

# **"The World is a Cancer Eating Itself Away": A Study on Robin Soans' Verbatim Play *Talking to Terrorists*.**

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## **Abstract**

The present study aims at analyzing the elaboration of the theme of terrorism in Robin Soans' (1946- ) Verbatim play *Talking to Terrorists* (2005). In this play, Soans presents terrorism in its different forms, tactics, and effects through making not only the terrorists to speak but also the individuals who had certain experiences with terrorism. Moreover, the play attempts to raise questions and solutions of how to control the plague that has been always responsible for reaping lives for nothing.

## **"The World is a Cancer Eating Itself Away"<sup>(1)</sup>: A Study on Robin Soans' Verbatim Play *Talking to Terrorists*.**

There is no universal issue attracted Man's attention, interest, curiosity, fear or even argumentation as it happened and is happening with the issue of terrorism. This might be attributed to the way terrorism is firmly linked to human life, fears, emotions, actions and reactions that used to be hidden before and now are all exposed. Actually the interest in terrorism is related to the sort of belief and thinking that dominates every nation and the various ideologies that control (or manipulate) it in dealing with internal or external affairs. As such, terrorism, which is based on conflict, is also responsible for creating conflicts inside nations as well all over the world and its condition as the direct outcome of wars and violent practices and damages. Some look at terrorism as a suitable means to serve announced or hidden agendas. Others view terrorism as a harmful action with catastrophic consequences because, sometimes it is only innocent people are entangled without any particular guilt just because they belong to a certain nation or a specific religious trend or even because they possess a particular political belief. The argumentation of this subject is rather a complex one to view or to discuss because it varies as the variety of human population and because "One culture's murderer is another's martyr [and] revolutionaries also can be freedom fighters."<sup>2</sup> Whether this or that, terrorism in the 21<sup>th</sup> century started to take a certain form: it is to be the motto of rejection or disapproval to the practices of some powers or regimes in authority. Thus, to provide a compact definition of terrorism is still a matter of debate, but those who are anti-terrorists agree on the general frame of terrorism as:

A violent action intended for public effect which is usually directed against members or institutions of the state. Its intention is to hurt not only its key victims but also those who support them. When its targets are those in power, the intention is to threaten the whole power structure. When the targets are the followers of the powerful, often the attempt is to threaten other like-minded followers.<sup>3</sup>

This definition might be closer to the real identity of terrorism and is adopted specifically after the events of September, 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the date of blowing off the towers of the World Trading Centre in New York along with different attacks in Europe after this date. Right away and from this date, the whole world is greatly alarmed to the danger hidden in bombs or plans hijacking, the hidden threats of peoples' lives and future and dealing with terrorism as the new terrible fashion of the age. Actually, terrorism is the main reason for making the new century to be looked at as the age of terror despite the fact that there is a very crucial point: terrorism does not belong to here or now, rather it belongs to an era that is much older than this date but it flourished after the actions of September just because the center of power in the world was targeted, the matter which helped to widen the gape between the two halves of the planet, the eastern and the western. As a matter of fact, terrorism is the direct outcome of the Western world's actions because simply Terrorism has always been nourished with the nourishment of European Civilization. The very first experience of the world with terrorism in its organized form started at the time of Roman civilization. To be more precise, the word terrorism is lexically borrowed from the Latin word "terrere" which means "to frighten". This term was

first used to describe the Cimbri tribes that used to make regular and fearful invasions against Rome, the matter that formed a nightmare to the great empire then because: "the terrere Cimbricus was a panic and a state of emergency in Rome in response to the approach of warriors of the Cimbri tribe in 105 B.C."<sup>4</sup>

During the Renaissance, terrorism in Europe turned to be an obsession that manipulated rulers' minds, affected specifically by the ideas of the Italian philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) and his book *The Prince* (1513) along with his other philosophies concerning how should rulers make fast hold and take brutal actions against the public to guarantee authority. The ideas presented by this philosopher have been so challenging up to the extent that they were able to change the whole thinking of the western world concerning the ideas of power and political authority and the way "the aim (should) justify the means". This is the reason why terrorism was transformed to take a second dimension that is the terrorism of the State.

Machiavelli and his 'bloody' philosophies [concerning providing justification for terrorism of State] crept into the heart of England, affecting the English life and thinking by the time of the English Renaissance. This influence can be directly touched during the reign of the Tudors dynasty or more correctly, tyranny, because in first place the Tudors were searching "the gaining and holding of power depended on terrorism; the state existed by virtue of its ability to terrorize its enemies internal and external, real or imagined"<sup>5</sup>. Such view is directly reflected in the most distinguished aspects of the English life like drama specifically in the productions of Marlowe and Shakespeare, especially in their plays *Tamburlaine* and *Edward II* respectively. Both plays, in addition to other examples, showed great dependence on the ideas of "authorized" violence against named individuals or even against whole nations as well.<sup>6</sup>

The real crisis, and mostly the first shocking experience of the western world with terrorism and violence came to be witnessed at the time the French Revolution broke out (1789) which was perfectly called "the Reign of terror" as blood and destruction were to be the real mottos of this revolution instead of its declared slogan of freedom, equality and brotherhood. In 1869, Russia joined France in the history of Terrorism as Sergey Nechayve established a Russian terrorist group which he called it "People's Retribution" which was inspired by the actions of an Italian patriot, Felice Orsini, the one who planned for the assassination attempt against the French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte III in 1858.<sup>7</sup> Nechayve's group, also known as the Society of Axe, worked secretly and based its principles on Catechism, teaching people to follow orders, sacrificing themselves blindly in terrorists actions without questions, using Christianity as its own cover to justify horrible actions in terrorizing the innocents.<sup>8</sup>

By the twentieth century, terrorism became a global state due to the breaking out of two world wars and the wars in Middle East, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Leninist's Terrorism in Russia along with the domination of despotic and tyrannical regimes that took fast hold of authority upon the world and passing by the actions of al-Qaeda Organization in the East and the West as well. Terrorism, thus, has alternated to be a sort of an obsession living inside every individual, controlling and conducting his\her life, fears and beliefs as well. In addition to that there is a very important fact: terrorism has a continuative nature. It is modifying and regenerating itself repeatedly through history and specifically, by 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries,

terrorism started to have different ideologies; political, religious, ethnic, regional and economical. As a result, the centers of power and different governments in the world tried to find solutions for this plague, a plague that is reaping the lives of thousands of people repeatedly in different regions in the world, a plague that is created and encouraged in the west and now the rest of the world has to deal with. Ironically, terrorism has changed to be a world phenomenon that is nourished and regenerated over and over because with every terrorist action, a different agenda is announced, a different militia is demonstrated, a new religion is declared to be responsible and a new organization is accused. Thus, terrorism has been always varied between Religion and Secularism: it does not have a stable or a fixed nature, but the only thing repeated with every case is the way every solution seems expired for power is exchanged with power. This policy has been responsible for turning modern life into a huge jungle in which survival turned to be for the "fittest" in the very bestial sense of the word. Of course, the fittest are those who own the gun, and the gun is faced with gun, so the whole world is imprisoned inside this endless absurd chain, but what about "talking"?

