Wisdom Journal For Studies And Research volume 04 Issue 07(21) 30/12/2024~

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

The Historical Myth in American and Iraqi plays

Kawakib Talib Gharbawee*
University of Baghdad
kawakib.t@coagri.uobaghdad.edu.iq

Received:14/11/2024 Accepted : 25/12/2024

Abstract:

The mythological Greek heroes of Sophocles' Ajax encounter contemporary stories of the Iraq War and sexual harassment of local soldiers. Ajax, a Greek warrior who loses to Odysseus for the armor of Achilles and succumbs to his arrogance. McLaughlin no doubt saw striking parallels between the Iraq War and the Trojan War. According to McLaughlin, the Greek "history" was most relevant to the audience of the time, and was intended to refer to ongoing wars around the world, including Iraq (McLaughlin, 2014). Rasha Fadhil reveals the archaic origins of Iraqi culture at Ishtar in Baghdad. Tigris-Euphrates Valley refers to a region that included early urban centres and water systems, as well as states and domains as well as works and recorded religious beliefs. The region was home to the Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian and Assyrian civic establishments and has been traced back to 7000 BCE by archaeologists. For Ishtar and Tammuz, the underworld is a metaphor for the misfortune of wealth that must be regained, as shown by tales of their adventures in Akkadia and Sumer.

Keywords: Historical Myth, Iraq war, Hegemony, Culture

***Corresponding author** : Kawakib Talib Gharbawee, e-mail : **kawakib.t@coagri.uobaghdad.edu.iq**

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

The research

Introduction :

Alan McLaughlin's ambitious but uneven anti-war drama in the piece of art "Ajax in Iraq" won many hearts as it showed a Greek Ajax fighter and an American soldier fighting in Iraq. This piece of art displayed the tragic destinies intertwined. In Ajax at War, the mythological Greek heroes of Sophocles' Ajax encounter contemporary stories of the Iraq War and sexual harassment of local soldiers (Roberts, 2020). Ajax, a Greek warrior who loses to Odysseus for the armor of Achilles and succumbs to his arrogance. As an alternative to Ajax, McLaughlin created the character AJ, a soldier known for her bravery, just like her counterpart from ancient Greek. Looking at the fall of Ajax as an example of PTSD, McLaughlin's dramatic approach bridges two worlds, and the trauma and tragedy of war is universal. AJ and Ajax take the stage together to stage an action sequence in the current story (Murray, 2020). The author described AJ's nervous breakdown as a reaction to sexual abuse by her senior colleague. The show uses sexual violence to show the US military's growing concerns about sexual harassment and assault, and PTSD to show how soldiers feel (Najem-Meyer et al., 2021). Because in the military, "the degree of coercion resulting from the use of rank and authority can be as severe as the threat or use of force", the relationship between sexual harassment and violence is complex (England et al., 2019). Routine verbal threats that represent the best transition from AJ evolution to personal attacks. AJ's injury highlights the seriousness of sexual abuse in the military, which is still required to be highlighted.

McLaughlin asks the fundamental question why humans fight with each other or get involved in wars that only lead to loss of millions of human lives and destruction. The majority of the population would answer that humans get involved in wars for their freedom and democracy (Murray, 2020). Whereas the reality is that the soldiers fight with each other for the sake of their daily survival, significantly from the ancient times to until now, soldiers from both sides are still fighting for this (Karanika, 2021). The aim of this paper is to highlight the significance of different ideas and elements to make it a better piece of art and appealing to its audience.

Discussion

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

Blend of mythical war of the Greeks and Modern War

McLaughlin no doubt saw striking parallels between the Iraq War and the Trojan War. The instructive argument is that all modern wars are viewed through the prism of the great battles of Greek mythology (Roberts, 2020). According to McLaughlin, the Greek "history" was most relevant to the audience of the time, and was intended to refer to ongoing wars around the world, including Iraq (McLaughlin, 2014). The reality of war, one of the most important aspects of human life, has remained unchanged since the days of ancient Greece, which may explain why war is given so much attention in McLaughlin's work.

The Trojan War was the war that dominated McLaughlin's work and Greek drama. For the Greeks, the mythical battle was the Trojan War: a little contrived to allow them to think of war outside of modern politics. Shared myths, which allow one to have a history and to understand and consider the issues raised more deeply, are their tools for dealing with and discussing the war in the public sphere (Romanello et al., 2021). For the Greeks, this was the perfect medium for discussing the realities of war, so why not use it for more modern discussions? McLaughlin argues that this is because "whenever Western civilisation has considered war as a concept, it has only considered the Trojan War from the beginning of cultural and literary history." concept of war, which leads to four important conclusions:

1. Wars are costly, long and destructive.
2. The massacre and subsequent suffering cannot be considered a happy ending.
3. Nobody benefits
4. At best, the concept of military glory is dubious

McLaughlin no doubt saw striking parallels between the Iraq War and the Trojan War. The instructive argument is that all modern wars are viewed through the prism of the great battles of Greek mythology (Murray, 2020). When Ajax was in Iraq, the author for some reason combined both wars into one dramatic production, but in this production, the lessons of the Trojan War shockingly exposed the realities of the war in Iraq. McLaughlin was able to transcend time by combining these two wars - ancient and modern (Beer, 2021). Ajax in Iraq is a drama about wars, not just about two wars. Human truths come from common myths.

