

The Intersecting Timelines of Past and Present: From Personal to Collective Trauma in the Novelist Sinan Antoon’s “Jasim’s File”

Hazem Kamel Abd Al Janabi¹, Thamir R. S. Az-Zubaidy²

Abstract

This paper investigates the disintegration of Iraq following the 2003 American invasion. It examines the impact of its aftermath in destroying sites of Iraqi knowledge and memory and shaping the traumatic experiences of Iraqi people as presented in Sinan Antoon’s story, “Jasim’s File” (2018). Accordingly, the story illustrates the impact of the American invasion in the dissemination of a fabricated or alternative reality. It demonstrates how different traumatic agents have asserted dominance and conveys the role of the American occupation of Iraq in turning personal traumas into collective ones. Thus, the paper highlights the intersection between trauma theory and postcolonial literary studies. Some of the premises of leading figures in trauma studies – Cathy Caruth, Dominick LaCapra, Marianne Hirsch, Dori Laub, and Roger Luckhurst – were inspected, to argue that Iraqi post-invasion fiction enriches the study of postcolonial trauma theory, especially when applied in an under-researched context such as Iraq. While exploring the traumatic experiences of two characters, Jasim and Zayn, the story casts light on the influence of wars, genocide, displacement, and invasion on the Iraqi people’s psyche. Further, it presents a context in which celebrating the therapeutic value of testimony increases rather than reduces the impact of trauma.

Keywords: *American Invasion, Jasim, Memory, Postcolonialism, Trauma.*

Sinan Anton and the Interest in Iraqi Trauma

The Iraqi cultural response to the traumatic outcomes of the 2003 American invasion has been multifaceted and complex. This can be identified in several significant literary texts that have employed various techniques to reflect the traumatic experiences their protagonists have undergone such as surrealistic form, detective storylines, fragmentation, and nonlinear narration. A good example of this is Sinan Antoon’s story, “Jasim’s File”, published in a collection titled *Baghdad Noir* (2018). Antoon, whose story is the focus of this paper, is among distinguished contemporary fiction writers whose works depict, in the wider context, questions of cultural memory, traumatic experience, perforated history, and oppressed minorities. Those were the main issues in his six novels, namely, *An Iraqi Rhapsody* (2002), *The Pomegranate Alone* (2010), *The Corpse Washer* (2013), *Ya Maryam (Ave Maria)* (2012), *The Baghdad Eucharist* in 2017, *Index* (2016), *The Book of Collateral Damage* (2019) and *Khuzama* (2023).

Introduction

Antoon’s story, “Jasim’s File”, is a hi(story) of individual and collective traumas that start to unfold whether by the voices of the two main characters in the story or those they talk about. Set in post-invasion Baghdad, the story describes a traumatic city whose incipient condition appears more devastating than its past and, consequently, provides no signs of a promising future. It centres on Jasim Hamza, a former patient at Al-Rashad Hospital, which is dedicated to the treatment of mentally retarded persons or those suffering from a psychological disorder. It relates Jasim’s chronicles from the night he was “liberated” by the American “cowboys” who invaded Baghdad with “iron horses” until the day he kills a university professor, almost three weeks later (Antoon 2018: 55). This incident conveys how the American invasion has spawned chaos and unleashed unprecedented and infinite monstrosity in Iraq and Baghdad, in particular. The two words “cowboys” and “iron horses” can be figuratively explored to indicate how Iraq might be perceived as a site where the American soldiers can act as they wish without being bounded by the authority of law. This is suggested in the story when Jasim described how the American tanks demolished the walls of the hospital,

¹ College of Law, University of Thi-Qar, Iraq, Mobile: +964(0)7811706141, Email: lawp1e246@utq.edu.iq, (Corresponding Author)

² Department of English, College of Education for Human Sciences, Wasit University, Iraq, Email: thrashid@uowasit.edu.iq

abolished, the authority keeping him and others inside, and frightened the inmate there who started “roaming around like terrified sheep” (Antoon 2018: 66).

