

Trauma, Guilt, and Narrative: An Analysis of E. Lockhart's *We Were Liars* and *Family of Liars*

Nisrein M. Abu Sawa

Language Center, The Hashemite University, Zarqa, Jordan

Abstract—The present article examines E. Lockhart's novels *We Were Liars* (2014) and the prequel *Family of Liars* (2022); it employs the notions of "trauma" and the "sense of guilt" and draws upon the view that narration can be a therapeutic tool. Accordingly, the article argues that the narratives which Cadence in *We Were Liars* and Carrie in *Family of Liars* form out of flashbacks as well as imaginary conversations and events help them deal with trauma and guilt respectively. It is argued that Cadence overcomes the traumatic memory of accidentally causing the death of the Liars through the fragmented narrative she constructs, and Carrie's shaped narrative helps her deal with the internalized sense of guilt she develops on account of murdering Pfeff. At the beginning of their narratives, both Cadence and Carrie are burdened with grief, repressing their tragic memories; however, through the gradual development of the narratives they form, they eventually take responsibility for causing the death of their victims. In fact, Cadence and Carrie manage to cope with grief by shaping narratives in which they ensure that they are forgiven, and their victims are in peace after passing, asserting at the end of their narratives that they can endure such pain. Therefore, the present article posits that the shaped narratives in Lockhart's selected novels function as an outlet, as the narratives help give Cadence and Carrie new perspectives on the tragic incidents and enable them to move on with their lives.

Index Terms—*Family of Liars*, guilt, narrative, trauma, *We Were Liars*

I. INTRODUCTION

Emily Jenkins, who was born in 1967 and writes under the name of E. Lockhart, is best known for writing children's picture books as well as young adult novels. Her young adult novel and psychological thriller *We Were Liars* (2014) is narrated by Cadence, the eldest grandchild of the Sinclair family, and its prequel *Family of Liars* (2022) is narrated by Caroline (Carrie) who tells her story to her dead son Johnny. The present article examines the role which narratives play in helping Cadence in Lockhart's *We Were Liars* deal with trauma and helping Carrie in Lockhart's *Family of Liars* deal with her sense of guilt. The article shows how both characters eventually come to terms with their grief through the gradual development of the narratives they shape.

In her book *Shattered Subjects: Trauma and Testimony in Women's Life-Writing* (1998), Suzette A. Henke employs the term "scriptotherapy" which she used in a paper delivered in the 1985 Convention of the Modern Language Association in Chicago to refer to "the process of writing out and writing through traumatic experience in the mode of therapeutic reenactment," contending that "the authorial effort to reconstruct a story of psychological debilitation could offer potential for mental healing and begin to alleviate persistent symptoms of numbing, dysphoria, and uncontrollable flashbacks" (p. xii). Thus, Henke stresses that life-writing can be used as a therapeutic tool for victims of anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a disorder which develops in some individuals after being exposed to traumatic events. According to Breuer and Freud (1956), trauma refers to "any experience which calls up distressing affects—such as those of fright, anxiety, shame or physical pain" (p. 6), and from a Lacanian perspective, it "implies an encounter with *the Real*" which is "a fearful dimension which has to be confronted ... It is a psychological dimension that symbolizes the ultimate nightmare, the deepest fear that may dissolve an individual's psychic integrity" (Wood, 2014, p. 20). The American Psychological Association (2017) also defines trauma as "events or experiences that are shocking and overwhelming, typically involving major threat to the physical, emotional, or psychological safety and well-being of the individual victim(s) and loved ones and friends ... Its original occurrence is usually sudden and unexpected" (p. 6). Examples of traumatic experiences include "military combat, acts of terror ... disasters and accidents, sudden or violent death of loved ones ... losses (including neglect and abandonment); hostage-taking; torture; slavery; and certain types of disability, illness, and medical treatment, especially for life-threatening conditions" (p. 6). Cadence in Lockhart's *We Were Liars* has a traumatic brain injury after she has accidentally burned the Liars, Gat, Johnny, and Mirren. The present study argues that the narrative which Cadence shapes out of flashbacks as well as imaginary conversations and events helps her cope with trauma. Carrie in Lockhart's *Family of Liars* also constructs a narrative based on imaginary conversations and events, and it is argued that her narrative helps her deal with the sense of guilt she develops after she kills Pfeff.

