



TRAUMA OF CHARLES FAMILY IN AUGUST WILSON'S "THE PIANO LESSON"

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Abstract

August Wilson's Piano Lesson (1987) is a play about the social life of a broken Afro-American. A family in Pittsburg - a city in Pennsylvania - that immigrated from the South. Grandparents of the family, who were slaves on a southern plantation, broke up and traded for a piano. This shocking event causes generational trauma and other traumatic events for the family when they bring the piano. This study investigates the play through the lens of literary trauma theory. This study can show that trauma or historical trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for the African Americans.

Keywords: Afro- Americans, Trauma Theory, Post colonialism and Racism.

Introduction

August Wilson (Frederick August Kittel Jr) was an American author (born April 27, 1945 Pittsburgh - Died Oct 2, 2005 Seattle, Wash), a participant in the Black Aesthetics movement, he co-founded and directed the Black Horizons Theater in Pittsburgh (1968), published poetry in African American magazines, and had his play Ma Rainey's Black Bottom premiered. Before that, he produced several plays, including Jitney (1982). Inspired by African American vernacular language, music, folklore, and storytelling traditions, he wrote films from different decades of the 20th century, including Fences (1986, Pulitzer Prize) and Come and Gone. Joe Turner (1988), The Piano Lesson (1990, Pulitzer Prize), Two Trains (1992), Seven Guitars (1996), The Jewel of the Sea

(first produced in 2003), King Hedley II (2005), Radio Golf (first produced in 2005). Originally, as August Wilson explained in an interview with the New York Times, the idea for the play was inspired. Painting "The Piano Lesson" by Romare Bearden, which considered one of the most important American Artists of the 20th century (Biography, 2018). Wilson explained that it was the piano that offered him the most "A link to the past, to Africa, for which these people the play is "an attempt to recover and exploit the social poorly documented, partially erased cultural history" Thus the main character of the play the concern is the unwritten history of African Americans. There is a lot of sibling rivalry in the play a family heirloom, a piano that carries history.

Afro-American and Post colonial studies

Post Colonialism is the period of time after the colonialism in which the British Empire dominated in many countries. Post colonialism is also a set of theories regarding art and culture dealing colonialism problem. The Post-Colonial age refers to the period from 1945 and it can involve a studied engagement with the experience of colonialism and its past and present effects.

Afro-American studies has been one of the most influential intellectual, social and political movements of recent times, influencing not only the United States but also many people who suffered racial oppression in other parts of the world. Most postcolonial theorists who study this topic view the study of black culture in the United States in part as the study of the world's largest Diaspora. Comparative studies of these movements represent a productive development in recent postcolonial theory, especially insofar as they take into account the differential impact of these major events on the individual groups that such studies reveal. The fact that the majority of African peoples were shipped into slavery makes this institution's relationship to broader practices of imperialism central to understanding the origins of African American culture. But beyond this basic fact of oppression and violence, the relationship between newly independent American society, the broader black Diaspora movement, and contemporary independence movements in Africa themselves remain complex. The history of the African American struggle for self-determination is historically linked to the broader movement of the African Diaspora struggle for independence. For example, people like Jamaican-born Marcus Garvey played a central role in America's struggle for self-determination.

The Original Trauma of Charles's Family

Recent studies suggest "[t]he children and grandchildren of historically traumatized populations continue to manifest such symptoms and risk factors even when they have not been, in a traditional sense, directly traumatized" (Danzer et.al., 2014, p. 351), and Mohatt et.al (2016) propose that African Americans are victims of historical trauma as they possess "a history of oppression, victimization, or massive group trauma exposure" (p.128). So are all the black characters are traumatized two or three times in this play. First of all characters are temporarily traumatized in their wake ancestors are exposed to various traumatic events during the Middle Passage slave trade and as slaves plantations therefore "the blemish of these inhumane conditions persists as a

kind of post-traumatic stress syndrome on the collective mind of Africans in America” (Akbar, 2006, p. i). The second is the characters experienced traumatic events firsthand.

The Charles family during antebellum slavery it belonged to the Sutters. Robert Sutter, forward wanted to buy a piano on his wedding day his wife, but he didn't have enough money. Because, he paid his two slaves, his mother and his son Charles family against the piano. A family breakup causes trauma to the family members and future generations. Sutter likes it Daddy's son Willie and sells Mama Berniece and her son. Papa Willie Boy remains alone, traumatized sudden destruction his family; so do mom Berniece and her boys traumatized by the same event. When the Sutters ask Daddy Willie Boy also draw pictures of his wife his son into the piano frame instead of talking about his own emotional wounds with words, he presents images not only his lost family in the piano body but also his entire family history. Here he gives “adequate expression” to the shocking event of the sudden destruction of his family in deeds (Pderson, 2018, p. 97) that functions as “talking cure”. Hence the piano it becomes a legacy with an irreplaceable record of the entire history of the Charles family.

