FORMATIONS OF HOSPITALITY IN DOCUMENTARY THEATRE: REVERBERATIONS OF MASS MEDIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

MERVE ATASOY

BOĞAZİÇİ UNIVERSITY

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Merve Atasoy

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Merve Atasoy, certify that

- I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution;
- this thesis contains no material that has been submitted or accepted for a degree or diploma in any other educational institution;
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ABSTRACT

Formations of Hospitality in Documentary Theatre:

Reverberations of Mass Media and Human Rights Violations

This dissertation inquires how documentary theatre, which depends mostly on factual material and uses similar techniques as media, can subvert the hierarchies that often emerge in media's representation of the Other. In contrast to media footages, which often assume the role of a host and decide who belongs to the 'home' or 'the nation', documentary theatre builds up 'reciprocal relations of hospitality' among the agents in theatre to undermine the sovereignty of a specific group. This reciprocal hospitality is enhanced through documentary plays' disclosure of their mediational limits and of their position as constructs.

The dissertation introduces four ways in which the reconfigurations of hospitality are manifested in documentary theatre: corporeal, commemorative, spectatorial and linguistic hospitality. It explores these categories with respect to Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, Genco Erkal's *Sivas 93*, Zoe Lafferty, Paul Wood & Ruth Sherlock's *The Fear of Breathing* and Erik Jensen & Jessica Blank's *Aftermath* respectively. The dissertation suggests that the concepts of body, memory, gaze and language often include borders through which quiddities of familiarity and unfamiliarity are formed in documentary theatre. Thus, the plays analysed in the chapters all blur the borders of what is perceived and treated as home in their own ways. They delineate the ways individuals and communities are haunted by the unfamiliar or those who are not considered a part of the 'home'. The dissertation aims to fill a gap in the current scholarship of documentary theatre with regard to the study of power relationships among the agents in theatre.

ÖZET

Belgesel Tiyatroda Konukseverlik Oluşumu: Kitlesel Medya ve İnsan Hakları İhlallerinin Yansımaları

Bu tez, büyük ölçüde gerçek olaylara dayalı olan ve medya ile benzer teknikler kullanan belgesel tiyatronun, medyanın 'öteki' temsillerinde göze çarpan hiyerarşileşmeyi nasıl yıktığı sorusunun üzerinde durmuştur. Sıklıkla 'ev sahibi' rolünü benimseyen ve kim(ler)in 'eve' ya da 'millete' ait olup olmadığının sınırların çizen medyanın aksine, belgesel tiyatro belli bir grup egemenliğinin altını oymak adına tiyatronun özneleri arasında 'karşılıklı konukseverlik ilişkileri' inşa eder. Bu karşılıklı konukseverlik, belgesel oyunların kendi iletişimsel limitlerini, eksikliklerini ve kurgusal konumlarını açığa vurmaları ile gelişim gösterir.

Bu tez, belgesel tiyatroda konukseverliğin yeniden yapılandırılmasını dört ana başlıkta ele alır: beden, anı, seyir ve dil temelli konukseverlik. Bu kategoriler sırasıyla Anna Deavere Smith'in *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, Genco Erkal'ın *Sivas 93*, Zoe Lafferty, Paul Wood ve Ruth Sherlock'un *The Fear of Breathing* and Erik Jensen & Jessica Blank'in *Aftermath* oyunları üzerinden incelenmektedir. Tez, vücut, hafıza, bakış ve dil kavramlarının belgesel tiyatroda çoğunlukla tanıdıklık ve yabancılığın esaslarının oluşturulduğu belli sınırlar içerdiğini öne sürmektedir. Her bölümde incelenen oyun kendi metotlarıyla 'ev' kavramının algılanma ve ele alınma biçimlerindeki hudutların dışına çıkar. Bireylerin ve toplulukların 'öteki' olan, yabancı olan ve 'eve ait olmayan' tarafından ne şekilde takip ve hatta kontrol edildiklerini ortaya koyar. Bu tez tiyatro özneleri arasındaki güç ilişkileri hususunda belgesel tiyatro üzerine yapılmış mevcut çalışmalardaki boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlamaktadır.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME: Merve Atasoy

DEGREES AWARDED

PhD in English Literature, 2021, Boğaziçi University
M.A in English Literature, 2015, Boğaziçi University
B.A in Western Languages and Literatures, 2012, Boğaziçi University

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Contemporary Anglo-American theatre, documentary theatre, ethnic studies, refugee experiences, media & theatre

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, Department of Western Languages and Literatures, Boğaziçi University, 2013 – present
BAP Project Assistant, Department of Western Languages and Literatures, Boğaziçi University, 2012 - 2013

AWARDS & HONORS

Honors List, Boğaziçi University, 2012

GRANTS

MLA Travel Grant, Graduate Students, January 2020
Bursary for CDE (Contemporary Drama in English) Conference, June 2018

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles

Atasoy, M. (2021) "Rethinking the Refugee Experience in Verbatim Theatre: Hospitality and Translation in Erik Jensen and Jessica Blank's *Aftermath*". *Modern Drama* 64 (1), 47-66.

Atasoy, M. (2019) "A River's Autobiography: Fusion of Human and Nature in Alice Oswald's *Dart*". *Metafor: The Boğaziçi University Journal of Literary Studies 4*, 30-40.

Kansız, M. (2017). "'Born in the Wrong Body': The Articulation of Sexual Self-Perception in Sarah Kane's *4.48 Psychosis*". *Journal of Contemporary Drama in English*, *5* (2), 277–291.

Book Chapters

Kansız, M. (2017). "Feminist Narratology in Adrienne Kennedy‟s *A Movie Star has to Star in Black and White*". in *Languages, Cultures, and Gender*. Izmir: Ege University Press. 164–184.

Conference Proceedings

Kansız, M. (2016). "'Ends Justify the Means?,' Evil, Media and Consequentialism in Dennis Kelly's *Osama the Hero*" in *Proceedings: Annual International Conference on Language, Literature & Linguistics (L3 2016)*. 152–158.

Other Publications

Kansız, M. (2015). Narrative Voice in Feminist Drama: A Study of Adrienne Kennedy, Caryl Churchill and Sarah Kane. Master's Thesis.

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To my mom, dad and sisters

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> I said ‘we have to stay here
> and watch
> because this is wrong’ (Smith, 1994, p. 67)

In 1991, a black US. citizen named Rodney King was severely beaten by four white police officers. The beating that was videotaped by a witness found wide coverage in the mainstream media. The protests against racism and police violence grew bigger when the officers were not found guilty after the trials, which led to the Los Angeles Riots in 1992. The quote above belongs to a clerk-typist named Josie Morales, who was present in the course of the incident and who is one of the interviewees in Anna Deavere Smith’s renowned documentary play about the riots, *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*. Morales’s position as a witness does not diverge from the typical inactivity of a bystander: neither she nor her husband, who becomes “petrified” during the beating, interacts with the officers to stop the violence (Smith, 1994, p. 67). Nevertheless, Morales’s statement illustrates her feeling that watching the scene of violence carries with it some ‘humanitarian commitment’.

A critical issue with regard to the statement above is the reason how and why passive engagement such as watching and witnessing one’s pain can be regarded as commitment even though one cannot take any action to stop it. The responsibility that Morales attaches to the act of witnessing mostly stems from the public and conscientious emphasis that is placed on giving testimony and revealing the truth, which predominantly requires one’s living contact or presence during the incident. After all, it is this spatial and temporal presence that distinguishes Morales and other witnesses from the people having only ‘heard’ of the incident (and from the vast

majority of the theatre audience). Yet, the fact that the living contact and presence is carried on to a stage performance in front of audience members, who already have previous knowledge of the incident thanks to TV interviews, videos and photographs, adds a new extension to the act of witnessing. Media tools, which record the moments in which the incidents took place, make sure that witnessing is not just restricted to an immediate experience of the incident. However, audience's demand to hear on stage the individual responses to an event marks a search for new contacts which would make them reinterpret the existing data. This condition suggests that the observations and assessments of how the incident has been depicted and evaluated so far are also part of witnessing.

In *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture***,** Philip Auslander (1999) states that "testimony is defined as a live performance of memory retrieval" (p. 113). In theatre, where different members of society come together and hear the verbatim accounts of eyewitnesses, audience can retrieve and re-examine their collective memories. While the interviews and the testimonies on stage are mediations of the eyewitnesses' statements, the presence of the audience in the same space and time establishes a platform for a 'live' public forum. In this public forum, which is somehow similar to the hearing of testimonies in the courtrooms, the audience members observe the dialogic relations among the characters. Just like the audience, the characters are also both the addressees and the respondents of media.

In such a public forum, humanitarian and civic responsibility to know more about the oppression and the oppressed is publicly shared. At this point, Morales' motive to watch the incident may also explain the audience's presence in the auditorium. After all, the humanitarian intentions to remember and reconsider the social and political incidents with high global or local repercussions are a significant

motive for the audience to come to theatre. In this regard, documentary plays, which will be explored in detail in the following pages, depend considerably on the humanitarian responsibility to recollect and testify. In documentary plays, this responsibility does not only belong to the the eyewitnesses. Anyone who learns about cases of violence and oppression has a responsibility to inform the others about them. This condition functionally brings the characters and the audience close to one another. Especially for the last three decades, the humanitarian responsibility to provide visibility for the oppressed has become a subject to a significant number of British and American documentary plays, which depict the 'real' statements of victims and/or witnesses and problematize the ways of mediation. The proliferation of these plays has marked the formulation of a new theatrical genre.

So far there have been numerous attempts by theatre critics to classify the plays that represent the accounts of people witnessing a real incident. Generic titles such as documentary theatre, verbatim theatre, tribunal plays, non-fictional theatre, theatre of fact are among the many alternatives that have been suggested to define these plays. Derek Paget puts forward the name 'verbatim theatre' to refer to the plays in which the tape recorded interviews of witnesses are represented on stage (usually by different actors). He differentiates verbatim plays from 'tribunal plays'[1], which refer to the group of plays where trials in courtrooms are reenacted. Carol Martin (2013) suggests the name 'theatre of the real' in her book of the same name so as to to bring these alternatives under an encompassing title. Martin expresses that all existing titles are in some way or another a preoccupied with laying claim on reality. She prefers using the name 'theatre of the real' due to "theatre's participation

[1] Tribunal plays plays specifically refer to the Kiln Theatre's (formerly Tricycle Theatre) productions starting with 1994. A more detailed explanation about the Kiln Theatre will be provided later in the introduction.

in today's addiction to and questioning of the real as it is presented across media and genres" (Martin, 2013, p. 5).

While the evaluation and depiction of the real in the examples of this genre will constitute one of the salient research questions in this dissertation, the name 'documentary theatre' will be preferred to underline the function of mediation implied in the word 'document'. Used as records and evidence, documents potentially substitute the very cases and happenings they record. In a way, they formulate a reality of their own.[2] The incidents in the past are carried to the present through the mediation of documents. The reality of an incident becomes predominantly based on how much consistency a document shows with respect to other documents. The related verbal and visual data shape the ways reality of local and global histories are understood by individuals. In a way, documents, which are indispensably used by media, play the role of witnesses of past events. They narrate the details of the past events to people who are spatially and / or temporally detached from them. Thus, they satisfy the individuals' need for confirmation of facts.[3] Yet, at the same time, documents can also reinforce the impact and authority of institutions such as media and state, which can control the access to documents. Since partial representation or concealment of information can put forward different 'facts', institutions can play with documents in order to legitimize their actions and guarantee their sovereignty. As it is going to be explained in the following pages, such manipulations often make both media and state mechanisms a target of criticism. Documentary theatre makes use of factual material to challenge the

[2] The documents' substitution of reality is quite parallel to Jean Baudrillard's description of the relation between simulacrum and reality in *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981), where he claims that simulacrum replaces reality after totally masking its presence.
[3] See Janelle Reinelt's "Toward a Poetics of Theatre and Public Events: In the Case of Stephen Lawrence" (2006).

objectivity which is claimed by the state and media: it depicts this objectivity as an illusion.

While the use of printed and visual material is one of the methods that give documentary theatre its distinctive character, documentary theatre also emphasizes that individuals themselves can function as documents. Personal narratives of witnesses about a past incident can defy the 'official' records that are used by media or point to the gaps in these records. In a documentary play, apart from putting forward new personal documents, the witnesses can also comment on what has been recorded and publicly shared about their problems till then. Particularly this last act opens up a possibility for the audience to relate to the characters presented to them. This is because both the audience and the characters are exposed to the records that spread to public. At this point, to share and listen to personal narratives about public incidents in theatre can be interpreted as a form of collective resistance to the historiography, which is considerably shaped by media. As Derek Paget (2008) argues in his essay "New Documentarism on Stage: Documentary Theatre in New Times", "individual 'bearing witness' (in the first person singular) has overtaken political analysis (conducted in the third person plural) in the new theatrical conjuncture, and that audiences too are implicated in acts of witness" (p. 129). Through the performance of a documentary play, the characters' act of witnessing in the past is sustained through the witnessing of the audience in the 'live' present.

As the accounts of the characters enter in a dialogue with one another on stage, the audience's witnessing of these accounts paves the way for new dialogues and new interpretations about the incident in question. As a result, documentary plays defy the hierarchical distinction between the live and the mediatized. They manifest the idea that a public's experience of live is significantly shaped by the

mediatized and vice versa.[4] The insertion of the personal testimony in the documents about a public incident is prone to create ruptures in the unilateral point of view in historiography. Especially considering the role of media in concealing the human rights violations directed at various socio-ethnic groups, these ruptures open up possibilities to underline the oppressive policies of the state. They can also manifest the human suffering that is not depicted in the press' objective language. As a result, the motive of contemporary documentary theatre is not to provide a 'more real' representation of what has been known by the public. It is to provide a space which overtly represents the defects of what is presented as reality by opening it into discussion.

In the light of the points explained above, this dissertation will focus on documentary theatre's relation to and subversion of media representations, its role in providing visibility for the various social, political and ethnic groups and its responses to the power relations between dramatists, audience and characters. Among the questions that will form the basis of this dissertation are as follows: as individual and collective responses to the lives of the Other are shaped by screens, photographs or the framing narratives of the press, how can documentary plays subvert the representations of reality by media and narrow the borders and gaps between different communities? How can they respond to the dehumanization of certain victims through selective depictions of violence and suffering? How can documentary theatre challenge the repeated stereotypes which create a fantasy about the Other in media? How can it foster mutual relationships between the audience and oppressed characters and prevent the hegemony of specific perspectives?

[4] Philip Auslander's *Liveness* (1999), effectively explores the prevalent binary structure established between the live and the mediatized. As he argues against the idea that "the live event is 'real' and mediatized event is secondary and somehow artificial representations of the real", he analyses the interconnections between these notions by drawing from various public performances (p. 3).

In order to respond to the questions addressed above, this dissertation will first investigate the effects of frames and borders that media uses in the representation of the Other. A good number of footages and documents about human rights violations, global and domestic conflicts and terrorist attacks circulate both around the national and international mainstream media. These footages and documents often draw the lines of what is 'familiar', 'homely' and what is 'foreign'. Thus, media often assumes the role of a host who decides what will be admitted to public view, who belongs to the 'home' or 'the nation' and who is not 'one of us'. In this practice, there is an inherent hospitality through which the hegemony and prioritization of specific institutions and communities can be formed. Especially in the depictions of human rights violations, both minorities at home and the oppressed people abroad are often treated as 'the guests' who are subject to media's treatment. In this dissertation, I argue that documentary theatre builds up 'reciprocal relations of hospitality' among the agents in theatre to undermine the sovereignty of a specific group. The audience, dramatists, actors and characters become all hosts and guests at the same time. I will also maintain that the reciprocal hospitality is enhanced through documentary plays' disclosure of their mediational limits and of their position as constructs.

This dissertation aims to fill a gap in the current scholarship of documentary theatre with regard to the study of power relationships among the agents in theatre (audience, dramatists, actors and characters etc.). So far the works on documentary theatre have predominantly focused on how this genre handles the complexity of 'authenticity', subverts the prevalent perceptions of reality and develops new interpretations of memory and history. Yet, in these studies, how this subversion can influence and rearrange the interactions among different communities has not been given enough attention. In the introduction to *Get Real: Documentary Theatre Past*

and Present, which is one of the most prominent volumes on documentary theatre, editors explain the common ground of the essays as follows: "Many of our contributors note that, instead of reaching for a wholly objective representation of 'truth', much documentary theatre has functioned to complicate notions of authenticity with a more nuanced and challenging evocation of the 'real'" (Forsyth & Megson, 2009, p. 2).

Similarly, in her work *Theatre of the Real* Carol Martin (2013) draws attention to the disruption of the border between the real and the fictional in documentary plays with the increasing use and power of media technologies. She suggests: "today's theatre of the real both acknowledges a positivist faith in empirical reality and underscores an epistemological crisis in knowing truth" (p. 14). With these remarks Martin suggests the ambivalence of documentary theatre: though it depends on documents, it challenges their credit and authority as well. It explores and criticizes how the documents have been deployed especially within media so far. At the same time, the presentation of 'truth' in media often positions different communities with regard to one another, constructs borders among them or prioritizes a specific collective profile. In this respect, my goal is to delve into the ways documentary theatre's handling of truth can also narrow down the borders among the dramatists, audience, actors and the characters who often come from different backgrounds.

Derek Paget (2008) points to the rise of individual testimony in "a new, privatised, political culture in which collectives have been sidelined" (p. 129). Though documentary plays' frequent use of interviews with individual characters supports Paget's argument, it should be kept in mind that individuals very often speak as a member of a society or nation, which shapes their identity. To exemplify,

while Smith's *Twilight Los Angeles 1992* introduces the evaluations and concerns of different individuals on Los Angeles Riots, they all speak as a representative of a social, occupational, or ethnic group: e.g. academicians, journalists, African-Americans, Latin Americans, Korean Americans, etc. The testimonies of the characters shed light to the ways their relations have developed in time. The depictions of testimonies on stage also address to the encounters among the audience, dramatists, actors and characters, who are themselves part of diverse communities. Documentary plays mostly revisit the prevalent opinions and interrelations of these communities as they play with the notion of 'truth'. The relationships between the agents in theatre during performance target the dynamics of relationships *out of* theatre as well.

If documents can manipulate information and influence the perception of the real, they can also give power to various communities and institutions which use them. In documentary plays, this power can even put the dramatists who make use of the factual material in an advantageous position. However, because documentary theatre defies the authority of documents, it can also undermine the sovereignty of the dramatists and of the audience who watch the representation from a safe and detached position. Studying the repercussions of mutual hospitality in documentary theatre, this dissertation scrutinizes the ways subversion of authenticity can deconstruct and reconstruct the collective relations in theatre. It hopes to contribute to the scholarship by illustrating how documentary theatre, which criticizes the "talismanic authority" of the document, can shatter the hierarchical relationships among different agents in theatre and how it can encourage new humanitarian exchanges (Forsyth & Megson, 2009, p. 3).

In this introductory chapter, documentary theatre, its relation to media and its use of hospitality will be investigated in three parts: the first part will explore the early development of documentary theatre and its relation to media, with a specific focus on the theatre of Erwin Piscator, Bertolt Brecht and Peter Weiss. Here, the way these prominent figures made an impact on the popularization of contemporary documentary theatre will be discussed. The second part will investigate the development of contemporary Anglo-American documentary theatre especially since 1990. It will emphasize that the role of individual witnessing, the criticism of the mainstream media and the preoccupation with raising awareness to the plight of oppressed groups come up as salient issues in contemporary documentary plays. This part will dwell on media's part in the invisibility and dehumanization of various socio-ethnic groups, which is extensively discussed in the critical and cultural scholarship.

The third part, which constitutes the dissertation's contribution to the field, will first underline the effects of frames and borders, which determine who does and does not belong to the house, on media and state politics. It will explain the rising interest in contemporary documentary theatre to respond to these frames and develop new forms of engagements with the Other. The chiefest of these engagements is the reconfigurations of hospitality between various agents in theatre (dramatists, actors, audience and the interviewed characters). After introducing the theoretical views on hospitality and on the power relations triggered by hospitality, I suggest that documentary theatre shatters the sovereignty of a specific community as 'the host', which often includes the dramatists and the audience 'at home'. It creates an approach to hospitality as a network in which the agents of theatre depend on and become haunted by one another. Finally, I am going to introduce the contents of the

chapters, which respectively investigate corporeal, commemorative, spectatorial and linguistic formations of hospitality in documentary theatre.

1.1 The real against the realist: early development of documentary theatre

The fact that the development of documentary theatre coexists with the proliferation of media and cinema in the 20th century is not a coincidence. The century saw revolutionary changes with the eruption of World War I and II and brought about the oppression, marginalization and suffering of different nations and ethnicities. The concern to inform more people about the existing social and political problems in the fastest way possible was influential in the use of cinematic projection on stage. This practice broke the three unities of Aristotle,[5] accentuated the multi-dimensionality of space and time in plays. The very 'moments' in which past incidents occurred began to be carried on stage. The extension of the past incidents into the 'presence' of the stage through projections led to an experience of the live as mediatized. Thereby, what was supposed to be real and factual by the audience entered in the mimetic domain of the stage, blurring the distinction between the two and bringing a new perception of reality in theatre.

Documentary theatre has developed out of the reactions against the realist tradition that dominated the end of 19th century. The mise-en-scène on the stage of 19th century realist play required the construction of the fourth wall, which made sure that the audience members cognitively separate themselves from the spatial and temporal positions of the characters. In *Modern Drama and Rhetoric of Theater* (1992), W. B. Worthen ascribes the framing function of the fourth wall to the

[5] In *Poetics*, as Aristotle focuses on the characteristics of a tragedy, he puts forward three unities which he requires for the success construction of a play: unity of time, place and action. These unities have been faithfully followed by many playwrights including the realist ones.

fascination with the camera in this century. In order to convey a sense of reality to the audience, dramatists depended on photographic objectivity. The mise-en-scène, which imitated the scene on a photograph, provided the audience with the external controlling gaze of a spectator. At the same time, it brought about an illusion of life-likeness. Yet, the aloof position of the audience in the realist plays hardly supported the goals of modern dramatists to draw attention to humanitarian and social problems caused by wars and mass violence. Besides, the Marxist association of 'real' problems of societies with class struggles formulated a platform in which the political was an indispensable part of the perception of reality. Thereby, particularly after 1920s, dramatists looked for new methods to raise the audience's awareness to the problems that oppress certain groups. They hoped to contribute to social activism and blur the distinction between the characters' and audience's positions in theatre.

At this juncture, Erwin Piscator and Bertolt Brecht reacted against the framed view of the camera, which – as Worthen also discusses in *Modern Drama and Rhetoric of Theater* – played a fundamental role in the stagecraft of 19th century realist theatre. The primary reality that Piscator and Brecht conveyed to their audience was the fact that their play was a construct. Additionally, in the modern world where the machinery began to substitute the human, technological tools such as filmic projections began to function like actors in their plays: "The film was a new gigantic actor that helped to narrate events. By means of it documents could be shown as part of the scenic background, figures and statistics. Simultaneous events in different places could be seen together." (Brecht, 1936/1964, p. 78). Still, for all the modification in theatrical techniques, the intention to capture 'an objective reality' constituted a significant motive in both practices. While the objective reality in realist tradition was based on a replica of how the world is seen from the camera's

eye, Piscator and Brecht's plays were predominantly concerned with eliminating subjectivity as they elucidated the problems of the social system. As a result, Piscator and Brecht's theatre made use of the documents as an objective 'evidence' of social operations.

The flourishing of German epic and expressionist theatre with the contributions of Piscator and Brecht played a major role in formulating the backbone of contemporary documentary theatre. The early examples of this genre led by these two key figures predominantly focused on the social formations which oppressed the working class.[6] Piscator, a pivotal figure in the blooming of epic and political theatre starting with the 1920s, put forward an alternative approach to the perception of reality that was influenced by the devastating consequences of World War I. His 1925 revue *Trotz Alledem!* [*In Spite of Eveything!*] is widely regarded as one of the earliest examples of documentary drama. Piscator constructed the play to stage the social and political history of Germany in front of the audience members who had only recently gone through the incidents represented. *Trotz Alledem!* covers the time span between the beginning of World War I and the assassination of Karl Liebknecht, one of the founders of Germany's Communist Party in 1919. The play is made up of a montage of the documents which provide factual information about the process.

In his construction of the play, rather than using the testimonial functions of human characters, Piscator preferred to treat the document as a main character that narrates the incidents. The projection of the documents on stage functioned as news media for the 1920s' audience. Dramatically the play depended on the director's

[6] The origination of Russian agit-prop theatre (also called as 'living newspaper') in the atmosphere of 1917 Revolution were quite influential in the formation of Piscator and Brecht's theatre and its concern with the working class.

organization of the projected scenes. Piscator's notes about the production of this play elucidate the close connection that he establishes between media and reality: "For the first time we were confronted with absolute truth as we ourselves had experienced it. It contained as many dramatic highlights and moments of suspense in fictional theatre, and it moved us every bit as much" (cited in Mason, 1977, pp. 263-264). In these words, "the absolute truth" already suggests Piscator's trust in the autonomy and authenticity of the media. It indicates his views on the credibility of the document. In addition, Piscator's statement underlines his presumption that the public experiences and interprets the 'truth' in the same way. This is also implied in his use of the word 'we' as the denominator of a homogenous collective body. Though the centralization of media and documentary material which "becomes a hero in [his] plays" is functional in emphasizing the culturally dominating system of media, the individuality of the characters loses significance (cited in Mason, 1977, p. 264). With regard to Piscator's style, Gregory Mason (1977) notes: "when characters appeared on stage, they were frequently abstracted, appearing sometimes in silhouette, with their dialogue transmitted through a loudspeaker" (p. 264). While Piscator and Brecht were interested in accentuating the social structures that controlled modern life, personal feelings and opinions of the oppressed and marginalized individuals were remarkably overshadowed.

Brecht's alienation technique, *der Verfremdungseffekt*, played a determining role in the elimination of character's emotions, which was significant in an objective treatment of the social issues according to Brecht. These alienation techniques included actors' detachment from the characters. In Brecht's plays, the fourth wall was often broken and the actors commented on the characters' behaviours. Stage effects and designs also made it clear to the audience that they were watching a play.

At this point, any kind of audience subjectivity and empathy for the character was undesirable for the dramatist, who aimed to explore the functioning of social structures rather than personal experiences. Brecht shared Piscator's views on the construction of theatre. For Piscator, theatre was "no longer stage against auditorium, but one big meeting hall, one big battlefield, one big demonstration" (cited in Mason, 1977, p. 264). In this understanding, reality did not allow for variations of individual evaluations. Besides, Brecht argued against an understanding of reality as an 'experience'[7]. Reality could not be restricted to a specific space and time. This opinion could also be observed in his attack of journalism and photography which – as he maintained– represented reality in a frame:

> The tremendous development of photojournalism has contributed to practically nothing to the revelation of the truth about the conditions in this world. On the contrary, photography, in the hands of the bourgeouise, has become a terrible weapon against the truth. The vast amount of pictured material that is being disgorged daily by the press and that seems to have the character of truth serves in reality only to obscure the facts. The camera is just as capable of lying as the typewriter. (cited in Grimm, 1975, p. 266)

Instead of concentrating on the moment, Brecht investigated the interconnections of different time spans to provide a representation of reality. Therefore, he widely made use of cinematic projections of past incidents in his plays and juxtaposed them with the presence of stage performance. Audience members were supposed to simultaneously take various spatial, temporal, social, political factors and relations into consideration. In this respect, Brecht intended to fill the gaps of a group of media (photography and press) with another medium (projections) rather than bringing the very capabilities of media (including theatre's own mediatory aspects) into question.

[7] See *Brecht on Art and Politics* edited by Steve Giles and Tom Kuhn (2003: 205)

The 1960s is a period in which documentary theatre began to be explored distinctively as a genre. Peter Weiss, who closely worked with Piscator for the direction of his plays, played a crucial role in the elucidation of documentary theatre's defining features. His essay "The Material and the Models: Notes Towards a Definition of Documentary Theatre" has the characteristics of a manifesto for the genre. Underlining the political consciousness of documentary theatre, Weiss sought to reexamine the recent public incidents before they were actually recorded in history as 'objective' narratives. The motives that he put forward for the staging of documentary theatre were parallel to the goals of historiography. For him, documentary theatre had to clarify the cause and effect of incidents. He stated: "the causes and relationships of decisive events which distinguish our time and which condition our future remain hidden from us" (Weiss, 1968/1971, p. 41). Weiss resisted against the prevalent narrativization of history. At this point, he aimed to develop a new plot out of the 'factual' materials that had been conveyed to public through media and history. This approach can be explicitly observed in the following words from "The Material and the Models": "documentary theatre refrains from all invention; it takes authentic material and puts it on the stage, unaltered in content, edited in form" (Weiss, 1968/1971, p. 41). According to this understanding, the dramatist demonstrates his/her political concerns through the way he / she handles the documents, which also determines the artistic and dramatic quality of the play.

Despite Weiss's objection to invention in documentary theatre, later playwrights such as David Hare and Robin Soans would not deny the use of invented material in their plays. Weiss's perception of documentary theatre was predominantly based on the deliberate selection and combination of authentic sources, which he used to problematize state policies. At this point, the editorial

effects of the dramatist differ from the editions of the news media and historiography because subjectivity is overtly declared in theatre: "Weiss's oppositional documentary theatre, a 'theatre of reportage', [is] the main counterbalance against a controlled media in which the 'rulers of the world hide their manipulations'" (Dawson, 1999, pp. 15-16). Contrary to Brecht's insistent emphasis on audience's objective contemplation of social and political systems, Weiss was more concerned with the protesting mood that could be directly conveyed to the audience (yet, he acknowledged that theatre could not have as stimulating effect as direct political action): "Documentary theatre takes sides. Many of its themes inevitably demand and assume judgments. In such a theatre, objectivity is likely to be merely a concept used by a ruling group to justify its actions" (Weiss, 1968/1971, p. 42). The connection that he establishes between objectivity and power exertion can be read as a criticism towards media footages and historiography. Both are liable to be abused by those in power (or those who seek to attain power) especially when the documents in media and history are considered 'unquestionable' due to their factuality. If political interests are concealed behind the objective language in these documents, the causes and effects of the oppression of different social or political groups cannot be thoroughly absorbed. Thereby, Weiss placed emphasis on the verbatim accounts of the characters and used them to illustrate the problems collectively experienced. Just as in Piscator's *Trotz Alledem! [In Spite of Everything!]*, the individual peculiarities of characters were overlooked in Weiss's documentary plays such as *The Investigation* [*Die Ermittlung*]. Yet, unlike Piscator, Weiss did not place technological medium at the center of his plays. Instead of media records and projections, he brought the testimonies of the characters to the foreground. For instance, because witnesses tell the incidents from their own perspectives in *The*

Investigation, objectivity is considerably defied. This practice brings Weiss's works closer to contemporary documentary plays which mostly depend on subjective evaluations.

The Investigation (1965), which is Weiss's most well-known documentary play, reenacts Auschwitz Trials in Frankfurt taking place between 1963 and 1965. Constructed in eleven 'cantos', the play picks up the testimonies of nine witnesses among hundreds in the trials. It illustrates the dynamics of oppression by emphasizing the collective experience of the Holocaust. The play eliminates the personal identities of the witnesses while the names of the defendants are disclosed. In order to explore what has not been conveyed to the public before by media, *The Investigation* remarkably makes use of the juridical space which provides immediate testimony to the public. In the play, narratives are formed through the dialogic relations among the judges, prosecutors, witnesses and defendants. The live experience of the Auschwitz trials is expected to be sustained through the live performance on stage. This practice turns the audience members into witnessing actors taking part in the process. At this point, the 'investigation' in the title is not only carried out by the judges and the prosecutors in the play. Rather, it is a public investigation that includes all the audience. Their humanitarian and civic responsibility to hear and evaluate the information is emphasized. Similar to *The Investigation*, Rolf Hochhuth's *The Deputy* (*Der Stellvertreter*) and Heinar Kipphardt's *In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer* (*In der Sache J. Robert Oppenheimer*) are among the salient documentary plays which retrace the gaps of information about World War II. Both of them were directed by Piscator in 1963 and 1964 respectively. The preoccupation of these plays with the causes and effects of oppression and human rights violations has remarkably influenced the proliferation

of British and American documentary theatre in in the post-Cold War period. With the dramatic increase in civil disorders and global terrorism, contemporary British and American plays have sought new ways to explore, represent and problematize reality.

1.2 The rise of Anglo-American documentary theatre

Despite Piscator, Brecht and Weiss's notable contributions to documentary theatre, their repercussions were not strongly felt in the British and American theatre. Productions which were developed out of the techniques of these dramatists were either restricted to local theatres or short-lived. In the US, the influence of these figures gave way to the staging of plays referred to as 'Living Newspaper'. Produced by Federal Theatre Project,[8] which was funded by the US government between 1935 and 1939, Living Newspaper consisted of plays tackling with social issues that were widely debated in the country. Plays such as *Triple-A Plowed Under* (1936), *Power* (1937), *One Third of a Nation* (1938) looked for solutions to agricultural matters, problems pertaining to access to electricity and housing crises respectively. These plays relied on documents and statistics that gave factual information about the existing domestic problems. They intended to raise the awareness of public to the plight of mostly lower class people living in slums. According to Hallie Flanagan, (the director of Federal Theatre Project), what constituted the core of Living Newspaper was "the struggle of many kinds of people to understand the natural and social and economic forces around them and to achieve through these forces a better life for more people" (cited in Stott, 1973, 108). The name "Living Newspaper" suggested a preoccupation to imitate media and press. Though Flanagan (1938/1963)

[8] Founded with the support of Franklin Roosevelt's administration, The Federal Theatre Project intended to provide employment for the unemployed actors during the Great Depression.

promised an "authoritative dramatic treatment" (141), the project was exposed to frequent censorship by the government, which apparently regarded the use of these social records as a manipulative source of power. The plays in this project often confronted imputations about anti-state and communist propaganda. The project came to an end in 1939. In the later decades, pivotal events such as Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam War triggered the productions of politically conscious and assertive documentary plays such as Martin B. Duberman's *In White America* (1964) and Emily Mann's *Still Life* (1981). Yet, their recognition was mostly restricted to the local scale.

In the UK, the influence of Piscator and Brecht was also felt in regional theatres in 1960s. A turning point for the sprouting of British documentary theatre was Berliner Ensemble's visit in 1956. Joan Littlewood, who was highly influenced by Brecht's dramatic techniques, made use of similar methods in her Theatre Workshop. Early examples of British documentary plays such as *Oh, What a Lovely War!* (1963) were produced there. Though the play was essentially a musical, it satirized the war and caricaturized the military and state figures by using documentary material. The dramatist's interpretations of the war without complete faithfulness to the factual materials contributed to the play's dissident tone. Instead of laying claim on reality and adopting a journalistic mission, the play was interested in developing a peculiar interpretation of what was widely known as reality. This attitude differentiated the play from its contemporaries. Another salient figure of the period was Peter Cheeseman, who produced plays in Stoke-on-Trent as the artistic director of The New Victoria Theatre. Plays such as *The Jolly Potters* (1964) and *The Knotty* (1966) particularly dealt with the local histories and their effects on local communities. Fringe theatres, which functioned as alternative and experimental

political theatres in the UK, played quite an effective role in the development of documentary theatre during the 1960s and the 1970s. David Hare and David Edgar were among the notable figures who produced plays protesting against contemporary government policies of the UK. For example, *England's Ireland* (1972), which was a collaborate production of Edgar, Hare and some other dramatists such as Howard Brenton and Trevor Griffiths, was critical of the occupation of Northern Ireland.