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

Although McLaughlin uses many Greek narrative conventions, the play is undeniably contemporary: the Greek characters speak poetically and sublimely; Greek and modern choirs discuss the action, sometimes combining it in interesting ways; with the exception of the rape, the violence took place behind-the-scenes and was communicated to viewers via instant messengers(Roberts, 2020). For example, Athena tells us stories about the killing of animals by Ajax, Mangus tells us about the heroism of AJ, says that AJ killed a sheep, says AJ committed suicide. The style of the entire piece of art is also very Greek, using a lot of words to appeal to the audience's logic and emotions.

There is no doubt that Ajax in Iraq was a tragedy, not essentially in the strict Aristotelian sense, but in the broader sense used today. A vicious attack on the show's two main characters, Ajax and his current mirror, AJ became the victim to a great cruelty, their actions are understandable given their backstory: Ajax was betrayed by his god and the people of his country without giving him the title he deserves (Murray, 2020). To spite Athena, she drove him mad only to ruin herself (Bartrop, 2021). AJ is betrayed by her seniors and other soldiers who ignore her suffering, and repeated acts of cruelty push her to her psychological limits and self-destruction. Fate doesn't matter here (McLaughlin, 2014). According to McLaughlin, these deaths could have been prevented. Its message is transformation, not helplessness in the face of fate. Viewers will learn from the story of Ajax and AJ and their contemporaries as a call to action: These people can and should be protected (Najem-Meyer et al., 2021).

Setting of the play

The narrator in the play was Greek goddess Athena. The audience is infuriated by her sarcasm, which adds to her harshness. Ajax Hendry was a demon-possessed war hero whom he portrayed as heavily made-up and macho weightlifter. Munch’s AJ is a strong but sensitive loner kind of a character (Murray, 2020). AJ expresses her state of mind through dance, movement and facial expressions. The orchestra is well prepared and performs many roles. The orchestra is well prepared and performs many roles (Roberts, 2020). Their synchronized development/dance choreographed by Farmanes-Bokka and Jones Welsh set the mood with fun music curated by Farmanes-Bokka and Adam Phalen on the main stage.

With a red background, abstract carvings, helmets, and giant right hands pointing towards Courtney Jordan Bindel's Middle Eastern set, the

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

scene is simple yet metaphorical. Everything is complemented by military bunks and wardrobe trunks. Throughout the show, lighting designer Joey Gutman varied the hue and intensity of the light to create a contrasting atmosphere between the ancient and modern worlds (Karanika, 2021). As soldiers, the group was dressed in camouflage pants and T-shirts with knee pads. When they became Greek choirs, they simply put on white masks (Borchorst. and Siim, 2018). Ajax wore elastic bands, a modified fustanella, skirt-like clothing, and a black leather belt. Bateman's Athena wears a bright red scarf over a sheer white tunic. Stephanie Dunbar (Catherine Baumgardner, wardrobe designer) designed these iconic clothing and accessories as a visual reminder of the synergy between ancient tragedy and modern warfare.

The stories are told by McLaughlin in alternating scenes. Half depicts the mighty Ajax, who is crazy about Athena after being let down by the Greek leaders Menelaus and Agamemnon. In a frenzy, he killed a herd of animals, which he considered enemies, later, when he came to his senses, shame drove him to suicide (Romanello et al., 2021). In the second half, AJ, the legend of women's conflict, sinks deeper and deeper into sorrow and unhappiness as her boss is attacked again until she finally breaks down and puts an end to it all too (Najem-Meyer et al., 2021). And the speeches of veterans, families of soldiers and others who returned to a country that was not favorable to them and did not want to have anything to do with them.

Character Analysis of AJ

There is a modern version of the Ajax experience in AJ's life. AJ stands out among a group of helpless soldiers who, after so many years on a mission, hardly understand what they are doing in Iraq. AJ was highly capable and performed so well at pulling her friend's body out of a pile of rubble after it had been engulfed in an explosion. With no thought of self-defense, AJ took each of her henchmen to safety, and was admired and applauded by her team (Romanello et al., 2021). To prove to her who the best player in the game is, her sergeant celebrates by brutally raping her. AJ also went mad in a fit of rage at the defenseless animals of the Iraqi peasantry and should thank the United States for their “liberation”, as did her Sophocles counterpart (Bartrop, 2021).

