CHAPTER FIVE

Creating the Space Inside the Prison: Articulating Trauma in Myriam Warner-Vieyra’s *Juletane*, Makuchi’s “Your Madness, not Mine” and Calixthe Beyala’s *Your Name Shall Be Tanga*

Trauma becomes the central theme of several texts to locate gender inequalities at the outset. Nevertheless, how the existence of trauma can be given due importance in the psychological space of the protagonist becomes the rationale for locating madness in gender inequalities. Myriam Warner-Vieyra, a Caribbean woman writer and Calixthe Beyala and Juliana Makuchi, prominent Cameroonian women writers explore this traumatic state of mind of their protagonists in their fiction to speak about several tangible relations to society, polygamy, imprisonment, poverty, prostitution, lack of freedom and denial of independence. Their texts question madness, asserting madness as a metaphor to locate the trauma of the protagonists. Their stories redefine madness in highlighting the aspects of race and gender inequalities.

these works as a common framework. H. Adlai Murdoch in the book *Creole Identity in the French Caribbean Novel* states,

> But one of the hallmarks of contemporary French Caribbean discourse is the very fact that the pressing sociocultural and geopolitical paradoxes of its ties to the French mainland have led its thinkers to explore alternative models of discursive self-articulation that can mine the terrain of difference that sets the imagined community against the metropole. As a result, the narrative strategies and discursive patterns of these novels are necessarily varied; adopting and adapting varying attitudes toward the genesis and implications of Caribbean realization, they address alternative postcolonial possibilities, a repositioning of the axis of the periphery and its other that retains the ambiguities of an alterity both intrinsically different and yet not quite. (Murdoch 3)

The French postcolonial space and the Caribbean Creole narrative strategies that are presented ambivalently and ambiguously in the fiction of these writers project a site of resistance that tries to fit into the cultural differences.

Warner-Vieyra, as a Caribbean writer, focuses her works to be reflexive of Caribbean identity crises and gender issues. Juliana Makuchi Nfah-Abbenyi often remembered by her pen name (Makuchi) focuses her works to be centred around the problems of Beba women. Though Calixthe Beyala has written all her works in French, the English translations explicate her idea of locating the postcolonial identity and gender politics. The present chapter tries to locate trauma as a challenge and as a resistance articulated in their fiction.
5.1 Juletane’s Mistaken Madness

The novel *Juletane* is a textual space allowing the protagonist Juletane’s critical dialogue. Juletane’s madness is a multifaceted discourse, individualizing her revenge and suffering. Juletane comes to Africa from Paris with lot of hopes. She feels Africa, the country of her ancestors, as a solace for her isolation. But her life in Africa makes her someone else. She tries to discover herself throughout the novel. Juletane finds her anger manifested in violence in the country. The language inaccessibility, the cultural differences, polygamous relations and childlessness make her in a turmoil. What happens within her interrupted narrative, becomes the strategically employed plot structure of Warner-Vieyra’s articulation.

Juletane is in a solitary world, cut off from the people, yet very clear of herself. She is unhappy about being nameless, what she refers to her identity. She questions madness being her name and her identity. She sees a madness as different entity from others. She asserts:

My real name I have never known, it was erased from the register of time. Here, they call me ‘the mad woman’, not very original. What do they know about madness? What if mad people weren’t mad! What if certain types of behavior which simple, ordinary people call madness, were just wisdom, a reflection of the clear-sighted hypersensitivity of a pure, upright soul plunged into a real or imaginary affective void? (Warner-Vieyra 2)

At the beginning of the novel, Juletane confronts the question of madness in a way of defining it in her own way. Similar to Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s employment of namelessness to a woman imprisoned as the title of their work “The Madwoman in the Attic”, Juletane is nameless for most part of the novel, just being referred as a “madwoman”, which makes Juletane rage with consistent anger.
Juletane is physically absent in the text as Helene reads the diary of Juletane with many interruptions. Helene, a middle-aged high-spirited woman, discovers Juletane’s diary and becomes part of her textual narrative. This narrative of Juletane in Helene’s reading becomes the challenging element of demonstrating textual madness. Helene’s propelling conclusions of Juletane’s life also make the text conclusive, where the possibilities of better framework can be inserted. Helene’s approaching marriage with a young intellectual called Ousmane parallels with Juletane’s failed relation in her marriage as an idea of warning Helene about the identity and relationships. Helene reflects on her own life when she is confronted with the textual space of Juletane.

Juletane’s diary provides the dialogue of a helpless woman giving evidence of how her behaviour is regarded as madness by others, how she is sent to an asylum and how her life is victimized in Africa. Her diary also reveals how writing the diary is her only companion. She uses writing as her way of locking her secrets; a method of using her rage.

Writing will shorten my long hours of discouragement, will be something for me to cling to and will give me a friend, a confidante, at least I hope it will... However did I fall into this well of misery, where my body has been lying for years, while my rebellious soul wears itself out in useless attempts to revolt, which leave me even more broken, more defeated than ever? (Warner-Vieyra 5)

In her diary, Juletane writes her name finally, where her diary is an open space for Helene’s perusal.

The switching past and present in Juletane’s narrative makes it more intertextual of her life in Paris. Juletane lost her parents at an early age and she had experienced any affection from
anybody. Her godmother is her only companion. As a student, she is not cautious about
government, independence and other political affairs. Though future of Africa’s independence is
the often-discussed topic among her friends, she does not show much interest about such ideas.
But her independence gets imprisoned in Africa, of which she has no hold. The question of
independence also connects to her isolation and homelessness. She is forced to leave her
homeland and live in Paris due to many circumstances. She becomes dependent on her
Godmother for emotional and financial support. She chooses to leave Paris in search of a happy
life, but becomes frustrated and depressed.

Juletane has a miserable childhood. She is grief-stricken to lose her parents, and the
sudden death of her godmother makes her fragmented. She gets hallucinations of her
godmother’s images. The images make her traumatic. The isolation and traumatic memory make
her seek love. Her trust over Mamadou’s love makes her unreasonable. Her isolation frames her
marriage with the African student Mamadou where Juletane sacrifices her life in Paris and comes
to Africa. She hopes to have a happy life with Mamadou, starting a new life of companionship.
She is shocked to learn that Mamadou already had a wife living in Africa, waiting for him in the
village with her five-year-old daughter. Juletane could not tolerate the man, whom she trusted to
the extent of leaving her own job in Paris, and ready to live her entire life with him in a new
country. But, in Africa, She could not forgive the man who has never disclosed the information
about his previous marriage. Juletane thinks of leaving Africa and living in Paris again. But she
continuously tries to seek love from Mamadou and remains in Africa as a rejected wife.

Africa, the country of her forefathers, provides Juletane with a dark psychological
landscape. Like Antoinette in Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*, she is filled with anger and revenge.
The way she tears a paper symbolizes her anguish of being someone else in a home that does not
own her. “I tear a bigger hole in my sheet at a spot where it was not properly mended. I like the noise the fabric makes as it rips. So I carefully tear the sheet into tiny pieces. That keeps me busy, entertains me and calms my anger” (Warner-Vieyra 17). Juletane’s anger is not understood by the rest of the family. Her sudden withdrawal from people can also be read as her implication of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, where an event or sudden onslaught results in psychological disturbance in the individuals. As M. Foster Olive defines aptly in his book *Child Abuse and Stress Disorders*,

Post-traumatic stress disorder, often referred to as PTSD, is a psychological disturbance that occurs after observing or being involved in a severely traumatic or horrifying event. Although most people believe they could carry on with their lives no matter what may happen to them, some events are so traumatic that people are unable to cope and function after they take place. (34)

Juletane had an unusual childhood, followed by a series of traumatic events resulting in her isolation and depression. Her post-traumatic conditions make her more vulnerable to exploitation when her husband takes a third wife. But in the anti-psychiatric perspective, Juletane’s traumatic condition can be questioned as Warner-Vieyra employs violence as a method to cope with the trauma. Juletane chooses her resistance methods in sharp contrast to the traumatic situation.