In his play *Talking to Terrorists* (2005), Robin Soans (1946- ), the British playwright and the master of Verbatim Theatre, presents this simple word "talking" as the only remaining weapon to control the global disease of terrorism. In his own introduction to the play, Soans writes that the idea of the play is basically inspired by a story of a Relief worker who, in one of her missions, she arrived to a large village that has been completely destroyed and the inhabitants of the village were angry. The Relief worker was astonished because those "people were angry not because they had nothing to eat and nowhere to live but because no-one had listened to their story of what had happened', a huge part of what we call terrorism arises from no-one listening' she said."<sup>9</sup> Thus, Soans' theory in this play is to understand the human psyche: what any human being is exposed to or witnesses in life affects his\her future actions. No one is born an evil or a devil, or in other words, no one is born a terrorist by nature. It is the way this individual is brought up that decides what he\she is going to be. The mentality of the terrorist must be understood so as to change or at least to lessen the evil in the world. In his presentation of this view, Soans is not depending upon traditional dramatic techniques or telling fictitious stories, rather, the playwright is elaborating a totally new and rather shocking style borrowed from the Verbatim Theatre. This theatre is a contemporary British theatre that "has gained both critical and popular attention in the last ten years. Part of its popularity has been seen as a reflection of frustration with the political process...other critics see the Verbatim Theatre as a manifestation of dissatisfaction with certain aspects of the media."<sup>10</sup> With these two opinions, whether a reflection of frustration or a manifestation of dissatisfaction, the validity of the Verbatim theatre rests in the fact that it is based upon new techniques: the word-for-word interviews and tape recorded materials in performances. At the same time, the verbatim play possesses a special feature represented by "[its] problematic performance methodology, especially in relation to its claims of authenticity."<sup>11</sup> This means that, unlike traditional forms of drama, the Verbatim Play depends on the opinions of interviewees to construct the play in order to achieve a high level of authenticity in presenting different issues. In other words, the function of the playwright in this type of drama is not to create events or characters but to document real testimonials of real people speaking of real experiences with an extreme emotional intensity reflected sincerely on stage since these experiences and emotions are the outcomes of real situations.

To deal with a topic like terrorism that touches the emotion of every human being is something difficult to tackle since validity, sincerity and objectivity are highly recommended aspects in dealing with this topic, Soans, thus chooses the verbatim technicality to deal with a delicate subject like terrorism. To achieve all these aspects, in *Talking to Terrorists*, Soans introduces to his audience the wide world of terrorism through real testimonials of people whom he actually met and who used to and are having actual personal experiences with

terrorism such as ex-terrorists, victims, aid workers, politicians, diplomats and even psychologists. The play thus turns to be a global one that shows all points of view, how all humanity becomes victimized and how the terrorist and the victim, the antagonist and the protagonist, become equal in suffering from a sort of violence that overwhelmed the world in a devilish way, threatening every individual in it. May be Soans has followed such technicality in presenting a play dealing with terrorism because in the first place, terrorism has much in common with drama since:

Terrorism here is two things, both *event*, the things that happen, and *process*, that is to say, it consists of the relationships developing among protagonists, the dyadic relationship of terrorists and authorities, and the triadic relationship of state, terrorists and public. Finally, all this is selectively perceived in different ways in the world beyond the state's boundaries. At all these levels, the desire of terrorists to create violent outrage and promote fear makes them a subject for the theatre. As a public event, terrorism is paratheatrical, a performance with an involuntary audience, a happening with an unscripted scenario that can go badly wrong, and often does. The dramatic text introjects aspects of this performative element back into a formal arena of performance, the modern stage.<sup>12</sup>

Such 'dramatic' linkage between drama and terrorism might be seen as something logical for both share a lot of common features but the most important feature linking both is the Conflict that makes drama drama and makes terrorism a dramatic act. Soans intends to get use of this connection between drama and terrorism so as to present the inner side of the terrorist, and to expose his internal motivations in front of the audience. Gradually the viewer may believe that some of those people, the terrorists, are not monsters after all. They are humans of flesh and blood. Their only guilt is that they were brought up in the wrong place and the wrong time. So they grow up to be "wronged" individuals. But at the same time and though the play is entitled *Talking to Terrorists*, yet it shows an opposite side: how painful is the life of the individual who gets hurt in a way or in another from terrorist actions and how his\her whole life has changed either because he\she was crippled or lost loved ones for no guilt or crime. So which side is to feel pity for: the murderer or the victim?

The answer to this question is rather too difficult to deal with since the murderer and his victim are put in the same equation but Soans sees that since every weapon has failed to deal with the problem so why should not we try to talk to terrorists, to investigate their problems, to understand their psychology so as to stop the madness going on all over the globe because "talking to terrorists is the only way to beat them"(Act I, P.25). As such, Soans presents on stage various stories of former terrorists who start to speak about their own conditions, their motivations and reasons of why they were as such. Ironically, those characters are not given names, they are given the titles of their "terror" groups because some of those ex-terrorists asked to hide their real identities for fear of being known. There is the Ex-member of the National Resistance Army, Uganda (N.R.A.), the Ex-member of the Kurdish Workers Party (P.K.K.), the Ex-Head of Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, Bethlehem (A.A.B), the Ex- member of the Irish Republican Army (I.R.A.) and the Ex-member of the Ulster Volunteer Force (U.V.F.), Every one of those Ex-terrorists is given a free space to "talk" to a psychologist, Edward, in the form of interruptive monologues of a different story and a different background but the emotion is the same inside each one of them.

