

Tribhuvan University

Traumatic Experiences of a Soldier in A.P.Herbert's *The Secret Battle*

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**Letter of Approval**

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### Abstract

A. P. Herbert's *The Secret Battle* is a classic novel of World War I. It is the story of an idealistic young officer called Harry Penrose. First in Gallipoli, then in France, he is tested and brought to breaking point. It is the story of one man's secret battle within himself: the fight to retain ideals of military glory amid the miseries of the trenches, to preserve a sense of duty to an incompetent command, to inspire his men with courage he had long ago lost.

It is fairly short, but quite worthwhile for the amazing descriptions of the struggles, experienced by junior officers in Gallipoli and France. It is written as a sort of fictional memoir from the point of view of a narrator, who is writing to set the record straight about his friend, Harry Penrose. The story is a protest against the mercilessness of the military machine, and does a very effective job of showing that Penrose has been failed by the system.

Although this study incorporates traumatic experiences of the soldiers and common people due to the wars waged by war mongers in order to fulfill their vested interests or selfish motives, it does not offer an analysis of authoritarian and imperialistic theories. Furthermore, examination of traumatic experience is the primary tool of analysis. The primary objective of this project is to explore the traumatic experiences of the soldiers in the First World War as described in *The Secret Battle*. It attempts to show the misuse of power and authority by the war mongers. It aims to show the pathetic condition of innocent, dedicated and devoted soldiers through the troublesome saga of Penrose who inspires his troops and tries very hard to serve the battalion well but gets tragic fate at last. This project analyzes the mental effects resulting from the torturous, inhuman, cruel and merciless treatment to the soldiers as well as the common people.

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## **CHAPTER I:**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Alan Patrick Herbert was born in 1890 in London and went to Oxford College in 1910, and studied law. He went down in 1914, having had several pieces of his light verse published, in *Punch* and elsewhere, and with the apparent intent of dabbling further in writing. In the summer of 1914, he was working at a mission in Bethnal Green; on the outbreak of the war, like most of his contemporaries, he promptly joined the military. He joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and continues his career. The novel follows the career of a young officer, Harry Penrose, written from the viewpoint of a close friend who acts as narrator. Penrose had enlisted himself in the ranks of army in 1914, immediately after completing his second year at Oxford. After six months in training he had been prevailed upon by his relatives like most educated volunteers and takes a commission as an officer.

In this novel he portrays the personal experiences of Penrose who is close friend of Herbert. He observes the activities and feeling of Penrose and describes as pictorial form. Penrose asserts himself; the war takes a toll on his personality. He begins to live up to his early dreams of heroism. His creeping self-doubt grows by degrees; he is reassigned from his post as scouting officer once. Penrose submits, working doggedly to try and keep from cracking. After a long period of this treatment, by the winter of 1916, Penrose's spirit is worn down; when the narrator is invalided home with an injury in February 1917, his last support is gone. Penrose has been offered a safe job in military intelligence; he comes within a moment of taking it, but at the last minute resolves to return to France.

This study delineates A.P. Herbert's *The Secret Battle* from the perspective of trauma study. The novel opens with the accounts of battle where many soldiers had been killed though it keeps on secret. It presents the account of the First World War when many soldiers became victimized and traumatized due to the wrong policy of the war. The novel first published in 1919. The book draws upon Herbert's experiences as a junior infantry officer in the First World War. It was one of the earliest novels to contain a detailed description of Gallipoli or to challenge the Army's executions of soldiers for desertion. Herbert praises for its accurate and truthful portrayal of the mental effects of the war on the participants. The plot of the novel revolves around the career of Harry Penrose, a young officer in the First World War. The observation of each and every activities of the war from the perspective of a soldier has been highlighted thereby presenting the crimes, offences and felonies caused by the authority holders. The mental effects of the war on the soldiers: terror, horror and fear among the common people and hardships of their life are the major focuses of *The Secret Battle*. The story is a protest against the mercilessness of the military system, and does a very effective job of showing that Penrose has been failed by the system. The excessive punishment even death penalty in the name of maintaining ethics of the war is vividly presented in the novel. Highlighting the traumatic, painful and distressing experiences of people and war soldiers in the First World War, this research will excavate the abuse and misuse of power and authority by the war mongers.

The content of this novel imaginings has undoubtedly changed over the decades, as a recent flurry of scholarship on the myth and memory of the war has argued, but from the Armistice right up to the present moment, the events of 1914–18 have been a crucial reference point for those seeking to understand not only war, but

the world around them. The First World War represented an absolute, unbridgeable break with the past; yet few would deny the truth in his assertion that it was the crucible in which the modern world was forged. If nothing else, the fact that the war is still debated in terms of its status as the originating moment of modernity tells us much about its place in the contemporary imagination, and by extension the contemporary cultural and historical landscape; paradoxically, this is proof of the extent to which the world we know now is shaped by that war.

*The Secret Battle* explores the traumatic experiences of the soldiers in the First World War through projecting personal experiences of victim soldier. It attempts to show the misuse of power and authority by the war mongers. It aims to show the pathetic condition of innocent, dedicated and devoted soldiers through the troublesome saga of Penrose who inspires his troops and tries very hard to serve the battalion well but gets tragic fate at last. It also analyzes the mental effects resulted from the torturous, inhuman, cruel and merciless treatment to the soldiers. The cruelties and atrocities inflicted on the common people and soldiers will be the primary objectives of the project. The underlying causes and potential consequences of wars will be discussed in depth and detail. This study clarifies the actual and underlying causes of different wars thereby focusing that wars are not fought for good purposes. Secondly, it shows the mental effects of the war on the soldiers, their family members and common people who are the actual victims of wars. Thirdly, it analyzes the consequences and internal politics of the war which is never in favor of the soldiers and common people who are just induced to participate in the war and made intoxicated by the war mongers for their personal gains and profits. The students, scholars and other people who want to know the internal causes, real activities and potential consequences of the war can also be benefitted from this project. It is also



useful to the war mongers who take the war as the one and only means to solve the existing problems thereby making them aware about the realities of the war.

Upon its publication in 1919, *The Secret Battle* has got a lot of attraction from the readers and critics. It is reviewed differently by different persons. It is mainly described as an autobiographic fiction. Churchill argues that it holds "a permanent place in the war literature", and describes it as "one of those cries of pain wrung from the fighting troops ... like the poems of Siegfried Sassoon [it] should be read in each generation, so that men and women may rest under no illusions about what the war means" (qtd in Gilbert 67). Relating it with Herbert's own experiences of the First World War, McCollum argues:

*The Secret Battle* is also closely based on Herbert's own wartime experiences, with some scenes being drawn directly from his memory. Penrose also bears some similarity to Herbert, who was also midway through his Oxford education when the war broke out, enlisted, and was eventually pressured by his relatives into applying for a commission. . . . The descriptions, particularly those of the Gallipoli campaign, are so evocative they will instantly provoke sympathy with what the men suffered in terms of uncertainty, heat, cold, flies and vermin, exposure, sickness and the inevitable strain on nerves that this hardship produced.

It is generally taken as the fictional account of Herbert's own experiences in the First World War. His observation of the activities of the war, the extreme brutalization of the soldiers, misuse of power and authority in the war by the so-called high class officials and war mongers, the condition of the common people are clearly and vividly illustrated in the novel.

*The Secret Battle* is said to be the epitome of the war novel. It is widely praised for its actual and elaborate portrait of the war, its internal causes and politics behind it and even its consequences. Samuel Hynes argues that the book was an "early and striking example" of a new form of the war literature, the novel which dealt with the soldier as a victim, rather than as a heroic protagonist. He further argues:

It is the thinly fictionalized story of a young officer being crushed by shell shock . . . there are gritty descriptions of Gallipoli- the heat, the dust, the flies, the dysentery and the musty smell of the dead. These are followed by good descriptions of scouting, life in the trenches and working parties on the Western Front. And then there are the relationships and conflicts between the officers and men that lead to the situation that the hero finds himself in at the end of the book.

