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**EXAMINING TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE AND
CULTURAL MEMORY: A PSYCHOANALYTICAL
READING OF MICHAEL ONDAATJE'S *WARLIGHT***

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to our beloved parents who have been the source of inspiration, strength and motivation when we were on the verge of quitting.

To our supportive brothers and sisters, as well as our teachers who shared their encouragements and words of advice with us through these past five years.

To our friends with whom we shared unforgettable memories.

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Abstract

There is a space in post-war life for memories, introspection, retrospection, foreshadowing, flashback, and terrible remembrances tinged with pain, wound, and trauma. These psychological effects of war, as well as distressing situations result trauma, which is the reaction to a horrific event that cannot be fully comprehended in the victim's daily life. In this context, the Sri Lankan-born Canadian writer Michael Ondaatje is well-known of depicting the psychological state of the characters in his literary works, in which, they have complex personalities and linked stories about their remarkable lives, as shown in one of his most famous novels, *Warlight* (2018). Thus, the current dissertation aims at examining traumatic experiences and cultural memory through Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical perspective in Ondaatje's *Warlight*. It also seeks to address the Protective Shield against Stimuli, Traumatic Neurosis and the returning of past events in the subconscious mind of trauma victims. In particular, it emphasizes the postcolonial period's status of children like Nathaniel and Rachel who were shell-shocked as a result of catastrophic circumstances such as the Second World War. In this research, the descriptive and analytical methods are employed to analyze and describe the novel's events as well as the character's psyche. Subsequently, this study reveals that neglecting children's effects of wars and violence can lead to the appearance of serious mental issues which may remain with them their whole lives, as it is the case for Rachel's epilepsy and Nathaniel's being stuck in the past. In addition, other Ondaatje's victims reaction to trauma differs from one another; in which, some would confront their harsh experiences like Nathaniel while others would bury these difficult events in their minds in order to forget and move on like Rachel.

Résumé

Il y a un espace dans la vie d'après-guerre pour les souvenirs, l'introspection, la rétrospection, la préfiguration, le retour en arrière et les souvenirs terribles teintés de douleur, de blessure et de traumatisme. Ces effets psychologiques de la guerre, ainsi que des situations pénibles, résultent d'un traumatisme, qui est la réaction à un événement horrible qui ne peut pas être pleinement compris dans la vie quotidienne de la victime. Dans ce contexte, l'écrivain canadien d'origine sri-lankaise Michael Ondaatje est bien connu pour décrire l'état psychologique des personnages dans ses œuvres littéraires, dans lesquelles ils ont des personnalités complexes et des histoires liées à leurs vies remarquables, comme le montre l'un de ses plus célèbres romans, *Warlight* (2018). Ainsi, la présente thèse, vise à examiner les expériences traumatiques et la mémoire culturelle à travers la perspective psychanalytique de Sigmund Freud dans *Warlight* d'Ondaatje. Elle cherche également à aborder le Bouclier Protecteur contre les Stimuli, la Névrose Traumatique et le retour d'événements passés dans l'esprit subconscient des victimes de traumatismes. En particulier, elle met l'accent sur le l'état des enfants de la période postcoloniale, en particulier Nathaniel et Rachel qui ont été choqués par des circonstances catastrophiques telles que la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Dans cette recherche, les méthodes descriptives et analytiques sont utilisées pour analyser et décrire les événements du roman ainsi que la psyché du personnage. Par la suite, cette étude révèle que négliger les effets des guerres et de la violence sur les enfants peut conduire à l'apparition de graves problèmes mentaux qui peuvent les accompagner toute leur vie, comme c'est le cas pour l'épilepsie de Rachel et le fait de rester coincé dans le passé pour Nathaniel. On outre, la réaction des autres victimes d'Ondaatje au traumatisme diffère d'une personne à l'autre. Ainsi, certains confronteraient leurs dures expériences comme Nathaniel; tandis que d'autres enterraient ces événements difficiles dans leur esprit pour oublier et avancer comme Rachel.

ملخص

هناك مساحة في حياة ما بعد الحرب للذكريات ، الإختبار الذاتي، والتأمل في الماضي ، و استرجاع ومضات الذكريات الرهيبة المشوبة بالألم والجروح والصدمات. هذه الآثار النفسية للحرب ، بالإضافة إلى المواقف المؤلمة تنتج عن الصدمة ، وهي رد فعل لحدث مروع لا يمكن فهمه بالكامل في الحياة اليومية للضحية. و في هذا السياق ، الكاتب الكندي المولود في سريلانكا مايكل أونداتجي معروف بتصوير الحالة النفسية للشخصيات في أعماله الأدبية ، حيث يكون لديهم شخصيات معقدة وقصص مترابطة حول حياتهم للافتة للنظر ، كما هو موضح في واحدة من أكثر رواياته المشهورة ، "وارلايت" (2018). وبالتالي ، تهدف الأطروحة التالية إلى فحص التجارب المؤلمة والذاكرة الثقافية من خلال منظور التحليل النفسي لسيغموند فرويد في "وارلايت" لـ أونداتجي. كما تسعى للتطرق الى الدرع الواقي ضد المنبهات، العصاب الرضحي و الى عودة الأحداث الماضية في العقل الباطن لضحايا الصدمات. بصفة أخرى ، فهي تركز على حالة الأطفال في فترة ما بعد الاستعمار ، وخاصة ناتانيال وراشيل الذين أصيبوا بصدمة نتيجة لظروف كارثية مثل الحرب العالمية الثانية. في هذا البحث تم استخدام المنهج الوصفي والتحليلي لتحليل ووصف أحداث الرواية وكذلك نفسية الشخصية. بعد ذلك ، تكشف هذه الدراسة أن إهمال آثار الحروب والعنف على الأطفال يمكن أن يؤدي إلى ظهور مشاكل عقلية خطيرة قد تبقى معهم طوال حياتهم ، كما هو الحال بالنسبة لصرع راشيل وكون ناتانيال عالق في الماضي. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، يختلف رد فعل ضحايا اونداتجي الاخرون من شخص لآخر. حيث يواجه البعض تجاربهم القاسية مثل ناتانيال ؛ بينما يدفن الآخرون هذه الأحداث الصعبة في أذهانهم لكي ينسوا و يمضوا قدما مثل راشيل.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The inhabited world cannot be fully understood without looking to the history of colonial rule and imperialism. In other words, the 'European history,' 'European literature,' or 'European Philosophy' cannot be conceived as existing in the absence of Europe's oppression and colonial encounters around the world. The post-colonial period has never suggested that colonialism has ended; in fact, much of it deals with the lasting forms of the colonial authority after the final end of an empire. Other forms of postcolonial theory¹ pursue to imagine a world after colonialism, but one which has yet to come into existence. Even after the colonized nation's independence, colonization still affected the nation's position and interaction with and within the international world; therefore, the independent nation would be unprepared to function in the modern global system and exposed to outside influence and pressure. In this vein, Britain experienced this after the world war two that had a huge impact on the country especially on people.

World War Two was a global war that involved the major and most powerful countries which were divided into two sides, the Allies and Axis power. It was the deadliest military conflict in history for its huge number of people's death from civilians to military, due to massacres, disease, deliberate genocide, starvation and mass-bombings. 1945 proved to be a key moment in Great Britain's history because WWII had an immediate impact when it comes to economic and political changes and it was extremely costly for Britain's empire in which it led to the devastation and the exhaustion of the country and its people. Cities and towns were heavily bombed, houses and schools were destroyed, thousands lost their homes and many slept in army camps. This was reflected in literature during and after the war, hence; the writing during this period was very diverse that the writers have depended on the experiences of war to discuss themes such as democracy, race, power and human behavior under conditions of stress. The latter, deals with the psychological state of people that is related to the effects of the war.

One of the most famous writers of the post-colonial period is Michael Ondaatje that gives memorable, often ambiguous, characters and interlocking stories of their extraordinary lives. His sensibility probably stems from his background. Ondaatje' style makes the reader spot the absolute and stunning beauty of his writing because he brings the lines together seamlessly and every sentence he writes is powerful in content and heavy in meaning.

1. Postcolonial theory is a body of thought primarily concerned with accounting for the political, aesthetic, economic, historical, and social impact of European colonial rule around the world in the 18th through the 20th century. Oxford references.

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In addition, Ondaatje is well-known of the historical content in his most literary works, and he is famous by his sensitive treatment of issues of WWII, discrimination, ethnic conflict and power relations. Besides, he makes his points through the lives and fortunes of his characters. Moreover, Michael Ondaatje portrays the psychological states of the characters in his literary writings and this can be highly seen in one of his most famous novels *Warlight* (2018).

Michael Ondaatje's novel *Warlight* made an immediate success when it reached "The New York Best Seller List" within the month of its publication and it was long listed among thirteen novels for "Man Booker Prize" in July 2018. *Warlight* is a novel that comes back to the reader as a series of sharply perceived images; in which, it tackles the complexities of 'trauma' and 'cultural memory' resulting from world war two. These two aspects can be explained as the push down of any unpleasant feelings, events, and the inability of retrieving episodic memories from childhood by people who were shell-chocked due to the war.

This dissertation basically examines traumatic experience and cultural memory through the psychoanalytical perspective of Sigmund Freud in Micheal Ondaatje's *Warlight*. Therefore, the aim of this study is to show the handing-down of unconscious experiences and burying past events as well as undesirable emotions in the mind which they will be returning later on. In other words, it highlights the 'protective shield against stimuli', 'traumatic neurosis' and the remembrance of past trauma which is the profound type of cultural memory.

This study is meant to answer a set of questions in order to guide the investigation. These questions are as follows: To what extent does the novel portray cultural memory and traumatic experience? How do traumatic events affect the characters? How do Ondaatje's characters react to the traumatic experiences?

In order to answer the research questions, it is hypothesized that the story is slowly revealed, in flashbacks, fragments, digressions and stories within stories, narrated in Ondaatje's style. In this vein, the recollections of past trauma experienced by the characters maybe the most profound type of cultural memory. Moreover, not dealing with the pain and the disability of getting over traumatic situations are the factors of creating the protagonist's psychological heft. In this regard, the repressed memory keeps coming back as a symptom in case it has not been fully assimilated in the conscious mind. Besides, Ondaatje's characters react differently to the traumatic experiences; some would confront them and others would alienate themselves to protect their mental health from the overwhelming trauma.

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The topic of trauma theory studies in literary criticism attracted a lot of attention after the publication of Cathy Caruth's "Unclaimed Experience" in 1996. It covered a number of different subjects, including trauma theory or theory of 'post-traumatic stress disorder' which are a sub disciplines in psychoanalysis that deals with the significance of memory in shaping individual and cultural identities. Moreover, psychoanalytic trauma theories, as well as other theoretical frameworks such as post-structural, sociocultural, and postcolonial theory, form the foundation of a critique that examines representations of traumatic experiences and their impact on identity and memory.

Nasrullah Mambrol in '*Literary Theory and Criticism*' claims that "Trauma studies first developed in the 1990s and relied on Freudian theory to develop a model of trauma that imagines an extreme experience which challenges the limits of language and even ruptures meaning altogether" (1). He further demonstrates that the idea that a traumatic experience pushes the limits of language and even shatters meaning completely established in the field's original limitations and continues to influence the critical discussion even as competing techniques dispel it. He also emphasizes that Sigmund Freud's views on traumatic experience and memory outline the psychological ideas that guide the field.

There are a number of works that studied the novel from different perspectives and various studies. Among them, there is Alex Preston in '*The Guardian International News*' magazine who claims that "We have no memories from our childhood... only memories that pertain to our childhood". Alex here points out that "this idea – that memory is the construct of the older self looking back – has been the engine driving much of Michael Ondaatje's extraordinary literary career." (1). In another words, this idea can be explained as childhood amnesia which means the inability of retrieving episodic memories from childhood by adults. In addition, Alex assumes that all Michael Ondaatje's literary writings are based on this idea and specifically well embodied in his most famous novel *Warlight*.

In The Punch Magazine, '*Michael Ondaatje: Shards of Memory*' Shireen Quadri states that "Reading Michael Ondaatje's *Warlight* is like walking through a blanket of fog and mist, with light surfacing at the end"(1). Onadaatje has a suspense strategy in which he brings up the topic, dismisses it, bring it up again later with a new perspective, and so on until the last pages hint at a conclusion. There are reasons for leaving the children behind, as it turns out, because this is a mystery narrative and those reasons cannot be mentioned without giving away the storyline.

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Moreover, the author and critic David Shields in ‘*The Guardian*’ argues that (in order to “fill in the holes; we turn our memories into specific images, which our minds understand as representing a specific experience, object or thought. If we think about memory this way – as a medium of visual metaphors – then we begin to understand the extraordinary intensity of Ondaatje’s writing style: he is a memory artist”(2). He also summons images with an acuity that makes the reader experience them with the force of something familiar, intimate and truthful.) Michael Ondaatje is a writer who uses descriptive language and sincere and honest thoughts to create stunning imagery. He writes in the style of a weaver. His thread is words, and the completed product is intensely colorful and intricate embroidery.

Furthermore, James Bradly in ‘*Sydney Review of Books*’ interprets that “At first blush Ondaatje’s new novel *Warlight*, which is set in immediately after the Second World War, and is driven by the shadowy legacies of intelligence work and clandestine operations, might suggest a late return to the territory that Ondaatje explored to such effect in *The English Patient*. Both novels share an interest in the aftermath of war and the duplicity of power, as well as a preoccupation with the idea of Englishness. Yet like Ondaatje’s last novel, *The Cat’s Table*, which presents a semi-autobiographical account of its author’s journey from Colombo to London as an unaccompanied 11-year-old, *Warlight* indicates narrator’s relationship to his youth, and the long shadow cast by his failure to grasp the complexities of their experiences at the time. The novel’s marvelously evocative title refers to the shrouded illuminations of the war years”. One of the consequences of war is psychological trauma. It has a severe negative effect on the survivors, and the symptoms differ from one person to the next. Extreme anxiety, phobias, hallucinations, and flashbacks are some of the most typical qualities discovered in trauma sufferers; however, there is no precise moment when a person may begin to display these behaviors.

In the *Globe and Mail Magazine*, ‘*Review: Warlight is on Michael Ondaatje’s Most Satisfying Novels Yet*’, Charlotte Gray illustrates by quoting from the novel (“The past never remains in the past,” muses Nathaniel Williams, the narrator of Michael Ondaatje’s eighth novel, as he tries to piece together fragments of information and memory about his childhood. We are in familiar Ondaatje territory here – sensuous prose, curious characters, missing threads, unstable footings. But which of these fragments has real significance? “Do we eventually become what we are originally meant to be?” ponders the narrator – and the reader – as each searches for meaning.) (1). Recollection serves as a gangplank between an outmoded past, an

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undeniable present, and an unknown future, yet human memory is as confusing as a landscape's collection. Landscape-based views, beliefs, and experiences may attach memories, affect perceptions, and affect an individual's aboriginal integrity and cognitive skills

Avid Bards in his *Book Review: 'Warlight by Michael Ondaatje'*, highlights that we regularly read about the trauma of those who have experienced war, but we rarely hear about how their children learn to live with them and it. Nathaniel and Rachel are victims of war's consequences, but they have the advantage of being able to hold their parents, particularly their mother, responsible for the abuse they believe they were exposed to. Their mother, on the other hand, must come to understand that the hatred of her children is the price she must pay for the decisions she made during her war years.