The story begins at night when the American troops broke through the hospital walls, Jasim notes, “thinking it was a military camp or a weapons depot” (Antoon 2018: 55). When they found nothing, they “went [out] through another wall” (Antoon 2018: 55). This process causes big holes in the walls protecting the hospital and resonates with a bigger one where the Iraqi borders are penetrated by the invading American troops. Thus, as this process provides the opportunity for insane persons – or those believed to be – to leave the place and roam the streets, the bigger one makes Iraqi people vulnerable to trespassers. In this sense, the story shows how Iraqi people become subject to internal and external threats as well as the presence of thousands of well-equipped American soldiers whose search for “mass destruction” weapons includes hospitals, regardless of the consequences of such inclusion. As the walls are now demolished, Jasim decides to seize this opportunity and go home. Before leaving the hospital, Jasim thinks of searching for his file but he finds the files “scattered all over the floor” and hears gunshots which convince him that running out is the best option (Antoon 2018: 57).

The American soldiers were not the sole outsiders in the hospital for they were looters who infiltrated through the big holes that the American tanks had made in the walls. Those looters, Jasim notes, were “wrecking the place”, and taking beds and chairs (Antoon 2018: 56). Consequently, the raid is meant to terrify rather than inspect and to encourage chaos and disorder rather than establish order. Jasim’s reference to this event and its negative impact on the patients express the barbarity, rather than civility, of the invader who bands the Iraqi security forces to encourage looters who follow the American forces in their night raids. The reference to terrified inmates is another instance of the traumatic impact of the American invasion on the Iraqi people.

More instances of the drastic impact of the American invasion on the Iraqi people are provided later in the story. When Jasim reaches the family house, he is greeted by a boy who tells his father, Uncle Abbas, that his “crazy cousin” is at the door (Antoon 2018: 58). The boy’s words indicate overtly that Jasim is regarded as crazy among his relatives. Further, when he receives Jasim, his nephew, Uncle Abbas is holding a gun in his right hand. This indicates that keeping guns inside houses has become widely expected in Iraq following the American authorities’ decision to suspend the Iraqi security forces, providing, in this sense, the opportunity for the people to raid security headquarters and take weapons. Accordingly, the American administration enabled the spread of weapons among Iraqi people who felt compelled to own guns to ensure their safety. Jasim is surprised the following day to find that his uncle and his family had left without prior notice. When Jasim goes out to buy some food, he is interrupted by someone calling him by name (Antoon 2018: 62).

The man’s name is Zayn. Jasim is unable to remember events preceding his residence at the hospital, but Zayn asserts that they were friends during school time. Although twenty-three years have passed since that time, Zayn knows exactly where Jasim’s house is and offers to give him a ride. While driving Jasim home, Zayn relates the tragic history of his family members who are from a minority group in Iraq. He tells Jasim that Saddam confiscated his family’s house and turned it into a building for the local branch of his governing party, the Baath Party, killed his father and drove the family to the Iraqi-Iranian borders “claiming [they] were of Iranian decent” (Antoon 2018: 62-3). Two days later, Zayn offers Jasim a job because he needs his help in doing his “unfinished business”, which is killing the Baathists (Antoon 2018: 64). To make Jasim an accomplice in his project, Zayn claims that the Baathists are responsible for the murder of Jasim’s family. After two weeks of training, Jasim kills his first victim, a university professor. As such, Antoon’s story conveys how Jasim and Zayn’s narratives become reciprocally dependent and their temporal framework interactively juxtaposed. The outcome of such reciprocal dependency casts a heavy shadow on the lives of many Iraqis as these two characters’ traumas have aggravated the drastic impact of the collective one.

Discussion

Although traumatic experiences were first believed to be resulting from wars and colonization, Judith Herman proposes that they “generally involve threats to life or bodily integrity or a close personal encounter with violence and death” (1992: 33). In this sense, they are not entirely linked to the battlefield and its aftermath since people are expected continuously to experience threats to life and body. Cathy Caruth defines trauma as “an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (1996: 11). As this definition suggests, responding to an event’s traumatic experience does not happen during the moment of its manifestation but only belatedly in the forms of hallucinations and nightmares. Jeffrey Alexander (2012: 11) observes that as it is irrationally experienced, the traumatic incident is buried in the unconscious to reappear in the shape of nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor. In so doing, the repetitive response is both psychological and physical. In Antoon’s story, both Jasim and Zayn have been subject to traumatic experiences. In Jasim’s case, it is the murder of his parents and siblings that remains a buried incident from the past. When the story opens, Jasim states that hearing noises is part of his “normal soundtrack” of nightmares and that he manages to sleep soundly by taking sleeping pills (Antoon 2018:55).