(Herman 124)

The activities of the war are discussed in depth and detail. The attempts of the soldiers to save them and destroy their so-called enemies, their life in trenches and the actual situation of the war are scrutinized from the close distance. The war is presented from the perspective of the soldiers not from the perspective of the war wagers in order to excavate the false and camouflaged humanitarian aspect and reject the glorification and valorization of wars.

Though it is described and analyzed by the critics and scholars, is not viewed from the angle of trauma. So, the researcher is mainly concerned in this genuine issue to explore the causes and consequences of wars and its mental, physical, psychological, emotional and other effects of the war on the soldiers, their families and common people. War trauma is associated with the war which involves a very wide range of violent and traumatic experiences, including immediate threat of death

and disfigurement, physical injury, witnessing injury and death of others, and involvement in injuring or killing others - both combatants and civilians (Norris 413). I will follow the ideas put forwarded by Piotr Sztompka, Neil J. Smelser, F. Norris and others to excavate the traumatic experiences of the soldiers and other people in A. P. Herbert's *The Secret Battle*.

This study incorporates traumatic experiences of the soldiers and common people due to the wars waged by war mongers in order to fulfill their vested interests and selfish motives; it does not offer an analysis of authoritarian and imperialistic theories. This shadow war emerged into the light. Indeed, some would argue that it has been over-exposed. It creates shocked soldier holds a central place in British imaginings of the First World War. In the factual reporting of newspapers and history books no less than the fictional recreations of novels and films, traumatized victims of the war claim their place alongside its heroes. The psychological effects of the war were of course widely discussed even while it raged, and forcefully represented in fiction, drama, and autobiography during and after the conflict. Yet the scale of the recent incorporation of shell shocked veterans into narratives of the First World War is new in this regard, Shephard Bernerd says:

The perceptions of this originating conflict are shaped by what we have learnt or imagined we now know about the costs of the war. This does not mean the 'real' meaning of the war has been lost, but that new dimensions of the experience, significance, and lasting influence of the events of 1914–18 are continually being uncovered. The rash of interest in shell shock over the past twenty years certainly tells us something about attitudes to war, trauma and psychiatry in contemporary culture, but as the four books under review amply

demonstrate, it also means that we are continually gaining new perspectives on the past. (30)

Above lines shows the traumatic scene of World War I which somehow related to this novel. Perception of the war is guided by patriotic vision so this encouraged officer to oppress soldier by using fake patriotism which made soldier shock in their life.

Overall textual analysis of this study related with trauma theory. Trauma refers to an event, series of events, or context that is emotionally overwhelming. It is used mostly in medicine and psychology. But, there is a current effort to borrow the concept of trauma from medicine and psychiatry and to introduce it into sociological theory and in literature the author explicates the notion of trauma as applicable to the theory of social change. War trauma, a relatively recent term, is introduced into international law by Rafał Lemkin. Trauma was initially understood as a psychological phenomenon – it appeared in the works of the French psychiatrists Pierre Janet and Jean-Martin Charcot, who had encountered the problem of personality disorders among the World War I veterans (Sztompka 315). So, “the recognition of the war trauma started with the investigations into the health of ex-political prisoners by physicians who had themselves been part of the resistance” (Withuis 4). It is associated with a strong negative affect that accompanies defining a tragedy, shame, a collective catastrophe, in order for it to have a traumatic impact (Smelser 40–41). It incorporates pains, sufferings, tortures and agonies of people.

*The Secret Battle* presents a long series of the First World War through the experiences of a war veteran Harry Penrose, who carries out different duties and responsibilities in different places. It is the accurate and truthful portrayal of the

mental affects of the war on the participants even others. Penrose starts out as a curious, determined officer who inspires his troops and tries very hard to serve the battalion well. He is an idealist and suffers from an excess of imagination, which over time makes it increasingly difficult for him to cope with the stress and trauma. He wants to be brave and tries to “do the right thing”. This leads him to stay at Gallipoli even when he is crippled with dysentery, and later leads him to return to France twice despite the recognition of his contribution and the prospect of an honorable retirement from the field the war. Even when he is manifested mentally unfit, he still chooses to return to his battalion. He becomes the victim of his own nature and a set of circumstances that he has to face. The soldiers are punished in the name of being cowardice and desertion. The soldiers are traumatized and brutalized without any specific and concrete reason. The authority holders are insensitive towards the pains and sufferings of the soldiers and common people rather they take wars just as a means to fulfil their selfishness and evil intentions.

There is everywhere fear, terror, horror, threat and danger to the soldiers not only from the enemies but also from their own so-called high post officials in *The Secret Battle*. The soldiers are traumatized, victimized and brutalized in different pretensions and feigns. The suppression, oppression, exploitation and overwork to the soldiers are the main causes behind their traumatic experiences.

To analyze the issue of trauma in this novel, the study has been divided into four chapters. All the four chapters concentrate on proving the hypothesis of the study. The characters in the novel are affected by trauma. The first chapter presents the general introduction of this research including the background to the present study, views of the critics on the author, and his writing and an introductory outline of the present research. A theoretical guideline of the analysis has been mentioned in

second chapter. In the same way, presentation and analysis mentioned in the third chapter and conclusion has been mentioned in the fourth chapter.

## **CHAPTER II:**

### **Trauma Theory**

Greek word 'trau·mas' or 'trau·ma·ta' which means serious injury or shock to the body as a form of violence or an accident. The etymological meaning of trauma is related with emotional wound or shock that creates substantial, lasting damage to the often leading to neurosis. Trauma is related with the medical terms which related with the overwhelming experiences. In this regard Cathy Caruth defines the trauma in her "Unclaimed Experience" says:

Trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events, in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed and uncontrolled receptive occurrence of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena. The experience of the soldier faced with sudden and massive death around him, for example, who suffers this sight in a numbed state, only to relive it later on in repeated nightmares, is central and requiring image of trauma in our century.(181)

So, this definition clearly shows that trauma is described as the response to an unexpected violent that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return latter in repeated flashback, nightmares and other repetitive phenomena, similarly she says through the notion of trauma and then clarifies:

Through the notion of trauma, will argue, we can understand that a rethinking of reference is not aimed at eliminating history, but as resituating it in an understanding, that is , of precisely permitting history to arise where immediate understating may not.(182)

For the development of the trauma theory the credit goes to Sigmund Freud who initially took the job of meaning and flourishing the trauma theory in course of his treatment of the people who were being mentally and physically wounded, disturbed and disordered in the First World War. Being the prominent psychoanalytical approach both in treatment and literature, most of the trauma theorist and critics are more or less influenced and associated with him and they tried their best to define trauma basing on Freud's psychoanalysis even speak for or argue against it.

The phenomenon of trauma seems all inclusive trauma which can be defined from two approaches: first psychoanalytic formalistic approach and second, cultural approach. According to the first approach a victimized subject does not disclose the real traumatic experiences; it rather exposes and expresses the testimony, in very distorted and deceptive manner due to the fear of social death. Unlike the psychoanalytical approach, cultural approach examines the undercurrents of the distorted testimonies by contextualizing it in the network of cultural politics.

Trauma is intrinsically multidisciplinary so it needs to displace older paradigms and attend to new configuration of cultural knowledge. Geoffery Hartman, Cathy Caruth, Dominik LaCapra, Ryan Lamoth, James Verger and others, basing their theory of trauma on Freud's psychoanalysis, speak and argue about the need for acting out or working through of the trauma for leading life as healthy citizen. In other words, all form of writing on traumatic history is based on two forms of remembering trauma the first results in the process of working through the other is based on denial and results in acting out. Both concept came from Freud and have been developed in such a way that it could be in historical studies.



The vivid description of trauma as dislocation in Caruth's volume is found in van der Kolk's essay co-written with Otto Vander Hasrt. These psychiatrists sometimes seen an anti-psychoanalytic worked with neuroscientists to show the brain mechanisms that support the thesis of trauma producing dislocated selves. In arguing that trauma is a special form of memory, they stated that in trauma the event has effect only, not meaning. It produces emotions, terror, fear, shock but perhaps above all the disruption of the normal feeling of comfort. Only the sensation sector of the brain the amygdale is active during the trauma. The meaning making one, namely the cerebral cortex remain shut down because the effect is much to be registered cognitively in the brain.