Local productions in the 1960s and the 1970s played a considerable role in the prodigious development of documentary theatre both in the UK and the US during the later decades. Documentary plays have gained significance in British and American theatre especially since the 1990s, when postmodernism and its essential skepticism towards reality became a widely debated topic as a school of criticism.[9] Many Anglo-American documentary plays, which will be exemplified in the following pages, have emerged from the search to cope with the changing attitudes towards reality. For all the focus on objective reality in early documentary plays, these plays have undermined the very idea of truth in a world dominated by media and information pollution. They have also highlighted the individual reporting and interpretation, which have been used as resistance to government policies. In "New Documentarism on Stage: Documentary Theatre in New Times" (2008), Derek Paget attributes the blooming of documentary theatre in 1990s to the "post-Reagan / post-Thatcher privatization of political culture in which onus of dissent is increasingly on individuals in a society, aided and abetted by a media those individuals can never wholly trust". (pp. 134-135). The "onus of dissent" that Paget refers to is shared by a

[9] Two salient figures in the discussions of postmodernism, Lyotard and Baudrillard particularly in their works *The Postmodern Condition* (1979) and *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981) respectively undermines the concept of objective reality. While the former argues that grand narratives are replaced by metanarratives with the rise of postmodernity, the latter maintains that simulacrum, or the imitation, has replaced the real in postmodern societies.

broad variety of individual voices in documentary plays. Such an emphasis on diverse voices not only subverts the unilateral narratives of media, but also defies the uniformity in the idea of nation (which was already an emphasized topic in the policies of Reagan and Thatcher).

Incorporating the voices of individuals from different social, racial, ethnic and political communities, documentary plays put forward the gaps of social and historical narratives which are presented as reality by media. They also draw attention to the oppression and injustice which can be caused by the "talismanic authority" of the document (Forsyth & Megson, 2009, p. 3). In documentary theatre, individual evaluations of significant local and global incidents constitute a significant form of resistance to the institutions which control the local and global flow of information. Since this dialogic structure brings alternative interpretations to the foreground, the dynamics of mass violence, suffering and human vulnerability can be further grasped.

As the spin of information is frequently used in media activities, the way individuals contribute to this spin and the way they are affected by it stand out as salient concerns of contemporary documentary plays. While some communities can be silenced due to misrepresentation or concealment in media, documentary plays seek to address this problem by highlighting personal testimony:

> Politics domestically (even internationally after the collapse of the USSR and the end of Cold War negative certainties) has mutated into a depthless, programmeless form that has over time increasingly privileged the figure of the *witness* as the last best hope of oppositional information. And increasingly this witness testifies to the failures of institutions charged with duties of care that seek to mask their failures through discourses of management that extend to information. (Paget, 2008, 138-139)

The uniform profile of nation in media narratives can obscure the distinct identities of different individuals and communities. Through the use of witnesses and

testimonies in documentary plays, they can be given more visibility. Especially in the UK and the US, the racial and ethnic diversity necessitates constant re-examinations of media's nation construction. In this respect, documentary plays effectively present and problematize the ways media influences different social groups' proximity to one another. They often focus on the testimonies of groups which share the same districts but develop emotions of fear and even hate for one another. As these testimonies are brought together on stage, the extent of visibility that media provides for them is brought into question.

Through testimonies and witnessing, individuals themselves undertake the function of documents. The dialogic relation between them counteracts the idea of 'objective' reality conveyed through media footages. Here, reality becomes a slippery notion which varies by the reception and interpretations of incidents. After all, media footages themselves are a product of interpretation formed through the edition, selection and framing of specific incidents. Though documentary theatre widely makes use of the records and footages that circulate around the mainstream and social media, it also underlines that the spin of information is an inevitable part of mediation. Therefore, instead of creating an illusion that they are presenting the truth and facts, contemporary documentary plays establish themselves on doubt against the authority and autonomy of the document and its mediative function. They foreground the subjectivity of information, which – according the Carol Martin (2009) – makes them 'morally superior' to media (p. 87). At this point, though contemporary documentary plays are stylistically quite similar to Bertolt Brecht and Erwin Piscator's epic and political plays (due to their use of narrators and/or screens on stage, arrangement of stage designs and lighting to accentuate theatricality, direct address to the audience etc.), their focus on audience engagement sets them apart.

The public forum which is opened up in contemporary documentary plays emotionally and mentally engage the audience in mediation's effects on the apprehension of the Other's life. As a result, the depiction of problems pertaining to human rights violations necessitates the elimination of emotional distancing which is required in Brecht and Piscator's plays. The audience is expected to alienate themselves not from the oppressed characters but from the conventional techniques of representation in media.

The first notable examples of documentary plays in the US after 1990s revolve around the interrelations of people from different communities by concentrating on domestic problems. Anna Deavere Smith's *Fires in the Mirror* (1992) and *Twilight Los Angeles 1992* (1994) effectively illustrate the dynamics of local struggles through interviews and examine their echoes in the US as a whole. Riots arising from the outbreaks of existing racial and ethnic tensions constitute a significant part of Smith's two plays. *Fires in the Mirror* is made up of the verbatim monologues of Black and Jewish citizens interviewed by Smith, which include their perceptions of their own identities and collective consciousness as well as their responses to Crown Heights riots[10]. *Twilight Los Angeles 1992* similarly depicts the evaluations of US citizens from miscellaneous racial backgrounds about the Los Angeles riots and its consequences. Both plays seek to formulate a platform as democratically as possible through the multiplicity of sociological variables behind the individual voices. They focus on the very moments in which individuals speak for themselves and narrate their memories and experiences. The plays also avoid introducing a specific idea of 'reality' which can explain to conflicts, disintegration

[10] Breaking out in 1991, the riots started with the accident in which two Guyanese immigrant children named Gavin Cato and Angelo Cato was struck by one of the vehicles in the motorcade of Menachem Schneerson, leader of Jewish Hasidic community. The accident brought about violent clashes and killings between the Blacks and the Jews.

and polarization in the society. Rather, the interviews give the clues of how the perception of reality is shaped by different perspectives and affects people's lives. The engagement of the audience with the Other, who often has a spectral presence in the society, depends on these moments of self-expression which bears traces of human vulnerability.

Since the prejudices about the members of some communities may prevent a sound communication with them in public, the representation of their personal experiences in theatre creates a shared space for social exchange. Any individual testimony that reveals the gaps of what has been widely known as truth gives the audience a humanitarian responsibility to interpret the existing information just as the characters do during their interviews. The focus on this responsibility has also led many documentary dramatists to stage plays which represent actual trials of locally and globally debated incidents and to look into the motives behind different forms of violence. Moises Kaufman and the members of Tectonic Theater Project's *The Laramie Project* (2000) is a notable documentary play that elaborates on hate crime. It investigates the murder of a gay student named Matthew Shepard in Wyoming and the succeeding legal process and arrests. In the UK, similar concerns to explore the causes and effects of human rights violations have prompted the plays of the Theatre (previously called 'the Tricycle Theatre')[11], which has developed into a significant centre of documentary theatre since 1980. Tricycle Theatre has produced famous tribunal plays such as *The Colour of Justice* by Richard Norton-Taylor (1999), *Guantanamo: Honor Bound to Defend Freedom* (2004) by Victoria Brittain and Gillian Slovo, *Srebrenica* (2005) by Nicolas Kent and *The Riots* (2011) by Gillian

[11] Opened in 1980 and located in London, Kiln Theatre (formerly Tricycle Theatre) is renowned for its staging of verbatim plays after 1994 with the leadership of Nicolas Kent.

Slovo. Representing the dialogues in courtrooms, these plays mark that the responsibility to reveal, learn and discuss the happenings is not specific to those who are brought to justice: it is also a public responsibility. While the audience members get to know the incidents they haven't personally witnessed, their witnessing in auditorium gives them a humanitarian responsibility to carry the testimonies out of the borders of theatre.

One other subject covered in documentary plays especially for the last decade has been the problems of immigration and civil wars / strives. "The sense of an urgent need among refugees and asylum seekers to address misrepresentation by publicly telling their own stories (if only by proxy) and an equally strong imperative among audiences to bear witness to such testimony" have fostered the production of documentary plays on immigration policies, refugees and their problems (Gilbert and Lo, 191). The complications and misunderstandings in how citizens of a country and refugees encounter each other are modelled in these plays. Within Anglophone theatre, Sonja Lindén's *Crocodile Seeking Refugee* (2005) and *Asylum Monologues* (2006), Victoria Brittain's *The Meaning of Waiting* (2010), Tamasha Theatre Company's *The Arrival* (2013) and Clare Summerskill's *Rights of Passage* (2016) are among the British documentary/ verbatim plays that touch upon the adversities refugees confront. Australian stage constitutes productions such as Sidetrack Theatre's *Citizen X* (2002), Michael Gurr's *Something to Declare* (2003), Ros Horin's *Through the Wire* (2004) and *The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe* (2013) and La Boite Theatre Company's *The Village* (2017). In the US, Erik Jensen & Jessica Blank's *Aftermath* (2010) dwells on the lives and memories of Iraqi refugees moving to Jordan after the American invasion. Particularly the emphasis on the distinctions of us vs. them in these plays has underlined the significance of

frames, borders and security ‘at home’. Thereby, contemporary documentary theatre is shaped by a motive to bring new ways of dealing with these frames.

1.3 Reconfigurations of hospitality in documentary theatre

Even though a considerable amount of research has been done on documentary theatre, how this genre responds to the power relations among different agents of theatre and what kind of alternative engagement mechanisms are developed among them need to be further studied. Carol Martin (2010) suggests that documentary theatre, which rather focused on local and national incidents towards the end of 20th century, has mostly addressed global problems and conflicts following 9/11 (p. 24). Military interventions, migrations and refugee crises are among the salient subjects that contemporary documentary plays have addressed to. International repercussions of these issues provide strong insight into the ways different communities interact with one another. Yet, these interactions do not happen smoothly. They are affected by social, religious, ethnic or linguistic frames which differentiate the members of communities and stimulate power struggles among them. In this respect, the reasons why documentary genre has been a popular genre to react to these borders and frames need to be further probed. At the same time, though the relationships and clashes between various societies are always covered in media, how documentary theatre, using techniques quite similar to media, differentiates itself from the media footages in its treatment of the subject matter is to be thoroughly analysed. Taking the frames and power relations between communities as a starting point, the following chapters will discuss that reconfigurations of hospitality emerge as primary ways of dealing with the frames both in media representations and in theatre.

1.3.1 Frames of hospitality: theoretical approaches

In a considerable number of critical and philosophical works on hospitality, frames emerge as a fundamental element that determines the nature of this concept. This is because the definitions of hospitality are based on the extent of (un)conditionality. It is 'the conditions' in hospitality which brings about the frames. In *Of Hospitality* (1997), which is perhaps the most significant treatise on this notion, Jacques Derrida elaborates on philosophical discussions about conditional and unconditional hospitality through Immanuel Kant's and Emmanuel Levinas's ethics in *Toward Perpetual Peace* (1795) and *Totality and Infinity* (1961), respectively. Levinas has suggested that unconditional hospitality entails the embrace of the absolute other without any rules and prerequisites. For him, the absolute other is indistinguishable: "a being that stands beyond every attribute, which would precisely have as its effect to qualify him, that is to reduce him to what is common to him and other beings" (Levinas, 1961/1969, p. 74). Thus, in unconditional hospitality, as Derrida underlines, the absolute other is welcomed without his identity being inquired into by the host: "one of the subtle and sometimes ungraspable differences between the foreigner and the absolute other is that the latter cannot have a name or a family name" (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000, p. 25). He goes on to argue that the very indistinguishability of the absolute other makes unconditional hospitality impossible. The host necessarily requires the outsider and the newcomer to reveal who they are and where they come from. He / she applies conditional hospitality which dictates laws and rules that the foreigner has to follow in the territory of the 'host'. Therefore, Derrida maintains that the law of pure hospitality, which requires an unconditional welcoming of the guest, is precluded by the (conditional) laws of hospitality. Frames are inevitable in the very practice of hospitality.

Though hospitality connotes an accommodation in a homely, secure and familiar space, it also inherently constitutes a door, a threshold, thus, a frame – as Derrida underlines in his *Of Hospitality*. For Derrida, a door is necessary for the host to check who will be admitted inside and who will not, which renders absolute and unconditional hospitality impossible. This is because unconditional hospitality necessitates the welcoming of another without even asking who he is. For such hospitality, there should not be a door: yet, every house does and must have one. This being the case, Derrida notes, doors and frames function as markers of host's sovereignty and control. At the same time, checking his guests through the doors of the house, the host also expects guests to follow his own rules.

Because the host has to retain his sovereign role, a power relation between the host and the guest becomes inevitable even though the host welcomes the guest with goodwill. After all, the guest is supposed to obey the rules of the host's house. For instance, Derrida marks that the foreigner, who does not speak the language of the host, is expected to express himself through translation and Derrida considers it a disruption, a violence. Thus, the sovereign role of the host sets him as the master of the house (often together with patriarchal, masculine characteristics). In "Hostipitality", he explains this relation with these words:

> hospitality is certainly, necessarily, a right, a duty, an obligation, the *greeting* of the foreign other [*l'autre étranger*] as a friend but on the condition that the host, the *Wirt*, the one who receives, lodges or *gives asylum* remains the patron, the master of the household, on the condition that he maintains his own authority in his own home, that he looks after himself and sees to and considers all that concerns him [*qu'il se garde et garde et regarde ce qui le regarde*] and thereby affirms the law of hospitality as the law of the household, *oikonomia*, the law of his household, the law of a place (house, hotel, hospital, hospice, family, city, nation, language, etc.), the law of identity which de-limits the very place of proffered hospitality and maintains authority over it. (Derrida, 2000b, p. 4)

At the same time, Derrida draws attention to the ambivalence of the Latin word ‘hostis’, which not only means ‘guest’ but also ‘enemy’ (as suggested in the word ‘hostility’), which points to the problem of drawing line between a guest and a parasite or an invader. A guest who does not conform to the order of the host may soon turn into an invader, posing a danger for the security and the sovereignty of the host. John Caputo (1997) suggests in *Deconstruction in A Nutshell*:

> There is an essential ‘self-limitation’ built right into the idea of hospitality, which preserves the distance between one's own and the stranger, between owning one's own property and inviting the other into one's home. So, there is always a little hostility in all hosting and hospitality, constituting a certain ‘hostil/pitality’. (p.110)

The power relationship between the host and the guest involves a state of being ‘hostage’. Derrida maintains that this state is mutually experienced by both parties. Pointing to French word ‘hôte’ which signifies both the giver and the receiver; the host and the guest, Derrida (1997/2000a) points to the ways the guest, who is given asylum by the host, becomes “the host’s host” (p. 125). On the one hand, the host provides the shelter and sets the rules, to which the guest is hostage. On the other hand, he is “prisoner of his place and his power, of his ipseity, of his subjectivity (his subjectivity is hostage)” (123). Thus, he is haunted by the guest, who is often marked as the deviant, the stranger. In this mutual relationship, the hegemony of a specific group is substantially broken.

Sara Ahmed in *Strange Encounters*, on the other hand, questions Derrida’s idea of hospitality in which the name / identity of the guest has to be forgotten. Rather, she puts forward an idea of hospitality which requires remembering of the names rather than forgetting. It is through this remembrance the encounters which “assimilates the Other in an economy of difference” (Ahmed, 2000, pp. 150 – 151). Tahar Ben Jelloun in his notable *French Hospitality* explores the treatment of

immigrants in French and marks that the rights of the immigrants are overshadowed by an emphasis on their duties as guest. Though the approaches to the Other varies in these accounts, the common tendency is to subvert the sovereignty or oppression of specific groups in the relation between the host and guest. Bearing this relation in mind, the following pages will explain how media's use of frames in the representation of marginalized communities constructs a relation of hospitality that prioritizes the host country and its citizens (their gaze, languages, memories and bodies). It will illustrate how documentary theatre can develop methods to undermine them.

1.3.2 Hospitality in media and the response of documentary theatre

A form of conditional hospitality is also commonly found in mass media as it often frames both its subject matter and its spectators. One of the prevalent criticisms raised at media institutions is the fact that they determine what and who will be presented to public. Among the most salient critical works which question the credibility of media depictions (especially the depiction of the oppressed), Judith Butler's *Precarious Life* (2004) impressively focuses on the ways in which media sets the parameters of 'grievable' and 'ungrievable' lives and influences the collective (mostly national) apprehension of the lives of the Other. Her discussion of media representations is particularly notable in accentuating the way how these lives are ignored due to the selection and framing of the mainstream media. According to Butler, the narratives of the mainstream media determine the grievability of human life by bringing the familiarity of the victim or the oppressed to the foreground (if the oppressed is someone we can relate to, his / her life will be grievable for the audience). It also silences the voices of the Other by putting forward specific 'faces'

(e.g. Bin Laden or Saddam Hussein) that substitute the bodies of the victims and make their suffering hidden (Butler, 2004, p. 141). In other words, the visibility of specific faces always comes at the expense of invisibility of the oppressed, whose existing pain and problems are not brought into a public view. At the same time, framing is also influential in shaping the collective memory of a society, which remarkably contributes to building communities and collective identities. As the lines that determine who are familiar, trustable and who belong to home are drawn in media depictions, the profile of the foreign and the uncanny is automatically shaped. A frame and a border is already inherent in the word 'we'. Media's approach to the idea of 'we' prioritizes the gaze and expression of specific communities as it anticipates and tries to fulfil their spectatorial expectations. Yet, as Judith Butler and Sara Ahmed also discuss in their works,[12] this attitude very often results in a lack of humanitarian responsibility for others and an inability to apprehend their suffering and concerns due to the dehumanization it brings about.

In order to undermine the spectrality of ungrievable lives, Butler (2004) underlines the necessity of coming up with new forms of visibility for the oppressed: "The task at hand is to establish modes of public seeing and hearing that might well respond to the cry of the human within the sphere of appearance" (p. 147). Though she does not overtly specify what she suggests with these modes of public seeing and hearing, her criticism with respect to the media predominantly targets the unilateral forms of representation turning the audience into self-centred spectators. At this point, her solution rather depends on dialogic relations among the representing and the (un-/mis-/under-/over-) represented ones. As she criticizes the communication that predominantly moves from media to the lives of the citizens, she looks for a

[12] See Cultural Politics of Emotion (2004) by Sara Ahmed

space which can allow for the self-expression of those who are influenced by the manipulations in the representation. A dialogic relation among the members of different political, social and racial groups can enable the repetition and subversion of the language of the media with new personal utterances.[13] Such a dialogic relation which can be shaped by questions and answers is prone to open up new viewpoints with respect to the existing representations about the Other. At this point, I maintain, documentary theatre provides an appropriate space for a mutual, dialogic relationship through which hegemony of a specific party is shattered. It brings about a new approach to hospitality that considerably differs from the one adopted by media.

In order to understand the role of hospitality on stage, Hélène Cixous' "Hospitality?" [L'Hospitalité?], which is included in the program notes of Ariane Mnouchkine and the Théâtre du Soleil's *Le Dernier Caravansérail*, provides an effective framework. In this text, Cixous elucidates the resistant and inquisitive function of theatre to apprehend human relations driven by state policies.

> To be hospitable to a human being, just as we are to the cat, we don't wait for it to repay us with goodness or to say thank you. In a neutral purity.
> There are people who are capable of this.
> The States, by definition, no. Today in Europe, hospitality, the foreigner, the right of asylum, immigration are under question. Everything having changed, lines of solidarity just as much as the causes of hatred.
> In this today, Theatre, like Philosophy, searches in order to understand what has happened to the hospitality that came from the Bible or from the Greeks, what is happening to it, what will happen to it, what we can want to elaborate on in new ethical attitudes and by new juridical and political devices.
> (Cixous, 2003/2016, p. 40)

Cixous maintains that theatre undermines the conditional hospitality of the states: it opens up a space in which one can host the others, the foreigners [*l'etranger*] by submitting to them. In the program notes (2003/2016), she also draws attention to the possible problems that can arise as one empathizes with the Other: "How can we put

[13] See *Excitable Speech* (1997) by Judith Butler.

ourselves as near as possible to the place of the other without taking her over" (p. 28)? Lara Stevens (2016) marks "rather than trying to remake the other in the image of the self or the self-same, Cixous challenges artists and spectators alike to remake themselves as the stranger to assert the right to be an other" (pp. 110-111). Though Cixous (2003/2016) uses the word 'theatre' as general concept and does not refer to a specific genre in her discussion of hospitality, the words "new ethical attitudes" as well as Cixous' dramatic oeuvre point to a divergence from the traditional forms of representation (p. 40). Yet, she does not specify how theatre shatters and differs from the typical and familiarized ways of encounter with the Other, the chiefest of which is media. A question that could be asked is 'why and how does the encounter in theatre can build up a stronger sense of hospitality than the daily encounters with the Other in media'? In order to understand the formations of hospitality in theatre, it is necessary to inquire what has been presented as 'the reality' about the Other, the stranger or the guest. The way theatre challenges this reality can provide notable insights into a non-hierarchical concept of hospitality. In this sense, this dissertation marks that documentary plays specifically construct such a relation of hospitality because they are mutually constructed with the Other.

In documentary plays, verbatim accounts of the Other are in dialogue with the ways dramatist edits his or her material. As Janelle Reinelt (2009) explains, "the documentary is not in the object but in the relationship between the objects, its mediators (its artists, historians, authors) and its audiences" (p. 7). In this relationship, none of the agents has a full control over the representation. Echoing Cixous' approach to hospitality, documentary plays often depict the audience as foreigners with regard to the Other. They include the verbatim accounts of real people about the very communities that audience members belong to. Thus, the

audience and dramatists' position as the Other is not based on how they 'imagine' themselves as the strangers: this condition is a significant element that distinguishes documentary theatre from other genres in terms of hospitality. In addition, because documentary plays often point to their own processes of formulation, they break the illusion that the audience encounters with the Other 'im-mediately.' In many cases, the dramatists do not disappear from the view: even if they are not seen on the stage, their presence can be felt in the characters' response to the audiences. Such practices effectively set forth the reciprocal relationships among the agents in theatre.

Contemporary documentary plays have paid particular attention to the problems and concerns of marginal and oppressed groups. They have aimed to stage that which has not been publicized sufficiently and/or rightly. They have also sought to develop various techniques to formulate an interrelation between the audience and oppressed characters. In addition, documentary theatre not only investigates how the media influences the audience through frames, but also seeks to deconstruct these frames. Hence, it substantially differs from the realist and naturalist theatre which - as Worthen discusses in "Chekhov's Camera"- makes use of the framed view of a camera. It is through the deconstruction of the frames that alternative perspectives and engagements with the Other can be observed. At the same time, Paget (2009) argues that naturalist theatrical forms "dominate, arguably, because they suit the ideological purposes of the principal operators and consumers of theatre" (p. 225). This condition makes non-naturalist genres such as documentary theatre a favourable option for anti-capitalist political theatre groups and companies.

It is quite meaningful that the interest in documentary theatre in the West has increased following September 11 and the War on Terror in which the US government took strict measures to reinforce its sovereignty. At the same time, this

period also marks common distrust towards media regarding the representations of political and military initiatives of the US. For example, in the 2002 lecture "The Journalist from Mars", Noam Chomsky expostulates the "journals of commentary, analysis, and opinion; in fact, the intellectual culture generally" for serving specifically the interests of US state and political agenda during the War on Terror (p. 69). Due to the social and international policies of the US, which are supported by media, there has been a noticeable increase in the fear and anxiety about the 'strangers' in and out of the society. With the politics of 'you are either with us, or against us',[14] whom to admit in the home (the country) and whom to trust have gained extra significance. Individuals and communities who are classified as the dangerous other have been portrayed in media as potential intruders and even 'ghosts' which are to come. Concordantly, the fact that refugee problems and xenophobia have become salient subjects in contemporary documentary plays stems from similar anxieties about those who don't belong to home. Moreover, the frames are not constructed only for those who come from other countries. As it will be analysed in the following two chapters, the very citizens within a country who believe that they are not rightly represented in mass media may feel as the Other in their own country. Thus, documentary plays also explore the dimensions of hospitality that a state shows its own citizens.

This dissertation is going to emphasize that documentary theatre reconfigures the idea of hospitality in media by manifesting the flexibilities of the terms 'host' and 'guest'. Because documentary plays often highlight the dramatists, audience and interviewees / characters' interdependence and networking, the privileged position of

[14] This politics is particularly shaped by the former US president George W. Bush's words "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists" during his address to the Congress on September 20, 2001.

a specific community is undermined (this community mostly includes the dramatists and the audience who watch the performance within a safe space). Thus, even though documentary theatre cannot completely remove the borders among different agents in theatre, it narrows them down as much as possible as it illustrates the mutual relations between these agents. A fundamental factor that defies the authority of the 'host' dramatist is documentary theatre's manifestation of its own gaps as a form of mediation. One the one hand, selection, editing and framing is also a significant part of documentary plays as in media: "sovereignty can only be exercised by filtering, choosing, and thus by excluding and doing violence" (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, p. 55). On the other hand, the fact that documentary theatre does not conceal its mediative process and its position as a construct defies the controlling and sovereign position of the dramatist. Derek Paget, Carol Martin, Alison Forsyth and Chris Megson also point to the self critical approach of documentary theatre: Paget (2009) marks that one of the functions of documentary theatre is to "interrogate the very notion of documentary" (p. 228). Similarly, according to Martin (2010), the genre "critique[s] the operations of both documentary and fiction" (p. 22). In the introduction to *Get Real: Documentary Theatre Past and Present*, Forsyth and Megson (2009) maintain "documentary performance today is often as much concerned with emphasizing its own discursive limitations, with interrogating the reification of material evidence in performance, as it is with the real-life story or event it is exploring" (p. 3). As documentary theatre refrains from naturalist and realist tradition that depends substantially on the fourth wall, it blurs the borders between stage and the real world as much as possible and invites the audience to act on humanitarian responsibility. However, in doing that, it does not centralize the audience's viewpoint and ways of expression. Rather, it is underlined that the

audience is haunted by the characters / the Other: to put in Derrida's terms, the audience members, who watch the play in their home country and seemingly assume the position of a host, become hostage to the Other. Because they 'know' about the suffering of the Other, they have the responsibility to apprehend it.

One of the most important elements that bring contemporary documentary theatre and hospitality together is the impact of subjectivity on both. In Levinas's approach to hospitality, for instance, subjectivity depends on 'opening oneself to the Other', on an exposure. Derrida argues that this exposure and ipseity is what turns the 'host' subject into a hostage to the Other. A similar exposure is observed in documentary plays through the accounts of individual witnesses. While the characters expose themselves to the audience members, they are somehow 'detained' on stage. Yet, this is not a one-sided experience. As different voices express their opinions on a widely debated subject, it is not only the characters who are questioned: the audience watching the performance in their safe space is put into question as well, which considerably echoes Derrida's viewpoints on hospitality. Derrida (1997/2000a) asserts that the host asks questions to the foreigner such as "who are you? where do you come from? what do you want? do you want to come? or what are you getting at? etc." (p. 131). Yet, he adds, the host is also "above all, even earlier" presented with "the question *of* the foreigner as question *come from* abroad. And thus of response or responsibility" (p. 131). Likewise, in documentary plays, the characters do not just answer the interviewers' questions: the characters interrogate the dramatists and the audience with their own perspectives and expressions as well. The very presence of the Other on stage is itself a question directed at the audience members and this question checks up on their identity and responsibility as humans. The subjectivity prevents the sovereignty and prioritization

of a specific community. In "Our Reflection Talks Back" (2017), Carol Martin explains the emphasis on subjectivity in documentary genre with the words below:

> In the 21st century, theatre of the real, including documentary theatre, has several defining characteristics, including the particularization of subjectivity, the rejection of a blanket universality, an acknowledgment of the contradictions of staging the real within the frame of the fictional, and questioning the relationship between facts and truth. (para. 15)

Subjectivity is accentuated through documentary plays' manifestation of their own mediational gaps and limits, of their position as a construct and of the accentuation of individual testimonies. It also contributes to reciprocal relation of the audience and the Other to a great extent. As the comfort zone of the audience is challenged, the frame that separates the audience and the characters is weakened. In this way, separation with borders leaves its place to interaction.

In this regard, the following chapters will explore how documentary theatre brings new approaches to hospitality through its treatment of the body, collective memory, spectatorship and language and how it subverts media's hierarchical understanding of hospitality. Chapter 2, which is entitled "Corporeal Hospitality in Documentary Theatre: Reconfigurations of the Other's Face in Twilight Los Angeles 1992", will focus on how documentary theatre can foster a mutual perception of hospitality through acting. In the play the humanitarian engagement is cherished through the actor's embracement of the Other's body through what is called 'other-oriented acting'. Here, instead of imagining the character's emotions and experiences with regard to her own sensation memory, Smith imitates the mimics and gestures of her interviewees by exposing her own race and gender, which already points to the performance as a construct. Smith's co-presence with her interviewees during her performance defamiliarizes the sense of affect that sticks to specific bodies. Thus, this act remarkably challenges the dehumanization of the Other's face, which is – as

Judith Butler notes – often observed in the mainstream media (according to Butler's view, the representation and circulation of specific faces in media dehumanizes the social, ethnic and racial groups which are associated with these faces. Thus, their lives are often considered 'ungrievable'). In this act, it is not just Smith's body that hosts the voice of the Other during performance; Smith also adopts the verbal and bodily language of the Other. The sense of liminality in her acting substantially contributes to the weakening of the frames between the audience and characters in Smith's performance.

Like the second chapter; Chapter 3, entitled "Commemorative Hospitality in Documentary Theatre: Revisiting the Collective Memory in *Sivas 93*", will explore the dynamics of hospitality in a local / national context and analyse the consequences of marginalization among the very citizens of a country. Yet, in this case the focus will be on how documentary theatre revisits the collective memory and establishes new relations of hospitality with the dead, the absent and the victimized. In this respect, the chapter will dwell on Genco Erkal's *Sivas 93*. Exploring how domestic politics give an identity to state, it will maintain that this identity may lead to the oppression of those with different identities. With references to the local media's stimulation of violence, also criticized by the play, the chapter will scrutinize the way media is manipulative in the construction of archives and repertoires, which considerably shape the collective memories. Pointing to the homelike aspects of the memory, the archive and the repertoire, the chapter will elaborate on how their construction may posit different communities as the unheimlich and the ghost. Presenting the incidents in a ritual-like manner, *Sivas 93* makes it clear that the audiences are haunted by the what is treated as the ghost and the absent: they become the latter's hostages. Presenting the documents through which the ghost 'speaks', the

play seeks to accentuate the hospitable relations with victimized people through revisiting and recollection.

In Chapter 4, entitled "Spectatorial Hospitality in Documentary Theatre: Rethinking Media Spectatorship in *The Fear of Breathing*", the scope will move from the local and the national to the global relations. This chapter will illustrate the way audiences are framed and interpellated in media as the citizens and hosts of a country, as those who 'belong' to a country. It will be emphasized that such an interpellation often risks putting the audience in the shoes of voyeurs. At the same time, this approach risks prioritizing the spectatorial expectations of the audience rather than the concerns of the oppressed. In the light of these issues, the chapter will scrutinize how the audience and dramatists are put into positions of foreigners. The play presents the audience with the ways the interviewees / characters see and even frame them. As the characters address the dramatists (and thereby the audience) as if they were tourists, the very motives of the audience to watch a documentary play about Syrian revolution are put into question. The play seeks to give an active position to the audience by inviting them to a public network which allows for the the plight of the Other. Thereby, it intends to carry the hospitable relations between the audience and other communities out of the borders of theatre.

Chapter 5: "Linguistic Hospitality in Documentary Theatre: Mediating the Other's Voice in Translation in *Aftermath*" will explore how the prioritization of a specific group's language and expressions can be challenged by documentary theatre. Drawing from Derrida's expression that the host imposes his own language to the foreigner, the chapter will point to the ways oppressed people from different countries cannot usually self-express in their own language. Rather, the audience learns about them through translation. In contrast to media footages, which impose

the audience's language on the Other through translation and put their audience in the shoes of a host, the play manifests the very process and problems of translation. Thus, it challenges the illusion that the narratives of the characters in their own language completely conform to their translated versions. By including refugee-characters' native language and presenting them in their domestic spaces, the play breaks the privileged position of the audiences and their language. While the audiences in media are conventionally been treated as the host because they watch the depictions in their own country, the play, similar to *The Fear of Breathing* in Chapter 4, puts them in the shoes of foreigners.

Though every documentary play may have their own ways of evaluating and reconfiguring hospitality, the chapters are going to scrutinize the most salient ones. However, the similarities among *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, *Sivas 93*, *The Fear of Breathing* and *Aftermath* in terms of their depictions of corporeal, commemorative, spectatorial and linguistic hospitality will be referred to throughout the dissertation. In addition, apart from these four plays, the dissertation will bring up examples from some other documentary plays too and point at their analogous practices of hospitality along the way.

CHAPTER 2

CORPOREAL HOSPITALITY IN DOCUMENTARY THEATRE: RECONFIGURATIONS OF THE OTHER'S FACE IN *TWILIGHT LOS ANGELES 1992*

> We've been portrayed as white racists.
> One of the most disturbing things, and a lot of the jurors
> said that
> The thing that bothered them that they received in the mail
> more
> than anything else,
> more than the threats, was a letter from the KKK
> saying,
> "We support you, and if you need our help, if you want to
> join
> our organization,
> we'd welcome you into our fold."
> And we all just were:
> No, oh!
> God! (Smith, 1994, p. 73)

The above quoted words belong to an anonymous juror in the Simi Valley trial, where four white policemen (Stacey C. Koon, Timothy E. Wind, Laurence M. Powell, Theodore J. Briseno) had beaten Rodney King were acquitted as a result of the jury's decision in 1992. In March 1991, Rodney King, an African American citizen living in Los Angeles were chased by the police for speeding. King subsequently stated that he escaped because he had been drunk and already on probation. When he finally stopped his car, the policemen attacked him with their batons. The beating was videotaped by a witness. The incident caused harsh reaction after the videotape circulated on TVs. As it has also been stated in the introductory chapter, the acquittal led to a public indignation in Los Angeles, which is known as 'Los Angeles Riots', as well as a rising anger toward the jury members.

This being the case, how would a news channel or newspaper would portray the speaker and his words? Considering that the anonymity of the juror is to be sustained, the speaker's face would either be completely concealed or blurred. Maybe his voice would be distorted in order to prevent recognition and his gender would not be revealed. Nevertheless, because of media's essential claims of objectivity and factuality with regard to the incident, the primary information that cannot be obfuscated about his identity is that he is a 'white' citizen. After all, it can hardly be expected in public that a black person receives an invitation of membership from the Ku Klux Klan. Otherwise, it would be a separate news source for the media. While one's body and language are among the chief signifiers of race in media depictions, what effects can be made if these very words are uttered by a black woman facing her audience on stage? In 1992, Anna Deavere Smith - a black woman actress, dramatist and academician - interviewed and studied various people involved in and/or witnessing the process and consequences of the Los Angeles Riots. She finally enacted them in her famous one-woman performance *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*. Throughout the play, she aptly demonstrates the codes of identification and behaviour that are attributed to specific racial and ethnic communities in a society. She gives strong clues about the way these codes are used and stimulated by mass media. At the same time, her performance is influential in terms of arousing different affective sentiments and empathy of the audience, who is already familiarized with the frames that mass media uses to represent various communities.

