

Echoes of conflict: Psychological fragmentation and trauma in American Tet and my blood is stations and shade



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ABSTRACT

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The true cost of war is not only engraved in the physical losses on the battlefield but rather in the echoes of pain screamed loud from the depths of the psyche. Wars are features of existence that extremely impact human life and injure the inner self by their traumatizing impacts that stay in the minds and psyches of people. Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to uncover the role of drama in depicting these psychological impacts of war, particularly within the context of anti-war drama. It tends to explore anti-war motifs through a psychoanalytic lens, represented in the adoption of Trauma Theory as a means of exploring the effects of wars on psychological fragmentation as reflected through anti-war themes in American and Iraqi plays. It provides a sort of comparative analysis between American and Iraqi anti-war drama, respectively represented in Lydia Stryk's American Tet and Qassim Matroudi's My Blood is Stations and Shade. The findings highlight suffering, loss, depression, and family disintegration, among other themes, as key notions mirroring the interplay between traumas and wars. Besides, the results reflect the varying representations of wars between the American and Iraqi contexts, asserting that although wars only result in misery, this misery differs from individual context to the wider shared communal sociocultural destruction.

Contribution/ Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature by uncovering the role of drama in depicting the psychological impacts of war. This study is one of the very few that have investigated anti-war motifs through a psychoanalytic lens. The paper's primary contribution is finding that suffering, loss, depression, and family disintegration, among other themes, are key notions mirroring the interplay between traumas and wars.

1. INTRODUCTION

The critical combination blending drama and politics within the realm of anti-war drama reveals the fact that the art of literature and the art of politics are two sides of the same coin, namely power (Leahy, 2008). Despite the significant difference between these two disciplines, they are implicitly interconnected as they serve common functions manifested in shaping realities and influencing the human mind. This connectedness to reality displays the power of drama in addressing real-life issues and responding to psychological, cultural, and sociopolitical complexities encountered within a given context. In respect of anti-war literature, drama serves as a dynamic tool in resolving existing problems by raising awareness of the brutal consequences brought forth by wars and hindering the well-being of humanity. Bozic and Tancic (2023) highlight this critical role of drama and theater stating that "through the

performance, the theater can perceive certain subjects, in specific situations, and solve their problems in their own way, as well as critically explain and interpret them, from the aspect of results, effects and consequences" (p. 1). This asserts its functionality in addressing real-life issues evoked by diverse factors including wars and political conflicts.

In the context of political phenomena, anti-war drama plays a vital role in societal reform and addressing underlying issues faced by community members. By illuminating human suffering, drama provides insight into the psychological challenges encountered during wartime and its aftermath. This underscores the significance of trauma resulting from violence, depression, and loss experienced during conflicts. [Habeeb \(2015\)](#) emphasizes the impact of wars in traumatizing communities, stating that "wars, commonly known as mass producers of death, traumatize humans and greatly affect their views of life... The traumatic effect of wars and oppression can be seen in the preoccupation of popular culture and mass media with violence in all its shapes. The recurrence of wars and oppression is increasingly shaping people's view of the world and consequently the growing need to study trauma" (p. 1). This highlights the importance of considering and addressing traumas as key factors causing suffering and leading to poor life conditions and psychological states. Similarly, [Adwan and Mohaisen \(2024\)](#) assert that war not only destroys countries but also damages the mental and emotional well-being of its people. War reveals the disturbing truth of suppressed trauma, demonstrating how unaddressed grief and pain perpetuate ongoing violence and suffering. When healing is difficult to attain, trauma continues to influence future generations.

Therefore, perceiving the anti-war dramatic scope through a psychoanalytic lens allows for uncovering the role of drama in highlighting suppressed needs and invisible sufferings of humanity. The exploration of different dramatic contexts, such as the American and Iraqi scopes, provides insights into the varying forms of psychological fragmentation represented and experienced in different contexts. Thus, by exploring anti-war motifs, this study uncovers psychological fragmentation through the lens of Trauma Theory, which allows for displaying the role of drama in depicting realities and communicating individuals' suffering and feelings. Additionally, it provides different representations of traumatized communities as portrayed in Lydia Stryk's *American Tet* and Qassim Matroud's *My Blood is Stations and Shade*, which respectively represent American and Iraqi anti-war dramatic contexts.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The integration of drama into human life fosters its role in addressing sociopolitical and cultural issues encountered within any social context. This consideration of real-life problems and social phenomena was widely approached through a dramatic perspective structured on the basis of popular movements and trends such as Realism, Naturalism, and Expressionism. In this regard, anti-war drama is granted special attention in the literary scope due to its emphasis on the ramifications of wars and the physical, mental, and psychological effects of violence and invasions during wartime and in its aftermath. However, despite the functionality of anti-war drama in depicting realities and reflecting humans' suffering and pain, rarely was this dramatic scope approached through a psychoanalytic approach that reports the traumas and psychological fragmentation experienced by humans during conflicts.