The trauma theory has aroused a vivid interest among the cultural and literary theorist. The reason behind why trauma theory has begun to drag the attention of theorist pushes us to look at popular cultural and mass media obsessed by repetition of violent disaster. James Berger states, in this regard:

It has become popular because of the successions of Die Hards, terminators and Robocops, as well as Nightmares on Elm Street, disease and epidemic films and now the return of the classic disaster films and twisters and turbulences and the repeated sequence of mini-apocalypses within each films; at real life cop shows and at the news itself, that never exhausted source of pure horror. By the same token of why trauma theory has become popular and inevitable makes us look at the preoccupation with family dysfunctions, child abuse, incest, spousal abuse in the media, most strikingly on the talk show circuit. There appears to be the sense both that family is only hope for curing all social ills and that family is damaged beyond hope(571).

But “trauma” is not simply another world for disaster. The idea of catastrophe as trauma provides a mother of interpretation, for it posits that the effect of an event may be dispersed and manifested in many forms not obviously associated with the event. Moreover, this dispersal occurs across time, so that an event experienced as shattering may actually produce its full impact only years later. This representational and temporal hermeneutics of the symptom has powerful implications for contemporary theory. It emphasizes on the retrospective reconstruction of the traumatic event which Pamu use in his writing technique. A traumatic analysis is in both constrictive and empirical. It plays the closest attention to the representational means through which an event is remembered and yet remains the importance of the event itself, the things that did happen. Thus a concept of trauma can be great value in the study of history and historical narrative in general, as the verbal representation of temporality. The idea of trauma also allows for interpretation of the crucial symptoms of the growths wounds, scars, on a social body and its compulsive, repeated actions. For instance, a sense of the dynamics of trauma offers a new understanding of the insistent returns of family disasters on talk shows that goes beyond discussions of market share and public taste. A history of trauma in addition suggests ways of receptualization important direction in critical theory itself. In particular, the recent crisis in poststructuralist through brought on by the Heidegger and de Man controversies seems to require a way of thinking about how events in the past return to haunt the present. . More fundamentally, it may be useful to look again at the rhetoric poststructuralist and post modern theory their emphasis on deplore what relation they might have to the traumatic historical events of mid century. This question became more immediately relevant when we see thinkers like Jacques Derrida, Jean- Francois Lyotard and Hayden white writing explicitly about the

holocaust in 1980s in ways that seem uncannily to each earlier work of theirs which, while full of rhetoric of catastrophe, contained no references to that history.

Trauma has now crossed the boundaries of psychiatry and mediclinal and has shown an interesting insistence on the direct effects of external violence in psychic disorders. This happened after the multi-culturalist's celebration of decanters and meaninglessness. Within psychiatry, recent discussion has been dominated by two disorders that entered the official diagnostic manual of the American Psychiatric Association in 1980; post traumatic Stress Disorder and Multiple Personality Disorder, multi-culturalist post colonial critics share an interest in dismantling those intuitional mechanisms that re-inscribed a power structure that favored the interests and continuing privilege of certain groups and notions. This interest did not arise in a vacuum; however its emergence had been prepared by civil rights, women's and Gay liberations movement of the 1960s and 1970s. These movements provided strength from a radical questioning of federal authority to which the protest against the Vietnam War had given vent and which contributed to its conception as a national trauma. The politics of culture appears as the violence in the nation and traumatized the people with memoir of the events which is the cause of trauma, such as partition violence of India and Pakistan. In the novel *The Secret Battle presents* the violence of World War I. Most of the violence is related to motives of war.

## **2.1 War as a cause of trauma**

War trauma creates shock symptoms and return to active combat duty. In 1923, following World War I, Kolak started to treat traumatized U.S. war veterans. Like Janet and Freud, he observed the nature of reenactment, a central construct in modern trauma theory, and noted that "the subject acts as if the original traumatic

situation were still in existence and engages in protective devices which failed on the original occasion” (p. 82; also cited in van der Kolk, Weisaeth, et al., 1996, p. 58). He also foresaw an important controversy that continues to haunt trauma therapists, that is, whether to bring the traumatic memories into the patient’s consciousness or to focus on stabilization (van der Kolk, van der Hart, & Marmar, 1996). Although earlier trauma theorists blamed the soldiers’ symptoms on their poor moral character, Kardiner understood that any man could be affected by the atrocities of war and that the traumatic symptoms were a normal response to an unbearable situation. Kardiner and his colleague Herbert Spiegel argued that the most powerful intervention against overwhelming terror was “the degree of relatedness between the soldier, his immediate fighting unit, and their leader” (Herman, 1992, p. 25). Consequently, treatment for traumatized soldiers during the Second World War focused on minimizing separation between these soldiers and their comrades and providing brief intervention methods such as hypnosis.

War I trauma involves the destruction of the culture of origin by the disruption of language, economic, sociopolitical, and spiritual systems through oppression and imposition of the ideology of a foreign culture, causing loss of identity, community, and worldview. The legacy of cultural trauma is manifested in the destructive activities that occur in African American communities including violence and substance abuse, which are known symptoms of posttraumatic responses. The attempts of African Americans to heal during the Reconstruction The experience of people of African descent in New Orleans in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina was a recapitulation of the trauma that characterizes the “Black experience” in the United States of America. Crimes against humanity against African-descended people in the form of chattel slavery for hundreds of years caused cultural trauma in American

history was met with additional traumas of Jim Crow racism including lynchings, state-sponsored terrorism, and organizations like the Klu Klux Klan. Compound trauma is a manifestation of the synergy of these past traumas with current traumatic experiences including the natural disaster of hurricane Katrina and how it was handled. The handling of the evacuation, e.g., separating families while boarding them on buses, was reminiscent of the white master breaking up slave families by selling off parents or children to others. Despite these traumatic experiences, African American people continue to survive and attempt to heal through efforts to reconnect them with their heritage. Posttraumatic growth occurs when a people can develop an entirely new worldview that reaffirms their humanity and determination to survive and thrive. All of these concepts and their interrelatedness as they pertain to the African American community in general, and Katrina survivors in particular, will be addressed in this presentation.

War trauma is related with the events that give to rise to what generally involve in force and violence. In this regard Jenny Edkins states:

Events that give rises to what we categories today as symptoms of trauma generally involve force and violence. Often this is threat to those people involved , in their lives and integrity, as the rape, torture or child abuse; some time it also involves witnessing the horrific deaths and others, for example I war time combat or in concentration camps . The victim of trauma feel they were helpless in their enforce encounter with death, violence brutality. (3)

In the novel the secret battle most of the narratives indicate helplessness situation of soldier and traumatized by the present political scenarios of the country. Trauma is

appears as the suffering of brutality where survivor feels ashamed and suicide. In this regard, Primo Levi clarifies:

Witnessing violence done to others and survivors can seem to be as the traumatic as a suffering brutality oneself. Sense of shame is paramount. The survivor feels complicit in the betrayal perpetrated by others. In this sense the survivor the survivors of the rape or incest is ashamed for the protagonist of violence against them as well as for themselves taking part in the violence oneself can evoke a similar shame. (4)

There found shock among soldiers which creates hallucination among them effects of trauma that it produce, and forms military rule of First World War I. It aims to contribute to understandings of the particular way which power, the social order and the person are constituted.

After political events, there is a struggle over memory. Some forms of remembering can be seen as way of forgetting ways of recovering from of remembering can be seen as the way of forgetting ways of recovering from trauma by putting its lessons to one side, refusing to acknowledge that anything has changed, restoring the presence.

The political is that which enjoins us not to forget the traumatic real but rather to acknowledge constituted and provisional nature what we call social reality. Politics refers to the sphere of activity and instructions that is called politics as oppose to economy or society. Politics part of what we call social reality. To exist within the agenda of framework that is already accepted within the social order. The political in its properly traumatic dimension on the other hand, concerns the real.