The first one to talk in the group is NRA, who in reality represents China Keitetsi<sup>13</sup>, an Ex-member of Uganda National Resistance Army. NRA describes painfully her long journey with terrorism that first started against her inside her family. NRA's family used to have a farm and she describes with a great passion how she used to be a normal farm child

overwhelming her animals with extreme warmth to compensate the harsh treatment of her father who used to beat her up mercilessly. When she was eight years old, she fled from the house because of a shocking incident which she describes it with extreme agony accompanied with tears and cries:

One time...I was eight years old...my stepmother said 'I'm going out, you had better cook the dinner'. I thought how the beef stew looked when she made it. I put nearly half a kilo of cream into the sauce and some curry; it had the right colour...it looked as it should. My stepmother told me to take to the dining-table. My father, he sat there and shouted, 'Woman, is this food you have prepared?' my stepmother said, 'Ask your daughter, she cooked the food, no one asked her to, but there it is.' My father he told my brother, 'Go and get me chilies'. My father put all, every one, into the food, stirred it round and told me, 'You eat it now.' I thought, 'He's going to beat me anyway, so I just sat there. He shouted at me, ordering me to eat. I still sat there, looking down. He told my brother to fetch a stick...the big stick for beating cows...he told me to lie down. I put my hands on my bum to protect me; he busted my fingers. He never cared if I died or not. I wished to die so the police would arrest him. He beat me on the head...I've still got something, look. Then he jammed my head between his legs, gripped tight, couldn't breath, beating me, beating me...my stepmother moving the chairs so he could beat me more easily...my brothers and sisters screaming, 'Stop, stop, ... father , you're killing her...stop, stop...' *Silence. She passes her thumb across her forehead several times. Eyes close. Tears.* When my father finished, I was full of blood.

(Act One, PP.38-39)

The crisis to come in NRA's life was worsening when she was recruited in the Resistance Army. As she escaped her father's house, a strange event which happened to her changed her life forever, destroying her own childhood and her future life as well:

It was the middle of the night. I had been walking a long time. I saw a flash of light, then a man's voice... 'Stop! Who are you?'  
'I'm looking for my mother'  
'Where's your father?'  
'He's dead'  
'You'd better sleep here'  
He threw two blankets on the ground.  
She does  
A group of men came out of the bush...they had guns on their shoulders. The blankets were smelling bad, but there were swarms of mosquitoes. I lay down and covered my head. *She lies down and goes to sleep, folded in the blankets.*

(Act One, P. 41)

The blanket NRA describes represents her urgent need for shelter and safety, two simple needs that are kept beyond her reach. Meanwhile this blanket turned to be the cover that transformed her into a beast, killing inside her the innocence of the child. When she was recruited, NRA's life changed from having a great passion to possess the ability to shoot, kill and cut any human alive. Of course such actions were not conducted by NRA's will, rather, there was no escape from such life, either to be or not to be at all. Her innocence is just like the innocence of a large number of "children soldiers" who fall under the effects and threats of the people recruiting and manipulating them in wars and bloody actions with the total ignorance of those children of what they are doing or even why. NRA's description of what she and her comrades used to do represents a shock to the viewer since these incidents are not part of fictitious actions imagined by a playwright: these incidents are the most nightmarish reality that is repeated daily. No one can imagine that a young girl of eight or ten years old would use words like 'short sleeve' or 'long sleeve' so as to ask where she should cut a human

arm, at wrist or elbow or when she speaks of herself in her past years that "we killed with total commitment. We fought, we tortured...we thought that was the best way to please our bosses"(Act One, P.57). Add to this the horrors NRA describes when she was chosen to blow off a soldiers' camp show how:

Men and women began running out and dropping in one big mess, still naked, their clothes swinging from their hands. The massive fire of our guns drowned out everything...the screaming of the goats and hens and people...eventually silence...nothing. Then daylight. We entered the camp...there was just one big bloody heap of goats and hens, soldiers and their women who had been on a visit. All dead in the morning sun. Back in our camp the prisoners were made to dig their own graves. One of our officers told me, 'Go spit them in the eye'. He told them, 'No bullets will be wasted on you. After you have dug your grave, I will call my best men. They will hit you on the head with an akakumbi'. That was a short, heavy hoe. They stood two at a time, and our strongest men smashed their foreheads and the backs of their heads until they dropped in the grave and died.

(Act One, P.57)

Despite the fact that all these horrible scenes are mentioned through words, their bloody imagism is printed in the minds of the audience and readers. But it seems that such unjustifiable cruelty becomes the new identity of post-modernism. Meanwhile as PKK, an Ex-member of the Kurdish Workers Party, starts to speak of his own story, the audience will find also a reflection of NRA's story. As if the same story is repeated but with a different character and a different place. PKK speaks of his early life before he was signed as a terrorist. As it happens with NRA, PKK used to have a very simple farm life, a life in which he was "very poor, but happy in spirit"(Act One, P.37). Such happiness could not last because soon:

The government say no more money for Kurdish villages in the mountains. We move to a town...nine of us living in one small room. We didn't speak Turkish; our clothing was different. At school, no one, no even teacher, spoke to me. I am left in corner alone.

(Act One, P.38)

It is well known that discrimination creates hatred and hatred leads the human brain to conduct itself in demonic directions. In tribute for all the hatred he witnessed and faced, PKK agreed to be recruited in what was called "Kurdistan Revolutionaries" when he was only fifteen years old. At first sight this group started its activities peacefully. Meanwhile "the older group said to counter violence from the state, there is no alternative but to use violence"(Act One, P.43) and so it was transformed into Kurdish Workers Party. Thus, PKK was admitted in "bomb lectures" when he was just seventeen years old. Instead of having a natural adolescent life, this young man was introduced to the world of death, a world in which one is either to survive the violence or to die through violence with no third choice. Ironically, this was not the only a dilemma in PKK's life but it was the gate that opened hell upon his life. PKK and his comrades participated in an operation against a Turkish Parliament member and a landowner who used to torture Kurdish people, robbing them of their farms, crops and animals though this man was himself a Kurd. PKK speaks of this operation which represented the beginning of his end:

We decided to target this man. To hit him is to hit the state. Ten o'clock at night, thirty of us creep on. The guards outside are silenced with gun to head and gagged. There were several doors into the main living-rooms...we survive all at once...there is the fascist eating with his guards, not family...we shout, 'this is a raid ...don't move'. The guards open fire. My friend next to me is shot dead. As soon as M.P. realizes situation,

he hid behind two of his men; they were both killed; by now there were so many bullets. We ran into the night...One of our guys got caught. I had to go up into the hills with two friends. It was winter. We lived in caves. And then one morning...hardly light, bitterly cold...I was first to hear it...the noise of an engine. Then we saw them...the blue berets of the soldiers. They are lined up in the shape of a crescent moon.

