ABSTRACT

AUCUN DE NOUS NE REVIENDRA: THE JOURNEY OF WORKING THROUGH TRAUMA

by Soosun Kim Kussman

Trauma theory has grown into a widely used theoretical model for understanding and treating victims of psychological trauma. The aim of this paper is to examine different literary and cinematic representations of trauma in an attempt to understand why testimony is seen as imperative to working through such experience. I also endeavor to show how psychological trauma is riddled with complexities and how successful testimony, according to the psychoanalytic model, does not always guarantee success in working through. In the course of this study, I consider Honoré de Balzac’s Adieu, Philippe Claudel’s Il y a longtemps que je t’aime, Soazig Aaron’s Le non de Klara, and Charlotte Delbo’s Auschwitz et après.
AUCUN DE NOUS NE REVIENDRA:
THE JOURNEY OF WORKING THROUGH TRAUMA

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Introduction**

Working Through Trauma to Regain Agency .......................................................... 1

**Chapter One**

Trauma Theory: From Freud to LaCapra ............................................................... 4

**Chapter Two**

*Il y a longtemps que je t’aime* and the Journey of Working Through Trauma ............ 12

**Chapter Three**

*Le non de Klara*: Non à tout... même la vie ..................................................... 32

**Chapter Four**

Shame as an Obstacle to Working Through ....................................................... 37

**Conclusion**

The *Travail* of Working Through ........................................................................ 47

**Appendix**

DSM-IV (1994) Diagnostic Criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder .................. 48

**Bibliography** ........................................................................................................ 49
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Juliette waiting at the airport for her sister, Léa</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The lead came “bars” of the window</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Juliette’s self-negation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Papy Paul, a fellow prisoner due to his inability to speak, is the first person Juliette confides in</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>“J’ai couché avec un homme la semaine dernière”</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>“Je suis encore un peu loin”</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The “talking cure” of the psychoanalytic couch as represented in the film</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Léa and Juliette at the piano with Petite Lys and Papy Paul looking on</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Swimming within the barred enclosure at the beginning of the film</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Juliette enters an intersubjective space</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Juliette uncomfortable outside of her safe space</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Léa finds Juliette sobbing in the alley</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>“Vous auriez pu faire quoi?”</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>“Dis-moi!”</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>“Ah oui!”</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>“Je suis là.”</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this paper to my late father, Kevin Kussman, whose untimely death earlier this year forced me to rethink trauma and the difficulties of working through. You are dearly loved and sorely missed.
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Introduction: Working Through Trauma to Reclaim Agency

In the beginning of the twentieth century Sigmund Freud published *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, and with that trauma theory was born. In the time between the First World War and the attacks of September 11, humankind has been subjected to various traumatic events, and from these tragic incidents trauma theory has grown into a widely used theoretical model for understanding and treating victims of psychological trauma. Trauma confounds the constraints of time and affects the past, present, and future of its victims and a thorough understanding is needed to effectively free victims from its powerful confinement.

In this paper I attempt to show the evolution of our understanding of trauma and to illustrate why testimony of traumatic events is seen today as imperative to the desirable process of working through trauma (versus acting out). I also explore the different outcomes of testifying about trauma. Why is witnessing sometimes successful, and other times unsuccessful? What makes for successful transmission of a testimony in order to achieve working through, and even if a testimony is successful, why does that then not guarantee working through as is suggested according to the model of trauma theory? In attempting to answer these questions, I turn to the literary and cinematic representations of trauma of Honoré de Balzac’s *Adieu*, Philippe Claudel’s *Il y a longtemps que je t’aime*, Soazig Aaron’s *Le non de Klara*, and Charlotte Delbo’s *Auschwitz et après*, among others. With the aid of Dominick LaCapra’s *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, and other prevalent trauma theorists, I endeavor to analyze traumatic representations to demonstrate the affects of trauma and to show the complexities involved in the therapeutic process of working through. In understanding trauma theory and its limitations, we will be better able to understand victim testimony thus providing trauma survivors with the audience that they need to successfully transmit their story and work through their trauma, allowing them to reclaim the subjective agency that their traumatic repetition of the past had stripped from them.

In chapter one, *Trauma Theory: From Freud to LaCapra*, I lay out the framework for trauma theory and I trace its evolution from Sigmund Freud’s “Mourning and Melancholia” and *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, to LaCapra’s
"Writing History, Writing History," which made its debut in 2001. I outline the two proposed traumatic responses: acting out and working through, and the necessity of testimony as a coping mechanism for trauma is discussed. I then turn to Honoré de Balzac’s *Adieu*, to illustrate the traumatic repetition characteristic in acting out by focusing on the scene of the re-enactment of the Beresina to highlight the importance of testimony in working through trauma.

In chapter two, *Il y a longtemps que je t’aime* and *The Journey of Working Through Trauma*, I explore the notion of testimony and what makes it successful in the working through process by using Philippe Claudel’s film *Il y a longtemps que je t’aime*, as a case study. In this film, the protagonist, after undergoing immense trauma with the death of her son and fifteen years in prison, is released back into the real world resigned to a life without joy, stuck in the past, reliving her pain. Through the help of her sister (and a few other key figures) she is slowly able to work through her trauma and confess to her past in order to move on, and embrace life in the present. This happy outcome is not always the case, even with transmission of trauma, and that is discussed in the following chapter.

Soazig Aaron’s fictive diary of a woman who welcomes her sister-in-law/friend back to Paris after years spent in Auschwitz, is a haunting tale of an inability to move out of the past, and this classic case of acting out is addressed in chapter three, *Le non de Klara*: Non à tout... même la vie. Even after talking about her experience in the death camp, Klara still has an inner refusal to work through her trauma. From where does this obstinacy to hold on to trauma emerge? Klara, in departing from trauma theory’s belief of testimony as a catalyst for working through, holds on to the past, denying herself a subjective agency in the present, and her story reveals the complexities of trauma on the psyche and divulges the multiple layers affected. While Balzac, Aaron and Claudel’s representations of trauma are poignant and they stay true to trauma testimony, they remain fictive representations, and because of this I conclude with a canonical traumatic representation of perhaps the greatest atrocity of our time: Charlotte Delbo’s *Auschwitz et après*. 
The realm of témoignage is where trauma theory has grown exponentially and it is also where it is perhaps the most problematic, being rooted in actual history (with survivor testimony, the question of historical accuracy and historiography take center stage, but that is not it a focus in this paper). In chapter four, *Shame as an Obstacle to Working Through*, I examine Delbo’s moving trilogy, which includes not only her own story, but the story of several of her comrades who were not able to make it back. When she says that “aucun de nous ne reviendra,” she literally means those that have fallen and those that return as survivors. Delbo gives us the stories of some who have returned and successfully worked through trauma (Marie-Louise), and some who have not (Mado), and we see how Delbo herself copes with and works through the past: the penning and eventual publication of her (collective) memoir. In this chapter, one of the many complexities that exist in the traumatic healing process, namely the affect of shame, is discussed. I attempt to show how shame, and its contagiousness, severely impedes the work required to work through a traumatic past on the part of all involved. By examining shame, we see how determination and courage are required to be able to successfully work through a traumatic past, and how hard trauma survivors need to work to overcome the many roadblocks that stand in their way.
Chapter 1 – Trauma Theory: From Freud to LaCapra

i am looking for peace. i am looking for mercy. i am looking for evidence of compassion. any evidence of life. i am looking for life...
i feel like my skin is real thin, and that my eyes are only going to get darker. the future holds little light.

Suheir Hammad

(Brooklyn-based poet responding to September 11th attacks)

At the close of the nineteenth century Sigmund Freud launched his brilliant career in psychology and created the field of psychoanalysis with the publication of *Studies in Hysteria* and *Aetiology of Neuroses*, and with that the seeds of trauma theory were planted. In the time between the First World War and the attacks of September 11, humankind has been subjected to various traumatic events, and from these calamitous incidents trauma theory has evolved and grown into a widely used theoretical model. The first documented descriptions of traumatic experience date back to the 6th century B.C. (Everly 3), but it was Freud, early in his career, who conceptualized traumatic neuroses, and it is his model and its subsequent evolution that has dominated Western psychiatric trauma theories (Everly 10). With the scope of major traumatic events in the twentieth century, including the two World Wars, the Holocaust, the mass traumas in Darfur and Bosnia, and most recently the War in Iraq, the number of traumatized subjects has grown exponentially. This rapid growth of the number of traumatized subjects allows us to understand better the effects of trauma, but it also indicates that a thorough understanding of traumatic stress is an urgent imperative for successful treatment. Our understanding of trauma, from its inception to the DSM-IV, has evolved in relation to historical traumatic events. As will be discussed later in chapter 3, there are numerous complexities in the treatment of trauma and we do not yet entirely understand all the obstacles that exist in successfully healing traumatic psychic wounds.

Freud (building on the work of French neurologist Jean-Marie Charcot1) was one of the first to expressively outline psychic trauma in 1895, but he began his

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exploration of it in relation to hysteria: “Freud argued that the symptoms of hysteria could only be understood if they were traced back to experiences that had a traumatic effect, specifically early experiences of sexual ‘seduction’ or assault” (Leys 20). This original Freudian view of neuroses was a post-traumatic paradigm that was referred to as “seduction theory” (Wilson 11). In Freud’s seduction theory, he posited that hysteria was caused by repressed childhood traumas (particularly sexual traumas), and these repressed traumas were the basis for hysteria and all other neuroses (Wilson 11). Freud soon shifted his model away from this post-traumatic seduction theory to focus on the oedipal model which he adopted in place of repression of past traumas as the core of all neuroses.

In the period in which the main interest was directed to discovering infantile sexual traumas, almost all my women patients told me that they had been seduced by their father. I was driven to recognize in the end that these reports were untrue and so came to understand that hysterical symptoms are derived from phantasies and not from real occurrences (Freud 120).