In other words, stories and books about the pain and suffering of those who have been through war are prevalent writings, but it is uncommon to find stories about how their children learn to live with them. In *Warlight* Nathaniel and Rachel not only must survive the war, as did many others in their surroundings, but they must also navigate the waters muddied by their parents and the mysterious men and women sent to keep a watch on them.

The selected novel has been studied through various perspectives and presented in many studies; therefore, it is read through the lens of Freudian psychoanalytic perspective to trace children's traumatic experience and cultural memory unlike the most common works that deal with the adults traumatic experience instead.

This research examines the novel of *Warlight* (2018) by Michael Ondaatje, a Canadian Nobel Prize winner, to see how individuals and psychology are formed through memories. This research looks at how place affiliation and understanding of environmental configurations be distorted or elevated in remembrance through the creation of cognitive maps. In an attempt to understand the novel from a psychoanalytical perspective, this study deals with previous problematic questions and verify the relevance of the hypothesis mentioned above using the descriptive and the analytical methods to analyze and describe the events of the novel and the psyche of the characters. In addition, the qualitative approach is used because it is the most suitable for this research.

Hence, this research is divided into three chapters. The first chapter gives a brief overview about trauma and cultural memory. Besides, it is dedicated to introduce the theoretical

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framework of trauma theory and cultural memory through Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical perspective. It also studies the political, historical and the sociological perspective to trauma theory. In addition, it reviews how they were projected in post-colonial literature.

As for the second chapter, it deals with the analysis of Michael Ondaatje's *Warlight*. It also aims at exploring trauma in the novel and how it is manifested through the characters. It seeks to identify the examination of Nathaniel and Rachel's traumatic experience of war. By then, it demonstrates the themes of violence and anxiety, loss and the search of mother besides the past and disillusionment.

Chapter three aims at exploring cultural memory in the novel and its effect on the characters. In addition, it indicates memory, space and history in Ondaatje's *Warlight*. Furthermore, it highlights the traumatic recollection of memory and how the protagonist's past events keep returning in fragments. Finally, this chapter deals with aspects of generation and healing the self, love and art, the secret revelation and storytelling in the novel.

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Introduction:

The mind is the most sophisticated and powerful human organ; however, the one thing that the mind is incapable of is distinguishing between a real event and one that is just a dream. This thing may either help to attract positive things into one's life or completely destroy one's health, and this is where the memory comes in. At first glance, the memory sounds something inert attached to the past, a memory of something that has started and finished in time. A closer examination reveals that memory is dynamic and links the three temporal dimensions: it is triggered in the present and relates to the past, but it constantly looks forward. This chapter will tackle the examination of Trauma and Cultural Memory through the lens of psychoanalytical theory.

The symbolic institutionalized legacy to which individuals resort to establish their own identities and assert their membership in a community is preserved through cultural memory. This is realizable because remembering has normative elements, which means that if you want to belong to a community, you must follow the norms of how and what to remember, as mentioned by Aleida Assmann in her conference Communicative and Cultural Memory. The mind can be affected by several factors; one of these factors is war. War causes a heavy effect on both the human mind and the human body. It leads to great psychological trauma to both combatants and civilians. As a result, the mental health responses progressively developed.

Nowadays, armies realize the psychological effects of combat and provide psychological support to veterans, but there is far less attention paid to the psychological effects of violence on civilian populations and providing psychosocial care to them, including people with mental health disabilities. Various studies have attempted to understand war behavior in recent years, such as the origins of behavior in war research, which is now being reviewed, and the people on war project, which sought to understand how civilians and soldiers experience war.

The psychological damages of war and the upsetting experiences due to the severe shock caused what is called 'Trauma' that can be defined as a reaction to a terrible, painful event that victims cannot properly understand or incorporate the events into their normal existence. Trauma can manifest itself in a variety of ways and sometimes it can be stuck with the person for his whole life. World War Two left many wounded soldiers and civilians that carried their

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memories combat and the burden of silence. This chapter is devoted to explain trauma and cultural memory, which are important aspects of the impact of war on people's lives.

I. An Overview of Trauma Theory:

The work of the French neurologist Jean Martin-Charcot in the late 19th century paved the way for the study of psychological trauma. Charcot was the first to investigate and characterize the illness known as "hysteria." Hysteria was formerly thought to be an illness with confusing and inexplicable symptoms until Charcot's study (Herman, 1992, 10). Pierre Janet and Sigmund Freud both concluded that the symptoms of hysterical were caused by psychological trauma. They believed that the symptoms were brought on by an altered state of consciousness caused by the excessive emotional reactions to the traumatic events. The reaction was dubbed "dissociation" by Janet, and "double consciousness" by Sigmund Freud (Herman, 1992, 12).

After the public's underlying interest with hysterical women had cooled, the beginning of the primary universal conflict brought trauma concentrates once more into the public awareness. Soldiers were judged by their constitutions, censured for their shortcoming of character and psyche (Herman 20–21). While numerous specialists would not feel for their encounters, rather propagating ideas of disgrace and shame, one specialist, W. H. R. Streams, upheld them and supported their personal stories. Siegfried Sassoon's most well-known patient "was treated with dignity and respect. Rather than being silenced, he was encouraged to write and talk freely about the terrors of war" (Herman, 22). Sassoon went through quite a bit of his time on earth after the conflict creating his journals and purported the advantage of expounding on his wounds (Herman 22–23). Regardless of the 'episodic amnesia' during which progress in mental trauma examines was neglected or hypotheses smothered, during seasons of progress, the association among trauma and the recuperating force of language is obvious (Herman 7). When the barrier between silence and freedom to speak about mental pain is lifted, then progress occurs.

'Trauma theory' emerged in the 1990s when a group of critics began to study the cultural effects of trauma. Cathy Caruth's *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995) got conspicuous, joining the articles and meetings of experts in few fields, like psychiatry, writing, film, and social science. Caruth introduced the rules for understanding and talking about trauma that

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have affected a time of interdisciplinary work regarding the matter. Also, Vickroy, in her work *Trauma and Survival in Contemporary Fiction* (2002), defines 'trauma narratives' as "fictional narratives that help readers to access traumatic experience". She also contends that "trauma narratives . . . are personalized responses to this century's emerging awareness of the catastrophic effects of wars, poverty, colonization, and domestic abuse on the individual psyche" (20)

The majority and developing number of reactions to trauma theory in postcolonial analysis exhibit the continuous allure of trauma theory regardless of the way that it is and progressively investigated as deficient to the examination plan of postcolonial contemplates. The key question in the debate between trauma theory and postcolonial literary studies is whether trauma theory can be successfully "postcolonialized" in the sense of being usefully associated with postcolonial hypothesis. Thus, this research presents a point by point the center ideas and precepts of trauma theory to add a bit more clear comprehension of the issues as of now in question in this creating connection between postcolonial literary studies and trauma theory. In addition, this research investigates how postcolonial fiction narratives represent trauma, characterized as a response to occasions so horrendous, so excruciating, that casualties cannot as expected comprehend or join the occasions into their typical presence.

II. Contextualizing Trauma: Historical, Political, Social and a Psychoanalytical Perspective:

II.1 An Overview of Psychoanalytical Theory:

One of the most effective and well-known figures in psychology's history was Sigmund Freud. Freud (1856–1939) was an Austrian nervous system specialist who was interested by patients experiencing 'hysteria' and mental issues. . He proposed the psychoanalytic theory of shaping personality, which claimed that personality is produced through conflicts between three basic components of the human mind: the id, ego, and superego¹. Thus, Freud's psychoanalytic theory suggests that the character is created through a progression of stages, each portrayed by a specific inside mental clash.

1- According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the id is the primitive and instinctual part of the mind that contains sexual and aggressive drives and hidden memories, the super-ego operates as a moral conscience, and the ego is the realistic part that mediates between the desires of the id and the super-ego. Britannica references.

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According to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality, human behavior is the result of cooperation between three brain segments: the id, ego, and superego. This theory known as Freud's structural theory of personality places extraordinary accentuation on the job of unconscious mental contentions in forming conduct and personality. Dynamic communications among these major pieces of the brain are thought to advance through five particular psychosexual phases of improvement.

The id, the most primitive of the three structures, is worried about moment satisfaction of fundamental actual necessities and desires. It works altogether unconsciously (outside of conscious idea). For instance, if your id strolled past a more bizarre eating frozen yogurt, it would probably take the frozen yogurt for itself. It does not have the faintest idea, or care, that it is impolite to take something having a place with another person; it would mind just that you needed the frozen yogurt. The superego, on the other hand, is concerned with societal standards and values, similar to what many individuals refer to as their 'conscience' or 'moral compass'. As a kid discovers what their way of life believes about what is good and evil, it develops. On the off chance that your superego strolled past a similar outsider, it would not take their frozen yogurt since it would realize that that would be inconsiderate.

Nonetheless, if both your id and your superego were included, and your id was sufficiently able to abrogate your superego's anxiety, you would in any case take the frozen yogurt, yet subsequently you would doubtlessly feel blame and disgrace over your activities. Oppositely to the instinctual id and the moral superego, the ego is the rational, pragmatic part of our personality. It is less crude than the id and is somewhat conscious and partly unconscious. It's what Freud viewed as the "self," and its responsibility is to adjust the requests of the id and superego in the pragmatic setting of the real world. In this way, in the event that you strolled past the outsider with frozen yogurt once again, yourself image would intercede the contention between your id ("I need that frozen yogurt at the present time") and superego ("It's inappropriate to take another person's frozen yogurt") and choose to go purchase your own frozen yogurt. While this may mean you need to stand by 10 additional minutes, which would baffle your id, your ego chooses to make that sacrifice as a component of the trade off fulfilling your craving for frozen yogurt while likewise keeping away from an undesirable social circumstance and possible sensations of disgrace.

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Thus, Freud considered that the id, ego, and superego are in consistent conflict and that grown-up personality and behavior are established in the consequences of these inward battles all through adolescence. He believed that an individual who has a solid conscience has a healthy personality and that lopsided characteristics in this framework can prompt despondency (anxiety and sadness, as we currently know them) and unhealthy behaviors. Regardless of the fact that Freud's theory has numerous benefits that assisted with growing our mental comprehension of personality, they are not unbounded. In his particular emphasis on the design of the human psyche, Freud gave practically no consideration to the effect of environment, sociology, or culture.

His theories were profoundly centered on pathology and generally disregarded “normal,” healthy functioning. He's also been criticized for his narrow view of human sexuality, which leads to the exclusion of other important factors. Furthermore, many opponents point out that Freud's theories are not supported by any precise empirical (experimental) facts. Furthermore, sexism, feminists, and modern critics have condemned many of Freud's theories, pointing out that psychoanalytic theory's assumptions and techniques are deeply patriarchal (male-dominated), anti-feminist, and misogynistic (anti-woman).

II.2 Sigmund Freud and Trauma Theory:

The center of trauma studies may be found in Freud's works; in fact, one might argue that trauma literature began with Aristotle, Homer, and Sophocles. The field has expanded in several ways, drawing on the foundations set by Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and his many interpretative works regarding psychoanalysis and traumatic neurosis. In fact, Pierre Janet, a contemporary of Freud, established the scene for a biological understanding of how trauma affects the brain with his lectures to the Harvard Medical School between 1906 and 1907. The origins of modern trauma theory can be traced back to the post-World War II era. Furthermore, over the last seventy years, theorists like as Lacan, Caruth, Van der Kolk and Van der Hart, Storolow, Feirstein, Kaplan, Butler, and Gibbs have developed the study of this theory.

The study of trauma writing has a long history, but it has never been more urgent or necessary than it is right now. The foundational work of Sigmund Freud may be directly linked to modern trauma theory. Much has improved since Freud's books were first published

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a century ago, but researchers have continued to examine and interpret his theories in the context of their various times, and the applications today are arguably just as appropriate. Freud's work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, his definition of 'traumatic neurosis,' in particular, is crucial to any discussion of trauma. In only a few pages, Sigmund Freud lays the foundation for what has become one of the most rapidly developing schools of thought.

II.2.1 Protective Shield against Stimuli:

One of Sigmund Freud's writings (1920) describes: "as 'traumatic' any excitations from outside which are powerful enough to break through the protective shield. It seems to me that the concept of trauma necessarily implies a connection of this kind with a breach in an otherwise efficacious barrier against stimuli." (29). He believes that trauma is closely connected with a breach in an otherwise effective barrier to stimuli. Thus, he interprets traumatic events as external excitations that are powerful enough to break through the protective shield.

The concept 'protective shield' is defined as a barrier that protects the mental mechanism from potentially overwhelming trauma. It is a fundamental concept that emphasizes a serious clinical issue for patients whose shield is broken or malfunctioning: the possibility of border misunderstanding between the internal and external worlds, consciousness and unconsciousness, body and mind, or self-conservation and sexuality. Hence, it protects the mental mechanism from extraneous excitations that may overwhelm it, preserving attention capability toward the outside world. However, the protective shield is a biological term primarily as it refers to stimuli rather than mental facts in the form of the ego.

The preparations for anxiety and the hypercathexis -an excessive concentration of mental energy on an object or person - of the receptive systems represent the last line of defence of the shield against stimuli. The stimuli become representations, and their intensities manifest themselves in the intensity of emotions, which Sigmund Freud called "quota of affect." The significance of the represented contents for the individual is shown by these effects. These intensities show as unsatisfying effects in mental life when taken as stimuli, such that protection against stimuli develops in parallel with the context of mental life in the attempt to prevent unpleasure. Thus, the idea of a protective shield against stimuli can only be applied to a newborn child who does not yet have a mental life.

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After first considering trauma to have a sexual basis (1894), Freud (1950/1894) focused on the children's need for care. After the First World War, he amended his anxiety theory once again. In 1926, he defined the infantile condition as one of 'helplessness' (Hilflosigkeit), which might be seen as a generalization of the early trauma risk (Freud, 1950/1926). If a child needed care, protection, or attention but didn't have a "protective shield," he would be completely helpless. Hence, the concept of a psychic envelope is based on the idea of a protective shield.

II.2.2 Traumatic Neurosis:

Trauma continues to play an important role in the aetiology of psychoneuroses. In one of his latest writings 1939, Freud states: "We give the name of traumas to those impressions, experienced early and later forgotten, to which we attach such great importance in the aetiology of the neuroses." (72).

Traumatic neurosis is a psychopathological condition defined by a variety of disorders that appear quickly or gradually after a severe emotional shock. A number of observations similar to a clinical picture of this sort were documented in the second half of the nineteenth century, usually in the aftermath of military involvement or railroad catastrophes, and were linked to either hysteria or neurasthenia. Psychiatrist Hermann Oppenheimer, however, was the one who first coined the phrase in 1889.

On the basis of traumatic neurosis, Freud was to build his theory of neuroses. However, by emphasizing the personal aspect of the precipitating factor and the potential of deferring the onset of traumatic neurosis, rather than the fear caused by an accident's direct threat to life, he discarded what had previously defined the category's specificity. Moreover, Freud contextualized and diminished the concept of shock and its etiological importance by considering propensity for and tolerance of trauma, as well as the trauma's significance in the subject's history and mental organization. Only when historical events brought the war neuroses to the center of attention, triggering Freud to reconsider traumatic neurosis, first in 1916 in his *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* and then again in the vein of his great theoretical revision of 1920, was the issue prepared to achieve its full immediacy.

