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(YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ)

Tezi Hazırlayan: SAFAA FALAH HASAN ALSARAGNA

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Jüri Başkanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Murat Kadiroğlu

Jüri Üyesi: Doç. Dr. Berna Köseoğlu

Jüri Üyesi: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Seda Coşar Çelik

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While I was thinking of a topic for my thesis, there was a concept that I always bared in mind and tried to consider before including any theory or literary work in my thesis. The concept was to choose a topic that is closely related to me or more clearly to my past experience and the people who were with me in that as well. The war on Iraq was one of the harshest and most bewildering in the era of modern warfare. Being a witness of that particular war urged me to write about it hoping to provide a slightly more transparent interpretation of the plays I have chosen, covering two major wars that broke the backbone of Iraq. These are the first Gulf War (1990) and the second Gulf War (2003) or what so-called Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

Before embarking on writing this thesis, it was important for me to explore what has been written and staged regarding modern warfare in contemporary literature with a focus on British and American literature. Throughout literary history, theatre has dealt with excessive and various amounts of war narratives ranging from the narrowest to the most considerable aspects of war and conflict. The biggest chunk of narratives that depicted war covered victory celebrations themes while other narratives, on contrary, carried out an anti-war theme by portraying the savagery and brutality that permeate every war. Therefore, theatre has always been a fertile ground for re-enacting warfare. For me, what mainly initiated the idea of writing about trauma in the first place was my veteran father who served more than thirty years in the army. I always listened to his stories from his military days and wondered how bad was the psychological impact of every incident they lived on the battlefield. The second reason was a collection of photographs and footage from the First Gulf War showing soldiers trying to survive airstrikes despite their fatal injuries. The causes I previously stated made me question the probability of depicting such traumatic experiences in words, and whether that depiction will ever be sufficient to transfer the very reality of warfare. In addition, those inexpressibly horrific scenes likewise made me question their impact on the soldiers' life when returning home and to which point that impact can extend.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Murat Kadiroglu for following up with my thesis and for his valuable instructions. Also many thanks to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Harith Ismael Turki for his contribution in backing my thesis topic. A wholehearted thanks to my parents and everyone who supported me and wished me luck in the completion of my thesis.

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CHAPTER IV

ÖZET

Travma, insanlığın başlangıcından beri her zaman insan beyninde yer almıştır. Ancak, bu felaket olaylarının ortaya çıkması, konumu ne olursa olsun herkesin, medya haberleri sayesinde bunların farkına varıp felaketlerin yayılmaya başladığı yakın zamana kadar tanımlanmamış ve sınıflandırılmamıştı. Birinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında, travmatik belirtiler geri dönen birliklerde tezahür etmeye başlamış, ancak vakalar ciddiye alınmamıştı. İkinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında ise, bu psikolojik vakalar daha fazla çalışmanın yürütülmesiyle büyük ölçüde ilerlemiş ve en sonunda travma terimine geçilmiştir. Zaman ilerledikçe travma bir psikiyatrik vakadan daha fazlasına, pratik olarak tüm çalışma alanlarına müdahale eden kapsamlı bir araştırma alanı haline gelmiştir. En dikkat çeken de şudur ki travma, edebiyatı tedavi ve temsil edilebilecek en iyi yer olarak görmüş ve edebiyatta önemli yerini almıştır. Son otuz yılda meydana gelen savaşlar ve korkunç olayların sonucunda travma sahnede de kendi yerini almıştır. Tiyatroların savaşa ve travmaya karşı son zamanlarda artan ilgisini göz önüne alan bu tezin amacı, modern travma teorileri bağlamında savaş travmasının meydana geldiği güncel iki oyunu incelemek; bu oyunlardaki travma türüne ait özellikleri gözler önüne sermek; tiyatronun bir takım travmatik olaylar karşısındaki rolünü ele almak ve son olarak travma deneyiminin edebiyatta nasıl yansıtıldığını öne çıkarmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Travma, *States of Shock*, *Black Watch*, TSSB, Savaş Oyunları.

ABSTRACT

Trauma has always been in the human psyche from the dawn of humanity. However, it was not identified and classified until recently when catastrophic occurrences began to proliferate over the world and that everyone, regardless of location, became aware of such disasters through media news. During the First World War, traumatic symptoms began to manifest in returning troops, but their cases were not taken seriously. During Second World War, this psychological case was greatly enhanced as more studies were conducted eventually leading to its transition into the term trauma. Over time, trauma has evolved into more than a psychiatric case; it has evolved into a comprehensive area of research that intervenes practically in all the fields of study. The most notable thing is that trauma has had a crucial role in literature; trauma found literature as the best place to be represented and treated. As a result of wars and terrible occurrences during the previous three decades, trauma has begun to play a significant role on the stage. Taking the recent increase of interest in war and trauma by theatres as a starting point, this thesis explores two current plays in which war trauma occurs in the context of modern trauma theories. The study's main goal is to highlight and examine trauma characteristics in those plays and provide an elaborative insight regarding the relationship between trauma experience and its depiction, as well as the role of theater in the face of such extreme events.

Keywords: Trauma, *States of Shock*, *Black Watch*, PTSD, War Plays.

INTRODUCTION

Conflicts have always existed among humans, and with the development of weaponry, conflicts would become severer leading to collective trauma. In the religious texts, the murder of Abel by his brother Cain was marked as the first murder with a weapon which is the knife (Schapiro, 1942: 1). Afterward, early humans fought with what is now known as clubs, axes, and spears. They also made use of bows and arrows and other basic tools that foragers have used for hunting. Those simple tools kept developing taking different shapes and used for different purposes. The biggest dramatic change in the history of weaponry and warfare came after the invention of guns that are enhanced by powder and a projectile that could cause fatal damage from hundreds of meters.

Since the invention of guns, wars' outcomes had become dominated by the numbers of muskets and cannons. This great shift in weaponry and tactics was a result of a great transformation towards the use of projectiles, and that led to the invention of the early firearms. The development of firearms had permanently rendered the classical forms of medieval arms as they became outdated. Firearms had erased the concept of chivalry that is based on courage and determination felt by the knight in the battle and that to assist him in gaining victory. Instead, after the invention of firearms, victory was possible with a single pull of a trigger. Killing without direct contact with the enemy was a revolution and a significant change in the standards of wars and "the medieval knight was unable to compete with [it], and in the course of a century faded into obsolescence, only to live in the hearts, minds, and literature of the people." (Schwope, 2003: 131). Nowadays, the modern soldier is equipped with a fully-automatic rifles that are more sufficient and easier to use than the primitive firearms and that has been a distinctive trend in the military's weaponry for a long time.

The industrial revolution that started in the nineteenth century in Europe had transformed the world significantly. Not only because it substituted laborers with

machines and made the treadmill of production run much faster, but it also contributed to the mass production of firearms and explosives with unprecedented technologies of the time. Now that the arms are deadlier and wars are easy to wage due to the developed weaponry, more escalations started to spark between countries and most of those escalations ended up leading to drastic wars. The twentieth century brought with it unprecedented wars and catastrophes to the world. The First World War ended with the death of millions, then, it was followed by the Second World War which was the bloodiest and the most disastrous of all wars. The colossal changes that occurred after the Second World War mainly stemmed from the extraordinary events that took place back then. The coercive domination of Nazis, the Holocaust, concentration camps, and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were unfortunate events that paved to a different world. Furthermore, after the end of the Second World War, the world was still unstable due to some small and sporadically appearing wars caused by the Cold War, the time of a series of political and martial escalations intended to impose power between the USA and the Soviet Union that lasted for over fifty years. In the new millennium, the tally of destructive wars started to increase again, starting from the First Gulf War (1990) until the declaration of the 'War on Terror' by the former president of the USA George W. Bush after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The alleged 'War on Terror' led to a subsequent invasion of Afghanistan (2001) and the invasion of Iraq (2003). The previously mentioned invasions took the lives of millions and caused a long-term ramification. The latest was the ISIS bombings and seizure of two of the main cities in Iraq as well as the emergence of armed militias in the country.

Naturally, after all these ruptures and chaos in various places, a sort of perturbation has started to reign over the world. Media, which took a major part in spreading news and scenes of wars allowing people to have more access to them, has contributed to the augmentation of the collective sense of anxiety. Through various technological means such as the internet, scenes of bombardment and killing become accessible to everybody and from thousands of kilometers. The constant exposure to such disturbing images of terrorist attacks, wars, and different forms of violence has aggravated a sense of horror and insecurity worldwide as they became trivial. Taking the

normalized and intense exposition of traumatic incidents, Kaplan defines the English society from 1990 onwards as a "Trauma Culture" (2005: 1) which is based upon Seltzer's term of "Wound Culture" by which he emphasizes the public's fascination with the bloody and graphic images that will eventually turn into trauma and shock (1997: 3). The imageries of war, terrorism, torture, and victimization have become something normalized rather than traumatizing. Being continuously exposed to such scenes, people became indifferent about violence and even some started to realize themselves getting pleasure from watching footages that contain violence as it became something we come across every day on social media.

Meanwhile the spread and the increasing availability of war imageries that have made people apathetic, traumatic incidents continued to have a tremendous impact on those who are exposed to them directly. Soldiers who are serving in the war zones and who have spent a considerable time there as well as the people who live in the conflicted areas are more likely to suffer from a long-lasting ramification, unlike the people who only observe the war by images. Trauma survivors will always carry the memory of trauma of war through their mentality and their bodies that were torn by war. As the traumatizing events are getting enormous day by day, and as their impact on humans is various and severe especially in the contemporary world, the branches of psychology, academy, art and literature have lately developed a considerable interest in trauma studies (Aygan, 2018: 5).

Although the Greeks interpreted the word 'trauma' as physical injury and likewise was used in English to refer to a bodily injury, today, the word refers to physiological damage (5). The same term was named differently during the time of the First World War; back then it was called "Shell Shock" (Myers, 1940: 26). Shell Shock is defined as a "mental illness caused by experiences of war" (Cambridge, 2022), and this term has also appeared in some literary works such as *Mrs Dalloway* by Woolf. One of the main reasons behind the fast development of the term as well as its recognition as a whole field of study called 'Trauma Studies' is the rapid occurrence of some sorrowful events with enduring impacts. As Raymond Williams observes, the world that we live in tends

to get more dramatic day by day to the point that in a case of a few days or weeks, the world would witness more events than what humanity would have seen previously in a lifetime (1983: 12). Moreover, some other narratives have also appeared that discussed social topics concerning trauma studies and that elevated the field of trauma studies and made scholars give it more credit. One of the ground-breaking works that handled the concept of trauma is Cathy Caruth's book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History (1996)* as well as other prominent works that will be handled in the later parts of this thesis. The world's fast-going treadmill has contributed to the creation of more events including the traumatic events that always get the biggest chunk of the statistics, and by that, the psychology of both real witnesses and the witnesses through the virtual platforms suffer mentally.

The two plays, *Black Watch* and *States of Shock* which are about the first and second Gulf Wars will be examined in terms of trauma in this thesis. *Black Watch* portrays the challenges that a regiment of the same name faces in Iraq after deployment. The play is a verbatim play, which means that the events in the play are all realistic and based on real interviews with the real soldiers. The play transparently reflects the trauma of the soldiers and attributes it to the corruption in the government. *Black Watch* with its strong performance was able to give the audience a realistic experience of trauma, and that makes the audience understand the traumatic soldiers returning with trauma. Besides, the play employs a major character that stands for the audience and their questions for the deployed soldiers. *Black Watch* provides an analogy of trauma on and off the battlefield.

States of Shock was written and performed before *Black Watch* and right after the First Gulf War. It provides more civic investigation of trauma. It focuses on the veterans rather than the deployed soldiers who are in service. Therefore, *States of Shock* does not portray the formation of trauma on the battlefield; yet, it examines trauma upon returning home when the traumatic soldiers start their civil life. The play also handles trauma as a social issue rather than a phenomenon that only appears on the battlefield. The physical and the psychological aspects of the trauma are both linked in the play

through its major character Stubbs. *States of Shock* views trauma on a wide scale; moreover, it shares many similarities with the previous play. This thesis will investigate each play according to its function and practicality with trauma in four chapters. The first chapter provides a genealogy of trauma, its history, and studies until its transformation into a theory. The first chapter also presents the therapeutic concepts of trauma and expands on trauma's role in human memory. The second chapter examines the relationship between trauma, war, and theatre. The third and fourth chapters each probe one of the two plays as an example of war trauma and that is achieved through centralizing trauma in them. Through examining the plays in this study, the devastating impact of wars on people, the ability of theatre in voicing and transparently conveying these traumatic experiences as well as the theatre's therapeutic role in overcoming trauma are affirmed.

CHAPTER I

1. TRAUMA: BACKGROUND, FUNCTIONS, AND THEORY

This chapter discovers the background of trauma shedding light on the theories by Freud and his contemporaries who had first defined the concept of trauma. The development phases of trauma are also elaborated and traced to the latest trending theories of trauma, which is achieved through citing different scholars with slightly higher emphasis on the Caruthian narrative of trauma. The transition of trauma from a basic concept to a theory then a field of study is also stressed together with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Trauma is also linked and defined within the umbrella of other disciplines, and its impact and function within the human mind and memory are similarly tackled. Furthermore, the ways of healing and reducing the damage of trauma are discussed in the part on healing trauma. This chapter overall is a path for comprehending the history and developments of trauma from its first appearance until now.

1.1. TRAUMA AND ITS BACKGROUND

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED),* the term trauma is defined as:

> A psychic injury, especially one caused by emotional shock the memory of which is repressed and remains unhealed; an internal injury, especially to the brain, which may result in a behavioural disorder of organic origin. Also, the state or condition so caused.

The term trauma gained its official recognition upon accepting Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a psychological disorder by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980. Afterward, trauma was defined as a psychological reaction to an extreme event that is considered to be outside the range of the normal human experience such as wars, catastrophes, and any injury that brings psychological damage (American Psychiatric

Association, 1980: 236). The recognition of trauma as a psychological disease made it gain more medical attention as it could extend itself into other fields of humanism, literary criticism, and beyond.

Cathy Caruth in her book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* which handles the term trauma in a wide interdisciplinary scope defines trauma as "the response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flashbacks, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena." (1996: 118). Caruth has the most cited emphasis on trauma, where she succinctly elaborates on its formation, she says that trauma forms "in the structure of its experience or reception: the event is not assimilated or fully experienced at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it." (4). Although this claim dates back to the very beginning of trauma's flourishment, yet it remains a significant and elaborative insight on trauma. Dominic LaCapra is also among those who have made notable observations on the growing space of trauma studies through his famous books *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, and *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma*. He conducted studies that relate trauma to the notion of historiography, representation, and memory (Aygan, 2018: 7).

The very first founder and contributor to the current field of trauma studies was the French physician Jean-Martin Charcot, who was the first to draw and investigate the relationship between traumatic disorder and mental illness while working on one of his patients during the nineteenth century. His main focus was on hysteria, a mental disorder that was believed to occur among women because it was mostly diagnosed in them. Charcot, on contrary, had a different opinion and tried to prove that hysteria is a psychological case rather than a physiological one because he discovered that its symptoms are identical to that of the neurological damage (Herman, 1998: 11).

Pierre Janet, a student of Charcot has resumed his research in the field of hysteria and he eventually discovered that the symptoms of hysteria can be conceived as a reaction to a past experience. He also discovered that when the patient faces traumatic

memories, the symptoms of hysteria can be alleviated (Aygan, 2018: 13). Furthermore, the famous neurologist Sigmund Freud has adopted some of Charcot's principles, he worked on the formation of trauma by tracking the symptoms of hysteria to the moment when the trauma occurs. Freud in his books *The Aetiology of Hysteria* and *Studies in Hysteria* co-authored by Breuer represents the dynamics of trauma and the symptoms formation, he assures that sexual abuse, assault and other forms of disturbing experience that are not acceptable by the consciousness can impose a type of psychological trauma that will deteriorate and develop into hysteria (Freud & Breuer, 2004: 285). According to this claim, trauma is formed out of two important phenomena that are interrelated. The first is related to the sexual abuse encountered by children in which they do not have a traumatic feeling at the time of happening due to their age and being sexually immature, the second is any non-traumatic event that triggers memory and takes the victim back to the main traumatic event (285). Therefore, abuse does not have any meaning when it occurs, but the memory of that abuse is triggered when the victims at the later stages of their life understand the meaning of the abuse.

Freudian trauma, then, is formed when the victim comprehends the nature of the traumatic event he/she lived in the past and was unaware of. Meaning that trauma is formed after a temporal disruption between the original event and the time when the victim realizes the ramifications of the past event. Arnold-de Simine contends that

> The concept of trauma as a temporal disruption, destroying or fracturing the narratives of our lives, is first formulated in Sigmund Freud's essay *The Aetiology of Hysteria*, where he claims that an event is not understood as traumatic until its return. (2018: 144)

By the end of the nineteenth century, Freud reaches his conclusion that hysteria is a result of a psychological (traumatic) disorder initiated by disturbing events (2004: 285). Then, trauma appears more like a ghost that constantly haunts the patients and appears at a very certain time when the senses to the main traumatic event are activated. The patients' conditions of hysteria equip us with an overview of how trauma functions,

where hysteric acts come as the outcome of the trauma process, and the linking line between the traumatic event and the place where hysteria occurs are memories. Memories, on the other hand, play a significant role in the traumatic formation, and they are bound to appear sometimes in an anonymous way, the mind sometimes recalls some memories that are unrelated or unnecessary. The major issue with traumatic people is the memories that attack them now and then making their psychological conditions worse. The response of the victim's mind to the recalled memory reverses the consciousness of the victim taking her/him back consciously to the point where they lived the traumatic event. According to Freud, this reaction is a "double consciousness" (285) that resembles two layers of consciousness embedded in the victim's mind. After Freud's claims, other scholars in the field of trauma studies sought to develop further studies on the backgrounds of Freud's theories regarding trauma.

1.1.1. Traumatic Neuroses

The term traumatic neuroses first appeared as a title of a book written by Hermann Oppenheim that contains descriptions of a psychological cases caused by workplace and railway accidents (qtd in Crocq & Crocq, 2000: 49). The modern forms of trauma remarked its appearance not far from our time now. Pinel, the psychiatrist who is known for his ability to save people from insanity, in his work *Noso-graphie Philosophique* published in the late eighteenth century, describes the situation of the scholar Pascal who almost died drowning in the Seine river after making an accident with his carriage. Until a very long time after the accident, Pascal was having continuous dreams of being on a tip of a cliff that he would place a chair near his bed to prevent him from falling as he gets into a state of fright whenever he woke up. Moreover, since the accident occurred, Pascal's personality went through a notable change as he became in a state of depression, apprehension, and scrupulousness. Pascal's case was one of the very first cases that can be attributed to a traumatic disorder or traumatic neuroses. Pinel, from his experience with Pascal and other patients who witnessed and participated in the conflicts of the French revolution, "wrote the first precise descriptions of war neuroses—which he

called “cardiorespiratory neu- rosis”—and acute stuporous posttraumatic states— which he called idiotism.” (qtd in Crocq & Crocq, 2000: 48).