With a focus on Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, this chapter will elaborate on the ways acting methods in documentary theatre may contribute to the promotion of humanitarian awareness and activism of the audience. In this regard, the chapter will investigate how documentary theatre, presenting an

alternative to the prevalent media representations, influences the audience's perception of the face of the Other. Emmanuel Levinas's evaluations regarding the concept of 'face' and Judith Butler's views on the affinities among mass media, face and dehumanization of the Other will be paid particular attention. The possible repercussions of these views on acting in documentary theatre will be analysed. Though Levinas maintains that 'face' humanizes the Other in *Totality and Infinity,* Butler notes in *The Precarious Life* that mass media frequently puts forward specific faces to dehumanize certain ethnic, racial or religious groups. This condition results in a paradox in terms of the effects of the 'face'. Anna Deavere Smith enacts people from varying races, ages and gender without making her face look like them. What will be argued throughout this chapter is that Smith's performance sets a notable example to capabilities of performance in documentary plays to open up public spaces for raising humanitarian awareness. As she strikes a blow against the consuetudinary representations of the Other's face in mass media, she conveys a sense of hospitality that is shared with the Other. On the one hand, just like media footages, Smith acts like a host: she determines whose voice will be admitted to the public's view and how long they will be presented. She surrogates the (non-present) body of the Other with her own. On the other hand, she also "inhabit(s) the speech pattern of another, and walk(s) in the speech of another", which turns herself into a guest with regard to the character that she enacts (Smith, 1993, p. xxvii). Both Smith and her audience are haunted by the voice of the Other. Because she functions both as a host and a guest at the same time, she defies the hierarchical position that privileges the media(tor)'s view. Thus, due to the accentuation of an equal position with the interviewed characters, empathy can be more easily developed in theatre than in media footages.

Even though the critics of Smith denounce her for caricaturizing and stereotyping her interviewees, her acting – as she has also underlined in Carol Martin's 1993 interview "The Word Becomes You"– brings to the foreground the effect of language and expression to reveal the struggles the utterer goes through. Reiterating these linguistic struggles, she aims to get a sounder perception concerning the Other. To do that, she lays stress on their mannerism, gestures and accents as well as their verbal expressions. Imitating these features, she makes the audience consider the concerns, priorities and plight of the Other. At the same time, she provides clues about the way caricatures and stereotypes can be constructed and collectively perceived by society. In other words, the audience is invited to confront and contemplate on the ways they can read the idiosyncrasies attributed to specific communities.

Though this chapter focuses on the acting method of Anna Deavere Smith to illustrate the efficiency of documentary theatre regarding humanitarian responsibility, different documentary plays do use different acting styles. As it will also be elucidated in the following chapters, many other documentary plays develop divergent approaches to casting and authenticity. For instance, in Erik Jensen and Jessica Blank's *Aftermath* (2010), which will be the discussion topic of the fifth chapter, the dramatists note that they prefer to cast actors of Middle Eastern descent. They don't find it right to cast actors from different ethnicities and races –e.g., of South Asian descent. In this sense, the couple aims to expostulate the overgeneralization of ethnicities, which "glosses over real and meaningful geographic and cultural differences" (Brunwasser, 2009, para. 15). As they prefer to remain faithful to the ethnic appearances of the characters, they rather try to establish a more realistic experience of confrontation. In this technique, the dramatist's initial

encounter with the interviewees is reiterated. The technique is mostly based on what Caroline Wake calls 'faceness'. For Wake (2013), faceness "refers to the vague and generalized humanity that an audience grants asylum seekers when they see a face that looks—to them, at least—like what an asylum seeker's face might look like" (p. 113). Even though Jensen and Blank do not use actors from different races interchangeably, they seek to imitate and sustain the vision that the audience is accustomed to observing in media footages. This being the case, their way of challenging the prevalent depictions of media is rather based on their dramatic structure, data selection and editing rather than casting.

What makes Smith's method special is that she is able to respond to mass media's handling of human rights violations *also through* her acting apart from the above mentioned elements. In addition, she incorporates the roles of interviewer, witness / audience and actor through her presence on stage. She chooses to convey her interviews without the mediation and interpretation of another actor. Despite the varieties in acting, what primarily and conventionally matters in the performances of documentary plays is to substitute / surrogate the interviewed characters' words and non-present body with actors' expression and image: it is the presence of the actor on stage that sustains the voice of the characters. As Carol Martin (2010) underlines in "Bodies of Evidence", "the actors on documentary stages perform both as themselves and as the actual personages they represent. The absent, unavailable, dead and disappeared make an appearance by means of surrogation" (p. 19). Such a reciprocal relation leads to a sense of hospitality both on the part of the actor and the interviewed characters. As the voice of the character becomes a guest within the actor's body, the actor resides in a corporeal zone that includes the latters' body,

gestures and mannerism. (The impact of such a hospitality mainly on the mediation of the Other's language will be studied thoroughly in the fifth chapter.)

Contemporary documentary plays such as Genco Erkal's *Sivas 93* and Doug Wright's *I Am My Own Wife* are some other examples in which the marks of corporeal hospitality can be observed. In *Sivas 93*, which will be the focal play of the next chapter, none of the actors specifically embody a character. On the contrary, the body of an actor incorporates individuals from different social, religious, political fractions: each of them becomes narrators, victims, politicians and audiences at the same time. Thus, the body becomes an elusive concept in the play: the performance removes the borders which separate the bodies. This corporeal hospitality is empowered through the ritualistic aspects integrated in the performance such as *semah* dance. Through this practice, the emphasis is placed more on the 'relations' among these fractions rather than certain figures.

Similarly, *I Am My Own Wife*, which illustrates the experiences of a German transgender woman Charlotte von Mahlsdorf in Nazi and Communist regimes, a liminal state that incorporates sexes is conveyed through acting. The play was first performed by a male actor, Jefferson Mays in 2003. Carol Martin explains the characteristic of Mays' performance as follows:

> Mays played 34 of the characters wearing a simple dress with pearls, and thereby making all the characters, save one, appear cross-dressed. In this transgendered pageant, Mays played everyone as if they all lived in one person and by performative extension the audience was asked to consider an analogous kind of incorporation. (p. 7)

Though Mays wears the same costume and makeup throughout the play, he depicts the mannerisms of each character during his one-act performance, which is similar to *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*. In addition, the dramatist and interviewer Doug Wright himself was among the characters Mays performed. As the audience can examine the

ways Charlotte von Mahlsdorf and Doug Wright's impressions about one another are reflected on their gestures, they also view how a third person – the actor – interprets them. Here, body signifies a space which is shared both by the observer and the observed at the same time. Instead of depicting the body of a transgender character as a spectacle, the play underlines very performativity of gender itself. The interactions among individuals influence the performativity of the body and gender. In both *Sivas 93* and *I Am My Own Wife,* characters are haunted by the gaze and body of one another.

In documentary plays, actors are aware that the words they speak on stage are already uttered by real people and that the narratives they tell are based on factual experiences. This awareness reflected on their performance already gives the actors the ethically and socially responsible position of a witness, which is transferred to the theatre audience. The latter is encouraged not just to watch the actors' performance but also respond to their humanitarian call. This condition is noticeably in line with the statements of Derek Paget in the essay "New Documentarism on Stage" (2008):

> theatrical team and the audience for the work are Seekers After Truth, who derive second order expression and experience through workshop and rehearsal (actors) and performance (actors and audience) …Performance becomes a Transmission of Witness; actors who work in Verbatim or Tribunal Theatre feel this is what they do. Their audience are Bearing Witness in a live event. (p. 140)

As a result, one can speak of a cooperation between the dramatist, actors and audience both as witnesses and members of a community. The performance becomes a means to reiterate their established and problematic views about the Other. In other words, theatrical performance is extended to the audience's space in and out of the borders of theatre as it gives way to a chain of witnessing. Specifically, in a play like *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, where the dramatist explores the clashing relationships at home within local communities in Los Angeles, the identity of the dramatist (who is

also in this case the actor) and the audience as citizens that have social commitments gain additional significance.

This chapter will elucidate the interrelations of face, media and acting in documentary plays in two parts. After giving synoptic information about the content and background of the play, the first part will point out the ways the characters enacted by Smith evaluate the riots. The common media depictions and attitudes about their races and communities will also be paid particular attention. In this respect, Smith's acting method opens up public spaces in which media's dehumanization of the face of the Other can be subverted. Her 'other-oriented acting' not only stands out as a repercussion of Levinas's treatment of the 'face' in the field of theatre, but also takes a stand against the alteration or erasure of the Other's face in media. The second section of the chapter will be allocated to the way her acting method establishes a relation of hospitality which is shared among actors, characters and the audience. Throughout the play, the liminal state of Smith's body – her position both as a host and a guest – substantially contributes to the subversion of the dehumanization caused by media's handling of 'the face(s)'.

2.1 Dehumanization of the Other's face in media: echoes of the Los Angeles Riots

Twilight Los Angeles 1992 emerges as part of a long-termed project which is named "On the Road: A Search for American Character" and carried out by Smith. Starting with the mid-1980s, the project is based on the interviews with American people about miscellaneous incidents leading to civil strives. Among the other plays that are included in the project are *Fires in the Mirror* (1992), *House Arrest (*1997*)*, *Let Me Down Easy* (2009) and *Notes from the Field* (2015). *Twilight* premiered in Mark Taper Forum, Los Angeles on May 23, 1993. It illustrates miscellaneous reactions

not only about the beating of Rodney King and the resulting Los Angeles Riots but also about the beating of a white truck driver named Reginald Denny by gang members[15] and the looting of the Korean merchants' stores after the death of a 15-year-old black girl, Latasha Harlins.[16] The interviewees enacted by Smith range from gang members, academicians, journalists, writers, (Korean) merchants who evaluate the incidents. Among them are also salient figures related to incidents such as Angela King (Rodney King's aunt), Daryl Gates (former chief of Los Angeles police department), Stanley K. Scheinbaum (former president of Los Angeles police commission) and Tom Bradley (former mayor of Los Angeles). In her prologue, Smith notes that after interviewing almost two-hundred people, she picked up twenty-five figures to perform due to time restrictions. In her technique, which is also called "monopolylogue", she only makes use of costumes and accessories that give idea about the identity of the speaker. Yet, she intentionally refrains from applying any make-up on her face to look like a person from different race:

> she never fully disappears into the role and character, and she is always visible as the character and as herself. Her style exceeds the mimetic function of portraying the subject in a realistic or fruitful way and makes a spectacle of both her performance and the performative process of identity (C. Smith, 2011, p. 157)

What particularly marks Smith's acting style is the fact that she stands up to method acting, which is very commonly used in the performances within American theatre. Grounded on Stanislavsky's technique of psychological realism, method acting presupposes that the character is already situated inside the actor. Therefore, actors need to imagine what it means and how it feels to be that character by looking

[15] After the outbreak of the Los Angeles Riots, four black gang members known as L4 attacked Reginald Denny as he was in his truck and the videotape of beating was broadcast around the US.
[16] In 1991, Latasha Harlins was killed by a 51-year-old Korean American woman, Soon Ja Du who was a store owner in Los Angeles. Blaming Harlins for stealing an orange juice, Du shot Harlins and killed her following a harsh affray. The incident triggered the attacks on the stores of Korean merchants in Los Angeles during the riots.

into their affective memories. As a result, they make an effort to tailor their gestures and bodily movements with regard to their empathetic treatment of the character. In this way, it is aimed to generate a realistic and 'natural' effect for the audience. As Debby Thomson (2003) notes in "Is Race a Trope? Anna Deavere Smith and the Question of Racial Performativity", the foundations of method acting are based on liberal humanism, which "views human nature as transcultural and transhistorical, and views a character's identity as having an essential core of interior objectives and the character's (or actor's) bodily acts as the outward manifestations of the character's interior identity" (p. 128). In contrast to this liberal humanist idea, Smith emphasizes the necessity to embrace the differences in racial, cultural and ethnic identities. Both in her prologue to *Twilight Los Angeles 1992* and in various interviews with her, Smith often underlines that she feels rather sceptical about the ideas of integration and homogeneity. She not only maintains that "a lot of people feel very betrayed by integration because it didn't work", but also finds the concept a "nostalgic idea" (Martin, 1993, p. 52). Instead of searching for a unifying voice, she suggests leaving aside one's own ethnicity and race to "speak a language about race" (Smith, 1994, p. xxv).

The fact that she presents divergent viewpoints regarding race-related experiences undermines the sense of reality and totality which is predicated on the emotional memories of the actor in method acting. Each character not only has their own personal narratives about race but also his / her own ways to bodily and verbally express them. The play's challenge of the reality and totality also overlaps with Lyotard's postmodern idea of 'small narratives' and the subversion of grand narratives (the play has already been a subject to a good number of postmodernist

readings).[17] Therefore, to get a sense of these narratives and languages, Smith believes, actors are not to camouflage their own bodies during performance. As Cherise Smith (2011) remarks about Anna Deavere Smith's enactment of the prominent African American scholar Cornel West, "viewers are experiencing Smith-as-herself, Smith-as-West, and West-as-West simultaneously." (p. 162)

As Smith's overall performance undermines the specifications of Stanislavski techniques / method acting and their ways to treat reality, it also strikes a blow against the conveyance of the real in mass media. This is mostly because both method acting and mass media make use of inductive approaches in their depiction of a person. In method acting, the psychological and behavioural traits of a character is expected to be transferred to the actor, who asks the question 'How would I feel and act if I were the character'? In other words, the actor presupposes that there is a common way of experiencing that people can agree upon. Just like the method acting that constructs an image of 'the other' through the imagination of a person's characteristics, the representation in the mainstream media build up an imagined view of a nation as well as the social, ethnic, racial and political groups within. As media institutions cannot contact and observe each and every member of the society, they construct characteristics of communal identity -as Benedict Anderson argues in his seminal work *Imagined* Communities (though he focuses on the impact of print media rather than visual media).[18] In a way, both in method acting and mass media, objects of representation are framed with regard to attributes that are based on the

[17] See for example Charles R. Lyons and James C. Lyons's "Anna Deavere Smith: Perspectives on her Performance within the Context of Critical Theory" (1994) and *Xavier Lemoine*'s "Embodying Hybridity: Anna Deavere Smith's Identity Cross-Overs" (2013).

[18] First published in 1983, Anderson's *Imagined Communities* focuses on the social construction of nations. One of the salient arguments in the book is that the circulation of printed media contributes to the formation of national identity as it can introduce specific images that can bring together the members of a community.

evaluation of the observer more than the object's viewpoint. While mass media moves from the camera's lens to public, the method actor moves from his/her own affective lens to the vision of others.

One of the notable examples in which Smith illustrates such framing can be found in her interview with Paul Parker, the Chairperson of Free the LA Four Plus Defense Committee. In this interview Parker elaborates on media's attitude towards his brother Lance Parker, who is accused of attacking Reginald Denny: "they basically paraded him around in the media / saying we got the gunman, we got this guy" (Smith, 1994, p. 171). At the same time, he displays his resistance against sensationalism of the television. "I'm not gonna let you / just put my brother's face around world TV headline news, / CNN world span, / and just basically portray him as a negative person" (Smith, 1994, p. 172). Besides, Parker is not the only person who draws attention to the symbolic use of the face in media: an ex-gang member named Allen Cooper – also known as – Big Al underlines the sociological and historical backdrop of the Los Angeles Riots with the words "It's not Rotney King / It's the ghetto" (Smith, 1994, p. 101). One of the remarkable points suggested by these remarks is that that these names and faces are being used as a symbol (of violence or victimhood) by media. This is also overtly seen in the remonstration of Daryl Gates, who confronts similar public reaction: "And suddenly / suddenly / I am the symbol of police oppression" (Smith, 1994, p. 187). Thus, even though mass media – like a play on a stage – creates its own protagonists and antagonists;[19] in time, these figures function as instruments, bodies, behaviours and sensations through which certain 'collective' characteristics are imagined by public. On the one hand, these characteristics can be examples of 'habitus' in a social structure. For

[19] See Janelle Reinelt's "Toward a Poetics of Theatre and Public Events: In the Case of Stephen Lawrence" (2006), where she explores the theatricalization of public incidents during their coverage.

instance, media can display the eating, working, sport practices of lower middle-class or upper class people. These actions, which constitute the habitus of individuals belonging to these classes according to Pierre Bourdieu, give ideas about the ways these practices shape the bodies of these people. On the other hand, media can also put specific faces within a frame and determines the frequency and manner in which these faces are represented. Therefore, it can play a part in the ascription of a certain label to a whole group or community related to these faces, which –in the end– leads to the formation of stereotypes and influences the public perception of the reality with regard to these figures.[20]

To exemplify, the depiction of black people living in a lower class neighbourhood mostly as gang members or drug addicts in media can create prejudices about all the other black people living in the same environment. Besides, as many characters – especially characters from different racial background – refer to media's selective approach to newsworthiness, they tend to characterize media as an authoritative community which seems to be dominated by the whites. Thus, media itself turns into 'the other' in the viewpoint of these people. Even though it is typical of the national media to adopt a unifying address to the public, these characters feel that their communities are not represented sufficiently and satisfactorily. In Paul Parker's denunciation of media's general neglect towards violence on non-white people, the word 'they' already implies the way Parker puts media on a separate and partial position:

> If Denny was Latino,
> Indian, or black,
> they wouldn't give a damn,
> they would not give a damn. (Smith, 1994, p. 172)

[20] A most well-known example of this condition, as Butler notes in *Precarious Life* (2004), is the depictions of Osama Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein's faces in the mainstream US media, which have played a role in the public association of Muslim and Middle Eastern people with terror and tyranny.

In line with Parker's remarks, Paula Weinstein maintains that there was a "media fest / of making white people/ scared / of the African American community" during the riots (Smith, 1994, 211). Both remarks implicate that the very system within media determines the angles, frequencies and identities of who / what is presented to the audience. It plays a role in the formulation of 'objective violence', which is "inherent to ... normal state of things" (Žižek, 2008, p. 2).[21] The characters' evaluations throughout the play are indicative of the close relation between the symbolic violence and the physical violence and looting during the riots. In *On Television*, Pierre Bourdieu (1996/1998) scrutinizes the way Patrick Champagne analyses journalists' treatment of the 'inner city' in *La Misere du monde,* noting that journalists "select very specific aspects of inner city as a function of their particular perceptual categories, the particular ways they see things" (p. 19). He adds that riots are a primary example for understanding the media manipulations about the inner city. In these manipulations, the affinity between 'dramatization' and TV, which retained its powerful stance in the 1990s, is accentuated.

> The principle that determines this selection is the search for the sensational and the spectacular". Television calls for *dramatization*, both senses of the term: it puts an event on stage, puts it in images. In doing so, it exaggerates the importance of that event, its seriousness, and its dramatic, even tragic character. For the inner city, this means riots. (Bourdieu, 1996/1998, p. 19)

Parker's use of the word "parade" in his description of the news about Reginald Denny (Smith, 1994, p. 171) and Weinstein's expression "media fest" (Smith, 1994, p. 211) already mark the performative and spectatorial function of the media. A parallel viewpoint can also be observed in the words of the ex-gang member named

[21] In *Violence*: *Six Sideway Reflections*, Slavoj Žižek differentiates between two types of violence, which are subjective and objective violence. The former stands for the violence which has an explicit perpetrator while the latter signifies the oppression triggered by language as well as economic and political system. Thus, objective violence does not have an overt perpetrator.

Big Al regarding the problems involving black people: “they handled like a soap opera” (Smith, 1994, p. 100). Though he does not specify what the word ‘they’ stands for in this expression and tends to use either the third person plural or the passive voice, his denunciation seems mostly to be grounded on a system that determines ‘visibility’.

The dynamics of the reactions and the violence that play explores are closely related to this politics of body and visibility. In *Precarious Life*, Judith Butler criticizes the way US media dehumanizes certain groups and creates a perception of their lives as ‘ungrievable’. She notes that the prevalent representations in the mainstream media very often serve to justify state policies. Thus, the dimensions of media footages have direct consequences on biopolitics:

> [Media interests] are deciding what will and will not be publicly recognizable as reality. They do not show violence, but there is violence in the frame in what is shown. That latter violence is the mechanism through which certain lives and deaths either remain unrepresentable or become represented in ways that effects their capture (once again) by the war effort” (Butler, 2004, p. 147).

The sovereign position of the media indicated by Butler also implicates the way media acts like a host as it stimulates systemic violence. As Derrida (1997/2000a) notes in *Of Hospitality*, “No hospitality, in the classic sense, without sovereignty of oneself over one's home...sovereignty can only be exercised by filtering, choosing, and thus by excluding and doing violence” (p. 55). In this respect, the frame that media constructs can be regarded as the frontiers of a ‘home’, which often connotes the sense of belonging to the nation. However, the postulation of the first person plural in media’s address to its audience can always disguise the differences within a nation and the conflicts between diverse communities. Thus, it may create an illusion of harmony. Such a treatment may result in critical circumstances of violence especially for the minority groups within a country. As media’s selections and

highlighting of specific incidents determine boundaries of the public agenda, the communities who inhabit the same country are silenced and become far from a part of 'us'. In *The Racial Mundane: Asian American Performance and the Embodied Everyday* (2015), Ju Yon Kim suggests that "the widely broadcast beatings of Rodney King and Reginald Denny, which came to emblematize the Los Angeles riots, simultaneously made visible and obscured everyday conditions of physical threat" (p. 124). As an example, she points to the remarks of Big Al, who talks about the ordinary proximity of the bubble gum machine and pistol for the gang members living in the city. 'Hosting' specific faces, media determines who will be admitted to the newsfeed and how long.

Furthermore, the interviewees often express their beliefs that both state and the mainstream media can privilege certain communities more than the others. On the one hand, these people inhabit a country as citizens and have the same rights and responsibilities as others. Hence, they are not supposed to 'receive' hospitality from a state they already belong to and permanently reside in.[22] In the play, Peter Sellars's words explicitly set forth the idea of 'home' and 'familiarity' which is conventionally associated with the nation:

> we can't live, / our own house burning / This isn't somebody else's house / It's our own house / We all live in the same house (…) / Right, start a fire in the basement / and you know / nobody's gonna be left on the top floor" (Smith, 1994, p. 200).

On the other hand, as the play makes it clear that the idea of unity turns out to be a fantasy. The position of the state with regard to miscellaneous communities creates a peculiar law of hospitality *within* the state. After all, the relation of giving and taking between citizens and the 'sovereign' state includes significant characteristics of

[22] See Judith Still's *Derrida and Hospitality* (2010).

hospitality such as giving accommodation, providing security and regulating the citizens' rights with respect to specific laws. The state mechanisms' failure to carry out these acts for specific communities may result in an attribution of a gender, race and religious sect to the state. It seems as if this human-like identity determines the degree of hospitality the state shows to those who do not share these features (The effects of this condition on minority groups will be thoroughly scrutinized in the next chapter on *Sivas 93*). Development of such an identity is likely to alienate these communities from their country. The reflections of this condition on urban life is strikingly illustrated in the words of LA based writer Mike Davis, who denounces the overall approach to young immigrants who finally become gang-members: "this is a city at war with / its own children" (Smith, 1994, p. 29). He underlines that the growing number of gang members is hardly a part of the public agenda and that the "city doesn't want to face these kids" (Smith, 1994, p. 29). Rather, these groups are treated as 'ghosts' by the majority.[23] Gil Garcetti's words about the police's effect on the jury members during Rodney King trials illustrate the way they feel threatened by these 'ghosts' in the city.

> For the most part people have a respect for the police,
> even people who are annoyed by the police.
> At least in a courtroom setting
> that magic comes in.
> You want to believe the officers,
> because they are there to help you
> (…)
> especially today they want to believe it,
> because everyone is living
> in a state of fear,
> everyone. (Smith, 1994, pp. 75-76)

[23] In *Of Hospitality*, as she responds to Derrida, Anne Dufourmantelle states that "the *hostis*[23] responds to hospitality in the way that ghost recalls himself to the living" (4). Here, 'hostis' means both guest and enemy.

At this point, the face of the police is almost perceived by jury members as 'the face of the state' which guarantees the security of the citizens. Therefore, the proximity of the white police to the state stands in contrast to the distance of marginalized communities, which gives clues about the degrees of state hospitality. Thus, it is not just the foreigner who confronts the exclusionist treatment of the state: it can also be the very citizens who are estranged from their country and who are perceived as a source of fear and anxiety.

2.2 Smith's response to the effacement of the Other: fostering shared hospitality through acting

In *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, Paul Parker's rage about the neglect towards the lives of specific communities suggests media's roles of selecting and filtering:

> many people got beat,
> but you didn't hear about the Lopezes or the Vaccas
> or the, uh, Quintanas
> or the, uh,
> Tarvins.
> You didn't hear about them,
> but you heard about the Reginald Denny Beating. (Smith, 1994, pp. 172-173)

Both on TV or in social media accounts, videos shared with the audience seek to capture the most dramatic, sensational and idiosyncratic moments. Because this requirement is also sustained in theatrical performances, the danger of turning the audience into consumerist spectators (which will be studied in the fourth chapter), underestimating the pain of the victims and witnesses, or turning them into a 'caricature'[24] can threaten the dramatists as well. At the same time, eliminating some

[24] In her interview with Anna Deavere Smith, Carol Martin also poses the issue of caricaturing the other as a question: "At certain moments your portrayal was close enough to caricature to make spectators uncomfortable—close to but not really caricature" (Martin, 1993, p. 50) Similarly in her preface to *Fires in the Mirror*, Smith also expresses that "One major concern audiences have voiced is whether or not I am creating caricatures or stereotypes." (Smith, 1993, p. xxxvii)

of the interviewees, who are already marginalized and silenced, during the selection process, can lead to their 'double silencing' as Caroline Wake (2013) notes in "To Witness Mimesis". In this respect, the following pages will focus on the ways Smith's acting techniques vitiate the hierarchical structure which puts the media(tor) in the position of a host – or as Derrida (1997/2000a) calls, "the chief, the father…the master of the house" (p. 5).

The problem that emerges which selection, fragmentation and edition of an incident or a statement is a point of question for documentary plays as well. After all, Anna Deavere Smith herself does behave like a journalist and picks up only 25 in about 100 interviews for performance. In this sense, Anna Deavere Smith plays the role of a hostess by the way she chooses whose voices are to present and which gestures, voices and accents to reenact: She has "the necessity and function...of choosing, electing, filtering, selecting their invitees, visitors or guests, those to whom they decide to grant asylum, the right of visiting, or hospitality" (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, p. 55). With regard to this situation, there are also criticisms about the number and identities of characters selected for performance. In "Doing Justice to the Subjects: Mimetic Art in a Multicultural Society: The Work of Anna Deavere Smith", Tania Modleski (1997) expresses that Smith does not do justice to the voices of white women, and presents the black woman as "archetype of the maternal" (p. 60). There can also be objections about the fact that she provides more space for the African American voices than rest of the communities in the US. This is mostly because she is African American herself and she has focused on critical social incidents that involved this community such as The Crown

Heights riot[25] in *Fires in the Mirror* and the death of Freddie Gray[26] and 2015 Texas Pool Party incident[27] in *Notes from the Field*.

Though Smith's objectivity is open to debate, she introduces different interpretations of the Rodney King and Reginald Denny incidents as well as the Los Angeles riots in her performance. This can be considered an attempt to form a public forum through which the collective problems can be discussed and the self-perception of the Other can be grasped. Even though the interviewees in her play do not address one another in the form of questions and answers, their concerns and comments about related problems put them in a dialogue. The audience is also involved in it because of their position as the addressee of the statements. Smith maintains in a Los Angeles Times interview with Steve Proffitt, titled "Anna Deavere Smith: Finding a Voice for the Cacophony That Is Los Angeles" (1993), "my goal is to bring people to the theatre who normally wouldn't be in the same room together" (para. 20). In this way, she, being both the dramatist-interviewer and the actress of the play, adopts the role of a host for the audience. In the same interview, she goes on to express that "I see the play as a call, and audience as part of the response to that call" (para. 21). Nevertheless, the call is not just directed at the audience: Smith also calls on stage the ones whose presence is vague and who has been effaced. She substitutes her own face and body with theirs.

[25] Crown Heights riot took place in Brooklyn, New York in 1991 as a result of the conflict between Jewish and black communities. The riot was triggered by the death of Gavin Cato, 7-year-old Guyanese immigrant after being struck by the car in the motorcade of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the leader of Lubavitch Hasidic Movement of the Jews.

[26] In 2015 in Baltimore, Freddie Gray died soon after he was arrested for carrying a knife. As his spinal injuries indicated police brutality, the incident led to protests in Baltimore.

[27] The incident refers to the police intervention to a pool party organized by African American teenagers in Texas in 2015. During the intervention, a police officer's (Eric Casebolt) fierce restrain of an African American teenage girl (Dajerria Becton) was videotaped and posted on YouTube. The action caused strong reactions and protests.

In Smith's interview with the anonymous jury member, who is also quoted at the beginning, it is made known that media reporters wanted to reveal the 'real' faces of the jury:

> and you know, the police were trying to get us into the bus / and cover / our faces / and/ and this reporter said / "why are you hiding your heads in shame? Do you know / that buildings / are burning / and people are dying in the South LA because of you? (Smith, 1994, p. 71)

While Smith is involved in 'the theatre of the real', she is not insistent in showing the 'real' faces of the agents, in contrast to the reporters. Rather, she builds up a space where the concerns and articulation of speakers outweigh their bodies. Smith's performance refrains from specifying the face as a 'signifier'. In media footages, due to the changes in public agenda, "spotlight put on the beating of white trucker Reginald Denny shift[s] attention from the violence inflicted on King to the violence inflicted by African American men" (Kim, 2015, pp. 124-125). Thus, while King's face was used as a signifier of blacks as victims for a certain period, the faces of 'LA four' emerged as the signifiers of blacks as perpetrators for another time. As the interviewees' memories enter in the public space in the form of metanarratives, different aspects of social history make their ways into the present throughout the performance. Because these memories are uttered through Smith's non-disguised body on stage, the audience members are estranged from the significations they associate with different faces. Smith's enactment of Daryl Gates, former chief of Los Angeles Police Department who was harshly criticized by the public during the Rodney King incident and who claims himself to be "the symbol of police oppression" after the disclosure of Rodney King beating, does not seek to reiterate the already known whiteness and maleness of Gates (Smith, 1994, p. 185). Rather, the performance engages with how visual and verbal language (gestures, mannerisms, word choice. etc.) of the Other affects the ways one perceives him/her

and how clichés about different communities are constructed as a result of this perception. Instead of eliminating the languages of the Other and making them subordinates to her own (as a host conventionally wants a guest to do in Derrida's view), Smith seeks to insert the articulations of the Other as much as possible.

Combining the stage and the auditorium, Smith blurs the frontiers between the private and the public. The frame that Smith speaks to the interviewees and the frame that audience watches the performance are intermingled. As the audience members are confronted with the voices that they may have evaded in their daily lives for different reasons (such as prejudice, security etc.), they are also invited to substitute Smith's body. The words that interviewees choose by knowing that Smith is an African American woman, as well as the responses that they expect to receive from her in their questions and comments, are transferred to people who have different race, gender and ethnicities. For instance, Theresa Alison, a black mother, positions Smith on the same side due to her race: "They've done it to my kid / they'll do it to your kid / It is the color, because we're Black" (Smith, 1994, p. 38). Though it would be naive to maintain that the transference of these words to audience can promptly stimulate empathy in theatre, the act is helpful to carry the *intimacy* in the interview to the theatre experience. The inclusion of conversational tones of people who would otherwise be strangers in audience's daily lives augments the establishment of hospitable relations during performance.

The play constitutes not only physical intimacy (because Smith and the audience share the same space in the theatre hall) but also the verbal intimacy. What is conveyed to the audience is a part of this conversational relation in which the audience is invited. For example, this relation can be observed in the question of the former president of Los Angeles Police Commission to Smith about the functioning

of the tape - “Is the tape on now?” (Smith, 1994, p. 77) as well as Big Al’s free-and-easy address to her “you gotta look at history, baby” (Smith, 1994, p. 102). As Smith’s initiative to learn more about the Other is reflected on the viewers, they stop being passive receptors. During the conversations, the questions that the interviewees ask Smith are also posed to the audience members, who are invited to find their own answers. Smith’s interview with Angela King, who expresses her feelings upon the news of her brother’s beating, marks one of those moments. During her statements, King asks:

> You see how everybody rave when something happens with / the / President of the United States? / Okay, here is a nobody / but the way they beat him, / this is the way I felt towards him. / You understand what I’m sayin’ now? / You do? (*really making sure that I mean what I say*) / Alright” (Smith, 1994, p. 57).

King’s pause to understand the opinion of her addressee leads the audience to halt and turn to themselves and their spectatorial experience as well. At the same time, as interviews very often take place in an informal manner and most of the speakers open up their privacies, the speakers’ statements retain their spontaneity. This relatively cosy state also stands out in sharp contrast with media and journalists’ insistent questions to various speakers to learn the details about them, as it is pointed out by the anonymous jury member, Angela King and Paul Parker. The anonymous jury member, for example, points to the way a reporter follows him home to learn more about the jury decision on Rodney King trial and vexes him with words: “The people wanna know, the people wanna know” as she gets her foot in the door (Smith, 1994, p. 71). Similarly, Angela King mentions the disturbance of her family members with regard to the persistent calls of media. This being the case, instead of intruding in the privacies of people, the interviews open up an encounter in which the speakers willingly include the audience in their private spaces and provide details

about their opinions and experiences. Such a relationship noticeably enhances the hospitable relations between them.

In “Identity and Difference in Anna Deavere Smith's Performance Art”, Julian Murphet (1998) notes that “[Smith’s] body becomes a living theatre, a stage whereon is played out the production of difference through identity and identity through difference” (p. 31). The association of the body with a closed space, a theatre or house may straightforwardly highlight the idea of Smith as a host that embraces the Other. Still, Smith herself does not reside in her own body as well as in her own emotional memory. What particularly sets her representation apart from media depictions in terms of hospitality is the fact that she also manifests herself as a ‘guest’. She enters in their corporeal zone, which includes their verbal and body language. Smith thereby unsettles her own sovereign position as the hosting dramatist and actress. Her ‘other-oriented’ acting technique plays a substantial role in this shared hospitality. Quoting from Smith’s *Fires in the Mirror* and *Talk to Me: Listening Between the Lines* respectively, Cherise Smith (2011) remarks:

> Her practice emphasizes and makes manifest ‘the travel from the self to the other,’ and it instantiates the ‘leaving [of one’s] *safe house* of identity’—‘your race, your social class, your nation, your professional area of expertise’—to stand at the ‘crossroads of ambiguity’” (p. 163, my italics).

Anna Deavere Smith emerges as a visitor who -to use her own words- “walks in the speech of another” (Smith, 1993, p. xxvii). Her performance makes it clear that memory and consciousness are yet another type of home and she temporarily inhabits these homes that belong to each character. Just as a guest is expected to adapt to the language of the host, Smith’s body conforms to the visual and verbal language which is shaped by their memories. This being the case, the face of the Other, as Levinas also points out, includes more than the visage or the top part of the

body. The language (including the body language), memory and call of the Other are to be taken into consideration as well.

