

I: Traumatized Voice of the Protagonist in McEwan's *Saturday*

This research explores the problematics in the narrative of 9/11 attacks on London undertaken by terrorists based on Ian McEwan's *Saturday*. It analyzes a sudden change in the protagonist's attitudes and perceptions when he encounters the microscopic events in the city that are likely to trigger his traumatized consciousness. It scrutinizes ideological contradiction of the protagonist that proceeds from political to moral sentimentalism. How the narrator undertakes his responsibility of humanity demonstrates his reactions to the tragedy. The setting of the novel is London on Saturday, February 15, 2003, the day of the protest march against the invasion of Iraq. This protest rally is the largest in British history that follows neurosurgeon Henry Perowne. He moves through this challenging and disturbing day. The apparently episodic plot is defined by two violent encounters with Baxter, an aggressive criminal, narrated through Perowne's perspective. The novel portrays a crisis triggered by an unexpected, violent, and random event within the life of the protagonist. However, Perowne encounters Baxter unexpectedly that challenges the protagonist's rational and self-limited subjectivity, along with his liberal, personal ideology.

The research reveals Perowne's personality as a neurosurgeon. His profession does not ensure his thoughts, as they are the products of the unexpected encounter with Baxter that triggers his psychological shock of the 9/11. The study explores his engagement with the modern world and its meaning. The research also explores the massive themes such as terror, violence, and shock as the way to express at what 9/11 tragedy transmitted not "just to the world in terms of communal, social, and governmental implications, but what it intended to the victims on an individual's level" (Patva 1). Here, the protagonist, one of the survivors, experiences the

transported implications of 9/11. He, though outwardly successful, still struggles to understand meaning in his life, exploring personal satisfaction in the post-modern, developed world. Though intelligent, he feels that he does not have much influence over political events. His traumatized personality guides his perceptions of the world around.

As my study is on trauma, its relevance to the novel, needs clarity. Ellen Verbestel defines '“Unlike the wounding of the body, which is a simple and in most cases healable injury, the wounding of the mind is much more complex because it is not experienced in real time, which makes it harder to register for our consciousness”' (9). Hence the protagonist did not experience the attacks of 9/11 himself. However, he suffers the wounds mentally. The terrorist attacks on New York and Washington are recalled early in *Saturday* by the flaming airplane Perowne sights upon his impulsive arousing. While Perowne's fears of a forthcoming strike against London prove groundless, they prefigure the contemporary drift toward paranoia. The initial penetration of English airspace by supposed hostiles is proleptic of the later, deadly serious penetration of Perowne's private space by a homegrown hostile, an event that threatens the violent sexual penetration of Perowne's daughter Daisy. If the narrative unfolds within English confines, its relevance steadily overflows those limits. The discursive tension between nation and globe pervades *Saturday*. Finally, Perowne reflects on the vulnerability that has come to intensify the plight in which he and his fellow townspeople find themselves:

London, his small part of it, lies wide open, impossible to defend, waiting for its bomb, like a hundred other cities.... A hundred years ago, a middle-aged doctor standing at this window in his silk dressing gown, less than two hours before a winter's dawn, might have

pondered the new century's future. February 1903. You might envy this Edwardian gent all he didn't yet know. (276)

While lying wide open might in less threatening times denote a relaxed, even erotic receptiveness that could counter narrowness, openness here has overtones that are more sinister.

The protagonist is a habitual perceiver of his own temperament that instantly, "wonders about this sustained, distorting euphoria" (5), and the resulting narrative provides plentiful cause to interrogate such an ideal view of London. The latter-day seems plentifully capable of stimulating introspection and irony. Such irony relates to Perowne's scratch with Baxter's car, an accident that causes only minor immediate damage but swifts a horrifying final showdown.

The novel investigates the dominance of the media and the narrative of the barbaric perpetrators whose tragic actions took life of around 3000 people in the attacks. McEwan connects this loss with the main plot of the narrative. He enables Baxter's objectification as a case by channeling the events of the description through the consciousness of Perowne, the urbane and cultured diagnostician. The choice of point of view has powerful ideological implications. The omniscient narration allows the standard of equality in McEwan's use of a unitary center of perception. It conditions the reader within a discursive universe that is persistently sensible. The protagonist's persistent ego system provides an amiable medium for those "flowers of civilization" that interact with serious literary fiction, in effect a cushion against the harsh roar of other sorts of lives being led. The primary occasion on which Perowne is prompted to an act of compassion with such an outsider Baxter's forced entry, clinches the point. Before Baxter speaks:

Perowne tries to see the room through his eyes as if that might help predict the degree of trouble ahead. The two bottles of champagne, the gin and the bowls of lemon and ice, the belittlingly high ceiling and its moldings, the Bridget Riley prints flanking the Hodgkin, the muted lamps, the cherry wood floor beneath the Persian rugs, the careless piles of serious books, the decades of polish in the table. The scale of revenge could be large. (207)

Although some of his observations, like the one about the belittlingly high ceiling, show sensitivity to the intruder's point of view, Perowne's thoughts promise no genuine fellow feeling. Instead, they are at bottom diagnostic, betraying worried class defensiveness, the troubled awareness of one whose prominent status rests on fashionable possessions and the casual mastery of print.

Later on when the danger has passed, the old poet John Grammaticus's courageous impulse is to extend sympathy to Baxter. There came a point after Daisy recited Arnold for the second time when I actually began to feel sorry for the fellow (229) is inwardly reproached by Perowne. "What weakness, what delusional folly, to permit yourself sympathy towards a man, sick or not, who invades your house like this" (230). Perowne is hostile against the brutal actions of the terrorists. He does predict such attacks on the homes of London dwellers as well. Therefore, his complaints are more to the invaders on Iraq rather to the perpetrators of the tragedy, which is his individual assessment.

The study questions his narration how reliable the subjective reactions are. As *Saturday* implies, when the elite of today may feel intimate relationship that covers over divisions of nationality, the barriers of privilege protecting them from the angry claims of the poor now need to be all the more carefully checked. Ultimately, the

novel has less to do with the condition of England in general than with the helpless condition of the English intelligentsia. The American social commentator Barbara Ehrenreich notes that the vanishing of the non-rich as a category from existing social consciousness:

When I watch TV over my dinner at night, I see a world in which almost everyone makes \$15 an hour or more, and I'm not just thinking of the anchor folks. The sitcoms and dramas are about fashion designers or schoolteachers or lawyers, so it's easy for a fast-food worker or nurse's aide to conclude that she is an anomaly-the only one, or almost only one, who hasn't been invited to the party. And in a sense she would be right: the poor have disappeared from the culture at large, from its political rhetoric and intellectual endeavors as well as from its daily entertainments. (117-18)

In the novel, the party is being held at the luxurious home of the advantaged and print-savvy Perownes. The fish stew invented by Henry serves as the symbolic showpiece of the feast, to which gatecrashers from the underclass are vigorously not invited. The writer's London may be, "a success, a brilliant invention, a biological masterpiece" even if no longer the hub of empire, still the site of flourishing global interchanges. The biological analysis arouses the psychological pressure of those leaving in the post traumatic phase of the western society.

McEwan's *Saturday* published in 2005 uses the symbolic medium of the allegory to translate the 9/11 attacks into a domestic plot of London. The novel's span is a day projecting Perowne's life. he is baffled and frightened before the dawn by experiencing burning aircraft descending toward Heathrow Henry mistakes this burning plane as a terrorist attack like 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the

Pentagon. The sight does not let him sleep. Subsequently, he explores the plane is steered by a Russian and has landed it safely. The scenario sets up the atmosphere of threatening and dominant contrast between his horrific political world and his joyous family.

