

## **Post 9/11: The Shared Painful Experience in Sam Shepard's *God of Hell* and Youssef El-Guindi's *Back of the Throat***

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This paper will explore the various dramatic mechanisms employed by Sam Shepard in *The God of Hell* and Youssef El-Guindi in *Back of the Throat* attempting to attain a better insight into the depiction of the shared painful experience of Americans and Arab-Americans post 9/11. The traumatic event of 9/11 and its aftermath altered nearly all aspects of American and Arab-American ways of living. These drastic changes affected the make-up of the American and Arab-American communities as they are intensified by the reaction of the American administration to the members of these two entities. By adopting a semiotic approach in analyzing the two proposed plays, this paper will delineate the reaction of the American authorities after 9/11 to Americans themselves and Arab-Americans in the States, in addition to the common sufferings of these two communities regarding the American oppressive practices. Both plays are written as a response to the attacks of 9/11 and the reaction of the American administration. *The God of Hell* is Shepard's most recent play which he describes as "a take-off on Republican fascism." In *The New York Times*, Neil Genzlinger conceives that the American administration "really needs to see" El-Guindi's play *Back of the Throat* as it is considered an "examination of the excess of post 9/11 security [measures]". Previous reviews of the two plays, to the best of my knowledge, have focused on contextual analysis. However, both dramatists, through the employment of various dramatic tools, skillfully portray the disappointment, anguish and pain (mental and physical) exercised by the American administration on their characters. Thus, this paper will examine the vital role of semiotics in revealing the shared experience between the members of the two communities in the two plays.