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"I told you all the time": Revisiting the representation of Temple Drake's traumatic abuse in William Faulkner's *Sanctuary*

«Se lo dije desde el primer momento»: Temple Drake y la representación del abuso traumático en *Santuario*

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ABSTRACT: This article examines William Faulkner's representation of traumatic abuse through his (anti)heroine Temple Drake (*Sanctuary*, 1931). First, I bring to the fore the material dimension of the character's traumatic rape, as opposed to its classical consideration as a multi-valent cultural metaphor (Patterson, 2002). Aided by insights from the field of trauma studies (Caruth 1995; Davis and Meretoja, 2020; Herman, 2015), I examine the clinical import the sexual assault had on the character's psyche through a close reading of her dissociation-induced traumatic memories. Second, I turn to the way in which the text deals with the representation of an event fraught with referential impasses. Specifically, in dealing with the elision of Temple's violation, disclosed not at the moment of its occurrence, but in the last scenes of the novel, I establish a parallelism between the aesthetic encoding of the traumatic event and its psychological processing. I argue that the purported narrative effacement of the abuse parallels the way in which the protagonist mentally absents herself from the scene of the attack, thus failing to adaptively integrate said attack into consciousness. Further, I posit that the author counters the narratorial silencing of the rape via metonymic indexes enmeshed in the textual fabric referencing the assault. Thus, the novel retains the same fragmentary reminiscing of the abuse as the character exhibits. Finally, I conclude that, in eliding the violation scene,

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Faulkner carries out a *prima facie* process of erasure of a traumatic event, only to reckon with its representational demands.

Kew words: traumatic memories, William Faulkner, representation, dissociation, ellipsis.

RESUMEN: Este artículo examina la representación literaria del abuso traumático de la (anti)heroína de William Faulkner, Temple Drake (*Santuario,* 1931). En primer lugar, mi lectura aborda la violación traumática que sufre el personaje a través de su dimensión material, en contraposición a su consideración clásica como metáfora multivalente (Patterson, 2002). Así, a través de postulados de los estudios del trauma (Caruth 1995; Davis y Meretoja, 2020; Herman, 2014), analizo la repercusión de la agresión sexual en la psique del personaje, a través de una lectura de sus recuerdos postraumáticos. En segundo lugar, considero la manera en que el texto aborda la representación de un acontecimiento cargado de impasses referenciales. En concreto, al elidir la escena de la violación de Temple, revelada no en el momento de su ocurrencia, sino en las últimas escenas de la novela, establezco un paralelismo entre la codificación estética que el autor lleva a cabo del evento traumático, y el procesamiento psicológico de la víctima. En concreto, sostengo que la omisión narrativa del abuso sexual, reproduce el proceso de disociación de la protagonista, es decir, el modo en el cual ésta se ausenta mentalmente de la escena del ataque. Además, sostengo que el autor contrarresta la supresión textual de la violación mediante índices metonímicos incrustados en el tejido textual que hacen referencia a la agresión. Por último, concluyo que, a través de su novela, Faulkner ofrece un estudio formidable acerca de las exigencias y tensiones narrativas que conlleva la representación de eventos psicológicamente disruptivos.

Palabras clave: recuerdos traumáticos, William Faulkner, representación, disociación, elipsis.

1. INTRODUCTION

The tortuous publication process of William Faulkner's *Sanctuary* features prominently in the annals of authorial publishing (Cohen, 1998: 47–49). When, after an infamous first rejection, the novel was published in February 1931, it shocked criticism and readership alike[2]. In his characteristically self-mythologizing voice, Faulkner claimed that the manuscript was envisioned as a "cheap idea [...], deliberately conceived to make money," and to give to the public "a little more than what they had been getting; stronger and rawer - more brutal" (Blotner, 2005: 233–4). Though not entirely disrupting Faulkner's previous experimental use of perspective deployed in *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) and his incursion in the Gothic with "A Rose for Emily" (1930), *Sanctuary*'s brazen manipulation of "[g]uts and genitals" led not only to the acknowledgement of the

[2] The well-known myth regarding Faulkner's publisher's initial rejection of *Sanctuary'*s manuscript, on accounts of the latter's concern to face prison given the book's obscenity, is found in Faulkner's introduction to the 1932 Modern Library book edition. See Philip Cohen (1998) for a thorough discussion on the novel's publication process.

author's innovative style, but cast his work in a rarefied light, with reviewers deeming Faulkner as an unnecessarily morbid, sadistic writer (Inge, 1995:53).

