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**Salahaddin University-Erbil**

**Trauma Of War and Its Aftermath in Pat Barker’s The Silence of the Girls Through a Psychoanalytic Perspective**

Skala Yousif Muhamad Amin

The Department of English

Aveen A. Faris

Salahaddin University-Erbil

Erbil-Kurdistan Region

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**Abstract**

War trauma, often referred to as combat or war-related trauma, is a psychological and emotional response to experiences or events associated with armed conflict. It encompasses a range of adverse reactions and long-lasting psychological effects that individuals, including soldiers and civilians, may endure as a result of their exposure to the horrors and violence of war. The impact of war trauma extends beyond the duration of the conflict, affecting individuals on personal, interpersonal, and societal levels.

This research employs a psychoanalytic lens to unravel the intricacies of war-induced trauma in Pat Barker's novel, "The Silence of the Girls, the study investigates the psychological dimensions of trauma experienced by the female characters in the aftermath of war. Through an examination of repressed memories, defense mechanisms, and the impact of war on the characters' psyches, the research aims to illuminate the psychoanalytic nuances embedded in Barker's narrative. By intertwining psychoanalytic concepts with the portrayal of trauma, the study seeks to deepen our understanding of the character's internal struggles and the broader implications of the war on the human psyche. Employing a blend of literary analysis and trauma theory, the study unpacks the narrative techniques employed by Barker to convey the visceral realities of war trauma

To critically examine and illuminate the nuanced portrayal of war trauma in Pat Barker's 'The Silence of Girls,'. The research aims to unravel the complexities of trauma representation, explore coping mechanisms, and analyze the transformative effects of war on individual and collective identities. By contextualizing the findings within broader literary and trauma studies frameworks, the research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the enduring consequences of conflict on marginalized voices and foster a meaningful dialogue on the intersection of literature, trauma, and historical narratives.

**Keywords:**

Trauma, war, Psychoanalytic theory, Pat Barker.

**Introduction**

Pat Barker's “The Silence of the Girls” gives a compelling insight into the profound psychological outcomes of battle, especially against marginalized ladies' voices in the human-of-war war trauma. The intricacies of the concept as portrayed in Barker's novel have been clear Pioneered by using Sigmund Freud and his concept of trauma and improved upon by way of next theorists, it affords a valuable framework for know-how the complexities of schizophrenia Essential to this theoretical method is the idea of the unconscious thoughts, where reminiscence a repressed and irreconcilable struggle manifests itself in special ways about the battle, its permanence outcomes of the trauma of war on their psyche And we can benefit deeper insights In “The Silence of the Girls,” Barker demanding situations traditional war narratives with the aid of foregrounding the reports of women who are frequently relegated to the margins of records Through Briseis, the Trojan queen who changed into enslaved through the Greeks visually, Barker gives a unique attitude on it the trauma of conflict -The violence is depicted Brice's acts as a manner for the reader to get right of entry to the intimate struggles and repressed feelings of ladies who've been silenced with the aid of the brutality of war, so the Freud's psychoanalysis presents a lens through which to take a look at the actions and motivations of the characters within the novel. Freud's theories of defense mechanisms such as repression, rejection, and displacement offer insight into how individuals address worrying reviews. Beginning with Freud, contemporary psychoanalysts have significantly extended our information on trauma and its results on the psyche.

In this paper, we can take a look at key moments in “The Silence of the Girls” via the lens of psychoanalysis, inspecting how trauma manifests itself in the mind, feelings, and movements of the characters. Placing the unconventional within the framework of psychoanalytic theory, it aims to deepen our knowledge of the trauma of struggle, and its lasting impact on the human psyche. Through this assessment, we hope to highlight the iconic cost of Barker's tale in addressing the psychological challenges of battle and resilience.