AJ is a mother, but was also a patriotic and courageous soldier who served in the army. What A.J. The art she portrays is a product of her circumstances—a person created by her circumstances and for her life in Iraq

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

is very different from her home country. AJ is in dire need of a break from what she does, as evidenced by her constant desire to sleep and her willingness to volunteer for adventure missions (Murray, 2020). AJ may avoid feelings and thoughts that as an individual does not want to face because these tasks somehow prevent her from thinking or feeling the current situation (Karanika, 2021). At the beginning of the play, AJ's will - her unwillingness to feel or face her feelings - is the only thing holding back her emotions. Her overwhelming rage and pain drives her to kill animals. She also committed suicide by choice: running from the sergeant, the war, and her ugly behavior.

Character Analysis of Ajax

Ajax is portrayed as a great hero, stereotyping himself as a traditional, arrogant, uncompromising, barren hero who harbors vices and limitations. In the Iliad, Homer, who may have been Sophocles' source, also describes Ajax as stubborn to the point of insanity (Romanello et al., 2021). The tragedy was caused by the arrogance of Ajax, who initially refused to help the goddess Athena. Ajax was big and noble, despite his short stage life, his uncompromising strength, and his somewhat bawdy treatment of women (especially when compared to the more generous Odysseus), he still dominates the drama and makes sense (Beer, 2021).

Ajax believes that his name “Aiz", which means “beauty” in Greek, can easily add to the oozing doom. Upon his return, he thinks of his father's victory and applauds them. And by killing innocent cattle, he shames his people (Zapkin, 2021). In addition, Ajax is adamant that he serves the Vyborg, Achilles would not hesitate with his armor alone. The character believed that would have had the armor of Achilles if Menelaus and Agamemnon had not demanded armor for another and the gods had not extended their hand to him.

The great warrior acknowledged his position and said that a strong man could be killed by a weak man if it was God's will. Ajax lamented that his opponent's pogles could move and that the Greek army despised him for his actions (McLaughlin, 2014). As a result, no one is interested in him anywhere, and his return home is unclear. Ajax could not raise his hand against Telamon at home, because Telamon did not want his son to return without a reason (Karanika, 2021). Ajax believes that Tramon would be proud of himself when came to know that his son was fighting for a noble cause

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

(Murray, 2020). Ajax came to the conclusion that a person deprived of hope is not interested in either life or death.

Tekmessa disagreed with her husband's views and insisted that before committing suicide, all options were invalid. Tekmessa did this after Ajax's death; Tekmessa and their son were slaves of the Argives. Tekmessa was known as Ajax's concubine, a noble wife now widowed. Tekmessa supported his parents, who lost their son at such a young age. Tekmessa felt a son for him, and the son will miss his father very much, and there will be no small children who will change his growing up (Romanello et al., 2021). Ajax joined the chorus of sailors asking if they had fulfilled Tekmessa's sad request! Tekmessa promises to follow his orders. Ajax then arranged for him to like his child. She said she was pregnant, so their son was taken from them. Her foresight was appreciated by the great warrior, whose son, now at the resort, asked him for a gift.

Through art, Sophocles presents Ajax as a person full of emotions, thoughts and responsibilities. Regret, love, friendship, patience and other Ajax emotions are just some of them. All this time, despite his actions, he seems to be trying to bring them together. His well-deserved conversations with sailors and his wife Tekmessa showed that, despite the night action, Ajax answered all questions in a brilliant tone (Zapkin, 2021). Ajax showed responsibility when he asked the sailors to look after Eurysacs and mentioned his armor. But like everyone has flaws, Sophocles also had flaws: he repented of his actions and decided to commit suicide. Ajax cursed himself for breaking his oath outside the tent (Bartrop, 2021). In his opinion, women's words are better than the words of a tough guy like him. From his words, it was clear that his plans to end this relationship were rejected (Romanello et al., 2021). In addition, it was revealed that Turke Mesa confirmed the fact that that woman would be a widow, which would make his orphan son more vulnerable to enemies.

Ajax announces that he will bathe in grass and bury the sword he received as a gift from Hector. After the purge, he assumed responsibility to both commanders and carried out their orders without hesitation (Beer, 2021). Ajax asks Tekmessa to pray to the gods in the tent to fulfill his wish. If Teucer arrived during his absence, he ordered the sailors from Salamis to carry his message. He assured the sailors that his miserable life was over and everything would be fine. The sailors of Salamis were very happy with his words and thanked the gods for dispelling the fog in Ajax's mind.

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

Societal Issues highlighted in the Drama

Gender inequality

Throughout history, women have been considered inferior and unequal to men. In this novel, the author utilizes both the current scenario of the US military and the example of Ajax from ancient times to highlight one of the most significant issues of the society (England et al., 2019). Women's rights seem like an endless topic in male-dominated Western culture; society has yet to level the playing field, despite evidence of gender inequality that has existed for thousands of years (Zapkin, 2021). As modern as our culture may seem, humans still have much in common with the ancient civilizations of Greece and Mesopotamia. In the ancient world, women were treated differently than men (Romanello et al., 2021). In fact, they are considered subordinate to men, deprived of any rights and privileges in certain areas. However, in some areas of Ancient Greece, women are considered irrational, timid and materialistic (Bartrop, 2021). According to Sacks, "Greece," one of the reasons women were kept at home was because they were considered vulnerable to sexual temptation or other pranks if they went out alone.