The introduction of the steam engine and the steam machinery during the Industrial Revolution has assisted in the increase of man-made catastrophes that have a traumatic sequence. Railway accidents were the first appearing catastrophe that shocked the public (48). Physicians back then were puzzled and unable to comprehend the symptoms of psychological disorders that people show after the accidents. Some scholars believe that the first serious attempts of understanding trauma as a psychological case were made after diagnosing unusual mental disorders in the survivors of railway accidents. Roger Luckhurst in *The Trauma Question*, observes that “the general scholarly consensus is that the origin of the idea of trauma was inextricably linked to the expansion of the railways in the 1860s” (2013: 21). The railways back then exemplified the name of modernity in the industrial production bringing with it a modern understanding, a notion of trauma and mental disorder.

Cathy Caruth assures that anyone who would go through an accident, supposedly a train collision, will develop a “series of grave psychical and motor symptoms, which can be ascribed only to his shock or whatever else happened at the time of the accident” (1996: 165). Furthermore, the people who held an emotional shock had to suffer the most after the accident, they showed some hysteric acts afterward, scholars have also believed back then that the mental symptoms that resulted from the railway's accidents are initiated by the microscopic lesion of the spine and brain, there was also terminologies put to such cases as “railway spine” and “railway brain” (qtd in Crocq & Crocq, 2000: 49).

The term traumatic neuroses, later on, was reshaped by Freud and Charcot as they paved the way for subsequent studies. Trauma has reemerged again at the beginning of the First World War that has resulted in millions of death over the European continent. Symptoms of hysteria and mental disorder were noticed in the soldiers returning from war, after staying in the trenches for a long time. The situation of those returning

soldiers has created confusion between the medical teams. With large numbers, soldiers were all facing similar mental illnesses and the medical teams in the military units were hesitant whether they should treat those returning soldiers as patients with mental disorders or as sane individuals. Judith Herman in her book *Trauma and Recovery* stresses that confusion happened between the medics and the military authorities regarding the traumatic soldiers saying that some of the authorities in the military assured that such soldiers do not deserve to be treated as patients, but they must be "court-martialed or dishonorably discharged" than to be provided with any medical care (2015: 21). In its first impacting appearance, trauma was not understood nor comprehended by the public, perhaps because it did not have a terminology or a measurement to diagnose it as a psychological illness. Later on, the psychological disorder the soldiers faced was attributed to the shelling and war scenes that the soldiers have lived and witnessed on the battlefield. This mental disorder was described as the result of exposure to warfare activities, such as being under bombardment, and initially, it was called 'Shell Shock' then later on it was called 'War Neuroses'. After the First World War, the concept of shell shock was exposed to several developments especially in the twentieth century due to the increasing escalations and conflicts. The term war neuroses or shell shock was even developed further into a theory that investigates the experience of the soldiers as a collective.

Back to Freud again, his enthusiasm for studying trauma was relieved when he was treating the veterans of the First World War. The vast majority of the veterans Freud dealt with were suffering from severe and recurring symptoms such as memory loss, weeping, and nightmares from their war experience. Most of the veterans were having disturbing dreams reminding them of the traumatic experience they encountered on the battlefield. In this regard, Freud suggests that the fright felt by patients is not a result of the traumatic dream but of what happens upon waking up "dreams occurring in traumatic neuroses have the characteristic of repeatedly bringing the patient back into the situation of his accident, a situation from which he wakes up in another fright." (qtd. in Caruth, 1996: 86). Therefore, the fright in the traumatic dream is not initiated precisely by what is experienced in the traumatic dream itself but upon waking up from

it. It is the moment when the patient wakes up into consciousness and has relived from the trauma what causes bewilderment and fright when waking up. Caruth then concludes that trauma is not only about facing a near-death experience but also about survival from the unknown (86). Likewise, Freud suggests that trauma must be followed by an awakening to life, rather than a tendency to death (75). Then, it can be said that Caruth agrees with Freud regarding the traumatic awakening and she further deduces that trauma could be a survival instinct.

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud re-introduces the term "traumatic neurosis" (1989: 55) which was previously coined by Herman Oppenheim and refers to it as an experience resulting from wartime trauma or severe accident that will reoccur to the survivor who lived it, impacting an emotional and mental disorder. Freud observes that the main cause behind the reoccurring traumatic experience and unpleasant memories is the conflict between different parts of the ego. Since the theory suggests that human beings' desire is either concentrated on reproduction for the sake of survival or aggression, Freud then, asserts that human existence is driven and preserved by these two libidinal desires. In terminology, the two previously mentioned desires are classified either under 'Eros' the principle for pleasure, or 'Thanatos' the instinct of death that urges a tendency of aggression and destruction (55). Trauma is also difficult to bear because it initiates the instinct of death and the urge to go back to the traumatic experience, for Freud it seems that it is an act against or 'beyond' the pleasure.

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud suggests a "stimulus barrier" or "protective shield" (23) that attempts to defend against any external excessive stimuli that could damage the mechanism of the individual's psyche. For Freud, the traumatic effect is "any excitations from outside which are powerful enough to break through [the] protective shield" (23). Trauma thus, resembles the power that breaches the efficacious protecting barriers, Freud adds, that eventually the traumatic breach and the extensive exposure to the stimuli due to the ego's unpreparedness will result in the traumatic neurosis initiating the death instincts (23). Trauma studies are often thought to have started their modern shape after Freud's work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, as Caruth

assures that “the centrality and complexity of trauma in our century was first most profoundly addressed in two important and controversial works by Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and *Moses and Monotheism*” (Caruth, 1996: 135). She further notes that Freud assured that “it is traumatic repetition, rather than the meaningful distortions of neurosis, that defines the shape of individual lives” (139).

Freud’s previous theories regarding trauma together with his famous work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* have formed the base for further trauma studies including war trauma. The psychologist and anthropologist Abram Kardiner carried on the clinical and theoretical studies on war trauma while treating the U.S veterans of the First World War. He then published his work *The Traumatic Neuroses of War* which handles some aspects and observations of war trauma, its treatment, and the post-war care of the patients suffering from neurotic disturbance. Just like Freud, Kardiner has also detected some re-emerging traumatic memories that he describes as ‘fixations’ on the traumatic experience in which "the subject acts as if the original traumatic situation was still in existence and engages in protective devices which failed on the original occasion" (1942: 82). Although trauma symptoms were considered a sign of weakness and moral decrease and the soldiers suffering from those symptoms were punished and marked with cowardice, and almost anyone who experienced war could have those symptoms.

As soon as the First World War came to an end, the long-term impacting trauma on the soldiers was forgotten together with the psychological studies of trauma. However, with the outbreak of the Second World War, trauma studies regained their prosperity with the already exciting shell shock research that was conducted during the First World War and observed within war veterans together with the new studies on the survivors of the concentration camps. Veterans of the Second World War have witnessed extremely violent and staggering scenes as the Second World War is the most destructive in history, Holocaust survivors as well have suffered from a very brutal treatment resulting in severe psychological damage. In line with that, Krystal in his work *Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body, and Society* studies the overcome of the survivors’ traumatization noting that trauma’s reaction

develops from anxiety to a progressive deprivation of "emotions and behavioral inhibition" and at this stage, interpreting certain feelings becomes more complicated. Moreover, he adds that survivors afterward become deluded and lost as well as unaware of what they feel or desire (qtd in Aygan, 2018: 18). Such conditions have been observed in Holocaust survivors and veterans as well in the previously mentioned Kardiner's findings.

It was not until the end of the Vietnam war that trauma was pushed back to the public arena due to the critical symptoms that appeared on veterans that later were classified as a chronic problem. Unlike what is popular about American heroism, fighters were collapsing psychologically. Most of the soldiers upon returning started to show abusive behaviors, including alcoholism and the excessive use of drugs to escape from their depressive memories and reality. They also dealt with the people surrounding them in an aggressive manner, apart from their degrading social situation of unemployment and homelessness.

1.1.2. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

The political escalations and minor conflicts that resulted from the Vietnam war have pushed some of the anti-war veterans to stand and voice their outrage about their catastrophic experience and the severe damage they suffered afterward through creating art and music. The purpose was to raise awareness about the effects of war and the long-lasting psychological injuries that it could cause. By the mid-70s the numbers of anti-war veterans have enormously increased and as a result, the American Psychiatric Association legitimately recognized trauma as a diagnosis and also included it with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in 1980.

The American Psychiatric Association in their third edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* defined PTSD's main aim as "the development of characteristic symptoms following a psychologically traumatic event that is generally outside the range of usual human experience." (Spitzer et al, 1980: 236). PTSD can be

initiated by different factors such as natural disasters, accidental man-made disasters, and deliberate man-made disasters (236). In addition, PTSD is also defined as a "part of a spectrum of reactions to trauma" (Morrison et al, 2003: 332-334) Morrison et al in their article *Relationships Between Trauma and Psychosis* suggest that the social/environmental, cognitive conditions and what the patients do after trauma all determine whether they will develop PTSD or not (338-345). Then, trauma can be regarded as a process where it starts from a traumatic incident, and later on according to the circumstances, one can develop further conditions such as PTSD. Cathy Caruth also believes that PTSD is a part of the trauma process in which it links the psychological aftermath and the traumatic event that one can encounter:

> As it is generally understood today, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder reflects the direct imposition on the mind of the unavoidable reality of horrific events, the taking over of the mind, psychically and neurobiologically, by an event that it cannot control. As such, PTSD seems to provide the most direct link between the psyche and external violence and to be the most destructive psychic disorder. (Caruth, 1996:135)

One can conclude and propose from the extract above that traumatic formation in any human can be divided orderly into three phases before reaching the level of the 'destructive psychic disorder', the first phase could be the traumatic event itself regardless of its kind and whether it is witnessed in a warzone or some other places. The first phase is more like the witnessing process, in which the mind processes and classifies the violent/traumatic event that the individual is witnessing. The second phase is where PTSD starts to appear, where the mind starts surrendering to the memories of the traumatic event. The final phase is the phase of the psychological struggle, where the severe psychological impacts of the traumatic incident start to appear. Caruth has described PTSD as the link between the traumatic event and psychological aftermath, and that justifies why PTSD is placed in the middle of the three phases supposed. PTSD is like a scale that measures the severity of the upcoming psychological damage and that is usually known by how often the memories are occurring to the patient and their severity (135).

There are several ways the re-experiencing of trauma can appear through, and what those ways altogether share is a 'recurrence' of the events that are caused by the PTSD. PTSD occurs when an unwelcomed memory such as the traumatic memory reappears in the present, sometimes it gets very intense to the point that the individual dissociates from reality, and "components of the event are relived and the individual behaves as though experiencing the event at that moment" (Spitzer et al, 1980: 236). The traumatic stress and its ability to dissociate individuals from their reality made theorists and scholars such as Ruth Leys and Ian Hacking suppose that PTSD is originally a "disorder of memory" (Leys, 2000: 2). Furthermore, PTSD is not only a disorder of memory, but it also could be a disorder of time because PTSD damages the person's experience with time and temporality in which the past is brought to the present and re-experienced once again.

In an updated edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* for the year 1987, the expansion of the diagnosis of trauma was noticed as they emphasized more the traumatic stressors rather than the personal experience. The updated edition assures that "in some cases the trauma may be learning about a serious threat or a harm to a close friend or relative, e.g., that one's child has been kidnapped, tortured, or killed." (1987: 247). In the latest edition of the same manual published in 2013, the depiction of trauma and PTSD is more inclusive and depictive unlike in the previous editions. The part about trauma was renamed "Trauma- and Stressor- Related Disorders" (265) and the list of the traumatic disorders came with a wider exposure than before such as "reactive attachment disorder, disinhibited social engagement disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, acute stress disorder, and adjustment disorder" (Phillips, 2015: 54). The new edition states that there are several ways to experience trauma:

1. Directly experiencing the traumatic event(s).
2. Witnessing, in person, the event(s) as it occurred to others.
3. Learning that the traumatic event(s) occurred to a close family member or close friend.
4. Experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic event(s). (271–272).

The manual also assures that the highest rates of trauma patients are recorded among those who returned from military combat (274). Although the new edition has classified several causes behind traumatic experiences, nevertheless, only a few causes have severe and long-term traumatic consequences such as extreme violence and rape.

PTSD is a very complex process that shows a difference from person to person, Judith Herman due to her experience with trauma patients has concluded that trauma is extraordinary and "traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life" (2015: 33). Standing on that, Herman also wanted to challenge the misunderstandings that stem from the original definitions of trauma, and she has gone far as to suggest a new diagnostic category of PTSD calling it 'complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder' or C-PTSD. C-PTSD shows and supplements PTSD as a "responses to trauma […] understood as a spectrum of conditions rather than a single disorder" (119). From the previous claims, one can learn that PTSD is a complex process and comes with several different definitions and it is even hard to be put under unified definition.

1.2. TRAUMA AND THEORY

Trauma has always been under intermittent development, and this development was dependent on the occurring events that left a traumatic effect on the people who experienced it. Trauma then, after its recognition by the American Psychiatric Association has gained a solid and considerable place among other theories. Furthermore, this recognition has permitted trauma to involve itself in plenty of social disciplines and as a result, the various horrific experiences of people have become classified according to trauma theory. As the studies of trauma have become more common today, trauma's limits are increasing gradually that trauma studies today are not only occurring in war, natural disasters, or abuse, but has extended to be a wider milieu. Firstly rooted in clinical medicine and firmly tied to psychology, trauma since 1990 has become more prevalent and classified under a wide variety of concepts due to the prominent theories of different scholars such as Cathy Caruth, Dominic LaCapra, Judith

Herman, and so forth. What is interesting is that those scholars were from different academic backgrounds such as history, psychiatry, sociology, and literature and each has analyzed and integrated trauma within their field of study shaping ground-breaking theories.

Freud as mentioned previously suggested that trauma is formed due to a psychological wound or damage rather than a physical one; in the modern sense, trauma was redefined as a reaction to a serious event causing psychological damage. The Slovenian scholar Slavoj Zizek has more general understanding of trauma. He defines it as a violent intervention of something extremely unexpected, "something" that the "subject" was not ready for at all (2011: 292). Zizek's definition of trauma is not merely general but it also de-categorizes both the cause traumatic event by calling it 'something' and also the 'subject' that is impacted by trauma. Both 'something' and 'subject' implicate an open-ended list of matters that can impact or be impacted by trauma, and that creates an infinite space for trauma to intervene in almost all the fields of study. After Zizek's stress on the ambiguous nature of trauma's cause, Judith Herman reassures that the causes behind a traumatic event are known and various such as "threats to life or bodily integrity, or personal encounter with violence or death" (2015: 33). Besides, Laura Brown together with Herman have worked on getting the attention of the pioneers in clinical psychology to recognize and determine the traumata that affect women and those affecting men. Brown and Herman highlighting the feminist aspects of trauma were very new and modern figures in the 90s. Both scholars called for challenging the male-centered expressions used in defining trauma, as the American Psychiatric Association defines stating that "the person has experienced an event that is outside the range of human experience" (1987: 121). Brown assures that what is regarded as the 'human experience' in defining trauma is set following standards of men of the dominant class and, further contends that war and genocide likewise are the work of males and the male-dominated culture, and traumatic events must be measured within human standards and no more (2004: 121). Such claims are rather so modern and unprecedented in the field of trauma studies of that time, pointing out a very critical side of the formation of trauma which is the experience and its categorization, where it is

thought wrong to limit trauma to wars, genocides and so, rather trauma must be generated upon human consideration rather than specific events. Because traumatic events sometimes could be gender-biased like wars and conflicts which are mostly initiated by a male-dominated act or decision, it is understood from her previous claims that Brown is seeking a more general and embracing definition of trauma that could include every situation or case where trauma could occur at. It seems that Brown's ideas are close to those of Zizek because Zizek prevents any identification or categorization when he defines trauma. The studies and perceptions of scholars such as Brown and Zizek show the rapid development of the concept of trauma and its inclusion in various disciplines and fields of study; in addition, they show us that the concept of trauma started to integrate and modernize copping with the modern principles and philosophies.

One of the key figures in the contemporary trauma theory is Cathy Caruth, who revisited the previous theories of Freud in her outstanding book *Unclaimed Experience* which later will be one of the most significant sources for trauma studies. Related to trauma, Caruth provides a slightly different interpretation regarding the nature of traumatic events by assuring that "Trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic event in which the response to the event occurs is often delayed" (1996: 11). Caruth further assures that the traumatic event is lived belatedly and not during the experience of this particular traumatic event: "the event is not assimilated or fully experienced at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it" (4). Unlike the former definitions, Caruth's definition of trauma tries to emphasize the significance of the suddenness and belatedness in experiencing a traumatic event. The individual while experiencing a traumatic event is unable to fully acknowledge or grasp what is going on because of the individual's unpreparedness for the sudden occurrence of the event. As a result, the suddenness of the traumatic event creates what Caruth called 'belatedness' or a delay in comprehending the traumatic event.

Likewise, the American scholar Dominic LaCapra claims that any traumatic event could hinder or numbs the human senses due to its severity. Therefore, the traumatic

experience cannot be fully comprehended or constructed until later when it reoccurs again (2016: 174). Therefore, understanding the process of the formation of the traumatic event also implies the concept of belatedness in this case.

1.2.1 Trauma and Memory

Memory plays a crucial role in the process of traumatization because memory is the unit responsible for keeping and preserving the information that the mind processes. Trauma is initiated depending on the re-occurring traumatic event that is recorded in memory. The scholars Bessel A. Van der Kolk and Onno van der Hart identify two important types of memory, the first is called the 'narrative' or 'normal' memory while the second is called the 'traumatic memory'. In their book *The intrusive past: The flexibility of memory and the engraving of trauma* Van der Hart and Van der Kolk define the two types of memory that they could identify suggesting that narrative memory is a social act and it significantly serves a social duty, in contrast, traumatic memory is bare of any social component, in which the patient does not experience any socializing activity and the traumatic memory is lived solitarily (1991: 163). It is understood from the definitions above that the traumatic memory is something that cannot be expressed by the patient. In other words, traumatic memory cannot be articulated while the narrative memory is articulable or conveyable due to its social nature. Both scholars further state that "what may most complicate the capacity to communicate about traumatic experiences is that memories of trauma may have no verbal (direct) component whatsoever [...] [They are organized] without any accompanying narrative about what happened" (287). Trauma situates itself in a very critical place in the patients' minds which makes them unable to express their traumatic feelings/memories verbally. The severity and anonymity of the traumatic event leave no chance for the individuals to express their experience verbally, while the events stored in the normal memory can be expressed and conveyed through words due to their social nature.