Pat Barker’s novel The Silence of the Girls is set at the very beginning of the twenty-first century and adapts and appropriates The Iliad with World War I. Pat Barker is an English novelist born in Yorkshire, England, on 8th May 1943."The Silence of the Girls" by Pat Barker is a powerful novel that explores the aftermath of war, particularly the struggles faced by women during the Trojan War. The story follows Briseis, a queen taken captive and enslaved by Achilles, as she grapples with the profound impact of war on her life, including the loss of her family, freedom, and sense of self. The novel vividly captures the suffering and dehumanization experienced by women who become spoils of war, highlighting the devastating effects of war on both individual psyche and interpersonal connections. The book explores themes of vulnerability, trauma, endurance, and the enduring scars of conflict, providing a somber yet powerful picture of the human cost of war.

**Section One: Psychoanalysis and Trauma Theory**

Psychoanalysis, a scientific discipline founded by Sigmund Freud, is a body of theories that explores mental functioning and development in humans. It is part of general psychology and has made significant contributions to human psychology. Psychoanalytic theory is concerned with normal and pathological mental functioning, not just psychopathology. While psychoanalysis primarily focuses on treating mentally ill or disturbed individuals, its theories also apply to both normal and abnormal mental functioning. (Brenner, C. 1974.P,15-16). According to Sigmund Freud, human personality is complex and has more than a single component. In his famous psychoanalytic theory, Freud states that personality is composed of three elements: the id, the ego, and the superego. These elements work together to create complex human behaviors. The psychoanalysis method of treating mental disorders, shaped by psychoanalytic theory, is complex and deep. (Cherry, 2022, NP). psychoanalysis, a method of treating mental disorders, shaped by psychoanalytic theory, which emphasizes unconscious mental processes and is sometimes described as “depth psychology. (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019.NP)**. Freud’s** theory of the human psyche posits that our unconscious is a storehouse of disguised truths and desires, often revealed through our actions or slips of the tongue. These parapraxes, or Freudian slips, reveal our true intentions and desires, particularly in dreams, art, literature, and play. Freud also developed the typographical model, which divided the human psyche into three parts: the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious. The conscious connects us to external reality, while the preconscious stores memories and represses our desires. (Bressler, 1999.P.125)

Additionally, Psychoanalysis is a psychotherapy aimed at removing neurosis causes, with most focusing on the psychoanalytic theory. Recent studies have expanded its application to include delinquents, borderline cases, and psychotics. (Greenson, 1974.P.5) Freud uncovered the initial psychoanalytic ideas from 1888 to 1898. Stewart meticulously detailed the series of findings made during this decade. The inception of psychoanalysis can be traced back to the collaborative work of Breuer and Freud in their Studies on Hysteria. (Greenson, 1974.P.7)

Furthermore, Psychoanalytic criticism, a method of literary analysis, has evolved over the twentieth century, with notable contributions from Freud, Jung, Frye, Lacan, and others. Freud developed a body of theory and methodology for treating emotional and psychological disorders, allowing patients to discuss their experiences and dreams freely. Freud, a prominent investigator of the unconscious, believed that the unconscious plays a significant role in our actions, thoughts, and feelings. He believed that the interaction between the conscious and unconscious shapes both ourselves and the world. ([Bressler](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&sca_esv=391f93f6c7aeb7e3&q=Charles+E+Bressler&si=AKbGX_rO4P19IF_yO85wYpkEaz-W_oZWd5JUOOVnUVftf2aeoeMQ-lMBMuAaG5uXo2GjXAA1rxctd68kDYdlJdNFMTPnl3aL4p9yxOHW9ljKDfHDc2vv31VjCPSqld-rs-UaIEkT5GUgCoZbFtjILIgv9qZIQziz_8XYQ6pRkMngyCPxSbfpjzfGbCKp2CP-FiMGjCNczfhL23vhC4VZuK7ZO64nVCkaLA%3D%3D&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiHi4n_1JeFAxUpSvEDHVRWBJEQmxMoAHoECCAQAg),1994.P.124) Trauma as a part of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, After the basic what Freud said trauma, investigated it deeply and in detail. Trauma, or traumatization, is a complex concept that explores the relationship between external and psychic reality. It has been a contentious topic in psychoanalysis, with debates surrounding the role of external events and the early environment in the cause and maintenance of psychic distress and illness. The concept also raises questions about how experience is represented in the psyche, how fantasy influences personal perception, and how internal worlds of wishes, conflicts, and deficits are negotiated in human interaction. Psychic trauma and its consequences have been a contentious issue in psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and society. After the pioneering work of Freud and Janet, the tide has shifted, with periods of denial and ignorance followed by confrontations, often accompanied by feelings of helplessness and horror. Two "rejecting" strategies have emerged in the last century: "blame the victim" and "Conspiracy of silence." The first was seen during and after World War I, when those with hysterical symptoms were often executed or subjected to inhuman and torture-like treatments, often causing them to return to the battlefield.(Elliott and Prager, 2016.P.1-3-20) Redstone in her essay Trauma Theory: context, politic, ethic's Suggests that the relationship between representation and actuality is constituted by the absence of traces, with the absence of traces testifying to a representation's relation to a traumatic event. This referential of traumatic memory is central to trauma theory, which is based on the traumatic event. This approach is relevant to historians and media theorists, as it highlights the importance of witnessing and the repetition of catastrophic events. However, the implications of placing trauma at the heart of a general theory of representation raise questions about its generalizability.

