The Representation of the Iraq War in Selected Anglo-American and Iraqi Novels

Pshtiwan Faraj Mohammed

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Arts and Humanities

Brunel University London

November 2015

Abstract

This thesis explores representation of the Iraq War in selected Anglo-American and Iraqi novels, examining how several authors have employed this theme in their narratives. The featured novelists are chosen from many writers who focus their efforts and their writing on this conflict. Criterion for selection included offering a critique of the diverse perspectives from which the conflict was perceived, the texts' engagement with the political conundrums underpinning war and its approach, how such fiction engages with a contemporary audience and what perspective are deployed to do so. Their public visibility provides the basis of one interpretative strand of the thesis. This study also explores and conceptualises how this conflict has entered the cultural consciousness and to what degree the novels fictionalise the conflict as their main subject, and assesses through which thematic emphases.

The texts chosen and to be analysed are pivotal to our understanding of contemporary Iraq and its recent history. It will be argued that the thematic content of these texts contextualise modern war's multiple effects within not only the fictional textual world, but as well as their imaginative characters these representations become part of the experience at least vicariously of the audiences who read them. The texts discussed in subsequent chapters are either originally written in, or translated into English (for publication), and therefore all available in English, one major criterion of textual selection. It is interesting to examine the theme of the Iraq War and the historical and pragmatic vein and cultural point of reference from which authors write and has come to dominate the discourse of some contemporary novelists. The goal is to critically explore how the war has become a focal point and the framework of their narratives. The thesis will attempt to analyse how such novels depict the effects of political violence and why they are drawn to powerfully articulate the gruelling reality and experience of those fictionally engaged by and/or affected by it.

It will be proposed that novels of and about this conflict are essential to study, understand, and engage with because of the content and the message they attempt to convey which is so crucial to understanding contemporary faultiness in socio-cultural histories, and the critical themes they utilize in writing and the dynamics through which they fictionalize their stories. Such fictional representations of this war serve an important societal, cultural, aesthetic and symbolic function. Thus the study encapsulates how novels of and about the Iraq War reveal and recapture the physical, psychological, and interpersonal losses that are felt by the civilians and military alike.

Contents

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the support, dedication, and mentorship of my advisor Professor Philip Tew, who was always wonderfully supportive when I needed his guidance. I am thankful for his constructive and valuable input. His advice allowed me to focus on key concepts and patterns through which I was able to critically evaluate the selected texts, for which I am indeed indebted. I thank him for transforming my life.

I am grateful for the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research particularly the Human Capacity and Development Program (HCDP) that sponsored the tuition fee and life maintenance for the period of my study at Brunel. Without this scholarship program this study would not have been possible. I would like to especially thank Lucia Rose from Aberystwyth University for her valuable time and help with the proofreading of the early drafts of the thesis.

I would like to thank the good people who work the circulation desks at two academic libraries specially, National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, Wales and the Central Library in Liverpool, North West England who were very helpful when I visited their archives. Gathering sources was a nearly painless endeavour as the systematic efficiency practiced at these libraries assisted me greatly as I gathered a variety of sources while this project was in its hazy phases.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the fantastic support provided by my wonderful wife Shady A. Karem for her continuous help in getting me through the most difficult process and for standing with me at all the time. A special thank you for the patience, affection, strength and motivation you always gave me throughout this period.

Declaration

I declare that all the material contained in this thesis is my own work.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my late father Faraj M. Ahmad (1932-1982) a conscientious objector and unwilling conscript who was missed in action in the Iraq-Iran War in 1982. We his family never heard of him again.

To my mother Hayat S. Sulaiman with love and eternal appreciation.

To my wonderful wife Shady Karem and my dear daughter Pelya.

The Representation of the Iraq War in Selected Anglo-American and Iraqi Novels

Introduction

This thesis explores the representation of the Iraq War in selected Anglo-American and Iraqi novels, examining how several authors have employed this as a key theme in their fictional narratives. The selected novelists chosen for this study are taken from those many writers who focus their efforts and their writing on the Iraq War story. Criteria for selection included offering a critique of the diverse perspectives from which the conflict was perceived, the text's engagement with the political conundrums underpinning war and its approach, how such fiction engages with a contemporary audience and what perspectives are deployed to do so. Their public visibility provides the basis of one interpretative strand of the thesis. The study also explores and conceptualises how this conflict has entered the cultural consciousness and to what degree the novels fictionalise the conflict as their main subject, and assesses through which thematic emphases. According to Stacey Peebles (2011) stories from contemporary American wars in Iraq are only now beginning to be told and that these narratives "reveals what it means to fight in a particular war as well as how that fighting reflects the politics and culture of the nation"(2).

The central claim is that the texts chosen and to be analysed are pivotal to our understanding of contemporary Iraq and its recent history. It will be argued that the thematic content of these texts contextualise modern war's multiple effects within not only the fictional textual world, but as well as their imaginative characters these representations become part of the experience at least vicariously of the audiences who read them. As Suman Gupta (2011) points out most of the literary texts about Iraq War are "either explicitly against the invasion or against war in general" (13). The texts discussed in subsequent chapters are either originally written in, or translated into English (for publication), and therefore all available in English, one other major criterion of textual selection. It is interesting to examine the theme of the Iraq War and the historical and pragmatic vein and cultural point of reference from which authors write and has come to dominate the discourse of contemporary novelists concerning the conflict. The goal is to critically explore how the war has become a focal point and the framework of their narratives. The thesis will attempt to analyse how such novels depict the effects of political violence and why such novelists are drawn to powerfully articulate the gruelling reality and experience of characters who are fictionally engaged by and/or affected by it.

It will be proposed that novels of and about this conflict are essential to study, understand, and engage with because of the content and the message they are attempting to convey which

is so crucial to understanding contemporary faultiness in socio-cultural histories, and the critical themes they utilize in writing and the dynamics through which they fictionalize their stories. Such fictional representations of this war serve an important societal, cultural, aesthetic and symbolic function. As aesthetic and cultural expressions such literature can reveal subtler or more neglected truths and histories and they are in effect filling the gaps which the official military story and political discourse have somewhat neglected. As Stacey Peebles(2011) shows that in the Iraq War stories one gets the sense that " the narrative of Iraq has already been written-by the historical and political circumstances, by the commanders and strategists, by the people of Iraq who are in conflict both with the Americans and each other" (164). The study will reveal how fiction can encapsulate and encompass the physical, psychological, and interpersonal losses that are felt by the civilians and military alike, shaping their perspectives and influencing the future.

The literary representation of this war started during the conflict itself and has since been elaborated in an enormous variety of fictional and non-fictional works. Therefore, the relevance and contribution of the texts analysed in this thesis are important when located within this thematic current. The literature of the Iraq War, in the novel and other narrative forms occupies the American, British and Iraqi popular culture and fictions. Suman Gupta (2011) points out that during the Iraq invasion a mass culture of interpretation prevailed. He writes that "It wouldn't be too far-fetched to claim that between 2003- and 2005, the invasion of Iraq generated a widespread- with some particularly dynamic modes-mass culture of critical engagement with texts, in a pragmatic, immediate, interpretative fashion"(25-26). He shows that during and directly after this war, numerous fictional and non-fictional literatures were written, published, sold, read and critically analysed. This mass interpretative field included numerous published war stories, war dramas, war poetry, war memoirs, war blogs, and war novels. It is within this context that I will continue to reflect on what Suman Gupta was suggesting as necessary steps to fully understand the effect of the Iraq War in the global consciousness of people "To continue in an analytical vein a great number of geographical perspectives and cultural traditions need to be taken into account"(185). Therefore to complete this task I shall explore an adequate account of the Anglo-American and Iraqi novels that have emerged out of this conflict in the forthcoming chapters.

A thorough survey of contemporary literary criticism suggests there is a need for a genre-wide comparative study of Anglo-American and Iraqi novels of and about the Iraq War and that the creation of such a critical text will bridge a scholarly gap. Presently there are only a few critical studies, in essays, articles, or book-length volumes that focus on the literature of

this war. What this scholarship tends to do, though, is to look at the literature of the Iraq War either in general broad terms or superficially. Many of these studies do not focus on a specific literary genre such as the novel, for example. Finally, many of the articles and essays, even when looking at this literature fail to examine the texts specifically as Anglo-American and Iraqi Novels of and about Iraq War. In such responses novels are grouped regardless of the nationalities of their authors, and neglect a specific set of Iraq War literature defining characteristics such as perspective or experiential engagement that are crucial in situating such texts. A detailed critique and analysis of a list of such studies will be explored in the next section entitled 'History of Literary Criticism of the Iraq War Novels'.

One main purpose of this thesis, *The Representation of the Iraq War in Selected Anglo-American and Iraqi Novels* is to create and articulate a set of standards by which the corpus of novels of and about Iraq War be assessed and classified, and by which they might be critically analysed. Using a pragmatic set of defining thematic focus, the interdisciplinary nature of this research will utilize a *polemological* approach to bring together different theoretical, cultural, and fictional perspectives that influence our understanding of narrative representations of and about the Iraq War. This approach is useful in examining public perception and cultural representation of the war experience, especially how some literary novels debate the social and historical consequences and general ramifications of the Iraq War. Additionally how novels speculate on the question of whether this conflict was inevitable or could have been avoided, and what, if any, alternative policies might have vetoed the outbreak of it, or might have changed the outcomes.

The neologism '*polemology'* remains either unheard of or known to only a few specialists and was originally conceived as a discipline based on scientific methods and academic objectivity to enable scientists, scholars and academics make sense of war and function as thinking and responsible citizens striving for peace. The word 'Polemo'' stems from ancient Greek for the analysis of human war and conflict. The French sociologist Gaston Bouthoul invented this new word *Polemology* in his landmark monograph originally published in 1951 as *Les Guerres* [Wars] and retitled *Traite de Polemologie* [Treatise on Polemology] in 1976 which was published by Payot in Paris.[1] Bouthoul devoted his career to combining knowledge and methodologies of all social sciences into a new interdisciplinary field of research and reflection about war. It is within this in mind that this thesis's approach can be

[1] Gardener, Hall and Oleg Kobtzeff ''General Introduction Polemology''. *The Ashgate Research Companion to War Origins and Prevention.*Eds. Gardener, Hall and Oleg Kobtzeff. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012. Print. 1-35.

considered polemological. Before I explain the polemological approach of this study I shall in a few words draw attention to and through some light on to clarify Gaston Bouthoul's neologism Polemology.

Bouthoul believed in an objective scientific study of war and was promoting interdisciplinary scientific study of war and peace. His approach was interestingly based on social scientific observations hoping to produce both a scientific taxonomy and a profound chronology of war, aggressiveness, clashes and opposing wills. In his book *Le Defi de la Guerre* (1976) Bouthoul defines the term as ''Polemology presents itself as a scientific study of war''. And this systematic study of war ''seeks to analyse and interpret the structural causes (demo-economic, geographic, mental...) which engender collective aggressivity'' (p.34). Gaston was interested in revealing how cultural discourses can be part of the materiality of war and he insisted on cultural encoding of war. His polemological studies involved a critique of a culture that consecrated war. In his treaties of and about Polemology he revealed that in order to eliminate the phenomenon of war, it was essential to ''deconsecrate war'' through scientific sociological and cultural channels. Gaston was discovering how the social, political, cultural and psychological factors interact and to be discovered in the mentalities of people over the long term. In all his writing he was tracing out the structural features of war at a given time across the globe and periodizing across history and recording it for posterity.[2]

Thus the polemological approach of this thesis, albeit in a different and meticulous way, categorizes the Iraqi, American and British novelistic responses to the Iraqi War. In reading and analysing fictional narratives this study fuses knowledge and methodologies of social and

[2] As a pioneer of the sociology of war and a talented prolific researcher Gaston Bouthoul established not only the French Institute of Polemology at the University of Stratesbourg in France, he also published two journals; *Guerre et Paix* and *Etudes des Polemologiques* and several other treaties and essays on the sociological and cultural studies of war. In his treaties Gaston sorted out periodicity, intensity, typologies distinguishing ultraconflicts, macroconflicts, microconflicts and infraconflicts. Some critics argue that Bouthoul's polemological approach to understanding war and conflict sought to preserve a scientific character and was to achieve complete political and emotional detachment, avoiding politicization and polemics. While Bouthoul's approach avoids personal feelings and turns into science and neutral observations when writing about war and tragedies, some academics critique him for failing to do that. For example Daniel Pick (1993) in his *War Machine: The Rationalization of Slaughter in the Modern Age* argues that ''For Bouthoul the distancing is the aim-the detachment of science. Yet his text is unable-whether willing or not- to avoid politisization, polemic or indeed the disclosure of intense anxiety'' (268). Other critics such as Jeronimo Molina argue that ''his kind of pacifism was not declamatory and moralist, but profoundly realist''.

political sciences to enlarge and articulate an understanding of the dynamics of this conflict as are imagined in selected literary texts written by both established and lesser-known novelists. This thesis will draw upon a range of primary sources concerned with war including fiction, literary criticism, philosophy, politics, history, psychoanalysis and other human sciences. The study will classify and critically analyse its selected novels that feature the Iraq War as their main subject using the author's thematic and content-based defining characteristics. Each chapter of this study will address specific defining thematic contexts, utilize and apply the extant criticism of such novels related to that thematic tendency as well as utilising appropriate and relevant theoretical conceptual sources. The result will be an interdisciplinary study encompassing the genre of the novel and the sub-genre of novels of and about the Iraq War that are written from different authorial perspectives in terms of national and gender backgrounds. In doing so, this study aims to contribute a new perspective to current scholarly debates about the imaginary works of and about the Iraq War and presents a critical examination of the thematic content of seventeen Anglo-American and Iraqi novels which I suggest are pivotal to our understanding of how this conflict is captured in fictional works and cultural narratives.

In other words, the thesis explores why and how the conflict preoccupies many novels and discussions, and why the war features as a thematic topic in a selected corpus of novels. The study traces the nexus between the Iraq War and literary novels emerging out of this period. In many respects my choice of the texts are eclectic, the novelists to be discussed are of different cultural, national and gender backgrounds including British, American, Iraqi, male and female, combatant and non-combatant authors. The discussion of the key novels will be linked to and juxtaposed with a larger cast of intellectual contributors and major political, philosophical, legal, ethical, sociological and military conceptual sources, which includes Schinkel, Zizek, Cavarero, Causewitz, Hobbes, Kant, Freud, and a plethora of other important figures whose social scientific theories and insights will be applied to enhance, assist and engage with the analysis and reading of the fictional works. Thus the present study seeks to bring together this apparently eclectic collection of writings and perspectives that raise disconcerting questions about the legal, moral, ethical and political ramifications of this conflict and subsequently our understanding of how this political predicament has entered and shaped the cultural consciousness of the first decade of the twenty-first century.

What is presented here is a kind of close reading to analyse and discuss fictional works thematically; and in doing so attempt a careful synthesis with theoretical works drawn from major relevant thinkers. I seek to offer a finely tuned comparison between the fictional

representation of the Iraq War and its political, moral and ethical contexts. These will be shown to be reflective and of historical interest of the current period in which they were written, offering a critical overview of the selected novels examining the war through the eyes of literary novelists. As writers of fiction their visions encompass and provide unique experiences, not only about how the war evolved but also the way attitudes towards it mutated. There is neither a published book or a critical study about the specific genre of novels of and about the Iraq War within different cultural traditions, nor an interdisciplinary approach is being used to analyse the subjects and themes of the novels highlighted in this study. In the first chapter four British novels will be examined. In the second and third chapters eight American novels written by male and female, combatant and non-combatant authors will be analysed. And finally in the fourth chapter five Iraqi and Arab-authored novels will be studied.

Chapter One examines how British novelists responded to the war in Iraq. It critically examines Ian McEwen's *Saturday* (2005), Jonathan Coe's *The Closed Circle* (2004), Melissa Ben's *One of Us* (2008), and Julia Jarman's *Peace Weavers* (2004). By drawing on political sciences, moral philosophy and international relation theories and the conception of interventionism this chapter explores how the selected fictions critically engage with and challenge the dominant political rhetoric aimed at justifying the war as a legal and/or humanitarian intervention. This chapter argues that British authors take issue with the moral and legal justification of the war and that is why we can find an alternative rhetoric in such fiction. They provide an anti-interventionist discourse that denounced the war as an illegal and/or immoral undertaking and they refute the arguments set forth by pro-war people, media and the government. This chapter illustrates that Iraq War shapes the contours of some contemporary British novels. In effect such British fictions anatomise how the decision to intervene in Iraq generated a climate of fear, uncertainty and has increasingly left a psychological impact on the nation's collective imagination. Chapter one has reading of four British texts, McEwan's *Saturday*, Coe's *Closed Circle*, Benn's *One of Us*, and Jarman's *Peace Weavers*. These texts reflect a range of satire and anger of the representations of the anti-war sentiment. The most difficult text is McEwan's since the pro-war lobby is given voice too with Perowne. Benn's *One of Us* is based on the true story of an anti-war suicide, Malachi Ritscher, who killed himself in Chicago in 2006- and there was a huge media reaction to his self-immolation. Equally, Benn is responding to the ethical stance taken by ministers who prominently performed anti-war resignation. The four texts seek to challenge and problematize certain discourses which have developed around the Iraq War. This chapter suggests that the capacity of such fictions

about Iraq also lies in addressing other universal themes such as morality, legality, the magnitude of the conflict, and the good and evil (positively or negatively) that resulted from intervention. As the war declined in popularity, British fiction voiced vocal and strong opposition, addressing themes of public dissent, anti-war activism, and resistance to militarism. This chapter analyses how such fiction attempts to debate and reflect on the arguments both for and against that intervention considering the potential unjustifiability of US-UK-led invasion. The analysis of these threads will provide an example of the current panorama of how the Iraq War is represented in contemporary British novels.

As I will explain in detail later, these texts satisfy the criteria which Philip Tew sets out in *The Contemporary British Novel* (2007) emphasizing that "certainly the literary aesthetic, perhaps as a collective unconsciousness, represents inflections of the wider Zeitgeist: both are affected profoundly by the historical shifts, by changes in cultural experience, and by eventfulness"(193). Tew introduces the concept of *narrative mirroring* that fiction reflects the cultural and/or historical, showing that contemporary fiction may respond to contemporary conditions of life and its emphases either culturally or aesthetically. Tew argues that major traumatological world events such as 9/11 and the Iraq War have reshaped both aesthetic and cultural sensibilities and that literature co-exists with such hard external realities. Therefore, considered as historical, political and cultural narratives, the selected texts offer very largely an alternative narrative that interrogates the legal and moral basis of this intervention, which I will suggest, can best be defined as an anti-interventionist discourse.

Chapter Two will analyse four American novels of and about the conflict written by civilian and veteran male authors, which are Ben Fountain's *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* (2012), Walter Mean Dyer's *Sunrise Over Fallujah* (2008), Tom Maremaa's *Metal Heads* (2009) and Kevin Powers *The Yellow Birds* (2012). The first three novelists did not have first-hand military experience; the exception was Kevin Powers who served as a machine gunner in Mosul city in Iraq. These four texts are the most classic of treatments, looking at the war narrative as combat experience. Each of the four sections that follow focus on central themes common to these narratives: first is the motivation of their protagonists to go to Iraq; second is the death of civilians or the human cost of war; third is the death of American fighting peers; and fourth is dehumanization in combat and the desire to kill in such a conflict situation. This chapter will draw on various established critical sources in each relevant section to explore the four mentioned themes. Importantly the analysis will consider how these authors understand the overall process of going to war and its effects upon individuals

involved in such a conflict, and the interplay of subsequent experiences with the young American soldier protagonist's original motives for doing so. Finally this chapter argues that such American novels ought to be considered as cultural and artistic vehicles worthy of serious study, and useful for further debate and reflection about the American invasion of Iraq. Both veteran and civilian male authored novelists who write from the perspectives of soldiers capture what the war was like for those who were far removed from the frontline at home. This trope of fiction reveals why the war was so difficult for American troops and what were the personal, physical, psychological and human losses of this conflict.

Chapter Three explores how the conflict in Iraq has given rise to a large body of literature, including perhaps surprisingly many novels written by women. In this chapter American women's fictional responses to the Iraq War will be examined. The novels chosen are *Sand Queen* (2012) by Helen Benedict, *One September Morning* (2009) by Rosalind Noonan, *The Nightingale* (2009) by Morgana Gallaway, and *Baghdad Fixer* (2014) by Ilene Prusher. One significant contribution of this chapter is to highlight the value of novels written by American women, which often seems to be overlooked if compared to the amount of attention being paid to male-authored fiction about war. This chapter focuses on the above-mentioned authors because there are few comprehensive works that deal with these particular authors. The inclusion of the gendered dimension through American women's writing on the Iraq war is an important inclusion. With each novel focus will be upon the literal content in terms of inflection of the war-related subject matter, its rhetorical approach and issues of aesthetic style as mechanisms for representing this conflict, and consider through whose point of view, particularly as a topic such as the Iraq War is; a territory principally dominated by male writers. It is interesting to analyse what kind of characters female authors imagine and whether they express women's concerns in relation to a war which was so controversial both in the U.S.A and globally. This chapter shows that there is a need to read and analyse women's writing about the Iraq War because it seems that in the war literary canon their voices are either marginalized or are considered to be insufficient. However, it will be shown that these writers who have emerged out of the Iraq War should not be ignored; it is a necessity to understand their discourse and their contribution as well as opening up the space for their literary productions to be read, heard, critiqued and received.

Therefore, this chapter dissects four wartime themes that are found in women's war literature. The first is how female soldiers become victims of wartime violence and how the trauma and plight of women are fictionalized in Helen Benedict's *Sand Queen.* The second theme is the role that women played as army wives, mothers, and sisters as anti-war activists,

opposing the war to protect their deployed men who were being put at risk by President Bush's decision to invade Iraq. The next theme in Morgana Gallaway's *The Nightingale* fictionally portrays the reversion of the rights of Iraqi women and the use of women as a weapon of war by a patriarchal masculine culture operating both within the insurgents and the U.S Army. The fourth theme in Ilene Prusher's *Baghdad Fixer* considers female war correspondents and their roles in reporting the run-up, conduct, and the outcome of the war and how it affected individual women and Iraqi society. In general these female authors fictionalize the timeless effects of war such as collateral damage, a large canvas of hardships, suffering and pain inflicted on innocent people. The overall approach is to treat fiction as a cache of evidence to support wider discussion of, for example, arguments for and against military intervention, or on the prevalence of gendered violence in the conflict.

Chapter Four demonstrates how the Iraq War enabled Iraqi novelists to engage in a veritable burst of literary creativity. Writers who were once silenced by the despotic regime of Saddam Hussein or forced into exile are expressing themselves through fictionalizing the experience in Iraq during the tyrannical rule of Saddam Hussein and most particularly after the American invasion. The sectarian violence that followed the occupation has also led to retrospection among Iraqi writers and a trend established in their literary outbursts is documenting the concepts of malice, violence, death, torture, radicalization, and a sense of existential despair. This chapter investigates six different themes. The first is the role of malice, reduction of human being and daily spectacles of violence as are fictionalized in Sinan Antoon's *The Corpse Washer* (2013). The second subject matter is the dynamics in which an us –versus –them discourse created a condition of demonizing the other which is dramatized in Inaam Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter* (2010). The third theme engages with state violence and its role in the Abu Ghraib Prison torture and abuse, and the blurred boundary between individual and state violence as in Rodaan Al Galidi's *Thirsty River* (2009) and Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter* (2010). The fourth theme involves the impact of mass media in representing the spectacle of war, the televised images of war, spectacularization of atrocity and suffering and how this ultimately lead to traumatisation of ordinary people or in a cry for revenge and radicalization recounted in Iqbal Al-Qazwini's *Zubaida's Window* (2008), Yasmina Khadra's *The Sirens of Baghdad* (2006) and *The Corpse Washer* (2013). The fifth theme encompasses a problematized relationship that exists between revenge, radicalization and terrorism of young men who join the insurgency to inflict violence on others in Khadra's *The Sirens of Baghdad* (2006) and the other texts as well. Finally the sixth theme incorporates a destabilizing link between evil and

autotelic violence that highlights the routinization of everyday violence and banality of evil. The desire to kill or destroy will be questioned as well as what drives people to cause so much harm and cruelty to others as are re-counted in Al Galidi's *Thirsty River* (2009).

In all of the above contexts, this chapter draws on theoretical conceptual sources to provide a literary and critical assessment and attempts to probe into how Iraqi novels might provide a useful framework to explain the complex pattern of violence, pain and suffering inflicted during the prelude, conduct and the aftermath of the American invasion of Iraq. It will be shown how these themes have come to dominate Iraqi novelist's current discourse and narratives more than any other subject they have written about in the past. Before presenting a critical analytical study of the selected corpus of novels of and about the war in Iraq in 2003 it is necessary to provide some historical background on the development of the novel in Iraq, including the prevalence of propaganda fiction under Saddam, and the ways in which subsequent writers have sought to break from that mould. Equally important is to present a brief history of literary criticism of the Iraq War novels to engage and question the nature of this literature and look at different ways in which writers from different national background have imagined this conflict.

History and Development of Novels in Iraq

Before Saddam come to power in 1979, there was a brief golden age for arts and literature in Iraq. This period coincided with the reign of Ahmed Hassan al-Bakir who was Saddam's predecessor. During al-Bakir newly nationalized oil revenues were funnelled into public art, literary magazines, and galleries as well as there was a successful campaign to eliminate illiteracy. However, as Saddam rose to power things began to change. Hundreds of thousands of young men were conscripted and killed on the battlefront of Iran-Iraq War. And this directly resulted in draining cultural resources of the country. The Iraq-Iran war, the invasion of Kuwait followed by thirteen years of economic sanctions made life miserable for Iraqi civilians while ensconcing the regime's power. Despite the excesses of police state, the embargo and the harsh conditions of life under Saddam's regime, some writers have found ways to survive. And then, as according to Hadane Ditmars, due to the violent occupations of the American forces, followed by unleashing of Islamic militias, and criminal anarchy the culture that sustained Iraqis through hard times has broken down, perhaps irrevocably. (Ditmars, 2012)

Before Saddam writers wrote about the suffering of the Iraqi people and their struggle towards independence. Their literary creativity expressed anti-colonialist sentiment and were

dedicated to Iraqi society and its politics. Famous literary works evolved mostly around social and political issues. And from 1930s to the late 1960s writers were inclined toward the political left and the communist party. But after saddam the quality of Iraqi literature deteriorated since the 1970s, when government control of culture became near absolute. Writers and poets who chose to remain in Iraq were forced to write verses in praise of Iraqi dictator Hussein (Elali, 2003).

Due to Saddam Hussein's oppressive power a great number of Iraqi writers left the country. They become disillusioned at the brutal dictatorship of Saddam. Many writers and intellectuals left Iraq due to the subsequent wars, sanctions and waves of internal repression. For example, the Iraqi poet Fadhil Assultani who left Iraq in 1977 recalls that with the rise of Saddam "about 500 Iraqi intellectuals left Iraq – poets, novelists, architects and so on". (Tarbush, 2013)

Even though Iraq has been plagued by a series of warfare and catastrophic events for over thirty years, the country had a rich cultural history and no shortage of cultural figures, writers and intellectuals. It is undeniable that Iraqi writers and their stories have contributed to shape modern Arabic literature. One problem is that few books have been written, particularly in English about cultural figures and Iraqi writers from the final quarter of the last century until the present day. In their *Conflicting Narratives: War, Trauma, and Memory in Iraqi Culture* Stephen Milich et al (2015) address a series of questions such as:

> What happened to Iraqi cultural production during the terrifying years of Ba'athist rule, under the sanctions of the 1990s, or following the 2003 US invasion and occupation? What has been the role of the Iraqi intellectual since then, and how has Iraqi culture responded to the memories and traumas of recent, violent pasts? Moreover, who, for that matter, can speak in the name of Iraq at a time when the country is more fragmented than ever before and an increasing number of writers live abroad?

Traditionally Iraqi literature since the 1950s focuses on issues of exile, resistance to the former Iraqi regime, and war-related themes. A series of devastating events namely The Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88, the Iraq-Kuwait War and the Gulf War of 1990-1991, the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, and the harsh economic sanctions have made Iraq a source of both academic and non-academic war study. These overwhelming events have shaped the Iraqi literature but there has been a noteworthy lack of attention given to Iraqi writers. Salih Altoma(2010) for example argues that "For although Iraqi writers, poets, and novelists have surmounted tremendous obstacles both within Iraq and in exile – continuing their creative output since the 1950s – their work has been largely marginalized." For example, in 1980 Fuad al-Takarli a

prominent Iraqi novelist wrote *The Faraway Man*, a novel which was highly critical of saddam's Baath Party. In an interview with him he reflects why and how he was not arrested:

> In general, during Saddam's time I wanted to continue writing, and thus I was careful not to arouse his antagonism. I never paid him compliments, but neither was I antagonistic or hostile toward him. I did not scream or curse, and in general, since my criticism was not considered direct or impolite, the authorities left me alone. (Rebecca Joubin, 2007)

Iraqi literature in 20th century focus on political issues of their time. If we look at some of the most well-known literary works of Iraqi authors including Saadi Youssef, Najem Wali, Salah Al-Hamdani, , Fadhil Al-Azzawi, and Abdul Rahman Majeed al-Rubaie, one can assume that Iraqi novels express the feeling of powerlessness and helplessness against the political situations of their time. They look at the violence of Baathism, wars and occupations. Furthermore, they address the specificity of psychological, rhetorical and political violence and anxieties of dictatorship. After the rise of Saddam Hussein, many authors left their country and immigrated to Europe where they were freer to express their views and opinions on what was happening in their country. However, some of them stayed in Iraq for reasons out of their control. Those who stayed could not dissent against the rule of Saddam without risking their own lives. Those who preferred to be silent against the repression of Saddam were later forced to publish propaganda and pro-Saddam works out of fear for being sentenced or punished. Therefore, according to April Fast (2005) contemporary Iraqi fictions tend to portray life under government control. Such fiction addresses the general concerns of Arabs, struggles between sectarian groups and individuals. (29). April Fast examines how Muhsin al-Ramli's novel *Scattered Crumb* which was published in 2003 represent a peasant family's life deteriorating as a father and son clash over saddam's rule.

It is possibly because of Saddam's ruthless rule that many scholars have examined his party's censorship practised against writers and intellectuals. Saddam's regime imposed full control on the media and printing houses and that not a single word was published without prior consent from his party. Saddam often politicized culture and suppressed any expression of human creativity not in conformity with the doctrinaire and often whimsical nature of his Ba'athist regime. Censorship was used by the Baath regime as one of the effective means of achieving its political objectives and curbing opposition. Any published material was scrutinized before it was published by the Baath party's censorship. For example, Salam Ali (2008) argues that the history of Iraqi literature is by necessity also the history of censorship. Saddam used all methods and instruments available to silence his oppositions. He confiscated and burned books and created a hypothetical enemy that did not exist. He used brainwashing,

imprisonment, deprivation of citizenship, exile and even execution. The reality was that Saddam often glorified violence and terror in his efforts to shape Iraqi culture and society. Those who violated these prescriptions could pay with their lives. Ali divides the impact of censorship on modern Iraqi literature into two periods of monarchic and revolutionary Iraq of which the former was less despotic. The censorship of monarchic Iraq extends from 1921 to the establishment of the republic of Iraq in 1958, followed by a decade of political unrest and then the second phase of censorship starts with the rise of Baath party power which continued until the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in 2003. The literature written during Saddam aimed to instruct people in how to be good, obedient, and empty citizens. This literature was greatly influenced by the political situation in Iraq and the type of government in power. The target of this censorship was to force writers underground or into exile outside of Iraq. During Saddam's rule all Shiite, Marxist, Salafi, and anti-totalitarian literature were immediately taken out of circulation and were given new narratives. This censorship was unprecedented in history and the closest analogy to it is a combination of totalitarianism Maoist, Hitlerism, and Stalinism. His censorship encompassed the widest possible range of ethnic, religious, literary and political categories. He had a range of enemies and he needed either to silence them or take their pens away. His antagonism included communist, Persian, Israeli, Salafi literature, as well as women's liberation literature. Saddam's regime annihilated works that criticised the practices of totalitarian regimes such as those by Abdul Rahman Muneef, Hassan Al-Alawi, and Adnan Makkiyyah. He also banned Iraqi and Arab poets such as Adonis, Ahmad Fuad Najim, Al Jawahiri, Al Bayyati, and Al Haidari. Literary works about women's liberation movements were also considered corrupt and immoral such as those of Haider Haider, Nawwal Al Saadawi, and Fatima Al Marneesi. He even banned Latin American and Western literary production such as the works of Gabriel García Márquez D. H. Lawrence, George Orwell and particularly William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Saddam's list of censorship also included books on mystics such as those by Al Hallaj, Al Bistami, AlSuhrawardi, Shamsuddin Tabriz, and Ain'l Qudhat Al Hamadani, In a nutshell,

> During its reign, the Baath Party was preoccupied with hostilities, wars, and counterattacks. As a result, Iraqi literature was redirected toward war and its exploits, but not in a way to criticize war as a disaster and futile waste of human lives... On the contrary, Iraqi war literature depicted war as a wedding party and martyrdom as a feast. All this happened during a period when access to other information channels was either completely blocked or closely watched by state intelligence (Salah Ali, 2008).

Accordingly art and literature were suppressed and those who did not comply with the regime were considered as unpatriotic or dangerous. Literature during Saddam was blandly

militaristic and nationalist. Clearly demonstrating the fact literature was a mouthpiece of dictatorship. In fact, Iraqi literature reflects the turbulent nature of Iraq's political realities. Iraq is an eventful country and during the 20th century it was engaged in a series of violent and constant changes, from kingdom of 1920s to the revolution of 1950s, from Republican Iraq to military coup of 1968 that put Saddam and his Baathist party to power, from Iran- Iraq war, to Kuwait invasion, from First Gulf War to the United Nations' imposed economic sanctions, to dethronement of Saddam in 2003 to American occupation and the subsequent sectarian war between the Sunni and the Shi'ite Iraq. As the political reality of Iraq changed its literature and artistic productions has changed as well. Due to numerous war and chaos in Iraq there has been a divide of Iraqi literature into two fronts, those who are considered ''outsiders'' who fled the country or were forced to leave under Saddam's Baath party dictatorship and those of 'insiders' who remained and that their perspectives are understandably different. In fact Saddam Hussein narrowed the ability of Iraqi writers to attend meetings outside their country and those who did leave often did not return. In an article called ''Culture in Post-Saddam Iraq'' Raphaeli argues that ''This led to a bifurcation of culture: There was the *thaqafat al-kharij* (culture of exile) and the *thaqafat ad-dakhil* (domestic culture). While a sense of Iraqiness permeated both cultures, over time, the culture of exile became richer and more critical''(Nimrod Raphaeli, 2007). In addition, Saddam was paying court poets to compliment him and portray him as a leader who epitomized heroism, glory, magnanimity and even possess prophetic perceptions for predicting the future. After the 2003 War there was a rising religiosity in Iraq resulting in the subsequent sectarian and religious war between the Sunnis and Shi'ite. Raphaeli argues that ''there are renewed calls for a return to Iraqi traditions of secularism and tolerance. There is a broad intolerance in Iraqi culture and the problem of religious militias whose tolerance for liberal and secular culture goes no further than the muzzle of their gun''.

From 1980s to 1990 Saddam's regime silenced and or forced writers to write literary works to glorify that war. This literature is stylistically poor and duplicitous in content. Thus Iraqi writers and intellectuals were politically compelled to leave the country. These exiled writers in their works expose the propaganda behind the official narratives of Iraqi history predominantly the Ba'ath-sponsored production of war novels and short stories. Yasmeen Hanoosh (2003), for example, argues such new fictions acknowledge the shared collective trauma and history of successive wars and interrogate and deconstruct Iraq's cultural formations and commence a new multifaceted analysis of Iraqi identity:

The development of contemporary Iraqi literature is the product of several

> fluctuations in cultural expression that span the bulk of the twentieth century. The abrupt transitions from the Hashemite monarchy (1932–58) to 'Abd al-Karim Qasim's regime (1958–63), the dictatorship of the Ba'th Party (1968–2003), the embargo years (1991–2003), and finally the post-2003 occupation era punctuate the ideological schisms and fractious state-writer relationship. The literary shifts also highlight the emergence of civic society in Iraq, the dynamics within the public sphere, and the ideological makeup of the various state-controlled cultural projects.

Few can deny that as war and political instability have characterized the lives of Iraqis, most Iraqi writers had firsthand experience of the impact of war. Fabio Caiani and Catherine Cobham (2013) demonstrate that Saddam put a considerable pressure on writers to rally behind war and write propaganda literature. Complying with the wishes of Saddam secured financial rewards but non-compliance could have extreme consequences such as imprisonment and execution. However, Caiani and Cobham believe that not all literature published during the Iran- Iraq War can be considered as mere propaganda. They argue that some writers did not abide by Saddam's wishes and instead focused on the tragedy of war and violence in their texts, they imply criticism of the regime and offer wide-ranging reflections on the psychological effects of trauma on Iraqi individuals and the moral choices people made in that time of crisis ''Some of the novels in terms of language and style use sophisticated skills such as interior monologue and that some of them need to be acknowledged for their merits as testimonies from the front for the future generations.'' (165)

Another literary critic Shakir Mustafa (2008) illustrates how the Ba'athist regime not only prohibited criticism of the state and its symbols but also that writers were ruthlessly punished for depicting political oppression. Those writers who fell short of compliance disappeared, imprisoned, banished or were rewarded according to their positions towards the state. Hence, he elucidates how Iraqi writers coped with one of the worst dictatorship in history and that these taught Iraqi writers a lesson how to ''portray political oppressiveness without risking retributions. Hence, treatment of politics in the selected fiction is subdued and indirect. For instance, the carnage of the Iraq – Iran war glimmers in the background, but one does not get the sense of any specific critique of the Iraqi regime's role in causing much of it.'' (Mustafa, xx- xxi)''. Therefore, it is not surprising that Iraqi novelists are always preoccupied with wars and that political conflicts form part of the backgrounds of many Iraqi fictions. Perhaps it is due to these factors that Ikam Masmoudi in her *war and occupation in Iraqi fiction* (2015) concludes that Iraqi fiction focus on the vulnerability of human subjects in their relation to coercion, war and necropower, sectarian killings and suicide operations and that they privilege and reveal these fundamental human experiences(215-219).

In a conference paper, Hans von Sponeck (2011), the former U.N. Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq uncovered the devastating economic, political, social and cultural consequences of the thirteen catastrophic years of sanctions. He shows how not only Iraqi individuals struggled, adopted and endured the catastrophic sanction but also the cultural productions of the country was drained and that the standard of living diminished, literacy rate dropped, school enrolment declined, infant and child mortality increased, and morbidity and malnutrition escalated: "Many who were able to migrate did so, leaving a "brain drain" in Iraq and an increased number of female-headed households. Without the basic requirements of paper and money, Iraq's once renowned literary production and consumption shrank, as did its cultural production in other areas."

Other scholars have examined the role of the sanctions and its impact on the Sunni- Shia conflict after 2003. For example Fanar Hadad (2011) argues that the sanctions in the intervening period of the uprising of March 1991 and the fall of Baath's in 2003 was also instrumental in shaping post-2003 Shi'ite- Sunni sectarian war. Hadad writes ''The sanctions-era was in essence the incubator of post-2003 Iraqi society.''(1) Other literary experts have found different trends in Iraqi literature. For example Achim Rohde (2010) argues that even though Iraqi writers had always to reckon with repression and censorship, their fiction after 1991 dared to depict the Iraq- Iran War in a critical way that were different from the heroic war fiction published in 1980s. But this was strategically calculated and predetermined by the regime that did not hold itself responsible for the destruction of life. The regime at this time, according to Rohde aimed to held America responsible for the loss of life during the imposed sanctions. However, up to this point Iraqi literature was unable to depict the tyrannical character of Saddam's rule:

> Iraqi writers has developed techniques to circumvent the censors already in the 1980s, for instance by composing abstract and metaphorical short stories and fairy tales that were, however, easily understood by a conscious reader and contained a hidden criticism of the regime. During the 1990s this trend seems to have become more accentuated. At least, it was quite openly discussed by literary critics (149).

In a symposium about the literature, art and film of and about the Iran- Iraq War, the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (2016) argues that this war has traumatized both Iraqi and Iranian society and also spawned a rich cultural production and that writers in both countries reflected upon and confronted the experience of this war in complex and various ways and at odds with the official narratives of martyrdom, heroism and patriotism dictated by both Iraqi and Iranian states. It is argued that writers in both countries tended to challenge official narratives and created an alternative literary discourse using a modernist literary aesthetics in

writing about that war. Critics such as Amir Moosavi (2015) for example contend that this aesthetics of fiction reflect on the subjective and collective traumatic aftermath of the Iraq-Iran War experience and developed a narrative of loss around that conflict and stands ‘‘in opposition to the wartime, state-sponsored heroic realisms—to simultaneously defang the official war narratives of each country from their entrenched binarism.’’

After the 2003 American invasion of Iraq, literature has been changed and proliferated. One can argue that one positive aspect of this war is that it has afforded a new freedom to Iraqi writers who were previously silenced during Saddam. It is evident that the 2003 war has enabled a burst of literary creativity within writers and that their fiction has become less formal, more forward-thinking and truly original and interesting. It has regained some of its traction with a return to social realism which was prevailing before Saddam’s rule in 1960s and 1970s. Post 2003 Iraqi fiction seeks to narrate the invasion's impact on Iraqis. Writers tend to portray gruesome spectacles of violence and address the terror of violence in Iraq. Writers such as Hassan Blassim, Ahmad Sa'dawi, and Lu'ay Hamza Abbas render the spectacles of extreme forms of violence in their texts. Some critics attribute the proliferation of such Iraqi fiction to the fall of Saddam Hussein dictatorship and his regime's strict censorship practices. One such critic is Haytham Bhoora (2015) who argues that there is an urgency to narrativize the silenced, repressed, and untold experiences of Iraqis that accounts for this surge in literary productions (189). According to Bahoora a recurring feature of the post-2003 Iraqi cultural production is the portrayal of decapitations, dismembered and mutilated limbs, tortured bodies and charred remains of corpses. (186). He deftly analyses this literary trend as an intervention to articulate the unspeakable, lost, repressed or deliberately silenced historical narratives of victims of a structural violence. He writes

> For contemporary Iraqi writers and artists, whether still in Iraq or forced into exile, the violent post-2003 national landscape is a constitutive thematic concern of their artistic production. The centrality of dismembering violence to the narration of post-2003 iraqi identity raises a series of questions about the role narrative fiction plays in constructing a history and experience of structural violence for which there has been no political, legal, or historical accountability. Absent this accountability, post-2003 iraqi literary narratives intervene to articulate the unspeakable, lost, repressed, or deliberately silenced historical narratives of victims of this structural violence (188).

Therefore, the disintegration of Iraq, the sectarian war, the insurrection against the American occupiers, the birth of a sectarian politics out of a legacy of betrayal, victimhood, loss, has been knitted carefully by Kan'an Makya's novel *The Rope* of 2016. Makya who was the author of the *Republic of Fear* in this novel tells the story through the eyes of a Sh'ite militiaman whose participation in the execution of Saddam Hussein changes his life in ways

he could never have anticipated. *The Rope* depicts the failure of Iraq in the wake of American occupation. It tackles identity issues as one of the key problems of Iraq as a state. This novel shows that Iraqi authors write about significant timely and topical issues and concerns that have affected Iraqis. One of the most important issues is the age-old-rivalry, animosity and sectarian and religious identity crisis. Such authors depict that the American occupation has added fuel to the fire of Shi'ite and Sunni sectarian identity. According to Penguin Random House this novel shows how identity is cobbled together and then undone. Also, in the light of such fiction critics such as Sadeq M Mohammed (2013) argue that:

> In my opinion, the Iraqi narrative today has matured enough to monitor the situation in Iraq with its interlacing details; it is able to catch the most interactions between competing identities in Iraq, looking for a presence in place and time. Many Iraqi authors have managed to monitor the situation in Iraq and its contradictions in an objective manner much better than the political analysts whom we see on television.

In addition, Haytham Bahoora (2015) shows that Iraqi fiction following the invasion and occupation of 2003 portray the brutal sectarian kidnapping whose victims' decapitated bodies litter Baghdad's streets, the routine nature of violence, to scenes of public execution. Such narratives and literary techniques characterize the failure of Iraqi's national allegory. In such fiction the present is haunted by the past. While early-to-mid twentieth century Iraqi literary production was diverse firmly embedded in the context of anti-colonial national struggle for independence, thus its themes and concerns were about the making of a nation, the promise of new social relations and social reforms and a utopian national imagery. However, in contrast, Bahoora argues that post-2003 Iraqi literature is about the 'unmaking' of the Iraqi nation:

> Contemporary Iraqi literature chronicles and historicizes the unmaking of the nation and its dismemberment by social and political forces, both internal and external. contemporary Iraqi fiction is a literature of mourning and trauma that, generally speaking, does not look to the future. At the same time, just as during the Hashemite period, this literature has an essential political and historical function.

What's more, in *War and Occupation in Iraqi Fiction* Ikram Masmoudi (2016) examines a large body of untranslated fiction from inside Iraq authored by Iraqi writers who were unable to flee Saddam’s tyrannical power, American occupation and sectarian violence. She argues that during Saddam’s rule from 1980s to 2003 such fictions are marked by the Ba’athist regime’s censoring practices. But after 2003 Iraqi authors truthfully portray the Iran-Iraq War and the 1991 Gulf War with critical urgency. Also, their novels portray the horrendous social turmoil unleashed by American invasion and the subsequent sectarian violence. According to her such writers historicize the experiences of dictatorship, oppression, embargo, war, occupation and sectarian violence that began with the Iran-Iraq War in 1980 from a range of

perspectives and critical positions.

One of most remarkable example is the Iraqi novelist Ahmad Saadawi who has written *Frankenstein in Baghdad.* The monstrous character of Frankenstein in this novel is a concrete symbol of Iraqi's current political, sectarian and identity problems. Its nameless and horrific Frankenstein-esque character is called 'what's-its-name''. This character is made up of parts taken from Iraqis of different races, sects and ethnicities and wants to take revenge on behalf of all victims in Iraq. He represents the complete Iraqi individual and the monster becomes an epitome of mass destruction as well as a dramatic representation of destruction that has been growing out of Iraq's chronological turmoil's. In an interview with Ahmad Saadawi conducted by Mustafa al Najjar in 2014 the author argues that ''the what's-its-name is a rare example of the melting pot of identities. Iraq has suffered from this chronic problem ever since it was established early in the 20th century. The issue of Iraqi national identity violently exploded after the toppling of Saddam Hussein's regime.'' Likewise, Ali Bader, a prominent Iraqi novelist tends to portray the political, social and cultural alienating life conditions in Iraq. In his historical novel of 2008 '*al-Haris at-tabagh'* (*The Guardian of Tobacco*) Bader deals with cultural life in Iraq after the invasion of the American troops. In it he chronicles the recent history of Iraq. He depicts the frightening Saddam Hussein's tyrannical rule and presents the calamitous effects of war, despotism and sectarian violence.

All in all, one can note that after 2003 there is a significant change in Iraqi intellectual life and that there is new literary generation that challenges the basics of Iraqi national culture and identity. This new literature question the validity of the former state-sponsored nationalism, the national novel by re-examining life in Iraq during 1990s and the impact of the post-2003 crisis. Ronen Zaidal (2015), for example, in an article argues ''Since the American-led invasion of 2003, Iraqi nationalism and Iraqi national identity have become core subjects of Iraqi literature.'' It is in the light of these developments that the significance of novels of and about the Iraq War becomes more apparent.

History of Literary Criticism of the Iraq War Novels

In part, reasons of space dictate that this study's scope will be limited to fiction and more specifically the genre of the novel, thereby excluding non-fictional writings. Before analysing this genre-specific literature of and about the Iraq War in the forthcoming chapters, it is necessary to examine and engage with the kinds of critical works that are available. Because the vast amount of Iraq War literature is just beginning to be comprehended; only a very few substantial works of literary criticism have emerged. In literature, the lack of texts

about the war in Iraq has thus far limited analysis of the literary production of the American war and invasion of Iraq. According to Brenda Sanfilippo (2014) literary criticism is still catching up because the majority of texts and films about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have only been released since 2012 (32).

These few limited literary criticisms about Iraq War literature includes two book length studies, two journal articles and a dozen of essays published online. The first two serious critical books include Suman Gupta's *Imagining Iraq: Literature in English and the Iraq Invasion* and Stacey Peebles' *Welcome to the Suck: Narrating the American Soldier's Experience in Iraq* both published in 2011. Gupta's work should be noted as the first lengthy piece of criticism completed on the literature of the Iraq War. His is the most insightful, comprehensive and valuable for making a substantial contribution to the analysis of such literature. Gupta expertly dissects and gives the first detailed account and analyses of a number of poetry collections and anthologies, plays, action thrillers, online personal blogs and some literary fiction. Gupta shows how:

> the literature about and of the invasion was substantially produced and circulated and received outside the Anglophone field, in numerous languages and linguistic territories and to continue in an analytical vein a great number of geopolitical perspectives and cultural traditions need to be taken into account (144-145).

In his account of the literature of and about the Iraq War, Gupta's *Imagining Iraq* becomes one of the first critical engagements to see the pivotal importance of and categorically launched Iraq War literary criticism. This is because Gupta's redefinition of Iraq War literature did a great deal to open up the enormous archives of texts, history and material culture of this field and topic of study.

Although focusing on a limited number of works, Peebles' *Welcome to the Suck* examines how new forms of media and technologies have emerged and engaged with the wars in Iraq. Her book focuses on specific authors and films and their Iraq war trajectories.[3] With a literary-critical eye for details accompanied by rigorous and theoretical cultural readings Peebles provides a politically astute analysis of contemporary war stories that speak from the perspective of the First Gulf War and the Iraq War in 2003. Peebles reveals how these tropes allow one to see that: "War alters the shape of our families, communities, and nation-it is, a

[3] Peebles's case study includes: online blogs; including Colby Buzzell 'My War", memoirs by Nathanial Fick '*'One Bullet Away"*, and Kayala Williams' "*Love My Rifle More Than You"*, a collection of short stories written by John Crawford '*The Last True Story I'll Ever Tell"*, Poetry by Brian Turner "*Here, Bullet"*, the documentary "*Alive Day Memories"*, and films "*In The Valley of Elah"* written by the war correspondent Mark Boal.

breaking point for history, politics, art, and the very way we talk to one another. It matters, and stories tell us why and how, then and now, we have to listen'' (174). Additionally, Peebles identifies in the cultural representations of the first and the second American wars with Iraq a defining feature of a soldier's experience is that they are generally personally idealist and politically cynical. Moreover, there is a sense ''in-between'' identities, for despite its apparent categorization war enables the breaching of certain boundaries of media, gender, nation and body (2). Peebles analyses this new twist in the trope of Iraq War stories which involves such a desire and/or tendency of the characters and protagonists to transcend all such categorizations.

While the analysis of Gupta and Peebles' works seem to be the first and the most significant published pieces of scholarly criticism on Iraq War literature, much of these scholarly research and analysis are understandably limited by the researcher's selective processes. This is not to argue that some critics might be biased in omitting or ignoring certain literary works that might not fit or conform to their personal views of the war. Rather, perhaps among such literary critics there exists a tendency to search for patterns (Even this thesis exhibits a similar tendency). What is interesting in Gupta and Peebles's scholarly works is that they both suggest and point out that fictions emerging from the war in Iraq have yet to receive the kind of serious and academic attention that the Vietnam War texts received during the1980s and 1990s mirroring the attention awarded to literature of and about First and Second World Wars. Only time will tell whether Iraq War literature will ever do so. The selection of texts presented in this thesis will attempt to demonstrate that they are morally serious and politically engaged novels which aim to draw attention to the plight of people during war, showing the impact of living under terror of war as well as presenting the growing insignificance of life during such a political conflict. Such texts give us a frame for understanding the evils of war, and as Robert Eaglestone (2013) argues contemporary fiction tries to understand and realize how forces makes human beings superfluous: ''Of all the forces which threaten to make people superfluous in the world, the one that has received the most attention in the fiction of the last ten years is international terrorism and the sense of 'endless war'' (69).

In addition to these two books, equally valuable are two single-author articles contributing to our understanding and appreciation of the literature of and about Iraq. The first article is Roger Luckhurst's ''In War Times: Fictionalizing Iraq'' published in the *Journal of Contemporary Literature* in 2012. By blending close reading and cultural history of some literary and cultural works Luckhurst makes an interesting point. He reveals that some of the

most significant cultural responses to the Iraq War in the West do not directly mention that conflict. Concurrently, Luckhurst demonstrates, these cultural works seem to speak of little less than our contemporal wars ‘‘the less often cultural works appears to address the Iraq war, the more often it actually does’’ (735). This is because, according to Luckhurst, the military, political and ethical gaugemire of Iraq has not made for easy narrative contours or crystalizing representations or any sustainable cultural reflections. In other words, the Iraq War does not lend itself to great literature. This shows that the traumatic event of the Iraq War resists narratives or representations of this war are often displaced through the iconography of previous wars.[4] In Luckhurst’s words, one wartime experience will always be seen through the lens of another war. Nevertheless, it is difficult to agree with Luckhurst’s relatively swift conclusion that the American invasion of Iraq, the Iraq Civil War, and or the occupation has not led to a certain canon of texts or definitive literary texts that have emerged from overlapping contexts of the conflict. Take for example; ex-marine Phil Klay’s 2014 novel *Redeployment, Iraq War Collection* that won both the *National Book Award for Fiction* in the U.S.A as well as Britain’s *The Warwick Literature Prize* and which graphically encapsulates the Iraq War experience.[5] This is in conflict with Luckhurst’s conclusion. Nonetheless, Luckhurst’s timely and relevant study convincingly demonstrates that this cultural representation and engagement with Iraq seems diffuse and largely isolated within specific aesthetic disciplines and it is not yet clear how one should characterize, name and periodise these fictions and events.

A second article in this field is David Kieran’s ‘‘What Young Men and Women Do While Their Country is Attacked’’: Interventionist Discourse and the Rewriting of Violence in Adolescent Literature of the Iraq War*’’* which was published in the same year in 2012 in the *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly.* Kieran interrogates recent young adult literature’s participation in contemporary debates over US foreign policy and militarism. Reading Ryan Smithson’s memoir *Ghosts of War: the True Story of a 19-Year-Old GI,* and the

[4] Roger Luckhurst has traced how trauma enters cultural works and practices by drawing upon a range of legal, psychiatric, and cultural political sources. In *Traumaculture*(New Formations, 50, 2003:28-47) and a book titled *The Trauma Question* (Rutledge, 2008) Luckhurst has introduced and expanded the concept of traumaculture and explored and advanced the cultural memory and trauma studies from the 1860s to the present.

[5] The judging panel of Warwick Literature Prize was the novelist A. L Kennedy who described *Redeployment* not only as a searing and satirical novel but a ‘scalding affecting book’’ about ‘‘one of the defining conflicts of our age’’. See EX-US Marine Phil Klay wins Warwich literature prize with Iraq War collection ‘Redeployment’’. *Times Colonist.* 10, November, 2015. Web. Retrieved 11 November, 2015. <http://www.timescolonist.com/>

novels *Sunrise Over Fallujah* by Walter Dean Myers and *Purple Heart* by Patricia McCormick, Kieran demonstrates and shows how ‘‘each contributes to the legitimization of the discourse of neoconservative humanitarian interventionism that has been central to the defence of the US intervention in Iraq’’(5). Kieran claims that as cultural capital of their times, each of these works participated in contemporary debates about US foreign policy, intervention and militarism in Iraq. He maintains that such fiction contributes to interventionist discourse in two key ways. First, they determinedly describe the war and the soldier’s experience in language that evokes the discourse’s tenets, casting the Iraq War as an appropriate response to the September 11th terrorist attacks, as a humanitarian mission, and as an intervention in which it is appropriate for dutiful, patriotic young Americans to participate. Simultaneously, Kieran maintains, each text acknowledges but revises controversial moments of violence that have dominated media coverage of the Iraq War and have shaped the growing opposition to it. Kieran demonstrates that ‘‘these texts portray the Abu Ghraib prison, the practice of house-to-house search operations, the frequent incidence of military sexual trauma, and the killings of Iraqi civilians in ways that minimize their violence or define them as appropriate and necessary-or at least unavoidable aspects of the war’’(5). In doing so, Kieran maintains, such texts prohibit a full consideration of the war’s violence and undermine the political critique that such an awareness would enable. Although acknowledging the validity of Kieran’s argument that some of post 9/11 literature for young people legitimises the war, Melinda Ingram in her brief book *Fictionalizing Iraq in British and American Literature for Children and Young Adults* (2015) believes that ethical matters emerge when writing for children about complex and sensitive matters. She reveals that‘ ‘I think debate about how to tell the story of the Iraq war, about what is too dark, too graphic, about where responsibility lies and so on, will continue since the situation is still unsettled’’(21). She argues that there is a need for contrasting perspectives on a story so that readers are entertained but also provoked to think and question events and attitudes surrounding the Iraq War.

