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### BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE, TRAUMATOLOGY, AND PHENOMENOLOGY ON THE SINGLE PLATFORM OF LITERATURE ISHIGURO'S FICTION

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The present study was carried out to investigate behavioral neuroscience, traumatology, and phenomenology on a single platform of literature Ishiguro's fiction. The research methodology used to draw results is textual analysis, the textual analysis explored that Ishiguro's novels are a satire on the idea of creativity, and meditation between identity, memory, and expectation and revealed deeper relationships but characters lack self-awareness which they arrive at through the course of their respective stories. Although, the theory applied reflects on who suffers from destructive plasticity. All characters appear to be the results of his own un-healable trauma. All the trauma-afflicted and destructed characters are distinguishable from those who are considered normal and healthy. The lifetime of the main characters of the selected novels where constant growth in age and contact with fellow citizens change the very nature of their thoughts and habits of thinking is a testimony to the fact that self is not static; it is plastic. The analysis also shows that theory of plasticity gives way to such destruction of the selves which embodies the construction of new selves. Applied plasticity is an offshoot of the theory of plasticity which does wonders in transforming the personae and life quality of human beings. The study concludes how Ishiguro's characters have the relevance of philosophy in the world of today.

## INTRODUCTION

Self is Plastic; it follows an unremitting trail of transformations. The theory of plasticity uproots the first instruction of philosophy that is “know thy self”. Owing to the unearthing of the idea that all subjectivities are subjected to transformation makes it difficult to demystify the intricacies of the self. Trauma theory and neurogenesis help to understand self that is the main concern of philosophy. The phenomenon of plasticity is derived from Catherine Malabou's philosophy that links neuroscience, psychoanalysis, and phenomenology together to arrive at the identity of self along with tracking the transformation of self. It is the formation of self through transformation. Malabou's book, *What Should We Do With Our Brain?* focuses on the intersection between psychoanalysis, neuroscience, and philosophy, envisioned through the lens of trauma. The key argument Malabou builds is that Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome and old age are key factors that clarify plasticity. The thesis aims to critically explore and evaluate the form of plastic characters in Ishiguro's literature. More specifically, this paper intends to probe into the proceeding research question: can Ishiguro's characters be called plastic characters and touch the different dynamics of plasticity: one of which is destructive plasticity.

### *Thesis Statement*

Ishiguro's selected fiction unravels a neuropsychological discovery that revolves around the concept of self not being a static entity; it argues that self appears to undergo a ceaseless cycle of formation, transmutation, and deformation. This ontological metamorphosis is largely characterized by destructive plasticity, resulting in ontological violence.

### *Delimitation*

The research under discussion will be delimited to the three works of Ishiguro: *The Buried Giant*, *The Undisclosed* and *A Pale Yellow View of Hills*. In establishing these delimitation parameters, the aim is to make this research more comprehensive, focused and specific.

### **Objectives of Study**

The objectives of this multidisciplinary study are:

1. To bring behavioral neuroscience, trauma studies, and phenomenology together on the platform of literature (Ishiguro's fiction).
2. To study the relevance of philosophy with the world of today.

### *Research Question*

1. How do the trauma-stricken characters in the selected texts of Ishiguro survive destructive plasticity?

### ***Theoretical Framework***

The framework of this research work will be based on the theory of destructive plasticity developed by Catherine Malabou. Man's desire to find meaning has often proved to be fruitless in this meaningless universe. However, there is one thing that is not finite or meaningless; and that is the desire to know the unknown phenomenon, discussed by Catherine Malabou in her essay "Ontology of the Accident", is destructive plasticity as a result of a serious trauma or accident. In this regard, she discusses various things in her essay like: plasticity; destruction by metamorphosis v/s classical metamorphosis; difference in plastic appearance v/s reality; accidental transformation which leads to the formation of other different philosophies of ageing; and various concepts of life and the ultimate destination, death.

It is plasticity that shapes us and makes us identifiable individuals. One such example could be of a person who loses memory as a result of some neural mutation or accident. Malabou feels that all of us must be ready to be the "other", to be someone else as the unpredictable course of life can hijack any individual. Malabou carries on with her discussion about the concepts of destruction by metamorphosis v/s its classic notion, and transformation by quoting examples from Greek mythology. "Metamorphosis never carr[ies] of the true nature of being". Plasticity is actually the mode of infinite possibilities of being. Trauma or accident can destroy the personality but can never undo or disappear the existence that has once been and whose essence will ever remain. Similarly, the road to death is different in the eyes of different philosophers and critics. Some believe it to be a sudden disappearance of a being while others believe it to be a gradual deterioration.