Then, after one generation, Doaker, Wining Boy and their older brother Boy Charles (Boy's father Willie and Berniece) stole the piano. Sutters assembled a lynch mob that formed Boy Charles the house is on fire. Son Charles escaped possession and caught the Yellow Dog train, but was stopped by the crowd he seized the train and set fire to his carriage, burn him and other innocent Africans the Americans who shared his compartment. in the future Ghosts of Yellow Dog became famous among them African Americans Charles Family (Doaker, Wining Boy, Boy Willie and Berniece) haunt instead of these traumatic events the family of the grandparents fell apart during slavery and traumatized by immediate extreme cruelty The lynching of Charles Boy.

In addition to ancestral and family traumas (her father and then the death of mother), is Berniece was traumatized by the sudden loss of her husband. According to the list of mental trauma Berniece suffers post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after witnessing a devastating death caused the murder of her father and husbands the sudden destruction of his family. Berniece is thirty-five years old and “*she is still in mourning for her husband after three years*” (Wilson, 1990, p.3). He blames his brother, Boy Willie and Lymon for murdering her husband, Crawley:

BERNIECE. You killed Crawley just as sure as if you pulled the trigger.

BOY WILLIE. See, that's ignorant. That's downright foolish for you to say something like that. You ain't doing nothing but showing your ignorance. If the nigger was here I'd whup his ass for getting me and Lymon shot at.

BERNIECE. Crawley ain't knew about the wood.

BOY WILLIE. We told the man about the wood. Ask Lymon. He knew all about the wood. He seen we was sneaking it. Why else we gonna be out there at night? Don't come telling me Crawley ain't knew about the wood. The fellows come up on us and Crawley tried to bully them. Me and Lymon seen the sheriff with them and give in. Wasn't no sense in getting killed over fifty dollars' worth of wood. (Wilson, 1990, pp. 52-53)

This may be noticed from the above and the following extract, viz Survivors of the traumatic incident of the Crawley creature murdered, Boy Willie and Lymon remember well what happened to them and give your details an adventure Their accurate report is a good proof that traumatic does not affect their memory experience They recorded their trauma experience through the visual sense. What makes them about the event reliable is that several times in the game they repeat the same event with the same precision, without even exchanging words:

BOY WILLIE. Me and Lymon was down there hauling wood for Jim Miller and keeping us a little bit to sell. Some white fellows tried to run us off of it. That's when Crawley got killed. They put me and Lymon in the penitentiary.

LYMON. They ambushed us right there where that road dip down and around that bend in the creek. Crawley tried to fight them. Me and Boy Willie got away but the sheriff got us. Say we was stealing wood. They shot me in my stomach. (Wilson, 1990, p. 37)

According to the list of factors that Contributing to PTSD can be inferred from the above catches which were both Boy Willie and Lymon traumatized by seeing the murder Crawley in the hands of the white sheriff and now both suffers from PTSD. Besides, there was Lymon was further traumatized when he was threatened death when he was shot and physically wounded stomach at the crime scene where Crawley was killed It is worth noting the conversation between them Wining Boy and Doaker audiences know that Lymon was also traumatized in early childhood his father was accidentally killed in a club. Undoubtedly Lymon's own blow to the stomach, bad in itself, would also have made it difficult for his immediate the memory of his father's unfortunate death and that the memory of the trauma triggered by that immediate injury. Surely he would have expected his death at that time same as his father.

Perhaps this event is related to a phenomenon to which traumatic history has a strange allusion repeats as the "falling snowball" accumulates speed, in so many generations of majors or minors variations on a theme.

WINING BOY. . . . L. D. Jackson. That was one bad-luck nigger. Got killed at some dance. Fellow walked in and shot him thinking he was somebody else. (DOAKER enters from his room.) Hey, Doaker, you remember L. D. Jackson?

DOAKER. *That's Lymon's daddy. That was one bad-luck nigger.* (Wilson, 1990, p. 64)

Thus, all the central characters are victims of history trauma because their ancestors were traumatized during that time slavery at the same time, they suffer directly traumatic experiences. Hence the resonance the original trauma continues.

Conclusion

The horrors of family separation, the pre-war era is the original trauma. The Charles family, the aftermath of a tragic event the separation of father from son and wife is a piano provided pleasant entertainment for the whites slave owner, but painful memories for African Americans The playwright conveys the message that white people have fun playing piano pain from catastrophic events in life African Americans It highlights the wonderful contradiction within man race: it always leads to historical trauma marginalized victims. The horrors of family separation The pre-war era is the original trauma The Charles family, the aftermath of a tragic event the separation of father from son and wife is a piano provided pleasant entertainment for the whites slave owner, but painful memories for an African Americans The playwright conveys the message that white people have fun playing piano pain from catastrophic events in life African Americans It highlights the wonderful contradiction within man race: it always leads to historical trauma marginalized victims.

The most vulnerable characters are women who suffer from severe trauma. Mother Berniece lost him as a result of the divorce of her husband's family, she lost her mother Ola husband in the traumatic incident of the Yellow Dog and Berniece lost her husband and father. The characters must be expressive enough repressing traumatic memories to heal their wounds.

Applying Pederson's key Elements theory shows that traumatic events are indeed memorable and descriptive as characters can be accurately remembers past traumatic experiences details even after 26 years. This ensures that traumatic events are more remembered instead of forgetting it completely.

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