

**The Great War's Postmodern Aftermaths: Trauma of the
Anti-Hero and Struggle of Power in *Peaky Blinders***



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Power in *Peaky Blinders***

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

I hereby declare that this thesis is the student's own work and effort. All sources of information incorporated here have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted with my approval.

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DECLARATION

This thesis is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.



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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and my sisters who have supported me in all my life choices, and were there through all the ups and down of my life. They were the light at the end of the darkest of tunnels I had to pass. These people in my life motivated me to bring out my absolute best in this paper.

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Abstract

Steven Knight's *Peaky Blinders* (2013-2022) explores the conflicting and complex nature of human beings as a result of the Great War, especially, the veterans who have returned with trauma, seen death, and faced it. The protagonist or the "Anti-Hero" of the British series, Thomas Shelby rises to unimaginable levels of Power through sacrifice and drive for extreme Power, all the while fighting his inner self along with the panopticon he was stuck in because of his fame. Set in the historical period post-First-world war, this series is sympathetic towards the veterans and criminals. However, the underlying conflict of greed for Power and the capitalist approach of different classes is not properly highlighted, although shown. The previous works done on this specific British Drama, have failed to address the bigger issue here: "The tremendous traumatic experience of war channelized as a weapon inside the knotty head of Thomas Shelby" to help his family rise from the lower-class mass to the upper-class citizens going out of bounds, exercising crimes without grief, and living like a dead person- all to be powerful and "untouchable". This research is conducted by following qualitative methodology, collecting data and information from previously conducted research on Power politics, Veteran trauma, *Peaky Blinders*, and The Great War. This paper further aims to analyze the variety of the labyrinthine reasons for crossing boundaries for avarice- due to the negligence of the class relations and the effect of The Great War, by cracking the shell of an Anti-Hero, and the Shelby family's rise to the Power.

Chapter One

Introduction

Trauma, behavioral changes and the urge to gain power, and the panopticons¹- play a big role in a person's mindset and society. Usually, trauma and behavioral changes are a reaction to a specific occurrence that leaves an invisible scar which results in a person's isolation and these generate a difference in their traits which can be seen in the series *Peaky Blinders*. Set in the 1900s, Small Heath, Birmingham, where the repercussions of the Great War, and its exploits following, influence the deeply buried trauma inside Thomas Shelby. Throughout the series, he channelizes war traumas and fights through behavioral polarity and panopticism of the higher authority into a weapon to gain Power. The series portrays the drastic shifting of how the Shelby family and Thomas Shelby, leave no bound to legitimize their business to outweigh all their competition.

One of the key points of my research is to investigate how Thomas Shelby used his trauma, class conflicts, and extreme PTSD to not give up, but rather channel it to legitimize the family gambling business. He aimed to create an identity of having extreme power by expanding their business of drugs and weapons across the world. The series was successful in connecting people all around the world because of Thomas's bold personality despite going through severe scars and internal trauma. Thus, he became the television famous Anti-hero² who rises up with

¹ Foucault's exploration towards the relationship between systems controlling people in a disciplinary and social surveillance without giving them any idea of it.

² A protagonist of a story, film, or drama with unconventional heroic traits.

the surge of Power and becomes a Member of the Parliament of the British Empire (MPOBE) from a gypsy-broken man.

Furthermore, previous studies of the same area, focused on Foucault's Power and Panopticon are vastly found. Also, there are studies that emphasize the traumatic experiences of the veterans who were deployed to France from Britain in the Great War. However, the connection between the traumatic experiences of the veterans alongside their surge for power and success in a certain society is a topic that is rarely analyzed. This research aims to explore the connection between the strong mindset of a bruised veteran who returns home and gives it all to make his family powerful with no limitations instead of hiding away from the world. This is something that needs to be analyzed so that, the importance of shifting one's mindset despite being in a position where one can lose it all is adequately explained. The research will help to shed light for society to be more empathetic towards people- specifically men, suffering from traumatic experiences, as well as understand the mindset of the veterans who return from war.

This paper is divided into two chapters. The first chapter gives an analysis of the creation of the Anti-Hero and takes the readers inside the mind of Thomas Shelby- a veteran of the Great War. Followed the second chapter, which explains the role of Thomas Shelby and how the Shelby family eventually rise up to being the strongest. Where my research is further conducted, focusing on how the more powerful rules over the less, the Shelby family's thirst for Power and the repercussions (family loses most of their loved ones) they had to face because of the Panopticon, and eventually overcoming these issues is thoroughly discussed to give the readers an overall in-depth analysis sequentially as the seasons' progress.

This research aims to answer how Shelby's mindset shifts as he returns from war after encountering the traumatic events making Thomas Shelby an Anti-Hero. Secondly, how and what drives the Shelby family to continue to earn wealth and power not only in London but across borders overcoming traumas and panopticon? The issues that arise in order to answer the questions, do not have any single-phrased answers or viewpoints. In order to explain all the chaotic-bold actions that are portrayed in the series due to the character's mental and behavioral issues, I have used related research to justify the thesis statements that are connected. Additionally, this study ensures provides the perspective of being adhered to the idea that a person can always succeed if they work hard in overcoming the obstacles that are portrayed through the light of the series, Peaky Blinders. Furthermore, help the ones who are suffering from trauma or have suffered in the past, gain a different perspective on life and encourage them to not give up.

Chapter Two

Methodology

This paper is based on formal film analysis, which is done by thoroughly analyzing each season of the series, library research which included reading and analyzing scholarly papers. The study is carried out through qualitative research, which is by analyzing previous studies on Peaky Blinders, Anti-Hero phenomenon in the postmodern prospect. The perspectives of the previous studies on trauma and mental wellbeing of the World War-1 veteran and the protagonist Thomas Shelby worked as my justifying tool to establish my arguments. These cover and analyze the different stages of Thomas's life which lead to the Power surge, class conflicts in the 1900s' and finally, the rise to power of the Shelby family.

The paper aims to investigate how war affects the psyche of a person and the creation of an Anti-Hero, Thomas Shelby that changed the narrative of the "traditional hero". The Shelby family's revolt to success from gypsies to the elite class, despite all odds that came their way. I examined these aspects through the lens of the theories of Michel Foucault's Power and Panopticon, Postmodern theories based on modern papers which analyzed the class conflicts shown in the TV series and the Anti-Hero phenomenon. In addition, I studied PTSD and the trauma of the veterans of war portrayed in recent studies. Through my paper, I want to acknowledge that the first world war had disastrous effects around the world, but the veterans who returned were never the same. Their trauma and suffering never actually left them.