### ***Research Methodology***

The research methodology that will be used to draw results is textual analysis. The strategy applied will be a 'plastic reading' of Ishiguro's texts to analyze their embedded gestation of a neuronal subjectivity (Malabou *Plasticity at the Dusk of Writing* 50). Drawing a framework from Malabou's conception of plasticity, the research project will classify the traces of plasticity in Ishiguro's works.

### ***Textual Analysis***

Literature gives us data to apply and study humanities or even scientific theories on it, to evaluate the results of the study and reach upon a certain conclusion. Catherine Malabou's theory of plasticity has been selected to be applied to the characters of the selected novels of Kazuo Ishiguro. The traces of memory loss, use of selected memory, indifferent and cold behavior due to some identified and some unidentified reasons of trauma leading to the conspicuous changes in self are merged into the lines of "The Uncounseled", "The Buried Giant", and "A Pale Yellow View of Hills" by Ishiguro. The theory of plasticity is a container of all the gears that can deal with the issues Ishiguro's characters are dealing with. Malabou is of the view that the modification in the form of

neuronal connections evokes plasticity that is an indirect, but very basic cause in the formulation of a personality (Malabou OA 3).

The preceding discussion establishes that the theory of plasticity has its three interconnected dimensions; neuroscience, psychoanalysis, and lived philosophy or phenomenology. In the novel "The Unconsoled" by Ishiguro, Mr. Ryder, the protagonist, seems to be an accomplished artist, a renowned pianist, and public figure, but a clue to his abnormality—that will be discussed later—has been given right in the beginning. Ishiguro writes, "The Support Group is made up of ordinary people from every walk of life brought together by their sense of having suffered from the present crisis. You'll be able to hear first-hand accounts of what some people have had to go through" (Ishiguro TU 12). No one knows what crisis underlies the reason of suffering here but some psychological abnormality and issue of memory loss are detected in the behavior of the protagonist right in the beginning, "After several minutes I had succeeded in remembering all but two of the players, but these last two names remained just beyond the rim of my recall. As I tried to remember, the sound of the fountain behind me, which at first I had found quite soothing, began to annoy me. It seemed that if only it would stop, my memory would unlock and I would finally remember the names (24)."

In this small, European town – possibly with Germanic origins – Mr. Ryder, a well-known pianist, was invited to play a special concert. He was also asked to speak briefly. The townspeople were deeply troubled because of their apparent impossibility of producing an important musician and Mr. Ryder was asked to come and strengthen their spirits. Later in the novel, the writer was an anonymous outsider who didn't know the setting, since he never had seen him before. The sound of voices, the blues, and the browns of the eyes behind the familiar odd face: someone else's totally unquestionable presence. However, this other person was strangely absent.

The city's people seem haunted by a recent event when city managers paid attention and support to a young musician, who turned out to have the false "arts values". Mr. Ryder is confused and disappointed that the city cannot be opened to different forms of creative expression. Mr. Ryder was no longer worried; he was indifferent, uncontaminated, cool. He was not the only one who has changed.

The history of Mr. Ryder has been disclosed gradually through other characters' actions, and his own lack of self-awareness has not been revealed by events. Mr. Ryder is so readily distinguished between those who are victims of destructive plasticity and those who are considered normal and healthy, because they are characterized in the course of their destruction.

The story reflects Mr. Ryder's life as an unforeseen failure rather than a sense of progressive transition. The theory reveals how Freud's plasticity conceptualizations overstate the likelihood of recovery and psyche that is immune to destruction. The lifetime of Mr. Ryder, where constant growth in age and contact with fellow citizens changes the very nature of his thoughts and habits of thinking.