For psychoanalysts, traumatic neurosis has a different meaning than it does in psychiatric clinical practice. The patient vividly remembers the initial trauma, which expresses itself in

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every scenario, whether transference-related or not, according to psychoanalytic categorization. The purpose of nightmares is to convey worry that was not there during the first experience. Such recurrent symptoms show a focus on the trauma as well as an attempt to gradually release excessive stress (that is, to work through it).

It's important to avoid using the term traumatic neurosis to the posttraumatic condition (or syndrome) in clinical and theoretical contexts, because posttraumatic syndrome refers to both physical (generally cranial) damage and problems connected to emotional shock. In a psychoanalytic perspective, such states do not fall under the category of neurosis. Here, too, Freud observed ambiguities, leading him to classify traumatic neuroses first among the real neuroses, then among the narcissistic neuroses.

II.2.3 A Political Perspective to Trauma Theory:

A traumatic event is a shocking, scary, or dangerous experience that affects you emotionally. During war, individuals can expose too many different traumatic events. That raises the odds of creating psychological wellness issues—mental health problems—like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression—and more unfortunate life results as adults. Violent armed conflicts, youngsters might be isolated from their families and communities by armed groups. These "kid soldiers" can observe or partake in killings and experience other traumatic experiences. Notwithstanding psychological the trauma and actual wounds (physical), numerous previous youngster soldiers face rejection from family and local area after the war.

Political psychologists are interested in a variety of events that have catastrophic consequences on huge groups of people. Such events incorporate the Holocaust, war, imprisonment, assassination, torment, terrorism, political movement, and living as a political outcast like refugees. Some relational types of trauma, like assault and inbreeding, also might be seen with a political point of view. Though, various examinations have inspected mental results of political events. For example, As a result of political or religious oppression, conflict, migration, and resettlement, refugees have experienced several very traumatic situations. Refugee trauma frequently occurs before the major war-related incident that causes people to escape or is forced to flee, such as incarceration, torture, property loss, hunger, physical assault, severe terror, rape, and loss of livelihood. Terrorism has also evolved into a

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worldwide scourge wreaking havoc on individuals, societies, and governments. A terrorist attack not only leaves physical wounds but also creates psychological damage, which needs emotional assistance and long-term monitoring.

II.2.4 A Sociological Perspective to Trauma Theory:

A trauma is not just an event. The concept of trauma is related to the ideas of arrangements and derangements of collective representations in the context of society conceived of as a cybernetic system. Thus, trauma can be also studied from a sociological perspective. In his book "Trauma: a Social Theory," Jeffrey C. Alexander develops a new social theory of trauma and applies it to a series of empirical examinations of social suffering across the world. Traumas, according to Alexander, are not just mental but also collective experiences, and trauma therapy can help in assuming a vital part in characterizing the birthplaces and results of basic social struggles. Jeffrey Alexander's book investigates social as opposed to individual trauma. It isn't concerned about the brain science of trauma, but instead the social implications those verifiable occasions come to have for communities. His methodology is principally sociological, investigating the collective construction of meaning, while additionally drawing on political theory and the philosophy of ethics.

Social and performative, with a Durkheimian commitment to the value of social solidarity, is one of Alexander's most significant contributions to global cultural sociology. Everything in Alexander's approach to culture and social meaning starts with the assertion that the world does not arrive to the analyst pre-interpreted. To say that the world does not come pre-interpreted is to say that one cannot decide in advance which features of social life will be meaningful to individuals and groups. According to him, traumas are purely happening, which break a person or collective actor's sense of well-being. Cultural trauma is an experience and scientific concept that denotes new significant and accidental connections between previously unrelated events, structures, perceptions, and behaviors.

A new scientific concept, on the other hand, illuminates a growing sphere of social responsibility and political activity. Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity believe they have been subjected to a traumatic event that has left indelible marks on their collective consciousness, forever marking their memories and altering their future individuality in fundamental and irreversible ways. In connection to the subject, cultural

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trauma, people have constantly used the language of trauma to explain what happened, not only to themselves, but also to the collectivities to which they belong.

II.2.5 A Historical Perspective to Trauma Theory:

Trauma studies originated from in the context of research about holocaust. This event was such of magnitude as to warrant the use of trauma in its historical form. The phenomenon of trauma or "hysteria" did not emerge in vacuum. The phenomenon was closely linked to modernity, especially the industrial revolution and dangerous new machines also linked to the growth of the bourgeois family which turned into the site for female hysteria.

Meanwhile, industrialization gave the social conditions for train and machine accidents and for large-scale wars. Native healing and colonial professional criticisms of indigenous family life might be seen as the offspring of two earlier and seemingly contradictory discourses: historical trauma and indigenous healing. While the former has focused on rebuilding intergenerational social relationships, the latter has pathologized indigenous parenting and child-rearing traditions. The development of historical trauma signifies a global change in the moral economy; in which, victimhood status, gained through individual experiences of physical and especially sexual assault has grown to have more weight than collective resistance against colonialism.

The connection among trauma and dysfunctional behavior (mental illness) was first examined by the neurologist Jean Martin Charcot, a French doctor who was working with traumatized ladies in the Salpetriere clinic. During the late nineteenth century, a significant focal point of Charcot's investigation was hysteria, a problem usually diagnosed in ladies. Hysterical side effects were portrayed by sudden paralysis, amnesia, tangible misfortune, and seizures. Women included the larger part of patients with hysteria, and at that point, such indications were thought to begin in the uterus. Until Charcot, hysterectomy was the most common therapy for hysteria. Charcot was the first to recognize that the cause of hysterical symptoms was psychological rather than physiological. He noticed that traumatic experiences could actuate a mesmerizing state in his patients and was quick to "describe both the problems of suggestibility in these patients, and the fact that hysterical attacks are dissociative problems—The results of having endured unbearable experiences" (van der Kolk, Weisaeth, and van der Hart, 1996, 50).

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In Salpetriere, young ladies who endured brutality, assault, and sexual maltreatment discovered wellbeing and cover, and Charcot introduced his hypothesis to enormous crowds through live exhibitions in which patients were spellbound and afterward assisted with recollecting their trauma, an interaction that finished in the repeal of their manifestations (Herman, 1992).

Crisis intervention methods to address traumatic events developed gradually, with the establishment of the first suicide hotline in 1902 in San Francisco. Psychological “first aid” was then additionally created with regards to military battle. During World War I, specialists saw that officers returned with "shell shock" condition. Psychological first aid was developed to help combatants in World War I overcome uncontrolled crying and shouting, memory loss, physical immobility, and a lack of response (Herman, 1992). The objective Psychological first aid was to give a short intercession that would assist the troopers with recuperating and get back to the front as before long as could really be expected. It was seen that by giving intercession near the front and not long after sending, traumatized soldiers had the option to survive their shell shock indications and get back to active combat duty.

II.2.6 A Psychological Perspective to Trauma Theory:

Psychological trauma, its portrayal in language, and the role of memory in molding individual and social characters are the focal worries that characterize the field of trauma studies. Psychoanalytic speculations on trauma combined with extra hypothetical structures, for example, poststructural, sociocultural, and postcolonial hypothesis structure the premise of analysis that deciphers portrayals of a limit insight and its belongings upon character and memory. The idea of trauma is for the most part perceived as a seriously troublesome encounter that significantly impacts the self's enthusiastic association and impression of the outer world. Trauma studies investigate the effect of trauma in writing and society by breaking down its mental, logical, and social importance.

Freud's theories on traumatic experience and memory characterize the mental ideas that direct the field. Psychoanalytic theories in regards to the roots and impacts of trauma emerged in the nineteenth-century investigation of study of shock and hysteria by analysts who, in addition to Freud, incorporate Joseph Breuer, Pierre Janet, Jean-Martin Charcot, Hermann Oppenheim, Abram Kardiner, and Morton Ruler. Freud's initial speculations in Examinations

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on Panic (1895) composed with Joseph Breuer and particularly his adjusted hypotheses later in his vocation in *Past the Delight Guideline* (1920), rule trauma's reasonable work by scholarly trauma critics today. According to Freud's early study, traumatic hysteria is triggered by a suppressed and previous experience of rape.

Moreover, Freud and Breuer stress in *Studies in Hysteria* (1895) that the first occasion was not awful in itself but rather just in its recognition. Since the first occasion keeps on incurring hurt, the talking fix (is the process through which a speaker identifies a speech error and corrects it by repeating what was said) or abreaction (the manifestation and subsequent release of a previously suppressed emotion as a result of remembering the event that triggered it) is needed to comprehend the impacts of the past and gain independence from its symptom-causing handle. Significantly, the horrible mishap is seen solely after a dormancy time of conceded activity (*Nachträglichkeit*) that defers the impacts and importance of the past (192). It is solely after a contemporary occasion considers forward the recently quelled occasion that the previous occasion can get known during the time spent recalling. The process of remembering inflicts the psychological pain; yet in addition, it attributes value to a previously repressed experience in the unconscious. This traumatic remembering, according to Breuer and Freud (40) is termed 'pathogenic reminiscences'.

In general, trauma is subsequently characterized corresponding to the process of remembering and as an occasion held inside the unconscious that causes a parting of the sense of self and ego. The writers, referring to the pioneer on trauma and dissociation Pierre Janet's work, write: "the splitting of consciousness which is so striking in the well-known classical cases under the form of 'double conscience' is present to a rudimentary degree in every hysteria, and that a tendency to such dissociation¹, and with it the emergence of abnormal states of consciousness ... is the basic phenomenon of this neurosis" (9). The crucial 'phenomenon of hysteria' includes separation which the creators contend is a guard instrument that emerges from restraint; another method of safeguard is amnesia (248, 793).

1- The act of dissociating: The state of being dissociated such as the personality (as in multiple personality disorder) or of discrete mental processes (as in the schizophrenias) from the mainstream of consciousness or of behavior. Oxford references.

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In another words, the idea that trauma causes separation or a hole in the mind is taken up by Freud all through his profession. It is the idea of the dormancy time frame between the occasion and its obsessive impacts, alongside the possibility that trauma sections the mind, can cause separation, and consistently unleashes destruction or contaminates it, are rules that Freud changes later in his vocation. Yet impact the contemporary meaning of trauma for scholarly critics.

III. An Overview of Cultural Memory:

Because memory is not just an individual, private experience but also a collective one, it has become a subject in both history (Pierre Nora, Richard Terdiman) and cultural studies. (e.g., Susan Stewart). These focus on the mechanism of collective memory (historiography) as well as its implications and artifacts (cultural studies). Two schools of thought have emerged: one asserts that the present forms our perception of the past, while the other asserts that the past shapes our understanding of the present. The other believes that our current actions are influenced by our past actions. 1st [two] However, it has been noted (most notably by Guy Beiner) that these two methods are not mutually exclusive. [Three]

In accordance with Jan Made, Symbolic history expressed in texts, rituals, monuments, festivals, artifacts, sacred scriptures, and other media act as mnemonic triggers to initiate meanings associated with what has happened, forming cultural memory. It also transports you back to the ancient origins, crystallizes past collective memories, and may last centuries. As a result, it assumes that information is only available to initiates.

Jan drew attention to the links between cultural memory and identity. Cultural memory, he claims, is "the faculty that helps us to construct a narrative picture of the past and creates an image and an identity for ourselves through this phase."⁽²⁾. Thus, cultural memory retains the symbolic institutionalized history that people use to shape their own identities and affirm their membership in a community. This is possible because remembering has normative dimensions, such as the researcher's assertion that "if you want to belong to a society, you must obey the rules of how and what to remember."⁽²⁾

Cultural memory, he said, is seen as a threat by authoritarian regimes because it serves as a collective unifying power. For instance, he used the example of the Bosnian war, when Serbian artillery destroyed Sarajevo's Library in an effort to stifle the memory of Bosnians

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and other minorities in the area. The goal, he explained, was to make culture a blank slate so that a new Serbian identity could be created from scratch: 'This was the authoritarian regimes tactic for destroying the past, because if you control the present, you control the past, and if you control the past, you control the future.'(3).

Therefore, the belief that individual acts of remembrance occur in a socio-cultural context is central to cultural memory theory. As a result, mediation, textualization, and acts of contact are results of the development of mutual versions of the past (Rigney, 2005). Simply put, the memories we have are part of the shared memories of the groups of which we belong and the communities in which we live and work. Furthermore, these communicated versions of the past aid in the construction of our identities and the answer to the question "who are we and who are the others?" As a result, our behaviors are influenced.

III.1 A Psychoanalytical Perspective to Cultural Memory :

According to Paul Cannerton, the influence of memory is seen in how the past is perceived in current circumstances, since it can never be erased from human practice. On the other hand, memory is colored by interpretation motivated by a desire to experience the real (Susan Stewart). Therefore, both memory and cultural perception rely heavily on experience, and vice versa. Many of our memories should be personal and special to us after learning about episodic memory, but cultural psychologists and researchers have discovered that the average age of first memories differs by up to two years across cultures. Enculturation and cultural traditions, according to researchers, have an effect on childhood memories. For example, how parents and other adults discuss, or do not discuss, events in their children's lives have an impact on how those events are remembered later.

As Aleida Assmann explained during her conference, with professor Jan Assmann, which is entitled '*Communicative and Cultural Memory*' that memory appears as a mechanism to shield the past from the corrosive effects of time and to provide subsidies for individuals to understand the environment and know what to expect so they don't have to reinvent the wheel and start from scratch with each generation. As a result, we must be cautious that the unpleasant past, once remembered, does not revive revanchism. Besides, memory can be hurtful and dangerous if it digs up anger eager to rewrite history. In addition, Aleida posed the following

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questions about the dangers and benefits of cultural memory resulting from traumatic events: 'Does this memory bring up an aggressive potential or does it result in greater respect and discussion between neighbors? "Does it create a community that is more vengeful and mindful of its past? "Does it make individual people more sensitive or oblivious to human rights violations or minority conditions?"(1). Cultural memory, the researcher concluded, should not be viewed as an unhealthy fixation on the past, but rather as a backup, a kind of context needed for society to construct its future. However, she believes that this recollection, like any other, should be examined critically.

III.2 Memory and History :

The distinction between memory and history is important in recognizing cultural memory as a phenomenon. This distinction was proposed by Pierre Nora (1931 -), who identified a gap between history and memory. When it comes to determining when representation "took over," scholars disagree. Therefore, Nora mentions the emergence of European nation-states. The French Revolution, according to Richard Terdiman, was the tipping point: the transformation of a democratic structure, combined with the advent of industrialization and urbanization, made life more complicated than it had ever been. This not only made it more difficult for people to comprehend the modern world in which they found themselves, but it also made it difficult for them to relate to the past before the revolution, due to the progressive nature of the break. In this situation, people's implicit views about their experiences were no longer present. To understand the past, one must first grasp the present, and to understand the past, it must be shown historically. When people realized that history was simply one interpretation of the past, they grew more concerned with their own cultural legacy (called *patrimoine* in French). This aided in the formation of a group and national identity.

In pursuit of a common identity to unite a nation or citizens, governments have created collective memories in the form of commemorations in order to put and hold minorities and individuals with divergent ideologies together. Moreover, the fascination with memory, it becomes apparent, is linked to the fear of forgetting and the desire for authenticity. However, more recently, doubts have been raised about whether there was ever a time when "pure," non-representational memory existed – a claim made by Nora in particular. Scholars such as Tony Bennett correctly point out that representation is a necessary precondition for human

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understanding in general: pure, organic, and objective memories can never be seen in their entirety.