In 1897 Freud abandons his seduction theory hypothesizing that the hysterics reporting sexual abuse were fantasizing the abuse stemming from an unresolved oedipal complex, rather than from actual abuse. He then takes this oedipal model to be the basis of all neuroses, including hysteria. In 1917, he extends his oedipal model to explain two possible outcomes of the traumatic situation of loss in his paper, “Mourning and Melancholia.”

...Mourning is regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one’s country, liberty, an ideal, and so on. In some people the same influences produce melancholia instead of mourning and we consequently suspect them of a pathological disposition... The distinguishing mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world... and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment. This picture becomes a little more intelligible when we consider that, with one exception, the same traits are met with in mourning. The disturbance of self-regard is absent in mourning... (233-4).

Freud explains that this rerouting of the pain of loss into self-loathing is due to a narcissistic object cathexis, and as such “in mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself” (246). In the healthy
process of mourning, the libido’s attachment to the lost object is slowly detached so that the mourner is eventually able to move on and reinvest in new object choices. In melancholia, the unconscious loss collapses the ego and in turn the melancholic, who narcissistically identifies with what has been lost, is unable to free “its libido from the lost object” (252). With Freud’s “Mourning and Melancholia,” we are given one of the first delineations of possible responses to traumatic events: the desired process of mourning versus the undesirable state of melancholia.

In the period following the First World War, Freud was forced to re-evaluate his stance on causes and reactions to trauma when he was confronted by returning traumatized war veterans. In one of his last published books, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he addresses trauma as follows:

> We describe as “traumatic” any excitation from outside which are powerful enough to break through the protective shield. It seems to me that the concept of trauma necessarily implies a connection of this kind with a breach in an otherwise efficacious barrier against stimuli. Such an event as an external trauma is bound to provoke a disturbance on a large scale in the functioning of the organism’s energy and to set in motion every possible defensive measure. At the same time the pleasure principle is for the moment put out of action. There is no longer any possibility of preventing the mental apparatus from being flooded with large amounts of stimulus, and another problem arises instead – the problem of mastering the amounts of stimulus which broken in and of binding them, in a physical sense, so that they can then be disposed of (56-7).

Whereas Freud, in “Mourning and Melancholia,” equated melancholia’s traumatic repetition of the past to a narcissistic loss stemming from an unresolved oedipal complex, here he turns away from this model to include external stressors (specifically war trauma) that overwhelm the normal function of the ego, or “protective shield” (Wilson 14). It is here with *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, that our modern understanding of trauma is conceived, as is evidenced by the Diagnostic Criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (“The traumatic event is persistently experienced... Recurrent and intrusive recollections... Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, etc...”) in the latest edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition* (DSM-IV).²

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² See Appendix 1
In 2001, Dominick LaCapra published *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, an elaboration of his earlier work, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, and Trauma*. In the wake of September 11, the importance of LaCapra’s expansion of Freud’s understanding of mourning and melancholia, and in turn working through and acting out, is amplified. Freud, in his developmental paper on trauma theory “Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through: Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psycho-Analysis” expands on what he introduced in “Mourning and Melancholia,” and it is this terminology that LaCapra expounds upon in his work. Freud contrasts “acting out,” the undesirable response to a traumatic event to the wanted process of “working through.” In acting out, “the patient does not *remember* anything of what he has forgotten and repressed, but *acts* it out…He reproduces it not as a memory but as an action; he *repeats* it” (147). In the preferred response of working-through, the victim must surmount resistance to remembering. “One must allow the patient time to become more conversant with this resistance… to *work through* it, to overcome it” (155). Dominick LaCapra takes the processes of acting out and working through as a theoretical model for understanding traumatic responses, and he maintains Psychoanalysis’ insistence on the “therapeutic work” of testimony. Freud heralds the “talking cure” for overcoming traumatic repetition:

> The main instrument, however, for curbing the patient’s compulsion to repeat and for turning it into a motive for remembering lies in the handling of transference. We render the compulsion harmless, and indeed useful, by giving it the right to assert itself in a definitive field... The transference thus creates an intermediate region between illness and real life through which the transition from the one to the other is made (154).

LaCapra seconds the psychoanalytic requisite of testimony as the fundamental stipulation to working through trauma.

> When the past becomes accessible to recall in memory, and when language functions to provide some measure of conscious control, critical distance, and perspective, one has begun the arduous process of working over and through the trauma in a fashion that may never bring full transcendence of acting out... but which may enable processes of judgment and at least limited liability and ethically responsible agency. These processes are crucial for laying ghosts to rest (90).
According to LaCapra successful transmission of a past traumatic event is vital in the process of working through. The obstacle for many trauma survivors to working through, to laying “their ghosts to rest” (90), is finding a willing audience to whom they can testify. A perfect illustration of this reluctance to hearing testimony can be found with the audience of Holocaust survivors. Upon liberation, many survivors, like Jorge Semprun, a survivor of the Buchenwald concentration camp, quickly realize that their required audience for transmission of their testimony would be hard to come by. He says in his harrowing memoir, *L’écriture ou la vie*, “Le vrai problème n’est pas de raconter, quelles qu’en soient les difficultés. C’est d’écouter... Voudra-t-on écouter nos histoires, même si elles sont bien racontées ?” (134). Without successful transmission of their testimony they are unable to enter into the process of working through and they are stuck in the process of acting out their traumatic past. This automatism of the past links them to their trauma through their haunting memories and it as if “tenses implode... and one were back there in the past reliving the traumatic scene” (21).

The articulatory process of working through allows one to “distinguish between past and present and to recall in memory that something happened to one back then while realizing that one is living here and now with openings to the future” (22). Working through trauma allows the survivor to decrease the duality of time by differentiating between the past, present, and future and to see themselves (and also to be seen by others) as one who lived through the trauma and came out alive altered by their experiences, rather than acting out and continually living with the trauma of their past.

The traumatic repetition of the past in acting out is epitomized in Honoré de Balzac’s elegantly written novella, *Adieu*. The story begins in the French countryside in 1819. The Bourbon monarchy has been restored to power following Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo, and Philippe de Sucy, a Napoleonic officer recently returned from captivity, is hunting with his friend, the marquis d’Albon. They happen upon an old monastery where they find a beautiful, but insane woman who vacuously repeats one single word – “adieu.” Upon closer inspection of the woman, Philippe realizes that she is his former lover who he has not seen since a traumatic event on the banks of the Beresina River in Moscow.
several years earlier. Philippe faints and the marquis takes him home. The marquis then returns to the monastery to find out more about this mysterious woman, and he meets the woman’s uncle, a doctor who explains to him that Philippe’s lover is the countess Stéphanie de Vandières, and she has been in this condition since the crossing of the Beresina in 1812.

Stéphanie’s husband was a general in the military campaign in Russia in 1812, when the French were forced to burn a bridge during their retreat from Moscow. In doing so, they left many starving, freezing soldiers on the bank where they were sure to be captured or executed. The countess, her husband and Philippe were part of this group left behind, and Philippe surrenders his spot on the last means of escape, a raft with only two remaining spaces, to his lover and her husband. As the raft departs, Stéphanie cries out a pained “adieu” to Philippe who is left behind, just as her husband, the general falls off the raft and is decapitated.

The doctor continues on telling the marquis d’Albon how his niece lost her mind at that precise moment, and how he found her several years later, after she escaped from a mental hospital in Strasbourg. “Ma pauvre nièce était devenue folle... Dieu seul connaît les malheurs auxquels cette infortunée a pourtant survécu” (73). She has since been living in the abandoned monastery in an animalistic state, only able to say the word “adieu.” When Philippe comes to and hears the details of his former lover’s situation, he tries to get Stéphanie to recognize him, and when she doesn’t, he dedicates himself to recreating the scene on the banks of the Beresina, in the hopes of jolting her back to reality. With meticulous attention to detail, he faithfully replicates that tragic day from eight years prior. With the help of her uncle and several extras, he drugs and blindfolds her and takes her to the elaborate panorama that he has laid out. When her blindfold is removed, she looks around at the scene with horror, and she momentarily regains her sanity. She looks at Philippe and says “adieu” before she falls dead into his arms. Years later Philippe also falls victim to the trauma, but by his own hand.

Stéphanie’s mental state results from the trauma that she went through involving the war, the loss of her husband, and the loss of her lover, Philippe. “As
in acting out in general, one possessed [...] by the past and reliving its traumatic scenes may be tragically incapable of acting responsibly or behaving in an ethical manner” (LaCapra 28). She is stuck in a mechanical repetition of the past through her reiteration of the word “adieu,” but her mind is unable to operate subjectively in the present as she has been so severely traumatized that she has repressed the past and is stuck in a sort of mental limbo between the past and present. “This repression works against healing, since it prevents the trauma of the past from being ‘dealt with’ by the self of the present” (Colvin 165). When Philippe recreates the scene of the crossing of the Beresina, he places Stéphanie back into the reconstructed present of the time of her trauma, forcing her to address the past, and temporarily recoup her role as a subjective agent. Her mechanical repetition of “adieu” was a retreat from subjective agency, and she is now forced to act subjectively in the constructed present. She is put back into the traumatizing situation, and the shock of being thrust back into the past overwhelms her, and she dies.

A ce cri, à ce coup de canon, la comtesse sauta hors de la voiture, courut avec une délirante angoisse sur la place neigeuse, vit les bivouacs brûlés, et le fatal radeau que l’on jetait dans une Bérésina glacée... Elle se recueillit, regarda d’abord vaguement cet étrange tableau. Pendant un instant aussi rapide que l’éclair, ses yeux eurent la lucidité dépourvue d’intelligence... elle tourna vivement la tête vers Philippe, et le vit... Elle vivait, elle pensait ! Elle frissonna, de terreur peut-être... Tout à coup ses pleurs se séchèrent, elle se cadavérisa comme si la foudre l’eût touchée, et dit d’un son de voix faible : Adieu, Philippe. Je t’aime, adieu (89-90).