Similarly, Ishiguro sets the mood of the novel "The Buried Giant" with a destructive, cold, indifferent environment introduced right at the beginning, "Icy fogs hung over rivers and marshes, serving all too well the ogres that were then still native to this land" (Ishiguro BG 3). The narrator expresses his surprise as, "-one wonders what desperation led them to settle in such gloomy spots — (3)." The setting is scary along with being mysterious, "Or that every so often, an ogre might carry off a child into the mist (4)." This line by the narrator is suggestive of the situation that the people in the age which Ishiguro is going to open up is an age of hard times, "there had been a time when they had lived closer to the fire; a time when they had lived with their children (5)." Cold, misty environment interweaved with the memory loss of the characters is enough to prepare the readers for a destructive drama that could lead to the construction of a new self.

Mr. Ryder lacks self-awareness and self- recognition and the town seems to have a threatening and claustrophobic environment. Mr. Ryder, while taking Boris to his home mentions, "As we continued to walk together through the dark, I tried once more to remember just what he had said that morning, but to no avail (Ishiguro TU 47)." He was holding Boris on his shoulder and made an observation that was again linked to the darkness in the surrounding, "He pressed himself against my body, but said nothing, and when I glanced down at him I saw he was gazing thoughtfully along the darkened street (53)." Mr. Ryder's being unable to recognize his past as well as himself gives a surreal touch to the novel.

The author defines that the life of Mr. Ryder, who found himself in an odd dream-like trance, was seen. His reason why he came to this town becomes increasingly confusing. It, therefore, takes less attention and is easier to deny and ignore. For a rich life, at any rate, a reflective philosophy of destruction is necessary because we each have to deal with our own mortality. So, there's a quick introduction to the trauma and synaptic space to non-evil destruction. Traumatic destruction can be separated relatively easily. The destruction of unsafe, neglected buildings, controlled burns to contain the risk of wood fires are also easy to separate from non-evil and non-painful destruction as explained by Joseph LeDoux that the philosophy which explores and probes the different angles of self cannot lead us properly to arrive at a point where we can establish a liaison between the self and brain. Perhaps some main memories, for which the dark moments are the decisions of life work, have come out of bitter frustration, a sense of treason.

The story unfolds the curtains to a dramatic situation where Mr. Ryder, in the beginning, seems to be a stranger in the city, shocks the readers bit by bit when his behavior confirms his years-old intimacy with every character he comes across. Sophie has been his past lover or wife with her son from another person. Mr. Ryder meets the father of Sophie, Gustav just as Bellhop of the hotel showing no signs of familiarity with him. Gustav, on the other hand, clearly exhibits his acquaintance with Mr. Ryder. On the death of Gustav, by the end of the novel, Mr. Ryder condoles his death in these words, "As you know, I had only known him for a few days, but he had been very kind to me, assisting me with my bags and so on (Ishiguro TU 525)."

Mr. Ryder had been the child of a disturbed family. His father and mother were always on toes. Hailing from a broken family, he had an earnest desire to see his father and mother together. This wish, in the back of his mind, gave him amnesic fantasies that his parents were coming to attend his concert. Catherine Malabou, in her “Ontology of Accident: Destructive Plasticity” describes this situation as,

Something shows itself when there is damage, a cut, something to which normal, creative plasticity gives neither access nor body: the deserting of subjectivity, the distancing of the individual who becomes a stranger to herself, who no longer recognizes anyone, who knows Mr. Ryder was a trauma-inflicted soul. His unhappy past with his parents that culminated in their breakup left him broken from inside in silence. Under the intermittent fits of trauma, he had been having a fantasy of his reunion with his parents since the time unknown. “Do you realise what tonight is? My parents, they're coming tonight. That's right! They're coming at last, tonight! They may well be there at this very moment! ... I might not even get as far as the piano. Or my parents might leave, the moment they start to turn on me...” (Ishiguro TU 443) Sophie tries to convince Mr. Ryder that his parents had never turned on him. She has had lived years with him, she knows every episode which has developed the drama of Mr. Ryder's life. “Look, calm down,' Sophie said. 'It'll be all right. They never turn on you. You always say they'll turn on you and so far no one, not a single person in all these years, has turned on you...” (443) Not ready to get convinced, he replies to her “But don't you understand what I'm saying? This isn't just any night. My parents are coming. If they turn on me tonight, it will be... it will be...” (443) Sophie is adamant to drag Mr. Ryder out of this illusion that his parents would visit him to witness his performance. She says to him,

They're not going to turn on you,' Sophie broke in again. 'You say this every time. From all over the world you phone to say the same thing. Whenever you reach this point. They're going to turn on me, they're going to find me out. And what happens? A few hours later you call again, and you're very calm and self-satisfied....'(443, 444).