To aid my research, I studied the traumatic experiences of the war veterans, and different perspectives of understanding class conflicts that can create a sense of urge to gain power through panopticon and gain a stand in the society to have a strong voice. Simultaneously, I analyzed the sequences of every episode and season of the series *Peaky Blinders*, to validate my research and take on the series. The objective of my study is to provide importance to the reasons and methods through which the mental state of traumatized people who have been to war needs to be taken into account, and to provide the rationale of the shift from traditional heroes shown on television to the Anti-Hero, as well as to examine how class conflicts can create a sense of struggle of Power surge in the society and families.

Chapter Three

Literature Review

In the article named “The Subject and Power” by Michel Foucault, he states, the human person is positioned in power relations as well as relations of production and signification, it quickly became apparent to which are intricate. Currently, it seemed that economic history and theory supplied a suitable tool for researching relations of production, and that linguistics and semiotics offered a tool for investigating relations of signification; nevertheless, for power relations. (Foucault 2). He also emphasizes on the question of the legitimacy of Power and describes the overall power revolving around structure. (Foucault 4). This article will help me analyze the Power surge and the power struggles of the Shelby family. While, also shed light to establish my theoretical lens based on Foucault’s stance on Power. This is the key theoretical framework of my second chapter. Where it will be discussed how and why Shelby family go to extreme lengths for Power and an establishment in the society.

In another article, “Foucault, Power and the Modern Panopticon”, by Connor Sheridan, explores the original birth of the idea of Panopticism, Foucault’s idea of the conflict of the powerful & the more powerful, and argues how we are never aware of the control a modern-day panopticon has over us, it is very subtle in operation, through video cameras, and other ways, even if it is not a watch tower over a circular prison Panopticism and Power is connected together since years (Sheridan 8). Michel Foucault, has established the connection of the establishment of these two, which is a very crucial part of my research. In the TV series Peaky Blinders, Thomas Shelby is under surveillance throughout as he keeps on grasping power and

rising above. In the 6 seasons of this BBC drama, Thomas Shelby loses two of the most loved women in his life due to his extreme rebellious nature against the “more” powerful and the panopticon he has to live in. This paper points out a crucial part of my research, even though *Peaky Blinders* is a historical period TV Series, it reflects the subtle modern ways of panopticon without the technology but thoroughly portrays the disastrous effects and struggles of living inside one.

Furthermore, in an article by Donna Sabella, named “Mental Health Matters: PTSD Among Our Returning Veterans: How to Recognize and Assist Veterans with This Increasingly Common Mental Health Disorder.” She explains, PTSD is a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and it occurs from having any traumatic event which then triggers it with anything that is even slightly similar to it. In this article, Sabella explores the cause of veterans who returns from war and their struggles to live a normal life after. It is also suggested that young soldiers who return from work are diagnosed with PTSD more than individuals of 40 years or older. (Sabella 4). In addition, she breaks down the symptoms of PTSD as, having nightmares from past experiences, feeling numb or detached or trying to escape from situations which remind an individual about the traumatic experience of war are some of the symptoms of PTSD found among veterans. (Sabella 2). Through this article, my groundwork of the research can be strong as these are very similar traits that can be found which are shown in the series in the character of “Thomas Shelby”. The character was introduced as someone who still gets nightmares about the war and is stuck on a loop of his own hell. This article, leaves a further scope in my research to explore the mental health condition of Thomas Shelby, through trauma and the state of the urban society after the World War I through postmodernism have stigmas regarding the mental health of men and why most “powerful” men shown in television are never seen to be openly talking about

their state of mental conditions as if it is a taboo. Also, because of the traumatic events and occurrences which veterans go through during the war, which affected Thomas Shelby, further explains how in the society it is rarely addressed even now, that any traumatic event causes an imbalance in people's mental health and it is ingrained in themselves, if not poured out properly.

In another article, "Shell-shock and the Cultural History of the Great War" by Jay Winter, "The term 'shell-shock' has been said as a term which has been never before examined in comparative historical perspective. This is a surprising omission, since the term was invented during the war, and has served as a prism through which much of the cultural history of the 1914–18 war has been viewed." (Winter 1). In this article, the historical background of the Great war. Along with explaining how "shell-shock" must be talked about more, given the repercussions the soldiers had to face both mentally and physically, after the devastation of the war. This article, further examines on the criteria how the soldiers who came back bruised were not taken care of properly and many were labelled with the terms as "hysteria" or "insanity" because of their unwell mental health. These will not only help my research to be conducted under a pre-dominant term of the Great War (Shell-Shock), but also different historical aspects of the political and the condition of Britain during that era has been discussed in this article regarding the post war situation will be my foundation to base my research on as *Peaky Blinders* is a historical period drama series where these are the key terms where my research will be based upon, also Winter focuses on the class conflicts and defines how the "elites" had been treated very differently than the ones of the working class, which is the focal point of my research as the Shelby family was originally gypsies and of the working class.

In the article, "Masculinity and PTSD: Violence among Veterans in the BBC Series *Peaky Blinders*" by Thomas Mueller perfectly describes the character graph of Thomas Shelby

from a bruised veteran who struggles every day to cover up his scars which are deep inside in order to prove his masculinity through rising up to power. Mr. Shelby said it best when he said, "I'll keep on (fighting) until I meet a guy I can't beat." The tragic cliché was born here. (Mueller 7). A way of putting one's self out there, creating fictitious people who can either love or murder with no remorse. The idea that violence is the only way to go from the lower, industrial class to the upper, wealthy, and powerful one is a tired cliché. Considering the background of rough and tumble 1920s Birmingham, the method appeared plausible. He leaves nothing behind and fears no one. This will give me a framework of my thesis about the impact of the great war among the veterans and how it specifically affected Thomas Shelby throughout his life, which made him immune to pain or maybe an escapist in a sense, who felt pain, but did not want to recognize the depth of it because of his "masculine" duties to gain power.

In another article, "Working-Class Power, Capitalist-Class Interests, and Class Compromise" by Erik Olin Wright the idea of "class compromise" is explained as the main argument by dividing it into three stages first. Firstly, Illusion: class compromise Working-class leaders-especially unions and parties-strike opportunistic arrangements with the capitalist class that promise broad advantages for workers but are usually hollow. Class compromises are one-sided capitulations, not reciprocal deals. Then Wright explains the next ones as Two armies of identical size combat. Each is powerful enough to inflict heavy costs on the other, but neither can defeat them. In a deadlock, the opposing forces may agree to a "compromise" in return for concessions on both sides. The compromises are genuine, though unequal. They don't represent actual class collaboration. This is a negative class compromise. The third picture shows class compromise as opposed classes cooperating. This isn't a power balance in which one side wins or loses completely. Here, workers and capitalists may enhance their position by active, mutual

collaboration. It's a "good class compromise." (Wright 2). This study of class conflict and the idea of "class compromise" will help me portray the stages of Power struggles and the compromises the lower-class, the Shelby's had to go through with the capitalists and how deeply it affected the whole journey of the rise towards power and fame of Thomas Shelby.