The connection of trauma between violence and political community is looking at how traumas such as wars or persecutions are inscribed and re-inscribed into everyday narratives. This takes place in the practices of remembrances, memorialization and witnessing. It also takes in political action. All these practices are the site of struggle. Despite this, there is an imperative to speak, and determination to find ways of speaking that remain true to the trauma. The process of re-inscription into linear narratives, whilst possibly necessary from some points view. It is argued that telling the story alleviates traumatic stress, for example is a process that generally depoliticizes, and that there is an alternative, that of encircling trauma. In this regard, Žižek says:

We cannot try to address the trauma directly without risking its gratification. We cannot remember it as something that took place in time, because this would naturalize it. All we can do is to encircle the trauma ..., memory and forgetting are crucial both in contesting the depolarization that goes under the name of politics. (15)

Cultural trauma has deep relationship with the history of the nation and it has direct connect with the shock of cultural dislocation .Showing the connection between trauma, violence and political community in “introduction: Trauma and violence and political community”, Edikin Jenny points out how traumas such wars or persecution are inscribes and rein scribed into everyday narratives. In the sense she clarifies, “[...] takes place in practices of remembrance, memorialization and witnessing. It also takes place in political action. All these practices are the site of struggle” (5). These lines clearly show the temporality and inexpressibility of trauma makes the role of the witness almost an unbearable one. Similarly, she put forward her idea about the relation between memory and cultural trauma and points, “ Memory is not

straightforward, especially in case of traumatic memory” (16). She further argued that some forms of remembering can be seen as ways of forgetting; way of recovering from trauma by putting its lessons to one side refusing to acknowledge that anything has changed, restoring the pretence. So, after traumatic events, there is a struggle over memory. In this regard she states:

AS far as memory concerned, how we remember a war, for example, and the way in which we acknowledge and describe what we call trauma can be very much influenced by dominant views, that is, by state ..., can be contested and challenged. Forms of statehood in contemporary society, as forms of political community, are themselves produced and reproduced through social practices, including practices of the trauma and memory. (11)

In fact, this definition about the role of memory in cultural trauma is not straightforward so that the forms of state hold in contemporary society are produce and reproduce themselves through social practices including the practices of trauma and memory. In this way, the essence of the trauma is precisely that it is too horrible to be remembered, to be integrated in to our symbolic universe. They cannot forget and some are haunted by nightmare and flashback scenes of unimaginable horror.

Caruth’s famous idea of latency argues that trauma as it first takes place is uncertain but the survivors’ uncertainty is not a simple amnesia for the event returns, as Freud points out insistently and against their will. Her ideas reinforce the fact that trauma can’t be forgotten. She gives emphasis. She gives emphasis on the part of latency, the temporary delay which should not be misunderstood as a repression because trauma by its nature, displays with a vengeance over a period of time,



especially when triggered by a similar event. For the person who has experienced unbearable pain, the psychological defense of dislocation allows life to go but at a great internal cost. Similarly, her another essay “The wound and voice “ open a new ground on a problematic explore by Jeoffery Hartman, Elaine Scamy and Zizek in the relation between pain and language negative, historical and ethnic dimension. Caruth posits the trauma as it first occurs is incomprehensible. It is only later, after a period of latency that is can be placed is a narrative, “the impact of the traumatic event lies precisely in its belatedness in its refusal to be simply located”(577).Traumatic narrative, then, is strongly referential, but not in any simple or direct way. And the uninstruction of the history develops from this delayed response to trauma, which permits “history to arise where immediate understanding may not.

On the contrary of Kali Tal” *Worlds of Hurt: Reading of Literature of Trauma*” takes an approach entirely different from those of Caruth and LaCarpa. Tal is hostile to psychoanalysis and bases her views of trauma on cognitive psychological and feminist politics that define strongly with the testimonies of rape and incest survivors. This strategy has certain strength – a keen awareness of systematic violence against women and a sense of how traumatic literature might produce social change but certain limitation as well. Defining “Trauma in literature”, Tal writes that it is defined by the identity of another, pointing to the work of the critic in relation to the literature of thee trauma both” to identify and explicate literature by members of survivor groups and to deconstruct the process by which the dominant culture codifies their traumatic experience”(18).But the Berger, Tal’s criticisms seem to him overstated and ill formed because Tal has no sense of traumatic return of the repressed, of widespread cultural symptoms and fetishes, of the role of trauma in the ideology.

Caruth relies heavily upon Freud to provide her with a framework for her examination of trauma, returning again to the passages of beyond the pleasure principle and Moses and Monotheism, Caruth presents Manian references as literary symptom, an unconscious, inevitable imprint of events on texts in the form of verbal tricks or tropes, and she quite effectively reinterprets de Man's blindness and insight model in terms of traumatic impact and later inscriptions. Caruth, in *Unclaimed Experiences: Trauma Narrative and History*, is concerned principally with questions of references and representation: how trauma becomes text or as puts in her introduction, how wound becomes voice. She sketches a theory of trauma as instigator of historical narrative through an analysis of Moses and Monotheism; describe the intersections of traumatic narratives which outline a theory of reference as the imprint of a catastrophic fall in a discussion of de Man and H. V. Klesist, and ends with a reading of Lacan's gloss on Freud's interpretation of the dream of the burning child, in which she proposes testimony as providing relation to trauma.

Soshana Fleman agrees with Caruth in the way of history writing that history is always written from the position of those in power. However traumatic history is reliable in the sense that it does not claim to project reality and it is based upon the testimony of the survivor and not those in power. Felman's concept of bearing witness the narrative recapitulation of trauma in Freudian term psychoanalytic dialogues is crucial activity. In her text *Testimony Crises of Witnessing in Psychoanalysis and History*, she explains:

To bear witness is to take responsibility for truth to speak, from within the legal pledge and juridical of the witness's oath. To testify before a court of law or before the court of history and future, to testify, likewise before an audience of readers and spectators is more than

simply to report a fact of an event or relate what has been lived, recorded and remembered. Memory is conjured here essentially, to address another, to impress upon a listener, to appear to community.

(45)

So, Felman is of the opinion that the witness's "act of seeing" or what is called the "testimonial witnessing" is a responsible affair and irreplaceable performance. The testimonial witnessing is act of seeing things through his/her own eyes, and whatever is witnessed gets accumulated in the mind in the form of memory. Such memory needs to be shared because it is special memory consisting first hand seeing it is unique and irreplaceable.

War trauma is related with the events that are overwhelming but the victims are also revelation. They strip away the diverse commonly accepted meanings by which that lead the lives in various communities. They reveal the contingency of the social order and in some cases how it conceals to own possibility. They question the settled assumptions about who the victims might be a humans and what we might be capable of. Those who survive often feel compelled to bear witness to those discoveries. But in particular, those who would tries to prevent survivor from speaking out the powerful, those who have perhaps more of a stake than most in concealing the contingency of form of social political organization. This may include, for example government who had send soldier in to battle , men who benefit from the structure in which women and children are subservient and vulnerable , state who have turned on section of their own citizens on genocide or deportations. The testimony of survivors can challenge structures of power and authority; moreover the challenges can be some regards transcend boundaries of culture and social group. It what Michael Foucault referred to as the solidarity of the shaken?

On the other hand political community has an ironic conception with the event that we have discussing in modern time. In modern political communities in the west faith in the social order is searching the security in system themselves are productive of and produce by force and violence. The point is no surprise to women of course who had long had to separate their notion of safety from the particular structures in which they live. Battered women would not recognize the picture of the family as a source of protection and stability. As a political unit it produced and define by organized violence .State are founded on violence, whether it takes the form of war, revolution or civil conflict Although once form of state appear peaceable enough ,internally and externally , physical violence remains a tool that only a state is allows to use .Attempt of other vigilante groups, opposition movements, criminals to use violence are seen as unacceptable in Maxweber's definition," The state that human community which lay claims to the monopoly of legitimate physical violence within a certain territory"(6)The right to use violence , in other words in the prerogative of the state. In the same way, modern nation state work by process of enforces exclusion, and it can change the definition of who precisely will be excluded enemy within a level.