III.3 Memory and Space :

Memory space (French: lieu de mémoire) is a term in collective memory that states that certain locations, items, or events may hold special meaning for a group's remembrance. 1st French historian Pierre Nora [1] coined the term, describing them as "complex objects." French historian Pierre Nora [1] coined the term, describing them as "complex objects." They are lieux—places, sites, causes—in three senses—material, symbolic, and functional” They are lieux—places, sites, causes—at once natural and artificial, plain and vague, concrete and abstract.

The idea of cultural memory has been frequently misunderstood due to a sometimes overly limited definition of memory as only a temporal phenomenon. Nora was the first to link memory to actual, tangible locations, which are today known and included as lieux de mémoire across the world. In his work, he refers to these as mises en abîme, or entities that represent a more complicated aspect of our culture. Despite focusing on a spatial approach to memory, Nora recognizes in his early historiographical theories that memory encompasses more than just concrete and visual elements, rendering it fluid and in flux. Furthermore, this problematic idea, which Terdiman refers to as memory's "omnipresence," means that, on a sensory level, a smell or a sound may become culturally valuable due to its commemorative impact.

One of the most difficult aspects of memorializing our history, whether in visual or abstract form, is the inevitability of its absence; in which, every memory we attempt to recreate becomes a "current past," as Terdiman puts it. In fact, this irrational desire to remember what has passed away forever elicits a sense of nostalgia, which can be seen in many facets of everyday life, but most notably in cultural items.

III.4 Embodied Memory :

The field of 'embodied memory' has recently sparked interest. In fact, the body, according to Paul Connerton, can also be used as a container, or carrier of memory, for two different

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forms of social practice: inscribing and integrating. The former category includes all activities that aid in the storage and retrieval of information, such as photographing, writing, and taping. The above refers to professional performances transmitted by physical action, such as a spoken word or a handshake. In addition, these acts are carried out by the person in an unconscious manner, and it is possible to argue that this memory, which is carried in gestures and behaviors, is more authentic than 'indirect' memory through inscribing.

The first ideas about embodied memory, in which the past is 'situated' in the individual's body, come from evolutionists like Jean Baptiste Lamarck and Ernst Haeckel in the late 1800s. The individual is a summation of the entire history that preceded him or her, according to Lamarck's law of acquired characteristics inheritance and Haeckel's theory of ontogeny recapitulating phylogeny. (However, none of these ideas is currently accepted by science.)

Recent ideas indicate that memories, rather than being modal mental representations, might be thought of as mental simulations including the reactivation of sensorimotor patterns linked with events during encoding. Furthermore, according to the sensorimotor model of memory (SMM), the body is the medium via which sensorimotor modalities replicate the somatosensory components of recalled experiences, and memory processes may be influenced by manipulating the body.

IV. Projecting of Trauma and Cultural Memory in Postcolonial Literature :

IV.1 Depicting Trauma and Cultural Memory in Postcolonial Literature :

Despite being increasingly criticized as insufficient to the research agenda of postcolonial studies, the diversity and growing number of responses to cultural trauma theory in postcolonial criticism indicate the theory's continued appeal. In fact, the key question in the debate between trauma theory and postcolonial literary studies is whether trauma theory can be effectively "postcolonialized," that is, usefully combined with postcolonial theory.

Trauma and cultural memory studies has emerged as a rapidly expanding and highly diverse field over the last few decades. Since the early 1990s, the promise of new expository potential held out by trauma theorists has been taken up by cultural and literary criticism, as in Geoffrey Hartman's *On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies* (1995), which

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presented the new theory as offering "a change of perspective" not only at the level of theory but also "of exegesis in the service of insights about human functioning." (544). Hence, Cultural trauma theory has become more common as a theoretical paradigm for literary practice since then.

While the theory has appeared in postcolonial literary criticism in recent years, its influence on postcolonial theory is still up for discussion. There is no consensus about whether trauma theory can be successfully "postcolonialized" at the moment. In addition, this was demonstrated in April 2010 at a conference on trauma, memory, and narrative in the contemporary South African novel hosted by the University of Vienna, Austria, where a number of distinguished postcolonial critics conversed with trauma scholars. Moreover, this discussion focused on the complexities and controversies surrounding trauma theory, as well as its exegetical importance for postcolonial literary studies. Trauma theory's impact is undeniably a significant and as yet unresolved topic in contemporary postcolonial critique, as the conference discussions illustrated. As a result, the trauma novel has been described as a modern literary genre, with the "postcolonial trauma novel" following in its footsteps.

The definition of collective trauma, on the other hand, needs a more detailed and culturally sensitive formulation in a postcolonial trauma theory. Such a reformulation, according to the editors, would necessitate a much-needed critical engagement with trauma theory's "one-sided, Eurocentric orientation." Furthermore, several project contributors criticize the Freudian model of collective trauma, which claims that trauma destroys and weakens collective cohesion. As a result, their findings contradict the notion that trauma is "a blow to the basic tissues of social life that destroys the ties that bind people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality," which has been common in trauma theory since the 1990s (Erikson 471).

IV.2 Depicting Trauma and Cultural Memory in Canadian Literature :

The Canadian literature that is the literature of a multicultural country, created by Indigenous people and by people of other ancestral backgrounds. The literature of Canada may be divided into two primary divisions: English and French, reflecting the country's dual origins and official bilingualism. Although Canadian writing started as an imitative colonial literature, it has continually established its own national identity. Due to the large number of

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immigrations, first of New England Puritans from 1760 on and later of American Loyalists during the Revolution, Canadian literature followed U.S. models almost until the confederation in 1867. The rigors of pioneering provided little opportunity for creating or appreciating literature before 1800. The only significant works were journals, such as Jacob Bailey's, and records of explorers' voyages, such as Henry Kelsey, Samuel Hearne, and Sir Alexander Mackenzie.

The Canadian writing is shaped by a special way in which Canadians focused on the possibility of memory transmission and survival of the past. The way individuals in a specific culture identify narratives and literature – or rather invent, then collude in, a collective imaginary about literature – can be situated in patterns of intellectual and cultural expression. Such patterns are shown through the ways in which culture related subjects are treated or expressed. Canadians are alright with humanist's John Porter's idea of "vertical mosaic", as it recognizes a country made out of an assortment of ethnic groups, and a public inclination not to meddle with the traditions, beliefs and privileges of those not the same as oneself.

On the one hand, psychoanalysis is concerned with people's psyches, whereas literature is concerned with literary writings that depict fictional characters as representations of actual people. Thus, most of WWI Canadian novels published in the last forty years is related to a transnational trauma paradigm. Referring to the concepts of post-memory and trauma studies, Canadian literature discussed various representations of suffering, such as shell-shocked soldiers' worries, survivor guilt, women's suffering, and colonial peoples' individual and communal scars. For example, Emma Donoghue's novel *Room* interrogates how experiences of violence are addressed and perceived. With a focus on Donoghue's choice to narrate the novel from the viewpoint of a young child, in which *Room* not only questions how trauma is externally imposed onto individuals' stories, yet additionally questions whether or not the clinical language of trauma is in fact a useful one for describing the nuances and paradoxes of experiencing violence.

Also, Michael Ondaatje relies in his novel *Anil's Ghost* (2000) upon the ambiguity of poetic tropes to represent the pathologies of memory and locate compulsive repetitive actions in geographic sites rich with geologic stratification. Regardless, where the setting of the story is, trauma narratives' preoccupations with place and memory, truth and history entangle with the reiterative elements of poetry to produce landscapes where history and memory share time

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and space. Individuals, psychologically damaged and struggling with their fragmented histories, record the wounded geography of persons and places. This kind of novels demonstrate the emergence of the chronotopic motif 'trauma-time' that operates in tandem with poetic tropes in fictional trauma narratives to portray the ambiguous relationships between history, truth, and memory. In addition to his fascinating literary writing, Ondaatje has been an important force in "fostering new Canadian writing" with two decades commitment to Coach House Press (around 1970–90), and his editorial credits on Canadian literary projects like the journal *Brick*, and the *Long Poem Anthology* (1979), among others.

In addition, the poet and novelist Margaret Atwood has become one of Canada's major writers in recent decades due to her interest in Canadian literature and culture. Her work has generated several discussions. She expresses her concern for current events across the world. Trauma, being as a new phenomenon, requires an interdisciplinary approach. It begins a movement to depict a changing incident; the road of sorrow and agony continues until it reaches a point of wisdom and comprehension. Margaret Atwood's central topic is female identity, and she chooses female characters and their psyches to embark on a journey using two key approaches: Psychoanalysis and Feminism. Margaret Atwood as a Canadian poet and writer criticize the environment and society that we live in it and as feminist she uses feminist criticism to focus on the ways in which women are oppressed in society, as well as their worries and trauma.

One of the conspicuous themes in fiction today is an intricate relationship between history, memory and trauma. The subjects of trauma, memory, and the related issues of recollecting and neglecting the past are difficult to talk about. At the point when these subjects are extended and associated with a whole country, it can turn out to be much more troublesome. The Canadian literature deals with trauma and cultural memory as two important characteristics to depict the world because since the 1970s and 1980s, there has been a developing interest in sentimentality and cultural memory – the way in which communities decide to aggregately recall the past. Because of broad expanded attention to globalization and diasporic communities, questions with respect to how the past is formed – by social groups, by the media, by political talk – have built up momentum.

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Conclusion:

To sum up, the study of shock and hysteria in the nineteenth century generated psychoanalytic beliefs on the origins and effects of trauma. Freud believes that trauma is strongly linked to a breach in a normally effective barrier to stimuli. As a result, he sees traumatic experiences as external excitations strong enough to break the protective shield. Moreover, since memory can never be removed from human practice, its influence can be seen in how the past is experienced in present circumstances. Memory, on the other hand, is influenced by interpretation motivated by a desire to know the truth.

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Introduction:

Uncertainties, mysteries, and doubts are topics that Michael Ondaatje enjoys writing about. He enjoys the idea of characters that are essentially unknowable and whose thoughts are flux. In fact, a potentially dramatic combination of circumstances is usually conveyed to the reader through hints and indirection: half-lights are commonly used to soften scenes, and rich prose is used to halt all action and most reflection. As a result, his works' procedures, in which similarly startling narrative potential is typically held in check, if not outright, stifled. Therefore, his work as whole is a struggle between the desire to reveal and the tendency to hide and/or conceal. In which, it manifests and strives to resolve itself in a profound attraction to secrets, as is typical. Christopher McVey argues that "Ondaatje's work frequently incorporates a countervailing desire to return, to reclaim, and to bear witness to the historical and national worlds from which his characters emerge" (142). One of his most famous novels is *warlight*, where the author strives, through writing, to retrieve a childhood that has been lost to him. This chapter explores the novel from a psychoanalytical perspective, demonstrating how trauma manifests itself in the novel through its protagonists and how traumatic experiences impact their lives.

I. An Overview of Michael Ondaatje's *Warlight*:

Warlight, is Michael's eighth work of prose, which is narrated by Nathaniel, a 28-year-old man reflecting on a wild strange and adventure-filled adolescence. The novel starts in 1945. Nathaniel, who is 14, and his sister, Rachel, have been abandoned by their parents in London, in the care of an enigmatic figure named the Moth. Moreover, the parents ostensibly went to Singapore for Nathaniel's father's "smoke-like" work. However, we quickly realize that it is the mother, Rose, who is behind the departure from Britain, and that she is a spy with a fascinating double life.

Furthermore, Nathaniel's sentimental education in postwar London is depicted in the first part of *Warlight*. He spends a brief period as a boarder at Dulwich College, similar to Ondaatje, before being initiated into a series of secret societies by the Moth as a day boy. He starts working at the Criterion hotel on weekends among the "mostly immigrant staff" overseen by the Moth; he meets the Darter, a shady greyhound smuggler; and he meets

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Agnes, whose estate agent brother allows the two of them into a series of empty homes. In fact, everything in this world appears both promising and mysterious, as if it were a clue to a great adult plot, yet that is how most children experience life.

Nathaniel, now in his late twenties, is in "a distant village, a walled garden"(44) in the novel's second half. We discover that the book is not about him, or that he has evolved into the type of withdrawn and veiled narrator that Philip Roth effectively used in *Nemesis*. Nathaniel is tasked with putting together the stories of his mother, secret spy Rose, and a man named Marsh Felon, who is described as a "Thatcher, naturalist, and an authority on war sites"(162) among other things.. Nathaniel recognizes that he can only "step into fragments of their story,"(171) but with the reader hanging over his shoulder, he knits together something that feels near to the truth, an explanation for "the confused and vivid dream of my youth."(202).

By this said, Nathaniel developed a stoic dedication to his freedom as a teenager, finding himself in "a borderless terrain between adolescence and adulthood"(55) without the oversight of his parents (65). His unlawful labor with The Darter provided him with a solid education in an environment devoid of typical parental affection and attention. The warmer, more positive influences of Agnes and Olive, on the other hand, counteracted this unusual, potentially problematic style of personal growth. Nathaniel's earliest experiences with personal relationships and love came from the former, while the latter fostered in him a feeling of wonder and curiosity about the world. Moreover, *Warlight's* success comes from telling a familiar story – from William Boyd to Simon Mawer, the female spy has become an established literary trope – in a way that gives us all the joys of the genre without ever feeling clichéd or predictable. It's almost as if WG Sebald wrote a Bond novel.

I.1 The Socio-Economic and Political Context of Michael Ondaatje's *Warlight*:

It was a time when circumstances shifted so many people's lives, when people found themselves acting in unexpected ways, when wartime liberties flowed over into the postwar period, when practicality turned into crime, and opportunity beckoned. And there were scores to be settled all through Europe. The conflict had not finished for many.

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Michael Ondaatje attempts to answer the question of how does one reconcile the differences between 'postwar' and 'life after the war' in his novel *Warlight*. In fact, it is a story of many shapes and sizes that covers many years. In which the impacts of World War II affect the lives of the protagonists throughout the work, even though it is set in the context of siblings Nathaniel and Rachel growing up in London after WWII. Nathaniel's personal journey from childhood to maturity is substantially affected by his acquaintanceship with cold independence and moral relativism, and the novel's portrayal of the transition to maturity is relatively bleak, even cynical. Above all, the novel is about growing up without the supervision of one's parents in a postwar world. Hence, Nathaniel and Rachel perceive the world through the lens of their parents' absence; shaped by their childhood in Singapore, where they were raised by a guy they call "The Moth" and his merry gang of misfits. Moreover, Growing up without parents is difficult for any child, let alone one who is growing up in the shadow of a war while being cared for by law-breaking individuals.

The costs and effects of war are the focus of *Warlight*. which is dealt once again in a story involving morally dubious espionage, which is pieced together and exposed gradually, bit by tantalizing bit. Furthermore, when it comes to Nathaniel's social sphere, it is not without ethic, though all his guardians act outside the law to some extent. The Darter, who smuggles greyhounds into London on his river barge, is Nathaniel and Rachel's other main guardian, in addition to The Moth. The illegality of Nathaniel and Rachel's circle of adults varies: although The Moth's wartime spying was sanctioned by the government, The Darter's smuggling is a one-man operation. Nonetheless, it is obvious that the war brought them all together by allowing them to exercise their marginal agency. They were "busy, argumentative souls who, having at one time legally crossed some boundary during the war, were now suddenly told they could no longer cross it during peace" according to Nathaniel (35).