Juletane’s gradual sense of losing her early pleasures of life can be read as her own way of deciphering trauma that she could not challenge. Trauma becomes her self built cage, imprisoning her permanently. The way Juletane decodes her traumatic past is essential to understand the transition she experiences from suffering towards resistance. At the same time,
while dealing with trauma, Myriam Warner-Vieyra brings in postcolonial notion of freedom and selfhood paralleling the lives of Juletane and Helene. Helene and Juletane share similar stages of colonial onslaught, but the intensity they experienced or viewed is different. Helene had a happy childhood. But, Juletane is isolated, always looking someone to comfort her. In Mamadou’s home, she is termed as a madwoman. Her anger and withdrawal from all other family members make her distant. She is been watched, gossiped about and scolded off. Helene, on the other hand, is economically and psychologically independent. Helene’s marriage with Ousmane becomes a sub-plot when Helene chooses Juletane’s life as her influence. Her friend Jacques expresses that Helene may have to share her husband with a young wife in Helene’s menopausal years. But Helene is confident of her imaginary marital life. She feels her decision to marry stems from her desire to have a child of her own who can keep her in company to eliminate her isolation. Reading Juletane’s diary at the crucial point of rethinking about her marriage frames Helene engulfed with several questions about men, their unfaithfulness and their domination over women. Reading Juletane’s tragic narrative, which explicates Juletane’s depression when her husband is parted between three wives, makes Helene think twice about her life. Helene sees the encounter with Juletane’s diary as a method of reflecting on her own life, how she is able to choose what she wants in her life. Juletane’s story becomes a mirror to predict Helene’s life. Juletane’s tragic life makes Helene resistant to any external authoritarian power towards her psyche.

Helene also figures how Juletane’s identity is misplaced in Africa. Loss of accessing one’s own language makes Juletane’s identity fractured. Juletane does not know the native language of her husband, deeply broken off in the community. She knows French but cannot talk or understand her husband’s language. He continues to talk in the language, which she has no
access to which makes her distant. She could not tolerate her husband’s weekend promises of visiting his first wife Awa and she becomes gloomy. “I began breaking everything in my room and banging my head against the walls. I did not come to my senses completely until four days later in the hospital” (Warner-Vieyra 25). Like Antoinette locked in Rochester’s attic, Juletane is locked in Mamadou’s unfaithfulness. Helene manages the broken relation with Hector, her friend who betrayed her when confronted with the question of marriage and designs her life independently. However, Juletane could not come out of Mamadou’s home.

Juletane’s life in Africa witnesses another traumatic event. The car accident makes her physically shattered as she lost her baby, psychologically as she could not stay happy thereafter. The villagers make stories about her miscarriage, blaming her as she prevented Mamadou from visiting his first wife Awa. The villagers also gossip about her as she prepared baby clothes in advance. Those gossips make her completely shattered. Juletane also could not come out of the shock that she could never become a mother again. Miscarriage she suffers symbolizes her beliefs on gender and her attempt to confine to a womanly role. She wanted to be cast into the role of a mother. When she finds that she could not fit in the role, she gets depressed. Mamadou too expects a woman to be apt in fulfilling her roles of wife and mother; when he finds that Juletane can no longer become a mother of his children, he insists on bringing his first wife to share his house. Warner-Vieyra strictly questions the way of assigning roles for women, Juletane as a negative example of not finding her own life, future or independence. Juletane, an educated woman, who had lived a moving life in Paris, becomes helpless in Africa and could not tolerate childlessness. Like Buchi Emecheta who satirizes the joys of motherhood in her novel *The Joys of Motherhood*, like Flora Nwapa who mystifies motherhood in her novel *Effuru*, like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie who brings the violence from the suffering mother in the novel
Purple Hibiscus, Warner-Vieyra satires motherhood and trauma through Juletane’s character. Warner-Vieyra offers several possibilities for Juletane to escape the present situation in Africa. However, Juletane chooses to make her own plot towards revenge.

Juletane could not tolerate Mamadou’s first wife Awa sharing her house, and becomes depressed. “I withdrew completely into my sorrow, spending days and days without going out, without eating, turning over and over the same thoughts, harking back to the same old story, endlessly, until I became numb, distraught” (Warner-Vieyra 36). She confesses that, she is living a vegetable life. She becomes fragmented and is mistaken or assumed mad. When she is taken to the psychiatrist, she confesses that, the psychiatrist, a man did not understand her problem and did not talk to her either. “Mamadou took me to a psychiatrist and I had an electro-encephalogram. The doctor, a man this time, apparently understood nothing of my problem. He talked mainly with Mamadou, prescribed medication, rest, quiet, and a nutritious diet” (Warner-Vieyra 38). Juletane’s responses to the trauma she experiences are not heard by the psychiatrist. The anti-psychiatrists argue how psychiatrists generalize the responses of the victims, refuse to listen their thoughts. As Thomas Szasz in the book Ideology and Insanity: Essays on the Psychiatric Dehumanization of Man talks about how psychiatrists are influenced by their own perspective about various things, “The psychiatrist is committed to some picture of what he considers reality, and to what he thinks society considers reality, and he observes and judges the patient’s behavior in the light of these beliefs” (Szasz 19). Juletane’s behaviour is judged in accordance with the psychiatrist’s perspective about gender, as he refuses to listen her, does not talk to her and just treats her as a subject incapable of understanding. The psychiatrist talks only with Juletane’s husband, undermining Juletane’s own anguish of being ill-treated by the same person. Juletane is subjected to accept the power relations where the psychiatrist does not even
talk to her and prescribes medicine only with her husband. Lack of having her own dialogue makes Juletane’s traumatic feelings intensified.

Besides explicating the condition of psychiatry being humiliating to the traumatic individuals, Warner-Vieyra powerfully discusses feminist issues making a woman vulnerable in a polygamous relation. Ndèye, Mamadou’s third wife, calls Juletane a mad woman, resentful of her. The new wife puts Juletane into a white woman’s identity and makes her someone else. “She was quite simply identifying me with the white wives of the colonials. She was even stripping me of my identity as a black woman” (Warner-Vieyra 42). Juletane lived her adult life in Paris, which makes her family to treat her differently. She is educated which also contrasts the other wives, who often associate her with the white woman. Juletane becomes suffocated with several labels about her identity and her psychological state.

Juletane is not sure where to associate herself with, either with her birthplace Gwadiloop or her psychological birthplace Paris or her dreamland Africa. She predicted Africa would be conjugal with her, mirroring conjugal relation with Mamadou. The hostility of the place and the hostility of its people make her erased with space. The namelessness she suffers combines with her spacelessness. She admits her lack of knowledge or interest on colonial matters. She was having a desired life in Paris, hence says, “...[i]ndependence or self-government were words which were quite new to me” (Warner-Vieyra 12). In her later life, she becomes the centre of these juxtaposing realities of colonization and post-colonialization. “Not only does Warner-Vieyra give voice to the otherwise-silenced "Other," she also problematizes the Self/Other opposition by positing an "Otherness," neither Self nor Other, located within the splitting of colonial space” (Badders 77). The problematised otherness makes Juletane psychologically
vulnerable to be chased by fragmentary thoughts, leaving her hopeless besides the pain of psychiatric medicine.

Juletane’s depression becomes her own, yet a separate entity as she still seeks a dream life with Mamadou. She still tries to win Mamadou’s affection, which in turn results in lowering her image. She distorts her image, rupturing it into pieces. Even the psychiatrist adds up to making her more fragmented and she takes her final solace in revenge. Juletane wants to revive her past, finding its warmth in Mamadou’s love. Mamadou should replace loss of her parents in hurricane, and all the other family members. “When I married him, it was more than a husband, it was a whole family that I had found. He had become the father who had died too soon, the friend whom I had always dreamed of” (Warner-Vieyra 24). Nevertheless, he is hostile to her. His hostility leads to fulfill her revenge drive. Helene is regretful that she could not do anything to Juletane, when a French psychiatrist referred her case. Helene also remembers another woman who died of heartbreak with the inability of tolerating her husband’s marriage with another woman. Juletane’s condition also hints that she has extreme heartbreak and people take it as madness. Her first question on what constitutes madness for people can be referred as her maladjustment to the society which tolerates polygamy and ostracizes her with madness.