This interconnectedness questions how Perowne's personal gaze can help to generalize the implications of such shocking occurrences. The novel engages the 9/11 as the foundation for London demonstrations which have taken place because of American and British military intervention in Iraq in 2003. McEwan uses this indirect form of representation to tackle the difficult problem of representing and understanding the singularity of 9/11 as disaster. The text is programmed to echo with the sense of individual experience against a contentious political experience. The question arises why the writer has portrayed a single narrator to present the trauma of 9/11 attacks, as it undermines other viewpoints in the narrative. The major protagonist's perceptions of the world around him on *Saturday* underscore the multiple perspectives of the disaster. One voice dominates the rest is the core aspect of this research.

The study explores the uncritical projection of London dwellers facing trauma in the post 9/11 Britain. Perowne is a self-complacent who presents the city as if everything is okay and protest marches against the American and British armed forces likely to attack on Iraq are normal. The secondary objective of the project is to examine how individualistic responses to trauma differ from the collective responses.

Since 9/11, occurrence has taken place, "everyone agrees airliners look different in the sky these days, predatory or doomed" (McEwan 16). Nevertheless, a lingering torment remains to disturb Perowne's *Saturday* because of an enormous demonstration for peace is under the way to objection for the forthcoming assault of

Iraq. Perowne's flaw is he takes even subtle plane crash as a terrorist attack that does not only affect his life but also other characters are influenced throughout the narrative.

The novel, published in 2005, has received many scholarships so far, as the novel is a 9/11 text that casts the responses and reactions of the people concerned directly or indirectly with the tragedy. Petr Chalupský has studied the protagonist's judgmental attributes. To him, "Perowne's uncritical celebration of London perfectly reflects his euphoric state of mind: the city becomes a projection of his complacency and self-importance, an illusory image closer to wishful thinking than any actual reality" (31). The psychological condition of the protagonist is dubious. He is a complex person who undergoes myriad changes. Chalupský quotes Michel de Certeau who describes this experience as one that brings pleasure from totalizing situation was so extreme, his framing of reality so indistinct that "he couldn't harm me" (91). Similarly, McEwan's characters deal with conflicts in their lives in a way that clarifies that they feel powerless and unable to solve their problems. The writer is also outstandingly obsessed with class difference in most of his works. He creates people from different classes, and usually the "lower class is abused and made to suffer by the upper class" (Abbasiyannejad 58). She further argues that the portrayal of conflict in relationships, the class war, sense of loss, most frequently parental loss, or particularly a father's absence in children's lives, the role of music and the constant presence of the Second World War are among the most significant issues that infuse the works of the writer (61).

Nicole Heber argues that, "what the criticism of Saturday suggests is that no matter how much liberty the literary author may take to move between descriptive levels, the literary critic is no less free to simply ignore forms of language they deem

meaningless or redundant" (2). Heber further mentions that the text's political engagement appears, first, to be partial and implied rather than overt and direct. Amusingly, this has given rise to a situation in which the chief point of argument is whether the novel is, in fact, a political work, rather than what its political comment might be (4). Elaine Hadley interprets the encounter between Baxter and Perowne far more critically, as a conflict between body and mind in which the troublesome capacity of the former, represented by Baxter, is repeatedly suppressed by the despotic consciousness of the latter. Hadley believes the text places a dangerously disproportionate emphasis on Perowne's cognitive elegance, cultivation, and control, a practice that operates according to a 'liberal cognitive aesthetic' (94). She argues that the sense of agency evoked by Perowne's cognitive superiority is illusory, and functions to repress the possibility of collective, embodied, and spontaneous action. Therefore, although Hadley lauds the operation Perowne performs on Baxter as a 'mournful human accomplishment' (93), she also dismisses it as yet another falsely lofty achievement of an individual consciousness.

McEwan's *Saturday* belongs to the group of the novel of the outsider. It takes place in 2003 as well but the events of 9/11 are seen from a distance as the protagonist, Perowne, lives in central London, as does McEwan. On that particular Saturday, 15 February 2003, Perowne is a witness of the demonstration against the invasion of Iraq. He even is caught up in a micro-terrorist attack himself, when a street criminal named Baxter invades Perowne's home and tries to rape his daughter. The viewpoint of the extreme Other, the terrorist who causes the trauma, is pictured here but of course, without delivering an explanation for the attacks of 9/11 (Verbestel 7). The scholarships above have not mentioned about the responses of the

protagonist toward the trauma in the post 9/11 London. Therefore, this project will fill up the gap by interrogating the protagonist's single voice toward the trauma.

This research focuses primarily on the personal and psychological repercussions. While something so significant as to be considered a “world event” evidently has wide-ranging implications, the events of 9/11 still affect others on a more personal level. While it is important to theorize about what such a huge historical event means on a macrocosmic level, how do we come to understand what it can mean to a person?

Before exploring the role of trauma, and how it affects the characters of McEwan's characters in *Saturday*, it is important to know the history of trauma as a psychological and theoretical concept. More prominently, it is essential to understand the origin and definition of the word “trauma”. Besides, it is also critical to look at the significance of trauma studies in psychology and the humanities. Actually, the word trauma, originally a Greek word meaning, “wound”, was first popularized by Sigmund Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (Caruth 3). After studying affected soldiers post World War First, Freud explains, “A condition has long been known and described which occurs after severe mechanical concussions, railway disasters and other accidents involving a risk to life; it has been given the name of "traumatic neurosis" (12). What occurs when someone experiences one of these events differs from the prior concept of “hysteria” that was often associated with these patients:

The symptomatic picture presented by traumatic neurosis approaches that of hysteria in the wealth of its similar motor symptoms, but surpasses it as a rule in its strongly marked signs of subjective ailment (in which it resembles hypochondria or melancholia) as well

as in the evidence it gives of a far more comprehensive general enfeeblement and disturbance of the mental capacities. (Freud 12)

More particularly, Freud claims that what makes trauma unlike is that “the chief weight in... causation seems to rest upon the factor of surprise, of fright” (12), which he elucidates is the “state a person gets into when he runs into danger without being prepared for it; it emphasizes the factor of surprise” (12). It is here, with fright and surprise, where the reaction to trauma centers.

As the mind is powerless to immediately process, which happens during the traumatic event, the psyche must learn to incorporate the events later. Perowne does not have control over his powerless mind. Therefore, the waves of his mind travel into different directions and consequently, he connects one crash with massive attacks. Despite being a neurosurgeon, minor causalities trigger his consciousness and he becomes overwhelmed. The psychiatrist Judith Herman investigates this Freudian concept of trauma, and its history. In her prominent text *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, she explains that “psychological trauma is an affliction of the powerless. At the moment of trauma, the victim is rendered helpless by overwhelming force...Traumatic events overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection, and meaning” (33). This explanation not only helps to define what psychological trauma means, but also helps to elucidate powerlessness, it generates. Perowne's thoughts and perceptions change when he encounters a minor crash and his assimilation of the 9/11 begins. My study questions how his personal perceptions can represent the collective voices. To justify this, I am using the trauma theory as conceptualized by Caruth.

The next chapter deals with the perceptions of the survivors in the post 9/11 London. How the people react to the disaster of 9/11 is the core aspect of the chapter. It also assesses the tragedy portrayed through narrative. In this way, the final chapter summarizes the impact of the trauma on the individuals as well as mass in the western countries depicted through England in the novel. The chapter also comprises of main findings of the research. At the end, the thesis embodies the works cited in the whole research work.