(Act One, PP.44-45)

It seems sarcastic that how an adult can see much violence in his life and yet he is able to use a romantic metaphor like a "crescent moon" so as to describe an army that shows up to catch and torture him. The days to follow in PKK's life seemed to be endless. He and a large number of people, men, women and children, were put under torment in the very diabolical meaning of the word. Then PKK was sentenced to death. When he was asked to put aside his favorite clothes to be hanged with, PKK seems to be ironic in choosing a red T-shirt just because he liked red colour. Meanwhile, he was saved from death penalty by an order from the president and was sentenced to twenty-one years of imprisonment, a penalty which represented something more painful than death itself because: "Twenty-one years and four months I was in prison. Now when I say it, it shocks me. All my youth...all my early life ...gone...just gone"(Act one, P. 47)

The agony of childhood nightmares continues with the third "terrorist", AAB (an Ex-head of Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade), the one who also lived and suffered unstable childhood that laid its dark and gloomy shadows on his future life. AAB goes back in memory when he was a little child living in a country that could not belong to its people anymore, Palestine. AAB remembers how innocent he was when he used to play "football out of rags" with his friends, yet he was satisfied. But the conqueror was the direct reason for ending this hard satisfaction and turn it to a bitter reality. AAB talks about his first experience with the Israelis when :

One day...my mother was sweeping the little yard at the front of the house. Six Israelis soldiers came round the corner and one of them kicked me from behind. I landed like a pancake. My mother said to the soldiers, "Why are you doing that to my son?" the soldier said, "What's a whore like you doing outside your house in a curfew"

(Act One, P. 37)

Out of his great hatred, AAB describes how he and his friends gradually began to lose the innocence of their hearts because of the cruelty of the conqueror's actions. Thus, their favorite game football was changed into "Soldiers and thieves" and they changed the latter into "Palestinians and Israelis" just because they were and are living such reality every day. By the age of thirteen, AAB's game became a factual practice when those children started to "[throw stones at a jeep that was running past [their] school" (Act One, P.39). Due to this action, AAB was captured and sent to prison for six months. Ironically, the prison could not break the will of AAB though he was just a child. The first thing he has done after being released was to form "a stone throwing group":

We were naïve... we had our meetings in the street. It was after midnight...I was with five of my brothers, sleeping on mattresses on the floor. Every two mattresses shared one dark grey United Nations blanket, made you scratch all over. I opened my eyes...there was an M16 pointing at my head. Every one of us was screaming. My mum was crying. The soldiers were silent, calm. The officer said, 'your son is the ringleader'. I was taken to the army compound.

(Act One, P. 40)



The hardships of AAB's life could not stop at this limit. After he was caught for the second time, he was tortured and imprisoned for six years though he was only fourteen years old then and his "crime" was stone throwing. As a matter of fact, with AAB Soans rises a very important issue: Is it fair for the one who opens his eyes on the condition of his country conquered by strangers who commit all cruel actions that one can or cannot imagine, and yet to take no action against this conqueror at all, or to take an action and to be called a terrorist? According to Soans everyone of us should think deeply before passing judgments as to which one is the real victim and which one is the real terrorist in this whole matter.

The last two terrorists to talk in the group are the Irish IRA (Ex-member of Irish Resistance Army) and UVF (Ex-member of Ulster Volunteer Force) who, despite the fact they are countrymen, they adopted totally opposite tendencies concerning their political beliefs for the first was a Republican while the latter was anti-Republican. In spite such difference, as IRA and UVF start to speak about their pasts and their motivations when they were terrorists, one can trace an identical being of both men. Both IRA and UVF are different from other terrorists in having happy and normal childhood. Meanwhile, as they grew up, both were obliged to be affected by the political unrest going on in their country. IRA speaks about himself when he joined the Irish Resistance Army for something to be more like a matter of inheritance than convenience because "both [his] grandparents were in the IRA, [and] joining the movement was the most natural thing in the world" (Act One, P.42). IRA's story with violence began when he was only thirteen years old. IRA was introduced in this early age to the world of bombs, meeting other teenagers of fifteen and sixteen who were given "positions of responsibility" so as to conduct different operations against their countrymen, members in UVFs and against the British forces. The consequences of such actions led to increasing unjustified deaths on all sides: "they were hairy days" as IRA describes them. Meanwhile, IRA was captured in one of these operations by the Military Police. It seems that in a country like Ireland, even the police has its own concept of terrorism. This fact is shown in the way IRA speaks about the way he was arrested and treated by Military Police members:

There was just me in a corridor with three military policemen...two of them were sitting, the third was walking up and down. At one point as he was passing, I got this almighty crunch in the base of mine spine. I went straight down. A British military medic examined. He looked at my back. He said 'what happened there?' 'nothing' he said, 'you've been duffed up lad'. Those were his very words. And he touched it...no pressure...just touched it, and my knees went from under me. He slipped me a couple of paracetamol. Then I was interned in Longkesh.

(Act One, P. 47)

Ironically and despite their differences, UVF reveals a story similar to that of IRA. As UVF was a teenager of sixteen years, he joined the Ulster Volunteer Force just because he believed that "it was a question of defending [his] area against people who were demonstrating aggression towards [his] family, [his] friends and my neighbors" (Act One, P.42). The gun was thus put in his hands when he was too young even to carry it and his long journey with terrorism started from thence: "I had a gun put in my hands at the grand age of sixteen. I near shot the man who put it there. The only thing I'd ever fired was my finger coming out of the cinema ...here I was sixteen with this bloody big weirdy weapon"(Act One, P. 43)

Meanwhile and as it happened with IRA, UVF faced the same destiny. One day and in an operation made by UVFs against IRAs, UVF was captured, tortured and sentenced to

jail. The reason for such gloomy destiny can be summarized in the very cruel sponsors who were responsible for putting dangerous weapons in the hands of children like UVF and his companions. The result was that some of those children were killed, others were badly injured and the rest were captured:

It was called the Conway Bar. Our intelligence had told us that an IRA unit was meeting there. We took two stolen cars...four of us, two guns, one bomb. It was a mixture as was often the case of these days, possibly fertilizer and bleach; it was in a metal gas container, two feet in high, and it had a slandered fuse...fifteen seconds from lightening to detonation. We arrived about eight p.m., basically at the front of the building...nobody in sight. We got out of our cars, two of us carrying guns, one carrying the bomb, the fourth guy stayed in the getaway car with the engine running. The plan- light the bomb, throw it through the door, go. We were huddled in the door, three of us, trying to light the bomb. At that particular point the door opened, and my colleague swung round and fired a number of shots into the bar. I basically raised my weapon to take aim, as our third colleague was pushing the bomb between our legs. The bomb or whatever it was caused the bomb to explode prematurely. Basically I came round with half the building on top of me, with my clothes blown off, barely able to see or hear. I didn't know what happened to anybody...I made my way up in the street, staggering absolutely and at that particular point another crowd, a republican crowd...came out of from another bar very close by...the crowd was coming after me...and they caught me. They proceeded to beat the living day lights out of me, and they were bringing me back across a bridge to hang me...when the military police arrived. I've never been so happy to see a policeman in my life...the military police threw me over the bonnet of their car and smashed my face in...I was lying in a heap, badly burned, bruised and bloodied... a police medical officer ordered them to take me to the hospital immediately... Fifteen years I was in Longkesh prison camp. One colleague died six weeks later as a result of his injuries.