Rather than allowing Stéphanie to work through her trauma, Philippe forcefully thrusts her back into the traumatic episode with dire consequences. She was unable to enter into a process of healing through testimony, imperative to the process of working through trauma, and she remained stuck in the past even with her last dying breath: “adieu.”

Successfully working through trauma is a complex process that calls for great work on the part of the victim and the audience. Freud recognized the complications involved in the treatment of trauma and over the span of his career he continued to modify his theories as he learned more about the human psyche. To this day trauma theory continues to evolve as we delve further into the intricacies of the human mind, and with the growing number of traumatized
subjects, a thorough understanding of trauma and its many complexities is urgent for successful treatment.
Chapter 2: *Il y a longtemps que je t’aime* and the Journey of Working Through Trauma

À la claire fontaine  
M’en allant promener  
J’ai trouvé l’eau si belle  
Que je m’y suis baigné

Il y a longtemps que je t’aime,  
Jamais je ne t’oublierai.

Sous les feuilles d’un chêne,  
Je me suis fait sécher.  
Sur la plus haute branche,  
Un rossignol chantait.

Il y a longtemps que je t’aime,  
Jamais je ne t’oublierai.

Chante, rossignol, chante,  
Toi qui as le cœur gai.  
Tu as le cœur à rire...  
Moi je l’ai à pleurer.

Il y a longtemps que je t’aime,  
Jamais je ne t’oublierai...

Traditional French Song

Seated at a worn, out of tune piano, two sisters sing an old, traditional song from their youth, and they conclude by giving one another a heartfelt smile. What a long way they have come. From an uncomfortable first meeting after fifteen years apart to this bonding moment, we see the powerful grips of a traumatic past begin to loosen its hold.

Philippe Claudel’s poignant 2008 film, *Il y a longtemps que je t’aime*, starring Kristin Scott Thomas and Elsa Zylberstein, tells the story of a woman who is haunted by her past due to the trauma caused by the loss of her child, abandonment by her family and fifteen years in prison. It shows one woman’s difficult journey on the path to working through trauma. The film opens with Juliette, the protagonist of the film, sitting at an airport with an old suitcase at
her feet. She sits smoking a cigarette with a doleful expression on her face. (See figure 1). She is waiting for someone, and every noise startles her. This image is spliced with that of another woman, Léa, Juliette’s younger sister, running into the airport. Léa finds Juliette sitting alone and watches her for a few moments without being seen. When Juliette finally does see Léa she uneasily returns the genuine smile offered by her younger sister. The women awkwardly embrace, and it is here with this meeting at the airport, that Juliette’s journey of working through the ghosts of her past begins. We do not yet know the source of her trauma, but we see her obvious detachment from her surroundings.

![Image of Juliette waiting at the airport for her sister, Léa](image1.png)

Léa brings Juliette to her house to stay and she leaves her alone to pick up her daughters from school. Juliette explores her new domicile. She quickly passes by the drawings done by Léa’s daughters, but she lingers on a window of leaded glass and she slowly runs her fingers along the bar-like lead cames. This motif of enclosure is prevalent throughout the film as we learn that Juliette spent the past fifteen years locked away in a prison, and we see that Juliette’s psychological isolation from the world is also symbolically represented. (See figure 2). Even though Juliette has physically been released from prison, she is
mentally stuck in a traumatized state and thus is still detached from the rest of the world.

We discover more of Juliette’s resistance to interaction with others as the film progresses. When she meets her nieces, toddler Emélia and her older sister Clélis (affectionately called Petite Lys), for the first time, she is cold and barely acknowledges them. Petite Lys asks her Aunt Juliette, “Pourquoi on t’as pas connue avant, tata ?” Juliette answers, “Parce que j’étais en voyage... un voyage qui a duré très longtemps.” It appears that Juliette is sparing her niece from the shameful truth of her incarceration, but again with the “voyage” we are presented with the theme of travel. Juliette was, and still is, away in a sense. She is not actively present. Petite Lys asks, “Et, tu étais où en voyage ?” Before Juliette has a chance to respond, Luc, Lys’s father, abruptly puts an end to the conversation. “Bon ! Ça suffit maintenant ! Tu arrêtes d’embêter ta tante. Tu manges !” There is an obvious tension at the table as the dinner resumes in silence. Luc’s silencing of Lys is also in effect the silencing of Juliette. His reticence to listen exemplifies the general resistance trauma survivors face when confronted with another. Robert Antelme, a survivor of Buchenwald and Gandersheim, says in his autobiography, L’espèce humaine, “Nous voulions parler, être entendus enfin [...] nous éprouvions un désir frénétique de la dire telle quelle.” (Antelme 9), yet
despite this “désir frénétique de la dire,” he says that, “À peine commencions-nous à raconter, que nous suffoquions” (9). He chokes on that which he must say, and like Jorge Semprun, who was silenced by the radical alterity he perceived when confronted with another, Antelme says of the soldiers that they encountered upon their liberation, “... bientôt le soldat n’écoute plus [...] C’est que l’ignorance du soldât apparaît, immense [...] Devant le soldat, il sent déjà surgir en lui, sous cette réserve, le sentiment qu’il est en proie désormais à une sorte de connaissance infinie, intransmissible” (Antelme 317). That which must be said in order to work through, is difficult to say, and grueling to hear. Trauma survivors, even when they are able to surmount their own silence, run into another problem in order to successfully transmit their testimony: the absence of a willing audience.

Juliette, however, is still unable to open herself up and speak about her traumatic past. On the way to taking the girls to school the following day, she decides to stay in the car alone while Léa walks Petite Lys to her class. She tellingly chooses to stay enclosed in her own separate space (the car), rather than to integrate herself into the public, shared space, which stands as yet another example of her unwillingness and inability to escape from the mental prison of her past. (See figure 3). Petite Lys says to her mother, “Elle est un peu drôle tata, non ?” Léa : “Pourquoi tu dis ça ?” Lys : “Ben, j’sais pas. Elle dit presque rien.” Léa : “Il faut lui laisser le temps de s’adapter.”

Fig. 3: Juliette’s self-negation
In Léa’s eyes, time is what Juliette needs in order to heal. Does the old adage, “time heals all wounds” hold true for victims of psychological trauma? In the previous chapter we read about the dire outcome of Balzac’s Stéphanie in “Adieu,” and in the following chapter we will look at Klara, a survivor of the Shoah. From these examples, along with countless other trauma survivor testimonies, we see that successful transmission of one’s story is the key to working through trauma (although, as we will learn in Le non de Klara, transmission does not guarantee recovery), and time is only part of the complicated equation in the healing process of psychological trauma.

Juliette resists speaking about the past even though she is mentally stuck there. Dominick LaCapra in Writing History, Writing Trauma, describes the temporal overlap of trauma survivors as a “collapse of [...] distinctions” where, one is haunted or possessed by the past and performatively caught up in the compulsive repetition of traumatic scenes – scenes in which the past returns and the future is blocked or fatalistically caught up in a melancholic feedback loop. In acting out, tenses implode and it is as if one were back there in the past reliving the traumatic scene” (LaCapra 21).

Throughout the film we see glimpses of Juliette trying to open up, but she always pulls away before she goes through with it. After Léa drops the girls off at school, she gets back in the car and decides to try to talk to her sister, at least in part, about the past.

Léa: Tu m’en veux ?
Juliette: De quoi ?
Léa: Ben... De pas être venue [en prison]. Mais je t’ai écrit au début, hein ?
Léa: Et puis, un soir, papa m’a vue. Avec maman, ils m’ont engueulée comme jamais. Ils m’ont interdit de recommencer. Ils m’ont dit que... que tu n’existais plus... Mais bon, j’étais juste encore une gamine, tu sais.
Juliette: Je voulais te dire...
Léa: Quoi ?
Juliette: C’est les services sociaux qui ont eu l’idée de te contacter, pas moi. Moi, je n’ai jamais rien demandé à personne.
Léa: Mais ils ont bien fait. Ils ont bien fait.

Juliette is cold and distant throughout this scene, but she seems momentarily to let her guard down when she says, “je voulais te dire...” but then she quickly withdraws and snaps at her sister about how it wasn’t her idea to contact her.
Léa responds warmly, letting Juliette know that she is glad she is with her. Although Juliette bluntly admits to Léa that it wasn’t her intention to come here, the situation is ideal for Juliette to begin working through her past. As her social worker says, “Vous avez de la chance [...] Vous avez votre sœur...” In the arduous process of working through, “survivors beginning to remember often desire to be alone, although very much in someone’s presence” (Laub 71), and although Juliette is still not able to open herself up and be actively present in an intersubjective space, she has the comfort of not being alone which was one of her greatest fears about being released from prison. “Je me suis mise à faire des cauchemars, toujours le même. J’avais ma valise, je passais la porte et je me retrouvais en plein milieu de nulle part. Il n’y avait personne, juste le vide.” Léa’s tenderness towards Juliette throughout the film allows the two women slowly to rebuild a trusting relationship, and in turn, Juliette gradually begins to open up. Shortly after the confrontation in the car, at the end of a long day shopping with Léa, we see the first glimpse of what Juliette may have been like prior to her life-altering trauma. The two women sit in a café, and Juliette, for the first time, initiates the conversation.

**Juliette:** Tu te souviens de Chez Bouchard à Rouen ?

**Léa:** Non.

**Juliette:** Ça ressemblait un peu à ici. Je t’ai amenée le mercredi après ton cours de danse.

**Léa:** Mes cours avec la mère Stabische.

**Juliette:** Oui... la grosse mère Stabische.

**Léa:** Elle n’arrivait même plus à se dresser sur ses pointes ! Je me souviens de ses moustaches aussi...

**Juliette:** Moi, je sortais de la fac. On se faisait un goûter entre filles Chez Bouchard. Tu prenais toujours une religieuse.