As the war started in 2003 the years after saw how the collective consciousness and imaginary closure of Iraq War directly resulted in a plethora of highly significant and miscellaneous narrative responses that illuminate the cultural history of the period. These works are too numerous to list here. They range from fiction, non-fictions, films, war reportage, documentary, blogs, online videos, cinema, drama, poetry, short story collections,

memoirs, personal narratives, graphic novels and literary fiction.[6] Such literature also includes theoretical and philosophical discourses. Consider, for example the commentaries by intellectual dissidents such as Slavoj Zizeˆk who in *Iraq: The Borrowed Kettle*(2004) warned and predicted that the vicious American intervention can only get more complex and that as a result of this a truly fundamentalist Anti-American Muslim movement will emerge. According to Zizek the danger was: ‘‘This is the first case of a direct American occupation of a large and key Arab country-how could it not generate universal hatred in reaction?’’ (18).

The American linguist, MIT professor and intellectual Noam Chomsky has fiercely criticized the international role and foreign policies of the United States of America under George W. Bush. He has consistently critiqued the War in Iraq in a series of essays collected and published as a book titled *Interventions* (2007). Similar to Zizek, Chomsky in one of the essays titled ‘‘The Case Against US Adventurism in Iraq’’ also warned that the war would increase anger and hatred towards the West and the United States of America ‘‘The consequence could be catastrophic in Iraq and around the world. The United States may reap a whirlwind of terrorist retaliations’’ (Chomsky, 2003, March 13). In fact, most of the prominent leftist and anti-war critics such as the award-winning documentary film-maker and author Michael Moore firmly opposed the intervention raising the issue of further terrorist acts against the West. Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*is considered one of the most critical works about President George W. Bush's the War on Terror and the subsequent Iraq War.[7]

Other philosophical investigations such as Judith Butler's Frames *of War: When is Life Grievable?*(2009) analysed the different frames through which we experience war. Butler points out that it is the frames and the media portrayals of state violence that determines whether we view a war and hence its victims as justified or not. Butler critiques

[6] A list of graphic novels and satirical cartoons includes *Clueless George Goes to War* (2005) by Pat Bagley, *You Back the Attack, We'll Bomb Who We Want* (2003) by Micah Ian Wright, *Iraqi Operation Corporation Takeover* (2007) by Lea O'Conner and Michael Wilson, *Pride of Baghdad* (2008)by Brian K Vaughan, *Walking Wounded: Uncut Stories from Iraq* (2015) Oliver Morel, *Baghdad Journal: An Artist in Occupied Iraq* (2005) by Steve Mumford, *War is Boring* (2010) by David Axe,*Combat Zone: True Tales of GIs in Iraq* (2005) by Karl Sinsmeister, *Lines in Sand: New Writing on War and Peace* (2003) by Marry Hoffman and Rhiannon Lassiter, *Signature Wound: Rocking TBI* (2010) by G.B Trudea, *War Fix* by Steve Olexa, *Johny Jihad* (2003) by Ryan Inzana. This list can also be extended to include *Generalissimo El Busho, Attitude 1, Attitude 2 and Attitude 3, and Silk Road to Ruin: Is Central Asia the New Middle East* all by Pulitzer Prize finalist Ted Rall. Simply put: the works mentioned above, while all contain the Iraq War as their central thematic element or defining action of the text, for reasons of space such a genre is not the goal or the focus here, and as such are not discussed.

[7] Micheal Moore's official website can be accessed at http://www.michaelmoore.com/

indiscriminate state violence and subsequently why we cannot feel for the horrors of the biopolitical lives of those who are being presented and/or portrayed as killable, precarious, vulnerable, and existential threats rather than living people who need protection. According to Butler war is framed in such a way to control and heighten affect in relation to differential grievability of lives ‘‘Precarity designates that politically induced conditions in which certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence, and death’’(25). Butler aptly describes how certain people’s lives become precarious, vulnerable, and grievable as they have very few choices and options especially when ‘‘They appeal to the state for protection, but the state is precisely that from which they require protection’’ (26).

Also worthy of note, is the observations in Adriana Cavarero’s *Horrorism, Naming Contemporary Violence* (2009) which is crucial in this regard referring to the case of the Iraq War as a kind of horrorism. Cavarero correctly demands that we should try to understand violence from the viewpoint of its civilian victims rather than from the perspectives of the warrior or the suicide bomber. If violence is seen from this perspectives then it enables us to understand the suffering of those who are defenceless and victims of war who do not care what the motives of the perpetrators of violence is but rather that contemporary modes of violence is ‘horroristic’’. Cavarero writes that war and terror should not be seen from the perspective of warriors but instead from the perspectives of ‘‘The civilian victims, of whom the numbers of dead have soared from the Second World War on, do not share the desire to kill, much less the desire to get killed’’ (65).

The prominent Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben in his *State of Exception* (2005) critiqued not only President George. W. Bush’s war against terrorism but also the juridical-political system of America. Agamben argued in the war against terrorism a global state of exception was easy to be announced to suspend the rule of law and this had biopolitical significance. Doing so, Agamben maintained, deprived citizens of their legal identity and in this process the ‘bare life’ reached its maximum indeterminacy. Under such rule the state of exception become a prolonged state of being thereby suspending and depriving certain individuals of their citizenships when they were accused of terroristic acts. Agamben shows that this is applied at the whim of the U.S government directed at those targeted by this process and when such a state becomes a prolonged rule then the state at any moment could turn into a lethal machine. Agamben observed that : ‘‘What is new about President Bush’s order is that it radically erases any legal status of the individual, thus producing a legally

unnameable and unclassifiable being''(3). Therefore, such philosophical engagements with Iraq are essential readings for those who might want to tease out the Iraq War with depth and precision and can provide a creative and critical framework in which to engage with often disturbing themes, and this thesis will subsequently draw upon these and other related sources.

In addition to book length, journal articles, and theoretical and philosophical writings there are also a dozen of essays that can cultivate our critical thinking and appreciation of Iraq War literature. Take for example, Ryan Bubalo's ''Danger Close: The Iraq War in American Fiction'' published in the *Los Angeles Review of Books* in 2012.Bubalo reviews some American novels that include Kevin Power's *The Yellow Birds*, Ben Fountain's *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, David Abram's *Fobbit*, Siobhan Fallon' *You Know When the Men are Gone* and *Fire and Forget: A Collection of Short Stories.* Bubalo suggests that this literature is vital and one needs to read them earnestly in order to comprehend what war does to the human beings engaged in its processes. He argues convincingly that ''While most of the country tries to forget the Iraq War ever happened, American Iraq fiction slams the doors on its unprotected Humvees and compels readers to take a perilous ride''. With trenchant analysis Bubalo argues that such fiction educates Americans about their country's imperial responsibilities in the Middle East.

Following Bubalo is ''Passive Aggression: Recent War Novels'' by Michael Lokesson which was also published in the *Los Angeles Review of Books* in 2013. Lokesson accurately describes and vividly captures the ambivalences, confusions, psychological upheavals and horrors found in modern war literature with depth and precision. Whatsmore, his account is significant because Lokesson, like Roger Luckhurst, shows that even though there are a torrent of war novels told through soldier's eyes about wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, no classic and generally acknowledged literary novel about the war in Iraq and Afghanistan has yet appeared. Lokesson observes that more time may be required, because simply recent wars, unlike past wars, do not lend themselves to great canonical literature, for which perhaps more retrospection is required. This is an interesting observation because if we note we can see that the literature of the past century about World War I, World War II and Vietnam shows that it takes at least a decade after major wars end for great novels to appear, evidenced by the delay in terms of publication of novels by major war writers such as Ernest Hemingway, Erich Maria Remarque, Joseph Heller, Norman Mailer, Kurt Vonnegut and Tim O'Brien. Lokesson's notes an essential aspect of the first wave novels of and about the Iraq War appears to be that they are written as if the authors of such fiction lived through the conflict.

These novelists tend to recount anecdotes, chronicles and their personal experiences with an immediate version of the events. Lokesson (2013) reviews and reassesses five recent novels about Iraq and reveals that this fiction:

> demonstrate just how difficult it is to write a soldier's novel in an age when war zones teem with IEDs and insurgents, where danger is both ever-present and invisible; an age when wars of questionable provenance are waged by an all-volunteer army; an age when the people doing the fighting are cut off, sometimes irreparably, from the society they are fighting to protect (n.page.)

Another interesting essay appearing in 2012 is "I am Not the Enemy" published by *The Slate Book Review* by Jacob Silverman which navigates and analyses how four novels address the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which are Geronimo Johnson's *Hold It Till It Hurts*, Kevin Power's *The Yellow Birds*, David Abram's *Fobbit* and Ben Fountain's *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Work*. Silverman illuminates how such literature can awaken a reader's critical and cynical thinking because he aptly notices that most of these works are set or take place in America so that "We read about life over here, so we don't have to think about life over there". This is perhaps one of the shrewdest and insightful essays in the field for its observation that in these post-war fictions themes of solders' returning home take priority over other themes, including concerns over the conduct of war.

Another notable essay is Ron Charles' "10 Years of the Iraq War, 10 Great Books" published by *Washington Post* in 2013 in which Charles convincingly argues that Iraq War literature has historical significance. He implies that through such literature readers will have the opportunity to learn much about the psychological effects and aspects of the war, and that reading this literature is vital in deepening our understanding, education and reflection about the consequences of war "Like all wars, the Iraq War has produced a library of great books. If not solace, they offer at least a measure of wisdom for those of us who have the responsibility of remembering and understanding what happened". Charles highlights how this fiction reveals the devastating effects of war and constitutes methodologically and historically important testaments.

There are, of course, a growing number of excellent literary novels and short stories written by American veterans who served in Iraq: from the earliest *The Yellow Birds* (2012) by Kevin Powers; David Abram's *Fobbit* (2012); Roy Scranton and Matt Gallagher's *Fire and Forget: Short Stories from the Long War* (2013); Phil Klay's *Redeployment* (2014); Micheal Pitre's *Fives and Twenty-Fives (*2014); and many others who are men of experience and men of letters. Each of these is immensely valuable and in the aggregate would provide a reader with a broader overview of the reality of the Iraq War and how it was experienced by

each of the respective authors and their fictional protagonists. These fictions allow each veteran author to articulate their own voice, and give them agency to represent themselves, their nation and their people. They are able to capture American experience in a distinctively faithful way. Although they write about their personal experiences they also document the historical and factual events of the war in their narratives.

However, the proliferation of such novels by veteran writers has been a concern for some critics and this brings us to another noteworthy essay "Stop Giving War-veteran Novelists a Free Pass" published late in 2012. Michael Larson mentions the works by Phil Klay, Roy Scranton, Matt Gallagher and Ben Fountain, and afterwards, claims that it does not take a veteran to write about war and the military. According to Larson the best novel so far about the experience of American war in Iraq is Ben Fountain's *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime War*, a civilian writer who has never served in the military. This perspective is also consolidated by Phil Klay who argues that it is a peculiarity of current wars that some of the best novels about Iraq have been written by non-veteran authors. In "Iraq and Ruin: Two Fictional Examinations of Life After War" published in 2015 Klay shows that five contemporary novelists including Ben Fountain, Lea Carpenter, Roxana Robinson, Willy Vlautin, and Joyce Carol Oates have charted new territory in examining recent conflicts whose fictions focus on psychologically and physically damaged veterans. This is why Michael Larson argues that if one day a classic Iraq war novel appears, it has nothing to do with the background of the authors, or even whether the author has a direct military experience in Iraq or not. In concluding his essay Larson (2012) argues that: "the likes of Phil Klay, Roy Scranton, Matt Gallagher and others are known as much, if not more, for being veteran writers than for simply being writers" (n.page)

In Larson's view it is clear that personal background should not matter as much as the content and style of the content they write. While in Larson's view a writer's authority derives from his skill in what he writes and how a book is structured, rather than any authenticating authorial identity as a veteran or a civilian caught up in these events. In Larson's judgement the corporate media and publishing industries tend to overemphasize the fictional works of veteran writers, in a way that erroneously implies that those authors without such an experience lack conviction. Larson starkly critiques the over emphasise paid to veteran authors; and in his conclusion he judges that many assess these authors as veterans first and writers second, and be lauded for the wrong reasons over those with no actual military experience in Iraq, seemingly a rational position. However, I would suggest that Larson neglects an important point that these experienced authors have written acclaimed

novels that seek to navigate and unravel the relationship between the personal and the political, the mixing of art and politics, the facts and fictions, and the confusion, complexity and ambiguity regarding the American war in Iraq. These factors make veteran literature particularly valuable because as personal narratives fictions of veteran authors might improve society's understanding of America's war against terror in Iraq; with depth and imaginations such fiction enlighten us, and help those who wrestled with what this war has meant. Veteran fictions, according to Mc Manus (2015), are worthwhile as through their fiction, they make war more concrete and present a clearer truth on U.S wars than best journalism. Besides veteran authors also capture effectively what the war was like for those civilians who stayed at home, projecting emphatically in a different manner. The trope of many of these soldier and or veteran authored novels manifest the reasons why the war in Iraq was so complicated and evidence what the effects the political conundrum had on American forces deployed in Iraq.

Yet another significant critical essay is Marcia Lynx Qualey's ''The Literature of Forgetting and Remembering in Iraq'' published by *alaraby* in 2015, a Middle East News and Current Affairs website. This is notable for levelling the most serious criticism against such canonization of American soldier's literature. Qualey argues that such a process is institutionally supported by US government organizations. In America thousands of books about Iraq are published and many have emerged from funded creative writing programs for returning soldiers. Thus, according to Qualey, while such American literature aims to forget Iraqis themselves and their part in the war, Iraqi fiction resists forgetting and offers an insistent reminder of the full scale of the tragedy. One should realize, Qualey writes, ''it is an attempt to forget the many other stories that could be told about the war''. On the one hand surely one cannot concur with Qualy's assertion that the institutional support for veteran authors in producing literature about the Iraq War purposefully aims to forget Iraqis. In fact there are hundreds of MFA-Master of Arts-programs in US universities that support returning veterans to connect with and tell the stories of their experiences in Iraq. Michael David Lukas (2010) in an essay entitled ''Workshopping the Next Generation of American War Literature'' shows that it is vital that soldiers translate their indescribable experience of war into fiction because this literature allows readers to see the human face of war, and it helps American public to understand war on an intimate level. He argues the effect of such writing workshops remains to be seen and it does not matter where such fictions are written in an MFA program or elsewhere ''the stories and poems of our veterans are an essential piece of understanding who we are, as a country at war and as the citizens in whose name the wars are waged''.

Lukas's argument not only supports this notion that writing about war can offer soldiers a chance to organize and make meaning of what might seem a fundamentally chaotic experience as well as using that experience as a source of creative inspiration but also highlights that a fundamental challenge of writing about war is to translate an indescribable experience into language. Lukas demonstrates that MFA program workshops focus on building community and getting the story out, for therapeutic reasons as well as literary outputs. However, I would argue that the embedded American fictions do not intentionally want to forget the Iraqi side of the war. In fact American veteran authored fictions are mostly anti-war novels; their protagonists are personally, politically, and philosophically ambivalent, disillusioned and confused. American veteran fiction about Iraq narrates the atrocities and the chaos of the war, either through direct comments from the author or through the use of a character that might embody the voice of the author, using words and a language not only to describe but also to impose order and control over the chaotic experience of war.

Nevertheless, one cannot contradict Qualey's observation that Iraqi authors themselves have produced a body of fiction about this war which is dwarfed by what he calls "American embedded literature". Qualey thoughtfully observes that Iraqi fiction aims to remember the full scale of the tragedy. In many ways this synthesizes and sums up what Iraqi-authored fictions exhibit about the war and this will be exposed and analysed in a chapter of this thesis dedicated to Iraqi and Arab-authored novels. The chapter will explore the effectiveness of Iraqi novels about the war as they engage with reality, being rooted in the human suffering and intense human experience the war caused. This literature is important because Iraqi authors can consider in the aftermath the wreckage caused by America's war in Iraq, writing about real personal sufferings caused by political violence; showing the agony of individuals in such a way to symbolize the collective suffering of the Iraqis. Iraqi novels make sense of themselves, grasp many truths, and in seeking to find meaning they transcend personal experience and are mainly about the devastating consequences of the war.

In an interview the Iraqi critic and novelist Sinan Antoon, also confirms that after all of these years of violence and two wars in Iraq, in the US mainstream press the interest is for writing of the veterans. [8]Antoon argues that in these fictions the American veterans are the

[8] Sinan Antoon is an American Iraqi novelist, critic and professor of English at New York University. He is the author of the widely acclaimed novel *The Corpse Washer* which will be discussed in the last chapter. Antoon argues that his novels are not published by mainstream presses because they are interested in commercial success only and he prefers them to be published by smaller presses among whom their interests are literary values.

victims of the war and the Iraqi civilians disappear (Forbes, 2015). In fact, Nahrain Al-Mousawi in reviewing *War and Occupation in Iraqi Fiction* in 2015 observes that the Iraqi War literary canon have been overtaken by American military accounts. Al-Mousawi asserts that US military titles have been published and promoted with regularity while war literature by Iraqi authors have consistently been ignored or left untranslated. Interestingly, Al-Mousawi illustrates that post-occupation Iraqi fiction, or post-2003 fiction, is largely absent from the literary accounts of the war in the US. The validity of this claim is tested by Lucy Freeland who in an essay entitled "10 Contemporary Iraqi Writers You Should Know" shows that literary talent of contemporary Iraqi authors are carving a place for themselves not only in Arabic speaking countries, but with the help of sensitive translation across the globe (Freeland, n.d). In fact, numerous Iraqi authors are increasingly being translated into English.[9] Their fictions despite numerous conflicts display virtuosity and versatility as they capture and paraphrase the struggle of their nation, transformed into fiction which articulates the perspective of previous silent Iraqi victims. Such fictions employ unique narrative styles to comment upon the personal and collective resentment of a country ravaged by war. Indeed, in a matter of ten years after the U.S invasion of Iraq, post-2003 Iraqi literature show that the prolonged experience of war still dominates Iraqi articulation of identity and the collective historical memory, expressing the subjective and collective traumatic aftermath of the war experience, and the lingering effects of the terror of war and violence. Significantly, Yasmeen Hanoosh in "Beyond the Trauma of War: Iraqi Literature Today" has pointed out that what marks the perspectives of several of the text's protagonists is that they are coloured by suffering or haunted by war nightmares and as such they prompt readers to rethink their own understanding of modern Iraq. She argues that Iraqi authors have revived the mode of social realism in their narratological models and as cultural expressions they demonstrate that:

> The strangeness with which the work of many contemporary Iraqi writers at once rivets and disorients the reader is perhaps the best metaphor for the incongruity of modern Iraq's cultural and political history, and a shrewd reminder of the cyclical nature of the country's collective calamities (Hanoosh, 2013).

The previous debates about the literary qualities, the canonization of and the promotion of American veteran authors and the lack of Iraqi voices to be heard as well as the attention the

[9] This includes but are not limited to widely known contemporary authors such as Ahmad Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* , Loay Hamza Abbas's *Closing Her Eyes*, Hassan Blassim's *Iraqi Christ and The Madman of Freedom Square*, , Sinan Antoon's *The Corpse Washer*, Inaam Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter* , Iqbal Al-Qazwini's *Zubaida's Window*, and Roodan Al-Galidi's *Thirsty River*. These author's novels were translated and published in English after the occupation of Iraq. Some of these novels are included in the analysis of the fourth chapter.

media corporate gives them remind us that literary and cultural productions occur through cultural apparatus, and through an elaborate network of formal institutions in education, politics, and communications. Alan Sinfield (2004) in *Literature, Politics and Culture in Post-war Britain* highlights the reality that ‘‘Literature is an institutional arrangement we have made to dignify some writing at the expense of other’’ (31). According to Sinfield literature is a cultural apparatus and that any culture will value some texts more highly than others. Sinfield credibly shows that literature is about authority and it is about having your work accepted as art or literature which is to be judged by an expert and gain a voice in discourse with certain claims to significance. Therefore a text may appear literary or otherwise depending on the contexts in which it is regarded and interpreted. As Sinfield reiterates ‘‘The literary as it is deployed in our culture is less a property of texts than a way of reading and placing texts’’ (33).Therefore one cannot dispute with Sinfield in claiming that literary texts of any period return repeatedly to certain complex, powerful and demanding themes, stories that demand most attention and that they can reinforce towards new understanding.

In his essay, the Iraq War veteran and West Point graduate Caleb S. Cage in ‘‘War Narratives: Truth and Fiction’’ shows that by 2010 in addition to countless nonfiction works written about Iraq there is also a small explosion in literary fiction coming out of the war in Iraq that has made a tremendous contribution to discussion concerning the Iraq War. His analysis indicates such fictions tell the war story in new ways; outlining truths that were previously absent, missing from accounts of the war. Surely one cannot but approve Cage’s analysis that shows how these stories cannot capture war in an objective term, but rather are personal narratives that explore subjective truths. Cage argues that such fictions vividly display the truth of war. He argues that these diverse authors challenge the existing narratives of war, individually and collectively they are able to capture the truth of war because:

> Their fiction directly and aggressively militates against the sterile and sensational depictions of wars that have been presented in nonfiction works. By not making any claims to universal truths, these authors are able to guffaw at the absurdity of military life, to object to the categorical heroism attributed to every soldier during wartime instead, and to examine the coarse lives led by veterans after combat (Cage, 2015).

In an essay ‘‘The Moral Art of War’’ published in 2010 Geoff Dyer insists that the war in Iraq is the defining story of our time. Dyer asserts that some of the best nonfiction works such as those written by Dexter Filkins and Sebastian Junger about Iraq convey the human story of war through unveiling actual stupidity, deceit, absurdity and killing fields of war. Dyer also maintains that the same human story of war is not being seriously examined through fiction.

He points out that novelists have yet to fully make imaginative sense of the Iraq war "It is difficult to see what the novelist might bring to the table except stylistic panache…and the burden of unnecessary conventions." Dyer believes that the defining stories of and about Iraq are being told in nonfiction "It is just that these books are not coming in the shape and form commonly expected: the novel"(243). Dyer argues that the genre of memoirs have replaced the role that fictional literature played about our contemporaneous wars and he anticipates and concedes that if a great novel does emerge from the current conflict, it might be by a writer from Iraq. This is interesting because many Iraqi novelists have produced excellent fictional works about the conflict in their country of which more will be discussed in the last chapter.

In his essay, Matt Gallagher also wonders why great novels about the War on Terror have not yet appeared. Writing for the *Atlantic Monthly* in 2011 the Iraq War memoirist explains that there are a number of reasons, namely the need for an elapsed time after war so that wartime experiences can be processed in fiction, the lack of market for novels from this war and the unprecedented divide between the civilians and the military due to all volunteer forces in the U.S Army. Gallagher writes "The market is heavy on memoir and light on fiction about the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq". This shows that generally wars need to end before fiction writers can fully capture their impact on the individuals, an outlook reinforced by Roxana Robinson.[10] In an essay "Army of Shadows" she illustrates that writings about war follows a sequence: first there is reportage, then memoirs, and finally novelists are always the last to capture war experience (Robinson 2014). This is because fiction is ruminative, emerging slowly from experience. In addition, her essay shows that ten years after the invasion of Iraq there are sufficient novels appearing that need to be analysed. Likewise, Adam Haslett (2014) writing for the *Prospect Magazine* in "Can Fiction Capture the Iraq War?" observes that in the decade since the invasion of Iraq the most widely read and highly regarded literature on the war have been written by journalists, and that it is only in the last few years that established American fiction writers have begun to make their own sense of the damage done to both Iraqi people and American soldiers. This shows that every war seems to produce great literary fiction and that it seems only a matter of time before the war in Iraq would provide raw material for novels about modern conflict. Indeed, recent novels such as those published by Ben Fountain, Kevin Powers and David Abram signal the

[10] Roxana Robinson is a novelist and critique. She is the author of *Sparta* a novel about Iraq War and is also recipient of James Webb Award for distinguished fiction from the US Marine Corps Heritage Foundation.

emergence of exciting new fiction about Iraq. In addition, Sarah Stodola (2015) in an opinion essay ‘‘When American and Its Writers Knew War’’ argues that Iraq until recently had a curiously flat impact on the broader American culture and that now the Americans are beginning to see the Iraq War as a historical event worth grappling with. Stodola also makes an interesting and compelling point when she examines American soldier-authored novels about Iraq and finds that those who do serve in the military are disproportionately from the less privileged class and therefore they are less likely to be those determining American cultural outputs. She argues that writers write what they know and even today when the war is officially over most Americans, even soldier-writers do not know this war very well. While some critics complain about the lack of classic war writers and classic war novels focusing on the contemporary conflicts, others criticise the content and thematic elements of recent war fictions.

Consider, for example, Linda Besner’s essay ‘‘Even in Fiction, Peace in the Middle East Proves Unimaginable’’ published in 2015 in which she deliberates that conflict in the region seems permanent, peace proving elusive, such possible alternative lives not featuring in most novels about Iraq. This is because the nature of modern war as it is depicted in such fiction shows that the concept of peace loses currency. Those soldiers who fought in Iraq and wrote fictions about their experience cannot even imagine peace in their fictions. She powerfully expresses this as ‘‘It is not that no one believes peace is possible: it’s that no one even knows how to want it anymore’’. Besner refers to past war literature in which the theme of war was treated as an aberration, that characters in previous war fictions have real lives from which their combat experience is a departure. American veteran authors of Iraq capture the complexities of their own experiences, turning their memoirs into fiction in response to their own reflection on the horrors and the sufferings they witnessed or perpetrated. In such novels returning soldiers cannot adjust at home and find peace in their civilian lives. In part this is a process with narratival dimensions in the real world of events. As a recent NATO 2014 report by Julian Lindley-French stated: “Equally, in crises narratives work in both directions and the Alliance must become far better at understanding the ‘stories’ of others as a crisis develops. The scenarios suggest that adversaries will start by trying to exploit the seams, the grey areas between peace and war through the use of proxies to de-stabilise situations, as took place in Ukraine-Crimea. Understanding these narratives will take more than simply good intelligence but access as well to deep knowledge and expertise and the insertion of such knowledge early in the conflict cycle” (8). He adds: “History is full of strategic blunders and they often take the same pattern: hubris, faulty visions, under-estimation of adversaries and enemies with the

assumption that any war will be short. The Alliance is in danger of making just such a mistake and no amount of 'narratives' however clever will compensate for a failure to adhere to the fundamental principles of strategy" (9).

Other critics, for instance, Sam Sacks (2015) in his essay "First-Person Shooters: What's Missing in Contemporary War Fiction?" scrutinizes a problem in modern war fiction and argues that this genre "scrupulously avoids placing the Terror Wars within a larger political or ideological context". His argument is that recent war fictions rarely address important questions such as why did America fight those wars? What were veterans trying to achieve? Did they succeed or did they fail? What consequences have they brought upon the countries they attacked? What, if anything have we learned? Furthermore, Sacks claims that several contemporary war fictions authored by veterans linger on solipsistic stories that focus on the trauma and the plight of psychologically troubled soldiers and veterans and this is why his conclusion states "War is hell, but its themes make critics purr". With this being said, Sacks suggests that these veterans tell the same kind of story because their authors are being cultivated in the hothouse of creative-writing programs. Besides, Sacks advises readers that one of the main functions of literature is to awaken us from stupor, but believes that veteran authors have done little to disturb the conventional view of the conflict.

In the same tradition of Sacks' critique others argue that the new war literature is largely free of politics and polemics. One example is George Packer whose essay "Home Fires: How Soldiers Write their Wars" which was published in *The New Yorker* on April 7, 2014. Packer argues that unlike their forbears young American veteran authors tend to write about that war to emphasize something different: they recognize their own anguish and suffering in the suffering of others, that is, they acknowledge the therapeutic healing role that literature can play after soldiers return home "The Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan", Packer claims were ironic because "They were worse than expected. Both began with hubris and false victories, turned into prolonged stalemates, and finally deserved the bitter name of defeat".

The Iraq War as a concrete historical tradition has therefore firmly asserted itself in contemporary Anglo-American and Iraqi novels, and that many novelists from different national backgrounds, including those to be analysed in this thesis have reflected upon and reacted to its events. Furthermore, they have used its effects and blended its reality with their imagination in their novels and this forms part of a cultural and aesthetic zeitgeist of the period. In *The Contemporary British Novel* published in (2007) Philip Tew argues that a series of major global events have reshaped both aesthetic and cultural sensibilities and these events, which are largely traumatological "9/11, the Bali Bombs, the Iraq war, the late-2004

Tsunami, the London Bombings and the flood in New Orleans have altogether brutally asserted the material origins of experience, of ideas and conceptions'' (202). Unlike Tew whose book features novels that responded to such a range of global events in terms of influences upon the aesthetic zeitgeist, the emphasis in this study will be solely upon Anglo-American and Iraqi novels concerned with the Iraq War, focusing on how such fictions infuse the personal with the political, and engage with the private and public experience of the war. However, it is easy to agree with Tew in that novels written after 9/11 and Iraq War have created new forms of consciousness exploring the personal, historical and cultural moments of the period through a consciousness of the material effects of trauma.

In fact, some literary critics complain that contemporary cultural studies and literary criticism have ignored or do not adequately engage with the issues of war. For example Nick Bentley (2008) in his *Contemporary British Fiction* identified certain trends and subject matter to speculate on ''recent political and cultural events such as the legacies of the 9/11 attacks and the so called 'war on terror' can be assumed to provide source material for fiction in the coming years''(195). Bentley shows that contemporary fiction is different in that only recently can anything as authoritative as a canon of contemporary fiction be said to have emerged. In his research carried out for the English Subject Centre Philip Tew also identified that ''contemporary fiction is a growing area in literary and cultural studies both in the UK and internationally'' (Tew M. a., 2007). Tew argues that contemporary fiction promises to be an area of literary studies that continues to be vibrant and exciting. In an article ''War in Literature and Drama'' Catherine Calloway argues that the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks have resulted in a new body of literature that considers the War on Terror and that a large body of literary criticism exists by scholars who have treated and began writing in earnest about war and literature. This is because, according to Calloway: "The proliferation of recent scholarship on war serves only to remind us that war is still very much a contemporary issue and that war literature is a popular topic for publication" (Calloway, 2013).

Literary scholars often argue that the subject of war literature have gone out of fashion in English departments. For instance, according to Gandal (2008) there are few courses that address the literature of war and the military and that scholars specialized in this field of enquiry often find themselves to some degree marginalized. Such critics argue that literary criticism in the twenty-first century only developed highly specialized, hermetic or esoteric styles and become somewhat too focused on a few favoured subjects, notably race, gender and sexuality. Consequently, they demand a more interdisciplinary literary criticism and cultural studies and that there is a need for more accessible styles of expressions imported

from other disciplines such as history, politics and the military. For instance the literary scholar and professor of English Keith Gandal in his article ‘‘New Directions in Literary Criticism: Studying War and the Military’’ reflected on the lack of reflection on war in America. He writes : ‘‘Perhaps the other major change that we might ask of literary criticism for the twenty-first century is that it have more interchange with other fields, such as history: that it become more truly interdisciplinary’’(Gandal, 2008). Gandal suggested that literary criticism and cultural studies for the twenty-first century needs to think more about and engage more deeply with the subject of contemporary wars such as Iraq. This is because and critics have had relatively little to say about such ‘unsavoury’ subjects and associated writing. Gandal’s compelling argument is that the subject of war and the military have fallen out of favour. He shows that most professors of English and history prefer to oppose war and criticize the military rather than critically study reflections of them in their academic endeavours (apart from a few canonical anti-war texts such as Kurt Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five* and Joseph Heller’s *Catch-22*).

This illustrates the need for in depth investigation, critique and analysis of the emerging issues. However, to date the representation of the Iraq War in the genre of contemporary novels has not been sufficiently studied. Tew (2007) argues that ‘‘There remains something relevant and challenging about interpreting works completed in recent years, ones which either reflect directly upon or react to current and recent cultural conditions that are part of a broader zeitgeist than literary studies’’ (222). Therefore it is in the context of such critical deficiency that this thesis considers a range of such novels that consider the conflict’s potentially troubling effects on society and individuals. This thesis will demonstrate that the Iraq War has impinged on the Anglo-American and Iraqi cultural consciousness and particularly in the cultural and aesthetic works such as the genre of novels which are deeply enmeshed within its ramifications. It is interesting and equally important to understand the pervasive symbolic impact of the US-UK-led invasion of Iraq on the cultural consciousness of the Britons, Americans and Iraqis and vigorously analyse how such fiction represents broader political controversies which are evident in the to be discussed fictional works. All in all, the thesis argues that the process of fictionalizing Iraq is still on-going and that this conflict continues to occupy a much more than important place in Anglo-American and Iraqi literary consciousness. Through its introduction to the literary and cultural study of writings from and about the Iraq War, this study invites readers to consider how and why it is important to understand this literature in its cultural context and attempts to establish a critical framework within which texts of and about the conflict could be discussed.

Chapter One: Rethinking the Iraq War in Four British Novels: an Anti- Interventionist Discourse

1.1 Introduction

The Iraq war is arguably one of the most destructive and documented events in recent history and such reality is reflected upon and shapes the contours of some contemporary British novels. Very possibly a majority of people in Britain did not want to go to war in Iraq, realizing even in advance the concomitant horror of conflict. Such resistance was eventually assimilated into the public consciousness and has fired the imaginations of some British authors who have engaged imaginatively with these dynamics. It is in this light that this chapter will analyse four British novels: Ian McEwan's *Saturday* (2005), Jonathan Coe's *The Closed Circle* (2004), Melissa Benn's *One of Us* (2009) and Julia Jarman's *Peace Weavers* (2009).In effect such British fictions anatomise how the decision to intervene in Iraq generated a climate of fear, uncertainty and has increasingly left a psychological impact on the British public imagination. This chapter suggests that the capacity of such fictions about Iraq also lies in addressing more universal themes such as morality, legality, the magnitude of the conflict and the corollary of the good and evil of intervention.

The theme of anti-interventionism began to feature more prominently in such fiction because the war was controversial in the UK and sparked public protest by people who were actively engaged with the ethical debates about the war. As the war declined in popularity, its fiction began to voice vocal and strong opposition, addressing a range of morally weighty issues such as dissent, anti-war activism, resistance to militarism and immorality of war. This chapter analyses how such fiction attempts to debate and reflect on the arguments both for and against that intervention that circulated before and at the time of the conflict, considering the potential (un)justifiability of US-UK-led invasion of Iraq. This anti-interventionist discourse, I will argue, raises questions about the moral ambiguity and the risks of resorting to war to resolve political conflicts. Furthermore, it highlights the inhumanity of armed conflict, questions and destabilizes the UK-US foreign policies.

Bellow I will examine how these selected fictions critically engage with and challenge the dominant political rhetoric aimed at justifying the war in Iraq as a legal and/or a humanitarian intervention. Considered as historical, political and cultural narratives, the selected texts offer very largely an alternative narrative that interrogates the legal and moral framework of this intervention, which I will suggest can best be defined as an anti-interventionist discourse. By incorporating critical conceptions from political theory, ethics and moral philosophy and applying them to the analysis of such fiction, my thesis will be that such an anti-

interventionist discourse ostensibly preoccupied the cultural and public imagination, shaping the collective consciousness of British people before and at the time of these events.

Examples of such theoretical texts include Alex J Bellamy's thesis in *The Responsibility to Protect or Trojan Horse?* arguing that "the credibility of the United States and the U.K as humanitarian intervention norm carriers has significantly diminished as a result of the Iraq war" (Bellamy, 51). The former British Foreign Office special advisor David Clark argued that "Iraq has wrecked our case for humanitarian wars"(p, 16). In other words, any such interventions cannot be a power for good because it will be regarded as potentially violating human right. Supporters of an anti-interventionist position prior to the war organized catalytical political marches and huge numbers of people participated in demonstrations against the Iraq war. The public's anti-war stance galvanized an opposition to Blair's policy and the Labour government. Protesters from Britain expressed their stance against the decision to go to war, as Steve Padley argues in his *Key Concepts in Contemporary Literature* the opposition was unprecedented "The largest articulation of political dissent of the early years of the 21st century was the expression of opposition to the decision by the United States, supported by the British government, to go to war with Iraq in 2003"(37).

As cultural products the selected fiction featured in this chapter all generally construct an image in reader's mind that shows the resort to unauthorized war was not only illegal but also morally problematic. They fictionalize the intervention as an aggressive unilateral act that undermined the sovereignty of the United Nations and the international community. Therefore the texts to be analysed reflects upon a reality that the intervention in Iraq increased disillusion among British citizens, with organized protests and a decline of trust in parliamentary politics as well as railing against politicians.

I will seek to examine how the principal characters of such fiction view the war and analyse their attitudes towards the interventionist doctrine. Although the majority of the characters are explicitly anti-interventionist, there are also occasions where some strongly support this policy. However, their opinions, world-views, and moral judgment do not necessarily embody the moral judgement of their authors. This chapter is divided into four sections. Each section will explain one novel starting with a brief summary and then drawing on knowledge from key political scientists to highlight the theme of anti-interventionism and how the texts engage with this controversial norm in international relations, political and moral philosophy, and ethics.

In section one, Ian McEwan's *Saturday* will be described. It will shed light on why its protagonist Henry Perowne and his daughter Daisy view the conflict differently. McEwan's

novel is useful to understand how British politics at this time divided people into two fronts; either for or against the use of armed force. Each front had their own moral, ethical and political justification for their opinions. For example, Henry Perowne sees the war in Iraq as a necessary lesser evil to end dictatorship. But Daisy believes that regime change and war violates human rights in itself. Therefore, this section draws on some norms in international relations theories and analyses trends such as regime-change and humanitarian interventions. McEwan's *Saturday* is useful to understand these norms and how they can be related to national security of those countries that intervene.

In section two, Jonathan Coe's *the Closed Circle* will be discussed, analysing how its central character Paul, an MP during the Blair's labour government resigns from his post due to his unease over voting for going to war. This section will explain how the hawkish politics of Blair's Labour government and its handling of foreign affairs was viewed, challenged and critiqued by some politicians and public opinion. This section will also analyse the effect of foreign intervention mainly on personal and political lives of British persons on the one hand and to a lesser extent on the Iraqi people on the other.

In section three, Melissa Benn's *One of US* will be examined, analysing how the intervention in Iraq affected two British families. The politics of intervention leads to a disastrous and shocking tragedy for one family and presents a challenge to a Labour politician. This novel will be utilized to discuss anti-war activism and the campaign for peace. Showing how the government manipulated public opinion, covered-up the truth, used a mixture of defective intelligence and nascent thinking to justify waging the war.

In section four, Julia Jarman's *Peace Weavers* will be analysed, showing how during the run-up to the conflict, women were politicized, and campaigned against the war and were actively involved in the largest distinct coordinated protest in history. More than any time this war created an anti-interventionist attitude and a condition for solidarity and global anti-war activism. As Ishaan Tharoor puts it between ten to fifteen million people marched worldwide against the Iraq War "From Auckland to Vancouver-and everywhere in between-tens of thousands came out, joining their voices in simple, global message: no to the Iraq war" (n.pag).

In the conclusion, it will be argued that the invasion of Iraq affected British culture, particularly within novels that were deeply involved in the dominant rhetorical debate used to justify the war on terror and the subsequent invasion of Iraq. These novels determinedly describe the resort to war in language that evokes the tenets of anti-war and anti-interventionist debate. Thereby, they cast the Iraq war as an inappropriate, unjustifiable

response to the September 11th terrorist attacks, and not a humanitarian intervention mission. It is interesting to understand the pervasive symbolic impact of the US-UK-led invasion of Iraq on the cultural consciousness of Britons. It is also equally important to vigorously analyse why many British novelists make that debate a fundamental theme in their works and how such fiction represents broader political controversies which are evident in the to be discussed fictional works.

1.2 Ian McEwan: *Saturday* (2005)

Saturday is a novel that is set on 15th February 2003, the day of the great anti-war march in London. McEwan balances the attitudes towards both interventionism and anti-interventionism in Iraq. Henry Perowne, the protagonist, represents pro-interventionist sentiments that advocate regime-change and the promotion of liberal values such as freedom and democracy. His daughter Daisy, an Oxford graduate of English literature, represents the anti-interventionist people who protested the war. The debates, disagreements and rival attitudes between the members of the Perowne family symbolize the extent in which pro-and anti-interventionist attitudes and ethical debates of the war were prevalent before and during the war and how deeply enmeshed they were in the private and public lives of the British public. McEwan dexterously presents such nuances for and against the intervention in the dialogues between Henry Perowne and his intellectual daughter Daisy. They both engage in a debate and discuss participation in the London demonstrations against the war. The dialogues show their oppositional viewpoints concerning the war in Iraq. Daisy tries to justify why the anti-war protesters are right, giving her father several reasons that Britain should not go to war. However Henry Perowne is not convinced with her comments and believes that regime change and humanitarian intervention is the only solution to settle the disputes about the war in Iraq:

> How about a short war, the UN doesn't fall apart, no famine, no refugees or invasions by neighbours, no flattened Baghdad and fewer deaths than Saddam causes his own people in an average year? What if the Americans try to organize a democracy, pump in the billions and leave because the president wants to get himself re-elected next year? I think you'd still be against it, and you haven't told me why.''
> Daddy, you're not for the war, are you?
> He shrugs. 'No rational person is for war. But in five years we might not regret it. I'd love to see the end of Saddam. Your'e right it could be a disaster. But it could be the end of a disaster and the beginning of something better. It's all about outcomes, and no one knows what they'll be. That's why I cannot imagine marching in the streets (McEwan, 187).

This dialogue reflects the predominant leitmotif used to justify the war in Iraq as a humanitarian intervention. Henry's attitude reflects the outlook of many international

relations theorists who advocate Human Rights instead of the sovereignty of states and held pro-interventionist attitudes.[11] Often such proponents of human rights reject the concept of sovereignty of states and instead advocate a solidarity stance in managing international relations among states. Before and after the war in Iraq, some legal scholars provided a moral and intellectual framework to justify the Iraq war as a humanitarian intervention. They asserted that if states actively violate the human rights of their citizens and/or fail to protect them, they would forfeit their sovereignty because sovereignty now means a state's responsibility to protect their own population.

Rights theorists such as David Luban argues that if a foreign state tyrannizes its citizens, then an intervention and the use of force to support the rights of its citizens is necessary and justifiable. According to Luban such interventions can prevent acts of barbarism (2002). Pragmatists such as Michael Walzer argue that in supremely urgent cases such as genocide and mass murder interventions can be morally justifiable. In his *Just and Unjust Wars* Walzer argues that such cases "shock the moral conscience of mankind" (107). Walzer labels humanitarian intervention as a politics of rescue and advocates a limited intervention to rescue the innocent and helpless from persecution and extreme distress. According to Walzer if states greatly abuse their power then initiating an altruist or a righteous war of punishment is justifiable (Walzer, 1995, 24). In addition, Fernando Teson fervently defends humanitarian war from a human rights perspective arguing that "foreign armies are morally entitled to help victims of oppression in overthrowing dictators, provided that the intervention is proportionate to the evil which it is designed to suppress"(15). According to Gillian Brock a state's violations of the rights of its people warrants humanitarian intervention which can be morally defensible. Brock claims that military intervention to protect the fundamental human rights of vulnerable individuals is necessary: "In both cases the tensions should be resolved in favour of protecting the individuals who suffer in these humanitarian crises"(35-36). David Rodin also argues that sovereignty ceases to exist if it fails to protect human rights and therefore a humanitarian intervention is justifiable:

> The moral status of state sovereignty derives entirely from its role in protecting and furthering human rights and human interests. For this reason, if a state fails to protect , or actively violates, the rights of its citizens, then its sovereignty can no longer function to rule out forcible intervention which is designed to secure those right"(4).

These stances were very controversial before the intervention in Iraq. Proponents of

[11] Such scholars and theorists include Jean Bethke Elshtian, Mary Kaldor, Eric A. Heinze, Fernando Teson, David Rodin, David Mellow, Gillian Brock, Michael Walzer and David Luban.

sovereignty of state argued that the war was illegal as it was not sanctioned by the United Nations; but proponents of human rights and Responsibility to Protect (R2P) argued that the illegality of the war does not necessarily mean that the intervention was immoral and unethical. In fact Hugo Grotius, a philosopher who is regarded as a founder of International Law was probably the first who propounded the view that foreign states have a right to intervene to prevent mass atrocities taking place in other states. According to Grotius, if a state attacks its own citizens, friends and allies then that state loses its sovereignty and therefore other states have a right to intervene to prevent what he calls 'unheard of cruelties':

> Every sovereign is supreme judge in his own kingdom and over his own subjects, in whose disputes no foreign power can justly interfere, Yet where a Basiris...provokes its people to despair and resistance by unheard of cruelties, having themselves abandoned all laws of nature, they lose the rights of independent sovereign, and can no longer claim the privilege of the law of nation (207).

Like Grotius, one of the founders of the social contract theory John Locke in his *Two Treaties of Governments* argues that the sovereignty of state lies in the state's power to protect the rights of its citizens. In other words, if a state fails to do so, then it loses the legitimacy of its authority and its sovereignty disappears because the social contract between the people and state ends. Accordingly Locke distinguishes a sovereign ruler from a tyrant as ''One makes the laws the bounds of his power and the good of the public the end of his government; the other makes all give way to his own will and appetite''(193).However, contrary to the theories of Grotius and Lock, John Stuart Mill in his article *A Few Words on Non-Intervention* argued that freedom cannot be imposed by outside states. Mill claims that it is unjustified for a foreign state to intervene in another state to help liberate its population. He put forward that freedoms cannot be imported and that a people have to fight their oppressors so that they deserve their own freedom and self-determination. For those citizens who are suffering under an oppressive state and want to be free and liberate themselves, it is first and foremost their own responsibility to achieve such freedom. Mill states: ''If a people does not value it sufficiently to fight for it, and maintain it against any force which can be mustered within the country,...it is only a question of how a few years or months that people will be enslaved''(Mill, 6). In Mill's opinion, a foreign intervening state will put in power a new form of government a puppet regime that is no different from the previous oppressive government. As a result, the state collapses into a civil war, and ultimately will become reliant on the intervening power for a protracted time. Perhaps there is no better demonstration of this than the current political status of Iraq.

In McEwan's novel, although the main protagonist Henry Perowne has a strict pro-war

and pro-interventionist attitude, nevertheless he also observes and admits the fact that: ‘‘Saddam could be overthrown at too high a cost. It’s a future no one can read. Government ministers speak up loyally, various newspapers back the war, there’s a fair degree of anxious support in the country along with the dissent’’ (145). After briefly addressing the political and philosophical arguments both for and against interventions it is interesting to return to the dialogue between Henry Perowne and his daughter Daisy and see how they discuss this contentious issue:

> Why take the risk? Where’s the cautionary principle you’re always going on about? If you are sending hundreds of thousands of soldiers to the Middle East, you better know what you’re doing. And these bullying greedy fools in the White House don’t know what they’re doing , they’ve no idea where they’re leading us, and I can’t believe you’re on their side.
> Look Daisy, if it was down to me, those troops wouldn’t be on the Iraq border. This is hardly the best time for the West to be going to war with an Arab nation. And no plan in sight for the Palestinians. But the war’s going to happen, with or without the UN, whatever any government says or any mass demonstrations. The hidden weapons, whether they exist or not, they’re irrelevant. The invasion’s going to happen, and militarily it is bound to succeed (188- 189).

Henry Perowne’s stance resembles what might be called the utilitarian or consequentialist school of thinking in international relations. According to this belief, humanitarian wars can be justifiable as sacrificing some lives; a greater number of lives will be saved. Perowne believes and asserts that ‘‘It’ll be the end of Saddam and one of the most odious regimes ever known, and I’ll be glad…Here’s a chance to turn one country around. Plant a seed. See if it flourishes and spreads’’ (189). Perowne believes that three months after the war there will be free speech, free press, unmonitored internet access, and democratizing Iraq will have a domino effect to encourage and push other despotic regimes in Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Libya for making reforms. However, his daughter Daisy refutes this wishful thinking arguing that it’ll be a mess because one cannot plant seeds of democracy with missiles, there will be civil war, leading to radicalization of extremist groups with increasing anti-western attitudes, which in turn upshots in less freedom more bloodshed. (190-191) Consequentialist thinking is morally dangerous because it espouses the Machiavellian rationale that the end justifies the means. Consequentialists admit that initiating aggressive wars or forcible interventions kills some but also spares more lives and what is important to see is whether positive outcomes are achieved or not and whether the benefits in human and material terms can outweigh the costs. This view and justification for intervention and initiating wars to remove dictatorial regimes encountered severe criticism. For example, in McEwan’s *Saturday,* Daisy reproaches her father Henry Perowne for espousing such a view and reprimands his consequentialist attitude:

> You're saying let the war go ahead, and in five years if it works out you're for it, you're not responsible. You're an educated person living in what we like to call a mature democracy, and our government's taking us to war. If you think that's good idea, fine, say so, make the argument, but don't hedge your bets. Are we sending the troops or not? It's happening now. And making guesses about the future is what you do sometimes when you make a moral choice. It's called thinking through the consequences. I'm against this war because I think terrible things are going to happen. You seem to think good will come of it (188).

Legal scholars such as Nicholas J. Wheeler argues that one should not consider the motives behind intervention in judging the legitimacy of humanitarian interventions, but rather should consider whether or not the intervention resulted in a positive humanitarian outcome. Wheeler argues that the victims should be the object of analysis and not the intervener's motives. It is because of this that he considers the Iraq War as a legitimate humanitarian intervention as it effectively toppled the repressive regime that was an obstacle to genuine human rights in Iraq. Wheeler concludes that"the war in Iraq was justified on humanitarian grounds despite the fact that its primary motive was nonhumanitarian"(192-211). Likewise, David Mellow argues that even if the war in Iraq was not motivated by humanitarian concerns it is still a morally justified war because: ''We should not give intentions and motives separate standing in the pantheon of just war criteria. The intentions of the leaders in the Iraq war might not have always been virtuous, but this, in itself, does not make the resort to war morally unjustified"(58). Eric A. Heinze also argues that the Iraq War qualifies and can be justified on humanitarian grounds because the war conforms to many international norms whether legal or not. The Iraq War was allowed to be justified as a humanitarian intervention: ''The invasion of Iraq maintains a sort of abstract normative acceptability as a humanitarian intervention (20-21).

Other critics such as Mary Kaldor even go further claiming that isolationism and non-interventions when massive human rights violations are occurring are in itself a humanitarian abuse. In *New and Old Wars* Kaldor claims that ''The failure to protect the victims is a kind of tacit intervention on the side of those who are inflicting humanitarian or human rights abuses"(125).This same attitude is presented In *Saturday* when Perowne and Daisy deeply disagree about the ethos of those who protested the war. Perowne believes that the anti-war protesters were appeasing the crimes of Saddam Hussein:

> ...There'll be more fighters,' Daisy says. 'And when the first explosion hits London your pro-war views...'
> 'If you're describing my position as pro-war, then you'll have to accept that yours is pro-Saddam.'
> 'What fucking nonsense.'
> 'What I mean is this. The price of removing Saddam is war, the price of no war is

leaving him in place.'

'It's crude and ugly,' She says 'When the war lobby calls us pro- Saddam.'

'Well, you're prepared to do the one thing he'd most like you to do, which is to leave him in power. But you'll only postpone the confrontation. He and his horrible sons are going to have to be dealt with one day. Even Clinton knew that' (190).

This being said, it is because of such competing theories of isolationism, non-intervention and pro-interventionists' foreign policies that Jean Bethke Elshtian, a pro-war critic, drew on Thomas Aquinas and the tenets of jut war theory to provide a moral and an intellectual framework to justify the war on terror and the intervention in Iraq. After 9/11 attacks Elshtian advocated the use of military force not only to protect America and its interests but also in the protection of innocents and in the promotions of liberal values such as freedom and democratic ideals:

> During the run-up to the Iraq War... I reminded those debating the war that St. Thomas Aquinas, among others, insisted that preventing the innocent from certain harm could well be a justified casus belli the innocent being those without the means to defend themselves'' (185).

According to McEwan's Henry Perowne, the humanitarian case alone could suffice to justify the war because Saddam was an oppressive tyrant who committed genocide and crimes against his own people and humanity ''The Prime Minister is expected to emphasize in a speech in Glasgow today the humanitarian reason for war. In Perowne's view, the only case worth making''(169). Perowne's pro-war stance is not without reason. Ever since he met and treated Miri Taleb, an Iraqi professor of history and a victim of torture by Saddam's Baathist regime, Perowne supported regime change. Miri Taleb showed Perowne his scars and told him that everyone hates Saddam and his tyrannical regime.

> You see, it is only terror that holds the nation together, the whole system runs on fear, and no one knows how to stop it. Now the Americans are coming, perhaps for bad reasons. But Saddam and the Ba'athists will go. And then, my doctor friend, I will buy you a meal in a good Iraqi restaurant in London (64).

Miri Taleb's story impels Perowne to read Kanaan Makya's *The Republic of Fear*, a renowned book that introduces him to Saddam's systemic and widespread human rights abuses, executions, torture, ethnic cleansing, and genocide. Hence Henry Perowne believes that Iraq is a rotten state and Saddam had no claims to sovereignty and that the USA owes Iraqi people, to atone for its previous disastrous policies by liberating and democratizing them. McEwan, the novelist writes that ''viciousness had rarely been more inventive or systematic or widespread. Miri was right; it really was a republic of fear… It seemed clear, Saddam's organizing principle was terror'' (72-73). Accordingly McEwan explains the reasons behind Perowne's strong pro-war attitudes and why he thinks the anti-war protesters cannot have an inclusive hold on moral discernment:

> If he hadn't met and admired the professor, he might have thought differently, less ambivalently, about the coming war. Opinions are a roll of the dice; by definition, none of the people now milling around Warren Street tube station happens to have been tortured by the regime, or knows or loves people who have, or even knows much about the place at all. It's likely most of them barely registered the massacres in Kurdish Iraq, or in the Shi'ite South (73).

In fact, Perowne notices that disputes about the invasion were so rampant in the private and public consciousness that made it impossible to ''enjoy an hour's recreation without this invasion, this infection from the public domain?...He has a right now and then everyone has it not to be disturbed by world events''(108). Perowne is baffled by the amount of coverage, predictions and stories being made about:

> For or against the war on terror, or the war in Iraq; for the termination of an odious tyrant and his crime family, for the ultimate weapon inspection, the opening of the torture prisons, locating the mass graves, the chance of liberty and prosperity, and a warning to other despots; or against the bombing of civilians, the inevitable refugees and famine, illegal international action, the wrath of Arab nations and the swelling of Al-Qaeda's ranks (180-181).

In addition to his interventionist and pro-war attitude, Perowne is also a realist and a pragmatic person. He does not believe in pure altruist humanitarian intervention. He knows that when foreign and powerful states intervene, they do so because they are often driven by a desire to defend and further their self-interests and to preserve their own sphere of influence. For example, Perowne is skeptical about sincerity of the Prime Minister Tony Blair, whether he was telling the truth or deceiving the public:

> Does this man sincerely believe that going to war will make us safer? Does Saddam possess weapons of terrifying potential? Simply, the Prime Minister might be sincere and wrong. Some of his bitterest opponents don't doubt his good faith. He could be on the verge of a monstrous miscalculation (141).

Overall, *Saturday* is peopled with fictional characters that have good reasons to convince themselves to either advocate or denounce the war. Henry sees the war as a necessary lesser evil to topple the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein but still remains cynical about the intervener's main motives and intentions. Contrary to her father, Daisy sees the intervention as a greater evil and a war of choice as morally wrong and should have been avoided. One can infer that while intervention and changing regimes can have a desired outcome for some people it can also lead to disastrous consequences for others.

1.3 Jonathan Coe: *The Closed Circle* (2004)

In this novel, the protagonist Paul Trotter is a member of the UK parliament in the Blair's administration. He is torn between his extramarital affair and his political career especially the decision over whether to vote for the war in Iraq or not. Finally, because of peer pressure and his own narrow personal interest he votes for the invasion of Iraq. Despite being married

he is involved in an extramarital love affair with a woman named Malvina and wants to leave his wife Susan. Paul frequently meets Malvina in his wife's brother Mark's flat, who is also a war reporter for Reuters. Paul knows that if he votes affirmative for the war in Iraq then Mark will be sent overseas and hence would give him a chance to use the flat. The following paragraphs show this:

> He thought: *if we go to war against Iraq, Mark will be sent there too and we can start using his flat again.* And this was what he wanted more than anything in the world. One hundred and twenty-one Labour MPs defied the government that night, and voted in favour of the rebel amendment. But Paul was not one of them (350-351).

There is a great deal of historical detail about the debate in British parliament and Blair's attempts to justify going to war. Paul sits through the whole debate which lasts for six hours. Even though Paul himself does not speak, he listens and agrees with two MPs, Kenneth Clarke and Chris Smith's accounts that reject the war and remains unconvinced by Tony Blair's comments about going to war:

> *If we ask ourselves today whether the case for war has now been established, I think this house ought to say not, and there is still a case for giving more time to other peaceful alternatives for enforcing our objectives...I have the feeling there is a little blue pencil around a date sometime before it gets too hot in Iraq*...He listened as Chris Smith said: *There may well be a time for military action...but at the moment the timetable appears to be determined by the President of the United States*...He listened as Tony Blair said*: I think the case we have set out in respect of Iraq is a good case. I hope that if people listen to it and study it in detail they will accept that if we do have to act and go to war, it will not be because we want to, but because of the breaches by Saddam Hussien of UN resolutions"* [Italics in Original](349-350).