This manifested a critical research gap that necessitates analytical intervention to uncover the power of literature in this domain. Besides, as the manifestation of trauma varies according to different contexts, it is also significant to explore diverse dramatic contexts to uncover the various features characterizing these scopes. In selecting two anti-war plays, particularly an American and an Iraqi one, this study displays the diverse manifestations of trauma in different dramatic contexts, reflecting the multiple social, cultural, and political factors that contribute to influencing the manifestations of trauma in anti-war drama. In terms of the selected plays, the catastrophic impacts of wars on humanity are portrayed at multiple levels including their effects on soldiers, displaced people, and soldiers' families who end up traumatized due to the brutality of wars, battles, and invasions which are critical sociopolitical issues hindering the peace and wellbeing of humanity.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The unique power of drama to depict realities, challenge ideologies, and transform societies is a critical feature characterizing this literary scope and fostering the interconnection between literature and human existence. In light of the significance of this literary genre, it is no longer questionable that drama can highlight social and psychological issues in a way that enhances the resolution of existing problems. In this regard, this study aims to explore the scope of anti-war drama and approach it through a psychoanalytic lens that allows for uncovering psychological fragmentation suffered by communities during wartime and in its aftermath. Particularly, this study seeks to uncover the depiction of trauma in American and Iraqi dramatic contexts manifested in the selected works of Lydia Stryk and Qassim Matroud, namely *American Tet* and *My Blood is Stations and Shade* respectively.

In approaching the aforementioned dramatic contexts, this study intends to explore the anti-war motifs employed in anti-war drama as tools for accentuating traumas as brutal consequences of wars. Through its approach to the anti-war scope, this work displays the power of drama in addressing existing issues and resolving sociopolitical phenomena as a means of liberating humanity and establishing an egalitarian society in which everyone lives in peace. Besides, in exploring both American and Iraqi dramatic scopes, this work provides insights into the different depictions of realities from different perspectives. However, it aims to show the intersection among different dramatic scopes in serving as remedies for healing social, psychological, and cultural illnesses evoked by wars, conflicts, and invasions.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Aiming to respond to the illustrated research problem, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What anti-war motifs are used to convey trauma and its remaining psychological effects in both plays?
2. How does the depiction of trauma vary between American and Arab plays?

5. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Drama: For Courtney (1980), drama is a literary manifestation of realities by human imagination expressed through text or performed in a theatrical context. Its significance is displayed in how it approaches existing sociopolitical problems and cultural issues through a lens that promotes resolving existing dilemmas. Styan (1975) maintains that drama as a text does not only encompass words on paper. It instead embodies sounds, silence, emotions, and sights that are communicated through the sensitive aspect of language.

Anti-War Motifs: Al-Hajaj (2011) claims that anti-war motifs are the messages communicated through the themes involved in a given literary work. They are primarily explored in the context of anti-war literature, in which broad anti-war notions such as dehumanization, suffering, depression, and sorrow are portrayed. Anti-war motifs serve a crucial role in the literary scope as they manifest a form of rebellion against existing issues in an attempt to achieve equity and establish a peaceful community (Al-Hajaj, 2011).

Trauma: Caruth (1996) defines trauma as a form of psychological suffering that results from humans' exposure to difficult situations or life conditions such as wars and violence. Sulaiman (2020) argues that traumas persist in individuals' minds, burdening them with feelings of depression, sorrow, despair, and anguish. Additionally, in some circumstances, traumas stem from suppressed needs that accumulate in the psyche until they are triggered by external experiences, leading to manifestations of trauma and psychological fragmentation (Caruth, 1996).

6. WAR REPRESENTATION IN DRAMA

For Franks (2008), the growing tendency of drama to depict realities and represent social life fosters its role in engaging with diverse issues, including sociopolitical ones such as wars and political conflicts. In this regard, the key factor driving the integration of drama into political life lies in addressing the consequences of wars due to their power in shaping characters' identities, relationships, and worldviews (Franks, 2008). At this level, Leddy (1940) highlights the importance of representing wars through drama, claiming that.