Miss Stratmann who was the in-charge of planning Ryder's concert, on his inquiring about his parents, studies Mr. Ryder carefully in the dawn light, then sighs.

Mr. Ryder, I've been meaning to speak to you about this for some time. We were all of us very pleased when you informed us some months ago of your parents' intention to visit our city. Everyone was truly delighted. But I must remind you, Mr. Ryder, it was from you and you alone that we heard of their plans to visit us. Now for the past three days, and today, in particular, I have been doing all I can to ascertain their whereabouts. I have repeatedly telephoned the airport, the railway station, the bus companies, every hotel in this city, and I have found no sign of them. No one has heard from them, no one has seen them. Now, Mr. Ryder, I have to ask you. Are you certain they are coming to this town?(511). Ryder has drowned so deep in his traumatic illusion which is, actually a delusion and is so comfortable in the abandonment of his old self and sculpting into a new self that has taken a flight from reality that he does not want to listen to the

truth which people around him are trying to make him believe. He tells Miss Stratmann, "They must be here somewhere. Besides, I heard them. When I stopped the car in the woods, I could hear them coming, their horse and carriage. I heard them, they must be here, surely, it's not unreasonable... (Ishiguro TU 512)." She throws a counter-question on him as "But you said they came by rail. Did anyone help them with their luggage? (514)." Mr. Ryder again tells her the fake fact that is created by his new self and exists in his imaginary world only "Oh, the railway porters would have immediately gone about helping them. Taken all the luggage out to the taxi, then the taxi driver would have seen to it after that. They'd have been driven to their hotel and that would have been that. I'm sure they didn't have to even think about their luggage (514)."

Mr. Ryder cannot take his parents off his mind, "My parents are quite right. I've a great deal left. (521)." Finally, Sophie gives him her word, "Your parents? Listen, my advice is, to forget about your parents altogether for now (521)."

The novel's characters are the targets of destructive plasticity, destructive plasticity indicates not only people suffering from brain damage, brain disorders or assaults, like brain-degenerative disease, including Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, but also people coping with post-traumatic stress disorder. Malabou's work is evil — it makes monsters, although destructive plasticity has creative powers. Although the theory reflects on who suffers from destructive plasticity, that is, those that are traumatized without a remedy, as does Mr. Ryder, the novelist's thoughts do not appear to be the result of his own un-healable trauma.

"The Buried Giant" seems to have been suffering from a collective trauma that has affected the memory of the community overall. "It's queer the way the world's forgetting people and things from only yesterday and the day before that. Like a sickness come over us all" (BG 20). The cold environment of "The Buried Giant", "the Axl and Beatrice's room, however, being too far from any fire..." (Ishiguro BG 6), and the recurrent description of a sheath of the mist around, "He wondered how thick the mist would be that morning, and if, as the dark faded, he would see it had seeped through the cracks right into their chamber" (7) with flashes of a weak memory in fragments which take them back to the life, they lived with their children, "Earlier, outside, some fragments of remembrance had come back to him: a small moment when he was walking down the long central corridor of the warren, his arm around one of his own children..." (7) provide food for thought to the readers that there is noticeable abnormality in the lives of Axl and Beatrice. Their forgetfulness displays them as half-dead beings.

Catherine Malabou is of the view that we all have to allow the improbability of escape from the state in which an ultimate trauma of pain and suffering push an individual to an outer place that is actually non-existent (OA 10). Through this sense, the researcher would extend the idea of disruptive plasticity so that it can be linked back to the idea of the elderly British couple, Axel and Beatrice, who plan to take up a voyage through order to meet a son whom they have not seen for long.

The failure of plasticity happens with the dilemma of getting old. This loss of plasticity is again a type of good or constructive plasticity. When this good plasticity is leaving its place, it cannot be possible that another form of plasticity tries to replace it. One can observe that there appear two opposite ideas of getting old counteract vaguely, which invites us to reconsider the ideas in the light of destructive and constructive plasticity. One can define aging as a change and count sickness with aging as an event (OA 39). The phenomenon of getting old tells us to be plastic so that one can gradually find the way to the declining youth and may find how to deal with it. On the other hand, the failure in having this plasticity, one agrees to his getting old and allows his personality to be passive and receptive for the last blast or annihilation ( Malabou OA 41).