**Léa:** Je me souviens pas.

**Juliette:** Tu devais avoir sept, huit ans. Il y avait plein de vieilles dames autour de nous.

**Léa:** Non, je me souviens pas. J’sais pas pourquoi. Pourquoi je me souviens pas ?

**Juliette:** Je t’en prie, arrête. C’est normal. Tu étais toute petite.

**Léa:** Oui, mais c’est absurde de ne pas s’en souvenir.

Juliette pleads with her sister to stop being hard on herself for forgetting one of the few memories that they have together. Léa’s response (“c’est absurde de ne pas s’en souvenir”) tellingly foreshadows what she must overcome in order to
help her sister work through the past. She recognizes the absurdity of not remembering, but she is still unwilling to deal directly with the past, and she prefers not to address it.

As Juliette begins to reconnect with her sister, she begins to try to talk with her about the past, but Léa remains steadfast in her reticence to hear about Juliette’s crime, and it is Juliette who grows increasingly frustrated at Léa’s inability to be a listening ear.

Juliette: C’est toi ou Luc qui pouvait pas avoir d’enfants ?
Juliette: C’est à cause de moi, ça. À cause de ce que j’ai fait.
Léa: J’ai pas cherché à comprendre...
Juliette: Je vais fumer dans le jardin. [Elle quitte la salle.]

Juliette opens the conversation about the past and she gives Léa the opportunity to speak with her about the elephant in the room – that which is not being said – and Léa simply states that she did not try to understand. With that, the conversation ends and Juliette leaves. If Léa is not willing to try and understand, then she doesn’t need/want to hear about it, and Juliette is once again denied the audience she seeks from her sister. Several scenes later, Léa once again tries to avoid discussion of the past, and this time Juliette confronts her directly. The two women are at the zoo with Emélia and Petite Lys. They are watching the monkeys in their cage when Lys observes, “C’est pas juste qu’ils soient prisonniers. Ils n’ont rien fait, eux. Les prisons, c’est pour les gens méchants, pas pour les animaux. Hein, maman ?” At this, Léa avoids the situation and jumpily states, “Bon, on y va !” Juliette angrily confronts her sister’s avoidance of the past. “Ne sois pas ridicule ! Qu’est-ce que tu crois ? Je dormais pendant tout ce temps-là, et puis, hop, un matin la bonne fée Léa m’a réveillée ?” To this, Léa once again says nothing, and the conversation ends. Her avoidance of the past fifteen years angers her sister and in response, Juliette echoes Léa’s theme of the absurdity (“C’est absurde de ne pas s’en souvenir”) of not addressing the past (“Ne sois pas ridicule !”).

Frustrated with others’ unwillingness to listen, Juliette goes to the one person who will not deny her an audience: Papy Paul. Papy Paul is Luc’s father.
He had a stroke several years ago and is now unable to speak. He lives with Luc and Léa and spends most of his days reading in the study. Juliette knocks on his door one day, and it is with Papy Paul (See figure 4), a man who cannot verbally deny her an audience, and who also, like her, is a sort of prisoner in the world because of his incapacity to talk, that Juliette is first able to speak about her past.


Fig. 4: Papy Paul, a fellow prisoner due to his inability to speak, is the first person Juliette confides in

After she is able to verbalize her distress at being abandoned by everyone while in prison without being interrupted, Juliette is encouraged to try once again to speak with her sister. She goes to the university where Léa works, and tells her, “Je voulais te parler...” The two sisters go for a walk, and they finally begin to communicate about the past, but Léa hesitates at first.

Léa: Tu pensais à nous là-bas ?
Juliette: Là-bas ? Là-bas s’appelle la PRISON ! Tu sais ce que c’est, une prison?
Juliette: Ils croyaient ou on leur disait ?
Léa: On leur disait.
Léa: Les parents ! Et toi ?
Léa: Ils m’ont tellement bourré le crâne...
[Lea pleure et Juliette s’assied près de elle. Pause.]
Juliette: J'ai couché avec un homme la semaine dernière.
Léa: Quoi ?
Juliette: [Elle sourit.] J'ai couché avec un homme la semaine dernière !
Léa: [d'un air incrédule] Qui ? Où ?
Juliette: Un type dans un café. On est allé à un hôtel.
Léa: Comme ça ?
Juliette: Oui ! Comme ça ! [Elles sourient.]

It is here with this scene that Juliette and Léa are finally able to begin the necessary discourse to work on their relationship. Juliette is finally able to hear about the circumstances related to the trauma of her abandonment, and Léa, herself traumatized by the loss of her sister (“Mes parents, ils font mourir ma sœur dans ma tête!”), is able to talk about the past. Through their brief dialogue, we can see a shift in the course of their relationship. Upon seeing that Léa is distraught, Juliette changes the subject – enough work has been done for today – but what she says and the manner in which she says it shows that she is on the path to recovery. She is finally talking about her life in the present, post-trauma, and she is even able to smile about it with her sister. (See figure 5).

![Image](image-url)

Fig. 5: “J'ai couché avec un homme la semaine dernière!”

She is beginning to work through her traumatic past, and is therefore able to focus more on the present, because “in working through, one tries to acquire
some critical distance that allows one to engage in life in the present” (LaCapra
148). Juliette has begun to address the past with her sister, but Léa is still
hesitant in her role as interlocutor, and as her older sister, Juliette ceases their
discourse on the past when she sees how distressed Léa becomes.

The importance of a willing audience is imperative to the successful
transmission of testimony in the process of working through trauma. While Léa
begins to be the listening ear that Juliette requires, she is still reluctant to assert
fully her role in Juliette’s healing process, because in turn, she too would have to
participate actively in the traumatic past.

The emergence of the narrative which is being listened to – and heard – is,
therefore, the process and the place wherein the cognizance, the “knowing” of the
event is given birth to. The listener, therefore, is a party to the creation of
knowledge de novo. The testimony to the trauma includes its hearer, who is, so
to speak, the blank screen on which the event comes to be inscribed for the first
time. By extension, the listener to trauma comes to be a participant and a co-
owner of the traumatic event: through his very listening, he comes to partially
experience trauma in himself [...] The listener, therefore, by definition partakes of
the struggle of the victim with the memories and residues of his or her traumatic
past (Laub 57).

While Léa may continue to reject hearing Juliette’s full account of the past,
her testimony is, however, not wholly unsolicited. In a mandatory meeting with
her social worker, a woman she describes as having the job “de fouiller dans [ma]
vie,” the woman inquires about Juliette’s silence during her trial, giving Juliette
the perfect opportunity to disclose everything that she has been holding back.

J’ai lu tout votre dossier évidemment : les comptes rendus, les minutes du
procès... Mais pourquoi vous avez rien dit pendant l’instruction, ni au tribunal
d’ailleurs. Même devant les experts, vous n’avez rien dit. Vous n’avez pas ouvert
la bouche. Leur rapports font vingt lignes: “Être quasi mutique.” “Psyché
fragmenté à la suite du divorce.” “Meurtre du fils...”

Juliette vehemently responds, “Mais qu’est-ce que vous croyez ? Que c’est là, à
vous que je vais dire quelque chose ? Foutez-moi la paix !” She remains faithful
to her silence, a silence for trauma survivors which is “defeat... [because] it serves
them both as a sanctuary and as a place of bondage. Silence is for them a fated
exile, yet also a home, a destination, and a binding oath” (Laub 58). Juliette
avoids the opportunity to testify because the soliciting audience, in this case the social worker, is not her desired/needed audience.

The listener has to feel the victim’s victories, defeats and silences, know them from within, so that they can assume the form of testimony [...] The listener to trauma, therefore, needs to know the ‘lay of the land’ – the landmarks, the undercurrents, and the pitfalls in the witness and in himself [...] The listener to trauma needs to know all this, so as to be a guide and an explorer, a companion in a journey onto an uncharted land, a journey the survivor cannot traverse or return from alone [...] Bearing witness to trauma is, in fact, a process that includes the listener. For the testimonial process to take place there needs to be a bonding, the intimate and total presence of an other – in the position of one who hears. Testimonies are not monologues; they cannot take place in solitude. The witnesses are talking to somebody: to somebody they have been waiting for a long time (Laub 58-9, 70).

The ‘other’ that Juliette requires for successful transmission of her testimony, is the one who is resisting: Léa. Juliette herself confesses that it is for Léa that she decided to come back (“La petite Lala, avec ses dents en moins, son sourire, sa main dans la mienne. Et c’est pour cette petite fille-là que j’ai décidé de revenir”).

While Léa continues to resist hearing her sister’s testimony, Juliette continues to find partial asylum in testifying to others. With Papy Paul, she broke her silence, but it is with Michel, a coworker of Léa, that she truly begins to divulge the details of her past. Michel has been attracted to Juliette from the first time he laid eyes on her (“Une femme parfaite: belle, intelligente, et qui aime le football en plus!”), and when Luc and Léa take Juliette to the countryside for a weekend with friends, Michel discovers why Juliette’s life is, in her own words, “un peu compliqué.” At dinner one night, Gérard, one of the dinner guests, has had a little too much to drink and he pronounces his discomfort at Juliette’s silence. He forces her to say what she has been avoiding since she came out of prison.


**Léa:** Ta gueule, Gérard ! Ta gueule !
Gérard: Bon, attendez. Laissez-la parler pour une fois que j’ai une véritable héroïne de roman en face de moi!

[Pause.]
Juliette: J’étais en prison pendant quinze ans pour meurtre.
[Pause, puis tout le monde sauf Luc, Léa, et Michel s’esclaffe.]
Kaisha: Bravo Juliette ! Excellente !