(Act One, PP. 45-47)

Eventually, the two enemies, IRA and UVF, became so close friends in prison. Ironically, only in prison both men found peace, the peace that has taught them to be positive individuals by attempting to rebuild themselves through education that has changed their lives forever:

UVF: When I was in Longkesh, I ended up with an honours degree from the Open University in Mathematics and Computers and Systems; in actual fact, it was the only subject I was any good at, but like so many young men in Belfast at that time I had left school at fifteen.

IRA: I got two degrees...one in Modern Literature and Art, and one in Politics. I took as my subject 'The Misrepresentation of the Conflict in Popular Fiction'. And I got a doctorate.

UVF: I saw this other man sitting there in the library...a Republican. I knew exactly who he was; I knew exactly what he'd done. As the morning wore on, I fancied a wee cup of tea; but then I thought it would be very rude to make one for me and not for him. 'No, fuck it' I thought 'I won't' ...but then I found myself saying 'would you like a wee cup of tea?'...we both talked ...we developed a tremendous friendship.

(Act Two, PP. 87-88)

So every one of those five terrorists, though every one of them belongs to a different country, their stories seem to be the same, their circumstances were the same, the human effect seems the same. Of course each one of those terrorists describes in words what used to be horrific and bloody real actions, actions which affected and changed the lives of other individuals, mostly innocent individuals. But one cannot ignore the reasons for such actions as to whether facing violence and oppression at home or country, or protecting family and friends against a merciless conqueror or even feeling obliged to follow the grandfathers'

steps<sup>14</sup>. Every one of those terrorists proves that one can be an ordinary human being, to have the ability to dream, to accomplish progress in life only if one was given a chance to have a peaceful and a stable life and this is exactly what happens to he\she in the present. After they were lucky enough to escape the prison of violence, they succeeded to have normal lives and to be normal individuals. But, after all, can one give justifications for those terrorists or at least to forgive them their past actions based on the unnatural environment they grew up in and the harsh circumstances they faced?

To intensify the importance of this question, Soans presents on stage a neutral character, Edward, a psychologist, who with every speech of every terrorists, tries to understand how the terrorist's mind is working. Edward sees that the greatest crime in the world was committed against those terrorists in first place when they were recruited while they were too young to understand or to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong, what was on their behalf and what was not. In other words, the real terrorists in this whole game are those who recruit children to be terrorists, who put dangerous weapons at the hands of children at the time when those children should live the years of their innocence. It seems as if the gods that manipulated the destinies of tragic heroes had come back to life once again to forbid those young individuals from having any freedom to decide what is good and what is evil. Thus, children and adults represent fortunes to those who recruit them so as to execute their demands, changing them into puppets and no more. Such view is reinforced by another character in the play, the Colonel who used to work in U.N. mission to sponsor war crimes trials in Africa and represents a live witness on horrors going on in Africa and more particularly in Sierra Leone. The Colonel supports Edward's view that "the true criminals are not the people who exact the crimes but the person who first thought it was a good idea"(Act One, P.56). According to the Colonel also, the matter does not stop at this particular point because the individuals used in terror actions, especially the children, are themselves terrified of what might happen to them if they do not follow the orders. The Colonel gives a description of what a terrorist group in Sierra Leon is doing to keep on existing depending on 'terror factor':

Living in the jungle, the guerrilla armies had no vehicles, no transportation; so they had the most enormous requirements for labour. And so whenever they moved through a village, they simply abducted everyone. They just took them. The young boys and girls were sent to training camps. They often had to kill their parents to show they were loyal... Amputations were conducted as a matter of course. It was called 'sending a letter'. You'd find someone returning from the fields, cut off one of their arms, and say, 'this is a letter to the village...we're coming back tomorrow, we will want food'. It was absolutely just standard. Acceptable. And that has got to cause you to think about, you know the nature of terror and who are the true perpetrators, because in this environment amputation had become commonplace.

(Act One, PP. 55-56)

Affected by such circumstances, whether in Africa or in any other area of troubles in the world, Edward sees that the life of the terrorist is and should be different from the life of the regular individual simply because terrorists tend to have a different and sore life pattern that depends on "not looking forward". Terrorists do not have future plans nor long-term expectations in life, they are just living the here and now without the least existence for "the day after tomorrow" as Edward explains extensively:

Most of us have a lot of things furnishing our minds...I'm giving evidence at a public inquiry in the morning, but then I mustn't forget we're having a dinner party on Thursday, going down to Wilshire at the week end, got to get

the boiler serviced. Terrorists certainly aren't thinking about the day after tomorrow. They are enjoying the moment. Even if it's ghastly, it's invigorating. It's what's called a "peak experience".

(Act One, P.43)

Along with the terrorists, their actions, motivations, thoughts and maybe justifications, Soans presents the opposite side of terrorism: the victims of terrorism and terrorists attacks. What is noteworthy in the play is the way Soans presents his multilayered concept of victimology. It is rather misleading to believe that victims of terrorism are only those who get "murdered" or hurt in a way or in another from terrorists attacks. Terrorism can be much more dangerous and sometimes hidden in its effect so as to include the hostages taken or kidnapped by terrorists, or the people who are accused of being terrorists while in reality they are innocent of such accusations, or even victims of terrorism might be the religions that are manipulated by terrorists to achieve certain profits and interests in the name of God. With every case and with every type of these four types, the audience are introduced to terrorizing experiences implanted in the minds of those victims (especially in the first three types). Meanwhile, such experiences are implanted once again in the minds of the viewers themselves.