In the article, "Modern Company, Postmodern Crisis", Alex Long talks about the television culture in the postmodern era, the rising interest of the audience in exploring the darker sides of the "capitalism" and the "right or wrong". (Long 3). Postmodernism is a concept used largely, but in a vague manner. Explains Long in this article and examines the legitimacy and the illegal activities caused by Shelby Company LTD, additionally, talks about how a British War hero returns to Birmingham, from World War and tried to legitimate the family gambling business. Also, this research paper touches on the topic of the rise of class antagonism during the time period. It is said by Long, how the audience changes their shift of understanding of the postmodern and late capitalism views through the entire series. This article is helpful for my research as it touches on the "Anti-hero" character of "Thomas Shelby", the grey side of the characters alongside the complex diversities of the TV series where nothing is classified as "good" or "bad", rather questions the traditional norms of judging a person overlooking the overall cause and effect of their actions. Also, this article is detailed about the shift of the audience's shift towards more realistic views of life, going beyond the criminal dramas and visuals everyone is used to watching. Furthermore, the struggles this specific protagonist has to go to in different lengths is highlighted which is driven by his greed and ambition to establish a position in the society during postmodern times.

'Peace at last': Subjective destitution and the end of analysis in *Peaky Blinders* by Jack Black, breaks down the ending of the television series using Lacanian theory, Black explains

when examining Lacan's subjective destitution, what first comes to the mind is the act of suicide. The decision to terminate one's life when suffering from a terminal disease may, at least for the subject, represent a way to avoid an unavoidable death (Black 3). In fact, the protagonist of the series, Thomas "Tommy" Shelby, has no other choice than to take this one in the last minutes of the *Peaky Blinders* season finale. In the finale episode of *Peaky Blinders*, the viewers are introduced to a rather fragile part of Thomas Shelby, which is rarely shown. Thomas Shelby, is told by his doctor, Holford, that he has 18 months to live because of a terminal disease, which is called "Tuberculoma" which makes him lose every consciousness and the audience sees a part of Thomas Shelby which is unradical, bringing out a scare in him which is hardly shown throughout the series. Despite of losing many loved ones, he still thrives with the urge to gain more Power, but the news of death looming around makes him weak and again, he alienates himself and leaves with a caravan in the middle of nowhere. This gives an apt area for the researcher to investigate the ending of the television series which will in addition leave the scope to analyze the character of Thomas Shelby, a person who is "untouchable" becomes the most vulnerable version of himself and then, eventually as always overcomes it with the amount of power vested in him, by himself.

Additionally, in the article, "Images of the European Crisis: Populism and Contemporary Crime TV Series" by Federico Pagello talks about the shift in television series from the traditional criminal detective drama. The author of this article examines the crisis of Europe and England portrayed in television through various different television series and talks about the "presents its protagonists as Robin Hood figures fighting against an oppressive and brutal establishment" (Pagello 7). The article also explores how the rise to power is integrated carefully through criminal activities and is also justified to the audience which is a make shift in

the crime genre. The results and the arguments of this article will help me narrate my research in the theoretical framework of Foucault, where the power from *Crime and Punishment*, a book by Michel Foucault is connected and also give me plenty of evidence to prove how an anti-hero, proves to be one of the most popular protagonists of pop-culture television because of the shift in the taste of audience's choices. "Even more provocative is the BBC show *Peaky Blinders*, in which a well-known gangster, Thomas Shelby, commits several political murders and terrorist attacks on the orders of hidden branches of the British State, some of which come directly from Winston Churchill." (Pagello 6). This statement further proves why this article was chosen as it explicitly explains the groundwork of my research.

Moreover, in my research, I will be analyzing the visuals, along with the gestures and other factors which are included in the TV series *Peaky Blinders*. Therefore, "Theorising a Relationship Between Soundtrack and Antihero Engagement in *Peaky Blinders*" by George Caton-Coult, will give me plenty of information to work on as the chapters are accurately divided from the introduction of the protagonist, to the definition and lastly, the lyrics of the soundtrack in the visual which evokes a certain energy inside the audiences making the show so popular. "One of the main arguments of this academic shift is that antihero texts themselves can influence our engagement with the morally-condemnable protagonists; in other words, the creators of these narratives encourage us to like antiheroes through various narrative and stylistic techniques. While there have been attempts to show how some textual features of antihero television series might achieve this, the potential role of soundtrack remains unexplored." (Coult 4). This article, divides his research in chapters, where he describes a "modern" anti-hero and then establishes a rather new phenomenon of connecting the soundtrack to the identification of a protagonist which is a fairly new aspect of literature. As my primary resource of this research is a

visual, this article is going to give a broader aspect to the deconstruction of the series for me to analyze.

These above chosen articles will provide the base of my research. As this is a qualitative research based on archival and library research, these articles are integral part to aid my findings and help my research groundwork on the series, *Peaky Blinders* (2013-2022). Where I will be using these previous studies, to analyze the trauma of the veterans of the war through Thomas Shelby, and later the class conflicts, power surge, and the panopticism that is shown throughout the series in the light of the theories and the frameworks provided above.

Chapter Four

Inside the Mind of the Anti-Hero Thomas Shelby

Stephen knight introduces an enigmatic character named Thomas Shelby played by Cillian Murphy in *Peaky Blinders* (2013-2022), a British TV show. One of the major postmodern crises that this series revolves around is the paradox of ambition, as British traumatized war hero Tommy Shelby (Cillian Murphy) returns from World War I to run and legitimize his family's gambling operations in Birmingham but is thwarted by the illegal gang activities that drive and inhibit the family's social mobility. He is characterized as a person who sees no bounds and follows no limits. This can be seen when in season 06, episode, 04, he says, "I have no limitations.". The way his character is portrayed thoroughly in the series. A person who has no limitations in every aspect of his life. Thomas Shelby is a figure who fulfills a similar purpose while often undermining or contradicting the qualities of the classic hero and is known as an anti-hero. Even when their actions clash with prevailing ideals, these people seem to be fighting for autonomy, fairness, equality, and an intangible form of 'rightness' for their fellow citizens. "Fortunately, the era of the popular culture anti-hero is the ideal time to put forward an against-the-grain social and cultural critique, and Tommy Shelby is just the anti-hero for the job." (Long 7). The modern anti-hero is actually immoral in that he consistently transgresses moral standards. When a nun inside a church says, "We don't smoke in here" Thomas, replies, "Well, I fucking do."