Everyone laughs (except Léa, Luc, and Michel) thinking that Juliette is joking to get back at Gérard for pestering her. She smiles coyly and slips away from the table to go outside, alone. She once again detaches herself from an intersubjective space to be alone in her own prison of solitude. The difference this time, is that Michel too leaves the public space of the dinner party to meet Juliette in her space, and it is here that she discovers that Michel understands her and is someone that she can confide in.


Michel tells Juliette that he understands her silence, for he too has seen what prison life is like, and “[il n’en parle jamais.” He shows Juliette that he knows the “bewilderment, injury, confusion, dread and conflicts that the trauma victim feels” (Laub 58), and he does not judge her (“ils étaient comme moi”). In doing so, Juliette recognizes him as a desirable interlocutor, but not quite yet as a possible suitor, for as she says when he tries to caress her cheek, “Non, s’il vous plait. Je suis encore un peu loin.” (See figure 6).

Juliette begins to confide in Michel about her time spent in incarceration, and we begin to see a noticeably more open Juliette.

Juliette: Pendant deux ans, j’ai marché dans une petite cour, une toute petite cour triangulaire avec des hauts murs. Je comptais mes pas, tous les pas que je faisais, et plus tard, les autres pas, à Centrale. Les surveillantes m’appelaient la Marcheuse, et les filles m’appelaient plutôt l’Absente parce qu’il paraît que je donnais toujours l’impression d’être jamais là.
Juliette’s mental absenteeism, resulting from her past trauma, took her out of her position as a subjective agent acting in the present, and placed her in a replay of the past, where her “past is uncontrollably relived” (LaCapra 89). By sharing her story with Michel (at least in part, for she only speaks of her incarceration) (See Fig. 6: “Je suis encore un peu loin.”

Fig. 7: The “talking cure” of the psychoanalytic couch, as represented in the film
figure 7), Juliette is able to continue her journey of working through the trauma of her past, and she begins to “reengage an interest in life” (LaCapra 151) in the present (See figure 8). This shift is subtly and symbolically represented. In the beginning of the film, after Juliette and Léa begin to speak a little about the past, there is a scene where the two women are swimming together in a pool. The theme of enclosure is evident as they are swimming in the middle of a cordoned off section in the center of the pool, representing Juliette’s space into which she is
allowing Léa. Near the end of the film, as Juliette begins to share her testimony and opens up to others, the two women return to the pool, but this time they swim outside of the enclosure, in the shared public space, representing an intersubjectivity that Juliette is beginning to allow herself to enter. (See figures 9 and 10).

![Figure 10: Juliette enters an intersubjective space](image)

While Juliette seems to be making enormous progress, she has yet to speak about the death of her son, and she still has not fully spoken about the past with Léa. When the two women decide to go out for a night on the town, confirmation of Juliette’s progress up to this point, the night ends in tears and silence for Juliette. The two women go to a bar for dancing and they are surrounded by people as they wait to get in. Léa smiles and appears happy that she is finally able to take her sister out for some fun, but Juliette looks radically uncomfortable and she turns to leave. (See figure 11). Léa, a few moments later, turns around and notices that Juliette has left. She leaves the bar and finds Juliette slumped over in the alley, sobbing. (See figure 12). Juliette shrugs her off and they go home. On the ride home, Léa finally implores Juliette to speak. “Tu peux tout me dire, si tu veux. Tu peux me parler. J’suis pas les autres, moi. J’suis pas les autres.” Perhaps she has learned that her sister, in spite of what she says, does not want to
hear about it, or perhaps she fears distressing her again. Whatever the case may be, Juliette, once again, remains silent and says nothing to her sister.

In the last scene of the movie, Léa is finally completely ready to confront the past. After some detective work on her own, she discovers the truth of her sister's crime: Juliette is not, in fact, a cold-blooded murderer. Now knowing the
true nature of what happened, Léa’s shame and her reticence to hear are absolved and she seeks out Juliette for her testimony in the climactic end to the film.

Léa: Et nous, on était là ! On ne comptait pas ?
Juliette: Tu crois que les autres comptent dans ce moment-là ? Tu crois qu’on se préoccupe de ce qu’ils peuvent penser, de ce qu’ils peuvent faire ? Vous vous êtes tous des vivants, des biens vivants ! De ce qu’on vient à détester pour ce qu’ils sont. Pour le simple fait qu’ils soient là.

[Juliette monte l’escalier, et Léa la suit].

Léa: Mais pourquoi tu ne l’as pas dit ? Pourquoi ? J’étais là, moi ! On était là ! On aurait pu t’aider à faire quelque chose !

Fig. 13 : Vous auriez pu faire quoi?


[Pause, puis Juliette lève les yeux, en larmes.]
Juliette: Dès le début, je savais. Je savais. Dès les premières signes. J’ai fait moi-même les analyses au labo. Et un soir, Pierre m’a chipé la feuille pour écrire son poème. Il me l’a rendu tout fier, petit bonhomme. Ah, je le voyais si beau, si heureux, et je voyais le petit mort qu’il allait être. J’ai senti en moi une douleur comme une grande main qui m’arrachait le ventre et le cœur et qui ne cessait de m’ouvrir. Alors, je l’ai pris avec moi. On a dit que je l’ai enlevé et c’est

[Léa embrasse Juliette et puis elle regarde par la fenêtre]

Léa: Regarde comme c’est beau.
Juliette sourit.

[La porte s’ouvre en bas et Michel lance un appel.]

Pause, puis Juliette parle.


This final scene opens and closes with the notion of presence (“On était là.” “Je suis là.”). Léa begins by pleading with her sister for answers. She tells her that they were there for her, and she rejected them. Juliette walks away and closes the door behind her, once again separating herself from others and closing herself off, only this time, Léa follows Juliette into her closed space, allowing her to testify on her terms and Léa implores her to finally say what she has been
unable to say and what Léa has previously been unwilling to hear (“Dis-le!”). Juliette finally opens up and says what she has been holding in and living alone with for the past fifteen years: she euthanized her son and willingly went to prison, for she was already in the worst prison imaginable, that of the traumatic repetition of the death of her child. Once Juliette has successfully transmitted her testimony, we see a shift in the mood of the scene. Léa hugs her sister, and then looks out the window, where the rain is running down the pane of glass. “Regarde comme c’est beau.” Juliette smiles, with a light in her eyes and whispers, “Ah, oui!” (See figure 15). Now that she has been able consciously to gain control over her traumatic past through testimony to her desired audience, Juliette is able to live in the present and appreciate her life around her. When she looks Léa in the eye at the end of the scene and says, “Je suis là,” we believe her. She has made it through to the other side on her journey to recovery, and she is now finally able to move forward. She has moved into the intersubjective state of being present before another/an “other,” and she is no longer “l’Absente” – she is “là.” (See figure 16). She has arrived at the terminus of her journey of working through, and she is “là,” living in the present reality as a subjective agent in an intersubjective space with her sister Léa, and also Michel, who is himself arriving at the end.
Fig. 16: “Je suis là.”
Chapter 3: *Le non de Klara* : Non à tout... même la vie

Je n’avais pas entendu la voix de Klara depuis longtemps. Une voix semblable, je veux dire. Une vraie voix de revenante : hachée, fragile, impérative, violente, pleine de tendresse, à l’orée toujours de silence, inépuisable. Une voix de survivante d’Oswiecim... voix évanescente comme la fumée des fours sur la plaine de Pologne... Klara, donc, est revenue... J’attendais depuis quelque temps un récit comme *Le non de Klara*... Merci Klara !

Jorge Semprun (Le Nouvel Observateur)

Jorge Semprun, author of *L’écriture ou la vie* and a survivor of Buchenwald, praises Soazig Aaron’s 2002 novel, *Le non de Klara*, a fictive diary written by Angélika, documenting her experience with Klara, her sister-in-law and best friend, who returns to Paris from Auschwitz after the liberation. *Le non de Klara* pays homage to the struggles survivors face upon returning from *l’univers concentrationnaire*, and Semprun applauds the verisimilitude of Klara’s voice, “une vraie voix de revenante.” While I agree completely that Aaron does a tremendous job at recapitulating the struggles of a survivor, I would like to point out that this, in fact, is not Klara’s story. Written in diary form, this fiction is meant to give us an inside look into Angélika’s subjective state, and when we hear about Klara, it is only through Angélika’s point of view. In a story about a woman who cannot overcome the ghosts of her past, it is interesting that the author would choose to tell this story from the point of view of the person that is, at least in part, responsible for the heroine not being able to work through her traumatic past, further solidifying the fact that in order successfully to work through trauma, transmission of a testimony is only possible when there is the appropriate, receptive audience. *Le non de Klara* tells the story of Angélika and Klara through Angélika’s first-person narrative. We see Klara’s struggle as she returns to daily life and we read about Angélika’s endeavor as she tries to be the receptive audience that her friend requires. At the end of the novel, Klara does tell her story but she is unable to overcome the powerful grip of her traumatic past and she leaves everything from her former life behind. *Le non de Klara* outlines the hardships faced not only by survivors, but also by those around them, and it shows the many complexities trauma victims face in overcoming the past and
working through their experience. Klara tells her story but she is not able to work successfully through her trauma and the key to her failure rests, at least in part, with our protagonist: Angélique.

*Le non de Klara* begins on, “Dimanche 29 juillet 1945. Klara est revenue. Voilà, c’est écrit. Il faut que je l’écrive pour que ce soit plus vrai et pour y croire... Ce cahier au mauvais papier est providentiel... sinon, tout va couler, je vais couler” (9). We see from the very beginning that this is Angélique’s story and like trauma survivors, she also feels it imperative to share her story, a fact that can be attributed to the contagious affect of trauma. “The listeners ... whose own listening in fact enables the unfolding of the testimonial life accounts... cannot fulfill their task without, in turn, passing through the crisis of experiencing their boundaries, their separateness, their functionality, and indeed their sanity, at risk” (Laub et al. xvii). Angélique feels the need to testify herself about the trauma that she faces in dealing with Klara, and by getting her story out, she is able to make sense of it, for “trauma calls out to be ordered into a comprehensible narrative which provides meaning” (Young 116), and by putting it down on paper, she is able to affirm to herself that which she thought unimaginable (“Klara est revenue”).