There are two different kinds of plasticity, both positive and negative; positive plasticity refers to the plasticity of effects and negative plasticity refers to the complete modification of the form, which is making of another being dissimilar to the previous being. Deviations and confusions in the actions that make the changes in a 'being' result from destructive plasticity. Destructive plasticity includes a flat emotional state of mind, neutrality, absence, and coldness.

The narrator of the "Buried Giant", unveils the under-sculpted or completely sculpted selves who had been treated terribly by life and were experiencing a fissure from their past in a village. The past was a no-go area for them. "You may wonder why Axl did not turn to his fellow villagers for assistance in recalling the past, but this was not as easy as you might suppose...For in this community the past was rarely discussed...I mean that it had somehow faded into a mist as dense as that which hung over the marshes(BG 7)." Here is an interesting thing; characters of the novel know that they are invaded by a mist of forgetfulness. They are in the phase of metamorphosis; they are under an obvious change but not completely changed. "...but the woman was no dream, and you'd remember her yourself if you spared a moment to think about it (8)." The notion of trauma is an enigma that establishes the relation of the psyche to reality. "The repetitions of the traumatic event—which remain unavailable to consciousness but intrude repeatedly on sight—thus suggest a larger relation to the event that extends beyond what can simply be seen or what can be known, and is inextricably tied up with the belatedness and incomprehensibility that remain at the heart of this repetitive seeing(91-92). Beatrice does not know that transience of memory is as big a blessing as its perseverance. "The day I spoke with her by the old thorn," Beatrice continued, "the strange woman warned me to waste no more time. She said we had to do all we could to remember what we've shared, the good and the bad. And now that boatman, when we were leaving, gives the very answer I expected and feared. What chance do we have, Axl, the way we are now? If someone like that asked of us our most treasured memories? Axl, I'm so afraid. (Ishiguro BG 51, 52)."Axl consoles Beatrice that one day they will get their complete memory back, "There, princess, there's nothing to fear. Our memories aren't gone forever, just mislaid somewhere on account of this wretched mist. We'll find them again, one by one if we have to. Isn't that why we're on this journey? Once our son's standing before us, many things are sure to start coming back (52)." They are aware of their memory loss and also know the reason behind this situation of theirs that is collective trauma:



“It’s the same in our own country, sir,” Axl said. “My wife and I have witnessed many incidents of such forgetfulness among our own neighbours (BG 67).”

Sometimes consciousness of a problem does not promise its solution or remedy. “I only meant knowing its cause wouldn’t make it go away, here or in our own country (BG 69).” Memory-loss turns, sometimes, not often a blessing that makes the other of the self to forget not only the remotely lived sufferings but recently passed as well. “But how can this be, Ivor?” Beatrice asked. “Is it the mist’s work again that they’ve lost all memory of the horrors the child so lately suffered?(BG 85).” They cherish good as well as bad, tragic as well as pleasing memories, “It was a memory, a simple one, but I was pleased enough with it. Oh, Axl! What memory was that? (BG 87).”

The memory brings the past events slowly and gradually to the characters who are at the mercy of it. “There’s something comes back to me, but not clearly. I’m thinking this was a drunken man you’re talking of.” Amid such a mist of memory loss Axl is suggesting that if a flashback visits them, they should keep it with them just like a treasure because memories are blessings, “With this mist upon us, any memory’s a precious thing and we’d best hold tight to it (89).”

This is a process of metamorphosis; they were different selves before this mist of forgetfulness prevailed over them and they were going to be metamorphosed into new selves, completely ruptured from their chronologically past selves. While the characters are aware of being plasticized, they are not yet completely destructed rather metamorphed. During this process, the characters get flashes of memory intermittently, “I can’t answer you, Mistress Beatrice, for I know not myself. I supposed by travelling beside you the memories would awaken, but they’ve not yet done so (BG 124).

For some time — in fact, ever since Arthur’s name had first been mentioned — a nagging, uneasy feeling had been troubling Axl. Now, at last, as he listened to Wistan, and the old knight talk, a fragment of memory came to him (BG 126). The mist is a collective traumatic sheath that has covered not one or two persons, but it has affected the whole community. “Yet I saw on the bridge Lord Brennus’s guards seemed not to be passing their time idly, but stationed there for a purpose, and if not for the mist clouding their minds, they might have tested you more closely (BG 125).”