In *Totality and Infinity* (1961/1969), Levinas maintains "the face is a living presence; it is an expression...The face speaks. The manifestation of the face is already discourse" (p. 66). In "Peace and Proximity", qouting from Vassili Grossman's text *Life and Fates,* he delineates how the face 'speaks' and how the vulnerability of the face is conveyed through the discourse of the face. His example is noticeably parallel to the language that Smith seeks to represent through her performance:

> A line is formed at the counter, a line where one can see only the backs of the others. A woman awaits her turn: '[she] had never thought human back could be so expressive, and convey states of mind in such a penetrating way. Persons approaching the counter had a particular way of craning their neck and their back, their raised shoulder with shoulder blades like springs, which seemed to cry, sob and scream.' (Levinas, 1984/1996, p. 167)

For Levinas, the 'face' of the Other does not always have to have visual markers: he continually evades from ascribing a clear-cut quality to it. The specific example that he gives effectively carries the meaning of the concept away from the denotation of human face. Parallel to this view, in Smith's performance, the gestures that speakers make during their statements stand out as a notable element which gives strong hints of their concerns, vulnerabilities or their search for justice. To exemplify, Mrs. Young-Soon Han (a former liquor store owner of Korean origin) "hits the table once" each time she complains about the fields that they –as Korean Americans– are found unqualified (such as getting food stamp, GR, welfare etc.) (Smith, 1994, p. 245). Her act of hitting the table delineates her reaction and the way she feels being unjustly treated. It is through this act her 'precariousness' speaks. Similarly, Rudy Salas' fast movements during his talk express his anger of the white teachers who made him feel inferior. Thus, to understand and respond to the call of the Other, Smith finds it

necessary to explore what the Other acquires through experience (e.g, manner of speaking, body language, accent) rather than what sticks to them (such as facial features, skin colour etc.). For her, one can learn about the identity and concerns of the Other and develop empathy especially in this way. After all, the problem with the jury's decision, which ultimately gave way to the riots, also partly stems from the gaps in visual form of mediation. In the preface to the play, Smith notes that the jury was unable to believe in the reality of Rodney King's pain when they watched the video. However, she adds, they were convinced that he was indeed in pain after they listened to the tape without looking at the scene. It is probable that the colour which sticks to King created prejudices in the minds of the viewers.

Before the audience, Smith herself is involved in this process of learning about the Other (through her practice) and making use of the performative aspect of identity. For scholars such as Judith Butler, performativity signifies repeated activities and expressions through which identity is formed.[28] Exploring this concept particularly in terms of gender, she notes that gender is learned in time. People develop an idea of what it means to be a girl / boy or how a girl / boy behaves through repetitions and practice. Smith's performance suggests that elements such as race, ethnicity, social class etc. carry with them a similar process of performativity. In her introduction to *Fires in the Mirror*, she points to this performative experience by alluding to her grandfather's words, which have influenced her. She says that she previously believed the words to be "if you say a word often enough, it becomes your own" (Smith, 1993, p. xxiii). Then, she expresses that she misremembered and

[28] Performativity is developed on J.L. Austin's concept of 'performative utterances'. In *How to Do Things with Words*, Austin defines these utterances as the ones which lead to actions (e.g. the word 'I do' points to the act of marrying. Taking Austin's performative utterances as a starting point, Butler maintains that the words 'It's a boy' or 'It is a girl' impose specific behaviours on individuals interpellated as a boy or a girl. Thus, gender is performed.

was corrected by her father and the actual words were "if you say a word often enough, it *becomes* you" (Smith, 1993, p. xxiv). The nuance between two expressions set forth the limited control that people have on their words. Words do not inherently belong to groups of people: rather, the latter are shaped by the words they use. Just as the interviewees' expressions are rooted in performative practices which make up their identity, Smith also makes herself undergo an analogous experience through rehearsals and continuous listening of the tape records. With her theatrical performance, she seeks to get a sense of the interviewee's identities as well as their habitus. At the same time, not only the expressions and behaviours of a person are shaped by performativity: people's treatment of the members of various communities are influenced by performativity as well. The iterated depictions and discourses about some communities (e.g black, Korean, Latino or white) in public, especially within media footages, contribute to the formulation specific ways of behaviour towards the members of these communities. As Smith's performance shakes the usual ways of representation and performativity of media, it underlines that personal acts and behaviours are also shaped by the public.

Smith herself signifies a liminal space in which the privacy of the speakers is made public. Especially during her depiction of people who carry the effects of violent memories on their bodies, this point can be observed more vividly. For instance, the enactment of Michael Zinzun (a representative of the Coalition Against Police Abuse) and Rudy Salas (a Mexican sculptor and painter), who narrate their experiences of the police violence, illustrates the relation in which the *expressions* of emotions and memories are shared. On the one hand, Smith's body becomes a vessel in which the words, gestures and mannerism of the Other flows through. Her display of her body for the sake of the Other is yet another form of hospitality: Zinzun and

Salas's scars and physical disability are hosted or accommodated in her own body. On the other hand, she also accommodates in and adapts into Zinzun and Salas's emotional and verbal memory. Zinzun states:

> One of these pigs stepped outta the crowd with his flashlight, / caught me right in the eye, / and you can still see the stitches (He lowers his lid and shows it) / and / exploded the optic nerve to the brain, / ya see / and boom (*he snaps his fingers*) / that was it. / I couldn't see no more since then (Smith, 1994, p. 19).

Rudy Salas conveys a similar experience of the police violence: "As a result of the kicks in the head they fractured my / eardrum / and, uh / I couldn't hear/ on both ears. / I was deaf / worse than I am now. / *(He pulls out one of his hearing aids.)*" (Smith, 1993, p. 3). On the one hand, the body and the memory can be thought to have the privacy of a home. On the other hand, through Smith's embodiment of Zinzun and Salas, they begin to have openings which give way to exchanges with the audience. This state echoes Judith Still's words (2010) on Derrida: "Hospitality is always about crossing thresholds – perhaps between the public and the private." (p. 7). As Smith's performance blurs the boundaries between her body and the body of the interviewees, the pain of the latter is carried on to a public space as well. The audience is presented with the idea that such physical and personal injuries, pain and impairment have their reasons and consequences which closely concern the public.

In "Anna Deavere Smith: Acting as Incorporation" (1993), as Richard Schechner analyzes Smith's acting style, he focuses on the ritualistic characteristic of the performance. This ritualistic aspect illustrates the way individual bodies are used to serve public affiliations. In this essay, Schehner argues that Smith 'incorporates' the characters, which –as he explains– means "to be possessed by, to open oneself up thoroughly and deeply to another being" (p. 63). In this regard, he associates Smith with the shamanists in Native America, Africa and Asia. With respect to *Fires in the*

Mirror, which is produced with the same style as *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, he notes that "Smith composed [the play] as a ritual shaman might investigate and heal a diseased or possessed patient" (p. 64). This explanation is particularly crucial when Schechner's elaborations on the concept of 'ritual' is considered. As it will also be explored in the following chapter on Genco Erkal's *Sivas 93*, rituals contain efficacy for Schechner:[29] in other words, something is fulfilled in rituals. At first glance, this may seem to be at odds with the views Smith (1994) points out in her preface: "acting is a constant process of becoming something. It is not a result, it is not an answer. It is not a solution" (p. xxiv). However, though Smith does not suggest explicit solutions to social, racial and cultural problems, the efficacy of her ritualistic performance lies in the fact that she develops alternative ways to explore and analyse these problems. It is her treatment of her subject that brings about efficacy. Her shamanism, which necessitates "open[ing] oneself up thoroughly and deeply to another being", is closely related to her method (Schechner, 1993, 63). Smith does not 'heal' the painful experiences of her interviewees through her 'shamanism'. Yet the healing effect is based on the way these people can be viewed by the audience. It hinges on the alternative approach to the 'face' of the Other, which diverges from that of prevalent media footages. As her performance 'incorporates' people, she opens up a different form of encounter.

At the same time, and more importantly, Schechner's views of Smith's performance substantially contribute to understanding the formation of hospitality in *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*. The word that he specifically chooses to define her performance, 'to incorporate', already implicates the inclusion, which is an essential

[29] See for example "From Ritual to Theatre and Back: The Structure/Process of the Efficacy-Entertainment Dyad" (1974) and "Ritual and Performance" (1993) by Richard Schechner.

part of hospitality. In *French Hospitality* (1984/1999), especially when he points to the 'attitude' of hospitality, Tahar Ben Jelloun's depiction of the concept bears strong similarities with Schechner's evaluation of Smith's performance: "[hospitality] brings together an action (a welcome), an attitude (*the opening of oneself to the face of another*... and the opening of one's door and the offering of the space of one's house to a stranger) and a principle (disinterestedness)" (pp. 1-2, my italics). The italicized words obviously echo Schechner's expressions which have been quoted above. Jelloun's understanding of hospitality combines active and passive states which are also found in Smith's performance. On the one hand, Smith actively welcomes the interviewees, provides spaces for their voices on stage and presents them in alternative ways. On the other hand, it is the interviewees' expressions which flow through Smith, which puts her in a passive state. While Schechner notes in "Ritual and Performance" (1994) that in rituals performers are possessed and in trance (p. 622), for Jelloun (1984/1999), "receiving somebody as a guest is a passive phenomenon by which you fill yourself with the other person" (p. 2). Hence, as Smith's shamanistic performance brings active and passive states together, it also demonstrates the way hospitality carries mutual influence between different parties with it.

In this case, what is presented to the audience via performance is rather an ambivalent state just as the title of the play suggests. Smith is not interested in providing the real face of the speakers (as the reporters interrogating the anonymous jury members would try to do so) or depicting them as 'realistically' as possible. What the audience observes on stage is a product of the encounter between Smith and the interviewees. In this regard, it is not only the interviewees who haunt the stage but also Anna Deavere Smith –as an actor and a dramatist – as she hides behind

the expressions of characters throughout the play. This practice brings about a more different treatment of the face than that of mass media. Media can pick up specific faces and keep depicting them as the signifiers of different concepts. As Butler notes, it can totally efface the Other. Smith, however, accentuates the fact that meanings are not inherent in the Other's body and face. Rather, the process in which one views the Other and *the process in which he/she is viewed by the Other* need to be taken into consideration. It is this act of reciprocal viewing that shapes the perceptions about the Other. In this regard, Smith's performance reiterates Sara Ahmed's emphasis on 'encounters'.

> One possibility is to avoid using particularity as a description of an other, which turns this-ness into a property of her body or her speech. Instead, we can begin to think of particularity as question of *modes of encounter* through which others are faced...Such an approach would avoid assuming that we can gain access to the individual expression or the 'real' of her body. Particularity does not belong to an-other, but names the meetings and encounters that produce or flesh out others, and hence *differentiates others from other others*. (Ahmed, 2000, p. 144)

What Smith performs is not necessarily the 'real' of the character's body nor is claimed to be so: "her performances …do not simply materialize what she sees and hears, but *how* she sees and hears, and thus what she is able and unable to see, able and unable to hear, given her own social position and habits of body and perception" (Kim, 2015, p. 162). As the exchange between Smith and the interviewees permeate the stage, the audience's observation of this exchange reiterates the chain of hospitality initiated with Smith and interviewees' relation. Considering that "hospitality is a particular form of gift that involves *temporary* sharing of space, and sometimes also bodies..." (Still, 2010, p. 14), the audience is also accommodated within Anna Deavere Smith's body through their position as the addressees of the

speakers and through their temporary presence in a theatre hall (which is yet another house)[30].

> Smith not only locates and embodies the liminal space in which identity is neither stable nor fixed, but she also models how to occupy the liminal space, encouraging her viewers to follow suit. Indeed, because Smith-as-West speaks to a silent, absent, yet authoritative interlocutor whom viewers cannot see but know to be Anna Deavere Smith, the artist encourages viewers to assume her position temporarily. Similarly, because Smith-as-West points at and talks to viewers as if they were the interlocutors, they temporarily become Smith by a process of theatrical substitution. (C. Smith, 2011, p. 162)

In this respect, Anna Deavere Smith's curiosity to learn more about the dynamics of social, racial and ethnic tensions and her engagement to analyse how these tensions leave their marks on the body and expressions of others are projected on the audience. As the intimacy of the conversational form of the interviews is carried on to the stage, audience members are given a chance to be part of encounters in which they are not usually involved in their daily lives. They are invited to reconsider their existing relationships with members of diverse communities.

To conclude, *Twilight Los Angeles 1992* as a documentary play predominantly depends on the significance of acting strategies and performance for the apprehension of the lives and vulnerabilities of others. The corporeal hospitality which is constructed in the play provides an alternative way to perceive and evaluate reality. In this manner of hospitality, the performer both accommodates the voices of interviewees in her own body and resides in their language, memory and identity. Here, what sticks to the bodies of the interviewers is not the only element that depict the reality about them. As she stages her process of learning / acquiring the expressions, gestures and accents of her interviewees, which make up their identity, she also disrupts the common ways of 'seeing' the bodies of the others.

[30] See *Audience and Performer* (2016) by Caroline Heim.

CHAPTER 3

COMMEMORATIVE HOSPITALITY IN DOCUMENTARY THEATRE: REVISITING THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY IN *SIVAS 93*[31]

In *Derrida and Hospitality* (2010), Judith Still notes "it does not make sense to say that the state offers hospitality to its citizens, that the collectivity offers hospitality to itself" (p. 11). Though Still conjectures an ideal condition of citizens belonging to the state, her comment about the reaches and dimensions of hospitality rather misses out the state's possible eliminative or negligent attitudes towards the minorities or the communities dissenting the government. As it has been set forth previously, the states' internalization of the us vs. them distinction is not an uncommon case in their foreign policies. This separatist agenda is also often sustained in their treatments of refugees and asylum seekers within countries, which has been explored and problematized in a good number of plays using verbatim techniques.[32] However, the disintegration *among the very citizens* can turn the sense of harmony and homogeneity in the word 'us' into an illusion as well. At this point, the government's policies towards majorities and minorities in the country lead to the ascription of an identity to the state. As some communities appear to be comparatively akin to this identity, some do not consider themselves belonging to the country -or 'to the home'- as much as the others. In other words, as the state power can affect different communities in varying degrees and because of the existing power relations among

[31] I would like to thank Genco Erkal for sharing the playscript of *Sivas 93* with me.
[32] See, for example, Ros Horin's *Through the Wire* (2004) or Sonja Linden's *Crocodile Seeking Refuge* (2005) which touches upon the problems of asylum seeking and immigration policies.

these communities, the dynamics of hospitality can apply to domestic politics as well. Thus, some communities at home can almost be treated as the foreign.

The previous chapter on Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight Los Angeles 1992* has demonstrated that the sense of belonging to a country is considerably manipulated by media. Some of the interviewees of Smith complain that the national mainstream media place more emphasis on the violence inflicted by the African American and Latino populations and present them to the public mostly as culprits. Their accounts suggest that they feel foreign in their own country because the human rights violations experienced by their communities are not sufficiently publicized. At this point, while Chapter 2 has scrutinized documentary theatre's use of hospitality to react to the representation of bodies, and specifically of 'the face' in media, this chapter will investigate the way it re-evaluates the collective memory which is influenced by media and mediation.

Focusing on Genco Erkal's 2008 play *Sivas 93*, this chapter is going to explore the construction of hospitality with victimized individuals and communities, especially those who are dead and absent, through commemoration in documentary theatre. Documentary plays enable actors, dramatists and the audience to revisit the incidents that are highly debated and widely publicized in media. So, they metaphorically take them into 'a house', where the collective memory of the society is 'stored'. The re-evaluation of the past incidents in the play becomes an attempt to invite those who were treated as ghosts (the dead and the absent) to the theatre, which can be considered an alternative house.[33] Yet at the same time, the play – in line with Derrida's *Of Hospitality*, which also delineates the relationship between

[33] See Caroline Heim's *Audience as Performer: The Changing Role of Theatre Audiences in the Twenty-First Century*.

hospitality and memory – suggests that the memory of the society becomes 'hostage' to those who have been excluded from the home country. The collective memory is haunted by these people. Thus, the society cannot totally be the host and the master of its memory. The sovereignty of documentations, media footages and records, which make up the official history and influence the collective memory of a country, is always challenged by other documents through which 'the ghost' speaks. As it will be elucidated in the following pages, memory undergoes change in time: 'the storehouse' or the 'the archive' does not always remain the same. Commemorating the absent and victimized people through performance, the play not only refreshes the collective memory but also underlines the society's ethical responsibility towards those who were symbolically displaced from home.

This chapter is going to investigate the commemorative hospitality of the play in two sections. The first section will elaborate on the estrangement and exclusion of minorities. The play underlines that governmental institutions' approach to specific communities can lead to the ascription of a character to the state. This character can be oppressing to various social, ethnic or religious groups. In this sense, especially minorities, even if they are citizens of a country, can be treated as a foreign and uncanny community which can disrupt the existing order. *Sivas 93* points to the tensions between Alevi-Sunni and between left- and right-wing groups. It emphasizes the state's control over the media on storing and circulating information (thus on collective memories as well). With ritualistic acts, the play underlines the ethical responsibility of other communities to those who are dead and victimized. The second section of the chapter illustrates the play's attitude towards collective memory and its mediation with references to Maurice Halbwachs and Aleida Assmann. Referring to Diana Taylor's remarks on the archive and the repertoire, the

impact of a commemorated past incident on the present and the future is going to be discussed. The play shows that those who are deported from home haunt collective memories and identities within a country. Pointing to Derrida's views on memory and hospitality, the second section will suggest that the audience and the absent voices (ghosts) become both hosts and guests at the same time. The mediation and commemoration of the incident through the documentary play contribute to the reconciliation with the victimized and the marginalized. With references to Emma Willis's *Theatricality, Dark Tourism and Ethical Spectatorship: Absent Others*, it will be suggested that the mob's spectatorship, which was yet another dimension of the violence, is replaced by the audiences' ethical spectatorship. Through such spectatorship, the audience can consciously apprehend the pain of the Other, which will set the scene for the fourth chapter on the spectatorial hospitality in documentary theatre.

3.1 Excluded from one's own state: estrangement of the minorities in *Sivas 93*

Commemoration of a person or people, who were victimized, murdered or inflicted violence, is a practice that is often observed in documentary plays. Through this practice, not only are the dead and the absent ones remembered but also the relations among different social, racial, ethnic communities are re-evaluated. To exemplify, *My Name is Rachel Corrie* (2005), which is directed by Alan Rickman, commemorates the British activist of the same name, who is killed by an Israeli soldier. As the play presents her experiences from her own voice, it also points to the plight of Palestinians and criticizes the policies of the Israeli government. Likewise, Moises Kaufman's *Laramie Project* (2000) and *Laramie Project:10 Years Later* (2009) explore the violence against LGBT people through the memory of Matthew

Shepard, who was murdered in Wyoming as a result of a hate crime. Through the memory of Shepard, the approaches of members of diverse communities to hate crimes and homophobia are scrutinized as well.

Practices of commemoration in documentary plays – especially ones that revisit traumatic and violent incidents – often mark that a society as a whole is haunted by these incidents even if they are experienced by certain individuals and minorities. Collective memories and identities of societies are also shaped by their attitudes toward victimized and oppressed groups both at home and abroad. For instance, in *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, Anna Deavere Smith explores the ways 'American identity' is marked by diverse memories of racial prejudice and violence: what is considered personal is a part of the collective as well. Another practice of commemorative hospitality can be observed in Erik Jensen and Jessica Blank's *Aftermath*, which will be explored in the fifth chapter. In the play, Iraqi characters narrate their memories and experiences during the Saddam regime and Iraq War to American dramatists and audiences. Especially the characters' stories about American invasion implicate that their painful memories inevitably become part of American collective identities, which are marked by the political and military policies of the US government.

The commemoration of the dead and the absent contributes considerably to the scrutiny of juridical mechanisms on national and transnational scale. In this sense, tribunal plays that enact trials include some degree of commemoration, too. As the violent incidents are remembered together with the witnessing of the audience, it can be problematized whether the verdicts were sufficient and rightful. Re-examining the motives of the perpetrators and the effects of the crimes on victims can provide clues about the effects of the incident on 'the present'. Nicolas Kent's

Srebrenica (1996) and Richard Norton Taylor's *Nuremberg* (1996) can be counted among the plays that commemorate the victims through the demonstration of the processing of justice. Though *Sivas 93* cannot be classified as a tribunal play, it manifests a considerable preoccupation with justice toward the victimized. As it commemorates the victims by narrating the flow of incidents and referring to the overall approach of the state and media, it carries the effects of memory to the presence and questions the ethical responsibilities of the society as a whole.

Staging one of the most bitter events in the history of Turkey, *Sivas 93* is based on the Sivas Massacre which took place in Madımak Hotel in Sivas on July 2, 1993. In this massacre 37 people were killed as the mob which consisted of Islamic fundamentalists set fire to the hotel. The incident marks a climactic point of the conflict between two Islamic denominations in Turkey: Sunnis, who constitute the majority of the population and Alevis, who make up the largest religious minority.[34] The conflict was particularly triggered after The Maraş Massacre,[35] which had taken place in 1978. It accelerated during the 1980s and the 1990s. The victims in Sivas massacre consisted mostly of Alevi intellectuals, poets, artists, caricaturists. They had come to the city for a festival organized to celebrate the life and works of the 16th century Alevi poet Pir Sultan Abdal, to sign their books and meet the art-lovers. Among the intellectuals coming to the city was also Aziz Nesin, who had started translating Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* into Turkish and received violent

[34] The distinction between Sunni Islam and Alevism dates back to the death of Prophet Mohammad. Following his death, the question who will be the legitimate successor carried disagreements with it. Basically, while Alevis follow the teachings of Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Prophet Mohammad, Sunnis follow the behaviours and sayings of the Prophet (which is called 'sunnah'). The exact number of Alevis in Turkey is disputable due to a lack of official statistics. The estimates generally range from 10 to 13 million.

[35] In December 1978, more than 100 Alevi and left-wing civilians living in Kahramanmaraş, Turkey (according to official records) were killed by extreme rightist and fascist groups, who targeted the Alevi neighbourhoods with bombs and machine guns, burned the buildings and raped women. The attacks lasted at least seven days.

reaction particularly from Islamic fundamentalists. In the opening of the festival, a statue of Pir Sultan Abdal was also erected. Following Nesin's speech, the demonstrators, the number of whom were increasing, first started to stone the hotel and then set it on fire. The governor of Sivas was severely chastised for inviting the group to the festival as well. Furthermore, it is known that provocative notices which target Nesin were issued around the city just before the festival.

Apart from being sprung from the ongoing Alevi - Sunni conflicts, the incident was also triggered by the clashes between Islamic fundamentalists and secularists and between the left and the right wings. While Sivas was populated mainly by Sunnis and by people supporting right-wing politics, the Alevi visitors mostly consisted of leftist and secular intellectuals. The approach of the state and politicians to the massacre during and after the incidents has been widely regarded as a scandal. For instance, the way Mayor of Sivas addressed to the demonstrators during the protests has been criticized for having quite a provocative tone. The play also marks that his address supported the attackers and ignited the violence. *Sivas 93* includes the most provocative words attributed to him during the incidents: "May your holy war be blessed" (Erkal, 2008, n.p). The government has been severely criticized around the country for not taking the process seriously despite the victims' pleas for help. It has been blamed for risking the Alevi intellectuals' lives for political concerns. Turkey is mostly populated by Sunni citizens and the government of the time was made up of center-right wing politicians. The state's inability to intervene and save the victims' lives has played a substantial part in the attribution of 'Sunni and right-wing' identity to the state by its critics. This identity was considered oppressive to minorities such as leftists and Alevis. The fact that some of the verdicts were abated following the escape of some defendants have raised strong doubts

about the conduct of justice within the state.[36] The play delineates that the lack of necessary attention by governments continued in the aftermath of the incident. It explicitly points to the way the targets feel themselves vulnerable and discriminated against due to the inability of their own state to protect them.

Sivas 93 premiered on January 11, 2008 in Dostlar Tiyatrosu, an ensemble which is known for its dissident stance and which has pioneered in the staging of Brecht's plays in Turkey. Since the 1970s, many examples of epic, political and documentary plays such as Weiss's *Die Ermittlung* [*The Investigation*], Alain Decaux's *Les Rosenberg ne doivent pas mourir* [*The Rosenbergs Shall Not Die*] and Hans Magnus Enzensberger's *Das Verhör von Habana* [*The Havana Inquiry*] have been performed together with visual materials. The performance of *Sivas 93* takes place simultaneously with the projections of photographs and videos that depict the locations and the moments of the attack throughout.[37] It also includes the recitation of poems by Metin Altıok, Behçet Aysan and Uğur Kaynar, who were among the poets killed in the massacre, and by Aziz Nesin during the performance. The music used in the play, which includes pieces from Nazım Oratorio and Metin Altıok Oratorio, is composed by the prominent Turkish pianist Fazıl Say. The play emerges as a product of detailed and dedicated research by Erkal, who is both the author and the director of the play. In a 2008 interview conducted in Boğaziçi University, he notes:

[36] Many of the defendants were fugitives during the trials of Madımak massacre (and some of them still are.) The first verdict of the trials, which started in 1993, were given in 1994. According to the verdicts, punishments ranged from 2 to 15 years of imprisonment. The supreme court of appeals overturned the decision of state security court and finally 33 people got the death penalty in 2000, which was turned into life sentence with the abolishment of the death penalty in Turkey in 2002. In 2012, the punishment of 5 fugitive defendants were revoked due to the statute of limitations, which was also included in the playscript of *Sivas 93* later.

[37] In his interview in Boğaziçi University, Erkal points out that the synchronic video and slide projections from beginning to the end during the performance have first been used in *Sivas 93* among the plays staged in Dostlar Tiyatrosu.

> First, I collected every material I could find: books, periodicals, interviews, a thousand paged court records of the Sivas massacre case which lasted five years, poems about the massacre, videotapes...Especially those that were recorded with the police cameras in Sivas Police Department and by İhlas News Agency. They hadn't been in the public view before...They had been used as evidence during the case. (Erkal, 2009, p. 220)

Erkal's statements about the video records that haven't been circulated already provide significant hints about the lack of sufficient publication in the media. Even though the records demonstrate important evidence about the identities and acts of the attackers and about the course of the events, the national media does not seem to have raised sufficient awareness about the reasons for and the consequences of the incident. In the same interview, Erkal notes that the play received attention not only from Alevi citizens but also people from various backgrounds at home and in Europe (including the cities of London, Paris, Berlin and Brussel) during its staging. This condition already implicates the interest and the need to gain more information regarding the incident.

Sivas 93, which includes four male and three (in some performances, two) female actors, does not specifically present them as characters. Rather, the actors both utter the testified statements of the victims and narrate the incidents. Meanwhile, they adapt their movements on stage to the actions narrated in the play: e.g., they perform the way victims try to evade the fire or the way the crowd approaches the hotel as they narrate them. The fact that all of the actors are dressed in black and holding red carnations gives the play a mood of mourning from the very beginning. This mood is supported by the darkness and emptiness of the stage. The play opens with a dance that echoes the dance that is performed during Alevi rituals (*semah*), which turns the commemoration into a ritualistic act. This is quite meaningful in the sense that rituals that "mark days and places of importance", signify "efficacy" (Schechner, 1994, p. 613). Here, the concept of efficacy suggests

that an action is fulfilled at the end of such performances –such as "forming and cementing social relations" and "remembering the past" (Schechner, 1994, p. 613).[38] Actors' performance of *semah* from the very beginning stands out as an embracement of the victimized through embodiment. It also signifies the representation of performative language that has been 'silenced' after the massacre. This ritual, which is normally performed to approach the divine by the Alevis, is rather used on stage both to recollect the very performance of *semah* during the festival and to mourn and commemorate the Alevi victims. As it has also been pointed out in the second chapter, the Other speaks through the actor's performance. The collectivity inherent in the performance of *semah* contributes to making the audience part of this act of commemoration.

At the same time, the sense of mourning which is conveyed through the ambiance of the stage contributes to what Paul Ricour calls 'reconciliation'. This reconciliation is not only with the absent Other who is hoped to be embraced but also with the very collective identity. Here, I don't refer to a single and homogeneous concept when I point to the 'collective identity': communities can still involve different and smaller communities. However, violence inflicted on a specific group that lives together with other groups inevitably becomes a part of the latter's memories and –by extension– of their identities. In "Memory and Forgetting" (1999), Ricour maintains "We could say that collective identity is rooted in founding events which are violent events. In a sense collective memory is a kind of storage of such violent blows, wounds and scars" (p. 8). At this point, not only the violence experienced by a community but also the one witnessed or even inflicted by that

[38] In "Ritual and Performance" (1994), while Richard Schechner associates theatre with entertainment and ritual with efficacy, he maintains that they are "not opposed to one another" (p.622). Underlining that "no performance....is pure efficacy and pure entertainment" (p. 622), he argues that "neither has priority over the other" (p. 614).

community should be taken into account. Any kind of elimination, disregard or distortion of information about the Other directly influences that community's collective identity as well: "diseases of memory are diseases of identity" (Ricour, 1999, pp. 7-8). Such a 'disease' implicates a gap in the mechanisms of news-giving / news-receiving and archives, which substantially shape the collective memory. Thus, media and mediation play a fundamental role in the formation of a community's identity as well: the way members of a community treat the Other in their own media give notable clues about their position as the host, as the ones who own the storehouse of the memory.

The idea of hospitality gains additional importance in *Sivas 93* as the play already dwells on an incident in which the life and security of the guest, which is to be guaranteed and protected by the host, are vitiated. In *French Hospitality* (1984/1999), Tahar ben Jelloun presents his definition of hospitality as "a reciprocal right to protection and shelter" (p. 1). He underlines that the sheltering and entertaining the guests becomes a matter of honour for the host because it "makes the guest recognize [him/her] as someone capable of sharing" and "improves [his/her] status, as someone capable of existing in relation to others" (2). Yet, in Sivas massacre, the inhabitants of the city not only abstain from protecting the guests but also – denying any sort of ethical responsibility – target their very shelter. Below is an anecdote from the play that dramatically demonstrates the disavowal of the vulnerability of the Other: "'Is there any policeman in here?'/ We said 'no'. And they left. / Then, the hotel was burnt down. / It had been ascertained that the hotel was 'in the clear'. Now it could be burnt down" (Erkal, 2008, n.p). In this regard, the mob obviously does not feel any responsibility for the lives of the 'guest' whom they almost demonize throughout the play.

The play points to a huge incomprehensibility in terms of the identity of the newcomers: even though they are 'invited' by the governor of the city, the references of the attackers introduce them almost as the invader or as the corrupted. This situation can be observed in the insults of the mob to women: "Have we invited you to Sivas? Go away bitches! Go where you come from, burn there and die" (Erkal, 2008, n.p). Throughout the play, it is marked that the guests staying in the hotel are perceived as deviants disturbing the order. This idea is promptly mediated to the people in the whole city. The attackers overtly associate the victims and the city governor with the devil. They depict their violence as a religious ritual which includes the dehumanization of the 'face': "Come on, join us! We are stoning the devil!"[39] (Erkal, 2008, n.p). As Aziz Nesin's face is demonized both in the local media and in the notices which were delivered to houses and mosques before the festival, both his life and the lives of people associated with him begin not to be considered worthy of apprehension (a problem which has been thoroughly explored in the second chapter). At the same time, through their demonization, a collective identity for the public is sought to be formed. Such an identity would be used to justify the treatment of the Other. As the notices delivered by the provocateurs address "to Muslim public", they implicitly claim that those who do not agree with these statements could not be Muslims (Erkal, 2008, n.p). They also present this opinion as a rule, a norm of belonging to the city (or even, to the country).

The abnormality ascribed to the visitors echoes Derrida's analysis of the relation between the host and the foreigner in *Of Hospitality.* Alluding to Xenos's

[39] Stoning of the devil is a ritual that Muslim pilgrims perform in Mecca during their pilgrimage, which is called 'hajj'. During the ritual, pilgrims throw stones to three tall pillars called 'jamarāt', which represents the devil.

(the foreigner) exchange with Theaetetus in Plato's dialogues,[40] he notes that the guest / the foreigner may be considered to be delirious by the host, who feels an anxiety of not being able to control it.

> Foreigner fears that he will be treated as mad (manikos)... 'I am therefore fearful that what I have said may give you the opportunity of looking on me as someone deranged,' says the translation (literally, mad, manikos, a nutter, a maniac), 'who is upside down all over (para poda metaballon emauton ano kai kato), a crazy person who reverses everything from head to toe, from top to bottom, who puts all his feet on his head, inside out, who walks on his head).' (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, pp. 9-10)

Derrida suggests that the host can blame the foreigner for questioning the law of the master or the father, thus committing 'parricide'. As the provocateurs' notices claim that Nesin is "wandering around the city as if he is making fun of Muslims", one can speak of a similar anxiety of being 'reversed' by the newcomers (Erkal, 2008, n.p). At this point, the latter is perceived to have an uncanny or unhomely presence, which can be observed in the recitation of Metin Altıok's poem during the play: "you think I am uncanny, / one that should be burned / to be made an example" (Erkal, 2008, n.p).

Accentuating the state's inability or neglect to stop the violence inflicted on the visitors, the play suggests that what is presented as 'the norm' in the city is also adopted by the state mechanisms themselves. This being the case, the state does not fulfil its responsibility to treat and protect its citizens equally: it metaphorically deports the victims from the 'home' or security. The sense of foreignness experienced on a local scale begins to be felt in the country as a whole. Feeling 'unhomely' is often studied with respect to postcolonial relations as in Homi

[40] In Plato's *Sophist*, a stranger from Elea, whose name is never mentioned, visits Athens and meets Socrates and other Athenians. However, during the dialoges, the Eleatic stranger talks to Theaetetus while Socrates remains silent. Pointing to the questioning attitude of the stranger and the silence of Socrates, Derrida suggests that "Socrates himself has the characteristics of the foreigner, he represents, he figures the foreigner, he plays the foreigner he is not." (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, p. 13).

Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*. Yet, in the play, "to feel at home and strange or estranged at the same time, or to feel not at home even when one is at home" emerges as an experience gone through by the minorities living in a country for a long time and without a colonial history (Byrne, 2009, p. 70). The opening words of the play effectively illustrate the victims' feeling of being betrayed: "We had trusted the state...We went there to sing our ballads and to perform *semah*. We did not take any guns with us as we left. We brought our books, our caricatures, photographs, our ideas. We visited there for peace and brotherhood, not for fight" (Erkal, 2008, n.p). From the start of the play, as the tension between 'we' and 'they' is put forward, the connotation of 'they' includes state mechanisms and state people as well. This is quite parallel to the reactions in *Twilight Los Angeles* which address the police violence that targets black people and emphasize the insufficiency of the juridical system to support their rights. In *Sivas 93*, the testimonies of victims and witnesses mark that state did not take sufficient precautions to stop the attack: "In the beginning there were only five hundred people. That crowd could have been dispersed and eruption of vehement incidents could have been prevented. Yet, things turned out differently. The security guards almost supported the crowd, protected it" (Erkal, 2008, n.p). In addition, it is underlined in the testimonies that the physical and verbal violence left its place to systemic violence after the incident. The systemic violence mostly includes the silencing of the victims' voice and concerns. The play reiterates that the investigations were not carried out efficiently and the gaps of information were not filled thoroughly: "The state did not want to probe into that. The facts have never been revealed" (Erkal, 2008, n.p).