Many scholars and researchers have assumed that traumatic memories are processed by special mechanisms different than the mechanisms processing the non-

traumatic memories, and these different mechanisms sometimes cause the traumatic memories to be unreachable at a times (Edelstein et al., 2004: 331). Traumatic incidents are not something that the human mind is accustomed to, therefore, once the memory deals with an unusual event, like a traumatic incident, the memory treats this incident differently unlike the other normal memories. Freud, Breuer, and Janet were the first psychiatrists to emphasize that traumatic memories are distinctive and are processed differently than other normal memories. Besides, Janet was the first to be concerned with showing the differences between traumatic memory and normal memory. He assured that the memory system is the central place in the mind that receives and integrates experience in an automatic way with slight conscious attention. However, how the experiences are saved and integrated into the mental structure depends on the individual's subjective assessment of the events. Expected and familiar experiences can easily fit into memory while the frightening and violent might find difficulty in fitting or integrating into memory. As a result, the memory will be unable to keep the frightening memories and thus stores them in a different place using different mechanisms. Moreover, the traumatic memories are treated as a parasite and they become disconnected from the cognitive system which they are no longer subjected to the individual's voluntary control to remember (Brewin et al., 1996: 675). The traumatic memories that are not allowed to integrate with our mental structure may later evolve into psychological damage, such as PTSD. Thus, one can acknowledge that the traumatic memory is experienced in a non-verbal way and it is hard to express it verbally later on because it is present in the memory in fragmented form.

In line with that, Caruth also agrees that the traumatic memories are far from being narrated. They are non-verbal because the memory has no direct access to them at any time. Caruth further claims that trauma

> is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available. This truth, in its delayed appearance and its address, cannot be linked only to what is known, but to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language. (1996: 4)

Caruth in her claim above assures that traumatic memory is too severe to be comprehended by knowledge or to be expressed by language and actions. Trauma is mostly looked at as an inner conflict that is preserved only inside the human mind, due to the impossibility of expressing it or conveying its feelings to others, whether through language or any other senses. The inaccessible traumatic memories could cause what can be called a 'Crisis of truth' in which the truth is neither reached nor understood. The traumatic incident that is hindered from the memory must be expressed clearly. Caruth proposes that literature could be the best milieu where traumatic incidents could be described even slightly. Caruth claims that literature has a very strong and conveying testimonial power that can best fit for describing trauma; not only that, but she also emphasizes the importance of the imaginative spirit of literature and that the traumatic experience can be conveyed through the imageries and imagination that literature provides in its narrative (4). Literature through fiction has handled many bewildering and shocking scenes but expressing trauma needs more professional writing that can convey this part as it is uneasy to express the traumatic incidents in words due to their unusual formation and complexity.

1.2.2 Healing Trauma

Since trauma became well-known among scholars, they have been trying to reduce its impacts on the patients ever since. Many scholars have suggested that patients must be strong and confront their traumatic memories whenever they appear. However, other scholars seem to have a different way to overcome trauma and its long-lasting damage. Some scholars suggested that minimal distortions in the trauma event would help to decrease the power and the damage of trauma. Furthermore, Santner in his *History Beyond the Pleasure Principle* introduces the term "narrative fetishism" as "the construction and deployment of a narrative consciously or unconsciously designed to expunge the traces of trauma or loss that called that narrative into being in the first place" (2022: 144). Then, narrative fetishism in its nature can be related to Freud's "work of mourning" (144) as both function as a way of response to loss or to a past event that is recurring in the mind and refuses to go away due to its traumatic nature.

The work of mourning functions through integrating and elaborating the reality of trauma or loss by constantly and repeatedly remembering it in symbolic or dialogic doses (144). So the narrative fetishism is a way of resituating the traumatic loss in another place where patients do not have to mourn for it, it is a process of figuring out and getting accustomed to the loss; moreover, Santner assures that the narrative fetishism could protect from any "posttraumatic damage" (144). Commenting on that, LaCapra believes that the concepts of 'narrative fetishism' and the 'work of mourn' are "fetishized and totalizing narratives that deny the trauma that called them into existence by harmonizing events, and often recuperating the past in terms of uplifting messages or optimistic, self-serving scenarios" (2014: 78). Standing on the previous extract, it seems that LaCapra does not agree with the idea of tricking the mind or emotions as the function of both concepts above is to make the individual pretends that he or she was never touched by trauma or never lived through any traumatic incident. Technically, the previously mentioned ways of avoiding damage from trauma could assist the severe case to avoid further damage. The only issue could be the unknown consequences of following such techniques and their long-term impact on the traumatic individuals.

Other scholars have also supposed other ways and techniques that one can reduce the impact of trauma, although Herman believes that the "resolution of the trauma is never final and recovery is never complete" (1998: 211). There are still some ways that guarantee recovery or a partial recovery at least. The dissociation, for instance, suggests splitting the original event from the picture of the very same event drawn in mind so that the emotions, senses, and images related to both real and imaginative events get spitted from each other as well (Van der Kolk , 2014: 66). The separation or dissociation between the real event and the one drawn inside the individual's mind can provide more resilience regarding the severity of the event, by which in this way the separation will give the individual the freedom to re-imagining and reconstruct the real event in their mind with less severity.

Regarding the recovery from trauma, there have been many claims that literature and arts could be one of the crucial reasons behind the traumatic recovery. In her article

Moving Beyond the Examination of History Sabra suggests that "Literature as a manageable alternative to a reality etched by violence and chaos; writing as a way of overcoming personal and collective trauma: there are highly-evident features of post-independence Algerian literature" (qtd. in Karahasan, 2013: 54). Ostensibly, that does not only fall under the Algerian literature's context, but it is also a measure for other literatures around the globe. Literature has always conveyed images of grief and shock, especially in the years following the world wars, therefore, literature can similarly convey the traumatic images and receding their weight and damage to the people suffering from them. It can be a source of empowerment for people to break the silence and start to talk about their traumatic experiences, and that will help them gradually to put their experiences into words and eventually overcome a great part of the damage. On the same line, Derrida believes that when the victims can understand and comprehend the criminal and as soon they agree, speak or contact with the criminal, a process of reconciliation is achieved (2001: 49). The process of reconciliation between the victim and the criminal could significantly reduce any possible damage that could be caused by PTSD. Jacques Derrida also suggests that the victim's understanding of the criminal could be reached in several ways, and one of those ways is literature. His claim aims the different parties to get involved in dialogue which means a sort of indirect forgiveness, and literature serves as a mediator in this process because it "opens a path towards reconciliation through a common language and dialogue" (Karahasan, 2013: 46). Then, literature is thought to be important in resolving traumatic complexities due to what it offers from a vision into the world in which it makes people aware of the multiplicity of opinions and events as well as the perceptions existing in their society. Moreover, reading common literature is also an attempt towards speaking the same language and paving the way for dialogue and reconciliation.

Herman also emphasizes the importance of 'comprehension' to reduce the traumatic damage, believing that one can use her/his own intellectual and cognitive abilities to understand and absorb the traumatic incident they have been through. She further elaborates that during the remembrance stage when the traumatic memories are visiting constantly, the trauma survivors must try their best to tell their story and that

will assist in the reconstruction and relocation of the traumatic memories that they can fit into together with the narrative memory making the survivors able to transfer their traumatic experience verbally. Although the first attempt to narrate the traumatic story might be "wordless and static" (2015: 175), but through constant repetition and with time one can overcome this issue. When the trauma survivors succeed in turning the traumatic memory into the narrative section, they will feel more comfortable in articulating their sensations, feelings and emotions, in other words, they will be able to speak the unspeakable (1992: 175). The previous claims sound to be fundamental and functional, yet the possibility of whether all survivors will be able to relocate the traumatic memories is questionable due to the uneven scale of damage and severity that the traumatic event could cause.

Agreeing with the abovementioned scholars who emphasized the significance of putting traumatic experience into words or expressions to comprehend the event and heal from it, the narration is very crucial in trauma theory. However, they all share a single point stressing that trauma hinders narratives and makes survivors constrained from telling their experiences. In contrast, no one can deny the existence of people having the ability to discuss and talk about their traumatic experiences openly and speak the unspeakable. Herman's suggestions regarding her theory on the traumatic memories together with the other scholars who shared the same view were exposed to heavy criticism lately. McNally in his book *Remembering Trauma* challenges the previously mentioned views. Unlike Herman, Van der Kolk , and Caruth's claims that trauma is unexpressive, McNally contends that trauma does not hinder the traumatic memories from being desirably memorable and verbally expressible. Standing on documentation and testimonies of the Holocaust survivors, McNally denies that traumatic memories are unexpressive. Replying to the previous assertions McNally elucidates three major points:

> First, people remember horrific experiences all too well. Victims are seldom incapable of remembering their trauma. Second, people sometimes do not think about disturbing events for long periods of time, only to be reminded of them later. However, events that are experienced as overwhelmingly

> traumatic at the time of their occurrence rarely slip from awareness. Third, there is no reason to postulate a special mechanism of repression or dissociation to explain why people may not think about disturbing experiences for long periods. A failure to think about something does not entail an inability to remember it. (2005: 2)

The extract above shows an assertive claim that traumatic memory is dealt with like any other normal memory that the survivors live through. Moreover, citing specialists such as Olio and Brown, McNally adds that the survivors could refuse to talk about their traumatic experience as a way of keeping on their privacy and that does not count as any form of inability or loss of control of their memory. As he reemphasizes the possible accessibility to traumatic memory as well as the ability of survivors to transfer them into narrative to heal themselves: "[narrating trauma] enables survivors to gain more control over the traces left by trauma […] [and] defuses traumatic memory […] establishing more control over their recalling, and helping the survivor to remark a self." (2). The issue with the previous claims is that they are general and it seems that only the part of survivors who were able to remember and socialize the traumatic memory are considered ignoring those who had amnesia.

Balaev in his book *Contemporary Approaches in Trauma Theory* disagrees with the Caruthan conceptualization of traumatic memory. Balaev conducts his research on the capability of literature and language in conveying the traumatic and the extreme incidents (2014: 5). Meanwhile, other scholars agree with him such as Stampfl who believes that the unspeakableness of trauma is something temporary and is a process that paves the way for the verbal expression of trauma (2014: 16). Ruth Leys in her book *Trauma: A Genealogy*, asserts that concepts and theories that were put by both Caruth and Van der Kolk are false as she confronted them with salient criticism. Lays believes that the processes suggested by Caruth and Van der Kolk of recalling traumatic memories and transferring them to narrative through repeating and other stressing ways would significantly harm those memories and distort them (2000: 253). Then, the

process of transferring traumatic memories into narrative would affect these memories and causes loss in memory when remembering the traumatic incident.

After viewing the various theories and definitions suggested above by different scholars, it is understood that it is so challenging to find a unified definition of the nature of trauma. Moreover, among all those conceptualizations and theories, it is also difficult to settle on one definition as a model for all. Although there are some points that scholars do not agree upon through criticizing each other, they do also agree on many other points. Healing from a traumatic incident is neither easy nor something that everyone can hold on and heal from as the healing process and ability differs from one person to another. The issue with the scholars above is that each one of them has conducted studies and built theories depending on one specific faction of survivors such as those of the Holocaust and so, instead there could have been one study that is built on a general standard considering all of the cases where trauma is found. In the literary contest, most of the plays where trauma exists contain belated trauma that returns in form of inevitable reputations and those repetitions do not heal or go away unless they are worked out.

1.2.2.1 Acting Out and Working Through

Considering the theoretical approaches of trauma in literature, a differentiation is often made between ‘acting out’ and ‘working through’ two terms based on Freud’s psychoanalysis that was developed by modern critics such as Dominik LaCapra. The traumatized person who is acting out means that he/she has not lived long with trauma to the point of emotional damage. Survivors who are acting out often experience re-occurring images of their traumatic incident either through hallucinations and flashbacks or dreams and is an unconscious attempt by the mind to cope with the severity of the traumatic event. As a form of healing from trauma, it is believed that a traumatic person must try to “work through” the trauma (2014: 65).

Acting out can be manifested in different ways such as consisting a re-experience of the traumatic event through dreams or flashbacks and mostly hallucinations as we will see in one of the plays that will be analyzed in this thesis. LaCapra, furthermore, describes the condition of acting out as

> fidelity to trauma and its victims, the feeling, especially pronounced in certain victims, that there is something in the repetition of the past – say, in a nightmare – that amounts to the dedication or fidelity to lost loved ones and is a kind of memorial that is not based on suppression or oblivion. (2014: 144)

Acting out is a sort of appreciation and 'fidelity' to the loved ones who were lost and their memories were embedded in the survivors' minds as a trauma. One more form that can be regarded as acting out is developing multiple identities and that will lead them to possible heal from trauma. The process of acting out has always been debated among scholars and critics and whether past trauma can be acted out or worked through. What is certain is that both of working out and acting through are an overlapping operations that their main objective is to elevate the trauma survivors to the point of recovery or healing from the traumatic memories chasing them.

Working through, contrary to acting out's unconscious nature, has a conscious and cognitive processing of traumatic incidents. Working through unfolds the traumatic events relieving the survivors, and that will help survivors to overcome the damaging outcomes of trauma. The process of working through also involves the comprehension, reflecting and being aware of the traumatic happenings. In this way, the survivors can familiarize themselves and get accustomed to the trauma and live with it. LaCapra proposes that working through is a sort of a "countervailing force" in which the survivors can form a significant distance from trauma that will help in distinguishing the past, present and future (144-145).

Working through is a functional conscious process that resembles the voyage of the survivors towards healing from their long-lasting suffering of trauma. The previous

concepts of healing from trauma all fall into this category, a category of working through which is the effort spent by the survivors towards healing. LaCapra has put an interesting point regarding working through describing it as the driving force towards balance or countervailing. It is a way of seeking justice from the traumatic torture (144-145). Acting out and working through can be likened to an empty mold where the survivors can fill their capabilities and strategies in resisting trauma. Acting out is molded differently depending on the survivor, for some acting out could be achieved via dreams, others by flashbacks or hallucinations. The base for working through and acting out was initiated due to the war trauma cases recorded during the world wars, simultaneously, both concepts have transferred to the field of literature as a way of tracking trauma of the characters within the plays mostly to determine whether the character is healing from trauma or not. When a survivor can go back to trauma and turn it into narrative without missing too many details, here the main and the most fundamental goal of working through is achieved. There might be scholars who disagree with the possibility of turning traumatic experience into a narrative; however, working through covers not only this way, but handful other ways of de-traumatization.

With its various definitions, everybody could agree that trauma stems from an unusual tragic event that has long-lasting psychological damage. Trauma also can function differently according to the nature of the traumatic event and the individuals who faced it. Scholars and theorists were not arguing about how severe or what the nature of the traumatic event; rather they were more interested in discussing the nature of trauma itself and its functioning methods. The previous chapter handled many theories regarding trauma and its functions and those of Caruth were the most interesting due to her revolutionary and modern definitions that are also based on older theories such as those of Freud. As the emphasis is on war trauma in this thesis, it would worth to mention the importance of the two world wars in elevating and developing the concept of trauma from only a probable condition into a whole field of study that intervenes in many of the social sciences studies. The Vietnam war was the war that constructed the modern concepts of trauma and pushed both theorists and clinical psychiatrists to further study trauma.

With the constant appearance of traumatic incidents in the world, trauma likewise was constantly developing. Major elements in the traumatization process such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a concept that describes the aftermath of a traumatic event, resembling the way through which the traumatic incident reappears such as dreams, flashbacks, and hallucinations, were discovered. Trauma studies went further to tackle subjects such as memory and the cognitive system. Moreover, the concept of trauma studies was peaking when theorists were arguing and assuming ways and methods for treating trauma and its recurrent damage. It seems that trauma is being proved as a fact day by day as long as new tragic events are occurring. lately, the war in Ukraine may expose to us new horizons regarding the trauma process and its formation as well as healing. Trauma then, can be called a renewable concept that is flexible towards developments and variation, which means that there is a lot to be discovered about trauma, a lot of unknown incidents to the point that we try to discover them in literature before their presence in reality.

CHAPTER II

2. TRAUMA, LITERATURE AND WAR

This chapter investigates the relationship between trauma and literature emphasizing the significance of theatre and its representation of trauma. Trauma has never been easy to neither represent nor comprehend. Therefore, the capability of literature in both representing and giving a comprehensive insight into the traumatic story will be tested in this chapter focusing on theatre. Trauma later will be examined within the scope of the verbatim theater measuring the possibility of the accurate representation of trauma within a verbatim play.

2.1. TRAUMATIC REPRESENTATION IN LITERATURE

Literature reflects almost all of the human phenomena and relates them to reality through simple and brilliant artistic mediums. Likewise, trauma interferes in all human matters and exists in every challenge that humans endure. Therefore, the concept of trauma was repeatedly theorized by the scientific fields but only very lately it gained credence and was theorized by the literary stream. Within a short time, trauma has raised its name in the literary milieu. Indeed, behind that recognition of trauma within the literary fields stand a collective effort of scholars and theorists such as Cathy Caruth and Shushana Felman who have worked enormously to achieve this goal. As the world is constantly evolving, so is literature; a new incident, and events that could include traumatic ones which literature will be representing and preserving in form of historical narratives including novels. Regarding novels and trauma, Michelle Balaev suggests that the traumatic novel shows how the attachments between self and others get damaged by tackling essential opinions about social relationships and moral laws that are connected to multiple environments. Besides, novels demonstrate the detachments between the self and others by describing the place where the traumatic incident took place because the psychical place provides information about the culture and history embedded in the

scenes and landscapes as it familiarizes the readers with the character's identity and makes them comprehend the nature of the traumatic incident (2014: 9).

English poetry has showed its distinctive role in not only representing trauma but also in functioning as a way of recovery through which poets who were deployed to war could express their trauma by writing poems. Poets such as Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and Rupert Brooke have documented their military experience in their poetry and that allowed them to express their trauma and demonstrate its horror as a testimony to their readers. Poetry for being verbally expressed would function better as a way of recovery than a way of demonstrating trauma because poetry could be the only way that trauma survivors can use to verbally express their trauma.