When Klara first returns to Paris, Angélique tries to solicit her testimony, but Klara is hesitant to divulge much information.

*Moi: Il y a beaucoup de choses à se dire, Klara. Comment commencer ? Tu veux me dire un peu ? Comment c’était ?
Elle: -- (voix rauque) Là-bas. Ça s’appelle là-bas. Ça s’appelait Oswiecim. Eux ont inventé un autre nom en allemand [Auschwitz]. C’était un endroit pour les saints et pour les bêtes (22-3).* 

Angélique is open to hearing her testimony, but Klara is not yet ready. She is still “là-bas,” acting out and stuck in the past. Angélique knows that Klara is carrying a heavy burden and she continues trying to get her to say what she needs to say, and she believes that she is willing to listen. “On sent... qu’elle veut parler. Elle comprend qu’on est prêts à l’entendre. Il faut entendre. Tout ce qu’elle voudra dire, il faudra entendre. Elle prend son temps” (57). After gentle coaxing, Klara does begin to open up and start speaking about her experience. “Je fais en sorte
que tous les jours Klara me parle de comment c’était Auschwitz. Elle répond volontiers” (69). Once she begins to willingly and freely speak (“volontiers”), Angélika realizes that perhaps she is not ready to hear what Klara has to say, and she goes from inviting Klara’s testimony, to being a weary listener. “Je suis fatiguée… Klara me parle, nous parle d’une autre planète avec ses coutumes, ses classes, ses codes, ses rituels, ses sacrifices… une autre planète. Terrifiante” (74). Her main goal is to recover her lost friend. She says, “... mon urgence était de retrouver Klara d’avant” (24), and she begins to withdraw when she is unable to assimilate the Klara in front of her, the déportée Klara, with her friend from the past. “Klara est revenue, mais ne nous est pas rendue. Klara est revenue, mais ne nous est pas revenue” (28). Klara needs to be seen by others as one who came out of a traumatic experience altered by it, but still as the same person. She is still living in the past (“Je n’ai pas quitté là-bas” 23), and she will always be different because of what she went through. Angélika’s expectation of bringing back the old Klara is impossible, because as Klara herself says, “Tu vois, je suis morte. De là-bas, on ne revient pas. Mes amies étaient normales. Elles sont mortes” (31). Her unrealistic expectation sets her up for failure from the beginning, and Klara tries repeatedly to tell her that the old Klara no longer exists, and what you see in front of you, is what is left. Angélika is not ready to accept this new, altered Klara, and therefore Klara is not able to find the receptive audience she requires of Angélika. “The absence of an empathic listener, or more radically, the absence of an addressable other, an other who can hear the anguish of one’s memories and thus affirm and recognize their realness, annihilates the story” (Laub 68). The other that is speaking before her is not the one that she expected, so she relinquishes her role as interlocutor. “Je lui demande de se taire” (90). She is no longer willing to listen, and Klara has lost the audience she requires to work through the past.

Klara continues to reveal information about her past, and she is met with persistent resistance from Angélika. She pleads with her, “Aussi impossible que de vivre là-bas, de revenir de là-bas, mais l’impossible est possible. À l’intérieur de l’impossible, il y a toujours un petit possible” (99). She is trying to let her know that there is hope, and she begs for Angélika not to give up on her, but
while Angélique listens hesitantly to Klara, she does not inhabit fully her role as a receptive listener, for she begins to question the accuracy of Klara’s testimony. “Tout ce que j’entends, il m’est difficile d’y croire. D’y croire absolument comme à une évidence. Je veux bien, je suis de bonne volonté pour croire Klara, et cependant c’est comme un conte… C’est sans doute ce qui effraie le plus pénible à entendre… quelque chose en nous refuse” (75). Klara pleads with her. “Croyez-moi, je le sais. Je vous en prie, croyez-moi” (139). If Angélique does not believe what she says, then her testimony is void because it has no audience. “The feeling of trust betrayed or fidelity broken... is one of the greatest impediments to working through trauma” (LaCapra 144).

As Klara prepares to leave for America, she continues to speak about her time spent at Auschwitz, much to the dismay of Angélique.

Elle dit qu’elle va partir... en attendant, elle est là... elle parle. En attendant, j’aimerais aussi être en vacances de Klara. À son contact, je me sens vieille. Elle m’use... Klara la douce me corrode. Et j’ai mal... J’apprends à entendre entre les mots. Klara me tue à petites doses... Je désire son départ (116-7).

Angélique went from genuinely soliciting her friend’s testimony, to silently tolerating it, to vocally silencing it, and now to having a violent reaction to it and desiring her departure. Yet, Klara continues speaking, and her plans to move away and try to start a life elsewhere, is telling of her plight to be heard. “This imperative to tell and to be heard can become itself an all-consuming life task... There are never enough words or the right words... The pressure thus continues unremittingly, and if words are not trustworthy or adequate, the life that is chosen can become the vehicle by which the struggle to tell continues” (Laub 78).

Klara decides to move away and leave all traces of her old life behind, including her three-year old daughter, Victoire.

Vous oubliez que je suis morte à Brzezinka. Vous oubliez que jamais je ne reviendrai en Europe. Vous oubliez que je vais changer de nom. Je vais disparaître. Klara Schwartz-Adler va disparaître... Je ne rejette pas ma fille. C’est moi que je rejette en dehors de sa vie à elle, pour sa vie à elle (137-8).

She absolutely refuses everything from her former life, and she plans on entirely negating her existence. She wants to disappear, for her own sake, for she cannot live the life of Klara, with traumatic memories, and for her daughter, to whom she...
is unable to give anything. "Je n’ai rien à lui donner sauf ma douleur et ma folie, ma maladie..." (138).

Klara leaves and Angélique has mixed emotions. “Klara est partie. Klara, Klara, voilà. Courageuse Klara. Je suis en deuil. Oui et non en deuil” (147). She repeats Klara’s name to confirm to herself that the person who left, never to return, was in fact her Klara. “Ce nom à dire et à redire pour savoir que c’est Klara, l’amie Klara, mon amie Klara, Klara la femme de mon frère, Klara la mère de Victoire” (9). She mourns the loss of her friend, but she welcomes the departure of her traumatizing presence.

By taking the voice of Angélique, Soazig Aaron invites us to learn about the subjectivity of the required other needed in the testimony to a traumatic past. Angélique was not able to be the listening ear that Klara desired because she was unable to accept the woman who came back from Auschwitz, changed by the trauma that she endured. Up to the very end she held out a false hope, “C’est insensé. Jusqu’au dernier moment, j’ai espéré un retournement” (148), and her unwillingness to be the accessible interlocutor that Klara desired, along with Klara’s own inability to lay the past to rest (“Je n’ai pas quitté là-bas.”), impeded the healing process. She told her story, yet she remains in the controlling grips of her past trauma, and she continues to act out through a repetition of her past. As Angélique herself contends, “Les êtres sont complexes” (80), and there are many obstacles that survivors face on the journey to working through the ghosts of their past.
Chapter 4: Shame as an Obstacle to Working Through

Where men and women are forced to endure terrible things at the hand of others—whenever, that is, extremity involves moral issues—the need to remember becomes a general response. Spontaneously, they make it their business to record the evil forced upon them. ...Here—and in similar situations—survival and bearing witness become reciprocal acts.

Terrence Des Pres, Survivor

Upon returning from “l’univers concentrationnaire,” numerous survivors feel what Robert Antelme describes as, “un désir frénétique de la dire” (9). There is an overwhelming urge to tell their story and to articulate their trauma. The successful transmission of a traumatic event, as we have seen, is vital to working through for survivors.

When the past becomes accessible to recall in memory, and when language functions to provide some measure of conscious control, critical distance, and perspective, one has begun the arduous process of working over and through the trauma in a fashion that may never bring full transcendence of acting out... but which may enable processes of judgment and at least limited liability and ethically responsible agency. These processes are crucial for laying ghosts to rest... (LaCapra 90).

Unfortunately for many trauma survivors, this ideal outcome of working through trauma to regain control over the present is often impeded by resistance to testimony from both witnesses and interlocutors. What motivates this persistent resistance? The tormented silence often associated with survivors, brought on by their own resistance to speak and by their audience’s resistance to listen, is often propagated by the contagious affect of shame. Shame often produces silence, and in order to work through trauma, silence is impossible. In writing about trauma, psychiatrist Dr. Dori Laub, himself a survivor of the Holocaust, notes “None find peace in silence, even when it is their choice to remain silent” (79). Witnessing is essential to working through, and shame is a challenging obstacle that inhibits this crucial process of laying the ghosts of a traumatic past to rest.

Witnessing is the key to working through for several reasons. In Charlotte Delbo’s Auschwitz et après, testimony is used as a tool to reclaim agency. In March of 1942, Charlotte Delbo was arrested by French police for “editing and producing anti-German leaflets” (Lamont ix). She was imprisoned and
eventually sent to Auschwitz where she endured and witnessed “unthinkable” (x) acts of cruelty and genocide. This dehumanizing experience rendered her powerless, and she lost the zealous voice she once possessed. In writing *Auschwitz et après*, Delbo recovers her voice, breaks her silence, and regains her agency. She writes in a way to reinforce her identity, to give a voice to a period in her life where she was forcibly silenced. In Auschwitz without a voice, without agency, Delbo begins to question even her own existence. “Le silence est solidifié... Nous ne savons pas si nous sommes....” (I: 53). One of the rare moments when she does try to speak up for herself, she is quickly reminded that she does not have the right to do so. One particularly poignant example occurs in the chapter she entitles “Le soir.” After a long day of excruciating work, Charlotte and a few other women are assigned the laborious task of carrying two of her deceased comrades back to camp. Along the way a truck stops to have a word with the SS officers on their way back to camp. An excessively exhausted Charlotte dares to address the officers on the truck.