Sivas 93 delineates that sufficient documentation about the incident and perpetrators has not been provided for archives, which are among the storehouses of

the collective memory. This is a different form of victims' exclusion from 'home'. In this sense, the play depicts the media as a remarkable factor that adds to systemic violence. The account of one of the witnesses in Madımak Hotel explicitly draws attention to the lack of information in media:

> In the hotel, we found a television that receives only one channel. The incident was reported in the news with just one sentence: 'Madımak Hotel has been stoned'. I cannot verbalize the hopelessness I felt at that moment. I won't forget. I mean, we are only mentioned, and it is purported that the incident has been settled. Whereas the crowd is getting bigger and bigger. (Erkal, 2008, n.p)

What is particularly frustrating for the speaker is the fact that their lives are not found and represented as 'grievable'. This condition also suggests that the grievability of life emerges as a problem among the communities within a nation as well. While the media composes the idea of a nation as an imagined and homogenized community, the lives of 'minorities' can be overlooked and eliminated from the public view. In other words, these communities can be treated as ghosts even when they are alive and present. In *The Spectatorship of Suffering* (2006), Lilie Chouliaraki remarks that "imaginary reference to public in the textual practices of news which, in telling stories about the suffering 'other', always carve their own sense of 'we' out of a collection of watching individuals" (the impact of this treatment on ethical spectatorship and the response to it in documentary theatre is going to be scrutinized in the next chapter) (p. 12). Whereas, the play implies that the perception of 'we' is also influenced by what is untold, or partly told about the suffering people who not only live outside but also live *in* the country. As the idea of 'we' connotes people who are familiar to one another, the suffering others whose vulnerability is not publicized within the country are metaphorically deported from home (Thus, the absent presence of these communities can make an *unheimlich*

effect in the collective memory as well, which will be elucidated later in this chapter).

The national media's designation of the public in the first person plural not only formulates a collective identity which privileges specific ethnical, religious or political traits, but also shows its power to draw boundaries of 'home'. As it has also been suggested in the previous chapter, the practices of media in filtering, including and excluding indicate its position as a host. Presenting various politicians' statements following the outbreak of the incident, the play suggests that this power is predominantly shared with the state mechanisms: the then President Süleyman Demirel's words about the event exemplifies the way 'the public' can be a product which comes out of filtering and elusion: "the state forces and the public should not be pit against each other. This is what is striven for" (Erkal, 2008, n.p). Likewise, the then Prime Minister Tansu Çiller's remarks "Our citizens surrounding the hotel have not been hurt in any way" suggest how the politics can influence the perceptions about the grievability of the very citizens' lives (Erkal, 2008, n.p). In this sense, the play overtly criticizes the overall approach of the politicians: "Oh my! May our 'public' not be harmed! As if those burned alive were not the public... As if those who suffocated out of the smoke, those who were stoned were not the public" (Erkal, 2008, n.p).

The mainstream media can provide homogenous depictions of a nation. Yet, the dynamics of sharing the same city and sectarianism can be more vividly observed in local media. The depictions of the Alevi intellectuals' visit to the city in the local newspapers sets forth the appropriation of the city by the communities that live within the city. Besides, because different communities are in closer contact in towns and cities, the clashes among them and the dramatic effects of these clashes can be

more concretely analyzed on a local scale. A similar example to this situation in documentary theatre can be observed in Anna Deavere Smith's *Fires in the Mirror*, where the clash between African American and Jewish communities in Crown Heights is explored. One other example is Gillian Slovo's *Riots*, where the members of various communities in Tottenham, UK (such as blacks, whites, Muslims) interpret the development of 2011 riots, lootings and assaults. In these plays and in *Sivas 93*, the communities are not just constructed through imagination as suggested by Benedict Anderson's views on nation formation. The inhabitants in towns and cities also have relatively more chance to contact other members of their communities and they can more promptly become organized because of the proximity. This being the case, local media can develop a more manipulative relation with its audiences, whose needs, interests and expectations it knows closely. It can address them more specifically when compared to national media. The play underlines how that kind of an address has played a substantial role in provocation of people. The performers state: "Three local newspapers commented with distortion on Aziz Nesin's speech the day before. 'They sold snails in the Muslim neighbourhood'[41], noted one of them. It was as if the other one had responded: 'We won't let them do that'" (Erkal, 2008, n.p). As the local media ascribes a collective identity to its audience, it plays a role in determining the boundaries of hospitality. In doing that, it depicts the newcomers as a danger to the very identity of the community, building up the anxiety that this identity is going to be changed by their intervention and ideology. The fact that the local media is closely acquainted with the sensitivities of its audience plays a substantial role in the provocation.

[41] An idiom in Turkish, 'to sell snails in Muslim neighbourhood' suggests acting inappropriately and without following the rules of a region. The idiom alludes to the fact that the consumption of snails is considered forbidden (haram) in Islam. Here, the play alludes to the provocative headline of a local newspaper named *Hakikat*.

The play also marks that the articles issued in the press supporting Islamic fundamentalism sustain the provocative tone after the incident as well. One of those articles comments on the incident as follows:

> The last month passed with full of action and blessings. One of the biggest resistances in the 70 years-old history of the republic took place on July 2. The outcome was a complete thrashing for the Western fundamentalists. Sivas witnessed Muslims' show of strength. What we want to emphasize is the fact that our people in Sivas used their rights to judge and punish. The right to judge and punish only belongs to Muslims. There are no ifs, ands, or buts about it. The illicit TC[42] has no authority. It is quite normal to overpower those who oppose to Islam. Yet, the real target of the Muslims in this country is TC itself: this should never be forgotten. May your wishes for revenge be everlasting (Erkal, 2008, n.p).

The mob's attack and the inability of security and state mechanism to stop the massacre were met with harsh reactions by a great many people around the country. Still, the hateful evaluations of the incidents conveyed in the local media are part of the archiving of the incident. Besides, because such evaluations (even if they are made by smaller and fundamentalist groups) are more likely to be debated and remain in the newsfeed due to the provocation that they create, they remain in the collective memory of the public. The following section is going to take the concept of collective memory shaped by the mediation of social incidents as a starting point. It is going to scrutinize the ways *Sivas 93*, which -as a documentary play- explores collective memories, opens up spaces for re-encounter and reconciliation with absent and excluded individuals and communities.

3.2 Confrontation with the (g)hosts: revisiting the collective memories

As the final lines of the play, which point to the goal of the performance, target the collective memories of the audience, the function of memory to speak to the present

[42] TC is the Turkish acronym for the Republic of Turkey.

and the future is underlined:

> We are finishing the play here.
> We have performed so that it shall not be forgotten
> So that it cannot be gone through again, so that there cannot be any time lapse in the crime of humanity (Erkal, 2008, n.p).

Commemorations not only aim to recollect an event but also to re-explore the existing collective identities and dimensions of who 'we' are. While commemorations often reinforce perceptions of national or religious identities, they also raise awareness towards the suffering experienced by the minorities within the nation. In this sense, they can lead to the questioning of the ethical and humanitarian responsibilities of other people in the nation. As it has been noted before, this commemorative performance which includes ritualistic elements seeks for efficacy: at the end of the performance, something is expected to be achieved. In this sense, through references to possible human rights violations that can occur in the future, the play intimates its interest not only in revisiting the archive and the past but also in the repercussions of this memory on the present and the future. It is only through the interrelation of these time spans the collective memories of the society can be fathomed and processed.

Paul Ricour states in "Memory and Forgetting" (1999) that knowledge and action are memory's two sorts of relation to the past: "In remembering or recollecting we are exercising our memory, which is a kind of action" (p. 5). This action targets the present and the future as well: as the play stimulates the collective memories through narration and performance of the happening, it opens up ways to collectively interpret the materials coming from the past. Thereby, it expects to activate humanitarian consciousness and ethical responsibilities. As memories constantly undergo alterations and eliminations, any injustice that can be forgotten

by other members of the society (whether they belong to the victimized community or not) can threaten the society in the future as well:

> the exemplary dimension of the same events is directed towards the future and regulated, 'towards justice', to quote Todorov. It is the power of justice to be just regarding victims, just also regarding victors, and just towards new institutions by means of which we may prevent the same events from recurring in the future. (Ricour, 1999, p. 9)

In the light of this goal, the play allocates a remarkable space to court records and accentuates the problems pertaining to the operation of justice and to the disclosure of some of the perpetrators. At this point, as the audience hears the accounts of the witnesses and defendants' testimonies, *Sivas 93* slightly bears similarities with tribunal plays (e.g., Richard Norton Taylor's *Nuremberg,* Nicolas Kent's *Srebrenica*, Gillian Slovo's *The Riots*) especially towards the end. Just as in tribunal plays, the intention is less to judge (as most of the audience is already familiar with the verdicts) than to remember ethical responsibilities through refreshing the audience's memories.

To elucidate the impact of recollection on the development of collective memories and on the idea of hospitality built up on the stage, it is essential to focus on the theoretical views on collective memory and its interrelation with history. Maurice Halbwachs scrutinizes the idea of social frames in *On Collective Memory*, which paved the way for future research on memory studies. Social frames stand for the groups that individuals position themselves and refer to in the first person plural. One can claim that these frames, which are closely connected to collective memories, function as homes where the borders of the familiar and the unfamiliar are internalized. As the members of these social frames memorize the narratives which unite them with the other members and which constitute their collective memories, their identities are also shaped by these frames. At the same time, Halbwach notes

that within society there can be various collective memories, which he differentiates from the concept of history. According to him, history is "unitary", "there is only one history" and "the historian certainly means to be objective and impartial" (Halbwach, 1950/1980, p. 83). Collective memories, however, are possessed by a community and correspondingly, they are subjective. Despite the binaries established with regard to history and collective memory, contemporary scholars elaborating on collective memory and its effects dwell on the interrelations and conflations of history and memory as well.

In "Transformations between History and Memory" (2008), Aleida Assmann explains:

> abstract and generalized 'history' turns into re-embodied collective 'memory' when it is transformed into forms of shared knowledge and collective participation. In such cases, 'history in general' is reconfigured into a particular and emotionally changed version of 'our history' and absorbed as a part of collective identity. While collective participation in national memory is enforced in totalitarian states coercively through indoctrination and propaganda, in democratic states it is circulated by way of popular media, public discourse, and forms of 'liberal representation' (William 1998). (p. 65)

Assmann's above quoted words effectively point to the impact of power relations and manipulations on the preservation of past incidents as part of a collective memory. In this sense, how the documents and materials are formed, put into use or concealed from the public view gains considerable significance. Any control on the circulation of the archive can affect the way a nation can perceive its history in the long run (critics such as Hayden White also argues that history-writing itself is a narrative which is based on the depictions of 'notable' events). Besides, considering that memory "bridges the past, present and future", the control of social and political groups in power can re-present, mis-represent or eliminate some elements of collective memories (Assmann, 2008, 61). Thereby, different individuals can be alienated from their own memories or from memories of the previous generation. In

"Invention, Memory and Place" (2000) Edward Said maintains that "the processes of memory are frequently, if not always, manipulated and intervened in for sometimes urgent purposes of the present" (p. 179). Such a manipulation can particularly pose a danger to marginalized minorities whose memories can be eliminated and 'forgotten'. Or, their painful memories can be disconnected both from the ethical responsibilities of the other communities. In this sense, such minorities inevitably have a repressed presence in the latter's narratives of their memories and historiographies.

Considering *Sivas 93*'s attitude to media and state mechanism, an anxiety for the victims to be silenced can be observed. As the play refers to the problematic juridical process and the comments of political figures on the incident from the past to the present, it emphasizes the underestimation of victims' rights and experiences. In referring to the notices distributed around the city, the actors ask: "Who wrote out those notices? Who set them, printed and delivered them? It wasn't known. Nor is it known now. The state hasn't wanted to scrutinize it. The fact has never been revealed" (Erkal, 2008, n.p). The play intimates that there is an unwillingness on the part of the state to provide documents for the archive, which would be integrated into the history. The lack of documentation about the identities of the perpetrators is likely to create a gap in the collective memory of both the victims' communities and others'. So, the play resists the appropriation of the documents by mechanisms of power like media and state, demonstrating an explicit distrust towards them. The actors note that even though there are numerous verbal and visual documents pertaining to the incident, these documents were not sufficiently examined. Pointing to the report which the chief prosecutor from State Security Court issued ten days after the incident, the play asserts that this bulk of documents cannot be analysed

within such a short time. Thus, it does not credit the report, which asserts that the massacre resulted from a mob provocation rather than plans of various organizations.

Sivas 93 is not interested in revisiting the incident with an objective standpoint. This is because the play maintains that the archiving and documentation have already been exposed to the manipulation of power mechanisms including the state. It correspondingly hopes to contribute to the sources about the Other which are silenced. This approach of the play is quite in line with the prevalent functions of documentary theatre to "reopen trials in order to create justice" and "create additional historical accounts" (Martin, 2010, p. 22) as well as to "celebrate repressed or marginal communities and groups, bringing to light their histories and aspirations" (Paget, 2009, p. 227). The play is especially preoccupied with justice (as it already believes that actual perpetrators have not been presented to the public and punished). Thus, it re-presents testimonies and evidences so that the audience as part of the public can apprehend the inequities stemming from the handling of the documents.

Considering Assmann's words (2008) that "collective memory is necessarily a mediated memory", *Sivas 93* as a documentary play opens up new ways of mediation to challenge it (p. 55). It reinterprets and refreshes the collective memory of a society in which its audience is also included. This collective memory is also a part of communal identities which the audience members cannot change or control individually. These identities are substantially influenced by media, which formulates 'imagined communities' as Benedict Anderson puts it. As yet another form of mediation, documentary theatre opens up new modes of articulation for cases which have not been effectively and sufficiently explored and discussed. In *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*,

Diana Taylor explores the processing of the memory through the relation between the archive and the repertoire. Her description of the archive emphasizes its characteristic as a closed space that bears strong similarities with the house:

> Archival memory exists as documents, maps, literary texts, letters, archaeological remains, bones, videos, films, CDs, all those items supposedly resistant to change. Archive, from the Greek, etymologically refers to 'a public building', 'a place where records are kept'. From *arkhe*, it also means a beginning, the first place, the government (Taylor, 2003, p. 19).

The meanings of the archive as 'a building' and as 'the first place' implies the significance placed on the security of 'original' information and ur-document. Archive is where the information springs from and belongs to: it is the storehouse of the memory. Taylor goes on to express that this storehouse does not remain the same but it is exposed to constant changes emerging from its interrelation with the repertoire:

> The repertoire, on the other hand, enacts embodied memory, performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing –in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, nonreproduceable knowledge. Repertoire, etymologically 'a treasury, an inventory', allows for individual agency, referring also to, 'the finder, discoverer', and meaning 'to find out'. The repertoire requires presence: people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge, by 'being there', being a part of the transmission. (Taylor, 2003, p. 20)

The mutuality between the archive and the repertoire echoes the relation between the host and the guest. On the one hand, Taylor's reference to etymology in explaining the repertoire, which means 'to find out' reminds one of the mobility of the guest, his visitation of the home, his position as 'the newcomer'. Archive, on the other hand, echoes the sovereignty of the host due to its connotations of being first. Even though documents can be kept by various power mechanisms like state and media institutions, revisiting them through performance and embodiment opens up new alternatives through which memory is recollected. The 'presence' of the repertoire contributes to the bridging of the past, the present and the future with

regard to memory. Taylor (2003) underlines "[The relation between the archive and the repertoire] too readily falls into a binary, with the written and archival constituting the hegemonic power and the repertoire providing the anti-hegemonic challenge" (p. 22). Nonetheless, she expresses that they "exist in a constant state of interaction", neither of them being superior to the Other (p. 21). Such an interaction is also found in the relation of the host and the guest. Even though the host conventionally signifies the sovereignty over the home; the guest, who visits the home (the archive) and stays there temporarily, can disarray the order of the host through his intervention. Thus, their roles can alter as a result of their interaction: "The very precondition of hospitality may require that, in some ways, both the host and the guest accept, in different ways, the uncomfortable and sometimes painful possibility of being changed by the other." (Rosello, 2001, 176)

As it has been expressed above, the information about the guest or the Other, who does not belong to the 'home', can be exposed to repression. The Other, who is regarded as a threat to the order, can turn into a ghost as the power mechanisms within a society treat them as if they did not exist. Especially representations of the incidents which do not give enough space to the viewpoints, experiences and interpretations of the Other contribute to such a repression. Yet, this does not necessarily mean that the call of the dead and victimized Other can be totally eliminated from the collective memory. Anna Dufourmantelle maintains in *Of Hospitality* that "ghosts haunt places that exist without them; they return to where they have been excluded from" (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, p. 152). At this point, the ambivalence of the word 'unheimlich' applies effectively to the Other, who has been deported from home.

In the essay *Das Unheimlich*, translated into English as *The Uncanny*, Sigmund Freud draws attention to the word 'heimlich' in German: while the word connotes the sense of belonging to the house, of familiarity, it also means 'secret' and 'hidden'. By association, the opposite of the word 'unheimlich' not only characterizes that which is unfamiliar: it also marks that which has been kept a secret and yet, revealed. Thus, as the word 'unheimlich' signifies 'the return of the repressed', it coincides with its opposite 'heimlich':

> We can understand why linguistic usage has extended das Heimliche into its opposite, das Unheimliche; for this uncanny is in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression. (Freud, 1919/1955, p. 241)

To explain the effect of the unheimlich on *Sivas 93*, one can note that the play builds a 'home' for the return of the repressed as it brings to surface the documents, records and people that are forgotten or pushed into the margins. Even though the Madımak massacre is not an incident that has been totally eliminated from the contemporary collective memory in Turkey, the victims' position as a minority continually threatens them to be hidden by the control of the political and ideological power. As there are often forgotten cases of violence behind unified perceptions of a nation - as Ernest Renan puts it in "What is a Nation?", the play opposes the continuation of injustice through silencing and repressing the Other. At this juncture, it emphasizes the mutual dependence of the audience and the voices of the dead / the victimized, as well as of the familiar and the unfamiliar. Thus, the audience emerges as yet another actor.

The act of 'revisiting' a memory, puts the (re)visitor on the shoes of a guest. Through revisiting, the temporal gap between the (re)visitor and the incident is acknowledged: due to this gap, the (re)visitor is often estranged from the 'original'

incident. Yet, he has to reconcile the past with the present, too: He makes the past adapt and conform to his present memory, his present 'home'. Thus, he also plays the role of a host. In *Sivas 93*, the actors and the audience, who constitute both the people from the victims' community and from other communities, revisit the Sivas massacre through narratives, videos, photographs as well as comments. Thereby, those who are expelled from 'the home' and turn into ghosts, make their way into the present. These ghost-victims who were wronged and treated inhospitably are re-embraced by the commemoration of dramatists and actors: "both 'remembering' and 'recollecting', suggest a connecting, assembling, a bringing together of things in relation to one another" (Greene, 1991, p. 297). At the same time, commemoration makes it clear that the communities that the audience belongs to are inseparable from these 'ghosts', who are a part of their collective identities. In *Of Hospitality*, Derrida explains the host's responsibility to the guest and his memory by alluding to Oedipus's death in Colonus. Expelled from his homeland in Thebes and being a stranger in a foreign land, Oedipus wants Theseus, the ruler of Athens to properly bury him and not to reveal where he is buried to anyone including his daughters Antigone and Ismene. Through this example, Derrida suggests that Theseus becomes bound by his promise and turns into a hostage haunted by Oedipus's memory:

> Oedipus demands that he not be forgotten. Because look out! If he were forgotten, everything would go badly...The host thus becomes a retained hostage, responsible for and victim of the gift that Oedipus, a bit like Christ, makes of his dying person...this is my body, keep it in memory of me (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, p. 107).

From this point of view, the audience of *Sivas 93*, who learns about the violence inflicted on an excluded group of people, is bound by a similar responsibility towards them. Yet, while Theseus is bound because he has to keep a secret and his promise to Oedipus, the audience's responsibility to the dead and the victimized necessitates

sharing the latter's experience with others "so that it shall not be forgotten" (Erkal, 2008, n.p). In other words, to know about a case - especially when an injustice is in question- inevitably carries responsibility with it.

The responsibility towards the absent is impressively underlined in the play through the will of the victims as they are stuck in the hotel and attacked by the mob: "the survivors shall write poems for the dead" (Erkal, 2008, n.p). In this relation, the survivors are assigned with a commitment to sustain the voices of those who were silenced and who did not have the chance to express their viewpoints and emotions and to respond to the attackers. This commitment is shared by the actors and the audience as well. In a way, they are expected to develop a bond which the victims shared with the survivors. As the actors reiterate the narratives of the victims and witnesses, they develop the chain in which the latter's painful experiences can be transferred to the other members / generations of a community. In doing that, they collaborate with the audience, who are supposed to remember, talk about and convey these experiences out of the boundaries of theatre. Hence, carrying them on to the present, the act of storytelling emerges as a way of coming to terms with the repressed Other. This condition is similar to what Helen Cixous expresses in the program notes of Théâtre du Soleil's *Le Dernier Caravansérail*, where hospitality towards the refugees and immigrants – who are commonly perceived as the Other – in France is expected to be built. Listening to their tapes, Cixous (2003/2016) comments on the responsibility towards the Other with these words: "Take my story, tell it, make sure it doesn't die without a burial and that we have not lived our modest and precious existences without leaving a trace nor descendants" (44). Yet, one point that needs to be remembered is the fact that this commitment does not give a full authority on the actors and audience to "remake the guest in [their own] image": the

actors and audience cannot be the absolute hosts as they confront the 'ghosts' or the guests (Cixous, 2003/2016, 40). To put in Derridean terms, the responsibility to articulate the injustice makes them hostage to the absent victims: the ghosts become the hosts.

The play's approach to the call of the Other bears similarities with Levinas's understanding of ethics as it underlines that the very humanity and vulnerability of the Other carries with it responsibility and calls for justice: In this relationship, one "come[s] to others not through a common property that distinguishes them as the enemy, but through the face of the other whom [he/she is] responsible for, and in that responsibility responsible for all the others as well." (Large, 2015, p. 89) However, what sets the play in a different framework is the fact that it does not separate communities from their religious, political and cultural contexts. As the play explores the humanitarian responsibilities for the Other, it seems to be more interested in the way the collective responses to the call of the Other can shape collective memories and identities. The play depends considerably on the humanitarian commitment which stems from watching the representations of violence and victimization. Pointing to the affinity between commemoration and ethical spectatorship, it hopes to stimulate the collective responses through commemoration.

Sivas 93 highlights the function of spectatorship as yet another act. Through the video records projected on the stage, it is marked that the crowd not just attacks but also watches the burning of the hotel. Viewing the ostracization of a community through violence constitutes a part of the perpetration. The spectators can 'take sides' through their mere passivity.

> Workers and officers finishing up their work dive into the crowd. They ask what's going on.

> It is as if there were a show and they were there to watch.
> One of them says 'Let's leave', and the other one responds 'Hold on, let's watch a little bit, let's see what's gonna happen.'
> An old man coming from the post office approaches and asks 'what's going on?'
> 'We are stoning the devil, uncle, take this stone and join us'.
> When the man breaks the glass of Şekerbank with the stone he throws, the crowd applauds him with laughter.
> 'Uncle, you couldn't hit the devil but broke the glass of the bank really well' (Erkal, 2008, n.p).

The play attributes a humanitarian responsibility to the audience by opening up a space of ethical spectatorship, through which the empathy of the audience can be aroused. In doing that, it considerably benefits from the effect of commemoration to open up new relations with the past, new ways to confront and come to terms with it. In this case, the spectators in Madımak incident are substituted with the audience present in the auditorium, who is invited to welcome and embrace those who were deported by the former. Herein the audience members are active through their position as commemorators, which are contrasted with the spectatorship of the mob. The emphasis on the altering modes of spectatorship in the play supports the reconsideration and reformulation of the relations between different communities. In this regard, the play seeks to open up new spheres of collective memory through the interaction of the archive and the repertoire and new encounters with those factionalized as minorities.

In *Theatricality, Dark Tourism and Ethical Spectatorship: Absent Others* (2014), where Emma Willis explores the effects of visitors' presence in the sites of dark tourism, she suggests that "by our own emplacement - our appearance we acknowledge our responsibility towards the disappeared, towards those who have exited" (p. 8). A parallel situation can be observed in documentary plays which revisit the cases of mass violence. In *Sivas 93*, like *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, the actors' performance stands out as "an attempt to understand the other's experience

through embodying it." (Willis, 2014, p. 7). Furthermore, this attempt is also projected on to the audience watching the performance. The audience members are not only invited to apprehend what the victims go through; they are also supposed to understand the ways spectatorship can become a part of violence – as it was the case during the Sivas massacre. As Michael Pinchback and Andrew Westerside explains in *Staging Loss: Performance as Commemoration* (2018), "to commemorate and to stage loss...is to trouble history, to trouble notions of linear time. It is both to recall the past and remake it, in full view of the present" (p. 1). As *Sivas 93* "recalls" and "remakes" the past, it encourages the critical and analytic experience of viewing and commemorating, through which the apprehension of audience about the lives of the Other is expected to be improved. That does not mean to argue that victims can exist only as those who are ghostlike, unheimlich and excluded and that their existence depends on the audience and dramatists 'hosting' them in theatre. Rather, the performance disrupts this view by underlining that communities as a whole already depend on those whose victimization they have witnessed: the victims become a part of their collective identity. As Marianne Hirsch and Valerie Smith maintains in "Feminism and Cultural Memory: An Introduction" (2002), "the past is always with us, and it defines our present; it resonates in our voices, hovers over our silences, and explains how we came to be ourselves and to inhabit what we call 'our homes'" (p. 9). Thereby, in bits and pieces, the audience is presented with this identity through the projection of the past into the present as well.

All in all, *Sivas 93* depicts the re-exploration of the past as a hospitable act through which the silenced and oppressed make their ways into the present and future. It also marks that collective memories, which serve as a home for various communities, are continually haunted by them. The commemorative and ritualistic

aspects of this documentary play contribute substantially to reconciling with the groups that constitute the minority and that are not sufficiently represented in media – an essential part of archiving the collective history. As they shake the audience's safe sense of belonging to a community by marking their humanitarian responsibilities to others, they also open up new archives and repertoires. Through this process, past experiences and relations can be evaluated and the prioritization of some communities with certain profiles can be averted.

CHAPTER 4

SPECTATORIAL HOSPITALITY IN DOCUMENTARY THEATRE: RETHINKING MEDIA SPECTATORSHIP IN *THE FEAR OF BREATHING*

Previous chapters have demonstrated that different formations of hospitality in documentary plays considerably defy the prevalent representations of specific bodies and collective memories in media. As documentary theatre responds to media's effects in the introduction or concealment of the concerns, oppression and suffering of various communities, spectatorship emerges as a problem that makes an impact on both spheres. After all, both documentary plays and media institutions pick up and present some voices by anticipating the 'interests' of their target audiences. With regard to documentary theatre, this condition is reflected in Alecky Blythe's account (2008): "The people who agree to be recorded for my shows are entrusting me with their stories, which are often very personal, so I do feel a great responsibility to present them in a way they are happy with. At the same time I have a responsibility to the audience to present them with a good evening's theatre" (p. 94). Blythe's words significantly reveal the expectations that the dramatist (and his/her imagined audience) and the interviewees build during the production of a documentary play. These expectations underpin the gist of the exchange between them: typically, as the interviewees give the dramatist their stories, which can raise the audience's interest; the dramatist provides the interviewee with an opportunity to have their voices reached to a large number of people and to raise awareness about their problems. In this context, one of the conflicts that may arise within theatre and media is between the concepts of "self-serving voyeurism" and "socially responsible

witnessing" (Willis, 2014, p. 6). During the depiction of incidents which include human rights violations, an excessive emphasis on the audience's gaze and interests may turn both the stage and media into a zone for dark tourism. Likewise, in this situation, victims can become passive objects of attention. Especially when victims belong to different countries and stand out as 'the other', it is often the case the audience is interpellated as a homogenous group of people who watch the incidents from a safe space in their home country.

Though theatre offers a public space which incorporates different individuals, the representation of characters' privacies, memories and trauma makes theatre a closed and exclusive area that turns the audience into voyeurs. The representation of the private experiences of others can turn into an occasion directed at the taste of the audience, who become 'guests in the house'. After all, "the analogies to a house are frequent in both the actor and theatre staff lexicons: fourth wall, full house, live house, houselights, bringing down the house, stopping the house and front-of-house" (Heim, 2016, p. 113). As the event and experience take place the within the 'walls' of the theatre, the audience, who internalizes the role of the guest, often expects to have a special time over the limited course of the performance. In *Audience as Performer*, Caroline Heim gives examples from questionnaires and authentic audience responses and points to the way audience members prefer to be regarded as guests. Expressions such as "something special, different – not an everyday thing" and "I want to feel like I am 'at home'" are among the audience responses, which suggest that the audience members both wish to be treated exclusively and also feel that they are part of a community (Heim, 2016, p. 135). This condition already points to the ambivalence of being a guest, which is both inclusive and exclusive as a state. It is inclusive because the guest is treated as if he were a part of the house (though he

actually is not): an audience member in Heim's questionnaire comments "Theatre is an art of the people and for the people and I want to feel like I'm part of their family" (Heim, 2016, p. 135). It is exclusive because not everyone takes part in the occasion. It is special to the audience who is 'among the walls'.

At the same time, when it comes to the representation of 'other' communities from different cultures and countries, the special position of the audience is strengthened through their citizenship, their belonging to a country. Watching the oppression of people in other countries somehow puts them within a space which implicates the security of the 'home'. In this sense, it is marked that violence is 'there', not 'here'. This experience also bears similarities to the prevalent depictions in national media which convey the violence and oppression abroad. These depictions often reinforce the target audience's sense of belonging as they make the victimized Other an object of the audience's gaze. In this respect, the audience has an ambivalent position. On the one hand, they are the 'hosts' of the country with respect to the 'foreign' victims. On the other hand, media treats them as 'guests' and serves them with the footages. This 'service' may give a more self-centred stance to the audience, creating an impression that it is their gaze as viewers (and consumers) that matters.

Yet, though the gaze of the audience is given significance, that does not mean that they have control on what they observe. Dramatists and media institutions often anticipate the expectations and interest of the audience, through which they - intentionally or not- profile and interpellate them. As they determine what will be admitted to the view, they take this interpellation into attention and assume the authority of the host. A remarkable number of scholars and dramatists focusing on audience and spectatorship in theatre such as Helen Freshwater, Liz Tomlin, Sophie

Nield and Chris Goode point to the ascription of a role to spectators, who are mostly treated as a single body.[43] Nield (2008) maintains that the spectator emerges as a character with a ghostly attribute, "imagined before [it] ever arrived, unseen, but known to be watching" (p. 534). Goode (2011) keeps this approach in his essay "The Audience is Listening", where he calls the audience "*they* – or, rather, *it*" (p. 468). In his theatre piece "Who You Are", the direct address to the spectators with words "you do not yet exist" undergirds the idea of a dramatist haunted by his/her audience (Goode, 2011, 469). This attitude echoes Jacques Derrida's words "the hostis[44] responds to hospitality in the way that the ghost recalls himself to the living, not letting them forget" (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, p. 4). This sort of a relationship with the audience implicates that the dramatist tends to regard himself / herself as a 'host' and the audience as guest. In this case, audiences, which are 'to come', emerge as a source of significant concern for the dramatists and actors inviting them into the theatre –or 'the house'.[45]

Furthermore, as the spectator becomes yet another character, he / she is also expected to follow certain norms and regulations in theatre just as a guest does: In "You Say Something: Audience Participation and *The Author*", where she elaborates on the interactive theatre, Helen Freshwater (2011) points out the way the audience is conventionally used to follow some "unwritten social script and ingrained social habitus" (p. 408). The dramatists' familiarity with the social habitus can play a considerable role in the designation of themselves and the audience as the natives of a country. The 'hostness' of the dramatist as well as of media carries with it some

[43] See *Theatre & Audience* and "You Say Something: Audience Participation and *The Author*" by Freshwater, *Political Dramaurgies and Theatre Spectatorship: Provocations for Change* by Tomlin, "The Rise of the Character named Spectator" by Nield and "The Audience is Listening" by Goode.
[44] Derrida uses the word 'hostis' to refer to the guest and the enemy.
[45] See Caroline Heim's *Audience as performer: Changing role of audiences in twenty-first century* (2016).

pressure both on the oppressed others, who are treated as objects, and the audience, who is framed and whose view is controlled through selection. Though audience members are often made to feel that they are 'part of the home', they do not seem to have a sovereignty on this home. As John D. Caputo (1997) underlines in *Deconstruction in a Nutshell*: *A Conversation with Jacques Derrida*, the statement 'make yourself at home' already implicates the sovereignty of the host since it is the host who 'allows' the guest to stay and seeks to sustain the order:

> 'Make yourself at home,' this is a self-limiting invitation. 'Make yourself at home' means: please feel at home, act as if you were at home, but, remember, that is not true, this is not your home but mine, and you are expected to respect my property. (p. 111)

Theatre's position as a house hints that there are also rules to follow by the guests. The audience's interpellation by the dramatists and positioning within a specific frame (already signified by the term 'the fourth wall') emerges as actions used to strengthen the authority of the dramatist. In this regard, the interpellation and framing of the audiences work to make them adapt into the 'house' and become 'admissible'.

In this chapter, my goal is to scrutinize how documentary theatre can challenge the spectatorial experience that puts both the audience and the characters within a frame and how it can thwart the authoritarian gaze of the host (the dramatist and the target audience in his/her country). Focusing on Paul Wood, Ruth Sherlock and Zoe Lafferty's 2012 documentary play *The Fear of Breathing: Stories from the Syrian Revolution*, I will maintain that the play ruptures the frames of the host by revealing the very process of the audience's interpellation. In this case, it is the characters who speculate on the needs, expectations and intentions of the audience – just as a host would do. The frame of the dramatists in theatre which can turn the audience into exclusive voyeurs is broken through the explicit delineation of the

interviewing dramatist and the audience as foreigners (the way this foreignness influences the use of language and translation will be scrutinized in the next chapter). Thus, the play puts audience and the characters in relatively equal positions, enhancing the possibility of humanitarian engagement.[46]

It is not only the dramatist and the audience who watch the characters (or the interviewees). The construction process of documentary play inevitably reveals how the interviewees see the dramatists – and the audience whom their stories will be conveyed to. The interviewees' direct address to the dramatists and the audience as well as their comments on the latter's possible reactions can always disturb the role that dramatists and audience cast for themselves. Especially in a play like *The Fear of Breathing,* which delineates the effects on civil war and human rights violation on the lives of Syrian people, the interviewees' treatment to the dramatists (and audience) as outsiders and tourists distorts any suppositions of humanitarian engagement on the part of the audience. As this situation shakes the comfort zone of the latter, it also leads them to question to what extent they prioritize their own expectations as spectators. In this respect, as *The Fear of Breathing* defies the common experiences of spectatorship in the mainstream media, it also breaks the privileged positon ascribed to the audience in theatre, who watches the performance in their home country.