The weather too makes Juletane pathetic. The descriptions she gives for gloomy and sometimes bright weather shows her relation with nature. She spends some of her days in shower; some in other isolated spaces. Mamadou’s third wife Ndye breaks her record when she was listening to Beethoven symphony and slaps her. She asks Mamadou to buy another record, which he refuses. She resolves into revenge. Her diary consists of her suffering at Mamadou’s home, but the incidents she records are very significant in portraying her turmoil. Juletane is
mistaken as a madwoman. In fact, she is filled with revenge to ruin her home that often degrades her.

Juletane’s revenge makes her exhibit her power over people who betrayed her. Her hatred towards the psychiatric medicine contributes to this purpose. She is unwilling to admit herself as responsible for the consumption of her medicine by Awa’s children. Except Juletane, no one knows the reason for the sudden death of Awa’s three children. Juletane becomes unsympathetic towards the children, suggesting her anger for being ill-treated constantly at her own home. Her fragmentary confession “Who is responsible for their death...? Didn't they prescribe drops for me? Drops that Mamadou himself was to make me take, and that were to be kept out of the children's reach...?" (Warner-Vieyra 69), hints at her revenge, poisoning Mamadou’s children with her prescribed medicine. Juletane’s unwillingness to accept the murder can be read as her sense of finding justice for the suffering she was made to endure.

Awa’s sudden death in response to the loss of three children can also be read as her traumatic outcome where she could not handle the loss of her children. Awa is exposed to the sudden onslaught of terrible death of her loving children. Selfless and victimized, she tries to find solace with her brothers, but kills herself in finding no way to bear the present situation. Juletane becomes possibly responsible for Awa’s death. Awa did not expect much from Mamadou; she tolerated Juletane and Ndeye, and ended her life tragically. Awa, who waited for her husband for many years, receives nothing from him. Symbolizing Awa’s death, Juletane’s death in the asylum, Awa’s children’s death and Ndeye’s hospitalization because of Juletane’s revenge, resulting in Mamadou’s unexpected death, Warner-Vieyra sharply rips of the layers of polygamy. Juletane’s revenge is a weapon to the disease of polygamy, an assertive answer Juletane gives for the label of madness she dislikes.
Warner-Vieyra strategically does not make it clear whether Juletane killed Mamadou’s children. She uses madness as a trope to disguise Juletane’s revenge.

Did I pour the contents of the medicine bottle into the children’s drinking-cup? Or did I leave the bottle where they could reach it? I don’t remember anything... I had taken the bottle intending to swallow a few drops, as I sometimes did to have a quiet night. I found it empty in the pocket of my dress, the next day, the day after the children’s death. I could not explain how it had got there. Perhaps it was not properly closed and spilled accidentally... I prefer this explanation. I would not like to know I was responsible for the death of the children. (Warner-Vieyra 74)

Warner-Vieyra emphasizes on Juletane’s medicine and subverts the act of the children taking the medicine prescribed for Juletane. The children’s consumption of the medicine leading to their death becomes a secret only Juletane knows. She locks it inside her mind, like many things she knows which others do not believe. Juletane is taken into asylum when she physically injures Ndeye though she is supposed to be punished accordance with the law. Asylum becomes the law for Juletane’s mixed responses; she succeeds in disguising her revenge.

Madness becomes an explorative space for Juletane to take revenge on her counterparts. Her ways are revealed, plotted to destroy her enemies. Yet people label her as mad. As she is certain of her sanity, her actions also reveal that she is vengeful than being insane. Her plot to kill Mamadou’s children which she does not admit herself as responsible and her violent act of pouring hot water on Mamadou’s third wife’s face which is revealed clearly, show how she uses the time carefully and manages to destroy the house which she was living in. Madness becomes the centre of Juletane’s life; she revolves around the centre and takes advantage of it. Madness
makes her character soft, tragic and appealing. She could be portrayed as a cruel antagonist, a heartless woman. But madness is used on her body and mind in making her a victim. Her special dislocation also contributes to this phase. As she vaguely admits, “A phrase which I once read comes to mind: 'He who creates a monster of pain should not be surprised if one day he is destroyed by it’” (Warner-Vieyra 75). She could be treated as the monster that created the pain and has been destroyed by it. In another sense, her co-wife lives with the injury that can be looked at as her fulfillment of revenge. Warner-Vieyra’s plot falls to a stereotypical womanly jealousy and makes the text less complex and congestive for characters development. However, the way madness is used makes it a special method of decoding personal agony and frustration.

Juletane is powerless as she is childless while Awa has three children. Juletane is equally powerless over Ndeye as Ndeye receives the status of being Mamadou’s favorite wife. The powerlessness over the other two wives too contributes to the behavioral discrimination towards Juletane as Patrick W. Corrigan, David Roe, and Hector W. H. Tsang write in the book *Challenging the Stigma of Mental Illness: Lessons for Therapists and Advocates*, “Behavioral discrimination occurs most obviously when one person is in a more powerful role compared to the person with mental illness” (Corrigan, Roe and Tsang 30). Juletane is resolved to accept her failure of being a capable wife. Madness is used against her by the people in powerful roles, seeking her withdrawal from all the household activities. To confront the discrimination of being treated with madness, Juletane first challenges the other two wives of powerful roles. She destroys their pleasure, asserting her power over them. She imagines to break the label of madness soon with her power. However, she becomes the victim of love towards Mamadou, which defeats her.
Juletane questions whether her madness is the will of the God, showcases her sense of reason suggesting how people take much care in labeling her with madness.

[What about my madness, whose will was that? That is, if I could be considered mad. For the moment I am neither the mad woman of the village nor the neighborhood. My madness is the private property of Mamadou Moustapha's house and in particular of Ndeye, his favorite and third wife. (Warner-Vieyra 62)

Till the end of the novel, Juletane expresses her ability to reason well. But her husband and her co-wives often humiliate her. At the end of the novel, her name is revealed, relieving her from the veil of madwoman. “No one had called me by name for years. I am ‘the mad woman’” (Warner-Vieyra 63). Her name as a centre, she criticizes the plight of women who are made to be submissive.

Warner-Vieyra’s depiction of the label of madness over Juletane’s life highlights the social aspect of madness. Being the victim of polygamous relationship, Juletane becomes aloof and frustrated. Her body too reacts to the traumas she is subjected to. The rivalry between the co-wives adds to her psychological rupture of losing her language, access to social life, employment, children and husband. At this hierarchical context too, Juletane is sympathetic to Awa.

Awa is a submissive and dependent woman who welcomes Mamadou’s wives with acceptance without questioning him. Juletane finds her as a typical woman happy about her husband’s education and money. “What did she get in return? A fewpagnes, a little food, very few jewels compared to the treasures which Ndeye had” (Warner-Vieyra 8). Juletane sees a mother in Awa and a rival in Ndeye. Warner-Vieyra posits a typical hierarchical relation
between the three women, marking their disintegrated lives. Awa is uneducated and unpresentable wife to Mamadou. She is the mother of his sons, but not eligible to be presented to his friends or accompany him to any places. Awa is a typical submissive woman for whom Juletane feels pity but could not do anything, as she is unhappy with her own life. In spite of being educated, Juletane too suffers the tragic life like Awa. Juletane is locked in madness, while Ndeye is opportunistic, self-centred, who finds Juletane’s presence intolerable. The disunity between these three women maps Warner-Vieyra’s typical womanly vision making their lives notwithstanding the notion of universal sisterhood. Warner-Vieyra criticizes the oneness of womanhood, as the difficulties can sometimes be multiplied for women like Juletane, where they struggle to come into terms with their rootedness, language and identity.

Awa’s death makes Juletane’s house shattered. Juletane is left uncared as Awa, the only person concerned of Juletane is dead. Juletane did not expect Awa’s death, equally traumatic of the incident. She becomes extremely angry for the sequence of miserable incidents. Juletane initially dreams of killing Mamadou’s third wife Ndeye with a knife. Later, she pours a handful of oil on Ndeye’s face in continuing her sequence of revenge. Her attempt to physically disfigure Ndeye, symbolizes her hostility to her co-wife and her revenge making the co-wife psychologically ruptured.