Antoon’s story veers between Jasim’s narration of the present and Zayn’s memories of a traumatic past following his family’s deportation from Iraq almost three decades ago. Zayn tells Jasim that after being forcibly moved to the borders, he, his mother, and two siblings moved to cheap housing on the skirts of Tehran. His mother married another man who used to beat Zayn and his siblings. Zayn enrolled in a school in Tehran learned Persian, and later joined the Brigades of the Iraqi opposition. A few days before Zayn’s meeting with Jasim, the Brigades entered Iraq from the south and drove up north to Baghdad. The traumatic experiences of forcible removal, the loss of his father, and the step-father’s beating dictate Zayn’s determination to return which symbolises a belated response to his traumatic experience. The themes of the story are augmented by the use of stylistic devices, such as dividing the story into nine parts to reflect the disintegrated lives of both Jasim and Zayn. Moreover, Antoon’s employment of anti-narrative modes, such as open-ended and disturbance of linear chronology, mirrors the circumstances of a traumatic encounter and its impact on the victim’s psyche. With Jasim’s return to the family house and Zayn’s to Baghdad, the story depicts a spatial return to the past that corresponds with the belated consciousness of the traumatic experience.

The persisting entry of trauma between the walls of past and present is suggested by Antoon’s employment of Jasim and Zayn, who jointly piece the shards of this story. Relating stories is often observed as opening up spaces for silenced narratives to be heard. Bilyana Kostova claims that storytelling is a “therapeutic device” that “help[s] victims of trauma to cope with the overwhelming events from their past and their haunting consequences” (2014: 163). Antoon’s story provides a context that does not support this premise; instead of helping Jasim to cope with his haunting experiences, Zayn’s narration of his traumatic experience helps in implicating Jasim in Zayn’s revenge. Since both are encouraged to act after demolishing the borders of the country and the hospital, Zayn and Jasim become members of a greater project to spread chaos and meddle with the country’s culture, history, and national memory.

Mary Louise Pratt coined the term “contact zone” to refer to the “attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal consequence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures and whose trajectories now intersect” (1992: 7). By invading Iraq and demolishing its borders, America has turned the country into a traumatic “contact zone” where Iraqi citizens are forcibly brought into contact with foreign soldiers and domestic victimized persons. Arguably, following the 2003 invasion, Iraqi people’s traumatic experiences are not limited to invasion and unleashed chaos but include, as stated above, the destruction of national culture, history, and memory. Commenting on such an issue and the possibility of inheriting trauma, E. Ann Kaplan writes that “[w]hen one’s lands have been invaded and snatched away, one’s culture destroyed (or nearly so), it is as if a deep wound has been made in the social body” that is transferred to the following generations and “remains open even if split-off from daily consciousness” (2008: 46-7). Relating the notion of trauma to colonisation and occupation resonates with the premises of trauma theorists who propose that since World War II, the study of trauma has been “linked into wider political frames: survivor narratives, responses to persecution and prejudice, and to the Holocaust and other acts of mass atrocity

and genocide” (Robert Eaglestone 2014: 1). This paper would add to scholars’ efforts to expand the scope of trauma theory which is perceived as being “too Eurocentric” due to its heavy focus “on the Holocaust as the paradigm of individual and communal trauma” and its marginalization of “other atrocious events” (Eaglestone 2014: 12). More importantly, studying the traumatic experiences of non-Western settings would enrich this field because, as Susan Najita states in her definition of “realistic trauma”, the traumatic experiences of invasion and colonisation “are ongoing, not foreclosed as in the case of the Holocaust” (2006: 187). Since 2003, Iraqi people have become vulnerable to cumulative trauma caused by both: the occupying forces and the armed groups. Investigating the rise of traumatic experiences in Iraq following the US-led invasion, AbdulKareem AlObaidy (2013) proposes that a survey made in Baghdad in 2010 showed that about 55% of young male adolescents had traumatic experiences.