If criminal desire can be classified into two categories: desire for dominance over others and desire for personal autonomy, the criminals of *Warlight* are unquestionably in the latter. Certain restrictions to access and activity had been lifted as a result of the war, but they were difficult to re-erect. It established a lasting sense of secrecy in the citizens it mobilized in covert action: "all of them abid[ed] by the secrecy of their roles, even after the war was over" (267). Nathaniel observes that though "the city still felt wounded, uncertain of itself...it

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allowed one to be rule-less" in the aftermath of the war (34). As a teenager, Nathaniel feels pleased by this momentary freedom and suppleness: "the illegal world seemed more magical than dangerous to me" (99). While the socio-political context of Ondaatje's novels varies, they all have an obsession with return and Nathaniel's obsession in *Warlight* is rooted in the *schwer*.

I.2 The Significance of the Title *Warlight*:

The most noticeable feature of *Warlight* is the overwhelming sense of darkness that varies across a number of levels. The title refers to the dark atmosphere of the Blitz, a tense time during which London (and other British cities) was forced to implement blackouts and curfews to shield themselves from German bomber planes. Moreover, Ondaatje heightens the idea that there was only the ghostly look of warlight, which alludes to the faint lighting that radiated from small orange lights on the bridges along the Thames, amid the darkness of the Blitz.

In fact, Most of the novel is spent attempting to explain the metaphorical essence of this *warlight*, which appears to penetrate the shrouded environment and expose only the characters' silhouettes. "It was a time of war ghosts," (31) Nathaniel says, "The grey buildings unlit even at night, their broken windows still filled over with black material where glass had been." The city was wounded and unsure of itself."(31)

In other words, *Warlight*, Michael Ondaatje's atmospheric new novel, refers to the dimmed lights that led emergency traffic during wartime blackouts, but it also refers to the cloak of mystery and confusion that blankets this haunting story.

Furthermore, most of the action — lovers' trysts in abandoned homes, secret wartime activities, transportation of contraband goods, and illegally imported greyhound racing dogs — takes place in a "wet, pitch-black world" only illuminated by the guiding light of what was known as a "bomber's moon." Also as Ondaatje puts it, is the dark of the English landscape, when lights are kept few and low to avoid detection by bombers. The broader sense, of course, is the war activity (also known as resistance) that takes place behind the scenes in near-complete secrecy.

I.3 Michael Ondaatje's *Warlight* as a *Bildungsroman*:

From the eighteenth century onwards, German writers such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Herman Hesse, and Christoph Martin Wieland published *bildungsroman*, a literary

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term coined by Karl Morgenstern in his lectures at the University of Dorpat between 1810 and 1820 to describe coming-of-age stories or novels of creation and culture (Swales 38). In fact, the bildungsroman is read and interpreted in the sense of German literary tradition, idealist philosophy, and nationalism; however, other countries have established modern versions of the bildungsroman within their own literary traditions. Moreover, the coming-of-age novel is still popular in the twenty-first century, despite its departure from its German origins. Michael Ondaatje's *Warlight* (2018) cleverly depicts the myth of England through the post-World War II journey of the discarded teenage protagonist Nathaniel Williams, exhibiting many of the characteristics of the conventional bildungsroman. From Nathaniel's abandoned adolescence in London to adulthood in Suffolk, *Warlight* is a bildungsroman that uses reality, memory, and imagination to form and shape his moral and psychological development.

“The vapid protagonists of the English bildungsroman represent a more democratic and thus presumably more modern national ethos than is manifest in continental examples of the form,” says Franco Moretti (189-190). Therefore, the protagonist of *Warlight* is definitely democratic; but, unlike previous English coming-of-age novels, the novel depicts the British Empire collapsing. This sheds light on postnationalism as a political philosophy in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, “Realist novels provide an imaginative space into which mutual visions and fantasies can be projected,” Tobias Boes claims. As a result of these predictions, identity-based initiatives to create organic societies, such as those envisioned by the nationalist imagination, are strengthened” (“Beyond” 116). Despite the fact that Nathaniel Williams, the protagonist of *Warlight*, grows up fast, he never really achieves his dream of getting to the next station in life, and as an adult, he seems satisfied with becoming a bureaucrat. On the other hand, according to Boes, “the bildungsroman has always created cosmopolitan remainders, and the logic of the genre does not serve to stabilize nationalist ideologies so much as gesture towards the possibility of world literature” (Formative Fictions 3).

In essence, Nathaniel's path is filled with reminders of cosmopolitanism and globalization that do not always correspond to the British nation-ideology. Moreover, the young protagonist's conception differs frequently from the ideal identity of conventional Englishness, which is built more in line with British imperialism. As the British Empire continues to implode, *Warlight* depicts the postwar environment in London. As strong visual representations of postnationalism in the United Kingdom, Ondaatje uses the agency of newly

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arriving immigrants in London and the metaphor of greyhounds being smuggled into the country. Hence, Nathaniel sees the tide turning from an imperialistic Great Britain to its implosion and decolonization, which leads to deep postnationalism feelings, as he bonds with the newly arriving immigrants.

One of the characteristics of the British novel of formation, according to Jerome Hamilton Buckley, is "ordeal by passion" (18). In the English bildungsroman, the male protagonist is traditionally searching for a woman who is beyond his station in life and social status so that he can marry up.

II. Distress, Mystery and the Uncanny :

Closely fought battles, friendship and treachery, horrific defeats in moments of utter confusion are all common themes of war stories. However, *Warlight*, by Michael Ondaatje, tells a more somber tale, set not in the midst of blitzkrieg but in the murky, frequently overlooked time that follows war. *Warlight* is an exciting and expertly constructed tale that is stuffed with other stories. Nathaniel, the writer, and his sister, Rachel, are two adolescents who are left in the care of a family friend called The Moth in postwar London. The Moth may be a criminal or not; their parents have gone on a secret mission overseas, probably related to the war and its aftermath. Each evening, The Moth invites his mates to the children's home, and together they form a motley band of misfits surviving on the outskirts of civilization.

Andrew Lanham in his article *Michael Ondaatje's Haunting Pasts* wrote: "Rhyming is Ondaatje's literary forte. He began his writing life as a poet, and when he shifted into prose, he carried with him a deft touch with metaphor and an uncanny ability to find the little resonances, the rhymes, between the disparate lives of his characters" (1). Ondaatje's literary strength rhymes, however, when he transitioned to prose, he brought with him a sophisticated sense of metaphor and uncanny ability to identify the small resonances, the rhymes, between his characters' diverse lives.

The book's first half is thrilling, with each chapter taking a surprising turn. However, the book lacks focus in the second half, and learning more about the veiled characters becomes frustrating. Instead of playing out in suspenseful scenarios, shocking surprises start

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to come as a list of facts. Because of the narration's thesis, maybe this attempt at building gaps and filling them pales.

"A Table Full of Strangers"(112) The novel's first sentence begins with this line of narration. It provides a sense of mystery and excitement that pervades Nathaniel's teenage years. Furthermore, the reader is drawn into Nathaniel's unusual, off-kilter personal world as a result of this allusion to his parents' departure and the crime-oriented guardians.

Nathaniel says: "Ours was a family with a habit for nicknames, which meant it was also a family of disguises" (11). In *Warlight* no one is who they appear to be, everyone wears a mask Nathaniel's attempts, several years later, to take off those masks, to reveal the true personalities of the people that influenced him when he grew up. In particular, he is trying to remember his mother who abandoned him and his sister Rachel. Nathaniel is piecing together his mother's past from the fragments of information she left behind. Her character, on the other hand, is as undefined to him as the figures on *Warlight's* cover.

The novel is intended to be Nathaniel's memoir of that time. He states that "when you attempt a memoir ... you need to be in an orphan state. So what is missing in you...will come almost casually towards you"(105). As disturbing as that sentence is in the story, it also explains why the book lacks bite—nothing happens by accident, because the pace is often strained. At the end, the reader is left with exquisite words, an odd cast of characters, and a cascade of revelations, but we still wish it all mattered more.

In New York Times Book Review of *Warlight*, Penelope Lively wrote:

This is a book that requires close reading. A sentence, a reference, will signal something yet to come ... This is a book rich with detail. The reader is bound to be conscious of a hidden ballast of research...but so deft is the writing that you forget this, simply appreciating the meticulous background that brings alive a time and a place ... But it's often the telling image that's the most striking, the incidental note that summons up the living past ... [an] intricate and absorbing novel. (1)

Warlight has all the hallmarks of a classic Ondaatje book, with recollection neatly assembled and rearranged until it reveals painful realities to its protagonists. The novel's beauty lies in its scope, in the epic leaps between written history and living secrets that

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memory makes. Still, the tenor is fragile in that room and the smoky gloom of postwar life can seem fantastical.

II.1 Parents abandonment, “The Moth” and “The Darter”:

Michael Ondaatje's historical novel *Warlight* (2018) is set in London after World War II ends and it follows fourteen-year-old Nathaniel, whose parents leave for a one-year government assignment in Singapore. They abandon him and his sister Rachel in the care of Walter, also known as The Moth, their enigmatic housemate. “An amateur theatre company,” Nathaniel rightly describes their house because he and Rachel meet a variety of other strange characters while living with The Moth in which these strange characters have left a lasting effect on their lives and experiences of the postwar years. *Warlight* is a unique coming-of-age tale that beautifully portrays all of the complicated feelings and adaptations that children went through during WWII, as well as how those adaptations shaped their adult personalities.

Nathaniel and Rachel persuade The Moth to let them live at home, despite their parents' intentions to send them to boarding school. Life soon becomes exciting for them when the Moth asks his mates to move into the home. One of his mates, The Darter, smuggles greyhounds into London on the black market to feed the city's abusive yet growing gaming industry. He also smuggles explosives into London from the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills, which he uses to ship them in barges.

Nathaniel was able to get a job at a restaurant thanks to the Darter's assistance. Later he runs into Agnes Street there and they begin dating and Agnes persuades Nathaniel to join the smuggling industry. When Agnes expresses her fear of never seeing his parents, Nathaniel asks The Darter to play the role of his father. The Darter is generous and caring, even assisting Rachel in treating her epilepsy symptoms. He also arranges for Rachel to work at a nearby theatre. When Nathaniel's parents' initial contract term expires, they do not return without any explanation.

Nathaniel worries that he is being followed and assumes that his mother is still in London. He, Rachel and The Moth are attacked one evening by the men who were chasing Nathaniel. Nathaniel is knocked unconscious, but he and Rachel are healthy until he regains consciousness. They find out later the Moth didn't make it. After that, they get to meet their mother

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briefly, who tells them that she was forced to leave them as part of a deal to ensure their safety. Then she leaves them again, Rachel is sent to a boarding school in rural England, while Nathaniel is sent to an American boarding school.

The story shifts forward to 1959. Nathaniel is hired by London's Foreign Office to work with The Silent Correction, a counterintelligence operation aimed at thwarting espionage attempts in the country. Nathaniel purchases a home in The Saints, the area where his mother grew up. He attempts to track down the friends he made through The Moth, but he is unable to locate the majority of them. Nathaniel and Rachel had a tense bond as a result of their childhood separation. Rachel has a son called Walter, who is named after The Moth.

However, Nathaniel's real motive while working with The Silent Correction is to gain access to information that will aid him in discovering what happened to his mother. He bursts into the office at night to resume his investigation as his mission becomes more feverish and urgent. He learns that a high-ranking official, Marsh Felon, attended his mother's funeral. Felon was also a childhood friend of his mother's. Nathaniel discovers that they worked together in Yugoslavia and were presumably once in love after searching deeper. They acted against a Yugoslavian, and his mother was eventually identified and murdered by the Yugoslavian's daughter.

While Nathaniel searches for The Darter at the end of the book, he discovers that he has married Agnes and that they have a daughter, who is most likely Nathaniel's biological child. Nathaniel expects to run into his daughter in the future, but he relinquishes his hold on his past. As a result, *Warlight* concludes with the implication that its protagonist has grown enough to move on from his traumatic encounters and his past attachment.

III. The Examination of the Traumatic Shadow in Michael Ondaatje's *Warlight*:

The title of Michael Ondaatje's book, *Warlight*, itself properly sets the atmosphere of the darkness of war and puts an emotional and physical shadow over this captivating story. *Warlight* is a story about self-discovery in many ways, the charting of a life, or lives, as Nathaniel and Rachel grow up in the crucible of war. This novel keeps you guessing and leaves you wanting more. It's a complex book with fascinating individuals whose personal

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secrets resonate more broadly — as a lesson in the long-term, haunting effects of war. As Nathaniel and Rachel try to figure out what went wrong to their parents, they get themselves into a series of misadventures.

Ondaatje's characters clearly recall other people's impressions of them, but they also lose contact with one another, often painfully. Nathaniel claims in *Warlight* that after his parents departed, he and his sister "began a new life," and he is "still unsure if the period that followed disfigured or energized" him. In *Warlight*, Ondaatje focuses on the complexity of war-related trauma. Nathaniel and Rachel, a teenage brother and sister, are the key characters. The siblings' mother and father, as well as a rogue's gallery of supporting characters who step in as guardians after the parents abandon their children, round out the cast.

Nicknames, aliases, and disguises are everywhere in the book. Rose, Nathaniel's mother, refers to her two children as Stitch and Wren. Viola is her code name on the airwaves, and she's the target of a ferocious manhunt that even threatens her family. The Moth and The Darter are the names given to the children's two mysterious, shady yet surprisingly kind guardians; while Nathaniel refers to his first girlfriend as Agnes Street, after the street where they first met for dating. Both Nathaniel's original family and the quirky, makeshift one he cobbles together by chance are lost in the shuffle, as are real names and personalities. *Warlight's* ambiguity, disguise, and subterfuge create suspense and atmosphere, but most of those characters' faces appear hazy, frustratingly so, as if you were struggling to figure out their features through shades at night.

III.1 Nathaniel and Rachel's Traumatic Experience of War:

In 1945, Nathaniel and Rachel are living in London. When their parents suddenly leave for Singapore, the two siblings are left in the care of two men who may or may not be criminals. Despite the fact that their father was a distant figure, Nathaniel and Rachel were both very attached to their mother. During their first winter apart from their parents, the siblings discover something that sheds light on both their mother's past activities their parents' lie about finding work in the East - a betrayal that shatters the teenagers' innocence and trust. The emotional center of *Warlight* is Nathaniel and Rachel's search for their missing mother, "who always had a printless foot." (141)

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Many of Ondaatje's distinctive characteristics are there in *Warlight*: unforgettable pictures and a profound examination of memory's mindscape. What is it that one remembers and what is it that one forgets? What is illuminated and what is left in the dark? For example, Nathaniel tells the Moth that he dislikes cats, the Moth reminds him of his childhood cat, which he adored:

“Do you remember the cat?”“No.”“You had a cat once.”“No, I didn’t.”“Yes.”I was silent, out of politeness. I never had a cat. I don’t like cats. “I avoid them,” I said. “I know,” The Moth said. “Why is that, do you think? That you avoid them? “You had a cat,” he said again. “You loved it. It was the only pet you had when you were a child. It was small. It would wait for you to come home. One doesn’t remember everything. ... It irritated your father. He was a light sleeper. In the last war he took on a fear of sudden noises. Your cat’s howling drove him mad. So your father killed it one night (27-28).

The cat's howling frightened Nathaniel's father, who had acquired a fear of loud noises as a result of the war. He was driven insane by the cat's yowling so he killed it. Nathaniel has no specific memory of this experience as a teenager; instead, he has relegated it to a general dislike of cats. Freud's theory about what happens to the psychological system when it is subjected to external trauma is shown here. The trauma neurosis resulted from a large gap in his protective shield as a result of external shock which is the death of his cat.