As to the first type of the victims, those who are murdered or hurt in terrorist actions, Soans seems to be so clever in combining the victim and the terrorist together to speak about the same event which happened on a particular day, 20 years ago. In one of his operations against the British government, IRA describes in an accurate manner the way he bombed Brighton Hotel, a place which Margret Thatcher was supposed to make a conference in. Ironically, Thatcher could not get hurt, the people who get hurt were the residents of the hotel; some of them planned to attend that conference. One of those victims is Caroline, a landowner and a survivor of that explosion in the hotel. Caroline tells in a photographic style a horrible experience that is living with her daily and how because of that terrible event, she lost all her close friends. Thus Caroline is still suffering of what happened. Every night that nightmare is repeated to her though it happened 20 years ago: "it sticks with you. I still wake up in the middle of the night...bolt upright...and its always the same time...quarter-past, half-past three"(Act Two, P.82).

Meanwhile, that whole night comes back alive on stage in the form of dramatic flashbacks memories. The victim and the terrorists are talking and describing the same event. IRA speaks about how accurate he was in making calculations for the timer of the bomb to blow off, while Caroline speaks of the consequences of the bomb when it exploded:

Three...quarter past three...I don't think we really realised what had happened until the chimney came down, and took our bathroom with it. There was a hole where the bathroom was...I don't like to think...I suppose it was ten feet from the bed...I suppose we were on the edge. Jack said, 'It's a bomb'. I always remember him saying, 'It's a bomb'. We were in the most crucial bit really. We got out of bed...people were shouting, 'Get out, get out' ...there was glass everywhere...shredded curtains and things...people shouting, 'Come this way, come this way'. There was emergency lighting, nothing else. I found a dress on a chair, put that on. Jack had left his suit on the end of the bed. He put it on on top of his pyjamas. He picked up his shoes and socks...I picked up a pair of boots and two anoraks...in fact Jack grumbled because I was half way out the door and went back to pick them up. When we got outside there was an old man in just his pyjamas, so I gave him one of the anoraks. Jack gave his socks to somebody. We went out through the emergency door onto a fire-escape...we knew straight away people hadn't come out. There was a column, you see...definitely a column

which came down. Under our room was Anthony Berry and his wife...you see, he was killed and she wasn't.

(Act Two, PP. 84-85)

Caroline survived the explosion along with her husband while other people could not. One of those victims was a woman whom no one could find her body nor any of her remains after that explosion as if her body had been just evaporated. Caroline feels a great disgust from any person who could ever do such bestial act. She believes that the person responsible for such an action cannot be a stable human being and thus he should be punished the very severe punishment in the world no matter what his excuses were. Such view is supported by another victim and another eyewitness on Caroline's tragedy. SS2, a diplomat, and his wife witnessed the same experience of Caroline's but with worst consequences. SS2 and his wife were also among Brighton Hotel's residents. In addition to the psychological offenses and disorders created inside the survivors of terrorist attacks, SS2 and his wife had to deal with another tragedy: the wife was paralyzed in that action that night and he was badly injured:

I was next to my wife, I was aware that she was gradually paralyzed. The most disconcerting thing...the debris was holding my head in a vice, and every time the wreckage moved, it twisted my head a bit more. If it had shifted seriously, it would have ripped my head off. I was wound up in the bedding; the dust was choking me. I knew I was bleeding badly...I lost the top of my hip, and I had a great gouge out of my belly.

(Act Two, P.85)

Thus, SS2 and his wife suffered a lot since 20 years and specifically the wife who lived in a bitter condition for this woman has been prevented from having an ordinary life. She remains ever since imprisoned in her wheel chair for the rest of her life for no obvious guilt. At the same time, SS2 speaks of his feelings once he knew that the person responsible for his and his wife's tragedy, IRA of course, would be released from prison and how he thought of killing him at the gate of the prison as a sort of revenge. The only thing that prevented SS2 from killing IRA is the fact that no one will get harmed but his wife for there would be no one to take care of her:

Mo Mowlam called me into her office...she said, 'I'm going to release him later this week...I didn't want you finding out from television' I said 'thank you for telling me'. She said 'You don't seem upset'. I said, ' There's no point; but tell me something...if I'm waiting for him at the gates and I give him both barrels of my twelve-bore, is that murder? Or it is good housekeeping?.' She said 'you wouldn't'. I said, 'Mo, I would, but for one fact, and that is the problem it would cause my wife'.

(Act Two, P. 88)

So it seems that SS2's wife was not the only victim in this whole matter, it seems that SS2 himself is changed for the man is a diplomat and he would be turned into a murderer if his wife was not at stake. He is also turned into a paranoid with no possibility to get back his original state before the accident. What happened to SS2 is happening repeatedly in different regions all over the world. Wheresoever and whensoever terrorism is moving, it creates only death and destruction, burning in its way any sense of life because life itself is targeted in the first place.

As for the second type of the victims of terrorism presented in the play, the people who are kidnapped as hostages by terrorists groups, have also a powerful presence in the

play. The story of Envoy (the Archbishop's Envoy)<sup>15</sup> reveals largely a bitter experience, not in dying, but in facing death and living with the feeling of approaching death every minute. This time Soans makes a special focus on the conflicts and civil wars going on in the countries of the Middle East and on the role of the West and religious organizations in all these conflicts and how such conflicts have widened the gap between the East and the West. Envoy served for a while as the archbishop's Envoy so as to negotiate releasing hostages in different countries. One day Envoy was sent in a mission to negotiate the releasing of four western hostages, kidnapped in Lebanon by the Islamic Jihad Organization that was founded by the eighteens of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and aimed at making special operations against western individuals. Envoy describes how he left his home and headed to Heathrow Airport believing that his mission would only extend for few days. Envoy could not imagine that the few days would turn into five years which he spent them when he was himself captured in this operation as a hostage:

I got up at something like four in the morning... 'cause it was very heavy snow. I got up before the family woke and I thought, 'Well, I'll be back in seven or eight days', and never said good bye to them. Only just got to Heathrow 'cause the snow was so heavy... got the plain into the Lebanon, and that was it. That was it for five years.

(Act One, P.48)

Meanwhile, Envoy starts to narrate the way he was captured when he was tricked by the members of the organization to get him as another western hostage. The matter according to Envoy has been "stranger than fiction" when he was taken to see the hostages in a doctor's clinic because he was told that they were "very sick and very depressed." Motivated by the sense of fear they might die and the feeling of guilt if any one of those hostages would get harmed, Envoy rushed to see them but what followed this action has changed his whole life completely for the next five years:

A few minutes later my contact stepped into the room. I was given a quick body search, we went down in the lift, got into a car, changed cars, then I was blindfolded, and we went into a safe house, they said to shake off a tail; and finally, on the fourth day, I was put in a van, blindfolded, and driven across town. We came to what I believed was an underground garage. In the floor was a trapdoor. He said, 'Jump down'. The door closed behind me, and, when I took off my blindfold, I was in a tiled cell. I was no longer a negotiator... I was a hostage.