Trauma theory, derived from de Man's theory of signification and neuroscientific studies by psychologists like Bessel A. Van der Kolk, is a complex and multifaceted concept. Its insights are influenced by de Man's theory of signification and neuroscientific studies, which argue that trauma is encoded differently from ordinary memory. The theory also incorporates a theory of subjectivity, which is influenced by Freud's seminal texts and neuroscientific work. This postmodern psychology emphasizes memory, brain function, and the role of the listener or witness in bringing previously unassimilated memory to consciousness. Despite its emphasis on narrative, witnessing, and intersubjectivity of memory, there is little discussion or debate about the model of subjectivity implied by trauma theory or the theoretical difficulties negotiated by that model.

In Addition, Trauma was defined as a situation of dissociation or 'absence' from the self in which the victim unconsciously imitated or identified with the aggressor or traumatic scene in a situation that was likened to a state of heightened suggestibility or hypnotic trance. The trauma theory, influenced by Caruth, Felman, and Laub, focuses on the unexperienced nature of trauma, leaning towards the mimetic paradigm. However, it also links to the anti-mimetic theory, which suggests that trauma is an external event. This anti-mimetic tendency influences Caruth's interpretation of Freud's writings, which emphasize the connection between trauma and an event. Trauma theory's interpretation of Freud differs from contemporary re-readings in Europe, focusing on unconscious conflict and mediation in the formation of neuroses. These alternative approaches to trauma substitute for trauma theory's emphasis on the dissociation of unassimilated memories and the traumatic nature of unconscious associations. Trauma theory's topography of the inner world dispenses with the layering of conscious/subconscious and unconscious, substituting a conscious mind with accessible past experiences and a dissociated area of the mind with traumatic past experiences. This revision abandons Freud's emphasis on the mediating role of unconscious processes in the production of mind scenes and meanings, including memories.(Radstone, 2007.P.12-13-14-16). Freud's concept of traumatic neurosis and Horowitz's stress response syndromes describe the psychological impact of extremely stressful events, leading to reactive processes and psychological disorders, as individuals attempt to master and integrate the experience. Freud's first theory for neurosis postulated the necessity of external trauma, specifically seduction, and later focused on traumatic neurosis, particularly "war neuroses." Trauma involves breaching a protective shield or stimulus barrier, causing disturbance on a large scale, and causing "repetition compulsion." This leads to a distinct "post-traumatic state" with symptoms similar to all those experiencing an external stressor. Freud later elaborated this theory, suggesting that the helplessness of the ego forms the core of the traumatic situation. However, classical Freudian analytical theory emphasized drives, instincts, and regression, leading some analysts to believe that the stressor was the recrudescence of a previously repressed conflict. Kardininer (1941) challenged these ideas, emphasizing the actual event or stressor, leading to symptoms of numbing, disintegration, and intrusion. Interest in traumatic stress grew in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s. (Black, 1997.P.32-61)

