

них трудно добраться через наслоения предыдущих художественных и публицистических интерпретаций. Постмодернистский исторический роман Дж. Литтелла не воссоздает историческую реальность, а дает лишь свое представление об идеях и культурных стереотипах прошлого, подчеркивая невозможность достоверной реконструкции истории.

Т. Г. Курс

DEPICTION OF TRAUMA EXPERIENCE
IN "THE SILENT PATIENT" BY A. MICHAELIDIS

In a time when mental health challenges are faced by so many, psychological thrillers seem to have gained in popularity. The novel "The Silent Patient" by A. Michaelidis is a good example of the genre. It is a story which focuses on a relationship between a psychotherapist and a mentally disturbed patient who does not say a word after her husband's murder. Not only does it incorporate drama, action and plot twists, but it also features two unreliable narrators, their perceptions, thoughts and struggle to grasp reality. The novel is peppered with terms to do with psychiatry, Freud's quotes and gives some details of lives of those who are locked in a mental institution. Far from being a comfort read, the novel explores the dark sides of the human psyche and seems to have been informed by reality and research conducted by numerous experts studying the origins of psychological distress. "The Silent Patient" appears to echo actual psychological theories, in particular, Professor Franz Ruppert's trauma theory. The story depicts painful experiences of trauma caused by parents and the conflicts they lead to.

One of the novel's narrators is Theo Faber, a forensic psychotherapist who studies psychology "to heal, get well and fix himself" as his past continues to haunt him. One cannot but agree with Theo who strongly believes that "we're shaped and completed by our parents", suggesting that much of who we are is shaped by our upbringing and torments and abuses that we have suffered. Theo shares with the reader some painful memories of his relationship with his father. It is where Theo suspects his anxiety originated, admitting that there were some happy moments, usually when his father was away. The narrator informs the reader that he "grew up feeling edgy, afraid, anxious" and never felt safe around his father. The latter would often have rages which made the house shake. The result was "a childhood and adolescence dominated by hysteria and physical violence". Theo pins high hopes on retreating, getting away. However, leaving "the semi-detached" prison does not work out. Having buried his dad in his unconscious, Theo carries him with him, no matter how far he goes. He is pursued by his father's shrieking voice, which leads to fear and attempting suicide. Luckily, he meets a psychotherapist who fixes him and transforms the quality of his life, driving away the voices in his head and pulling him back from darkness. The shrink does improve the quality of his life, but the effect of the therapy is not everlasting. The history of instability makes Theo overreact to the fact of his wife's infidelity. Feeling deceived and betrayed, he feels it his duty to enlighten the

injured party. He knows what it is like when somebody lets you down. As the novel unfolds, the reader is taken aback by his homicidal phantasies and hate which result in a gory death scene. Undoubtedly, there is a link between this terrible outcome and Theo's being damaged as a boy. It is known for a fact that traumas experienced in childhood often cause relationship problems in adulthood.

The novel's other voice, heard mainly through her diary entries, belongs to the title character Alicia Berenson who also has a troubled past. She is a painter who, out of the blue, shoots her husband dead. Being placed under house arrest before the trial she completes a painting called Alcesta and then does not say a word. Alicia's motives and the silence that follows are right at the core of the novel. As it progresses, the reader finds out that Alicia's childhood was as damaging as Theo's. The latter observes at some point that they had similar childhoods, similar fathers. After the car accident in which her mother died, Alicia heard her father say something that had a devastating impact on her, that in a way killed her. He wished that she had died instead of her mother. The father's cruel words inflicted serious damage on her psyche, which manifests itself in Alicia's later life when she is an adult. Theo comments on the effects of this traumatizing experience in the following way: "your sense of self-worth would implode, and the pain would be too great, too huge to feel, so you would swallow it, repress it, bury it". He comments further on that as time passes by "you would lose contact with the origins of your trauma, you would forget". However, some things are not so easily left behind – "one day all the hurt and anger would burst forth." They do in Alicia's case, and we see how the emotions that were buried deep down come forth and erupt into violence which has roots in Alicia's childhood trauma.

In conclusion, the novel "The Silent Patient" shows how memories from the past can haunt us and how we can become emotionally unstable because of some traumatic experience resulting from our parents' behaviour. The implications of the novel are far from being a comfort blanket. Indeed, the novel raises further awareness to mental health and the issues that surround it, showing that parents' toxic phrases and actions can be detrimental to the mental strength of their children in the future. What is more, the text seems to widen our sympathies towards those who are vulnerable and teaches us to be receptive and kind in a world where all people are "crazy, just in different ways".

Э. В. Ломако

ПРИЕМ ИГРЫ В РОМАНЕ ДЖ. ФАУЛЗА «ВОЛХВ»

Для английского писателя Джона Фаулза (1926–2005) принцип игры неразрывно связан с его идеями о соотношении искусства и жизни, взаимосвязи художественного восприятия и мировосприятия, неоднозначности изображения жизни средствами искусства. Ведущей темой одного из его лучших романов «Волхв» (*The Magus*, 1966, 1977) является взаимоотношение искусства и действительности, мира и представлений о нем. Для