Since the war was the one great movement that touched all of humanity, and since drama is the method of expression most apt to reflect the attitude of the audience as well as that of the author, drama's representation of war is of paramount importance as a record of human thought during a most interesting period of history. (vii)

In illustrating the role of drama in depicting and addressing political problems, Pandya (2023) claims that drama employs characters that represent the impacts of wars on humans, including physical, mental, and psychological effects. This sheds light on the drastic ramifications of wars and "provides valuable insight into understanding the enduring consequences of war as it impacts character development and shapes human values" (Pandya, 2023). In this context, Gordon (2008) maintains that in resisting political conflicts, the notion of anti-war drama is displayed as it crystallizes the power of literary works in fostering the notions of power and resistance against the devastating impacts of wars. These notions are mainly fostered in the context of anti-war motifs that employ language as a critical instrument for resisting wars and longing for peace (Al-Hajaj, 2011). Within the scope of anti-war literature, these notions are mirrored in dramatic characters and themes such as the futility of war, trauma and depression, resistance and identity, dehumanization, rape, suffering, pain, injustice, homelessness, loss, and many other motifs that promote the communication of meaning and the depiction of reality through drama (Airaksinen, 2023; Bimantara, 2020; Ford, 2013; Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, Kamaluddin, & Nasir, 2022; Oberman, 2019).

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1. Corpus

In the scope of anti-war literature, anti-war drama occupies a broad context manifested in the employment of drama and theater as tools for evoking social change and addressing existing political issues. This adherence of drama to depict realities and resolve problems is fostered in different dramatic scopes, including American and Iraqi drama. In this regard, this study approaches the scope of anti-war drama and explores anti-war manifestations and themes mirroring psychological fragmentation and traumas suffered by humans during wartime. The selected corpus is representative of both American and Iraqi scopes as it involves a balanced representative selection of two anti-war plays. Specifically, the studied corpus involves one short American play, namely Lydia Stryk's *American Tet*, and another short Iraqi play, particularly Qassim Matroud's work titled *My Blood is Stations and Shade*. These plays provide two different perspectives on the aftermath of war and the depression and traumas suffered by soldiers and citizens as a consequence of wars and conflicts.

In providing a brief overview summarizing the content of these plays, Lydia Stryk's *American Tet* is regarded as an anti-war play that deals with the extreme implications of war on humanity. It revolves around the tough experiences of soldiers who are forced to depart from their families in line with their psychological suffering in trying to re-engage with civilian life after being deployed on the battlefield. Besides, the play provides scenes displaying the sorrows and depression encountered by families and individuals due to loss and death as two brutal human costs of war. Through its approach to the scopes of violence and war, this play highlights different anti-war motifs that mirror the power of drama in depicting realities and influencing social ideologies and communities.

As for the selected Iraqi play, Qassim Matroud's *My Blood is Stations and Shade* is a typical anti-war dramatic work that effectively reveals the brutal consequences of wars on humanity, mainly at the level of psychological fragmentation and family shattering. Besides, this play accentuates the nostalgia for the homeland after years of separation due to invasions and wars.

Through its critically woven scenes, the play symbolizes the everlasting longing for peace and the miserable wait for freedom and relief. Its main characters, namely The Man and The Woman, represent poor Iraqis whose dreams are raped by conflicts that deprived them of the simplest right to live with their beloved ones in their homeland freely and peacefully.

8. RESEARCH DESIGN

Kumar (2011) defines research design as the procedure through which the outline and structure of a study are set in a way that allows researchers to practically and effectively respond to the posed research questions and investigated phenomena. Therefore, a research design serves critical functions manifested in organizing the flow of the study and ensuring the reliability and validity of the employed instruments and adopted frameworks. In this regard, designs and research types vary according to diverse factors that shape the research paradigm. According to Salkind (2012), the qualitative design is one research type that operates at the level of qualitative data rather than numerical findings. For Obeyd (2021), it is characterized by its emergent nature and flexible analysis that involves a wide range of subjective interpretations. In this context, the conducted study adopts a qualitative research design that aims to approach and study a selected corpus through a qualitative analytical lens. Salkind (2012) describes this design stating that it intends to “examine human behavior and the social, cultural, and political contexts within which it occurs” (p. 11). This aligns with the ultimate purpose of this study, which is to explore anti-war motifs and investigate psychological fragmentation through a psychoanalytic lens. This analytic approach is structured on the basis of Trauma Theory, which allows for uncovering anti-war motifs and discovering their manifestations in the American and Iraqi dramatic contexts.

9. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

9.1. Trauma Theory

Being a branch of Psychoanalytic Theory, Trauma Theory is a critical framework through which human suffering and psychoanalytic fragmentation can be explored. Its significance derives from the criticality of trauma as a serious psychological and social issue encountered in different contexts and domains. At the level of its integration into the literary field, Bond and Craps (2020) maintain that the seriousness of this issue necessitates its consideration in multiple contexts such as novels, films, songs, and videos as a means of addressing its consequences on humanity. This mirrors the multiplicity of contexts through which trauma can be perceived.

In exploring its development as a distinct theory, a significant contribution to this evolution was marked by Cathy Caruth in her work titled *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Her book addresses the intersection between literature, trauma, and the sociocultural context. For Caruth (1996), traumas are psychological wounds that can be associated with Freud's notion of ‘wounds’ that originally refer to physical injuries. However, Caruth (1996) expands on the association between physical and psychological pain, stating that the term ‘wound’ was primarily used “in the medical and psychiatric literature, and most centrally in Freud's text, the term trauma is understood as a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind” (p. 3). This highlights the profound impact of trauma on an individual's well-being and psychological health.

At this level, in employing Trauma Theory as a lens for exploring the scope of anti-war drama, multiple themes and motifs can be unveiled. These involve themes of suffering, pain, depression, loss, anguish, and other notions that depict the traumatic impacts of wars in the sociocultural context. This investigation of traumas during wartime and in its aftermath is mainly mirrored in the analysis of the characters' behavior and thoughts that reflect their psychological fragmentation and portray the consequences that traumas can evoke in a given community.

10. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

In approaching the scope of anti-war drama through a psychoanalytic lens, the researchers explore traumas and psychological fragmentation as conveyed by anti-war motifs. This approach allows for displaying the power of drama in depicting realities and responding to critical real-life problems. Besides, the investigation of the American and Iraqi dramatic contexts through a common lens displays the varying manifestations of traumas evoked by the brutality of wars and their ramifications on soldiers, families, and citizens both during the war and in its aftermath.

10.1. *Anti-War Motifs and the Portrayal of Trauma in Modern Contemporary Drama*

In the context of the explored dramatic scopes, anti-war motifs are extensively encoded into the selected American and Iraqi anti-war plays in a way that manifests psychological fragmentation evoked by wars and invasions. At this level, a variety of themes are portrayed in a way that powerfully mirrors the traumatized communities. These themes are reflected in both plays through the thoughts and behavior of the characters. Among the critical anti-war themes, the following notions are significant ones that are effectively perceived through the lens of Trauma Theory.

1. Suffering, loss, and pain.
2. The futility of war.
3. Trauma and depression.
4. Departure and exile.

At the level of suffering and pain, these motifs are reflected in Matroudi's *My Blood is Stations and Shade* at multiple levels, including the following excerpt.

THE MAN. I feel my heart is leaping out of my body at any time I think about the moments when I'll meet my family.

THE WOMAN. How long have you been away from them?

THE MAN. The years during which I have not seen home, my loved ones, and family are the age of a young man who has achieved many of his dreams. (*A moment*) Nothing but sighs and meditations on the smoke of cigarettes are harvested (Hameed, 2019; Matroudi, 2019).

In the selected excerpt, The Man's expression mirrors the agony and sorrow hidden within his heart, reflecting the case of many Iraqis who were forced to depart from their families during wartime. The themes of suffering and pain are recurring motifs in anti-war drama, which are manifested as a clear reflection of psychological fragmentation. This is common between American and Iraqi scopes, as these themes are also displayed in Stryk's *American Tet*, particularly in the following quote: "Nhu. Dao means Peach Blossom. She was as sweet as a peach. ... She was always laughing ... I have no one here. No family. When you lose them, you have nothing. You don't want to live, you understand" (Stryk, 2008).

The extracted quote mirrors Nhu's suffering, representing her inner traumas due to wars and invasions that forced her to leave her country and lose her family members. This reflects pain, suffering, and loss within one scope, asserting the brutal traumatizing consequences of wars.

In line with the aforementioned anti-war themes, the futility of war is another anti-war motif that is closely connected with traumas and psychological fragmentation. This notion is reflected in various contexts within both plays. At the level of Matroudi's *My Blood is Stations and Shade*, the following excerpt effectively illustrates war's futility and brutality.