A *sui generis* gangster novel, *Sanctuary* opens with Southern belle Temple Drake and her date Gowan Stevens being held against their will at Old Frenchman's Place. A derelict plantation house, the mansion is the shrine of illegal whiskey distillation, thus symbolizing the downfall of an eviscerated Southern aristocracy. The gang of moonshiners in charge of the bootlegging business is integrated by Lee Godwin and his mistress Ruby Lamar; Van, a shadowy figure the novel does not disclose much about; and Tommy, an erratic presence endowed with a keen perceptiveness. A strange hierarchy in place, the moonshiners are in business with a gangster who goes by the name of Popeye, a threatening presence marked not only by the formlessness of his features, but by the ruthlessness of his behavior. After a nightmarish night at Old Frenchman's Place, Temple Drake is taken by the sexually impotent Popeye to a Memphis brothel under the auspices of Miss Reba to satisfy his scopophilic tendencies. The young girl is to remain at the brothel for an approximate period of five weeks. In confessing her ordeal to Horace Benbow –the lawyer in charge of recruiting the missing girl's testimony, and the complementary narrative thread the novel follows–, we learn that Temple was molested no less than three times in twenty-four hours while captive at the plantation house. It is in the last scenes of the novel, however, that a cataclysmic confession is unveiled to the reader: via an analeptical element, a "dark-brownish paint[ed]" (195)[3] corncob, the reader learns that Temple was brutally raped by Popeye.

As a literary work, and through its cinematic permutations, *Sanctuary* powerfully stages what W. J. Cash coined in the 1940's as the "Southern rape complex" (Barker, 2006) [4]. Said complex consists in a symbolic arrangement wherein "a black male rapist and [a] white female victim" allegorizes the threat that Southern civilization suffers at the hands of black individuals (Patterson, 2002: 142). Important to our analysis, Laura S. Patterson cogently argues that "the 'rape complex' that has beset Southern Literature for much of the twentieth century [has been read] as a cultural ritual rather than a criminal act with a perpetrator and a victim" (2000:37; Yaeger, 2009:126). Criticism has thus employed rape as a "multi-valent metaphor" to be conjured only in its metaphoric and historical import, and has thus elided the material dimension of Temple's suffering (2000: 42). In this vein, Faulkner's handling of the chronotope of rape, marked by a conspicuous deferral, had an unmistakable ethical import: in silencing an event which needs witnessing, Temple's traumatic ordeal becomes a contingency, as it is dependent upon the author's depiction and the reader's sympathy. Indeed, the narrative elision of the character's violation loomed large over a criticism which not only capitalized on a metaphorical reading of *Sanctuary*'s central rape, but made the work prone to ideological excesses. Particularly, Temple Drake has been read as a complicit victim in her own defilement, criticism describing her in less than generous epithets (Luce-Cox, 1986).

Our analysis seeks to renew critical engagement with the traumatogenic abuse the character undergoes and its literary representation. Aided by a psychologically-oriented approach, we aim to bring to the fore a material dimension to Temple's rape, envisaged

[3]The citations used throughout this paper are found in: Faulkner, William. 2011 [1931]. *Sanctuary*. New York: Vintage Classics

[4] The two film adaptations of Faulkner's novel are *The Story of Temple Drake* (1931), directed by Stephen Roberts; and the eponymous *Sanctuary* (1961) directed by Toni Richardson. See Deborah Barker (2006) *"Moonshine and Magnolias: "The Story of Temple Drake' and "The Birth of a Nation*" for a powerful discussion on the 'rape complex' representation on screen through the cinematic adaptation of Faulkner's *Sanctuary* and Thomas Dixon Jr.'s *The Clansman* (1905).

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not within the limited lens of its cultural metaphoricity, but as a physical event causing psychological traumatization. We rely on insights from the field of trauma studies (Balaev, 2008; Caruth, 1995; Collins and Meretoja, 2020) offering both clinical and critical tools to examine the close relationship between the psychical and textual metabolization of a traumatic event. Thus, in the first section of this paper we offer theoretical clarity concerning the relationship between trauma and literary representation. In light of this discussion, we set out to examine the psychological imprint of Temple's rape. Specifically, we gather evidence to account for the character's fragmentary recollection of the different episodes of sexual assault she undergoes. We underscore the rape the young woman suffers as the main stressor triggering the character's dissociation or psychological absentation from the traumatic scene. The second section of this paper expands on the affordances of the psychological model, which we use to scan the aesthetic encoding of Temple's ordeal. Insofar as the novel circumvents the main traumatic signifier (the rape scene) and refuses to represent it at the moment of its occurrence, the textual body evokes the victim's dissociated consciousness and subsequent evacuation from the frame of her abuse. In incessantly defiling Temple's rape via metonymic signifiers, yet avoiding its explicit unveiling, we argue that the text mimics the victim's dialectics of forgetting and remembering. Importantly, our discussion will give us ground to conclude that *Sanctuary* offers a powerful meditation on the narrativization of psyche-shattering experiences, presciently anticipating a core concern in the field of trauma studies.