The following alterations seem to be playing a role in the memory disturbances—depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Stress hormones pose a harmful effect on the prefrontal cortex; and perhaps it causes the people to make wrong decisions when they are in stress. Contrary to the effects of stress on the prefrontal cortex and hippocampus, intense stress appears to increase the contribution of the amygdala to fear. A study suggests that stress hormones play a role in the intensification of fear by stress: the amount of stress hormones is increased artificially in the bloodstream, which contains a similar impact as stress has on fear. (LeDoux 224, 225). Panic disorder and PTSD implicate changes in the administering of threats, but both the diseases have differentiating reasons and indications. In panic patients, fear is expressed in the mode of distinct abrupt panic attacks, caused by a clear environmental

provocation; it gives rise to preemptive anxiety and various degrees of escaping conduct. In panic disorder, fear doesn't show any relation to actual threats and mostly implicates a typical responsiveness to disturbing somatic sensations. In PTSD patients, fear is expressed in the mode of elevated responsiveness to provocations of a real, fatal distressing incident and comprises hallucinations and elevated alarming response. Therefore, various neural systems must be changed in these patients (LeDoux 294).

Awareness of the fact that one is affected by post-trauma memory loss is itself the proof that they have not yet touched the stage of destructive plasticity. Exhaustion of possibilities is a starting point for the destructive plasticity. It starts when all possible genius leaves when the adulthood erases the childhood, uniformity is shattered, the spirit of kinship unity disappears, companionship is broken, associations rakish in the coldness of this sterile life. The negative possibility remains suspended in between becoming real and unreal, it sustains its negativity until it is totally shattered. The happiness of Beatrice on knowing the cause of the mist that brought memory loss to her and her whole community made her excited as the cause of a problem embodies its remedy in it. Eradication of the cause can bring a solution to the problem. "Beatrice had turned to him in excitement, exclaiming, "Axl, do you hear that? The she-dragon's the cause of the mist!"( BG 178). And why was Beatrice so happy on this revelation, "Beatrice, he knew, feared the boatman's questions, harder to answer than Father Jonus's, and that was why she had been so pleased to learn the cause of the mist" ( BG 181).

Sometimes, some components of the body start living their lives autonomously and dissolve the whole unity without its complete annihilation that leads to the sense of madness. For example, if a writer does not remember his own literary works; even does not remember his own self, is no more living without being dead. His nature changes into another being which does not resemble the previous persona. The point here is that he does not say that his apparent look is changed but he is on the view that his nature is changed which is his form or his being and existence ( Malabou OA 34).

Catherine Malabuo puts forward the phenomenon of plasticity as the possibility to be changed or transformed without being smashed. According to Freud's notion, one can recognize that plasticity demotes accurately to the everlasting being to anything that can be broken or shattered but does not vanish fully (48). This transformation of identity results in reorganizing the image of the being that leads to another crucial escapade which is defenseless and there is no recompense in it. The arrival of Sachiko from Tokyo at Nagasaki records a weird reaction from the locals, "One was explaining to her companion how she had spoken to the woman that morning and had received a dear snub. Her companion agreed the newcomer seemed unfriendly — proud probably (12, 13). An endeavor was made to remove the memory of the damages and physical harms that were incurred on public lives by erecting a new building on the ruins of the atomic bomb in Nagasaki. But the psychological and emotional traumas threw a very painful spell on survivors. Because the bomb killed more than one-quarter of the inhabitants of Nagasaki, "citizens who had lost no family members in the holocaust were as rare as stars at sunrise" (Ishikawa, 1981, p.6).

In "A Pale View of Hills", Etsuko's former neighbor, Mrs. Fujiwara who lived a happy, contented, comfortable life before the disaster the atom bomb brought with it, bears an irreparable personal loss: It left four children and husband breathless. Only she herself and her eldest son could survive it. The best way she found to cope with the disaster was her intensely hectic routine schedule for to run a small noodle café that reflects, she struggles to disremember the pain by not finding even a single moment to think about the dead, But in spite of all these efforts, she discloses to Etsuko that at times, she opens her eyes to the dawn unaware of the fact where she was. After the blast, Etsuko becomes parentless and has to be adopted by Ogata-San; she later marries his son Jiro. Etsuko, like a mad girl, plays the violent at night in the early days of his stay at Ogatas (2509).