II: Assessment of Tragedy in Posttraumatic Phase

This study explores the impact of trauma on the protagonist, in McEwan's *Saturday*. The problem is with the narration built up on the personal perceptions of Perowne. The novel describes a day in Henry Perowne's life. He is a neurosurgeon in London. The narrative is set on Saturday 15 February 2003, the day of well-known protests against the invasion of Iraq. Primarily, Perowne wakes, walks to his bedroom window and sees a burning plane descending into Heathrow. The story takes a u-turn to the event that the protagonist views throughout the day. On his way to play squash with his companion, he faces a car accident with Baxter accompanied by two other young men. Their encounter turns violent. Baxter is humiliated in his companions' presence. Perowne purchases fish in dinner; he visits his mother; he also watches his son's band rehearsal. At evening, he discusses the Iraq War with his daughter. Unfortunately, his evening is spoilt when Baxter and one of his companions puts Perowne's wife at knifepoint. The intruders indeed destroy the peace of his family. In the struggle, Baxter is injured and later taken to hospital. The thesis investigates the subtleties of Perowne's experiences on Saturday and questions how his personal narrative can represent the voices of the people in London fairly.

The protagonist is inclined to religious sentiments and his lean to supernatural explanations baffles him. He cannot stay with a single mind. Therefore, he moves toward the window purposelessly. There is some hidden order beyond his understanding. However, it is significant to him. The confusing city cultivates insomniacs, which keeps him awake and sleepless (McEwan17). His unusual behavior indicates that he is frightened and therefore, cannot keep with himself. He perceives the world around pessimistically. His desperate mood implies the repercussion of the 9/11 attacks on Londoners depicted by Perowne.

As a neurosurgeon, he is supposed to overcome his nerves in such crisis and frightening situation. Nevertheless, his condition further suggests that he is beyond normalcy. The novel depicts the secondary trauma associated with mediated acts of witness, through the burning plane and Perowne's prayer of 9/11. The research questions his invocation in the sense that the positioning in the text of Perowne as a remote witness and of dangerous objects (Crowther 8) as safely far mainly in the section of the burning plane projects the novel as a trauma narrative. Through the portrayal of witnessing of Perowne, the novel poses the interactions between trauma, psychological delusion and bafflement, which can be analyzed based on the narrative of *Saturday*. The novel projects Perowne compassionately engaged, but confined to which he can precisely empathize with suffering of others, for instance, Baxter. The entire narration moves around Perowne's perception and personal observation, which is the problem in the novel. Because of Baxter's intrusion, the peace of the family destroys and the degree of insecurity increases.

Dominick LaCapra argues in *Writing History, Writing Trauma* that there are 'alternative narrative modalities that do not simply rely on a variant of a predictable plot structure (55) that is, "the conventional beginning-middle-end plot, that pursues resonant closure or uplift" (54). These 'alternative narrative modalities' raise in exploring and problematic ways the interrogation of the nature of the losses and absences, anxieties, and traumas called them into existence (54-5). LaCapra in *History in Transit* distinguishes the prospective of fiction to examine the traumatic and raise the question of other probable forms of experience (132). Trauma is a disjunctive phenomenon, an out-of-context experience that upsets expectations and disrupts one's comprehension of accessible contexts. This devastating experience threatens to annihilate experience (LaCapra 117). The standard of fiction has the potential to

explore the traumatic, comprising fragmentation, emptiness, or emigration of experience, and may question the other forms of experience (LaCapra 132). In *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, LaCapra mentions that empathy can be "understood in terms of attending to, even trying, in limited ways, to recapture the possibly split-off, affective dimension of the experience of others" (40). This empathy is a venture in understanding or learning how to work within the limitations of consciousness. According to Bradley and Tate, "*Saturday* is [McEwan's] real 9/11 novel as it metaphorically poses the war he saw being waged that day, "literature versus terror, empathy against solipsism" (29). Actually, the writer was quick to devise and express a response to 9/11 in just this streak. "We fantasize ourselves into the events,' he mentioned in *The Guardian*, "What if it was me?" The protagonist attempts something similar to this unreal substitution, through the connection he establishes between the burning plane and "the other familiar element of 9/11-the horror of what he cannot see. . . . No blood, no screams, no human figures at all, and into this emptiness, the obliging imagination set free" (McEwan 15). The vision of his obliging imagination, "then plays out: a cabin in crisis, suddenly void of protocol, in which passengers decide where best to escape the flames, or whether to save or abandon their language" (McEwan 15-6). As the entire narrative moves around the protagonist, his daily affairs reveal the ideology of the writer. McEwan portrays Perowne's mental state:

Henry feels himself rocking on his feet in fear and indecision. A strong urge to urinate keeps nudging between his thoughts. He wants to catch Theo's eye, but he also senses that Rosalind might know something, or have an idea. The way she brushed against his side could be significant. She's right behind him, settling her father on the sofa. (213)

Henry Perowne at the window cannot have peace of mind. Rather, he is beyond the control. His indecisive position implies his traumatized mind, that he is suffering posttraumatic mental disorder. Rosalind, Perowne's wife is endeavoring to balance her father on the sofa fails to do that. In this fragile stage, the family peace is disrupted. When commenting on the narrative, Thrailkill mentions, "Henry not only narrates to himself the passengers' confusion and fright, he imagines their reflective consciousness, their own assessment of their panicked actions" (184). When the novel draws attentions to the individual and collective need for empathy, it partially focuses the "concrete limitations" (Gauthier 9) of empathic engagement. Similarly, Tammy Amiel-Houser shows a noticeable contrast between McEwan's expressed vision of the narrative form as "soliciting our imaginative understanding of other human beings" and the vision he presents in the novel of the impenetrability of the Other, . . . the inability to step into another's mind" (McEwan 129). The crash between Baxter and Perowne demonstrates, "*Saturday* draws attention to Baxter's abstruse quality that can neither be represented nor emphatically understood . . . Baxter, with his unknown identity-no first name, no origin, no identifying details with his confusing temperament and inexplicable reactions, becomes the stumbling block of the narrative" (Amiel-Houser 131). The novel regularly calls attention to the role of mass media, especially television, in Perowne's engagement with the external world that is not limited to empathy and the implicit question that according to McEwan, is asked of us by media depictions of events such as September 11. . . "What if it was me?" (McEwan 89). More than the dissemination of information about the attacks, media are engaged in constructing truths, which lead people to misconstrue the representations. Perowne's observation clarifies how this culture of misconception is heightened:

Misunderstanding is general all over the world. How can we trust ourselves? He sees now the details he half ignored in order to nourish his fears: that the plane was not being driven into a public building, that it was making a regular, controlled descent, that it was on a well-used flight path- none of this fitted the general unease. He told himself there were two possible outcomes - the cat dead or alive. But he'd already voted for the dead, when he should have sensed it straight away - a simple accident in the making. Not an attack on our whole way of life then. (39)

The city dwellers portrayed by the characters in *Saturday* lack the mutual understanding and beliefs. People hardly trust each other. This culture of mistrust and misunderstanding leads people to find the phenomena frightening and insecure. This sense of insecurity intensifies the fear. Perowne is critical of the contemporary politicians particularly the candidates who ran for presidency. He indirectly blames those American leaders responsible for the attacks of 9/11. Despite their mischievous and villainous roles in panicking the situation of the United States and other western countries like England depicted in the novel, Americans and English people cast votes for George Bush in America and Tony Blair in England, which suggests that even the people in both of the countries were ignorant and lacked the sensibility.