Freud (1957) defines the sense of guilt as "the expression of the conflict of ambivalence, the eternal struggle between Eros and the destructive or death instinct" (p. 121). He links the individual's sense of guilt with aggressiveness which opposes civilization since civilization "obtains the mastery over the dangerous love of aggression in individuals by

enfeebling and disarming it and setting up an institution within their minds to keep watch over it, like a garrison in a conquered city” (p. 105). Freud regards the sense of guilt “as the most important problem in the evolution of culture” since “the price of progress in civilization is paid in forfeiting happiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt” (p. 123). In order to be civilized, this aggressiveness is sent back to the individual’s ego, and hence the sense of guilt in the individual develops. The present study argues that Carrie in *Family of Liars* develops an internalized sense of guilt, which she manages to deal with through the narrative she shapes. Therefore, the present paper emphasizes the role which the narratives in Lockhart’s selected novels play in helping the main characters deal with the tragic incidents behind their grief.

II. TRAUMA, GUILT, AND NARRATIVE IN LOCKHART’S FICTION

Cathy Caruth (1996) describes trauma “as the response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flashbacks, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena” (p. 91). After summer fifteen, Cadence in Lockhart’s *We Were Liars* has a traumatic brain injury after causing the death of the Liars, an accident she does not initially remember, and that makes her experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) like migraine and amnesia. Individuals who experience traumatic experiences usually repress the traumatic memory, and in this case such a memory “acts like a foreign body which long after its entry must continue to be regarded as an agent that is still at work” (Breuer & Freud, 1956, p. 6). The patient’s lack of ability to deal with the traumatic experience may lead to a traumatic neurosis, and in such experiences “the protective shield against external stimuli is broken through and excessive amounts of excitation impinge upon the mental apparatus” (Freud, 1961, p. 44).

Cadence’s traumatic memory of the death of the Liars is repressed, and as a Sinclair Cadence is brought up to repress all her sad feelings as well. She says: “We do not discuss our problems in restaurants. We do not believe in displays of distress” (Lockhart, 2014, p. 38). Freud (1961) argues that in order to deal with the trauma, “the ego, which experienced the trauma passively, now repeats it actively in a weakened version, in the hope of being able itself to direct its course” (p. 81). For example, traumatic experiences like wars and fatal accidents are repeated by the traumatized patients in dreams or reactions; “the patient does not *remember* anything of what he has forgotten and repressed, but *acts* it out. He reproduces it not as a memory but as an action; he *repeats* it” (Freud, 1914, p. 150).

Cadence does not remember the last part of summer fifteen, and she mentions that she goes on a trip with her father to Europe during summer sixteen, assuming that the Liars in Beechwood do not answer her emails because of the poor reception there. Since Cadence is not told by anyone about what happened in summer fifteen, her return to Beechwood in summer seventeen and the construction of her narrative can be considered as an unconscious attempt of reenacting the trauma. She says: “I resolve that everything I learn in the next four weeks will go above my Windemere bed. I will sleep beneath the notes and study them every morning. Maybe a picture will emerge from the pixels” (Lockhart, 2014, p. 77). However, Cadence counts on imaginary conversations with the Liars in her narrative so that she can feel she has mastery over the past events that happened in summer fifteen.

van der Kolk (2014) argues that “it is enormously difficult to organize one’s traumatic experiences into a coherent account—a narrative with a beginning, a middle, and an end” (p. 43); initially, trauma is not remembered in a coherent narrative, but rather in fragmented images and sensations. In addition, trauma narratives are not always reliable and consistent; Caruth (1995) argues that “the transformation of the trauma into a narrative memory that allows the story to be verbalized and communicated, to be integrated into one’s ... knowledge of the past, may lose both the precision and the force that characterizes traumatic recall” (p. 153). Herman (1992) also states that “people who have survived atrocities often tell their stories in a highly emotional, contradictory, and fragmented manner which undermines their credibility ... When the truth is finally recognized, survivors can begin their recovery” (p. 1). Therefore, victims can heal and cope with trauma only if they manage to come to terms with the tragic incidents behind their grief and pain of loss.