She is abruptly reminded that she is not allowed a voice, and her temporary forgetfulness of this fact causes her to feel ashamed.

In writing her memoir, Charlotte Delbo reclaims a voice that was forbidden her in “l’univers concentrationnaire.” She wrote “Aucun de nous ne reviendra” in 1946, the year following her release from Ravensbrück. Her testimony allows her to narrate her story and she gives it a voice, but she hesitates for nearly twenty years before fully affirming her agency, because it was not until 1965 that she published her story and gave her voice an audience. Her resistance to giving her voice an audience will be discussed later on, but first we will continue to examine the need for witnessing to work through trauma.

Survivors of trauma often report a feeling of being haunted by the past, and this inability to make a distinction between the past and the present is symptomatic of acting out. Acting out is what one tries to overcome (at least in
part) by working through trauma. Witnessing functions to work through trauma by counteracting acting out with what Laub calls “re-externalizing the event.”

To undo this entrapment in a fate that cannot be known, cannot be told, but can only be repeated, a therapeutic process — a process of constructing a narrative, of reconstructing a history and essentially, of re-externalizing the event — has to be set in motion. The re-externalization of the event can occur and take effect only when one can articulate and transmit the story, literally transfer it to another outside oneself... Telling thus entails a reassertion of the hegemony of reality and a re-externalization of the evil that affected and contaminated the trauma victim (Laub 69).

The articulation and reception by another of a traumatic narrative allows the victim to sort out their unimaginable experience (“Expliquer l’inexplicable” - Lamont xi), and in doing so, they can possibly make some kind of sense out of it. In *Coping with Chronic Stress*, a group of psychologists and sociologists join together to explore the ways in which people deal with stress and trauma. In specifically speaking about dealing with trauma from the Holocaust, Boaz and Eva Kahana, Zev Harel, Kathy Kelly, Pam Monaghan, and Lani Holland second LaCapra’s idea of testimony as a coping mechanism for trauma. They theorize that through the articulation of one’s experience, “Disclosure of accounts of survival facilitates processing of traumatic memories and may help create meaning by organizing jumbled and incomprehensible experiences” (325).

Kahana et al. also stress the need for a receptive audience in the re-externalization of an event and in the process of working through. When there is a true listening ear, “the listener is likely to respond by providing social support to the trauma survivor. These dual processes then become part of a successful coping process that in turn helps reduce intrusive memories” (325). In *Auschwitz et après*, Charlotte Delbo goes to visit one of her comrades, Marie-Louise, several years after the liberation. Marie-Louise was fortunate enough to have a very receptive audience in her husband, Pierre. “Je lui ai tout raconté... Nous passons nos soirées à bavarder. Nous n’en finissons pas de parler d’Auschwitz. Mes souvenirs sont devenus les siens.” (III: 84-88). Marie-Louise and Pierre tell Charlotte about their return trip to Auschwitz, and Pierre says that, “Marie-Louis n’a pas pu se rappeler sa place au block 26.” Charlotte says, “‘C’était à droite, dans la deuxième travée’... Par chance, je m’en souvenais” (III:
This is a poignant juxtaposition of two possible outcomes of survivors. Marie-Louise has told her story, and has worked through her experience, thus she is not haunted by her memories. Charlotte, on the other hand, remembers well because she is still living “à côté de” (xi) her memories. She has not yet completely worked through her trauma and her “memories serve as internalized representations of trauma” (Kahana et al. 325).

The obstacle for most survivors to working through, to laying “their ghosts to rest” (LaCapra 90), is finding this audience. “Little self-disclosure was possible for Holocaust survivors during periods marked by a conspiracy of silence, because no one expressed interest or solicited information about their traumatic experience” (Kahana et al. 325). Without being able to share their story, survivors find it very difficult to regain their agency because they are unable to counteract acting out and the compulsive repetition of the past by the process of working through. They are stuck mentally replaying the past, and are as such bound to their trauma through their haunting memories. By articulating their trauma, they are able to gain some measure of conscious, linguistic control over the past, and they are able to begin the process of working through.

Like the case of Marie-Louis in Delbo’s *Auschwitz et après*, Robert Antelme, survivor and author of his own memoir, *L’espèce humaine*, speaks about his *bonheur* resulting from the successful transmission of his testimony. In his letter to Dionys Mascolo, a friend to whom he told his story immediately after his liberation, he says, “Saying everything, that is where I have experienced my paradise.” After sharing his story with Dionys and his wife, Marguerite Duras, Antelme writes *L’espèce humaine*, a beautifully written *récit* about his experience in *l’univers concentrationnaire* which highlights the indivisibility of the human race. Shortly after its completion, Antelme attaches a preface, or his “discours d’excuses” (Creech 16), explaining his “désir frénétique de la dire” (9). He explains why he had to write his testimony, and then as his wife Duras says in *La douleur*, “Une fois ce livre écrit, fait, édité, il n’a plus parlé des camps de concentration allemands. Il ne prononce jamais ces mots. Jamais plus. Jamais plus non plus le titre du livre... C’est dans ce silence-là que la guerre est encore présente...” (77-79).
Robert Antelme published his testimony and then never again spoke about it. Charlotte Delbo writes hers but then waits decades before publishing. Why is it that successful transmission of testimony to work through so often malfunctions due to survivor resistance? What drives their resistance to speak and to be heard? Psychologist Silvan Tomkins, in writing about affect theory, and more specifically about shame, says that shame can first be observed in human beings at as young as seven-months old. When the infant sees its mother and expects to be attended to by her, but then she turns away, the infant is shamed and responds by lowering his eyes and his head. He explains:

Shame... is activated by the drawing of a boundary line or barrier, the ‘introduc[tion] of a particular boundary or frame into an analog continuum.’ That is, shame involves a gestalt.... Without positive affect, there can be no shame: only a scene that offers you enjoyment or engages your interest can make you blush... Shame is characterized by its failure ever to renounce its object cathexis (22-3).

Upon liberation, Antelme had a receptive audience in Dionys Mascolo and he was able to share his story and he experienced “paradise.” He continues on to write *L’espèce humaine*, and then he attaches an almost apologetic preface to it and never speaks of it again. He says,”À peine commencions-nous à raconter, que nous suffoquions” (9). After he returns, he expects to find the additional receptive interlocutors (like Dionys Mascolo), but he is deceived and he learns that his testimony is not readily received. It is here that his words become suffoqués. “If I wish to speak to you but you will not listen, I am ashamed” (Tomkins 152).

Charlotte Delbo also quickly learns that she cannot freely speak to others about her traumatic experience.

Je suis revenue d’entre les morts
et j’ai cru
que cela me donnait le droit
de parler aux autres
et quand je me suis retrouvée en face d’eux
je n’ai rien eu à leur dire
parce que
j’avais appris
là-bas
qu’on ne peut pas parler aux autres
(II: 188).
She learns from the gaze of the other (“face to face with them”) that her testimony is not welcome and she is shamed into silence for nearly twenty-years by resisting publishing her testimony. Tomkins says:

The innate activator of shame is the incomplete reduction of interest or joy. Hence any barrier to further exploration which partially reduces interest or the smile of enjoyment will activate the lowering of the head and eyes in shame and reduce further exploration or self-exposure powered by excitement or joy. Such a barrier might be because one is suddenly looked at by one who is strange, or because one wishes to look at or commune with another person but cannot because he is strange, or one expected him to be familiar but suddenly he appears unfamiliar (1345).

In *L’écriture ou la vie*, Jorge Semprun is confronted with the same shame of an expectation and consequent deception at the precise moment of his liberation. The first people from outside of the camps that he interacts with are Allied officers. “Ils sont en face de moi, l’œil rond, et je me vois soudain dans ce regard d’effroi : leur épouvante” (13). From the gaze of the other he learns that he cannot tell his story. “Mais peut-on raconter ? Le pourra-t-on ? Le doute me vient dès ce premier instant... J’étais un revenant, en somme. Cela fait toujours peur, les revenants” (234). He sees himself as he believes the soldiers see him, as a diminished human, reduced to only a shadow of a man, and this causes him to question the possibility of finding a receptive audience, thus shaming him to silence. Michael Morgan, in his study on shame, says:

This shame as a kind of suffering was felt by the released prisoner ‘because of a reacquired consciousness of having been diminished’...At the time in the camp, there may have been little opportunity to see oneself in this light... but once the prisoner was released, there was time and opportunity to look at oneself as one had lived and become (18).

Semprun sees himself through the eyes of the other, and he sees what he looks like to others, and he realizes that his appearance is frightening to those on the outside, and this shames him to silence. “Shame before the look of revulsion, or shame before the look of lack of concern or solidarity or relatedness is... a sense of one’s own unworthiness, of one’s own repulsiveness. One could serve others best by disappearing, by not being present. Shame is about self-negation” (Morgan 24). The idea of self-negation as it relates to trauma survivors is seconded by Dori Laub in *Testimony*. “Speakers about trauma on some level
prefer silence so as to protect themselves from the fear of being listened to and of listening to themselves. That while silence is defeat, it serves them both as a sanctuary and as a place of bondage” (58). By being silenced by their shame and by refusing to speak about the atrocities they experienced, survivors are negating themselves along with the trauma. They don’t speak about it so that they won’t be seen as that person, the survivor, both by others and also by themselves. While this silence is “a place of bondage” for survivors, prohibiting them from testifying to work through their trauma, it can also be their “sanctuary,” as was the case for Sarah Kofman.