Juletane’s hospitalization to cure her mental illness is proved futile as her reason for attacking her co-wife is her anger more than her madness. She continues to write her diary in locating her reason and anger within the label of madness. She feels solace in the words poured on the notebook. Juletane talks to another woman in the asylum, who is locked at home, while suffering loneliness. She tells Juletane that, writing diary is white people’s business. Juletane breaks the ideology and tries to word her sufferings to authenticate her condition, which may lost
in future with vague memories. Mamadou’s death by accident makes Juletane hopeless as she could not win his affection any more. Juletane’s refusal to eat with the grief of her husband’s death and her body becoming unresponsive for medicine can be read as the metaphorized illness constituting the death of physical and psychological self. Between Paris and Africa, Juletane’s life is divided into several segments of love, heartbreak and disappointment. Mamadou’s death which Juletane did not expect makes her pathetic. She too dies in the hospital with a dream of passing the night calmly and expressing the wish to wake in a different world. “To wake up in another world where mad people are not mad, but wise and just” (Warner-Vieyra 78). Warner-Vieyra takes necessary care that, a clear picture of Juletane’s life and death are presented to the readers, breaking the label of mental illness.

Myriam Warner-Vieyra’s first novel As the Sorcerer said (1982) also centres around the theme of madness, imprisoning a protagonist who could not tackle the colonial and postcolonial nuances. Her life is split between the forces of her village nostalgia and her dreamland Paris’s cultural encounter. Zetou, the protagonist of this novel, shows how psychiatric hospital becomes her home when she tries to fulfill her dreams. Like Juletane, she is born in Guadeloupe, but had a difficult childhood because of her father and grandmother who are strict followers of patriarchy. They want her to stop her education and become an ideal woman who is expert in household activities than reading and writing. Her mother Rosamonde, who left her in childhood to seek her own fortune returns to divorce her father when Zetou is a grown up woman, becomes another upshot in Zetou’s perception of identity. Her mother’s French cultural turns make her inferior. She leaves Guadeloupe with her mother hoping for a new life in Paris. But to her shock, colonial pressure in France and her own loss of past relocated her into a psychiatric hospital as a madwoman.
Like Juletane, Zetou dreams of returning to Guadeloupe. Zetou too is caught between traditional and modern values of Guadeloupe and France. While Juletane lives in Paris and finds Africa as a space of trauma, Zetou learns that Paris is a sight of chaos and left helpless in French psychiatric hospital. While Juletane ends her life in an African asylum, Zetou tries to revive her past, glimpsing it from her memories in the hospital itself. Both the asylums in different geographical locations serve for the juxtaposing hybrid identities of both the protagonists. Warner-Vieyra creates a special text where madness gets written, revised and rewritten within the mental abilities of the protagonists. Juletane has a mind with reason superseded by trauma; Zetou too experiences the same as a displaced woman in a different country. Juletane’s text leaves the rearticulated madness as a trope of resistance and redefines reason and anger.

Juletane’s madness is complicated with intertextual narrative, associated vengeance and anger, however ends in a tragic death resulted from one’s own anger and frustration. Juletane’s tragic death can be read as her passive response to her unfailing love towards Mamadou. She is unwilling to leave Africa though she has the opportunities to walk away from the marriage, but she chooses to seek love from Mamadou at any point of time. The trauma of losing her husband makes her unresponsive to the physical needs as she stops eating in preventing the continuation of her life. Before Mamadou’s sudden death, Juletane’s sudden realization of her husband’s previous marriage becomes the central traumatic event in her life, resulting in her chronic depressive phases. Her recall of childhood and constant illusions of her home in Gwadilooop can be treated as autobiographical abnormalities what Mieke Verfaellie and Jennifer J. Vasterling term in the essay “Memory in PTSD: A Neurocognitive Approach” as “[a]utobiographical abnormalities associated with PTSD are not limited to recall of trauma-specific memories but extend to events unrelated to the trauma, suggesting a larger, overarching autobiographical
memory impairment” (Verfaellie and Vasterling 106). Memory becomes the time roll for Juletane. Yet she is able to come out of the confinement from the time. However, she ends her life in the asylum. Her home and the asylum act similarly in confining her, in one way succeeding to make her believe her madness. But Juletane never confirms to what others think of her, accentuating her anger consequence from the series of traumatic events.

5.2 Stories of Resistance: Makuchi’s “Your Madness, not Mine”

Makuchi’s short story collection “Your Madness, not Mine” addresses several themes connected with gender inequalities. The short stories presented in the collection replicate how women face the injustice in all its forms in Cameroon, are labeled as mad women. Makuchi stresses on her language, her gender, her culture, in these stories through several characters; are of a replica of her ideas. The first story in this collection “The Healer” gives a clear picture of superstitious beliefs, women being ill-treated if they do not have children. The narrator’s aunt is the victim of such superstitious beliefs. Finding that her faith has no reason, she becomes rebellious. The story centres on the issue of infertility and the entire village being misled by the healer. However, the narrator’s aunt makes the village realized of the healer’s violent practices. The narrator reveals the story of a victim who takes revenge on the healer. “My aunt, they said, had gone crazy” (Makuchi 10). The nameless fighter becomes vengeful:

[s]he had gone on a rampage of destruction and, like a wounded python thrashing through the hills, refusing to accept the moment of death, had systematically put fire to a number of huts. The thatched roofs had burned very fast, and the fire spread rapidly throughout the compound. People rushed to save themselves and their relatives. The police came too late. There was nothing left to salvage in this secluded village but hundreds of patients
who looked scared, haggard, numb, not knowing where they were, not knowing where to go. (Makuchi 11)

With anger the rebellious woman says, “The stories of all those women were only worth a three-year prison sentence, one that Azembe did not even finish serving since it was claimed that he had died of a heart attack” (Makuchi 11). The narrator’s aunt fires the healer’s home, metaphorical of firing the myths about his ability of making women fertile.

The healer was a legend before, revered of his magical abilities. Makuchi gives a picture of the status of Cameroon as Azembe the healer would make their country victorious.

He had excelled in his craft, so much so that it was said that if Cameroon chose to go to war with any of her neighbours Chad, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, the Central African Republic, or Nigeria, especially Nigeria (Cameroonian claimed that the others were chicken feed) all the government had to do was prostrate itself in front of Azembe, and he would walk (of course, nobody would see him) ahead of the army and harvest the bullets and shells from those Nigerian guns and cannons. It was as simple as that. The Cameroonian army would only have to march on behind him, or rather they would have to imagine and keep a respectful distance. The Nigerian soldiers would have fled from what they saw and could not see, what they knew but could not know, and the Cameroonian would declare victory. (Makuchi 4-5)

Cameroon is at the cusp of war and people are conscious of it. Makuchi satirizes the people who ignorantly believe the magic. Hundreds of women believe that they got children only after visiting the healer. No one question his ability to make women fertile. He receives respect in the village. But, the narrator’s aunt finds the reason behind his magical practice. She
confesses that, she could have been given a sleeping drug by Azembe, which made her unconscious. “She told me that all she could recollect was that she had felt very drowsy after Azembe had given her her first treatment” (Makuchi 8). She pretends that she took Azembe’s medicine and finds his sexual exploitation on her body. She becomes vengeful after knowing how Azembe is actually not performing any miracle, but taking advantage of women who visit him.

That precise moment, she said, that something had snapped in her head, invading her arteries, spreading through her entire body. The intense pain had miraculously evaporated and she seemed possessed, like her mother on those nights when granny donned her ancestral gear and went out to fight off those evil spirits that come to the village once in a while to steal the crops from our farms. (Makuchi 10)

The narrator’s aunt becomes conscious in making the truth about the healer heard everywhere in her village.

The narrator’s aunt, the victim of healer’s sexual exploitations like many other women of her village, is sure that Azembe is the evil spirit, who happens to invade the women. She decides to act on justice for herself and the other victimized women. What she does gets rarely accepted in her community. Nevertheless, she tries to invade the colonizer who tried to colonize her body. Like a colonizer, the healer gives a drug that can put his subject into slumber, then tries to gratify his sexual needs. The narrator’s aunt resists his force raged with violence and tries for the emancipation of women of her community.

The narrator’s aunt finds resistive ways to challenge the trauma imposed on her. When she realizes that her body is used for someone else’s selfish desires and her infertility is used for
this purpose, she becomes outraged. The trauma is transformed into revenge. She succeeds in fulfilling it. The narrator’s aunt fights with the healer though no one listens to her and assists her. Yet she exhibits her anger and succeeds in making the village conscious. Her sudden violence in attacking the healer is regarded as her craziness by the villagers, but she accentuates the meaning in her violence.