Cadence and the other Liars, Mirren, Johnny, and Gat have decided to burn down the house of Cadence’s grandfather, but Cadence has accidentally burned the other Liars. However, Cadence’s way of remembering this incident through the narrative is gradual; she does not remember the death of the Liars until the end of the narrative. In fact, her narrative consists of fragments and imaginary conversations between her and the Liars who console her throughout the narrative. She has conversations with the other Liars, and they all justify burning down the family house. Johnny says that the sisters have argued and screamed at each other over the inheritance; the sisters even embroil their children in their heated arguments, so the Liars have thought that by burning the house they will bring the family together. In addition to justifying the fire in her narrative, Cadence imagines that the Liars apologize to her for not contacting her. Cadence starts writing about the fire towards the end of her narrative, but at first she remembers that the dogs have died in the fire. The fact that she remembers causing the death of the dogs helps pave the way for remembering the tragic incident of burning the other Liars. Towards the end of her narrative, Cadence feels that she can talk about the truth of the fire in which Gat, Mirren, and Johnny have perished. She mentions that she has thought that the Liars have been outside the house worrying about her. She goes to the house to save them but could not because the house is engulfed in flames. Cadence expresses her remorse:

I shouldn't have soaked the kitchen first. I shouldn't have lit the fire in the study. How stupid to wet the books so thoroughly. Anyone might have predicted how they would burn. Anyone. We should have had a set time to light our kindling. I might have insisted we stay together ... If only I'd gone back to Clairmont faster, maybe I could have gotten Johnny out. Or warned Gat before the basement caught. Maybe I could have found the fire extinguishers and stopped the flames somehow ... I wanted so much for us: a life free of constriction and prejudice. A life free to love and be loved. And here, I have killed them. My Liars, my darlings. (Lockhart, 2014, pp. 208-209)

Ever since the accident happened, Cadence had not had the chance to mourn the death of the Liars, but her narrative has her claim responsibility for the Liars' death as well as her family's sadness. Cadence cries because the Liars have been deprived of realizing their dreams; nevertheless, she reminds herself that she is loved and forgiven by the Liars.

van der Kolk (2014) posits that "our autobiographical self, creates connections among experiences and assembles them into a coherent story. This system is rooted in language. Our narratives change with the telling, as our perspective changes and as we incorporate new input" (p. 236). One's perspective on the traumatic experience changes thanks to the narrative, and thus the traumatic narrative has a crucial role "in remaking the self" since "working through, or remastering, traumatic memory ... involves a shift from being the object or medium of someone else's (the perpetrator's) speech (or other expressive behavior) to being the subject of one's own" (Brison, 1999, p. 39). Through narrating the trauma, the traumatic memory is transformed "into a coherent narrative that can then be integrated into the survivor's sense of self and view of the world" (p. 39), as "the goal of recounting the trauma story is integration, not exorcism" (Herman, 1992, p. 181).

Trauma narratives do not represent the trauma; rather, they are "accounts of recovery, of dealing with the effects of a traumatic experience" (Castle, 2013, p. 216). Cadence manages to survive the trauma by forming a narrative in which she makes sure that the Liars are comfortable after death, and she is forgiven by them. She imagines Johnny telling her that they go to the "same place as when you're not here. Same place as we've been ... It's like a rest. It's like nothing, in a way. And honestly, Cady, I love you, but ... I just want to lie down and be done" (Lockhart, 2014, p. 216). When Cadence apologizes to Johnny, he says: "Not your fault ... I mean, we all did it, we all went crazy, we have to take responsibility. You shouldn't carry the weight of it ... Be sad, be sorry—but don't shoulder it" (p. 216). Mirren apologizes to Cadence too, and Cadence also imagines that she makes her peace with Gat and that the Liars leave into the beach happily.

Brison (1999) argues that "memories of traumatic events can be themselves traumatic ... They are experienced by the survivor ... as flashbacks to the events themselves"; however, narrating memories "empowers survivors to gain more control over the traces left by trauma," thereby "giving shape and a temporal order to the events recalled, establishing more control over their recalling, and helping the survivor to remake a self" (p. 40). Therefore, narrating memories can contribute to the recovery from trauma. By telling the trauma narrative, the survivor manages "to integrate the traumatic episode into a life with a before and after" and "gain control over the occurrence of intrusive memories" (p. 46). Narrating the traumatic memories helps give Cadence new perspectives on the tragic incident, and hence she is eventually capable of dealing with trauma. She ends her narrative by saying that in a beautiful family "something bad happened, something stupid, criminal, terrible, something avoidable, something that never should have happened, and yet something that could, eventually, be forgiven" (Lockhart, 2014, pp. 222-223); however, she affirms that she will endure the pain, saying: "MY FULL NAME is Cadence Sinclair Eastman. I suffer migraines. I don't suffer fools. I like a twist of meaning. I endure" (p. 225). Herman (1992) affirms that narrating the trauma story helps alleviate the pain; she maintains:

After many repetitions, the moment comes when the telling of the trauma story no longer arouses quite such intense feeling. It has become a part of the survivor's experience, but only one part of it. The story is a memory like other memories, and it begins to fade as other memories do. Her grief, too, begins to lose its vividness. It occurs to the survivor that perhaps the trauma is not the most important, or even the most interesting, part of her life story. (p. 195)

Like Cadence, Carrie in Lockhart's *Family of Liars* tells a narrative which is also based on imaginary conversations and events as well as flashbacks. They both arguably manage to narrate their traumatic memories in a way that helps them eventually cope with their grief. They are both in control of the traumatic memories which they narrate; the control of "certain aspects of the narrative" helps lead "to greater control over the memories themselves, making them less intrusive and giving them the kind of meaning that enables them to be integrated into the rest of life" (Brison, 1999, p. 47). Like Cadence who manages to shape a narrative which helps her deal with trauma, Carrie shapes a narrative which helps her deal with her sense of guilt. Carrie's sister Rosemary drowned when Carrie was sixteen, and Carrie feels guilty because of living a normal life without Rosemary. Consequently, in her narrative Carrie imagines seeing and talking to Rosemary. Carrie tries to make Rosemary happy, telling her stories like the story of Cinderella. Carrie is aware of her grief and the need to deal with it; by imagining talking to Rosemary who enjoys listening to stories told by Carrie, Carrie attempts to lighten the load.

Carrie's sense of guilt is highlighted in the novel. According to Freud (1962), the sense of guilt results from "the tension between the demands of conscience and the actual performances of the ego" (p. 27) as well as "the tension between the strict super-ego and the subordinate ego" and "it manifests itself as the need for punishment" (Freud, 1957,

p. 105). The unconscious sense of guilt hinders one's recovery from many neuroses; "this sense of guilt expresses itself only as a resistance to recovery which it is extremely difficult to overcome. It is also particularly difficult to convince the patient that this motive lies behind his continuing to be ill" (Freud, 1962, p. 40). By developing a sense of guilt or a "moral" factor," the patient "refuses to give up the punishment of suffering" (p. 39), and the sense of guilt "does not tell him he is guilty; he does not feel guilty, he feels ill" (p. 40). Freud (1957) argues that:

The individual's aggressiveness is introjected, 'internalized'; in fact, it is sent back where it came from, i.e. directed against the ego. It is there taken over by a part of the ego that distinguishes itself from the rest as a super-ego, and now, in the form of 'conscience', exercises the same propensity to harsh aggressiveness against the ego that the ego would have liked to enjoy against others. (p. 105)

Carrie's narrative arguably helps her deal with the heightened internalized sense of guilt she develops. Carrie has killed Pfeff by hitting him with a board; in her narrative she portrays him as a bad person. Although Pfeff makes advances to Carrie's sister Penny, he does not have any feelings of guilt, and because of him Carrie loses confidence in herself and gets into arguments with her sisters. Carrie's portrays Pfeff as a cheater in an attempt to justify the murder she commits. Even though Carrie depicts Pfeff as a person who deserves to be killed, initially in her narrative she does not admit that she is responsible for Pfeff's death. Rather, she imagines that her sister Bess has killed Pfeff after he has tried to rape Penny. Carrie asserts that she covers up Pfeff's murder in order to protect her sisters. Carrie feels guilty because she has not kept Rosemary safe, but she will protect Penny and Bess. Consequently, Carrie and her sisters take a boat trip and make sure that Pfeff's body sinks and will never be found. Carrie notices that the board, which is the murder weapon, is missing, and it turns out that Carrie's father hides it.