This series has been one of the most polar Tv shows aired on BBC and Netflix, with ratings of 8.8/10 on IMDB and 92% on Rotten Tomatoes, this series has been nominated for many awards, and won. Giving the audiences a taste of the modern drama set in 1919. According

to Wikipedia, this TV show, “breaks all the barriers and welcomes a new era of television which was never represented before on television.” Alex Long explains, complicity with contemporary ideas that glorify bourgeois life and downplay the relevance and existence of the lower class is at the heart of the postmodern problem that has led to this lack of representation, which Knight took advantage of and created this whirlwind of a sensational series and brought a character like Thomas Shelby to life. This character is a never-seen of the traditional TV that was used to watching but instead introduces us to a character that falls into a grey area. Creating an Anti-Hero, which drew the audience to dive more into the mindset and the characteristics of Mr. Shelby. The major trait of anti-heroes is that they defy the expectations of what a hero should be while yet being sympathetically presented, at least initially. The capacity to make the audience rethink their moral presumptions makes the modern anti-hero a powerful postmodern instrument for societal criticism, regardless of whether audiences are encouraged to enjoy antiheroes because of or in spite of their moral failings. “I am not a traitor to my class. I’m just an extreme example of what a working man can achieve.” Thomas Shelby is seen to be constantly saying these dialogues, which makes it very clear that he is someone from the lower class, and despite being successful, he will never be ashamed or deny his class. These lines by Thomas Shelby in Season 04, episode 01, accurately describe how loyal he was towards his roots and this is why people resonate with this man, despite his flaws as portrayed in the series. The character of Thomas Shelby is very complex however it is most relatable and the series portrays this fictional character in a way where people can connect to it in many different ways because of how flawed this character is portrayed in the TV series. In my interpretation, despite being a criminal involved with various criminal activities Thomas Shelby is shown to be a strong, powerful, untouchable figure of the fictional world who also has deeply rooted family values as well as

repressed feelings which come off now and then. Furthermore, “Looking more closely at Peaky Blinders, and Tommy Shelby specifically, allows us to better understand this postmodern, neoliberal crisis and unpack the cultural and political significance of its representation.” (Long 10). Here, Long explains, how analyzing this series and getting a closer look at the character of Thomas Shelby can make the audiences understand the importance of the portrayal of the crisis and the significance of the character, and the issues shown in the series which should be taken into account.

The first episode of season one of Peaky Blinders starts off showing Thomas Shelby entering the screen on top of a Black Horse marching into the suburban town of Birmingham. While the famous soundtrack of the series starts playing overshadowing the whole storyline and the genre of the series. It is necessary to demonstrate a certain regularity to the occurrences that the soundtrack shares a consistent relationship with antihero engagement in Peaky Blinders.” (Coult 28). The theme song of the series, “Red Right Hand” by Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds, perfectly puts together the whole idea of the Anti-Hero character of Thomas Shelby, and the lyrics,

“On a gathering storm comes

A tall handsome man

In a dusty black coat

With a red right hand” (Cave, 1994).

This song was written inspired by John Milton’s Paradise Lost, which symbolizes that God has come for vengeance. Much likely, how Thomas Shelby has returned from war to seek

revenge from all those who have caused him hurt. This song is a perfect match for the soundtrack of the series, which plays in the background every time Thomas Shelby appears on screen and achieves certain milestones. Which eventually and mostly are acts of vengeance towards the people who are from the upper class, or more powerful and have treated him badly as shown in the TV show. He is an exceptionally dressed man, wearing the widely popular “Peaky Blinders cap” along with a three-piece suit which depicts the era, in the 1990s with so much power and fear he possess, that everyone around the area starts hiding from him. Later, in the first episode of season 1, a man brings up a Chinese woman who is said to be a gypsy witch who can cast spells on horses it is seen that she blows a sort of red dust onto the face of the horse that Thomas was in through which Thomas makes everyone believe around the area that in the incoming horse race that this particular horse is going to win and he asks everyone to bet for this horse. This portrays the side of Thomas Shelby which is very clever, alongside that he’s intuitive and he knows the people around him. This interpretation can be made because later in another scene in season 1, in the same episode when Arthur Shelby his older brother asks him about the chaos he created and how it could land them into trouble, Thomas replies by saying that people would bet on this horse because they have seen that it is going to win in the race. “One faction of war veterans became despondent and self-demeaning, struggling to fit back into society. One might envision the stereotypical soldier who cowered under a table when triggered by the sound of a backfiring car. For other veterans, the facial expression became a blank, emotionless stare.” (Muller 5). This is supporting evidence that in my interpretation, Thomas Shelby has two faces, the first one was before the war that happened where he was working inside the tunnels planting bombs and could die at that very moment. He faced death during the First World War and after that, he returns as a person who is almost not recognized and who has lost all his faith and

religion, this can be seen more when Thomas Shelby says in season 03, episode 02, “No, I am not God, not yet”. This person has lost all his faith on order, who has lost all his faith on the government because after the war they were just left there without even asking about their mental health or without even being concerned about how they felt after coming from a place where they have seen death face to face. When Thomas Shelby says, “And Arthur, tell my boy that sometimes, death is a kindness.”. (Season 2, Episode 4). This makes Thomas Shelby a person who is not scared of anyone, who lives his life as if it’s a bonus status given to him because he thinks that everything that has happened was the worst that could have happened and now, he’s just a person who is not scared of anything. Thomas Shelby becomes this person someone everyone’s afraid of someone everyone is scared of who is very much threatened by the government who is very much threatened by the upper-class people but he thrives with the fear that he has implicated other people.

Furthermore, Thomas Shelby is not someone who is afraid of losing himself or even dying. “No one is going to hang you, Tommy. You’re going to hang yourself” – Ada Shelby tells Thomas in a scene in Season 5. The effect on the family is profound,” says Vallone. While reactions differ, some common emotions in family members that result from PTSD in a loved one include fear and worry, sympathy, and anger and mistrust. This is how his sister, Ada Shelby, had a hard time understanding Thomas Shelby also, she was worried about him. There are multiple scenes where we can see him struggling to sleep, getting flashbacks, him caring hallucinations about the war. “The person may also experience physiological reactions when exposed to cues associated with the trauma.” (Sabella 2).