The next story titled “your madness, not mine” is about Jikwu’s mother, who happens to live with rage and bursts out violently one day, breaking the prison cell of patriarchy around her. Before getting married, the nameless protagonist used to work and had financial independence. However, after her marriage, her husband stops her being employed and locked her at home. He assigns a typical role to her.

He claims that a man's job is to work and feed his wife and children, to take care of his family. That's what his father and grandfathers did and that's what he's going to do. The woman's job, he says, is to stay at home, raise her children, cook his food, and entertain his friends. That's what her mother and her grandmothers did and that's what she's going to do. . . . (Makuchi 17)

He beats her, his children, never stays at home. The protagonist keeps fighting with her identity, and the role assigned to her.

Jikwu narrates his mother’s tragic story to his friend Beatrice, an internal narrative that makes it possible to see the protagonist’s story in a different lens. Jikwu’s narrative however does not have the childish tinge. He expresses emotional turmoil and loss. His mother decides that they should go to their grandparent’s village leaving his father, which uncovers how his
mother happens to be tired with her husband. His mother is obsessive for typing, which replicates her education, her office work which she liked before getting married.

Sometimes when she thinks no one is watching, she pulls out her old typewriter from underneath her bed and begins typing. Typing on an imaginary sheet of paper. I don't understand why she doesn't feed the machine with paper. But she types, types, fast, faster, faster, faster, until the tips of her fingers hurt. (Makuchi 16)

She hurts her fingers badly, a sign of her fulfillment in achieving what is forbidden. For her husband, woman should not work or go out of her home. She should not use a typewriter, which indicates her education. But the protagonist insists on fulfilling her wish to be sure of her writing and reading ability.

The protagonist does not insert a paper in the typewriter, which shows the hindrances that surround her progressive thoughts. She is not interested in recording her thoughts on paper. She just insists on finding a tool to make her reasonable. The protagonist becomes more obsessive, her typewriter finds place in her kitchen, where she types vigorously. “Her fingertips were bleeding and swollen. The paper she'd remembered to use this time was smudged all over with her blood. She was staring straight ahead, talking to herself . . .” (Makuchi 18). Her monologue reveals that her husband agreed that she could go out for work before marriage. She is sad that he broke his promises and made her house bound. Her vigorous typing also reveals how she wishes her fingers to perform a productive work. “Look at my fingers, they are good at cooking, they are good at sewing, they are good at cleaning, but they can never be good enough for a job outside this house” (Makuchi 19). She hurts her fingers, hands and her body, as they should not be used in her house either. She becomes extremely emotional and determines to harm herself. “She was
scratching her face, her arms, her neck . . . she was wounding her entire body” (Makuchi 19). She becomes angry, “She was picking up everything in her path and throwing it against the wall” (Makuchi 19). Her obsession for typing and her attempt to type on the machine even without inserting a paper can be read as her reaction to the misplaced identity she is subjected to endure.

The trauma of the protagonist results in unshared secrecy. She tries to break the car owned by a woman whom she thinks her husband’s girlfriend. Failed in her attack, she gets captivated by three neighbouring men. This typical vengeance similar to Juletane’s ambiguous attack on Mamadou’s children and her direct attack on his third wife make it possible to interpret jealousy, suspicion, and infidelity leaving more traumatic situations provoking vengeance and violence.

The protagonist confirms that it is not her madness but her husband’s madness because he would not allow her to be herself.

[s]he picked up her old typewriter, threw it on the ground, picked it up, flung it at the wall, picked it up, threw it down, many . . . many times, until she decided to pull the keys out one by one. Andreas, this is your madness, not mine, she was screaming, pulling at the keys with her bruised and bleeding fingers. (Makuchi 22)

She pleads her son to be himself, teaches him how he should not kill the self in any person. The protagonist tries to show how her self is torn and how it is taken away from her. Through self harm, she reveals her internal rupture happened for being deprived of her own self. The story of Chebe, which she tells her son about a husband who eats everything ignoring his wife and children, in fact, is a three-fold narrative aimed to symbolize her own story. Madness is used to denote her husband’s jealousy. Makuchi uses the extreme situation of the protagonist to
assert, “It’s time to wake up from this slumber and clean myself up” (Makuchi 23), suggesting her freedom and a new life.

Makuchi draws two different stories of women. Both of them try to capture the essence of constructing their own selves. They are not given psychiatric treatment, but treated as insane by the people around them. The remaining stories in this collection have other subjects to deal with, but these stories tell the readers, their revenge and victory through the methods of uncovering the mythical madness. The next story, “Market Seen” tells poignant stories of poor women, often getting cheated by the sellers whenever they buy clothes or meat. Sibora, who faces difficulties as a single mother, is deeply anguished at this injustice, while the stories “Election Fever” and “American Lottery” are stories of political consciousness. Makuchi presents agony of a mother who loses her only son because of AIDS in the story “Slow Poison”. Makuchi voices the injustice done to women in the name of superstitious beliefs and poverty imposed helplessness. Above all, internally colonized patriarchal ideologies make them shout: “your madness, not ours”.

“Your Madness, Not Mine” presents ruptured reality of deprived women who voice their trauma in many possible ways. They are no longer silent about the trauma they injure but they invent language of their own for decoding their psychological spaces. The women in these stories explicate their own methods of resistance when victimized in traumatic situations.

5.3 Resistance in the Prison: Calixthe Beyala’s Your Name Shall be Tanga

Calixthe Beyala’s novel Your Name Shall Be Tanga presents the plight of an African woman Tanga, whose life is subjected to poverty, sexual exploitation and imprisonment. Beyala also projects a white woman labeled with madness in paralleling the life of Tanga. Anna-Claude,
a philosophy teacher, hallucinates on being a wife of someone, a mother of twelve children, and her past life in Africa.

She'd talk about herself by talking about them, about a place in Africa where she was supposed to have lived in a previous life; about a husband she was supposed to have buried alive for having desecrated faithfulness, about her twelve children, two of whom had died. The students would listen to her, laugh, and murmur that she was crazy. (Beyala 3)

Her hallucinatory character Ousmane, a smart African young man, is her solace in her depressive phases. Like Elizabeth in A Question of Power, Anna-Claude imagines the life of her hallucinatory character Ousmane. “She was living his life and she used to speak to him. She told her friends about his moods, his mannerisms, his refusal to speak until he’d had two or three cups of coffee, the smell of his cigar” (Beyala 4). She struggles all the days waiting and searching for him. “Walking between sky and dust, she'd go around in the middle of the afternoon, looking under the baobab trees, in the market-places, giving the description of her man. Nobody matched it, nobody was supposed to” (Beyala 5). Anna-Claude is imprisoned for this reason where she meets Tanga. She demands Tanga’s story for preserving it. Tanga’s story becomes her story.

Tanga, a victim of several sexual exploitations, poverty and dejection, also an African girl of sixteen experiences life’s utmost sufferings. From the age of ten, Tanga is forced into prostitution. She is ashamed and angry about it. She has limited options for the economic stability for her family. Forced sexual abuses in the childhood makes her traumatic. Love becomes another terrific victimization of her body, as it happens to Tanga when she first feels
intense love for Hassan. She believes in him and dreams of their true relation. With the tendency
to get affectionate with someone in the childhood and with the idea of associating her body
victimization with love, she becomes resistant to the sexual exploitation. As Karen A. Duncan
writes in *Healing from the Trauma of Childhood Sexual Abuse: The Journey for Women,*

Women who consider themselves compulsively sexual describe the ways this damaging
behavior resulted from the sexual abuse. For example, their bodies were objects to the
perpetrator or the sexual abuse was how the perpetrator showed he "loved" her, so that is
how she came to think of her body as an object or to define love as only sexual. Unmet
childhood needs for affection and caring are met through sex, and some women sexualize
their relationships as a way to feel powerful instead of powerless or to prevent emotional
intimacy by making sex the focus of the relationship. Women have described how they
have felt desired through compulsive sex while at the same time viewing it as a way to
punish their bodies for the shame of the sexual abuse. (119)