Because of his pondering on such serious issues, his pessimism intensifies. Perowne has not experienced other traumatic accident of that magnitude since 9/11. However, he is frightened and is much panicked about the future terrors. The sense of insecurity is creeping around him, which demonstrates the repercussion of the attacks on the survivors. Indeed, the role of media is not less crucial in this regard. Mass media portrayals of terror and war, as described in *Saturday* echo the

magnitude of violence. For Perowne, global coverage can be a disturbing phenomenon. The novel draws attention to 9/11 and the sociopolitical uses and constructions of trauma (LaCapra, 95) for which the event has been importantly used. The period, 'these past two years', encompasses September 11, the referent of the "monstrous and spectacular scenes" (McEwan 180). Such scenes are depicted as feeding the "darker longing" (McEwan 180) for further illustration of terror.

Perowne is unable to know Baxter, and as a result, any effort to understand him even from a position of primary introduction is spoiled from the beginning. Baxter appears as a threat in the scene of the car accident and of the home invasion. In the beginning of the novel, Perowne witnesses the burning plane, he lies with his wife Rosalind and "settle[s] in the eternal necessities of warmth, comfort, safety. . . a simple daily consolation" (McEwan 50). He throws himself into the "different medium" of sex, which free[s him] from thought, from memory, from the passing seconds and from the state of the world" (McEwan 52). He again throws himself into the same 'medium' near the end of the text, after he returns from performing life-saving operation on Baxter, "it is the point 'where he marks the end of his day', and the gesture by which he finally returns from exile" (McEwan 280). Perowne revives order and resorts to the reassurance of old routines. Just before the end that comes as a fall, Perowne concentrates in its pleasure; Rosalind whispers a reminder of their brush with death that night, as if for their own excitation, "My darling one. We could have been killed and we're alive" (McEwan 280). This declaration of their immunity from death, "spoken in a space of warmth, comfort, [and] safety" (McEwan 50), echoes with the passion belonging to self-preservation and the delight that turns on pain.

The intricacies of science, in both biological and technological terms captivate Perowne (McEwan 262-3). Through moments, the novel shows a curious

promise to the complexity of mind and its cultural products. It can be connected to the setting, London itself being at once described as a radiant invention and "a biological masterpiece, with millions teeming around the accumulated and layered achievements of the centuries, as though a coral reef" (McEwan 3). The text constantly brings forth the important thickened intricacy of human decency in a kind of terrified atheist transcendence. Since this research analyzes the novel to justify, how Perowne fails to represent the voices of the common people in London, his perceptions hold significance in this regard. He is a bit idiosyncratic personality. The narration in the novel illustrates Perowne's mood:

Perowne suddenly feels his own life as fragile and precious. His limbs appear to him as neglected old friends, absurdly long and breakable. Is he in mild shock? His heart will be all the more vulnerable after that punch. His chest still aches. He has a duty to others to survive, and he mustn't endanger his own life for a mere game, smacking a ball against a wall. (102)

Perowne does not have any control over his senses. He perceives the world around meaningless. The degree of absurdity heightens his desperation. More than the physical torture, he suffers the psychological pain, which is intolerable to him. This indeterminate condition raises a question how Henry's personal observations can portray the problems facing the mass in London. McEwan simultaneously reflects on Perowne's vigor and sense of responsibility by strengthening his rational part. Perowne's actions demonstrate how he judges the role of other characters. His interconnectedness with Baxter affects his perceptions. The story shows that Perowne maps Baxter's path to a "meaningless end", from the first small alternations of character" through to "nightmarish hallucinations", and starkly points out that this is

how the brilliant machinery of being is undone by the tiniest of faulty cogs, the insidious whisper of ruin, a single bad idea lodged in every cell, on every chromosome four" (McEwan94). Predictability brings to Perowne both the fish whose terrors are past, and the man whose terrors are yet to come: yet, when Baxter intrudes into his home, Perowne cannot induce himself that molecule and defective genes alone are "terrorizing his family" (McEwan 218). The impact of terror on Perowne's family is outstanding.

In this research, I have explored, as argued by La Capra, how trauma, its experience, and its recollections is transformative and disorderly, yet incompetent of being fully mastered. Perowne's experience of trauma is encoded in memory. *Saturday* explores the consciousness of its protagonist, Henry Perowne in a worldstuffed with multifaceted incidents of violence. It is a novel which responds to a world that recalls the visual impact of the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre, so globally relayed with cinematic plenitude in the media. "The September attacks were Theo's induction into international affairs, the moment he accepted that events beyond friends, home and the music scene had bearing on his existence" (31). The remnants of the attacks on the people living behind reflect on the geopolitical situations of the United States. Theo in the novel hypothesizes the international affairs as the background for the attacks of 9/11. The fear of the further attacks is intensified by the images created on the media.

Saturday engages in exploring how people position themselves in a world transfigured by global terrorism. In an interview with Jeffrey Brown on "Online News Hour" (2005), McEwan reflects his setting and period of the novel. He explores a flavor of the present. He has not really expected the present. He hopes to sort of get a flavor of the city, not also deny the pleasures involved in being in a city, and to mix

anxieties with pleasure. A novel is set not about the event but its shadow, and it casts a very long shadow, not only over international affairs, but also in the very small print of our lives. Perowne's sense perception is sharp that can guide him to feel the prolonged trauma. He also experiences the sense of guilt committed by the terrorists. Far better is "one of many victims than the original sinner" (88-9). This protagonist cools down in the locker room, which apparently makes him forget; "to obliterate a whole universe of public phenomena in order to concentrate is a fundamental liberty. Freedom of thought. He'll emancipate himself by beating Strauss" (108). Perowne seeks for liberty in order to come out of the fear and terror creeping around. McEwan shares Edward Said's "belief that works of literature are not just texts but participate in 'worldliness'-they become interpretations of their place in a global setting." The duality of post 9/11 existence, with its contradictory emotions of potential joy and unconscious fear, "this happiness cut with aggression" (79), is personified in the characters governing their relationships not only with each other, but also to the world at large.

Security and unremitting fulfillment is merely an illusion, but McEwan presents a narrative, which relates the possibility of creating potentially serene existence, albeit fragile, against the backdrop of a world that is no longer the same. The novel foregrounds satisfaction and success, whereas the terror is the dark and annoying backdrop to a world, which confronts a symbolic battle to continue to live a life as unchanged as possible by the horror of 9/11. Perowne positions himself in a world that is permeated with violence, preoccupied by the memories of global horrors. Perowne's view of the world since 9/11 has transformed as he accepts, "everyone agrees airliners look different in the sky these days, predatory or

doomed.”(16) The original trauma is not in this example caused by individual loss but by a worldwide threat perceived from the console of a television sprawl:

It’s already almost eighteen months since half the planet watched, and watched again the unseen captives driven through the sky to the slaughter, at which time there gathered round the innocent silhouette of any jet plane a novel association. . .Watching death on a large scale, but seeing no one die. No blood, no screams, no human figures at all, and into this emptiness, the obliging imagination set free. (16)

Henry's life is fractured and influenced by flashbacks of the media indulgence of 9/11. It darkens his decision; his rationality becomes his flaw and anxiety intensifies. He interrogates about the probability:

To enjoy an hour’s recreation without this invasion, this infection from the public domain. . . He has a right now and then-everyone has it-not to be disturbed by world events, or even street events . . . It seems to Perowne that to forget, to obliterate a whole universe of public phenomena in order to concentrate is a fundamental liberty. Freedom of thought. (108)

Despite not having his life interrupted by any forces, he survives the terrible consequences of invasion, which is infectious. Even forgetfulness is the basic right of individuals as argued by McEwan. Individuals need to be mentally independent for recreation and constructive work. Perowne's life is terribly affected by media. Where news and the “morbid fixation” (127) of watching television coverage of 9/11 offers an explanation of chaos, the same experimental logic leans towards generalization leading to misinterpretation of what is not, in reality a threat, but a cargo plane in need of an emergency landing. His empirical mind creates order out of chaos but

paradoxically construes chaos, as a means to rationalize his terror, when it is not there. In the novel, Perowne's systematic imagination has the potential of disengaged destruction while it feeds his anxiety. His mind constructs the "catastrophe observed from the safe distance...the other familiar element-the horror of what he can't see"(16).