2. FICTIONALIZED TRAUMA

2.1. TRAUMA AND REPRESENTATION

At the heart of *Sanctuary* lies the friction between abuse, traumatization and representation. Coincidentally, these aspects, in their academic and scientific articulation, remain at the inception of trauma as a critical apparatus (Davis and Meretoja, 2020: 2; Herman, 2014). In the preface of the field-shaping work, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory,* Cathy Caruth underscores the centrality of memory and the attendant epistemological gridlock following psychical assault, arguing that figurative, literary, modes of expression may help to attend to the necessity "to learn anew, each time, what it means for a memory to be true" (1995: xix). The concerted effort to use trauma as a hermeneutic tool scanning the physical and psychological hurt imbricated in literary modes of expression is further theorized in works such as Laura Vickroy (2002) and Anne Whitehead (2004). The latter discusses traumatic representation positing that in trauma-laden novels, the rhythm of the narration is dictated by the perverse encoding of trauma, as the textual body "mimic[s] its forms and symptoms" (Whitehead, 2004: 3). Despite critiques against the overreliance on a prescriptive set of strategies to represent trauma, such as the "shattering trope" (Balaev, 2008) wherein a text mimics the process of consciousness division and subsequent generation of traumatic traces, *Sanctuary* attests to how the textual body metabolizes, as it were, the traumatic assault suffered by the protagonist. In so doing, Faulkner's work is attuned to Laura Vickroy's claim that "[t]rauma narratives go beyond presenting trauma as subject matter or character study. They internalize the rhythms, processes, and uncertainties of traumatic experience within their underlying sensibilities and structures" (2002: 3).

2.2. TRAUMA AND MEMORY

Bridging the medical and the literary sphere, the patent interest in hearkening to traumatization via its anamnestic traces, is closely linked to the clinical understanding of traumatic memories accompanying psychologically probing events. In their contribution to Caruth's volume and subsequent contemporary works, neurologists Bessel van der Kolk & Onno van der Hart (1995, p. 158–182; Van der Hart, Nijenhuis and Steele, 2005), discuss the flighty nature of the encoding of potentially traumatic experiences. Drawing on the findings of Salpêtrière French psychologist Jean Pierre Janet (1889, 1919), spanning the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, Caruth's collaborators distinguish between narrative or ordinary memory, and traumatic memory, respectively. According to the authors, "[l]ack of proper integration of intensely emotionally arousing experiences into the memory system results in dissociation and the formation of traumatic memories" (1995:163). Simply put, traumatic memories are premised on the occurrence of dissociative episodes occurring in the midst [peritraumatic] or shortly after an event inducing helplessness and horror in the victim, wherein altered states of consciousness appear in order to regulate the aversive affect generated by a potentially psyche-shattering event (Kumpula et al., 2011, 617) Thus, dissociation, understood as abnormal consciousness division, is marked by a "disruption of and/or discontinuity in the normal integration of conscience, memory, identity, and emotion", (Black and Grant, 2015: 191), and is inextricable from the genesis of traumatic memories. Even though rates of dissociation as a response to disabling psychic stress are variable (ibid., 183), and despite voices contesting the dissociative model[5], scientific consensus gathered in the fifth edition of *Disorder Statistics Manual* (DSM-V*)* acknowledges the existence of dissociative states generating a faulty encoding in memory of, generally, a traumatic event (Black and Grant, 2014: 178, 191).

3. TEMPLE DRAKE'S TRAUMATIC MEMORY

When Horace Benbow goes to Miss Reba's brothel to recruit Temple's testimony, the young girl has suffered a trail of physical and psychological violations. However, neither Temple's rape at the hands of Popeye, nor the scenes where the girl is molested by the males at Old Frenchman place, are fully disclosed to the reader until chapter XXIII (141– 159). These crude frames are delivered by the author in a markedly oblique fashion, disclosed only via Temple's trauma-laden testimony to Horace. Importantly, the young woman's account offers an unparalleled perspective into the interiority of the dissociative-prone victim when facing traumatic abuse. In what follows, we closely examine the protagonist's recollection and establish the margins of her trauma-induced dissociative episodes. Ultimately, we bring to the fore the afferent traumatic memories generated by said episodes.

Temple's confession bears close resemblance to Jean-Pierre Janet's account of the phenomenology of traumatic memory, on whom Caruth's collaborators, neurologists Van der Kolk and Van der Hart, capitalize (Van der Kolk and Van der Hart; Van der

[5] Critical voices of van der Kolk's model such as Ann Kaplan (2005: 36), suggest that either by passing or not the cortex, "trauma does find its way in memory"; while clinicians such as McNally (2005) take aim against a clear-cut distinction between narrative and traumatic memory in neurological terms. However, Temple's example goes precisely in this direction: the event is not forgotten but non-adaptively encoded.

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Kolk & Fisler, 1995)[6]. Following Janet, the authors posit that traumatic memories are not available for ordinary retrieval but said extraneous elements, which the French psychiatrist calls "subconscious fixed ideas [*idée fixe*]" (1995: 163), are lodged in the subterraneous mind, continuing to exert an enduring influence on the victim. As a consequence, the main elements governing the delivery of traumatic memories are the victim's self-absorption, the narrative dilation of the testimony, and its consequent lack of social function. In other words, in contrast to narrative memory, which is a social act, "traumatic memory takes too long [and it] is inflexible and invariable. Traumatic memory has no social component; it is not addressed to anybody, the patient does not respond to anybody; it is a solitary activity" (Van der Kolk and Van der Hart, 1995: 63). The analogy between this observation and Temple's soliloquy cannot be overlooked. Divorced from the narrator's gendered remark, it is in a meandering, almost self-absorbed and lethargic fashion that the girl delivers the particular account of her ordeal:

