermit, the Wedding-Guest and the Gloss-Writer, who are compelled to listen to the Mariner’s story. Paraphrasing Lifton, Caruth states, “So in a way what you’re saying is that the ideological moment is when the therapist draws on this paradigm . . . the moment at which the trauma gets assimilated into that narrative of ‘you must have had a stress in your childhood’”(142). “The most common constrictive responses [by therapists] are doubting or denial of the patient’s reality, dissociation or numbing, minimization or avoidance of the traumatic material, professional distancing or frank abandonment of the patient” (Herman 151). In other words, finding an empathic witness is very difficult; even professionally trained psychotherapists act as false witnesses. Coleridge’s “Rime” is full of ideologically driven false witnesses.

The Mariner symbolizes a universal sinner and all the sailors represent the human beings who too are guilty of being accomplice in crime. Albatross symbolizes a Christian soul. It brings good omen for the ship but faces the cruelty of the Mariner that turns into a burden, guilt, an obstacle for the Mariner, the dead body of which is hung around his neck by the sailors. We see delusion of faith. In English law, delusion has been the cardinal feature of insanity for the last two hundred years. A spirit had followed them; neither departed souls nor angels. The same theme is reflected in the following lines of the poem:

And some in dreams assured  
 Were of the Spirit that plagued us so;  
 Nine fathom deep he had followed us  
 From the land of mist and snow.(131-34)

As this statement opines, some religious beliefs can be pathological. They exist outside of the proof of scientific explanations; therefore, quite easily can be branded as delusional from the point of view of rationality. In clinical practice, there are no clear guidelines to differentiate normal religious beliefs from pathological religious delusions. Religious beliefs and delusions can arise from neurologic lesions and anomalous experiences, suggesting that at least some religious beliefs can be pathological.

In shooting the bird, the Mariner has initiated a traumatic rupture in his conception of the self and the world. He is, as the Wedding-Guest sees, plagued by this irreconcilable act and moment. Indeed, he cannot grasp, thus we cannot grasp why he did it or how he did it. But the why or how is beside the point: “the identity they [survivors of trauma] have formed prior to the trauma is irrevocably destroyed” (Herman 56). Significantly, “Rime” marks the Mariner’s conception of the

traumatized self as the “I” enters the poem for the first time. The Mariner’s opting for guilt rather than “utter helplessness” and inexplicability embodies a “crisis of witnessing” (Felman and Laub 34). He can only say what he did, but he cannot make sense of it nor integrate it into his sense of himself or the world. That integration can only come through a dialogic exchange with a survivor by proxy.

In the “Aftermath of Traumatic Life Events” Herman states, “survivors are highly vulnerable. Their sense of self has been shattered. That sense can be rebuilt, only as it was built initially, in connection with others” (61). What the Mariner needs is a confirmation and recognition of his own humanity. As Laub, in the context of his discussion of the testimony of Holocaust survivors, says, “It is this very commitment to truth, in a dialogic context with an authentic listener which allows for a reconciliation, which makes the resumption of life . . . at all possible” (73). “It is,” Laub contends, a “dialogic process of exploration and reconciliation of two worlds—the one that was brutally destroyed and the one that is” (74). When the Mariner stops the Wedding-Guest, it is to initiate dialogue and, unknowingly to access the truth of him, a truth that can only be known paratactically within the gaps. It is not accessible through fear driven questions that are inherently denials of the Mariner’s post-traumatic normalcy. Tragically, the Mariner never comes across the necessary authentic listener. He always comes up against “agonistic witnesses” who may leave “sadder and wiser,” (Macovski 12) but they are anything but empathic.

The Wedding Guest acknowledges the Mariner’s tortured state in the question, “Why look’st thou so?” (Coleridge 130) which might make one think that the Wedding-Guest is acting as a survivor by proxy, from this point on, the Wedding-Guest is either silent or in fear of the guilt- and shame-ridden Mariner and wants nothing more than to escape. At the end of Part 3, for example, the Mariner relates the

death of “Four times fifty living men” (216) and the departure of their souls, which he says, “passed me by, / Like the whizz of my cross-bow!” (Coleridge 222/3), giving concrete form to his guilt and responsibility. This triggers the Wedding-Guest’s self-centered interjection which is revealed in the following lines:

I fear thee, ancient Mariner!

I fear thy skinny hand!

And thou art long, and lank, and brown

As is the ribbed sea-sand. (224-27)

He fears the Mariner is one of the walking dead, hence the Mariner’s reassuring response: “Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest! / This body dropt not down” (230/31). In this connection, Ward Pafford notes, “The point of the reassurance is, of course, that the Mariner is a fellow human” (623). The Wedding-Guest is a false witness, resistant to the tale of death. The Mariner, however, insists upon his own humanity. He was and is alive, and says to the Wedding-Guest, “Alone, alone, all, all alone / Alone on a wide wide sea!” (132-3). Or as Judith Herman has learned from survivors recovering from traumatic experience, “the traumatic syndromes are normal human responses to extreme circumstances” (158). For him, the traumatized person’s responses are natural in excessive suffering.