Nathaniel is calm, distant, and he admits to bury things; therefore, his narrative style is rather distanced. However, there are times in Nathaniel's narrative when he meets his beloved, Agnes; when he assists the Darter – who becomes an unexpected father figure – in smuggling greyhounds for illegal dog races; and when he throws a dish at a wall and grazes his mother's forehead. These intense moments serve as electric shocks in an otherwise impassive narration.

An attempted kidnapping ends in tragedy on a winter night, shattering the veil of household peace, an incident which brings Nathaniel back to his mother, but which pushes Rachel away. Even in the presence of her son, their mother is disfigured, her arms covered in scars, her movements careful, and her words guarded when she returns. Rachel, on the other hand, is permanently damaged by being abandoned; her relationship with their mother is irreconcilable, and she effectively isolates Nathaniel when he decides to stay with their mother. Several years later when Nathaniel returns to London, he is neither able to reunite

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with Rachel, who is now working as an actress, nor able to reassemble the strangers who used to sit at his table.

Psychiatrist Dr. Nikole Benders-Hadi says "In the best-case scenario, the death of a parent is anticipated and there's time for families to prepare, say their goodbyes, and surround themselves with support,In cases where a death is unexpected, such as with an acute illness or traumatic accident, adult children may remain in the denial and anger phases of the loss for extended periods of time ... [leading to] diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder or even PTSD, if trauma is involved." (x)

The loss of a parent is one of the most traumatic and universal human experiences. The loss of a parent causes severe bodily anguish in the short term. Grief puts the entire body at danger in the longer term. As a result, when tragedy strikes, the victim may feel distant and alone. For Ondaatje the two siblings, who find themselves in "a borderless landscape between adolescence and maturity," parental absence presents both narrative potential and crisis. Nathaniel and Rachel also learn about the world around them from their unusual guardians and through life itself, rather than from standard education. Parental loss has been shown in studies to have severe mental, emotional, and physical consequences.

Even though, Nathaniel and Rachel both witnessed the same traumatic events, however, everyone grieves in their own way, and the consequences vary from a person to another. Rachel's reaction was more severe and difficult that she even developed a mental illness. In her book *Unclaimed Experience*, Cathy Caruth said "carry an impossible history within them, or they become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess" (5). The traumatized are, in a sense, their trauma until they are able to integrate it, almost usually with the assistance of someone who hears what the traumatized are unable to hear.

In addition, Freud's protective shield against the stimuli and traumatic neurosis theory can be seen through Rachel. After the abandonment of their parents and the kidnapping, Rachel was under a severe emotional shock which broke her protective shield and resulted as mental disease called the epilepsy. By distancing herself from her mother and brother, she builds a barrier for her mental health against possibly overwhelming trauma, specifically to prevent epilepsy seizures from happening.

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Nathaniel, who is twenty-eight years old, says at the end of the book, "We order our lives with barely held stories." (213). How are these kids? What made their parents leave? Was it true that the two men were criminals? As *Warlight* sways its way through almost more than 200 pages into its self-referential end, all is slowly, tantalizingly unveiled in flashbacks, fragments, digressions, and stories from within stories, and narrated in elegant Ondaatje an style. Nathaniel's childhood is abruptly ended by a series of violent episodes, and he is unwilling to let down his guard. Worse still, he becomes a ghost of his own life: "I think it was becoming clear that it was not just my mother's past that had become buried and anonymous. I felt too had disappeared. I had lost my youth." (112). In another word, Ondaatje reminds us of the long, dark shadow that war casts and that wars don't end; thus he says "They never remain in the past." (159).

"If a wound is great you cannot turn it into something that is spoken, it can barely be written." The story is told from the perspective of Nathaniel who digs through his mother's life and find out what she's done, who she's been with, and why she thought she could abandon everyone. It's a depressing book about a mother's life, which was marked by a lack of affection for her children.

III.2 Violence and Anxiety:

Of course, children have always been involved in war. They normally have no choice but to go through the same horrors as their parents, whether as victims or combatants. Indeed, war and terrorism, which are man-made acts of abuse, have had a long-term mental and psychological effect on generations of children and young people. In which, the prevalence of posttraumatic stress symptomatology, manifested by anxiety disorders such as posttraumatic stress disorder, ranges between 10 and 90 percent among children who have been subjected to war-related stressors for a longer period of time. Furthermore, children's exposure to war trauma and fear has been shown to trigger high levels of stress, which has been linked to the development of a variety of psychological problems [4]. However, it is rare for children to go through such upheavals without showing challenging behavior and deviations from normalcy.

Nathaniel's childhood is abruptly ended by a series of violent episodes, and he is unable to let down his guard. Worse still, he becomes a ghost of his own life. : "I think it was becoming clear that it was not just my mother's past that had become buried and anonymous. I felt I too had disappeared. I had lost my youth," (112) he writes. With *Warlight*, Ondaatje reminds us of

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the long, dark shadow that war casts. In which Nathaniel claims that the Wars don't stop and they don't stay in the past.

To cope with life's shocks, deprivations, and upheavals, infantile nature has certain methods at its disposal. Atypical detachment from the world has been observed in some adolescents, according to studies. Some people, like an automaton, become emotionless. There have also been reports of hysterical emotional outbursts. In general, however, the child reestablishes good ties with the outside world sooner or later. In fact, the extent of recovery is determined by many factors, including the degree of damage, care during the post-traumatic period, and the child's coping skills, which are further determined by the child's age. And in certain cases, a child who has been exposed to a lot of death and destruction at a young age can develop a heart that can no longer be scarred. They become unconcerned with other people's pain.

Despite being subjected to a wide range of horrific crimes, not all exposed children develop long-term health problems, and some children respond with only minor symptomatology. Variation in resilience—the risk of difficulties developing—could be linked to psychosocial coping factors, according to one theory. In addition, Folkman et al. recommended that people use a variety of defenses and coping mechanisms to secure their psychological and emotional well-being in the face of stressors [5]. Not to forget to mention that the child's ability to identify and escape risks, the child's ability to use adults for caretaking tasks, the child's capacity to control anxiety, the child's ability to commit himself/herself to a cause, and the child's ability to find significance throughout the experience are all examples of protective factors that have been established.

Other aspects include the degree of social, community, and family cohesiveness, as well as common values and belief systems among children and their parents. While psychological and biological factors that influence stress response have been reported, little is known about their particular protective value. According to studies, while children showed little psychological reactions in response to their experience of being in a bombing, this changed as the proximity of the danger zone, as well as the intensity and lethality of the exposure increased [6]. Several months after the attack, 87% of children exposed to chemical attack agents reported psychological signs and a high traumatic event level [7]. And the majority of children who are subjected to ongoing war stressors will suffer from severe psychological morbidity.

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III.3 Loss and The Search of The Mother:

Warlight is Nathaniel's attempts, 15 years later, to figure out where his parents went and why he and his sister were left in the dark. In fact, Nathaniel understands as an adult that his parents' disappearance when he was a child had a huge impact on who he is. He also sees their departure as a betrayal and connects it to his lack of faith in others. Moreover, his entire life after that is shrouded in mystery, because His parents have gone, and he discovers that his mother is nowhere to be found.

Part one reveals to Nathaniel that his mother never left for Singapore, raising plenty of new questions about her activities. Nathaniel, now in his twenties, tells the reader about his attempts to uncover his mother's true identity as "a high-level spy who was 6 involved in murky acts of espionage" in Eastern Europe following World War II (Sawhney par. 7). He reconstructs narratives based on historical documents, much like actual history, by presenting parts from the pasts of his mother and a few of her colleagues based on files discovered during his work in the Foreign Office archives. In another words, Nathaniel's employment with the British Foreign Office gives him access to archives containing sensitive information about his mother's clandestine World War II operations (Ondaatje, *Skin* 152). In addition, the second part of the novel is mostly focused on Nathaniel's discoveries in the Foreign Office archives, which is essentially a reconstruction of the life of Rose Williams, his mother, based on the unofficial, classified records seen by her son in the Foreign Office.

Nathaniel comments on the opportunities the job provided him for learning about his mother's past early in Part Two:

[A]ccepting a job that included sifting through the details of the war might, I thought, be a way of discovering what my mother had been doing during the period she left us under the guardianship of The Moth. We knew only the stories of her radio broadcasts from the Bird's Nest [...] Perhaps there was now a chance of discovering that missing sequence in her life. (131)

In fact, Nathaniel builds together a narrative based on his personal interpretation of the fragmented historical documents. Furthermore, when he is out dancing with his girlfriend Agnes Street one night, he thinks he sees his mother. "Is this how we discover the truth, evolve?"(90) He asks. In which he puts together unconfirmed fragments. After that, He

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discovers that his mother Rose was assassinated by a foreign operative ten years ago. She had adopted the codename Viola and used it to conduct immoral activities for the British. This alters Nathaniel's viewpoint of his childhood, of his mother, and, as a result, of himself. Nathaniel moves to the Suffolk village where his mother lived before she was killed at the end of the story, elaborating on the significance of this loss.

Moreover, for Rose, in particular, the novel's final section establishes the absent figure from the first half as a personality. And it's evident that Rose is one of those who has been formed and directed by historical circumstances, forced into another life by the war, becoming someone motivated, dedicated, and amazing. Moreover, Nathaniel is still hurt by her desertion of him and his sister and finds it difficult to build a postwar relationship with her. In addition, Rachel, like the children's father, is a mysterious character throughout the novel, and she has refused to meet her mother. Nathaniel himself does not come across strongly as a character, which is something that might happen with the narrator in a work of fiction. In which, we know his thoughts and replies, but he isn't particularly cheerful, preferring to take a back seat and let more vivid personalities take center stage.

Warlight is a novel that provides a challenge to the reviewer because revealing too much about what happens would be a disservice. From the moment she appears to abandon her children until Nathaniel finds himself spending his school holidays with her in Suffolk after the war, Rose is at the center of the story. She has been involved in intelligence work, which isn't giving too much away. That was hinted at from the start, though the nature of the job isn't revealed until years later, when an older Nathaniel begins his own research.

The narrative shifts away from Nathaniel's point of view to a detached description of Rose's life - one that Nathaniel appears to be aware of. The technique is a little confusing. You have to believe that this is his reconstruction of what happened back then.

III.4 The Past and Disillusionment:

It hardly needs to be mentioned that postcolonial literature is intrinsically invested in (re)turning eyes to the past, and this orientation takes many forms: to archives, to memories, in redress politics, in acts of recovery. The prefix "re-" aptly encompasses both "retrograde" and "again," indicating the optimism that backwards motion might permit even a partial

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redo, restitution to something more complete. In fact, "The past... never remains in the past." That is the central theme of Michael Ondaatje's latest novel, which juggles time in the same manner that memory does, interlacing the 1940s war years with their immediate aftermath before skipping forward a decade or so before returning to the conflict.

Warlight is a collection of Nathaniel's fractured memories as well as various histories based on historic documents uncovered by Nathaniel through his adult life. Even a small explanation like this is enough to show that *Warlight* employs what Hutcheon would call «an overtly controlling narrator" (A Poetics of Postmodernism 117). According to Sawhney, the work "take[s] the form of a memoir" (par.5). It is, more exactly, a memoir divided into two parts – "Part One" and "Part Two" in the literal sense (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 1 and 119). The former is focused with Nathaniel's adolescent years, whereas the latter is concerned with the past as seen through the eyes of an older Nathaniel, as well as the pasts of a number of other characters — all of which are expressly constructed by Nathaniel himself.

Nathaniel in *Warlight* is clearly yearning for the unknown, not necessarily reaching for a stage of life completeness. In which, his path is disrupted by his forced maturity into adulthood, which causes him to become complacent while his family life is ruined, leaving him broken or injured. Moreover, Nathaniel reflects on his abandoned adolescence, "as if we were in a time capsule of the war years when blackouts and curfews had been in effect, when there was just *warlight*" (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 81). In other words, Nathaniel's job as an espionage agent is to discover the past, but much like in real life, the farther he digs into it, the murkier it becomes. Memories, like people, are incomplete, and there are always multiple perspectives to a story. Hence; this is what *Warlight* tries to tell the reader by its end.

Ondaatje's young narrator was raised on a legacy of incomplete information, and he knows "how to fill in a story from a grain of sand or a fragment of discovered truth." (23). This book which he refers to as his lost inheritance mixes together memory, history, and imagination to create a shimmering effect. Furthermore, he fills in the gaps with conjectures as needed, based in part on clandestine investigation he conducts on the side while reviewing official archives for compromising records. And he comments: "We order our lives with such barely held

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stories. As if we have been lost for generations in a confusing landscape, gathering what was invisible and unspoken." (213)

Nathaniel refers to his return effort as a 'rewitnessing' project, as he investigates the events of his past (114). Nathaniel's teenage years are paired with a period more than a decade later, when he returns to reflect on and analyze the key events of his youth. In fact, His adolescence is haunted by the possibility of the schwer, and his adulthood is haunted by the aftermath. Moreover, Nathaniel faces the schwer and his guilt in events that happened after the war and impacted many lives in his obsessive efforts to make sense of his past. Also, he explains his project to a "you," which places the reader in a potentially universal position: "You return to that earlier time armed with the present, and no matter how dark that world was, you do not leave it unlit. You take your adult self with you. It is not to be a reliving, but a rewitnessing." (114)

In looking back at the past, as well as in the characters' first experiences with it, he maintains the motif of almost-darkness: "There are times these years later, as I write all this down, when I feel as if I do so by candlelight". Given how many of the characters are recognized by their colorful norms de guerre rather than what may appear on their birth certificates, the darkness extends to identification as well.

Conclusion:

Overall, Michael Ondaatje's works are primarily concerned with war, its moral ambiguities, and its potential risks. Thus, in *Warlight*, he emphasizes how the war indirectly damaged the lives of two children and caused their traumatic experience when their parents went away and left them in the care of a mysterious guy who was sort of criminal; Nathaniel and Rachel were often put in danger and got kidnapped because of him. Furthermore, Nathaniel attempts to reclaim a childhood that he has forgotten through writing. *Warlight* has all the characteristics of a classic Ondaatje novel, with memories meticulously constructed and rearranged until they expose terrible facts to the characters. The novel's brilliance resides in its sweep, in the epic jumps that memory takes between recorded history and living secrets. Even yet, in that space, the tone is delicate, and the smoky darkness of postwar existence may appear magical.

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Introduction:

Memories are curious things. They can sometimes pass for thoughts, sensations, or pictures before exposing themselves to be memories. They come to mind at times and appear to be rather meaningless, while at other situations they overwhelm consciousness and transport us to a vividly recalled past. Memory is often associated with recalling events from the past. It allows people to learn from their past experiences and apply what they have learned to current situations. It is an important aspect of who we are. Culture, or a way of life particular to a group of people, is also distinct. Cultural memory refers to a type of collective memory shared by a group of people. Objects such as museums and historical monuments are frequently used to retain cultural memory.

Astrid Erll in her article 'Traumatic pasts, literary afterlives, and transcultural memory: new directions of literary and media memory studies', *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture*, wrote: "Cultural memory is a theoretical perspective which links literary and media studies closely to interdisciplinary research in the humanities and social sciences."⁽³⁾ Text, oral traditions, monuments, rituals, and other symbols are all used to transmit down cultural memory from one generation to another. Humans have access to a large variety of cultural symbols, such as books, in order to understand culture. Artifacts from the past can help us understand where we come from. Libraries and the internet appear to have an endless supply of information about what really means to be a part of a culture. The longest-lasting kind of memory is cultural memory. Cultural memory may, in fact, survive for thousands of years.