In the first part of the chapter, I will explore how the audience and dramatists are interpellated as foreigners by the characters / interviewees in the play. The characters' treatment of their addressees bears similarities to guides' attitudes to tourists and this attitude leads the audience members to question their own motives to see a play of Syrian revolution. The audience members, who are conventionally

[46] I use the expression 'humanitarian engagement' to refer to the conscious contemplation of and interest in the problems pertaining to human rights violations.

treated in theatre both as exclusive guests and as hosts of their own country, are made to confront their own spectatorial position. This situation not only differentiates the play from the prevalent experience of spectatorship in the mainstream media, but also disturbs and unsettles the audience. In the second part, my focus will be on how the play breaks the door and threshold within the theatre by creating a public forum, with references to Derrida's views on the effect of technological medium in hospitality. Instead of building an idea of hospitality among the theatrical borders, the characters want their plight to be carried out of the auditorium and debated by different people as networks. It is through such a public network the sovereignty of a specific host and specific viewpoint can be broken.

My goal here is not to depict documentary theatre as utopian space which optimizes the relations of different communities in theatre. As it has also been previously stated, while documentary plays focus on some points, they can leave out and overlook some others. Nevertheless, what differentiates documentary theatre from mass media is its overt references to the problems related to mediation: documentary plays can question their own limits as yet another medium. To exemplify, like many documentary plays*, The Fear of Breathing* does not take the individual responses of the audience into consideration. Thus, its approaches to audience and spectatorship do include gaps. Instead, the play offers insight into the way the audience is collectively designed and addressed in media. In mass media, "choices made when creating the news text [...] always carry norms as to how the spectator should relate to the sufferer and what we should do about the suffering" (Chouliaraki, 2006, p. 3). On the one hand, documentary plays, which extensively make use of verbatim and journalistic techniques, do face the same risk. After all, dramatists very often construct their documentary plays by imagining an audience.

Their selection and combination of the interviewees' words can prescribe the audience how the Other's suffering should be apprehended. Thereby, the audience can be pre-constructed as a specific community. On the other hand, interviewees' direct addresses to the audience in documentary plays contribute to the manifestation of the ways audience is fashioned. Audience members can see the difference between their self perceptions and the way they are interpellated by 'others'. In *The Fear of Breathing*, characters' interpellation of their addressees as tourists undermines any humanitarian profile that audience members and dramatists can ascribe to themselves. Similarly, in *Aftermath*, which will be analysed in the next chapter, there are moments when Iraqi refugees reveal their disturbance about possible spectatorial interests of American dramatists who interview them. This disturbance is directed at the American audience as well. In such moments, the audience may question to what extent they put their expectations on top of the Other's concerns and suffering. Their awareness of the problems of spectatorship emerges as a fundamental element to empower human rights consciousness in media-saturated world.

Documentary theatre often adopts a self-reflexive approach and displays its own process of construction as yet another type of medium. It "claims moral superiority not because it is more objective than media but because it is *more subjective* than media" and "offers *perceived* reality and social and political commentary as a viable form of knowledge (as opposed to editorial)" (Martin, 2009, pp. 87-88). Carol Martin notes in "Bodies of Evidence" (2010) that documentary plays "critique the operations of both documentary and fiction" (p. 22). Likewise, Alyson Fortsyh & Chris Megson (2009) express that documentary form "annex(es) a battery of reflexive performance techniques' and 'indicates a self-conscious

acknowledgement of the complexity of 'reality'" (p. 3). As *The Fear of Breathing* explores how the collective spectatorship emerges an activity which influences the relationships with the Other, it scrutinizes the new roles that theatre can provide for the audience. The awareness of the audience members about the plight of the Other and their humanitarian engagement out of the borders of theatre depend on documentary theatre's overt problematization of the common practices of spectatorship.

4.1 Displaying the dynamics of spectatorship and frames of hospitality: Lafferty, Sherlock and Wood's *The Fear of Breathing*

The problems of spectatorship or the prioritization of the audience have influenced a good number of contemporary Anglo-American documentary plays directly or indirectly. Among them are tribunal plays which present the audience with the representations of trials which have high repercussions in media. Though the audience members are not directly addressed in these plays, they are put in the position of the observers in actual trials. Instead of aestheticizing the representation, tribunal plays highlight humanitarian responsibility to apprehend the case. Apart from tribunal plays, there are also verbatim and quasi-verbatim plays which problematize spectatorship. David Hare's seminal documentary play *Stuff Happens* (2004), which puts on stage the semi-fictional background of Iraq War, enunciates that political cases inevitably turn into a construct through what is mediated to the public (and what is not). At this point, it highlights the idea that spectatorship is already inherent in what the audience considers 'real life'. In the Tectonic Theatre Project and Moisés Kaufman's play *The Laramie Project* (2000), which explores the aftermath of the murder of a gay university student named Matthew Shepard, the

newspersons' overall approach to the case is brought to the foreground. The play occasionally raises criticisms of the way media feeds spectatorship through sensationalism. Likewise, Alecky Blythe and Adam Cork's *The London Road* explores the reactions of the neighbourhood in London Road to the serial killings of Steve Wright.[47] As the play continually draws attention to the media's obsession with the incidents, it also reveals the press' efforts to provide the most absorbing scenes to their spectators (only to conceal the tragedies behind the murders). In addition, in *Aftermath*, there are moments when the characters react against the American interviewers' questions because they doubt that the interviewers may highlight their own concerns during representation.

The Fear of Breathing is another striking example of the way audiences are affected by their own spectatorship. The play, which premiered in Finborough Theatre in London on July 17th, 2012, is based on the verbatim interviews with various Syrian political activists, proponents, and opponents of the Assad regime during the revolution. These interviews were complied by a theatre director Zoe Lafferty, and two award winning reporters, Ruth Sherlock from the Daily Telegraph (formerly) and Paul Wood from the BBC. They managed to get in Syria secretly despite the ban on journalists from abroad. In the play, detailed explanations of the activists' motives to rise against the Assad regime, Alawi-Sunni conflicts, and the violence inflicted on activists by guards and soldiers are provided by characters such as Omar (a leading activist), Quataba (a student), Faha (a radio DJ), Ahmad (a media coordinator), Muhummad (a soldier escaping from Assad's army) and a mother whose daughter is killed by the Syrian security.

[47] In 2006, Steve Wright killed five women who worked as prostitutes in Ipswich, Suffolk. Following the trials that took place between 2006 and 2008, Wright was sentenced to life imprisonment.

The accounts of the characters set forth the different facets of the problem caused by the operations of the regime. Nevertheless, the play chiefly focuses on the younger generation's means and ends for a revolution and freedom. Omar and Quataba, who are substantially influenced by the 'Arab spring' in Egypt, narrate their experiences of the demonstrations in different locations in Syria and the reaction of the government. Muhummad, who hopes to join the Free Syrian Army, gives descriptions of the states of prisons and the influence of his Sunni identity in his inferiority in the army. The conditions in the hospitals and the neglectful attitude towards injured demonstrators are elucidated through Ahmad and Mother's statements. Besides, the play also illustrates the means that the characters develop to fight with the regime: Omar, Quataba and other activists rely mostly on online communication, graffiti and distribution of DVDs. Similarly, Faha, who looks for more integrity with the West and enunciates her distaste for the traditional assets of Syria, foregrounds art and science to achieve her goals for revolution. In this respect, the play already accentuates an ongoing need for self-expression and publicity specifically on the part of the opponents. Possibly the most disturbing moment, however, is when Quataba is tortured in Syrian prisons, which is considered a "visceral reenactment" (Cavendish, 2012, para. 5) and "grimly staged" (Barfield, 2012, para. 3) scene by the reviewers.

The character that distinctly sympathizes with the government is a hotel owner named Peter, who separates himself from other Syrians with his British and Christian identity. The use of this character which could be regarded as an 'outsider' is quite noteworthy: it introduces a Western point of view which denies the violence inflicted by the regime and expresses a lack of sympathy with the native population of the country. The selection and presentation of such a character as the supporter of

the regime already hints the idea that the suffering and oppression of the native citizens is not sufficiently grasped and acknowledged by the West. Hence, the play as a whole seeks to guide the people living out of Syria, who can be uninformed or misinformed about the incidents.

The production of Finborough Theatre received acclamation following its premiere: Michael Billington in *The Guardian* (2012) proclaims that the play is "genuinely revealing" and that "the first-hand testimony is riveting" (para. 3). He adds that "one has to applaud the courage" of the interviewers (para. 1). Likewise, Dominic Cavendish (2012), who calls the play an "essential viewing" (para. 6) writes: "I can't remember a piece of documentary theatre that has arrived with such remarkable dead-on timing as *The Fear of Breathing* – an insiders' view of Syria, and another coup for the plucky little Finborough in Earls Court" (para. 1). Nevertheless, for all the construction of the play with the interviewees' own accounts, some reviewers such as Steve Barfield from Exeunt Magazine criticize the play due to its mostly partial approach. Though the interviews set forth the apprehensions and experiences of individuals that played various roles in the civil strife, there are very few characters in the play that appear as the supporters of the government. The play is mostly based on the accounts of characters who narrate the process in which the organizations against the regime started and developed. Nevertheless, the protests of Assad's supporters, Bashar Assad's 2011 interview with the American journalist Barbara Walters in ABC News and Asma Assad's statements are mostly shown in the footages projected on stage:

> The lack of voices supporting the regime deprives us of any idea why the Ba'ath regime has lasted so long, or why it still has supporters in Syria and elsewhere and makes the play rather one-sided and dependent on a reductive logic of sectarianism for such an explanation." (Barfield, 2012, para. 4).

In this regard, the play diverges from documentary plays such as Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight Los Angeles 1992* and *Fires in the Mirror*, where voices that belong to the clashing social groups are more equally given the floor. The dramatists develop a preconception about the footages which dominate mass media. This leads them to provide more space for the voices which -they think- are unheard.

Though *The Fear of Breathing* benefits copiously from the contributions of journalists (among the characters is also an unnamed photographer narrating his experiences during the civilian massacres[48]), it calls the credibility of media into question. Both the opponents and proponents of the regime (including the Assads themselves) blame the media institutions at home and abroad for being biased, misleading or neglectful. They point to the political ends behind their treatments of the subject. On the one hand, the anti-government activist characters in the play turn to social networks such as Facebook and Skype because of their distrust in a 'government-controlled media'. They clandestinely organize through these networks. They also denounce the global media for not paying sufficient attention to the violence against the civilians. On the other hand, the proponents of the regime mostly target Western media and report that they depict activists as people fighting for freedom rather than terrorists. The criticism of the mainstream media both in Syria and in the West and the reactions to censorship significantly problematize modern repercussions of hospitality which are shaped by the proliferation of media technologies.

In *Of Hospitality*, Derrida extensively points out the fact that the border between public and the private is blurred with the booming of technology and the

[48] Dominic Cavendish from *the Telegraph* alleges (2012): the "unnamed photographer is presumably the Sunday Times's Paul Conroy" (para. 4). Conroy, who was reporting from Homs, was injured after his lodging was bombed by the forces of Syrian Government on February 22nd, 2012. In this attack, an American journalist, Marie Colvin and a French photojournalist, Rémi Ochlik were also killed.

state may intervene in the private domain of the citizens (e.g e-mail, internet) for any possible threat to its sovereignty. Thus, such domains are regarded as if they were public. For fear that the state can also intrude in these private domains, the activist characters seek to carry out their organization as secretly as possible. At the same time, Derrida marks in "Hostipitality" (2000b) that while doors and thresholds are necessary for the guest to come in, they also implicate a sense of control and filtering:

> To take up the figure of the door, for there to be hospitality, there must be a door. But if there is a door, there is no longer hospitality. There is no hospitable house. There is no house without doors and windows. But as soon as there are a door and windows, it means that someone has the key to them and consequently controls the conditions of hospitality. (p. 14)

The state interventions on mass media function as a way to empower its control as hosts, which makes the characters think that their voices are not sufficiently and effectively represented. In other words, the sovereign power checks the door that is built in media deciding what is to be represented. It is through this door the voices that are conveyed to masses are controlled.

A similar control can be observed in the play itself, too. After all, Lafferty et. al. do not represent each and every voice they interview and they select what will be admitted to the theatre. Yet, contrary to media that conceals its subjectivity, the play reveals it to the audience. Representing a setting in which individuals already look upon most of the media as a false witness and criticize its one-sided standpoint, *The Fear of Breathing* displays its own position as a construct which specifically presents certain voices. Introducing the political figures only through projections rather than enacting them like the Syrian citizens on stage, the play puts the latter in a closer contact with the audience than the former. Such construction of the play also implies that political figures are already more privileged to self-represent and raise their

criticism through globally circulating media. The emphasis of media on political figures during national and international unrest creates an environment in which state politics shape the humanitarian problems and determine their solutions. Consequently, depicting those who do not find enough space in media and cannot have their voices globally heard, the play takes sides. It opens its own doors to those whom have not been 'hosted'. Yet at the same time, it disrupts the dramatists sovereign position as hosts. This is because the play encourages the audience to go out of the spectatorial boundaries set for them. It reveals the way audience are profiled and given a role that they passively play through interpellation. Thus, *The Fear of Breathing* leads them to go out of the frame of representation and explore their ethical and humanitarian responsibility actively and more consciously.

For a thorough insight into the interpellation of audience and the consideration of their expectations and needs in theatre, it is necessary to look into the existing scholarship on spectatorship. In *Theatre and Audience* (2009), Helen Freshwater marks the ongoing distrust of authentic audience reactions and points to the emphasis on a theoretically framed audience whose interests are predicted by dramatists and critics. With regard to this condition, Liz Tomlin (2019) contends that "no response can entirely escape the effects of the ideological conditions in which it is conceived" (p. 27). The endeavours to imagine and interpellate audience members with regard to various social, political, economic or aesthetic concerns often point to a tendency to profile a single collective entity, the audience (Goode, 2011; Freshwater, 2009, 2011). They also implicate a pursuit of control and manipulation on the part of dramatists and critics. Even in the cases where the audience members can actively participate in the performance, they can be expected to follow an aforethought agenda: the performance can "offer them the choice of option A or

option B – or the chance to give responses which are clearly scripted by social and cultural conventions" (Freshwater, 2009, 75). Such an approach involves a relation of 'hospitality' which puts the dramatist in the shoes of a host or "the chief, the father...the master of the house" (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, p. 5). The audience's temporary presence during the performance can risk their subordination to the rules of (host) dramatists.

Throughout the play, various constructions of spectatorship are exposed to the audience. The most prominent of them is the stage directions in the opening, which position the audience almost in a tourist site. Considering the play's concentration on Syrian Civil War and its painful effects on the citizens' lives, the insertion of an introduction which underscores tourism constitutes rather an unusual starting point for the subject matter of the play.

> *We enter a dark room. The walls are covered in graffiti. Hafez and Bashar al-Assad's faces are everywhere. There is scaffolding on which TVs hang. As the audience enter the TVs flicker on and off. On them we see the famous sites of Syria. A voiceover welcomes tourists. Every now and again we hear a rumble. Actors sit on stage watching the screens.*
>
> ON A TV SCREEN: The material for this piece was collected across Syria. The stories are true. The characters are real people. The words spoken verbatim. Names have been changed to protect identities.
>
> *The TVs continue to play images of the famous sites in Syria. Traditional Syrian music plays in the background.* (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, p. 25)

The stage directions make it clear that the audience's entrance in the hall is accompanied by a voiceover on TV, which immediately puts them on the shoes of tourists /guests. Among the first things they can observe on stage are projections of the touristic attractions in Syria and traditional Syrian music. Such a formulation stands out as a reminiscent of the way the tourists' potential interests about a specific

location are anticipated and directed by guides. It also points to the way media and documentary plays are shaped by a similar process.

In "The Guided Tour: A Sociological Approach" (1981), Christopher Holloway points to the theatricality of touristic guidance within the sites of memorial, which is predominantly conducted for raising the viewers' attention. The practices that he refers to bear strong similarities to the techniques in documentary plays to engage the audience in the humanitarian problems:

> Guides […] wish to ensure that their passengers enjoy an experience that is more than routine, and they may use their dramaturgical skills to de-routinize the excursion. This they may do by using acting skills to involve the audience emotionally, or they may invite members of the group to share some deeply felt personal perspective of the site. (Holloway, 1981, pp. 388-389)

Both in media footages or documentary plays, the expectations and potential reactions of the audience from a representation are estimated by those who are supposed to mediate it. The projection of tourist destinations – rather than the rumbles of the civil war – on stage reiterates the concealment of human suffering on media representations, which is also decried by the adversaries of the regime during the play. Instead, the country is almost advertised on TV. Such cover-up of the violence tends to profile an audience that lacks awareness of the political unrest and of the resulting civil violence. At the same time, it promotes a rather exotic image of Syria for people who are not familiar enough with the country. As the play goes on, it becomes more clear that this is a predominantly Western audience.[49] Additionally,

[49] This is not necessarily to assert that the prospects of staging the play are restricted to a Euro-American territory due to its Western orientations. Apart from the UK, *The Fear of Breathing* has also been staged in Akasaka Red Theatre of Tokyo, Japan between Nov. 11-17, 2013. As the production accentuates its own audience's non-belonging and distance to Syrian citizens' plight, it also questions the foreign policies of the home country through the representation of humanitarian crises in Syria. In Andrew Eglinton's interview (2013), Toshinobu Kojo, the director of the production states: "It's often said that Japanese people take peace for granted. I totally agree with that view. The current government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is certainly shifting to the right and I am worried about the proposed expansion of Japan's Self-Defense Forces and the introduction of a new state secrecy law" (para. 12). He adds "Japanese people have heard about what is happening in Syria through the news, but many people see it simply as someone else's problem. Distance creates a barrier to empathy." (para. 6).

the play's display of TV screens contributes to the manifestation of such audience profiling. Rather than making the audience a totally passive part of spectatorship, the play invites them to look into the very process that leads to this experience.

The depiction of an audience profile as tourists highlights the fact that the audience may have various motives in mind to watch a representation. It is this intentionality that distinguishes them from a bystander whose presence during an incident is often only by chance. So, the play bases the ethical responsibility of the audience on their voluntary presence on the auditorium. In order not to turn this presence into passive spectatorship, the play seeks to engage the audience in the act of gathering information from the witnesses by narrowing the gap between the interviewer and the audience as much as possible. In this way, the audience can observe the way 'the Others' profile themselves.

The Fear of Breathing relates the audience to the interviewers with respect to its willingness to learn more about the impacts of the civil war on the lives of the victims. Even if the audience has not had the chance to personally contact the Syrian citizens going through the strife, their very presence on theatre for information springs from a similar humanitarian commitment that leads the interviewers to activity. While the play re-enacts the very moments that the witnessing characters respond to the questions, the audience does not see the interviewers as characters on stage. Thus, the characters directly address the audience throughout the play as they already did when they faced the interviewers in Syria. Although this direct address creates an illusion of immediacy between the audience and the characters, the construction process of the play is revealed to the former in bits and pieces. It is already projected on the TV screens on stage that the source material of the play is

the verbatim accounts recorded in Syria.[50] Besides, the encounter with the hotel owner (Peter) manifests the experience of the interviewers during their stay in the country: he speaks to the audience as if they were customers and tries to please them. Likewise, both Peter's and the activists' approaches to the Western identity of their addressees hold a remarkable space in most of the scenes and reveals the treatment towards the interviewers as foreigners. With the concealment of the interviewers, everything the characters utter to and about the interviewers is directed to the target audience of the play as well. Therefore, the play somehow depicts what would possibly happen if the target audience (English speaking and Western) personally met the characters.

Both the interviewers and the audience are connected to one another through their stance as 'outsiders', who belong to the setting neither as victims nor as first-hand witnesses of the civil war. The responses of the characters give significant insights about what they think about the outsiders, how their preconceptions about the latter affect their language, and how they feel about being exposed to their gaze (as the characters already know that their responses will be mediated to a wider audience). The characters very often regard the interviewers either as spectators to their suffering or as tourists who travel around the country. Thus, the interviewers are continually positioned on the safe and detached side, just like the audience who watches the painful incidents on the secure space in front of TV. Thereby, the interviewers' immediate and face-to-face communication with characters does not substantially differ from the target audience's mediated encounter in the sense that

[50] In 2012 production of Finborough Theatre, the setting in which the encounters between the characters are represented does not provide an exact copy the original settings in Syria. Rather, the stage is designed quite minimally.

they both stand out as spectators and outsiders especially through their Western outlook.

The play also highlights the Western profile of Peter, who -though a resident in Syria- separates himself from the people who are subjected to prejudice due to their social and ethnic identities. As the play inserts the comments of this character among the personal experiences of the civil war victims, it sets forth the disengagement which comes with being a foreigner. It implicitly questions to what extent the target audience, observing the incidents from the 'safe' side, is a part of such detachment.

> PETER: …I have a good relationship with the embassies, they always give me visas. Why? Am I poor? No. So will I become illegal immigrant? No. Am I a Muslim? No. So will I become a terrorist? No. (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, p. 50)

The play propounds that the people in Syria themselves remain ignorant of the violence inflicted on many citizens. This is essentially because both the government superintendence on media and the remarks of characters supporting Assad (mainly Peter) mask and deny it. Throughout the play, Peter continually tries to divert the attention of his addressees by painting an entirely different portrait of Syria:

> PETER: You want to go out and see the see the sites? Damascus is the oldest constantly inhabited city in the world. Can you believe it? The city of Jasmine. And we are used to visitors. We have been occupied by the Ottoman, the French, the Israelis and even a little bit by the British. They say we are cradle of civilisation. We have all the sites of ancient empires. But don't worry we have modern things too. Do you like sushi? I love sushi and it would be a pleasure to go with you. (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, p. 34)

Peter's touristic language is aimed at the manipulation of his addressees' perspectives. It bears similarities with the language of local media which is depreciated in the play for hiding the voices of oppressed people. As he is after creating a decent image for the people visiting the country in person, his words at first appear in line with Assad's denials of state violence in Barbara Walter's

interview and his proposition that Western people should observe the reality through a live experience in Syria. Yet, the play expounds that this live experience also brings distortions with it. Especially in the beginning, Peter's efforts to disguise the unrest in the country often seem at odds with the existing conditions, which already triggers doubts about the arguments of regime supporters:

> PETER: Umm we don't have many customers…well actually none. The people they think there is problem in Syria. Nonsense! (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, pp. 25-26)

Peter prefers to market the tourist attractions of the country for his self-interests as a hotel owner. He hopes to attract the attention of his addressees by providing an exotic diversion and keeps them out of the conditions of the civil strife. Since what he speaks to the interviewers staying in his hotel is also addressed to the audience on stage, the observation of the country as a pastime becomes an act which is also ascribed to the latter, who will continually be reminded of this spectatorship during the play.

> *PETER enters; he changes the TV channel to 'Arab's got talent' and addresses the audience. A HOTEL WORKER scrubs the floor.*
>
> PETER: It's popcorn o'clock. (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, p. 37)

As the play goes on, Peter occasionally offers popcorn to the audience through the unseen interviewers, which creates an impression on stage that the audience is watching a movie or an entertaining and fictional depiction. The broadcast of *'Arab's got talent'* implies Syrian media's dissimulation of civil violence. At the same time, the references to entertainment and spectatorial tastes problematizes the audience's motives to watch the play. Just like the interviewers who visit the country for a temporary amount of time, the audience also spares certain time to observe the enactment of this visit. Answering the question 'whose interests and viewpoints are prioritized during this brief experience?' is quite helpful to note the dimensions of

spectatorship. In this limited duration of observation, the documentary play looks for impressing the audience as much as possible through the selection and combination of personal statements. Yet in the meantime, the play evades putting the the audience's gaze in the centre and making the victims and witnesses a passive object of this gaze. As it spurs mutual deliberation between the audience and victims/witnesses, it demarcates itself from media.

The Fear of Breathing suggests that both the mainstream media and the touristic depictions concentrate on how the viewer will / should regard the scene and react to it. In this case, the voices and perspectives of those who are depicted are overlooked. To attract attention to the way media develops spectatorship and places its audience within a detached and supervising position, the play underscores the fact that the audience is also being imagined and estimated by people whom they view.

> OMAR: (…) Are you aware I've been watching you? For the last two hours. I followed you into the mosque, down the street, to the cafe. You didn't notice?
>
> *He shrugs.*
>
> It's just procedure. I'm sure you are nice people but how do I know? We haven't met before and anyway, even if you can be trusted, maybe you are being monitored. (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, p. 26)

Though the characters do not see the theatre audience during the original interview, play demonstrates that they speak to an imagined audience who has a previous information about their experiences. At the same time, the interviews set forth the way the audience can be sorted as a uniform mass in the mind of the interviewed characters as well. Since the audience members are also politically positioned by these characters (especially because of their national identity) and turn into an object of their attention, the prominence of their gaze substantially diminishes.

4.2 Building humanitarian networks: documentary theatre as a public forum

For all the spectatorship of these foreign addressees, the activist characters invite them to act on the humanitarian commitment that emerges from the observation of the oppressed. The interviewers' assumed mission to report what they have viewed in Syria is also accredited to the theatre audience. Both are shown responsible for giving testimony of the oppression they witness.[51] This condition echoes the concluding remarks of Carol Martin in *Theatre of the Real* (2013), who maintains that works of documentary theatre "intend for the spectators to reconsider the world around them on the basis of theatrical experiences [they] offer" (p. 175). The dramatic structure of the play provides an efficient ground for networking, which also holds an utmost significance for many characters in the play, especially the opponents of the Assad regime:

> OMAR: You must tell people this. You promise me. Talk about what you see. Talk about our ideas. How we are organising. We have a new Facebook group for everything. You could imagine. We thought of everything. We are trying everything. (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, p. 52)

The fact that the citizens do not trust their own media leads them to look for alternative methods that provide more satisfying information. The activist characters' preference for social media rather than the mainstream media points to the stress laid on the discussion and interpretation of the existing humanitarian problems. The characters often point to the networking in social media where problems such as oppression and mass violence are relayed to the masses and debated by them. Still,

[51] This emphasis on testimony in the play is closely related to Levinas's understanding of ethics and responsibility for the Other, which is also thoroughly explored in Emma Willis's *Theatricality, Dark Tourism and Ethical Spectatorship*. According to Levinas in *Otherwise than Being* (1974), one's position as a subject is preceded by his connection to the Other and depends on its substitution of his being with Other. So, one is compelled to 'respond' to Other's plight and this responsiveness is continually encouraged throughout the play.

Steve Barfield from the Exeunt Magazine problematizes social media's non-use as a stylistic technique in the play:

> bearing in mind the highlighting of the role of social media in the early days of demonstrations, there was surprisingly little attempt to work this factor into the scenography; the actual use of TV screens seemed curiously old-fashioned and broadcast news dependent" (*Exeunt Magazine*, 23 July 2012).

Despite this stylistic absence, *The Fear of Breathing* still carries the communicational techniques in social media to the relation between the characters and the audience in the auditorium. Discussion and networking stand out as the chiefest of these techniques. The introduction of characters that view and comment on video records echoes the prevalent communications in social media. As the characters opposing the regime inform the interviewers and the audience about the way they built online organizations, they also try to retain their communicative relation by carrying it out of the theatrical territory:

> *OMAR, QUATABA and FAHA enter. They all carry in laptops and start to type away on them. They are speaking the audience separately.*
>
> OMAR: The people in each network know each other because we are living in the same community. And I know that he is with the movement because he stood on my street and shouted for freedom. For him to announce this on the street I know that he wants to be in this revolution. I know he is safe.
> AHMAD: And we made small groups on Facebook – you know Facebook?
> OMAR: This is my Facebook account – the battalion of the revolutionaries – not an armed battalion – a Facebook battalion. Add me if you want – Omar Alkhani – then you can have all the updates. It's where all groups communicate.
> AHMAD: Facebook helped to spread the word.
> OMAR: It didn't start the whole revolution but it helped to begin things. (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, p. 35)

In order to broaden the scope of external attention for their pleas, Omar and Ahmad need to move out of the safe zone which only includes people they know. Their communicative goals reach beyond the space which provides visibility. Just as the social media platforms like Facebook help them express their social and political

interests and worries without revealing their identities, their perspectives can also be recounted to an audience within the anonymity provided for them on stage. Especially social and ethnic groups which can have prejudices about one another can publicize their ideas 'more safely' and spark the production of debates.

In this respect, the play's approach to technological medium and networking is particularly in terms of modern repercussions of hospitality. According to Derrida, the development of technology has blurred the distinction between the public and the private. In *Of Hospitality*, he claims:

> Nowadays, a reflection on hospitality presupposes, among other things, the possibility of a rigorous delimitation of thresholds or frontiers: between the familial and the non-familial, between the foreign and the nonforeign, the citizen and the non-citizen, but first of all between the private and the public, private and public law, etc." (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, pp. 47-48)

He goes on to argue that the blurring of these frontiers leads the state to intrude in / control the private spaces of its citizens, which include their phone lines, e-mail addresses and internet access, to ensure its sovereignty (p. 51). Yet, the play marks that the blurring of frontiers can also function as a mechanism of resistance through the networking it provides. Thereby, the interaction out of the boundaries of theatre and the activity of the audience are encouraged. In *Deconstruction in a Nutshell*, John D. Caputo (1997) comments on Derrida's ideas on hospitality with the words below: "Hospitality really starts to happen when I push against this limit, this threshold, this paralysis, inviting hospitality to cross its own threshold and limit, its own self-limitation" (p. 111). Though the play cannot totally remove the limits of hospitality, the frontiers; it does its best to reduce them. It is only through such an effort the dramatists, the audience and the characters come close to one another. In this sense, it is quite influential to be able to observe how the Other views and addresses the audience.

One of the foremost queries in *The Fear of Breathing* is to what extent the audience can take action *out* of the theatre and protest against the adverse circumstances presented to them. In the play a photographer's emphasis on urgent humanitarian intervention (knowing that his remarks will afterwards be conveyed to a larger audience in the West) sets a notable example to the characters' efforts to intensify the audience activism outside the theatre.

> PHOTOGRAPHER: The time for talking is actually over. I don't know how we can stand by and watch this. It's not a war, it's massacre, an indiscriminate massacre of men, women and children. It's more than a catastrophe. In years to come, we are going to sit and we are going to go, how did we let this happen under our nose. Please, forget the geopolitics, forget the meetings, forget all of that and do something. 'Cause as I'm talking to you now, they are dying. What is happening to those people, we are going to look back in shame, of sitting and watching. It needs someone to step up to the mark and do something. Otherwise we are going to be talking about a massacre beyond measure. (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, p. 80)

While the characters frequently point to the emergency of the humanitarian help and necessity of worldwide awareness of the mass violence, the effectiveness of these immediate calls in galvanizing the audience is quite disputable. The photographer's words quoted above bears strong similarities to the language of media which invites its addressees to act against violence as soon as possible. In *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (2008), Slavoj Žižek argues that such a language hampers the thorough contemplation of the reasons behind violence: "there is a fundamental anti-theoretical edge to these urgent injunctions. There is no time to reflect: we have to act now" (p. 6).[52] The play does not particularly do a causal research on violence and use its findings as a humanitarian agenda. Instead, it endeavours to display how the

[52] In *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (2008), Slavoj Žižek introduces two types of violence which he categorizes as 'subjective' and 'objective'. While subjective violence signifies the form of violence whose perpetrators are easily identifiable, objective violence describes violence which is hidden behind the subjective violence and whose causes and inflictors are hard to detect: it is "inherent to the 'normal' state of things" and so much ingrained in the social, economical and political systems (p. 2). In this work, he introduces the calls for immediate humanitarian help made by what he calls 'liberal communists', as a form of objective violence. This is because these calls prevent the public awareness of the problems in the system, which leads to subjective violence.

victims and witnesses themselves view and verbalize the violence. Apart from the photographer, characters such as Omar and Faha also look for urgent humanitarian intervention and solution to their problems, which is mostly because they are experiencing the effects of violence personally and im-mediately. At this point, the tension in their 'present' moment prevents these characters from considering how the audience will be affected by this call for urgency. For people to whom the consequences of violence are mediated, however, the invitations to act in no time can only work to ease their conscience. In order to minimize this outcome, the play chooses to question very course of spectatorial experience. Herein, the strength of the play in terms of raising humanitarian consciousness does not come from the narratives of violence and suffering. It lies in the pursuits to make the audience members notice their own spectatorship and to decentre the audience's gaze.

Through the end of the play, references to the audience's anticipated interest and involvement in the suffering of the Other becomes relatively provoking and indicative of the way theatricalization can be differentiated from reality in the audience's mind.

> OMAR: You in the West are very happy with what is happening. Syrians killing Syrians. You are very happy that after six or seven months there will be no military. Then you will make your intervention…You are just using us to play your power games. What did Britain do? Britain is no different. What did you do? Talking about the regime and talking about the politics and doing a demonstration? You did nothing.
>
> *Beat*
>
> You should go home now. Go back to whatever you normally do. Go drink and party. The entertainment is over.
>
> *Beat*
>
> But please remember, this is my reality and I will stay here because I have nowhere else to go. (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, pp. 83-84)

As Omar tells the audience to go home, he also marks that his position as a host on stage is coming to an end. At the same time, his words about the audience's possible behaviours after the play include metatheatrical overtones. Even though the characters are real people and their words are based on their verbatim statements, the play marks that the audience is liable to separate the experiences *in* and *out* of the theatre. Thereby, the suffering of the characters can be restricted to the specific spatial and temporal presence of the audience. The humanitarian commitment can be recognized as a binding force as long as the audience remembers them. Due to the temporality in theatre, the audience members may regard their act of watching the Other's plight as a short and special moment of conscientious satisfaction (since they feel sorry the victims as they watch). So, pointing to the audience's typical attitudes, the play invites them to show more humanitarian awareness out of the borders of the theatre.

Knowing that his face will remain hidden from the audience, Omar speculates that he will become a ghostlike figure, an absent presence on stage. On the one hand, his words "this is my reality" stand out as a testimonial account about his experiences (suggesting that this is what he 'really' has gone through). On the other hand, these words are an implication that mediation will inevitably shape the ways his reality will be perceived. Because he "ha(s) nowhere else to go," the stage becomes a home for him. Omar anticipates that he will be separated from the audience with political and mediational boundaries. Nevertheless, just as in *Sivas 93*, where the absent victims or 'ghosts' haunt the memory of the audience, *The Fear of Breathing* seeks to carry the Other's haunting effect beyond the theatre by inviting the audience to 'remember'.

In line with Omar's words, Peter's remarks at the very end of the play also point at the border between the audience and the characters, which the play expects to narrow down:

> PETER: Tomorrow it is going to be sunshine just like today…
>
> *Pause*
>
> How old is your dad? And your granddad? Ask him about the Second World War. They know what a war means
>
> … You, you have not seen, you can't imagine. When I went to the museum for the Second World War...when I saw the pictures my heart was crying – not my eyes, my heart…Imagine if what is happening in Syria, is in London. Do something different. It is not something easy but let's have another solution?
>
> *Pause*
>
> Umm sushi. You know, if it was Monday we could go to the Cinema City for sushi because that's the best…
>
> *He exits. On the news the most recent news from Syria plays.* (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, pp. 84-85)

Peter's sudden turn from reminding his addressee of the Second World War to an invitation to eat sushi stands out as a striking implication of the anticipated audience attitude after the play. Peter, who isolates himself from the activist characters throughout the play and highlights his Western identity, stands out as the character which relates to the detached audience the most. The play connotes that the humanitarian responsibility is remarkably influenced by the audience's spatial and temporal position (which can also be noticed in Peter asking the audience to assume the location of unrest as London). It raises consciousness about this effect through its references to the play's construction and by imposing the interviewers' temporal and spatial experience on the audience. Concordantly, it seeks to blur the borders between spaces in and out of theatre. The insertion of the recent news from Syria

points to the play's motivation to extend the provisional theatrical experience to what is perceived as 'real life'.