Since its beginning, trauma has been experienced in various forms and ways such as on the battlefield or even in human relationships, and literature has the sufficient ability to represent those various forms and settings of trauma appearance. The expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden to earth in the Quranic and Biblical narratives reflects the shock and heartbreaking of both Adam and Eve that left them in a state of trauma-like depression. Both were punished for eating from the forbidden fruit, then afterward they were sent to earth from heaven and found themselves naked. It is known that Adam has wept for sixty years due to the psychological and physical damage (trauma) he experienced (Kathir, 2021: 30). Those scenes of the expulsion of Adam and Eve all are portrayed in John Milton's *Paradise Lost* so vividly that could it be considered as one of the first literary works that reflected biblical trauma.

Although most trauma theorists have emphasized the significance of putting trauma into narration as many survivors feel the necessity of verbalizing it, other scholars in contrast suggest that words are not able to convey the reality of the traumatic event. Together with the dilemma that the survivors feel regarding verbalizing trauma, scholars and even psychoanalysts have also been involved in long-lasting debates in this regard negotiating the possibility of turning trauma into a narrative. While some

survivors see that keeping the traumatic experience untold gives them a sort of privacy and respect, others feel more enthusiastic about sharing their experiences to get support and to let others know about the incident that they can avoid in the future. After the Second World War and due to the disastrous events that took place back then, the public wondered whether literature was appropriate in expressing and portraying the suffering and despair that people felt. After the Second World War, many literary works appeared and reflected the scenes of destruction and bloodshed during the Second World War. Those literary works were mostly authored by returning soldiers who have eye-witnessed those bewildering scenes from the battlefield. Thus, such literary works were written as an attempt of verbalizing trauma and turning it into narrative by the author, and also those literary works could function as testimonial material that makes readers witness the traumatization process of the author. Furthermore, the readers themselves after reading those literary works will have learned how to deal with and treat their traumata. Therefore, post-Second World War literary works can embody the recovery of the readers from their trauma.

Trauma has a very paradoxical relationship with interdisciplinary studies. Caruth invocates that the main role that literature can play is enhancing "our ability to listen through the departures we have all taken from ourselves" (1996: 11), and literature is one of the best ways to endure the 'departures we have all taken from ourselves'. Those departures represent the traumatic scenes that are embedded in the survivors' mind and the best way to release and speak about them is through literature. The reason why literature has always been marked as a sufficient way that survivors can speak the unspeakable is due to its various modes of expression that are not ordinary and sometimes exceed the understanding of the human.

In her *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History,* Cathy Caruth in further explanation of traumatic events and belated experiences uses literature and literary interpretations as proof of realistic situations. Arguing that literature widens our horizons and makes us witness situations that we are not aware of and have not encountered before, it enriches our experience and directs our attention to the others'

experiences that would have otherwise stayed unknown and unspoken (1996: 4). Indeed, some traumatic incidents stuck in the memory cannot be transparently described, but such dilemmatic experiences can be described in different ways that are close to their unspoken realistic description by using the medium of literature.

In the opening of her previously mentioned book, Caruth highlights Freud's use of literary texts such as the story of Tasso in breaking down and analyzing the concept of traumatic repetition in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Caruth explains the role of literature and what it reveals to Freud through Tasso's story concluding that

> trauma seems to be much more than a pathology, or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available. (1996: 4)

Then, trauma is more than an event that leaves possible damage or a psychological case, it is rather an embodiment and elaboration for unspeakable words indicating inexpressible situations. Through literature, one can understand trauma more whether it was self-trauma or collective trauma. The deep expressive ability of literature grants it more credence in comprehending and perhaps treating the traumatic people from their recurring trauma. Literature in some cases can express spiritual feelings, unlike other disciplines.

The literary critics Felman and Laub agree partially with literature's therapeutic role in trauma, yet approach it differently. In their book *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, they emphasize the significance of testimony as an act of witnessing traumatic events. Their book is a response to the ongoing traumatic events in history, such as the trauma of the Second World War and the Holocaust. The book also investigates the literary production that responded to those traumata. The traumatic past is radically unknown and unfinished; however, its impact continues to the present and it even could surpass our understanding and consciousness. Therefore, in the

book *Testimony* Felman and Laub claim that the trauma that survivors lived in the past cannot recover, nor cure, rather and as a substitute, we can and we must listen to the trauma of the survivors, and through listening, we can experience the trauma they lived and survive it ourselves (1997: 40).

Listening to others' trauma would make us comprehend what those people have been through, and as a result, by resorting to our comprehension of their situation, we can help them to integrate better into our society. The testimonial language is inevitably the language of literature; it differs from any other form of language or speech and when narrating a testimony, the speakers get into a unique and tough position where they have to be very accurate and expressive in their description of the traumatic event. Moreover, testimony constitutes a heavy responsibility which makes the witnesses take the burden of what they say and claim. Testimony then changes the linguistic styles and the attitude of the witnesses due to the responsibility it implies to them.

Unlike Caruth and Felman, Theodore W. Adorno denies the aestheticizing and the trivialization of awful traumatic events by reflecting them in literature. Adorno in "Trying to Understand *Endgame*" sheds light on the tremendous challenges that art faces in representing literature. He contends that literature representing the trauma of violence has no meaning as long as those who cause pain to others exist. Furthermore, he states that art tries to squeeze out the pleasure from horrendous scenes that have serious traumatic consequences, concluding that art has done injustice to trauma victims (1982: 87-88).

The representation of the traumatic events via the artistic and literary language could have the risks of failing in accurately representing the experience or sensationalizing it. In addition, using literature to represent trauma could impose some indifference or disrespect towards the suffering. Regarding Adorno, Mukadder explicates that "according to Adorno, in every work of art lies the potential to give pleasure and alleviate the horror of the event" (2010: 35). Therefore, due to the sensitivity of such events, Adorno finds the literary representation of them a bit risky.

Agreeing with Adorno, Wyschogrod finds literary representation of the Holocaust inappropriate as he claims that "[art] transforms suffering into a catharsis for which people are willing to pay money to experience […] Therefore, art is pleasure even if the raw materials it works with are not […] transform the Holocaust into art […] result in poor art" (1975: 68). Unlike Caruth, Felman and Laub, Adorno and Wyschogrod seem to stand against the idea of representing trauma in literature because they both share the point that literature is made for pleasure, and the traumatic events are so serious to be handled within a literary or artistic context.

Trauma and literature have always been related to each other as the relationship between trauma and narrative is as long as the history of trauma itself. Meanwhile, literature has always been the medium where traumatic incidents are reflected due to literature's strong expressive nature, and that makes it easy to conclude that it is a "widely accepted therapeutic truth that the stories we tell about the catastrophes that beset us – both individual and collective – can be crucial tools for recovery." (Pederson, 2018: 97). Literature according to the previously mentioned scholars is interpreted as a cure or recovery in the context of trauma. Others like Geoffrey Hartman, who argues that literature could be the best way to "read the wound" of the trauma survivors, furthermore puts the question of whether trauma "can only be reclaimed by literary knowledge" (1996: 641). Then, it is understood that the critics and scholars who encourage the intervention of literature within trauma are divided into two parts, the first part looks at literature as a therapeutic tool that assists trauma survivors to overcome their trauma and recover from it. The other part thinks that literature could contribute to understanding trauma and make people comprehend it more easily.

Although literature and trauma could be viewed as associated terms, simultaneously there are some issues that problematize the theories of critics and scholars that associate literature with trauma. Kansteiner, rejecting the notion that trauma can be re-experienced through testimony, claims that there is an unidentified area between trauma and its representation, or "between trauma and entertainment" (2004: 195). Therefore, the concept of transmissibility of trauma or experiencing trauma

through reading texts is as Gibbs contends "deeply problematic" because simply what is written and represented in the text that describes trauma is bound to change according to the readers' disposition (2014: 28). Relying on Gibbs' claim, texts that represent trauma cannot be always a way towards comprehending trauma because of the readers' different opinions and perceptions.

2.2. TRAUMA, THEATRE, AND WAR

2.2.1 Staging Trauma

Scholars have always posited a connection between trauma and theatre because theatre is regarded as one of the best places to interpret attitudes through not only language but the body. In theatre, the body is used as a voice that speaks for trauma after it has been approved that expressing trauma fails if done linguistically. During the linguistic fail of trauma and silence on the stage, the audience observes and 'hears' the countermelodies and Post-Traumatic echoes through the movement of the character's body. Dramatists such as Sarah Kane, Samuel Beckett, and Bertolt Brecht always generate a traumatic atmosphere in their plays. With such playwrights, re-enactments such as fast heartbeats, broken laughter, severe scars appearing on the body and so reveal the traumatic state of the individuals.

The body on the stage resembles a resistance and an objection against trauma as well as a method of recovery. When a specific play that handles a character of traumatic past is performed, the very traumatic past of this character becomes present on the stage and the audience has to engage whether as a conscious witness or an unwitting spectator. Duggan and Mick Wallis argue that theatrical performance can function as a "privileged site for the exploration of trauma" (2011: 1). They also assure that due to trauma's spread among the different disciplines and fields of studies, it became a "route" from "which to examine cultural issues of experience, memory, the body, and representation…especially in the fields of history, literature, cultural studies, and fine arts" (1). Theatre with its liveliness can highlight several aspects of trauma that readers

cannot comprehend. Being performed with customs utilizing different ways to integrate the audience within the performance atmosphere, theatrical performance embodies and portrays trauma and traumatic induvial. Unlike texts that talk about trauma, theatre provides a physical re-experience of trauma and also a space to evaluate and comprehend the traumatic incident. The audience then, not only witnesses trauma but also shares it with the victims on the stage.

Patrick Duggan in his book *Trauma and Tragedy* investigates to which extent theatrical performance can represent the unpresentable (2018: 8), highlighting how the representations of trauma in theatre can be achieved to comprehend trauma. Moreover, Christina Wald's *Performance Maladies in Contemporary Anglophone Drama* is another book that highlights trauma from a cultural scope. Wald's book is concerned with trauma related to sexual abuse and domestic violence; it discusses how some contemporary plays embrace concepts of melancholia, hysteria, and trauma. Both of the critics mentioned above agree that there is a mutual relationship between trauma and performance. Duggan in his above-mentioned book assures that "theatre, more than any other art form, is perfectly placed to attempt a dialogue with, and even a representation of trauma" (8). Agreeing with Duggan, Trezise and Wake also assure that "performance studies as a lens for trauma, trauma studies as a lens for performance" (2014: 13).

After interpreting the claims made by the previously mentioned critics, we can find that all of them agree on one crucial point which is that trauma and theatre are closely associated with each other. Therefore, it is worth asking what kind of association brings trauma and theatre together? Aristotle has constructed the base concepts for every tragedy, and one of those concepts is imitation or mimesis. Imitation can both be found in theatrical performance and the process of traumatization. After the traumatic incident, a recurring imitation of the original event haunts the victim. Duggan focusing on the common aspects between theatre and trauma claims that the repetition after the traumatic event "amount to an internal mimetic, representational restaging of the trauma event" (5). Therefore, the re-enactments of trauma are both acted upon and watched by the experiencer. Trauma and theatre are parallel in their functioning, and that makes

them relatable and integrative. Representing a traumatic event on stage would be as much actual as of the represented repetition of trauma inside the individual's head. Theatre exposes some aspects of trauma that cannot be reached by any other form of art.

2.2.2. Witnessing War Trauma: Verbatim Theatre

The beginning of the twenty-first and the twentieth century was marked by a series of political conflicts, wars, catastrophes, and terrorism that in their turn have shaped our contemporary history. Testimony has also emerged as an early response to traumatic events because it gives a voice to those who are suffering due to their trauma. Gilmore notices that due to the emergence of several testimonial narratives, a "culture of testimony" (2018: 2) has been formed in the era. Moreover, due to the popularity of testimonial narratives, the concept has developed and spread to too many disciplines.

In the last two decades, the concept of war has significantly developed from a traditional concept that presented clearly defined state conflict between two clear combatants to a new concept where the laws of war are no more significant with a formless conflict. An example of the latest concept of war and conflict is terrorism and civil wars. The second concept of war itself led to the contemporary understanding of war trauma and as a result the emergence of testimony. Documentary plays or verbatim plays are the bastion of testimony in contemporary theatre. Both testimony and contemporary theater do not come together unless they are linked to trauma. Julia Boll in her book *The New War Plays* explains the association between trauma, testimony, and contemporary theater suggesting that

> it is easier to see testimony linked with trauma theory and trauma culture, since both rely strongly on testimonial evidence and the witnessing of the act of testifying. Therefore, it appears a natural development that the war traumata of soldiers and civilians inside and on the periphery of the war zone should find an adequate means of representation in the documentary dramatic mode. (2013: 80).

The theatre field needed a new movement in tandem with the need to express and voice the suffering of the victims of war. Therefore, new forms of theatrical performances have emerged that are based on interviews with the victims of wars themselves. This later was called documentary theatre or verbatim theatre. Verbatim theatre offers a precise description of traumatic events, word-by-word description, and testimony. It can be noticed that verbatim theatre, standing on trauma critics, can be regarded as a form of recovery or comprehension of the victim's trauma due to its clear interpretation of the traumatic events.

According to Richard Norton Taylor, the aim of the verbatim plays is "to uncover and establish the most accurate version of events" (qtd in Hamond & Steward, 2012: 114). Will Hammond and Dan Steward in *Verbatim: Contemporary Documentary* elaborate on the term and the way of creating verbatim plays assuring that the term verbatim means the source of the text spoken during the performance. The words of the real people are recorded after being interviewed and then transferred by the dramatist into a script after the research and editing process. Dramatists could also resort to existing official records from the archives to utilize them in the play production process. After all of the sources and transcripts are ready, the dramatist rearranges and re-contextualizes the transcript and brings it to a dramatic form. Finally, actors are assigned to play the role of the real individuals in the play (9).

Literature has always been in close connection with trauma, theatre likewise is thought to be the best medium in which trauma can be represented. Moreover, verbatim theatre transparently reflects trauma and helps both victims and spectators to comprehend the traumatic event. It also represents what is unpresentable and unspeakable in form of theatrical performance.

CHAPTER III

3. TRAUMA'S FORMATION AND REPRESENTATION IN GREGORY BURKE'S *BLACK WATCH*

This chapter will provide a traumatic reading of Gregory Burke's *Black Watch*, a quasi-verbatim play that represents the suffering of group of soldiers in Iraq reflecting the unstable attitudes and their trauma formation, touching upon its function as a way to demonstrate traumatic testimony and make the audience witness trauma-like reality. The characters of the play will be interpreted as traumatic characters attributing to the reasons. Furthermore, the role of wrong politics is also emphasized with its turn in creating public trauma.

Born in 1968 to a Fife family in Scotland, a family that had a long and continuous history in the recruitment of its men in the British armed forces, Gregory Burke was the playwright to write about the story of the Black Watch regiment. He has always been interested in the catastrophic performances, particularly the extremism of their language and the horrific images that are implied by those performances. Burke believes that such scenes can get the audience to be more aware and knowledgeable about the real situation that the victims lived, which is achieved when the audiences' emotions are disturbed by what they have witnessed on the stage. Burke's first play *Gagarin Way* carried a political theme that portrays some political changes that happened in Scotland. He also wrote *Straits* which similarly carried an apolitical theme; however, Burke's most celebrated play is *Black Watch.* At the beginning of his career, Burke was curious about many events happening in his surroundings and that made him feel that there are too many unanswered questions. Most of Burke's questions were revolving around the political situation that Scotland was living during the war on Iraq. Therefore, Burke decided to concentrate his writing on a contemporary and current issue of his time which is the situation of the recruited soldiers that were deployed to Iraq as a substitute to the American troops in Basra amid questions about the role of those soldiers in such war.

Burke then perceived that it is the time to offer the opportunity to the soldiers of the Black Watch regiment to express themselves and their perception of what the British government has gotten them into. He resorted to the verbatim theatre that is based on real interviews to portray the reality of what this regiment has faced during their harsh experience in war. Burke also wanted to stage this play not only for the public but also for the families and relatives of the soldiers who served in this regiment. He then wanted to create a piece of art that reflects a reality that concerns the whole society in Scotland without neither beautifying nor softening the events that he recorded through his interviews with the real soldiers from the Black Watch regiment.

The play *Black Watch* is one of the most influential and reflective productions by the National Theatre of Scotland. It tells the story of the iconic and historical regiment Black Watch. It was directed by John Tiffany and first performed in August 2006. *Black Watch* tells the story of a group of soldiers in the Scottish Black Watch regiment who were sent for service in Iraq following the notorious invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the USA and its allies including the UK. The invasion of Iraq started when the USA's president back then George Bush and UK's prime minister Tony Blair justified and approved the invasion of Iraq standing on a statement released by the United Nations Security Council stating that Iraq must comply with the disbarment from weapons of mass destruction. Despite the clear evidence showing that Iraq has no such weapons as claimed and also amid the rejection and condemnation of the international community against any aggression on Iraq, the US, UK, and their allies invaded Iraq on 20 March 2003. Later on, it became clear that the reason behind the invasion of Iraq is pure imperialistic which is to control the oil of the county.

Although it is based in the south of Iraq in Basra city, the Black Watch regiment was relocated to another district near Fallujah known as the triangle of death. During the day of this redeployment, three Black Watch soldiers together with their Iraqi interpreter were killed in a suicide bomb attack. The play *Black Watch* mostly revolves around this event but it also shows several aspects of the lives of soldiers and their struggles. The play not only demonstrates the soldiers' living conditions and their struggle with the

insurgency on the battlefield, but it also shows the moments when they are being interviewed by the writer to prepare for the production.

The events in the play takes place in a camp called Camp Dogwood near the center of Babylon Governorate in Iraq in 2004. The main characters are Cammy, Granty, Stewarty, Writer and other characters that appear at specific situations such as Sergeant and Officer. The play has another setting which is the pub where the real soldiers of the Black Watch are interviewed at. The two settings of Camp Dogwood and the pub shift throughout the play, when a soldier answers a question the setting shifts to the battlefield setting at Dogwood to portray what the soldier has described. The play contains twenty parts or scenes each titled different according to the events that are going to take place, for example, pub parts contains the interviews that are conducted with the soldiers. Throughout the play at Dogwood, the regiment faces hard times to defend their camp against ambushes and bomb attacks. The settings usually shift by music or a sudden explosion as the stage directions states. The play also demonstrates the soldier's thoughts about the army and the political game that they fell into. The final event in the play which is the major event when three soldiers and an interpreter are killed by a suicide bomber.