> She went on like that, in one of those bright, chatty monologues which women can carry on when they realize that they have the center of the stage; suddenly Horace realized that she was recounting the experience with actual pride, a sort of naive and impersonal vanity, as though she were making it up, looking from him to Miss Reba with quick, darting glances like a dog driving two cattle along a lane.
>
> (Faulkner, 2011: 159)

Another aspect of traumatic memory is its inevitably painstaking retrieval, being "evoked under particular conditions" (162). Temple's confession is not easily elicited and her aversion to retelling her story is evident by the way in which the young girl tries to dodge Horace's petition. Arnold and Trouard (1996: 175) have noticed that Temple's reminiscing exercise is unbearably painful as, in order to give a response to Horace's inquisitiveness, she does indeed need to return to the scene of her laceration. Temple's bravado when facing the magnitude of her confession reinforces its taxing dimension, as the young women dazedly claims: "Dont [sic] think I'm afraid to tell [...] I'll tell it anywhere. Dont [sic] think I'm afraid. I want a drink" (158). It is far from casual that up to five times during her confession Temple needs to resort to alcohol. An inebriated substance may of course be considered to help affect management more than memory retrieval, but what can be deduced is that accessing the episode of her trauma is no ordinary task, and alcohol may be considered to have played the role of desensitization. When she finally accedes to speak, the protagonist opens her testimony with an allusion circling back to a traumatic signifier:

> I just sat there in those *cottonseeds* and watched him. I thought it was the rat at first. There were two of them there. One was in the corner looking at me and the other was in the corner. I dont [sic] know what they lived on, because there wasn't anything there but *corncobs* and *cottonseeds.*
>
> (Faulkner, 2011:147, my emphasis)

Through this allusion the reader is hearkened back to the novel's early scenes. Temple is taken by Ruby Lamar, one of the moonshiners' mistress, to an adjacent barn, in an attempt to spare the girl from the potential danger emanating from the males in the Plantation house. The young girl is then informed that "[t] here's some cottonseed-hulls

[6] See Hagenaars et al. (2010) for an alternative discussion on memory processing in the aftermath of trauma and the afferent visual and linguistic intrusive elements it generates. A relevant distinction is made between *verbally accessible memory* (VAM) and *situationally accessible memory* (SAM). The latter typology refers to the encoding of particularly traumatogenic material that is not consciously processed. As such, the memories generated are "difficult to retrieve intentionally […] full of sensory impressions," and ultimately linked to "primary emotions, like fear and horror" (77) – as in the case of our protagonist.

over there" where she "can lie down" (55). What seems a casual, descriptive reference – the corncobs– contains an arborescent string of trauma-laden associations telescoping a chain of abuse spanning a period of approximately five weeks. This is made patent as the girl immediately refers to a colliding signifier that will pervade her narration: "And so whenever I breathed, I'd hear those *shucks*[7]" (147, my emphasis). Indeed, what calls the reader's attention is not only their sensory salience, but the young woman's obstinate allusion to the shucks, mentioned no less than eight times in the span of two pages. Said puzzling allusions acquire further significance if we consider that shucks were used as the filling material of the mattress on which Temple was abused at Old Frenchman place. The protagonist's story encoding is evocative of Cathy Caruth's dictum who links the indefatigable pervasiveness of trauma to its metonymic arrest over the victim; for Caruth, to be traumatized is "to be possessed by an image" (1995: 5). In other words, Temple's possession of the shucks interspersed in her narration, simultaneously corresponds to the locus of her assault –the mattress where Popeye molested her– and the instrument of her violation–the corncob. The shucks, then, indexically stand for the narratively circumvented rape, as well as for the different frames of abuse and captivity.

A clinically-informed reading shows that the protagonist's fixation on the elements present at the time of her abuse is the result of a faulty apprehension and subsequent fragmentary integration of said details. In turn, this maladaptive encoding occurs as a consequence of dissociation episodes. What triggers consciousness dissociation is the "aversive peritraumatic affect" (Kumpula et al., 2011: 617) and the strong physiological response that characterizes the traumatic stressor. In the dissociative episodes linked to her abuse, Temple displays a physiologically aroused behavior wherein her sensations appear magnified to her. In the proximity of Popeye's first assault, the young girl exhibits what appears as hyperventilation commonly accompanying an acute anxiety episode (Brashear, 1983). Temple thus "could hear the blood in her veins, and the little muscles at the corners of her eyes cracking faintly wider and wider, and sh*e could feel her nostrils going alternately cool and warm*" (161, my emphasis); seconds later feeling her "nose going cold and hot and cold and hot" (161). We do know that Popeye's hand touch feels for Temple like "alive ice" (161), so alongside the victim's agitated breathing was an increased heart acceleration, and a dysregulated body temperature followed by sweating. These unavoidable marks of increased physiological responsiveness, namely accelerated heart rate and higher skin conductance (sweating), correspond with the most common physiologic reaction to threatening events. Significantly, a high physiological arousal correlates with the increased severity of post-traumatic stress, which gives us ground to assume that the engraving of such an event will necessarily present a degree of abnormality (Hetzel Riggin, 2010: 192). Moreover, in etiological terms, Temple's dissociation strongly correlates with the surge in panic and anxiety that sexual violations bring about. Research by leading experts in the field has been carried out to elucidate the way in which episodic dissociation is related to anxiety in quantitative and qualitative terms, being acknowledged that a "clustering of panic attacks" are present "around the time of onset of" dissociative episodes (Sierra et al. 2012: 123).