Although trauma studies have widened the scope of traumatic experiences, their European causes and impacts are still vibrant. Hussein Bulhan (1985: 37) notes that “The discipline of psychology [...] from its beginning to the present, has been enmeshed in [Europe’s] history of conquest and violence”. “Jasim’s File” explores the aftermath of the 2003 invasion of Iraq by Western armies from the US, the United Kingdom, and Spain. It has identified this by describing the details of the US troops’ raid on the hospital and also their role in permitting Jasim and Zayn to play intrinsic roles. Accordingly, this story is a counter-narrative to that of the invader which claims that invading the country is meant to free its people from the dictator’s grip and dismantle its weapon of mass destruction. Although being a perpetrator in this story, Zayn can be regarded as a trauma survivor. His story is, in fact, his testimony which narrates part of his family’s traumatic history. The same can be said about Jasim’s account of the three weeks starting from the moment he leaves the hospital till the day he kills the university professor. Narrating or recovering the traumatic past is an insatiable task for the traumatic person who might not remember all past episodes. Regardless of its painful impacts, remembering the past remains essential, Leela Gandhi observes, for enacting a “historical and psychological recovery,” even though there would be “gaps and fissures” (2019: 8). “Jasim’s File” draws attention to the evils of the process of fabricated or alternative memory which is operating in Iraq since the 2003 invasion. A striking instance is when Zayn starts filling the fissures in Jasim’s memory with fabricated events. Other examples of this process will be highlighted in this paper.

While referring to the two characters’ role in the wave of violence following the American invasion of Iraq, it is important to mention Ashis Nandy (1983) who notes that colonisation initiates a culture of violence that often mimics that of the oppressor. As conveyed in this story, the culture of violence in Iraq exacerbates the pernicious ramifications of occupation and causes a surge in the traumatic experiences Iraqi people have encountered since the 1980s. It is worth noting that during and after the war with Iran, and also the invasion of Kuwait, and the subsequent UN sanctions, the Iraqi regime had an internal war with some battalions in the Iraqi opposition. Although this internal war was fought for political reasons, it entailed ideological, racial, and ethnic conflicts and ended up with voluntary and forced displacement. During the 1980s, the Iraqi regime issued decree 666 by which, Elizabeth Campbell (2010) purports, the regime stripped Faili Kurds of their citizenship, confiscated their properties, and drove them to the borders with Iran. A striking instance of this is Zayn’s family members who were labelled as Iranian and driven to the borders. Frantz Fanon (1986) explores such an issue with regard to the black person who is educated according to the white coloniser’s syllabus but discovers, later, that he is not part of its history, a process which culminated in stripping him of his subjectivity. In the same sense, treating Zayn’s family members as being of Iranian origins has stripped them of their Iraqi subjectivity and identity. The residues of such an experience have caused a psychic wound or trauma especially when they are coupled with deportation, punishment, and loss of family members.

By implicating Jasim in Zayn’s revenge, Antoon’s story introduces a context in which speaking about the traumatic event and the presence of, what Dori Laub (1992: 68) terms as the “empathic listener”, might lead to another traumatic experience or secondary trauma. In this sense, Antoon’s story problematizes the celebration of the therapeutic value of testimony in reducing the impact of trauma. Jasim and Zayn’s traumatic experiences are physical wounds that cause mental ones. The relation between the two wounds is also observed by Roger Luckhurst (2008: 3) who suggests that trauma is no longer restricted to one individual but spreads to those nearby since it “leaks between mental and physical symptoms, between ...

victims and their listeners ...to the extent of claiming secondary victimhood”. The mental or psychological wounds in this story, however, retain their physical conditions in the wounds Zayn and Jasim inflict on their victims, such as the university professor. Luckhurst’s premise of the transmissibility of traumatic experiences and claiming second victimhood, or what Laurie Pearlman and Karen Saakvitne (1995) term as vicarious traumatization, resonates with Laub’s idea of “bonding” which the testimonial process articulates between the traumatic person and the listener (1992: 70). As Jasim remembers nothing about his family, he is not entitled to provide a testimony. It is Zayn who does so and his narration of his traumatic experience has affected Jasim who is persuaded to participate jointly with Zayn in killing persons on the list which might include the perpetrators, as Zayn notes, of the murder of his family. Hence, a notion of bonding has been established between the speaker and the listener. Accordingly, Zayn’s trauma is transmitted to Jasim. However, the impact of their traumatic experiences increases sharply when they start killing people because it extends beyond them to entail families of the persons they murder. As such, their traumatic experiences are no longer personal. This is how Antoon’s story presents Iraqi people as being victims of a collective trauma and acts of violence and monstrosity that the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 has unleashed and perpetuated.