Knowing that his experiences are going to be conveyed to the audience in the West, whose policies he blames for breeding the unrest in Syria, Omar expresses his resentment about being watched from the 'secure' side. His words "what did you do? Talking about the regime and talking about the politics and doing a demonstration? You did nothing" set an impressive example to this resentment (Lafferty, Wood & Sherlock, 2012, p. 84). In this case, he reckons spectatorship as a political stance whereby the audience members are inevitably placed on a specific side position regard to the victims. As they watch the humanitarian crises on stage, the extent of their engagement with the suffering of the Other significantly marks their political inclinations and their relation to a social or national group. This situation echoes Willis's statements *in Theatricality, Dark Tourism and Ethical Spectatorship* (2014).

> whilst our willingness to engage with the suffering of others is important, this is most effective when we are made to realize our own ambivalent position in regard to such spectatorship; that is, when as spectators we are made to understand our role as participants. I do not mean that we must assume some kind of guilty stance but we need to acknowledge that our engagement is not neutral or innocent but always already political. Ethics begins when we start by acknowledging the asymmetry of the position of the spectator (pp. 213-214).

Emma Willis's evaluation of spectatorship responds to a repetitive concern in documentary theatre where the audience has a performative part. The audience's very presence in the auditorium can be deemed as a language (which is repeated every time the audience enters in this space). This language brings about a process at the end of which an action is 'done'. In this performative position, which becomes more palpable in tribunal plays, the audience members – through their mere presence and observation – become the witnesses of an incident in the past as the related evidence and testimonies are recorded. This process of recording often serves to

fulfil a collective purpose through the formulation of an archive and contribution to different ethnic, national, racial histories. At the end of this process, the audience's belonging to a specific community is reiterated. What particularly makes this condition political is the power relation that arises between the audience and characters. In mediation, the detachment of the audience from these people puts the former in a relatively powerful and safe position. It is mainly that attribution of power to the audience members that turns the them into spectators.

To conclude, the problem of spectatorship emerges as an inevitable consequence of the audience's continual relation to media, which they depend on to have access to information. In *The Fear of Breathing* which touches upon humanitarian problems, the audience's political and social activism is encouraged through the interruption of the institutional voice of media by the multiplicity of personal voices. As these voices create a space for discussion and interpretation of humanitarian problems, the perceptive and reactive positions of the audience are problematized and the aloofness of the audience is eliminated. Awareness about human rights violations is not just raised through the exposition of the victims' anguish and witnesses' testimonies. It is also stimulated through the manifestation of the dynamics that create the prioritization of the audience's gaze. With this last point, *The Fear of Breathing* sets a salient alternative to the documentary plays that explore spectatorship.

CHAPTER 5[53]

LINGUISTIC HOSPITALITY IN DOCUMENTARY THEATRE: MEDIATING THE OTHER'S VOICE IN TRANSLATION IN *AFTERMATH*

> [The foreigner] has to ask for hospitality in a language, which is not his own, the one imposed on him by the master of the house…This personage imposes on him translation, and that is the first act of violence.
> This is where the question of hospitality begins: must we ask the foreigner to understand us, to speak our language, in all the sense of this term, in all its possible extensions, before being able and so as to be able to welcome him into our country? (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, p. 15)

In his 1996 lecture *Of Hospitality*, Jacques Derrida draws attention to the relation between hospitality and language: the linguistic differences between the host and the foreigner bring about a form of communication in which the latter is expected to be subordinate to the rules and 'logos' of the host. Derrida (1997/2000a) calls this host "the chief, the father…the master of the house" (p. 5). The fact that the foreigner needs a representation with the host's ways of expression so as to be considered and welcomed by him is also a condition which is frequently observed in global and national media depictions of the Other. Most people from different societies and ethnicities, specifically the ones who need the humanitarian consciousness and activism of people around the world, are often depicted in media with languages which are not their own. While national media institutions convey the plight of the foreign people with the official languages of the countries they belong and address to, they tend to treat their target audience (who speak the same language) as the 'host'. Besides, because the news is carried out mostly in English on a global scale - particularly through the major media institutions such as BBC and CNN- the statements and concerns of the oppressed people and of the minorities, are

[53] Some parts of this chapter were also published in *Modern Drama* 64.1.

continually transferred to the world through rephrasing. At the same time, these media institutions have received much criticism around the world for providing predominantly a Western point of view. This situation inevitably carries with it a risk of misconstruing the victims' problems and positing a Western and oftentimes an Anglo-American viewpoint as 'the host', who is 'the owner' of language. This being the case, Derrida's consideration of translation as a form of disruption (or violence) arouses essential questions about the human rights crises and their representations in different media especially because translation is also conventionally regarded as a bridge between two or more cultures, societies, nations etc. My goal in this chapter is to investigate the reflections of hospitality and linguistic mediation in documentary theatre, which conventionally subverts the prevalent media footages and their ways of representation. Among the leading questions that will be raised throughout the chapter are: how can the disruptive effects of translation in media can be eliminated in documentary theatre? How can a documentary play, even though it also makes use of translation to convey the interviewee's statements, put forward alternative solutions to problems stemming from this practice? In the light of these inquiries, I will specifically analyse Jessica Blank and Eric Jensen's 2009 play *Aftermath*, which offers effective ways to establish and appreciate hospitality in and out of the theatre.

In this chapter, I will explore how *Aftermath* as a documentary play subverts the hierarchical relation between the 'host' audience and 'foreign' victims presented as the characters. I will analyse how the play problematizes the centralization of the host's language. As *Aftermath* explores the consequences of American intervention on the lives of the Iraqi migrating to Jordan, it substantially marks the impact of linguistic mediation to explore and promote the concept of hospitality. The hospitality that emerges in the meeting point of the stage and the auditorium supports

the characters and the audience's mutual embracement and acceptance of one another. In this relation between the two groups, which will be elucidated at length in the following pages, neither one becomes sovereign over the other as neither is the owner of this space as a whole. Hospitality turns out to be a concept that both share in theatre. More importantly, the disruption of audience and dramatists' positions as hosts contributes to revealing the ethnic, social, religious and political differences among the refugee-characters and prevents them from being perceived as a homogeneous group of people. Thus, a focus on the formation of hospitality in documentary theatre can provide a deeper understanding of the humanitarian and political functions of the genre, which are continually elaborated in the existing scholarship.

Just like the plays which have been explored in previous chapters, *Aftermath* provides notable insights regarding the functions of documentary theatre to 'unsettle' the audience members and challenge their common experiences of news receiving. As documentary theatre defies the so-called legitimate information imposed on a media saturated audience about the Other, it revisits the relation between 'us vs them', which is shaped by the (often fictionalized) discourse of mass media. In the light of these points, I am going to elaborate on how the play emphasizes the communicatory problems stemming from translation, which is yet another form of exchange and mediation. The trauma of the Iraqi immigrants, which is already difficult to be verbalized by them, resists translation into another language. *Aftermath* not only problematizes the ordinary forms of receiving information about the Other (mainly through the mass media) but also its own mediating capabilities as a play that also uses translation. Besides, the play implicates the connection between language and idea of 'belonging'. It suggests that the power relations caused by

language influence the dynamics of hospitality. As *Aftermath* develops the idea of mutual hospitality between the audience and the characters, it offers an approach in which the language of a specific community as 'the host' is not given priority over another 'foreign' community. In this sense, the play bears similarities to *Twilight Los Angeles 1992* and *Fires in the Mirror*, where the actor "walk(s) in the speech of another" and imitates the accents, pauses and stammers of individuals from different socio-ethnic groups (Smith, 1993, xxvii). However, in this case, presenting a foreign language, Arabic, to the target American audience, *Aftermath* completely puts them in the shoes of strangers. Thereby, it seeks to break hierarchical relationship between the 'host' audience and the 'guest' characters /refugees.

5.1 Mediating refugees' trauma in translation: a bridge or a barrier?

Blank and Jensen's *Aftermath*, whose premiere took place in New York Theatre Workshop on 15 September 2009, emerges as a product of the interviews that the couple carried out with Iraqi refugees in Jordan. The play was directed by Blank herself. Migrating after the collapse of the Saddam's regime and the American invasion of Iraq in 2004, the characters with diverse social backgrounds and occupations provide information about their lives before, during and after the invasion. Being exposed to the 'us vs. them' distinction nurtured by state politics and media footages especially after the War on Terror,[54] the American audience that Blank and Jensen target is invited to reconsider the ways they receive news about the Other. The play introduces nine Iraqi characters including a translator, who belong to varying socio-economic status and religious outlook. The profiles of these characters

[54] War on Terror, declared by George Bush, the US president of the time, refers to the military campaign targeting the Middle Eastern and African countries which are related to Al-Qaeda after the attacks of 9/11 in 2001. The fact that Iraq was regarded as one of the main fronts of Al-Qaeda was mostly presented by the US government as a reason to invade the country.

range from the ones that accentuate their relation to American culture for the sake of building connection to the interviewers and the audience in the US (e.g Yassar, a dermatologist; Asad, a theatre director and his wife Fadilah, an artist) to the ones who seem to be less familiar with the American culture (Abdul-Aliyy, an imam; Naimah and her husband Fouad, who are both cooks).

From the very beginning, the characters on stage offer the interviewers – and the audience – something to drink and the play sets the scene for hospitality: *Aftermath* opens up Rafiq addressing the audience, from whom he obviously cannot get a respons. He treats them as his guests: "*Bes gabul ma nebdi, lazem takhithoun chai. Aow gahweh. Aow yimkin 3aseer burtugal? (Beat. No response.) Chai aow gahwah? Aow maye, 3indy maye mibattal…Chai? (Beat) Gahweh? (Beat) 3aseer burtugal?*"[55] (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 8) Likewise, Fadilah asks "*Takhthoun gahweh? 3Indna Kaman 3aseer burtugal? / Maye? Knaffa? Baklava?*"[56] (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 15) In addition, Fouad and Naimah offers the interviewers –and concurrently, the audience– some pita bread fresh from the oven. As the play goes on, the interviews conducted with these characters set forth what they went through during the Saddam regime and after intervention of the American troops. They also include their homesickness and memories about their familial and professional lives: Rafiq, a pharmacist who previously lived in Fallujah, enthusiastically speaks of his fellow townsman and of his job experiences from the very beginning of the interview. In a similar manner, Fouad and Naimah explain how they got married and how their neighbours actually helped them build their home in Baghdad. Basima –a Christian woman having lived in the same city- reminisces about Christmas days she

[55] "But before we begin, you must have tea. Or coffee. Or perhaps some orange juice? (Beat. No response.) Tea or coffee? Or water, I have bottled water…Tea? (Beat.) Coffee? (Beat.) Orange juice?"
[56] "Would you like coffee? We also have orange juice? Water? Knaffa? Baklava?"

spent with her family. Apart from the portrayals of domestic backgrounds, characters such as Yassar, Asad and Fadilah apprise their addressees of their intellectual and professional attainments back in Iraq. While Yassar, who seems to enjoy talking about his rich life in Baghdad, tells what led him to expertise in dermatology, Asad and Fadilah as a couple introduce their activities in the Institute of Arts in Baghdad.

The interviews defy the ascription of unitary religious profile to the Iraqi citizens as well. Rafiq reminds the audience that Iraq has been a cultural mosaic made up of different religious orientations and included Sunni, Shi'a and Christians. At the same time, the characters' accounts give remarkable indications of the clashes stemming from the differences in religion, which provide a thorough insight into the civil strives within the country. The conflicts between Islamic branches of Sunnism and Shi'a are occasionally alluded to during the interviews. The audience learns that some Shi'a militia forced Fouad to leak information about the Sunni in the neighborhood and that one of the charges against Abdul-Aliyy by the Americans was his conversion to Sunnism despite his Shi'a origin. Basimah, stands out as a Christian Iraqi citizen who is exposed to hateful attacks especially after the fall of the regime. She notes that she often received letters of threat stating "This is an Islamic country. You Christians are not welcome here" and that those unsigned letters were accompanied by a bullet (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 24). As the play goes on, the audience gets to know the further dimensions of violence that the characters have been exposed to: Abdul-Aliyy narrates the torture inflicted by American soldiers in Abu Gharib prison[57] and the conditions he was forced into. The stories of the characters also include forceful intrusion of the Americans and the other Iraqi into

[57] After the US' military intervention into Iraq in 2003, it was revealed in the photos of CBS News that American soldiers and CIA personnel in Abu Ghraib Prison tortured and physically and sexually abused the prisoners. The incidents found high repercussions in media and substantial reaction and around the world.

the homes of civilians whom they wound or murder afterwards. Rafiq states that his nephew Akram is killed as such by Americans wearing military gear. As for Basimah; it is noted that her husband, sister and baby is killed in their car during a bombardment while her face is severely injured. Apart from these traumatic experiences, the interviewees' statements point to the cases of looting, the conditions of the wounded in hospitals, leaking information about other citizens' private lives and restrictions on free speech.

What sets *Aftermath* apart from the documentary plays that dwell on the plight of refugees is the fact that it does not introduce refugees that live *within* the country of the target audience. Most importantly, the play accentuates the fact that refugees within the play are forced to migrate due to the intervention of the audience's country. This is illustrated by Yassar, who responds to President George W. Bush's words "We will fight the sons of Al-Qaeda in Iraq". He comments "Invitation. Beautiful invitation coming" and asks "How can he say that" (Blank & Jensen 2010, p. 23)? This situation demonstrates how hospitality can turn into invasion. The audience has to bear the government's role as invader/intervener before they become guests in refugees' home. Feelings of shame and guilt created by the US government's foreign affairs are revealed and ascribed to the audience**.** Thus, the play sets forth rather a different approach to hospitality and challenges the idea of a 'host' audience as it plays with the dynamics of proximity in the relations with the Other. In doing that, it casts a new light on the 'exchanges' between refugees and audience, the leading of which is language.

In most documentary plays on the refugee experience, some of which have also been named above, bureaucratic problems that refugees confront stand out as salient issues that are delineated. These problems point to an exchange between

refugees and host country: while the latter provides food, shelter etc. for the former, refugees are expected to follow the host's rules in turn. It is through this exchange, which necessitates the obedience to the host's rules, that the language of the host country gains significance. In *Of Hospitality*, Derrida (1997/2000a) underlines that "the foreigner is first of all foreign to the legal language in which the duty of hospitality is formulated, the right to asylum, its limits, norms, policing, etc." (p.15). In other words, he is supposed to get his point across with the host's way of language. The centralization of the host's expressions is not only a problem in bureaucratic relations: it threatens both media and theatrical representations of refugees as well. Stories of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are very often conveyed via translation, which signifies yet another form of exchange. On the one hand, refugees depend on being represented in the language of the host media or theatre for their voices to be heard. On the other hand, the 'story' that the host media and audience receive can result in the representation of the refugees in a specific, uniform manner. As a result, the gaze of the audience can be prioritized as it has been underlined in Chapter 4. This condition may obstruct understanding the refugees' real conditions and differences to a large extent.

In addition, in local and national media, the circulation of the news is largely shaped by the incidents which are believed to be of the most concern to the community 'at home'. It promotes the 'us vs them' distinction causing the perception of the latter as the unfamiliar; as those who do not belong to home. Especially national media serves as a host through the establishment of distinction. As it presents the incidents that are out of the boundaries of the country or that include minorities at home, it determines how long and how much of the news about 'the other' will stay in the newsfeed. National media also reiterates what is (or is not)

familiar and homely for the target audience through the language that it uses. In media's 'hospitality', it is required that the native expressions of 'the other' be made appropriate for the audience through translation. Just like guests that are expected to comply with the order and laws of host, 'the Other' finds a space in media (as well as in theatre) through an array of adjustments (translation, interpretation, editing etc.)

The capacity of media to regulate the expressions of 'the other' can also be vividly observed on the global basis. As English becomes a common language that is used to reach as many numbers around the world as possible, the risk of depending on an Anglo-American centred viewpoint emerges. This condition can lead the audience to overlook the natives' own expositions about their own suffering. In addition, the most prominent news channels around the world such as BBC, CNN and FOX News are already media institutions with Western origin: even the term 'CNN effect', which is used for the news media's manipulation of politics and economy, suggests the American-centred undertones of the global media. This condition carries with it a risk to cause distorted perceptions concerning reality. Ali Darwish expounds in *Translation and News Making in Contemporary Arabic Television* (2010):

> Given that the bulk of programs broadcast by Aljazeera and other Arabic television stations is transmitted and translated from other languages, mainly English, translation plays a major role in repacking programs and reframing reality. How meanings are produced or rather reproduced in television has great deal to do with how language is used and how visual signs are framed and interpreted. (p. 27)

As the Western viewpoints in the above-mentioned news channels are imposed on the other societies such as the Arab world, reactions to this influence – such as the 'Al-Jazeera effect' – seek to distort the monopoly of the Western media.[58]

[58] 'Al-Jazeera effect' stands for the impact of new media which introduces the voices of marginal groups that are not presented in the mainstream media. The term has frequently been used as an alternative to CNN effect.

Especially during the Iraq War, whose social consequences are explored by *Aftermath*, channels such as Al-Jazeera got remarkable attention due to their challenge of Western media. This effect signifies the noncompliance with the prevalent significations of the mainstream media (or 'the rules of the host').

The previous chapter has explored the reaction to the experience of spectatorship which centres on the expectations and interests of the audience. It has argued that the audience is unsettled through the problematization of these interests and expectations. *Aftermath*, however, sets an example to the defamiliarizing function of documentary theatre through its linguistic structure. It seeks to manifest the very process in which translation takes place and points to the problems of translation. The stage directions of *Aftermath* are particularly concerned with building up a sense of discord in the audience by providing alternative types of communication in theatre:

> Please note that translation is an important part of this play. All the characters are Iraqi. English translation is provided for footnotes for the actors' information only. All Arabic in the script should be spoken in Arabic, with no translation 'assistance' from the program, supertitles, or the like. Any resulting disorientation for the audience is intentional. (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 7)

Even though the majority of the play is enacted in English, the play frequently inserts the Arabic words uttered by the characters. With this practice, the audience is expected to go through a similar sense of foreignness which is also experienced by the interviewers. Thus, the play brings an alternative to the customary channels of communication with the Other. The chiefest of them is mass media, which targets the addressees' viewpoints with their own language. In other words, *Aftermath* as a documentary play intentionally sets forth the problems of mediation, which influences the relation and understanding between different communities.

Aftermath's manifestation of mediational gaps is quite in line with Derek Paget's remarks in "The Broken Tradition of Documentary Theatre and Its Continued Powers of Endurance". He suggests "the distinctiveness of documentary theatre over and against other media's ways of mixing drama and documentary lies in its characteristic modalities…the form openly declares its documentary provenance and its representational status through a variety of means" (Paget, 2009, p. 228). In this sense, although the play remarkably depends on linguistic mediation, it doesn't refrain from presenting it as a problem.[59] Paget argues that documentary theatre functions as a 'weapon' to resist the oppressive practices and consequences of social, racial or ethnic policies.[60] Thus, the development of methods to engage the audience in the political and humanitarian issues raised on stage particularly gains significance. Such an engagement can be formed through shaking the audience's familiarity with common forms of representation and experiences with the Other: scholars such as Carol Martin and Derek Paget consider the reconstruction of an event among the essential functions of documentary theatre.[61]

Aftermath is not a unique example of documentary theatre that provides references to translation and its problems in the representation of refugees. Ariane

[59] The idea of self reflexivity can also be found in the writings of in Carol Martin who notes in "Bodies of Evidence" in *Dramaturgy of the Real on the World Stage* (2010) that documentary plays "critique the operations of both documentary and fiction" (p. 22) and Alyson Fortsyh & Chris Megson (2009), who express that documentary form "annex(es) a battery of reflexive performance techniques" and "indicates a self-conscious acknowledgement of the complexity of 'reality'". (p. 3)

[60] See also Derek Paget's 'New Documentarism on Stage: Documentary Theatre in New Times' (2008).

[61] In "Bodies of Evidence" (2010), Martin introduces six functions of what she calls 'the Theatre of the Real'. These are to "reopen trials in order to create justice; create additional historical accounts; reconstruct and event; intermingle autobiography with history, critique the operations of both documentary and fiction, elaborate the oral culture of theatre and the theatricality of daily life."(p. 22) Similarly, in "The Broken Tradition of Documentary Theatre and Its Continued Powers of Endurance" (2009) Paget focuses on five functions and notes that documentary plays "*reassess* international/national/local histories; *celebrate* repressed or marginal communities and groups, bringing to light their histories and aspirations; *investigate* contentious events and issues in their local, national and international contexts; *disseminate* information, employing an operational concept of "pleasurable learning" and can interrogate the very notion *documentary*" (pp. 227-28).

Mnouchkine and Théâtre du Soleil's *Le Dernier Caravansérail* [*The Last Caravanserai*] (2003) Alecky Blythe and Rustaveli Theatre's *Do We Look Like Refugees?* (2010) are among the prominent plays that illustrate these issues. *Le Dernier Caravansérail* is made up of the tape recordings of refugees and migrants from Russia, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan and presents them in translation. The program notes include Hélène Cixous's remarks about the play. They provide the translation of non-French expressions in pencil, "indicating that the original words used had their own specificity and cultural context which no translation can provide full account" (McEvoy, 2006, p. 222). In "Finding the Balance: Writing and Performing Ethics in Théâtre du Soleil's *Le Dernier Caravansérail* (2003)", William McEvoy (2006) notes "the pencil gestured towards a refusal to replace the other's words with one's own" (p. 222). Thereby, he points to the consciousness of the play about its mediational gaps.

In *Do We Look Like Refugees?*, however, the juxtaposition of the 'original' and the 'translation' takes place within staging itself. In this play, Georgian actors listen to the tape recordings of Georgian refugees of the 2008 Russo-Georgian War. Similar to Anna Deavere Smith's performances in *Twilight Los Angeles 1992* and her other documentary plays, actors, involved in an other-oriented acting, try to perform exactly what they hear in the recordings. The play's UK performance uses surtitles for the English speakers. Yet, the surtitles do not provide a direct translation and exclude the refugees' pauses, repetitions, coughs etc. With regard to surtitles Lib Taylor (2013) suggests:

> the material presence of a written text meant that the transcription and editing process of the play's creation became more available to the English-speaking audience during the performance, and the artifice of representing voice and language to create character and narrative became more apparent (p. 377).

While both *Le Dernier Caravansérail* and *Do We Look Like Refugees?* meta-theatrically reveal the gaps of translation, *Aftermath* sets forth these gaps and problems in its 'storyworld' as well. In this case, the characters themselves criticize translation and its effects: the audience is presented with refugees' own viewpoints about translation rather than the dramatists and interviewers.

Aftermath does not reveal the interviewers on stage and the characters directly address the audience as it is often the case in a good number of documentary forms. Yet, it presents a mediator in a human form, which differentiates the play from its counterparts. Here, the audience can view how a character can manage the process of mediation between two groups. The character named Shahid, who translates the characters' words into English and acts as a negotiator between the characters and the interviewers, plays quite a functional role throughout the play. The problems that he goes through and the refugee-characters' sceptical attitudes towards him give considerable clues about the limits and inefficacies of media to convey the suffering of other people. Underlining that Shahid was the only constructed character in the play, Blank and Jensen explain his mediative function in an interview with Joan Brunwasser on 12 October 2009 with the words below:

> The play contains a translator character, who is a composite of several different translators we worked with in Jordan (the other characters are not composites and are direct representations of individuals we met). We allowed ourselves slightly more dramatic license with the translator, simply because he was a composite and serves as the bridge between the audience and the other characters, but he speaks for himself as well--about the experience of being a translator in Iraq and the particular struggles associated with trying to bridge two worlds-- and is not a mouthpiece for our point of view. (Brunwasser, 2009, para. 11)

Even though the play allegedly keeps the dramatists' own opinions out of the content, it does not hold an objective standpoint when it comes to exhibit the 'manner' of mediation. That is to say, the dramatists' initiative to formulate the

translator character caters substantially to the play's development of its own questions and critical approaches with regard to media(tion). Here, *Aftermath* presents the media(tor) as yet another agent with own political or ideological views. With the introduction of the translator, the audience members do not just observe and receive information through the medium: they can see the very medium (or mediator) as well as its face to face contact with the mediated (characters).

Throughout the play, Shahid is the one that can communicate with the refugee characters, who are otherwise isolated from one another on stage: his presence somehow tempers the awkward relation which seems to arise during the American interviewers' the first encounter with the Iraqi refugees. The focus on his mobility and on his role as a translator contributes to the elucidation of the way a mediator influences communication. In addition, the naming of this composite translator as 'Shahid' is rather meaningful as the word already stands for 'someone who witnesses' in Arabic. The play draws attention to the fact that the mediator is after all a witness and an observer. He is not just responsible for conveying reality of what he sees but he also develops his own interpretations with regard to the observation. By emphasizing the 'individuality' of medium and depicting it in a human form (as a 'composite' translator), the play consciously undermines the objectivity attributed to it.

Shahid's position as a figure who may manipulate language bears resemblances to the controlling stance of dramatists who edit the interviews for staging. This condition underlines the shared role of characters and dramatists in mediation. At the same time, it implies that characters may follow their self interest in their exchanges with others – just like the dramatists. The other characters' attitude towards Shahid is mainly shaped by this possibility. On the one hand, one of

the most striking moments in the play comes when Rafiq comments on the interviewers and the audience at the very beginning: "*3abali chanaow khurus*"[62] (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 8). The sentence, which exemplifies his first impressions in his address to Shahid, stands out because it intimates the effects of translation. During the encounter, Rafiq, who is trying to show hospitality to the interviewers, feels uncomfortable with not being understood and seems to be relieved when he sees the translator. Thus, at first glance the functional and bridging aspect of mediation/translation is imparted to the audience:

> SHAHID: Iraq has been isolated for decades, it's the first time most Iraqis see foreigners. People started coming to Baghdad from all over the world: not just soldiers *ya3ni*: journalists humanitarian et cetera. So there's a lot of translation and suddenly I had a lot of work…So my house became the 'host house'... And in war zones, foreigners don't feel safe walking down a certain street, or if a journalist works for the big corporation media, their insurance doesn't cover them in the dangerous areas, hm? So, they need a fixer –a person from that country, who will walk down the street to find the story. Someone both sides can trust. Kind of – a bridge. (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 21)

On the other hand, as the play continues, translation often leads to serious problems especially because the speaker's concerns can, deliberately or not, be distorted during the adjustments that take place in translation. As a consequence, the translator can also become an outsider. In the play, Shahid's perspective on the confidence of the people whose speech he translates turns out to be more complex than he imagines. His self-perception as a translator does not conform to what the others think about him. Even though he upholds his claim to objectivity by expressing that he is "interested in everyone" (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 13), the characters often consider him a threat which can betray them by siding with the Other. Therefore, his close communication with the American interviewers results in

[62] "I thought they were mute."

his treatment as an outsider despite his identity as an Iraqi. At the same time, though characters seem to view objectivity as a favourable characteristic of a translator, they cannot help but presume that Shahid belongs to one group or another. In addition, the fact that Shahid is a composite character prevents the audience from viewing the singularities and diverse viewpoints of each translator. It consequently risks depicting translators as a homogeneous group, which is at odds with the play's emphasis on the specific conflicts between and within communities in Iraq. Still, the characters' past experiences with translators, which they point to in their statements, as well as their attitudes towards Shahid, provide notable insights into the communicative tensions among Iraqis.

The characters' sceptical attitudes towards Shahid significantly indicate the parallelism between hospitality and translation, which both include an 'exchange'. Hospitality is initiated by Shahid in the play as he mediates between two languages. Yet, other characters tend to distrust him as they think that his hospitality and way of translation may be shaped by his own benefits and that he may expect something from the newcomers. Such a tendency indirectly echoes media's and dramatists' potential anticipations for more audience and public attention for themselves, which influence their way of representations. As it has also been emphasized in the previous chapter, both in media and in theatre, this condition may lead to the centralization of a specific point of view (and – as in *Aftermath* – a specific language). Consequently, the concerns of victimized characters may be underestimated. What empowers the formation of linguistic hospitality in this documentary play is the fact that it does not create an illusion of im-mediate communication between the dramatists (and audience) and interviewees. The disclosure of the problems of translation challenges the predominance of a 'one-and-

only' language and of the audience and dramatist's position as 'masters of the house'. It also prevents the depiction of refugees as a uniform entity as their tensions stemming from the use of language reveal their many differences.

Aftermath emphasizes the status of translation as "necessity and impossibility", which significantly bears the ambivalent characteristics of hospitality and gift elucidated by Derrida (Jeffers, 2012, 74). In "Hostipitality" (2000b), Derrida describes that translation is "an enigmatic phenomenon or experience of hospitality, if not the condition of all hospitality in general" (p. 6). Just as it is not possible for the host and the guest to be involved in an 'absolute' hospitality, translation as an exchange can hardly be shaped with a complete disinterest. Various goals of the translator or mediator can put the translation in a specific frame. Derrida argues that unconditional hospitality is only possible if it lets the guest in regardless of who he/she is. He also claims that a gift can only be pure when the giver expects no reimbursement. Because "the practice of giving always locates [the gift] in particular systems of value" (Nicholson, 2005, p. 162) and because the host's authority depends on his / her control over the guest's actions, genuine hospitality and gift giving become impossible.

In *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*, Derrida argues that a genuine gift is not given out of self-interest or rational decision making. Thus, a genuine gift is impossible. He states: "from the moment the gift would appear as gift, as such, as what it is, in its phenomenon, its sense and its essence, it would be engaged in a symbolic, sacrificial, or economic structure that would annul the gift in the ritual circle of the debt" (Derrida, 1991/1992, p. 23). Similarly, translation in various forms of media can also function as a gift for those whose voices are not otherwise heard. Yet the translation and editing of the refugees' testimonies are filtered through

selective information about them. Since the calamity that the refugees have survived often makes them 'newsworthy' for the dramatists and audience, refugees may be overvalued with regard to their victimhood. In line with this situation, Emine Fişek in *Aesthetic of Citizenship* (2017) marks her interview with an actor playing in Theatre du Soleil's *The Last Caravanserai*, who notes that the theatre team had difficulties translating the refugees' words: "the greatest challenge had been to find the correct words, to not betray the etymology of words, their culture, religion and practice" (p. 170). She adds: "when I inquired as to why translation and transmission were such points of tension in their practice, the actor's reply had less to do with the actual 'culture, religion, and politics' in question than the process of representing the pain and suffering associated with migration" (Fişek, 2017, p. 170). Among the specialties of *Aftermath* is its conscious problematization of the mediators and translators' concerns during their exchange with refugees. *Aftermath*'s refugee characters overtly express their scepticism about translation because they fear that the social, ethnic, religious or political interests of the translator may influence the manner of translation. The play's emphasis on these doubts and differences contributes to the depiction of refugees as a heterogeneous community.

In "The Art and Poetics of Translation as Hospitality" (2013), Paola Zaccaria argues that translation lays the ground for hospitality. She emphasizes that the in-between position of the host and guest contributes to deconstructing the hegemony of his/her native tongue: "the translator learns that, in being simultaneously the host and the guest of the other's language, he or she undergoes the disquieting experience of being expropriated of his or her own language and cultural identity: he or she makes the experience of ex-appropriation". (Zaccaria, 2013, p. 175) While admitting the essential role of translation in the hospitable relations between different

communities, my point differs from Zaccaria's argument in that it marks the 'disclosure' of the process of translation as a basis of hospitality. In other words, I maintain that it is not sufficient to translate: it is also essential to set forth how the translation is carried out and what problems it carries with it. Even though the translator may observe and experience these problems, the audiences who are presented with the information only in their native language do not see the nuances between two languages. They evaluate the information about the Other (in media or on stage) by taking the translated version at face value, which can push the Other's language into the background. As soon as an expression is translated, significations may go out of the control and intention of the translator and various meanings can be drawn from the translation.

In addition, one of the problematic conditions about the translator is the extent of his/her neutrality. In her essay, Zaccaria provides rather a disinterested portrayal of the translator: "it is possible to represent the translator as he or she who oscillates between unconditionally surrendering himself or herself to the (hospitality of the) other's language, and complying to the conditions posed by his or her own native language and culture" (Zaccaria, 2013, p. 172). Still, this seems to be a profile of how an ideal translator is supposed to be. *Aftermath*, however, illustrates the ways the audience positions the translator within specific categories and identities even if the translator tries to remain objective and disinterested. The audience can presuppose that the translation is shaped by the translator's profile and intentions. Despite the bridging function of translation and the translator, both are perceived to be closer to one side of the bridge, pointing to a problem of trust about them.

In addition, the neutrality of the translator can be a problematic concept due to the position of translation as a 'job'. *Aftermath* suggests that the translator's

anticipations about his/her target audience may lead them to choose specific ways of translation and word choice. This situation also poses a problem for the dramatist, who 'translates' the interviewee's statements into a documentary play, admits some of them into the stage and excludes others. The motive to keep the audience's attention high – as indicated in Blythe's words (2008) "I have a responsibility to the audience to present them with a good evening's theatre" – also indirectly points to the dramatist's interest for theatrical success (p. 94). The inclusion and exclusion of others' statements can be shaped by this interest. It is often the case that these interventions are not revealed to the audience: a successful translation is the one that skilfully conceals its status as a translation, one that is 'almost the same as the source'. The mastery of the translator depends on the extent of the concealment of intervention. Writing in the context of anthropological and ethnographic literature, Sara Ahmed (2000) claims:

> what is at stake is *the concealment of the translation itself*: a translation which both creates the strangers as a figure of speech (the 'they' in the narrative), then destroys the strangerness through designating the 'they' as that which returns us to the Law of argument (p. 69, my italics).

Here 'the Law of argument' refers to the established modes of discourse that the translator takes at face value. This being the case, though translation is "an act of violence" as Derrida (1997/2000a) claims in *Of Hospitality*, it is very often a veiled one. It creates an impression of harmony on the surface rather than violence (p. 15).

5.2 *Aftermath*'s approach to linguistic hospitality

The linguistic hospitality that *Aftermath* offers is based on problematizing the impression of harmony in translation, breaking the monopoly of specific languages and acknowledging the difficulty of verbalizing the pain. As an example of documentary theatre, in which the statements of refugees are 'translated' into a play,

Aftermath cannot completely counter the concealment of translation. After all, the way the dramatists work out their material after their encounter with the characters is not revealed to the audience. It remains unclear why they preferred to represent some stories and expressions and exclude others. In addition, the audience is not shown each experience with different translators and cannot compare individual instances of translation with each other. Even so, the play's introduction of a translator-character and examination of the challenges of translation stand out as worthy attempts to undermine the illusion that the dramatists and the characters communicate without any mediation.