Paul is puzzled by the way Tony Blair, an apparently principled man, clings to his half-truths and wishful thinking and would not be swayed either by public opinion or by the words of his colleagues from the path he had chosen, a path that Paul calls 'narrow, unswerving path'. Paul thinks that it made no sense and that Iraq posed no imminent threat. He keeps asking why they were doing this, why they were trying to talk themselves into seeing a threat from a small, impoverished country thousands of miles away, with no proven links to terrorism and a clapped-out arsenal that had been dismantled years ago under the scrutiny of UN inspectors. However, later, Paul Trotter feels remorseful, looks back with shame and regrets his decision in voting for the war. He resigns from parliament and from the Labour party. He sends a three page letter to the Prime Minister explaining that the decision for going to war was illegal and immoral. He reproaches himself and the PM for having made the wrong choice. He explains that his political decision was motivated by his own narrow personal interest and below is a part of his letter that says:

> *'It is with great regret that I feel I must tender my resignation as a Member of*

Parliament...I feel greater unease about this war than about anything else you have led the party into during your period of office...Voting against the rebel amendment, and for the invasion of Iraq, was the only political act of my career on which I look back with shame. It was such a huge misjudgement, in fact, that it forced me to look hard at my motives for making it; and when I did so, I realized that a complete revolution had taken place in the relationship between my political and personal priorities. It was this realization that led directly to the decision to leave my wife, and so, unavoidably, to the decision to resign. Please forgive me, Prime Minister, for any distress, embarrassment or political damage which my actions might cause. You will read this letter, I suspect, with mounting disbelief and anger. But after giving all of these matters much thought, I am convinced, finally, that I have done the right and honourable thing.
In continuing friendship and admiration.
Yours truly,
Paul Trotter [Italics in Original] (401-403).

As his letter indicates, Paul's uneasiness about this war is not without reason. Paul is concerned with five major questions which were also the key for major critics and international lawyers. I shall scrutinize these five issues one by one and examine how they were conceptualized by main theorists before and after the conflict. The first question that troubles Paul is '*Was toppling Saddam Hussein indeed the aim? That was not how you presented the matter to the British people"* [Italics in Original] (402). This issue was addressed by many scholars, for example by Kenneth Roth, the director of Human Rights Watch in a compelling essay written in 2004. He contended that the principal justifications originally given for the war were the alleged weapons of mass destruction that Saddam possessed or aimed to possess and his alleged links with terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda. Therefore, Roth concludes that the invasion of Iraq was not a legitimate humanitarian intervention, nor should it be considered such because the humanitarian impulse had not been a primary motivation (13-33).

Many critics argued that the change of the rhetoric and/or appeal to the United States of the humanitarian intervention argument is significant as the principal intention and motive was not a humanitarian concern. Rather the war was motivated by security concerns and national interests which were changed later by the coalition of the willing. In his "Motives, Outcomes, Intent and the Legitimacy of Humanitarian Intervention" Alex J. Bellamy argues that "the 2003 war in Iraq is important because it represents the first time a group of intervening states have justified their actions by referring to the humanitarian outcomes that were produced by acts primarily motivated by non-humanitarian concerns"(Bellamy, 2004, 217). Furthermore, the realist school in international relations perceives interventions in the internal affairs of another country as a fundamentally political form of behaviour. In other words, if an intervention does not serve a country's national economy, security and self-

interest it will not occur, no matter whatever the prevailing humanitarian situation is. One such realist critic is Neil MacFarlane who claims that in the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century most interventions were motivated by considerations of state and alliance interests: ‘‘Intervention proceeds in a legal and normative context that may (or may not) influence the conduct and frequency of intervention. But at its root, intervention is a political act’’ (10). Therefore, one may argue that regime change to protect human rights was only a part of the reasons and there were several other motives for intervention in Iraq.

Paul’s second concern is about the post-war consequences and what will follow after toppling the regime. He is sincerely concerned ‘‘*And once he is toppled, what will follow?...My great fear is that we have not even begun to imagine the possible consequences for this Middle Eastern adventure”* [Italics in Original](402).This jus post bellum concern was also a serious issue that was raised widely by a range of critics and international lawyers. One can argue that intervention has an unintended consequence of provoking the very violence it aims to stop. That intervention might unintentionally create rebellion, violent protests, insurgency and uprising and as a doctrine, it can be used for political advantages. Alan Kuperman, for example, warns that the willingness of powerful countries in the West to undertake intervention elsewhere creates a hazard whereby the very willingness may be prompting those atrocities that in turn create the need for intervention: ‘‘In practice, intervention does sometimes help rebels attain their political goals, but usually it is too late or inadequate to avert retaliation against civilians’’ (2008).

It is perhaps because of jus post bellum concerns that ancient thinkers from Chinese philosophical tradition such as Mo Tzu precisely espoused the view that warmongering is always harmful to world peace and inevitably leads to harmful consequences. In his *Against Offensive War* Mo Tzu advanced a moral theory about the resort, conduct and conclusion of war contending that ‘‘If the rulers and officials and generals of the world sincerely desire to promote what is beneficial to the world and to eliminate what is harmful, they should realise that offensive warfare is in fact a great harm to the world’’ (60-61).

It is therefore a particularly dangerous illusion that one might always use military force to solve every international issue. Writing on post war phases of conflicts, C.A.J Coady(2002) argues that in order for the world to be a somewhat less dangerous and exploitative place for all its inhabitants people have to realize that only rarely can wars be legitimate and that the attractions of decisive violence frequently tend to distract us from the more fundamental, though less glamorous, task of reconsidering and reconstructing domestic and international politics: ‘‘The current drive to solve the problems of terrorist attacks by a war against

terrorism may well involve the same unbalanced confidence in violent solutions'' (36).

Consequently, one can argue that the disintegration of Iraq and the recent destabilization created by ISIS terrorist groups in the region only testifies to and confirms the worst apprehension that Paul the main character in Coe's novel has about the Middle Eastern adventure. The third and fourth question that most troubles Paul Trotter is that he hardly sees any legal or moral justification for the intervention:

> *There has been a growing sense that our war with Iraq is impossible to justify. Saddam's Iraq posed no imminent or direct threat to the British people; he had no proven links to international terrorism or the September 11th attacks; we have broken international law; we have weakened the authority of the UN* [Italics in Original](403).

Dozens of scholarly books and articles have likewise taken issues with the legality, morality and the legitimacy of the Iraq War. Because of practicability, one can clearly examine some of the most competing theories about the advocates of state sovereignty as it is opposed to human rights. Proponents of sovereignty believe that interventions in the internal affairs of another country violate international borders and state sovereignty and thus should never be condoned. According to this view, nation states possess absolute rights, political sovereignty, and territorial integrity which implies that national borders be inviolable. One such legal positivist and proponent of sovereignty is Christian Wolff (1679-1754). As a German rationalist Enlightment philosopher Wolff argues that ''Nations are regarded as individual free persons living in a state of nature, nations must also be regarded in relation to each other as individual free persons living in a state of nature''(9).

Conversely, the proponents of Human Rights have developed a theory of sovereignty as a responsibility to protect (R2P). In other words, if states violate or fail to protect the rights of their citizens, then a humanitarian war is justifiable to stop those atrocities. However, like all other theories of international relations, humanitarian war has its own limitations and critics. Alex. J. Bellamy, for example argues that timing is very important in regard to humanitarian intervention. He argues that in 2003 the regime was not committing genocide, ethnic cleansing and the scale of human rights abuses was not sufficient to justify or warrant unauthorized intervention. To Bellamy, timely and appropriate intervention would save the lives of innocents who cannot defend themselves. However, in the case of Iraq, Bellamy warns that the illegality of the war will affect future attempts to stop countries that violate basic human rights:

> Whilst Saddam's regime was certainly guilty of mass murder, especially in 1988 and 1991, it was not conducting a programme of murder and ethnic cleansing when the allies invaded in 2003. Unauthorized intervention for

humanitarian purposes in this case was therefore unjust (Bellamy, 2006, 227).

Additionally, John Mearsheimer critiqued the foreign policies of Blair and Bush's governments and argued that their faulty intelligence and strategic deceptions had potential blowbacks that led to a disastrous erosion of civil liberties, affected democracy, undermined the rule of law, degraded body politics, and damaged the reputation and international standing of both countries. Mearsheimer analyses the consequences of political lies in international relations as:

> The Bush administration lied to the American people in the run-up to that conflict, which has turned into a strategic disaster for the United States. The same is true in Britain, where it is widely believed that Tony Blair lied about the Iraq threat to sell the war to a sceptical public (ix).

It is interesting to notice that the intervention in Iraq have been largely understood to have failed key tenets of the just war theory. That if we rate the intervention against the just war calculus it can hardly be said to pass the principles of jus ad bellum, jus in bello, and jus post bellum. A critic of just war theory such as Michael Quinlin concludes that the war in Iraq was questionable and legitimate grounds did not exist to justify it because:

> To label a government a 'rogue' regime, however justifiably, does not erase the rights of its citizens as human beings; and the duty of a national leader to protect his citizens does not confer a right to inflict heavy and near-certain penalties upon others to ward off an uncertain risk to his own, unless that risk can fairly be judged of both massive scale and high probability (241).

It is interesting to come back to the novel and see what other issues troubles the protagonist most. Paul Trotter's final and fifth concern is that this intervention will provoke further terrorist attacks and will endanger the security of the Western world:

> *Most seriously of all, we have confirmed the worst prejudices of the Muslim world as to the contempt and indifference which they believe the Western people feel towards their beliefs and their way of life. Further terrorist attacks on the West and on Britain in particular which before this war were merely likely, are now inevitable* [Italics in Original](403).

It is remarkable to notice this paragraph foreshadowed the London bombing in July 7th 2005 as *The Closed Circle* was published in 2004. I will dissect this issue from a range of critics who thought that this war would not prevent terrorism but rather provoke further resentment, anti-Americanism and anti-western attitudes in the Arab and Muslim world and that it is therefore a dangerous enterprise to global security and peace. One can construe from the wisdom of those scholars I have quoted that war cannot always be necessarily morally right or practically wise but rather an abhorrent conduct and a bizarre way of settling disputes as it is pragmatically often a bad choice. This is because cultural differences cannot be eliminated by military interventions which are unlikely to be successful and it is an unattainable goal to attempt to impose cultural values. Spreading freedoms or democracy

only provokes dissent, Islamic fundamentalism, and exacerbates more division and greater violence in the Middle East. In his *Bending the Rules Morality in the Modern World from Relationships to Politics and War* Robert A. Hinde demonstrates that US-led efforts in this direction in Iraq prove that "Attempts to convince members of another culture to conform to one's own values by military, political, or economic means are unlikely to be successful. (106).

Hinde claims that our desire to see ourselves as right can lead to bending rules, creating more division, and making in-group and out-groups of us. He concludes that violence breeds more violence and the consequences of wars are unpredictable. Akin to Hinde, Richard Falk also effectively argues that promoting liberal and democratic values risks strategic defeat, bringing democracy fosters islamization, radicalization and nationalism to the Middle East and further deteriorates world peace. Falk probes the contradictions and the limitations of the US claims to bring democracy to the region and identifies what he calls ' a triumphalist litany of normative distortions' of the Bush administration manipulations and the symbols and language of democracy. He takes the issue with advocation of promoting democratization that risks the prospect of peace: "Earlier experience and previous reckoning suggest that the region cannot embrace moderation of this sort until it achieves post-colonial self-determination (nationally and regionally)" (32-33). These intellectuals' warning and their critique of the Iraq war provide wisdom and the insight that the use of military force alone cannot transform the political systems of Middle Eastern countries.

Towards the conclusion of *The Closed Circle*, Paul Trotter leaves his wife Susan and his two children to follow the young Malvina. He sends Susan an email telling her that he is in love with her and has decided to leave her to live with his newly-found love. Jonathan Coe compares Susan's bitter feeling of being betrayed to that of the Iraqis, both being freed but such liberation comes with a cost. Susan looks at her television that broadcasts images of the statue of Saddam Hussein being pulled to the ground by a jubilant mob and her feeling is comparable to that of the newly-liberated Iraqis. This is captured in this way:

> Susan looked at the faces of the crowd and wasn't so sure. So this was how it was going to end. Or perhaps start. The Iraqis looked exhilarated, to her, but also stunned. And there was a kind of mania in their eyes. A kind of fury: the fury of a people who had been granted a freedom, of sorts, but not on their own terms; a people whose liberation had come too brutally, too swiftly; a people who would never feel kindly towards those who had freed them; would never trust their motives. A people who did not know what to do with their freedom, yet, and would soon turn their energies into hatred against those who had bestowed it on them, uninvited, unasked. Watching the cloudy television screen through tear-filled eyes, Susan knew, at that moment, exactly how they felt (407).

The novel's concluding message is that what is political is personal and vice versa. Coe enlightens the reader that the intervention in Iraq was not appropriate and the political decisions made by politicians might ruthlessly affect the personal and private lives of those close and far to them.

1.4 Melissa Ben: *One of Us* (2008)

One of Us is a novel about anti-war sentiment and the disillusionment of the public and the constituency with the rule of Tony Blair's labour government in Britain. The story is set in March 2003, where a leading political journalist, Ben Caldor and a 42-year old woman Anna Adams meet at a London cafe during the aftermath of the invasion of Iraq. Anna has a story to tell, one that involves her brother Jack, a political activist and peace maker, who has committed suicide by torching himself alive as a protest against the US and UK-led invasion and the occupation of Iraq. However, the authorities not only covered up his tragic death for political reasons but accused him of mental illness. To Anna's disappointment, this momentous political act is not adequately covered in the media because leading political authorities in the British government silenced critics of war. Anna Adams is insisting in defending and honouring her brother who died for a noble cause and that argues that his campaigns, political protests and subsequent self-immolation at the day of the Iraq invasion should not go unnoticed. Anna, alone, is determined to tell Jack's side of the story and stand against those who managed to keep the identity of the 'unidentified homeless man' out of the news.

Jack was profoundly an anti-war protester; he was deeply bonded to his society and is alienated by Britain's entanglement with Iraq. Jack wanted to change the interventionist policy of the Labour government and perceived it as a root of political evil in world politics. When his anti-war activism was hidden by the government he commits a radical act of suicide to let the world hear his individual voice and anti-war stance. In addition Iraq is the main reason for his death. Just before he torches himself alive on March 19, 2003, Jack sends an email to his sister that is entitled ''the fog of war''. He writes about Norman Morrison, the man who protested at the time of the Vietnam War and set fire to himself and like him, Jack sacrifices himself for a noble cause:

> In a society where it is normal for human beings to drop bombs on human targets, where it is normal to spend 50 per cent of the individual's tax dollar on war, where it is normal...to have twelve times overkill capacity, Norman Morrison was not normal. He said, 'Let it stop' (257).

This shows the depth of Jack's alienation with the politics of his country and that his death was politically motivated. Jack was a person of principle who has 'discontent written into his

very cells''. He is personally an idealist and a pacifist who is involved in activism waging a war against the war on terror. According to him the Americans are dangerous because they are going to involve his country into a third world war if they are not careful. To him any empire is dangerous especially the USA: ''He become obsessed. After September 11th, then the invasion of Afghanistan. He began to sit out at that encampment opposite the entrance to the House of Commons...He was there day and night'' (224). Jack is restless, rebellious, and discontented with his family, country, government, and powerful politicians who are about to launch an offensive war against Iraq. He then torches himself alive in front of Downing Street:

> What they could be sure of was that within seconds he had doused himself with the entire contents of the can of petrol, found turned on its side minutes later, then flicked open the square head of a small lighter and torched himself alive...So, it-he-Jack- ran in the direction of Parliament, cars swerving and people screaming. Women covered their faces with their hands, then lifted the weight of their heads very slowly, fingers spreading; this, after all, their only chance to peer at unmitigated horror. To experience war. Men stared open-mouthed, muttering to themselves, soundlessly (247).

Jack's ethos, personal belief and actions have a deep philosophical root. His anti-war and pacifist attitudes resemble much of those political and moral philosophers who advocate absolute pacifism and non-violence means to promote human rights and liberal values. Jack's principle reminds us of ethicists such as Richard Norman who argues that one cannot sacrifice one people's rights to promote the rights of others. Norman also argues that Iraq was not a humanitarian war and even if it be so, wars of humanitarian interventions violate human rights. Such wars are utilitarian and consequentialist and that is why they are not an effective way to promote human rights. Such wars usually promote the rights of some only to undermine the rights of others. Norman argues:

> American's wars against Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 were ostensibly part of a 'war on terrorism', and, in the case of Iraq, an attempt to eliminate that country's supposed weapons of mass destruction, but when those attempted justifications looked too thin, the human rights of Afghan and Iraqis were also invoked (191).

Jack's personal behaviour and actions show that as an idealist he hopes for a better utopian non-violent world. Jack despises the easy liberalism of his parents and sees it as meaningless. He is not apathetic but disillusioned by politics. He works for a housing charity and is closer to people on the streets than his well-off family. Jack is revolutionary and idealistic. Iraq is the vehicle for his ultimate crisis. He is critical of his parents except for his sister Anna. Jack reads Sartre, Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and listens obsessively to Dylan and Van Morrison. He stays as late as he can at the Holborn library reading essays about Orwell, Gramsci,

history, politics, mostly about Iraq, Israel, Palestine, Ireland, India and confesses that 'I am like our father, a semi-recluse surrounded by books, obsessed with the human attempt to make sense of the senseless''(189).

It can be deduced that Jack's political philosophy corresponds to moral thinkers such as John Rawls and Immanuel Kant who reject power, real politics, and the realist school of thinking in international relations. Kant and Rawls transformed morality into politics; they advocate the principles of law, morality and a stricter concern for human rights. For them, international relationship is a matter of the nature of relationship among nations. Nations can be regarded as free agents and also restricted by moral claims. Both Rawls and Kant believe that states can be judged like individual men. This is because they can attack and injure each other if laws do not restrict them. Rawls effectively argues that: 'Human rights are a class of rights that play a special role in a reasonable Law of Peoples: they restrict the justifying reasons for war and its conduct, and they specify limits to a regime's internal autonomy'' (79). Kant also adopts this view and his categorical imperative of moral philosophy of 'Duty for Duty's sake demands that ''Act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law''(qtd in Walker, 135). In his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* Kant requires us to act morally in such a way ''So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means'' (Kant, 429). This implies that Kant opposes utilitarian consequentialists who regard the value of an action or an intention as deriving from its beneficial consequences. For Kant and Rawls consequences are not what matters, what matters is the good intention of the moral agent. Kant assigns primacy to an agent's intention and motives rather than the consequences of his actions. The most important thing for Kant is the good intention of the good agent and describes it as ''like a jewel, it would still shine by itself, as something that has its full worth in itself. Usefulness or fruitfulness can neither add to this worth nor take anything away from it'' (394). To Kant it is possible for the power of rationality to bring significant ethical conclusions. If humans use reason and follow the law they can build a better world by transcending their own impulses, tendencies and propensities for evil and make progress toward eternal peace.

Back to the novel, Jack hates being apathetic and wants to take direct action to redress what he sees as the unsuccessful politics of his country. Except for his caring sister Anna, Jack's family perceive him as depressed and a failure. Conversely, Anna describes him as clever and caring. Jack wanted to make a difference. In his emails he writes that he wanted to be at the heart of things. We see torrents of fury directed at his dad, mother, siblings, the

society, and the government, it is only Anna who took care of him:

> You cannot wait…for those in power to give to those without power. Everything must be taken, fought for. All that time I was working with people on the street, I could never work out really why they didn't take something for themselves. RISE UP like the revolutionary mob of old. At least terrorize the comfortable class…How important are any of us in the great scheme of things?(160).

Jack's critique of western liberal democracies reminds us of the French writer Alexis De Tocqueville (1805-59) who, in his analysis of American democracy in the nineteenth century coined the phrase 'the tyranny of the majority' to warn against potential dangers of democracy. Tocqueville argued that freedom is constrained in a more subtle way in western democracies than in repressive regimes. ''The germ of tyranny lies in every democracy just as much as in other forms of government'' (252). Jack warns that democracy in the West is a kind of despotism, run by a comfortable class of people who have an executive hold on power over individuals without their consent. Like Tocqueville, Jack sees the threat of democracy as an oppressive influence of public opinion on individual thought and behaviour. Jack's concerns also remind us of Fareed Zakaria's *The Future of Freedom, Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad* where he argues that democracy by itself is not the answer to peace and prosperity because modern democracies face difficult new challenges and one of the most difficult of all requires that:

> Those with immense power in our societies embrace their responsibilities, lead, and set standards that are not only legal, but moral. Without this inner stuffing democracy will become an empty shell, not simply inadequate but potentially dangerous, bringing with it the erosion of liberty, the manipulation of freedom, and the decay of a common life (256).

In a stream of consciousness, Jack writes letters revealing his personal opinion about the politics of intervention. He claims that Iraq war cannot be morally justifiable:

> If you do not fight back against what is morally wrong, you are defeated. In your soul...Which is exactly the same argument that propelled Britain and allies into war against Germany (I know, I know, nations do not have souls, war creates employment) It is essentially the same argument, only incendiary (188).

This shows that Jack is not only passionate about politics but also a caring and morally principled man. He is not convinced by the viewpoint that the war in Iraq was necessary but rather a war of choice. Jack's cynicism shows that Tony Blair's government created what Peter Lee would call as an ''Illusion of morality''. Peter Lee argues that this illusion worked initially by distorting and appropriating the just war tradition in a pro-interventionist discourse and that Blair forced an optimist dialogue that the use of military force and a war in Iraq would encourage a beacon of political stability, democratic freedom and economic prosperity. Lee argues that this undermined the bond of trust between British government and

its people: ‘‘Blair did not subvert a political system; he subverted the values that underpin a political system’’(186).

Jack joins other anti-war protesters in America who hold banners proclaiming ‘‘no more blood to be spilled in our name’’. With other people calling themselves anti-globalizers they hope to stop the war. He critiques his family, society, Britain’s educational and political system and argues that:

> We were all raised not to speak of what was in our hearts and we were socialized into politeness, into a steely front, and that is a killer too...But the people here are brave. I have not met people like this. Much younger than me. They sit and talk, face each other, talk for hours, passionate about politics, open about their fear (191).

This reflects the story of Malachi Ritschwn who committed self-immolation in Chicago Nov,3 2006. Subsequently the death of Jack shows how deeply fictional British characters are enmeshed with the politics of intervention. Anna, Jack’s sister tells the journalist Ben Caldor that ‘Jack did what he did for a reason. It should be known’’ (2). The government covered his story up in newspapers saying ‘an unidentified young man in his mid-forties’’ (2).And this enrages Ben Caldor who promises Anna to honestly publish the story. What is extraordinary about Jack’s death according to Ben Caldor is:

> More questions weren’t asked, that someone there, one of the witnesses, didn’t question the official version, that whoever in the press knew about it allowed it to be written off as the act of a homeless madman. That no-one guessed that there was a political motive. And on the night of the invasion itself. *Incredible* (258).

This novel shines light on the socio-political contexts through which a young man chooses to set fire to himself. This evokes a sense of horror and dissatisfaction in the way the government’s foreign policy affected and led to the invasion of Iraq. Jack uses his suicide as a political tactic to stir-up a movement and action, hoping for a particular profound political change, seeking action and not apathy. Jack’s death as a fictional character reminds one of the Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi whose self-immolation become the catalyst of the Tunisian Revolution and incited the wider demonstration of the Arab Spring in 2011. Jack is aware that his act is a powerful tool in that critical time. He knows it will be difficult for the government to respond and deal with it and that they cannot condemn his individual act since all he does is kill himself in a public way that has political undertones. This allows his message to spread in a way that governments can’t really control or grasp. However, Jack does not know that after his death the Foreign Secretary would accuse him of having a history of mental problems and that his mind was clearly disturbed on the day in question. This is because Andy Givings, the fictional Foreign Secretary wants to avenge those who published the truth behind Jack’s death as a result of national politics. Andy sees this as undermining his

government's foreign policy.

The war in Iraq not only results in Jack's tragic death but also shatters the personal relationship that exists between Anna's family and Andy Giving who becomes the Foreign Secretary of Britain. Andy Giving's persona represents Tony Blair as a historical figure in this story. Moreover, Matt Adams, the elder brother of Jack and Anna Adams, has given every moment of his life to Andy's political achievements. Nevertheless, because of their disagreement over the war in Iraq their relationship deteriorates:

> Matt had been uneasy about the strikes in Afghanistan, America and Britain's response to the Twin Tower's disaster, was firmly against the invasion of Iraq; unthinkable, he insisted, without a second United Nation's resolution. Increasingly, he was alone voice among Andy's circle at the heart of government (233).

Matt's opinion resembles the perspective of critics of liberal democracies such as Roger Howard who in his book on *What is Wrong with Liberal Interventionism* denounces the Iraq War because he believes that a liberal intervention is a dangerous delusion, that war in Iraq is oxymoronic, inflicts death and destruction and such wars are vulnerable to accusations of failure, hypocrisy, and double standard. ''There is no more alarming illustration of this dangerous delusion than the Iraq War'' (41), he argues.

Like his brother Jack, Matt is sceptical about the intention behind the invasion. He is deeply concerned and thinks to resign from his post as a Senior Political Advisor because of his cynicism "Should he quit entirely? Should he stay and continue to try and persuade Andy, who was increasingly hawkish, to another view? (233). Though Matt and Andy have been inseparable friends for two decades, the difference in their stance towards Iraq finally splits them. Because of his anti-war stance, Matt is marginalized and pushed away. 'As the build up to war began, Matt was simply pushed, gently, to the outer edge of the advisor's circle (234).

Matt eventually resigns from his job because of his moral principles, which won't allow him to support the war, just like Paul Trotter who also resigned from Parliament in the previous novel *The Closed Circle*. However, Andy Giving who symbolizes Tony Blair increasingly becomes one of the most outspoken politicians and is dragging the UK to war in Iraq. He frequently visits America delivering speeches to strengthen the campaign in order to boost public support for the war. Whatsmore, Andy's pro-war stance has a melancholic effect on his eldest son Dan who holds similar anti-war views to Jack and Matt and denounces the intervention. Dan tells Anna that he did not believe the allegations made by politicians against Iraq:

> But then I see Bush, that stupid face. And the terrifying people around him. And I don't believe any of it. I don't trust them. I don't trust that this is the right thing to do. Harold Wilson didn't get pulled into Vietnam. Why are we following the

Americans so blindly? (241-242).

Thus the war in Iraq not only disillusioned Anna's Brothers Jack and Matt, but also Dan, the son of Andy Givings. The invasion of Iraq marks much of the disputes not only among Andy Givings and his political advisors, but also between Andy and Anna. As Foreign Secretary of Britain, Andy Givings seems to know what is going on and attempts to justify to Anna why intervention in Iraq is right and why Anna has to be silent about his brother's death:

> Anna, you're a brilliant girl, and I know you understand what a threat we face. A tyrant who has already slaughtered hundreds and thousands of his own people. Over the past few years the world has changed beyond recognition, I believe. These changes seemed to happen, almost overnight. Whatever...the analysis...' he hesitated, clearly deciding to change track, 'Anna, the choice we face is simple. Could you live with what happened in New York? Could you forgive yourself if that-a 9/11 scenario- were to happen here? Your family destroyed. By Madmen (263).

Andy firmly believes that an invasion of Iraq would eliminate the threat of global terrorism. In the above quotation, Andy evokes 9/11 to justify Iraq. His arguments reflect the stance of the pro-humanitarian interventionist intellectuals such as Mary Kaldor, Thomas Friedman, and Jean Bethke Elshtian who provided moral and legal justification for the war. Such intellectuals acknowledge the advent of a new norm in international relations that allows a legitimate forceful intervention over the sovereign affairs of tyrannical states to alleviate severe humanitarian distress. Steven Dixon defines this norm as ''Over the last 25 years of international system, in which the primacy of sovereignty was central to relations of accepted state behaviour, has witnessed the development and increasing legitimacy of humanitarian intervention as a new norm''(126).

In response to Andy Giving's previous question, Anna Adams is not persuaded by his arguments; she believes that the invasion of Iraq was an act of aggression, one nation attacking another sovereign state for no good reason. She tells Andy:

> ...My family had been destroyed already.' And ' I can't answer all your political points. Not directly. But I know Jack like-others-hundreds of thousands of others- saw it differently. He saw this action-what you have done- as directly aggressive. An invasion of another land. Without good cause.' And also saying 'Jack had a right to do what he did. And he had a right to be heard beyond the community of his family and friends'' (264).

Even though Andy intimidates Anna not to think about publishing the true reasons behind her brother's suicide and pressurizes her to be silent. Anna is determines to tell the truth. Andy does so because he knows it will be damaging his reputation if Anna spoke to the press. Finally, Anna feels proud about having made his story public. She knew that Jack sacrificed his life in protest at the hundreds and thousands of lives lost. Jack emerges as a hero and

inspires the anti-war movement because:

> Jack's death has become legendary, is talked of in the same breath as Jan Palach's protest against the Russian Army invading Czechoslovakia in 1968, or Norman Morrison's last stand against Vietnam in 1965, throwing his baby daughter Emile to a bystander before he set fire to himself outside the office of Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defence under Kennedy and Johnson, chief architect of the Vietnam War (278).

All in all, *One of Us* takes the issue of the legality and legitimacy of that intervention at its moral centre and explores how the calamity of Iraq and its outcome ruins the professional, political, personal and public contours of two British political families. Thus *One Of Us* associates the tragedy of a young man's self-immolation to the impact of larger global political events, namely; the decision to intervene in Iraq and its ramification for the people in Britain.

1.5 Julia Jarman: *Peace Weavers* (2004)

Peace Weavers is written by British children's author Julia Jarman. Hilde, a British teenage girl is the protagonist who is sent to live with her father in an American military base in Suffolk in England. In a time just before the Iraq war it was from this place that US planes flew to attack Iraq, provoking a debate since 2003-that still goes on about the legality, morality and practical consequences of that war. There Hilde falls in love with Friedman; the son of a fighter pilot who would be killed in friendly fire in the Iraq War. This novel critiques the American invasion of Iraq as seen from the perspective of a female teenager who actively campaigns against it. Hilde's story shows one girl's struggle to fight for what she believes in and her moral choices for promoting peace. Like her pacifist Quaker mother Maeve, Hilde is against the Iraq War and campaigns for peace in protest of US-UK led intervention in Iraq. Hilde blogs and creates her own page titled www.peaceweavers.com where people can sign a petition to stop that conflict.

The novel narrates how an ancient story of an Anglo-Saxon woman as a peace weaver inspires Hilde to start her own peace weaving campaign. Even though Hilde knows the war in Iraq is an impending doom, this will not stop her from standing up and fighting for what she believes in. She knows that her mother's struggle to stop that conflict is futile because ''The date for war was obviously in someone's diary. Maeve was kidding herself if she thought she and her Quaker friends were going to stop it'' (8). Hilde's story connects the past with the present and the private personal lives with the public. The novel illustrates the way the characters discuss the contentious intervention in Iraq. For example, the following dialogue between Hilde the protagonist and Lieutenant Karl Van Jennions a fighter pilot explicitly

illustrate how divided people were at the time of the conflict:

> Dictators haven't got consciences, and you can't negotiate with them. They lie. Think of Hitler.
> But Saddam Hussein isn't Hitler. He hasn't invaded another country.
> He did in ''90,'' said Karl.
> So… She chose words carefully. It was probably right to push him back into his own country, when he invaded Kuwait. War might be right sometimes, as a last resort. I am for peace weaving, and that might not be the same as pacifism. I think it may be right to have armies for defence, but surely it's not right to be an aggressor? Do you think it would be right?
> Silence.
> Freidman waited for his dad to reply, fascinated.
> I serve my country, Hilde.
> Right or wrong?
> I am in the military. I do what my president asks.
> Wright or wrong? She insisted...
> I do my duty. I am a patriot...You've surely heard of the concept of the just war? War's wrong, but sometimes it is a guy's duty to go to war to prevent a greater wrong. Like in 1939 to stop Hitler, and in 91 to stop Saddam Hussien when he invaded Kuwait. The USA is a big powerful country and it is our duty to go to the aid of smaller countries.
> Hilde's head was full of counter arguments. Words were rushing into her head. Maeve's words. Oil. The good old USA didn't go round defending all the little countries that needed help, just countries with oil for their oversized cars. And they were not just keeping an eye on Saddam. They were going to 'liberate' Iraq, which meant invade. Bomb enough people and you might hit Saddam. Was that fair? Is that what the Iraqi people wanted? Had anyone asked them? Would it stop terrorism or provoke it?(102-104).

In the above dialogue, Hilde and Karl discuss the legal and moral aspects of the war in Iraq. Karl is a pragmatist whose perspective reflects that of the neo-conservative politicians in America during the build-up to the Iraq war. Hilde's viewpoint reflects the pacifists and their anti-war sentiments. Karl strongly believes that the US has the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of those countries that are ruled by dictators and who violate human rights. In their discussion of the war, they refer to the past and lessons learnt from history. Karl believes that the intervention liberates Iraqis but Hilde views it as an illegal and immoral war. Karl believes that it will democratize the region but Hilde claims that it is for oil and self-interest. Hilde disagrees with and critiques Karl's blind patriotism, devotion and uncritical acceptance of the dominant military rhetoric and its justification for the intervention in Iraq. Unlike Karl, Hilde believes that the war is destructive and will destroy Iraq. Karl has his own realistic motto "If you want peace, then prepare for war", but Hilde's ideal motto says "If you want peace, then prepare for peace" (105-106).

Karl, as one of the proponents of humanitarian war believes that Saddam's past atrocities made him a legitimate target of regime change and justified the use of force. Karl's opinion

reflects the pro-war ideological discourse believing that opposing tyranny and the necessity not to allow human right abusers to go unchecked were adequate moral reasons that justified the removal of Saddam. Often such advocates of the human right, for example Thomas Friedman, claim that ending oppressive regimes is a right and moral reason that could have sufficed to justify intervention: ‘‘Mr. Bush doesn’t owe the world any explanation for missing chemical weapons. It is clear that ending Saddam’s tyranny is enough’’ (2003).

Nonetheless, according to Hilde, the only rare time that war can be right or justifiable is when you defend yourself. Her arguments for not going to war echo some political scientists who advocate non-intervention in U.S foreign policy. Such advocates often oppose humanitarian war. They believe that if America uses it as its guiding foreign policy, non-interventionism is more sustainable and affordable for a more prosperous and better off America and a more peaceful world in the long term. For example, Daniel Larsion argues that such policy is more acceptable and less likely to provoke foreign resentment. ‘‘Americans have grown understandably weary of foreign entanglements over the last 12 years of open-ended warfare, and they are now more receptive to a noninterventionist message than they have been in decades’’(2014, n.page).

Thus the novel shows conflicting points of view concerning the war in Iraq. To Hilde, Karl is a warmonger because his job as a fighter pilot involves bombing, killing and maiming people. However, Karl sees himself as a peace keeper and liberator because if it were not for their planes, Saddam would have attacked several countries and killed thousands of people. The contentiousness of the war splits those whose viewpoints differ. This novel shows the extent in which public opinion was divided and how the war becomes divisive leading to deterioration in personal relations due to differing political attitudes towards the war in Iraq.

This will not stop Hilde blogging and campaigning to gain support for peace weaving. She makes dozens of banners and writes many slogans on her website; e.g.: Hand Up for Peace Campaign, No Blood For Oil, Talk Not Tanks, Dialogue Not Death, Words not Weapons, Keyboards Not Kalashnikovs, and Make Love Not War. On her website she spreads words of peace. She writes a peace weaving petition online to not only help stop the war in Iraq but also to create further peace. In her innocent childlike comments, Hilde talks to the BBC TV about her philosophies of anti-war activism:

> I’m protesting against the war with Iraq, but it’s not just a protest against that war or any war. I’m campaigning for peaceful solutions, for using the United Nations, which is a brilliant peace-weaving network actually, for letting weapons inspectors carry on looking for Weapons of Mass Destruction, for disarming Iraq if they find any. Dropping bombs on Iraqi people-to get rid of one man-it’s stupid. It’s cruel. It’s

> unfair. It'll do more harm than good. So that's why I'm urging people to become Peace Weavers and Stop the War (188-189).

Hilde advocates diplomacy, negotiation, and the reliance on the role of the United Nations rather than the U.S unilateralism in order to resolve international conflicts. Her arguments resemble political philosophy of the opponents of the use of force. The anti-interventionist doctrine holds that there are always other viable alternative non-violent means such as diplomacy than waging war to resolve international conflicts, and that resorting to war often leads to cataclysmic consequences. According to such anti-interventionist attitudes the costs of regime change outweighs its gains. For example, according to the Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy "the evils procured by violence, force, or war, far outweigh any of the good that may arise" (Moseley, n.pag).In addition, deontological pacifists see peace as a duty and duty as a moral action and moral action to be categorically upheld because they are good in themselves which is demanded in all pertinent circumstances never to aggress, use force, or support or engage in war against another. Although human rights of those living in other countries are important, it needs to be balanced with national security and interests of those countries that intervene. The U.S should avoid unnecessary aggressive conflicts under the pretext of humanitarian intervention. Anti-interventionists believe that one cannot sacrifice some people's rights to promote the rights of other. For example, Richard Norman calls this 'utilitarianism of rights' and believes that "humanitarian interventions themselves violate human rights" (191-192).

In other words, military interventions leading to a war fail to achieve its goals because war kills. As an activity war is singularly ill-suited to the upholding of human rights and paradoxical to the right of life. Wars create more fundamentalism, they escalate violence, and provoke instability and terrorism. In addition to deepening rivalries, divisions, creating anti-American and anti-western attitudes, war will have negative unintended consequences because the sacrifices and the death it causes outweigh the positive results. James K Wither's article "Basra's not Belfast: the British Army, "Small Wars" and Iraq" argues that "The Iraq war may cause a significant reappraisal, not just of military doctrine and strategy, but also of Britain's role in future small wars" (611). This will also affect civil liberties in western democracies and it does not make the West safer or more secure.

Often anti-interventionism as a political philosophy encourages and maintains foreign relations with other countries but it limits that nations should not become so involved in other state's internal affairs that they become entangled with each other. In the political history of America there were supporters of such policy such as President George Washington, Thomas

Jefferson, the U.S Senator Robert. A. Taft and the U.S congressman Ron Paul. Republican senator Robert A. Taft, for example, opposed American involvement overseas and in 1943 he wrote that "Our fingers will be in every pie…potential power over other nations, however, benevolent its purpose, leads inevitably to imperialism"(Patterson, 289). In his only book *A Foreign Policy for Americans* (1953) Taft stated that the U.S should not change other forms of governments elsewhere or impose any special kind of freedom by war. Taft argued that the foreign policy of the U.S should first protect the liberties of American people and second to maintain peace. Taft's advice seems prudent because American entanglement abroad has to some degree exacerbated Islamic radicalization in the Middle East in the twenty first century.

The proponents of this policy support the view that interventions abroad motivate Islamic militancy and are detriment to peace and tranquillity. For example Andrew Bacevich in "American Dream, Super-Sized" critiqued Western credentials to export democracy as applied to Arab world and states "This effort will encounter protracted, determined and bitter resistance…One thing is sure, the effort promises to be a bloody one" (B11). Interventionism is therefore an unstable policy and detrimental to U.S national interests, hence non-intervention protects American genuine interests. Writing on the latest terrorist attacks on the Charlie Hebdo satirical magazine in Paris, the American historian and former CIA intelligent officer Micheal Sheuer argues that the past and present bipartisan interventionist foreign policy of the United States, Western military and cultural interventions in the Muslim world is the main motivator for the Islamic insurgency and this has boosted a greater number of people to join the fight against the West for the cause of Jihadist. (n.pag).

Since 9/11people witnessed many vicious terrorist acts in major cities such as London, Bali, Moscow, Madrid, New Delhi, Mumbai and recently in Paris. One can deduce and appreciate why Julia Jarman's novel *Peace Weavers* is significant. The anti-war activism and anti-interventionist rhetoric of the protagonist Hilde also inspires and encourages her friends to be involved in civil protests and demonstrations. For example, in a letter for Hilde, her friend Ruthie writes to her:

> Like you I'm against the war full stop. It's STUPID STUPIDSTUPID! Mum says she'll go along if the UN sanction it, though she doesn't think they ought to. But Dad-DUH!-thinks Saddam Hussein will have to be removed by force. He says the UN have already passed loads of resolutions ordering him to get rid of his WMDs, but he hasn't, so war would be legal. Grandad-double DUH!- says Tony Blair knows what side his bread is buttered! Translation-attacking Iraq is wrong, but Britain has to go along with it, because USA are the superpower, so we have to keep in with them. But-some GOOD NEWS- Mum and I are both going on the march on 15th Feb. Are you?(177).

This demonstrates how deeply enmeshed and embedded the anti-war movement were in

the collective consciousness of British people. Then the march against the war started in London, people holding banners that says " Don't attack Iraq", "No blood for Oil", " Weave Peace not War":

> Millions and millions of people were marching for peace. They weren't just a noisy minority, though they were noisy. Bands played. Crowds chanted. And opinion polls showed that most people were against the war…It would achieve something…The government cannot ignore us now… But the government did. The war began on Thursday March 2003. Hilde felt as if the tide had tuned and crashed her against the rocks (199).

It is clear that the Iraq war shaped Jarman's historical novel and this experience coloured her fiction. The novel lends voice to women whose roles in promoting peace are either forgotten or marginalized. In a letter for Hilde, Maeve, her mother encourages her daughter to win the hearts and minds of people in the American base that the war with Iraq is wrong and needs to stop. She writes to her:

> To protest against the increasingly belligerent stance of the USA and our own government who seem hellbent on war with Iraq…It would be excellent publicity for the Stop the War campaign, which is even more important now. War with Iraq would kill innocent civilians and incite terrorists. It would increase the number of attacks, make 9/11s more likely not less (85-86).

Hilde is encouraged by her mother; she is politicized, actively engages in increasing public support for peace and mobilizes school children because she knows they were worried and scared about their parents getting killed in the war. She is an idealist, a pacifist and sometimes a cynic who always questions what she is doing saying: "But what was the point of trying to persuade kids on the base that war was wrong? How could they stop the war? How could anyone stop it?"(87). Hilde is so preoccupied and enraged by UK foreign policy that she writes a letter addressed to Tony Blair saying:

> Dear Tony Blair,
> What if Cherie was in Baghdad right now? Would you still be going to war? What would your children think if you gave orders for bombs to be dropped on their mum? Well, my mum is there, and so are thousands of Iraqi Mums (91).

Often, this domestic form of opposition to war reminds us that pro-interventionist foreign policy is dangerous both internally and internationally. Anti-interventionist attitudes holds that the pretexts of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the so-called humanitarian war are an imperial tool used by powerful states to interfere in the domestic affairs of smaller nations. For example, Jean Bricmont in his book *Humanitarian Imperialism: Using Human Rights to Sell War* argues that the United States of America has used humanitarian doctrine to justify its imperial global wars which are self-serving and more destructive since the end of the Cold War. In another blog titled *Responsibility to Protect as Imperial Tool, The Case for Non-Interventionist Foreign Policy* Bricmont recommends that the right policy the West should

adopt is non-intervention because ‘‘humanitarian intervention goes only one way, from the powerful to the weak’’(Bricmont, 2012, n.pag). In other words, the responsibility to protect and wars to protect human rights from oppressive dictators violates International Law and the United Nation’s Charter. This kind of war contravenes the principles of national sovereignty and territorial integrity of smaller states. It further strengthens the hegemony of imperial powers and stronger states that might exploit internal conflicts of weaker ones for their own purpose of colonization.

Therefore, as these fictions depict, justifying a war on false humanitarian grounds can be dangerous; it will spark public protest because the public know this may prevent future attempts to intervene in countries where grave humanitarian crisis occurs. These anti-war fictions provide an anti-interventionist discourse that reminds us of the dilemmas of the doctrine of humanitarian intervention and responsibility to protect. For example, in his ‘‘Ethics and interventions: the humanitarian exception and the problem of abuse in the case of Iraq’’ the political scientist Alex J. Bellamy argues that the moral language of such norms can either be abused, manipulated or misappropriated to justify invasion of other sovereign states for the sake of selfish-interest(Bellamy, 2004, 131-147).

Finally, upon examining Julia Jarman’s *Peace Weaver*, it is clear that the novel’s political theme is not only intended to enlighten but also challenge readers that making right decision is difficult but a moral responsibility. Hilde is an exemplary literary peace weaver figure who actively engages in every way possible in the tradition of bringing peace to a conflicting international community. Hilde refuses to be apathetic, passive and/ or powerless individual. Instead she wants to have control over what happens in her life and the politics of her country. She convinces others that war is wrong, and continuously struggles to exact an influence on her community and keep her belief in anti-interventionist discourse to end hostility, settle conflicts and prevent war.

1.6 Conclusion

In the final analysis, these British novels are carefully designed to address a more serious political and philosophical subject of their time, above all advocacy for or against the invasion of Iraq. At first, they critique the decision to intervene and in turn highlight what is politically at stake in the visions and justifications of war. Accordingly, such fiction is a vehicle of political protest that neither supports Britain’s foreign policies nor reinforces the dominant pro-war stance. Moreover, they chronicle the controversial legal, moral and pedagogical issues that the war raised. Similarly, their protagonists fit the frame of being

either for or against the invasion. Therefore, it seems that these fictions in their specific contexts principally denounce the war and the occupation. With attention to provide an anti-interventionist discourse that serves as a warning against the consequences of armed conflict. For the most part Iraq War is the common theme and denominator of these novels. In essence such fictions aim to make sense of the conflict and as cultural products they challenge the construction and legitimization of positions within these debates. To put it differently, these fictions show that the Iraq War was deeply enmeshed in the domestic, personal and everyday lives of people in Britain and elsewhere. There was a contending narrative among activists, parents, politicians and the public about Iraq. Writing about the Iraq War literature in English Suman Gupta aptly observed how ‘‘deeply embedded the upcoming invasion was in the routine consciousness of people’’ (159).

In their representations of the war and Britain’s experience of it, McEwan advocates the invasion of Iraq but Coe, Benn, and Jarman critique the legitimization of the interventionist discourse as necessary and reject the narrative that such intervention was legitimate or inconsequential. They vindicate the argument that intervention and aggressive military actions have disastrous consequences such as destabilization and armed resistance. This chapter has demonstrated that British fictions are important mimetic vehicles helping us to understand real world political events. This corresponds to an observation that Philip Tew in *The Contemporary British Novel* put as follows: ‘‘Literature co-exists with such harsh external realities. It offers a zone of meditations, reflection and perhaps, as some assert, transcendence’’ (202).

In brief, these fictions show that in addition to security concerns major pro-war politicians invoked a liberation and humanitarian act of kindness narrative in order to justify going to Iraq. As an illustration, Jeremy Moses argues that throughout the entire six month period before the Iraq war ‘‘while security narratives made up the bulk of statements in favor of invasion, there were consistent references to humanitarian narratives and frames’’ (363). The anti-interventionist narrative imagined in such fiction neither perceives the war as justifiable nor a worthwhile humanitarian altruist act. By way of contrast, it considers intervention in Iraq as an imperialist and colonial project that aimed primarily to advance the interest of those who intervened. Indeed, this discourse refuses the rhetoric of liberation and the wishful thinking of importing freedom and democracy to Iraq. More importantly, because Iraq was a subject of increasing scepticism and heightened opposition, subsequently these novels as cultural products of their time deconstruct and discredit the pretexts under which it was waged. Overall, this fiction initially reflects the war’s decline in popularity. Secondly, it

critiques the political leadership of US President George W. Bush and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair for having created a political quagmire in Iraq. Thirdly, it challenges the appropriateness of the US-UK-Coalition led intervention and finally undermines the use of military force as the only resort to prevent or resolve every international political conflict.

Chapter Two: the Iraq War in Selected Male Authored American Novels

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will analyse four Iraq War novels written by male American authors, which are Ben Fountain's *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* (2012), Kevin Powers *The Yellow Birds* (2012), Walter Mean Dyer's *Sunrise Over Fallujah* (2008), and Tom Maremaa's *Metal Heads* (2009). Three authors did not have first-hand military experience; the exception was Kevin Powers who served as a machine gunner in Mosul city in Iraq. This chapter is divided into four sections and will draw on various established critical sources set out below in each relevant section to explore and critically analyse four central themes common to these narratives. The first is the motivation for going to the Iraq war; the dynamics that drive soldiers to enlist and an analysis of the differing authorial approaches to various representations of such diverse motivations. The second is the death of civilians or non-combatant casualties; and the manner in which this theme can be fictionalized. The third is the death of American fighting peers; and explaining why war can be such a debilitating and undermining experience for the American soldiers involved. The fourth is the process and effects of dehumanization in combat and the desire to kill in such a conflict situation. Importantly the analysis will consider how these authors understand the overall process of going to war and its effects upon individuals involved in such a conflict, and the interplay of subsequent experiences with the young American soldier protagonist's original motives for doing so.

In framing its critique the first section will draw upon seminal academic studies on the principles of combat motivations such as those put forth by James M. McPherson in his *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*. McPherson's study inspires to the question of whether or not, as in the Civil War, the Iraq War was a landmark conflict for America historically, and whether the American soldiers involved similarly also fought for notions such as duty, honour and a compelling ideology. This section also utilizes Charles C. Moskos' concept of institutional and occupational orientation theorized in his "From Institution to Occupation: Trends in Military Organization" which will facilitate an understanding of whether soldiers enlist with regard to extrinsic or intrinsic values and if such values serve primarily an individual or collective purpose. David Segal's "Measuring the Institutional/ Occupational Change Thesis" and his conceived pragmatic professionalism theory will enlighten as to why soldiers might be driven by ideals of patriotism and honour, but simultaneously on the other hand, be concerned with the financial wellbeing of themselves and their families. John Eighmay's *Why Do Youth Enlist?* and his formulation of

seven themes will help me engage in an understanding of why soldiers go to war; for one or a combination of values such as fidelity, risk, family, benefits, dignity, challenges and adventure.

Additionally I will draw upon Katherine M. Ngaruia's *Public Service Motivations and Institutional-Occupational Motivations* which provides a new theory of several complex factors that affect military enlistment, the concept of tangible and intangible motivation will also assist the reading of the novels. The theoretical studies of McPherson, Moskos, Segal, Eighmay along with Leonard Wong and colleagues' finding in *Combat Motivations for Iraq War Soldiers* will inform and enrich the analysis of the novels. This section considers if soldier's motivations to go to Iraq is based on ideological, political, financial and personal considerations alone or a combination of factors. Finally as *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* demonstrates, on occasion there can be other reasons for going to war such as in this case avoiding jail, one of a number of alternatives including pragmatic ones which are not emphasized in the academic studies cited in this section.

The second section will look at the death of civilians and the human cost of the war. This section explores how and why the authors present this theme and looks at what, exactly, is the nature of non-combatant death and how different authors represent the demise of such victims variously. All of the texts in this study contain extended scenes involving civilian causalities and I will situate this theme as a defining characteristic of their common literary approach. Iraqi civilians in these novels are at least nominally at war with the Americans, at the mercy of, exposed to, and adversely affected by the violence occurring during the war. One of the consequences of the war is inevitably perhaps civilian casualties. The novels depict how their protagonists face, cope and deal with the psychological and emotional tolls of this combat. War's violence randomly affects and kills such civilian and or non-combatant Iraqis, losses which have a devastating effect on all those who survive and even have perhaps witnessed atrocities.

The second section also draws on critical sources such as Walt Whitman's *Specimen:Days and Collect* and his claim that literature (including fiction) cannot express the real cost of war, as well as Wallis R. Sandborn's *The American Novel of War: a Critical Analysis and Classification System* and his arguemnt that the literature of war should depict civilian death because war begets violence and non-combatant deaths are a facet of all war literature. Carl Von Clausewitz's *On War* and his conceptions about warfare illuminate an understanding that the violence of combat is inherent to the means of waging war, the physical force and warfare causing inevitably such consequential damage which would include that related to civilians.

Moreover, *The Lancet* report on human cost of the war in Iraq that associates the civilian deaths as a primary result of the invasion will further situate and illuminate the reading of the novels. George Packer's *Home Fires, how Soldiers Write Their Wars'* and his conceptualization about the changing nature of modern warfare and the maddening inability to know the enemy which increases the numbers of civilian casualties will be deployed critically in relation to the first wave of Iraq War American Literature. Also useful for the analysis is the Italian philosopher Adriana Cavarero's *Horrorism* which offered a thesis helpful in critically analysing the violence of contemporary wars, her term 'horrorism' encapsulates how such violence can be regarded from the perspectives of civilian victims rather than the terms war or terror that characterize other contemporary accounts of such forms of violence.

Based on critical readings of the fictional accounts, the thesis here will ask whether that civilians or innocents are inevitably killed in wars, should not stricter policies be put in place to protect them as a prerequisite for a legally sanctioned campaign, in order to differentiate such acts from war crimes and terrorism? Should not soldiers use force sparingly and if possible more effectively discriminate combatants from non-combatants? Even if sometimes a war is being fought to defend important moral values such as peace, the protection of people from a greater evil, and defending justice should there not be a better mechanism to minimize damage inflicted on civilians during war? To answer these questions as part of its analysis this section also employs 'Just War' theorists such as David Fisher's *Morality and War: Can War be Just in the Twenty-first Century?* and Michael Walzer's *Just and Unjust Wars A Moral Argument with Historical Illustration.* They formulate the grounds whereby one might specify conditions for judging when and if it is ever justifiable to go to war, and the right conditions for how a war must be fought according to in bello principles of discrimination.

The third section examines and attempts to explain the various reasons for, the manner of the depiction of the deaths of American combatants, and of their fighting peers, particularly as they occur as a predominant theme in the bulk of the selected novels. Interestingly, because these novels are told from soldiers' perspectives they can be grouped as soldier tales and provide insights into such individuals' mind-set and their experiences in Iraq. The section benefits from social contract theorists such as Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*, John Locke's *Two Treaties of Government*, and Samuel Von Pufendorf's *On the Duty of Man and Citizen according to Natural Law* to explain what man can do and become in the state of nature and whether that state of nature is the same as a state of war of every man against everyman.

Sigmund Freud's pamphlet *Reflections Upon War and Death* also provides further insights into the Hobbesian state of nature and why in the state of war the primitive man within is allowed to reappear. War along with a lack of moral repression unleashes evil and violent instincts, a recurrent atavism despite so-called civilization. Furthermore, the section also draws on Michael Stephenson's *The Last Full Measure: How Soldiers Die in Combat* to observe why the changing nature of modern warfare has made war inexorably nastier and how soldiers meet their own deaths as a consequence of being in an army during wartime and combat.

The last section focuses critically on dehumanization and the killing experience which occur in combat and how these factors affect soldiers, drawing on a range of established academic sources to analyse the fictionalization of combat as a killing zone. Peter S. Kindsvatter's *Cowards, Comrades, and Killer Angels: the Soldier in Literature* will be used in understanding why in combat soldiers become efficient killers. Jonathan Shay's *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and Undoing of Character* is used to explore why in combat the soldier may become crazed or go berserk, the prototype of frenzied and crazed warriors. Hannah Arendt's theory of banality of evil and Herbert C. Kelman's *Violence without Moral Restraint Reflections on Dehumanization of Victims and Victimizers* broadens the reading as to why war can weaken moral restraints by turning soldiers into unscrupulous killers. J. Glenn Gray's *The Warriors: Reflection on Men in Battles* further enhances the readings to illuminate how soldiers become aggressors and mad destroyers. *The Moral Education* of Emile Durkheim and his theory of man as homo duplex, the antinomies found in body/soul, individual/social dualism, the lack of harmonies leading to the rise of conflicts, violence as a growing feature of civilization and the advancement of society enhances the understanding as to why in war violence becomes normal and accepted. Jean Jacques Rousseau's *The State of War* and his ideas that it is only after leaving the state of nature followed by entering into the state of civil society that we have soldiers and the state of war arise as efforts to prevent war or to promote peace will also be utilized to the stories. As a combination used in the analyses these theories should provide a radically better and more nuanced understanding of the depictions in the four selected novels of modes of dehumanization as outlined above in their relation to wartime combat and their aesthetic depiction, exploring an implicit complicity or potential voyeurism on the reader's part.

Finally the conclusion argues that such American novels ought to be considered as cultural and artistic vehicles worthy of study, useful for much further debate and reflection about the American invasion of Iraq. The conclusion progresses by drawing attention to what major

thinkers such as Bertrand Russell in his *the Ethics of War* (1915) and Slavoj Zizek's *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* formulated so as to further broaden our understanding about the ethics of different forms of violence.

2.2 Combat motivations of American soldiers deployed in Iraq War

Perhaps for both the general reader and literary critic alike, one of the main aspects of war fiction is its capacity to shed light on what motivates combatants to go to war in the first place, why soldiers enlist and risk their lives. Perhaps due to the ubiquitous nature of conflicts in historical and modern periods- the American Civil War, twentieth century wars such as World War I, World War II, Vietnam and more recently the War on Terror in Iraq and Afghanistan in the twenty-first century a number of theorists have examined the motives of why young soldiers fought. For example, in *For Cause and Comrades, Why Men Fought in the Civil War,* the American historian James M. McPherson carefully examined the letters and diaries of a thousand and seventy six soldiers and explained why they fought as they were:

> Wartime volunteers from civilian life whose values remained rooted in the homes and communities from which they sprang to arms and to which they longed to return. They did not fight for money. The pay was poor and unreliable (5).