Lisa McCann reviews post-traumatic stress syndrome explaining that one of the manifestations of post-traumatic experience is the overt disagreement of painful traumatic recollections. Individuals often avoid accommodation of traumatic visual memories, or make external adjustments because transformation and acceptance of the original trauma is too chaotic and disruptive for the individual.

The memories of the past revive when any similar accident/incident occurs before the traumatized person. Perowne undergoes a state of being traumatized when he sees a plane in agony that very instantly evokes images of catastrophic proportions. Consequently, his past anguish relives to the extent of imaging details of the victim's last moments. Such trauma contributes to a "community of anxiety" (180) a rupture in worldview that marks both excitements in an existence that appears successful, safe, and secure and the awaiting threat of the unknown terrorists who can end it all, "a result, a consequence, exists separately in the world, independent of himself, known to others, awaiting his discovery" (19). The world is confusing, fragmented, yet equally striking in its absurdity.

The opening emotions of the text in exploring La Capra's notions of "absence" and "loss", greater insight of McEwan's convincing depiction of trauma can be perceived. The World Trade Centre attacks portray for Perowne "loss" of a world where insecurity is definitive and safety an illusion delicately portrayed in an early description in *Saturday*. Perowne reflects often about the "grand achievements of the

living”(77) mindful that some academics like, “to dramatise modern life as a sequence of calamities” (77) because progress is “old-fashioned and ridiculous” (77). Perowne is judging the condition of the people in the city and passing remarks about them. Nevertheless, his monopoly on the description of the world affairs is suspicious. In this regard, McEwan writes:

The street is fine, and the city, grand achievement of the living and all the dead who’ve ever lived here, is fine too, and robust. It won’t easily allow itself to be destroyed. It’s too good to let go. Life in it has steadily improved over the centuries for most people, despite the junkies and beggars now. The air is better, and the salmon are leaping in the Thames, and otters are returning. At every level, material, medical, intellectual, sensual, for most people it has improved. (77)

Henry seems positive about the changes in the world periodically. Despite some reservations, he finds almost everything okay, which is a compromising act on his part. His observation demonstrates that he subtly conveys his critical judgment on almost every aspect of life that soothes him. He is fighting the traumatic state.

Perowne is suffering psychological trauma. The concept of trauma is now loosely employed in the dialect, often used casually to signify a range of painful experiences. Ruth Leys, who imparts a genealogical survey of trauma studies, calls attention to the recent shift towards the fashionable usage of the term by juxtaposing two reported incidents of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), both of which occurred in the Spring of 1998 (Leys 2). Leys concludes that the concept of trauma is an identification of trauma, and specifically a diagnosis of PTSD might lead to a deeper understanding of the painful experiences of victims (2). The external event is traumatizing rather than traumatic, since the event itself only becomes traumatic once

meaning of trauma has become “debased currency” (Leys 2). Leys argues that trauma is now loosely employed for predictable use in intellectual, emotional, legal, social, casual, and political discourse, often for political or legal gains. In spite of some debates within the field, a distinct theoretical model of psychological trauma exists. Trauma is usually as an impaired cognitive response to a chiefly irresistible or disturbing event, which often materializes in the form of flashbacks, nightmares, dissociative symptoms, mental breakdowns, hallucinations, and neurosis. This notion suggests that the event enters the mind unexpectedly and with great force, and remains lodged in the mind. Perowne's case is similar. The discussion on famine and three million refugees who are preparing the reception camps in Syria and Iran triggers Perowne to remember the September 11 attacks and then he starts suffering. The narrative details about the projection of the implication of the 9/11 trauma in the posttraumatic phase:

The UN is predicting hundreds of thousands of Iraqi deaths. There could be revenge attacks on London. And still the Americans remain vague about their post-war plans. Perhaps they have none. In all, Saddam could be overthrown at too high a cost. It's a future no one can read. Government ministers speak up loyally, various newspapers back the war, there's a fair degree of anxious support in the country along with the dissent, but no one really doubts that in Britain one man alone is driving the matter forward. (145)

The UN report reveals the casualties in Iraq, which implies the further attacks on the western countries. Perowne's worry is about his country that participated in invading Iraq. The results can be more traumatic if revenge is undertaken on London. Despite convincing talks and speeches by politicians, civilians like Perowne cannot build up

confidence about the repercussions of the recent attacks on Iraq. He is conscious about the violent reactions from the Iraqis eventually. Therefore, he is not able to concentrate on his professional responsibilities. Rather he is overwhelmingly overcome by terror and fear of the upcoming disaster.

Instead of registering the event normally into one's consciousness, Perowne is left with disturbing repetitions of the past often in the form of dreams and flashbacks. According to this perspective, trauma displaces language; thus, the only meaningful response is to recreate the event through narrative recall. As Balaev explains, "this popular notion . . . that trauma inherently produces a temporal gap and a pathologically fragmented self works from a Freudian perspective of the mind that imagines normal external stimuli enter the brain in one fashion, but traumatic stimuli enter another region of the brain in a different fashion" (6). A traumatic experience hampers normal cognitive processing. Perowne is a normal person and is engaged in his professionalism. However, this traumatic experience troubles him. He is psychologically so disturbed that the September 11 becomes frozen somewhere in the psyche eventually destroying his identity. His concern is about the whole city and accordingly he discloses his worry:

This is the fair embodiment of an inner city byway-diverse, self-confident, obscure. And it's at this point he remembers the source of his vague sense of shame or embarrassment: his readiness to be persuaded that the world has changed beyond recall, that harmless streets like this and the tolerant life they embody can be destroyed by the new enemy-well-organised, tentacular, full of hatred and focused zeal. (76)

There is cultural diversity in London, which has made it both safe and vulnerable. Perowne is worried about the future of the city. On one hand he is convinced that people here are tolerant and peace-lovers. On the other, he lacks confidence about the security. He connects the September 11 with the invasion on Iraq by both American and British governments. Consequently, he foresees the possible reactions that might be violent and catastrophic. Perowne's suffering lies there. E. Ann Kaplan puts it, "The phenomena of trauma . . . that interested clinicians did not arise in a vacuum. The phenomena were closely linked to modernity, especially to the industrial revolution and its dangerous new machines" (25). The opening of the railway in particular resulted in many critical, horrible accidents, often leading to serious physical and psychological injury for survivors.

The word "trauma" does not always denote psychological impairment. It originally refers to a physical injury, derived from the Greek word meaning, "wound". Actually, the word has not lost all of its original connotations as the medical community still uses trauma to refer to serious bodily injury. In the late 1800s, the term trauma largely became a psychological term referring to a victim's disordered psychological state in response to an event so strong and unintelligible that it overwhelms and overpowers normal cognitive functioning. Since trauma, as a serious field of study, finds its theoretical roots in Freud and his colleagues at the opening of the twentieth century, it is often considered a new concept connected to diverse industrial accidents and war neuroses that began to arise with increased occurrence. Perowne still sees many possibilities of war. Therefore, he is overwhelmed. The novel reads:

The scene has an air of innocence and English dottiness. Perowne, dressed for combat on court, imagines himself as if Saddam, surveying

the crowd with satisfaction from some Baghdad ministry balcony: the good-hearted electorates of the Western democracies will never allow their governments to attack his country. But he's wrong. The one thing Perowne thinks he knows about this war is that it's going to happen. With or without the UN. The troops are in place, they'll have to fight.