War causes of destruction

This piece highlighted the fact that war has no benefits not even in ancient times and not in the present times as well. It will only cause loss and nothing else. Everyone whose lives were affected by the war suffered greatly in the country where the war was going on. Soldiers and their families may suffer physically and psychologically as a result of participating in peacekeeping or peace enforcement operations (Romanello et al., 2021). In most modern Western countries, war is perceived negatively as a phenomenon that destroys peaceful societies and profoundly changes people's lives. Of course, war affects people in different ways, depending on many different factors (Neely, 2021). On the other hand, war has many negative consequences for society. First of all, this has a negative impact on the demographic situation (Zapkin, 2021). The devastating destruction of cities and the long-term impact on the world economy is one of the consequences of the war. Infrastructure, public health and public order are severely affected by armed conflict mentally (Murray, 2020). The destruction of settlements, public infrastructure, hospitals and living structures has had a huge impact on human society. Wars cause political and economic instability and unspeakable sadness. People's daily lives are under threat (England et al., 2019). Finding a job and managing your daily life can be a challenge. To

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

ensure their safety, people are being evacuated and must remain on the move. Some suffer emotional and physical scars for the rest of their lives.

The fact that war can destroy societies and nations has profound political implications. Civil liberties were limited during the war. Freedom of speech, freedom of choice and the activities of political parties and civil society are often severely restricted by states of emergency or war. Both sides created competing photographs (Davenport et al., 2019). Dissident citizens lack trust, and their relationship with the opposition or "hostile" territories has been strained and poisoned over the years (Romanello et al., 2021). Damage to infrastructure can lead to a catastrophic collapse of social infrastructure, infrastructure, and education and health systems. Educational standards have fallen in many war-torn countries as educational institutions and schools have been destroyed (Murray, 2020). If any particular infrastructure is severely damaged, other systems such as the economy can be severely affected. This includes deficiencies in specific transport routes within the city that may hinder the proper functioning of the economy.

Sexual Assault and Rape in Military

As the number of cases of rape and sexual assault in the US military continues to rise, it seems that the authorities are taking small preemptive steps to try to bring the perpetrators to justice and put an end to these horrific incidents (Karanika, 2021). It seems that the military cannot solve this problem alone, and it seems that our nation must intervene to stop these crimes, bring the perpetrators to justice, and give the victims the help and support they need. To get to the bottom of the problem, it is important to understand why rape is so common in the military, why these crimes are often underreported, and what the military and our country can do to prevent future rape. (Zapkin, 2021) Many women told stories of being raped in the army. Each of these women was forced to have sex, but none of their actions indicated an interest in sex. Sexual abuse is prevalent in most American institutions and societies. The US military is one of the sexual assault agencies and has been the subject of numerous scandals that have attracted widespread media attention (Neely, 2021). The victims of these attacks are both men and women working in these services, but women are at greater risk. A study of the experience of female soldiers during the Iraq War revealed post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) caused by sexual assault and war-related stress. About 16% of Afghan and Iraqi members were investigated and there were several reports of sexual harassment (Romanello et al., 2021).

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

In addition, about 5% of men also reported experiencing pain during sex. According to the Pentagon, approximately 85 percent of cases of sexual assault in the military go unreported. The soldiers are so afraid of the consequences and humiliation for reporting crimes that they keep silent. Both men and women in the US military have reportedly been victims of sexual assault (Murray, 2020). However, most cases of sexual violence go unreported due to fear of repercussions and stigma. Various programs and approaches have been developed to track rape in the military.

Facts that made Ajax in Iraq unique

When the author takes on a script about the American military presence in Iraq, she returns to Sophocles Ajax - his feelings of betrayal, shame, irrationality, and then painful and sober suicide. Because his demands on me were so difficult to satisfy, the writer returned to the hero's thorn bush almost against my will (Zapkin, 2021). Because Ellen needs their help with the material, the writers hope to work with theater graduates not just as actors, but as fellow artists. In the sense that her generation was essentially sending their own to fight, the war in Iraq seemed to be their war, not hers. The writer knows how everyone is feeling, but she wants to know what it means to them. Ellen told them that she would use the information they gave her to create something that would include both their ideas and her own.

Some students talked to their grandparents, who told them stories about life during World War II that the students had never heard before. Others spoke on the streets to homeless Vietnam veterans or returning soldiers, some of whom were friends or relatives of the students. There are various forms of performance such as scenes, monologues and dance music (Neely, 2021). Most of the works are smart, subtle and beautiful. After the first round of workshops, the audience felt overwhelmed and unsure how to organize the piece, as the students produced about 30 hours of material that varied greatly in theme and tone (Romanello et al., 2021). The author always turns to the Greeks when in doubt, especially when it comes to structure. The authors also found that when they began to directly investigate the war in Iraq, the horrific story of Ajax best reflected the horrific chaos they were investigating.