Fabricating Alternative Memory

As stated above, this story sheds light on the process of fabricating an alternative memory. When Zayn offers Jasim a job, he tells him “We have a lot of unfinished business” (Antoon 2018: 64) which is killing the Baathists. Zayn disapproves Jasim’s remark that this is the job of the police and security forces saying that “There is no police or security now. Plus, they were all criminals themselves” (Antoon 2018: 64-5). In this way, the American invasion has initiated a high-scale process of distorting information and replacing it with a forged one. An example is noticed in Zayn’s words that the Baathists are the murderers of Jasim’s family and also that the police are “criminals”. By disbanding the police and other security forces shortly after the invasion, Mark Thompson (2015) notes, the American administration has paved the way for the emergence and success of armed groups. Indeed, as stated in this story, Zayn is encouraged by the American troops to prevail in this chaotic situation by providing him with permits to use guns and pass checkpoints (Antoon 2018: 66). Although Zayn observes that Saddam is to be blamed for what happened to his family, he avenges himself by killing persons and also training Jasim to murder people whose names are on the list. Accordingly, the American troops are responsible for letting Jasim, a murderer who suffers from amnesia, and Zayn, who suffers from a traumatic past, take centre stage.

After investigating the traumatic experiences of the American invasion on the Iraqi people as shown in this story, it is important to comment on the process of narrating the traumatic event. Laub claims that the survivor of the traumatic event “is not truly in touch either with the core of his traumatic reality or with the fatedness of its reenactments and thereby remains entrapped in both”. To cope with this state of entrapment, Laub (1992: 69) adds, “a process of constructing a narrative ... has to be set in motion”. Jasim does not remember how his family members were killed. When he goes home following the American troops’ raid on the hospital, Uncle Abbas asks if Jasim “remember[s] anything about the accident” and he responds “No”. Moreover, he does not remember the faces of his family members and this is why he asks his uncle for their pictures. He surprises his uncle by asking if the police have caught “the bastard who killed my family” (Antoon 2018: 59). Uncle Abbas knows that Jasim is the perpetrator and this is why he and his family leave the house the following day. As Jasim has no access to his past, Zayn takes the chance to construct its narrative by claiming that the Baathists are the perpetrators of his family members, and this is how he turns Jasim into an accomplice in his revenge against them.

Zayn’s choice of Jasim as a partner in his project of revenge is done according to a study of his case. Zayn tells Jasim that he “vouched for” him because he is “the perfect candidate” who has no “past” or “no access to the past” and “[n]o sentimental attachments” and also because – Zayn, here, suggests that it is Jasim’s plan – “you wanna get back at them for killing your folks” (Antoon 2018: 65). Although Jasim assures Zayn that he is “still not sure who did it”, the latter presumes that the killer is someone who they could identify on his list. This is how he tries to fill the jigsaw of Jasim’s amnesia relying on a false assumption which is an instance of filling the fissures in his memory with alternative or fabricated events. To prepare Jasim for his mission, Zayn takes Jasim to a spot in Baghdad to practice shooting. Two weeks later, Jasim murders

the university professor. Through this incident, Antoon illustrates how Zayn and Jasim have become agents in disturbing the process of knowledge and education and also in disseminating violence as a tool of terror and control.

At the end of the story, Antoon discloses the impact of this process of distorting knowledge, whose scope entails national memory and documentation, and dictating an alternative one. While Jasim is killing his first victim, Antoon takes the readers to a site about twenty kilometres from the hospital which was the target of the raid at the beginning of this story. There, a boy appears herding his goats. The boy goes “through the heaps of trash that had been dropped off for the first time in weeks”, finds a paper, and reads “Jasim Hamza Khidir ... Amnesia ... Killed his entire family” (Antoon 2018: 68). As he drops the paper to search for something valuable, one of the goats eats it. This paper is one from Jasim’s file which is one of the files Jasim saw scattered over the floor before leaving the hospital. Patients’ files at any hospital are an example of the archive. Archiving, as Maggie B. Gale and Ann Featherstone argue, is a “site of power relations”, as well as a signifier of the “ownership of information and knowledge” (2011: 17). The American troops’ raid on the hospital which entails demolishing its walls and scattering the patients’ files over the floor has damaged this site of knowledge, disturbed the power relations it signifies, and led to treating this archive as rubbish. Martine Hawkes (2018: 32) states that “the archive plays a dominant role in forming the collective narrative of an event”. Archives are the option left, Hawkes (63) maintains when no living person or memory is possible to consult. Hence, destroying archives undermines the power and authority they symbolise and also the collective memory residing in them. In so doing, scattering the patients’ files and treating the written documentation of the patients, the reports of their cases, and treatment as rubbish has erased this sample of knowledge about those patients and the reasons why they are kept in this hospital.