Similarly, he is also the person who helps another veteran of the war who is equally traumatized but cannot hide it as well as Thomas Shelby. Family members may also feel

burdened if they are placed in the role of caregiver, which they often are when the disorder is severe.” (Sabella 4). Here, Sabella talks about the suffering of PTSD of returned veterans and the effects that it has on their families and the people around them. This can be seen in a particular scene where a man named Danny walks into the Garrison bar and creates a huge scene breaking the chairs and tables and creating chaos where two of the other veterans Thomas Shelby and Freddie puts him down and calms him. Whereas, Thomas will be seen in multiple scenes throughout the series, taking opium, smoking cigarettes all throughout the series, and mostly getting rid of his demons inside his head by relying on different drugs and alcohol. He says to himself, “No need to say goodbye, no need to sleep. Just think, Tom.” Thomas Shelby is someone who thrives with intelligence, he’s like this human being full of a superpower who thinks twice as fast as anyone else who can put any situation into place, and who thinks everyone else around him slower so he takes the idea of taking things into his hand by making the plans of everything that would be done to legalize their gambling business get out of the class difference that they were in all throughout also protecting himself and his family from the police, government, IRA, and many other people who were against them like rival gangs and everything else.

Eventually, Thomas Shelby teams up with various rivals and then stabs them in the back without any fear of losing his life. They were clearly more powerful and richer than him with a more established stand in society because the Shelby family were actually gypsies. Polly Gray, Thomas’s aunt was the only person he would think has enough intellect alongside him to plan for certain things. “You are grieving. And when you grieve, you make bad choices.” Aunt Polly, tells Thomas in a scene in season 4. As I interpreted before, describes how deeply she knows him. Furthermore, Thomas was a man who was skilled with the intellect of planning and

plotting, creating plans in his mind and then carrying out those plans with the people he considered to be less intellectual for example his brother Arthur in one scene Thomas tells him “I think so that you don’t have to”. (Season 01, Episode 01.) Throughout the six seasons of the series that aired on television, Thomas Shelby had been hurt, bruised, and forced to commit crimes in order to survive and keep going having the number of enemies he had made while getting powerful. In the first and second seasons, Thomas Shelby finds love in a woman named Grace, and for the first time, it is seen how much power someone can bestow over Thomas. “I need you to be all right. I need you, Grace, I need you.” (Season 03, episode, 02). Grace had formerly been a spy and had come to demolish his family, but later she falls in love with him and resigns from her post as a spy. The happiness between them does not last for long as she dies in the second episode of season 3, by being assassinated by an enemy of the Shelby family named Vicente Changretta. This leaves him alone with his son and he is driven towards suicide, he loses himself and is shown to be unable to cope with the loss. However, Auntie Polly, (Helen McCrory) is back again as usual to convince Thomas that he has to come out of the loop inside his head. All the while, hallucinating Grace, he hugs Grace and utters, “After all this time... our love still remains.” Later, in the last season of the series, Polly Gray is shown to come back in a body bag, killed by the IRA as collateral damage between the conflict between Thomas Shelby and Oswald Mosley (Sam Claflin). The IRA directly accuses Thomas of the death of his confidant, Polly and Thomas is left as a bruised man seeking vengeance again. In the same season, when Thomas is out of the country for work, he loses his daughter, Ruby to the disease TB which spread to both of her lungs. Despite all his losses and grief which settles as internal trauma, he clouds his mind with drugs, which makes him lose his consciousness but not his intelligence or the greed to seek power. Thomas keeps on thriving to get more powerful,

spreading their once “illegitimate” business across borders and being unstoppable. “There is no rest for me in this world. Perhaps in the next.” Says, Thomas Shelby, as he keeps on working towards success despite being brutally damaged inside.

At the end of the series (Season 6) aired in 2022, Thomas Shelby is said to have tuberculoma, a terminal disease by his doctor, Holford. which finally affects him. He takes care of everyone’s financial and social needs his family, does not tell anyone about his weakness, and walks away from everything with a caravan which is a gypsy (the origin of the Shelby’s) trait, along with a black horse, which in my analysis depicts the first scene of the series. As Black says, “When contemplating Lacan’s subjective destitution, one may immediately think of an act of suicide. Faced with a terminal illness, the option of taking one’s life may, for the subject at least, comprise an escape from an end that is inevitable.” Thomas Shelby, similarly, contemplates death every day leaving him isolated in the middle of nowhere and putting a gun to his head, which is a common trait of Thomas Shelby that the audience has seen throughout the entire series of the show. Subjective destitution can therefore be conceived as an occurrence whereby one’s fundamental fantasy, that is, one’s narcissism, and one’s inherent sense of self, is surrendered, given up, and/or traversed (Lacan 2004, 273) explains Black. However, later he gets to know through a dream where his daughter. Ruby comes and asks him to see the newspaper, by seeing it he understands that it was all a plot against him carried on by his doctor and Oswald Mosley, along with the help of the drugs he was taking prescribed by his doctor. Surprisingly enough, Tommy does not kill the doctor, he shoots at the ground. He says, “I am back. Back from under the ground.” Which symbolizes the surrender of the 'inner kernel' that has organized and ruled his post-war existence; a sense of self marked and molded by the horrors of war and his inability to come to terms with the death of his former wife, daughter, and younger brother.

During the war, Tommy and his older brother worked for the British Army in a tunneling firm. With Tommy being 'back from beneath the earth,' there is a sense of conquering this past: a history that has tormented him via vivid hallucinations picturing him underground, battling hand-to-hand against a German soldier for the duration of the last season. (Black 5).

Lastly, “The only thing that could kill Thomas Shelby was Thomas Shelby himself.” (Season 6, Episode 06). This perfectly sums up the entirety of the series and how the character of Thomas Shelby has been portrayed in the show, as a veteran, not only of the war but also the circumstances he has been put in on several occasions which he makes his strength and turns into a weapon to achieve power. No enemy in the entire series could make him stop for once or scare him into giving up. As in this chapter, I mentioned before, Thomas Shelby returns as someone who did not have any beliefs or limits nor was he afraid of death. Rather, his battered mind which was the result of the vast traumatic experiences he had during the war, made him stronger and turned him into an untouchable human being who could fathom any occurrences and return stronger, because he has faced worse during the war. The findings of this particular chapter include how Steven Knight portrayed the character of Thomas Shelby, making him the popular Anti-Hero of the generation. It also includes the reasonings and explanations about the repercussions of war, which internally damages a person scarring them forever with trauma and PTSD. However, the main finding that I want to emphasize is for that society to understand and accept someone who has different behavioral traits after being a veteran. Additionally, if a veteran or a person suffering from PTSD due to deeply rooted traumatic experience is unable to gather up the strength and achieve what they want. The findings of this study’s objective are to ensure them or encourage them to not give up, but rather channelize their pain into power, through the analysis of the mind of Thomas Shelby.