Yet people do manage to reestablish a sense of purpose and identity after major loss compounded by traumatic experiences, for many, they try to cope by blocking all memory of shattered past. Referring to Freud, *in Refuge Trauma the Assault on meaning*, Miranda Alcock clarifies: ... deep attachment to this object has been shattered, due to rejection, indifference or disappointment, survival requires that the love of the lost object somehow be preserved. Unable to bear the painful reality, the person omnipotent identities ... instead of anger and frustration being directed towards the loved object, the aggression are turned on the self. To preserve the

attachment, not to give up the love relationship, although the object is gone, the attack has been redirected, so the idealization of the loved object can be retained, preserved from the hatred and rage provoked by the narcissistic wounding of the initial abandonment. (298)

So, these different ranges of concerns can be conceptualized under the categories of cultural trauma which is the cause of wound.

“Traumatic Experiences of a Soldier in A. P. Herbert’s *The Secret Battle*” will focus on the causes, events and detrimental consequences of wars. It will revolve around the career of Harry Penrose, a young officer in the First World War. The observation of each and every activities of the war from the perspective of a soldier will be highlighted thereby presenting the crimes, offences and felonies caused by the authority holders. The mental effects of war on the soldiers; terror, horror and fear among the common people and hardships of their life are the major focuses of *The Secret Battle*. The story is a protest against the mercilessness of the military system, and does a very effective job of showing that Penrose has been failed by the system. The excessive punishment even death penalty in the name of maintaining ethics of war is vividly presented in the novel. Highlighting the traumatic, painful and distressing experiences of people and war soldiers in the First World War, this research will excavate the abuse and misuse of power and authority by the war mongers.

### CHAPTER III:

#### Traumatic Experiences of a Soldier in *The Secret Battle*

Alan Patrick Herbert portrays the situation of soldier in the World War I which is full of shell shock. Penrose is the main character and narrator of this novel who is traumatized from the war. During the First World War, British government neglects the basic human rights and enforced soldiers to fight against enemy. Most of the time: battle, death, violence, injury and inhuman punishment keeps secret. Latter this secret suppression and violence appear as form of shock which Herbert delineates in this narrative. The situation Herbert describes, " I am going to write down some of the history of Harry Penrose, because I do not think full justice has been done to him, and because there must be many other young men who flung themselves into this war at the beginning "(1). British troops are in full of depression though they are guided by the loyalty of command so they forget pain and read to do anything in the battle. The overall situation of battle reflects in the following lines:

.....Most of our own party had not yet lost the light-hearted mood in which men went to the war in those days: the 'picnic' illusion of war was not yet dispelled; also individually no doubt, we had not curious confidence of the un-blooded soldier that none of these strange, terrible things could ever actually happen to us ; we should forever hang upon the pleasant fringes of war , sailing in strange seas, and drinking in strange towns, but never definitely entangled in the more crude and distasteful circumstances of battle. And if there were any of us with a secret consciousness that we deceived ourselves, to –night was no time to tear away the veil.

(2)

Above lines show the situations of war and violence which made soldiers traumatized and being affected by shell shock. Circumstance of battle field is rough and danger though the situation is never bring out by officer which became painful to the soldiers who fight in this blood battle. Penrose elaborates the circumstance of war and speaks:

I did not undeceive him and tell him how parched and austere, how barren of comfortable grass and shade he would find them on closer acquaintance. We steamed into Mudros Bay at the end of an unbelievable sunset; in the great harbor were gathered regiments of ships battleship, cruiser, tramp, transport, and trawler, and as the sun sank into the western hills, the masts and the rigging of all of them were radiant with its last rays, while all their decks and hulls lay already in the shot blue dusk.(3)

Penrose's descriptions are full of traumatic because he could not tell everything in his narrative because he is one of the victims of this blood war of Gallipoli. He was affected by shell shock of the war. There found melancholy in his tone which hid in official description of war. In this regard, he says:

So, I sat there watched Harry , and his wife played and played soft ,melancholy, homesick things (Chopin, I think) that leagued with the wine and the warm fire and the deep chairs in an exquisite conspiracy of repose. She played for a long time , but I saw that she too was watching. And the fancy came to me that she was fighting Harry, fighting.(131)

Above lines replicate the traumatic situation of soldiers who could not speak what happen in the war and only expresses the personal feeling. There feeling is based on personal experiences which are symptom of melancholia. In official narrative

nothing wrong in battle which is painful for the narrator and speaks, "And again I say that all I have tried to do. This book is not an attack on any person, on their death penalty or on anything makes people think about these things, so much the better"(164). Many soldiers got death penalty in the name of maintaining discipline in war and military rule which is more violence than regular war. The situation creates shell shock among the soldiers which Penrose examines:

I was able to assure him that he need have no qualms. He was, I discovered, pathetically full of military ambitions; he dreamed already, he confessed, of decorations and promotions and glorious charges. In short, he was like many another under-graduate officer of those days in his eagerness and readiness for sacrifice, but far removed from the common type in his romantic, imaginative outlook toward the war.(3)

In the name of sacrifices and patriotism many soldiers lost their life in battle. Commander of the troop and British government forget the basic humanity which create problem in soldiers till long time. It presents the First World War an absolute, unbridgeable break with the past; yet few would deny the truth in his assertion that it was the crucible in which the modern world was forged. If nothing else, the fact that the war is still debated in terms of its status as the originating moment of modernity tells us much about its place in the contemporary imagination, and by extension the contemporary cultural. Penrose remembers of the time and says:

These were days of hot anxiety about one's kit; hourly each officer reorganized and re-disposed his exiguous belongings, and jettisoned yet more precious articles of comfort, lest the weight regulations be violated and for the sake of an extra shirt the



whole of one's equipment be cast into the sea by mysterious figure we believed to catch over these things.(4)

The situation is not so bearable for the soldiers. They are in hot anxiety and hunted by the violence which has been seen by their eyes on the battle field. The sadness he expresses, "All the king's ships manned ship as we passed, and sent us a great wave of cheering that filled the heart with sadness and resolution"(4). British troops are guided by the patriotism during Gallipoli war. They are motivated by knighthood and persuaded to bear everything of war. The situation Penrose describes, "From many were moved in that moment who were never moved before. But while we were yet warm with cheering and the sence of knighthood we cleared the boom and shivered a little in the breeze of the open sea"(5). The situation is more terrific though there is no option to get off from the circumstances which, "but such terror were not for us. There was a bright moon, and as we saw the solace cliffs of Cape Helles, all, I think, expected each moment a torrent of shells from some obscure quarter"(5). Penrose minutely observes the physical situation of war which is strange and terrific for British troops though they fought for nation. This forceful fighting is traumatic in itself though soldiers fight for the sake of life and nation. Penrose describes the situation as:

By now we were very tired, and it was heavy work laboring through the soft sand. Queer, Moorish –looking figures in white robes peered at us from dark corners, and here and there a man poked a tousled head from a hole in the ground, and blinked upon our progress. Someone remarked that it.(6)

Above line show the military discipline of British troops which is painful and traumatic for soldiers. They are affected by shell shock. The shell shocked soldier

holds a central place in British imaginings of the First World War. In the factual reporting of newspapers and history books no less than the fictional recreations of novels and films, traumatized victims of the war claim their place alongside its heroes. Penrose elaborates the situation and says:

The digging was a comfort to the men ,who being pitmen , were now in their element; and the officers found solace in whispering to each other than magical communication about the prospective ' searching' it was the first technical word they had used in the field and they were secretly proud to know that it meant. In a little the dawn began, and the grey trees took shape. (7)

Most of the time troops hide the painful situation of war though it remains in the unseen part of mind affected soldiers till long time as form of melancholia. Penrose compares the situation by taking the references of olive tree, "No one was afraid; without the knowledge of experience no one could be seriously afraid on this cool, sunny morning in the grove of olive-trees .those chill hours in the sweeper had been much more alarming"(8). Due to imperial ethos troops could not be freed from the fear of authority which falls the behavior of individual soldiers as form of war trauma. Penrose describes the situation of French baseline and says, "Below was a cool , inviting grove of imperial cypresses ; all along the narrow strip between us and the shore lay the rest-lines of the French, where moved lazy figures in blue and red , and black Senegalese in many colors"(9). Everyone falls on the fallacy of history and persuades to fight with enemy though they have no keen individual interest in war and violence. In this regard, Penrose views, I myself am a stolid, ill-red person, but I confess that the spectacle of those historic " flats was not one , in diplomatic phrase , which I could view with indifference. On Harry, ridiculously excited already the effect was almost alarming"(10). The situation goes toward the painful process as,

"and though he was to this extent forewarned and forearmed, it must have been a painful process. And it explained to me the puzzling intervals of seeming melancholy which I had seen varying his usually cheerful demeanor"(11). There is rumor of patriotism which is fantasy of individual soldier which has no important in personal life which Penrose elaborates, " I've heard of lots of them the kind of man that nobody gives an important job because he's sure to muck it up(though I do believe Elliston's more likely to be that than me" (12). The situation of full of confusion Penrose does not know what will go on in the secret battle though he assures the violence against individual soldier. He express the situation and says, " I did not know whether it would ever die; for certainly I had never seen that sprite working so powerfully in any man as a positive incentive to achievement"(12). In the same way he further speaks, "True , the inhabited portion of the narrow land we won had already become in great part a wilderness; the myrtle ,and rock-rose, and tangled citrus, and all that wealth of spring flowers in which the landing parties"(13).