Demolishing collective memory and archives murdering a university professor and implicating him in the murder of Jasim’s family indicates a systematic process that is initiated, or operated, by the American troops to distort facts and destroy major components of Iraqi knowledge and memory. In addition to pushing insane or psychologically disturbed people like Jasim to take centre stage in eliminating the country from its academic staff, such as the university teacher, the US invasion participates in engulfing the country in a state of amnesia where documents about the country, its history, official sites, and collective memory are damaged. Moreover, it opens up opportunities for constructing an alternative memory as Zayn does with Jasim. Through this sole example of the raid on the hospital accompanied by looters, Antoon’s story sheds light on the impact of the American invasion on Iraqi culture, knowledge, and documentation. Moreover, it demonstrates how disbanding Iraqi security forces in May 2003 by Paul Bremer, the then Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, has opened up the space for the emergence of armed groups and left many important sites vulnerable to continuous raids by looters.

It is worth noting that the Coalition forces have failed and even refused “to protect Iraq’s incomparable cultural heritage, exposing it to looters and art thieves” (Global Policy Forum: 13). In addition, there is a reference to the US troops’ role in destroying gates of buildings, hence opening the way for looters to intervene. Douglas Cox comments on the process of destroying statues of Saddam Hussein wherever they found them regardless of the significance of the places where they were erected. He asserts how destroying statues commenced a process of destroying those sites by noting that the “U.S. forces reportedly entered the grounds of the National Library and Archives building in Iraq, where they tore down another statue of Saddam Hussein located near the entrance. Following this, looting and destruction began” (1027-28). As stated here, this important site of valuable books and resources had been destroyed under the pretext of destroying the dictator’s statues. Indeed, following the American invasion in 2003, acts of vandalism began to be reported in public properties, whether in museums, libraries, official headquarters, universities, factories, and hospitals. In this story, Antoon presents the hospital as a miniature of other sites all over Iraq to propose, arguably, that no official site has ever escaped the American troops’ raids.

Conclusion

Antoon’s story depicts the fraught circumstances under which two individuals navigate the aftermath of their traumatic events to evidence the role of the American invasion in turning an individual trauma into a

collective one. It represents interrelating layers of trauma in Iraq arising from systematic oppression, invasion, and acts of extreme violence. Through the reference to scattered files, such as Jasim's file, looting, murdering academic staff, and banding security forces, the story casts light on the enduring ramifications of the American invasion on Iraqi heritage, memory, history, and culture. The story portrays how segments of Jasim's former life, which have been revealed by a boy at the end of the story, have been falsely articulated, modified, or changed. Zayn's intervention in altering Jasim's life story indicates another process of modification, distortion, and replacement on the national stage. By permitting vandalism, or legitimising it, as when the American troops demolish the walls of the hospital, Antoon's story portrays how Iraqi people have become vulnerable to chaos, oblivion, and invisibility and how the American invasion has negatively impinged upon Iraqi people's history, culture, and identity. In so doing, the intersecting timelines of past and present in the story portray how the invasion has replaced Saddam's regime with another horrible tyranny. Moreover, the story enacts in miniature how the 2003 invasion has opened up the space for criminal behaviours to rein and so personal traumatic experiences are no longer personal but graduated to be collective.