Chapter Five

Power: By Order of The Peaky Blinders

The Shelby family rose to power in the Peaky Blinders (2013-2022) television series through a combination of cunning, intelligence, and violence. The family, led by Thomas Shelby, was involved in various illegal activities, including gambling, bookmaking, and protection rackets. One of the key factors in the rise of the Shelby family was their ability to adapt and change with the times. According to Foucault about Power, “Truth is a product of this universe; it can only be formed under a variety of constraints. And it produces regular power impacts. Each society has its own regime of truth, or "general politics" of truth, which includes the discourse types that are sanctioned and accepted as true.” (Rabinow 1991). In the series, as it progresses, the family moves from being a small-time gang operating in the back streets of Birmingham to a major player in the criminal underworld of the city. “By order of the Peaky Blinders!”- This is their saying every time they attempt an incident to gain Power. However, the Shelby family's rise to power was not without its challenges. They faced competition from other criminal gangs, as well as the police, who were determined to bring them down. According to my interpretation, Power is seen by Foucault as a daily, socialized, and embodied phenomenon that transcends politics, which is an important aspect of his theory of power. Due to this, state-centric power battles, such as revolutions, may not necessarily result in a modification of the current social structure.

This is shown in the series by the portrayal of the Shelby family which was plagued by internal conflicts and power struggles, that threatened to tear them apart. This is notable in one particular scene, where in season 03, episode 02, where their regular family meeting is called.

When Arthur (Thomas's elder brother) and Jon (younger brother) have a conflict because of their betting business. In this particular scene, it is portrayed beautifully, how the family overcomes their inner conflicts, to gain power against the real enemies, outside. Despite these challenges, the Shelby family managed to survive and thrive, thanks in part to their resourcefulness, determination, and willingness to do whatever it takes to get ahead. By the end of the series, they had become a major force in the criminal underworld, with a reputation for being ruthless and uncompromising.

The power surge of the Shelby family mostly initiated by Thomas Shelby started in the first season overall. Thomas Shelby is the leader of the biggest gang in Birmingham, named the Peaky Blinders run by the family Shelby's. "We shake hands with the devils and we walk past them." says, Thomas Shelby. Which depicts their stance about working with the evils, and also defeating them eventually. Which is going to be analyzed further in this chapter. They sew razor blades in their hats, and they go for the eyes of their enemies to attack. The question arises here, why was Thomas, so hell-bent on taking leadership of the family despite not being the "eldest son" of the family? As Winter says, while he explores the term, 'shell-shock'. That the way the war was conveyed, it managed to carry with it a specific set of attributes toward the veterans. As he describes, it is not a physical injury, but a new kind of war. His claim is that 'shell-shock' - in some places and not in others, and only under certain circumstances - turned from a diagnosis into a metaphor that can be not only tragic but powerful, as well. (Winter 3). The bruised and traumatized veteran, as I have examined in my previous chapter, wanted vengeance. He turned his trauma into his strength and strived for power. "And as I said, you put a bullet in that fucker's brain. By order of the Peaky Blinders."- Thomas Shelby, (Season 3, Episode 5). My claim that Thomas is the smart one who is always got some master plan he is keeping to himself. However,

one day during a routine robbery they accidentally steal some high-tech military-grade machine guns the British military was secretly shipping. using those guns is a big deal with comes to the attention of Winston Churchill himself and so he sends in a specialist to get them back. The Chief Inspector Campbell. The IRA, however, was against it. Thomas's thrive for power provokes him to work with the enemies and as I discussed in my earlier chapter, his vast intelligence, plans, and plots with the enemies and wins to become more powerful. Foucault questions, "Is not necessary to draw a line between those who believe that we can continue to situate our present discontinuities within the historical and transcendental tradition of the nineteenth century and those who are making a great effort to liberate themselves, once and for all, from this conceptual framework?" (Foucault 1977: p. 120). (Best and Douglas 34). According to me, Foucault, while talking about liberation from the conceptualization framework, he aims to talk about the power that is needed to break free from the traditional struggles during the nineteenth century. The great effort he refers to is the power struggle he emphasized further in his theories. In my analysis, this is exactly what my groundwork and my findings will try to portray, the Shelby family, with the help of Thomas Shelby, were doing. They did not want to be stuck in the traditional way of class conflict and the confined lower class as gypsies, therefore their vast risks were only to liberate themselves once and for all by using their power. To strengthen my argument, the last episode of season one plays a big role. When, the main enemy of the season, Billy Kimber a very powerful man, is shot dead by Thomas who was a risk to the business and to the family of the Shelby's.

Season two starts, 2 years later Thomas Shelby and Peaky Blinders are now the top horse racing in northern England but the big fish is down in the South. In London, the Shelby brothers go down there and start trouble with the Italian crime boss, Darby Sabini. They were an

extremely powerful gang and clearly on the hierarchy than the Shelby family. Three police officers almost killed Thomas at gunpoint. In that scene where, “In the bleak mid-winter” is said by Thomas Shelby, which is a phrase they learned during World War-1 when they were sure they had no life anymore to look forward to. This shows the trauma of veterans still lingers and never really goes away. As Peter Leese explains, “Every soldier returning from combat in the Great War, and especially the injured and disabled, had to face the difficult readjustment to civilian life.” However, with a turn of events, one officer shoots the other two and leaves Thomas saying, “Winston Churchill isn’t done with you yet.”. Now, why would Thomas be needed by Winston Churchill himself? As Sheridan in his study says, “Classical panopticism breaks down what differentiates people from those around them to make them more easily molded and made to fit a specific image that is most beneficial to the reigning hierarchic power.” (Schmelzer 130).” This is where the aspect of panopticism comes into the discussion in my analysis. Through this scene, we finally understand that the Shelby family is not just rising up to power, but there are higher authorities who are keeping an eye on them as the family was reigning in Birmingham individually, which was creating a threat in other places, and the theory of panopticism is connected here, as it is explained by the portrayal of the series. Officer Campbell returns, and saves him, asking him to work for him assassinating someone else. “Campbell is what John Cawelti called the “hard-boiled detective,” whose primary function is to punish evildoers for their misdeeds (59). However, the series makes it clear relatively quickly that Campbell is not just hardnosed; he is heartless. Unlike the morally righteous characters of the past (e.g., *The Untouchables*), Campbell admits that he “would do things that would shame the devil” (Episode #1.4) in order to get what he wants.” (Long, 11). Long, here puts the concrete evidence by analyzing the ruthlessness of this character, and why inspector Campbell has