Carrie does not fear authority represented by her father and the police; instead, she develops an internalized sense of guilt. Freud (1957) argues that the sense of guilt arises either from the fear of authority or from the super-ego, as the individuals who do something fear to be punished by the authority they are dependent on and fear to lose the love of the authority. Thus, they allow themselves to do bad things as long as they are not blamed by the authority. The super-ego is established when "the authority has been internalized;" the individual becomes anxious as "the super-ego torments the sinful ego with the same feelings of dread and watches for opportunities whereby the outer world can be made to punish it" (p. 108). The sense of guilt and the need for punishment caused by the fear of the super-ego lead to "a lasting inner unhappiness" (p. 112). Carrie starts developing a sense of guilt, feeling the need to tell her mother, but she asserts that she does not want to distress her mother. Since Carrie's mother will not be told about the murder, her father hides the board and later burns it in the bonfire, and the police presume Pfeff dead, Carrie does not have to fear authority. Nonetheless, she later develops a sense of guilt, and it can be argued that it is internalized.

Carrie feels pangs of guilt when she is told by Yardley that she has hurt Pfeff; Carrie says: "*I don't think you should have to pretend you would never, ever hurt anybody. All those words of Yardley's, they ring in my ears now. They jumble and tangle as I tell this story to my son Johnny*" (Lockhart, 2022, p. 282). Yardley's words have made Carrie think that since she has hurt Pfeff, she is punished with the death of her son. She eventually feels apologetic about murdering Pfeff, pointing out: "I think he could have become a good man ... I do not think he deserved to die. I know he was capable of terrible things. But so was I" (p. 295). In addition, Carrie's sense of guilt heightens since she kills Pfeff while he is angry with his parents who are divorcing, so in her narrative she imagines Pfeff saying: "I saw my mom ... I wanted her to know I loved her and stuff. I was worried she didn't know, because we'd kind of been in a fight all summer" (p. 274). Herman (1992) maintains: "Because the truth is so difficult to face, survivors often vacillate in reconstructing their stories. Denial of reality makes them feel crazy, but acceptance of the full reality seems beyond what any human being can bear" (p. 181). So, Carrie's inability to accept the fact that Pfeff and his parents are not reconciled makes her imagine in her narrative that Pfeff comes after dying to make peace with his mother.

Carrie also imagines in the narrative that Pfeff apologizes to her. He says: "I really am sorry. That I hurt your feelings ... I was wrong ... Can we say sorry to each other and set it to rest?" (Lockhart, 2022, p. 275). Carrie also assures herself that Pfeff is comfortable after dying. She imagines that Pfeff tells her that he does not remember how he has died, saying: "I was on the dock with Penny. And I felt a sharp pain in my head. I might have screamed ... everything went dark and very quiet. Like a long sleep. It was comfortable after that, actually. Like a rest" (p. 274). In an attempt to deal with her heightened sense of guilt, Carrie imagines that Rosemary and Pfeff are in peace after death. Carrie even assures herself that Rosemary still loves her even though she is a murderer. Carrie's perspective does change because of the narrative; she writes to Rosemary:

Relief floods through me, even as I weep, because I can see my own letters, and that means I can see a future beyond this island, beyond this addiction. Although I will never, ever escape what I have done, and although I might never forgive myself ... I will, in a small way, in a limited way, move on. (p. 312)

Carrie confirms that she will move on, believing that she is forgiven by her son on account of the narrative she has shaped and thus she will heal. Carrie feels ready to move on after she is done with the narrative; she says:

I killed a man and threw his body in the ocean ... But now that I have told that story, I think I may be able to tell a new story about myself ... this is the worst I have seen and the worst I have done. Please bear witness. I do not want such horrors to determine my future. (pp. 320-321)

Like Cadence, Carrie affirms at the end of her narrative that she is ready to move on. Herman (1992) asserts that "when the 'action of telling a story' has come to its conclusion, the traumatic experience truly belongs to the past," and

hence “the survivor faces the tasks of rebuilding her life in the present and pursuing her aspirations for the future” (p. 195). Both Cadence and Carrie eventually come to terms with their grief through shaping narratives in which they make sure that they are forgiven, and their victims are comfortable after passing, which stresses the role of shaped narratives in giving the individual new perspectives on tragic incidents and traumatic experiences.