THE DRIVER. (He stops her with a signal by her hand) It's never my habit not to keep my word, how about if it's business! But, I'm sorry to tell you that I can't take you to Iraq today. The Iraq Route Man has contacted me and said the road isn't safe: you may be subject to risks of death.

THE WOMAN. Another day of sadness (Hameed, 2019; Matroudi, 2019).

The displayed quote shows the catastrophic consequences of war on people's psyche and psychological well-being. It illustrates the futile nature of wars as reflected in exiled people's sadness, sorrow, and agony. Additionally, the continuous fear of death and the absence of safety are also signs of the catastrophic impacts of wars on humanity and their contribution to creating traumatized communities. This notion of war futility is also portrayed in Stryk's work, mainly in the following excerpt that uncovers the drastic effects of wars, asserting its futile nature: "NHU. It's okay. I'm sorry, Elaine. Only. Now. Again. War. Why can't they stop? It's only death and destruction. No winning. (Tearful) Killing. Destroying. What for, can you tell me?" (Stryk, 2008).

The terms "death, destruction, killing, etc." are obvious representations of the futility and brutality of wars, which bring forth loss and agony to poor humans. This asserts that wars have no victory, but only loss, suffering,

destruction, and death. This emphasizes the futility of war, which is a key aspect igniting traumas in societies and evoking catastrophic consequences.

Similarly, trauma and depression are also critical anti-war themes portrayed in both American and Iraqi anti-war drama. Although other motifs such as suffering, pain, departure, death, and loss evoke traumatized societies, trauma and depression are also displayed as separate themes within the explored context. In Matroudi's work, the notion of depression is displayed in *The Man's* and *The Woman's* addiction to smoking, which mirrors inner conflicts and suppressed needs. The scene of *The Man* smoking is recurrently observed throughout the play, holding intensive connotations beyond its explicit signification. This is displayed in the following excerpt:

THE MAN. ... Without a cigarette, my day is incomplete; when I don't smoke. I feel my body is wearing out. ... Man without a cigarette and others is a hollow body eaten up by woes like cancer. (to himself) But who are the others; they are all. My watch has no hands, and tie knows no door; therefore, I recollect myself and decide not to smoke; but all the boats that carried me onboard showed that my worries were heaviest.

THE WOMAN. ... I have been taken into the dark ways of smoking. My lungs have been ulcerated, and their colour changed into the colour of misery (a moment): my age is stations deserted by memory (Hameed, 2019; Matroudi, 2019).

This quote reflects the inner suffering and psychological fragmentation experienced by exiled citizens as a consequence of wars. This asserts that wars create traumatized communities who spend their entire lives trying to recollect their happiness and restore their inner peace.

In this regard, the notion of trauma is also displayed in Stryk's *American Tet* at multiple levels, ranging between soldiers' traumas and families' depression. In this context, Jim's experience of war and the tough scenes he was exposed to left an everlasting imprint on his heart and mind. The cruelty of these scenes made it impossible for Jim (a former soldier) to overcome these shocks. Thus, he ended up being a new person burdened with misery and pain. This is reflected in Jim's dialogue with his son Danny.

JIM. (*He shakes his head*) No. Then they buried him alive. I arrived six weeks later. (*Pause*) We were force-marched through the jungle to get there. This is not something I ever told your mother. She says, "When you got home, you weren't Jim. Whatever happened to him?"

DANNY. What happened to you?

JIM. You didn't live if you didn't talk. No one survived who didn't talk. They buried me (Stryk, 2008).

Perceived through the lens of Trauma Theory, the quoted excerpt asserts the tough nature of traumas as their impacts linger in humans' psyche and mind, leaving them burdened with misery and pain. This emphasizes the futility of war and displays the catastrophic consequences of wars on creating traumatized societies.

Eventually, departure, exile, and family disintegration are also phases of anti-war notions that contribute to instigating traumas during wartime and in its aftermath. These themes emphasize the catastrophic impacts of wars on soldiers and families as they are forced to leave their homeland and depart from their loved ones. The theme of exile is crystallized in Matroudi's work as the character's main issue lies in their nostalgia for their homeland after years of exile. The tough conditions of *The Man* and *The Woman* are the consequences of wars, and they serve as representations of the psychological fragmentation evoked by wars and invasions. In Matroudi's work, the themes of departure and exile are displayed at multiple levels, including the following excerpt: "THE MAN. I feel I'll explode: once I arrive at the borders of Iraq, I will weep there and wash the roads with my tears. THE WOMAN. I'm frightened" (Hameed, 2019; Matroudi, 2019).