References

- Alexander, Jeffrey C. (2012). *Trauma a Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Antoon, Sinan. (2018). 'Jasim's File'. In Samuel Shimon (ed.), *Baghdad Noir*, 55-68. New York: Akashic.
- AlObaidy, AbdulKareem. (2013). 'Psychological trauma: experience from Iraq'. *Journal of Trauma and Treatment*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4172/2167-1222.S4-005>
- Bulhan, Hussein. (1985). *Frantz Fanon and the Psychology of Oppression*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Campbell, Elizabeth. (2010). 'The Faili Kurds of Iraq: Thirty years without nationality'. Ocha Services. <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/faili-kurds-iraq-thirty-years-without-nationality> (Retrieved 6 December 2021).
- Caruth, Cathy, (ed.). (1995). 'Introduction'. In *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, 3-12. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP.
- Caruth, Cathy. (1996). *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP.
- Cox, Douglas. (2010). 'Archives and records in armed conflict: international law and the current debate over Iraqi records and archives.' *Catholic University Law Review*, 59(4): 1001-1056. <https://scholarship.law.edu/lawreview/vol59/iss4/5> [Retrieved 5 December 2021].
- Eaglestone, Robert. (2014). 'Introduction'. In Gert Buelens, Sam Durrant, and Robert Eaglestone (eds.), *The Future of Trauma Theory: Contemporary Literary Cultural Criticism*, 1-8. Oxon and New York: Routledge.
- Eaglestone, Robert. (2014). 'Knowledge, "afterwardness" and the future of trauma theory'. In Gert Burlens, Samuel Durrant, and Robert Eaglestone. (eds.). *The Future of Trauma Theory: Contemporary Literary Cultural Criticism*, 11-21. Oxon and New York: Routledge.
- Fanon, Frantz. (1986). *Black Skin, White Masks*. London: Pluto.
- Gale, Maggie B. and Ann Featherstone. (2011). 'The imperative of the archive: creative archive research'. In Baz Kershaw and Helen Nicholson (eds), *Research Method in Theatre and Performance*, 17-40. Edinburgh: Edinburg University Press.
- Gandhi, Leela. (2019). *Postcolonial theory: A critical introduction (2nd ed)*. Columbia University Press.
- Global Policy Forum, *War and Occupation in Iraq (2007)*, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/977ABA699FB1D8E1852572F400648580-globalpolicyforum-waroccupationiraq-june2007.pdf> [Retrieved 5 December 2021]
- Harris, Adrienne. (2003) 'Relational mourning in a mother and her three-year-old after September 11'. In Susan W. Coates, Jane L. Rosenthal and Daniel Schechter (eds.), *September 11. Trauma and Human Bonds*, 143-164. Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press,
- Hawkes, Martine. (2018). *Archiving loss: Holding Places for Difficult Memories*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Herman, Judith. (1992). *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence – From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*. New York: Basic Books.
- Kaplan, E. Ann. (2008). 'Traumatic contact zones and embedded translators'. In Kaplan, E. Ann and Ban Wang, (eds.), *Trauma and Cinema: Cross-Cultural Explorations*. 45-64. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Kostova, Bilyana. (2014). "'Time to write them off?': impossible voices and the problem of representing trauma in *The Virgin Suicides*'. In Marita Nadal and Monica Calvo (eds.), *Trauma in Contemporary Literature: Narrative and Representation*. 163-77. New York and Oxon: Routledge. Doi:10.4324/9781315880501-14
- LaCapra, Dominick. (2014). *Writing History, Writing Trauma*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Laub, Dori. (1992). 'Bearing witness, or the vicissitudes of listening'. In Felman, Shoshana and Dori Laub (eds.), *Testimonies: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*. 57-74. New York and London: Routledge.
- Luckhurst, Roger. (2008). *The Trauma Question*. London and New York: Routledge.

- Luckhurst, Roger. (2012). 'In war times: fictionalizing Iraq'. *Contemporary Literature*, (53).4: 713-737.
- Najita, Susan. (2006). *Decolonizing Cultures in the Pacific: Reading History and Trauma in Contemporary Fiction*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Nandy, Ashis. (1983). *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pearlman, Laurie, and Karen Saakvitne. (1995). *Trauma and the Therapist: Countertransference And Vicarious Traumatization in Psychotherapy with Incest Survivors*. New York: Norton & Co.
- Pratt, Mary Louise. (1992). *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Thompson, Mark. 'How disbanding the Iraqi army fueled ISIS', *Time*, 28 May 2015. <https://time.com/3900753/isis-iraq-syria-army-united-states-military/> [Retrieved 10 December 2021].