(62)

Perowne looks into him and comes up with the image of Saddam Hussein, the ruler of Iraq. Henry imagines why Saddam can plan to revenge on the western nations like Britain and America. Perowne is so concentrated on the wartime occurrences that he becomes sure about the forthcoming wars. He undergoes this consistent temperament, which troubles him. However, the question arises how his perception can represent the observations and psychological thoughts of London dwellers. How can his trauma become cultural trauma? The personal observations may not depict the collective responses. Traumatic neurosis is a consequence of a widespread break of this protective shield, “. . . a breach in an otherwise efficacious barrier against stimuli. Such an event as an external trauma is bound to provoke a disturbance on a large scale in the functioning of the organism's energy and to set in motion every possible defensive measure” (Crauth 33). A Freudian perspective comprehends traumatizing experiences as persistent and infectious, as contagions of the mind blocked directly into the subconscious. Perowne's beginning experience reminds him of the disaster. The narrative discloses his initial perception:

Air travel is a stock market, a trick of mirrored perceptions, a fragile alliance of pooled belief; so long as nerves hold steady and no bombs or wreckers are on board, everybody prospers. When there's failure,

there will be no half measures. Seen another way deaths per journey - the figures aren't so good. The market could plunge. (15)

There is a belief system, as the consequence of long experiences. Perowne has internalized the notion of perceiving the world around from a particular perspective. Bombs and deaths turn him to react negatively and pessimistically. He does not see any hope for peace and harmony if the situation drastically changes. From the very beginning of the narrative, he is frightened and therefore, he responds to the minor incidents hopelessly. He suspects whether something could remain in existence if further attacks took place. Despite being a neurosurgeon, he becomes a victim of traumatic neurosis. Freud developed the concept of the “talking cure”-that in order to purge the negative pathological affects of a past life-altering event, the event must be “abreacted” or relived through psychotherapy and hypnosis, “The injured person’s reaction to the trauma only exercises a completely ‘cathartic’ effect if it is an adequate reaction . . . But language serves as a substitution for action; by its help, an affect can be ‘abreacted’” (Freud and Breuer 8). Freud and Breuer conclude, “It may therefore be said that the ideas which have become pathological have persisted with such freshness and affective strength because they have been denied the normal wearing-away processes by means of abreaction and reproduction in states of uninhibited association” (11). If the memory of an irresistible and painful experience is suppressed and denied, often subconsciously as a mechanism of defense, recollections of the event force themselves to the surface pathologically; these memories manifest as diverse unbearable symptoms such as nightmares, convulsion, hallucinations etc.

Perowne feels “alert” and “inexplicably elated”(3) accepting, that he is happy. He becomes self-satisfied about feeling a false sense of sanctuary for having taken every measure possible to protect his life and that of his family. Nevertheless,

violence intersects Perowne's life in the public domain with his attack by Baxter pushing an awareness that "nothing can be predicted, but everything, as soon as it happens, will seem to fit" (87). The attack feeds his unintentional insecurity and anxiety showing his vulnerability. After having played a game of squash, Perowne, fragile from the accident with Baxter, attempts primarily to decide his encounter by adopting what he knows has protected him thus far—disengaging himself from his action, and not ethically probing his response:

It's been a tough week, a disturbed night, a hard game. Without looking, he finds the button that secures the car. The door locks are activated in rapid sequence, little resonating clunks, four semiquavers that lull him further. An ancient evolutionary dilemma: the need to sleep, the fear of being eaten. Resolved at last by central locking. (121)

Perowne creates a substantial object around his feelings of anxiety in the form of Baxter, when he deliberately experiences first-hand his family under threat that he is able to counteract his denial and respond to violence and trauma in a more encouraging manner by reaching out and offering Baxter a form of conditional forgiveness.

Perowne controls the life happenings of all his associates in one way or other. In LaCapra's terms, Perowne transforms "absence" to "loss" in the sensible encounter with Baxter. The transition from a conceptual symbolic fear to a concrete, realistic one is usually considered as a means of dealing with a traumatic incidence. La Capra predicts that fear can never be much eradicated. However, the consciousness of the trauma equips people to comprehend the traumatic incidence and its implications.

Though Perowne feels "baffled and fearful" (4) when reflecting "and now, what days are these?" (McEwan 4), he feels protected and detached from the violence that

fills the world beyond his window. His remoteness is depicted from his god-like aloofness as he looks down on the square noticing with surgeon's accuracy the anxieties of dissimilar people that "often drift into the square to act out their dramas"(60). Perowne sees the events of September 11 as exterior traumas from which shortly he can shield himself and his family by considering that he can protect them from further tragedy. He observes the cyclic violence initiated with the 9/11 so that a burning cargo plane immediately evokes disastrous visions that precautions people through the illustration of the personal attack on his life and the security of his family. He emphasizes violence flashes violence with the understanding that violence intensifies yet more violence. McEwan at the ending of *Saturday* suggests a solution. Trauma does not become an unbearable experience that ends all but rather an experience of transition that empowers a new image of life. The novel includes historical environment projected by 9/11. The background of 9/11 structures trauma in all the incidences and thoughts.

Indeed, Perowne's privileged social status affects the way he jokily treats Baxter, a man of a lower social class by deliberately lying to him-what Perowne refers to as "a shameless blackmail" (95). Initially, he "knows himself not to be a man of pity" (98) he manipulates incidences and medical information when he has an accident with Baxter because "when you are diseased as Baxter is, it is unwise to abuse the shaman" (95). Perowne's response reflects a disrespect for social responsibility towards Baxter who, in his eyes, is a hereditarily damaged thug disadvantaged by his meager and lowly social rank. Baxter becomes a victim of social injustice relying on dishonesty and violence to survive. Perowne analyzes him unsympathetically and as an outcast. The fear of being attacked prompts Perowne to betray Baxter in their first encounter offering him hope for Huntington's disease. The

research questions his ethical status particularly considering Perowne's profession. Nevertheless, Perowne is to undertake a journey of a tested life course.

Actually, Cathy Caruth is generally renowned as the most important scholar working on trauma outside of the domain of psychology. She argues that trauma, "resists simple comprehension" (Caruth 6). Trauma contains a paradox, "that the most direct seeing of a violent event may occur as an absolute inability to know it; that immediacy, paradoxically, may take the form of belatedness" (Caruth 91-92). She explains that

The repetitions of the traumatic event-which remain unavailable to consciousness but intrude repeatedly on sight-thus suggest a larger relation to the event that extends beyond what can simply be seen or what can be known, and is inextricably tied up with the belatedness and incomprehensibility that remain at the heart of this repetitive seeing. (Caruth92)

The situation can be for an individual be present at the time of the violent incidence. However, she or may fail to deal with what she sees. Consequently, the mind is powerless to depict the incidence because the mind does not properly program the occurrence in the first place. It is only as a delayed experience. Caruth further states that a "peculiar, temporal structure" or "belatedness" to trauma, "since the event is not experienced as it occurs, it is fully evident only in connection with another place and in another time" (Leys 7). After all, trauma is never experienced directly. In case of Perowne, he has not experienced the September 9/11. However, he is traumatized and shares his experiences based on imaginations. He forecasts of the similar incidences that also ground on his personal visions and images he sees around after the invasion

on Iraq. He is critical and analytical about the international affairs that have taken place particularly in Iraq. The narrative goes on:

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

Their conversation reveals that there is a war of hatred in reciprocal way. The culture of hostility is swarming around London. The excerpt makes clear the conflict is more political than cultural. The flavor of culture can ensure that the English society is diverse and this diversity can expect peace and harmony amongst people there.