Facts that made Ajax in Iraq unique

When the author takes on a script about the American military presence in Iraq, she returns to Sophocles Ajax - his feelings of betrayal,

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

shame, irrationality, and then painful and sober suicide. Because his demands on me were so difficult to satisfy, the writer returned to the hero's thorn bush almost against my will (Zapkin, 2021). Because Ellen needs their help with the material, the writers hope to work with theater graduates not just as actors, but as fellow artists. In the sense that her generation was essentially sending their own to fight, the war in Iraq seemed to be their war, not hers. The writer knows how everyone is feeling, but she wants to know what it means to them. Ellen told them that she would use the information they gave her to create something that would include both their ideas and her own.

Some students talked to their grandparents, who told them stories about life during World War II that the students had never heard before. Others spoke on the streets to homeless Vietnam veterans or returning soldiers, some of whom were friends or relatives of the students. There are various forms of performance such as scenes, monologues and dance music (Neely, 2021). Most of the works are smart, subtle and beautiful. After the first round of workshops, the audience felt overwhelmed and unsure how to organize the piece, as the students produced about 30 hours of material that varied greatly in theme and tone (Romanello et al., 2021). The author always turns to the Greeks when in doubt, especially when it comes to structure. The authors also found that when they began to directly investigate the war in Iraq, the horrific story of Ajax best reflected the horrific chaos they were investigating.

The psychological impact of current wars on veterans has been the subject of much research. The author and his team have identified the prevailing pattern of suicide among soldiers today, both during missions and after returning to civilian life (Davenport et al., 2019). A common experience among soldiers is the feeling of shame and guilt that their ingrained ideas of good and evil have been harmed, what military psychiatrists call moral trauma (Zapkin, 2021). This mental health issue can also lead to “insanity” where soldiers attack innocent civilians, prisoners in their care, or increasingly their own soldiers (Romanello et al., 2021). Loss of trust in commanders, a sense of betrayal and, above all, a sense of humiliation by the US military - “demobilized”, as evidenced by the suicide note of a soldier who once served with pride - seem to be common themes in many of these suicides and psychotic episodes. .

The audience also asked reporter Ellen McLaughlin to pay attention to the widespread predation of soldiers by their commanders or fellow

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

soldiers, in particular sexual harassment and rape, perhaps because there are more women than men in this group (Zapkin, 2021). Rape as an act of repression and domination, as all military history tells us, is not surprising, if not terrifying in the face of the kind of aggression that war can unleash. But now that so many women in the military (one in seven active duty) serve on an equal footing with men and expect to be treated like fellow soldiers, it has taken on a new urgency (Najem-Meyer et al., 2021). “Rank rape” or “order rape” is especially traumatic because the victims suffer at the hands of those they must obey and rely on for survival. This is betrayal in its purest form.

Another recurring theme is confusion. Since civilians resemble insurgents and insurgents resemble civilians, soldiers are likely to “knock down the wrong door” from time to time, causing hostility in the communities they seek to control. However, Iraqi soldiers were most confused by their purpose (Romanello et al., 2021). Every soldier has his own view of what he does. At the end of the day, a soldier riding at high speed in an army dining car almost always feels like he's risking his life over a big pile of ice-cold soda. One of the most dangerous things one can do in Iraq is drive a truck - soldiers often do this - because the damage done by roadside explosives far exceeds the damage done in direct combat (Beer, 2021). Managing this risk makes warriors feel cheated by the boss again, because literally the best guarantee of this weapon is better knowledge.

All these themes attracted the author, including confusion and injustice, shame, betrayal of one's own party, and the isolation of soldiers who committed suicide. Despite the obvious content of the classic text, it seemed to the author that the creation of a modern version of the script with the woman Ajax (known as AJ) was not enough to convey the seriousness of the original text (Zapkin, 2021). Similarly, the relatively simple new version of Sophocles' play fails to adequately capture the complexities and characteristics of the Iraq War and the ways in which the author and his team are trying to solve it (McLaughlin, 2014). Therefore, the author decided to combine two equally important and interconnected narratives - modern and classical - each of which enriches and deepens the other (Neely, 2021). When these two currents are intertwined in counterpoint, the author loved the flash of the female-male, modern, folk-poetic double resonance in tragedy. In the classical and modern part of my drama, Athena, the goddess of war and the dark, terrifying embodiment of Ajax's madness, rules (Romanello et al., 2021). The author directs the action and addresses the audience with learned

and cynical force. Athena enters in full costume and speaks to us in the first minutes of the performance, while the audience looks at the closed tent and listens to muffled screams coming from inside. The Greek belief in warfare as the most masculine activity, with a female deity as the main deity, has always fascinated the author. Neither the gods nor the people took Ares seriously.)