Aftermath suggests that just as dramatists are self-interested, translators can also express their own priorities in translation, which puts them in a more advantageous position with regard to other refugee characters. Even though Shahid is a character developed by Jensen and Blank, the characters' accounts of their experiences with translators back in Iraq implicate the problems of trust between the Iraqi refugees and the translators following the intrusion of American soldiers. During the interviews, even though characters converse with the Americans in a friendly way, they become noticeably disturbed during the interventions of the translator. Not only do they avoid Shahid in the interviews, they also tend not to use the simplest options that Shahid suggests as English approximations of their Arabic words. Yassar, who emerges as a self-confident and dominant character, becomes particularly uneasy with the position and presence of Shahid. He deliberately refuses the words that Shahid suggests and seeks to exert authority on the language that he uses:

> YASSAR: …They look like Fatiheen—
> SHAHID: Knights—
> YASSAR: That's not what I said. (*To us*) Like heroes. (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 21)

Throughout the play, like the other refugees who have their own worldview and interpretations, Shahid sets forth his personal opinions about the incidents, too. He not only comments on the Iraqi citizens' life during Saddam Hussein's regime but also evaluates the American invasion and its consequences:

> SHAHID: Under Saddam, it is not like we all walked down the streets of Baghdad in grey suits, like grim faces, heads hanging down. We're Iraqis, we're not Russians. But we knew where the red lines were. We knew what would upset who. We knew that if we kept our nose off politics, if we didn't insult Saddam, then 'happily ever after'. We had some space. (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 12)

As Shahid situates himself among 'the Iraqi' through the repeated usage of the word "we", he projects an image of a concordant community. Yet, the fact that he speaks the language of the foreigner instigates the mistrust of his fellow citizens. He admits that during his address to the audience: "First, people would be suspicious of someone who was translating for the American army. Then they would be suspicious of someone who was talking to any American. Then they would be suspicious of anyone who spoke English" (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 25). It is as if speaking the language of the Other places a border between the translator and his fellow citizens. Because he can always include his own interpretations in translation, he is regarded as a potential manipulator who can influence the ways statements will be comprehended by others.

The play reveals the moments when the refugees and interviewers' different priorities during translation lead to frictions, echoing the 'violence' of translation that Derrida points to. The interviewers' preoccupation with managing the flow of the conversation with regard to their own priorities rather than the refugees' concerns is strikingly illustrated in Abdul-Aliyy's sharp response to Shahid, who interrupts his narrative. When he is asked if he is optimistic about the future relationship between

Iraq and the US, Abdul-Aliyy, resenting the interruption, questions whether the interviewers are really interested in his story. He goes on to tell that six people from his family were killed during the war apart from his mother, who died in the streets. In this moment, he overtly directs his anger towards the interviewers and, through them, the American audience:

> ABDUL-ALIYY: (*With growing anger*) You know, Saddam was convicted and executed because he killed one hundred and forty-eight. Now, everyday one hundred and forty-eight people are killed every day. Everyday, everyday. Is this what you have harvested from all of this and you want me to think of good relationships with America in the future!? *You* think of having good relationships with *us*! (*Beat. He composes himself.)* I thank you, and I apologize, and I would be honored if you stay and have lunch with us. May God bless you. And hopefully you will visit us in Baghdad in better conditions. (Blank & Jensen, 2010, pp. 36-37)

The change in Abdul-aliyy's collected tone can be attributed to a feeling that the interpretations and concerns of the Americans have been superimposed on his own. As he asks Shahid: "Can you translate this? Hm? Translate this for them!", he challenges the interviewers to perceive the dimensions of his and the other refugees' agony (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 36). He also implicitly sets forth the unfeasibility of grasping this condition through language.

Abdul-Aliyy's resentment towards the American dramatists / interviewers also alludes to the invasion of the US and recalls its position as an intruder. At the same time, because the refugees live in Jordan, US does not have a bureaucratic position as a host country. Nor the play provides any information about Jordan's refugee policies. In addition, the emphasis on the characters' experiences in Iraq, where they are citizens, decentres the audience's position as the host. The fact that the audience cannot be a full-fledged host in the mimetic structure of the play enables the revelation of power dynamics between the refugees. Thus, what distinguishes *Aftermath* is the fact that it does not hide some refugees' role in the

process of translation (though it conceals the dramatists' editing process like many documentary plays). The play emphasizes that the material made available to the audience in English translation was previously conveyed by people who are fellow citizens and speak their native languages. Since refugees also depend on one another for a representation of their experiences, the self-interested and humanitarian concerns behind gift-giving and translation are not peculiar to the ethnographer or the dramatist. Refugees who mediate between other refugees and interviewers have these concerns as well.

Due to the divisions among sectarian and ethnic communities, characters confront a disturbing sense of profiling, which at some point Shahid has to admit as well: "Everyone's pulling at you to make a choice: this side, that side, or you drown. (*Pause*) This seems to me an unnatural way to live" (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 26). While Shahid asserts that he is "not working for anyone with power," he overlooks the fact that his very act of mediation and translation may turn out to be a source of manipulation (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 13). Even if he does not look after the interests of a specific community, he can lose control over his translations due to the way they are interpreted by others. Moreover, as a translator, Shahid himself is involved in the process of interpretation, which diverts the translated statements from any intended objectivity. In this sense, the play draws attention to the human influence which is hidden behind mediation (the mass news media being an essential part of it). In the characters' narratives about the problems caused by translators, their suspicions about being misrepresented even continue during the interview:

> NAIMAH: …These translators, they don't –
> FOUAD: You know, God *damn* those translators – (*To Shahid.*) I'm sorry – (to us) but half of them don't even translate, they change everything around. Maybe he doesn't like the way she looks? Maybe he doesn't like our religion? Maybe he doesn't like our shirt? (*To Shahid, accusing.*) Maybe he says what he thinks the Americans want to hear so they'll keep working with

> him? Who knows? (*To us.*) Half of our problems are because of the translators. (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 25)

Fouad's indignation about the translators is closely related to his concern that the translator is only looking out for the interests of himself and / or his own community. This attitude also points to the crosscurrents among different social, ethnic or religious groups. Commenting on Iraqi relations with the Americans during the invasion, Shahid claims: "the Americans – they don't understand all these splits: Sunni, Shi'a, Jewish, Christian, Kurd" (Blank & Jensen, 2010, pp. 25-26). Correspondingly, Emine Fişek (2017) underlines that the conditions of refugees can be "render[ed] an instance of universal humanity that is devoid of political and social contexts yet in need of expert interpretation" (p. 157). In the above quote, Fouad's concerns point to the ethnic, religious, and political tensions which mark his national history. Fouad, who is forced by Shi'a militia to blacklist the Sunnis he knows, reiterates his doubts about other Iraqis in his comments on translators. In a similar vein, Abdul-aliyy's and Basima's accounts bear traces of the clashes of Shi'a vs. Sunni and Muslims vs. Christians in Iraq.

The ethnic and religious differences and peculiarities are made clear in Shahid's discussion of Iraq's tribal system, which regulates the relations between communities:

> There are rules even for the rulers. Iraq's tribal system is like very, very strong. Saddam didn't follow a constitution – but bad as he was, even he was forced to follow the tribal system…To solve the problem between our tribes, you come to my tribe's 'host house'…You explain the problem and the elders decide who apologize to whom.
> You can't go past the head of tribe. You can't just go in. This system worked for thousands and thousands of years. (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 17)

The legal process based on Iraq's tribal system, which is substantially different from the one in the US, points not only to the distinctions and separations among the communities in Iraq. It also marks a longstanding understanding of authority

(signified by 'the head of the tribe'). Shahid's expression emphasizes that foreignness can be experienced within the same country as well. In this case, the exchanges between different communities must be taken into consideration: as the head of the tribe plays the role of the host and secures the justice, the members of the tribes are supposed to follow the rules and not disturb the order. On a larger scale, the juridical system, which marks the unique social structure of Iraq, problematizes the idea of 'universal law' and 'universal humanity'. It questions whether the discussion of 'the universal' actually militates in favour of a specific culture or cultures and whether the 'universal humanity' gives authority to some cultures while making others 'foreign'. Thus, the emphasis on such mediational problems considerably contributes to three-dimensional depictions of refugee characters.

In *Of Hospitality*, as Derrida points to the impact of language on foreignness, he marks that the host and the foreign are reciprocally put into question by one another. The foreigner as "someone who doesn't speak like the rest, someone who speaks an odd sort of language" stands out as a figure that challenges the authority of the host through his inquiries (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, 5). Yet, at the same time, Derrida notes, he is also put into question by the logos of the host. As a documentary play, *Aftermath*'s construction in the form of interviews allows for the manifestation of host-foreign relation which is built through questions and answers. On the one hand, the Iraqi immigrants, who refer to the painful incidents they experienced back in their home country and ask "Can you translate this?", challenge the capability of the foreign interviewers' language. On the other hand, they are also questioned by the interviewers who seek to learn their stories and backgrounds to convey to the target audience in the US. In order for these narratives to be introduced to a large number of people, their language has to be translated into another one. To

attract attention to the problems of communication due to differences in language, *Aftermath* points to the very issue of one's verbalization of his/her own traumas even in their own words. In this case, the play emphasizes that the mediation of painful experiences in the language of the Other turns out to be even more problematic as pain already resists language. Thereby, it breaks the sovereignty of a specific language during the exchange between the audience / dramatists and characters.

Throughout the play, the verbalization of the Other's pain and suffering constitutes an essential problem not only for those who observe or hear about it but also – and most importantly – for victims themselves. As the play moves from conversations about the character's memories and domestic lives to the descriptions of their traumatic experiences, it becomes clear that they have noticeable difficulty in finding words to express their emotions. This situation is most strikingly indicated in Basima's words as she begins to talk about the car accident caused by bombing. The audience learns that the incident occurred when Basima and her family were on the road to have Basima's baby vaccinated. Though she tries to save her husband from the wreck, she cannot achieve to do so. In addition, her narrative includes bitter details of the accident: she points to the exposition of her grievous condition on TV as well as the attitude of a Muslim guy who makes fun of the incident and her pain. She particularly has hard time explaining why the family couldn't leave Basima's sister alone at home:

> BASIMA: —because my sister was just seventeen, we couldn't leave her alone in the house, someone, the militias…could come into the house and… (*she can't say it. Uncomfortable beat as Shahid tries to figure out how to explain.)*
> SHAHID: It — ah…would be impolite for me…to try to…
> BASIMA: (*Finally*.) And hurt her.
> SHAHID: (*Murmurs*.) *La samah Allah*.[63] (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 27)

[63] "God forbid."

The dialogue suggests that translation has its own limits and challenges for the translator/ mediator. Though Shahid understands that Basima refers to a possibility of rape, he finds it disrespectful to utter the words which Basima cannot articulate, and hesitates to speak in this case. Therefore, the primary thing that needs to be translated is the insufficiency or inability of language itself to express her emotions: "But whatever I can say about the accident wouldn't be enough (*She needs a break. To Shahid.)* Translate this OK…" (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 28).

At some point, the play impressively illustrates the dilemma which stems from the role of translation. The characters already know that what they hardly articulate in their native language cannot properly be conveyed in translation. Still, they depend on language to draw attention to the insufficiency or incapability of language. Their wavering and breaks during the narration of their traumatic experiences are constantly accompanied by a final request for Shahid: 'translate this'. On the one hand, the request marks a need to communicate what they have gone through and a demand for their plight to be apprehended by the other. On the other hand, the repetition of this phrase in different parts of the play turns it into a rhetorical statement: it points towards the incapability of mediating through translation. Moreover, however useful translation can be for international communication and humanitarian intentions, words can still create gaps among miscellaneous social, ethnic, national and/or political groups or enforce the existing ones. Hence, the play leads the audience to evaluate the representation by bearing them in mind:

> BASIMAH: I think —— most Americans don't know what a bomb sounds like. You don't feel your eardrums, from the sound, *ya3ni*. Every explosion we thought the world would crumble on top of us. Every strike…is an earthquake. For nine days, the whole family hid out in one room with no

> windows. And then, when we finally went out again —– (*Beat. To Shahid.) Mah agdar awsuf shikilha, reehatha goolelhum*,[64] tell them okay —–
> SHAHID: *Ma tigdareen tuwasifeen il* —– ?[65] (*In English*) Okay. (*To us.*) You know the streets were full of corpses… You know, the Iran-Iraq war, the Kuwait war. They weren't in the cities. Men went away to war. It was 'over there'. But here —– the smell —– (*Beat*). You don't get that from TV. (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 20)

As the translation of sensation into words considerably constrain the characters, the play seeks to unite the host and the foreign by marking the insufficiency of language to express the pain. Neither the media representations of the painful incidents nor the expressions of the primary witnesses are thoroughly able to convey the experience. In this sense, underlining the futility of putting a specific language in the centre, *Aftermath* defies the hierarchical relation between the languages of the host and the foreign.

Instead of depicting their traumatic experiences as the sole characteristic that define them, the play chooses to give space to characters' commitment to their memories and language. Rafiq shows 'his guests' the map of Fallujah, where he lived in the past and provides information about his routines and memories in the city.

> RAFIQ: (*To us.*) Ah because —– (*He shows us a map*.) the city is split between the two sides of the Euphrates river. (*Re: map*) I grew up here, and I studied there; I married there, and I worked there. (*Contemplates map*). I still own a pharmacy in Fallujah...It is a city whose inhabitants, the great majority, are educated: university professors, doctors, pharmacists. But no hotel owners. Because you see: There are no hotels.
> SHAHID: *Suduug*?[66]
> RAFIQ: *Suduug*. (*To us*) Whoever comes to visit, we have them as guests at our house. No hotels in Fallujah. (*Rafiq pulls out pictures, handling them preciously*.) Here. This is the Sunni mosque. Most of the Jews lived on this side, next to the mosque. We were friendly with each other one of them… (*Finds another picture*.) This is my grandfather. (*Finds another picture*.) This is a church —– *ya3ni*[67], we had Christians, we had Shi'a, we had Sunni, we

[64] "I can't describe what it looked like, the smell."
[65] "You want me to describe the —–"
[66] "Really?"
[67] "You know."

were friends, we didn't care the difference.
So, you see. This was Iraq. (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 9)

Reminiscing about their memories, introducing their families and homes to the interviewers and showing their pictures, the immigrants symbolically carry their home to the land of the Other. Just like Rafiq, Naimah and Fouad also share the photographs of the home they built together with their neighbours in Iraq. As in *Sivas 93*, explored in the third chapter, remembrance and narrativization play a notable part for the identities of the characters. Through the relation between the stage and the auditorium, the elements that make up these identities are welcomed. As it underlines that the foreign cannot completely be separated from his/her home and subordinated to the rules of the host, the play echoes Derrida's words in *Of Hospitality* regarding people who are dislodged from their homes:

> 'Displaced persons', exiles, those who are deported, expelled, rootless, nomads, all share two sources of sighs, two nostalgias: their dead ones and their language. *On the one hand*, they would like to return at least on a pilgrimage, to the places where their buried dead have their last resting place…*On the other hand*, exiles, the deported, the rootless, the stateless, lawless nomads, absolute foreigners, often continue to recognize the language, what's called the mother tongue, as their ultimate homeland, and even their last resting place. (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, p. 87)

In the play, characters frequently express their dreams to visit their homeland after the war ends. Shahid proclaims: "even before the war, you meet any Iraqi anywhere in the world, and it is enough to say the word 'Baghdad' for them to start crying. They love Baghdad" (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 8). In line with this assertion, Fadilah notes that she "yearn[s] for one hour's walk in Baghdad's beautiful streets" (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 39). Similarly, Fouad and Naimah discuss with one another as they share the details of when they built their house. Thereby, they share the act of reminiscing with the audience:

> FOUAD: *Wilek la! Shda tkharbuteen? Anee atthakkar liannu hai kanat el sana illy ummy ejet yemna —*[68]
> NAIMAH: *La ya habibi, inta galtan —*
> SHAHID: *(Overlapping.)* They are negotiating. (*They continue to argue. Overlapping again with Naimah.)* It's almost over.
> NAIMAH: *a3ruf meta hataina el asas mal binaya, liannu Bilal lee hel waqet ma kan mawlud? Ibnak? Ma titthakar meta inwalad ibsak?* (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 11)

Blank and Jensen's particular inclusion of the Arabic words in the play supports the idea that "language resists all mobilities *because* it moves about with [its speaker]" (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 1997/2000a, p. 91). In this sense, *Aftermath* underlines the fact that hospitality can be established without dismissing the language of the foreign and by embracing their identity – as the immigrants already reiterate at the end of the play: "Anee Iraqia"[69] (Blank & Jensen, 2010, p. 39).

While verbal and cultural exchanges are a notable part of documentary theatre, *Aftermath* leads its audience to regard these exchanges as 'networks' rather than two-directional relations between 'us' and 'them'. The play depicts the interrelation and interdependence of plural and diverse forms of mediation (by characters, dramatists, interviewers, translators etc.) as an essential element in verbatim genre. The role of mediation in shaping the perceptions of otherness in verbatim theatre can be better grasped with plurality and diversity: as mediation and mediators vary, so do the degrees of being other. Especially within the context of verbatim plays that focus on the problems of refugees and migrants, demonstrating the variability of otherness helps moving from a frame that prioritizes a specific perception of the foreign. In this respect, the play introduces a Derridean approach to decentralize hierarchies between different agents involved in mediation in verbatim theatre. Treating the audience and dramatists as 'the centre' (in this case, as the host),

[68] "No way! What are you talking about? I remember because that was the year my mom"
[69] "I am an Iraqi"

as the guiding element *outside* the structure of verbatim play will not properly raise awareness to the dimensions of problems that refugees and migrants confront. Here, decentralization does more justice to comprehend the complexities and interplay of power relations among characters, dramatists and audience. At the same time, the emphasis on hospitality in *Aftermath* directly addresses documentary theatre's concern to formulate a humanitarian bond and to "*celebrate* repressed or marginal communities and groups" (Paget, 2009, p. 227). As documentary theatre "*disseminate*[s] information" and as the act of witnessing is transferred from actors to the audience, the communication established on stage is expected to be carried beyond the borders of theatre (Paget, 2009, p. 228). In this sense, hospitality allows for new and alternative ways to look into the socio-political consequences of global incidents which documentary theatre traditionally seeks to respond to.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has delineated the ways documentary theatre challenges the hierarchical and unilateral relation of hospitality in mass media's depictions of human rights violations. In this form of 'hospitality', public representations can often be managed and manipulated by state mechanisms and/or media institutions as they play the role of a 'host'. As 'hosts', they often seek to determine specific frames through which the admissions of the foreign or 'the other' can be controlled. These frames of familiarity and belonging can be shaped by body politics, shared memories, common languages and/or gazes, etc. Especially in the case of local and national media, it is through such frames that the distinctions between 'us' and 'them' can be made. Due to these distinctions, members of 'other' communities are often given visibility - or 'accommodated' - for a limited period of time in media. This distinctive approach may lead to the oppression of individuals and communities perceived as 'the other', 'the foreigner' or 'the guest'. Such oppression mostly stems from the power relation between the host and the foreigner, which is stimulated by the host's intentions to retain his controlling position 'at home'. As Derrida notes in *Of Hospitality*, determining who will be admitted to home, the host retains his sovereign position through the frames, thresholds and doors even though his control can be oppressive and violent to 'the other'.

A similar power relation which can be oppressive to specific communities can pose a risk to theatre as well. Acting methods, interpellation of the audience or linguistic choices, dramatists' preferences to use specific materials etc., which are all parts of the process of mediation in a play, can depict a specific party as 'the host'.

For instance, in the representations of oppressed communities, dramatists' manipulation of information with regard to their own interests (as well as the interests of the audience) can highlight their position as the host. Correspondingly, as the oppressed communities' position as the Other is reinforced, their plights may not be given sufficient attention. Thus, it is essential to problematize how the concerns of the Other can be apprehended without objectifying him/her and prioritizing the interests of the dramatists and audience in particular. In this regard, the common perceptions and representations of the Other's or the stranger's 'reality' are to be explored so that the hierarchical relations between the host and the guest can be challenged. This is because prevalent representations of reality mostly depict the host and guest as binaries.

Since documentary theatre revisits and problematizes the very reality of information that circulates in media, it proves to be an effective genre to subvert the the binaries between 'us and them' or 'the host and the guest'. Claiming to be factual, media footages often conceal the way the representations of these communities are put in frames, which only provide a specific depiction of reality. Thus, their objectivity becomes an illusion. However, documentary theatre conventionally develops methods such as breaking the fourth wall and revealing the process of the play's construction, which seeks to distort these frames. As documentary plays bring the very capabilities of mediation into question, they also undermine the dramatists' controlling stance. In addition, the character's direct address to the interviewers, which is projected on to the audience, puts both the interviewing dramatists and the audience in the shoes of foreigners. It is the Other who becomes the dramatist and the audience's host. This being the case, documentary theatre establishes mutual relations or networks of hospitality among

different agents in theatre - dramatists, actors, audience, and characters - by manifesting the very gaps and limits of mediation. Because such a treatment of hospitality undermines dramatists' controlling position and disrupts the audience's comfort zone, the sovereignty of a specific agent in theatre can be prevented. Thereby, the suffering and victimization of the Other can be further apprehended. Mutual hospitality in documentary theatre can contribute to raising humanitarian awareness both at home and abroad.

The existing scholarship on documentary theatre, which is based on factual information circulating in media, has predominantly elaborated on the genre's approach to reality and subversion of 'truth'. This dissertation aims to fill the gap in the scholarship on documentary theatre by pointing to how the genre's treatment of reality influences the power relations among audience, dramatists, characters and actors. Since the use of frames and boundaries between the stage and the auditorium (e.g., the fourth wall) specially affects the perception of reality on stage, any distortion on these frames can reconstruct the power mechanism among the agents in theatre.

While Helene Cixous in her program notes and short essays has pointed out the necessity of cherishing hospitality to further understand and come to terms with the Other, she attributes the concept of hospitality to theatre in general. Yet, the generic features and techniques, which enable the development of a mutual hospitality among different agents in theatre, need to be specified. Such a specification can help understanding the theatre's distinction from other platforms, mainly media, where the encounters with the Other also take place. In order to establish hospitable relations with the Other on stage, the common representations of his/her reality are to be questioned. In this respect, documentary theatre proves to be a most effective

genre. In order not to repeat the unilateral practice of hospitality in media, documentary plays not only revisit 'reality' and bring new approaches to it but they can also deconstruct and revise the relations and distribution of power among various communities. More importantly, the ways documentary plays differentiate themselves from media footages in terms of their treatment of the power relations are to be clearly exposed during representation. In this sense, the exposition of the play as a construct can emphasize the dialogic and collaborative relationship among the agents in theatre.

Documentary theatre does not depend completely on the imagination of the dramatist: it develops out of the verbatim statements of real people, the perspectives and interpretations of characters, dramatists, actors and audience in a 'play'. In line with Derrida's arguments in "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences", the play among these agents prevents the formation of a centre that is both in and out of the structure.[70] In this respect, the relationship of the agents in theatre turns into a 'network'. Reciprocal relations of hospitality in documentary plays can take this network out of the boundaries of theatre. After all, knowing about human rights violation gives the individual a responsibility to testify and speak about it. Thus, just like the chain established by the play of signifiers in poststructuralist discourse, the mutual hospitality in documentary theatre creates 'a chain of testimony' which is carried on to other individuals.

In this dissertation, the formation of hospitality in documentary theatre has been explored with regard to four aspects of the concept: corporeal, commemorative, spectatorial and linguistic hospitality. These aspects are interrelated and they can also

[70] According to Derrida, the structuralist discourse depends on a centre which not only holds together the components of the structure but also remains out of the structure. It is the 'centre' that provides the meaning. Instead, Derrida suggests that meaning is deferred through the infinite play of signifiers.

lead to one another. To exemplify, the approach to body in corporal hospitality can be an effective tool for reinforcing commemorative hospitality. Through the emphasis on the liminality of body, the effects of the Other on one's collective memories and identities can be further fathomed. Similarly, as commemorative hospitality underlines how collective memories are haunted by the Other, the self-centred attitudes and expectations of the spectators can be undermined, which can cherish spectatorial hospitality. Even though the most salient formations of hospitality have been analysed in each chosen play throughout this dissertation, a specific documentary play can incorporate different forms at the same time. Besides, each play develops its own peculiar methods to apply these aspects of hospitality.

The concepts of body, memory, gaze and language often include borders through which quiddities of familiarity and unfamiliarity is formed. Thus, the plays analysed in the chapters all blur the borders of what is perceived and treated as home in their own ways. Scrutinizing the formation of corporeal hospitality with a specific focus on Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, the first chapter has indicated that an individual's body, with boundaries and privacies of its own, resembles a home. The body signifies – as Anna Deavere Smith suggests – "a safe house of identity" (in "Talk to Me", 24). Introducing the characteristics of Smith's 'other-oriented acting', the dissertation has analysed how the other's body could be hosted in the actor's body and vice versa. It has also maintained that corporeal hospitality can particularly subvert the dehumanization of the Other's 'face' in media footages. In this respect, Levinas and Butler's views on the face of the Other shed light on the documentary theatre's alternative treatment of the face. While Levinas argues that the 'face' (which does not at all signify a human face in a literal sense) humanizes the Other' by revealing his or her vulnerability, Butler argues that the

footages in mainstream media introduce specific faces through which the communities associated with them are 'dehumanized'. In line with Butler's argument, it can also be observed in the subsequent chapters that the dehumanization of figures such as Aziz Nesin in Chapter 3 and Saddam Hussein in Chapter 5 influences the ways the lives of the affiliated people are apprehended. In Smith's acting method, the actions of the Other is not 'imagined': rather, the actor observes the gestures, accents and mannerisms of each character during interviews and imitates them. Meanwhile, she does not conceal her racial outlook, which plays a significant role in manifesting the play's position as a construct. Due to the ambivalence of the body in performance, none of the bodies are placed into centre. The states of being a host and a guest do not reside in specific bodies: rather, they are in constant movement and frequently substitute each other.

The characteristics of a home are also inherent in individual and collective memories. Especially collective memories, which are significant constituents of collective identities, arouse sentiments of familiarity and belonging as they unite different individuals. Still, some figures can either be hidden or kept out of these 'homes'. The second chapter, which has investigated the commemorative hospitality with regard to Genco Erkal's *Sivas 93*, has accentuated that some communities can be treated as foreigners in their home countries. As the government policies can give a specific profile and identity to the state, citizens who diverge from this profile can be excluded and labelled as the deviant ones. *Sivas 93* elaborates on this exclusion with regard to the Alevi and leftist intellectuals in Turkey who were killed in Sivas Massacre. Pointing particularly at the local media, which triggered the violence, and the state mechanisms and justice systems, which failed to protect the rights of these communities, the chapter has maintained that the practices of various power

mechanisms can manipulate the ways documents and information about these communities are stored or repressed in collective memories. In this respect, the chapter has revisited Diana Taylor's views on archive and repertoire and suggested that documentary theatre can make use of the relationship between the two in its treatment of commemorative hospitality. Taylor explains that repertoire includes the embodied performance of a past incident while the documents are kept in the archive, which signifies a storeroom, a 'home'. She goes on to say that both of them are interrelated and there is no hierarchy between them. In the light of Taylor's statements, the chapter has emphasized that the relationship between the archive and repertoire is parallel to the one between the host and the guest. While the authority of the documentation in the archive echoes the position of a host, the mobility of the guest is inherent in the embodied performance within the repertoire. *Sivas 93*, blurs the borders of the archive, the home, through the performance: in doing that, it seeks to re-call the figures and communities who have been repressed and marginalised and to open up new exchanges with them.

Chapter 4 has elaborated on the spectatorial hospitality with references to Paul Wood, Ruth Sherlock and Zoe Lafferty's *The Fear of Breathing*, which dwells on Syrians' reactions to and consequences of Syrian Revolution. It has maintained that documentary theatre challenges the common attitude in the mainstream national media which treats the target audience as the host citizens at home and which prioritizes their viewpoints. In addition, such a treatment can also be observed on stage. Even though the audience watches the representation for a predetermined period of time –like guests, the representations of the distant others abroad can also put them in the position of a hosts who watch the others' suffering from a safe space. Such an approach often limits the audience's perspective by framing it. As a

documentary play, *The Fear of Breathing* reveals the very exchanges between the dramatists and characters in the play's construction process. As the play demonstrates the ways Syrian characters address the British audience as if they were tourists, it questions the audience's motives to come to theatre and pushes them out of their comfort zones. It also breaks the framed and familiarized view imposed on the audience in media. In addition, *The Fear of Breathing* seeks to carry the humanitarian awareness in the auditorium (which is yet another closed space) to a wider platform: as the characters in the play organize through social media, the audience is also invited to share and discuss these problems and concerns with other people.

Documentary theatre can problematize the sense of familiarity and belonging by playing with language as it has been suggested in Chapter 5. In this respect, the chapter has referred to the linguistic exchanges with Iraqi refugees, a translator and (unseen) interviewees in Jordan, which is illustrated in Erik Jensen and Jessica Blank's *Aftermath*. The play targets the audience's comfort zones both by introducing expression from a totally different language (Arabic) and by setting forth the very borders and limits that emerge during the articulation of suffering. Drawing attention to problems of translation, the play invites the audience to go beyond the significations and verbalizations that they encounter in their daily lives. In media footages where the Other is hardly given an opportunity to self-represent in their own language, the audience mostly enjoys the position of a host: it is the Other who is expected to fit it. As the characters frequently point to the gaps of translation, the play distorts the sense of reality which can also be shaped by the familiarized expressions in the audience's native language. In this sense, the linguistic hospitality

in *Aftermath* bears similarities to the corporeal hospitality in *Twilight Los Angeles 1992*, where the typical representations of 'the face' are challenged.

Apart from blurring the boundaries of the body, memory, gaze and language, the formations of hospitality in documentary theatre delineates the ways individuals and communities are haunted by the Other, the unfamiliar, those who are not considered a part of the 'home'. Before anything else, individuals are bound up with the humanitarian responsibility to give testimony about an injustice and oppression to the Other. Subverting the binaries of the host and the guest, documentary plays often point to this commitment as they invite the audience to take the spectral position of the Other into consideration. In documentary plays, the absent Other makes its way to the 'presence' of the stage. In corporeal hospitality that is formed on stage, the absent Other 'speaks' through the gestures and mannerisms imitated by the actors. It is as if the actor was 'possessed' by the Other, which is also manifested in Richard Schechner's depiction of Anna Deavere Smith's performances as a ritual. Here, liminality is an essential part of the dialogue among the agents of theatre. In commemorative hospitality, the stage sets the scene for 'the return of the repressed'. Exploring the incidents of violence towards minorities, documentary plays such as *Sivas 93* propound that collective memories are continually haunted by those labelled as the uncanny. The repressed communities are a fundamental element that make up collective identities.

As the dramatist and the audience become 'haunted' by the Other in documentary plays, they can also confront the ways the Other treats them as strangers. The reflections of this condition is predominantly elucidated in Chapter 4 and 5. Chapter 4, which analyses the dynamics of spectatorial hospitality with references to *The Fear of Breathing*, has suggested that the dramatists and audience

become haunted by the characters' gaze. Through the depiction of the encounter between the dramatists and the interviewed characters, the gaze of the latter is carried on to the audience. As the audience members are put in the shoes of a foreigner through this gaze, the ways they are interpellated by the Other can be revealed. A similar approach to the audience as foreigners is also observed in the formations of linguistic hospitality in *Aftermath*, where some expressions of the characters are presented in their native language. The audience is unsettled through the continual 'intrusion' of the Other's language.

The accentuation of different forms of hospitality in documentary theatre can shed light to further research on the representation of problems pertaining to refugees, asylum and migration. The documentary genre has been widely preferred by dramatists in recent years for raising awareness on these issues. *Le Dernier Caravansérail,* where Helene Cixous's program notes draw attention to impact of hospitality in theatre, is a salient example to these types of plays. An emphasis on the mutual hospitality in documentary plays on refugee problems can prevent the perception of the host country's rules as 'the universal values.' It can also contribute to taking the peculiarities of refugees' ethnic, religious and social positions into consideration. In addition, in recent years, documentary plays which present refugees / former refugees themselves as actors (e.g Ros Horin's *Through the Wire* and *The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe*) have been produced as well. Opening up new modes of encounter with refugees and asylum seekers through documentary theatre can contribute both to reducing the prejudices about these individuals and to incorporating different segments of the society.

The dissertation's emphasis on the network among the agents in documentary theatre can also open up further research on the transference of digital media

technologies and social media on stage. These platforms, which already bring a fundamental alternative to the hegemonic and unilateral position of the mainstream mass media, can effectively foster the mutual relations of hospitality through the democratic space they provide. As it has also been noted in Chapter 3, where the activist characters in *The Fear of Breathing* resort to social networks for organizing, social media blurs the boundaries between the public and the private. Through personal documents and testimonies that are posted and shared, social media can carry the concerns and problems of an individual or community to a larger audience. On the one hand, Derrida suggests in *Of Hospitality* that the intermingling of public and private spheres through the state control on e-mails, phone lines and internet works to reinforce the state sovereignty over citizens. This is because e-mails, phone lines and internet also make up the private spaces of citizens. The interaction of the public and private through the state control can be quite repressive to individuals. On the other hand, a counter-reaction to such power mechanisms can still be formed through the interplay of social media and theatre, which can also blur the border between the public and the private. When the personal information is 'willingly' shared with public, the frames which lead the audiences to evaluate reality from a specific perspective can be broken.

Through the integration of digital platforms with theatre, performances are represented and watched through social networks to a greater extent. Thus, social media itself has turned into a stage. Especially with the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, theatre has been carried on to the homes of audience around the world. Both video-conferencing systems such as Zoom and live broadcasts on YouTube have given the audience members not only to watch the theatrical representations in their own private spaces but also to simultaneously comment on

the actors and the performances and to communicate with other audience members. At the same time, the staging of the plays via social networks have significantly established solidarity among the dramatists and actors having a hard time in the sector and the audience members experiencing the social and psychological consequences of the lockdown. In this respect, the reciprocal relations of hospitality among the agents in theatre have been considerably reinforced.

The use of social media, digital networks and interactive techniques in theatre can add a new dimension and perspective to documentary theatre or 'the theatre of the real'. The experimental techniques that can be integrated in documentary plays can stimulate new perceptions of reality or challenge the existing ones. Besides, the audience can interactively communicate with the interviewees and see them in person. Through the interactive relationships established via digital technologies, audience's position as yet another character and actor can be more accentuated. The more the audience's comfort zone is targeted and the more the exchange between the various agents is encouraged, the more the prioritization of a specific party – as well as the power struggles between 'hosts' and 'guests' will be undermined. In addition, the audience's participation in the performance through digital means can highlight the dynamic condition of 'reality' which is depicted documentary theatre. The audience's experiences and reactions during performance can add another dimension to the 'factuality' of an incident. As performance in documentary theatre can challenge the prevalent perceptions of reality and contribute to the formation of new archives and repertoires,[71] the interactive relationships within a performance can underline the audience's roles in the development of collective memories and

[71] See Diana Taylor's *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (2003).

documentation more promptly and effectively. In addition, as the different perspectives of the audience and characters about the 'reality' are put forward in interactive documentary plays, the slippery nature of reality can be more vividly foregrounded.

As the perceptions of reality undergo changes in time, so do the methods which are developed for their representation on stage. Particularly the distance between the self and the Other stands out a regulating element both in the perception and representation of reality. Though media, following the steps of technology and globalization, intends to reduce the distance, it keeps substituting reality as a consequence of the postmodern condition. Furthermore, since the positions of 'the giver and the receiver' or 'the viewer and the spectacle' in media representations constitute binary relations among specific communities, the distance among them hardly narrows down. In this sense, the mutual hospitality established in the documentary theatre or 'the theatre of the real' stimulates the development of networks which not only subverts the binary relations but also undermines the very gaps of media in the depiction of reality. As human rights violations have become a substantial part of reality around the world, the reciprocal relations of hospitality need to be grasped and experienced more than ever.

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