Tanga’s love for Hassan takes abusive turns. Yet she is not ready to accept him as the
perpetrator. When she comes to know that he is no different from any other man, she becomes
obsessed with sexual imagery, which she repeatedly uses in her uninterrupted language and
narration. “At the words ‘How much?’, carelessly tossed out by Hassan, I feel my cheeks tingle.
Shame grabs my heart. Rises in my throat, ties my head in knots. Until now I felt shame for only
one thing, my mother old one” (Beyala 12). Tanga’s repeated delusions, her imaginary characters
all have sexuality as the basic characteristic. Overt sexualization of her imaginary characters
results from her way of disowning her body trying to punish and hate it.
Tanga’s life is surrounded by poverty and all the bitter memories of childhood, as she gives birth to her father’s child, invaded by patriarchal violence, sexual exploitation, and self-destruction that she ends up being a prostitute. The prison cell, an asylum for them, wove their stories together. While Anna-Claude had hallucinations, Tanga has obsession, depression, and lose of time and memory. Though the focus was on textualising Anna-Claude’s label of madness, Tanga’s narration within the novel leaves the possibilities of making Tanga a victim of anxieties, and nervous onslaught. Tanga becomes the victim of sexual colonization, which makes her engulf it with perversion. She wants to adapt the child Mala. He refuses it and she becomes miserable. Tanga has violent and terrible dreams making her reality sorrowful. Tanga asks Hassan to marry her. He refuses. “’Marry you? But you're totally nuts, old girl! Do you know what would happen to you? You'd lose your beauty. Like all the others’” (Beyala 93). No one wishes to marry her, interested only in having sexual relationships with her. This makes her hate the people around her. Tanga is deprived of a dream life. Tanga becomes enraged, jealous and filled with hatred when her sister chooses prostitution. She leaves home and her angry mother, and questions “How much time went by while I was in this delirium? I couldn't say. Time had left my spirit. Every minute brought forth its plans for flight, slowly, very slowly, second after second until insanity displayed itself” (Beyala 103). Tanga finds solace in interrupting others and re-instating her own story within their vague narratives.

Tanga too invents characters and situations. Her behaviour makes people stare at her. 

He says: 'She's completely out of her mind!' People gather round. Eyes full of mirth stare at me. Some people are laughing. Others comment on the hue of the particular madness which pursues me. I shrug my shoulders, stick out my tongue and let fly a spurt of spittle. They move away. I slip towards the exit... relieved. (Beyala 120-121)
Tanga’s madness is situated inside her chaotic mind, a chaotic life she endures at home. She is homeless in her home; the streets are hostile towards her. Placelessness creates several places inside her mind, making her bewildered. Sometimes, she chooses those places she invents, sometimes she gives descriptions of those places and its associations, making her narrative filled with blurring lines of reality and imagination.

Tanga is made to sell her flesh to feed her family. “I the girl child-woman, dutiful in the fulfillment of the rites of child-parent to her parents, since it's fitting that I sell my flesh to feed them, to feed them always because of the breath of life they gave me,”…. (Beyala 18), and never given respect by her mother, sister, her deserted lover, neighbors or friends. Camilla, a white prostitute makes Tanga more miserable for the shame and disgust that surrounds the life of a prostitute. Beyala chooses a white listener to Tanga’s storey, a white replica to unfold the misery of prostitution through Camilla’s storey. Tanga repeatedly encountered the racial equalities she is quite yet believe. Tanga dreams of going to France and living there happily. She is fascinated by the country. She imagines the journey several times. Camila breaks the myth in revealing the darkness of her country. As Camila asks, “‘D’you know what an insane asylum is, a rest home, a correction centre, an orphanage?’” (Beyala 85), Tanga has no answer as she never knew about them. She was free in walking over the streets, interrupting the people in streets, and having her reservations on the things she wants to do or want to talk about. Tanga is not locked up for her madness unlike Anna-Claude, which Tanga finds better than living in poverty. Tanga’s storey inserts Anna-Claude, they both become one which prompt Anna-Claude to say “I AM ILLUSION I AM MADNESS” (Beyala 127). Both the stories speak madness as silence forced on their lives.
Calixthe Beyala presents madness as a metaphor in the lives of Tanga and Anna-Claude. Tanga, the poor African girl, is discriminated because of her poverty and her life as a prostitute. The stigma attached to her life makes her invent hallucinatory characters. As Patrick W. Corrigan, David Roe, and Hector W. H. Tsang write, “Stigma can actually bias our memory so that persons with mental illness are recalled in a more negative light” (Corrigan, Roe and Tsang 28). Tanga is recalled as an unreasonable girl biased by her life and her incoherent conversations. Stigmatized in several ways, Tanga becomes powerless in her own family and the world. Her refusal to return to her family can be read as her way of eliminating something, which makes her pathetic. Anna-Claude on the other hand, is stigmatized because of her hallucinations and never receives respect although she is in a respectable profession. The stigma towards the label of mental illness puts the victims in a difficult situation as they are given the label of mental illness against their presumptions and are forced to accept the hostility by the people who ascribe such label to their deviant behaviour. As Thomas Szasz explains how mental illness came into existence by the psychiatrists who project their propaganda of eliminating the illness:

> [t]heir aim is to create in the popular mind a confident belief that mental illness is some sort of disease entity, like an infection or a malignancy. If this were true, one could catch or get a mental illness, one might have or harbor it, one might transmit it to others, and finally one could get rid of it. Not only is there not a shred of evidence to support this idea, but, on the contrary, all the evidence is the other way and supports the view that what people now call mental illnesses are, for the most part, communications expressing unacceptable ideas, often framed in an unusual idiom. (Szasz 19)
As mental illness is not contagious, it cannot be infectious. It can be regarded as a dialogue against the silence of the world about several aspects of irony and oppression. Tanga narrates her life stigmatized by the people in contrast to giving her support and solace.

Sonja Darlington in the assertive conclusion of the essay “Calixthe Beyala's Manifesto and Fictional Theory” confirms that, “As a manifesto against Western colonizers, Your Name Shall Be Tanga can be a call for African nations not to be driven into helplessness and deprived of their humanity” (52). Your Name Shall Be Tanga rips off the layers of mythical freedom, emphasizing on the sexual colonization, as Tanga’s body gets a space for any man to exploit, her selling of flesh, as a metaphor of making her psychologically die slowly. At the beginning of the novel, Tanga is at the point of dying, when Anna-Claude insists that, she should share her story before it gets ended with her life. While narrating the story, enduring the violence of the prison guards, Tanga can be seen as a girl who dies each minute. Her slow death is like infection spreads through her life, taking it away from her. Her helplessness becomes something new, when she inserts her present into dreams and illusions. She uses them as a temporary solace. In owning madness, she tries to disown her present catastrophic life.

The just seventeen years old Tanga is a woman before she was a girl, a mother before she had thought of her own mother, learns about life without education. The parallel events of catastrophe around the world, do not concern her as they cannot offer any justice to her.

I read: 'Hostilities in the Middle East. Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The forgotten people of Bangladesh.' I no longer budge. I garner the rebellion these words sow in me. I am watching for things to snap. The apocalypse. Nothing. Not even any despair. There's trouble brewing. Today, only onions make people weep. (Beyala 54)
Tanga finds her own trauma resulted by spacelessness and inability to access her own body. Being undesired of her life, she finds something real and the world miseries as a false connotation.

Anna M. Agataangelou in the article "Sexing Globalization in International Relations: Migrant Sex and Domestic Workers in Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey" claims that,

[t]he sexual labor and use of women's bodies for consumption in Third World sites cannot be viewed in isolation from the global political economy's generation of profits. Desire economies generate profits for some agents of the peripheries and much more for Western elites of the global economy. (142)

Tanga’s situation too can be glanced from a global economic perspective, as she cannot have the status of being an earning member of the family. Her money is parted for profitable being of her family, commodifying her body is a sight of exotic attraction for the foreigner. The sexual commodification from the early age victimizes Tanga’s psychological space. Her lack of interest on international affairs can be seen as her attempt to centre on her sufferings than on the world’s calamities. She decentres the world affairs with her narrow worldview, but she is unaware of her role in making the economic global trade possible with her distorted bodily interactions.