Thomas Shelby's cousin Michael arrested, and then makes Polly, (Michael's mother) sleep with him in order to get Michael released in the tide turns on the Peaky Blinders. "When Campbell threatens, and later commits, acts of what Vaage terms "moral disgust," he places himself in the lower moral position, allowing the audience to feel justified in sympathizing with Shelby, who may be immoral but serves the purpose of punishing the greater evildoer. As Vaage explains, "In order to make the anti-hero morally preferable, there are always proper villains who are perceived as morally worse" (120). This comparison indicates a sort of postmodern moral relativism on the part of the audience, at least as far as fiction is concerned. The degree to which audiences can overlook wrongdoing appears less dependent on the act itself and more on the relation of the wrongdoer to other characters. (Long 11). Here, the connection between the Anti-hero, and the way it is perceived by the audience even when they commit crimes, which I talked about in my previous chapter and also comes into the discussion in this chapter, is explained by Long. Although, yes, the Shelby family had their share of crimes committed, there was always another worse actual "villain" in the series who would be criticized further by the audience. Therefore, Steven Knight, the creator of the show, carefully, puts another character who is portrayed in worse ways than the Shelby family, mostly, the Anti-Hero Thomas Shelby. This creates a distinct line between the morally acceptable wrongdoings of characters (Anti-Hero) and a villain.

In the third season, the Shelby family is legitimately very rich, and their business never stops. They are now working out a deal with the Russians. Some Russian nobles are here in exile after the communist revolution the British government wants to sell them takes to take back their country and stop the spread of communism in prediabetic regions they can't do it legally so they go to their go-to criminal Thomas. The Peaky Blinders, also the "Shelby Brothers Limited" have

a whole people shipping empire now but they still illegally shipping alcohol to America during probation.

This stirs up another conflict with Mr. Changretta. A powerful man sends assassins to kill Thomas Shelby, at the Shelby Foundation dinner, however, Grace, the love and wife of Thomas, takes the bullet in her chest and dies. The argument and the analysis here lie, why get involved with more and more powerful men again? In Wright's words, "compromise generally hinges on the relationship between the associational power of the working class and the material interests of capitalists. The conventional wisdom among both neoclassical economists and traditional Marxists is that, in general, there is an inverse relationship between these two variables: increases in the power of workers adversely affect the interests of capitalists." My points of the Shelby family constantly making deals with the more powerful despite of the fatal dangers is explained by this author, these deals not only favor the "more powerful" ones but the Shelby family as well. And given the criminal records of the family, they always win and get their revenge. For example, Arthur Shelby, shoots Mr. Changretta in his head and his wife to get revenge for Grace, and the famous words are uttered, "By Order of the Peaky Blinders."

Later in the series, when the whole Shelby family except Thomas, is captured by the police and sent to execution, the family is released till the very last minute of execution when the officer receives a letter from the king of England authorizing that arms deal, that was shown in the first episode. "The impression of fulfillment and of the end, the muffled feeling that carries and animates our thought, and perhaps lulls it to sleep with the facility of its promises ... and makes us believe that something new is about to begin, something that we glimpse only as a thin line of light low on the horizon - that feeling and impression is perhaps not ill-founded (Foucault 1973b: p. 384)." (Best and Douglas 37). According to the analysis of Foucault by Best and

Douglas, which gives concrete ground to my study of Thomas Shelby and the Shelby family their hope to regain the lost power, and the will to keep thriving amidst all odds in all actuality is what keeps them going and fighting. Through Foucault's words, it can be analyzed that the thought of fulfillment kept the family going and thriving toward their success. Even during the time when they were almost on the verge of death, the light they saw because of their passion for power, did not let them give up, therefore their glimmer of hope, to rise up again, was not groundless. Meanwhile, Thomas Shelby also negotiated with the government contracts and gets a position as the OBE (Officer of the British Parliament), so one year after, Thomas Shelby becomes the OBE, legitimately an English gentleman. Foucault says that form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, and imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. (Foucault 5). By negotiating with the government and becoming the MPOBE, Thomas Shelby recognizes the power that is attached to him alongside, others around him, and also recognize the power he processes. This is how my argument aligns with Foucault, that because of the power Thomas Shelby gains which is eventually a greater good for the Shelby family itself. Actually, categorizes and marks the individuality of their family and thus, it imposes a truth that they are now powerful which they recognize and take advantage of. "The Shelby's stand out in this space: they dress elegantly and live well and indeed might be mistaken for working-class aristocrats or indeed the unseen businessmen of this vision of the city. In fact, they are representatives of what the earliest analysts of social hierarchy in Britain labeled a 'residuum', the unrespectable 'working' class, the unemployed, and villainous (Jones, 2014). The family is in fact Didicoy, mixed-blood Romanichal or 'Gypsies': the lack of representation of such figures in the media at all, let alone

in drama suggests that this is surely one of the most confounding aspects of the series identified by Compton and one of the signal achievements of *Knight*.” (Long 12). As Paul Long in his article explains, my stance is just that. Beginning from a lower class of gypsies who had little to no value in society, establishes a start of reign. Bruised veterans (Thomas Shelby and his brother Arthur Shelby), lost souls come together as a family and become a big powerful name- “The Shelby’s” not only in the little town of Birmingham but across the nation and other parts of the world, later.

Season 5, of the *Peaky Blinders*, begins with another time jump to October 29th, 1929 that’s the day of the big stock market crash. Thomas being a savvy guy saw this coming and told Michael to pull their funds out but over in America where Michael lives with his wife, Jeana Michael. The Shelby family gathers themselves together again, and the crash will put all their legal business in disarray so it’s time to pivot and refocus on the off-the-books and legal business and so the Sheldys are back in Birmingham once again. “A trope of attraction and repulsion is echoed in the overall mise-en-scene. The Birmingham of *Peaky Blinders* is a place constantly at work and as a consequence is resolutely working class: there is barely a glimpse of the factory bosses, businessmen, or the municipal wonders that drew international visitors to see ‘The best-governed city in the world’ (Hunt, xxxix).” (Long 8). This shows that no matter how separated they were around the world, the family stood by each other despite all odds. This is the key point of my thesis, their bond as a family, made them rise up to power. Next, they plan to assassinate the Fascist, Oswald Mosley (Sam Claflin), “who is against the Jews. “Some members of the audience, specifically the host and his family, reject Oswald Mosley’s speech as they exhibit body posture that reflects displeasure and incredulity. This is due to the implicit hate message contained in Mosley’s speech towards several ethnic and political communities and how this