### **Soldiers in the First World War**

Herbert expresses his personal feeling of the First World War through the narrative of Penrose which is full of traumatic events and experiences of soldier. In Gallipoli war many British soldiers lost their life and some are punished by British troop itself that remain as secret till long time and it appears as shell shock. Shell shock in the First World War shows subsequent realization that perceptions and experiences of monolithic, self-evident, or historically constant. In this regard, Penrose states, "And so we made what we conceived to be the quickest and simplest form of shelter against a quite temporary emergency long , straight , un-traversed ditches , running parallel to and with but a few yards between each other"(14). There are many evidence of traumatic effects of war which found in every battle such as,

"It is sufficient testimony to the indifference of the Turkish artillery that with such naked concentrations of men scattered about the peninsula, casualties in the rest-camps were so few"(14). By showing the fear of discipline commander convince the troop and mentally ensure them for fighting. The situation Penrose elaborates:

Then indeed did a man learn to love water; then did he learn discipline, when he filed his water-bottle in the morning with the exiguous ration of the day, and fought with the intolerable craving to put in to his lips and there and then gurgled down his fill.(15)

Above lines indicate the exiguous ration of days when soldiers are fighting in Gallipoli. They express the feeling, "So we were to sorry for three days of quiet in the camp before we went up the hill; hurry alone was all eagerness to reach the firing – line with the least possible delay"(16). Descriptions of natural phenomena, but were rather shaped by prevailing social and cultural mores, and in some times and places, driven by powerful emotion of war mentality. In this regard Penrose describes the nature of commander and speaks:

He was an excellent company commander, but would have made a still more admirable second-in-command, for his training in figure and his meticulous habits, in such things as the keeping of accounts were just what is required of a second-in-command, and were lamentably deficient in myself.(17)

Above lines show nature of company commander who ensure his soldiers for battle which portrays as, "But Eustace was never tired of exhibiting the frailty and subterfuge of all men, particularly in their relations to the war; the nation arrived for him as regularly as the German submarines would allow, and all his views were in that sense distinctly national"(19). The particular situation which

commander describes before his soldiers shows the emergency of time and urgency of war. The situation is discomfort for everyone though they make certain to bear it, "The little discomforts of camp life were nothing to him, for were they not part of his normal life? and when I emerged from my dug-out pursued by a centipede of incredible ferocity, he held forth for a long time on the best method of dispatching"(19). Eustace is not so bad though he creates the traumatic situation in the name of maintaining military law on his troop, "He was personally and spiritually attracted; by Eustace alternately fascinated and disturbed"(20). Which further elaborate the situation as:

So that , apart from purely military consideration, the fear of being lost is no small thing , for a man knows that he may wander all night alone in the dark, surrounded by unknown dangers ,cut off from sleep, and rations, and the friendly voices of companions, a jest among them when he discovers them : then such a march becomes a nightmare.(21)

Above lines show the pure military circumstance of Gallipoli war which is full of violence. Many soldiers got death penalty from the troop and being the victim of violence which creates shell shock among soldiers. The physical circumstances of troop are not so good that make terrible situation which describes as:

There was then a wild hail of bullets in all those gullies, since for many hours of each night the Turk keep up a sustained and terrible rapid fire from his trenches far up the hill, and ,whether by design or bad shooting, the majority of these bullets passed high over our trenches, and fell hissing in the gully-bed.(22)

Embedding notions of physical and psychological health and illness in the broader historical context, and therefore encompassing not only the relations of

circumstance which Penrose describes, "It seemed to us that these strange proceedings must be a part of the everyday life of the soldier. If they were not, we raw creatures should not have been asked to endure them. We had no standard of safety or danger by which to estimate our position"(23). It shows the traumatic situation of soldiers. They are not safe in war though commander presides them by showing the fake notion of patriotism and immortality. These so called fame further creates horror at the battle field, "horrors of war';but this the kind of thing which more than battle and blood, harasses the spirit of the infantryman, and composes his life"(24). The situation Penrose induces:

That night we stood a total of hours hopelessly jammed in the suffocating trench, with other troops trying to get down a man staid in those crushes, unable to sit down, unable to lean comfortably against the wall because of his pack, unable even to get his hand to his water-bottle and quench his intolerable thirst.(24)

In the battle field the troop effort to create easy environment though it could not solace to soldiers. The situation is become melancholic, "For every we wind round the endless traverses, and squeeze past the endless host we are relieving; and sometimes the parapet is low or broken or thin, or there is a dangerous gap"(25). Penrose could not be clear about the situation and become worry. In this regard, he says, "I was anxious to know what impression the night had made on Harry, but these and other answers gave no real clue. I had a suspicion that it had, in truth, considerably distressed" (27). The situation creates shell shock which is related to hysteria and rejected the finer details of soldiers. Penrose describes this unpleasant situation, "I was still acutely conscious of the unpleasantness of the night's proceeding; and a certain envy took hold of me at this youth's capacity to concentrate on the attractive shadow of distasteful things" (28). Soldiers dislike the situation of

Gallipoli war though the war is connected with national pride and dignity of British crown. There found much description about this historical event which create trauma among the living soldier. Penrose speaks about the situation as, " So many men have written descriptions of trench life in France; there have been so many poems, plays ,and speeches about it that the majority of our nation must have a much clearer mental picture of life on the western front that they"(29). Many soldiers lost life and other become injure in this battle which keep secret for longtime in the name of national pride. Penrose describes about the loss of life, "In the first week we lost twelve men each day; they fell without a sound in the early morning as they stood up from their cooking at the brazier, fell shot through the head, and lay snoring horribly in the dust"(30). Commander orders soldier to follow the strong rule of troop though individual soldiers are being victimized due to the over load of war fear which describes in this way, "The Turks were natural soldiers, fighting in their own country; more they were natural scouts. Our man was ponderous uncouth pitman from Tyneside and the Clyde"(32). Mentally ill soldiers are given threat to national unity, and themselves as loyal servants of the nation performing an essential duty. The situation of war shown as , "In heat of the day these things produced in the healthiest man an intolerable irritation and fatigue; ta a frail , sensitive youth like harry his day long rambles must have been torture ; but though he too became touchy he pursued his task with determination"(33). The traumatic situation of soldiers appears through melancholic state of mind. They remain silence before commander though they are full of anxiety. In this regard, Penrose says,

For it was an exhibition of nervousness as well as musketry: fearful of stealthy assault in the dark, he would not desist till he could see well across his own wire.