The author was also intrigued by the idea that Athena is the goddess of reason and that madness also reins - no rational thinking: madness. Likewise, it is capable of undermining the insight, strategy, and cunning it provides. As we watch two great warriors, one modern, one ancient, sink into rampant infamy, PTSD is our guide to Athena(Najem-Meyer et al., 2021). As in the classic text, the fall of Ajax occurs at the beginning of the play, while the fall of A.J. happening at the top (Petersen et al., 2019). When AJ reported to an officer who, instead of rewarding her for her bravery, insulted, raped, drove her insane and killed a flock of sheep (Romanello et al., 2021). AJ made a heroic move by saving her friends on a freight train. At the end of the play, when the man and woman from Ajax stand alone on the stage, two parallel stories merge into one. At one time, both players - Ajax and A.J. - freed from their bloody delusions, they are sick with shame (Davenport et al., 2019). Hello, we do not know each other, but they exchange speech when they are ready to bite. While they were talking quietly, Ajax sharpened her sword, and then buried the hilt in the sand; AJ cleaned up and got ready to pop the M16 into her mouth.

McLaughlin asked the actor who played the “famous British Arab” Gertrude Bell (McLaughlin, Ajax in Iraq 4) to use sand and a rake to draw a topographical map of Iraq on stage before the play began, arbitrarily defining Iraq's modern borders as a country. The idea that Iraq as we know it is essentially a “fictional place” is conveyed to the audience through this tentative action (McLaughlin, “Ajax 15”). The fact that this event occurs early in the game also suggests that these boundaries are relevant to the following questions. In fact, much of today's conflict in Iraq stems from the boundaries Bell helped create in the early 20th century. Seeing the fall of Ajax as an example of PTSD, McLaughlin's dramatic approach bridges two worlds, and the trauma and tragedy of war are universal. Ajax and AJ team up on stage to perform choreographed action sequences in the current story. James Bain described AJ's nervous breakdown as a reaction to sexual abuse by her boss. The show uses sexual violence to show the US military's growing concerns

about sexual harassment and assault, and PTSD to show how soldiers feel. Because in the military, "the level of coercion fostered by the use of rank and power can be as severe as the threat or use of force", the relationship between sexual harassment and violence is complex. The usual verbal threats from AJ's superiors turned into physical attacks. AJ's injury highlights the seriousness of sexual abuse in the military, which has yet to be dealt with. Rasha Fadhil's ***Ishtar in Baghdad*** is a play in which Mesopotamian gods are brought into war-torn Baghdad as people who are not only witnesses to the destruction of the city and its inhabitants, but who are both protected by American troops and tortured by them. Relics, rather than being shown as pictures of her country's societal heritage, are resurrected by her. This fits with her image of Iraqi people as adaptable, as she argues that they, like the heavenly creatures, will be restored to their original brilliance at some point in time as ripe divine beings. Fadhil's promotion of the folklore of these two people as emblematic of Iraqi thinking notwithstanding the assault and specifically the Abu Ghraib agony outcry will be diagrammed in the following. We will link the deities' promise of resurrection, which occurs at the end of the play, to the notion of sumud, or "immovability," as a feature of the Iraqi individual (Stuckey, no date). Essentially, the producer conveys Iraq's ancient past as social capital. Iraqi author and lobbyist Fadhil now resides in Lebanon. The Iraqi Ministry of Culture has recognised her work, and she has won awards for short stories and stage plays all around the globe. This play was given a prepared reading by an Australian group of understudies in Ishtar in Baghdad. Her plays have been staged around the Middle East.

5.2.2 The use of mythology in the play Ishtar in Baghdad

Fadhil reveals the archaic origins of Iraqi culture at Ishtar in Baghdad. Tigris-Euphrates Valley refers to a region that included early urban centres and water systems, as well as states and domains as well as works and recorded religious beliefs. The region was home to the Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian and Assyrian civic establishments and has been traced back to 7000 BCE by archaeologists. For Ishtar and Tammuz, the underworld is a metaphor for the misfortune of wealth that must be regained, as shown by tales of their adventures in Akkadia and Sumer. It's clear from this passage that Abu Ghraib has been conflated with the dream. CBS aired a storey that showed graphic images of Iraqi inmates being tortured in a facility built on the grounds of an old jail used by Hussein's regime (Chathier, 2018). The

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

images were captured in the autumn of 2003. Many of the inmates are stripped down to their underwear and placed in humiliating or even sexually explicit postures. Troopers from the U.S. military are shown joyfully interacting with detainees and even a dead corpse. The images were widely disseminated and tarnished the image of the United States as a rescuer of the Iraqi people. Fadhil paints the invasion and occupation as an attack on the contemporary Iraqi population as well as the country's ancient past by linking the daydream to the jail's disgrace and, in an indirect manner, referencing the destruction of the Iraq National Museum.