Conversely, the protagonist undergoes a twofold process of abstention resulting in the conscious removal from the traumatic scene; and hyperarousal, resulting in an intense activation of the nervous system. In what concerns the former, studies show that "[m]any trauma survivors report that they are automatically removed from the scene:

[7] At Miss Reba's brothel the shucks, the outer covering of a maize, are substituted with springs. Temple's conspicuous insistence on their mentioning after her short one-night stay at the colonial house, acquires thus further relevance and attests to the ruthlessness of the treatment she received in said location.

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they look at it from a distance or disappear altogether, leaving other parts of their personality to suffer and store the overwhelming experience" (Van der Kolk & Van der Hart, 1995: 168). Temple resorts to a particular yet unsuccessful unsexing, while removing herself partially from the different episodes of her abuse. (It is not until the last moments of her ordeal that Temple dissociates completely "all of sudden" going "to sleep" (150)). Importantly, her diegetic account is paradoxically that of an aerial, detached observer. At all times, however, the young woman seems to retain part of her awareness of her thought processes. Aside from listing her body response, Temple displays something akin to a metamemory or monitoring of her own thoughts as exemplified in syntactic tags such as "I'd think…I thought":

> *I'd think* they were laughing at me because all the time his hand was going inside the top of my knickers and I hadn't changed into a boy yet [...]. That was the funny thing, because I wasn't breathing then. I hadn't breathed in a long time. So *I thought* I was dead.
>
> (Faulkner, 2011:150, my emphasis)

As van der Kolk and Van der Hart point out, it is precisely by this intense activation of neural pathways that the engraving of traumatic memories and the host of adjacent panic responses take place. Namely, "memories can be 'fixed' [...] by the occurrence of intense autonomic activation at the time that an event occurs" insofar as "intense arousal ('vehement emotions') interferes with proper information processing and appropriate action", which can lead to "both hypermnesias and amnesias" (1995, 173). Faced with the magnitude of the acutely distressing episodes she undergoes, Temple experiences an intense activation of noradrenergic pathways present in the Central Nervous System's locus coeruleus, whose purpose is that of fabricating endogenous opioids as a means of buffering the acute sense of physio and psychologic pain. Outwardly, Temple's responsiveness is marked by her "skin [...] jumping away" from the aggressor "like little flying fish"; her skin constantly "jerking", and her "insides […] bubbling", while "the shucks […] make so much noise it was like laughing" (150).

In light of this, the traumatogenic episodes she undergoes will be marked by a particular etching in the girl's mind. Temple's "speechless terror" hinders the ordinary linguistic encoding of the event, and "this failure to arrange the memory in words and symbols leaves it to be organized on a somatosensory or *iconic* level: as somatic sensations, behavior reenactments, nightmares, and flashbacks" (van der Kolk, 1985, my emphasis). Indeed, Temple's narration does retain a particular form of iconicity and schematicity. The girl's trauma is delivered not only through a confusing chronology but under the guise of underlexicalization. In the paroxysmal seconds preceding the sexual abuse, Temple confusedly utters: "Something is happening to me! […] I told you it was!" (68). A "something", which later, throughout her confession, becomes "that" and "it": "'Yes; that. […] It just happened'" (147). Thus, instead of a linguistically encoded, organized arrangement of the events –corresponding to the *narrative* memory above mentioned–, Temple primarily conveys her experience by means of singular imagery. The imagery of the shucks dovetails with the explanations put forward by Brett and Ostroff in what concerns the clinical imagery of traumatic events. According to the authors, "images are mental contents that possess sensory qualities […] associated with any of the sensory modalities, [even though] visual imagery is believed to be most common" (1985: 417). In the protagonist's case, it is an aural imagery that characterizes the event's engraving, as for the young woman "the shucks begin to make so much *noise* it was like *laughing*" (161, my emphasis). In other words, the audible sound of the shucks corresponds to perceived sensory cues which were present in the midst of

Temple's peritraumatic dissociative. Said cues are but the salient yet distorted features corresponding to the corncob as the penetrating element; and the shucks-filled mattress as the locus of the assault. Thus, a dissociation-mediated encoding of the traumatic event illuminates the obstinate presence of the traumatic abuse indicia in the victim's recall, while helping understand the imagistic content of her memories.