III. CONCLUSION

The present paper has highlighted the role of narratives in helping Cadence in Lockhart’s *We Were Liars* as well as Carrie in *Family of Liars* deal with traumatic memories and the sense of guilt respectively. Both narratives shaped by the main characters of the selected novels are based on flashbacks as well as imaginary conversations and events. Carrie tells her story to her dead son Johnny, and Cadence writes her memories down because as Sinclairs Cadence and Carrie are brought up to repress their feelings. Therefore, Cadence’s and Carrie’s narratives function as an outlet and eventually help them deal with the tragic incidents behind trauma and the sense of guilt.

At the beginning of their narratives, Cadence and Carrie are burdened and overwhelmed with grief. Carrie feels guilty because she enjoys her life while her little sister Rosemary has died at an early age. So, Carrie imagines talking to Rosemary and sharing activities with her. Carrie’s sense of guilt heightens when she kills Pfeff who makes her feel that he is attracted to her but ends up making advances to her sister. Carrie’s father hides the murder weapon, and Pfeff is presumed dead by the police; therefore, Carrie does not have to fear authority. Carrie learns that she has killed Pfeff while he is angry with his parents, so her sense of guilt becomes internalized. In an attempt to deal with her sense of guilt, Carrie imagines in her narrative that Pfeff apologizes to her and tells her that he has made peace with his mother and feels comfortable after dying.

Similarly, Cadence imagines in her narrative that the Liars apologize to her for not contacting her after summer fifteen where in fact Cadence has forgotten that she has accidentally burned the Liars in the house fire she and the Liars have planned. Through her narrative, Cadence remembers events gradually; first, she justifies planning the fire, and then she mourns the death of the dogs which she has accidentally caused in the fire before she finally confesses that she has caused the death of the Liars: Gat, Johnny, and Mirren.

At the end of their narratives, Carrie and Cadence affirm that they can endure their pain. Carrie states that she is forgiven by her dead son for the terrible thing that she has done. Cadence is also consoled by the Liars with the fact that their death is not her fault, and that they feel comfortable after dying. Carrie’s and Cadence’s shaped narratives have arguably given them a new perspective on the tragic incidents and have eventually enabled them to deal with their grief and move on.

REFERENCES

- [1] American Psychological Association. (2017). *Clinical practice guideline for the treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in adults*. Retrieved December 15, 2023, from <https://www.apa.org/ptsd-guideline/ptsd.pdf>
- [2] Breuer, J. & Freud, S. (1956). *Studies on hysteria* (J. Strachey & A. Strachey, Trans. & Eds.). The Hogarth Press.
- [3] Brison, S. (1999). Trauma narratives and the remaking of the self. In M. Bal, J. Crewe, & L. Spitzer (Eds.), *Acts of memory: Cultural recall in the present* (pp. 39-54). University Press of New England.
- [4] Caruth, C. (Ed.). (1995). *Trauma: Explorations in memory*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- [5] Caruth, C. (1996). *Unclaimed experience: Trauma, narrative, and history*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- [6] Castle, G. (2013). *The literary theory handbook*. Wiley Blackwell.
- [7] Freud, S. (1914). Remembering, repeating and working-through. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.), *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud* (1958, Vol. 12, pp. 145-156). The Hogarth Press.
- [8] Freud, S. (1957). *Civilization and its discontents* (J. Riviere, Trans.). The Hogarth Press.
- [9] Freud, S. (1961). *Inhibitions, symptoms and anxiety* (A. Strachey, Trans.). The Hogarth Press.
- [10] Freud, S. (1962). *The ego and the id* (J. Riviere, Trans.). The Hogarth Press.
- [11] Henke, S. A. (1998). *Shattered subjects: Trauma and testimony in women’s life-writing*. St. Martin’s Press.
- [12] Herman, J. L. (1992). *Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence—from domestic abuse to political terror*. Basic Books.
- [13] Lockhart, E. (2014). *We were liars*. Delacorte Press.
- [14] Lockhart, E. (2022). *Family of liars*. Delacorte Press.
- [15] van der Kolk, B. (2014). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. Viking.
- [16] Wood, J. B. (2014). *The autograph man*, by Zadie Smith: the long way to heal trauma. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature*, 20(2), 19-30. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17576/3L-2014-2002-02>

Nisrein M. Abu Sawa is an English instructor at the Hashemite University/Jordan. She graduated from the University of Jordan in 2013 with a BA in English Language and Literature and received her MA in English language from the Hashemite University in 2017. She wrote her MA thesis on doubling and personality disorders in selected (post)modernist fictions and published a number of papers on English literature in international journals.