[Der Kolk](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&sca_esv=02e6ca09a22e3908&q=Bessel+van+der+Kolk&si=AKbGX_qWtsfHufXsq_1jeDkJp50FstNngDxsch3EVTUjn7imcKdmm7KGq4PhxPPOrZ8IRRIcyEOE6z-AdNQq-JpFe70bh-pWvW83fik6xFq2EkjMMqJ5FF97YFMICEp3N1zx897INGRLN-tzi25rYLoN05ySq-mEkD2f0OhL9u_aYzaq77u-nNj6lBRIu_HsP9ebbxo7UV936gKzMnczPDu72UnSX6AE1w%3D%3D&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjA6dHF25eFAxXzSvEDHc2ZBWMQmxMoAHoECEwQAg) stated that the brain's part dedicated to survival is not good at denial. Long after a traumatic experience is over, it may be reactivated at the slightest hint of danger, mobilizing disturbed circuits and secreting stress hormones. This results in unpleasant emotions, intense physical sensations, and impulsive and aggressive actions. These post-traumatic reactions feel incomprehensible and overwhelming, leading survivors to fear that they are damaged to the core and beyond redemption. The part of the brain devoted to survival is not very good at denial, and long after a traumatic experience is over, it may be reactivated at the slightest hint of danger. Trauma can be a devastating event that cannot be undone, but it can be dealt with through the imprints it leaves on the body, mind, and soul. These imprints include anxiety, depression, fear of losing control, self-loathing, nightmares, flashbacks, and difficulty engaging fully in tasks. Trauma also robs individuals of self-leadership, which is essential for recovery. The challenge is to regain ownership of one's body and mind, allowing one to feel free to know and feel without becoming overwhelmed or ashamed. This often involves finding a way to become calm and focused, maintaining calmness in response to memories, being fully alive in the present, and not keeping secrets about one's survival methods.

These goals are not steps to be achieved in a fixed sequence but rather overlap and may be more difficult depending on individual circumstances. The author discusses specific methods or approaches to accomplish these goals in each chapter, which can be useful for trauma survivors, therapists, and people under temporary stress. Some people may improve using just one method, but most people benefit from different approaches at different stages of their recovery. The author has extensively used these methods to treat patients and has experienced them personally. (van der Kolk, 2014P.13. 219.220)

A severe emotional blow or wound is referred to as trauma (which may also be connected to physical trauma). Psychoanalysis aims to counteract the consequences resulting from psychological trauma. Psychological trauma might persist, but many emotional scars heal gradually. A sufficiently enough stimulus—such as a death or an accident—prevents the mind from reacting effectively through typical emotional routes, like grief or rage.

Meanwhile, in many cases, this lack of resolution can promote repetition compulsions, the re-emergence of chronic trauma through rumination and dreaming, or the urge to place oneself in other traumatic situations. there is. Psychoanalysis helps victims develop emotional and behavioral strategies to cope with trauma. Fortunately, the need for treatment for trauma survivors is now well understood within the broader mental health community. Understand that while certain medications can help treat trauma, treatment must always include a psychological component and that treatment may be necessary years after the trauma has been experienced. You need to keep it. Psychoanalysts treat trauma, from the shock of World War I to the war neuroses of World War II, Vietnam syndrome after the Vietnam War, and now post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). conducted much of the early research in Treatment for PTSD still includes elements that go back to psychoanalysis. (Anon, 2023.NP)

Trauma survivors often exhibit a variety of symptoms, even those with simple PTSD, which extend beyond the triad of numbing/avoidance, re-experiencing, and hyperarousal. Some authors suggest that these symptoms are not comorbid diagnoses but rather reflect the complex effects of psychological trauma on somatic, cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects. There is a potential dimension of trauma-related disorders with more complex and elaborate symptomatology. However, there is limited theoretical development to explain the common threads of diverse trauma-related symptoms, making it difficult to develop a coherent diagnostic taxonomy. The lack of theoretical clarity regarding the effects of traumatization makes it difficult to develop a coherent diagnostic taxonomy. (Der, E R S Nijenhuis and Steele, 2006.P.105-106)