Black Watch came at a time when other plays such as David Hare's *Stuff Happens* another verbatim play that provides a collection of viewpoints of politicians about the Iraq war were being produced. Similarly, another playwright Simon Stephens is also famous for his play *Motortown* which reflects the life of a returning soldier who carried violent events in his hometown due to war trauma. *Black Watch* also reflects the trauma of the working class who were compelled to serve in the military due to their financial status. The trauma in *Black Watch* is caused by not only the violence witnessed by the soldiers but by the government itself that deployed those soldiers to a dangerous and unknown place amid a disastrous foreign policy. In addition, the soldiers in the play appear to have been traumatized already due to their social background and what they have effaced from life challenges as most of them are coming from working class

The Black Watch was the first British regiment deployed in Iraq to an unprecedented and demanding environment. During a period of high reduction in the military budget, soldiers were asked to fight with very limited support. The Black Watch soldiers are "eight hundred Scottish soldiers […] replacing four thousand American marines" (Burke, 2010: 9). This shows the government and its political policy as the main reason behind the agony and torture that the soldier's lived on the battlefield. The play portrays Gregory Burke's interviewing ex-soldiers and uses the information he collects to control the narrative and form to perform the soldiers' experience and to express their complex and problematized perspective.

3.1 TRACKING TRAUMA IN *BLACK WATCH*

The social and economic background of the soldiers serving in the regiment is not sufficient to let the soldiers enjoy their life back home; therefore, most of them decided to get into the military due to financial problems. From the soldiers' conversations with each other, how their situation could have been back home can be understood. When any of the regiment soldiers is intending to go back home, he always gets demotivated by his friends about how his will is going to be there, miserable and poor. Private Rosco comments on considering leaving the army "What else are gonna do anyway? […] The pits are fucked" (Burke, 2010: 29). The extract shows that the soldiers are almost compelled to stay in the army just to survive the unknown that is waiting for them back home. Those working-class/middle-class soldiers are no more able to detach themselves from the military as if the fear of facing financial turbulence back in their towns became a greater concern than getting killed on the battlefield. Soldiers being under such absurdism could be enough to get them psychologically damaged. It seems that the tradition of sending soldiers of the low class is common in war history, especially that of the west. Soldiers who were supposed to get paid and be taken from the financial crisis they are into were left without their basic right as military personnel which is salary. Instead, the government has convinced them to fight for glory, a glory that is never true. In the play such references can be noticed in the Lord Elgin's speech with the soldiers, Lord Elgin is a historical character that appears to talk to the soldiers of the Black Watch

regiment highlighting the history of the government's manipulation of soldiers with financial challenges with a promise of glory:

> **GRANTY** We're still wanting fucking paid.
> **LORD ELGIN** Paid?
> […]
> **LORD ELGIN** I mean, come on, it's no just the money. There's the travel.
> […]
> **CAMMY** What about Glory?
> **LORD ELGIN** Glory?...O Aye…the glory. (2010: 27-28)

The extract shows how Lord Elgin is trying to convince the soldiers who are probably living under the line of poverty of the glory that war can bring them. He even goes far to an insufficient justification of fighting the war saying that it is not only about money because "there's the travel". It is apparent that for Burke, the Iraqi war resembles another conflict where soldiers are forced to fight by force due to their low rank in society and the promises of glory by the government. Lord Elgin and his expressions in the play are highly politicized reflecting a serious problem that the soldiers are facing from their government. Lord Elgin's character can be classified as 'gestus' which was invented by Brecht and is an action implemented by a character that serves as a focal point and expresses a reference to another topic. Lord Elgin then, resembles the wrong policy that the British government has run among its soldiers, including the false promises of glory in fighting the war. This miserable and degrading treatment of the soldiers by the government makes them easy subjects that the government and powerful politicians can use as they are the ones usually sent to the frontline and are the first to face death. Therefore, the "working-class soldier is treated like a laboratory specimen by doctors and the military and, in consequence, suffers a mental breakdown that leads to visions of the apocalypse and the brutal murder of his partner." (Cotterell, 2020: 102). The soldiers in the *Black Watch* are suffering a mental breakdown not only because of war but also because of what the government has imposed on them. Trauma in those soldiers is not only recurrent but renewable and from several sources. According to

Cotterell, the British society especially the middle-class has been psychologically traumatized not only from the violent attacks of terrorism on the battlefield, "but moreover by the West's constructed response to a vaguely conceived, yet exaggerated, form of terrorism" (105). The war in Iraq was waged by countries that are obsessed with consumerism and this war is marketed through a state-run media that deceives people and pushes them to go and fight for no purpose. Those governments justified the war on Iraq by claiming that they are trying to spread 'freedom and democracy' and such words were repeated again and again to evoke others as much as possible. Thus, it is fair to say that the Iraq war and "the Middle Eastern wars, as manifested in these plays, are merely an updated form of imperialism delivered through gun, blindfold and cultural export" (106).

The society where the soldiers in *Black Watch* are from has also contributed to their journey that led them to their trauma and mental discomfort. When reading the play, it becomes apparent that soldiers are highly criticized in their society and this mostly happens with soldiers of a middle-class background. At the opening of the *Black Watch,* Cammy explains the society's perceptions about soldiers back home:

> **CAMMY** I didnay want tay have tay explain myself tay people ay.
> *Beat*
> See, I think people's minds are usually made up about you if you were in the army.
> *Beat*
> They though ay?
> *Beat*
> They poor fucking boys. They cannay day anything else. They cannay get a job. (2010:4)

Before elaborating on the extract above, it is crucial to notice the language that is spoken by the soldiers in the play. Their language implicates two important factors, the first is their situation in the society as a middle class or working class. The second is their trauma and that is through the language of war used throughout the play. The

soldiers' use of slang language and their way or communicating with each other indicates that they are not a members of the upper class, besides, the topics that they talk about are mostly related to jobs and making money which are topics that are mostly found in the middle/working class' conversations. The second point can be emphasized in the scene titled 'Blueys' that conveys the everyday experience of war. The scene opens with an emotional exchange between soldiers that portrays aspects of serving in war. The scene also contains a repetitions of swearwords that also could be regarded as a sign of the soldiers' inner conflict.

Cammy in the extract above expresses his exhaustion from the public's reactions to him as a soldier. Getting reacted to with destructive criticism, soldiers will have no choice but to get deployed far from where they live to be isolated avoiding the mental pressure that their society puts them into. Therefore, the society where those soldiers lived has also contributed to the war due to their negative perceptions of the soldiers. Agreeing with that, the playwright Simon Stephens comments:

> I was not an unapologetic advocate of the war in any way and was sensitive to many arguments made against it. But it struck me as simplistic and somehow childlike not to see the war as symptomatic rather than causal. It wasn't that the war was a monstrosity born out of a salvage. (2009: xvii)

In the observation above, Simon Stephens assures that the Iraq invasion was born out of a huge social disease, and the persuasive cultural tensions that stood against those soldiers must be listed as one of the causes impacting their suffering. Cammy reflects on all of the soldiers in the Black Watch regiment and their fear of returning home. Commenting on such society where those soldiers are living, Enric Monforte argues that "plays underline the intrinsic precariousness of Western citizens of all classes and bleakly show their total lack of empathy with the plight of the dispossessed, their absolute lack of concern about the (racial, class) Other." (2017: 48). It can be understood that the western culture does not have empathy towards the marginalized; rather the empathy is repressed far in their subconscious. Then, the western society during the Iraq

war was fighting a war against itself and being consumed within and that is more dangerous than any foreign antagonist (Cotterell, 2020: 107).

The soldiers of the working-class background in the *Black Watch* are suffering from mental wounds that paved the way for their battlefield trauma. They have no place to escape because they are trapped between two malicious fates, either to stay in the army or to go back home and face the unknown. According to a 2013 study, Harvey Thompson assures that the young soldiers that come from disadvantaged backgrounds are highly expected to be exposed to battlefield risks such as trauma and PTSD (2014: 1). Although this is a continuous argument, the *Black Watch* is one of the very few plays that exposes the central problem behind the trauma of soldiers through transparently conveying their struggle as a working/middle class in Scotland together with portraying the government's manipulation. The mental situation of soldiers in the *Black Watch* is almost the same because they are all living under the same circumstances, they all fear being a soldier not only because of battlefield risks but because of the society's reaction. The soldiers in the *Black Watch* then, are living in a collective trauma caused by political, social, and martial factors as Caruth posits that trauma "is never one's own" rather "we are implicated in each other's traumas" (1996: 25).

To better understand the trauma of the soldiers in the *Black Watch*, it is necessary to closely shed the light on one of its characters which almost stands for all of the characters in the play. The least talkative ex-soldier Stewarty suffers from an apparent trauma from his previous experience as a soldier. He is always silent and if he tries to speak he makes inexpressive sentences. The signs of trauma on Stewarty and the signs of his previous traumatic experience are constantly apparent throughout the play. Stewarty's silence throughout the play reveals the severity of his past experience that he is no more able to process his speech as a reaction to his inability to narrate his experience. According to Caruth, it is always challenging for survivors to be able to narrate their traumatic experience and share it with others; therefore, they always fail to express their experiences and end up in a total silence (1996: 5). Laub agreeing with Caruth adds that silence for the survivors of trauma is a "fated exile" (1991: 58). The

silence of Stewarty is suddenly broken when he was asked by the journalist about his feeling when shooting at the enemy, he breaks his silence with rage that expresses his mental situation, he gets angry and aggressive then tells the journalist that if he wants to experience it himself then he should find a pedestrian and "Kick them tay death" (60). After Stewarty's moment of anger and aggressiveness, his friends make comments about him:

> **GRANTY** He's got depression.
> **CAMMY** He had to get bugged out ay.
> **GRANTY** After a couple ay boys we kent got killed.
> **CAMMY** Some boys didnay take it good ay.
> **WRITER** I understand.
> **CAMMY** You dinnay. (61)

The extract above provides an insight into the struggle with the traumatic experience lived in the past of both Stewarty and his comrades. For Stewarty, his trauma is like a wound that is hard to recover. His wound resembles his trauma that is always stuck in his consciousness and the least reminder of these traumatic events could place him into rage and agony like any trauma survivor. For Cathy Caruth, a trauma in some cases is like a "wound that cries out" (1996: 4), and the wound cries out whenever the survivor is reminded of his traumatic experience. When the journalist asked Stewarty about what it is like to shoot someone, he revived the picture of past trauma in the mind of Stewarty making him enter a state of rage and depression. Although it has been a long time since Stewarty's traumatic event, it seems that his mind is unable to avoid or overcome the fierceness of his past experience. In this regard, it is crucial to relate to Cruth's comment that assures "the painful repetition of the flashback can only be understood as the absolute inability of the mind to avoid an unpleasurable event that has not been given psychic meaning in any way" (1996: 59). From the same extract above one can learn that Stewarty shares his trauma with his fellow soldiers. Stewarty and his fellows understand each other's mental struggle because they all suffered the same. When the writer comments on Stewarty's rage after the journalist's question saying that he understands Stewarty's reaction Cammy replies to him saying "You dinnay" (61)

[you do not]. Cammy's reply shows that he and the other soldiers are the only ones who can understand the traumatic events that they have been through. It is possibly true that only those who experienced trauma can understand it, and that is why trauma is presented to the audience as a performance or footage whose purpose is to traumatize the audience putting them in the place of the traumatized. Stewarty and the soldiers are well aware that the writer does not understand what they have been through. Since trauma is mostly caused by a violent event that could be from a physical or psychological aspect, it is hard for those who did not go through such an event to fully grasp the meaning of trauma. Trauma in all of its forms implies psychological damage to its survivors and it is hard to guess or imitate the psychological damage caused by trauma by those who did not experience it. That is simply because this psychological damage is a result of a biological process that only occurs to those who have experienced and lived a traumatic event. Trauma then is incomprehensible to people who have not experienced it just like the writer who was carrying interviews with the soldiers of the Black Watch.

The traumatized always feel stressed because no one can understand them. Moreover, they are also aware that it is only those who lived a traumatic incident can understand the feeling of being traumatized. Stewarty again is asked by the writer about whether he got hit before or not on the battlefield and that reminded Stewarty of the incident when he and his fellow soldiers got attacked by a suicide bomb. The bombing took the lives of three soldiers together with their local translator. As for Stewarty he got his arm broken from the blast, and after he was hospitalized and sent home for treatment he kept breaking his arm again and again so that he does not have to be sent again to the army:

> **WRITER** Did anyone else get hurt?
> **STEWARTY** I broke my arm.
> **WRITER** walking wounded?
> **STEWARTY** Walking fucking wounded. See when it got better. My arm. I fucking broke it again myself. And I kept breaking it.
> *Beat*

It would get better and I would break it myself.

Beat

Get better. Break it myself.

Beat

Better. Break it.

Beat

Better. Break it. (64)

It seems that Stewarty at the beginning could not totally absorb the incident that he went through and that is what made him afraid to return back to the army so he started to break his hand repeatedly. Stewarty's survival from the traumatic events elevated his pain and fear of the military to another level. According to Caruth, the victim who survives a traumatic event "wakes up in another fright" and no matter how hard he tries to escape, the traumatic memories will always follow (1996: 65). Even though Stewarty could survive physically, his traumatic memories are still taking him back to the battlefield and to this particular traumatic event he lived. Those memories are buried in his mind and ready to surface and re-traumatize at any moment.

Stewarty's depression of not getting his traumatic situation understood pushed him to initiate violent behaviors towards others, especially those who did not experience trauma. It is as if he feels irritated by those who did not go through what he went through; he always gets aggressive when he is reminded of his trauma. Stewarty continues his hysteric behavior against the writer and he starts asking him to write down what he has mentioned about himself during the blast. He then grabs the writer's arm and wants to break it just to let the writer understands the pain that Stewarty felt when he was experiencing the event:

STEWARTY Write it down way a broken arm though.

Stewarty grabs the Weiter's arm

CAMMY Come on Stewarty' leave the boy alone.

STEWARTY Let me break your arm and see if you can write it down way a broken arm.

CAMMY Stewarty, come on tay fuck.

Stewarty If he wants tay ken about Iraq, he has tay feel some pain?

CAMMY It's no his fault.

They pull Stewarty away from the Writer. (65)

The main reason behind Stewarty's intention of breaking the arm of the writer is his inability to explain his trauma. He feels that he is prisoned with it and cannot set himself free and speak for his pain. Stewarty's action shows that he is still in the process of traumatization which justifies Stampfl's assertion that unspeakableness is a phase in the process of traumatization. In this phase, the survivors lose all of their abilities of verbal expression, they face difficulty to put their experience into words but at the same time they feel an urgent necessity to make the others understand their suffering (2014: 16). Caruth suggests that the traumatic experience resists narration, even though the memories of the traumatic experience return to haunt the survivor, but they are "nonverbal" and almost impossible to express in words (1996: 4).

Stewarty's inner pain that stems from his previous experience has completely dominated him and made him a victim of his own rage. It would be very hard to categorize the stage of trauma within Stewarty and his fellow soldiers who were redeployed again because they have already experienced all of the proposed phases of trauma previously and with their redeployment they are re-experiencing the trauma not psychologically but in reality. So, Stewarty and the soldiers are stuck in between healing from their previous trauma and facing a new one at their current deployment. They are all lost within their own traumata. Considering this case, it is important to review Dori Laub's comment regarding the order of the traumatic incident:

> While the trauma uncannily returns in actual life, its reality continues to elude the subject who lives in its grip and unwittingly undergoes its ceaseless repetitions and reenactments. The traumatic event, although real, took place outside the parameters of "normal" reality, such as causality, sequence, place and time. The trauma is thus an event that has no beginning, no ending, no before, no during and no after. This absence of categories that define it lends it a quality of "otherness", a salience, a timelessness and a ubiquity that puts it

> outside the range of associatively linked experiences, outside the range of comprehension, of recounting and of mastery. [. . .] The survivor, indeed, is not truly in touch either with the core of his traumatic reality or with the fatedness of its reenactments, and thereby remains trapped in both. (1992: 69)

Laub's comment can fit accurately with the situation of the soldiers in the *Black Watch*; trauma has no end or beginning and that is valid in many cases including the case of soldiers in *Black Watch*. Those who suffered from such a trauma are 'trapped in both' exactly like the soldiers in the play who are trapped between their previous traumatic experience and what they are living in their new deployment. Cammy seems the only person in the regiment who is in a mild psychological state who seems to understand what could happen if a soldier is reminded of his trauma. That is apparent after the incident between Stewarty and the Writer. Cammy tells the Writer "I knew it was gonnay be a fucking disaster, you coming here. . ." (65). Cammy then, resembles that traumatic character who was able to understand his trauma and avoid its worst symptoms, unlike Stewarty who is still severely suffering from his experience.

The redeployment of soldiers and the insistence of the government to send them to the battlefield made soldiers question the main aim of the war. What makes this war different from the other wars fought by Scotland and the Black Watch regiment is its imperialist tendency. Scotland was an equal partner of England, yet they were manipulated and used by the UK parliament to take the war and were sent to the most dangerous parts of the battlefield. That is exactly what made the soldiers in the *Black Watch* question their role in the war and know that they are harming the people instead of liberating them. In the play, the officer who has a higher military rank than the other soldiers of the Black Watch reveals the main reason behind the invasion. He tells the soldiers "It's important that we have a reminder of what we're here fighting for. Porn and petrol" (35). The soldiers' trauma and suffering stem from a pure imperialist cause, which is fighting and invading for petrol and resources, something that their ancestors the colonists were doing hundreds of years ago. The soldiers feel regretful and are fully aware of their pointless role in the army, and that is what causes their depression and

worsens their traumatic symptoms because they suddenly discovered that they are fighting for nothing and their friends in the army have similarly died for no purpose.

Cammy in the play clarifies their role as a soldiers in the army to his friends, he says:

> **CAMMY** It's a buzz, you're in a war ay, but you're no really doing the job you're trained for but it's no like they're a massive threat tay you or tay your country, you're no defending your country. We're invading their country and fucking their day up. (49)

Cammy's comment makes it clear that all of the soldiers in Black Watch regiment are aware of the political game they were involved in. As for those soldiers who were redeployed again to the military including Stewarty, Cammy elaborates that they all should not be sent again to the army but the government intentionally lost their papers of the first deployment and that what made soldiers to be redeployed:

> **CAMMY** Stewarty was signed off with depression after we got back from Iraq the first time. But when they knew they were going back they lost his paperwork. No just his. Everycunt who'd tried to leave. Stewarty shouldn't have been there the second time. (65)

From Cammy's comment, one can know that the UK government has forced its soldiers to go back to war again. Even those who suffered from trauma and depression-like Stewarty were sent again and that explains Stewarty's decreasing mental health and the continuous recurrence of his past traumatic experience. Those redeployed soldiers and their trauma are a reflection of the chaos caused by the government and its violent never-ending imperialistic desires since the 20th century. Only after they are deployed and entered the fight in Iraq do the Black Watch soldiers understand the damage and misery inflicted upon them, Cammy describing their situation in the camp says: "This is pish. Sitting about daying camp security. Getting mortared all the time. Getting fucking ambushed. Getting killed by suicide bombers. And for what? […]. My mind's made up"

(70). Cammy realized that he is fighting for an imperialist project and he has no more patriotic enthusiasm. Together with the other soldiers, Cammy "suddenly feels more like an invader of someone else's country than a defender of his own" (Spencer, 2008, 5). Those soldiers all became aware of why they were deployed to Iraq and who is responsible for their trauma and depression. It is their government that created "the biggest western foreign policy disaster ever" (Burke, 2010: 71).