Mariko, a 10-year-old girl Sachiko's daughter, is the most severely traumatized character in the novel. After the death of her husband, Mariko's mother had to undergo a completely ill-disposed situation at her uncle's house with a cousin who already was not in a habit of sharing her space with someone. She re-plans her life from scratch and makes up her mind to immigrate to America with her American boyfriend Frank with her daughter Mariko. Her association with Frank makes her neglectful about the state of mind of her daughter who often complained to see a strange woman. When Mariko was only five years old, she beheld a young mother who was drowning her baby in Tokyo:

Mariko went running off one morning. I can't remember why, perhaps she was upset about something. Anyway, she went running off out into the street, so I went chasing after her. It was very early, there was nobody about. Mariko ran down an alleyway, and I followed after her. There was a canal at the end and the woman was keeling there, up to her elbows in water. A young woman, very thin. I knew something was wrong as soon as I saw her. You see, Etsuko, she turned around and smiled at Mariko. I knew something was wrong and Mariko must have done too because she stopped running. At first, I thought the woman was blind, she had that kind of look, her eyes didn't seem to actually see anything. Well, she brought her arms out of the canal and showed us what she'd been holding under the water. It was a baby. I took hold of Mariko then and we came out of the alley (PYVH, 74).

According to Sachiko, a few days after she committed infanticide, she committed suicide. Mariko was haunted by the image of that very woman as having been followed by her through all their journey from Tokyo to Nagasaki. One of the most authentic trauma theorists Cathy Caruth's notion about a traumatized subject: "To be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event" (1995, 4-5) testifies the obsession of Mariko with the image of a woman as a traumatic fit.

Sachiko's regular absence from home left Mariko with a complicated emotional structure that is full of anxiety. Mariko falls victim to the feelings of alienation and insecurity when she comes to know that her mother had planned to migrate to America with a man whom she used to call a pig. She idealizes a complete and cozy home with kittens she loved to nurture. Though, this very world of her own was devastated by her mother a day before their departure. Sachiko throws

a box with Mariko's kittens in it in the river so as to reduce their luggage to take along in their journey. Mariko lived the moments of witnessing the Tokyo woman drowning her baby once again while she was viewing every single step of drowning the cats. Mariko runs along the kitten box crazily that is flowing in the river with a futile thought to rescue them which she was unable to.

This is the climax of Etsuko's memory. The tale of Nagasaki is enclosed within an external layer of several decades later story of Etsuko that is set in the countryside of England. Niki, Etsuko's younger daughter's five days' stay, recalls the summer when she made friends with Mariko and her mother. Niki is there on a mission to drag Etsuko out from a fit of trauma. She fell a victim to trauma when a couple of months ago, Keiko, her daughter from Jiro, her first husband were found dead as she had hanged herself in her apartment at Manchester. Trauma visits her in the form of nightmares and the eerie atmosphere of Keiko's ex bedroom reinforces the effect. During her five days' stay neither Niki nor Etsuko could have a sound sleep, because of nightmares. Etsuko dreams of a small girl playing in a park on the swings. These dreams are the results of revisiting the memories of Mariko and the little girl in the dream could be the shadow of Sachiko's daughter Mariko. As Sachiko alter-ego of Etsuko in the same way, Mariko is Keiko's alter-ego. Sigmund Freud interprets dreams as: "The conception of dream-elements tells us that they are ungenue things, substitutes for something else that is unknown to the dreamer (like the purpose of a parapaxis), substitutes for something the knowledge of which is present in the dreamer but which is inaccessible to him....."(114).

Through a dream, something that is unconscious finds its way to the conscious. The overlapping of images of Mariko and Keiko; their being from the same age group, their appearance accompanied by ropes, Mariko startles by the rope Etsuko's ankles get entangled in and then Keiko hangs herself with a rope. In addition to that, in the very first meeting of Etsuko with Mariko, her indifference awakens in her "every kind of misgiving about motherhood," She was several months' pregnant with Keiku at that time. Another time that witnesses the confused identities of Sachiko/Etsuko, Mariko/Keiko, is when Etsuko relaxes Mariko who wants to escape exit to America, she promises Mariko "In any case, if you don't like it over there, we [my italics] can always come back...If you don't like it over there, we'll come straight back. But we have to try it and see if we like it there. I'm sure we will"(p.173). Here, the use of pronoun "we" four times by Etsuko accentuates Keiko's identification with Mariko and her own identification with Sachiko. The same word might have been said to Keiko when she was brought to England like Sachiko who considered America the best land to educate Mariko in. While bringing Keiko to England, Etsuko did not realize Keiko's feelings for a strange land.