In this sense, a complex juxtaposition of the shucks and alternative indicators of traumatization governs Temple's recall of the procession of violations she is victim of. For instance, the mattress where the victim is later molested by Popeye is analogized to a singular casket signifying Temple's agonizing episode and linking the abuse not only to the gangster but to the rest of the moonshiners. In another particularly revealing scene, the Southern belle is accompanied by Godwin, who exhibits a distinct predatory behavior. The man is seen as "swep[ing] his other arm under Temple's knees. She felt herself swooping, then she was lying on the bed beside Gowan, on her back, jouncing to the *dying* chatter of the *shucks*" (53, my emphasis). In fact, every time there is a sort of undressing foreshadowing the rape the shucks clattering is heard, as these scenes hint at the symbolic violation the girl suffers. Faulkner is intent of presenting Ruby Lamar's perspective of the scenes narrated by the young girl. Thus, we know that Ruby "could hear the *shucks* in the mattress as Temple sat up and Goodwin took the raincoat *off of her*" (60). And yet again, Ruby hears Gowan penetrate Temple's room and interpellating the girl: "Sit up and *take it [the coat] off*" with the audible "*shucks* rattling while he took it off her" (110, my emphasis).

Importantly, these references aid a pattern of association in the victim's mind wherein the shucks index the abuse that is yet to come, and will resurface once the abuse has been perpetrated. Memory encoding is ultimately a matter of patterning and associationism, since what "memory processes best [is] not specific events, but the quality of experience and the feelings associated with it" (Van der Kolk and Van der Hart, 1995: 169). In Temple's case the conflation of the shucks with frames of her sexual violation is triangulated by imagery of death. The three elements circle back to each other and culminate in Temple's own pathologic mental associationism. There is little doubt as to why Temple, in Caruth's terms, is "possessed" by the shucks (1995:5). Paradoxically, then, it is the traumatic signifier lodged in the victim's memory that again and again *speaks* – chatters, rattles – of an event that the novel obstinately appears to silence.

4. AESTHETIC DISSOCIATION

The cohering center of *Sanctuary* is the conspicuous erasure of Temple Drake's traumatic rape. In coating it in indirection, Faulkner practices an arguable obscuring of the novel's main – traumatic– scene. In line with critical discussions on the problematic narrativization of traumatic shock defying a linear, ordered textualization (Whitehead, 2004), we claim that, in so doing, Faulkner does not so much efface but reckons with the possibilities of textualizing an event which renders conventional modes of representation ineffective. In this sense, the author carries out a representational process wherein the elliptical nature of the work imitates to an extent the dissociative tendency of the individual that we have explored in the section above. We now endeavor to show precisely how the textual narrative mimics the psychological encoding exhibited by the novels' heroine.

In her monograph on the physical markings of ellipsis (three dots, dashes, hyphens), the author Anne Tanner illuminates the way in which said elements give voice to "hesitations, interruptions and omissions" (2015: 1). Ellipses, she claims, do not

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suppress information but rather express a type of "communicative dependence on the non-verbal" (ibid). In this sense, through a structural ellipsis, Faulkner presents what Gerard Prince calls the *unnaratable* "that which according to a given narrative, cannot be narrated" (1988: 1). In what does this impossibility to narrate reside? Is it a heterodiegetic or a homodiegetic incapacity? In other words, is the narratorial voice, or the narratee unable to speak? We argue it is both –the narrator giving voice and silencing Temple; while Temple claiming *and* shielding away from the testimony. Remarkably, then, Temple's amnesic narration to Horace of the traumatic scenes she endures, occupies a fractal, *mise en abyme* perspective. That is, the young woman's fraught testimony constitutes the narrative blueprint that the novel as a whole replicates.

Both Temple's narration and the overall narrative structure are characterized by an arrest over the traumatic event, while both substitute the traumatic shock by recurrent ersatz that stand in metonymic relation to it. Indeed, due to its malignancy and potential to shatter both the psyche and the textual fabric, a non-reckoning with the traumatic event at the time of its (effaced) occurrence, is countered by its errant distribution in the text through a chain of deeply enmeshed signifiers. This remark is paradigmatically abstracted in the frame in which, after the forced penetration, Temple is taken by Popeye to Miss Reba's brothel. As the indexical sign of rape, Temple's blood, is smeared "*all over* [her textual] *body*" –the blood is "down [Temple's]" stocking and then "*all over* [Temple's] coat" (104, my emphasis). Significantly, the narration is saturated by Temple's blood/rape, and just as one of Miss Reba's girls remarks, vaginal blood appears to be "the most hardest [sic] blood of all to get" (99). In other words, both Temple (her undergarments) and the novel are impregnated by the stubborn marker of her rape. Paradoxically, however, both the novel and the dissociation-prone victim refuse to overtly *voice* this insistence. Just as Temple encodes the blood by the deictic "it", the narrator uses stands-in and placeholders throughout a good portion of the novel to refer to the sexual assault. Thus, through Temple's blood (and the interchangeable rape indicia –the shucks, the corns) the *novel's body* parades Temple's rape while simultaneously carrying out a *prima facie* process of erasure.