Captured orders by the Turkish high command repeatedly forbade this reckless expenditure of ammunition.(35)

Above lines show the nervous situation of soldiers who spend their life in dark battle field though commander project the value of patriotism of the war. It shows the hypocrisy of war which describes, "At the best it was an hypocrisy. For the reluctance of the officer to look over was one thing to look for a moment or to and pass on, and another to stand there and repeat the process at brief intervals" (36). The circumstances of war is dangerous which is located in remote part of the island, "Far away he can see the green lights of a hospital ship, and as he looks they begin to move and dwindle slowly into the distance, for she is going home"(37). Soldiers are in being hopes of life though they are ensured by commander and military rules. The situation is almost a wild which describes, "Almost at once there is a wild din in his dreams . rapid fire again. Springing up , he rushes into the trench with the others. It is an attack"(39).Military norms and the urge of officers create monotonous situation which Penrose describes as , "The officer braces himself for his duties, and by and by all the man are more or less awake and equipped, though their heads droop as they sit, and their neighbors nudge them into weak fullness as the officer approaches"(40). Soldiers remember nothing in this melancholic situation. They have cold memory of order. In this regard, Penrose speaks, "It is nothing to do with them. Then he remembers what he is for, and tells his men excitedly to fire on the figures. Some of the man have began cooking there breakfast, and are with difficultly seduced from their task"(41). Due to fear of violence and upcoming death, they belated to perform their activities. In this regard, he says, "He has been put in a flash position . Presently a belated chit arrives to say that the French were to attack at sun-rise, but the attack was a fiasco, and is postponed" (41). The circumstance of war provides



opportunity to upgrade to high rank officers and commander who are succeeded to persuade to soldier for scarifies in battle. The situation of high officers projects in this way, "High officers in shirt sleeves and red hats looked long and wisely at it through periscopes; colonels and adjutants and subalterns and sergeants stood silent and respectful while the great men pondered"(43).

### **Traumatic Anxiety and Herbert**

The Secret Battle is also closely based on Herbert's own wartime experiences, with some scenes being drawn directly from his memory. Penrose also bears some similarity to Herbert, who was also midway through his Oxford education when war broke out, enlisted, and was eventually pressured by his relatives into applying for a commission. It is interesting that Herbert based Penrose's background on himself, distancing the fictional him from the narratorial "I". I suspect all young officers would have heard about Dyett and reflected on how close they themselves could have come to being in his position. The descriptions, particularly those of the Gallipoli campaign, are so evocative they will instantly provoke sympathy with what the men suffered in terms of uncertainty, heat, cold, flies and vermin, exposure, sickness and the inevitable strain on nerves that this hardship produced.

Colonial of the troop regularly orders to the sergeants which is monotonous and fearful. In this regard, Penrose says, "I was afraid but he as yet was only faintly surprised. The colonel had sent him out; the colonel had said the Turks fred high, and if you kept low you were quit safe and he ought to know"(44).

Traumatic situation of colonial reflects in the lines though anxiety of soldiers. The anxiety covers with vast blackness which Penrose states, "But he would not go back, and squirming on worked his head into a gap in the parapet, and gazed into a

vast blackness. This he did with a wild incautiousness, the patience of the true scout overcome by his anxiety to do what he intended as soon as possible" (45). When the situation goes worse for soldier Harry, he feels worries and says, "In that moment, Harry told me, all the elation and pride of his exploit ebbed out of him. A sick disgust with himself and everything came over him. Williams the other scout, lay between him and Trower, who was now moaning horribly in the darkness"(46). William faced both physical and mental problems in the battle field which he describes, "Tearing open his pocket he fumbled at the elastic band round the case. The little phial was smaller than the rest; he knew where it lay. But the case was upside-down; all the phials seemed the same size"(47). The circumstances which have been seen in the battle field mentioned by Penrose as:

Poor Harry! as he lay there bandaging his scout, he noticed that the lad had stopped moaning, and said to himself that his morphine tablets had done their work. This was our first experience of the weapon, and the first experience of a whizz-bang is very disturbing.(49)

Above lines show the traumatic situation of Harry whose life is in full of fear and anxiety, "It was undesirable, if not impossible, to rebuild the parapet during daylight, so he moved them in to the next day. He then went along the trench to see that all the men had ceased work"(50). Like Harry many other soldiers faced same problems in life which is created by war and its violence. In this regard, Penrose says:

For in this respect the lives of soldiers are not uniform; though many may live in the same regiment and fight in the same battles, the experiences which matter come to them diversely to some crowded and overwhelming, to some by kind and delicate degrees. And so do their spirits develop. (51)

Above lines show the situation of soldiers who are affected by the violence of war though the colonial neglect the fear and persuade soldiers, "The colonel had been pleased with the reconnaissance, as such. But the sight of his six poor men, lying black and beastly in that sunlit hole, had killed the 'romance of war'"(52). It ironies the reality of war which create problem in life of soldiers. Most of the time official hides the reality of war. In this regard, Penrose speaks, "An officer lies down in the afternoon to sleep in his whole. The files cluster on his face. Patiently, at first he brushes them away, with a drill-like mechanical movement of his hand ; by and by he does it angrily; his temper is going" (54). The situation is worse because soldiers are mutilated by officers which are the main cause of trauma. In this regard, Penrose says, "The men grew lazy from sheer weariness of these messages, so that they were mutilated as they came and had to be repeated; and there was this able always"(55).. When troop was in far from the camp they practices the hole and yard which guide soldiers by their officers, "There was only a yard between the holes of the officers and the holes of the men ,and their raucous quarrelling grated on the nerves already sensitive from the trials of the day , and the officer came near to cursing his own men; and that is bad"(56). It shows traumatic situations which faced by soldiers during the war time. The circumstances is being worse, "As it grew worse, men became querulous but were still interested in themselves. And those not in the final stages discussed their symptoms, emulously, disgustingly still a little anxious to be worse than their fellows" (57). When troop was in Gallipoli physical environment become worse which Penrose describes:

Did not come here but ward noisily in the shallow water; so all was quit, save for an occasional lazy shell from Asia and the chunk-chunk of a patrol-boat. The sea

at this hour put on its most perfect blue, and the foot-hills across the straits were all warm and twinkling in the late sun. (58)

Above lines show the environment which troops faced in the bank of Gallipoli where troops were prepared for fighting, "We knew that some of us, though courageous, were greedy; that others, though not greedy, were querulous about their food and had a nasty habit of sticking out for their right" (59). Troops have knowledge about the physical setting of the battle field though they are confused about the situation because they are being traumatized by homesickness, "A parcel from home to schoolboys and soldiers and prisoners and sailors, and all homesick exiles, is the most powerful emblem of sentiment affection" (60). Penrose elaborates the situation as, "He feels that he has betrayed the tenderness of his home; and though the giving of pleasure to companions he likes may overcome this feeling the compulsory squandering of such precious pleasure on a many" (61). British troops survive to support, and played a crucial role in sustaining the morale of this largely young, amateur army that it was all a strange tangle of friendship and animosity and good-nature and bitterness. Yet on the surface, you understand, we lived on terms of toleration and vague geniality" (62). The situation Penrose induces:

It was his own tin. Further, someone had tried to scratch the initials out. Harry kept his temper with obvious difficulty. Burnett knew well that he had lost his mess-tin (we were all sick of hearing it), but he said he was quite ignorant of having it in his possession. (63)

Above lines show the cope in the face of pain and terror does not justify the events which caused these emotions. Of course it is important to realize that the meanings attributed to the war by subsequent generations have often been shaped by

the contemporary political and cultural landscape or that many prominent representations of the war can be read differently, or read alongside other accounts which emphasized different aspects of life. The following lines clarifies, "It became an active element in that vast complex of irritation and decay which was eating into his young system ; it was leagued with the flies, and the dust , and the smells, and the bad food, and the wind ,and the harassing shells of the trucks"(65). It shows the traumatic situation of troop that faced in the course of battle which Penrose describes, "Some time the doctor came and sat under our olive tree. And some of us spoke jestingly of the universal sickness, and asked him how ill we must be before he would send us home"(67). All are confused about the situation what will go on into the battle field, " Nobody could say anything about you 'I told him ; one's only got to look yet you to see that you've got one foot in the grave well ,we group again tomorrow he said, ' and if I am not better after that, I'll think about it again"(68). Physical environment also suggests the traumatic scene of battle field where few people are entangle and wait upcoming situation that reflects in the environment. The situation Penrose describes, "A few clouds forgotten by the wind , or the smoke of the night's battle ;but I marched with my eyes upon it all the stumbling way to achi baba .and when I found karry at a halt, he , too was gazing at the wonder with all his men. It's an omen, he said" (70). The overall situates reflects the traumatic circumstances which faced by soldiers. While soldiers are near to the banks of sea they are affected by melancholia. In this regard, Penrose states, "Very early the guns had begun ,and everywhere, from the straits to the sea , where the loud barking of the French seventy-fives thinly assisted by the British artillery, which was scanty, and had almost no ammunition"(71). The following lines justify the situation of battle field:

Any orders ? And when he shook his head , cursed a little ,but in their hearts wondered if they were glad , for the waiting was bad indeed, but who knew what tasks they would have when the orders come.... Often the reserves had the worst of it in these affairs...a forlorn hope of an attack without artillery. Digging a new line under fire. Beating off the counter-attack.... (73)

Our understandings of situation of battle field shows the shadow of the First World War. In turn, our perceptions of this originating conflict are shaped by what we have learnt or imagine we now know about the costs of war. This does not mean the 'real' meaning of the war has been lost, but that new dimensions of the experience, significance, and lasting influence of the events of 1914–18 are continually being uncovered. Penrose describes the situation, "A whole brigade had tried and failed there was a redoubt there were endless machineguns... some laughed 'a rumor' ; but most men felt in their heart that there was something in it , and inwardly"(74). It shows the traumatic situation which faced by soldier during the war. They got nothing against fears, "The rest of us said nothing, for we were wondering if it were true of ourselves, I went with Harry to his platoon; they too said nothing, and their faces were expressionless"(75). The following lines of novel further clarify the situation as:

The men who passed us on their way down grimly wished us joy of what they had left; their faces were pale and drawn, full of loathing and weariness, but they said little. and so we sat all the scorching hours of the sun, or moved listlessly up and down ,trying not to look up wards .. but there was a hideous fascination about the think so that after a few hours a man came to know the bodies in his day with a sickening intimacy.(77)

Above lines show the rash of n shell shock of war which creates trauma situation among soldiers. The situation is related to both emotional and psychological suffering. Officer of war troop also faced the problem though they never been physically sick, "No officer went sick; no officer could be spared; and indeed we seemed to have a greater power of resistance to this ordeal of disgust than the men" (78). In the war there need more soldiers for fighting though all are being traumatic and the number are being minimized. In this regard, Penrose describes the situation, "He wanted more men; he wanted another officer but no more could be speared from an already small reserve. He was full of the height ground on the right from which is party would ' obviously' be enfiladed and shot down to a man .however, he went"(79). Harry and his friends faces problem which he describes:

In the first place, he had welcome the chance of doing something at last, of putting his doubts to the test, but I am sure that what chiefly carried him through that night, weak and exhausted as he was, was the though , burnet let them down; burnet let them down; I' am not going to let them down/ anyhow he did very well.(81)

Above lines induce the traumatic history of Gallipoli war which reflects trauma wartime emotional experience of a traumatized soldier and a shell shock patient which Penrose states, "So I was not surprised when this letters began to reveal something of the old enthusiastic Harry , chafing at the dreary routine of the depot ,and looking for adventure again. But I am anticipating"(82). It shows the traumatic situation which Harry faced in life though he could not openly express in his daily activities. in this regard, he says, "I do not know if all this seems tedious and unnecessary; I hope not ,for it is very relevant had been in the hands of certain persons the end of the story might have been different. I do not know. Certainly it ought to have been different"(84). The following lines further describes the situation:

In the line also there was not too much war few of the infantry on either side ever fired their rifles; and only a few bombers with rifle grenades tried to injure the enemy. There were short sectors of the line on either side which became spasmodically dangerous because of these things and at affixed hour.(85)

Above lines show the traumatic anxiety of British troop who are fighting in Gallipoli war. The weapons of war silently create fear to the fighter which Penrose describes the situation, "Then a machine-gun opens again, and you slip round the corner to find nothing at all, only more blackness and the rats scuttling away in to the grass, and perhaps the bones of a French man"(88). The lines portray the situation which salvages identity of soldiers. In this regard, Penrose says, "Or may be the line would advance at last, and some salvage party come upon your uniform rotting in the ditch, and they would take off your identity disk and send it in to headquarters, and shovel a little earth above your bones"(89). Gallipoli war reflects the shell shock of World War I when many soldiers secretly punished by British Commander. The situation Penrose says, "Or you scented him far off like a dog nosing through the grass and made him a landmark, whispering to your companion, 'kept fifty yards from the dead un' or 'make of the dead both'"(90).

The novel reflects the traumatic situation of soldiers of the First World War which happened in Gallipoli during the war time. In the war many soldiers are secretly punished in the name of violation of military rule. All the soldiers become traumatized but to homesickness and the upcoming fear of war. In thread, Penrose says, "They had a little house in Chelsea very tastefully furnish by Mrs. Penrose whom more of her that evening than I did of Harry, who was hopelessly entangled with two or three in laws"(121). Penrose saw dangerous dream about war which he describes, "I dream of them every night.. usually it's an enormous endless plain. Full



of shell holes of course and raining like hell and I walk for miles ( usually with you) looking over my shoulder waiting for the shells to come ... and then i..."(123). The situation is full of confused that shows the melancholic situation which , " rations... has every man got his box respirator?... why haven't you cleaned your rifle?... as if I cared a dam!... No, I won't say that ... but there you are you see , it 's on my nerves... but sometimes" (124).While troop is near to the battle field there appears the dragon fear related to mental as well as physical pain. The situation Penrose says, "I don't know one officer is the same as another to most people... And then, you know although you hate it, it does get hold of you somehow out there ... and after a bit , when you've got used to being at home you get, restless"(125).

The novel portrays the situation of Gallipoli war which happened during the time of the First World War between France and Britain. The war keeps secret by British government many years which Herbert brings out through this fictional writing. All the events and narratives of the novel reflect the traumatic situation of soldiers that fights in the war.

## CHAPTER IV:

### War can have Traumatic Impact Even on Soldiers

The novel portrays the situation of Gallipoli war through the narratives of Penrose. Penrose describes various scene of war and situation of the soldiers who fight far island for the sake of national unity. He was being victimized due to the war violence and inhuman behavior of commander who punished soldier in the name of maintaining military rule.

*The Secret Battle* reflects the traumatic history of the First World War which mirrors the situation of soldiers who are punished by commander in the battle field and kept secret by government since long time .The novel ironies the so-called British patriotism and urge to maintain humanity in military field. Due to inhuman behavior of commanders and fare of bloody war many soldiers become traumatized. Penrose portrays the events which he faced in his life in the battle field ; delineates how the war is traumatic for soldiers. Many soldiers killed in war by enemies and equal numbers of soldiers became physically injured. More than that are killed and become traumatized during the war.

The novel explores the mentality of British commander who punished many soldier in the name of maintaining military law. Latter this cruel military rule became the main cause of trauma and being victim of shell shock .It shows the daily occurrence, which makes the killing, dying, and dismemberment, which did occur somehow less terrible. The novel tries to cope in the face of pain and terror does not justify the events which caused these emotions. Of course it is important to realize that the meanings attributed to the war by subsequent generations have often been shaped by the contemporary political and cultural landscape, of the First World War.

It represents the situation of soldiers which read differently, or read alongside other accounts which emphasized different aspects. This novel is one of the example of war literature, which dealt with a victim-figure rather than a heroic protagonist. Penrose is one of the victim figures who being traumatized by war of Gallipoli. The horrific loss of life in the World War first was due largely to the incompetence and abuse by officers situated a safe distance from the fighting, military top-brass situated at an even safer distance from the fighting and government officials and ministers situated in a different country and represents the British colon. The Secret Battle is the story of an idealistic young officer called Harry Penrose. First in Gallipoli, then in France, he is tested and brought to braking point. It is the story of one man's secret battle within himself: the fight to retain ideals of military glory amid the miseries of the trenches, to preserve a sense of duty to an incompetent command, to inspire his men with courage he had long ago lost.

Herbert's principal strategy is related to show warfare and its mental effect. The effect portrays as form of war trauma. Penrose's narratives and his personal feelings shows that he was victimized by the war and lost everything in life. He tries to free from trauma though he could not because he was badly affected by the anxiety of blood war of Gallipoli. This war is one of the main causes of shell shock. In this war many people lost their life and became injured and it remained long time secret in the history of British. It was kept secret because of its bloody figure which makes soldiers traumatized since long time.

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