3.2 TRAUMATIC TESTIMONY

Theatrical representation of soldiers' trauma and making them aware of its experience to the audience is significant because it will make the audience comprehend what soldiers have faced on the battlefield and as a result, they can be more hospitable to them when they are back home. Moreover, the families and relatives of the soldiers can also take the chance to attend those performances to know what their sons and relative soldiers have been through. The performance of the *Black Watch* has raised questions regarding the link between the theatrically translated traumatic experiences of soldiers and the reaction of the audience towards them. Moreover, such performances are evidence of the public's interest and desire to comprehend the soldier's situation on the battlefield. Julia Boll connects the performance and representation of trauma to performing soldier's testimonies as a response to war. She observes that "it appears a natural development that the war traumata of soldiers and civilians inside and on the periphery of the war zone should find an adequate means of representation in the documentary dramatic mode" (2013: 80). The play *Black Watch* is based on actual interviews with the soldiers who have previously served in Iraq and it reflects this part in the play itself together with the soldiers' experience on the battlefield. In an interview with Sarah Beck, the writer of the *Black Watch* Gregory Burke insists that by the creation of the play he intended to tell 'the real' stories of the soldiers deployed to Iraq in their own words (Beck, 2016, x). When the play was being performed in Scotland, many friends and family members of soldiers who were deployed and also those who died were invited to attend the performance of the play. Most members of the audience came out of the theatre in tears, showing how they were moved by the play and how "the

production allowed them to publicly acknowledge their friends and family in active service" (Boll, 2013: 106). Then, the play has proved itself as a medium that the families of the soldiers and even the audience can feel and experience what the soldiers have experienced on the battlefield.

Carol Acton writes "when images of the war dead are connected with the grief of their families, especially mothers, receiving their bodies" and "they become particularly potent in their ability to undermine wartime aims" (2007: 2). The music and traditional songs that are presented in the play reflect a big part of the soldiers' feelings and attitudes since those soldiers have boundaries that hinder them from speaking out about their trauma. The sounds of explosions, mortars and gunfire in the background of the stage are also used to portray the atmosphere of the battlefield where those soldiers spent most of their time during their deployment. Those scenes in the *Black Watch* reflect the soldier's unspeakable experience and their emotional intensity in an attempt to be used as a way of communication with the audience.

While conducting interviews with the real soldiers of the Black Watch regiment, the ethical boundaries were taken into consideration by the interviewers, the writer Gregory Burke and the director John Tiffany. Besides, more creative approaches to record the soldiers' testimonies were followed. When the soldiers were being introduced, there were always limits to what is being asked of soldiers during the interview, they tried not to ask evocative questions that would awaken the trauma within the soldiers. For example, the director Tiffany invited a soldier called Stephen who the character of Cammy is based on to the interview to ask him questions. As a test, Tiffany asked the actors taking roles in the play to prepare two questions for Stephen upon his visit to the rehearsal room. The major question that Tiffany wanted to be answered and elaborated on is "what is it like to kill somebody" (qtd in Beck, 2016: 130) as he expects the audience to be curious about such a question. Listening to soldiers themselves the answer to this question would help a lot in the formation of the structure of the *Black Watch* that revolves around the killing of three soldiers. The interviewers of the *Black Watch* knew already what the audience wanted to know and also what they ought to

know. However, the main challenge that faced the interviewers was how to get such information from the soldiers without asking them direct questions that would make them angry and emotional (130). Therefore, Tiffany and Burke were very sensitive with the questions they asked soldiers and always preferred soldiers to talk about their experience themselves.

Despite Tiffany's initial interest in knowing how a soldier would feel upon killing somebody, he always tried to avoid asking the soldiers questions about the direct killing. Tiffany in an interview with Sarah Beck, explains "when I met them, when I met the soldiers, it was the question I realized I had no right to ask" (130). It seems that the interviewers team including Tiffany were well aware of the traumatic memories that the soldiers could recall meanwhile the interview if they were asked sensitive questions. Taking an ethical act while interviewing soldiers will make the information provided by them more realistic and empty of emotional impact. The ethical matter of not asking direct questions about killing is emphasized in the play when the Writer asked a direct question to Stewarty about how it is like to shoot someone, and as a result Stewarty enters a state of agony and misery. The Writer's character in the play is opposite to the real writer of the *Black Watch*. The purpose of making the Writer in the play ask the direct question could be to make the audience aware of the fact that those direct questions will activate the traumatic memories within the soldiers. Furthermore, the Writer's character in the *Black Watch* can also be classified as an "interrogatory figure" (Ings, 2014: 126) standing for the audience themselves Tiffany assures that "It wasn't necessarily about the writer, writing himself into the play, the whole thing with the writer's story, is for me about the audience" (Beck, 2016: 135).

When the audience in the *Black Watch* listens to the Writer's speech and his questions in the performance, they directly relate themselves to him, because he asks and gets answers to all of the questions that revolve inside the audience's mind. He answers the major questions that the audience and the families of the deployed soldiers ask and which are mostly related to the soldiers' experience on the battlefield:

WRITER What it was like in Iraq. (7)

[…]

WRITER What was training like? (22)

[…]

WRITER Is peace-keeping difficult? (24)

[…]

WRITER Is it right that in Iraq, during the war you lived in the wagon?

(45)

[…]

WRITER How do you pass the time? (45)

[…]

WRITER Did you worry about having to shoot people? (48)

[…]

WRITER What's it like when you're attacked? (58)

[…]

WRITER What was it like when one of you got killed? (62)

The questions above the Writer asked to the members of the Black Watch regiment do not sound like questions of a professional journalist. If one notices how general and basic they are, it becomes clear that they are actually questions that could be asked by the public. Almost all of those questions are not preferred to be asked in this way by anyone as they can cause the soldiers to remember their trauma and enter a state of mental breakdown. After each question the Writer asks, the play shifts from the interview room to the battlefield to answer the question. For instance, one of the last questions of the Writer was about how the soldiers would feel if one of them is killed; then the scene directly shifts from the interview to the battlefield where three members of the regiment are killed due to a suicide bomb. The reason why those questions are not answered verbally by soldiers is due to their severity and the soldier's trauma that causes the inability to answer them. Therefore, the answers to the Writer's (audience's) questions are set through performance and music and that will also help the audience to witness what the soldiers have lived and feel their trauma and mental suffering. And this process of witnessing is called the virtual experience of trauma by La Capra describing it

as when "one puts oneself in the other's position while recognizing the difference of that position and hence not taking the other's place" (2014, 78). Witnessing makes the audience more comprehensive and appreciative of soldiers' role in the war as well as the mental struggle that they suffered from their battlefield experience.

The traumatic testimony presented in the *Black Watch* embodies the mental breakdown of the soldiers and their trauma in a decent way. Unlike other plays, the *Black Watch* reflects many aspects of the enduring traumatic symptoms of the soldiers and in a clear way. That makes the audience not only understand the experience the soldiers have been into, but also their mental struggle throughout their deployments. One of the significant traumatic symptoms that are presented in the play is the soldiers' inability to express themselves and their struggle with their speech. Regarding the play and its excellent testimonial representation, Deirdre Heddon argues that the *Black Watch* has an effective model approach in dramatizing traumatic testimony:

> Unlike other verbatim plays, where it seems as if people easily tell their implicitly dramatic stories, complete with a natural narrative formation, in Black Watch what we witness is the fragmented structure of interviews, the diversions and digressions, the moments of anger and impatience – all that stuff that is cut from the typical verbatim play. (2007: 140)

It can be said that the play has a transparent way of representing to the audience and the inclusion of the interview scenes with the soldiers. When the interview scenes are included in the play, it would give the audience a chance to get more familiar with the process of the creation of the play and it is a sort of proof that the play is not fictional. The reactions of the soldiers during the interview show the audience the mental aspect of the soldiers and their suffering when they are reminded of their trauma. Tiffany the director of the *Black Watch* finds it necessary to show the audience as much as possible from the reality of the soldiers' life and the battlefield outcome. As the play is based on the suicide bombing event that killed three regiment soldiers, Tiffany felt the need to show the real footage of the bombing to the actors and found it necessary to

recreate the scene in the play as in reality. He states: “I watch it just to get a sense of the actual reality of it […] I knew that we had to show that, and I knew we needed to show the horror of it. And, so we just went there. We had to just go there” (Beck, 2016: 139). Then, the team behind the making of the *Black Watch* adopted a realistic and effective method to provide the truth about the war in Iraq.

3.3 TRAUMATIC HISTORY IN THE *BLACK WATCH*

In the scene called ‘Fashion’ Cammy stands to talk about the history of the *Black Watch* regiment while other soldiers around are dressing him into significant uniforms that the regiment used throughout the history. From this scene, one can understand the traumatic history of the regiment and it is a way to say that the Iraq war was not different from the previous wars where the regiment members have suffered. Cammy starts describing the history of the Black Watch starting from its first appearance saying that “we were fucking mercenaries” (Burke, 2010: 30). This is the first sign that the regiment's history was not pleasant as an organized army as they were used as mercenaries to fight “tay half ay fuckin Europe” (30). Cammy furthermore elaborates historically that the regiment is deceived as they were promised not to “serve abroad” (31) but they were exploited because as Cammy says “We’re useful cunts tay hay on board” (31). Since the first appearance of the regiment, they “fought all over the world” (31) from the American war of independence, passing through waterloo, Alma, and the two world wars until the war on Iraq.

This historical insight that Cammy represents about the regiment shows the continuous traumatic history of the regiment since its establishment. Simultaneously, the narration of the history of the regiment describes an outline of a regiment that is approaching destruction. If the whole regiment is to be considered as one unity (body) that is traumatized, then the historical description of the regiment will become a description of a trauma process. That can be elaborated with Caruth’s claim regarding trauma survival and destruction:

> From this perspective, the survival of trauma is not the fortunate passage beyond a violent event, a passage that is accidentally interrupted by reminders of it, but rather the endless inherent necessity of repetition, which ultimately may lead to destruction. (1996: 146)

The passage of the regiment through several wars in history functioned as a constant reminder of the trauma, and that becomes very clear when Cammy refers to Mesopotamia:

> **CAMMY** Before we went tay Palestine tay take Jerusalem. Then Syria tay drive out the ottoman
> Turks. Which we did in 1919, in Mesopotamia.
> *Beat*
> Mesopotamia?
> *Beat*
> Where the fuck have I heard that before?
> *Beat*
> Oh. . . aye.
> *Beat*
> Here we are.
> *Beat*
> Again. (33)

The extract above reflects the recurrent trauma of the Black Watch regiment. They were previously in Mesopotamia during the First World War, and now they are re-experiencing this by being in Mesopotamia once again. This re-experiencing of the same event is not only at the level of the regiment as a whole, but it is also on the personal level of the soldiers. Most of the soldiers in the regiment had their fathers and grandfather who served in the same regiment; therefore, the soldiers have inherited their trauma as they are serving in the same place where their ancestors have served long years earlier. It seems that the war that the Black Watch is fighting in Iraq led to the soldiers and the whole regiment's destruction due to what it caused from misery and mental damage. The officer at the end of the play says that:

> It takes three hundred years to build an army that's admired and respected around the world. But it only takes three years pissing about in the desert in the biggest western foreign policy disaster ever to fuck it up completely. (71)

The Black Watch regiment's good reputation has come to an end when they are involved in the unfair war that damaged the soldiers psychically and mentally. That destruction came after a long history of witnessing war on the battlefield.

3.4 VICTIMIZING THE VICTIMIZER

Most of the plays like *Black Watch* ignore the local war victims' suffering and do not represent them directly. Although the purpose of the play is to shed the light on a political disaster by narrating the story of a Scottish regiment, it is still crucial to give some importance to the war victims. For instance, in the suicide bomb that killed three soldiers and an Iraqi local who worked as an interpreter with them, all of the soldiers were given names and other characteristics; yet, the interpreter was never given such impotence. Maybe one can claim that the play was designed to be performed for the families and relatives of the soldiers; however, it is still important to show war victims and the casualties caused by the soldiers.

With the close reading of the play, indirect reflections of the war victims' situation can be felt, and it shows that some of the soldiers are not only traumatized but traumatizers as well. When the Americans were randomly bombing the city, the soldiers of the Black Watch were looking and getting pleasure shouting that 'these Americans are fucking amazing' (Burke, 2010: 39). Other soldiers are also hoping that the Americans would leave something for them saying that "I hope there's some left over for us" (40). Moreover, when Fraz was asked whether he kept count of the people he killed, he answered "I lost count at twenty-three, darling" (51), In another scene when the Writer asks again if they kept the records of the people that the regiment killed in the wagon, one of the soldier answers him "we'd have run out ay fucking room ay" (59). Finally, Stewarty confesses that Fraz, a soldier in the regiment, was "terrorizing the

innocent motorists ay Iraq" (67). The previous extracts show that the soldiers of the regiment of the Black Watch have been involved in terrorizing acts against the locals of Iraq. This is only understood by the close reading of the play as it is not clearly stated in the play nor the interviews. In the end, the soldiers led by Cammy come to realize that they are doing nothing but bullying the people in Iraq. The soldiers in the regiment are not the only ones who are traumatized, yet they also traumatized the innocent people in Iraq according to their confessions, and that is how the victimized becomes a victimizer.

CHAPTER IV

4. THE TRAUMA OF WAR RETURNING HOME: SAM SHEPARD'S *STATES OF SHOCK*

This chapter will handle trauma in soldiers after returning home through the play *States of Shock*. The chapter also highlights the ramification of PTSD in Stubbs, the major character in the play. Through examining other characters in the play, a general trauma insight of the public society in America is provided. Moreover, the chapter touches upon social trauma that sometimes could result from war trauma and promotes trauma as a link between the physical and psychological aspects of trauma survivors.

Sam Shepard or Samuel Shepard Rogers III is an enthusiastic American actor, playwright, author, director, and screenwriter whose career lasted for more than a half-century. He was born in 1943 and passed away in 2017, he won many awards and was always praised for his plays that constantly left an impression on his audience. Shepard wrote more than 50 plays, and although not all of them reached the edge of fame, he won ten awards for his writing and directing. He also won the Pulitzer Prize for his play *Buried Child* and was nominated for many other awards.

Shepard's plays are known for being surreal, bleak and poetic as he also wrote about themes of absurdism and national identity. Sam Shepard bestowed on the American stage its postmodernity in the 60s. Although he was not the only one to do so, but he interjected an exuberant, youthful voice that has extended the world's appreciation of theatre and postmodern aesthetics (Roudané, 2002: I). Shepard's theatre has some glimpses of hope, wildness and fun. His play *True West,* for instance, has a sense of humor that motivated and energized the performance and audience, but at the same time sadness prevails the play at some point. The plays of Shepard consist of mixture of emotions and feelings that shift orderly throughout the performance. He also has some plays that talk about love relationships between men and women, as is seen in

Fool for Love and *Eyes for Consuela*, or between parents and their children as in *Buried Child* or *Curse of the Starving Class*. In Sam Shepard's writing, the family constitutes an important element as he usually portrays family members that are disconnected and cannot agree with each other.

In Sam Shepard's Career which spanned over half a century from the Vietnam war until Obama's administration, he lived and witnessed many significant events that were constantly occurring. Throughout these years, his writing was able to evolve from the alternative and local theatres to the mainstream until his recognition by Hollywood. Later on, Shepard became a cultural icon that earned the media's attention and critical esteem. During the production of his writings for five decades, he was called 'quintessentially American' and even, the most American of America's dramatists. Shepard as a dramatist used realist psychology and preferred to use the playful style in his writing as he draws upon several literary and non-literary styles and genres. Above all, Shepard had a fresh voice and was intensely voracious in his theatrical sense. His voice was definitive of the private fears of both public and individuals. With the deterioration of the public sphere in the United States due to the long chain of wars that the country has taken in addition to the Gulf War, Shepard could have felt the need to reorient his plays by adding some political tendency to them. Shepard's characters after politicizing his plays became less concerned with society and social change, yet, they became more fixed to function in a catastrophic world with shattered families and psychologies. More martial atmosphere started to dominate the plays as more characters like veterans, in-service military personnel and mobsters that demonstrate their depression and anxieties amidst a postmodern set.

Shepard has proved to be an energetic modern playwright, one that is very distinctive in his creative skills. Later on, Shepard would try to rewrite his plays to improve them and fix them according to the modern literary sense. His last plays were politicized and aimed to reconstruct the post-war society that was demolished by wars and their psychological impact on the people and the deployed soldiers. Shepard also expressed his rage in those plays against the American government and its policy of

waging wars and killing innocent people. One of his most remarkable plays that handled this topic is *States of Shock*, an anti-war play that reflects every side of the consequences of the war that America has unfairly planned against other countries.

In a letter to his playwright friend, Chaikin, in 1983 Shepard wrote that he had been considering the idea of "being lost of one's identity being shattered under severe personal circumstances—in a state of crisis where everything I've previously identified within myself suddenly falls away." And this condition was called by Shepard a "shock –state" (qtd in Tekinay, 1996: 70). Afterward, in a collaboration between Chaikin and Shepard, they dramatized this shock state or trauma in all of its horrors in *The War in Heaven*. Which is a play that does not only focus on war trauma or the shock meanwhile in the battlefield, but it also focuses on the "resulting emptiness or aloneness" (Day, 1992: 33). The play is based on the extremely private and personal concept of 'Shock State'. The mood of the play implements a misty atmosphere as the play itself is saturated with nihilism.