Cultural memory, like all other types of memory, serves a vital purpose in which it crystallizes common experiences. Cultural memory provides us with an insight of the past in this way. Moreover, it establishes a shared identity and a way to communicate that identity to prospective members. The recollections of past trauma experienced by groups of people may be the most profound types of cultural memory. For example, nation-based war memories have long been associated with expressions of national identity, patriotism, and efforts to maintain the historical significance of the past. Regardless of victory or defeat, war and conflict frequently disrupt the continuity of a nation's memory sequence and leave recollections of wounded, trauma, and suffering.

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Therefore, this chapter investigates how cultural memory matters in various national contexts and the representation of traumatic pasts in media such as literature. Michael Ondaatje in *Warlight* explores the interrelationship of memory and history, as well as the different ways in which a half-remembered past may impact our sense of us and knowledge of the world, love, relationships, and familial bonds. The novel unfolds like shards of fragmented memory — luminous, shadowed — piecing together its disjointed fragments, illuminating its dark recesses, pitting the freedom of adolescence against the turmoil of post-war England, our love for certitude, and the certitude of love, against the uncertainty of life.

I. Memory, Space and History in Michael Ondaatje's *Warlight*:

Sergio Matos in "History, Memory and Fiction: What Boundaries?" raised these questions «how do history and memory relate? What differences are there between the registries of history proper and the registries of memory?»(429). Memory is typically considered as a precious collection of absolute truths and stories, owned as a community at large legacy or identity, while history is shared and secular. Memory is frequently held, and history is frequently understood. History is altered when memory is passed down through the generations. Moreover, memory is essential for documenting history because it provides history a flow, emotional significance, and knowledge that most fundamental historical texts lack. For example, important historical events, such as phases of colonization, may be viewed as disasters by people who are colonized.

G. Robert Frazier in his article "Michael Ondaatje on the clues that lead to stories" writes:

“The mindset of a writer—from the relationship between character and author to the process of creating a literary work—is an exploration that fascinates many readers. Michael Ondaatje, the author of several critically acclaimed literary novels, including *The English Patient*, considers himself an archaeologist. Not the kind that roots around in the dirt for prehistoric skeletons, but the kind that extracts memories and transcribes them to the written page.” (1)

Michael Ondaatje compares his writing method to archaeology when discussing his latest work, *Warlight*. He usually starts with a fragment or an image, which he then exploits to gradually reveal the story. Ondaatje says his novels are generally inspired by "a specific clue I

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have to unravel." Thus, he starts *Warlight* with a statement that becomes the novel's opening line: "In 1945, our parents went away and left us in the care of two men who may have been criminals."(11).

Michael Ondaatje is a writer who focuses on war, its moral ambiguities, and its unforeseen consequences. Thus, the first half of the novel describes how The Moth and his companion, The Darter, turn the two teenagers' life into an unsupervised period when they are cared for with benign neglect that demonstrates Ondaatje's masterful ability to portray a London in which Nathaniel lives his new extraordinary life, one in which school is barely mentioned and in which he and Rachel begin to raise themselves up.

At his spare time, Nathaniel works as a lift jockey at an up market hotel, washes dishes in a fast-paced restaurant, and encounters individuals he would not have met in his former family life. He begins dating Agnes, a waitress whose brother is an estate agent and offers them keys to abandoned houses where they have an affair on dirty carpets. He and Rachel begin eating the most of their meals from street barrows with The Moth, who dislikes cooking.

People come and go out of their houses, enigmatic and frequently elusive, sometimes drunk or hangover, yet one or two make a real impact on Nathaniel and return later in the narrative. For example, Nathaniel subsequently follows the exotic adventures of Olive Lawrence, an intriguing ethnographer, and Arthur McAsh, who Nathaniel feels knows more about his mother's wartime work than he does.

In the first chapter of novel, scene of '*The Mussel Boat*', Nathaniel gives a detailed description of how London was at that time. He illustrates:

We continued through the dark, quiet waters of the river, feeling we owned it, as far as the estuary. We passed industrial buildings, their lights muted, faint as stars, as if we were in a time capsule of the war years when blackouts and curfews were in effect, when there was just *warlight* and only blind barges were allowed to move along this stretch of river. (61).

Nathaniel gradually gets to work for The Darter, who, despite his mysterious illegal activities, is most likely to care for Nathaniel and Rachel of all the adult characters.

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Smuggling racing greyhounds and other unknown cargo is the Darter's business, and it takes place on barges at night on the Thames's known and undiscovered canals, through tunnels, past dark power plants, and to concealed spots where they meet seagoing vessels that discharge the unexpected cargo. The cinematic descriptions of these midnight journeys by Ondaatje are magnificent, light and gloomy at the same time. With this scene Ondaatje demonstrates to the ambient light during a wartime blackout.

The reader gradually uncovers the little-known details of Nathaniel's life. This is a book written by a great storyteller, whose writing is so delicate, lovely, and serenely written that Ondaatje's war narrative is elevated to a peaceful masterpiece. As the reader sees the novel shift from Nathaniel's British perspective in London to one that is more global. Memories are a key aspect in Ondaatje's storytelling style in *Warlight* and other works.

I.1 Memory and Forgetfulness:

Warlight alters views away from the illegal desire that propels *The English Patient's* storyline forward. Instead, the center of this novel is on a mature man's exploration of a childhood filled with adult turmoil and drama. The shadowy or fragmented stories of Nathaniel and Rachel's adolescence are war lights inside unusual conditions, similar to dimmed lights in a war.

After the departure of their parents, the two siblings decided to do everything together to stay connected and closer to each other; however, when they grew up things changed. Thus, Nathaniel says "If I do not speak of my sister in this story so much, it is because we have separate memories. Each of us witnessed clues about the other we did not pursue" (61). Rachel was already a different person 13 years later when the second section of the novel was introduced, and she could have attained an autonomy that Nathaniel was unable to fully attain. Rachel's pathography has distinct challenges that Nathaniel's narrative does not.

Sheila Heen, a negotiation and difficult conversation expert, believes that emotions have an influence on what is recalled. The fact that memories with emotions are labeled with a bright red tag makes it easy to find and recall those memories, even years later, and even when we would rather not recall them. This is why a sister recalls an incident from her childhood as a pivotal point in a fight with her brother, but the brother has no recollection of

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the incident. He didn't tag it if it had no emotional relevance for him at the time. As a result, it didn't stick.

Rachel's epilepsy disease had a lingering effect on her memory, but she "tossed away such concerns" (46). Rachel's health may be assessed in this way by how she reacts to the events in the first section of the book. Like when they were abducted, Nathaniel could hear Rachel «Rachel's muffled crying"(99). Furthermore, Rachel chose to detach herself from her mother, from the years that went by. Also, she "had no desire to reenter our youth" as Nathaniel about her dilemma says, "Rachel in her own way had abandoned us, did not wish to go back to what was for her a dangerous and unreliable time" (120).

Rachel dismisses her mother's early recollections and faces it as a point of reference to be ignored. It was nearly accomplished in a modified process of retrogenesis, which recognizes that "human memory, identity, and development tends to follow the principle of 'first in, last out,' - the idea that our most tenacious experiences are our most tenacious ones" (Robertson, 2014, p.232). However, Rachel's modified process was active, and she prioritizes her memories and chooses to forget them, a process known as "first in, first out." Rachel was using active forgetting, which temporarily closes and suppresses the doors and windows of consciousness, making room for the new in order to move forward, she forgets.

It is a widely held belief that people frequently cope with painful memories by forgetting them. It might be difficult to escape the feeling that there is something traumatic lurking beneath the surface if one does not have many childhood memories. Sigmund Freud was the first to link childhood trauma to memory loss, or more specifically, repressed memories. Some adolescents respond to trauma by dissociating or mentally detaching, which may damage their ability to remember what happened. Others just refuse to think about the experience and block it out, but this isn't the same as forgetting. In either case, trauma rarely fades totally from memory.

"If a wound is great you cannot turn it into something that is spoken, it can barely be written." (275). Survivors tend to recall traumatic experiences at least to some extent, although though they may not completely comprehend what happened. Young children do not have a completely developed emotional depth. As a result, childhood recollections may not have the same emotional depth as those of adolescence or adulthood. Because these memories

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have less weight, they disappear more gradually with age. This theory may explain what was going with Rachel and justifies her acts due to her traumatic experiences.

II. Traumatic Recollection of Memory Michael Ondaatje's *Warlight*:

Traumatic memories, according to researchers, are a kind of conditioned threat response. Memories are biological phenomena that change throughout time. The brain systems that store the memories are activated when they are exposed to signals that induce the memory or retrieval of traumatic experiences. Moreover, memories that have been reactivated can be altered. The nature and direction of this change are determined by the circumstances of the individual recalling the memory. The recollection of implicit or explicit traumatic experiences is frequently related with high levels of stress.

Many of Ondaatje's distinctive characteristics are there in *Warlight*: unforgettable pictures and a thorough examination of memory's mindscape. His poetic style, as well as his regular use of figurative language and the characters' philosophical reflections, both slow down and deepen the story. He burnishes his words till they glow like an award-winning poet. Although his writing style might cause difficulties in reading as it also adds depth and joy as the storyline zigzags from present to past and back again.

The lost recollections of a wartime childhood and the two sibling's parents' wartime occupations are recollected. "I bought and moved into their small timbered house protected by that walled garden... almost immediately a past that felt completely erased began returning," Ondaatje says (127). Nathaniel's recollection and arrangement of memory is governed by a decree that is very similar to the unities of classical theater, which demand unity of place, time, and action. His memory is closely tied to the relationships he formed with his family and with the environment around him as a result of his acts and their depth. Landscapes are abstractly defined as "spaces" or "locations" that exist reflexively in his cognitive and corporeal experiences of the material world, which are formed by numerous identities.

Nathaniel's desire to shed light on his family's secrets is linked throughout the story to places that they formerly inhabited. The miserable tang of the ancient house, as well as the memories it evoked, confirms his high ambition to piece together his own former identity. In *Warlight*, characters are discovered profoundly bonded to places they connect with, and their

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memories are stored there. The narrative is based on the idea that locations are lost inheritance. Everything is thought to rhyme in a little hall of reflections of past and present locations, and in those reflections, the protagonists locate their missing parts and things they have become wary and apprehensive about, come to them rather casually.

Although childhood is regarded as the most precious phase of one's life, the mind finds it difficult to comprehend this abstract age. The human brain has a tendency to reproduce this period of time by accessing memories that connect it to locations visited. Nathaniel's life permanently changed as a result of his encounters with his two guardians, The Moth and The Darter. He eventually gathers a sense of sanity to his and his mother's fragmented pasts through these acquaintances:

When you attempt a memoir, I am told, you need to be in an orphan state. So what is missing in you and the things you have grown cautious and hesitant about, will come almost casually towards you. "A memoir is the lost inheritance", you realize, so that during this time you must learn how and where to look. In the resulting self-portrait everything will rhyme, because everything has been reflected. If a gesture was flung away in the past, you now see it in the possession of another. So I believed something in my mother must rhyme in me. She in her small hall of mirrors and I in mine. (135).

In another words, due to what Nathaniel has been through after his parents departure and the influence of the Moth and The Darter on him have shaped his new life, he decided to write a memoir about the whole experience. Thus, what he wants to say is that there is a condition if you're going to write about a memoir, which is you need to be orphaned, lonely and abandoned, so what's lacking in you, as well as the things you've become wary of and anxious about, will come to you almost unintentionally. Eventually you realize that "a memoir is your lost inheritance"(105). Therefore, you must learn how and where to look at this time because everything has been influenced and affected, everything will harmonize in the resultant self-portrait.

Recollection serves as a gangplank between an obsolete past, an undeniable present, and an unknown future, yet human memory is as muddled as a landscape's compendium. Scenery views, beliefs, and experiences may attach memories, affect perceptions, and affect an individual's indigenous integrity and cognitive skills. From Nathaniel's abandoned childhood

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in London to adulthood in Suffolk, *Warlight* is a bildungsroman that employs reality, recollection, and imagination to mold and shape his moral and psychological growth.

III. Regeneration and Healing the self:

The second half of the novel is centered by disclosures about the mother's life and job, while Nathaniel and Rachel's conflicting reactions to parental abandonment push them apart. Nathaniel struggles with the irony that his mother's actions during and after the war resulted in a familial trauma that may never heal as he grows into adulthood. *Warlight* is the story of Nathaniel's journey to discover who his missing mother was in order to fully understand himself and reclaim his identity. Although they suffer violence and traumatic event, the war is not primarily about bombs and warfare for Nathaniel and several others. The conflict lays the setting for drama and struggle that these two profoundly affected youngsters can never completely comprehend.

Even for those who aren't suffering from a serious mental illness, cultivating emotional awareness is challenging. Therapist encourages the patients to express or their feelings using actions, such as arm and body gestures that might be protective or aggressive. Stabilization, memory and emotion work, and eventually integration are all parts of the therapeutic process.

The survivor did not only need to survive so that they could tell their stories; they also needed to tell their stories in order to survive. There is, in each survivor, an imperative need to tell and thus to come to know one's story, unimpeded by ghost from the past against which one has to protect oneself. One has to know one's buried truth in order to be able to live one's life. (Laub qtd. in McCurdy 96)

Sigmund Freud's writings are the foundation of trauma research. His Trauma Theory explained the meaning that patients assign to traumatic events, the impact that these experiences have on patients' functioning and the wide range of symptoms that traumatized patient's exhibit. What Freud highlights is one of the most important aspects of trauma studies, which is a resistance to speak about the trauma one has suffered. Thus, patients choose to with them the memories of their traumatic experience and the burden of silence.

Psychological trauma is caused by a very stressful experience that reduces or eliminates the sense of security and entails a threat to your life or safety. In the case of *Warlight*, it was

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the parents' abandonment, the neglect and mistreatment, the unsafe and unstable environment and surroundings, illegal lifestyle of *The Moth* and *The Darter*, which gradually resulted in Nathaniel and Rachel's Trauma.

In order to heal from trauma, one must connect with others, ask for support. However, Nathaniel chose to isolate and alienate himself and dug deeper into the causes for his mother's mysterious death, drowning in his grief and depression, while Rachel chose to separate herself from the past and her mother in order to recover and look forward to the future.

In the preface of her book *Trauma Culture*, Kaplan points out that the "political-ideological" context of trauma has an impact on its long-term effects. As a result, individual and social traumas are connected. She prescribes: "as Freud pointed out long ago, how one reacts to traumatic events depends on one's individual psychic history, on memories inevitably mixed with fantasies of prior catastrophes, and on the particular cultural and political context within which a catastrophe takes place, especially how it is 'managed' by institutional forces." (1).

What Kaplan notes Recovery from trauma is an individual process and will and look different for everyone. As Freud pointed out long ago, how one reacts to traumatic events is dependent on one's individual psychic history, on memories inevitably mixed with fantasies of previous disasters, and on the specific cultural and political context in which a disaster occurs, particularly how it is 'managed' by institutional forces.