During Fadhil's performance, Ishtar and Tammuz start off on a path that mirrors the one described in their tradition. First, Ishtar and Tammuz visit war-torn Baghdad, and then they are detained in Abu Ghraib for interrogation. Astonished by what they may learn from roosting in a faraway realm, the gods and angels drop down to aid their children, the Iraqi people and restore the country to its natural state (Hussien, 2021). They observe a bomb in Baghdad and rush to aid the victims. Individuals screaming for assistance, a solitary young lady, a wounded guy, a group of teenage males curious about the incident and an Iraqi woman who lost her kid three years ago are all among the Iraqi civilians they see after the blast. Various Iraqi-themed persons respond to the explosion in different ways. It's possible that some people feel scared by the immediate savagery, while others seem to be exhausted by the sustained battle.

Divine creatures' claims about their identities leave them perplexed. In Arabic, the name Tammuz refers to the month of July, therefore a wounded man does not understand Ishtar's request for assistance in locating her missing companion. Sumer is only a brand of smoke for young males. The young woman, who is alone, is concerned about missing an evaluation since she has misplaced her textbooks. Other Iraqi characters have blasted assessments of their social heritage, which shows that they have either forgotten or had it ripped from them under the strain of defending something essential that links them to the ground. Among them is the roadside vendor, who puts on display on the tarmac in front of her sweets she claims to have cooked for her missing kid. She says he disappeared in another explosion almost three years before. The woman continues to believe he is still alive since she received the kid's school bag back (Strommenger, 2020).

The Mesopotamian gods Ishtar and Tammuz are Fadhil's "semi-heavenly shadow reappeared in Baghdad for assuring their common roots in

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

this place of suffering and for showing the appalling for the destructing and damage .Ishtar and Tammuzs's coming down to earth questions the identity of the strangers who damage the earth with heavy arms" (Sulaiman, 2020)

Following her observation of his clenched numerical note pads, she laments that his educators did not teach him that "two less one equals zero," a condition that assesses her sorrows. She wants him to come to her with the sweets, and she would accept that he "take [her] with him" as payment, which means that she would rather die with him than go on living without him at that moment. Despite her initial hostility towards Ishtar, the merchant eventually comes to her aid, pointing out that she saw the removal of Tammuz and warning her not to go looking for him. Ishtar doesn't take her advice into consideration. She's on a quest to find her beloved before safeguarding him from the underworld, as shown in many fantasy versions. Ishtar is quickly apprehended by the Americans since she is so confident in herself.

There are also stories of the second effect of the divine beings' excursion, in which they and their kin detainees suffer maltreatment at the hands of American warriors in the underworld, which is the community of confinement, recalling the exhausting stripping down of Ishtar and the savagery incurred by Eresh kigal. The inmates are beaten, subjected to electroshock, forced to move, chained up and made to bark like dogs, piled high, undressed, and otherwise abused. The abuses shown in the Abu Ghraib images are largely responsible for this (General, 2021). a report issued in 2004 as a result of a tactical examination led by Major General Antonio Taguba found that the United States military had committed numerous abuses against Iraqi prisoners, including shooting and beating homosexuality and assault demonstrations, recording and capturing male and female prisoners stripped of clothing, numerous prisoners in physically unambiguous stances and constrained sexual displays, organising prisoners in human heaps, bouncing and more. Fadhil compares the American invasion of Iraq's National Museum to the Mongolian invasion in the thirteenth century, which he compared to that of the United States in the twenty-first century. The end of the Islamic Golden Age was marked by the Mongolian invasion in Baghdad in 1253. Rich culture and developments in science and art were hallmarks of the Abbasid Empire, which was controlled from Baghdad and lasted until the Mongolian invasion in the year 750 C.E. Up to 800,000 of the city's residents were

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

slaughtered by Hulagu and his troops. They destroyed libraries and mosques, plundering the Caliph's repository in the process. It was an Iraqi assault on the Iraq National Museum in 2003 that took place while American forces fought back since the United States had failed to adequately prepare its troops for the aftermath of the strike. On March 20, 2003, the invasion of Iraq began; on April 5, American forces occupied Baghdad; and the gallery was plundered from April 8 to 16, 2003 (Mahmood, 2018). The Mesopotamian treasures of antiquity are held in the display hall as the world's primary repository. According to Major General Taguba and the Western press, the American military has been accused of protecting the library and files in an inadequate manner, but Iraqis who assaulted the premises seem, by all accounts, to be responsible for the actual destruction. Although it should be predicted, a few rumours, probably pushed by Baathist sympathisers, directly criticise the United States. As a consequence, Fadhil has created characters like Ishtar and Tammuz to represent Mesopotamian relics that were savaged by American troops in the play.