As mentioned, the vaginal blood is substituted by the deictic "it", corresponding to the strategy of underlexicalization. From a psycho-stylistic perspective, "underlexicalization is a lack of a term or a set of terms" which is substituted with placeholders such as *something, thing, stuff.* According to Fowler, "such gaps in an individual's lexical repertoire mean that the individual does not have access to the concepts concerned, or has *difficulty of acces*s" (1986: 152). Through an exploration of the girl's traumatic memory, we have elucidated the particular engraving and subsequent difficulty to linguistically access and convey trauma-generated recollections. This difficulty is stylistically accented. Prominently, the author resorts to underlexicalization to deliver Temple's agonic cry expelled before the rape: "*Something* is happening to me! […] I know *it* was!" (75, my emphasis). It is via underlexicalization, that is, a specific type of anti-language, as Fowler (1978) evocatively terms it, that Temple's rape can linguistically conjured. In the same vein, as we have examined through Temple'straumatic memory, a dissociation-induced recall is characterized not by an absolute lack of encoding, but by an obstinate, refractory etching of the traumatic event in the character's mind. This persistence is formally achieved through underlexicalization. Said strategy prompts a special involvement with the text, as readers seek to detangle the obvious relations underrepresented yet inevitably overwrought in the novel. If we admit to a process of underlexicalization as the foregrounding, rather than the erasure, of the traumatic rape, we can establish a parallelism between this aspect and the specific engraving of the victim's dissociative memory. That is, the same retentiveness undercutting the young

woman is narratively *experienced* by the reader. In this way, the reader *witnesses* an event that is not verbally but structurally delivered.

There is a second strategy at work wherein the narrative curtailment of the character's rape is in symbolic and material dependence with the flighty encoding of the victim's dissociative mind. Specifically, Faulkner uses a particular economy of accumulation and erasure thus building a sense of what Matthews calls an "immense foreboding and mesmeric recapitulation" (1984: 246). Following a reformulated Genettian terminology, proleptical and analeptical material – "rough synonyms for flashback and flashforward" (Phelan, 2016: 240)– bookend an elided operator: the rape scene. In this way, by means of the internal workings that govern the ellipsis, the silenced material – the traumatic sexual abuse – dictates a reconstructive enterprise where both proleptical and analeptical material "explains the necessity of a coreferential element" (Salzmann, 2017), in this case the rape scene[8].

In what concerns proleptical elements, the author indeed deploys a set of anticipatory motifs of the forthcoming violation by "telling before time" or "evo[king] before the [...] event that will take place" (Phelan, 2016: 246). The embeddedness of said anticipatory motifs evoke a dually signified rape, as veiled allusions are made both to the instrument of rape and its effect. For instance, Arnold and Trouard (1996) refer to Horace's "fingering" of his corn "cob pipe" (126) as remindful of the stained corncob Temple is violated with. Moreover, the initial reference to Temple's description through her "spill of red hair" (27) and her soiled coat, puts her under the sign of the abuse to come. More than this, coinciding with Balaev's link to trauma and its representation through landscape (2012), Faulkner enlists landscape in the foreshadowing of the penetration scene and the victim's agony through an eviscerated "gutted" Old Frenchman place, and a "gutted, choked road" (13) that takes to the location where the girl's ordeal will take place. Significantly, the figurative invasion and continuous violation by the males who constantly "creep" (120) in Temple's room, alongside the room's bareness signifying a sort of undressing that the girl undergoes, anticipates in a vivid way the body's invasion.

The most explicit references, however, involve the already discussed shucks and their pervasiveness in the narrator's account and Temple's testimony[9]. The narrative voice, both mirrors and foreshadows the protagonist's particular trauma-related imagery. Contrary to the plot's silence of the rape scene, the recurrent shucks are audible markers incrusted in the textual body, going from a "faint dry whisper" (47) to a "faint, furious uproar" (153). The narrator, moreover, carries out a similar figurative superposition of the shucks to images of death that pervade the young girl's narration to Horace. Temple testifies that: "it was because they had put *shucks* in the *coffin.* I was crying because they had put shucks in the coffin where I was dead" (150, my emphasis). The colliding dimension of the traumatic signifier and death – shucks and coffin – harks the reader back to a premonitory initial scene where Temple is first brought into the abandoned room at Old Frenchman place. In presenting this scene through another character's

[8] Once again, the buried, narratively *disnarrated,* event coincides with the victim's traumatic memory wherein trauma-induced memor(ies) are rescued by means of signifiers which point towards the *necessary* existence of an (ellided) traumatic material.

[9] Arnold and Trouard (1996), the novel's authoritative voices and commentators, claim that, indeed, "[c]obs and shucks, have played an important role in [Temple's] ordeal" (152). But beyond their aesthetic function, the shucks, a motif now sedimented in the novel's imagery, were also the ingredients of the whiskey distillation carried by Lee Goodwin and the rest of the moonshiners. As such they come to symbolize the degeneration of the plantation economy and its respectable members among whom, Temple, the daughter of a judge.

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perspective, the narrator's imagery bears an uncanny resemblance to Temple's own account, particularly through the salience of the shucks-death binomial: "The voices had got quiet for a moment and in the silence Tommy could hear a faint, steady chatter of the *shucks* inside the mattress where Temple lay, her hands crossed on her breast and her legs straight and close and decorous, like an effigy on an ancient *tomb*" (53, my emphasis).