In two texts examined in this dissertation, guilt-related references of the main characters’ unethical activity, imageries, themes and narrative techniques are crucial intra-textual link. The main parallel between *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Frankenstein* is that both include ambitious characters, who reject the social ties and commit crimes against nature. The Ancient Mariner leaves behind the familiar community and embarks on a bold journey to new territories. Robert Walton’s daring expedition goes to the North Pole to “ascertain the secret of the magnet” (Shelley 8).

The Mariner asserts his dominance over the animal kingdom and rejects a proffered relationship when kills the friendly Albatross. Frankenstein violates the nature by rudely “penetrating in to her recesses” (28). In his obsessive pursuit of scientific knowledge and he usurps nature’s laws by creating life in his laboratory. His work is anti-social in that he pursues it alone and does not visit or writes to his family while he is engaged in to it.

Both the Mariner and Frankenstein espouse morals that condemn selfish ambition and advocate a loving, harmonious co-existence with people and other living things too. This message is conveyed in the Mariner’s lines, “He prayeth well who loveth well/ Both man and birds and beast” (Coleridge 612/13). He on the way of further advocating loving and harmonious relation states:

Oh sweeter than the Marriage feast,  
 ‘Tis sweeter far to me,  
 To walk together to the Kirk  
 With a goodly company! (601-4)

These above lines clearly state what the Mariner wants after the realization of his guilt. Similarly, Victor Frankenstein tells Walton to “seek happiness in tranquility and avoid ambition” (Shelley 152). He also admonishes Walton that “if the study to which you apply yourself has a tendency to weaken your affections then that study is certainly unlawful, that is to say, not befitting the human mind” (33). Robert Walton, unlike Victor, writes to his sister and longs for a friend while engaged in his quest for knowledge and glory, and he turns back from his expedition when his crews feel unsafe. He thereby avoids Victor’s crime and gives up ambition with loving concern for others. As Walton himself says, directly comparing his situation to that of the Mariner, he “kills no albatross” on his journey to “the land of mist and snow” (11) but

instead respects the needs and rights of other beings. Here the sense of guilt for destroying the nature and natural creatures is common in both texts.

Another similarity between Coleridge and Shelley is that both of them experienced tremendous loneliness in their own lives; their journals are filled with lamentations about their solitary state, “it was the will of the Providence that I should pursue my pilgrimage alone,” (Coleridge 523). In another entry, Coleridge addresses his ‘dear’ notebook as the “Sole confidant of a breaking heart, whose social nature compels some outlet...I have not a soul on earth to whom I can reveal and yet I am not a God, that I should stand alone and therefore you, my passive , yet sole, kind, friend I reveal them” (38). Similarly, in her first entry after Percy Shelley death, Shelley writes, “now I am alone! Oh, how alone! White paper- will though be my confident? I will trust thee fully, for non shall see what I write” (429). In another entry of 21 October 1838, after describing her retiring personality and the tragedies of her life, Shelley concludes, “all this has sunk me in a state of loneliness no other human being ever before I believe endured- Expect Robinson Crusoe” (555). Finally, an entry from Shelley’s journal for 16 April 1841 consists solely of the following lines: “Alone-alone-all-all alone/ upon the wide, wide sea/ And God will not take pity on/ My soul in agony!” (573). A sense of radical isolation of being incomplete and lacking the other who would supply one’s missing half is one of the central affinities between Coleridge and Shelley and it is one of the most pervasive and haunting elements of the Mariner and Frankenstein too. The fact that Shelley quoted the stanza on solitude in her journal leaves no doubt that she responded deeply to this dimension of Coleridge’s poem.

The morals that advocate nurturing family and community relationships are undermined in both texts. Not only are many characters alone in both works but the

relationships that are presented are fraught with guilt conflict, pain and resentment. These terms characterize all of the Mariner and Frankenstein's relationships with others and on some level virtually all of other characters as well. It can be interpreted that various problematic relationships in both works as the expressions conflicted feelings towards mother, father and sibling figures. For example, the killing of albatross in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* has been interpreted as a matricide, a patricide and a fratricide. The albatross is maternal in that sense that it is associated with food and protection. It is paternal in that it is associated with God the Father. Critics frequently relate the poem's depiction of troubled family relationships to Coleridge's own conflicted feelings towards his mother, his younger brother Frank and his older brother George, who became a father figure after his natural father died when Coleridge was eight years old. David Miall identifies "the source of Mariner's guilt over shooting the albatross as Coleridge's repressed childhood belief that he was somehow responsible for his father's sudden death and would be punished for it" (41).

*Frankenstein* also conveys ambivalence towards mothers, fathers and siblings who have been associated with figures in Shelley's life. Most of the characters in the novel, like Shelley herself, lacks mother and the parallel between Frankenstein's abandonment of his Creature the moment it comes to life and Mary Wollstonecraft's death shortly after giving birth to her daughter is hard to ignore. Just as the Mariner's reaction to the shooting the albatross has been interpreted as a reflection of Coleridge's traumatized response to his father's death, the Creature's intense pain as well as his anger at his parent for abandoning him has been read as a reflection of Shelley's own troubled feelings towards her mother: guilt from the sense of being responsible for her death and anger over her mother's neglect, that Gilbert and Gubar note, "Shelley like all orphans, must have feared that she had been deliberately

deserted by the dead parent" (43). All of these similar references included in both texts create the close intra-textual link related to trauma of guilt.