The cultural dislocation and emotional separation from her father lead Keiko into deeper isolation: For the two or three years before she finally left us, Keiko had retreated into that bedroom, shutting us out of her life. She rarely came out, although I would sometimes hear her moving around the house after we had all gone to bed...Shehad no friends, and the rest of us were forbidden entry into her room...In the end, the rest of us grew used to her ways, and when by some

impulse Keiko ventured down into our living room, we would all feel a great tension (53-54).

The memory of Mariko and Sachiko makes Etsuko realized that she has been utterly mistaken in taking Keiko to England for a better future. This sense of grief and guilt captures her so strongly that she feels Keiko's room haunted. In Tony Morrison's "Beloved" Sethe, just like Etsuko, cannot dismiss the remembrance of her departed daughter. Though Etsuko does not kill her daughter as Sethe does, she is blamed for the untimely death of Keiko.

At one instance, Etsuko, feels that "someone had walked past my bed and out of my room, closing the door quietly" (PYVH, 174); while she was standing outside Keiko's room, she hears "a small sound, some movement from within" (88); Niki also notices some unfamiliar sounds, and she asks her mother to move to the spare room, on the fourth day, because staying in the room opposite to the room of Keiko makes her uneasy.

This is the climax of Etsuko's memory. The tale of Nagasaki is enclosed within an external layer of several decades later story of Etsuko that is set in the countryside of England. Niki, Etsuko's younger daughter's five days' stay, recalls the summer when she made friends with Mariko and her mother. Niki is there on a mission to drag Etsuko out from a fit of trauma. She fell a victim to trauma when a couple of months ago, Keiko, her daughter from Jiro, her first husband were found dead as she had hanged herself in her apartment at Manchester. Trauma visits her in the form of nightmares and the eerie atmosphere of Keiko's ex bedroom reinforces the effect. During her five days' stay neither Niki nor Etsuko could have a sound sleep, because of nightmares. Etsuko dreams of a small girl playing in a park on the swings. These dreams are the results of revisiting the memories of Mariko and the little girl in the dream could be the shadow of Sachiko's daughter Mariko. As Sachiko alter-ego of Etsuko in the same way, Mariko is Keiko's alter-ego. Sigmund Freud interprets dreams as: "The conception of dream-elements tells us that they are ungenue things, substitutes for something else that is unknown to the dreamer (like the purpose of a parapraxis), substitutes for something the knowledge of which is present in the dreamer but which is inaccessible to him..."(114).

## CONCLUSION

The novels *The Unconsoled*, *The Buried Giant* and *A Pale Yellow View of Hills* are a satire on the idea of creativity, and a meditation between identity, memory and expectation. During the course of novel, Mr. Ryder, Axl and Beatrice and Etsuko, Mariko, Keiko and Sachiko became deeper into his relationships with the people they met. They lack self awareness which they arrive at through the course of their respective stories. Although the theory reflects on who suffers from destructive plasticity, that is, those that are traumatized without a remedy, as are all the characters mentioned above, the novelist's thoughts appear to be the result of his own un-healable trauma. All the trauma afflicted and, resultantly, destructed characters are readily distinguishable from those who are considered normal and healthy, because they are characterized in the course of their destruction. The stories of the novels reflect the aforementioned characters' lives not as unforeseen failures rather a sense of progressive

transition prevails. The lifetime of the main characters of the selected novels where constant growth in age and contact with fellow citizens change the very nature of their thoughts and habits of thinking is a testimony of the fact that self is not static; it is plastic. The theory of plasticity gives a way to such destruction of the selves which embody construction of the new selves. Sometimes, the construction of new selves feels like a blessing that allows the injured selves to live in their comfort zones. Applied plasticity that is an off shoot of the theory of plasticity can do wonders in transforming the personae and life quality of human beings. It always keeps the venues of constructive destruction or a better and bright future open for the afflicted and traumatized souls.

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