At the time of the production of *The War in Heaven*, the political climate in the US was not at its best; rather, it was tense and heated and that made the playwrights feel that they must widen the personal scope of the 'shock-state' in their plays that they can be touching upon the wars that America has been taking. After a while, when the escalations started to elevate and the US had sent its military to the Persian Gulf while they were bombing Iraq, Sam Shepard got inspired to write his play *States of Shock*. That serves as a philosophical and political reaction to the war of the US on Iraq. At the same time, it is also a reaction to the public sphere in America and their support of America's intervention in Iraq. The play goes on a trip to reveal the consequences of this war and the mental damage caused by its trauma. It also reveals the reality behind the American democracy and takes out its fake glamour. *States of Shock*, just like the *Black Watch*, reveals the reality of the war and the manipulation of the government's policy and the damage that it causes to the deployed soldiers in return. *States of Sock* can be regarded as a confession of the truth on behalf of the American society.

When it was announced, Sam Shepard's new play *States of Shock* would be first performed at New York city's American Place Theatre. Critics began to anticipate excitingly because at the time, Shepard had not written a new play since 1985. When *States of Shock* was staged in 1991, the popular and the critics' responses were mixed. The play was not like any play that Shepard had before; it was not like what the audience and the reviews anticipated from Shepard and his family dramatic style. The public then realized that Shepard's play was a harsh outcry against the Gulf War waged by the US. The play has also been related to Vietnam as Shepard himself was a Vietnam veteran. Ostensibly, the play has its traces from the Vietnam war because by writing the play, Shepard seems to ask: Didn't we learn anything from the Vietnam war?

States of Shock is more than condemnation and angry reaction to the Iraq war, it is a traumatic and bewildering performance with archetypical images of war. Moreover, according to DeRose, *States of Shock* is a "reminiscent of Shepard's hallucinatory plays from the late 1960s, States of Shock is more concerned with expressing a highly personalized state of traumatized consciousness, what Shepard calls a "shock state" than with telling a story" (1992: 2). This state of shock that Shepard is implementing in his play is more tied to his generation, the Vietnam war's generation than to any other event although the play revolves around the Gulf War.

The single-act play describes the relationship between an elderly man and a young man who is later on revealed as his own son. The elderly character is a Colonel, a traditional military man. He is a strong believer in the myths of war perpetuated by people like him. Stubbs, the young, is a disabled war veteran, representing martyrdom and war damage in the play. He is traumatic and suffering from severe PTSD. According to the Colonel's story, Stubbs is a war hero, because he tried to protect the son of the Colonel by standing in front of him and getting the missile coming through his body leaving a hole in him. Although Stubbs tried to do so, it did not work and the Colonel's son died. Stubbs now is paralyzed using a wheelchair. The play's setting is a family café. According to the stage directions, a huge cyclorama that covers the wall to the ceiling and is lit with rockets, tracer fire and explosions in darkness to give a battlefield

atmosphere. Colonel is bringing Stubbs from the treatment center to the café to celebrate the Colonel's son's death anniversary. During the play, the Colonel interrogates Stubbs about how his son was killed. Stubbs then stuns everyone with the truth that the Colonel is his father. Other characters in the play are Glory Bee the waitress and a white couple, those are not minor characters in the course of the story yet they represent specific parts of the American society.

4.1 THE STATE OF THE TRAUMATIC SHOCK IN *STATES OF SHOCK*

States of Shock demonstrates traumatic victims that were severely affected by their bad experience in the military. Stubbs sounds to be the one who got the most damage among all of the other characters in the play. Seemingly, Stubbs in the play is looking for a chance to discuss his trauma and find a way to recover from its pain. DeRose assures that Stubbs

> Is not interested in the events leading up to his life-altering trauma; he wants to discuss the trauma itself and the horrendous aftermath—the pain, the emotions, the personal ramification, and the subsequent dissolution of the world as he once knew it. (4)

Stubbs is doing so by letting people around him to know about his trauma. He always faces the strangers and reveals his big scar:

> (STUBBS blows his whistle again and abruptly lifts his shirt to the armpits, revealing a massive red scar in the center of his chest. GLORY BEE looks away from it. STUBBS keeps his shirt held up)
>
> **STUBBS** When I was hit—It went straight through me. Out the other side. Someone was killed. But it wasn't me. I'm not the one. I'm the lucky one. (Shepard, 1991: 4)

By doing so, Stubbs as a trauma survivor is searching for any possible way to get over his trauma, and losing hope especially with the pressure implemented on him by his surroundings. Trauma survivors are always in need to talk about their damaged feelings and fix them rather than being reminded of their traumatic incidents that they lived previously. In Stubbs case, he is constantly reminded of his trauma due to the Colonel's insistence to tell him more details about the traumatic incident that he lived. He keeps reminding him over and over again and by using objects to associate them to the real scenes of the battlefield:

> (He's busy taking several toy soldiers, tanks, airplanes, and ships out of his bag and arranging them on the table in front of him. Stubbs just stares into space)
> […]
> **COLONEL** When you were hit, Stubbs-you were backed up against the mountains. Is that right? Pretend the sugar id the mountain. Right here. Just pretend.
> […]
> You had heavy enemy artillery plus warships firing into you from offshore. Let's say the knives will represent the shoreline.
> […]
> Now—from the top of the mountain-Let me get this straight, now. Only you can verify this because you were there, Stubbs. I'm just going on hearsay. From the top of the mountain you were backed up by your own defensive artillery plus militia. Is that right?
> (STUBBS just stares at the forks and toys). (9)

The extract above shows the Colonel's constant insistence on Stubbs to let him talk about the incident that he has been through. The Colonel by doing so is reminding Stubbs of his own trauma, creating more damage to his mentality and hindering him from getting recovered from his trauma. Cathy Caruth argues that the survivors of trauma when badly reminded of their traumatic incident could lead to their destruction (1996: 146). The Colonel is unaware that he is leading Stubbs towards destruction by asking him such questions. Stubbs during the interrogation and reminders of his trauma,

keeps silent and still as he never comments nor refers to his own traumatic incident. But at a moment, when the Colonel kept bothering him with his insistence, Stubbs exploded and started to hallucinate about what he has seen in the last moment before he got hit by the missile. It seems that Stubbs is trying his best to recover from the trauma that he is in, yet the Colonel's insistence was unbearable to him.

Despite of the Colonel's insistence and reminders of Stubbs' traumatic past, Stubbs has never replied to him nor showed interest in the Colonel's questions. He is careless and uninterested in recalling or remembering the traumatic incident that he has been through. The carelessness and silence of Stubbs regarding the Colonel's interrogation can be justified in two ways. The first is that he tried to recover from his trauma; therefore, he has created a dissociation between the real incident that he lived and his imagination. Van der Kolk suggests that the dissociation and separation between the real event and the person's imagination can help in reducing the severity of traumatic symptoms, and that will give a sort of freedom to the trauma survivor to reconstruct and re-imagine the real event with less severity (2014: 66). Stubbs, then, is seen as silent and careless and even does not react to what the Colonel is reminding him of which means that he was successful in dissociating his imagination from the real event he has been through. The second way or scenario that through one can justify Stubbs' silence can be related to his inability to reply to the Colonel, because he is unable to describe his trauma and what he has witnessed meaning that he is facing some state of unspeakableness. Stubbs' feelings and emotions are hindered from being released due to the anxiety and pain imposed by trauma. Henry Krystal claims that

> The trauma response evolves from a state of hyper alert anxiety to a progressive blocking of emotions and behavioral inhibition [...] without being able to interpret the meaning of what they are feeling. Unable to "know" what they feel, they become prone to undifferentiated affect storms and psychosomatic reactions, which are devoid of personal meaning and cannot lead to adaptive responses. (qtd in Van der Kolk , 2012: 60)

The Colonel has always been making false claims about Stubbs, and estranges him from his own identity. Instead of speaking the reality and accepting that Stubbs is his own son, he keeps saying my son has died and you tried to save him. Consequently, this makes Stubbs face a dilemma in his understanding of himself and comprehending his trauma. Making him feel that the real Stubbs has died and that he is now a new Stubbs lets him enter a new level of shock and trauma, which is the trauma of survival that Caruth explains it as when "is not simply the attempt to grasp that one has almost died but, more fundamentally and enigmatically, the very attempt to claim one's own survival" (1996: 150). Stubbs was shocked when he became aware that his father is no more in need of him, and that made him re-traumatized once again by his real father that is disowning him indirectly by claiming that the old Stubbs is dead and that he is now another person.

States of Shock represents not only a traumatized Stubbs but a whole society that has lived the trauma or witnessed it. Moreover, it does not only portray a war trauma but a social trauma as well. Glory Bee in the original performance stands for an African American woman that works at a family restaurant. Glory Bee's trauma is a mix of social and war trauma, her social trauma came from the constant abuse and racism towards the African race in the US. Such racism and aggression towards Glory Bee can be also observed in the play itself, the two white couple that are sitting silently waiting for their Calm Chowder order. While waiting, they keep scolding the waitress Glory Bee because their order is late. When the White Woman sees Glory Bee entering she comments that "She ought to be shot" (13), and that explains the aggressiveness towards the Africans in the US, and justifies the trauma of Glory Bee herself. As for Glory Bee's other trauma, that is initiated from the sequence of wars that the US, especially from the Cold War that made the American society imagine destruction coming to America, and Glory Bee is not different:

> The thing I can't get over is, it never occurred to me that Denny's could be invaded. I always thought we were invulnerable to attack. The land- scaping.

> The lightning. The Parking lot. All the pretty bushes. Who could touch us? Who would dare?
> [...]
> When the first wave of missiles hit us, I kept studying the menu. I thought the menu would save me somehow. The pretty colored photo- graphs of all our specials. The Catfish Dinner. The Chicken-Fried Steak. I worshipped the menu. (36)

The waitress Glory Bee apart from her trauma, symbolizes the innocent American youth before deployment unlike Stubbs who resembles the lost youth after the war.

The white couple in the play were used to portray the American society of white people and their support of war and violence. The white couple from their way of talking and usage of language appear to be pro-violence, and Shepard has used them to criticize the American public's support of the war on Iraq. The two white couple also reflect some traumatic symptoms in their speech with other characters. At the end of the play, when the wagon of masks enters the stage, the White Woman asks whether they have to take a specific position to avoid any kind of attack:

> (Suddenly, from left, a metal busboy's wagon, loaded with gas masks, is rolled onstage. It arrives all by itself and stops centerstage. The characters ignore it. Pause.)
> […]
> **WHITE WOMAN** Shouldn't we be getting under the table by now? Shouldn't we be tucking our heads between our knees? (37)

As it is apparent in the previous extract, the white couple seem to be experienced with taking precautions against war. Therefore, it can be said that those couple have previously experienced war and are traumatized by it because they are indifferent about whatever happens on the stage as they are always silent and still. The masks that come onto the stage resemble the American public's fear of the weapons of mass destruction and also resemble their justification for invading Iraq blaming its government to have hidden weapons of mass destruction. When the story of the play advances, the features

of the setting of a family café started to change and appear more like a warzone. Glory Bee is having constant problems balancing the tray as if there is an external force shaking the ground making her lose her balance which, could be bombs or missiles. Besides, there is the sounds of the constant bombing in the theatre especially when the performance reaches a climax. Finally, the death of the restaurant manager and the delay of the food that is according to Weiss could be "attributed to the cook's wounds" (2007: 83) all imply a warfare atmosphere that shatters the family café turning it into a battlefield where all of the characters are suffering from mental wounds. Then, it can be said that the playwright successfully creates the inner mind of the characters by creating a chaotic atmosphere.

4.1.1 Ignoring the Traumatized

Stubbs' previous experience in war left him disabled, paralyzed, almost dead and rotten from inside out. Stubbs has also been abandoned spiritually and emotionally as he became impotent due to his injury. In the play, he constantly screams that "My thing hangs like a dead meat" (Shepard, 1991: 30). The reference to Stubbs' impotence does not sound purely sexual, yet a traumatic outcome that shows the personality and identity loss that Stubbs experienced due to his trauma. Stubbs' constant screaming regarding his impotence represents his will and eagerness to express his trauma in words as much as possible. This scream also represents his will to stand against those who have abandoned him and left him alone struggling with his trauma. From the play, one can understand that Stubbs is not comprehended nor appreciated by his society. No one in the play had given him attention or inquired about his feelings. The Colonel appears to force Stubbs to believe in untruthful matters that Stubbs does not believe in. Moreover, Glory Bee the waitress, keeps ignoring him whenever he shows his wound. The whistle, the silent outcry that he uses whenever he takes his shirt to show his wound shows us that he is desperate for being comprehended and understood. Toward the end of the play when Stubbs gets no response from the other characters in the play, he "blows his whistle and lifts his shirt again, exposing his chest wound to the audience" (43). Through this, Shepard might want to say that the American society represented by the audience has

also rejected and marginalized people like Stubbs who face traumatic and psychological problems and are in need of rehabilitation. Herman emphasizes the significance of "comprehension" (1992: 175) to reduce the trauma damage. Elaborating on that, during the remembrance of trauma when the trauma memories start to haunt, the survivors must try to tell their story and that will help in the reconstruction and relocation of their traumatic memories, making them able to transfer their traumatic experience verbally (175).

As for the Colonel, the situation is a bit more complicated. The Colonel represents an old and traditional warrior who believes in the old myths of war. He is patriarchal and believes in the pre-Vietnam American military righteousness. He is strict and has no empathy towards his son. He even tries to disown him and gets rid of him. The Colonel cannot bring himself to believe that the old values that he is following are no more valid although it is his own son that is suffering the trauma of his father's classic thinking. What the Colonel cannot see in himself is that he is also traumatized like Stubbs, and that is very apparent in his aggressive acts against Stubbs. When Stubbs disobeys him, he threatens him with beating. The Colonel has invented his own son's death because he thinks that death is more honorable than coming back home traumatized. The national and the strict nature of the Colonel becomes clear when he tells Stubbs that the American people are superior and they are

> Bravest stock. The Pioneer. The Mountain Man. The Plainsman. The Texas Ranger. The Lone Ranger. My son. These have not died in vain. These ones have not left us to wallow in various states of insanity and self-abuse. We have a legacy to continue Stubbs. It's up to us. No one else is going to do it for us. Here's to them and to my son! A soldier for his nation! (21).

The extract reveals the Vietnam spirit and mentality of the Colonel, and also reveals the reason behind his abandonment of his own son. Returning to the history of war trauma, it was not until the Vietnam war that the returning soldiers started to develop a mental disorder that made them collapse psychologically. As this situation contrasts the illusion of the American heroism, the commanders started to humiliate

soldiers by punishing them and sending them off service, because being traumatized for them is a sign of cowardice and a stigma. As for Colonel coming from the Vietnam war generation, he shares exactly the same values with them. He feels ashamed for keeping his son with him as he created an illusionary picture in his mind that his son died as a hero and was not traumatized and ended up in a wheelchair.

In other incidents in the play, the Colonel sounds that he is still attached to his son. He nurses him and changes his clothes during his injury. Yet he just feels ashamed of the people around him. He also tries to manipulate Stubbs by repeating that he is not his son. He tells him that if you become a better person "I just might consider adopting you" (37). That shows that despite Stubbs' situation that stands against the Colonel's traits, the Colonel is still having a parental connection with Stubbs.

4.1.2 Trauma of the Body

Most trauma cases are resulting from war injuries that usually leave scars and permanent marks on the survivors. Although the trauma and its consequences are psychological, the body's injury also plays a significant role in the severity of trauma. Stubbs' experience on the battlefield left him "eighty percent mutilated" (10). The wound that was left on Stubbs' body serves as a permanent memory of his trauma that is engraved on his body. He constantly reveals it to the other characters and the audience giving an impression that the idea of the existence of this wound re-traumatizes Stubbs whenever he sees it. Stubbs' wound manifests the bewildering moments that he has witnessed before. According to DeRose: "Stubbs' physical and emotional mutilation is graphically manifest in a wound which he regularly reveals to the audience and to other characters on the stage" (1992: 4). Then, the great wound on Stubbs' body represents his damaged psychology and speaks for "the physical devastation and emotional havoc wreaked upon those who go to war, those who die, and those who return "mutilated" to the families which sent them off to fight" (4). Stubbs himself in the play assures that there is a psychological impact behind his wound by saying that "The middle of me is dead. The core. […] the part of me that goes on living has no memory of the parts that

are all dead. They've been separated for all time. They'll never have a partner" (Shepard, 1991: 10). Stubbs' wound also represents the social shock that he got from his father after he decided to leave him. He expected to be celebrated after returning from war, yet he faced another trauma back home, which is the denial of his father to him. Stubbs resembles his father's betrayal to the traumatic incident that he lived on the battlefield, addressing his father the Colonel:

> **STUBBS** Remember the moment you forsook me. The moment you invented my death. (20)
> […]
> Your face, lying. Smiling and lying. Your bald face of denial. Peering down from a distance. Bombing me. (39)

In the extract above, Stubbs likens his father the Colonel to the front face of the missile that went through him. Stubbs' words associate his trauma from the battlefield with his trauma from his father's rejection of him. Therefore, Stubbs is living between two traumata; the first that he got from the war and the second is the social trauma that he faced in his life as a civilian. In other words, Stubbs drew a similarity between his body trauma and his social trauma because they are a consequence of each. Stubbs' body trauma and the wound that made him mentally unstable caused him to be rejected by his own father the Colonel.

In *States of Shock*, Stubbs represents an image of unjust war and its disastrous aftermath. He frequently wheels himself around the stage with his whistle, showing his scar to everybody. The trauma of war and the betrayal of his father went through him as a missile stripping him out of his identity and his name and most importantly, it stripped him from being. Stubbs throughout the play kept screaming "My thing hangs like dead meat" (9) and this is not only a reference to his physical impotence, it also refers to his inner self that is traumatic, hollow and empty. As Brencio and Novak argue "trauma disturbs the "ek-static" unity of temporality and when it enters into a person's life, everything changes as the traumatic event overwhelms the individual's ability to cope

with, and find meaning in life" (qtd in Tekinay, 2019: 127). After losing his body and becoming impotence, Stubbs lost meaning in his life; he is lonely now and neglected by everybody even his own father. Yet, Stubbs' hope is not regained until he has something that is close to sexual intercourse with Glory Bee. Then suddenly, he starts shouting that "My thing is coming back" (Shepard, 1991: 38). Gradually he repasts the same phrase again and again. Afterward, Stubbs shift suddenly to narrate the story of his trauma:

> **STUBBS** (Rolling on floor with GLORY BEE)
> My thing is coming back!
> **GLORY BEE** Oh, great
> […]
> **STUBBS** My thing is arising! I can feel it!
> […]
> **STUBBS** It's coming back! It's all coming back to me now!
> **COLONEL** You're dreaming, Stubbs! Wildly hallucinating again.
> **STUBBS** No—listen—here's how it was. Listen to me now!
> (STUBBS stops rolling with GLORY BEE and tries to sit up from the floor. He gets GLORY BEE to help him. COLONEL stays in wheelchair. Struggling to sit)
> When I was hit. It went straight through me and out- (39)

The extract above pictures Stubbs' first step towards his recovery from his trauma. His rolling on the ground with Glory Bee made him overcome his impotence, and psychologically changed his mood. As Glory Bee is a representation of the innocent American youth that has not been deployed to war, it seems that the intercourse they had has given Stubbs an energy and hope in life. Glory Bee also stands for the part of the society that appreciates and understands the survivors of trauma as they let him have that sort of intercourse with him and commented "oh great" (39) when Stubbs regained his erection. Besides, Stubbs' healing made him able to talk verbally about his trauma in a normal way. Thus as soon as he finishes with Glory Bee, he starts to recall the incident to the Colonel.