This kind of mental injury in both writers has been outlined in their literary texts. Both their texts have many references of individual guilt, childhood memories and impacts of colonial expansion and lack of family cares. In order to lessen the psychological pain both writers have used literary writings as the strongest means of outlets. So, these texts are key examples of the expressions of individual, social and national guilt and trauma. Both writers speak about the trauma of colonial guilt in order to normalize it.

## Chapter Four

### Conclusion: Normalizing the Trauma of Guilt in Coleridge and Shelley

The present dissertation has tried to scrutinize the feeling of guilt and sense of trauma in two 19<sup>th</sup> century Romantic writers Coleridge and Shelley in their respective texts *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* a poem and *Frankenstein* a novel respectively. Both texts have left an indelible trend at the time they were composed. These texts have abundant references of personally committed mistakes, lack of family care, death of parents, childhood memories, and effects of the scientific innovations, impacts of colonization and drawbacks of the then national policies. In order to lessen the psychological pain of above mentioned events, they have used literary writings as the surest means of expression for their feeling of guilt and sense of trauma. So, these are the texts of guilt and trauma.

Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and Shelley's *Frankenstein* not only reveal the process of grasping the unattainable which is fundamental to trauma, but fictional tales that emulate and inform the process of testifying to the traumatic experience of the central characters Mariner and Frankenstein the Genevan student. There are many similarities between both texts, regarding their sources of creations, imageries, themes and narrative techniques. The main characters in both texts reject the social ties and commit crimes against nature and own creations. The Mariner leaves behind the familiar community and embarks on a bold journey to new territories. The Mariner asserts his dominance over the mammal kingdom and rejects a proffered relationship when kills the friendly Albatross. Frankenstein violates the nature by rudely piercing in to it process. In his obsessive pursuit of scientific knowledge and he usurps nature's laws by creating life in his laboratory. His work is

anti-social in that he pursues it alone and does not keep in touch with his family members while he is engaged in to it.

While the Frankenstein and the Mariner appear to be similar, their stories finish in a very different way. The Mariner blames himself for the deaths of his crew, believing that he was survived in disgusting condition. However, he comes to realize that he is not to blame for their deaths and that all life, even the life of the sea snakes that he once thought to be so hideous, is beautiful. In contrast, Victor continues to blame himself indirectly for the deaths that occur in the wake of the creation that he believes is a monster that should no longer live. He believes that the creature not only deserves to die, but should be forced to suffer pains much worse than the ones he experienced from the creature's entire existence. Victor follows the "monster" to the ends of the Earth, only to become ill and die before he can end the miserable life that he created. Both Victor and the mariner suffer through situations that result in death followed by guilt. In the end they are only similar because Shelley needed to get across to her audience that more than one person is affected by a person's actions. The similarities in their situations, as created by Shelley based on Coleridge's poem, do their best in strengthening and translating Shelley's message to the readers.

This study of two writers Coleridge and Shelley with their respective texts, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Frankenstein* deals with the feeling of guilt and trauma of the writers too. Both writers had been suffered from the trauma of guilt due to colonial excesses and colonial mentalities of the time. Their feelings of guilt and trauma are reflected while creating their respective texts. Trauma and guilt are related with each other. Feeling of guilt leads to the persistent memories of the overwhelming events as it is called trauma. Guilt is a common response of following loss and

traumatic experiences with significant victimization. When events result in severe traumatic reactions, multiple losses can occur.

As we have already known trauma is always repeated time and again. In this repetition there are subtle changes in the fore grounded expressions of the narrative too. The repetition of trauma helps to normalize the life of the victim. If the traumatic experiences are repressed, that causes severe mental disorders. The real beauty of the trauma lies in its setting of victim's life as it happens in its repetition. We may reexamine and reassess our sense of meaning and belief such as the meaning of the event and the experience, issues of trust, connectedness to others, and the goodness and badness of human beings. 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.

Despite being outwardly simple in nature, some kinds of guilt are more complex. Some guilt may become entangled with other posttraumatic issues such as an improved sense of connectedness to others with whom the trauma was experienced. Traumatic strain shakes up numerous relationships. We may reexamine and reassess our sense of meaning and belief such as the meaning of the event and the experience, issues of trust, connectedness to others, and the goodness and badness of human beings. 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.

Trauma survivors experience a particular type of trauma-related guilt, called survivor guilt. Survivor guilt is often experienced when a person has gone through some kind of traumatic event. He may even blame himself for surviving a traumatic event as if he did something wrong.. Coleridge and Shelley had experienced

tremendous loneliness in their own lives. That's why they have expressed their lamentations about their solitary state in their texts. Finally, the two texts *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Frankenstein* are linked together because of the sense of the colonial guilt, and narrativization of the stories to sooth the trauma of colonial guilt.

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