ISSN print/ 2769-1926 ISSN online/ 2769-1934

IV. CONCLUSION

Rasha Fadhil's ***Ishtar in Baghdad*** is a play in which Mesopotamian gods are brought into war-torn Baghdad as people who are not only witnesses to the destruction of the city and its inhabitants, but who are both protected by American troops and tortured by them. Relics, rather than being shown as pictures of her country's societal heritage, are resurrected by her. This fits with her image of Iraqi people as adaptable, as she argues that they, like the heavenly creatures, will be restored to their original brilliance at some point in time as ripe divine beings.When McLaughlin takes on a script about the American military presence in Iraq, she returns to Sophocles Ajax - his feelings of betrayal, shame, irrationality, and then painful and sober suicide. Because his demands on me were so difficult to satisfy, the writer returned to the hero's thorn bush almost against my will (Zapkin, 2021). Because Ellen needs their help with the material, the writers hope to work with theater graduates not just as actors, but as fellow artists. In the sense that her generation was essentially sending their own to fight, the war in Iraq seemed to be their war, not hers**.**

V. Bibliography List

1 Bartrop, P.R., 2021. War and destruction in Western Europe: Picking up the pieces. In *The Routledge History of the Second World War* (pp. 687-701). Routledge.

2 Beer, J., 2021. Enraged: Why Violent Times Need Ancient Greek Myths by Emily Katz Anhalt. *Comparative Literature Studies*, *58*(1), pp.232-234.

3 Borchorst, A. and Siim, B., 2018. Women and the advanced welfare state–a new kind of patriarchal power?. In *Women and the State* (pp. 128-157). Routledge.

4 Davenport, C., Mokleiv Nygård, H., Fjelde, H. and Armstrong, D., 2019. The consequences of contention: Understanding the aftereffects of political conflict and violence. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *22*, pp.361-377.

5 England, P., Levine, A. and Mishel, E., 2020. Progress toward gender equality in the United States has slowed or stalled. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *117*(13), pp.6990-6997.

6 Karanika, A., 2021. MEANINGFUL SILENCE IN GREEK LITERATURE-(E.) Papadodima (ed.) Faces of Silence in Ancient Greek Literature. Athenian Dialogues I.(Trends in Classics Supplementary Volume 100.) pp. viii+ 318. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2020. Cased,£ 91,€ 99.95. ISBN: 978-3-11-069001-9. *The Classical Review*, *71*(2), pp.285-288.

7 Jassim, J.W. (2019). Between Stuff Happens and Ishtar in Baghdad.*Al-Adab Journal*, 1-14.

8 Johns, R., & Davies, G. A. (2019). Civilian casualties and public support for military action: Experimental evidence. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *63*(1), 251-281.

9 Judis, J. (2007). An American Suicide: What War Did to Jeffrey Lucey. *Carnegie Endowment for International.* Retrieved fromhttp://www. carnegieendowment. org/2007/08/06/american-suicide-what-war-did-to-jeffrey-lucey/d46.

10 McLaughlin, E., 2014. On Finding Ajax in Iraq. PMLA, 129(4), pp.834-838. (McLaughlin, 2014)

11 Murray, J., 2020. The silence of Ajax: Reading Longinus against himself. In *The Sublime in Everyday Life* (pp. 21-36). Routledge.

12 Najem-Meyer, S., Robertson, B. and Romanello, M., 2021. *Optical Character Recognition of 19th Century Classical Commentaries: the Current State of Affairs* (No. ARTICLE

13 Neely, M.E., 2021. The Civil War and the limits of destruction. In *The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction*. Harvard University Press.

14 Petersen, E.E., Davis, N.L., Goodman, D., Cox, S., Syverson, C., Seed, K., Shapiro-Mendoza, C., Callaghan, W.M. and Barfield, W., 2019. Racial/ethnic disparities in pregnancy-related deaths—United States, 2007–2016. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, *68*(35), p.762.

15 Roberts, M., 2020. Ajax in America, or Catharsis in the Time of Terrorism. New Theatre Quarterly, 36(4), pp.306-319.

16 Romanello, M., Najem-Meyer, S. and Robertson, B., 2021, September. Optical character recognition of 19th century classical

commentaries: the current state of affairs. In *The 6th International Workshop on Historical Document Imaging and Processing* (pp. 1-6).

Zapkin, P., 2021. War as Performance: Conflicts in Iraq and Political Theatricality by Lindsey Mantoan. Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism, 36(1), pp.244-246. Hwang, K., 2021. The Ajax Dilemma in Authorship. *Journal of Craniofacial Surgery*, *32*(5), pp.1653-1654.

الاسطورة التاريخية في مسرح الامريكي والعراقي

الدكتورة كواكب طالب الغرباوي

جامعة بغداد

kawakib.t@coagri.uobaghdad.edu.iq

الملخص:

يتناول هذا البحث الاسطورة التاريخية في المسرحيات الامريكية والعراقية الحديثة وخصوصا في مسرحية الكاتب الامريكي مكلولين واستخدام اسطورة المقاتل الاغريقي في مواجهة الحرب وتاثيرها على الجنود والمجتمع ومسرحية الكاتبة العراقية رشا فاضل عشتار في بغداد ونقدها للواقع الحرب من خلال استخدام الرموز التاريخية في الاشارة الواضح الى الواقع الماساوي للحروب .

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأسطورة التاريخية، حرب العراق، الهيمنة، الثقافة