McPherson concludes that Civil War soldiers were idealistic men who fought for a cause in which they firmly believed. What induced these men to fight was courage, honour, patriotism, political and ideological conviction such as preserving the Union or fighting for liberty. One might well ask if his conclusion is still relevant for the American soldiers in the war in Iraq. The following section attempts to probe this question by closely reading the motives of the soldier protagonists in the aforementioned novels.

McPherson's conclusion seems still pertinent to Robin, the protagonist in Walter Dean Myers' *Sunrise Over Fallujah* (2008), for the protagonist volunteers to go to Iraq against his father's wishes. In a letter to his uncle he explains his initial motive for joining the Army as part of a reaction to the terrorist attacks on America in September 11, 2001. He also has other motives such as defending his country, building his personality, seeking adventure and following the footsteps of his uncle who served as a Vietnam veteran. In an email to his uncle named Richie, Robin explains why he went to Iraq:

> *I felt like crap after 9-11 and I wanted to do something, to stand up for my country. I think if Dad had been my age, he would have done the same thing. He was thinking about me and about my future-which is cool- but I still need to be my own man, just the way you were at my age...I hope that one day I'll be talking and laughing the same way about what Jonesy (a guy in my unit from Georgia) calls our adventure*[Italics in Original] (1-2).

Robin's decision to join the army was not simplistic but rather complex, involving not just notions of patriotism and idealism that inspired him to enlist but additionally his own self-serving motives. The narrative demonstrates that even in the twenty-first century, a young person like Robin may reinforce his patriotism and be motivated by individual commitment, obligation, a sense of duty and loyalty so as to serve his country. From the perspective of Robin, going to war can also be a chance to prove his masculinity and strength of character.

One of the most convincing scholars on combat motivations is Charles C. Moskos whose seminal work "From Institution to Occupation: Trends in Military Organizations" put forth a hypothesis that the American military is moving from an institutional format with symbolic points of cultural reference to one increasingly resembling that of any profession. Moskos' thesis of Institutional-Occupational is often abbreviated into (I/O) model of military organization which, holds that the institutional organization is value laden and has to do with commitment to beliefs and causes beyond the individual's self-interest, such as duty, honour, and country. However, the occupational model of the military is grounded in supply and demand and rights and benefits driven by strong self-interest motives. Moskos' conceiving of the I/O formulation was alarming about why we should be concerned about trends towards occupationalism in the military services. Moskos conceptualises a hypothesis that: "the overarching trend within the contemporary military is the erosion of the institutional format and the ascendancy of the occupational model" (44).

Moskos presents this model to broadly describe individual motivations for serving in the military. According to his framework, both models are likely to describe aspects of conscription to the U.S military with one orientation more prominent than another. According to his account the military as an institutional organization has intrinsic practices, norms and values that sustain a personal sense of obligation, loyalty, and a sense of duty and individual commitment to serve collective altruistic purposes. However, understanding the military as occupational organizations means perceiving military service as one would perceive a civilian job or an occupation or a workplace. Military service is seen as work that has established tasks, times, and locations. Work beyond normal hours and tasks involving great effort are expected to be compensated. Incentives to work and remain in the organization are extrinsic, such as individual self-serving purposes like increased salaries and promotions. Moskos viewed the U.S conscripted military of the 1960s as largely institutional whereas the all-volunteer army was more occupational and so depended upon labour market trends and competition

with civilian jobs.

Given this framework, it is intriguing and informative to check the primary incentives of the soldier protagonists in these novels. Do they join because of the need for employment, financial and personal gains or are there other more seemingly abstract considerations such as belief in freedom, peace and democratization? The novels exemplify various reasons why such soldiers having decided to enlist are sustained in the contemporary context because of aspects of the institutional framework. For example, in Kevin Powers' *The Yellow Birds* (2012), the twenty-one-year old protagonist John Bartle joins the army because he felt it was freeing him from responsibilities, thinking he would never have to make a significant or challenging decision again. In his vision institutionally the army would be an appropriate and effective place for him to disappear, because previously he had seen himself as a purposeless boy, unlike his ancestors given purpose and a destination by the outbreak of a war. He describes his disillusionment in Iraq in these terms:

> I thought of my grandfather's war. How they had destinations and purpose. How the next day we'd march out under a sun hanging low over the plains in the east. We'd go back into a city that had fought this battle yearly; a slow bloody parade in fall to mark the change of season. We'd drive them out. We always had. We'd kill them... while we patrolled the streets, we'd through candy to their children with whom we'd fight in the fall a few more years from now (91).

Bartle and his comrade Murphy are from Richmond, southwest Virginia, both disillusioned. As civilians neither actually has given much thought about why they are enlisting and the narrative implies that in truth they would both prefer an alternative to the uncertainty and emptiness of civilian life, avoiding the concomitant lack of self-belief and confidence in their prospective futures. Additionally, desire for an exciting adventure propels both Bartle and Murphy choosing a military career. Bartle explains his growing disenchantment, recollecting why they enlisted:

> I understood. Being from a place where a few facts are enough to define you, where a few habits can fill a life, causes a unique kind of shame. We'd had small lives, populated by a longing for something more substantial than dirt roads and small dreams. So we'd come here, where life needed no elaboration and others would tell us who to be. When we finished our work we went to sleep, calm and free of regret (37).

Hence once involved in the military conflict, Power's protagonist does reflect about his choice of going to war and tries to organize his experiences of that war into a pattern whose fragments might later assemble into a story that might make some sense. He lives on the brink of an existential crisis and asks that: 'What did it mean that this choice was an illusion, that all choices are illusions, or that if they are not illusions, their strength is illusory"(217). It seems that Bartle and Murphy joined because they were afraid of taking control of their lives,

wanting to place themselves into a bureaucratic system that would subsume them, making almost every significant choice for them. Uncertainty and knowing not what to do with their small lives in America, motivates Bartle and Murphy to enlist because at least in military service they will have a certain direction and certainty, or at least, so they imagine. Using Mosko's concepts, occupationally the military supplies a framework apparently denied them in civilian life, satisfying the individual in their demand for meaning, where in however, illusionary a fashion, the occupational frame purveys through its intrinsic practices, norms and values precisely a narrative of a personal sense of obligation predicated on loyalty, and a sense of duty. For a while clearly even the wayward and lost can be persuaded of their individual commitment to serving a collective set of altruistic purposes. Ironically, the cynical anti-heroic protagonists, Bartle and Murphy, are neither idealistic nor do they believe in more abstract concepts such as fighting for liberty and freedom. They wish primarily to submit to the discipline and strict rules of the army, joining up because the military bestows upon them a certain power and prestige that their civilian lives apparently lacked and additionally on another pragmatic level because of an opportunity to see more of the world. The following section sums up Bartle's main motives and why he remained initially content with his decision:

> I'd been in the army a couple of years. It had been good to me, more or less, a place to disappear. I kept my head down and did as I was told. Nobody expected much of me, and I hadn't asked for much in return. I hadn't given a lot of thought to actually going to war, but it was happening now, and I was still struggling to find a sense of urgency that seemed proportional to the events unfolding in my life. I remember feeling relief while everyone was frantic with fear. It had dawned on me that I'd never have to make a decision again. That seemed freeing (34-35).

Therefore, in *the Yellow Birds* one can infer that it was not values like patriotism, ideology, duty, honour or courage that were the primary motivations for their enlistment, nor certain narrow occupational incentives such as personal advancement, but more the overall institutional framework, its capacity to negate the void and emptiness of the pair's previous civilian lives combined with and an innate desire for excitement and change. Bartle and Murphy who had constrained or small lives in America, also lacked job opportunities within their community, which facts motivates them to join the military and inspire their desire to experience something more exciting, to concretize the dream of escaping to a more exotic place, undertake an adventure outside America. Whatever the social, economic and psychological pressures that encouraged their volunteering, these other factors inspired that ambition.

The complexity of the motivations behind a soldier's enlistment in Army services

has made scholars evaluate and critique Moskos' theory of Institutional/Occupational orientation. One of those is David R. Segal who in *Measuring the Institutional Occupational Change Thesis* neither supports nor refutes Moskos' finding but rather evaluates his thesis to propose his perhaps even more nuanced theory of pragmatic professionalism. According to Segal institutionalism and occupationalism may be separate dimensions and vary independently of each other. So that pragmatic military professionals may be motivated by ideals of patriotism and honour, and at the same time, be concerned with the financial well-being of themselves and those close to them. Segal's thesis holds that the potential for both institutionalism and occupationalism is high within the military. Segal argues that it is possible for military personnel to see their service as a calling, a job, or a combination of both. Segal explains his hypothesis as a:

> Combination of economic and mission-oriented concerns-with short term fluctuations in a more economic direction when caps are put on military pay or when the structure of traditional benefits is threatened, and short-term fluctuations in mission-oriented directions during the early stages of military engagements or during periods when America's position in the international system is being challenged by terrorists or foreign powers (Segal 370).

Hence it is possible for soldiers to be patriotic and idealistic and also be self-interested people looking to advance their own achievements. In Tom Maremaa's novel *Metal Heads*, for example, the protagonist Lance Corporal Jeremy Witherspoon is a cynical boy from California who gets wounded, loses his left hand and has partial sight in his right eye as a result of being blown by an IED in Iraq. He retrospectively reproaches himself for having made the wrong decision to enlist and feels remorseful about joining the army because he regrets his intentions:

> Probably it's my own fault, all of it, the way I joined the Marines and betrayed my oath of honour. I was looking to kill in the name of answering the call to duty in Baghdad without really being prepared. I mean, I knew nothing about Iraq. I had been kicked out of high skolliwoll a couple of times in my native state of kahleefornia, and was lucky to get in. Not that they were taking just anybody, warm bodies off the street, to serve our country in the mess that's become Iraq. I had to pass a couple of tests and persuade the recruiters of my good intentions, my commitment to God and Country, and all the rest of it. Hey, it worked, but I did wrong (21).

Witherspoon admits that even though he knew they would be trained to kill, he did not care and even claims he joined so that he might kill people. As a young boy Witherspoon thought that going to war could be transforming. By serving the Army as a soldier, Witherspoon was convinced that he would be empowered, feel proud, and demonstrate his manhood, courage and masculinity:

> But it makes you a man, tough as steel, a killer. The thought of killing does not

> bother me, but then I realize, among the recruits, we'll be trained to kill other soldiers, young men, from other armies in other countries, men like ourselves, all in the name of protecting our families, our values, our country...at the end of it all is a gruelling test of manhood, courage and endurance (195-196).

Although the protagonist remains politically cynical, anti-heroic and questions the causes for which the Americans are fighting, nevertheless Witherspoon ventures to enlist, because he wants to improve his character. He wants to test his masculinity and to see if he can endure the hardships of war. The army makes him feel superior and more powerful than others. However, in contrast another main character John Hart, a father of two, has entirely other motives for enlistment. Hart served as a National Guardsman on weekends to bring some extra money for his family and as he explains to Witherspoon herein lie his principal reasons and motivations:

> Spoon, I was doing my part to support Mary and my two kids, Jake and Josh, nine and twelve, respectively, if you are interested in knowing. Job kept me and my family going until I had to report for duty and deployment in Iraq. Do I sound rational? Am I making any sense? (22).

The passage above demonstrates that John Hart has joined for pecuniary reasons, even if that meant putting his life at harm's way. However, he is also described as a religious man, an idealist who believes in personal salvation and redemption; additionally, is described not only as a soldier, but as a fire-fighter. He is a many-faceted individual. I would suggest that John Hart's combat motivation testifies to David Segal's theory of pragmatic professionalism, with a combination of institutional and occupational motivations, combining both a belief in values such a patriotism as well as being centrally concerned with the financial well-being of his family.

Maremaa's *Metal Heads* also depicts different soldiers with varying motivations for going to war. In Witherspoon's case it is in large part his failure in high school, as well as lust and an irrational desire to kill that inspires him to enlist. For others, the Army can also be a test of manhood, courage and can build personality. For John Hart financial reason is a dominant factor and his family needs a job as a source of income. Nevertheless, he also endangers his life because he was a loyal and spiritual person who believes in redemption. In addition, whatever he encounters he never loses his humanity but becomes a model for other soldiers because he provides spiritual guidance to them as a religious and honourable man:

> The day John Hart came in, things also changed around here. I mean, they were never the same, if that makes any sense. John Hart's a rainmaker, all right, best of breed. A former National Guardsman, firefighter, soldier, he's the man, as I was saying, or was the man until what happened happened (23).

John Hart is described as an idealist, a saviour of humanity and a high priest of goodness who changes the lives of his comrades and is a highly revered figure by all his peers. The

ironic and tragic life of John Hart in Iraq is that while he was able to earn the trust of the Iraqis in a situation that easily could have been catastrophic; he was abandoned and betrayed by his family whilst he returned home to the United States.

> Thousands of miles away in a foreign land named Iraq, with an ancient culture so different from your own, with people speaking another language, a family unknown to you that you saved has honored you-honored you by naming their firstborn son after you, believing that you are worthy as a man and a hero forever in their eyes, while in your own land, here at home, your own wife and kids have chosen to discard and abandon you because they don't see you as a man anymore. You're disfigured for good now. You're just a metalhead (229-230).

Recent scholarly articles such as "Public Service Motivation and Institutional-Occupational Motivations Among Undergraduate Students and ROTC Cadets" by Katherine M. Ngaruiya and colleagues demonstrate that a soldier's motivation for enlistment cannot be attributed to one single reason but must involve a complex combination of factors. They show that social, personal and organizational factors affect military enlistment and divide motivations into tangible and intangibles:

> Tangible motivators include salary, benefits, enlistment benefits, and money for college. Intangible motivators include desire for self-improvement, desire to serve others, aspirations to serve one's country and becoming disciplined and confident (2-3).

This tangible and intangible motivation theory claims that one cannot reduce such a decision. This would seem not to be the case in Ben Fountain's satirical novel *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* (2012), where the initially eponymous protagonist appears to have joined the army simply to avoid prison. Billy had also been charged with criminal mischief for having trashed the car of his sister's fiancé. His sister Kathryn was badly injured in a car accident and had been left by her fiancé who three weeks after the incident had broken off their engagement. Billy felt insulted and wanted revenge by doing something drastic. As a result when he was prosecuted, the Court reduced his sentence to army service as an option. For Billy this seemed a better place and choice because:

> Billy joined the army, which seemed as good a place as any to be sloughed off, better than jail and being raped every night by guys with names like Preacher and Hawg. Thus he came to be a soldier at the age of eighteen, a private in the infantry, the lowest of the low (19).

However, it emerges that avoiding jail was not the main reason. Billy was also unsatisfied with his place in civilian life and moreover, he had not the best reputation in his town. Though he received good grades at school, Billy explains his true underlying feelings as:

> I just hated school so much, hated everything about it. I'm starting to think that was what was fucked up, a lot more than me? Keeping us locked up all day, treating us like children, making us learn a lot of shit about nothing. I think it made me sort of crazy (84).

Ben Fountain uses Billy's motivation for joining the army as a tool to satirize, critique, and ironically undermine key features of U.S society. Billy is extremely exasperated at his fellow American people who are so grateful and proud of his heroism and sacrifice for going to Iraq and defeating the insurgency. Billy Lynn might have been coerced by the legal system and thereby became destined for Iraq; however, he also hated school and wanted a more adventurous life. When Billy returns home for a short victory parade he considers going AWOL but is shamed into not doing so because his squad is determined to go back and therefore he redeploys because his friends did as he wanted to stay with them. Fountain writes:

> They are the ones in charge, these saps, these innocents, their homeland dream is the dominant force. His reality is their reality's bitch; what they don't know is more powerful than all the things he knows, which means that, something terrible and possibly fatal, he suspects. To learn what you have to learn at the war, to do what you have to do, does this make you the enemy of all that sent you to the war? (306).

Billy's story reproaches not individual soldiers but rather the larger system, including the politicians who make the major decisions in going to war and society for its support and complicity. This is shown in the manner in which the veterans are celebrated and depicted as being larger-than-life heroes who made extraordinary sacrifices to protect the nation. However, Billy always questions and ridicules such collective values because fundamentally he does not regard himself as a hero, and he sees himself as an accomplice in the murders of Iraqis. Billy articulates this strongly with regard to his ordeal when he returns home for a brief victory tour, before his imminent redeployment:

> We appreciate, they say,..We love you. We are so grateful. We cherish and bless. We pray, hope, honor-respect-love-and-revere and they do, in the act of speaking they experience the mighty words, these verbal arabesques that spark and snap in Billy's ears like bugs impacting an electric bug zapper...No one spits, no one calls him baby-killer. On the contrary, people could not be more supportive or kindlier disposed, yet Billy finds these encounters weird and frightening all the same. There's something harsh in his fellow Americans, avid, ecstatic, a burning that comes of the deepest need. (37-38).

Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk ridicules and mocks the idea that soldiers might fight for institutional abstract collective values such as liberty, freedom and bringing democracy to the Iraqi people, and certainly many of the scholarly studies considered in this chapter would support a notion of variability and divergence in such matters, albeit in some cases ideals might contribute for certain individuals.

The opposite view to that of Ben Fountain is found in factual analysis, in *Why Do Youth Enlist?* where John Eighmey surveys responses of younger American soldiers

obtained in the 2001, 2003, and 2004 Department of Defence Youth Polls. He advances a conceptual framework to identify an integrated typology of seven distinct motivational themes for enlistment, namely: fidelity, risk, family, benefits, dignity, challenges, and adventure. Eighmey associates the tangible, self-serving themes of benefits, dignity, challenges, and adventure with those who exhibit Moskos' occupational orientation, and the other-serving intangible themes of fidelity, risk and family with those seemingly articulating more Moskos' institutional orientations. Eighmey ascribes tangible and intangible aspects to both occupational and institutional orientations: ''The consistent emergence of these themes as leading factors indicates they may be important organizing contructs employed by members of the youth population when evaluating choices related to military service'' (327).

Eighmay's formulation might also be related to David Segal's theory of pragmatic professionalism. Both assert that young people's motivations to enlist can be institutional and occupational at the same time. This conclusion is also supported in *Why Soldier's Fight, Combat Motivations in the Iraq War* by Leonard Wong VII et. al. The findings in this study support the idea that even though soldiers might be motivated by self-serving motives and personal gains, they might also express a belief in ideals such as fighting for liberation, freedom and democracy. The study found that:

> Surprisingly, in the present study, many soldiers did respond that they were motivated by idealistic notions. Liberating the people and bringing freedom to Iraq were common themes in describing their combat motivation (17-18).

Among the soldier protagonists in the selected novels featured in this chapter with all of apparently different motives, similar to those variations outlined by various commentators cited above, one protagonist stands out as a classic idealist. In *Sunrise Over Fallujah* Robin believes that by enlisting and serving in the US Army as a Civilian Officer coordinator he would bring a human face to the war and help the Iraqis. Thus it is a mixture faith or ideology and a sense of social, humanitarian duty that motivated him. He feels proud to have stepped up to defend his country ''I reminded myself of my mission in Iraq. I was defending America from its enemies, removing weapons of mass destruction from Iraq, and building democracy. If the jerks drinking tea didn't appreciate that, I didn't care''(63). Robin glamorizes his experience in Iraq since he was reaching for the highest idea of life and offering himself up for his country:

> *I just wanted to write down that I did what I thought I had to do over here. I did it for my country and for the people I love and for myself, too. At least that's what I'm telling myself. But there's a distance between what my brain says I'm doing, which is more or less what the missions tell us that we're doing, and what I'm feeling*

> *inside…Mama said that I shouldn't be the hero type. I don't know. Maybe you have to be a hero type to deal with the bigger things that happen to you. At least you have to be bigger than life to fit all the things inside that you didn't know you could absorb before* [Italics in Original](280).

Most of the protagonists and main characters in the conflict considered in this chapter are men who seem to be simultaneously politically and philosophically cynical and yet personally idealistic. Except for the *Sunrise Over the Fallujah*, the other soldiers do not share a romantic glorification or an idealistic notion of fighting for freedom or defending their country; rather they join the military for personal reasons such as income and see the army as a job opportunity or training. Being in the military gives these particular soldiers in these novels a sense of pride that is unmatched in civilian live. It provides a sense of purpose and direction. These soldiers are less inclined or are reluctant to express their ideological sentiments such as nationalism. In fact, some of them appear to have been about as little concerned with ideological issues when they enlisted. They either attach little importance to idealistic notions or they feel awkward if they find themselves speaking about them. This is also further supported by Leonard Wong et al.'s study which asked soldiers why they primarily entered the military. The soldiers do not hide the fact that they were motivated by personal gains such as in the cases highlighted by Wong:

> To get money for college, to gain experience before looking for a job, to follow in the footsteps of a family member who had been in the military, or just to find some adventure before settling down. Although one or two mentioned that they were motivated to enlist because of September 11, 2001, most did not cite patriotism or ideology as their enlistment rationale (9).

However, such deployments in the books analysed in this chapter leave them bitter, angry and physically and psychologically wounded. In *Welcome to the Suck, Narrating the American Soldier's Experience in Iraq*, Stacy Peebles found that American soldiers depicted in fiction after emerging from the conflict in Iraq, they have the power to change American national narratives because they :

> Feel betrayed not necessarily by their own nation, which many already believe is on a fool's errand in Iraq, but by the personal resources they expect to carry them through. They are politically cynical but personally idealistic, believing themselves to be beyond the strict categories of race and gender, to be technologically and culturally savvy. But these resources fail them as well (4).

Finally in the analysis of such Iraq war novels by various male American authors featuring young soldiers, one can begin to comprehend the range of circumstances that drove or led such individuals to join the Army, to become combatants, and risk their lives. The novels fictionally represent and highlight certain key factors, which include: the nature of their voluntary decisions to join up and why they were drawn into war, their educational,

socioeconomic, psychological environment, vulnerable personal circumstances and triggers. In addition they show how these diverse risk factors interacted. Soldiers joined the army through choice. The analyses of such fiction demonstrate how voluntary these soldiers' participation was and whether war, family, education, employment, peer pressure, social influences, search for status, seeking adventure and acceptable role models were among the risk factors they experienced. These gives a clue as to why ultimately soldiers become cynical, disillusioned and see the war as a dangerous political endeavour.

2.3 Death of civilians or non-combatants

The texts under consideration in this study *Metal Heads, Sunrise Over Fallujah, The Yellow Birds and Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, present civilian or non-combatant deaths which occur either through intended or accidental destruction as predominant thematic elements. In each text, numerous unarmed people who are neither active participant nor involved in the war are killed, presenting the reader with both a realistic aspect of conflict and one of its key moral dilemmas. These people, whether children, women and/or the elderly become a given coordinate of war that is troubling. The military slang used to mask the killing of innocent people is that of 'collateral damage'. This section will analyse how these American novels of Iraq War unavoidably tally these costs.

In *The American Novel of War, a Critical Analysis and Classification System* Wallis R. Sandborn argues convincingly that the reality of all wars show that armed conflict begets civilian deaths and this is a byproduct of every war. Regardless of the line of battle, Sandborn claims, civilian deaths are a facet of every war and war fiction:

> The byproduct of combat during war, of course, is human death, and within the spectrum of human death, noncombatants die. Consequently, war, any war, every war, in any era, in every era, in any country involved, in every country involved, is deadly to non-combatants (128).

Clearly according to Sandborn this emerges as a trans-historical reality, however regrettable. Many historians concede that conventional fiction cannot capture adequately the true human cost, the unspeakable suffering and the horrors inflicted by war. However, fictions have that capacity, including those emerging from the circumstances of the Iraq War, which are replete with ghastly accounts of the killings of innocents. Consider, for instance, *Sunrise Over Fallujah* in which a group of American soldiers kill a frightened Iraqi kid because they misidentify him for a potential terrorist. The American protagonist describes the horrendous scene, his own response as well as the lamenting of the boy's grandmother together in the following which I need to quote at length:

> The boy's body was curled up, head bent toward his knees. There was a dark stain

> on the front of his light blue shirt, a triangle of blood spread on the ground in front of him. One hand was closed and one opened, the fingers slightly spread. I felt myself holding my breath. I moved the muzzle of my weapon away from him. It was harder to move my eyes away. The grandmother ran from the building. She looked heavier than she had in the apartment. Her mouth was open, a black hole in her gray, lined face. Her lips moved but there was no sound. She gestured toward the boy, took a tentative step to him, then stumbled forward and fell on her knees. She looked at him and then up to me. Her anguished eyes pleaded hopelessly. I walked away. Away from the house, away from the body, away from the grandmother. The buildings across the street, the soldiers moving cautiously past them, were unreal through my tears. It was a horror movie badly out of focus, with only the images in my head crystal clear (56-57).

The protagonist defines the scene as 'horror movie' and 'unreal' to encapsulate his disbelief about the range of carnage in Iraq, but from the perspectives of Iraqis themselves death was neither a movie nor unreal, rather, it was factual and familiar. The excerpt above defies the renowned statement of Walt Whitman who argued that "The real war will never get in the books…Its interior history will not only never be written Its practicality, minutiae of deeds and passions will never be even suggested" (80-81). This is for the reason that a novel without real war violence is most likely not a true novel of war, as Wallis R. Sanborn III suitably argues: "The novel of war's violence exists on the battlefield first, if not primarily only then, and often, too, in the minds of the characters" (64).

Sanborn's claim holds true to recent Iraq War fictional accounts. These works feature countless scenes and graphic descriptions in which civilians are massacred. In *The Yellow Birds*, civilians are brutally annihilated, often by various forms of the violence of the war, such as suicide bombings, roadside IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices), insurgent attacks and U.S Army counter-attacks. The protagonist Private John Bartle ruminates on his experience in Iraq and acquaints us with the ubiquitous nature and normalization of death in Iraq; "nothing seemed more natural than someone getting killed...We only pay attention to rare things, and death was not rare. Rare was the bullet with your name on it, the IED buried just for you. Those were the things we watched for"(11-12).

The Yellow Birds depicts evil and acts of cruelty as part of a daily fact of life in Iraq during the invasion. It seems that rising death tolls become commonplace and perhaps they could have been avoided. Bartle's description enhances the devastating effect the war had on the civilians who were not immune from the large scale violence of the war. Power's novel clarifies that civilians could not escape from the danger of death because of the sheer scale of gunfire, ground operations, air strikes, house-to-house raids, and the cracking down of invading forces or the skirmishes, ambushes, attacks and retaliations of the insurgents. He describes the spectacle in which nameless and voiceless "bodies were scattered about from

the past four days of fighting in the open space between our positions and the rest of Tal Afar. They lay in the dust, broken and scattered and bent, their white shifts gone dark with blood'' (5).

Obviously, the examples above aptly substantiate Carl Von Clausewitz's arguments made in *On War*. According to him 'war' is understood as nothing but the continuation of policy by other means and this leads to extremities because it is ''an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will…Violence, that is to say the physical force, is therefore the means, the compulsory submission of the enemy to our will is the ultimate object''(14). Clausewitz illuminated the violence of war and its effects on civilians. He conceptualized that war always involves the use of armed force and massive violence and that the violence of war stems from the means, or the physical force, which is used unsparingly to compel our enemies to fulfil our demands.

This Clausewitzian sense of political violence best applies to conventional wars between states where there are soldiers in uniforms fighting in the frontlines. However, after the atomic Bomb of the World War II many critics argued that modern war has changed into asymmetrical warfare and is similar to terrorism because in such wars combatants and civilians are killed indiscriminately. One of such critic is Gaston Bouthoul who shows that modern war does not differ from terrorism.[12] In his ''Definitions of Terrorism'' (1975) Bouthoul views war as an organized and bloody confrontation on a grand scale between political groups and that the atomic bomb was a turning-point in the history of war:

> The last war to conform to these conventions was that of 1914. Since then, the new techniques of war, aerial bombardment of towns and later, the permanent targeting of nuclear weapons on great centres of population, seems superficially to resemble terrorism (52).

The novels in this study specify this changing nature of contemporary war and especially the absence of the frontline in new wars as one of the key reasons which often leads to countless civilian deaths in Iraq. The blurred line between combatants and civilians often confused fighting soldiers making them unable to discriminate between a potential enemy-combatant and civilians. In Iraq there were no traditional armies fighting against rival armies. Instead, there were groups of insurgents who were hiding among civilians or sometimes using civilians as a human shield which made the threat of war more lethal for noncombatants. The danger of death can be posed by anyone anytime and anyplace. In markets where people

[12] Bouthoul, Gaston and Carrere, R. *Le Defi de la Guerre de 1740 a 1974*. Paris: PUF, 1976. Print.

come together, civilians were targeted by suicide bombers. Sometimes in checkpoints, the invading forces mistook terrified men for a potential enemy. Often in such circumstances there were detrimental losses of lives. As John Bartle in *The Yellow Birds* notices:

> I'd been trained to think war was the great unifier, that it brought people together than any other activity on earth. Bullshit. War is the great maker of solipsists: how are you going to save my life today? Dying would be one way. If you die, it becomes more likely that I will not. You're nothing, that is the secret: a uniform in the sea of numbers, a number in the sea of dust (12).

The Yellow Birds demonstrates that as an outcome of the invasion violence was occurring on a daily basis and the demise of civilian became numbingly normal. Many sources confirm this aspect of the Iraq war. One may look at *The Lancet Report* published by researchers at John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in October 2004. In that article, researchers found that in the first eighteen months after the war the death toll 'excess death' associated with the invasion was higher than one hundred thousand. The violence of the invasion, the researchers emphasize, was the primary cause of those deaths. [13]

Therefore, it is no surprise that soldier protagonists, for example in *the Yellow Birds*, Bartle and Murphy keep on killing and watching people be killed. They are desensitized and eventually lose emotional connections. They carry out things they never perform in their normal lives. As an example the narrators delineate their disorientation in a scene where an old man and woman are shot by them at a checkpoint: 'Holly shit, that bitch got murdered,' Murph said. There was no grief, or anguish, or joy, or pity in that statement. There was no judgment made. He was just surprised" (22).

The invisibility of the enemy and inability of soldiers to discriminate between armed combatants and civilians is a predominant theme in these selected novels of the Iraq War. The blurred line among insurgents, the civilians and the occupation forces often generated grievous inhumanity. For example, in *Sunrise Over Fallujah* the protagonist expresses his nervousness as 'What was definitely messing with my mind was that it was hard to tell who the enemy was, and with our soldiers moving from place to place so quickly, it was getting hard to tell where our friends were, too" (77).These soldier protagonists are disillusioned by their experiences in Iraq showing that wars are always more catastrophic than expected. Likewise, George Packer, a respected Iraq War journalist and critic provides additional

---

[13]For details about the human cost of the invasion consult the website https://iraqbodycount.org/ and https://costsofwar.org/article/iraqi-civilians. Also useful is Tim McGirk's article *Collateral Damage or Civilian Massacre in Haditha?* published by*Time* on 19 March 2006 and can be accessed via .<:http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1174649,00.html>.

insights on this issue in his article for *the New Yorker* '*Home Fires, How Soldiers Write Their Wars'*. Packer relates that U.S soldiers were fighting ghostlike, invisible insurgents who were hiding among Iraqi civilians. He describes this predicament in term of the 'maddening unknowability of the enemy'. What's more, he states that the first wave Iraq war literature by Americans is overwhelmingly ironic and disillusioned literature as it is concerned with: 'The thin line between survival and brutality, the maddening unknowability of the enemy, tenderness, brotherhood, alienation from the former self, the ghosts of the past, the misfits of home'' (Packer, 2014).

Correspondingly, in *Sunrise Over Fallujah* non-combatants, innocent bystanders and indifferent observers are killed through a series of random explosions. Myer's narrator Robin, a Civil Affairs officer, witnesses the evolving bloodshed. He traces the way in which people are blown up by suicide bombers. Regardless of the intended target, civilian lives are often eliminated and shortened. Robin realistically recounts a horrifying experience when an American fighter jet torpedoes a school that 'killed some civilians. A few children. This is a war and collateral damage happens. That's a fact of war and a reflection of what is known as the ''fog of war.'' Nothing happens perfectly. Bullets fly. Bombs fall. People stand up at the wrong time'' (94).

It is these unmitigated killings that have inspired the Italian philosopher Adriana Cavarero to pen down *Horrorism Naming Contemporary Violence*. Cavarero provides the thesis for critically analysing the violence of contemporary wars when she encapsulated that within the context of the Iraq it is Horrorism rather than war or terror that encompass the scope of contemporary forms of violence. Cavarero argues that more than terror or war what stands out in contemporary conflict scenes is horror. Today's horror renews the most ancient myths of Horrorism through carnage, torture, bodies burning, and massacre of the innocent. By Horrorism Cavarero means:

> To emphasize the peculiarly repugnant character of so many scenes of contemporary violence, which locates them in the realm of horror rather than that of terror...Calling it horrorism… helps us see that a certain model of horror is indispensable for understanding our present (29).

Cavarero's framework is essential for understanding the fictional violence that occurs in the selected novels. Consider, for instance, *Sunrise Over Fallujah* where civilians are objectified as corpses lying on the street. Such scenes of horrorism are revealed when the protagonist pensively observes that civilians riddled with bullets don't look like humans anymore.

> I keep looking away from the dead because I don't want to see them. When I do

> look, I see that the dead are not like human beings anymore. They are not neatly laid out but twisted at obscene angles on the side of the road. Sometimes there are mourners. They hold their hands up to the sky, as if asking, Why is this human being lying here? I know that human beings are not supposed to look like this. Sometimes they are just body parts lying along the side of the road. At first I felt a little bit ashamed at how scared seeing bodies makes me, but I notice that everyone in first squad stops talking when we come on that kind of scene (127).

Like the protagonist, a female soldier named Marla also wants to make sense of this horrorism. Marla notices that as a result of the randomness, routinization and normalization of daily suicide bombers who exploded themselves and everything around, civilians were wiped out:

> You go out and you see people shopping…Women buying onions and bread or people having coffee. Then down the street somebody gets blown up, it's weird. It was weird-weird and unnerving. Somebody buying onions, somebody getting their fingers blown off, somebody dying (208).

This violent trend shows nothing but the scene of horrorism of contemporary war in which Cavarero so eloquently expresses. The following observation from Cavarero's *Horrorism* is not without significance that the use of violence is directed at dehumanization and nullifying human beings even more than at killing them: ''Evidently it is not so much killing that is in question here but rather dehumanizing and savaging the body as body, destroying it in its figural unity, sullying it. In an act that strikes at the human qua human'' (9)

Similarly, in the satirical novel *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, Billy reveals how horrendous and dehumanizing the war was. In order to defeat the insurgents they had to blow up not only houses but entire blocks where civilians used to live. Hinting at substantial deaths of anonymous civilians, the following paragraph from the novel substantiates why the protagonist is tremendously exasperated and why Cavarero's coining horrorism is so appropriate:

> Finally it's sourced to a four-storey apartment building down the street. There are flower pots in the windows, laundry struck from the sills. ''Call it in,'' Captain Tripp radioed to Lt., so Lt. Calls in the strike, two 155 mm HE rounds engage and the whole building, no, half the block goes down, boom, problem solved in a cloud of flame and smoke...the only way to really successfully invade a country is by blasting it to hell (221).

Additionally, Billy reproaches American society for such civilian casualties in Iraq. This is for the reason that back home the American people are overexcited about their gallantry in Iraq. However, Billy does not feel valiant. Instead, he is devastated, guilt-ridden and rather ashamed of what they have done. Instead of feeling heroic, Billy perceives himself and his society as a complicit for crimes against humanity:

> He wished that just once somebody would call him baby-killer, but this doesn't seem to occur to them, that babies have been killed. Instead they talk about democracy,

> development, dubuaemdees. They want so badly to believe, he'll give them that much, they are as fervent as children insisting Santa Claus is real (219).

Further testifying to such outrage, the protagonist in Tom Maremaa's *Metal Heads* presents such facets and the narrator conveys his emphatic view after witnessing the evisceration of an entire Iraqi family literally blown into pieces by a bomb. Witherspoon himself feels the pain but he points to a routinization of violence and the fact that such horrific deaths become part of the combatants' daily lives, which desensitize and numb his soldier friends:

> When I was there I got to witness an entire family blown to pieces; I mean, I knew the father, the mother, their three boys, young daughter, cousin, a brother, two uncles, and a great grandmother who must've been one hundred years old, if she was a day. And when I come back to their house I found the rubble, the ruin, the body parts scattered in every direction, with nothing left of the family, a giant hole in the earth, smouldering from red embers, lives scattered into a million pieces...my pain impossible to match the pain of losing that poor Iraqi family. My buddies, the ones with me on that patrol, felt the same, or if they didn't it was because they had grown numb to the losses that fell their way each day (42).

Consequently, one can confirm that civilian deaths are defining characteristics and integral components of these American novels of the Iraq war. These fictions realistically depict the way non-military people were killed randomly. Evidently, these authors reiterate this aspect of the conflict as a crucial thematic element to raise socio-political, moral, ethical and human concerns. It is not without significance that since the U.S war in Iraq began in 2003, many scholars in the realm of ethics, law, peace and international relations have revived the principles of just war theory. Partially because of rising civilian casualties, scholars like Michael Walzer and David Fisher have written seminal works on war, law, ethics, and morality. The traditional just war theory is concerned with three distinct but interrelated phases of war into Jus ad bellum, Jus in Bello and Jus Post Bellum. That is justice in the resort to war, justice in the conduct of war and justice after the war has ended. The death of noncombatants often falls under the rules of jus in bello. These rules prescribe the right and just conduct for a war to be fought. Just war theory holds that un-armed non-combatants who are not part or engaged in the conflict must be immune, protected and never targeted by physical force. This is because civilian people do not pose direct immediate harm to the combatants. Historically and today we have seen that civilian people are killed and they are called collateral damages. Furthermore, since contemporary wars have changed, it is more difficult for state armies and combatants not to engage in killing civilians, partly because insurgents tend to use them as strategic human shields or due to incompetent strategic mistakes.

David Fisher, for example, in *Morality and War: Can War be Just in the Twenty-first Century?* notes that "for civilian deaths, whether intended or unintended, can alienate the support of the population and so prejudice the success of military mission" (101). Fisher's intuition is again helpful when he asks 'If civilians are inevitably killed in wars, does that mean that war is morally forbidden?" (85). It is from this vantage point that David Fisher concludes and judges the First Gulf War as just and the Second Gulf War (the Iraq war) as unjust wars. Fisher attributes the injustices of the Iraq War to the large numbers of civilian deaths. In the following paragraph Fisher underlines the core difficulty in Iraq and other contemporary wars at the dawn of the twenty-first century: "Any death is a moral tragedy to be avoided...there is no license to kill non-combatants who pose no such a threat" (100).

Historically many thinkers have long argued that war is not always unjust. That under certain circumstances war is a moral necessity, for example in self-defence or against a greater evil. Several just war philosophers used the theory to limit international conflicts, and the need of civil society to provide sound justifications not only for going to war, but how to conduct a just war. Sometimes war is even considered a moral virtue. Aristotle, for example, in *Nichomachean Ethics*, Book X, chapter Seven argued that 'We go to war that we may live at peace…for no one chooses war for the sake of war, nor even to make preparations for war; for a man would seem to be altogether sanguinary, if he made his friends enemies in order that there might be battles and murders" (260). However, the founding fathers of just war theory and for the most part Michael Walzer's seminal work on *Just and Unjust Wars, A Moral Argument with Historical Illustration* formulated the grounds to specify conditions for judging when and if it is ever justifiable to go to war, and the right conditions justness for how a war must be fought.

Just war thinkers emphasize and hold that states, armies, military commanders, officers and soldiers who execute and participate in war have a responsibility and moral obligations to use force sparingly to defend important moral values such as defending justice and protecting innocent human lives, knowing that taking an innocent human life is wrong. All these philosophers emphasize discrimination and non-combatant immunity as two of the main principles of just war theory. According to the rules of engagement, combatants must discriminate between combatants and noncombatants. That non-armed civilians should never be made the target of military attacks forms one of the principal required criterions for the right conduct of war. Jus in bello or justice in the conduct of war criteria of discrimination maintains that soldiers should respect what is lawful and what is a criminal behaviour in war. Armies must morally and legally restrain themselves when they come across civilians.

Otherwise they could be held accountable by international laws for crimes against humanity. Michal Walzer, reminds his reader that commanders, officers and soldiers are responsible for the lives of the civilians. Combatants should target only those, in Walzer's words, are 'engaged in harm' and not civilian populations who are immune from posing direct threat. In Walzer's words, combatants are:

> Charged with the protection of the weak and unarmed. It is the very essence and reason of his being…precisely because he himself, gun in hand, artillery and bombers at his call, poses a threat to the weak and unarmed, he must take steps to shield them. He must fight with restraint, accepting risks, mindful of the rights of the innocent (2006, 316-317).

Undoubtedly, these Iraq War novels should appeal to a discerning reader of Iraq War-era since they raise awareness about what the civilians endured and bring into foray the political and societal aspects of the war. They acknowledge that war always has evil consequences, predominantly the deaths of non-combatants. Therefore, the authors dramatize the horrors of civilian death as an essential thematic element to seriously engage with ethical and moral dilemmas of war. These fictions make us feel and endure the hardships for ourselves and lay before us the tragedy and bleakness of wartime experience and uphold that although the life of an individual is precious and must be valued, nevertheless, war creates a destructive condition where human lives are wasted, shortened, made expendable and superfluous. They all imaginatively dwell on human suffering and capture the horrors of the war to display that once a war is initiated, it would inevitably inflict massive harm, potential sufferings and generate the loss of civilian lives. This is evocative of Fisher's claim that each death, civilians especially, is a moral tragedy that needs to be avoided.

2.4 Death of combatant and fighting peers

The next dominant theme of the American novels of the Iraq War is the ever-present death of American combatants. This section will analyse the demise of fighting peers and servicemen in the selected texts. In *The Yellow Birds* for example, the protagonist John Bartle reflects 'The War tried to kill us in the spring... It tried to kill us every day...The war had tried its best to kill us all: man woman, child. But it had killed fewer than a thousand soldiers like me and Murph'' (3-4). Just a few pages into the novel, the body count exceeds thousands making him deliberate about the endless comrades who fell 'We didn't know the list was limitless. We didn't think beyond a thousand. We never considered that we could be among the walking dead as well'' (13). Although the narrator himself survives, he is devastated by the demise of his friend Murphy:

> It never happened. I didn't die. Murph did. And though I wasn't there when it

> happened. I believe unswervingly that when Murph was killed, the dirty knives that stabbed him were addressed ‘‘To whom it may concern’’ Nothing made us special. Not living. Not dying. Not even being ordinary (14).

This demonstrates that in the heat of combat the law and moral value that protect people in peaceful times disappear, hence the reason for vast numbers of killing. Similarly, this in bello violence further testifies to the claim of social contract theorists such as Thomas Hobbes and Samuel Von Pufendorf who hold that in the state of nature, man is violent and aggressive. One may inquire if the state of war is analogous to the state of nature? The following quote from Hobbes exemplifies his thesis:

> In that condition which is called war; and such a war, as is of every man, against every man… in such conditions, there is…continual fear, the danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short (60-62).

Based on Thomas Hobbes's account in *Leviathan,* man who naturally value liberty and dominion over another need to get themselves out of the miserable conditions of war. Therefore, their only way to protect themselves from invasion and the harm of others in the state of nature propels them confer all their power or strength upon one man or a commonwealth power to enter the state of civil society. For the most part, the novels in this study put forth the argument that in war and combat soldiers leave the state of civil society and enter into that Hobbesian state of war and natural violence, of each man against his fellow man fighting for their own survival. This evil and cruelty of war manifest itself in *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*. The protagonist Billy Lynn is distressed by the demise of his intimate comrade known as Shroom. In an interview with a reporter Billy expresses the extent of his distress and how preoccupied he was with his loss:

> Were you good friends? Asked the reporter from the *Ardmore Daily Star*. ‘‘Yes,’’ Billy said, ‘‘we were good friends.’’ *Do you think about him alot*? ‘‘Yes.’’ Billy said, ‘‘ I think about him alot.’’ Like every day. Every hour. No, every couples of minutes. About once every ten seconds, actually. No, it's more like an imprint on his retina that's always there, Shroom alive and alert, then dead, alive, dead, alive, dead, his face eternally flipping back and forth (42).

Consequently, the death of Shroom has a traumatizing and detrimental effect on Billy who survives:

> When he died, it's like I wanted to die too. But this wasn't quite right. ‘‘When he died, I felt like I'd died too.’’ But that wasn't it either. ‘‘In a way it was like the whole world died.’’ Even harder was describing his sense that Shroom's death might have ruined him for anything else, because when he died? When I felt his soul pass through me? I loved him so much right then, I don't think I can ever have that kind of love for anybody again (218).

In addition, in Myer's *Sunrise Over Fallujah,* Robin the protagonist provides a vivid description of the violent death of his squad team when a US Humvee gets blown by a vehicle borne roadside bomb. He portrays the scene:

> Then I saw it. A marine was carrying the upper part of a body I could tell it was an American by the uniform-to another vehicle. They were producing body bags from somewhere and in minutes the dead marines were off the street. I retched and was a heartbeat from vomiting. I could feel my mind closing down. It was too much to take all at once (133).

As a rule, in the state of war combat soldiers die and their deaths have detrimental impacts on those who survive. In combat the use of force often results in the downfall of fighting peers. In the second essay of *Two Treaties of Government* John Locke demarcates the state of nature from the state of war. In the former state, according to Locke, people live together without need of a common superior and are governed by reason. But the state of war occurs when people exert force on other people violating their natural rights and freedoms without a common authority. Locke believes that it is reasonable and just that men have a right to destroy what threatens them with destruction and he defines the state of war thus:

> One may destroy a man who makes war upon him, or has discovered an enmity to his being, for the same reason that he may kill a wolf or a lion, because they are not under the common law of reason, have no other rule but force and violence (112).

Therefore, according to Locke the difference between the state of nature and the state of war is in the way war ends. In civil society war ends when the use of force or violence is over but in the state of nature war never ends and this is the reason that men agree to enter the civil society. Hence one may argue that the continuation of war in other ways may also be considered as a state of nature identical to war. This is depicted in *Sunrise Over Fallujah* where the central character Robin delineates that even though the war ended, the invasion still continued and cost many lives and people acted belligerently against each other. On top of this, *Sunrise Over Fallujah* shows that only those who are killed in action are counted:

> Even though the war is over, there is still fighting in and around Baghdad, and the sounds of bombing just outside the city at night are awesome. It is like a thunderstorm at distance. When the night sky lights up, our guys cheer, but it scares the crap out of me. The booming is far away, but it's inside me, too. It's not so much the noise, it's like something shaking in my chest. The president said that our mission has been accomplished. But there are still guys getting killed, and Captain Miller said they were only counting guys who died on the spot (126).

After they are stricken by a bomb, one of the closest friends of Robin, named Corporal Charles Jones is severely wounded and then dies. Charles Jones' death had a very shocking effect on Robin who is considerably perplexed about the velocity of death in Iraq:

> Over and over I thought that we were in a war of complete randomness. Death was hiding in every shadow, lurking along every roadway, flying through the midday air. It came suddenly and randomly. There was no logic except the constant adding up of numbers. How many are dead? What are the names? (276).

It was this same myriad of death in the First World War that led Sigmund Freud to compose *Reflections upon War and Death*. Freud believed that the real reason why so much

cruelty and so many brutal acts were committed was because during wartime people's violent instincts were relieved of moral suppression. Further, Freud claimed that wars are inevitably an enduring aspect of civilizations:

> War strips off the later deposits of civilizations and allows the primitive man in us to reappear. It forces us again to be heroes who cannot believe in their own death, it stamps all strangers as enemies whose death we ought to cause or wish; it counsels to rise above the death of those whom we love (70).

Hence, Freud subsequently emphasized the state of nature that Hobbes imagined earlier. That because of malice and evil in human nature men are prone to violence and the state has never been able to eradicate this evil. In the state of nature, he believed that violence is the only law for survival. Furthermore, he accentuated that at first war disillusioned people, then changed attitudes towards death, and later on affected psychological turmoil, mental distress and anxiety. Besides, Freud underlined the emotional impact of war and suggested that it was necessary to help people understand their own feelings, come to terms with their mental distress and accept their own vulnerability. Consequently, he concluded the essay with 'Si vis pacem, para bellum, if you wish peace, prepare for war... Si vis vitam, para mortem, if you wish life, prepare for death'' (72).

With this in mind, Freud's insights are useful for an appropriate understanding of Tom Mareema's *The Metal Heads* as a novel of the Iraq War. In this novel though the American veterans such as Richi, John Hart, Pink, Dogg and Chico are severely wounded, dismembered and amputated by IEDs in Iraq, they do not die there. These fighting peers are being treated in St. Richard Hospital in California. In the United States they are being used for experiments and tests. Skank, the novel's villain murders nearly all of the wounded veterans. He is a psychopathic private security contractor who eliminates his fighting peers because they witnessed him raping an Iraqi girl. Just before being killed by the protagonist Corporeal Witherspoon, the criminal skank confesses that:

> I KILLED THEM ALL…I pushed Richi off the roof, I stabbed John Hart in the back a dozen times and watched him bleed to death, I electrocuted Pink and watched him twist in the wind until his body burned to a crisp. And that was only the beginning. I'm telling you I got my orders. I'm only doing my job. Dogg was a tough one, tougher than I expected. He fought me like a true soldier, he fought hard. We went with each other with samurai swords, and even though he got cut real baddiwad, as you'd say, and his blood splattered all over the lab- the docs were watching, cheering me on he fought me to the bitter end. Chico was easy, I'm letting you know, because you're next Spoon. You're easy. You stood there in Ramadi while I did my job on that Iraqi girl, you and your buddy, and you did nothing to stop me. That's how I know you're easy (247).

Readers can see that Skank was a war criminal in Iraq. It is interesting to notice that in the state of war and combat man can turn to savagery and brutalize not only opponents but

sometimes their own comrades without remorse. One may ask whether it is the evil inherent in man or the inclination to survive that makes them engage in such acts of destruction? The intrinsic evil in man in war or the state of nature is also maintained by the German philosopher Samuel Von Pufendorf in the eighteenth century in his *On the Duty of Man and Citizen According to Natural Law*. Pufendorf reinforced Hobbes's thesis and pointed out that in the state of nature no animal is fiercer than man, none more savage and prone to vices disruptive of peaceful society and that man is driven by vices unknown to them such as ambition, revenge, stubbornness, and aggressiveness: ''In the state of nature each is protected only by his own strength; in the state by the strength of all. There no one may be sure of the fruit of his industry; here all may be'' (115).

Pufendorf emphasized that in order for men to protect themselves from their own evil that they present to each other; they are drawn into society and are willing to abandon their natural liberty. Whether it is the state of nature or the state of civil society that leads to the evil of war, we already have seen what man can do to his fellow man in the many wars of the twentieth century. Michael Stephenson in *The Last Full Measure How Soldiers Die in Battle* drew on in-depth research to consider the nature of combat and how soldiers through the ages have met their deaths as a consequence of being in an army during war-time. Stephenson conceptualizes that 'war has become inexorably nastier' because in modern warfare the tradition and the myth of glorifying or romanticizing tales disappears. The heroic, intellectual and psychological tradition that enabled men to commit themselves to go to war, be killed, sustained them to endure pain and death is rarely like the past. This is because of the changing nature of warfare that makes soldiers feel differently about fighting and death (358-359).

Stephenson finds that the increasing distance between combatants, the empty nature of battle where soldiers do not see or know their enemy, the lack of personal contact with enemy, being killed by an anonymous roadside bomb, a mine or an IED, a sniper, the strategic and tactical changes of modern warfare all frustrates and alienates soldiers and makes it difficult for them to cope with. Also the lack of public support for war back home isolates and disillusions soldiers who find it difficult to carry the work they are required to do. What war does to soldiers can sometimes be indescribable and the novels in this chapter defy this indescribability of the human and material costs. As a closing example in this section in *Metal Heads*, the fathers of the soldiers who are killed in Iraq are not allowed to look inside the caskets of their dead sons. The government denies the parents of fallen soldiers their right to see their son's bodies because they are so horribly mutilated, churned

and torn into pieces. The protagonist reports that:

> Major Pink told me this, he got word from one of the fathers whose son had been killed in Ramadi and he wouldn't get to viddy the body of his son because it was ''unviewable…His son had been blown into pieces by an IED but he still wanted to open the casket and touch whatever parts of his son's body he could (54-55).

Perhaps it is because of the high number of human, social and political costs that the selected novels tackle death of fighting peers and how the protagonists grapple with the trauma of their friend's fall.[14] The violence of the war led to thousands of deaths of American soldiers. In *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* and *the Yellow Birds,* large numbers of American soldiers are killed. Kevin Powers and Ben Fountain tally the death of Murphy and Shroom to show how such losses of lives bring great sorrows to their friends such as Bartle and Billy Lynn. But in *The Metal Heads* fighting peers are wounded and their lives ended by their criminal friend back in the United States. Tom Maremaa's fictionalizing Iraq as a thriller and an allegorical novel is his own unique approach to display that war leads to strange cruelties. Only in Myer's *Sunrise Over Fallujah* the death of fighting peers remains nameless and voiceless. These novels challenge the conventional wisdom that it is often the fallen soldiers who pay the debt of conflict; rather, it is also those who survive that carry the burden long after witnessing the demise of their comrades.

2.5 Dehumanization and killing in combat

The novels under consideration demonstrate that in the uncertainty and the fog of war, soldier protagonists become violent, aggressive, and commit cruel acts. These characters are struggling to cope with their wartime experience. Because they undergo, engage with and witness violence, the soldiers are dehumanized and the novels present this dehumanization resultant thereof. In wartime they view their enemies as less than human and not deserving of moral considerations.

Consider, for example, in Myer's *Sunrise Over Fallujah* the protagonist Robin describes his own descent into insanity and dehumanization because it was the only way to protect himself he was terrified and wanted to survive:

> It had always meant that some terrible thing had happened, some horrible wrong that occurred that brought people to the far ends of sanity. But now I was willing to kill because I was afraid of being killed, willing to kill people I had never met, had never argued with, and who, perhaps, had never wanted to hurt me. But I was afraid so I

[14] The website *The Costs of War* reported that as of April 2015, the numbers of American troops who have died fighting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan totalled 6,802 deaths. For more details about the numbers of such deaths consult the website.< http://costsofwar.org/article/us-killed-0>. (Updated as of May 2014 and Accessed 20/11/2014).

would kill (213).

When Robin and his squad are attacked by the insurgents, he describes the way for the first time he killed an enemy 'I don't remember shooting again, or any sound the weapon made. All I remembered is the way the top of his head exploded and the way his hands, fingers spread wide apart, went to the side of his face" (232). Then Robin describes the effect the taking of another man's life had on him:

> I rode for the first time as someone who had killed. All the time before that, I had fired my weapon into the darkness, or at some fleeting figure in the distance, I could say that maybe I had missed, that maybe it was not my bullets that hit them. No more. I wanted to be away from Fallujah, away from Iraq. I wanted to be alone in the dark with my grief. I wanted to mourn for myself (234).

The metamorphosis of soldiers into killers in war can be found in the literature of war. Although soldiers know that taking another man's life is wrong, they kill and sometimes feel an appalling thrill to kill the enemy. War literature is loaded with such men who may not be psychopathic killers but rather often rational human being. These soldiers kill because they are affected by their wartime experiences and descend into madness. Many academic sources prove that man does possess a major capacity for destruction and violence in times of war. For example, in "Cowards, Comrades and Killer Angels: the Soldier in Literature" the U.S Army historian Peter S. Kindsvatter conceptualized that in war many soldiers become efficient killers who take to their work rather handily. Some men in battle are quite adept at the calling of war and they become 'killer angels'. Kindsvatter explains the factors that transform soldiers into killer angel. One rule is that if you don't kill you'll be killed, and also that a soldier's right to kill is legally established by his government:

> The wartime environment is one in which the killer Angel will not only thrive, but also prove to be a valuable asset to his comrades and his country. In every war, on every side, such soldiers emerge and the literature of war is rife with examples (45-46).

Further testifying to Kindsvatter's notion of killer angels, Jonathan Shay in *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character* also explored American combat veterans who have been going berserk in Vietnam. Instead of calling them killer angels, Shay identifies Achilles as a prototype of a warrior as a berserker. Shay considers the dehumanization of soldiers, their transformations into killers and their descent into madness in combat as a process of berserking. Merriam-Webster dictionary also defines 'Berserkers' as ''marked by crazed or frenzied behaviour suggestive of sudden mental imbalance'' or someone whose actions are recklessly defiant and frenzied in battle especially from anger. Shay illustrates the term berserk from Homer's *Iliad* and uses it to explain the character, a special state of mind and behaviour of frenzied and bereaved American warriors who went

into battle that triggers them into violence and killing rages. Shay defines berserker as:

> The frenzied warriors who went into battle naked, or at least without armor, in a godlike or god possessed but also beastlike-fury...applies to the whole spectrum of epic, noteworthy valor, from clearly nonberserk to berserk...the ambiguous borderline between heroism and a blood-crazed, berserk state in which abuse after abuse is committed (77).