Yet another dimension is palpable when a deeply buried index, the mattress' springs substituting the shucks, is presented through the same death-laden association: "Temple moved slightly; the dry complaint of mattress and *springs died* into the terrific silence" (105). The narrator's voice and the protagonist's further blends, and in so doing, the former *partakes* Temple's narrativization. In the girl's own account to Horace, the narrator takes over, as there is an implicit shift of perspectives from Temple's first-person narration to the narrator's intervening through a third person marker – "She said" (148). Similarily, the narratorial voice retains the same subjective delivery of the story that Temple displays, both agencies blending in an undistinguishable voice.

On the other hand, analeptical references pervade Temple's deposition at Lee Godwin's trial, the moonshiner charged with Tommy's murder. Said deposition culminates in the climactic moment in which both Temple and the reader are presented with a fatidic inculpatory evidence: "[Temple] moved her head; he caught her gaze and held it and lifted the *stained corncob* before her eyes. The room sighed, a long hissing breath" (212, my emphasis). By means of the stained corncob, the reader is witnessing an event – the rape scene – which is anachronistically reconstituted. Importantly, this chronologic reconstitution of the traumatic abuse dovetails withthe Freudian-Caruthian envisaging of trauma as a "break in the [victim's] min[d] experience of time" (1996: 61). Essentially, what underwrites the temporality of the traumatic experience, Caruth argues, is its anachronic apprehension. The traumatic event is not experienced as it occurs, but only *belatedly;* in its reconstruction, it is apprehended for *the first time*. This confused temporality is subsumed in the aforementioned wail expelled by Temple at the moment of her abuse: "Something *is happening* to me! […] Itold you it *was*!" (68, my emphasis). Mimetically, this structural determinism is replicated by the novel's larger organization, and again in the subsequent interpretive act carried out by the reader. The girl's absentation from the traumatic scene renders impossible its online apprehension, which means that said scene is unavoidably located in the past ("was"). The narrative import of this aspect is that Temple's rape can only be witnessed by thereader as already-happened.

In the same line, in presenting the instrument of rape in the last scenes of the novel, Faulkner carries out a sort of inverse maneuver to another category put forward by the aforementioned Gerald Prince, that of the *disnarrated or dénarré.* According to the latter, this category refers to "events that do not happen, but nonetheless are referred to (in a negative or hypothetical mode) by the narrative text" (3). It is by means of this cataphoric correlator that the event that does not occur *narratively* is materialized (albeit metonymically) for the first time. Phelan argues that, beyond the retrospection inherent in the process of decoding the narrative discourse, an analeptical reference sets in motion an overwrought flashback, in this case to the rape scene. Indeed, the stained corncob agglutinates the indexical elements that have been proleptically paraded up until this point. The reader superposes the information tethered to the unveiling of the stained corncob to Temple's brutal rape. This macrostructural arrangement, then, prompts a simultaneous process of scene shift and a scene blending wherein two narrative frames of experience are blended to form a third domain of knowledge (Fludernik, 2003) – theapprehension of the girl's brutal

violation. More importantly, this final domain of knowledge blends both past and present textual information, which entails an ever-unfolding processing of the traumatic event in particular.

Consequently, rather than effacing, this strategy foregrounds the girl's agony. Indeed, the text's overdue mentioning of Temple's rape is lived by the reader as an "unfolding present" (Phelan, 2016: 243), a dilated "is happening". Remarkably, then, the author does not efface but adds to the tenaciousness of the traumatic shock, whose encroaching in the novels' fabric parallels the victim's arrest on the traumatic abuse. Thus, through strategies of underlexicalization and anticipatory motifs, the text is imbued with an extreme sense of preordination which speaks at all times about the traumatic abuse. In this way, the novels' body materializes the heroine's fraught testimony: "Something *is happening* to me! […] I told you *all the time*!" (68, my emphasis).

4. CONCLUSION

In a singular way, through Temple Drake's story, Faulkner's work attests to the fractious relation between sexual abuse and its problematic representation in fiction. Moreover, it heeds with unstated precision to the more specific debate surrounding the ethical, and unavoidably interpersonal demand readers have: that of witnessing a deeply traumatizing event. In this sense, the novel is a powerful meditation on how fiction as a representational mode tirelessly offers new maneuvers to conjure, that is to tiptoe around a noxious (traumatic) event charged in nescience. Nevertheless, *Sanctuary* is also a cautionary tale on how essentializing a certain inscrutability accompanying a traumatic event, can entail its effacing. The attendant result, as hinted at in the introduction, is that fiction is left only with the power to figure or to allegorize, rather than *to tell.*

A material reading of crude events that are fictionalized, that is an approach to decoding fiction drawing on clinical and literary theorizations of trauma, can thus serve to open interpretive interstices where structural or stylistic choices – such as the deferral of the *Sanctuary*'s main traumatic signifier, Temple Drake's rape–are read in consonance with the victim's symptomatology. Notwithstanding the pitfalls inherent in this equation, the novel at hand offers ground for advancing the materiality of an event whose clinical and phenomenological ramifications are all too present.

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