Ayo Abietou Coly in the article “Neither Here nor There: Calixthe Beyala's Collapsing Homes” says,

Beyala's mothers contrast sharply with the loving and protective African mothers popularized by authors such as Camara Laye, Mariama Ba, or Nafissatou Diallo. Tanga is raped by her father under the eyes of her mother who then pushes her and her younger
sister into prostitution. Not only do daughters lack protection from their mothers, but also the daughters end up providing emotional and financial support to the mothers. (37)

Tanga gives a dark picture of Africa absent in the works of many other writers. She projects all the chaos and conflicts that surround a house. Tanga tries to be true with her crude descriptions of poverty and sexual commodification. Her words unveil the secrecy of woman’s plight in the sexual assaults.

And I, I’ve been a girl child-woman from the start. A story that happens in a lifetime, every lifetime. No dreams, no memory, no illnesses. A thigh, breasts, buttocks. A mass of flesh poured out by the gods to announce the coming of woman, a swelling of flesh that will not be named. (Beyala 16)

Tanga presents the present Africa, which offers no scope to nurture children. The child sex abuse that centres the life of Tanga, uninterrupted by her mother and the home, becomes a mirror of nothingness in childhood.

As M. Foster Olive talks of early sexual assaults resulting in trauma in the lives of adults creating pity or anxiety or hatred towards the adults, Tanga’s situation too can be framed within the trauma resulted by child sexual abuse. Her father’s pedophile behaviour and support from her mother make her later life fractured.

Child abuse often causes behavioral problems (aggression, defiance of authority, drug and alcohol use, or even suicide) as well as a host of emotional issues (depression, withdrawal, anger, and distrust of others) that can last for years or even decades. Many survivors of child abuse (particularly those who were abused sexually or physically) have
hyperactive stress responses and go on to develop Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. (Olive 91)

Tanga too develops mistrust on people. She refuses to listen, tell or to have any sort of interaction with Anna-Claude initially. She has no stable relationship with any of her family members or others. Tanga’s isolation can be read as her phases of accepting the trauma. She chooses the language of emotional turmoil as she still lives in her lost childhood. Her repeated usage of the phrase “the girl child woman” can be referred as her memory of the past abusive people. But in the anti-psychiatric phase, psychological illnesses are manipulations of the psychiatric practitioners. Beyala too imposes that view in projecting and juxtaposing ways of resisting the trauma by Tanga’s ways that can contradict the psychiatrist’s diagnosis of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. As the prominent anti-psychiatrist R. D. Laing writes in his well-received book *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness*,

When I certify someone insane, I am not equivocating when I write that he is of unsound mind, may be dangerous to himself and others, and requires care and attention in a mental hospital. However, at the same time, I am also aware that, in my opinion, there are other people who are regarded as sane, whose minds are as radically unsound, who may be equally or more dangerous to themselves and others and whom society does not regard as psychotic and fit persons to be in a madhouse. I am aware that the man who is said to be deluded may be in his delusion telling me the truth, and this in no equivocal or metaphorical sense, but quite literally, and that the cracked mind of the schizophrenic may let in light which does not enter the intact minds of many sane people whose minds are closed. (27)
As one cannot be diagnosed with any sort of mental disorder as Laing considers, the lack of differences between people who stay outside the asylum who are equally unreasonable, Beyala projects Tanga’s reaction towards the trauma of life not as something to be miserable about, but with rage to denote how traumatic illnesses do not seek medical intervention, but a positive change in the country in the fields of development measures for the poor, education for the girl child, and reformative measures for the downtrodden.

The postcolonial Africa is not a country of freedom for everyone. For girls like Tanga, welfare is merely an illusion. Tanga satirically remarks on the leaders doing welfare measures in her town. She is utterly disappointed at their negligence.

[w]hen they come through for the hundredth time, they'll open their eyes and take in the spectacle of our wretchedness? Then they'll notice that we are the shame that day in and day out they themselves have woven, under their egotistical leaders. (Beyala 22)

These types of negligence from the ruling side provokes girls like Tanga to choose prostitution for living. Tanga and her sisters are microcosm for large-scale injustice victimizing the poor, with corrupted and self-interested leaders. They are subjected to choose prostitution which in turn result in violence at any stage of their lives.

Tanga envisages education as a means of attaining self-hood for a woman like her. She wants her sister to be literate to prevent the atrocities she experienced. But her attempts remain futile. She contrasts herself with her mother, who too believes prostitution as the only means of living. Tanga could not convince her mother or sister about other possibilities of a better living. At the verge of this traumatic situation, she loses herself gradually. Tanga’s illusions are more horrific than her real life unlike Elizabeth in A Question of Power, whose invention of illusory
characters comforted her. Jennifer T. Westmoreland Bouchard in the article “'L'illusion, c'est moi/La folie, c'est moi' ("I am Illusion/I am Madness"): Madness, Merging and the Articulation of Universal Female Suffering in Calixthe Beyala's To t'appelleras Tanga” says,

Tanga and Anna-Claude's hybrid (and thus inherently subversive) identities render them unclassifiable by the dominant systems in which they reside. Due to their "unruly," behaviors, neither is allowed to fully integrate into the African context. Both are forcefully excluded and quarantined to maintain social order. Unable to fit into society, both women retreat into themselves, creating their own fantasy worlds that eventually push them into states of madness. (63)

The fantasy worlds of Anna-Claude and Tanga can also be seen merging with madness, as they help these two resisting women to invent their desired selves.

Tanga’s severe trauma results from a difficult childhood which is dominated by incest and violence, subjecting her to several hallucinations including tactile and visual. Some of her hallucinations are not even part of her fractured flashbacks or fragmentary dreams. Tanga is still influenced by her early childhood sexual abuse though she invents hallucinatory characters that are not related to the abuse. John Read, Thorn Rudegeair and Susie Farrelly in their essay “The Relationship between Child Abuse and Psychosis: Public Opinion, Evidence, Pathways and Implications” opine that,

With or without the need to explain trauma flashbacks/hallucinations, having been severely or repeatedly sexually abused as a young child is likely to render other people a serious potential threat, a threat that can easily be generalized to anyone or anything that
is reminiscent of the perpetrator or the circumstances surrounding the abuse. (Read, Rudegeair and Farrelly 42)

Tanga’s father is her early abuser but she seems to reflect his characters through different people in different situations. Tanga’s life explicates how she becomes the victim of several miseries, her body being used without her consent. She becomes powerless to resist violence against her body. The illusions make her live such traumatic events again.

Tanga finds people betraying her throughout her life. Her mother and sister never give any solace in her tragic life. Added to the turmoil, they often humiliate her. The world too regards her as a prostitute undermining her helplessness. Her forced sexual exploitation leaves many memories of trauma and she tries to create her new self in the illusions she harmonizes. Her resistance to the outer problems is framed through her internalized illusions. Tanga redefines trauma within her interrupted narrative and her way of reverting the world into a dream.

5.4 New Endings

The revenge story of Juletane, the heart-wrenching story of Jikwu’s mother, the courageous story of the Narrator’s aunt in “The Healer” and Tanga’s story that aimed at breaking the silence about the racial and gender oppression explicate how trauma is deconstructed. The endings of these stories suggest how madness is used against the women who challenge the social order. The language used in this fiction is powerful. For example, as Beyala uses most explicit language in describing Tanga’s sexual explorations and as Warner-Vieyra describes the turmoil of Juletane’s forced and self-imposed separation from her husband, offering the possibility of excluding the constructive barriers of language expressive. Makuchi, on the other hand, chooses strategically on emphasizing narrative structure than language. Juletane’s story
derives from Helene’s reading, the helpless mother’s story is inferred from her child’s retelling to his friend in “Your Madness, not Mine” and Tanga’s storey is told in tension and horrific state to Anna-Claude. All the stories are narratives within the narrative, forming a hierarchical relocation of story within the story.

Tanga’s speaking body is the frame for perpetuating neocolonial oppression. She chooses less resistive method than the other protagonists, for example: Juletane chooses revenge as her expression and Jikwu’s mother uses a typewriter as a tool to define her turmoil. Tanga is given less opportunistic frame to be resistant. Anna-Claude, in sharing the similarities of trauma of the mind, victimizes her more with the brief interventions of the listener, and repeated abuse of the prison guards. Tanga is not given any clinical confinement unlike Juletane who is subjected to the confinement and Electro Esefelogram. Tanga’s space of madness is not tangible for the others. Tanga keeps her madness as a trope of solace, demystifies its existence. Juletane uses different strategies in coping with her traumatic events. Jikwu’s mother and the narrator’s aunt in the short story collection “Your Madness, not Mine” end their stories in suggesting their liberation.