The excerpted quote mirrors the agony, sorrow, and fear shaping exiled citizens' lives. These serve as stimulators of trauma as they result in drastic ramifications for the personality and psyche of people. These feelings linger in the people's minds even beyond the physical borders of traumatizing events.

Similarly, these anti-war notions are also displayed in Stryk's *American Tet* and they assert the catastrophic nature of wars that have no victory and only result in misery, loss, and pain. In this regard, the shades of trauma are reflected by the themes of departure and family disintegration highlighted within *American Tet*. The following quote displays the manifestations of these concepts. The quoted excerpt displays Eliane's psychological suffering as she speaks about her son's departure as he engages in the American military missions in Vietnam.

And boy, has she got stories! And then there's my son, Danny. Currently serving bravely on the ground in Iraq. (She stops) Danny. Mom's thinking of you. You're in my prayers, honey. Stay safe. We're waiting for you. And it's not long now...(Stryk, 2008).

The displayed excerpt mirrors the agony and sorrow felt by soldiers and their families during wartime. This asserts the fact that wars are lose-lose games that do not bring forth but losses, pain, and suffering to all parties. In *American Tet*, this nature of wars was crystallized in Nhu's case as well in being a Vietnamese girl who lost her family during the American invasion and was forced to leave her motherland. Thus, both Americans and Vietnamese were overwhelmed with the catastrophic ramifications of war.

10.2. Divergent Visions of Trauma across American and Arab Landscapes

In approaching the selected plays through a psychoanalytic lens, it is evident that both Americana and Iraqi anti-war dramatic scopes emphasize the traumatic consequences of wars on humanity. However, some variations exist at the level of sensitivity to cultural and societal values explored in each context. In the context of *American Tet*, a broad aspect of psychological fragmentation is depicted in soldiers' suffering and their families' disintegration. This perspective is highly emphasized through an American viewpoint as it displays a societal and cultural phenomenon encountered during wartime in the American context. Therefore, as the notion of war is not central to the entire American community, the display of after-war traumas is regarded as an individual experience rather than a sociocultural and collective issue. Hence, war consequences in this scope are primarily displayed at the level of personal identity. In other words, the notion of trauma is internalized in the American context as it represents personal struggles to overcome war consequences.

Nevertheless, exploring the traumatizing impacts of war in an Iraqi anti-war context, the consequences of wars are differently portrayed. In Matroudi's *My Blood is Stations and Shade*, war is considered a collective sociocultural phenomenon rather than an individual experience. The fact that wars destroy communities, shape cultures, and influence the entire lifestyle of the invaded society reflects its drastic impacts on humanity. Trauma in this context is not limited to individual suffering, but it is rather a form of historical pain shared among generations and communities. This shows that trauma in this scope is a form of shared suffering.

Therefore, while both plays grapple with the drastic effects of war and its interconnectedness with psychological fragmentation, the American context displays a more internalized, personalized, and limited view compared to the generalized perspective of the Iraqi scope. At the level of the aftermath of war, the American context displays an individual memory showing personal fragmentation and suffering, while the Iraqi scope mirrors social and cultural fragmentation, representing a collective transformation in a community's identity. This reveals that the path to recovery through an American lens is limited to reclaiming one's self and liberating oneself from personal struggles, unlike the case in the Iraqi scope, in which recovery calls for community resilience and solidarity in an attempt to face the rape and violence of the invader.

11. CONCLUSION

Consequently, perceiving anti-war drama through a psychoanalytic lens assisted in uncovering the catastrophic ramifications of wars on humanity and communities. The illustrated anti-war motifs assert that wars have no victory as they only result in loss, suffering, pain, and depression, which underscores the futile nature of wars. The adoption of Trauma Theory throughout the analytical process revealed the effects of war on psychological fragmentation,

hindering the well-being and peace of societies. The notions of brutality, cruelty, and futility are common among American and Iraqi perspectives, showing that wars are tools of destruction at all levels. Additionally, the comparative analysis between the American and Iraqi contexts mirrored the varying representations of wars through different perspectives. Although both works acknowledge the catastrophic impacts of wars, the differing representations of these forms of suffering and pain reveal the differences between the invaded and the invaders' experiences. Although both encounter tough conditions that linger beyond physical experiences, it is still critical that the shades of psychological fragmentation vary in their severity between communal suffering and individual distress.

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