message pertains to the host's family.” (Sustaita, 10). According to my interpretation, the hatred and rejection towards Mosley are exactly what the Shelby’s take advantage of. Also, because he was a competition of the family, and a member of the parliament as well, the best thing was to take him off the picture once and for all. In Foucault’s words, even if power is incorporated into a diverse field of possibilities, power only exists when it is put into action. (Foucault 12). Which is how analysis regarding the portrayal of the plan to assassinate Mosley by the Shelby family is related to the theory of Foucault about power. The possibility of killing Mosley was not a usual one, as he was again, one of the strongest men in England. However, as Foucault said, and it is shown in the series, the power of the Shelby family exists because it is always put into action. Furthermore, the Shelby’s takes help from Alfie Solomons, a Jew, and he helps to organize a riot that serves as the signal for the assassination, however, fails to execute the plan, which again ends the season showing Thomas Shelby in a vulnerable position, he walks off into the fog where he hallucinates Grace yet again- shouting and putting a gun to his head, ready to end his life. “It’s common for PTSD survivors to experience disturbing thoughts, flashbacks, anger, fear, or detachment from loved ones and society. Biological changes in the brain trigger PTSD, which many times associated with memory processing. Research indicates PTSD manifests through both prior life experience, then experience occurring post-PTSD event. It is best conceptualized through individual “self” in the context of time, rather than triggered by one specific (or series of) events” (Mueller 6). As a person who suffers from PTSD on a regular basis, through flashbacks and always going back to his first and only love, the woman with who he has only found solace, Grace, Thomas spirals into the same loop of hell again, as he loses just once to be “more powerful” than a “superior power”. When Thomas sees a courtesan after losing consciousness, she utters, “You still love her, don’t you?” to which Thomas loses his mind, and

shouts, “Why would you fucking say that? Why would you fucking say it?” Sobs, and says again, “What are you fucking saying?” This captures, the inner softness Thomas carries within him, which only Grace could see and was a part of. Which is why his mind is completely lost with the very thought that he has lost her.

Following the words of Foucault, “When one defines the exercise of power as a mode of action upon the actions of others when one characterizes these actions by the control of men by other men in the broadest sense of the term-one includes an important element: freedom.” (Foucault 14). In my analysis, over the course of their upward exercise of power, the Shelby’s, and Tommy Shelby in particular, throughout the series, do define power by acting upon the actions of others. This is specifically seen when Thomas Shelby is not done; he still aims to seek power from the more powerful, for himself and for his family. After a 4-year time jump, The Shelby’s seek to expand business in America. They partner up with Jack Nelson, an American. Correspondingly, this is easy because Thomas Shelby is now a big politician who can toss and turn the cards around him as he wishes for his family. Where he challenges the men of the government, again. By using the theory of Foucault, my argument relies upon, that- through all the actions of the Shelby family, and their urge to challenge the higher authority of men every time they defeated the one under them, this is how they exercised power and the sole reason behind this was to liberate themselves completely and gain freedom.

Meanwhile, the IRA also assassinated, who killed Aunt Polly to bestow and show their power over the Shelby’s. Thomas gets a call from the head of the IRA, Laura McKee, at the start of the sixth season of *Peaky Blinders* when Aunt Polly comes back in a body bag in front of the Shelby house and she says, "Ever since you began to build your empire, you've had a crutch to lean on, last night we kicked away that crutch." In return, she is killed by Arthur Shelby in a 30-

minute-long shooting scene, which is in my opinion, one of the most powerful scenes, in *Peaky Blinders* (Season 06, Episode 06). where there is a strong conversation between Arthur and Laura McKee when Arthur held her at gunpoint.

Arthur- “Her name was Elizabeth Gray.”

- “She was my Aunt Polly. My Aunt Polly”

Laura- “Vengeance is for the Lord---”

Arthur shoots her before she could finish her sentence, and replies,

“Not in Small Heath, it ain’t”.

This particular impactful scene portrays the sheer devastation and sorrow that the killing of Aunt Polly had over the family. Also, my stance on the Shelby family, is that they are glued together, and one person missing is like a puzzle unfinished. Also, this scene also depicts the power the Shelby’s has at Small Heath, when Arthur replies to Laura, he means that in that place, they are God. This finally brings closure to the series, that they achieved what they wanted to, the Shelby’s are God now in Small Heath, and if further analyzed, around the country as well.

This chapter is my interpretation of the *Peaky Blinders*, using the theories of class conflicts and Michel Foucault’s theories and analysis of Power and Panopticism. The Shelby’s’ climb to prominence was not without difficulties. The findings of this chapter include the possession of power and the exercise of it in different aspects. Along with different societies. The Shelby’s, were up against other criminal groups as well as the police, who were out to bring them down. Furthermore, the family was beset by internal tensions and power struggles that

threatened to split them apart. Despite these obstacles, the Shelby family survived and thrived, owing in part to their inventiveness, drive, and willingness to go to any length to succeed. They had grown into a significant force by the conclusion of the series.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

The Great War left an indelible mark on the whole planet. As a result of the war and its aftermath, many war veterans and their families were forced to contend with a wide range of challenges throughout the postmodern period, including economic, social, and other related issues. In addition, soldiers who fought throughout the war had difficulties, some of which may have been communicated orally at times, but in general, these difficulties are kept to themselves since they are so deeply ingrained in their brains. Because of this, they were often forced to deal with the repercussions. Because of the toll that the war had on their mental health, the soldiers who took part in the First World War experienced not just trauma but also social isolation.

This study's aims and the discussion have highlighted the main importance of the analysis which is to portray the importance of changing one's mindset despite being in a position where you can lose it all and being adhered to the idea that you can always succeed if you work hard for it despite obstacles, it is necessary to examine the resilient mindset of a battered veteran, Thomas Shelby, the Anti-Hero, who would rather return and conquer than hide away from the world. This will provide a sense of hope for those who are suffering or have endured a new perspective on life and give them the strength to keep going. This also portrays, the members of the Shelby family as well were not immune to the effects of the postmodern era. There were internal conflicts with their families, life in general, and other external factors but eventually gained the power they were thriving for.

“Where there is power, there is resistance.” This quote by Foucault oscillates with the purpose of this study, which ties up the loose ends of the struggles of classes to gain Power. This

paper leaves the scope to further analyze the limitations that have been left due to the main key focus of the research. The communist approach shown in the series, along with the fascist movement, is something widely portrayed in the series which can keep the ball rolling for any further research conducted in the light of the series *Peaky Blinders*, through the help of this paper. Additionally, it may be useful to investigate further the mental health prospects, because, how often in society do we acknowledge the mental illness of powerful men and their struggles?

This research paper, will aid the answers and fill in the gaps of the unfulfilled studies conducted in these areas. This paper aims to help the survivors of war or people suffering from PTSD, and also address the Power struggle of classes and society.

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