Anxiety overwhelms Perowne and he does ponder the cause of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on 9/11. The narrative reveals that the terrorist organization under the name Islamic State is working to control the world under the Islamic law. In this regard, McEwan mentions, "In the ideal Islamic state, under strict Shari'a law, there'll be room for surgeons. Blues guitarists will be found other employment. But perhaps no one is demanding such a state. Nothing is demanded. Only hatred is registered, the purity of nihilism" (33). Perowne thinks of the suitability of his profession in the new nation imagined so far by the terrorist organization. However, such Islamic state is not the desire of people across the world. Perowne reveals the minds of people based on his personal experiences, which is questionable. He with much certainty speaks for the people of the world, which the research questions. In the traumatized mood, he cannot decide what he should think and what he should not. This failure in choosing the appropriateness of words and vision, he suffers even the linguistic incapacity.

In fact, trauma therefore is the experience of an irresistible event only after the event has occurred as flashbacks, nightmares, and other episodes of cognitive destruction and repetition. Traumatic memories are stored in a different way in the mind, are void of the essential narrative framework, and appear as distortions on the surface. Trauma caused by social inequality manifested as intolerance and injustice introduced irregularly in the novel projects the continual multifaceted conflict in society. Political intolerance is recommended with the debate of the persecution of the Falun Gong symbolized by the protesting couple who “keep vigil across the road from the Chinese embassy [...for] beatings, torture, disappearances and murder”(123) while “you see Mainland Chinese in Harrods, soaking up the luxury goods”(123). Pretense and discrimination against Islamic women symbolized by three figures in black burkas who appear to walk around so completely demolished (124) while their husbands sport “baggy shorts and Rolexes and are entirely appealing and sophisticated (124). A mocking observation on western consumerism and double standards is dejected when Perowne states that new scientific research has demonstrated that fish have the same pain receptors as humans. Perowne smoothly sums up that he too is part of the double standards as he confesses he would be uncertain killing lobster for his fish stew, yet would keenly order one in a restaurant.

These minute perceptions by Perowne reflect that he is sensitive to injustices and double standards, mockingly disengages from the rich diverse and multinational society London is popular. Perowne's journey is connected to terms with a distorted world. These slight socio-political transformations represent London as a society stuffed with inequalities that contribute to fear, anxiety, and terror on both political and domestic level.

Though *Saturday* is not a political novel with open significance to 9/11, one needs to deem how the intertextual reference to 9/11 is used as symbol to explore public perception, in particular of the protagonist. The text discloses in a twenty-four hour period on *Saturday* 15 February 2003, the day of the largest anti-war demonstration held in London. The environment of global conflict against which the narrative should be analyzed, discloses a debate about war, violence, the denial of violence because it is an anti-war demonstration. On *Saturday*, a transformation takes place. Perowne recalls an appearance from his mother that this day “is bound to be marked out from all the rest” (51). His bafflement and incapacity clarify the meaning of 9/11 that renders Perowne powerless of making any clear verdict about his position on the war.

Perowne does not have any clear view about the war when a heated debate takes place with Daisy who is passionately opposed to the war on Iraq. He agrees that he would agree to the war because of his understanding of the violence Saddam Hussein committed in his own country, as mentioned by an Iraqi patient of his, Professor Taleb. Perowne needs to resume his position in relation to the political ideologies of the war, but finds it complicated to commit to a judgment as he is “wedged in traffic alongside the multiple faces [...experiencing] his own ambivalence as a form of vertigo, of dizzy indecision” (141). In his state of rejection, Perowne still grapples with the chaotic and incomprehensible world. Actually, trauma is hasty in the intertextual dispute of the anti war demonstration. It also offers a critical setting to the day in query and alludes to events that unfold, echoing through the rest of the novel.

The possibility of further violence from the perpetrators of terrorism does not only frighten society but also western powers on the "war on terror" respond to this. It raises a question how Western powers can wage a war to stop a war. It is, as Daisy

points out to her father that the looming invasion is “completely barbaric” (189) and is morally questionable. When Perowne mentions, “The hidden weapons, whether they exist or not, they’re irrelevant. The invasion’s going to happen, and militarily it’s bound to succeed. It’ll be the end of Saddam and one of the most odious regimes ever known, and I’ll be glad” (189). Daisy’s reaction is fundamental in pointing out the moral double standards in his proposition, “So ordinary Iraqis get it from Saddam, and now they have to take it from American missiles, but it’s all fine because you’ll be glad” (189).

Professor Taleb informs Perowne about the conditions resulting in his imprisonment and torture for unrevealed reasons. This information moves Perowne and eventually he concludes that victims were the Iraqi citizens as well as the authorities as both were tortured and abused in similar circumstances for hidden reasons. The details project strong visual terms with details of the horror through images. Perowne learns much about the problems and tortures:

That torture was routine—Miri and his companions heard the screaming from their cells, and waited to be called. Beatings, electrocution, anal rape, near-drowning, thrashing the soles of the feet. Everyone from top officials to street sweepers, lived in a state of anxiety, constant fear.

Henry saw the scars on Taleb’s buttocks and thighs where he was beaten with what he thought was a branch of some kind of thorn bush.

(65)

These visual descriptions of the torture might expose the emotions of trauma. The stark visual imagery infers to the intensity of the emotions. For Perowne the comprehensible reply is driven by Professor’s Taleb’s account so that “it seemed clear, Saddam’s organising principle was terror” (73). The visual image of post 9/11 society

is for Perowne a predicament of chaos and suffering, the only faith that Perowne has is the security of scientific progress.

Perowne attempts to establish peace out of the chaos caused by fear and insecurity by depending on scientific explanations. He observes the world in logical terms. He details the girls in the square in medical terms as having “exogenous opioid-induced histamine reaction” (60). Whatever he does and views about is a way to release him from the grip of troubles and tensions created by the tragedy. He takes help of science to seek for solutions to his suffering from terrible memories. Therefore, he considers science as a grand meta-narrative for answers to many questions. He is sure that only science can help him to explore the possible solutions to human agony. Perowne uses his rational imagination in interpreting images even when they are not there relying on his systematic knowledge and skills to make sense out of chaos. It is a reliable means to minimize his fear and anxiety. The cargo plane is a mystery for him, as “he doesn’t immediately understand what he sees, though he thinks he does” (13). He uses his rational imagination and interprets it to be a meteor, “he revises his perspective outward to the scale of the solar system: this object is not hundreds but millions of miles distant, far out in space swinging in timeless orbit around the sun. It’s a comet, tinged with yellow, with the familiar bright core trailing its fiery envelope” (13). Perowne's honored status in the medical domain is contributive to this. His capacity in healing and surgery is indicative of a world that is suffering from a terminal malady that needs curing.

Perowne meets Rosalind, the symbol of love and compassion through surgery. Nevertheless, his mother suffers from multi-infarct dementia that slowly divides cognition, while Baxter’s Huntington’s disease is a neurological disease only offered a short pardon through surgery. He concludes that science cannot transform in its

totaland cannot solve all the problems. After all, the novel presents surgery both persistent and an endeavor at compensation.