III.1 . Love and Art:

One of the features of the British novel of formation, according to Jerome Hamilton Buckley, is "ordeal by love" (18). Traditionally, the male protagonist seeks out a connection with a woman who is above his social class and position in life in order to marry up. As Nathaniel listens to Harry Nkoma recount his carnal yarns of his affair as a young child with his piano teacher, Mrs. Rafferty, he becomes interested in sex, and he starts a relationship with a Criterion waitress he hardly knows and who is clearly beneath his social status, as she is a working class woman. These romantic relationships helped in nurturing the ethical development of Nathaniel, As in Joyce's *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* (1916), when Stephan Daedalus' sexual awakening confirms his purpose in life as an artist. Moreover,

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according to Patricia Alden, "marriage or a sexual connection in which each partner obtains a deep sense of 'inter-relatedness' while keeping an equally vivid sense of his uniqueness" is a "symbol of reconciliation"(99).

In a bildungsroman, a character known as "The Unrequited Love" is a common supporting character. Indeed, Agnes Street's (not her real name) and Nathaniel's relationship starts out as a friendly one between two coworkers but quickly develops into a passionate and intimate one in which they frequently have an affair on the hardwood floors of unoccupied London houses. Although Agnes had more sexual experiences than Nathaniel, "something else set Agnes apart from the rest" (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 72). In addition, the beginning of sexual encounters is tame at first, as it is for Paul Morel in D.H. Lawrence's *Jude the Obscure*, but soon becomes extremely intense and difficult.

Nathaniel recalls the intensity of their love in one intense passage: "Banging into a wall. It's as if neither of us thinks of anything except to escape this closeness, and it's only closeness that will help us escape... Her hands beating my shoulders... It isn't lovemaking". Furthermore, Buckley claims that the bildungsroman hero often possesses this "aesthetic sense" (208). "The Agnes I knew during the summer was not the Agnes she would become later," Nathaniel continues, as they are eventually separated. Therefore, this leaves a hole in Nathaniel's life and sets him apart from classic coming-of-age heroes because he has not chosen the path of marriage.

Alden claims, "By making the sexual experience the path to true selfhood, he ignores the pain of upward mobility; intimate relationship provides his characters with a way of obtaining a full feeling of individuality without costly alienation, shame, self-betrayal, or disillusionment," Nathaniel's sexual experiences in *Warlight* have become an important part of his identity (99). As Nathaniel grows older, his identity becomes more linked with the developing postwar sense of postnationalism, which is a recurring theme in Ondaatje's works.

Nathaniel grew up in an environment that lacked traditional parental affection and attention. The warmer, more positive impacts of Agnes and Olive, on the other hand, counterbalanced this unconventional, potentially destructive kind of personal development. In which, Nathaniel's earliest encounters with intimate relationship and love came from the former, while the latter created in him a feeling of wonder and curiosity about the world. In fact, themes of love, intimacy, and emotional dysfunction are all closely tied to Nathan's

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development story. And he learns how his childhood affects his adult issues with intimacy, which is linked to his desire to separate himself from the world.

In Ondaatje's novel, fiction and art in general are recurring themes. Art is frequently connected with the characters' history and lives. Marsh Felon, for example, compares himself to a museum statue: "[i]n Naples, he stood before a harsh emperor, he recalls how the eyes in that evasive stone face never met his, no matter how much he shifted from side to side in an attempt to get their attention. There are times when he believes he has turned into that man" (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 250). Likewise, Nathaniel associates events in his life with "an old film revived in a cinema" (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 277).

Art is linked to not only people but also places. "She pulls out a chair and sits, resting her wounded arm on the table, the continuous mural around her," writes Rose Williams as she travels through an Italian city for her secret work (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 247). In fact, murals also appear in Ondaatje's novel *In the Skin of a Lion*. Despite the fact that the passage is about protagonist Patrick, murals are employed as a metaphor for historiography in the greater context of the novel, and in tandem with music: He continued walking past the street musicians' music, aware of the silence between each individual movements once more, knowing that by just giving the thread of a hum, he could now provide music. Also, he observed the interactions, noting how each of them was carried by the power of something greater than themselves [...] The street-band had portrayed ideal company [...] His own life was no longer a single story, but rather a piece of a mural made up of 51 people. Moreover, Patrick saw a magnificent night web – all of these fragments of a human order, something unconstrained by his birth family or the news of the day. (*Skin* 151) Ondaatje Patrick's steps have a pleasing rhythm, yet they are separated by an awkward silence, these steps could be considered historical documentation or fragments.

The process of narrative employment, which involves filling in the gaps left by historical facts and therefore building a history in the shape of a narrative, appears to be symbolized by weaving these seemingly disconnected parts together by "the thread of a hum" (Ondaatje, *Skin* 151). In addition, as the process of narrative employment is prone to subjectivity, this metaphor reflects the postmodern idea that history is unreliable. Therefore, the key to the story of *Warlight* moving forward is rooted in art - notably, Honoré de Balzac's work – both figuratively and practically. Balzac's literature appears throughout the narrative in a

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fragmentary form. It is first referenced after Rose Williams' death, when Nathaniel is alone in the house he used to share with his mother and reflects on her behavior: During my holidays, I could hear her sigh or close a book in the next room, how often did she return to the shelves of paperbacks, where she could find Rastignac by Balzac, Félicie Cardot, and Vautrin by Félicie Cardot? [...] [M]y mother knew every book in *La Comédie Humaine*, and I began to wonder where she might have found a version of her unrecorded life. And whose career did she follow, strewn among those tales, till she had a better understanding of herself? She would have understood that *Le Bal de Sceaux* is the only work in *La Comédie Humaine* that does not feature Rastignac, but that he is continually mentioned within it. (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 189)

Official histories and news stories are all around us on a daily basis, but art events arrive too late, traveling slowly like messages in a bottle. Only the best art can bring order to the tumultuous events. Only the best art is capable of realigning chaos to suggest both chaos and order 47. Every novel should begin with the phrase: Please believe me when I say that this will take time, but there is order here, but a very faint, very human order. If you want to get to town, take a side trip. (Ondaatje, *Skin* 152; original emphasis)

When Nathaniel and his sister try to learn more about The Moth's personal history, particularly about life during the war, the research is described as an attempt to "coax a few stories from him about what he had done and where" later in *Warlight* (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 11). Similarly, when The Moth tells the two children about a specific occurrence related to their mother's wartime job, their mother "listened so intently to what he said [...], devoting herself totally to his shadowed story" (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 12). Hence, Ondaatje frequently used terminology connected with fiction and art to convey 'factuality,' a concept connected with the traditional world of history. However, in keeping with its postmodern approach to history, *Warlight* is keen to emphasize the inaccuracy of any history, like when Nathaniel says it was "a moment of real and false recollections" (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 11).

III.2 The secret Revelation:

Secrets, retrieved memories, and shocking revelations are all there in *Warlight*. The novel's introductory part depicts how the two children adapt to their new strange guardians and even thrive. Who is The Moth? What relationship does he have with their parents? And who are all

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the mysterious and suspicious visitors who show up at their house while their mother and father are away? Nathaniel is drawn into a world of mystery and hidden societies by the Moth.

Rachel takes Nathaniel down to the cellar one day after school to show him what she has found. Her mother's trunk, which they had watched her pack carefully in preparation for the move to Singapore. So, they start questioning where has their mother vanished? And if she didn't go to Singapore why did she abandon them? What was the reason? The luminous truths Ondaatje exposes in response to these concerns remain long after the final page of this rich, melancholy novel—one that might end up being its acclaimed author's masterpiece.

When strangers try to kidnap the kids, the Moth, the Darter, and others interfere, resulting in a brutal fight and one death. Nathaniel knows his mother's voice and realizes she is attempting to save him. In the second part of the novel, Nathaniel uncovers that his mother, Rose, was a spy working under the code name Viola. However, Rose isn't going to inform Nathaniel about what she did or why an assassin could come one day, even after Rachel has severed all ties as a result of her abandonment and lies. Therefore, Nathaniel investigates for his late mother's background through historical records about espionage and war.

In an interview of Michael Ondaatje with Tishani Doshi, she said "Strangers are always important in your books; it's always the peripheral characters that are instrumental in educating the protagonists..."(25). He replied:

That has become a recurring thing. In *The Cat's Table*, that whole sense of adventure of meeting strangers you'd never meet again, even in *The English Patient*, it's the meeting of a new family in that house, and the idea of having been born into one family and then discovering your real family later on. In some ways the criminal elements in this story (*Warlight*) become members of the family for Nathaniel.

Michael Ondaatje's style may be confusing and frustrating to follow for readers who prefer linear plots with immediate action. Though, many people have praised Ondaatje's poetry and fiction for their skillful mixing of mythological and historical elements. Ondaatje's fascination with national boundaries and identities, as well as his increasing sensitivity to gender relations, the complicated cultural impacts of war, and the glamorization of violence, are all reflected in his work.

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III.3 Storytelling:

The term 'stories' is employed throughout the work as if it was interchangeable with history, or, from a more postmodern view, 'histories'. Nathaniel remarks early on how little he and his sister understood about his parents' personal life when they were young: "They had barely spoken to us about their lives. We were used to partial of stories" (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 8). In fact, the usage of the word "stories" in this context is notable, as more factual language would have probably fit Nathaniel's point better (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 8). Also, It's no coincidence that Nathaniel uses a word connected with fiction, art, to describe how talking about his own experience "is like clarifying a fable," as he explains later on the same page. He even goes so far as to say that he "suppose[s] there are traditions and tropes in stories like this" — the novel itself being the story (Ondaatje, *Warlight* 8).

It's vital to keep in mind that *Warlight* is, at its core, Nathaniel's (re)construction of past events for the reader, emphasizing its metafictionality. This set-up casts Nathaniel as the text's historian-storyteller, blurring the line between fact and fiction forever. While this is an obvious postmodern feature, it's worth noting that the function of the storyteller is a common theme in postcolonial writing, not least since oral tradition plays such a significant role in "Postcolonial cultures" (Dragas 4). Furthermore, as Areti Dragas points out: "[w]ith the rise of postmodernism, the growing internationalization of the novel in English and the injection of an ever-growing number of postcolonial writers in English, we have witnessed a turn away from the realist tradition and a return to storytelling in the novel" (3). In which, Nathaniel's role as historian-storyteller is reminiscent of Saleem in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, who is both a storyteller and a historian, as Dragas points out (151).

A storyteller at the heart of a novel can be an effective vehicle for expressing both postmodern and postcolonial sentiments, because storytelling "is foregrounded and portrayed not only as a tool of perceiving the world, but is also set up to question the great narratives of history, religion, and politics, as well as ideological constructs like nationhood" (Dragas 2). Indeed, readers become aware of Nathaniel's occasional or possibly constant unreliability as a historian, a characteristic that has a substantial impact on his authority as a historian and, by extension, on history as a concept, as a result of the events in *Warlight*. Thus, Dragas claims that the "return [of] the storyteller" can be viewed as a "return [of] history to its historic place within the storyteller's repertory," making the two conceptions inextricably linked and indistinguishable (155).

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Conclusion:

To conclude, Cultural memory, like all other forms of memory, has an important role because it crystallizes shared memories. In various national contexts, cultural memory is important, as is the portrayal of traumatic pasts in media such as literature. The deepest kinds of cultural memory are recollections of previous trauma experienced by communities of people. In *Warlight*, Ondaatje examines the connection between memory and history, as well as the variety of ways in which a half-remembered past may affect our sense of self and knowledge of the world, love, relationships, and familial connections. The story develops as shards of shattered memory, brilliant and shadowy, putting together its disconnected parts, exposing its dark recesses, contrasting adolescent freedom against the upheaval of postwar England, our yearning for certitude, and the certitude of love against the uncertainty of existence.

General Conclusion

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Irene Visser in his article *Trauma theory and postcolonial literary studies* claims that “Despite that trauma theory is being increasingly criticized as insufficient to the research aim of postcolonial studies, the diversity and growing number of reactions to cultural trauma theory in postcolonial criticism reflect the theory's continued appeal.” The essential question in the discussion between trauma theory and postcolonial literary studies is whether trauma theory can be effectively “postcolonialized,” and successfully combined with postcolonial theory. This research explored how trauma is depicted in postcolonial fiction narratives. In which, trauma is described as a reaction to events that are so horrific and painful that survivors are unable to comprehend or integrate them into their daily lives. In fact, as trauma research has become more prevalent, the concept has grown to be extended more broadly to situations other than those originally anticipated, such as war, natural disasters, abuse, and isolation, to include psychological trauma that may or may not have arisen from physical violence.

“Traumatic experiences often exist as memories that are not immediately recognized as fact because they are awful in their severity and intensity.” Such events are best comprehended not just through the acquisition of data, but also via a process of determining where and why conscious comprehension and memory fail. According to Cathy Caruth in her book “*Trauma: Explorations in Memory*” and other critics, literature creates a window on traumatic event by teaching readers to listen to what can only be told in indirect and unexpected ways. New ways of thinking about and responding to trauma can also be found in sociology, film, and political activism. Moreover, a prominent collection of analysts and critics examine what literature and new ideas from a number of clinical and theoretical disciplines bring to the understanding of traumatic experience in *Trauma and Memory*.

Michael Ondaatje's *Warlight* is a mystery thriller set during WWII that was released in 2018. The protagonist Nathaniel is the narrator, who begins the story in 1945 and relates it in flashbacks. He is fourteen years old at this point, and he has an elder sister named Rachel. Their parents go for Singapore, leaving them in the care of their mother's friend Walter, who is known as “The Moth” due to his quiet demeanor. Pimlico Darter, an ex-boxer active in professional crime, is a friend of the Moth. Darter enables Nathaniel in obtaining employment at a store, where he begins a romantic encounter with Agnes Street, a working-class girl. Moreover, Nathaniel, Rachel, and The Moth are all attacked one night. Their mother was a spy during WWII, and the kidnappers were foreign operators, it turns out. Arthur McCash

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saves the children, but The Moth is murdered. In the second half of the novel, Nathaniel is an adult in 1959, and he is working at a government archives office. His mother was assassinated, and his sister was kidnapped (who now has a child whom she named Walter, in memory of The Moth), she was too outraged by their mother's death to attend the funeral. However, Nathaniel grew up in the same small Suffolk town where his mother did. Also he discovers via his work that his mother had an affair while serving in the Foreign Service, and that Darter and Agnes have married and had a child who could be Nathaniel's.

Trauma narratives are fictitious stories that enable readers to explore and have access to traumatic experiences. In fact, for no other reason than the sheer intensity of every scene and description, *Warlight* is a far slower read than *Snap*. While the novel's "action" is primarily confined to the last third, *Warlight* depicts the reality of the suffering of children of those who experienced the war. Moreover, it is a poetic trip into the past, exposing both the horrors and the potential of recreating a life after war, as its title indicates. In which the characters read history to have a better understanding of their own life. They read fantasies to transport themselves to other worlds and they listen to each other's experiences in order to tie their community together.

Therefore, neglecting the impacts of war and violence on children can lead to the development of significant mental illnesses that can last a lifetime, from childhood till adulthood, as it is manifested in the main characters of *Warlight*: Nathaniel and Rachel whom experienced trauma and cultural memory through their parents' departure, the violent atmosphere they were left in and the mysterious life that was full of fragments. Hence, Rachel had epilepsy as a result of this, and Nathaniel's memory was trapped in the past searching for answers. By this said, children's reaction to trauma can be different, some would be returning back in their life and confront what happened to them as Nathaniel. While others would just try to forget everything and move forward in life as Rachel did. Thus, further researches about Trauma and cultural memory should focus more on the children's perspective as a central point in the post-war life.

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