In other words, killer Angels and berserking need to be distinguished from fighting spirit. Shay believes that in the Vietnam War many people confused the two terms because of the blurred line between them. In like manner, soldiers going berserk or becoming killer angels can be found in Kevin Powers' *The Yellow Birds*. The protagonist John Bartle describes a scene in which he and his fighting peers went berserk when they spotted a suspected frightened Iraqi man running to save his life. In the beginning Bartle experiences an epiphany moment wanting to stop the shooting but soon he himself along with others engages in a frenzy of shooting, riddling the man with bullets. Bartle describes this killing/berserking experience and his own feelings at that time in this way:

> He looked left, then right, and the dust popped around him, and I wanted to tell everyone to stop shooting at him, to ask, 'What kind of men are we?' An odd sensation come over me, as if I had been saved, for I was not a man, but a boy, and that he may have been frightened too, and I realized with a great shock that I was shooting at him and that I wouldn't stop until I was sure that he was dead, and I felt better knowing we were killing him together and that it was just as well not to be sure you are the one who did it (21).

This typical case illustrates how in war moral restraint can be weakened making it easier to rationalize killing the enemy. In fact, some scholars have argued that one cannot kill another human being without first dehumanizing them. Before being killed, the victim is dehumanized by the victimizers. For example, after the Mai Lai Massacre in Vietnam, Herbert C. Kelman in "Violence without Moral Restraint: Reflections on Dehumanization of Victims and Victimizer" identified three psychological mechanisms that can weaken the moral restraint of men and turn them into unscrupulous killers during wartimes. They are authorization, routinization, and dehumanization. Kelman explains the three interrelated factors as:

> Processes of authorization, which defines situations as one in which standard moral principles do not apply and the individual is absolved of responsibility to make personal moral choices, process of routinization, which so organize the action that there is no opportunity for raising moral questions and making moral decisions; and processes of dehumanization which deprive both victim and victimizer of identity and community (25).

Kelman's thesis of dehumanization can also be confirmed by Michael Stephenson who accurately proclaimed that during the havoc of combat killing becomes uncomplicated, untroubled and even an exciting experience:

> The power of killing in combat a sanctioned release for our murderousness is as though some ancient and psychotic genie that we normally keep stoppered in its civilized bottle has been let loose…It is so easy and thrilling to let the genie out. Just a twitch of the trigger finger (383-384).

What's more, Hannah Arendt developed the thesis of the banality of evil arguing that certain people who commit unspeakable war crimes against humanity may not be frenzied insane people. They are, according to her, rather normal individuals who are only implementing the systemic violence that their state demands of them. Certain people commit evil crimes against humanity when they cannot differentiate between the banal and the commonplace whether in genocidal campaigns, war or armed conflicts. Like Kelman, Arendt also claimed that it is the normalization of violence, the routinization and rationalizing of the unthinkable that make men execute their fellow humans. In "Thinking and Moral Consideration: A Lecture", Arendt explains her thesis as:

> However monstrous the deeds were, the doer was neither monstrous nor demonic, and the only specific characteristic one could detect on his part as well as in his behavior during the trial and the proceeding examination was something entirely negative: it was not stupidity but a curious quite authentic inability to think (417).

Additionally, in critical circumstances when soldiers get ambushed or see their friends die or witness atrocity they lose their own humanity and commit cruel acts. The American thinker and World War II soldier J. Glenn Gray in *The Warriors,reflection on Men in Battle* calls the berserk aggressors mad destroyers. The mad destroyer soldier-killer, according to Gray, may be lurking in all of us. In war soldiers will be possessed by a demon, a fury that makes them enjoy destruction and killings. They come to be blinded by rage and do not grasp the consequences of their actions. They lose control until they are dead, victorious or utterly exhausted:

> Most men would never admit that they enjoy killing, and there are a great many who do not. On the other hand, thousands of youths who never suspected the presence of such an impulse in themselves have learned in military life the mad excitement of destroying ... Generals often name it "the will to close with the enemy." This innocent-sounding phrase conceals the very substance of the delight in destruction slumbering in most of us (58).

Essentially, Emile Durkheim further extends the concept of dehumanization by explaining the reasons for killing in combat and associating it with the nature of human beings as a Homo Duplex. In *Moral Education*, Durkheim, even before Sigmund Freud, developed a theory to explain violence in human nature and society. The concept of human beings as homo duplex provides a basic sociological thinking and a crucial framework to an understanding of today's violence. The human condition as homo duplex sets out the idea that it is not man that makes civilization, quite the contrary; it is civilization that makes man what

he is. According to this theory the human sphere is marked by a universal radical dualism, antagonism and antinomy between the individual and the social, the body and the soul. With advancement of civilization, this notion of antinomy grows and continues to develop. When conflicts arise between groups or societies, currents and flows of energies can be released that give rise to or unleash extreme forms of violence. During wartime the structures that protect individual values are weakened and in certain conditions this involves violence, which is expressed in the following:

> We have seen, in fact, that the individual controls himself, only if he feels himself controlled, only if he confronts moral forces which he respects and on which de dares not to encroach. Where this is not the case, he knows no limit and extends himself without measure and bounds…Consequently, nothing restrains him: he overflows in violence, quite like the tyrant whom nothing can resist (193).

In demonstrating the connection between war and aggressiveness Gaston Bouthoul has argued that war is a ‘‘delayed infanticide’’. Bouthoul considers war as an all-encompassing, omnipresent and omnipotent force which challenges people and families of all kind, states, societies and civilization as a whole. Furthermore, war depends on our will, it is a kind of collective violence, a clash of collective will that periodically grips nations and it is a social and political phenomenon with major consequences. According to Bouthoul war is always a peculiar fact of the collective lives of people and that when an antagonistic psychosis develops amongst nations they break into armed conflict and great massacre.[15]

Having established this context, it seems as though Tom Maremaa’s *Metal Heads* utilizes Durkheim’s notion of the absence of control and moral values in wartime zones that often induces horrific deaths. For example, the protagonist recounts how he witnessed an American military private contractor named Skank who out of rage not only raped a young Iraqi girl but killed all the members of her family in the Iraqi city Ramadi. Skank commits a war crime at the presence of Witherspoon, the protagonist who chides himself for not thwarting his onslaught:

> I certainly won’t forget what Skank did in Ramadi, how he brutalized that young Iraqi girl while the rest of us stood by without lifting a finger or saying a word to the contrary. I told you we’re baddiwad and we carry the guilt around with us, like hundred pound weights strapped to our backs, until our bones crack and we’re bent in half…In Ramadi, when I stood by and did nothing while Skank went on rampage. I’m motionless, frozen in my tracks, a Marine who can’t stop a private contractor from committing a war crime. How’d I ever get to be like this? What’s happened to me? I mean, this poor, innocent Iraqi girl is coming home from skolliwoll and Skank targets her, this tall, thin girl with blue eyes, rosy cheeks and those sweet lips.

[15] Bouthoul, Gaston. *L'infanticide Différé.* Paris: Hachette, 1970. Print.

> Skank's made sure her father was arrested two days before and dragged off prison on some phony trumped up charge of participating in a militia and firing on us... I hate those freaking private contractors and how they've tainted our men in uniform with their acts of violence (168).

This passage demonstrates that in the upheavals of Iraq, some private contractors like Skank committed crimes and thought they could get away with it. They either considered themselves themselves above the law of the U.S military or due to lack of moral forces and to use Durkheim's terminology they overflowed in violence and did not imagine they could be held accountable. Basically, Jean Jacques Rousseau's *The State of War* published in 1896, can also reinforce the previously explained Durkheim's theory of violence. Rousseau refuted the notions of Hobbes and Pufendorf that in the state of nature there is the war of each against all. Instead Rousseau argued that it is only after having entered into the state of civil society that man spills the blood of his fellow man:

> Man is naturally peaceable and timid; at the slightest danger his first movement is to flee; he becomes warlike only by dint of habit and experience. Honor, self-interest, prejudices, vengeance all the passions that can make him brave perils and death- are alien to him in the state of nature. It is only after having entered into society with another man that he decides to attack someone else, and it is only after having been a citizen that he becomes a soldier (258).

Therefore according to Rousseau there is no war between man; there is war only between states, there is no war of each against all in the state of nature but that there is the war of all against all in the state of society. This is because according to Rousseau since the creation of civil society the entire face of human relations have changed leading to enforcement of law, slavery and perpetual wars "We now enter into a new order of things. We will see men, united by an artificial concord, assemble to cut one another's throats and all the horrors of war arise from the efforts made to prevent war" (259).

Thus it is the formation of civil society that eventually leads to a systemic dehumanising process that manifests itself in war and destruction. This critique of democratic and liberal western society and its effects on people's lives is best explained when Billy, the protagonist in the satirical novel *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* becomes enraged at American society because it only sent him to a war he did not believe in but now requires him again for a second deployment. Billy ironically blames the collective American society rather than individual soldiers for their failure in Iraq. In a satirical stream-of-consciousness moment, Billy thinks:

> Why don't they just… send in more troops. Make the troops fight harder. Pile on the armor and go in blazing, full-frontal smack down and no prisoners. And by the way, shouldn't the Iraqis be thanking us? Somebody needs to tell them that, would you tell them that please? Or maybe they'd like their dictator back. Failing that, drop

> bombs. More and bigger bombs. Show these persons the wrath of God and pound them into compliance, and if that doesn't work then bring out the nukes and take it all the way down, wipe it clean, reload with fresh hearts and minds, a nuclear slum clearance of the country's soul (39).

Thus, this section has analysed that each authors of the novels utilize a particular authentic approach to depict war' dehumanizing effect on combat soldiers. These fictional works enrich our understanding about war and how as a cultural product they could express the concerns of particular traumatic period in history. They demonstrate that war is a realm out of the moral bounds. War is a state of aggression that dehumanizes its participants and a phenomenon where horrific deeds and crimes could be normalised, routinised and practised.

2.6 Conclusion

These fictional works are worthy of study because as a literary genre, as a specific creative movement of the period, and as an act of artistic expression they provide profound imaginative insights into the evils of war and its ramifications. The contents of these works are worthy vehicles for much criticism and discussion about the cruelty of war. These cultural works echo precisely Bertrand Russell's account of the infernal evils of war in his pacifist article *The Ethics of* War which was published in 1915 during the First World War:

> To begin with the most obvious evil: large numbers of young men, the most courageous and the most physically fit in their respective nations, are killed, bringing great sorrows to their friends, loss to the community, and gain only to themselves. Many others are maimed for life, some go mad, and others become nervous wrecks, mere useless and helpless derelicts. Of those who survive many will be brutalized and morally degraded by the fierce business of killing, which, however much it may be the soldier's duty, must shock and often destroy the more humane instincts (127-142).

To recapitulate, this chapter explicated some of the defining themes which included combat motivations, death of civilian and American soldiers, and combat as a dehumanizing experience. Apparently, *The Yellow Birds, Metal Heads,* and *Sunrise Over Fallujah* reveal that soldiers enlist for war for various individual motivations. *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* satirized the capitalist and institutional systems of the United States of America such as the court, the army, and the society that is responsible for sending reluctant young men to fight a war they hardly understand. Ultimately, this kind of fiction demonstrated that in addition to killings, war inflicted massive physical, emotional, and psychological damage on both sides of the conflict. The American soldiers and the Iraqi civilians suffered and paid the cost of the conflict. Furthermore, the physical force of the warfare created a condition of dehumanization, vulnerability and destruction.

All in all, the conclusion culminates with a forward-looking recommendation for further study. The final outcome is to draw attention to further interesting thematic elements that are worthy of study but that were not presented here. The themes to be mentioned shortly are also definite and are found in many, if not most, American novels of the Iraq War. Including the preceding novels analyzed in this chapter and those which can be found in Michael Pitre's *Fives and Twenty-Fives*(2014), Phil Klay's *Redeployment* (2014), Sarah Stark's *Out There* (2014), David Abram's *Fobbit*(2011), David Zimmerman' *The Sand Box*(2010), Nicholas Sparks's *The Lucky One*(2008), and Alan Madison's *100 Days and 99 Nights* (2008).

Often in such war novels or collections of short stories, combatant soldier protagonists are found struggling to adjust when they return home from their deployments to Iraq. Most often, these soldiers are plagued with guilt after several of their friends are killed. Further, they cannot tell others about their experiences and most frequently suffer from posttraumatic stress or traumatic brain injury. Combatants feel uneasy to talk about their wartime experiences perhaps because they do not want to make their close friends and family members feel uncomfortable or themselves stigmatized. Writers who had military experience in Iraq such as Kevin Powers, Phil Klay, Michael Pidre and David Abram composed fascinating stories about soldier's experiences. Maybe it is only through fiction that they can adequately share their experiences. Their fictions make us not only curious but also better comprehend soldier's experiences and the reality of war. Their novels expose the estrangement that can stem from combat exhaustion. The soldier characters who survive harrowing deployments in Iraq struggle to adjust or fit back home with their loved ones who have no idea what they have been through or experienced. These soldiers' homecoming is just the beginning of another war. These kinds of fiction often maintain that Iraq War is not over because its psychological and emotional tolls continue to torment returning soldiers. Finally, these novel's soldier protagonists will not feel at home until they find a channel to narrate and/or share their secrets and burdens. Therefore, the American novels of the Iraq war are worthy of further literary study and scholarship because through their optic they illuminate tensions and the realities of war, compelling stories of sufferings and they have the power to raise awareness, change public's perception about the foreign policy of their country and decisions involving future foreign interventions and peace-making.

Accordingly, these soldier's tales familiarize readers with the horrors of war that stems from direct physical forms of violence. From these fictions we conclude that war is a prime example of direct violence which is not hidden from our view. In other words, armed conflicts, fighting and resorting to intentional use of force destroys lives and creates

perpetrators and victims. Nevertheless, violence can take many forms, the most visible of which is physical violence (direct violence) which manifests in wars, genocide, rape and sexual assault. Even so, it is the other forms of violence such as state, cultural and structural violence that cause direct physical violence. Slavoj Zizek also warns that states absorb, monopolize and usurp all other forms of physical violence and use it as legitimate violence while the illegitimate violence is that which is practiced by individuals and society. The state and structural forms of violence is not perceived by society unless it is mixed with private physical violence. Henceforth, Slavoj Zizek argues often one form of violence blunts our ability to see the other forms of violence or leads to aspect blindness, raising complicated questions, that the inherent violence in globalization, capitalism, fundamentalism, and language causes more violence than it prevents. In Zizek's words, there is a

> The complex interaction of the three modes of violence: subjective, objective and symbolic. The lesson is thus that one should resist the fascination of subjective violence, of violence enacted by social agents, evil individuals, disciplined repressive apparatuses, fanatical crowds: subjective violence is just the most visible of the three (10-11).

Chapter Three: American Women's Fictional Responses to the Iraq War

3.1 Introduction

The Iraq War has given rise to a large body of literature, including perhaps surprisingly many novels written by women. In this chapter I examine American women's fictional responses to the Iraq War. The novels chosen are Helen Benedict's *Sand Queen* (2011), Rosalind Noonan's *One September Morning* (2009), Morgana Gallaway's *The Nightingale* (2009), and Ilene Prusher's *Baghdad Fixer* (2012). The emphasis will be on the female author's perspectives on the conflict and how they utilize the war as imaginary constructs in their narratives. With each novel I will focus upon the literal content in terms of the inflection of the war-related subject matter, its rhetorical approach and issues of aesthetic style as mechanisms for representing this conflict, and consider through whose point of view the Iraq War story is fictionalized which is a territory principally dominated by male writers. It is interesting to analyse what kind of characters female authors imagine and whether they express women's concerns in relation to a war which was so controversial both in the U.S. and globally. In addition I will explore why even after the official end of the conflict, its literature still grows and female novelists continue to reflect upon its after-effects and communicate its intimate details.

This chapter will be divided into four sections. In section one the focus is on how Helen Benedict in *Sand Queen* fictionalizes the plight of female combatants and the trauma of being sexually abused by their male colleagues. The second section details how Rosalind Noonan in *One September Morning* depicts army wives, mothers, and sisters as anti-war activists, opposing the war to protect their deployed men who were being put at risk by the war against terrorism. In the third section I draw attention to how Morgana Gallaway's *The Nightingale* portrays the reversion of the rights of Iraqi women and how they are used as a weapon of war. Finally in the fourth section I look at Ilene Prusher's *Baghdad Fixer* and consider female war correspondents and their roles in reporting the run-up, the conduct and the outcome of the war and how it affected individual women and Iraqi society.

As each author tackles a different aspect of the war, I will discuss these issues separately drawing on a number of theoretical, critical conceptual and academic sources to discuss the complexities of the issues that these novels tackle. What clearly unites these novels is their capacity to capture the utter futility of the war, its shocking aftermath, and the plights and trauma each protagonists undergo in his/her own way; and indelibly becomes marked by it. These novels critique war and militarism. Their significance lies in their articulation of private pain and recording of human suffering. Hence certain central questions arise after

critiquing these novels; what are these female novelists presenting us with? When Benedict, Noonan, Gallaway, and Prusher portray characters directly affected by the war, what exactly are they testifying or bearing witness to which issue? These will be clarified in this chapter.

3.2 Women combatants as victims of wartime violence in Helen Benedict's *Sand Queen*

In *Sand Queen* Helen Benedict translates the traumatic experience of sexual abuse into fiction to express what is inexpressible. Benedict describes her novel as ''the stories of these two characters reflect the silences, tears and jokes of soldiers, and in the lonely eyes of Iraqi refugees; those secret places in the human soul that have always been the territory of novelists'' (Benedict, 2013). *Sand Queen* is set in 2003 in Iraq. It is told from two rare perspectives, an American woman protagonist Kate Brady serving the US marine as a camp guard and a young Iraqi girl named Naema, a medical student at Baghdad University. The story starts when Kate enlists before America invaded Iraq. She is just nineteen years old and she joins the army to prove herself, honour her family, serve her country and contribute to democracy building in the Middle East. Suddenly she finds herself as a makeshift guard at camp Bucca, one of the greatest American prisons in southern Iraq near Omm Qasir desert in Iraq in 2003. In the acknowledgements of the novel, Benedict reveals that the materials for this novel were culled from the research she did in her nonfiction book. [16] Thus one can see that *Sand Queen* is a well-researched novel based on facts but remains as a fictional account of the war in Iraq.[17]

Kate Brady the protagonist faces the daily threats of combat duty and is prey for the lustful men in her camp. This puts her life in grave danger. As a female soldier Kate is

[16]Helen Benedict's previous non-fiction work on women and the Iraq War is *The Lonely Soldier: the Private War of Women Serving in Iraq* (2009).

[17] When Benedict discovered that vast numbers of American women were fighting in the Iraq war, she become curious why they had joined up, went to war and what was it like being a woman in combat. To discover these questions, she interviewed forty American female soldiers, most of whom had served in Iraq. What she found was that these women soldiers have endured war and suffered trauma not only because of combat but because they were sexually assaulted by their male comrades. These women she interviewed were too afraid, too proud, too ashamed or speechless about their experiences in Iraq. They all wanted their stories to be heard. This explains why Benedict switched from non-fiction to fiction since she believes that only in the realm of fiction one can truly express the suffering of these women. In her novel she combines her interviews, research and imagination to fill in those silences and get to the uncensored story of war -- to how it really feels to be in a war day in and day out, from the long stretches of boredom to the worst moments of violence. This is according to her article *Why I Wrote a War Novel* published by.<http://www.ontheissuesmagazine.com/cafe2/article/166>.

sexually harassed by the men in her unit, raped and assaulted and when she reports this to her superiors, not they only ignore her; but send her to a shooting mission on the front lines to get rid of or silence her. Kate is vulnerable to men like Boner and Kormick who beat, assault, rape, and verbally abuse her with names such as pinkass, buttass, and Big Tit. She is forced to seek revenge but cannot manage it. Some of her female comrades are also sexually abused by these men. As the novel shows; these women are too scared and vulnerable to defend themselves or hold their rapists criminally accountable. As a result they are subjected to repeated abuse on a daily basis in the camp and thus suffer the pain of military sexual trauma. [18]Kate's friend, called Third Eye, commits suicide because she cannot endure the horrible experience she went through. By looking at the following rape scene from the novel, we can deduce the drives and the motives of Kormick and Boner, two male soldiers deployed in the camp of Kate punching and gang raping her, which is a crucial scene so I need to quote at length from the novel:

> Kormick pulls me up to the shack, making me stumble. ''Boner!'' he barks. Boner snaps out of his trance with a start. When he sees Kormick gripping my arm with that weird clench to his jaw, he looks scared too. ''Want a little fun?'' Kormick says to him. ''What?''''Boner!''Kormick's even angrier now. ''Come on, you know what I mean. Do it!''. ''Uh, okay, Sar'nt.If you say so.'' ''Boner steps up to me, looking embarrassed, but he reaches out anyway, aiming right at my boob….For a second, everything's still. Then something comes flying at me from the side and slams into my right breast so hard it knocks away my breath. I double over, dropping my rifle and gasping, the pain tearing into my chest. I feel myself being picked up, flung into the shack and thrown facedown on the table. I kick out hard as I can, struggle and struggle, but huge hands are gripping my neck, pressing into my trachea, the fingers squeezing so deep I can't move, can't breathe. All I can do is taste my own spit and blood. And then I am not me anymore. I'm a wing. One ragged blue wing, zigzagging torn and crooked across the long, black sky (79-80).

In what follows I will explore why Benedict fictionalized the act of rape itself and how *Sand Queen* depicts rape as a moral, ethical, legal, social, political problem and a feminist concern. In *Theories of Rape, Inquiries into the Causes of Sexual Aggression,* Lee Ellis has conceptualized three theories of rape including the feminist theory, the social learning theory and the evolutionary theory. According to Lee Ellis ''The feminist theory considers rape to be primarily an act of aggression without genuine sexual motivation used by males to ''keep

[18]This is a euphemism used for rape in the U.S. military. see ''*Rape in the US Military: America's Dirty Little Secret''* by Lucy Broadbent, 9, December 2012 .<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/dec/09/rape-us-military>. (Accessed on 1st January 2014) and also useful is a review of a documentary film *The Invisible War* in the Guardian see ''*Rape in the US Army is a Secret Epidemic*'' by Peter Bradshaw, 6 March 2014, .<http://www.theguardian.com/film/2014/mar/06/the-invisible-war-review-rape-military>. (Accessed on 10 March, 2014).

women in their places in socioeconomic and political terms'' (16). According to Ellis, the feminist theory essentially views rape as a psedeosexual act used by males to intimidate and dominate women. However, they ignore the sexual drives only to emphasize the drive to control. The feminist explanation purports that rape is, most immediately the result of a male's decision to behave toward women, in a possessive and dominating manner. Thus sexual gratification is not considered a prime motivation by the feminist theory. The social theory suggests that there is an assumption that the motivation behind rape is largely unlearned, but the actual techniques and strategies involved in committing rape are believed to be learned, and the evolutionary theory sees the tendency to commit rape as resulting from natural selection favouring males relatively strong tendencies to orient their sexual drives and a drive to possess and control multiple sexual partners.

Sand Queen's protagonist Kate is raped because the men simply have the power to do so, enjoy it and the system allows it. After the rape, Kate is no longer called by her name; the novelist refers to her as 'the soldier' as if she is ripped of her identity. In the beginning Kate did not even consider reporting the act, knowing that her superiors would not take this seriously and only make her case worse writing ''If I report Kormick, he'll only make my life even more fun-and-games it already is…No, anything I say will only make me sound like those of whiny pussies all the guys think we females are anyway'' (100). Thus Kate knows that even if she reports it, her rapists will not be prosecuted. The reason why she thinks this will be explored bit by bit.

A recent study demonstrates why such rapes are not prosecuted effectively. In an article "Rape is not Vigorously Prosecuted as a War Crime" Binaifer Nowrojee conceptualized that sexual violence remains the invisible war crime against women, given its routine widespread and systemic use. The reasons provided are that often usually rape is ignored not only by the military but by international justice institutions because they did not receive real complaints; the victims (often women) will not talk about the rape, they keep silent for fear of stigmatization. The article explains that rape of women in wartime is a deliberate act of dominance and violence that targets women's sexuality and gender roles:

> Sexual violence against women and girls in situations of armed conflict constitutes a clear breach of international Law. Perpetrators of sexual violence can be convicted for rape as a war crime, a crime against humanity, or as an act of genocide or torture, if their actions meet elements of each (66).

Another study *Violence at Work* by Duncan Chappell and Vitorio De Martino put forward a similar viewpoint. They argue that the employment of men and women in military and paramilitary organizations not only subjects women to bullying but also to sexual assaults

and harassment which always becomes an occupational hazard, however, fortunately they recognize

> That fact that instances of sexual assault and harassment now seems more likely to be investigated by authorities is encouraging, and may account for apparent rise in the number of complaints of this type recorded over recent years in a number of military and paramilitary organization''(104).

This may be true to some extent, however, as a fictional work, *Sand Queen* tells a different story. Kormick and Boner gang rape Kate. They insult her, call her horrific names and in big black letters they stick paper to a wall claiming that thirteen men have raped Kate ''TITS BRADLY IS A COCK-SUCKING SAND QUEEN, SIGN IF YOU'VE FUCKED HER'' (104). They give her the name Sand Queen, which is one of the worst things a female can get called in the Army. Kate describes it as ''an ugly-ass chick whose being treated like a queen by the hundreds of horny guys around her because there's such a shortage of females'' (105).Kate is not the only victim, other female soldiers in her unit are also attacked by these men. Such as Third Eye who like Kate, is repeatedly abused by Kormick. The following dialogue between Kate and Third Eye expresses their plight:

> If I tell you, you won't say anything about it, right? Third Eye whispers then.
> ''Nothing to nobody, ever?'' You swear?''
> ''I swear.''
> ''If you do, I'll kill you. I mean it.''
> ''I know you do.'' I lean closer. ''Did he hurt you? Are you alright?'' Third Eye swallows and looks away from me. Then she says in a hoarse whisper, ''He raped me. Him and Boner together.Of course I'm not all right(139).

Because Kate can no longer tolerate the brutal behaviours of Kormick and Boner towards herself and her friend Third Eye, she decides to report the assault and files a complaint against her rapists to her platoon leader Sergeant First Class Henley. But instead of properly investigating the rape, Sergeant Henley tells her:

> Soldier, in case you forgot, we're at war. The cohesion of our unit is of paramount importance, and my job as a platoon sergeant is to preserve that cohesion. We have a common enemy, and that is the hajji. We can't waste our time or diffuse our energies on internal strife, and especially not on whiny snivelers like you. Now, either you pull together with your comrades like a real soldier, or you at least have the grace to give them a fair shot. I don't know what your problem is, but I've heard enough about you already (152).

When Kate realizes that Sergeant Henley will not help her, she threatens to file a report to Judge Advocate General (JAG) a higher authority and decides that she will not be silent until somebody listens to her. However, Sergeant Henley intimidates her by reminding her that staff sergeant Kormick has already reported that Kate behaved in an indecent manner meaning that she called for it telling her ''Sergeant Kormick, who, I might add, is a fine and a dedicated soldier, kindly declined to press any charges in the hope you shouldn't repeat this

unacceptable behaviour but he did enter it on the record in case there should be a recurrence"(153). He threatens that if she insists on reporting the rape she would be court-marshalled on charges of committing infractions, insubordination, and charges of destruction of government property.

The fictional abuse that Kate endures in the line of duty has been a subject of much recent academic scrutiny. In *The Body that Writes*, for example, Tel Nitsan has conceptualized that individual and symptomatic military rape during wartime takes root from domestic peacetime rape and rape that is used to terrorize, degrade, and humiliate not only the women of the enemy but even among one's own groups. By treating women's bodies as penetrable being, men reinforce the prevailing patriarchal social order while simultaneously sexually and symbolically rewarding themselves as victors. Tel Nitsan explains that well-distinguished and dominant individual masculine combatants exercise power and accomplish their own personal aims in their attempts to rape their female colleagues. By arguing that:

> Simply without viewing women's bodies as commodities, without men experiencing a sense of entitlement, possessiveness, and/or a sense of superiority in 'peacetime' women's bodies cannot be seen as spoils of war(155).

Tal Nitsan argues that rape in 'peacetime' or in 'wartime' works the same way. Rape creates fear and dominance of men over women by destroying their self-conception as dignified, secure and self-determined persons. Nitsan demonstrates that studying rape critically poses a clear challenge to those who benefit from it. Also in *The Politics of Genocidal Rape Affirming the Dignity of the Vulnerable Body* Debra B. Bergoffen distinguished the link between 'peacetime' and 'wartime' rape and has emphasized the significance of distinguishing the gendered meaning of domestic peacetime rape from the gendered meaning of wartime rape, stating that:

> Both types of rape reinforce the subject status of women as vulnerable to men's power...the vulnerability to being raped, the status of potential victim, is a horizon of patriarchal women's life. .. The reality of being raped destroys a women's existential security.(50-51).

Both Bergoffen and Nitsan confirm that rape creates male dominance, destroys and dehumanizes the victim. Therefore Benedict's *Sand Queen* amplifies wartime rape of women and reflects such feminist concerns and the demand of women's control over their own bodies. Benedict denounces the horror of rape making the gendered and sexual aspects of violence in wartime visible. Her novel is a reflection on practices in the military whose inherent violence is apparent and poses grave questions such as those Raphaelle Branche and Fabrice Virgili in *Rape in Wartime* raise:

> Understanding the decision to resort to rape also requires a grasp of the mechanics of

> decision-making in the groups concerned. Who authorized the rape and defined its manner? Who committed it? What are the effects of this kind of violence on the various actors, victims as well as aggressors, and more broadly on the different circles to which they belong? Then the question of the rapist's freedom of action needs to be considered (8).

To answer these questions, let us delve deeply into why Kate Bradly is represented as a victim of rape by men who were supposed to protect her and not assault her. Even after reporting the rape, her officials ignore and intimidate her to be silent. It is here we can see the inherent violence in the military and American law itself that seems to discriminate between men and women. Studies have shown that the legal system is violent in its enforcement. For example, Rene Gerard in *Violence and the Sacred* argued that "There was a direct correlation between the elimination of sacrificial practices and the establishment of a judicial system"(297-298). Gerard stated that the violence of today's penal and judicial system especially the death penalty owes its origins to generative violence that was predominant throughout all history, rituals, and human culture. According to Gerard today's systemic violence springs from the original impulse of entire communities who want to vent their fury on a single surrogate victim. Thus generative violence penetrates all forms of mythologies, rituals and legal system. "When unappeased, violence seeks and always finds a surrogate victim. The creature that excited its fury is abruptly replaced by another, chosen only because it is vulnerable and close at hand"(2).

While Gerard emphasizes the violence of the legal system, feminist legal theorists emphasize that the law is not only violent but also gendered and biased. This is conceptualized by Lucinda Joy Peach in *Is Violence Male The Law, Gender, and Violence,* who argues that law is designed and written by men to serve the interests of men and subordinate women:

> Whereas women in the military have been the victims of violence, specially of the sexual violence by their commander... the law's response to sexual abuse scandals within the military in recent years reinforces the image that military women are essentially victims of violence (60-61).

Therefore Peach proposes a deconstruction of gender-bias treatment with regard to violence in American law. Peach argues that this deconstruction is not only essential but also necessary to enhance the legitimacy of women's use of violence in defence of herself and delegitimate the use of violence against them. In light of this, can the fictional women like Kate Bradly and Third Eye defend themselves against the ubiquitous violence and masculinity in the military? After their disappointment, Kate Bradly along with another female soldier called Private Yvette Sanchez come together to report the assaults to a female officer called Lieutenant Sara Hopkins and hold their rapists criminally accountable. Though

she listens and sympathizes that this is an appalling act, and promises to follow it up, look into the appropriate measures and do her best to make sure the men do not get away with it, telling Bradly ‘‘Well, we can’t let a few bad apples bring down the morale of the whole company, can we?...Army Specialist Bradly, I know this wasn’t easy for you, so I commend your courage and persistence here’’(227). However, Kate and Yvette do not understand that Sara Hopkins is just another army ‘*bitch*’ looking out for herself by keeping other females down. She and Henley punish them for reporting the crime, and sadly tell them ‘‘Specialist Bradly and Private first Class Sanchez, you are both ordered to move out at oh six hundred hours tomorrow on a convoy up to Baquba. As commanding soldiers, you have been selected for the honour of being assigned to a shooter mission’’ (230).

By putting them in the first line of defence, the first to take fire and first to be blown up if they hit an IED was a clear message they wanted to get rid of them by sending them into a suicide mission. This mission results in the death of Private Yvette Sanchez which will further traumatize Kate saying that ‘‘Jesus clearly didn’t give a fuck about protecting Yvette… Yvette was killed because that shithead Henley is buddies with Kormick, and Kormick wanted revenge on me for reporting his sick, perverted ass. Valor and honor? Shit’’ (275).

In alternating chapters, Kate is also placed with a group of women whose lives were also destroyed by the Vietnam War at a hospital receiving treatment and care for her trauma. This shows that women are recurrent victims of war, whether as a soldier or as part of a family. She is asked to share her story but Kate is disinclined to talk. They press her “if you don’t like a sharing, we understand. But airing our issues usually helps. That’s what we are here for. Are you sure you don’t want to contribute?” (108). The third point narrator tells us that “Kate is not willing to hear these women’s sad-sack loser stories, she does not want to hear how, thirty friggin’ years after the Vietnam War, they are still as screwed up as she is”(108).

Kate even cannot tell her family what has had happened to her, she says “All they want to hear is how noble and heroic I am being” (123). They are very proud of her and want her to be brave and strong, unaware of the wound she carried with herself. Thus Kate Bradly is left to suffer her pain alone. She internalizes her own suffering. Kate and other women’s collective abuse by the patriarchal system becomes her own private suffering. This has also been conceptualized by Sandra I. Cheldelin who in *Victims of Rape and Gendercide* stated that “In the early phases of war, women speak with one another about their suffering. However, as months and years follow, an implicit oath of silence takes hold. Thus, the collective experience becomes private as each victim is isolated in silence’’(19). *Sand Queen*

depicts that rape is a dehumanizing act which strikes at the core of physical integrity and human dignity. Sandra I. Cheldelin aptly defines the purposes behind rape as ‘‘intimidation, degradation, humiliation, discrimination, punishment, control or destruction of the person... rape is a violation of personal dignity’’(29).

Kate is no longer a normal person as she is ripped of her humanity and she is conscious of this. She hates who she has become. When she shoots an Iraqi prisoner, she fainted and fell from a tower she was guarding from and is taken back to the States for treatment. She is diagnosed with trauma and displays every symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, having nightmarish dreams, lack of interest, being dumb, depressed, feeling guilty, struggling to reconcile her former civilian life with her military experience and tarnished by trauma as in her own words:

> Every step I take hurts my back, every thought hurts my heart. I can’t stand the sight of Tyler. Can’t stand Mom or Dad. Can’t stand our house or Willowglen or anyone in it…Can’t sleep or eat either. Can’t even pray or think about God. Blood is in my eyes and my soul...I look into the mirror. Pale skin, empty eyes. Half robot, half fucked-up human being, the two sides fighting to the death. I have no idea which one will win (299).

Kate’s feeling of being dehumanized as a half-robot and half-fucked-up human being is a result of participating in the war in Iraq that not only disillusioned her but turned her into a robot, a machine that does not feel and is numbed. This is evocative of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus, Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* Deleuze and Guattarri argue that what constitutes our sickness today is that the globalizing capitalist system turns humans into a schizophrenic machine-desiring system. They conceptualize that capitalism postulates a life that oscillates from one extreme to another, from paranoia to schizophrenia, from fascism that resides within us all to revolution, from breakdowns to breakthroughs, from human to non-human, from human to machines. Deleuze views capitalist system as a dehumanizing process that couples people and the machine together. For Deleuze we live in a schizophrenic universe of productive and reproductive desiring machines that defines the essential reality of man as machine-desiring system and what is non-human in man is the flow of his desire and forces:

> We are all handymen: each with his little machine. For every organ-machine, an energy-machine: all the time, flows and interrupts...producing-machine, desiring-machines everywhere, schizophrenic-machine, all of species life: the self and the non-self, outside and inside, no longer have any meaning whatsoever (1-2).

This schizophrenic dehumanizing aspect of the capitalist system has long been a concern for the Enlightment humanist philosophers such as Jean Jacques Rousseau who in his *Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men* explored the origin of

dehumanizing inequality among mankind as a result of the growth of civilization, the progress of state and government, and the social and political forms of existence that tend to exacerbates inequality and degrade the morals of men. Rousseau argued"the savage lives within himself; the sociable man, always outside of himself, knows how to live only in the opinion of others; and it is, so to speak, from their judgement alone that he draws the sentiment of his own existence (Masters, 179). Thus according to Rousseau the roots of inequality lies in the societal existence which is a state of substantial inequality and was based on competition, preference, jealousy, anger, fear, ambition, and the monstrous private desire to control which has been created in civilization and hence all evil.

From this context one can understand *Sand Queen* as a work of fiction and art and its significance in shaping how we see and understand the world and the plights and suffering of women. Benedict's novel not only represents the violence of rape in the context of wartime experience, but also expresses this harrowing experience in such ways that demands readers to sympathize with the suffering of others. *Sand Queen* as a war fiction of the Iraq War that tackled raping military women is not simply about meaning and interpretation but rather about experimentation. Through Benedict's fiction, one learns that as with other disciplines such as philosophy, law and social sciences, art and especially fiction and novels in particular are very useful for making visible, drawing attention to, understanding, and making sense of complex and yet fundamental human flaws such as wartime rape and sexual violence.

3.3Women as anti-war protesters in Rosalind Noonan's *One September Morning*

One September Morning puts its reader into the head of Abby Stanton whose husband John Stanton has been purportedly killed in Fallujah during the war. He was a popular football player who in Iraq, after 9/11, enlisted as a combatant to defend his country in the war against terror. However, in his tour of duty in Iraq and before being killed he was disillusioned and questioned America's invasion of Iraq.[19] Noonan's novel is still a work of imagination, addressing the devastating and transformative change in the life of army wives, mothers, brothers and sisters of fallen soldiers who played a crucial part in the growing dissent and anti-war movement against the war in Iraq. As the title indicated, the novel

[19] This novel was partly based on the true story of the famous American footballer Patt Tillman who fought in the war on terror and his death was caused by friendly fire which received extensive media attention because the U.S army tried to cover it up. Further details about this can be found in ''What Really Happened to Pat Tillman''.<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/what-really-happened-to-pat-tillman/>. Also relevant is a documentary about his family's fight for the truth .<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/8046658/Betrayal-of-an-all-American-hero.html>.

examined the profound effects the 9/11 attacks had on the personal lives of families, the degree to which veterans suffered alienation and post-traumatic stress, the reasons behind the choices made by some of deployed U.S veterans in Iraq to leave and go AWOL (absent without official leave). My emphasis is on interpreting the domestic and personal lives of people, especially women who were closely related to John Stanton, what the war did to them and what they did during this conflict.

To understand how the war in Iraq changed the lives of women, I will examine Cynthia Enloe's *Nima's War, Emma's War, Making Feminist Sense of the Iraq War,* and draw on her conceptualized feminist curiosity to shine light on women's plight in *One September Morning.* As a scholar in feminist international relations, Enloe was perhaps the first to uncover the effects of militarization on women in a global context. Enloe argues that the security of individual women and community was compromised and undermined in the global war on terror: "if we do not try to make feminist sense of wars, we are unlikely to make reliable sense of any war" (218). In addition, the presence and ethos of military institutions and the process of militarization affected woman everywhere. Enloe claims that only by paying serious attention to women's lives, ideas and actions might one understand war and militarization. Enloe puts it : "Only when women's historically situated lives, ideas, and actions are the subjects of sustained curiosity will we be able to assess war preparer's and war wager's efforts to use women and ideas about feminity"(218).

This demonstrates that only by seriously exploring women's experience during wartime and by crafting a feminist curiosity, a new fundamental understanding can be made especially in the way feminists understand how every war is waged, coped with or assessed in terms of gendered histories. As Enloe puts it "the Iraq war is better understood if we ask how its occurring at a distinctive point in the national and international histories of women and how patriarchy has shaped its causes, its widening cause, and its aftermath"(4). Like Cynthia Enloe, Susan Sontag also emphasised that war is a masculine undertaking. Sontag writes that throughout the history of mankind war has been the norm and peace an exception. She states "Men make war. Men (most men) like war, since for men there is 'some glory, some necessity, some satisfaction in fighting' that women (most women) do not feel or enjoy" (3). Sontag reiterates that "War is man's game- the killing machine has a gender and it is male" (5).

Keeping Enloe's feminist curiosity and Sontag's man's game in mind, *One September Morning* makes the complex wartime experiences of American women at home as real as those who become victims and protested the war and helps to understand the impact of the

Iraq War on American women. By delving deep into the lives and experiences of army wives, mothers and sisters, one can demonstrate how these particular women can represent the lives of women in general and how their individual stories can shed light on a larger canvas of the war in Iraq. The novel depicts how American women have their own stories, histories, their own feelings and dilemmas, their own organizing strategies to stop wars. Furthermore, as a fictional depiction, it poses questions such as how and why women mobilized to denounce the war in Iraq. It also tackles how women make sense of the gendered politics of war, how women are used to wage and justify war, how women absorb the costs of war, and how women's experiences can help us to understand not only war at its outsets or at its peak, but also the war and its ongoing aftermath and human cost. Finally, the reader will wonder why the characters in *One September Morning* turn against the war in Iraq and in order to answer these questions let us first look at *Paying the Human Costs of War American Public Opinion and the Causalities in Military Conflicts.* In this study, Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver, and Jason Reifler have examined the way in which the American public decides whether to support or denounce the use of military interventions: ''The public will tolerate mounting causalities if it believes that the United States is still likely to win, provided that the casualties are themselves deemed necessary for success'' (245-246).

With regard to supporting or denouncing war, Gelpi, Feaver and Reifler found that the most important consideration for the public is the expectation of success. If the public believe that a mission will succeed, they will support the war even if the costs are high. But when the public does not expect the mission to succeed, even small costs will cause the withdrawal of support. This explains that the most important factor is whether the public views the initial decision to start war is correct, winnable and morally justified. As soon as the public find that the mission won't succeed they withdraw support for a war. Perhaps this can explain the growing dissent of the women in *One September Morning* and also the disillusionment of the soldiers themselves. In the novel, the death of John shakes his whole family, and becomes a radical point through which the life of all the family changes. His sister Madison is an anti-war, anti-Bush teen who protests the war in Iraq. Madison marches with a group of teens who are supporting peace in anti-war protests holding slogans that say ' WE NEVER DECLARED WAR.'' , ''GET OUT OF IRAQ'' , 'NO MORE BULLSHIT GET OUT OF IRAQ!''{Capitals in original}''(34-35).

Sharice, John's mother, as an army wife with two of her sons deployed in Iraq, was a patriotic, conservative woman sturdily supported the troops and the war. Though she was aware that the war in Iraq has taken a huge toll on the men who had served the U.S. Army,

she ‘‘wonders if the rest of her country is half aware of the sacrifices that have been made by military families’’(40). Sharice as John’s mother and Abby as his wife had a lifelong history of political fraction. They agreed to disagree and not to discuss politics together. Sharice was pro-war, Abby was anti-war. Sharice sees John’s death as a heroic sacrifice for his country, but Abby as a widowed wife believes her husband died pointlessly. This was because Abby ‘‘Never imagined herself as a soldier’s wife.’’ And she ‘‘Didn’t want to be married to the military, but by the time John had come to the decision to enlist, she had already fallen for him’’ (80). Abby did not like his decision but was unable to change his mind as she says ‘‘To be honest, it wasn’t a change I welcomed. I never imagined myself as a soldier’s wife. It was a world, a culture, so foreign to me, and I prided myself on being in control of my own life’’ (81).

Because of John’s death, Sharice, a formerly pro-war mother turns into a staunch anti-war activist and becomes entangled with political anti-war activism. Sharice asks herself and cannot imagine she is now a grieving mom saying ‘‘How did this happen; this total reversal in role, from conservative military wife to controversial victim?’’(223). As an anti-war woman she joins the WAW (Women Against the War) movement, an anti-war group established by military wives who are against the war on terror. Eva who is one of these women explains the mission of their group as ‘‘It is not like we are talking anarchy or free love or any of that stuff that pitted society against the military back in the sixties. We just want a chance to discuss our concerns over our government’s military actions with other concerned, informed people’’ (237).

This politicization of the feminized and maternalized body of the grieving mom of fallen soldiers in the Iraq War and her impact on the anti-war movement during the Bush Administration’s invasion of Iraq and how it galvanized the dissent and anti-war movement has also been examined by Tina Managhan in her *Gender, Agency and War The Maternalized Body in US Foreign Policy.* Managhan has conceptualized the reading of war, international relations and US foreign policy through the prism of historically and culturally specific maternalized female bodily forms and women’s complex entanglement with war and peace. Managhan refers to this complex entanglement of women’s relationship to the process of militarization, war, peace, dissention and anti-war movement as the ‘‘Eventualization of maternal bodily forms’’ in the US foreign policy. By scrutinizing the role of Cindy Sheehan (mother of a soldier killed in Iraq) and how she emerged and sparked as a spokesperson for the American anti-war movement, and how she as a grieving mother became the ‘‘catalyst’’ voice of dissent, Managhan explains: ‘‘As a spokesperson for the troops and the anti-war

movement, Sheehan was able to forcefully argue that if you support the troops (which you must), you should not support this war'' (117).

In *One September Morning* the mothers and wives of deployed soldiers in Iraq debate whether supporting the troops could translate into supporting the war in Iraq. The army wives all belong to a group called Family Readiness Group FRG, which is always focused on some task to make life more bearable for the armed service members. These women have recently been more in a tense relationship over the controversy about the intervention in Iraq and discuss politics among themselves. They have rival political allegiances, some are pro war, others are anti-war. The pro-war wives think that support for the troops equals support for Bush's policies and even translate this into patriotism. Others think that patriotism means support for the troop but not the war, and some others think support for the troops means to bring them home. The following dialogue between the women characters; including Sharice, Eva, Jehn, Suki, Janet, Britt, Chessie, and Jehn Hausner show how deeply divided these characters are over the invasion of Iraq, reflecting real positions adopted by such women. As Managhan puts it war protesters aligned themselves with the figure of the soldier and they could challenge the predominant rhetoric and convincingly advocated another discourse ''that in the current Iraq War ''being for'' the troops means ''being against'' the war...the soldier was cast as an innocent victim; what changed was that he was not cast as a victim of the war protester, but the Bush administration'' (117-119).

Back to the novel, Jehn is criticizing a teacher for sharing stories about the effects of American occupation on the children of Iraq that gives fourth-graders nightmares because she is pro-war. Jehn tells the other women that

> Our guys belong over there…and anyone who questions that doesn't have the right to call themselves an American…It's not about politics, Chessie. It's about our men putting their lives on the line for this country, and they need our support. If you don't support the president, you're stabbing your own guys in the back. You gotta support the leadership or you're just plain unpatriotic (233).

But Chessie Johnson criticizes the presence of the military in Iraq saying "Seems to me our country was founded on the expectation of freedom…and that would include the freedom to disagree with our president. Freedom to hold opinions, freedom to argue and debate. That's all I'm saying"(233). Another woman called Britt believes that support for the troops should not be equalled with support for the war stating that "I love my husband and my country, but I really don't see the merit in this war, if that's what they are still calling it. I mean, I'm all for ending terrorism, but I think our guys really don't belong in Iraq right now'' (234).

Sharice does not want to be as judgmental and participate in this controversial political

debate since she knows that some of the women want to limit the group to their own definition of patriotism. Having lost one of her sons in Iraq and another going AWOL she is not willing to talk about this controversial topic. But she changes and is transformed from a prowar conservative woman to an anti-war dissenter activist in joining the WAW movement. The passage reflects the extent in which Bush's war on terror divided women on different fronts. Managhan aptly describes why women's involvement, especially the figure of grieving mothers, in the anti-war movement was somewhat successful as they could reverse the gendered logic of protection ''contrary to established ideas about the 'just warrior' protecting the feminized homefront and 'beautiful souls', the mothers were out doing battle to protect their sons from the military men'' (117-119). The reason provided by Managhan was that Cindy Sheehan, as a grieving mother and leader of the anti-war movement who was also supported by pacifist veterans enabled her to bolster her motherly position as a fierce protector of deployed soldiers. She was protecting the children who will be put at risk by the military. But prowar people claimed that it is the military that protects the children, Sheehan inverts a rhetoric of protection by arguing that the military risks the children mothers protect.

One September Morning transforms her military women into anti-war protesters, demonstrating how their struggle for peace was bolstered by grieving moms and veterans who were against the war. The story deconstructs the notion of sacrificial death that had to be paid in order to fight terrorism and how women challenged authorities to end the conflict simply because they did not see merits in this war. This is reminiscent of Rene Girard's concepts of the mechanisms of mythmaking and scapegoating as a foundation of cultural life. Girard believed that violence does not end with a social contract but paradoxically the problem of violence is frequently solved with a lesser dose of violence. When violence threatens the existence of a community, a bizaree psychological process emerges; henceforth violence is all of a sudden projected against a single demonized individual or targeted group. These people are specified as enemy and violence is executed against them (Gabriel Andrade, Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy).

The mothers and wives of fallen soldiers continue to suffer for the prices their men have paid for it. These women do not think the war is worth the sacrifices. These anti-war women activists are patriotic and love their country. But they adhere to their ethical moral choices that the war on terror has been beneficial for some but disastrous for others. They are aware that it is their responsibility to denounce war and militarism. Therefore they want not only to stop the war but hold those who wage war criminally accountable for their actions.

One September Morning shows the reasons why the wives and mothers of fallen soldiers could not accept the death of their sons and husbands and the way they mobilized themselves to denounce the war which was to stop the sacrifices that have claimed so many lives. The novel's anti-war discourse undermines the granting or accepting death of loved ones whether by sacrifice for your country and the war on terror. Jacques Derrida in his *The Gift of Death*; finds an interesting analogy of the fallen victims of the Iraq War with the narrative story of Abraham and his willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac for God. He argues that if God has not sent a lamb as a substitute or an angel to hold his arm, Abraham could have committed infanticide, an abominable first-degree criminal murder by slaughtering Isaac because he adhered so strongly to his absolute religious duty. To Derrida, the sacrifice of the other to avoid being sacrificed oneself needs to be deconstructed. He develops a notion of absolute duty versus general duty and religious responsibility versus ethical responsibility. Derrida believes that if God as One is to be treated as the Other then every other (bit) must also be treated as other. Hence all responsibility becomes equally absolute. However, Derrida argues that because the absolute (religious) duty contradicts general (ethical) duty, therefore in adhering to one's duty one neglects the other. In lining up ourselves with one we fight against another. Hence in choosing an option we (individuals, society, nations, and states) inevitably help one but simultaneously wage war against another. Derrida's opinion is worth quoting at length:

> Whether they be victims of the Iraqi state or victims of the international coalition that accused that state of not respecting the law. For in the discourse that dominated such wars, it was rigorously impossible, on one side and the other, to discern the religious from the moral, the juridical from the political. The warring factions were all irreconcilable fellow worshippers of the religions of the Book (86).

All in all, *One September Morning*'s anti-war and pacific rhetoric questions blind patriotism and the call of duty, showing that in the war on terror many people died in a controversial war in Iraq and many people at the United States deemed it unnecessary and denounced the concept of protection of the nation by militaristic means.

3.4 Women as weapons of war and the reversion of Iraqi women's rights in Morgana Gallaway's *The Nightingale*

The Nightingale tells the story of an Iraqi female protagonist called Leila AlGhani who is the daughter of a former Iraqi Baathist and Sunni Judge turned insurgent in city of Mosul. Leila Al Ghani was a medical assistant who ante bellum had a very progressive life. However, after the war her options become radically limited, and her freedoms much more compromised. She cannot continue working in the Mosul hospital because one of her male

colleagues sexually harasses her. This forces her to join the American Base hospital as an Arabic to English translator and medical assistant. Thus, she risks her life because if the locals and especially her father found out she is working with the American, she would simply be killed and considered a traitor. However, she has her own dreams and ambitions which is to continue her postgraduate studies in a European country, hence she challenges all norms and the traditions of her country but pays a price for doing so. When her father finds out she is working with the Americans, he decides to recruit her and use her as an informant spying on her American colleagues by bringing confidential information to his insurgent groups. On the other hand, the Americans also want her to spy on her own father's insurgent group if she is to save herself. Both sides want to use her as a weapon of war and she herself is a victim of war who is subordinated to further the advances of rivals. Leila as a woman, as a daughter of an insurgent, as a translator and as a medical assistant is (ab)used by everyone. Her story embodies how the rights of Iraqi women have been reversed as a result of the invasion which empowered the religious and militia men to revert to fundamentalism.

This in turn obliterates the rights of women in Iraq in particular affecting the Leila Al-Ghani. Cynthia Enloe argues that patriarchy and militarization work together; patriarchy privileges masculinity and those who benefit from the privileges of masculinity; patriarchy is the structure and ideological system that perpetuates the privileges of masculinity. All kind of social systems, institutions, and whole cultures can become patriarchal: ''patriarchy can be as ubiquitous as nationalism, patriotism, and post-war reconstruction''(2004, 7) In Enloe's own words, to be curious about women, ''by taking seriously women in their myriad locations, feminists have been able to see patriarchy when everyone else has seen only capitalism, militarism, or racism or imperialism.'' Moreover, in discussing how private security companies (PSC) benefited from patriarchy and masculinity Enloe states: ''patriarchy can be fashionable as hiring Bechtel, Lockheed, and other private military contractors to carry on the tasks of foreign occupation, that is, as the U.S governments strategists seek to give their post-war reconstruction steps in Iraq and Afghanistan the look of something that is the opposite of old-fashioned dictatorship and imperialism''(2004,7). According to Enloe these PSCs are the most profound masculinity-privileging organization who were paid to carry out the imperial agenda of the U.S government. Thus, this masculinity as shown in the *Nightingale,* depends on drawing women into complicity, or manipulating feminity, or forcing, controlling, and squeezing standards of their feminity, using the politics of marriage and the reversion to fundamentalism to obliterate women's rights.

In order to do justice to the anguish of women from all sides of the Iraqi conflict, in

addition to patriarchy, Cynthia Enloe proposes that other perspectives should also be considered outside the American, British and Iraqi women, which includes the coalition forces of the countries in support of the Iraq War ‘‘if we are ever to have a realistically complete gendered understanding of this hydra-headed experience we call the Iraq war, we will need to listen to women from all these countries’’(2010, 12-13). This includes women in Honduras, Australia, Georgia, South Korea, Japan, Ukraine, Spain, Italy, and Poland. Even the wives of the men from places like Pakistan, India, Fiji, the US, South Africa and other countries, who were hired by the dozens of private security company contractors played such a significant role in determining how the Iraq War was waged. Enloe argues that the maternal support of all those men who were involved or were affected by the war in Iraq should also be considered. Enloe even reiterates that not only military wives, but also

> Women married to militias, But their lives too call for future consideration where are the women in the personal lives of those Iraqi men who joined the armed insurgency, the party-affiliated sectarian militias, and the U.S-sponsored Sunni Awakening Councils? We need to know how pressured these Iraqi women were to accept their husband’s decisions to take up arms. How much did their own households economies come to depend on the salaries paid by militia leaders to their rank and file men? (2010, 14).

I attempt to investigate what Iraqi women do during this conflict and what the conflict does to them in Morgana Gallaway’s *The Nightingale* (2009), which fictionalizes the Iraq war from the perspective of Leila; an Iraqi daughter of a militia man. Leila Al Ghani has high hopes and dreams for herself. She strives to pursue a career as a doctor. However, her parents are trying frantically to marry her off to her cousin. *The Nightingale* incorporates the contradictions inherent in the American invasion's claims to liberate Iraqi people and the subsequent rise of terrorism and insurgency that undermined people’s liberation. The novel also hints at the private security contractors profiteering from the war. Through the context of Leila’s actions and experience during this war, Gallaway incorporates all these elements of the conflict as powerful forces that work to crash Leila’s dreams, life and hopes. The war is portrayed as an obstacle for the individual women’s search for meaning and happiness.

If we look at Leila’s life in the *Nightingale,* after the war, her father becomes increasingly conservative and radicalized. He reverts to Islamic fundamentalism, an extremist Jihadist who is not only a sympathizer with the resistance but also actively engages in plotting against the Americans. He was formerly a Baathist official and now one of the leading Sunni insurgents in Mosul city. He organizes major terrorist attacks in Mosul and hides Al Ansar Islam and Jihadist groups in his house. This reminds us of Slavoj Zizek’s argument in his article "The Iraq War: Where is the True Danger?" arguing ‘‘Even if successful, the attack on

Iraq will give a big boost to a new wave of anti-American terrorism''(2003). Like Zizek's warning the novel *Nightingale* charts how the war has changed the perspectives and shaped the political opinion of normal Iraqi people, especially those affiliated with the former regime. Leila describes her father's anti-American sentiments as "Al Ghani's political opinion was a sore subject. He clung to the old ways, and spoke more and more longingly of Saddam's regime, when he had been a party official and a judge on the local circuit" (7). Leila also observed that the pictures of torturing Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghareeb transformed her father to be more anti-American. "After the Abu Ghareeb pictures, her father had started staying out late at night and getting mysterious phone calls" (7). As we learn from Leila, her father assists insurgents to fight against American imperialism. Her father is becoming angrier, bad tempered around the house "their father's mood changed like the wind these days" (12). He is organizing terrorist attacks against the invaders and talks about "the New Crusade". Leila blames the Americans for having disbanded the Iraqi Army and thus provoking an insurgency, she says her father "has become a bad man! Before the war he was fine and now he has gone crazy, it is your fault, you Americans it is, do not deny it and everything is upside down now" (211). During another situation Gallaway states "it was the war that turned her father into a terrorist, her mother into an impotent sack of bones. Iraq's descent into madness left no family untouched" (258). This transformative change in people's attitude and reversion to fundamentalism is nowhere better explained than by Kelly Oliver's *Women as Weapons of War Iraq, Sex, and the Media.* She asks how can more violence beget peace and how can the terror of war defeat the terror of terrorism. In fact, according to her, the war on terror has increased the threat of Global Islamic radicalism:

> We talk as if terrorism is a disease out of control, a disease that we can fight with our surgical strikes, but a disease that we can never conquer, because in our war on terror we are in fact creating terrorists. The cure is spreading the disease (16).