4.1.3 Traumatic Existentialism in *States of Shock*

Stubbs utilizes his memories of the frontier to endure the horrors of battle. The key to survive a battle is to "fix a picture in your mind" (176). However, the image Stubbs presents for us is not a glorious unending expansion. There are parallels to the frontier and the Second World War in his modest memories of home. For Shepard, war is an essential element of the building of America, and the American man has been sacrificed in the process. The impotent war veteran, Stubbs, who states while "staggering badly" that the soldier must "Lock onto an image or you'll be blown to KINGDOM COME!!" (176) portrays a guy whose life has been devastated by the effects of war. The unrelenting conflict between the human need to feel at home in the world, on the one hand, and the strangeness and bitterness of the world, on the other, generates a state of existential nihilism in *States of Shock.* Stubbs represents reality in all its weirdness, bitterness, and cruelty. While the other characters such as Glory Bee the young waitress, the Colonel, and the white couple – each symbolize a desperate attempt to live with the world in their own manner. To escape nihilistic sorrow, everybody gets narcotized in his or her own way.

Due to the general trauma of almost all of the characters appearing in the play, *States of Shocks* has developed a Godless existential cosmos where characters are no more believing in any divine body. As Stubbs was trying to remember how he was shot and how a hole appeared in his middle, he remembers that God did not assist him in his hardest moments saying:

> I could feel his spine trembling on my spine. There was nothing we could do about fear. We couldn't talk ourselves out of it. Neither one of us knew how to pray. We had no idea who God was. Who was God? (28)

The absence of God in the *States of Shock* can also be another reason for the deterioration of the characters' mentality making their trauma memories worsen. The God and belief in most of the theatrical performances resemble a spark of hope and

serenity for the characters. Thus, being godless, the atmosphere is always tensioned and the characters are living amid despair and absurdism because they all have lost their hope and peace of mind at the very same moment they lost their belief in God. According to Ross, trauma survivors develop sort of anger toward God because they think that God could have intervened and prevented them from their traumatic incident (2016: 431). In *States of Shock*, the universe is devoid of a God, an infinite and eternal power to which man can submit to. Would the cosmos still be a mess of discordant occurrences with no underlying unity, structure, or significance if such a force existed? This question is forced onto the audience by the performance. Sorrowful, abandoned people suffer physically and emotionally in a godless society. Human lives, which are so subject to severe shocks, traumata, tragedies, disappointments, and sufferings, have no worth in Shepard's universe. He clears the ground of all illusions and imported meanings.

With the time, traumatic characters who are under intensive pain resulting from reminders and repetition can develop a serious suicidal tendency. The characters in the play, especially Stubbs and the Colonel have their traumata and memories intertwined in a complex way that there is almost no way of recovering from it. Their memories that reoccur to each of them remind the other of his trauma. At the end of the play, the characters reach that destructive moment of trauma that Caruth has previously emphasized. Their disbelieve, agony and pain led the character to have a severe existential crisis that transformed them into suicidal at the end of the play, Stubbs losing his mind starts mumbling “long live the enemy” while other characters are singing:

> Sometimes I live in the country
> Sometimes I live in the town
> Sometimes I have a great notion
> To jump into the river and drown
> Irene, good night
> Irene good night
> Good night, Irene
> Good night, Irene

I'll see you in my dreams (42)

The song that everybody sings at the end of the play implies the characters' desire of ending their lives and terminating their pain. It also resembles the characters' desire to depart to another world where they will be living a more peaceful life. Bottoms commenting on the final song in the play assures that it is tough to tell whether this signifies revenge, revolution, or Oedipal patricide, but as a bare vision of America's future, it is maybe more unnerving than the same image of reciprocal masculine animosity that had shuttered *True West*. Moreover, he adds that the freeze lasts until the end of the 'vaudeville' act, when the entire cast (except Stubbs) sings Leadbelly's 'Goodnight Irene'. That is a quiet suicidal lament for unrecoverable dreams juxtaposed starkly with that Damoclean sword hovering over Uncle Sam, wielded by his own "son" and it creates a chilling conclusion to an awkward but nonetheless provocative play. (1998: 249).

4.1.4 The American Traumatic Identity in *States of Shock*

Sam Shepard in *States of Shock* portrayed a traumatic society that resulted from a long series of wars and conflicts that America got itself into. The play projects the American society and highlights its trauma so that the American audience can comprehend the society they are living in. Shepard thinks that wars and their mental impact have consumed the American society and created a brutal society. In the play Sam Shepard reflects the negative change in the American society through Stubbs' comment:

> I was here. Facing the green sea. I was smelling it. Through the smoke. It didn't smell American to me. It smelled like a foreign sea. The birds were not American birds. I wanted to have a feeling for home but nothing called me back. I wanted to have a memory. I prayed for a memory. But nothing came but smoke and the smell of dead fish. (16)

When Stubbs is back from military, he notices that the American society has changed into an alien society. This is also what Shepard wanted to underline which is the deterioration of the American society.

The play also criticized this point through the character of the Colonel who stands for the pro-war American public. Moreover, the characters in the play are various as we see Glory Bee, the African American waitress that faces her trauma as a black woman by the discrimination she faces. In an interview with Carol Rosen about the creation of *States of Shock,* Sam Shepard remembers himself watching TV and seeing the bombardment of Iraq during the Gulf War:

> It just seemed like doomsday to me. I could not believe the systematic kind of insensitivity of it. That there was this punitive attitude—we're just going to knock these people off the face of the earth. . . . Not only that, but they've convinced the American public that this was a good deed, that this was in fact a heroic fucking war, and welcome the heroes back. What fucking heroes, man? I mean, they bombed the shit out of these people. They knocked the stew out of them over there with bombing and bombing and bombing. (2004: 235)

The great fury and anguish provoked by the whole hoax of the war, as well as the way everything became choked down and censored in the media drove Shepard to write about the American traumatic culture; *States of Shock* allows the audience to express their outrage. It mocks the nation's obsession with adopting ideas of virile, heroic, and aggressive masculinity, while concurrently harkening back to Western ideals of manhood that are considered a cure to a sense of crisis and lack of purpose "in the grand scheme of things." (236).

One of Sam Shepard's major reasons to create *States of Shock* is to reveal the traumatized society and their unawareness of how serious war is. Apart from that, Shepard tries to show the other side of the coin and criticize media for their role in the traumatization process as they allow violent scenes to be shared freely on news etc. . The

media's neglectance from spreading awareness about war's consequences is also criticized in the play, according to Bottoms, Shepard tried to ask question that media rejected to ask: "namely, doesn't anybody here remember Viet Nam?" (DeRose, 1992: 2). The Americans are victims of government and media manipulation as well as the old-minded people such as the Colonel who spread the news and give lessons that are no more valid and worked by.

The result that Shepard is waiting and hopping from his play is to evoke and warn the American public about the seriousness of the war and about the victims and causalities that America is causing for the other nations. He contends that America must confront "the hard facts" (236) about its own violent character and history, as well as analyze the disaster of American identity "from every possible angle" (236). The nation must recognize that the romanticized image of the pioneer/cowboy, which has been cherished and pushed as a defining attribute of the country, has been sanitized to conceal the atrocious and terrible realities of that identity. Only once its 'hard facts' and restrictive and excluding characteristics are disclosed will the nation's residents be able to restore any feeling of identity (236). In the play, Stubbs confesses that his wound was caused by a friendly fire: "It was friendly fire that took us out. That's what it was. You could see it heading at us from the mountain, not the sea. It was coming straight to us" (Shepard, 1991: 28). Stubbs in the previous extract implies that he was hit intentionally with friendly fire, by contrast, in other part of the play Stubbs is seen cheering for the enemy calling "long live the enemy" (24). Shepard could have created this contrasting image where the enemy is praised and the friends are blamed just to demonstrate that the American society is consumed within, in other words, destroys itself by itself.

Shepard in his play professionally portrayed the traumatic society around him. Especially the character of the Colonel for Shepard himself was a Vietnam veteran and witnessed such people in his life. He represented a collective trauma of an egoist society that thinks merely about its superiority. What this society is unaware of is the severe mental illness that lies under the heroic stereotype that this particular society has built

for itself. Sam was a brave and honest man in his play as well as transparent to reflect the reality of a pro-war society.

The trauma in the play *States of Shock* is reflected through almost all of the characters and notably, each of those characters has faced their trauma in different ways. The most interesting and traumatic character in the play is Stubbs whose trauma is apparent from his both physical and psychological aspects. Stubbs clearly represents the condition of soldiers returning from the battlefield and Shepard uses Stubbs to make the audience understand and witness what those soldiers feel after the battlefield. Finally, *States of Shock* is a transparent play that reveals the true trauma of soldiers to break the aesthetical stereotype of going to war and also reveals and exposes the traumatic nature of the American society that has always been aestheticized.

CONCLUSION

The concept of trauma gained its official recognition as a psychological disorder in the mid-80s by the American Psychiatric Association and was defined as a natural reaction to any event that is outside the range of the usual human experience. The causes behind trauma are various and the most popular ones are war injuries, catastrophes and rape incidents that bring a psychological disorder to their survivors. Moreover, trauma's recognition by the American Psychiatric Association made it gain more attention from almost all the disciplines including the medical and literary disciplines. After the recognition of trauma, many writers have written books that contributed a lot to the field, for being the first books to be written about trauma, some of them were considered as significant references that are still referred to until now. One of those books is Cathy Caruth's book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* which deals with trauma in an interdisciplinary vision and provides the most cited definitions of the term.

The first traces of trauma have appeared very long time ago as some claim that it even excited in the Greeks time but it did not become visible until the industrial revolution and the invention of the steam engine that in its turn increased the accidents at factories and railways. Railway accidents are thought to have demonstrated the first form of trauma when the public was very shocked by what they lived when witnessing or living a railway accident. With the expansion of railways, more trauma cases started to appear but the term still had not been coined yet. With the increase of cases, and when Freud appeared as one of the greatest psychologists of the 19th and 20th centuries he reshaped and studied this psychological case and contributed a lot to its current name. During the First World War trauma had a bigger influence on soldiers especially the ones returning back home who started to hallucinate and go through a hard psychological crisis. At first it was thought to be some sort of hysteria, yet with further studies the first terminology for this psychological disorder was coined and called war neuroses or shell shock. The studies on this psychological case continued until the Vietnam war when psychologists decided to take a serious step in studying trauma due

to the huge number of traumatized soldiers coming back from the Vietnam war. Later on the term PTSD was coined which stands for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder that describes the mental situation of trauma survivors after the traumatic incident.

The theme of trauma when entering the field of literature and theatre in particular was able to make a huge success. Because theatre employs the body as a tool to explain trauma to the audience, and as trauma cannot be transferred or demonstrated verbally, theatre stayed one of the best places where trauma was comprehended and understood. Besides, theatre has become a way of recovery for not only trauma survivors but for their families as well. When the families of the trauma survivors witness trauma in theatre, they will develop better ways to deal with their traumatic sons and fathers because such performances that handle trauma make them comprehend trauma survivals. With time, the theatre started to develop more techniques and styles to represent the serious events where trauma appears. One of those distinctive theaters is the Verbatim theatre that its performances are based on real interviews with the real character who lived the real story that is performed on stage. Verbatim theatre is suitable for demonstrating trauma because it provides transparent and vivid pictures of the survivors' trauma.

Written as a Verbatim play, Gregory Burke's *Black Watch* tells the story of a group of soldiers deployed to Iraq during the second Gulf War in 2003. The play came as an attempt to expose the disastrous foreign policy that was caused by the UK when they decided to deploy eight hundred Scottish soldiers from the Black Watch regiment replacing them with thousands of American soldiers in Iraq's most dangerous place called the triangle of death. The whole play revolves around a traumatic incident which is a suicide bomb that killed three members of the regiment and a local interpreter. The play closely tracks the trauma of the soldiers who were dimmed for being poor. They were constantly under fire until their psychological starts to deteriorate by the end of the play when the major traumatic incident takes place. The soldier Stewarty in the play represents severely traumatic character that has been forced to be redeployed again for the second time because the government intentionally lost his documents. Stewarty is

getting traumatized for the second time through his deployment and acts in a very violent and angry way as a result. The play furthermore demonstrates the traumatic history of the Black Watch regiment by narrating the wars that they entered by one of the characters and finally assuring that the war they are taking now is the final and the most traumatic one in the history of the regiment. Regarding the audience, and for being a verbatim play, *Black Watch* represents war trauma excellently. The team and actors of the play are all aware of what they are representing as they try to make the audience comprehend those soldiers. They created one major character and called it 'Writer' just to express and ask what the audience is wondering about regarding the soldiers who survived trauma.

Although *States of Shock* is not composed according to the Verbatim theatre's traits, it was written by a Vietnam veteran who lived during the time when war trauma was peaking. Sam Shepard in his play focuses on the American society and views it as a society of trauma and mental disorder due to their constant support of the wars that the government gets itself into. Shepard reflects characters from different factions of the American society reflecting their mentality and their trauma that haunted them for different reasons. The central character in the play is Stubbs, who has got a huge scar in his middle due to a missile that went through him while he was trying to save his friend. He is the most traumatized character in the play, as he suffers from both social and war traumata. Stubbs' biological father, the Colonel tries to deceive him that he is not his father and the real son of the Colonel is dead and is the one that Stubbs tried to save. The Colonel in the play represents an old-fashioned warrior who believes in glory and the honor of death on the battlefield. For that the Colonel did not want Stubbs back because he believes that such traumatized soldiers like Stubbs would be a stigma and shame for him. As Stubbs' father tries to disown him, Stubbs enters his social trauma which he was not expecting. The trauma in *States of Shock* is mostly emphasized through Stubbs and his body wounds. The whole play revolves around him and his action because he represents a veteran in the deteriorating American society.

Both Gregory Burke's *Black Watch* and Sam Shepard's *States of Shock* revolve around two consequent wars against Iraq. The first is the Gulf War of 1990 which is represented in *States of Shock* as this war marks the beginning of a long-term western aggression against Iraq until its invasion in 2003 by the coalition forces and the play *Black Watch* is about this invasion. Historically and politically, the Gulf War in 1990 is what mainly initiated and led to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Saddam Hussein's regime had given the green light to its military to enter Kuwait for nationalistic unjustifiable reasons. The Gulf War was an instant and direct reaction, yet also brutal and unjustifiable act to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The American reaction to the Gulf War destroyed almost all of the civilian infrastructures as Iraqi civilians came out severely damaged from this war. After the Gulf War, America forced a general blockade on Iraq that killed hundreds of thousands of civilians. Meanwhile, the political and martial escalations continued in the area until 2003 when the American government under George W. Bush's administration decided to invade Iraq starting a new decade of war and destruction.

States of Shock, then can be regarded as one of the performances that paved the way for the creation of other plays in the future such as *Black Watch*. To assure the dramatic relationship between these two plays, it is important to shed the light on some of the major similarities that both plays share. Through those similarities, one can also discover the developments and the stylistics of war theatre between the first and the second Gulf War. Regarding the technicalities of both plays, we can see huge similarities between the sets of the theatre ground where these two plays were performed. The *Black Watch* contains many background sound effects in order to put the audience in a more realistic atmosphere to the battlefield and to what the soldiers have lived. Moreover, whenever the action rises and the atmosphere gets more intense, sounds of explosions and mortars start to play. *States of Shock* contains exactly the same background effects as in *Black Watch*, in addition to a screen that constantly shows pictures and videos from the battlefield. As for the theme of the plays, they both carry a political tendency that the purpose is to warn the audience, especially those who were affected by those wars and mainly manipulated by the government as this war was never

necessary. As both plays talk about consequent events, Burke and Shepard tried to show the reality behind the war and that is reflected through the characters of the play. The main characters in both plays carry similarities between each other; Stubbs in *States of Shock* and Stewarty in *Black Watch* are severely traumatized.

The interesting similarity between Stewarty and Stubbs is that they are both exploited and this exploitation made them get into another trauma apart from the one they lived previously. Throughout the course of the two plays, Stewarty and Stubbs are both under constant and bothering reminders of their trauma by the surrounding characters. Stewarty was sent forcibly to the army for the second time after they have intentionally lost his documents of the first deployment, and that made him live a second trauma in his second deployment. As for Stubbs, he was shocked when he knew that his own father does not want him anymore making him enter a second trauma after the one he lived on the battlefield. Both the Colonel in *States of Shock* and Lord Elgin in *Black Watch* they the same personality in both plays. They portray the nationalists and proud military men that honor wars and martyrdom as they appear in the play to encourage soldiers to go to the battlefield revealing their pro-war characters. They also represent the governments in the UK and US that pushed their soldiers to war saying that it is for the sake of the glory of the nation. *States of Shock* in its time was similar to a template for the upcoming plays that handle war and trauma for the sake of delivering facts about the manipulation of the governments and the drastic consequences that war causes to both returning soldiers and society.

Both *Black Watch* and *States of Shock* have transparently mirrored the real situation of soldiers on the battlefield and after it. Moreover, those plays demolished the idea of glory and honor of war placing trauma and PTSD. Both plays function by explicitly demonstrating traumatic and suicidal characters for the sake of making the audience imagine themselves as if they lived the traumatic experience. The plays have also revealed the manipulation of the governments and exposed their game by attributing the cause of public trauma to them. What is notable in both plays is their similarity in several aspects and that is a sign that tells us trauma has always been there regardless of

the timing. I think that these plays played a major role in making the western world understand its violence to itself and the other people around the world. Simultaneously those plays have also drawn the attention to the victims of the wars where those soldiers were traumatized. In other words, the ultimate purpose of these two plays is to reveal that the governments are the main issue with traumatizing people. One can realize that after noticing both soldiers who invaded a particular country and the people of the same country are all traumatized and victimized, so the only side to be blamed is the decision-maker.

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