Makuchi chooses nameless protagonists for the two stories suggesting the namelessness attributed to denote “the mad woman” is similar to the namelessness Juletane shares as being mostly referred as “the mad woman”. Juletane’s experience of medical intervention also suggests how her suffering, tolerating polygamy is medicalized. In more appropriate terms, Thomas Szasz puts it contrasting the disease and its treatment in social and medical model:

In short, when one speaks of mental illness, the norm from which deviation is measured is a psychosocial and ethical standard. Yet, the remedy is sought in terms of medical
measures that—it is hoped and assumed—are free from wide differences of ethical value.

The definition of the disorder and the terms in which its remedy are sought are therefore at serious odds with one another. (Szasz 15)

Juletane’s deviant behaviour stems from a social aspect of family system. Ironically, she is been treated medically. Tanga too chooses the world as a narration against her speaking illness. Shoshana Felman in the preface to her work Writing and Madness (Literature/Philosophy/Psychoanalysis) advocates that

Society has built the walls of mental institutions to keep apart the inside and the outside of a culture; to separate between reason and unreason and to keep apart the other against whose apartness society asserts its sameness and redefines itself as sane. But every literary text, I argue/ continues to communicate with madness— with what has been excluded, decreed abnormal, unacceptable, or senseless—by dramatizing a dynamically renewed, revitalized relation between sense and nonsense, between reason and unreason, between the readable and the unreadable. (4)

Juletane’s refuge in the asylum, Tanga’s confinement in the prison leading to her death and the rebellious women in “Your Madness, Not mine” locked in the name of patriarchal order get their voices expressed through the narratives of the authors who use literature as a medium of explaining the unreadable sometimes sacrificing the aesthetic abilities. Beyala’s language is unpolished; she uses overt images to discuss Tanga’s sexual suffrage. Warner-Vieyra too is detained from complex language structures. Makuchi on the other hand, employs complex narratives but keeps the language filled with revolutionary acts as a way of outsourcing the idea rather than literary aesthetics.
The stories decode complex metaphorical context in re-instating their position as Caribbean and Cameroonian women writers. Warner-Vieyra, Makuchi and Beyala do not uphold the view of explicating the women’s suffering lives as they understand those lives for being women. Instead they project a space to locate madness as an uncovering image to demonstrate its perception in the world. As Elaine Showalter writes in *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Bronte to Lessing*,

The theory of a female sensibility revealing itself in an imagery and form specific to women always runs dangerously close to reiterating the familiar stereotypes. It also suggests permanence, a deep, basic, and inevitable difference between male and female ways of perceiving the world. (10)

Warner-Vieyra, Makuchi and Beyala show their perception of the world not falling under the category of a specific female sensibility in projecting their own views of madness as a similar entity making their protagonists to create their own selves. As Showalter further asserts, the projection of real lives of the women in these stories, negate the romanticization of women’s madness, present the negative stereotypes that surround such label and the women:

I think that, instead, the female literary tradition comes from the still-evolving relationships between women writers and their society. Moreover, the "female imagination" cannot be treated by literary historians as a romantic or Freudian abstraction. It is the product of a delicate net-work of influences operating in time, and it must be analyzed as it expresses itself, in language and in a fixed arrangement of words on a page, a form that itself is subject to a network of influences and conventions, including the operations of the marketplace. (10)
Without employing any fancy literary devices, the texts purport concrete views than offering an aesthetic experience.

As Felman further succinctly points out, “To speak about madness is to speak about the difference between languages:” (18), Beyala, Makuchi, Warner-Vieyra employ their own language for making the textualized madness inserted naturally in language differences. Using French words, which are not lost in translation, offer the hybrid flavor of understanding the trauma of being different in a language structure. For instance, Juletane could not speak with her husband’s family in Africa. She could not express her words in a usual conversation. Her loss of voice literarily coincides with the loss of her space in the family role. But Tanga has her own voice while sharing her story with Anna-Claude, giving a clear glimpse of her life in Africa, with its conditions. The language in these texts is unrefined, suggestive of their natural allusions. “Literature narrates the silence of the mad as it narrates the silence of the trauma” (Felman 5). In narrating the silent trauma of oppressed women, Beyala, Makuchi, Warner-Vieyra take a less traditional root in inserting madness in the characters. For one character madness is used to disguise her revenge, for another character it helps to show her true self, for one protagonist it helps to make her escape the suffering. In articulating the injustice these characters endured, the respective writers make madness as a tool to experience freedom, fulfillment and recovery.

Whether the traumatic sufferings of these characters can be treated as Post-traumatic Stress Disorder can be regarded ambiguous, as a few of them have not been given any medical intervention. Their method of coping with trauma in turn is new as they choose the resistance beyond the medical model. Initially psychiatrists too were reluctant to include Post-traumatic Stress Disorder in DSM III (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) as Richard J. McNally writes,
Psychiatrists opposed to the inclusion of the diagnosis in DSM-III argued that the problems of trauma-exposed people were already covered by combinations of existing diagnoses. Ratifying PTSD would merely entail cobbling together selected symptoms in people suffering from multiple disorders (e.g., phobias, depression, personality disorder) and then attributing these familiar problems to a traumatic event. (1)

Though any of these characters are qualified to be called the victims of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder is ambiguous, Juletane receives clinical treatment. Her medical responses are vaguely presented. As McNally further opines:

[t]he movement to include the diagnosis in DSM-III arose from Vietnam veterans' advocacy groups working with anti-war psychiatrists prompted concerns that PTSD was more of a political or social construct, rather than a medical disease discovered in nature. (1)

Whether Post-traumatic Stress Disorder be considered as a medical disorder? Can recurring dreams and flashbacks be related or unrelated to the traumatic event be recorded for the medical purposes? How do the psychiatrists relate the trauma with the person when the person displays mixed reactions to the occurred event? are the questions that seek responses till date. In this context, Allan Young’s views on Post-traumatic Stress Disorder give more insights into the categorization of this disease. Young writes:

PTSD is a disease of time. The disorder's distinctive pathology is that it permits the past (memory) to relive itself in the present, in the form of intrusive images and thoughts and in the patient's compulsion to replay old events. (5)
Young also cites the fact of PTSD’s inclusion in DSM, and its similar symptoms with related diseases. If Young’s terms are taken into consideration, trauma becomes enslaved by time, making the characters suffer with the time related event. Anna-Claude’s repeated hallucinations of imaginary lover are constant and would have developed from a long time. Tanga’s sexual victimizations too started at the early age, and they continue for a long time, making her completely stressful after living with the trauma for several years. Jikwu’s mother too bursts occasionally in fulfilling her secret desire, but one day she outbursts completely. Juletane on the other hand, ignores the possibilities of returning to Paris and records the moment of realization of her husband’s living wife and child. Time do not heal the traumatic memories of these characters. They were not having trauma from one fraction of moment; it was a long time experience to a series of hateful events, and they choose different methods to reveal their stresses.

Trauma enables these women to get their selves redefined, imposing self – punishment and self – injury, imagining time and memory for a long time. In rearticulating the selfhood of the protagonists, the chosen writers dealt explicitly with the language and meanings of relocation and hybridity, marriage as a central plot, and revenge as a different medium. The protagonists reflect on their own trauma creating their own traumatic selves within the outer space of their lives and challenging the ostracizing world they live in. They create their own selves in giving new meaning to trauma. Though their responses are trauma-enabled, they make their experiences different in challenging the trauma. In articulating the trauma enabled lives of the protagonists, Myriam Warner-Vieyra, Makuchi and Beyala highlight new ways of challenging the oppression. They project prison in metaphorical sense for decoding the confinement of the actual prison, confinement at home in a different country, and equating the prison with the label of madness.
These writers show how the protagonists are able to ruin the prison against their selves and can create their new selves. The texts purport the idea of fighting the external world through one’s own ability to possess the reason, in defining the gender in the postcolonial context.
Works Cited


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