Akin to Kelly Oliver, in *Welcome to the Desert of the Real* Slavoj Zizek claimed that the US-led war on terror and Global Capitalist system is responsible for increasing Global Islamic fundamentalism. Zizek argues that in this system people feel free because they lack the very language to articulate their own unfreedom which serves to mask and sustain their deeper unfreedom. Focusing on post 9/11 American rhetoric of being 'either with us or against us' and quoting Kant and Chesterton who have asserted that "You are free to decide on condition that you make the right choice" Zizek critiques the ruling ideologies of western democracies that impose such a choice on people. He sees this imposition as the fundamentalism of the West. According to Zizek the problem is not Islamic fundamentalism but rather the way West presents its liberal parliamentary democracy as the only viable

alternative political system. Thus for Zizek the freedom of thought paradoxically secures social servitude. Zizek views Global capitalism as fundamentalist and America as a complicit with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. In the war on terror we are being misled by false antagonism and are missing the point of late capitalism:

> Today's resistance to capitalism reproduces the same antagonism calls for the defence of particular (cultural, ethnic) identities being threatened by the global dynamics coexist with the demands for more global mobility against new barriers imposed by Capitalism, which concern above all the free movement of individuals (189-190).

The immediate effect of the war in Iraq on this novel is that Leila's father wants to forcefully marry her to her cousin Abdul as is shown in the following paragraph when Leila complains to her mother that her father cannot force her to marry someone she does not love:

> I refuse to marry Abdul. Do you hear me? I refuse…No one in the modern world arranged marriages…Nowhere in the Quran did it say that the parents should arrange marriages for their children, because even Allah was aware that such things could turn into disasters. Arranged marriages were the stuff that suicides, murders, and runaways were made of (204).

In Iraqi *Women, Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present,* Nadje Sadiq Al-Ali has intimately examined how the conflict in Iraq has put the condition of Iraqi women firmly on the global agenda. For decades, their lives have been framed by state oppression, economic sanctions and three wars. Al-Ali argues that US-led calls for liberation have produced a greater backlash against Iraqi women. The invasion, which was followed by more social conservatism of Islamist movement's rise to power had a great impact on women's lives. Al-Ali sees the escalation of violence as the main cause of this repercussion:

> Reconstruction process have been seriously impeded, if not entirely stopped, by the escalating violence and chaos. Women who have a public profile, either as doctors, academics, lawyers, NHO activists or as politician, are systematically threatened and have become the targets of killings (258).

Leila takes a job as a translator and assistant sergeant in an American hospital called Combat Support Hospital, on the military base, Camp Dianmondback in Mosul. A job which is extremely risky because the previous post was held by a man who had been kidnapped by insurgents who had cut out his tongue. The mujahedeen target and kill anyone who works with the Americans, even cleaners. "She had taken a job with the Americans. It was the most dangerous thing she could do, and Leila was exhilarated and terrified and helpless all at once. It was Inshallah, the will of God,, the wheel of the Fates, spinning round and round, depositing her somewhere unexpected"(53).

Another aspect of the Iraq war this novel fictionalizes is the role of private security contractors who profited from the conflict in Iraq. These private contractors like Asset

Protection International (API) benefited from this war, systematically tortured people in prison and were the major players who were profiteering from the continuing violence and chaos in Iraq. They manufacture trouble to continue with their lucrative reconstruction and defence contracts with the U.S army. Noam Chomsky argues that ‘‘The roots of torture in American society are very deep, the modern economy and our wealth were created by massive torture in slave labor camps. It’s also been a very frightening society, since its origins’’ (Stone, 2014).As the novel depicts these PSCs are perpetrators of violence; they abuse not only Iraqi detainees but also manipulate the American army. When Captain James and Leila find this out, they decide to reveal how these contractors not only did not alleviate violence, but ignited a civil war and exacerbated the conflict to maximize their contracts such as bombing a nursery that leaves several killed and injured, including the death of Leila’s sister Fatima. The following dialogue between Captain James and Leila shows who is to be blamed for the increasing violence in Iraq:

> There is something you’ve gotta understand. The army is not the only power operating here…the corporations have a lot of say over what happens. Their bosses are civilians, just like ours. And sometimes, like with API, they put pressure. They want violence. We already know that. So when an incident like those Hellfire missiles in the city…
> James paused, reluctant.
> I am not going to say anything else, Leila, but you can draw your own conclusions.
> Leila understood. It was as they’d discussed. The contractors from API wanted a basis for their contracts; they wanted an insurgency. That was why the curt command to kill was given, making Fatima another innocent causality in their war.
> ‘‘They cannot do this,’’ Leila said. ‘‘I did not think the mighty United States Army was under the orders of a corporation.’’
> ‘Times have changed,’’ said James. We do what we have to do. God, it’s fucked up. Sorry. But it is (302-303).

The crisis of these private security contractors benefiting from warmongering has also received much attention in recent security and human right scholarship. In an article "Private Security Firms in Iraq Can be Tried as War Criminals" published by Human Rights First, a non-profit, human rights organization, it is argued that private security contractors had more forces in Iraq than the U.S army. They were able to operate in Iraq and Afghanistan without any accountability, which has resulted in tragedy.[20] They argue that ‘‘these contractors must be held accountable for their actions because they have committed and are committing

[20]It estimated that more than 180,000 private contractors operated in Iraq which was more than the number of U.S military forces there. In 2008 there were at least 35,000 PSCs are in Iraq. For more on why their actions brought extensive focus to their role in Iraq see Human Rights First. "Private Security Firms in Iraq Can be Tried as War Criminals." *Warcrimes, opposing viewpoints series.* Ed. Margaret Haerens. Greenhaven Press, 2011. 29-40.

serious crimes with virtually no criminal accountability and they demand that existing U.S federal criminal law be used to prosecute those private security companies who were involved in civilian killings and abusive interrogations. Human Rights First found that:

> *Not one* private contractor implicated in similar crimes in Iraq has been prosecuted. Human Rights First believes that the Justice Department's neglect has created a ''shoot first, ask question later, or never'' attitude among contractors (36-37).

On the other hand, in *Allegations Against Private Security Firms in Iraq are Politicized,* George H. Wittman argued that ''allegations against American security contractors are a result of political opportunism by the Iraqi government which wants to take more control of Iraqi security operations'' (41). Wittman states that first the numbers of civilians killed by these contractors were exaggerated and that these security contractors have a vital role in providing personal and physical security and that this has been a necessary fact of life since after the invasion and remains so. This is because these private security companies are able to provide a form of protection that neither the Iraqi government nor the coalition forces could provide the services these PSCs offer: ''there is really no question that the majority of current Iraqi leaders want to work the American ''occupation'' to as much of their economic and political advantage as possible. And they want to gain control of that advantage in whatever manner they can. Taking over the lucrative private contracting of security operations is the first step in that plan''(45).

In addition to the criminalization of Private Security Contractors, *The Nightingale* emphasizes the use of women as a weapon of war. Once more I draw on Kelly Oliver's conceptualization of the use of women as a weapon of war to explain the way in which in *The Nightingale* Leila Al-Ghani is used as a means to an end. Kelly Oliver argues that:

> Whether as individuals representing all American women or all Muslim women, as heroes or as scapegoats, as victims or torturers, as oppressed or as feminist avengers, women have been a central element in the discursive constellations revolving around recent military action in the Middle East (44).

Leila's father knows that his daughter's job as a translator and medical assistant in the American hospital is very useful to employ to help the causes of the Mujahedeen. He wants to use her as a spy against the Americans especially when wounded mujahedeen were taken prisoner and Leila's task was to make sure they revealed nothing vital to the Americans by translating disinformation, filing false reports and taking note of any weaknesses in security in the camp and then pass that knowledge to her father. Despite her usefulness, her father is very upset that Leila has rejected the arranged marriage with her cousin and thus she has disgraced and shamed the name of al-Ghani family. Towards the end of the novel he has a new plan not to punish her but to offer her one last chance to redeem herself to save her

honour so the name of Al-Ghani will be remembered forever by using her as a body bomb and telling her she has to commit a suicidal mission against the Americans:

> You have joined our martyrs' brigade,…You are strong and reasonable girl. And you can get revenge on the Americans now. They blew up your sister. Did you know that? It was their Hellfire missile that killed her…and now you both will find your place in Paradise. You must drive this truck and blow up the hospital there (286).

On the other hand, when her Americans colleagues find out that her father is a terrorist; they also force her to comply by bringing useful information to hunt down the insurgents if she wants to save herself. As James tells Leila:

> It's up to you, Leila…You know, you might show a little gratitude. You're not …a pristine island of medical holiness in this war, you're involved, too! When your father hides the muj, they go out and kill people. Did you stop to think about that? He's not just putting your family in danger, he's putting every citizen in Mosul in danger. And you can't sit here in the hospital, translating for us and treating our soldiers, and expect us not to ask you, Leila! Of course we had to ask if you might keep an eye on your father, the terrorist(198).

Leila is left with few choices. She has either to spy on her American colleagues and thus help the agendas of his insurgent father in killing the Americans, which is something she does not believe in and not especially after her father wanted to use her as a body bomb. Or she has to spy on her father and thus help the Americans find and locate her father's insurgent groups. Either choice she makes she will betray someone. But she has to save herself and her career. She is torn between these choices till the day her father ties her to a car loaded with bomb. However, she is melodramatically and miraculously saved and the bomb does not go off until she manages to escape. The question of how these wartime costs should be tallied and how they were absorbed by women is aptly put by Cynthia Enloe as: ''Wartime reversion to patriarchal marriage codes is costly... All these costs are too rarely entered into the war wager's edgers''(2010,12). All in all, *The Nightingale* as a work of fiction sheds light on how both the insurgents and United States Army including the Private Security Contractors were all liable for unlawful deeds during the war and the immediate victim of their actions were women like Leila Al-Ghani whose rights and freedoms were compromised.

3.5 Women as War Correspondent in Ilene Prusher's *Baghdad Fixer*

In *Baghdad Fixer*, Ilene Prusher fictionalizes how war journalism served to highlight a large canvas of hardships, suffering and pain inflicted on people' lives in Iraq by chronic wars. In particular, she shows how the war in 2003 destabilized the country, opened a Pandora's Box of insurgency, ignited the age-old animosities and rivalries between the country's Shias and Sunnis resulting in a civil war and how this resulted in obliterating

women's lives. *Baghdad Fixer* depicts various issues of the invasion, its twists, turns and the outcome such as increasing honour killing, arranged marriages of girls by their parents, women's loss of their husbands as a result of the rising death tolls, and the suffering of women as a result of the war.

Baghdad Fixer was written by the American journalist Ilene Prusher in 2012. Before switching to fiction, Prusher worked as an independent journalist and as a war correspondent where she covered major conflicts during the past decade; namely the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.[21] In the dedication in *Baghdad Fixer*, Prusher writes ''to the memory of all fixers, journalists and truth-seekers who lost their lives trying to tell the story in Iraq, in particular friends and colleagues I lost''(663). Prusher mentions a list of fixers and other journalists who as a colleague had inspired her to birth her first novel. Prusher's novel fictionalizes fixers (interpreters) and their outstanding roles in covering the war in Iraq while also lending voice to as much Iraqi characters as possible. This technique has never been used by other novelists who fictionalized the war in Iraq. *Baghdad Fixer* puts us in the head of Nabil al-Amari, an Iraqi English teacher-turned-fixer who interprets for Samara Katchens, an American journalist who also covers the Iraq War for *the Tribune* from March to May 2003.

Baghdad Fixer depicts why journalists went to the frontline, what the war did to them, and why war reporting mattered. It explores how humans make war, enjoy it, dread it, profit from it and even love it. It fictionally crystallizes what Elaine Scarry in *The Body in Pain the Making and Unmaking of the World* conceptualized as the nature of war in its infliction of pain and suffering. Scarry defined war as an event whose central activity is bodily pain and injury, demonstrating that:

> Injuring is, in fact, the central activity of war. Visible or invisible, omitted, included, altered in its inclusion, described or redescribed, injury is war's product and its cost, it is the goal toward which all activity is directed and the road to the goal…War kills; that is all it does(81).

This idea of war as an act of injuring, killing, and inflicting of violence has been examined by war scholars such as Antulio J. Echevarria II who in *Clausewitz and Contemporary War* defines the dynamics of contemporary war and emphasizes that violence; fighting and destruction are characteristics of the essence of war: ''War, an act of violence, and warfare, as the technique of applying that violence have an intimate and dynamic relationship... the

[21]Further useful details can be found in ''Ilene Prusher in conversation with Patrick Cockburn and Charles Glass'' of ABC news at the Frontline Club, London, December 2012. Web. Accessed 16 February 2013.<http://www.halbanpublishers.com/showBook.php?file=baghdadfixer.xml&sortby=date>.

two are clearly not the same, but the violence of war comes from war's means, from warfare''(57).

He adds that ''The essence of war is violence. The essence of war is fighting, the violent clash of opposing wills is, the essence of a war'' (63). While Echevarria emphasizes that in the current global war on terror both the United States and Al-Qaeda are clearly using or are attempting to use violence and armed forces to achieve ends that are as political as they are religious or secular in nature, Scarry highlights the fact that the main outcome of war is injuring of the human body or a massive injury of bodily pain which is the original site of the wound and she emphasizes that no matter what the intent of the war is or what the accidental effect of bombing or shooting was ''injury must at some point be understood individually because pain, like all forms of sentience, is experienced within, 'happens' within, the body of the individual'' (65). Prusher's *Baghdad Fixer* incorporates a perspective akin to these theorizations of pain and suffering showing how war blighted and ended many lives or to borrow Scarry's phrases *uncreated and unmade the world* in its massive destruction and infliction of suffering.

Scarry also conceptualized that pain and suffering inflicted by war defies language and resists objectification in language. The pain or suffering of war is first difficult to express, hence there is political complications that arise as a result of pain being inexpressible, inarticulalable, and un-shareable. Scarry argues that though there is ordinarily no language for pain, there is a fragmentary means of verbalization to those who are themselves in pain or those who wish to speak on behalf of others, but this verbal sign is inherently unstable that when not carefully controlled it can have different effects and can be intentionally used for the opposite purposes. Because expressing pain can be ''invoked not to coax pain into visibility but to push it further invisibility, invoked not to assist in the elimination of pain but assist in its infliction, invoked not to extend culture… but to dismantle that culture''(13). Scarry believes that the most imperative step to alleviate, coax, and eliminate pain, and extend culture of those who are suffering as a result of war is to find a channel to effectively express suffering and make visible the pain that is inflicted on humans whether in the context of war or torture. This seems to be the point of Prusher's novel reiterating that independent female war correspondents like Samara Katchens, perhaps analogous to Ilene Prusher herself, continued to play a vital part in covering the war in Iraq, pursuing truth, bringing to light those who are most directly affected by war and if possible to hold the criminals accountable for their actions.

Prusher's novel lends voice to Iraqis themselves to express the effects of the war on their individual lives and their society. *Baghdad Fixer* is not just about a series of challenges faced by an American female war journalist while covering the war in Iraq, it is about the codes, ethics, specifics and details of war journalism in relation to how war is waged or justified and how the media can be used for propaganda and disinformation. Its story reflects the concerns raised i*n Women War Correspondents in The Vietnam War,* 1961-1975; a study by Virginia Elwood-Akers where she emphasized the crucial roles of women journalists who covered the war in Vietnam ''They were deeply involved in the controversy which raged and still rages over whether coverage of the war was accurate or distorted to favour one point of view or another'' (1).

Baghdad Fixer represents how different women experienced this specific historical event. The novel imagines the impacts of the invasion and the rise of Islamic movements and their effects in increasing the suffering of Iraqi women as described by Nadje Sadiq Al-Ali in *Iraqi Women, Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present* as:

> Despite or even partly because of US and UK rhetoric about liberation and women's right, women have been pushed back even further into the background and into their homes. They suffer both in terms of the ongoing and worsening humanitarian crisis and through lack of security on the streets (258).

The novel depicts the decline of women's freedom in Iraq. In the first few pages of the novel women are the first victims of a firefight unleashed between the insurgents and the American forces. Noor, Nabil's would-be fiancé is shot on the day she was to be betrothed. This paragraph describes Noor's death:

> Noor has collapsed at our feet, making choking sounds. The red is seeping through the neckline of her crème-coloured blouse. For a second, or an eternity, there is an absence of sound. Fruit and bone-china and blood scatter across the floor, on my lap. A sliver of persimmon clings to Baba's shirt. Noor's mother screaming.''Rahmet-Allah!''''Where did it come from?'' ''Get an ambulance!'' ''Goddamn Americans! (4).

Samara Katchens is depicted as a fearless war correspondent who firmly believes that by reporting the human toll of war in Iraq she could curtail the excesses of war profiteering people as well as how war undermined the rights of women. Delving deep into this novel and the individual stories one can see how the war was partially launched under the pretext of liberating women, but women were not liberated, their rights and freedom have been obliterated to serve the masculine agendas of militarization. In *"Embedded Feminism" and the War On Terror* Krista Hunt conceptualized how the Bush administration not only embedded media to favourably shape opinion during the invasion of Iraq, but also *embedded feminism* by using the rhetoric that the war on terror would liberate women abroad. This

rhetoric was used to boost strong support for the war on terror. In Hunt's view, Bush's administration embedded feminism to justify and legalize its neo-colonial imperialism. Thus the administration denounced anti-war feminists for failing to protect their sisters abroad. Hunt says that many feminists like herself were sceptical of "the Bush administration's (en) gendering of the war on terror" and they saw it as a rhetoric and "as an opportunistic way to moralize and justify the war" (51). Hunt conceptualizes that in national, imperial and colonial projects one can always find how embedded feminism discourse are incorporated into political projects that claim to serve the interests of women but ultimately subordinate that goal.

> Embedded feminism, appeals to women's oppression and liberation were raised to moralize the colonial project rather than to further the struggle for women's rights...Far from promoting women's rights, embedded feminism sparked resistance within colonized countries to both imperialism and women's rights (54).

Prusher's novel bears witness to this engendering of the war on terror and the embedded feminism by highlighting the individual human costs of war for women. Focusing on minute details, Nabil AL-Amari comforts Amal, his fourteen year old sister telling her that "Noor lived a good life,…She was happy before she died. She won't have to suffer through this like the rest of us"(40). Amal's life is also depicted as a prisoner of war, representing Iraqi girls, because she is unhappy about what the war has done to her as she complains "All I do is sit in my room."… "I'm tired of it. I'm tired of everything here." Amal complains about how the war has deprived her, being locked at home she tells her father "It's not fair! How come Nabil gets to do everything and I'm always stuck in here" and her father reminds her "You want to go out and get shot like their driver?" Amal is on the verge of tears "But I am not spending any more time in the kitchen today,". This makes Nabil compare Amal's life to teenagers in America. "In America teenage girls rebel by doing drugs or getting pregnant. But this is all Amal has. Refusing to make jam" (565). And the following dialogue between Samara Katchens and Amal explains how the war reversed the rights of women generally and particularly teenage girls. It also highlights the difference between the life of Iraqi women before and after the invasion and how their way of life changed as a result of rising religiosity, destabilization, and fear:

> How the life in America?Amal pleads. "What's life like?" Sam smiles, looking uncertain how to answer. "It depends on where you live. Some beautiful areas, some terrible areas sort of like in Iraq. It's a huge country." Amal's face pretends a thousand more questions. "America is very free, yes? You do, you say…whatever you like." "Something like that, but you still have to follow the law and pay your taxes." "Are you happy America coming to Iraq?"…Sam sighs. "It's a tough question. I don't know. It wasn't my idea to come here, but now that we're here, I

> hope Iraq will be better off. I mean, you have to believe that…Right now, it's not looking so good, is it?'' Amal shakes her head no, it isn't. ''But I bet you're glad Saddam is gone, no?'' Amal pushes out her lower lip. ''Nabil says he was too bad. But me, Amal? My life was not bad before. I went to school, saw my friends, go shopping with Mum. Now, problem, now everything problem (576-577).

This problem of reversing the rights of people and in particular of women under the banner of liberation, freeing and democratizing Iraqi people in relation to the rhetoric of Bush's administration was previously aptly articulated by Herbert Marcuse in his *Political Preface to Eros and Civilization.* In this study Marcuse criticizes the contradiction inherent in the governing system of global mass democracy and the political paraphernalia of capitalism which turns liberty into submission, freedom into oppression, productivity into destruction, democracy into domination, the good into evil, and welfare into warfare:

> The people, efficiently manipulated and organized, are free; ignorance and impotence, introjected heteronomy is the price of their freedom...the truth is that this freedom and satisfaction are transforming the earth into hell. The inferno is still concentrated in certain and faraway places: Vietnam, the Congo, South Africa (98).

Had Marcuse lived to this day, he would have also added Iraq to the list. *Baghdad Fixer* also sheds light on many women, like Malika for example who lost her husband. Malika is a 25 year old woman who is carrying a baby boy in her arms and tells Nabil and Sam that her husband was arrested in the middle of a night, though she has gone to Abu Ghraib and other prisons searching for him in vain. There were rumors her husband was killed, probably buried in a mass grave near Baqubah along with other men who were arrested last year but she is still hoping he is alive. Malika tells Samara:

> My husband must come home, she announces slowly, in English. ''He has never seen his son!'' And then she is in tears, which are quickly turning to sobs. ''What America will do for me now?''Malika demands of Sam, pleading with her a bit louder and rocking the child, who has also began to cry. ''America will bring back my husband? America will pay support for my son with no father? Every child must have a father! (137).

But there are several stories about past and current war crimes perpetrated in Iraq and the list is too exhaustive that makes Nabil even wonder if these are the stories that American government wants the rest of the world to hear, or will reporting these atrocities will be distorted by U.S government saying that ''the more their reporters describe the bad things that happened under Saddam, the more they are able to justify taking over our country'' (136). Nabil asserts that the United States benefited from the crimes and dictatorship of Saddam Hussien to justify the invasion and the military actions.

In the *Aftermath of U.S Invasion: The Anguish of Women in Afghanistan and Iraq* Hayat Imam conceptualized the gender specific forms of violence, the victimization and reversion of Iraqi women's rights and uses the phrase ''Double Burden'' to describe how war imposes a

two-fold burden on women. First the burden of experiencing the violence of war and second the burden of war's gender-specific forms of violence. Imam argues that while war is a male enterprise, it imposes a double burden on women:

> Women also have to deal with particular traumas. When their husbands, sons, families, and community members are targeted, kidnapped, imprisoned, tortured, or killed, women are not only overcome by grief and fear, they must pick up the pieces, be strong for children and other dependents, and ensure the family's survival (117).

This double burden is aptly described when Samara interviews another woman called Suad al-Hamdani, an Iraqi woman from Tikrit. Suad says her husband went missing, weeps and complains that: "everything is wrong way round now…We have no one coming here but the American soldiers. No one to protect us. No electricity most of the time. Shooting every night…I don't even know where my husband is"(288). Nadje Al-Ali echoes Imam's notes that Iraqi women have not only survived wars, but have also endured gender-specific forms of violence, poverty and oppression and appropriately describing the status of Iraqi women's severe suffering as "A growing number of Iraqi women have been carrying the burden of being the main breadwinner while having to care for children and other dependants, as thousands of Iraqi men lost their lives through political prosecution, wars, occupation and, more recently, sectarian violence"(268). Both Nadje Al-Ali and Hayat Imam, as distinguished feminist researchers, alert us not only to the specific gendered consequences of war on women, but also to the fact that women are more increasingly victims and casualties of war and mostly a victim of suffering that are inflicted on them in terms of displacement and poverty after conflict.

Perhaps the most significant part of *Baghdad Fixer* is the way Ilene Prusher in the mouth of its protagonist Nabil Al-Amari compares the figure of Samara Katchens to two well-known Arabic literary female figures in *the Arabian Nights*. These female characters Kahramana and Scheherazade symbolize the fight for justice and the importance of storytelling. Because Samara was so determined to tackle the complexity of the political events that shaped the war in Iraq and how its violence affected Iraqi women Nabil draws an analogy between Samara Katchens and Kahramana, thinking that "Maybe Sam would be like Kahramana, a woman who stops the work of unjust men, a struggler who has to do the difficult job of holding the crooked accountable for their deeds"(425). Nabil also emphasizes the power of storytelling and reflects on his relationship with Samara. He then compares Samara to Scheherazade, who metaphorically represents Ilene Prusher herself both as a war correspondent and war novelist:

> I should have told her about the mind of Scheherazade. She saved her life from a

> murderous king by her ability to tell him a new story every night. Until then, the king had a habit of marrying a beautiful woman every day, enjoying her for the night, and then having her beheaded in the morning, sure she had betrayed him. Through her great knowledge of history and literature, through her ability to weave stories together, Scheherazade told the king enchanting tales that kept him on tenterhooks each night until it was almost daybreak. After a thousand night of this, he fell in love with her and made her queen. The writer Ibn al-Nadim mentions it as already having been famous in his tenth-century catalogue of books in Baghdad. So we have known for at least a thousand years that a storyteller a female one, at that can change the course of history. Our stories are our strength. They have the power to keep us alive (661).

In fact before Ilene Prusher fictionalized the role of Sam as Kahramana and Scheherazade in *Baghdad Fixer,* Fawzia Afzal-Khan, an Iraqi feminist, critic, playwright and artist in *"*The Female Body as a Site of Attack, Will the ''Real'' Muslim Women's Body Please Reveal Itself?*"* suggested that it is time to invite the figure of Scheherazade of the *Arabian Nights* to perform once again so that the world can save itself from violence and described Scheherazade as:

> Scheherazade's voice is, for me, the voice of a woman of passionate intellect and reason, a woman whose fight for life is not personal but collective, the voice of a woman who wants to see justice, not murder, meted out to other oppressed women like herself, a woman unafraid to voice her dissent with the powerful when that power becomes abusive and unjust. Scheherazade is the voice of a Muslim feminist(Afzal-Khan 194).

Whether Prusher was aware of Afzal-Khan's reimagining of Scheherazade or not, her depiction of Samara and associating her to Scheherazade is a successful attempt in reincarnating this figure to stand for women's freedoms in Iraq. *Baghdad Fixer* as a work of fiction successfully sheds light on how female war correspondents covered the war's after-effects on Iraqis generally and particularly on women. *Baghdad Fixer* attests to Cinny Kennard and Sheila T. Murphy's finding in their study on *Characteristics of War Coverage by Female Correspondents* that there is a systemic difference in the content of women and men's reporting of conflicts by arguing that ''the female correspondent field many more stories involving victims of war, military families, U.S. children's reaction to war, the cost of war, profiteering, and stories of rallies and protest than their male counterparts''(134).What they found was that when women report war, the content of their reports tend to be more *soft-edged* than *hard-edged*. And by Soft-edged they meant stories about civilian casualties, and victims of war in general and by Hard-edged they meant military tactics, weapons and strategies. At the end of the novel when Nabil's parents flee the country because of the threats they receive from militiamen, Nabil thinks about who was liable for all that happening saying ''Maybe I am responsible for that, maybe Sam is. Maybe George Bush is. Maybe all of

America. Maybe Saddam. It hardly matters. Most importantly, they'll be safer elsewhere'' (685).

3.6 Conclusion

All in all, Benedict, Noonan, Gallaway, and Prusher as American novelists fictionalized the Iraq War through the prisms of a variety of perspectives of female protagonists and expressed women's concerns and human suffering. The content from these writers explain that though the war ended as a historical period, its after-effects are not over for those who were either in Iraq as a soldier or were back home in the United States and lost their men or civilians in Iraq. These novels tend to be victim-based, because they were concerned more with people, passions and the pain inflicted by war and brought attention to their writings. Benedict tackled the issues of rape in the U.S army, Noonan engaged in the anti-war movement and woman activists, Gallaway draw attention to the reversion of women's rights in Iraq and their exploitation by either fundamentals or a masculine military culture, and Prusher explored the role of women as war correspondents in articulating and bringing to light the suffering of civilians generally and women in particular.

The novel's thematic contents resemble the depressed and melancholic lives that Julia Kristeva have theorized in her *Black Sun, Depression and Melancholia*. They depict that the Iraq War had a radical effect on women's writing and this is evident in the way they fictionalize how the individual lives and especially the lives of women and children were shattered by an indefinite number of misfortunes that weighed them down on a daily basis. These novelists had elements of tragedies and fictionalize a life that springs from war and destruction, from times of crisis that produces depression and melancholia, or in Kristeva's own words a ''devitalized existence.'' A life whose burden constantly seems unbearable, ready for a plunge of death, the absorption of sorrow, and of being a witness to the absurdity and meaninglessness of being. The war in Iraq as depicted in these novels attests to Julia Kristeva's conceptualization of the significance of meaning or its lack in the life of their central characters as ''For the speaking being life is a meaningful life; life is even the apogee of meaning. Hence if the meaning of life is lost, life can easily be lost: when meaning shatters; life no longer matters'' (6)An interesting question which arises is whether Iraq authors tackle different themes when they fictionalize the Iraq War compared with their British and American counterparts. The next chapter will attempt to answer this topic.

Chapter Four: The Iraq War in Iraqi and Arab-authored Novels

4.1Introduction

The Iraq War that toppled the repressive regime of Saddam Hussein has enabled Iraqi novelists to engage in a veritable burst of literary creativity. Writers who were once silenced by the regime or forced into exile are now expressing themselves through fictionalizing the life experience in Iraq during the terror reign of Saddam Hussien and most particularly after the American invasion. The sectarian violence that followed the occupation has also led to retrospection among émigrés and exiled Iraqi writers and a trend established in their literary outbursts is documenting the concepts of malice, violence, death, torture, radicalization, and a sense of existential despair. This trend embodies itself in multiple forms which could be categorized as individual, state and symbolic violence such as those that are conceptualized in Willem Schinkel's *Aspects of Violence* into private acts of violence, state monopolized violence, autotelic violence and systemic violence which Schinkel calls the 'reduction of human being' in its dehumanization of the other.[22]

In this chapter I attempt to explain how some Iraqi and Arab-authored novels including Sinan Antoon's *The Corpse Washer* (2013), Roodan Al Galidi's *Thirsty River* (2009), Inaam Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter* (2010), Iqbal Al Qazwini's *Zubaida's Window a Novel of Iraqi Exile* (2008) and Yasmina Khadra's *The Sirens of Baghdad* (2007) fictionally represent the Iraq War. I will draw on a number of theoretical tools from other disciplines and cultural methods of critique to critically analyse and show how these fictional works deal with various but also interrelated concepts of violence on both an individual and collective level and how this might lead to a dehumanization and reduction of being of the other. In what follows I will identify several thematic subject matters common to the novels. These themes ranges from various individual acts of violence, state and political violence to torture in the Abu Ghraib prisons; the appalling human cost of invasion, the sheer magnitude of the widespread violence the U.S invasion occasioned in Iraq, people's post-war radicalization feeding into terrorist groups, struggle and resistance, responses to diasporas and life in exile. I will analyse variously how the depiction of the invasion and its toppling of Saddam Hussein created in many novels a representation of the other as the enemy, the relationship between good and evil, the interconnectness between the private and public suffering of the Iraqi people, private acts of violence and state violence against civilians and consider how these often lead to a radicalization of young men. I will argue that these novels question and

[22]Willem, Schinkel. *Aspects of Violence: A Critical Theory.* London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010. P.45

contradict the narrative of the perpetrators of both acts of terrorism and the imperial US invasion of Iraq and these literary works forge important moments of violence as '*reduction of being'* as described by Schinkel and are conceived in my analysis of these novels. In all of the above contexts, this chapter attempts to probe how Iraqi novels might provide a useful framework to explain the complex pattern of violence, pain and suffering inflicted during the prelude, conduct and the aftermath of the American invasion of Iraq.

I seek to demonstrate that literary fiction is perhaps one of the most useful sites which can account for and respond to collective, ongoing, everyday forms of traumatizing violence and the suffering of Iraqis during and the invasion of Iraq. By bridging the public and the private pain and the imagined body whether national, social or individual life affected by war, Antoon, Khadra, Al Galidi, Al Qazwini and Kachachi use novels as a form of writing to provide an adequate and necessary account of Iraq War experience and enable us to recognize the sufferings of Iraqis. They fictionalize what happened in this period and employ an aesthetic account seeking to influence their reader's perspectives. They situate the events in Iraq and question the relationship between the private and the public suffering, the victim and perpetrator, the Arabs and Americans, the us versus them discourse and tackle the terror of the violence of war, terrorism, and resistance. The geographical areas where these novels were written stretches from Germany, France, and Holland to the United States but by Iraqi authors writing in numerous languages, showing how the U.S invasion of Iraq was not only affecting people in the region, rather the artists who lived far from the conflict. The authors had no prior combatant experience; except for Yasmina Khadra who served in the Algerian Army the rest are non-combatant writers who were not involved with the war itself. Sinan Antoon, Roodan Al-Galidi and Yasmina Khadra were already established writers, but Inaam Kachachi and Iqbal Al-Qazwini began writing novels during the Iraq War.

4.2Daily spectacles of violence in Baghdad, reconfiguring the concept of malice as a reduction of being: Sinan Antoon *The Corpse Washer* (2013)

In this section I will focus on daily spectacles of violence in Baghdad and reconfiguring of themes such as malice, abjection, reduction of being, and torn bodies in *The Corpse Washer* (2013) by Sinan Antoon and demonstrate how its protagonist comes to terms with trauma in his constant personal encounters with death as a corpse washer. This novel was written in Arabic by Sinan Antoon in 2012, an exiled Baghdad-born Christian and New York based professor, and then it was translated into English in 2013 by the author himself. The novel tells the story of Jawad Salim, an Iraqi Shiite artist tuned into a corpse washer against his own

will. Through his individual story we are shown day to day deaths and corpses piling up in Baghdad as a result of the invasion and the sectarian conflict between the Shiite and Sunnis. Jawad wanted to be a sculptor and not a corpse washer. However, the political and economic conditions during the invasion followed by the unleashing of a violent and an age-old rivalry, animosity and sectarian war between Shiite and Sunnis lead to rising death tolls, piling of corpses and unemployment in Baghdad. This dictated the fact that Jawad returned reluctantly to corpse washing, a profession he always avoided. Through his personal experiences we are given a panoramic view of the sectarian war and the everyday struggle of Iraqis with violence and death. Having to look death in the face every day, Jawad is the recipient of death. The heavy causalities inflicted in Baghdad demands that he returned to his father's tense and suffocating job of corspewashing. As he is accustomed to scenes of aftermath he describes his profession in these terms:

> If death is a post man, then I receive his letters every day. I am the one who opens carefully the bloodied and torn envelopes. I am the one who washes them, who removes the stamps of death and dries and perfumes them, mumbling what I don't entirely believe in. Then I wrap them carefully in white so they may reach the final reader the grave (3).

This line of work depresses him, isolates him from others and he increasingly alienated and estranged from himself, others and his city. He is a prisoner of death and the daily death he witnesses suffocates and draines him of life. In an attempt to flee from the civil war, he describes his melancholic loneliness

> I felt for the hundredth of time what a stranger I'd become in my hometown and how my alienation had intensified in these last years…but the stranger today was whoever lived in Rusafa and Karkh, Baghdad's two halves. Everyone in Baghdad felt like a stranger in his own country. Most people were drained, and the fatigue was clearly drawn on their faces (174-175).

On his way to Jordan, he reflectes on why there is no end to the war, what life was like before the invasion and how it has changed after, pondering:

> When would this war tire of slaughtering people and just quit? Not just stop to catch its breath before continuing to tear away at the country, but really quit. I always used to say that Baghdad in Saddam's time was a prison of mythic dimensions. Now the prison had fragmented into many cells with sectarian dimension, separated by high concrete walls and bloodied by barbed wires (175).

Jawad's probing questions about the war resemble Francois Flahault's interrogation of what *the inner springs of human malice* are in his volume entitled *Malice.* He asks specifically"Why wars are fought? Why do people torture their enemies?"[23]Flahault's conceptualizations of malice can explain the source of Jawad's inner despair answering why

[23]Flahault, Fransois. *Malice.* Trans. Liz Heron. London: Verso, 2003. p. 2

people intented to destroy, harm and kill.Flahault sees the question why wars are fought not as naïve but as a philosophical inquiry that needs a better philosophical formulation. Flahault believes that not only external but internal factors are also responsible for human malice and the concomitant desire to destroy. This may be due to bad values, ideologies, and principles that have not been sufficiently studied or understood. Flahault argues that in the last two centuries the contemporary thought that marks the progressive humanism and spirit of the Enlightment "tend to avoid the question of the inner spring of malice" (2). I need to quote him at length to show where the springs of malice lie:

> Indeed, it is not just bad principles that lead people to harm one another; other factors (such as the violence of relations of economic dominance, political disorganization, widespread incompactness and irresponsibility) are just as likely to have this consequence. (2-3).

However, in *Aspects of Violence*, Willem Schinkel highlights the intrinsic attractiveness of violence, the role of a will to violence and examines an autotelic (violence for the sake of violence) as a significant aspect of violence usually unrecognized in the social sciences of violence. [24] In the vein of Flahault and Schinkel, Jean Baudrillard in *The Transparency of Evil, Essays on Extreme Phenomena* seeks to understand why we can no longer speak of evil, and why good is no longer the opposite of evil, instead of examining why there is human malice everywhere around the world Baudrillard states that:

> All the talk is of minimizing of evil, the prevention of violence; nothing but security. This is the condescending and depressive power of good intentions. A power that can dream of nothing but rectitude in the world, that refuses even to consider a bending of evil, or an intelligence of evil (85-86).

Baudrillard, therefore, believes that one should concern him/herself with the real question "Where did evil go? And the answer is: everywhere because the anamorphosis of modern forms of Evil knows no bound: "In a society where it is no longer possible to speak of evil, Evil has metamorphosed into all the viral and terroristic forms that obsess us" (81). Baudrillard believes that the idealized view of the human relationships and the Enlightment belief in the natural attraction of the good that are the basis of today's discourse on the right of man is shallow, useless, and hypocritical because in this context "evil can manifestly be

[24] Willem Schinkel critiques both social sciences and philosophy because both disciplines in their definitions of violence have universalized only a limited number of forms and aspects of violence. Schinkel distinguishes private, state and structural violence as ideal typical forms of violence. He claims that any definition of violence is a matter of politics and this is why he ontologically defines violence as reduction of human being and that defining or not defining violence will lead to blind spots, as a result of which certain forms of violence go unnoticed (17).

dealt with only by means of evil''(85-86). According to Flahault historical, social, ideological, organizational and other conditions can trigger the logic of destruction, war and violence. Seeking to understand how the Nazis could have gone so far as to exterminate millions of human beings who were in no way engaged in warfare. By examining the moral triangle that exists between the perpetrator, the victim and the spectator, Flahault states that the spectator is horrified by the acts of the perpetrator or the villain and responds with compassion to the victim, the spectator identifies with the victim and thereby idealises himself. This is what Mark Seltzer in 'Wound Culture: Trauma in the Pathological Public Sphere' famously called a ''wound culture' that operates in society today: the public fascination with torn and opened bodies and torn and opened persons, a collective gathering around shock, trauma, and the wound''(3) which characterizes the public sphere defined by this wound culture as a ''pathological public sphere,'' in which ''the very notion of sociality is bound to the excitations of the torn and opened body, the torn and exposed individual, as public spectacle''(3-4). Seltzer believes the body of the victim is not only a collective spectacle ''But one of the crucial sites where private desire and public space cross''(3). Here the public are occupied by individuals who cherish witnessing the wound of others because they experience an erotic pleasure or an "alternation between a sympathetic-masochistic identification with the victim and the sadistic pleasure that such identification might cover" (272). Seltzer's theory confirms Flahault's statement that the forces of life as well as malice are fed from the same source, and this dichotomy exists in the dualistic nature of human beings. Man by nature is more likely to be intrinsically fascinated with the spectacle of evil and destruction as Flahault puts it ''Instead of acknowledging their internal problems and their own limitations, democratic societies are increasingly looking for perpetrators and villains to demonize and thereby idealizing themselves by giving themselves a good conscience'' (x). This is the reason provided by Flahault and is explained by Chantal Mouffe in the preface to *Malice*.

Flahault's conceptualization of malice, Schinkel's autotelic violence, Baudrillard's' evil and Seltzer's wound culture, all suggest the fact that the public including everybody is fascinated with the torn and open body of the victim. This fascination with the spectacle of violence is also evocative of the concept of 'abject', a term conceptualized by the French philosopher Julia kristeva in *The Power of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (1982). In the context of postmodern thought, Kristeva dissects the idea of ''abjection'' by examining the act of witnessing horror and all that it entails in terms of traumatic effects on the subject. Kristeva examines the human reaction to horror and the subsequent breakdown it entails in

meaning caused by the loss of the distinction between self and other and subject and object. Kristeva's primary example for what causes such reaction is in our confrontation with the corpse (the body of the victim) which according to her traumatically reminds us of our own mortality.

In *the Corpse Washer*, this abjection, malice, evil and wound culture characterizes Jawad's horrific tale which like his heart is "full of death." The narrator tells us that the book is shaped by death. Lamenting and bemoaning the enormous destruction of Baghdad. Corspewashing is no ordinary profession for him. The traumatic events of war and the many corpses he washes and shrouds torture his soul at night causing him insomnia and nightmarish dreams. Jawad compares himself to a pomegranate tree that grows just outside the Mghasyl (washroom) for the tree is drinking the water of death budding and blossoming, bearing fruit and growing bigger every day. Jawad metaphorically says ''all my branches have been cut, broken and buried with the dead. My heart has become a shriveled pomegranate beating with death and falling every second into a bottomless pit"(184). Like him, the pomegranate's roots were there in the washroom in the depth of hell.

Jawad's life as a corpse washer attests to Julia Kristeva's claims that our confrontation with the corpse and its eliciting of reaction in us traumatically shows us our own death. Jawad witnesses sites of death, horror and corpses constantly that embodies the notion of Kristeva's abject. This literalizes a breakdown of the distinction that was essential for the establishment of his identity and what he is confronted with when he experiences in witnessing sites of trauma or the human corpse. This uncannily reminds him his own eventual death made plain real. As Kristeva puts it:

> The corpse, seen without God and outside of science, is the utmost of abjection. It is death infecting life. Abject. It is something rejected from which one does not part, from which one does not protect oneself as from an abject. Imaginary uncanniness and real threat, it beckons to us and ends up engulfing us (4).

Kristeva claims that in the presence of death and the corpse we understand, react or accept and refuse what the corpse is, it is the most sickening of waste that becomes a borderline that encroaches upon everything and therefore, as she puts it "It is no longer I who expel, 'I' is expelled. The border has become an abject"(4). *The Corpse Washer* is an excellent reworking of Kristeva's conception of abjection where the abject is encountered by the protagonist when he enters the Mghasyl (washing room) and witnesses the corpses of the victims of war. Jawad's life is breaking down. He is both drawn to and repelled by the abject, both fascinated and disgusted. His feelings of fear, adrenalin and nausea are the psychological and the biological recognition of the presence of abjection. The impact of his many encounters is so

powerful he is devastated. It is at this point and afterwards that he confronts the horrors of death, corpses, and mutilated, charred, and beheaded bodies. These confrontations threaten and undermine his state of being, sense of existence and meaning. The paragraph below graphically encapsulates his everyday trauma that engulfs him:

> Dozens of corpses start coming from every direction. Some come through the main door, others from the side door which leads to the small garden. Some come out of the storage room. Some wear nothing but a cloth around the waist. Others are shrouded and trying to shed their shrouds as they approach the washing bench. Corpses begin to wash one another and others stand in line around the bench awaiting their turns. Their numbers multiply and they fill the entire Mghasyl, leaving no place for me. I go out into the street, but throngs of living corpses are surrounding the place, filling the streets sidewalks. I start to suffocate (138).

Jawad, the protagonist of *the Corpse Washer*, has no alternatives but to resort to corpsewashing to earn his living in Baghdad. This job brings Jawad to a low and degraded situation where he finds his life to be despicable. However it was not his choice, rather it was his fate to have such a miserable condition. Jawad is in dreadful conditions. He has always avoided this career but the reality of the war forces him to face corpses which he considers as abject. His abjection is evident in his confrontation with the corpses which he fears and avoids because it makes him feel helpless and alienated. This abjection is a consistent feature of Sinan Antoon's *The Corpse Washer*. Jawad as a former artist but now as a corpsewasher is threatened by something that is not part of him in terms of identity and non-identity. He expresses his abjection succinctly, when he remembers the first dead person he washed with his father saying ''I still remember how cold and strange the first body I helped my father wash and shroud felt. It was an old man in his sixties. His skin was wrinkled and yellowed'' (27) which caused him ''I vomited that day and felt sick for days'' (22). For this corpse reminded him ''of the fish my mother used to put on the kitchen table to clean before cooking. I was curious to touch the fish's skin but felt a mixture of fascination and disgust afterwards''(27). He describes exactly how he felt at this moment saying ''I spent a long time looking at the fish as it lay on its side. With its open mouth and thick lips, its head looked like a human head, crying out, demanding to be returned to the water. The eye, too, was open looking into our eyes. We, who were about to devour it''(27). Jawad is propelled into a world of abjection where his identity disintegrates threatening his conception of his identity. No matter how hard he tries to exclude his abjection it still exists and traumatizes him in multiple nightmarish dreams. Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection best defines the status of Jawad's burden when she says ''The abject has only one quality of the object and that is being opposed to'' (2). As Jawad was always unwilling to do corspewashing, always attempting to

refuse his job and even flee the country. But the reality of the war forces him to accept what he reviled most.

Jawad's existential problem lies in his encounters with numerous deaths which are accompanied by a sense of nonexistence. His loss of his loved ones brings feelings of powerlessness and deterioration in his living conditions. Jawad's life entirely changed because of the numerous conflicts in Iraq. His brother Ameer was killed in al-Faw battle in Iran-Iraq war. His father died the day America invaded Iraq. His communist uncle Sabir is forced to leave Iraq and go to Germany because of his political views. His fiancé left him for good because of breast cancer caused by depleted uranium used in weaponry by Americans in the first Gulf War. In the run up to the American invasion, Jawad acerbically comments on their lives: ''but we got ready for wars as if we were welcoming a visitor we knew very well, hoping to make his stay a pleasant one''(61). After the death of his father they drive his body to bury him at Karbala, but on the way the Americans stop them, check them and suspect them as suicide bombers. One of his father's apprentice poignantly complains ''Looks like these liberators want to humiliate us''(68). What's more, Jawad is deeply disturbed when he sees that American troops are stationed at the Martyr's Monument in Baghdad and have turned it into a barracks. Jawad is not happy with what the American troops do in Iraq: ''I was deeply offended and angered when I saw the American soldiers and armored vehicles occupying a place which symbolized the victims of war victims such as my brother and thousands of others. My uncle said it was a premeditated insult, calculated for its symbolic significance. It was not a matter of logistics''(95). Thus one can see how Jawad, like many Iraqis, perceived the invasion not only as a destruction of Iraq but as an insult, which in Schinkel's terms humiliate them and reduce their being, thus mortifying and degrading their symbolic pride.

The Corpse Washer illuminates how the invasion, like a storm opened a Pandora's Box of death, traumatic violence, destruction and a reduction of the value of life for Jawad and other people like him in Baghdad. As a fictional representation of the Iraq war it shows the trope of countless murder, killing, kidnapping and suicide bombing. One significant example of historical event which is fictionalized in this novel is the suicide bomber who attacked al-Mutanabbi Street in Baghdad, killing more than thirty people who sell and buy books there. Jawad describes this event: ''I saw the scenes of the aftermath that we have become accustomed to after each attack: puddles of blood, human remains, scattered shoes and slippers, smoke, and people standing in shock, wiping their tears or covering their faces''(161). Jawad struggles to find a rational explanation for growing acts of terrorism

reflecting deeply "I know that humans can reach a stage of anger and despair in which their lives have no value, and no other life or soul has value either. But men have been slaughtering others and killing themselves for ideas and symbols since time immemorial; what is new are the numbers of bodies becoming bombs" (162). These bodies are what Seltzer defines as a pathological public spectacle, Kristeva calls abjection, Flahault calls human malice and Schinkel calls a reduction of being all summed up in the narrative of Jawad.

4.3Us-Versus-Them mind-set and demonizing the other: Inaam Kachachi *The American Granddaughter* (2010)

In this section I focus on the Us-versus-Them discourse, the demonizing of the other, the deep division between Western and Iraqi characters as well as the conflicting role of identity of translators who operated in war zones and the growing antagonistic images of Americans represented in Iraqi fiction and employ such theories of us versus them as are conceptualized in Moira Inghilleri's *Translators in War Zones* and Rasheed El-Enany's *Occidentalism, East and Western Encounters in Arabic Fiction* in my interpretation of Inaam Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter*(2010).

Rasheed El-Enany argues that the encounters between Americans and Arabs have stirred Arab authors into literary and polemical responses which seek to describe and understand the nature of such an encounter.[25] Rasheed El-Enany argues that the representation of Americans in Arab literary works "has undergone radical changes from positive to negative." Because according to El-Enany

> As the United States emerged as a superpower at the end of the Second World War with growing interests in the Middle East...the image of the United States in the Arab World on the whole and consequently in its representations in literary conditions began to change radically towards the negative (153-154).

In this context one can understand why Inaam Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter* represents the United States as a neo-colonial and neo-imperialist power mindful only of its capitalist interests. The novel was written in Arabic by Inaam Kachachi who lives in France and was translated into English by Nariman Youssef in 2010. The novel tells the story of Zeina Behnam, an Iraqi-American girl who along with the American troops returns to her war-torn country to undertake a job as an interpreter for the US Army and finds herself

[25]Contrary to focusing on how Arabs are represented in Western literature, Rasheed El-Enany reverses Edward Saeed's *Orientalism* and focuses on how Westerners are represented in Arabic fiction. Something he defines as *Occidentalism*. See El-Enany, Rasheed. *Arab Representations of the Occident, East-West Encounters in Arabic Fiction.* London: Routledge, 2006.

tormented by her conflicting allegiances. Through this character the novelist conceptualizes the predominant us/ them attitude present in Iraq during the invasion period and after. Her traditional grandmother Rahma Girgis Saoer, the only remaining family member in Iraq, disapproves of her involvement with the occupying forces. The novel reveals Zeina's painful inner struggle against a backdrop of a war that divides Iraqis and Americans into a Manichean us versus them and how her country is being torn apart because of the invasion. In this novel the Iraqis see the Americans as a repressive world power, hostile to their legitimate aspiration. Through the characterization of Muhaymen, a Mahdi Militia man to whom the protagonist Zeina falls in love, Inaam Kachachi depicts an anti-western attitude from an intellectual position showing Iraq's antagonistic feelings about the American policy in their country. This antagonism is not against what the west stands for, but what the west has done in the region in their political undertaking particularly since the war against terror and the invasion of Iraq. Therefore, *The American Granddaughter* testifies to what El-Enany states that "the hardening of American policies in the region and globally since the events of the 11 September 2001 and the subsequent invasion of Iraq in 2003 will have done nothing to change the declining image of the United States in the Arab consciousness, and its literary representations" (153-154).

The American Granddaughter shows that the violence of the American military intervention further increased the antagonized image of Americans in Iraq. The life of its protagonist, Zeina, is radically changed by the impact of the violent events occurring in Iraq under the occupation and in her vulnerable position as an interpreter for the US army. Because of her dual citizenship as an American Iraqi, she can neither belong to America nor to Iraq, her identity is torn in-between. Going to Iraq as an interpreter with the US Army was a tempting but also challenging job for exiled Iraqis; they did so for numerous reasons: to improve their financial status, to be closer to their people in Iraq, and to discover what they thought about the invasion and what was going on in Iraq. Zeina narrates the events that followed the invasion, showing how the Iraqi interpreters were always under threat of being assassinated since they were labelled as spies or mercenaries working with the Americans. The author expresses the mixed feelings of Iraqis towards the American forces and Iraqis who interpreted for them, stereotyping Zeina as a traitor, a collaborator and an inside enemy. Her grandmother looks at her contemptuously, and thinks that she is led astray and needs to be re-educated. Rahma sees her as a fledgling collaborator who helps the invading forces as a local guide and wants to put her back on the righteous path and correct the direction of her compass.

This vulnerable position Zeina finds herself in is best captured in ‘‘Translators in War Zones, Ethics under Fire’’ by Moira Inghilleri showing that Iraqi translators who worked with the American forces were vulnerable and often faced difficulties in Iraq. Arguing that ‘‘translators have historically been viewed as ‘prodigal figures’ or returned natives, earning trust or suspicion from the other participants in interpreted exchanges and the wider community’’(207). This is Zeina’s predicament in Baghdad because she cannot tell her grandmother that she is a hired translator but pretends that she is a United Nations observer monitoring American transgressions. As she says ‘‘the pain in her voice made me fear that her heart would stop beating if I told her the truth. So I lied to my Grandmother Rahma. I couldn’t have done otherwise. I told her I was US representative observing the operations of the US Army among Iraqi civilians’’(60).

On one hand Zeina has to stay loyal and professional in her practice of interpreting for the US forces. On the other hand she wants to prove her fidelity to the Iraqi people. Zeina, an American-Iraqi, is in limbo, something in-between her Americanness and her Iraqiness, torn between her conflicting loyalties. Additionally, as an interpreter for the US Army she has to be a reliable person because her ethical and political judgements are as central to her task as her language competence. The challenges of interpreting for the US Army are explained by Moira Inghilleri as:

> Translators, particularly those working in conflict situations, operate under social/interactional conditions that can disrupt or disturb the means by which a space for notions of transcultural consciousness, humanity or ethical responsibility is realized. The political realities and military strategies of the ‘war on terror’ and the occupation of Iraq have been characterized by misrecognition of the other, in the persons of Muslims, detained prisoners, Iraqi civilians, and translators themselves(209).

Given this context, the story of Zeina fictionally and eloquently expresses what people’s reaction was to both US invading forces and the Iraqis involved with them as translators by expressing the fact that ‘‘Things were still unclear during those chaotic first few months. People were still recovering from the earthquake-like shock, still unsure whether to welcome those who’d arrived in tanks or to spit on them’’(61). The novel reveals that killing and targeting translators was common practice for the insurgents during the years of the invasion of Iraq. The insurgents demonized translators as traitors and villains and were considered as the enemy within. Zeina describes Iraqi’s antagonistic attitudes towards her and her comrades: ‘‘Can’t you see that they hate you even more than they hate us?’ Deborah was telling me half the truth. The whole truth was that...they saw me as a traitor’’(144). Nevertheless, Zeina as a military interpreter sees herself as a liberator helping Iraqis to

rebuild their country. However, for the Iraqis and even her own relatives, she is still an American and is treated as an outsider. Therefore, she has to bear the growing mistrust among her Iraqi people. Moira Inghilleri aptly describes this antagonist attitude towards translators ‘‘as a social pariahs an outcast group perceived by many Americans and Iraqis alike as the enemy within’’(212).

Zeina’s story shows the burden of interpreters who had no safe guard, no escape from the personal, professional and physical risks involved in their career. Towards the end of the novel, Zeina is disillusioned by her experience in Iraq. She can neither return to the United States of America nor cope with Iraq, saying that ‘‘My life was broken in two: ‘before Baghdad’ and ‘After Baghdad’’(145). In a letter to Muhaymen she reproaches herself that ‘‘I couldn’t be anything but American. My Iraqiness had abandoned me long ago. It fell through a hole in my pocket and rolled away like an old coin. ‘‘I tried to be both but failed’’ (163). Zeina is ultimately devastated, joyless, angry, and defeated. She sees herself as ‘‘no longer an ordinary American but a woman from a faraway and ancient place, her hand clutching to burning coal of a story like no other’’ (3). Toward the end of the novel, Zeina finds herself neither as an Iraqi nor an American, this is due to the stark contrast between the Iraqis and the Americans and the prevalent us versus them attitude in Iraq and particularly among her relatives who make her feel tainted by her dual nationality looking at herself not only as a demonized other, but dehumanized to ‘‘A dog with two homes’...I couldn’t get my old life back, and I couldn’t adapt to my life in the zone. I was a dog with two homes but unable to feel at home in either’’(147).