(Act One, P.50)

To face such horrible reality Envoy describes dramatically how he tried to find solutions to treat the new unbearable sense of "strict solitary" inside him. Actually, what can be revealed from Envoy's speeches is that the man has passed a heavy experience of a deep psychological effect for "one thousand seven hundred and sixty- three days altogether" (Act One, P.52), the period of his captivity. In order not to lose his mind, Envoy had to make an "inner journey" to overcome this dilemma. He tried not to put in his mind that he was a hostage nor even he could say a prayer with himself in order not to "indulge in extempore prayer"(Act One, P.52) that may remind him of his terrible situation. Besides, Envoy had to live with interrogation and beating "on the soles of [his] feet with cables"(Act One, P.50) repeatedly just because his kidnapers believed that he knew certain intelligence information (such as Iran Contra), that matter which Envoy was so glad not to know anything about it at all. Moreover, Envoy had to live with death daily, the matter which filled him with great pressure and torture, not only physically but also spiritually:

One evening they told me I had five hours to live...and actually I was so exhausted...I really had been interrogated a lot...I was just feeling ...in those circumstances, the body just takes over, and I slept...and after five hours they came back...'Are you ready?'. I said 'Okay'. They said, 'Face the wall.' I was turned round ...a gun was put to my head...then they dropped it and said, 'Another time'.

(Act One, P.51)

The third type of the victims of terrorism are the people who are accused of being terrorists while in reality they are not. Soans takes us this time to Uzbekistan and the stories of al-Qaeda as a model of the injustice happening repeatedly in this unstable country. The testimony now is not reported by a victim; rather it is reported by a witness, the Ex-British Ambassador in Uzbekistan, AMB. AMB feels a terrible sense of dissatisfaction from the western law related to "War on Terror" and its aggressive style in dealing with every Muslim individual as a terrorist without the least respect for the human value of this individual. At the same time, AMB feels a great amazement from merciless policies in interrogations practiced in some countries neglecting a very important fact: some people might be crashed down in these policies without any guilt. AMB speaks about a very touching story he witnessed while he was in Uzbekistan. The story is about an old man, Hodaybergeinov, who was accused of being a terrorist and an accomplice to Osama Bin Laden while in reality the man does not have any clue of who Bin Laden is:

He was being accused of the murder of two policemen...the robbery of a jeweller and about five other things, including attempting to overthrow the government. Twelve other people had already been convicted of the murders...the policemen really had been killed...but when a murder happens, that's a jolly good reason to get rid of a couple of dozen political opponents by charging them all. It's what the Human Rights Watch call recycled crimes...Hodaybergeinov was charged with all the offences...the judge kept making gratuitously anti-Muslim remarks...'How could you conspire? How could you understand what you were saying to each other through your long Muslim beards'...at the end [Hodaybergeinov] broke down and he said, 'it's not true...all I've told you...it's not true. They tortured my children in front of me until I agreed to give evidence.' And then he wet himself; and without looking up, he said, 'We are poor country people from Kokhand, what do we know of Osama Bin Laden?'... Hodaybergeinov was sentenced to death.

(Act Two, PP. 67-68)

AMB sees it to be a great dilemma to get evidence under torture and how this particular issue leads the world to unknown and dangerous sequences. Of course such policies are run by the West in the first place and specifically by the United States that is overwhelming the developing countries with its unjustified policies and putting people under torture to ensure the State's security and safety and looking at every Muslim individual as another Bin Laden. This idea is reinforced by a very strange testimony of AMB himself:

I started sending things back to London saying 'There is something unacceptable happening here and we can't continue going along with the American position'...it was about the I.M.U., the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and their links to Osama Bin Laden...What this material said about armed terrorist units roaming the mountains above Samarkand just wasn't true. I thought, 'Some other poor bastard's been tortured.' So I asked my deputy to go to the American Embassy, because I could tell from the coding that this has been passed from the Uzbeks to the CIA...she went to see the head of the CIA in Tashkent. He said to her, 'Yes, you're right, it

almost certainly would have been obtained under torture...*isn't that strange?*  
*That never occurred to me as a problem'* [My Italics]

(Act Two, P. 70)

It is really astonishing how the free world is looking at Man, more particularly the Muslim Man, as no more than a terrorist and a beast that should be hunted down and killed just because the mind of the "[Western] world is full of Osama bin-Laden groups...It's just the same as Iraq and the Weapons of Mass Destruction" (Act Two, P.75). Such view leads us to the fourth and the last type of victims of terrorism, the religions that started to be targeted and manipulated to be the source of terrorism not only in the eyes of the opponents but also in the eyes of the supporters. In different historical stages, many religions were used as means to justify certain ends because religion, according to policymakers, represents a means to distract the public. Under the name of God and serving God's message on this planet, different excuses were given so as to justify violence and bloodshed whether among the Jews, Christians or even Muslims. The Jewish history<sup>16</sup> is full of the examples of how the Jews tended to eliminate their opponents in the name of God. The Christian history<sup>17</sup> is also full of different and cruel crimes committed against individuals with accusations of heresy pretending to serve the message of God. In Islam<sup>18</sup>, there are also different examples on the exploitation of God's name to fight the opponents of Islam through violence and violent actions. In *Talking To Terrorists*, Soans makes a special focus on the way Islam has turned to be the new scapegoat of modernism and how after the actions of September, the concept of Islam has been targeted and the reason is both: the Islamists extremists and the Western Governments that both aimed to belittling the holy message of this sacred religion to be only a matter of creating panic, killing others and then to facing death (or to be a martyr). Unfortunately, Islam was not the only victim in this matter since, as a direct outcome of these actions, every Muslim in the Western world becomes afraid to declare himself as such for fear of being accused of being a terrorist just because of the illogical connection between Islam and terrorism (thanks to the actions of al-Qaeda and Bin Laden). So the religion itself becomes the victim of the misconceptions of those who declare themselves to be its supporters. To shed light on the dilemma of the Muslim individual in the Western world, Soans presents four Muslim young men living in Luton. Every one of those men feels terribly afraid, not only because they are Muslims living in a western fanatic society, but also because they are afraid from other Muslims extremists that deformed the image of Islam by their extremist and unjustified actions. The result is to live always in fear and precaution just because they are Muslims:

Faiser: Some of our people are no longer welcome. We made that very plain. Last year during Ramadan, this one guy Rafeeq started shouting his mouth off, saying our leaders were preachin' a weak message, \ weak and westernized.