In Paroles suffoquées, Kofman pays homage to Maurice Blanchot, a man widely known for his works on the impossibility of language in narrating survivor testimony (and a man who only at the very end of his life endeavored to give a voice to his own story). While Kofman mostly sticks to commenting on the works of Blanchot who believed in not speaking to preserve human dignity by not using Nazi language and Antelme, she also for the first time in her career, attempts to speak about her own experience, namely with her father and his death at Auschwitz. Madeline Dobie, in the introduction to the English translation, states, “Smothered Words [Paroles suffoquées] marked a watershed after which she was no longer able to write in the language of mastery” (xiv). This “language of mastery” that she departed from is the uncharted territory that Kofman entered when speaking about her own trauma. In 1994, Sarah Kofman published one of her final works, Rue Ordener, Rue Labat. She says that all she has left of her father is the fountain pen she took from her mother’s purse: a pen that she used until it broke and she patched up with Scotch tape and eventually retired to its reserved place before her on her desk. Kofman says that this pen “me contraint à écrire, écrire. Mes nombreux livres ont peut-être été des voies de traverse obligées pour parvenir à raconter « ca »” (9). The same year she finally publishes her own testimony is the year that she commits suicide. “The act of telling might itself become severely traumatizing if the price of speaking is re-living; not relief,

but further retraumatization. Poets and writers who have broken their silence may have indeed paid with their life for that deed” (Laub 67).

While breaking her silence may have been a retraumatization for Kofman, it is more often therapeutic for Holocaust survivors to testify in the process of working through, but even when they are able successfully to transmit their stories, their testimonies themselves show signs of the shame to which they are still subjected. Charlotte Delbo explains in order to survive after Auschwitz she had to live “à côté de” Auschwitz, by splitting herself in two: her Auschwitz self and her post-Auschwitz self. She says:

> Auschwitz is so deeply etched on my memory... that I cannot forget one moment of it... I live next to it. Auschwitz is there, unalterable, precise, but enveloped in the skin of memory, an impermeable skin that isolates it from my present self... I feel that the one who was in the camp is not me, is not the person who is here, facing you (Lamont xi).

We can see her rejection of her former self as a sign of shame she feels over the trauma she endured. Morgan says, “We may seek to avoid shame... by closing off the past from the present... or by allowing the present to cover over, bury, or isolate it as though the past is in its own world and separate from ours” (29-30).

> Je reviens
d’au-delà de la connaissance
il faut maintenent désapprendre
je vois bien qu’autrement
je ne pourrais plus vivre
(Delbo, II: 191).

Shame prohibits the suture of these two selves into one. By distinguishing between her past and present selves, she is insisting that she is not the same person who was in the camps living in a severely dehumanized (shameful) state.

Shame clearly plays a large role in the resistance of survivors to testify, and in the manner in which they do testify, but how does shame play a role in the resistance to listening to testimony? Why is it so difficult for survivors, who need to witness to work through, to find a receptive audience?

The shame of the other, his bipolar affect, his contempt, and his negative affect are all sources of shame in the self. These are all instances of shame from an essentially dyadic relationship. But the human being is capable of being shamed by another whether or not the other is interacting with him at all. The human being is capable through empathy and identification of living through others and
therefore of being shamed by what happens to others... He is vulnerable to the vicarious experience of shame (Tomkins 159).

Rather than listening to a testimony wrought with dehumanization and horror, many prefer not to hear about it all, so as not to get entangled vicariously in the shame of the trauma. “Ils racontent, ils racontent, et bientôt le soldat n’écoute plus” (Antelme 317).

Interlocutors can also feel a vicarious shame through, “the indignity or suffering of others to which [they] feel identified” (Tomkins 160). Antelme says in L’espèce humaine that the Holocaust was a crime against humanity committed by man and that in order to truly understand the experience, it had to be shared and responsibility had to be taken by all.

La seule réponse à faire à ce crime est d’en faire un crime de tous. De le partager. De même que l’idée d’égalité, de fraternité. Pour le supporter, pour en tolérer l’idée, partager le crime... Robert L. n’a accusé personne, aucune race, aucun peuple, il a accusé l’homme. (Duras 61-63).

The idea that such an atrocious crime against humanity could have been committed by those just like us is obviously an uncomfortable thought and one that is often rejected because, “one feels ashamed at being human in such a human world.... [There was a sense] of having failed in human solidarity” (Morgan 21). The fact that something like the Holocaust took place at the hands of human beings and that little was done by us to stop it clearly provokes feelings of shame, and rather than confronting the shame, it is more comfortable for an audience simply not to accept the testimony, and therefore they don’t have to be ashamed at their involvement or non-involvement in it. They feel it is better to forget about it and to move on, as is the case with Mado’s husband in Delbo’s Auschwitz et après:

Mon mari est gentil. C’est un compagnon sûr. Il est attaché à son fils, à sa femme. Je ne me demande jamais s’il comprend parce que je sais qu’il ne comprend pas et je sais depuis que je le connais que mes explications lui échapperont. Suis-je seulement capable d’expliquer? Il dirait, tranquille, rassurant : « Je sais par où tu es passée. Je sais qu’on ne revient pas de là-bas sans garder des cicatrices qui se redéchirent au moindre effleurement. C’est pour cela que je ne t’en parle jamais. Je veux t’aider à oublier. Parler fait mal. Il ne faut pas en parler si on veut oublier » (III: 63).
He says that he wants to help her forget by not speaking about it, when it seems that it is really he who wishes to forget, because as we see with Mado and survivors in general, forgetting trauma is not a realistic option (nor desired in terms of memorializing those lost). While her silence is his desired outcome, it is her prison in the past. “Je n’en parle pas. Je ne lui en parle jamais. Pour lui, je suis là, active, ordonnée, présente. Il se trompe. Je lui mens. Je ne suis pas présente” (III: 66). Because of his shame he is not a willing interlocutor, and because she is unable successfully to share her testimony, she is unable to work through her trauma and is thus stuck in the past, reliving her trauma. “Le temps ne passé pas. Il ne s’estompe rien, il n’use rien. Je ne suis pas vivante. Je suis morte à Auschwitz et personne ne le voit” (III: 66).

In working through, trauma survivors try to articulate a past trauma to a receptive listener in order to distinguish between the then and now, and to regain control and agency over the present. To be able successfully to embark on the path of working through, shame and its many obstacles for witnesses and interlocutors have to be overcome. It takes bravery and strength from both sides to surmount the powerful affect of shame and the silence that it promotes, and while it may be difficult, it is not impossible, as we have seen from Marie-Louise and Antelme’s bonheur to begin to work through trauma. With considerable courage and patience, through testimony, survivors can begin to lay their ghosts of the traumatic past to rest, and only then can the healing begin.

Je ne sais pas
si vous pouvez faire encore
quelque chose de moi
Si vous avez le courage d'essayer...
(Delbo, III: 212).
Conclusion: The *Travail* of Working Through

“Survivors challenge us to reconnect fragments, to reconstruct history, to make meaning of their present symptoms in the light of past events.”

Judith Lewis Herman

The past century has provided us with numerous case studies with which we have been able to build our understanding of trauma and its many complexities. Trauma theory has evolved from the work of Freud and his contemporaries, to a field that intersects with a wide variety of disciplines, including historiography, literature, literary theory, and contemporary culture (Berger 569). Traumatic representations, whether they be oral, literary, or cinematic, allow us an inside look to the reciprocal relationship needed to work through the past, and they show us that the work required to work through trauma, is a joint venture which requires the patience, courage, and compassion of all involved.

### DSM-IV (1994) Diagnostic Criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

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<th>A.</th>
<th>The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following were present:</th>
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<td>(1)</td>
<td>Event of events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat</td>
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<td>to the physical integrity of self or others</td>
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<td>(2)</td>
<td>The person’s response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror. <strong>Note:</strong> In</td>
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<td>children, this may be expressed instead by disorganized or agitated behavior.</td>
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B. The traumatic event is persistently reexperienced in one (or more) of the following ways:

| (1) | Recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event, including images,      |
|     | thoughts, or perceptions. **Note:** In young children, repetitive play may occur in    |
|     | which themes or aspects of the trauma are expressed                                   |
| (2) | Recurrent distressing dreams of the event. **Note:** In children, there may be        |
|     | frightening dreams without recognizable content                                        |
| (3) | Acting of feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring (includes a sense of       |
|     | reliving the experience, illusions, hallucination, and dissociative flashbacks episodes, |
|     | including those that occur on awakening or when intoxicated). **Note:** In young      |
|     | children, trauma-specific reenactment may occur                                        |
| (4) | Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize |
|     | or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event                                           |

C. Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general
   responsiveness (not present before the trauma), as indicated by three (or more) of the
   following:

| (1) | Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma      |
| (2) | Efforts to avoid activities, places, or people that arouse recollections of the trauma|
| (3) | Inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma                                 |
| (4) | Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities              |
| (5) | Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others                                     |
| (6) | Restricted range of affect (e.g. unable to have loving feelings)                     |
| (7) | Sense of a foreshortened future (e.g., does not expect to have a career, marriage,    |
|     | children, or a normal life span)                                                     |

D. Persistent symptoms of increased arousal (not present before the trauma), as indicated by two
   (or more) or the following:

| (1) | Difficulty falling or staying asleep                                                  |
| (2) | Irritability or outbursts of anger                                                    |
| (3) | Difficulty concentrating                                                              |
| (4) | Hypervigilance                                                                        |
| (5) | Exaggerated startle response                                                         |

E. Duration of the disturbance (symptoms in Criteria B, C, and D) is more than 1 month

F. The disturbance causes clinically significant distress of impairment in social occupational, or
   other important areas of functioning

Specify if:

**Acute:** if duration of symptoms is less than 3 months

**Chronic:** if duration of symptoms is 3 months or more

Specify if:

**With Delayed Onset:** if onset of symptoms is at least 6 months after the stressor
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Creech, James. Lecture: “De la honte à la théorie.”