Perowne struggles much in the course of playing diverse roles. As a father, he feels responsible for family peace and harmony that he sees in the satisfaction of all his family members. He makes efforts to think of the needs of his children. The novel reads:

Henry contends with fatherly thoughts, with nascent outrage at this unknown Italian's assault on the family's peace and cohesion, at his impertinently depositing his seed without first making himself available for inspection, evaluation where was he now, for example? And irritation that this boy's own family should know before Daisy's, that arrangements are already in hand. (240)

When his family faces assaults, he loses his confidence about the security and worries about the future in the sense that there can be more such attacks, which can destroy the peace and integrity of the family. Along with pondering on harmony of the family, he also expresses his concerns about the marital aspect of his daughter. Thus, Perowne is so obsessed with familial affairs that he cannot have the peace of his own mind. He suffers myriad sorts of difficulties in this posttraumatic situation in London.

The study interrogates the representation of the London dwellers in the narrative, because the writer intentionally designs the plot to project the sufferings of people that commonly evokes the sense of horror and terror. The individual trauma represents the collective memory of the people. The psychological trauma affects the cultural trauma through the interplay of memories in the mind of the protagonist. As incidents lead inevitably towards the invasion of Perowne's personal life by Baxter, the conflicts in Perowne's individual life have been resolved through watchful logic.

This rational, scientific approach has partly been successful. The burning plane is not an apocalyptic threat, but a cargo plane in distress. The car accident with Baxter did not turn out, as yet, to be as brutal as expected-Perowne has allayed his victim's intentions (116). Perowne himself threatens the external contentment and complacency that all can be resolved through logic. It becomes clear when seeing Baxter in his home threatening the safety of his family, "It is, of course, logical that Baxter is here. For a few seconds, Perowne's only thought is stupidly that: of course. It makes sense. Nearly all the elements of his day are assembled" (206).

The change cannot yet be complete and will only be complete when Perowne experiences and witnesses an assault on his family. Perowne "knows himself to be incapable of pity" (98) and that he finds a medical strength. Now as he faces threat, he hopes that Baxter is moved to shame. It is only when everything that Perowne holds precious, his family, which is on the brink of being taken away from him, that Perowne realizes the repercussion of his actions. Having led a life of trauma brought on mainly through physical illness and social inequalities, Baxter is moved to desire for a better life. It changes his state of mind unlike his fellow street thugs.

Trauma and violence are reinstated by a desire to live, which is not limited only to Baxter, but awakens Perowne to live an examined life. Actually, it is meant to demonstrate empathy and love particularly to those in need. Perowne acknowledges the liability of having started a cord of events that would have been catastrophic for all implicated:

He's responsible, after all; twenty hours ago he drove across a road officially closed to traffic, and set in train a sequence of events. . .

Daisy recited a poem that cast a spell on one man. . . Still, Baxter fell for the magic, he was transfixed by it, and he was reminded how much

he wanted to live. No one can forgive him the use of the knife. But Baxter heard what Henry never has, and probably never will...Some nineteenth century poet. . . touched off in Baxter a yearning he could barely begin to define. That hunger is his claim on life. (278-279)

The novel projects Perowne's view of his changing world. La Capra's belief that trauma cannot be eradicated in its entirety, but merely understood better in a new and changed form. Perowne feels vulnerable-the world is a test as it projects so many new risks, a world where "perhaps a bomb in the cause of jihad will drive them out with all the other faint-hearts into the suburbs, or deeper into the country, or to the chateau - their Saturday will become a Sunday" (276). At the deeper level, Perowne's new world comprises optimistic images, unlike the intimidating plane in the breach. Perowne finds his life absurd and therefore, his mind rotates from one place to another. He does not stay stiff in the sense that he keeps changing his mood about the phenomenal world. The novel reveals the impact of both decisions and actions of the UN. The narrative goes:

Walking down to the kitchen he reads the headlines. Blix telling the UN the Iraqis are beginning to cooperate. In response, the Prime Minister is expected to emphasise in a speech in Glasgow today the humanitarian reasons for war. In Perowne's view, the only case worth making. But the PM's late switch looks cynical. Henry is hoping that his own story, breaking at four thirty, might just have made the late editions in London. But there's nothing. (69)

Media play a significant role in reminding Perowne of the invasion on Iraq and therefore, he is forced to ponder on the further implications of the September attacks on the westerners. His personal perceptions lead us to generalize the possible

reactions and views of the people. Gradually, he transforms himself and tries to overcome fear and anxiety by consoling him. On a humanistic ground, both Perowne and Baxter come to understand the fragility of humanity in the face of their personal traumas. By placing the protagonists in acts of trauma, McEwan imparts the scope for moral growth with a view that anethically questioned existence, through self-investigation and self-determination, is a prospect. However, the novel does not provide any guaranteed solution for eliminating trauma. Perowne becomes perceptive to the limitation of his advantaged bias in understanding the wider multicultural society.

III: Implications of Trauma in McEwan's *Saturday*

The study has explored how the individual experiences can depict the collective perceptions in the posttraumatic phase as mentioned in McEwan's *Saturday*. The narration moves around the protagonist, Perowne who expresses his panics through his scientific experiments and medical practices as a neurosurgeon in London. After the invasion on Iraq by American and British armies, in the aftermath of 9/11, Perowne as representative of the English society portrayed in the novel undergoes diverse situations to show how he feels about the future implications of the Iraq invasions and what the Londoners would suffer. His individual trauma leads him to generalize the fear, anxiety, and shock of the common society, which is questionable.

The research has analyzed how personal suffering represents the collective trauma as Alexander et al. investigate the notion of cultural trauma widely and across numerous contexts particularly drawing attention to the meaning-making process that follows disastrous events, not the inherent traumatic quality of the events themselves. A tragic event, mass atrocity, or large-scale event that yields a significant number of individuals suffering from post-traumatic stress is not culturally traumatic per se; rather, it is the viewpoint of the injured collective, the provision of meanings surrounding the events, and the public appearance and distribution of these meanings that make an event culturally traumatic. In addition, these meanings must persist to be understood as harmful to the collective by the injured collective and must have lasting, permanent effects on the group's identity as a whole. Perowne as an individual perceives the world as if he speaks the experiences of the mass. He notices that Baxter has some symptoms likely connected to a neurological disorder called Huntington's disease and decides to notify him about his condition. Partially because he wants to terrify him and he wants to avenge for ganging up on him, but on the

other, Perowne feels he should help the poor man, as will become clear later on. The accident impresses Perowne still bothered by the encounter during his squash game. By uttering the small word “crash”, he returns to his own memories. The deeper impact of the accident on Henry makes him unable to express his true feelings about the encounter to Jay Strauss and his mind still lingers on incidents, which already belong to the past.

Perowne's wife, Rosalind a lawyer professionally is admitted to the hospital because of a brain tumor. She appears to be damaged by the death of her mother and the absence of her father. Particularly, the loss of her mother haunts Rosalind is a barrier Henry has to break to really be with his wife. Similarly, Perowne's son and daughter are the complete opposites of their parents because their choices and desires are beyond acceptability by parents. Despite horrible family condition, Perowne is interested in politics and survives the implications of 9/11. His personal engagement with the world affairs indicates that McEwan has deliberately portrayed him to represent the societal level for experiencing the trauma, which is problematic.

The real trauma in the novel involves all members of the family, including John Grammaticus, and takes place during the family dinner that evening. Baxter, who acts as the substitute terrorist, and a companion aggressively enter the family's house and intimidate them with a knife. Rosalind plays a significant role, as she is taken hostage by Baxter and continually faces the threat of being murdered by him. Henry's daughter, Daisy, faces a violent sexual penetration when Baxter makes her take her clothes off and intends to rape her. Thus, the setting forms a symbolic reference to 9/11.

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