Jad: You correct yourself first, then your family, then other people.

Faiser: He says it's okay to be robbing from non-believers...any non-Muslim house...their wealth is permissible 'cause you're in a land of war...it's a holy war... 'cause Blair is attacking Muslims in other parts of the world...

Aftab: He's saying you can't attack Muslims abroad and pretend you like them at home.

Faiser: He says you can go all-out, man...killing innocent women and children...any tower block...Canary Wharf...it's a legitimate target.

Momsie: We sat down and told him to go, for spreading rubbish among the youngsters.

Faiser: It's because of Rafeeq I'm afraid to send my wife to the centre of town. He generates so much hatred it's unbelievable. I was on the pavement last week...this old guy winds down his window and shouts, 'Oi, F Bin-Laden!'... I said, 'Stop your car and come round and speak to me.' But he didn't. he said, 'F you mate' and drove off.





<sup>6</sup>Ibid, P.17.

<sup>7</sup>Habib Ur Rahman, "Rising Trends of Terrorism: Cases, Dynamics and Remedies", cited in *The Dialogue*, Vol. IV, No.3, PP. 409- 430, [www.qurtuba.edu.pk](http://www.qurtuba.edu.pk), accessed on 31-7-2012.

<sup>8</sup>, "Peopl's Retribution", cited in [www.britannica.com/topic/people'sretribution](http://www.britannica.com/topic/people'sretribution), accessed on 31-7-2012.

<sup>9</sup>Robin Soans, *Talking to Terrorists* (Intro.), (London: Oberon Books Ltd, 2005), P. 3. All references to the play are taken from this edition; henceforth, all subsequent references will be parenthetically cited within the paper.

<sup>10</sup>Alison Jeffers, *Refugee Perspectives: the Practice and Ethics of Verbatim Theatre and Refugee Stories*, *Platform*, Vol.1, No.1, Autumn, 2006, PP.1-17, P. 1, Cited in [www.rhul.uk](http://www.rhul.uk), accessed on 31-7-2012.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid, P.2.

<sup>12</sup>Orr & Klaic , P. 3.

<sup>13</sup>NRA or China Keitetsi (her real identity ) was a child soldier from her 8 years old until she was 18 when she was able to escape from Uganda and the time the play was written she has been living in Denmark. She wrote a very effective book *Child Soldier* which reflects her own personal experience when she was a child soldier. Emma Bergmeier, "*Talking to Terrorists: the Truth about Terrorism* ", cited in *Interviews*, [www.xpressmagazine.com.au](http://www.xpressmagazine.com.au), 8-7-2011.

<sup>14</sup>Terry Stoller, "the Age of Terror", [www.hotreview.org/articles/ageofterror](http://www.hotreview.org/articles/ageofterror), accessed on 14-7-2010.

<sup>15</sup>Envoy's real identity is Terry Waite, an English humanitarian and author. He was the assistant for the Anglican Communion Affairs for the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie in the 1980s. As an envoy from the church of England, he travelled to Lebanon to try to secure the release of four western hostages, including the journalist John McCarthy, but he was kidnapped and kept as a hostage for five years (from 1987 to 1991). "Terry Waite", [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org), accessed on 8-7-2011.

<sup>16</sup>The Jewish history with the exploitation of religion in terrorist actions goes back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century with the actions of the Sicarii: a group of Jewish extremists who were active in Judaea Province. Their name Sicarii means 'dagger men' because they used to hide a Sicae, a small daggers, under their cloaks to target their opponents. Along with this group there was another Jewish group called themselves the Zealots, which means on "behalf of God". This group was active during the Great Jewish Revolt (66-70). Both groups targeted not only anti-Jewish Roman individuals but also they targeted the Jewish Collaborators with the Romans in an intention to expel the Romans from the holy land of Judea. By 20<sup>th</sup> century, Jewish terrorism becomes so obvious in Palestine with the manipulation of Judaism in the "holy fight" against Palestinians to justify bloodshed and violence. "Sicarii Zealots", [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org), accessed on 25-1-2011.

<sup>17</sup>Christianity has also been exploited by its supporters to justify terrorist actions. In the name of God in Medieval era, especially in England, the Catholic Church has given itself the license to commit violent actions, such as torment, terrorization and even burning people alive in accusations of heresy. In Modern times, the Society of Axe, established by the Russian extremist Nechayve, used principles of Christianity to justify terrorist actions. "People's Retribution", cited in [www.britannica.com/topic/people'sretribution](http://www.britannica.com/topic/people'sretribution), accessed on 31-7-2012.

<sup>18</sup>Islam is the most victimized religion among all not only by its opponents but mostly by its supporters whether among al-Shi'a or al-Sunna. Terrorism in its extremists form is given free spaces and religious justifications by "Muslims theoreticians" such as: Hassan al-Banna, the founder of Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and his *Essays* on the concept of al-jihad in Islam, the writings of the Muslim Brotherhood main theoretician Sayyid Qutb, the writings of the leader of Iranian Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini in his *Essays on Islamic Governance*, the ideas of Abdullah' Azzam in his *Join the Caravan* and Bin Laden's Deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri in his book *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*. All of them presented religious justifications for terrorist actions especially concerning the ideas that "suicide bombings in the Muslim world cannot be separated from religion". Jonathan Fine, "Contrasting Secular and Religious Terrorism", *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2008, PP.59-69, cited in [www.meforum.org/1826/contrasting-secular-and-religious-terrorism](http://www.meforum.org/1826/contrasting-secular-and-religious-terrorism), accessed on 25-1-2011.

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# "العالم سرطان يأكل ذاته": دراسة في مسرحية التلقين حديث إلى إرهابين لروبن ساونز

## الخلاصة

تسعى هذه الدراسة الى محاولة تفصي و تحليل موضوعة الإرهاب في مسرحية التلقين حديث إلى إرهابين (٢٠٠٥) لروبن ساونز (١٩٤٦ - ) حيث يهدف الكاتب في هذه المسرحية الى تقديم الإرهاب بجميع اشكاله وتكتيكاته و تأثيراته من خلال جعل إرهابين سابقين و افراد كانت لهم علاقة ما بالإرهاب يتحدثون عن تجاربهم مع الإرهاب، كما تحاول هذه الدراسة طرح العديد من الأسئلة و الحلول عن الكيفية التي يمكن من خلالها السيطرة على طاعون العصر الحديث و المسمى بالإرهاب والذي طالما كان المسؤول المباشر عن حصد الأرواح دونما مبرر او عذر.