4.4 Abu Ghraib Prison torture and abuse, individual or state violence?

In this part I draw attention to the subject matter of torture and abuse of Iraqi detainees in two novels. In my readings of Rodaan Al Galidi’s novel *Thirsty River*(2009)and Inaam Kachachi’s *The American Granddaughter* I examine the blurred boundary between individual and state violence drawing on Kelly Oliver and Willem Schinkel’s theories on torture. The two novels rematerialize the concept of torture in which American prison guards brutalized Iraqis detainees in Abu Ghraib Prison in Baghdad. These two novels show that torture is a form of violence where the thin line between state and private violence is often blurred and this sort of violence as defined by Willem Schinkel and are depicted in these fictional narratives is a form of dehumanization and reduction of being. The photos of torture in Abu Ghraib prison exemplify the thin relation between a state monopolized and legitimate violence sometimes leading to an illegitimate private act of violence. According to Schinkel

there are times when state violence takes the shape of private violence for example when policemen and prison guards make use of legitimized forms of private violence in their execution of state violence. Their violence will usually only be recognized as private violence the moment it becomes excessive and exceeds the bounds of the legitimated. When these people exceed in their private violence they are held accountable for their actions. According to Schinkel the photographs of torturing Abu Ghraib prisoners was a kind of violence aimed to reduce human being, claiming that

> The thin balance between state violence and private violence is in such a case exposed for instance by the strategy of the American army to stress that these soldiers were not operating under orders but acted on their own imitative, thus making it appear wholly as a case of private violence of a few deranged individuals (198).

In this case, what is political has become personal, and the systemic violence allows individuals engaging in their sadistic practice of violence and torture in order to reduce the being of the other. In *The American Granddaughter*, for example, the protagonist Zeina is disillusioned when she watches the pictures of Abu Ghraib prison broadcasted on Fox news. The novel seeks to capture the experience of war as difficult, chaotic, destructive and dehumanizing. These photos have a devastating effect on the protagonist. As the violence escalates and the insurgents ruthlessly increases their attacks that demoralize the US soldiers, Zeina explains why this happened

> The brutality of our soldiers increased in direct proportion to our losses. The sight of stretchers carried in and out of the clinic became a daily routine, but I still couldn't get used to it. It was in this atmosphere of fear, with death lurking around every corner, that the case of Abu Ghraib dropped on us (139).

This is an interesting passage of the novel. The protagonist here shows that at the chaotic times of war the soldier's mental state—such as stress, grief, loss of friend, fear, and exhaustion have contributed to their evil deeds. Or perhaps it was because high officials and the system might have allowed, tolerated or even encouraged abuse and mistreatment of prisoners. For example, after the outbreak of these photos, Zeina is in despair and disappointed by her fellow soldiers' quick and easy condemnation and justification of this act. She becomes furious and shows the reaction of her fellow soldiers in her unit. There were two types of reactions:

> Some were resentful, and others were trying to find justifications. They said that such things were done by ignorant, low ranking soldiers, some called them stupid for allowing photos to be taken. Another answered in a deep voice that those prisoners must've been violent criminals to be treated that way (140).

This showed how some soldiers condemned the act and saw it as a result of ignorance of low-ranking soldiers while others saw it as justified because those were terrorist suspects.

Schinkel says that US officials called them 'deranged individuals' and to the US military their violence acts did not represent the American Forces. The photos of torture and humiliation numb and shock Zeina. She is so sad not only because of the a violations of human right, domestic and international law and or the Geneva Convention but because those who abused them were female soldiers who used racial and sexual violence in abusing and torturing Iraqi men. This makes her anger bitterer. She cannot believe that a female soldier who could drag a prisoner behind her like a dog on a leash could get into the US army. This act of witnessing crimes of war and crimes against humanity is an epiphany moment for Zeina because it is evocative of the brutality of Saddam's regime in torturing her father. She is weighed down with shame and guilt saying that "the real protagonist wasn't pain; it was humiliation" (139-140).

In *Women as Weapons of War, Iraq, Sex, and the Media* (2007) Kelly Oliver conceptualizes similar concerns such as those asked by Zeina in *The American Granddaughter* why is it that the images of women abusers from Abu Ghraib generated so much press and media speculation, and why women's involvement in Iraq continues to haunt debates over interrogation techniques, torture, and American sentiments towards the war. And what aspects of culture could give rise to young female soldiers, who abuse, even torture others for fun, and what cultural meaning or lack of meaning could have resulted in 'guiltless glee of sexual abuse at Abu Ghraib' by women prison guards. Oliver's elucidation is that:

> This pornographic way of looking plays an essential role in waging war; and how historically it has been used, even developed, within the context of colonial and imperialist violence. In this regard...the American occupation of Iraq follows in a long line of colonial and imperialist ventures executed by the "West" in the "East" (2)

Oliver aptly argues that women are used as a threatening weapon of war by the military to 'soften up prisoners' as an interrogation tools. Like Mark Seltzer's *Wound Culture*, Kelly Oliver argues that while these photos are shocking they also look very familiar in that it is the popular culture that normalizes this 'pornographic' way of looking at sex and violence.

In contrast to *The American Granddaughter,* Rodaan Al Galidi's *Thirsty River*, devotes two entire chapters to the photos of the Abu Ghraib torture and abusing of prisoners under the titles "On the way to Abu Ghraib" and "Pyramid of Naked Arses". This novel fictionalizes these images of torture and their effects on people with a sense of black humour and sarcasm. The torture in Abu Ghareeb prison turns one of the character named Dzajil into a world famous celebrity as a pornographic spectacle. Dzajil is tortured there as a leader of the militia party known as The Army of God and the Party of Heaven. Dzajil had tattooed an eagle shape

on his arse and when the photos of Abu Ghraib went viral, members of his family could immediately recognize him through his eagled tattoo on his bottom. They recognize his tattoo and this turn him into an icon. One of his nephews is so cheerful to see his naked body broadcast live on television he says‘‘The arse of my uncle is now famous all over the world, just like Elvis Presley! We have a world famous member of our family’’(Al Galidi, 309).Though the torture Dzajil has endured had weakened him, after his release from Abu Ghraib prison, Dzajil becomes a famous national leader. Later during demonstrations by the Party of Heaven against the Americans, people held up photos of Dzajil's arse and Dzajil himself hands the photos of his arse out to journalists and political leaders who come to visit him.

This media spectacularization of the eagle tattoo on Dzajil's bottom shows the world how sadly Iraqi prisoners were hooded and stacked up nakedly in the shape of a pyramid. The US soldiers treated them as less than human being, reduced Iraqi detainees to what Gerry Kearns in his "Bare Life and Political Violence" calls a ‘‘Bare life’’ which, according to him, is at the heart of colonialism. Bare life, as Gerry Kearns explains, occurs when the life of colonized people are considered as redundant, not worthy of living and not treated as a political subject but reduced to a mere biological life by the colonizing power. Gerry Kearns describes this pernicious form of biopolitics as a 'bare life' by stating that‘‘When people are held without charge and abused in the pursuit of evidence in a war on terror, that sets aside international law and human rights, then truly some lives are being treated as if they were either not worth living or not worth protecting’’(7). In other words, when the colonizing state treats the colonized people as mere biological life and not as a political subjects, the colonized turn to violence in opposing their reduction of being to a bare life. I will elaborate this theme in the forthcoming section on revenge, radicalization and terrorism.

This is how, in wartime, the mix between state and private violence becomes blurred in relatively horrific cases such as Abu Ghraib. Such forms of extreme violence have been primarily understood by Willem Schinkel as a form of dehumanization. His ideal typical forms of violence are classified into private violence; typically it is not legitimized and is not based on the authority of state. This violence is not deployed by the state but reducible to one or more individuals. It is a prototypical form of violence and concerns a self-maintenance of an individual over against one or more individuals by means of the negation of the being of the other and is unjustifiable. Here individuals subsist by negating the violated by means of violence (175). But state violence is ‘‘largely dependent on the legitimate use of violence, the self-reproduction of the state entails a self-reproduction of state violence’’(170). Thus

violence is at the core of state's origin and is justified. The violence of the state consists not only merely of police violence, but also of the force of law in general, and the procedural violence that is inherent to the proper functioning of the state"(166). This violence is also highlighted by Slavoj Zizek as systemic violence which he calls ''the often catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political system'' (1). In its ideal typical forms of private acts of violence, state, interstate, violence of war, structural and symbolic violence Schinkel argues that all empirical definition of violence cannot wholly capture what violence amounts to in social process. Therefore, a redefinition that can be an adequate account of what violence is without highlighting certain aspects and blotting others out is needed. Hence Schinkel defines violence ontologically as *a reduction of being* (45). Furthermore, we have seen how both novels depict this reduction of human being and how the main protagonists feel and think about the release of those pictures.

Both *The American Granddaughter* and *Thirsty River* reckon with what happened in Abu Ghraib and point out it was an act of evil. They help readers gain an insight and understand that dehumanizing and abusing others was made possible because of the evil of war. The two novels convey that torture was an experience too difficult to articulate and too hard to describe. They illustrate Schinkel's notion of dehumanization manifested in the torture of human beings. This exposes the fact that torture is a deliberate attempt to destroy and dehumanize conducted by people who are in a situation that allows no sympathy whatsoever with their victims. The 'pornographic' images of torture in Abu Ghraib are depicted in these novels as a form of violence and a process of dehumanizing, humiliating, and reducing Iraqi *others* to an object, representing a *reduction of human being.* One can deduce that only through reducing their being into objects or into bare life the US soldiers could have tortured and humiliated those Iraqi detainees.

4.5The role of television and war images and their impacts on ordinary people

In this section I focus on the role of television and mass media in representing the spectacle of the Iraq War and its impacts on ordinary people mainly in Iqbal Al-Qazwini's *Zubaida's Window*(2008),Yasmina Khadra's *The Sirens of Baghdad* (2006) and *The Corpse Washer.* For this I draw on Susan Sontag's *Regarding the Pain of Others*, and other scholar's conceptualization of the role of mass media spectacularization of atrocity and the suffering and how this could ultimately lead to the traumatization of ordinary people or in a cry for revenge. I also draw on Stef Craps's *Postcolonial Witnessing Trauma Out of Bounds* to maintain that war has a traumatic effect on people who despite the fact that were far removed

from the conflict zone still feel deeply affected by it such as the exiled Iraqi protagonist of *Zubaida's Window* and demonstrate why it is important to recognize the traumas of non-Western nations.

Three out of the five novels under discussion focus on the role of mass media in spectacularization of powerful and persuasive images of the Iraq War and its subsequent impact in terms of traumatization of ordinary people who watched them. For example, Zubaida, the fifty year old protagonist in of *Zubaida's Window* (2008) is shocked and numbed by the catastrophic images of the invasion of Iraq broadcasted live in her television. The novel was written in Arabic by German based Iraqi novelist Iqbal Al Qazwini and is translated into English by Azza El Kholy and Amira Nowaira. It is told from the perspective of Zubaida, an exiled Iraqi woman who lives in Germany. The novel juxtaposes the individual despair of Zubaida with the collective suffering of the Iraqi people and the gory realities of the US invasion of Iraq aired live on world media channels. Seeing the footage of the war revivifies Zubaida's anxiety of her émigré life in Germany as an Iraqi refugee who was forced to leave her country because of the tyrannical rule of Saddam Hussien. Zubaida's only way of seeing her country is through her television screen which is her only window to recollect the painful episodes of life experienced under former dictatorial regime, during the U.S invasion and the sectarian violence that followed the invasion. She is so preoccupied with the invasion she cannot stop watching the coverage on her television. The following paragraph shows her individual despair:

> For almost a year now, it has transmitted nothing but images of Iraq and especially Baghdad, drowning in a sea of expectations and possibilities: death, annihilation, destruction, burning oil, the smell of gunpowder, the remains of dead bodies, and the wolves coming from the border deserts to devour the corpses of soldiers and non-soldiers alike. She cannot bear to look at the pictures of Baghdad burning, and is equally terrified by the image of Baghdad dead and still (Al-Qazwini, 106-107).

Zubaida's Window depicts television as a communication technology continuing to play an important role in the war's execution. The Iraq War was covered 24/7 live in many of the world's TV networks. The novel shows how the coverage of the war was heavily absorbed by mass media around the world especially in its initial months and the beginning of the war. The novel shows the impact this coverage could have on people in constructing a picture in their heads and how this picture could continue to haunt, alienate and traumatize them later. This emotional effect of media coverage of war on civilians like Zubaida is discussed by a number of scholars. For example in *Cinema Wars,* Douglas Kellner provides an insightful

assessment of the post 9/11 media, films and American ideologies in the new millennium.[26] He states that:

> Despite attempts by the US and its allies to control images and information in the Iraq War, the invasion, occupation, insurgency, civil war, and chaos opened a Pandora's Box visible to an expanding global media. The Iraq Horror Show was documented in digital camera and video, film, and military blogs, as well as print news articles and critiques, often distributed throughout the world on the internet(199).

In the same context, Sean Aday, in *The Real War Will Never Get on Television* examines the way journalists and reporters covered the Gulf War and the Iraq War.[27] One important difference he discusses is that while in the first Gulf War the American military heavily censored the embedded media, in the Iraq War they loosened censorship restrictions, therefore reporters had more access, better communication technologies and less censorship to air casualties of the war. Aday observes that:

> Important technological advances in the visual medium, most notable mobile satellite video, allowed reporters to get closer to the fighting and, if they chose to, show the gory reality of modern warfare to their audiences back home. Second, changes in the military policy allowed journalists to be embedded with military units and have even better battlefield access than their civil war counterparts (142).

For that reason, Sean demonstrates that The Iraq War offered the press an opportunity to provide a more comprehensive portrait of battle. Hence one can see how news coverage took advantage of this increasing battlefield access to show audiences not only the exciting nature of American military power, but also the bleak ramifications of its use. This is precisely how Zubaida observes uncensored access to the gory reality of the Iraq War. *Zubaida's Window* elucidates the fact that people are more likely to remember war long after the events because of the visual images of war coverage. Zubaida shows that in the twenty-first century globalized media entertainment television continues to be one of the dominant communication technologies for war coverage and it is still a very useful tool to obtain information. Television can generate a complete portrayal of war. But it also can have a distressing effect on those who are concerned with the consequences, as Zubaida is repelled and made uncomfortable by watching the suffering of Iraqis and raises ethical questions of what effects showing causality imagery might have on watchers. For example this paragraph expresses Zubaida's despair, hopelessness, and plight as an ordinary exiled Iraqi woman who perceives the grim events of the invasion and its ramification:

---

[26]Kellner, Douglas. *Cinema Wars Hollywood Film and Politics in the Bush-Cheney Era.* Wiley Blackwell A John Wiley and Sons, Ltd Publication, 2010.

[27] Aday, Sean ''The Real War Will Never Get on Television''. Eds. Seib, Philip. *Media and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century.* Palgrave Macmilan, 2005. P.142.

> In front of her eyes, Baghdad is being destroyed one stone after the next. The planes are not responsible. They simply burn away the traces of destruction began decades earlier. They have come to get rid of the evidence of a hidden plan to destroy her country. This was the place she has always dreamed of living in, running away from, and returning to(2).

The media portrayals of the initial bombardment of Baghdad had a devastating impact on Zubaida as is narrated from third person point of view. ‘‘The sky rages with a sand storm as red as blood. Satellite correspondents transmit fresh news, and Zubaida smells the odor of split blood’’ (4). Thus obliterating her dream of the possibility of returning to her home after the removal of the oppressive regime and the destruction the invasion occasioned in Baghdad.

In her *Regarding the Pain of Others* Susan Sontag has pointing out that photography of war makes suffering loom larger, and because suffering and misfortune are too vast, and epic these days, they show something that needs to be seen, bringing a painful reality together.[28] Sontag confirms ‘‘wars are now living room sights and sounds’’ (18). Zubaida sees the war in Iraq as a catastrophic event that seems eerily like its representation. Photography and images of atrocity unmask the dehumanization of war, as Sontag claims: ‘‘the scale of war’s murderousness destroys what identifies people as individuals, even as human beings’’ (55). Sontag also believes that the more distant the place is, the more possible it is to have full frontal coverage of war. Her post-colonial argument is that the western media refrain from showing images of causality in the West but are more prone to show violence in exotic places, meaning in the third world. Sontag states that ‘‘Victims, grieving relatives, consumers of news, all have their nearness to or distance from war, the frankest representation of war, and of disaster injured bodies, are of those who seem most foreign, therefore least likely to be known’’(55).

Though Zubaida is far removed from Iraq, she is severely affected by the war on an emotional and psychological level. According to Sontag, while ‘‘narratives can make you understand war, photography can do something else: they haunt us’’ (80). In Sontag’s opinion because there is too much suffering and injustice in this world, there is too much remembering and accordingly ‘‘we don’t get it, we truly can’t imagine what it was like. We can’t imagine how dreadful, how terrifying war is; and how normal it becomes. Can’t understand, can’t imagine’’ (113). However, the protagonist of *Zubaida’s Window* reverses Sontag’s conclusion because as an exiled woman, she is shocked by the implication of the US planes bombing Baghdad and what it could mean to the Iraqis. After the fall of Baghdad

[28]Sontag, Susan. *Regarding the Pain of Others.* London: Hamish Hamilton, Penguin Group, 2003. P.18.

> She tries finding a balance between patience and inaction, luck and possibility, between forgetfulness and awareness, between desire and impossibility, between attentiveness and lethargy, and between understanding the facts and justifying them, but she reaches no conclusion (116).

Zubaida testifies to what Jean Baudrillard in *The Spirit of Terrorism* deftly describes as the state of people watching global traumatic events by saying that "what stays with us, above all else, is the sight of the images. The impact of the images, and their fascination are necessarily what we retain, since images are, whether we like it or not, our primal scene" (26). Al Qazwini describes Zubaida's state as follows: "It seems to Zubaida that the whole world has gathered in Iraq, that nothing existed outside its borders. Pictures of death unroll on the TV screen as she watches, feeling confused about whether she should continue watching. She feels rather dizzy, her breathing becomes increasingly irregular. She longs for some fresh air to clear her smoke-chocked lungs" (2).

In addition *Zubaida's Window* unveils the fact that traumatic events and its extreme forms such as invasion not only affect people with close proximity, but even those far removed from its immediate threat. This concern has also been examined by Paul Crosthwaite in *Trauma, Postmodernism and the Aftermath of World War II*,[29] whose thesis states that "in the case of truly colossal catastrophes, even those individuals remote in time and space, and with only the dimmest grasp of the event, are nonetheless inescapably subject to its realignment of the parameters of speech and thought"(26). Crosthwaite shows that large scale devastation, wars and terrorist insurgencies could manifest themselves to the literary imagination and reiterates that the wars in the past and those in the present will continue to be reflected in literary imagination. Crosthwaite anticipates that the emerging wave of fictional responses to 9/11 attacks and other traumatic catastrophe like the Iraq War, will continue to inspire fiction that may trace the harrowing experience in the present and future writing of fiction. Though Paul Crosthwaite states that "President Bush and Prime-Minister Tony Blair similarly strove to align the invasion of Iraq in March 2003 with a powerful narrative of the United States and Great Britain's Second World War as an epic struggle of liberty against tyranny"(176). Up till now these novels that have emerged from Iraq War do not portray the conflict as an epic, mythic or heroic struggle; but rather as a gruesome and horrific episode for Iraqis and hardly ever acknowledged within academic scholarships.

The reason why these Iraqi novels about the Iraq War have not receive much attention so far may best be explained in relation to Stef Craps's *Postcolonial Witnessing, Trauma Out of*

[29]Crosthwaite, Paul. *Trauma, Postmodernism and the Aftermath of World War II*. Palgrave, MacMillan, 2009. P.26.

Bounds. In this landmark study about postcolonial trauma and the suffering of non-Western people and minority cultures, Stef Craps has found an exciting new ground in the trauma theory and he sharply criticizes and accuses the founding texts of the field of trauma as ‘‘tainted with Eurocentric bias’’. Craps explains why trauma theory as a field of cultural scholarship:

> tends to show little interest in traumatic experiences of members of non-Western cultural traditions; that is, people living outside hegemonic, wealthy nations or regions such as the United States, (Western) Europe, Canada, and Australia, as well as post colonial indigenous groups and dispowered racial and diasporic groups living in Western countries(3).

According to Craps the failure of trauma theory to give due recognition to the sufferings of those belonging to non-western or minority groups sits uneasily with the field’s ethical aspirations. Using a range of literary examples, Craps finds this marginalization, blindness or lack of interest in the traumas and the suffering of non-Western and minority groups such as the traumas of slavery, Apartheid in Africa, the Genocide of Native Americans, colonialism, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, and the War on Terror as unethical and therefore he proposes the need of reshaping, resituating, and redirecting trauma theory to be more inclusive, decolonized, and globalized more thoroughly and responsibly so that trauma theory can foster attunement to previously unheard suffering of non-Western or minority groups, and why trauma theory should, in Craps’s words ‘‘ account for and respond to collective, ongoing everyday forms of traumatizing violence’’. Craps speaks to the urgency of overcoming trauma theory’s Eurocentric biase and the need to rethink trauma theory from a postcolonial perspective in the globalized world of the twenty-first century. Craps argues that ‘‘If trauma theory is to live up to its promise of cross-cultural ethical engagement, traumatic colonial histories not only have to be acknowledged more fully, on their own terms, and in their own terms, but they also have to be considered in relation to traumatic metropolitan or First World histories’’(6).

Stef Craps’s thesis helpfully broadens our understanding in examining Iraqi literary texts that depict life under the U.S invasion of Iraq as a traumatic experience. *Zubaida’s Window*, for example, juxtaposes the traumas of colonial rule of the British Empire in Iraq in 20thcentury and the neo-colonial neo-imperialist venture of America in Iraq in 21stcentury. The past traumas are renewed with fresh wounds as Zubaida describes

> Belated sorrows have their own special flavor, unlike new, hot sorrows that come all of a sudden, brandishing their sharp swords, cutting of a piece of the soul, and leaving the fresh wound to settle down until the body gets used to the pain and accepts it (102).

These violent events not only affect Iraqis in the war zones, but continue to emotionally and

psychologically affect the Iraqi community living in the diaspora, and to a great extent Iraqi novelists who live outside Iraq. Zubaida's story proves how important the role of history is in interpreting and understanding the past, present and future of the country and the fact that without understanding the history of Iraq one cannot comprehend why immediately after the US invasion of Iraq, a wave of sectarianism, insurgency and terroristic attacks increased in Iraq. As in the afterword for the novel, Nadje Al-Ali claims that "narratives about the past controls different attitudes toward the present and about the future of the new Iraq" (126).The American invasion is triggering the belatedness of the past traumatic wars in Iraq and is evocative of the last war in which Zubaida lost her only brother. Zubaida vividly remembers the cyclical nature of the traumatic history of her country:

> The war she watches on television today is the same as, or an extension of, the previous one that broke out on the Iranian front. The soldiers who die today are the same soldiers who died yesterday, but are dying one more time. They die, then come back to life to die once again. Then the cycle begins again until the spark of life has completely disappeared. The fear that overtook her yesterday at a meaningless war is the same fear she feels today, as she watches the destruction of the land on the screen(11).

Sinan Antoon's *The Corpse Washer*, shows that media can function as a reproduction of the scenes of violence. In this novel, television as a communicative device shows the sectarian violence between the Sunnis and Shias who are massacring each and demonstrates the scale of the destruction of Baghdad. This devise broadcasted the national tragedy of Iraq during and after the invasion. As Jawad observes "eventually, the dish become our only window through which we could see the world and the extent of our own devastation, which multiplied day after day" (97). Interestingly *The Corpse Washer* shows how television was used as a communication tool by the terrorist groups to intimidate, instil fear and terrorize people as they broadcast the spectacle of beheadings live on television. Antoon further intensifies the media spectacle in horrifying people when one day the protagonist flips through the channels in search of something that might relieve his insomnia and entertain him a bit, but he finds only one channel that broadcasts a horrific scene of beheading:

> Five hooded men stand around a sixth, who kneels and wears an orange work suit. A black bag shrouds his head. Four men hold their weapons while their leader reads the execution verdict to the kneeling prisoner." After tilting the head of the prisoner with a single blow with his sword, Jawad recalls I feel nauseated and turn off the TV, but blood flows from the screen, covering everything around me in blood(54).

In Ysameena Khadra's *The Sirens of Baghdad* images of war, violence and suffering of people are utilized to inspire dissent, fortify the outcry against the war and radicalize young men. For example, after the American forces bomb a wedding in his village, Sayed, a former Taliban member with affinities to Islamists takes full advantage of the hatred in the village

against the Americans. He donates a TV to the local Café called Safir to radicalize nearly all the young men in the village. Sayed is well aware how the spectacle of television can be used as a lethal weapon to radicalize the young men to join the resistance. The television broadcasts Aljazeera images of civilian casualties and glorifies heroic deeds of Iraqi resistance against the American forces. Sayed's technique provokes the young men to retaliate. The paragraph below shows how the protagonist observes the impact of that TV he donates:

> The TV that Sayed had donated to the idle youth of Kafr Karam proved to be a poisoned chalice. It brought the village nothing but turmoil and disharmony…Sayed had hit the bull's-eye. Hatred was as contagious as laughter, discussions got out of control, and a gap formed between those who went to the Safir to have fun and those who were there "to learn." It was the latter whose point of view prevailed. We started concentrating on the national tragedy, all of us together, every step of the way. The sieges of Fallujah and Basra and the bloody raids on other cities made the crowd seethe. The insurgent attacks might horrify us for an instant, but more often than not they aroused our enthusiasm. We applauded the successful ambushes and deplored skirmishes that went wrong (83-84).

Sayed knows that television can unmask the full extent of the conflict in Iraq and the media coverage of Aljazeera can be a spectacle to vivify the condemnation of the war in this village and madden the young men to join resistance to give major blows to the Americans. *The Sirens of Baghdad* confirms Suzan Sontag's claims that "photography of an atrocity may give rise to opposing responses. A call for peace.A cry for revenge" (11). Sayed's television in the Café degenerates the situations in the village. Just few days after the TV is brought in the cafe, Yaseen, Hassan, Hussien, Salah, Bilal and all other young men disappear and soon reports of major attacks and fatalities arrive into the village and they prepare for the worst. Sayed understands that depiction of suffering and pain is bound to have consequences and that shocking photographs and coverage of war can have an effective impact on local people in the village. Sayed not only brings a TV but also DVDs to make the suffering of Iraqis loom larger and provoke feelings of the idle young in the village to mobilize support for the resistance.

This problematic connection between media spectacularization of the horrors of war, their disturbing impact on ordinary people and subsequently leading to radicalizations of young men and a call for revenge and terroristic campaigns is aptly observed by Kelly Oliver in her volume *Women as Weapons of War Iraq, Sex, and the* Media (2007) where she finds a link between the spectacle of *pornographic* use of media and photos of torture at Abu Ghraib and how in turn radical suicide bombers also used the same pornographic spectacle as a tool not only to terrorize people but also to radicalize young men. The paragraph below illustrates this

clearly so I quote her:

> On both sides violence and war have become media spectacles and media scandals in addition to political practices within a global economy or world history. They are taken out of their context and exploited for their marketability on broadcast and internet media(9).

Whilst in the previous sections I highlighted the themes of malice, violence as reduction of being, the us-versus-them discourse, demonizing the other, private and state violence in the context of torture, the impacts of televised war images in traumatizing ordinary people; and the media spectacularization of the horrors of war, I shall focus more expansively on the role and connections of revenge, radicalization and terrorism in the next section.

4.6 Revenge, radicalization and terrorism: Yasmina Khadra's *the Sirens of Baghdad* (2006)

In this section I turn to the themes of revenge, radicalization and terrorism by young men who join the insurgency to avenge by means of inflicting violence on others. I will consider Yasmina Khadra's novel *The Sirens of Baghdad* (2006) and draw on theoretical concepts that are put forward by F. M. Moghaddam's *Staircase for Terrorism*, Alex Schmid's *Terrorism Study*, and Nancy Sherman's *Revenge and Demonization* and apply them in my readings of and encapsulation of those topics.

The 2003 invasion of Iraq added fuel to the fire of an age-old rivalry and animosity and sectarian conflict between Shiite and Sunnis. After the invasion there was an increasing insurgency that led to civil war, radicalization and terrorist acts. Before I fully engage in discussing how this novel fictionalizes and imagines such themes I need first to demonstrate and establish a context through which experts on terrorism can help us understand the links that might exist between revenge, terrorism and radicalization. After the Iraq War many scholars argued that the intervention was primarily responsible for wreaking a havoc of terrorism in Iraq. Nancy Sherman in ''Revenge and Demonization''[30] rightly demonstrates the political gaugemire created in Iraq as:

> The thirst for revenge seems to many one of the more primitive and noxious sentiments in war. It brings to mind personal vendettas and lawless punishment, feuds where blood and not money becomes the coinage for exchange. It conjures up the grievance that militias, gangs, and armed kin stand ready to carry out and pass on from generation to generation. It reminds us of the blind passion that fuels war crimes. It speaks to the sectarian violence and reprisal killings that, as I write, compete with the insurgency and counter insurgency for number of lives taken each day in the war in Iraq (289).

[30]Sherman, Nancy. "Revenge and Demonization." Eds.. Larry May. *War Essays in Political Philosophy.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 289-305.

Similarly, Kelly Oliver claims that the war on terror has actually increased the threat of terrorism by causing a rise in ‘‘global Islamic radicalism’’ that has spread across the world rather than hindering its threat. She puts this as ‘‘We talk as if terrorism is a disease out of control, a disease that we can fight with our surgical strikes, but a disease that we can never conquer, because in our war on terror we are in fact creating terrorism. The cure is spreading the disease’’ (15-16).

This raises the ethical, moral and political question why certain kinds of violence can be considered as legitimate while others can be illegitimate, why is the imperial U.S invasion of Iraq is considered by some as morally right and justifiable act but the violence of the insurgent groups as immoral and unjustifiable? Who should decide what is morally justifiable or not? Does not justifying certain violence legitimize other forms of violence? Kelly Oliver deftly makes a distinction between the two: ‘‘To call an act a terrorist act, to call a person a terrorist, to call an organization a terrorist group expels them from the realm of the political into the realm of the pathological. There is ‘normal,’’ ‘‘civilized’’ violence and then there is ‘‘abnormal,’’ ‘‘sick,’’ and ‘‘Barbaric’’ violence’’ which according to Ghassan Hage ‘‘the ways that the classification ‘terrorist’ is used normalize some forms of violence and pathologize others.’’ This definition of the violence of terrorism and its classification as the worst possible kind of terrorism thus becomes ‘‘an inflammatory term that not only describes a particular form of violence but also legitimates another form of violence, namely the high-tech warfare of Western militaries’’(128-129). Jean Baudrillard in *The Spirit of Terrorism* also argued that the root of terrorism lies in ‘‘the single-track thinking of the west’’(99). A West that calls itself as a champion of free world, freedoms and democracies and this humiliates east’s standing out against what the West calls or defines as civilization.

In defining the roots of terrorism, political violence, war, and specifically highlighting the political character of notions of violence, Schinkel elaborates the conceptual issues arising out of the definition of violence, the problems, etymology and semantics of defining violence. He provides a historical analysis of the gradual function of modern concept of violence which according to him arose as a consequence of several phenomenon such as the autonomization and secularization of state, nationalism, state’s control of the church, urbanization, the strict regulation of physical violence of the lower class people, and the emergent of disciplinary society in 19th century. According to him the industrial revolution that needed disciplined workers allowed the state to absorb all sorts of illegitimate and unjustifiable private physical violence into a legitimate and justifiable state violence .Schinkel shows that ‘‘throughout the western European history, then, the autonomization of the state coincided with an usurpation

of legitimate violence by the state"(30) and also " The modern State's monopoly of legitimate violence thus grew out of a secularization of the state." And as a result ''the state become the people's means of moral protections against themselves''(30). Therefore, to avoid aspect blindness in defining violence, Schinkel provides an ontological definition of violence as a 'reduction of being' in order to transcend the difficulties often found in empirical social scientific definition of violence and overcome aspect blindness to a fundamental understanding of the nature of violence and comes with a better assessment of ontic violence arguing that an ontic definition of violence is less violent than an empirical definition. Therefore, Schinkel defines violence as a form of reducing the being and dehumanizing; be it private, state, structural, or symbolic.

Having established this context, in Yasmina Khadra's *The Sirens of Baghdad* we have full portrayal and access to the world of terrorism through the prisms of its protagonist. Published in 2009 *The Sirens of Baghdad* was written by an Algerian novelist based in France, Yasmina Khadra, and was translated into English by John Cullen. This novel takes us into the mind of a student turned into a terrorist and is told from the unique perspective of those who are anti-American and displays what happens to civilians when they are overexposed to violence. The anonymous protagonist is an emotional but also determined university student of humanities in Baghdad University. He has to terminate his university education because of the invasion and returns to his village to wait for sometime after the invasion and then resume his studying. But soon the war reaches his village and three horrendous acts of violence committed by American troops radicalize the anonymous narrator.

To understand the motives of why the protagonist in this novel joins the terrorist groups and how young people radicalize, I resort to what Alex P. Schmid in *The Rutledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*[31]tells us about terrorism. Schmid claims that foreign intervention is responsible for creating the preconditions necessary for insurgent terrorism (248). According to Schmid at first sight there appears to be little rationality for a suicide bomber who is striving for a certain political goal to blow themselves up and thereby deprive themselves of being part of hoped-for political results. Often such individuals appear to be driven by a feeling of revenge or painful humiliation rather than strategic calculations. The terrible deeds and cost of the life can, however, provide the bomber with great emotional satisfaction. Schmid also highlights that motivational causes such as actual grievances that people experience at a personal level, also motivates them to act. There are also triggering causes

[31]Schmid. Alex Peter. *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research.* New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011.P.217.

such as political calamity, an outrageous act committed by the enemy, or some other events that call for revenge or action are also factors that drive people to violence and terroristic acts (261). *The Sirens of Baghdad* as I will explain contains such preconditions, motivational and triggering causes that radicalize its anonymous protagonist.

In addition the protagonist not only undergoes Schmid's preconditions that are essential to radicalize, but also undergoes each of the six steps of radicalization fittingly described in Fathali M. Moghaddam's psychological study of radicalization in *Staircase for Terrorism a Psychological Exploration*.[32] This study illustrates how a normal person turns into a terrorist and why young people might become engaged in the morality of a terrorist organization and their psychological motivation for it. Moghaddam uses a metaphor of a six-storey building to represent each step in the radicalization process with a psychological explanation for each stage. In this metaphor there is a narrowing stairway leading to a terrorist act at the top of a building, as people climb the stairway, they see fewer and fewer choices, until the only possible outcome is the destruction and reducing the being of others, or oneself, or both. I shall briefly formulate Moghaddam's metaphor as the following: in the Ground floor of this building, several factors like feelings of and perceptions of relative injustice, threats to personal and collective identity, those who feel are unjustly treated become motivated to search for options to address their grievances. On the first floor individuals are actively seeking to remedy those circumstances they perceive to be unjust. On the second floor, agents form inter-group relations, their leaders increase their in-group and strengthen their own support and cohesion against outside group threats and they begin to place blame for injustice on out-groups. This is often the cause of demonizing the other and anti-American sentiment. On the third floor, people find morality that justifies their struggle and their ideals. Constructing values and ideals to rationalize their use of violence, at this stage they also isolate themselves from their society and affiliate secretly to their in-group. Thus they disengage with their society and view them as sympathizers with enemy. On the fourth floor, they strengthen a categorical thinking of Manichean us versus them view of the world. They perceive the legitimacy of their terrorist organization. Here, there is no chance to get out of the group alive, they are trained to become suicide bombers and might implement a terrorist act within 24 hours. They legitimize their goals further by an end justify means attitude. At this stage the members are under dual pressure of their recruiters and the government

[32]Moghaddam, Fathali M. "The Staircase to Terrorism A Psychological Exploration." Eds. Lisa M. Brown, Larry E. Beutler, James N. Brechenridge, Philip G. Zimbardo Bruce Bongar. *Psychology of Terrorism.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. 69-77.

dictatorship which does not grant them return back. Their options narrow in a tightly controlled group which they cannot exit from alive. On the fifth and final floor the organization justifies that anyone who is not actively resisting the government is a legitimate target of violence. Thus from their point of view, acts of violence against civilians are justified because they are perceived as part of the enemy. The group distance themselves psychologically from their society to intend to destroy. Thus they allow their members to engage in acts of violent terroristic acts(70-76). Each of these stages elucidates the action of the protagonist in *the Siren's of Baghdad* and why he radicalizes. The protagonist is first tormented by the killing of Sulayman; the village's much loved mentally disabled boy, who is killed by American troops while patrolling a roadside checkpoint , saying ''The first gunshot shook me from my head to my feet, like a surge of electric current. And then came the deluge. Utterly dazed"(57). He faints at that moment, loses consciousness, and regains it only to lose it again. He is stricken; vomits, sobs shakes, and is outraged. Although he is not yet over his last shock, another shocking event is the appalling massacre bombing of a wedding party and the killing of civilians by American troops who mistake a wedding for a gathering of insurgents. Witnessing this scene a wave of nausea cuts him in describing it as ''the dead-seventeen of them, mostly women and children lay under sheets at one side of the garden…agitation grew as the true extent of the tragedy became apparent'' (94).And soon after this atrocity, not only the protagonist but also''Six men asked the faithful to pray for them. They promised to avenge the dead and vowed not to return to the village until the last 'American boy' had been sent back home in a body bag"(98).These two appalling acts of violence push the protagonist too far. He becomes numb, and before recovering, the Americans raid his house in search of hiding terrorist groups. Finding nothing, they humiliate his elderly father by forcing him to expose his genitals and terrify his family. Shouting hellish insults assaulting and humiliating his distraught mother and naked father in his underwear, he and his family are mortified, humiliated and reduced. I shall quote him at length to demonstrate how he describes the assault:

> And then one night, the sky fell in on me again...I saw while my family's honor lay stricken on the floor, I saw what it was forbidden to see, what a worthy, respectable son, an authentic Bedouin, must never see: that flaccid, hideous, degrading thing, that forbidden, unspoken-of, sacrilegious object, my father's penis, rolling to one side as his testicles flopped up over his ass. That sight was the edge of the abyss, and beyond it, there was nothing but the infinite void, an interminable fall, nothingness. Suddenly, all our tribal myths, all the world's legends, all the stars in the sky lost their gleam. The sun could keep on rising, but I'd never be able to distinguish day from night anymore. A Westerner can't understand, can't suspect the dimensions of the disaster. For me, to see my father's sex was to reduce my entire existence, my

> values and my scruples, my pride and my singularity to a coarse, pornographic flash! I was finished. Everything was finished irrecoverably, irreversibly (99).

This violent house raid, the invasion of his privacy, and the humiliation of his father is reminiscent of what Schinkel defined as a reduction of being, a violence that is meant to dehumanize the existence of the other. At this moment, the protagonist says ‘‘I was *condemned to wash away this insult in blood*’’ [Italics in original] (102). The American soldiers dishonour the dignity of his old father. The protagonist says that they do not understand how grave it is to force an old ailing man to the ground and expose his genitals for the whole family. It is obvious how an illegitimate private act of violence is sometimes committed under the auspices of legitimate state violence. The ‘‘overexcited GI’’ soldiers commit an act which is considered worse than a rape for an Arab Bedouin. Here Schinkel’s argument of the productivity of violence, a ‘‘will to violence’’, and Flahault’s inner spring of malice are relevant to highlight the intrinsic attractiveness of violence, evil and malice in our encounter with others and their reduction of our being often leading to the reduction of others being and existence. This aggressive act of U.S soldiers can be considered as a certain form of violence which also leads to other forms of violence. The protagonist knows that after this event there is no hope, nothing is left to salvage, it becomes like a piece of wreckage and instantaneously joins the Jihadists to fight the Americans and revenge. This cruel and abusing behavior is seen by the protagonist as an assault on his family’s honor, a disgrace of a certain magnitude that immediately brings a change, a transformation and radicalization in him. The protagonist knows that such humiliation can be washed away only with blood. His desire for revenge propels him to bring justice, and his rage is a response to a wrongful injury inflicted by Americans.

In a state of post-shock and post-offence period, the protagonist is smothered by his anger and is radically changed as well. He becomes a ticking bomb about to go off, in rage and despair he shows how irredeemably dehumanized, crushed, and humiliated he is. He often repeats that ‘‘It was my duty to wash away the insult, my sacred duty and my absolute right. I didn’t know myself what that represented or how it was constructed in my mind; I knew only that an obligation I couldn’t ignore was mobilizing me’’(160). Tormented by pangs of his conscience, he is on the point of imploding; and so impatient to give a major blow to the Americans even exasperated by the delay in his mission. He cannot wait any longer for he wants to be sent on a real suicide mission. He sometimes broods over his anger in silence as he is subjected to a heavy ordeal and a great burden. He is even disheartened and wants to die. As he explains ‘‘A week passed, things grew more and more intense, and my inner

turmoil, a compound of weakness and dread, steadily increased. I felt myself sleeping deeper and deeper into depression. I wanted to die'' (235).

Although revenge is a motivation constantly propelling him toward insanity, in his monologues he reveals more about himself: ''As a matter of fact. I was indeed angry, I held a bitter grudge against the coalition forces, but I couldn't see myself indiscriminately attacking everyone and everything in sight. War wasn't my line. I wasn't born to commit violence- I considered myself a thousand times likelier to suffer it than to practice it one day''(99). He also reveals a great deal about his personality before he joins the resistance saying that ''I was an emotional person; I found other people's sorrows devastating. Whenever I passed a misfortune, I bore it away with me.'' And sees himself as a ''delicate porcelain creature'' who as a child often wept in his room, and ''at school, my classmates considered me a weakling. They could provoke me all they wanted. I never returned their blows. Even when I refused to turn the other cheek, I kept my fists in my pockets, eventually the other kids got discouraged by my stoicism and left me in peace. In fact I wasn't a weakling. I simply hated violence'' (97). Though he was not a violent person, the atrocities radicalize him from a neutral observer to a violent terrorist who is keen to revenge. Whilst in Baghdad, he tells us that ''I heard a lot of speeches and sermons. They made me mad as a rabid camel. I had only one desire. I wanted the whole planet, from North Pole to the South Pole, to go up in smoke'' (8).

In a review of this novel Sukanya B. Senapati compared the protagonist to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, in that they both move from paralysis of passivity and inaction to hyper-action (Senapati, n.page). This process of conversion and transition from passivity to hyper-action is realized in *The Sirens of Baghdad*. The novel demonstrates how dehumanizing war and violence could be, how Iraqi civilians, victims of war themselves could be turned into perpetrators and shows how and why the occupation provoked an insurgency and a sectarian tension between Sunnis and Shias. The events are evocative of what Jonathan Steele in *Defeat,Why They Lost Iraq,* claimed that the increased terrorism and radicalisation in Iraq was due to

> Nearly every mistake the American made after toppling Saddam Hussein from the use of heavy handed and abrasive military tactics at checkpoints and during house searches, the underestimation of the armed resistance as nothing more than a few former Baathists and foreign jihadists, the killing of hundreds of civilians in air strikes described as counter insurgency (4).

In ruined and devastated Baghdad, the protagonist finds his relatives and joins them; he is given a job in a store which is used as a front for bomb making and resistance operations. He proves he is ready to do anything to help their cause. After witnessing several attacks and

escaping real life threatening situations, he is sent to Beirut to undertake a secret mission. He is vaccinated and will be sent to London to contaminate millions of people with a virus. This is suggestive of London bombing in 7th July 2005. The turning point of the novel occurs at the very end where the protagonist just before boarding the plane decides to withdraw from his mission because of his moral conscience. In an epiphany culminating moment the protagonist realizes how far he has gone; he changes his mind, and regrets the mission and does not board the plane though he knows this is his end. Asking himself "What have I done with my destiny? I'm only twenty-one years old, and all I have is the certainty that I've wrecked my life twenty-one times over" (306). Thus *The Sirens of Baghdad* is an interesting look at the effects of violence on ordinary people, explaining how war and hatred can turn a victim into a deadly weapon or a perpetrator and how ultimately in only rare cases the moral choice can prevail over and give way for forgiveness and tolerance. This is demonstrated in the protagonist's final line "I concentrate on the lights of the city, which I was never able to perceive through the anger of men"(307).

This compelling novel proves that fiction that appeared in and with regard to the U.S invasion of Iraq in 2003 did not ignore the problem of terrorism. On the contrary, the widespread extreme religiosity, violence, and terrorist attacks in Iraq after the invasion have led novelists to integrate the theme of terrorism and radicalization in their fiction in an authentic way that neither rationalizes nor legitimizes terrorist figures or acts. *The Sirens of Baghdad* is an evidence of what Elaine Martin has observed in "The Global Phenomenon of 'Humanizing' Terrorism in Literature and Cinema" that "Cultural artifacts—books and films—that represent terrorism humanize and contextualize both terrorists and terrorist acts. Much as with the films of Third Cinema, literature helps give a voice to multiple perspectives rather than only the official one" (8). This observation fits *The Sirens of Baghdad* discussed above more accurately. Given that context in which a peaceful young protagonist was driven to join an anti-occupation resistance groups who sink into bloodshed and terrorism only because of being wronged by American forces who humiliated him and out of desperation he wanted revenge. He was a believable protagonist, whose story was told from an insider perspective, providing us an insight into his motivations and finally experiencing doubts, even become cynical, regretting his actions and withdrawing from his assigned mission. Nevertheless, the novel neither justified the terrorist deeds nor the U.S invasion of Iraq. Its argument aims to be continuously balanced.

4.7Evil or autotelic violence: *Thirsty River* (2009) by Rodaan Al Galidi

In this final section I draw attention to the desire to kill or destroy questioning what it is that drives people to cause so much harm and cruelty on others drawing on the sources of human *Malice* by Francis Flahault and his conception of that term and Schinkel's notions of autotelic violence, violence for the sake of violence, in my analysis of Rodaan Al Galidi's *Thirsty River* (2009).

Thirsty River is an epic satirical novel that depicts the turbulent history of Iraq through the points of view of one family extended over four generations. *Thirsty River* is ironically dedicated ''For the Victims who never became the perpetrators''. The invasion and collapse of the regime, as the novel depicts, had the potential to transform Iraq into an ungovernable space becoming a magnet and a breeding ground for militias and how radical militias consolidated their grounds mobilizing and plotting against the Americans and terrorizing the local people. The characters in *Thirsty River* explicate the most extreme cases of autotelic violence, which is violence for the sake of violence. There are occasions when the main protagonists; Sjahid, Dzajil, and Joesr, for example, either consciously or unconsciously, are willing to engage in violent behavior for the sake of that behavior itself or for the pleasure and adrenaline of the action. These characters provide situations of engaging in acts of violence out of passion or impulsivity and show how autotelic violence motivates them to be perpetrators simply because they have the power and the will to do so.

In a review of *Thirsty River* for Banipal, a magazine of modern Arabic literature, Susannah Tarbush states that in Al-Galidi's novel ''Tragedy and horror are juxtaposed with black comedy as the author explores the corrupting effects of dictatorship''(Tarbush). However, this novel is as much about the evil and horrors of the Iraq War and post-invasion period as it is about the violence of the former dictatorship in Iraq. In *Thirsty River*, the characters engage in autotelic acts of violence for no apparent goal, they are clearly not acting rationally because their behaviour do not have a rationally calculated goals since they are not fighting for an ideal or an end, but they are attracted to the intrinsic nature of violence and illustrate potential for evil acts only when their passion drives them to it. In ''The Will to Violence'' (2004) Willem Schinkel conceptualized this autotelic violence. [33] He argues that

> Apart from possible structural causes of violence, violence may occur for the sake of itself. There may be intrinsic features of violence that appeal to a will to violence. Violence may be an end to itself, for itself. Like there is sex for sex itself, which is to

[33] Willem Schinkel. "The Will to Violence." *Theoritical Criminology.* 01 February 2004: 5-31.

> me, apart from all sorts of biological, psychological and whatever other causes, the most important element there is to sex there is violence for violence's sake (17).

In the *Thirsty River*, as I will show there is a hidden instinctual desire for violence in people, there is a will or a desire for autotelic violence, violence can be an attraction, a pull or quite simply the love of and pleasure derived in violence for its own sake is quite evident in *Thirsty River.* The reason for this violence, in Schinkel's view is that "Popular culture is full of violence that serves no other purpose than to please"(20). Kelly Oliver calls these types of people who derive pleasure in practicing violence for fun or entertainment as 'Abysmal individuals' or black sheep, or a few bad apples people who "are not exceptions but rather the product of a culture in which innocence and even ignorance are valorised"(120). Here Oliver associated the word innocence with instinctual or natural violence. Kelly Oliver quotes Julia Kristeva in defining these abysmal individuals further as "average inhabitants of the globalized planet of humanoids trained by reality shows and the internet" (120). The abysmal individuals occupy an abyss between law and desire. This is because, In Kelly Oliver's view "The body has aggressive impulses and we act on them…without waiting, without thinking, without considering what they mean or where they come from"(121). This is the evil, the autotelic violence, the animality or monstrosity of human being. Similar to the violence in nature, like a tornado or a forest fire in their vicious destruction.

In this novel, Dzajil, who was a chicken thief, undergoes a radicalization process from a neutral observer to a violent insurgent. He forms a new army militia under the name of 'Army of God' and Party of Heaven, previously they were only six members, now they have become eighty-five and they are steadily growing as former Baath party members and Jihadist people queue to enlist and join his army. Every man who becomes a member receives a Kalashnikov from the Barracks, abandoned by the Iraqi Army and with an identity card of the Army of God. They accept men who are fighting the Americans; these are men with long beards and Qurans at their hands. Together they all become a very powerful militia in Iraq. Saddam Risen, another son of the Bird family who was formerly a Fedaeen of Saddam Hussein joins his uncle's Army of God as well and changes his name to Abdullah the Pious. Saddam Risen and the militiamen arrest and torture people, replicate the violence that Saddam once inflicted upon Iraqis. They kill and kidnap people and turn into a potent militia. Roodan Al-Galidi puts it deftly when he observes that a political vacuum would create an atmosphere where "In the Army of God Saddam found the freedom he needed to practice his violence" (283). Abdullah the Pious and other men in the Army of God assassinate those who do not join them. Al-Galidi describes their violent acts as "At night, when the Americans

withdrew to the green zone, a list of names rolled out of the Party of Heaven's computer of those who were not members and had to be killed or kidnapped, and Saddam's masked men headed off in all directions into the dark"(282).

On 20th March 2003 the war starts with bombardment and on 9th of April the American and Iraqis destroy the statue of Saddam Hussein on Ferdaus Square in Baghdad. Sjahid, another son of the Bird Family is killed by the Americans as he was shooting on an anti-aircraft. A baker explains to his sister the scene in which Sjahid was killed "He was crazy, we told him that the Americans were flying above us, but he screamed 'Long live Iraq' at us, and those sorts of slogans. We told him that even Mr. President had fled, but he just carried on shooting. We wanted to take him away from there, but he threatened to shoot us if we did not let him fight against the Americans" (261). Thus we can see how in frenzy Sjahid engages in shooting without thinking of his own safety or the consequences of his actions. It is the adrenaline of fighting or going berserk that pushes him to shooting but others cannot recognize this and call him 'crazy'. Sjahid and other characters in this novel act in ways that are self-destructive and violent. They demonstrate a willingness to harm, destroy and kill people without thinking. This is what Schinkel explicates as an evil, an immoral autotelic violence that shows the darker aspects of human being. *Thirsty River's* protagonists illustrate the existence of such autotelic violence, and provide some examples when people may act irrationally and enjoy violence. Their violent actions are self-referential, existing for its own sake and attesting to Schinkel's argument that violence as an intrinsic force could be autotelic because "Violence can after all, be regarded as a force itself, as a source of attraction, a source that pulls an agent"(7).

Thirsty River is a novel with epic proportions depicting how families were shaken up during Saddam and most particularly after the invasion where people found more freedom to inflict violence upon others. The Bird Family are depicted as victims of the turbulent history of Iraq but later turn into perpetrators. Iraq, a country ravaged by several tragedies of the 20th and early years of 21st century bleeds over the last four decades of hostilities, economic sanctions, wars, invasion, civil war and insurgency. *Thirsty River* shows that in times of war and calamity even civilians practise autotelic violence and do evil things. In war both sides are capable of evil as has been noted by Tim O'Brien[34], one of the most prominent Vietnam war novelists whose view are relevant here to quote on the problems of the war in Iraq. In an interview, O'Brien compares Iraq to Vietnam and highlights war crimes stating that "war is

[34] Quoted in: Wiener, Gary, ed. *Social Issues in Literature, War in Tim O'Brien's The Things They Carried.* Green Haven Press, 2011.P.42.

inherently evil and the process of going to war will engender bad behaviour" and furthermore "war is nasty and brings out the worst in people (Wiener, 42). O'Brien confirms that in war, the consequences are inevitable and it is impossible that abuses and crimes at times of war can be entirely eliminated. He emphasizes that all wars are the same in terms of destruction, dehumanization and the loss of human lives. *Thirsty River* fictionally portrays real people caught in harsh conditions and their characters tell us what it is like to be a civilian; a human being in a war torn country.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the impact of the Iraq War on people and the way Iraqi novelists have fictionally represented it. The novels demonstrated the human suffering caused by the invasion and the hardships and abuse of life that followed the post-invasion instability in terms of civilian killings, torture of Iraqi prisoners, the increasing terroristic attacks, and traumatization of Iraqi people both inside Iraq and in diaspora. Though the Iraqi novelists selected in this chapter lived outside Iraq and wrote in languages other than Arabic, Antoon, Al-Galidi, Al-Qazwini, Kachachi and Khadra had the advantage of the insider and outsider perspectives and in their fiction we see an insightful response and an attempt not only to anesthetize but also to act as a catalyst for meaningful understanding and to expose the tragic and traumatic experience of the Iraq War and the many situations of injustice and abuse the Iraqis went through during this period. The literary analysis of these novels are crucial ways to listen to, hear and become part of the process in which Stef Craps suggested in his *Postcolonial Witnessing* as necessary steps not to be blind to or eclipse the traumas of non-Western nations and why the "traumas of non-Western populations should be acknowledged for their own sake and on their own terms" (Craps, 3).

The novels examined in this chapter are cultural and aesthetic products of their historical time and largely they attest to Shakir Mustafa's claim expressed in his edited volume *Contemporary Iraqi Fiction An Anthology* (2008) that "Iraq's troubles, nevertheless, have energized its literary scene". Mustafa also correctly claims it is "only natural that recent Iraqi fiction has drawn heavily on such events and the sentiments they elicit"(xiii). Suman Gupta in *Imagining Iraq, Literature in English and the Iraq Invasion* (2011) also observed that literature of and about Iraq shows "how deeply embedded the upcoming invasion was in the routine consciousness of people" and "how enmeshed in the domestic, personal, everyday preoccupations of people" (Gupta, 159).

These novels expand an understanding about the war against Iraq; they unmask the full

extent of the immediate period and fictionalize the various aspects of violence it occasioned. By depicting the poignant reality of the invasion, the people's experience, feelings and actions with regard to the horrors in convincing realistic details, a painful truth about life in Iraq as a result of the invasion is fictionalized. The authors fictionalized its gory reality, the growing Shiaa and Sunni sectarian violence, and draw attention to rising religiosity in Iraq and the religious militias acting as terrorist groups. This chapter looked into why these novels address not only the consequences of the war, but also the process of the war and its psychological and physical effects on civilians and even shaped Iraqi literary fiction. The novelists narrativized this experience from Iraqi's point of view, an inside perspective that allowed their characters to tell individual stories that were symptomatic of the unheard private and collective traumatic suffering. The Iraq War has altered not only lives and literature of Iraqis, but also lives and literary works of those outside this geographic area stretching from the United States of America to the United Kingdom and this has also elicited an enormous amount of literary texts. As was mentioned in the introduction, Suman Gupta in his book suggested that to understand the effect of the Iraq War in the global consciousness of people "To continue in an analytical vein a great number of geographical perspectives and cultural traditions need to be taken into account" (Gupta 185). It was within this context that this thesis have explored and studied how some selected Anglo-American and Iraqi novels have reflected and responded to the Iraq War and how this conflict has entered and shaped the cultural consciousness of this time.

Conclusion

This thesis tackled a challenging, complex and important topic, in examining how contemporary writers in the UK, US, and Iraq have mediated one of the most controversial wars of recent times. The Iraq War was a tumultuous conflict, which had enormous consequences in embroiling the Americans and West in Middle East conflicts and violent politics, and in triggering terrorist and warlord resistance and radicalization. It was of very real interest to consider how the war has been represented in fiction, not least so as to gauge the extent to which culture in the West, in Iraq itself, or in diasporic or Iraqi-origin communities abroad fictionalized the conflict. This thesis covered the full spectrum, with a useful set of chapters looking at the hugely contentious justification for intervention by Bush and Blair, at combatant texts, at female authors' treatment of the gendered violence, and at Iraqi representations, particularly those that dissect the radicalization caused by the consequences of the war. The readings of the texts were backed up with some adducing of relevant war studies theory, gathering together critical commentary, such as it is, on the texts, and some broad-ranging consideration of the politics of the textual representations. It scoped out the interventionist case which dominates the fictional response, be it by liberal intellectual critics of the war, or by Iraqi writers keen to demonstrate the evils of war, and the precise ways it led to the current Daesh radicalization, and the Sunni-Shia civil war. The thesis presented the war as a manifold of representations that document the public responses to the war, the brutalities of its conduct, especially from women's perspective, and the link to current radicalization violence.

This thesis closely analysed and explored the dominant thematic trends of the selected British, American and Iraqi novels of and about the Iraq War. In moving towards the end of this study this thesis attempts to draw together the various thematic tendencies noted in the preceding chapters and in numerous ways the reader can also connect and bridge the various concepts underscored in the culmination of each foregoing chapters. As there is much to read, discuss, and argue about this rich and dynamic literature this thesis is interested in presenting a few concluding notes on the contextual impact and trajectories of such literature.

One need not delve deep into the collected works of this period to realize that Iraq has been an ongoing preoccupation in the collective mindset. It has become a matter of popular and mass concern and novelists have both drawn upon and imagined upon its context. Since the 2003 invasion of Iraq there has been an explosion of more than two thousand books published about this conflict and as a result literary critics such as Marcia Lynx Qualey (2014) wrote in his ‘‘Time Travelling: Whose Iraq Stories?’’ that this proliferation of

publications reflects not just a need to *read* Iraq, but also a need to *write* it. The texts studied reveal and illuminate the moral, political and aesthetic aspects of this war and collectively enhance our understanding of this conflict. This study has examined and reckoned with how certain literary and popular novels appeared within and reflected the socio-political contexts of the invasion. The novels studied here corroborate to Paul Fussel's findings in *The Great War and Modern Memory* that a reciprocal relationship does exist between life and literature ''life feeds materials to literature while literature also returns the favour by conferring forms of life'' (XV).

It might be prudent to argue that Iraq War has inspired a large volume of fiction that permeates the collective thinking of society as well as dominating current psyche. Iraq War novels demonstrate that the legacy of war can shape literature, that such literature has cultural significance and can alter cultural consciousness as well as cement the image of this war in the national memory. As Michael Mack (2012) maintains that literature does change the way we think about ourselves and our societies and that it helps us to cope with the current and future challenges by changing the way we think (11). As such in the novels of and about Iraq War we can detect a deep sense of distrust and cynicism. There is also a heightened awareness for contemplating, passionately debating and critiquing the legacy of the Iraq War. Accordingly, this thesis maintains that each group of authors from a certain national background addresses a different and unique dimension of the Iraq War such as its *causes, conduct, and consequences*. There are also common themes, which can be found in such novels such as the timeless effects of war, namely: pain, human suffering, and the death of both innocent civilians and good soldiers. In other words, this thesis argues that Anglo-American and Iraqi novels address different aspect and/or phases of the Iraq War. In closing, one can see, then, that there are four main points to be identified in the finale.

Firstly, British novels of the Iraq war are more concerned with the causes of the war, in the language of the just war theory the jus ad bellum phases of war, that is, they consider a range of issues such as the morality, legality and the ethical debate over the justification of the Iraq War. From the onset British fictions warn readers of the grave consequences of intervention like radicalization and destabilization in the Middle East. This is why they provide an alternative anti-interventionist discourses to challenge the dominant rhetoric of the government's pro-war stance. This discourse ostensibly preoccupied the cultural and public imagination, shaping the collective consciousness of British people at the time of these events. As cultural products such fiction construct an image in the reader's mind that shows the resort to unauthorized war was not only illegal but also morally problematic. British

novelists fictionalize the intervention as an aggressive unilateral act that undermined the sovereignty of the United Nations and the international community. The principal fictional characters of such texts view the war in a different way but the majority are explicitly anti-interventionist, on occasions one finds some strong support like the character of Henry Perowne in McEwen's *Saturday*. However, the characters' opinions, world-views, and moral judgment do not necessarily embody the moral judgment of their authors. The texts analysed validate what Suman Gupta pointed out that most of the texts about Iraq War are either overtly against the invasion of Iraq or against war in general and there are substantial differences in their anti-interventionist expressions: "Some are bitter interventions, some are pensive ruminations, some are intellectual probing, some seek to universalize from the particular moment and some to give flesh to the particularity of the Iraq invasion, some look back and some look forward"(13).

Secondly, this thesis maintains that the American male authored novels of the Iraq War are far more concerned with the conduct of the war, the jus in bellum phase of the war. They address the invasion and the occupation of Iraq and the manners and the process of how the war was fought and carried out and their traumatic impacts on veterans and their parents after they return home. This is because most are soldier tales; they are either written by former deployed soldiers in Iraq or are told through the viewpoint of such veterans. Some of these works are quite powerful, gaining force and authority by their author's authentic experience and deployment of war in Iraq. For instance the veteran Kevin Power's *The Yellow Birds* and the civilian Ben Fountain's *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walks* fictionalise the war's effect on both the homefront and on the battlefront exploring the politics of the war and the effects of those choices on the troops on the ground and the return of traumatized veteran. Both became finalists for the *National Book Award*. In addition to this, both authors have received most critical attention and commercial success. While most of these narratives focus on the challenges of coming home after combat, they also reflect on the dehumanizing consequences of the Iraq War on soldiers, family and civilians. One of the universal aspects of such male-authored American novels of and about Iraq is that their soldier protagonists are typically alienated because they unavoidably encounter moral and ethical issues. That said, historically and within the context of this chapter literary critic such as Eli Jelly Schapiro in an article titled "The Crazy: Writing the Iraq War" acknowledges that "the war does not end when a tour of duty or the conflict itself ends. It lives on in the minds and bodies of veterans whose fight to overcome war's trauma can last for years, decades, a lifetime".

Thirdly, American female authored novels of the Iraq War articulate a voice seldom found

in contemporary war fiction. Such novelists as Benedict, Noonan, Gallaway and Prusher are emerging on the literary scenes who tell the women's side of the Iraqi story. Through the perspectives of female protagonists they show how the war in 2003 destabilized the country, opened a 'Pandora's Box' of insurgency, and ignited the age-old animosities and rivalries between Iraq's Shias majority and Sunnis minority resulting in a civil war and rise of radicalisation and how this consequently obliterated women's lives. Their writings exhibit literary merit reflecting women's concerns and experiences within the context of the Iraq War which gives women agency to represent themselves in their narratives. Their novels share many commonalities and similarities in terms of thematic topics such as the critique of war and militarism, the articulation of private pain and human suffering, increasing wartime violence practised against women, the reversion of women's rights due to honour killing, arranged marriages, the shocking aftermath of war such as the loss of husbands, and the plight and trauma of each protagonist and how this motivated women to take an active role in the anti-war movement. Together these American women's fictional responses to the Iraq War substantiate what Kayla Williams in her essay ''Women Writing War: A List of Essential Contemporary War Literature by Women'' argues that it has become impossible to ignore the important role women play in modern conflict as well as in any serious account of war literature.

Fourthly, this thesis retains that Iraqi and Arab authored novels of the Iraq War often address the enormous and tragic consequences of the war; the jus post bellum phase of war. This narrative draws attention to the devastating effect of this war on the Iraqi people. By bridging the public and private pain and the imagined body whether national, social or individual life affected by war, it is argued that Antoon, Khadra, Al Galidi, Al Qazwini and Kachachi use novels as a creative mechanism to provide a necessary account of the Iraq War experience and enable recognition of the trauma and the tragic sufferings of people from the perspectives of Iraqis. These authors show that the historical and political realities of Iraq after the American invasion had such profound effects on the Iraqis that they made them the focal points of their novels. The geographical areas where these novels were written stretched from Germany, France, and Holland to the United States but by Iraqi and Arab authors writing in numerous languages. This shows that the U.S invasion of Iraq was not only affecting people in the region, rather the collective consciousness and the imaginative works of novelists who lived far from the conflict. Their fiction is perhaps one of the most useful ways to account for and respond to collective, ongoing, everyday forms of traumatizing violence and suffering. As such the Iraqi and Arab authored novels of and about the Iraq War

authenticate what the literary critic Hussein al-Skaff in his essay of 2014 titled "The New Iraqi Novel: Documenting Sorrow" demonstrates that most of the published novels appearing since the invasion of 2003 document Iraq's pain because they "document wars, death, prison cells, fear, and the confusion of human dignity, and monitor the results of the occupation, terrorism, unnecessary death, and shattered dreams".

Collectively the Iraq War novels interestingly exemplify that war should be avoided as much as possible, used as a last resort, and only fought when there are no other options available. Such literature as a cultural consciousness advocates the cultivation of diplomacy and negotiations amongst nations-states rather than the resort for unnecessary war. In the light of post-war conflict in Iraq Sun Tzu (c544-496 BCE) in *The Art of War* foretold "There is no instance of a nation benefitting from a prolonged warfare" (Terry, 2009). As narrative explanations of the war such fictions show that the underlying principle of war is that it is enormously costly both in treasure and lives. Most of the novels and the theoretical sources used in this study prove to be right in registering the war's consequences such as human suffering, pain and psychological break down of people. When reading and interpreting the texts in this study it becomes clear that the Iraq War, like all other wars, often has unintended and unexpected consequences. As Peter W. Galbraith(2008) one of the most authoritative scholars on Iraq has shown in his book *Unintended Consequences: How War in Iraq Strengthened America's Enemies?* that the case of Iraq is defined by the consequence of defeat and that a spectre of defeat shapes the thinking of the war's architects as they have not only failed to achieve any of American political objective in Iraq but has strengthened America's enemies instead (43). This tragic aftermath, time and again, contradicted the intended objectives and goals of war. This is reminiscent of Paul Fussell's understanding that war often destroys what it purports or claims to protect "every war is ironic because every war is worse than expected. Every war constitutes an irony of the situation because its means are so melodramatically disproportionate to its presumed ends" (7-8).

Taken as a whole these fiction and narratives frames tend to articulate a certain level of human suffering of war and depict the war as a violation of rational legal, political and ethical principles. As Patrick Thornberry (2005) a prominent expert in international law argues the great majority of USA and international lawyers have regarded the Iraq War as "an illegal enterprise from its inception" (111). Furthermore, other critics have shown that the war was a colonialistic and exploitative practice that has done more harm than good and created more problems than they solved because its goal was to transform the political system and culture of that nation so that they are compatible to America's national interest. For example, in

Gringo (2012) Travis Barret argues that the Iraq War was the product of immoral thinking because "the invasion of Iraq is a clear illustration of an absence of moral perspective and moral restraint. The lack of moral consideration is not uncommon among heads of state" (458). Thus, the literary texts examined express and contemplate public anxiety and outrage; their tones are sad, tragic and melancholic and prove that its episodes are fresh in the memories of many writers and readers. As cultural reflections of the zeitgeist, such fictions tend to assume that instead of creating a democratic pro-American Iraq, the war has inadvertently created an authoritarian and sectarian country with a great deal of anti-western attitude. In this sense, such fictions express a reality that the Iraq War and its effects pervade the cultural consciousness of the period. They communicate the truth of how regime change in Iraq not only failed to bring about stability and democratization but were efficacious to cause greater violence, civil war, authoritarianisms, chaos and deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. Furthermore, the war in Iraq has damaged the moral standing of both the U.S. and U.K government. In light of these unintended consequences some critics charge those who perpetuated the Iraq War to be responsible for creating the conditions conducive to the rise of ISIS terrorist groups. Adil Rasheed (2015) in his book on *ISIS: Race to Armageddon* identifies several of the causes that have been attributed to the rise of the ISIS and argues that "the most important of them was the US-led Iraq War of 2003 which destroyed the state of Iraq and led to its virtual trifurcation along sectarian lines"(2). It is indisputably because of these criticisms that the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair has apologized for the Iraq War mistakes in intelligence and planning. Tony Blair has admitted that there are elements of truth in the view that the Iraq invasion partially led to ISIS rise:

> I can say that I apologize for the fact that the intelligence we received was wrong because, even though he had used chemical weapons extensively against his own people, against others, the program in the form that we thought it was did not exist in the way that we thought (Blair, 2015).

However, it is important to note that Tony Blair did not apologize for ousting Saddam Hussein considering the fact that it is still better to have got rid of Saddam than left him in power. To be fair, Blair reminds us of the complexities of resolving international crisis created by despotic and tyrannical dictatorship, that interventionism or non-interventionism as a policy of Western states is full of loopholes. Blair said the policy of Western interventions regarding interventions remains inconclusive:

> We have tried intervention and putting down troops in Iraq; we've tried intervention without putting in troops in Libya; and we've tried no intervention at all but demanding regime change in Syria. It's not clear to me that, even if our policy did not work, subsequent policies have worked better (Blair, 2015).

In view of these arguments for and against that intervention, equally important is John Stuart Mill who saw the root of armed conflict and war. Mill has argued that the war that accompanies external intervention always does harm to the resident people. Mill argued against interventions in his classic essay of 1859 ‘‘A Few Words on Non-intervention’’ explaining that even with best intentions no country is ought to interfere in the internal affairs of another country: ‘‘No people ever was and remained free, but because it was determined to be so; because neither its rulers nor any other party in the nation could compel it to be otherwise’’ (qtd in Doyle, 223). Like Mill, Immanuel Kant in his ‘‘Perpetual Peace’’ of 1795 also contended that ‘‘No state shall forcibly interfere in the constitution and government of another state’’ (96). However, many international lawmakers, rights-based theorists, and Consequentialists regard these legalistic restrictions as outdated because in contemporaneous world state sovereignty no longer merits respect when dictatorial governments and failed states can commit grave acts of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Optimistically, to prevent the victims of those crimes recently the United Nation Security Council, particularly both China and Russia, has unanimously reaffirmed their own commitment to the principles of the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) in 2005 and 2009.[35] Responsibility to Protect (R2P) as a norm means that if states actively violate the human rights of their citizens and/or fail to protect them, they would forfeit their sovereignty because sovereignty now means a state’s responsibility to protect their own population. According to the principles of this norm each member of the United Nations assists each other in their responsibility to protect innocent populations from either the commitment or incitement of the four mentioned crimes. In *The Responsibility to Protect: A Defence* Alex J Bellamy argues this genuine and resilient international consensus and implementation of the R2P offers the best chance to making the humanity less violent and build an international community that is less tolerant of mass atrocities and more predisposed to prevent them:

> When states ‘‘manifestly fail’’ to protect their populations from these four crimes, whether through lack of capacity or will or as a result of lack of intent, the international community should respond in a ‘‘timely and decisive’’ fashion with diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, and failing that, with all the tools that are available to the Security Council. This can include the use of military force, which is sometimes a tragic necessity (2).

However, like all other theories of international relations, ‘responsibility to protect’ as a cosmopolitan, moral and ethical principle has its own limitations and critics, remains as a controversial norm and is far from perfect. On the one hand R2P and military interventions

[35] It is interesting that both these countries currently have massive human rights issues against their own people, not to mention propaganda and media restriction.

are considered a lesser and necessary evil than the evil of dictatorship and on the other it is considered that resort to armed forces and wars to prevent mass atrocities can violate human right itself. Also the realist school in international relations perceives R2P and any interventions in the internal affairs of another country as a political act or a fundamentally political form of behaviour. In other words, if R2P and/ or an intervention do not serve a country's national economy, security and self-interest it will not occur, no matter whatever the prevailing humanitarian situation is. In view of this, the German political and constitutional theorist Carl Schmitt (1888-1985) notoriously argued that whoever invokes humanity wants to cheat. As a critic of liberal cosmopolitanism, international order, and Universalist ideology Schmitt exposes the double standard and selectivity critique that are often levelled against international humanitarian interventions or R2P. This was because, according to Schmitt, when states wage wars in the name of or under the pretext of humanity it has serious political implication. This implies that powerful states can misuse the concept of humanity, peace and justice for their own interest. Schmitt reminds us that when states intervene they do so for their national interest or they intervene only when it suits their own agenda. According to Schmitt the so-called humanitarian wars are an imperial tool used by powerful states to interfere in the domestic affairs of smaller nations. In *The Concept of the Political* Schmitt points out "the concept of humanity is an especially useful ideological instrument of imperialist expansion, and in its ethical-humanitarian form it is a specific vehicle of economic imperialism" (54). Equally important, as an acute critic of liberalism Schmitt believed that "It is not a war for the sake of humanity, but a war wherein a particular state seeks to usurp a universal concept against its military opponent" (54). In the light of such philosophical debates surrounding the intervention in Iraq the German thinker Peter Sloterdijk in his book *In the World Interior of Capital: Towards a Philosophical Theory of Globalisation* (2013) argued that the turbulence surrounding the Iraq War had a such a mental side effect that it could be felt worldwide. Sloterdijk critiques not only politicians who advocated re-establishment of American exceptionalism, unilateralism, realpolitik and imperialism but also intellectuals and academic advisors such as Fukuyama, Brzezinski, Wolfowitz and others who helped to justified the Iraq War. Sloterdijk writes teasingly about President Bush whose intentions in Iraq was to bring God's gift to mankind; primarily democracy and freedom to an unwilling recipients, by force if necessary:

> To explain what job the Americans were doing in Iraq, George W. Bush had to draw, as usual, on the Old Testament, for example Isaiah 61: 'He has sent me[...] to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners...And this democracy which has recently come into modern Arabic usage, approximately

meaning ‘Western assault on a country for the purpose of turning it into a market economy (238-239).

One last thing these Iraq War novels leave out for the reader to infer/interpret is an ancient Roman maxim about war and peace ‘‘Si vis pacem, para bellum ’’- If you want peace, prepare for war’’. But history teaches us that whenever we prepared for war we almost always ended up by provoking more violence. Instead of accepting this cynical maxim as true, Gaston Bouthoul in his book *Le Phenomene Guerre* proposed that war appears as a mental epidemic fuelling a social epidemic. Thus he transformed this roman proverb into ‘‘Si tu veux la paix, connais la guerre’’- ‘‘If you really want peace, you ought to know what war essentially is’’ (3).

Bibliography

Primary Texts: novels and novelists

Al-Qazwini, Iqbal. *Zubaida's Window A Novel of Iraqi Exile*. Trans. Azza El Kholy and Amira Nowaira. New York: The Feminist Press at the University of New York, 2008. Print.

Antoon, Sinan. *The Corpse Washer.* Trans. Sinan Antoon. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013. Print.

Benedict, Helen. *Sand Queen.* New York: Soho Press, 2011. Print.

Benn, Melissa. *One of Us.* London: Vintage Books,2008. Print.

Coe, Jonathan. *The Closed Circle.* London: Penguin Books Ltd,2004. Print.

Galidi, Rodaan Al. *Thirsty River.* Trans. Luzette Strauss. Wiltshire: Aflame Books, 2009. Print.

Fountain, Ben. *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk.* Edinburgh: Canongate Books Ltd, 2012. Print.

Gallaway, Morgana. *The Nightingale*. New York: Kinsington Publishing Corp, 2009. Print.

Jarman, Julia. *Peace Weavers.* London: Scholastic Ltd,2004. Print.

Kachachi, Inaam. *The American Granddaughter.* Trans. Nariman Youssef. Doha: Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation Publishing, 2010. Print.

Khadra, Yasmina. *The Sirens of Baghdad*. Trans. John Cullen. London: William Heinemann, 2007. Print.

Maremaa, Tom. *Metal Heads.* Clear Water Florida: Kunati Inc., 2009. Print.

McEwan, Ian. *Saturday.* Croydon, Surrey: Vintage, 2005. Print.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Sunrise Over Fallujah.* New York: Scholastic INC, 2008. Print.

Noonan, Rosalind. *One September Morning.* New York: Kinsington Books, 2009. Print.

Powers, Kevin. *The Yellow Birds.* London: Sceptre, 2012. Print.

Prusher, Illene. *Baghdad Fixer.* London: Halban Publishers Ltd, 2012. Print.

Secondary Literary Criticism

Books

Dyer, G. *The Moral Art of War*. In G. Dyer, *Working the Room* (pp. 243-256). Edinburg: Canongate Books Ltd (2010). Print.

Eaglestone, R. *Contemporary Fiction A Very Short Introduction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press,(2013). Print.

Fussell, Paul. *The Great War and Modern Memory.* New York, Oxford University Press, 1975. Print.

Gupta, S. *Imagining Iraq: Literature in English and the Iraq Invasion.* London: Palgrave MacMillan, (2011). Print.

Ingram, Melinda. *Fictionalizing Iraq in British and American Literature for Children and Young Adults*. La Vergne, Tennessee, USA,(2015). Print.

Mack, Michael. *How Literature Changes the Way We Think* . London: Continuum, 2012.

Mustafa, Shakir. *Contemporary Iraqi Fiction: An Anthology.* New York: Syracuse University Press, (2008). Print.

Padley, Steve. *Key Concepts in Contemporary Literature.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, (2006). Print.

Peebles, S. *Welcome to the Suck: Narrating the American Soldier's Experience in Iraq.* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, (2011). Print.

Tew, P. *The Contemporary British Novels.* London: Continuum, (2007). Print.

Sinfield, A. *Literature, Politics, and Culture in Postwar Britain.* London: Continuum, (2004). Print.

Journal Articles

Halwani, R. "Literary Ethics." *Journal of Aesthetic Education, 32,* 19-32(1998). Print.

Kieran, D. "What Young Men and Women Do While Their Country is Attacked: Interventionist Discourse and the Rewriting of Violence in Adolescent Literature of the Iraq War." *Children's Literature Association Quartely, 37*, 4-26 (2012). Print.

Luckhurst, R. "In War Times, Fictionalizing Iraq." *Contemporary Literature, 53*(winter), 713-737 (2012). Print.

Lukas, M. D. "Workshopping Next Generation American War Literature." *A National Journal of Literature and Discussion*. Web. Retrieved September 4, 2015, from The Virginia Quarterly Review: .<http://vqronline.org/essay/workshipping-next-generation-american-war-literature>.(2010).

Essays, reviews, interviews and other Electronic Sources

Al-Mousawi, N. "War and Occupation in Iraqi Fiction." *Middleeastmonitor.com*.28 July, 2015. Retrieved August 12, 2015. Web.<http://middleeastmonitor.com/media-review/20068-war-and-occupation-in-iraqi-fiction>.

Al-Skaff, Hussein. "The New Iraqi Novel: Documenting Sorrow".*Alakhbar.*12, December, 2014. Web. Retrieved 03 October, 2015. <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/22873>.

Benedict, Helen. "Why I Wrote a War Novel." *On the Issue Magazine.* 03 August 2013. Web.17 January 2013 <http://www.ontheissuesmagazine.com/cafe2/article/166>.

Besner, L. "Even in Fiction, Peace in the Middle East Proves Unimaginable." *National Post.* 26 Feb, 2015. Web. Retrieved March 10, 2015. .<http://news.nationalpost.com/arts/books/the-knife-ross-ritchell-green-on-blue-eliot-ackerman-review>.

Bubalo, R. "Danger Close: The Iraq War in American Fiction." *Los Angeles Review of Books*.25 Dec, 2013. Web. Retrieved April 16, 2015. .<https://lareviewofbooks.org/essay/danger-close-iraq-american-fiction>.

Cage, C. S. "War Narratives: Truth and Fiction." *The Rumpus*. 25 May, 2015. Web. Retrieved August 22, 2015, .<http://wwwtherumpus.net/2015/05/war-narratives-1-truth-and-fiction>.

Charles, R. "10 Years of the Iraq War, 10 Great Books." *Washington Post*. 19 March, 2013. Web. Retrieved April 15, 2015. .<http://www.washingtonpost.com>.

Forbes, M. "Iraqi Writer Sinan Antoon on his Novel." *The National*. 14 May, 2015. Web. Retrieved July 28, 2015, .<http://ww.thenational.ae/arts-lifestyle/the review/iraqi-writer-sinan-antoon-on-his-novel>.

Freeland, L. (n.d). ''10 Contemporary Iraqi Writers You Should Know." *The Culture Trip*. Web.Retrieved April 9, 2015 .<http://theculturetrip.com/middle-east/iraq/articles/10-contemporary-iraqi-writers-you-should-know/>.

Gallagher, M. "Where's the Great Novel about the War on Terror". *The Atlantic*. 14 June, 2011. Web. Retrieved January 13, 2015 .<http://http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2011/06/wheres-the-great-novel-about-the-war-on-terror/240233/>.

Hazlett, A. "Can Fiction Capture the Iraq War." *Prospectmagazine*.20 Feb, 2014. Web. Retrieved January 22, 2015 <http://http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/arts-and-books/can-fiction-capture-the-iraq-war>.

Klay, P. "Iraq and Ruin: Two Fictional Examinations of Life After War" *Newstatesman*.12 March, 2015. Web. Retrieved August 12, 2015. <http://www.newstatesman.com>.

Larson, M. "Stop Giving War Veteran Novelists a Free Pass. " *Salon*. 11, Dec,2012 Web. Retrieved January 20, 2015. <http://http://www.salon.com/2012/12/11/stop-giving-war-veteran-novelists-a-free-pass/>.

Lokesson, M. "Passive Agression Recent War Novels." *Los Angeles Review of Books*. 1st October, 2013. Web. Retrieved June 15, 2015, .<https://lareviewofbooks.org/essay/passive-aggression-recent-war-novels>.

Marcia Lynx Qualey. "Time Travelling: Whose Iraq Stories?" *Warscapes*. 30 March, 2014. Web. Retrieved. 03 November 2015. <http://www.warscapes.com/column/marcia-lynx-qualey/time-traveling-whose-iraq-stories>.

McManus, D. "Through Fiction, Veterans Present a Clearer Truth on U.S. Wars." *Los Angeles Times*. 5 July, 2015. Retrieved August 31, 2015, from .<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-0705-mcmanuswar-fiction-20150705-column.html>.

Packer, G. "Home Fires: How Soldiers Write Their Wars." *The New Yorker*. 7April, 2014. Web. Retrieved February 11, 2015..<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/04/07/home-fires-2>.

Qualey, M. L. "The Literature of Forgetting and Remembering in Iraq." *alaraby*. 12 April, 2015. Web. Retrieved April 15, 2015,

.<http://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/artsandculture/2015/4/12/the-literature-of-forgetting-and-remembering-in-iraq>.

Schapiro, Eli Jelly. "The Crazy: Writing the Iraq War" *10 October*, 2012.Web. Retrieved, 03November, 2015. <http://www.thenation.com/article/crazy-writingiraq-war> .

Sacks, S. "First Person Shooters." *Harpers Magazine*. 24 August, 2015. Web. Retrieved August 28, 2015 .< http://harpers.org/archive/2015/08/first-person-shooters-2/3/>.

Sanfilippo, Brenda. "Blood Wings: Feeling War in the Twenty-First Century."2014. Web. UC Santa Cruz: Literature. Retrieved 11August, 2015. <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/09g6v217>.

Silverman, J. "I am Not the Enemey" *the Slate Book Review* .7 September, 2012. Web. Retrieved April 15, 2015. .<http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/books/2012/09/novels_of_iraq_and_afghanistan_yellow_birds_fobbit_billy_lynn_hold_it_til_it_hurts_reviewed_.html>.

Stodola, S. "When Fiction Writers Knew War." *Cicero Magazine*. 4 Feb, 2015. Web. Retrieved April 19, 2015. <http://www ciceromagazine.com/opinion/when-fiction-writers-knew-war>.

Tew, Philip and Mark Addis, 'Final Report: Survey on Teaching Contemporary British Fiction', English Subject Centre (2007). Web. 6 October, 2015. .<http://www.english.heaccademy.ac.uk/explore/projects/archive/contemp/contemp1.php>.

Williams, Kayla. "Women Writing War: A List of Essential Contemporary War Literature by Women" *Los Angeles Review of Books*. 26 May, 2014. Web. Retrieved. 03 October, 2015. <http://lareviewofbooks.org/essay/women-writing-war-list-essential-contemporary-war-literature-women>.

Other Secondary Theoretical and Conceptual Sources

Acolytesofwar. "Ikram Masmoudi's War and Occupation in Iraqi Fiction" time now, the iraq and Afghanistan in art, film, and literature. 1st January, 2016. Web. Retrieved 12 February 2016. <https://acolytesofwar.com/2016/01/01/ikram-masmoudis-war-and-occupation-in-iraqi-fiction/>.

Afzal-Khan, Fawzia. "The Female Body as a Site of Attack, Will the "Real" Muslim Women's Body Please Reveal Itself?". *Interventions, Activists and Academics Respond to Violence.* Ed. Elizabeth A. Castelliand Janet R.Jakobsen. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. 187-195. Print.

Agamben, Giorgio. *State of Exception.* Trans. Kevin Attell. Chicago: Universty of Chicago Press, 2005. Print.

Ali, Salah *Ideology, Censorship, and Literature: Iraq as a Case Study*. Agder University, Kristiansand, Norway, Primerjalna književnost (Ljubljana) 31. Special Issue (2008), 213-220.

Al-Ali, Nadje Sadig. *Iraqi Women, Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present.* New York: Zed Books, 2007. Print.

Andrade, Gabriel. Rene Girard. *Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. Web, Retrieved 10 February, 2015. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/girard/#SH7b>.

Arab World Books, Ali Bader. Web. Retrieved 20 march, 2016. <http://www.arabworldbooks.com/authors/ali_bader.htm>.

Arendt, Hannah. "Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture." *Social Research* 38 (1971 Autumn): 417-446.

Aristotle. *A New Translation of the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle.* Ed. Jonathan Barnes. Trans. W.D. Ross. Oxford: Baxter,1819. Print.

Bacevich, Andrew. "American Dream, Super-Sized," *Los Angeles Times.* 3 December 2003. 15 January 2015.

Bahoora, Haytham, "Writing the Dismembered Nation: The Aesthetics of Horror in Iraqi Narratives of War," in *Arab Studies Journal* (Vol. XXIII No. 1), Fall 2015: 184-209. Web, Retrieved 12 march, 2016 <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/23667/new-texts-out-now_haytham-bahoora-writing-the-dismn>.

Barret, Travis. *Gringo: Second Edition*. Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2012. Print.
Baudrillard, Jean. *The Spirit of Terrorism.* Trans. Chris Turner. London: Verso, 2003. Print.

—. *The Transparency of Evil, Essays on Extreme Phenomena.* Trans. James Benedict. London: Verso Books, 1993. Print.

Bellamy, Alex J. "Responsibility to Protect or Trojan Horse? The Crisis in Darfur and Humanitarian Intervention after Iraq." *Ethics & International Affairs*, Vol, 19, issue, 2, September, (2005): 31-54. Web.

—. "Ethics and Intervention: the Humanitarian Exception and the Problem of Abuse in the Case of Iraq." *Journal of Peace Research,* Vol,41 No, 2, (2004): 131-147. Web.

—. *Just Wars From Cicero to Iraq*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006. Print.

—. "Motives, Outcomes, Intent and the Legitimacy of Humanitarian Intervention." *Journal of Military Ethics*, Vol, 3, No.3, (2004) 216-232. Web. Print.

—.*The Responsibility to Protect: A Defence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. Print.

Bergoffen, Debra B. *Contesting the Politics of Genocidal Rape: Affirming the Dignity of the Vulnerable Body.* New York: Routledge, 2012. Print.

Blair, T. (2015, October 25). Tony Blair Says He's Sorry for Iraq War 'Mistakes,' but Not for Ousting Saddam. *GPS.* (F. Zakaria, Interviewer) CNN.Web. Accessed 27, October, 2015<http://edition.cnn.com/2015/10/25/europe/tony-blair-iraq-war/>.

Bouthoul, Gaston and Carrere, R. *Le Defi de la Guerre de 1740 a 1974*. Paris: PUF, 1976. Print.

Bouthoul, Gaston. *L'infanticide Différé.* Paris: Hachette, 1970. Print.

—.Gaston. *Essai de Polemologie. Guerre ou Paix?,* Paris: Denoel Gonthier, 1976. Print.

—. Gaston. ''Definitions of Terrorism'' Eds. David Carlton and Carlo Schaerf. *International Terrorism and World Security*. New York: Rutledge, 2015. 50-60. Print .

—.Bouthoul, *Le Phenomene Guerre*, Payot, coll. Petite Bibliotheque Payot, 1962. Print.

Breverton, Terry. *Immortal Words: History's Most Memorial Quotations and the Stories Behind them*. London: Querqus Publishing Ltd, 2009. Print.
Bricmont, Jean. *Humanitarian Imperialism: Using Human Rights to Sell War.* Trans. Diana Johnstone. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2006. Print.

—. "Responsibility to Protect as Imperial Tool, The Case for Non-Interventionist Foreign Policy" *Counterpunch*. 20 February 2012. Web. Retrieved 07 January 2015 <http://www.counterpunch.org/2012/02/20/the-case-for-a-non-interventionist-foreign-policy/>.

Brock, Gillian. "Humanitarian Intervention: Closing the Gap between Theory and Practice." *War, Torture and Terrorism: Ethics and War in the 21st Century.* Ed. David Rodin. Cornwall: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007. 35-49. Print.

Butler, Judith. *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* London and New York: Verso, 2009. Print.

Caiani, Fabio and Catherine Cobham *the Iraqi novels key writer key texts*, 2013, Edinburgh University press, Edinburgh.
Cavarero, Adriana. *Horrorism, Naming Contemporary Violence*. Trans. Willam McCuaig. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006. Print.

Cheldelin, Sandra I. "Victims of Rape and Genderside." *Women Waging War and Peace, Internation Perspectives of Women's Roles in Conflict and Post-Conflict Reconstruction.* Ed. Sandra I. Cheldelin and Maneshka Eliatamby. London: Conituum International Publishing Group, 2011. Print.

Chomsky, N. "The Case Against US Adventurism in Iraq." *Star Tribune.* 13 March, 2003. Web Retrieved October 31, 2015.<http://www.chomsky.info/articles/20030313.htm>.

Clark, David "Iraq has Wrecked Our Case for Humanitarian War," *Guardian*, August 12, 2003. Web. Retrieved 15 May, 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2003/aug/12/iraq.iraq1>.

Clausewitz, Carl Von. *On War*. Vol. 1. Trans. Colonel J.J. Graham. Prod. Charles Keller and David Widger. London: The Project Gutenberg EBook, 25 February 2006. Last Updated January 26, 2013. Web. Retrieved 6March, 2014.
.<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1946/1946-h/1946-h.htm>.

Coady,A.J. "The Ethics of Armed Humanitarian Intervention". Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2002. Print.

Craps, Stef. *Postcolonial Witnessing*. London: palgrave macmillan, 2013. Print.

Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver, and Jason Reifler. *Paying the Human Costs of War, American Public Opinion and the Casualities in Military Conflicts.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009. Print.

Crosthwaite, Paul. *Trauma, Postmodernism and the Aftermath of World War II.* Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009. Print.

Deleuze, Felix Guattarri and Gilles. *Anti-Oedipus, Capitalism and Schezophrenia.*Trans. Mark Seem and Helen R.Lane Robert Hurley. London: The Athlone Press, 1983. Print.

Derrida, Jacques. *The Gift of Death and Literature in Secret.* Trans. David Wills. Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 2008. Print.

Ditmars, Hadani. ‘‘A Culture in Exile Baghdad’s artistic exodus.’’ September 12, 2012. <https://thewalrus.ca/a-culture-in-exile/>.

Dixon, Steven. “Humanitarian Intervention: A Novel Constructivist Analysis of Norms and Behaviors.” *Journal of Politics & International Studies* 9.Summer (2013): 126-172. Print.

Doyle, Michael. W. *The Question of Intervention John Stuart Mill and Responsibility to Protect*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015. 205-227. Print.
Durkheim, Emile. *Moral Education*. Trans. Everett K.Wilson and Herman Schnure. New York: Dover Publications, Inc, 2002.

Echevarria, Antulio J. *Clausewits and Contemporary War.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. Print.

Eighmey, John. "Why Do Youth Enlist?: Identification of Underlying Themes." *Armed Forces & Society* 32 (2006): 307-328. Print.

El-Enany, Rsheed. *Arab Representations of the Occident, East-West Encounters in Arabic Fiction.* London: Routledge, 2006. Print.

Ellis, Lee. *Theories of Rape, Inquiries into the Causes of Sexual Aggression.* New York and London: Taylor and Francis Group Hemishphere Publishing Corporation, 1989. Print.

Elshtian, Jean Bethke. *Just War Against Terror.* New York: Basic Books, 2004. Print.

Elwood-Akers, Virginia. *Women War Correspondents in The Vietnam War, 1961-1975.* Metuchen, N.J, & London: The Scarecrew Press, Inc, 1988. Print.

Enloe, Cynthia. *The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in New Age of Empire.* London and Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004. Print.

—.*Nima’s War, Emma’s War, Making Feminist Sense of the Iraq War.* Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2010. Print.

Falk, Richard. “The Global Setting: US Foriegn Policy and the Future of the Middle East.” *The Iraq War and Democratic Politics.* Ed. Alex Danchev and John MacMillan. London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2005. 20-35. Print.

Fisher, David. *Morality and War: Can War be Just in the Twenty-first Century?* New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Print.

Flahault, Fransois. *Malice.* Trans. Liz Heron. London: Verso, 2003. Print.

Freud, Sigmund. *Reflection on War and Death.* Trans. DB A.A.Brill and Alfred B.Kutner. New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1918.Print.

Fridman, Thomas. "The Meaning of a Skull" *New York Times,* April 27, 2003. Web. Retrieved 15 May, 2013. .<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/27/opinion/27FRIE.html>.

Gallaway, Morgana. “The Knightingale”. Web. Retrieved 12 September 2013.<http://morganagallaway.com/books/the-nightingale-2/>.

Galbraith, Peter. W. *Unintended Consequences: How War in Iraq Strengthened America's Enemies New York,* Simon & Schuster, 2008. Print.

Gardener, Hall and Oleg Kobtzeff "General Introduction Polemology". *The Ashgate Research Companion to War: Origins and Prevention.* Eds. Gardener, Hall and Oleg Kobtzeff. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012. Print. 1-35.

Gerard, Rene. *Violence and the Sacred.* Trans. Patrick Gregory. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977. Print.

Grant, Patrick. *Literature, Rhetoric, and Violence in Northren Ireland, 1968-98 Hardened to Death.* London: palgrave, 2001. Print.

Gray, J. Glenn. "The Enduring Appeals of Battle." *Rethinking Masculinity: Philosophical Explorations in Light of Feminism.* Ed. Robert Strikwerda, Patrick D. Hopkins Larry May. Boston, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 1996. 45-62. Print.

Grotius, Hogo. *The Rights of War and Peace, Including the Law of Nature and of Nations.* Trans. A.M.Campbell. New York: M. Walter Dunne, 1901. Print.

Hadad, Fanar, *Sectarianism in Iraq:antagonistic visions of unity,* oxford university press, new York, 2011.

Hall Gardner and Oleg Koptzeff. "General Introduction Polemology". *The Ashgate Research Companion to War: Origins and Prevention.* Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited,2012, pp1-35. Print.

Hanoosh, Yasmeen. "Beyond the Trauma of war: Iraqi literature today". Words Without Borders, the Online Magazine for International Literature , 2013. Retrieved 12 april 2016.< http://www.wordswithoutborders.org/article/beyond-the-trauma-of-war-iraqi-literature-today>.

Heinze, Eric A. "Humanitarian Intervention and the War in Iraq: Norms, Discourse and State Practice." *Parameters* (2006 Spring 2006): 20-34. Print.

Hinde, Robert A. *Bending the Rules, Morality in the Modern World from relationships to politics and war.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. Print.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan, or the Matter, Form, and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civil.* London: Printed for Andrew Crooke, 1651. Print.

Howard, Roger. *What's Wrong with Liberal Interventionism? The Dangers and Delusions of the Interventionist Doctrine.* London: Social Affairs Unit, 2006.Print.

Hughes, Esperanza Bielsa and Christopher W, ed. *Globalization, Political Violence and Translation.* New York: P algrave Macmillan, 2009. Print.

Human Rights First. "Private Security Firms in Iraq Can be Tried as War Criminals." *Warcrimes Opposing Viewpoints Series.* Ed. Margaret Haerens. Greenhaven Press, 2011. 29-40. Print.

Hunt, Krista. "Embedded Feminism and the War On Terror." *Engendering the War on Terror:Gender in A Global/Local World, War Stories and Camouflaged Politics.* Ed. Editor Krista Hunt and Kim Rygiel. Cornwall: Ashgate, 2006. 51-71. Print.

Imam, Hayat. “Aftermath of U.S Invasion: The Anguish of Women in Afghanistand and Iraq”. *Women, War, and Violence,, Personal Perspectives and Global Activism.* Ed. Lihua Wang, and Linda K. Fuller Robin M. Chandler. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. 117-134. Print.

Inghilleri, Moira. ‘‘Translators in War Zones, Ethics under Fire”. Eds. Hughes, Esperanza Bielsa and Christopher W. *Globalization, Political Violence and Translation.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. P.207

Jenkins, Richard. *Pierre Bourdieu*. London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2002. Print.

Jeremy Moses, Babak Bahador & Tessa Wright. “The Iraq War and the Responsibility to Protect: Uses, Abuses and Consequences for the Future of Humanitarian Intervention."*Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 5, (2011): 347-367. Print.

Joubi, Rebecca, ‘‘A Guide to Modern Iraqi Literature in Translation’’ Al Jadid. Vol. 19. No. 69. Retrieved 6March, 2016. <http://www.aljadid.com/content/guide-modern-iraqi-literature-translation>.

—. “Iraq’s Most Beloved Novelist, Fuad al-Takarli, Describes His Fine Balancing Act.” Al Jadid, Vol. 13, no. 58/59 (2007) Retrieved 6March, 2016. <www.aljadid.com> .

Kaldor, Mary. *New and Old Wars:Organized Violence in a Global Era.* 2nd Edition. Cornwall: Polity Press, 2007. Print.

Kant, Immanuel. ‘‘Perpetual Peace’’. *Kant: Political Writings.* Eds. Hans S. Reiss. 2nd Ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991. 93-131. Print.

—. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals.* Trans. Gregore. 1996. Vol. IV. Cambridge: Cambrdige University Press, 1795. Print.

Katherine M. Ngaruiya, et al. "Public Service Motivation and Institutional-Occupational Motivations Among Undergraduate Students and ROTC Cadets." *Public Personnel Management* (2014): 1-17. Print.

Kearns, Gerry. "Bare Life, Politcal Violence, and the Territorial Structure of Britain and Ireland." *Violent Geographies.* Ed. Derek Gregory and Allan Pred. New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2007. 7-30. Print.

Kelman, Herbert C. "Violence Without Moral Restraint: Reflections on the Dehumanization of Victims and Victimizers." *Journal of Social Issues* 29 (1973): 25-61. Print.

Kellner, Douglas. *Cinema Wars Hollywood Film and Politics in the Bush-Cheney Era.* Wiley Blackwell A John Wiley and Sons, Ltd Publication, 2010. Print.

Kindsvatter, Peter S. "Cowards, Comrades, and Killer Angels: the Soldier in Literature". *Parameters.* June 1990.31-49. Web. Retrieved 27 July 2014 <http://strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/Articles/1990/1990%20kindsvatter.pdf>.

Kristeva, Julia. *The Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection.* Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982. Print.

—.*Black Sun, Depression and Melancholia*. Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia

University Press, 1992. Print.

Kuperman, Alan. "The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention".*International Studies Quarterly. Vol 52, Issue 1,* (2008): 49-80. Print.

Larison, Daniel. ''Noninterventionism: A Primer''. *The American Conservative*. 11 June 2014. Web. Retrieved 23 October 2014 <http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/noninterventionism-a-primer/>.

Lee, Peter. *Blair's Just War Iraq & The Illusion of Morality.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Print.

Leonard Wong, et al. ''Why Soldiers Fight: Combat Motivations in the Iraq War''. *Stratigic Studies Institute*. Monograph. Carlisle: U.S Army College, July 01, 2003. Print.

Les Roberts, et al. "Mortality before and after the 2003 Invasion of Iraq: Cluster Sample Survey." *The Lancet* 364.9448 (2004): 1857-1864. Print.

Lindley-French, Julian. *Wilton Park: Foreign and Commonwealth Office Conference report: NATO's Post 2014 Strategic Narrative: Monday 17 – Wednesday 19 March 2014; Wilton Park P1319*. London: FCO, 2014. Retrieved 28 September, 2015.<https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/conference/wp1319/>.Print.

Locke, John. *Two Treaties of Government.* London: Printed for Thomas Tegg; W. Sharpe and Son; G. Offor; G., 1823. Print.

Luban, David. "Intervention and Civilization: Some Unhappy Lessons of the Kosovo War." *Global Justice and Transnational Politics.* Ed. Pablo de Greiff and Ciaran Cronin. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Presss, 2002. Print.

MacFarlane, S.Neil. *Intervention in Contemporary World Politics.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. Print.

Managhan, Tina. *Gender, Agency and War, The Maternalized Body in US Foriegn Policy.* New York and London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2012. Print.

Marcuse, Herbert. *Towards a Critical Theory of Society.* Ed. Douglas Kellner. Vol. 2. London: Routledge, 2001. Print.

Martin, Elaine. "The Global Phenomenon of 'Humanizing' Terrorism in Literature and Cinema." *Comparative Literature and Culture* 9.1 (2007): 2-9. Print.

Martino, Duncan Chappell and Vitorio De. *Violence at Work.* 3rd. Geneva: International Labor Office, 2006. Print.

Masmoudi, Ikram, *War and Occupation in Iraqi Fiction*. Edinburgh University Press, 2015. 215–219.

Masters, Roger D., ed. *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality; The First and Second Discourses.* Trans. Roger D. And Judith R.Masters. New York: St Martin's Press, 1964. Print.

McCutcheon, Richard. "Rethinking the War against Iraq". *War and Peace / La guerre et la paix* 48.1 (2006): 11-28. Print.

McKenzie, Jon. "Abu Ghraib and the Society of the Spectacle of the Scaffold." *Violence Performed Local Roots and Global Routes of Conflict.* Ed. Patrick Anderson and Jisha Menon. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. 338-355. Print.

McPherson, James M. *For Cause and Comrades, Why Men Fought in the Civil War.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. Print.

Mearsheimer, John. *Why Leaders Lie, the Truth about Lying in International Politics.* London: Duckworth Overlook, 2012. Print.

Mellow, David. "Iraq: A Morally Justified Resort to War". *War, Torture and Terrorism: Ethics and War in the 21st Century.* Ed. David Rodin. Cornwall: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007. 51-70. Print.

Milich, Stephan et al. *Conflicting Narratives: War, Trauma, and Memory in Iraqi Culture*. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2012. *Arab studies journal*, vol .xxiii. No.1. fall, 2015. Ameer moosavi. Retreived 19 april, 2016 <http://roundups.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/23461/conflicting-narratives_war-trauma-and-memory-in-ir>.

Mill, John Stuart. "A Few Words on Non-Intervention." *New England Review* 27 (2006): 252-264. Print.

Moghaddam, Fathali M. "The Staircase to Terrorism A Psychological Exploration." *Psychology of Terrorism.* Ed. Lisa M. Brown, Larry E. Beutler, James N. Brechenridge, Philip G. Zimbardo Bruce Bongar. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. 69-77. Print.

Mohammed, Sadek, "Identity and Belonging: The American Occupation in the Iraqi Novel" Iraq literary review, International Writing Program, Issue No 3, Winter 2013. The University of Iowa.

Molina, Jerónimo. "Gaston Bouthoul. En Conmemoración De Un Pionero De La Polemología. *Reis* 119 (2007): 117–128. Web.

Moosavi, Amir, "Writing the War between Ambivalence and Loss: Arabic and Persian Literatures after the Iran-Iraq War", September 25, 2015, city university of new York, Web. Retrieved 20 march 2015 <http://memeac.gc.cuny.edu/2015/08/11/09-25-2015-writing-the-war-between-ambivalence-and-loss-arabic-and-persian-literatures-after-the-iran-iraq-war/>.

Moseley, Alexander. "Pacifism". *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. n.d. Web. Retrieved 20 January 2015 < http://www.iep.utm.edu/pacifism/ >.

Moskos, Charles C. "From Institution to Occupation: Trends in Military Organization." *Armed Forces and Society* 4 (1977): 41-49. Print.

Murphy, Cinny Kennard and Sheila T. "Chracteristics of War Coverage by Female Correspondents." *Media and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century.* Ed. Philip Seib. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. 127-140. Print.

Mustafa, Shakir *Contemporary Iraqi Fiction: An Anthology*, 2008, edited and translated by Shakir Mustafa, Syracuse University Press, New York. Print.

Najjar, Al-Mustafa. "Novelist Ahmad Saadawi creates an Iraqi Frankenstein" Interview, March 22, 2014, Web. Retrieved 4 april, 2016 <http://english.aawsat.com/2014/03/article55330305/novelist-ahmad-saadawi-creates-an-

iraqi-frankenstein>.

Nitsan, Tal. "The Body that Writes: Reflections on the Process of Writing about Wartime Rape Avoidance in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." *Rape in Wartime.* Ed. Raphaelle Branche and Fabrice Virgil. London: palgrave macmillan, 2012. 153-169. Print.

Norman, Richard. "War, Humanitarian Intervention and Human Rights." *The Ethics of War: Shared Problems in Different Traditions.* Ed. Richard Sorabji and David Rodin. Cornwall: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006. 191-207. Print.

Nowrojee, Binaifer. "Rape is not Rigorously Prosecuted as a War Crime." *War Crimes, Opposing Viewpoints Series.* Ed. Book editor, Margaret Haerens. Greenhaven Press, 2011. 65-71. Print.

Oliver, Kelly. *Women as Weapons of War, Iraq, Sex, and the Media.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. Print.

Patterson, James T. *Mr. Republican: A Biography of Robert A. Taft.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972. Print.

Peach, Lacinda Joy. "Is Violence Male, The Law, Gender, and Violence." *Frontline Feminisms, Women, War, and Resistance.* Ed. Margarite R. Waller and Jennifer Rycenga. New York and London: Garland Publishing, INC., 2000. 51-71. Print.

Penguin Random House, "The Rope, a Novel by Kanan Makya", Retrieved 15 march, 2015

<http://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/249860/the-rope-by-kanan-makiya/9781101870471/>.

Pick, Daniel. *War Machine: the Rationalization of Slaughter in the Modern Age*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, (1993). Print.

Pufendorf, Samuel Von. *On the Duty of Man and Citizen According to Natural Law.* Ed. James Tully. Trans. Michael Silverthorne. Cambridge U.K: Cambridge University Press, 2000. Print.

Quinlan, Michael. "Britain's Wars Since 1945." *The Ethics of War: Shared Problems in Different Traditions.* Ed. Richard Sorabji and David Rodin. Cornwall: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006. 235-143. Print.

Raphaeli, Nimrod. "Culture in Post-Saddam Iraq" *Middle East Quarterly*, Summer 2007, pp. 33-42. Web. Retrieved March 23, 2015.<http://www.meforum.org/1707/culture-in-post-saddam-iraq>.

Rasheed, Adil. *ISIS: Race to Armageddon.* New Delhi: Vij Books India Pvt Ltd, 2015. Print.

Robinson, Roxana. "Army of Shadow". *Bookforum*. August, 2014. Web. Retrieved July 23, 2015.<http://www.bookforum.com/inprint/021_02/13271>.

Rohde, Achim, *State-Society Relations in Ba'thist Iraq: Facing Dictatorship*, Rutledge, Taylor and Francis group, London, 2010.

Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain: the Making and Unmakign of the World.* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985. Print.

Schinkel, Willem. *Aspects of Violence: A Critical Theory.* London: Palgrave MacMillan,

2010. Print.

—. "The Will to Violence." *Theoritical Criminology* 01 February 2004: 5-31. Print.

Segal, David R. "Measuring the Insitutional/Occupational Change Thesis." *Armed Forces & Society* 12 (1986): 351-376. Print.

Seib, Philip, ed. *Media and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century.* New York: Palgrave Macmilan, 2005. Print.

Seltzer, Mark. *Serial Killers: Death and Life in America's Wound Culture.* New York: Routledge, 1998. Print.

—. "Wound Culture: Trauma in the Pathological Public Sphere." *October* 80 (Spring 1997): 3-26. Print.

Shay, Jonathan. *Archilles in Vietnam Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character.* First Scribner trade paperback edition 2003. New York: Scribner, 2003. Print.

Scheuer, Michael. "On Paris: The Cost of Western Leader's Deceit and Interventionism Will Only Grow". *Non-Intervention.* 12 January 2015. Web. Retreived 19 January 2015.<http://non-intervention.com/1475/on-paris-the-cost-of-western-leaders-deceit-and-interventionism-will-only-grow/>.

Sherman, Nancy. "Revenge and Demonization." *War Essays in Political Philosophy.* Ed. Larry May. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 289-305. Print.

Schmitt, Carl. *The Concept of the Political: Expanded Edition*. Trans. George Schwab. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007. Print.

Sloterdijik, Peter. *In the World Interior of Capital: Towards a Philosophical Theory of Globalisation.* Trans. Weiland Hoban, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013.

Sontag, Susan. *Regarding the Pain of Others.* London: Hamish Hamilton, Penguin Group, 2003. Print.

Stephenson, Michael. *The Last Full Measure How Soldiers Die in Battle* . London: Duckworth Overlook, 2013. Print.

Stone,Ropert. "Interview with Noam Chomskey on Senate Torture Report." 24 December 2014. Web. Retrieved 13 September 2015. ‹http://rupertstone.com/2014/12/24/interview-with-noam-chomsky-on-senate-torture-report/›.

Tarbush, Susannah. "Iraqi Poet Fadhil Assultani Writes His Perspective on British Poet Philip Larkin" *the Tanjara*, January 05, 2015 Retrieved 22 April 2016 <http://thetanjara.blogspot.com/2015/01/iraqi-poet-fadhil-assultani-gives-his.html>.

Taylor, A.J.P. *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958. Print.

Tesón, Fernando. *Humanitarian Intervention: An Inquiry into Law and Morality.* New York: Transnational Publishers, 1998. Print.

Tharoor, Ishaan. "Why Was the Biggest Protest in World History Ignored?" *Time.* 15 February 2013.Web. Retrieved 22 January 2015 <http://world.time.com/2013/02/15/viewpoint-why-was-the-biggest-protest-in-world-

history-ignored/>.

The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq, "Iraq Under the Sanctions: Economic, Political, Social and Cultural Effects" *Conference, pp16-20, amman, Jordan, September 23-25, 2011.* Retrieved 22 march 2016 <http://www.taarii.org/conferences/iraq-under-sanctions>.

The Centre for Middle Easter Studies, ‘‘The Iran-Iraq War: Literature, Art and Film’’ Symposium, Cambridge, MA, February 12, 2016, Retrieved 28 March 2016 <http://cmes.fas.harvard.edu/event/iran-iraq-war-literature-art-and-film>.

Thornberry, Patrick. ‘‘It Seemed the Best Thing to be Up and Go: On the Legal Case for Invading Iraq’’. *The Iraq War and Democratic Politics*. Eds. Alex

Danchev and John McMillan. London: Routledge, 2005. Print. 111-131. Print.

Tocqueville, Alexis de. *Democracy in America.* Harper Collins Edition, 1994. Print.

Tzu, Mo. “Against Offensive War.” *Basic Writings of Mo Tzu, Hsun Tzu, and Han Fei.* Ed. Burton Watson. Trans. Burton Watson. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967. 60-61. Print.

Virgili, Raphaelle Branche and Fabrice, ed. *Rape in Wartime.* Trans. Helen McPhail. London: Palgrave Macmillan , 2012. Print.

Wajeeh, Elali. "Iraq," Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia 2003. Retrieved 22 april 2016 <http://acc.teachmideast>.

Wallis R. Sanborn, III. *The American Novel of War A Critical Analysis and Classification System.* North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2012. Print.

Walker, Ralph. “Kant.” *Ethics: The Key Thinkers*. London: Bloomsbury, 2012. 133-151. Print.

Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations.* New York: Basic Books,1977. Print.

—.*Just and Unjust War: a Moral Arguemnt with Historical Illustrations.* Fourth Edition. New York: Basic Books Persus Books Group, 2006. Print.

—. “The Politics of Rescue.” *Social Research* 62 (1995). Print.

Wheeler, Nicholas J. “Humanitarian Intervention After September 11,2001.” *Just Intervention.* Ed. Jr Anthony F. Lang. Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2003. Print.

Whitman, Walt. *Specimen Days & Collect*. Ed. David McKay. Philadelphia, 1883. Print.

Wither, James K. “Basra’s not Belfast: the British Army, ‘‘Small Wars’’ and Iraq’’. *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 20.September-December (2009): 611-635. Print.

Wittman, George H. “Allegations Against Private Security Firms in Iraq are Politicized.” *Warcrimes, Opposing Viewpoints Series.* Ed. Margaret Haerens. Greenhaven Press, 2011. 41-45. Print.

Wolff, Chistian. *Jus Gentium Methodo Scientifica Petractatum.* (1750)Trans. Joseph Drake.

Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1934. Print.

Zakaria, Fareed. *The Future of Freedom: Illebral Demoracy at Home and Abroad.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc, 2007. Print.

Zeidal Ronen, "Iraqi Nationalism in the Novels of Maysalun Hadi" *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 69, No. 3, Summer 2015, Web. Retrieved 14 March, 2016 <https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1P3-3769671871/iraqi-nationalism-in-the-novels-of-maysalun-hadi>.

Zizek, Slavoj. *Violence, Six Sideways Reflections.* New York: Picador, 2008. Print.

—.*Welcome to the Desert of the Real.* London: Verso, 2012. Print.

—. "The Iraq War: Where is the True Danger?" *Lacan.com.* 13 March, 2003. Web. Retrieved 4 December 2013.<http://www.lacan.com/iraq.htm>.