The conditions of neurotics are influenced by the frequent traumatic neuroses, which are not the same as spontaneous neuroses. Traumatic neuroses show clear indications of a fixation on the moment of the traumatic disaster, with patients regularly living over the traumatic situation in their dreams. Hysterical attacks in these patients approximate a complete transposition into the situation. Freud worked trauma into his general theory of neuroses, using symptoms as a basis for affirming the existence of forgotten or repressed trauma. (Gordon, 2008.P.32) Freud and other psychologists try analyzing any traumatic event's influence on an individual and society

***1.1 War and Trauma***

Most wars throughout history can be traced back to one of these reasons: conquering a new nation, colonizing new land, gaining control over valuable resources like minerals and oil, establishing an empire for power and wealth, or seeking revenge for a previous humiliation that diminished a group's power, prestige, and wealth. Conflict often arises from the need for group identity. People naturally seek belonging and identity, leading to divisions based on ethnicity, nationality, or religion. One of the main driving forces behind warfare is the ambition of a certain group of individuals, typically governments, but sometimes the general populace of a nation, tribe, or ethnic community, to enhance their influence and prosperity. This group aims to achieve this by conquering and subduing other groups, as well as by seizing their land and assets. Nations engage in warfare for various reasons. It has been argued that a nation will resort to war if the advantages of engaging in it are considered to outweigh the disadvantages, and if there is a belief that there is no other mutually acceptable solution. Specifically, some argue that wars are primarily fought for economic, religious, and political motives. On the other hand, others assert that most contemporary wars are fought for ideological reasons. (National Geographic Society, 2022.NP) During her childhood, Pat Barker observed her grandfather's scars as he washed himself in the kitchen. However, he chose to remain silent when she inquired about his experiences during World War One. This left her with a sense of mystery and silence surrounding his past (Barker 2019a, 7:58). In the 1990s, Barker delved into the theme of men being silenced in her Regeneration trilogy, which focused on the struggles of war poets like Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, as well as the unique anthropologist and analyst William Rivers. She also introduced fictional characters such as Billy Prior, a working-class bisexual who stood out among the upper-class officers. Surprisingly, in 2018, Barker released The Silence of the Girls, a departure from her previous works centered around World War One. This novel coincided with the peak of World War One commemoration, leading many to anticipate Barker's return to the war archive rather than a shift towards the Iliad. Barker has long viewed the First World War as a modern-day Trojan war (Barker 2019a, 7:58). This analogy draws inspiration from the war poets themselves, who often referenced the Iliad to either celebrate bravery or challenge the brutality of war. (Lanone, 2020.P.1-4) The Trojan War, a conflict that took place during the Bronze Age between the kingdoms of Troy and Mycenaean Greece, is a tale that intertwines history and mythology in ancient Greece. This epic story has served as inspiration for some of the greatest writers of antiquity, including Homer, Herodotus, Sophocles, and Virgil. Classical sources recount that the war was sparked by the abduction (or elopement) of Queen Helen of Sparta by the Trojan prince Paris. Her husband, Menelaus, sought the help of his brother Agamemnon, the king of Mycenae, to lead an expedition to bring her back. Agamemnon was joined by renowned Greek heroes such as Achilles, Odysseus, Nestor, and Ajax, along with a massive fleet of over a thousand ships from various parts of the Hellenic world. They sailed across the Aegean Sea to Asia Minor, where they laid siege to Troy and demanded the return of Helen from King Priam. (Editors, 2009.NP)

The teacher in The Human Stain by Philip Roth posits that European literature commences with a dispute, particularly over a woman. This notion is echoed in Pat Barker’s The Silence of the Girls, which reimagines The Iliad from the perspective of women during the Trojan War. Barker sheds light on the overlooked aspects of the epic by focusing on characters like Briseis, a female slave caught amidst Greek heroes. In an interview, Barker discusses her decision to revisit mythology and the importance of storytelling in offering a fresh perspective on the classic tale. Additionally, Catherine Lanone (2020) explores how The Silence of the Girls stands out during World War One commemorations by delving into the war archive rather than drawing inspiration solely from The Iliad. (Borgohain, 2021. P.1-5) War and trauma These two words usually come together when war causes different types of trauma. The psychic etiology was first incorporated into trauma theories by Freud and Janet, albeit their views differed significantly. Trauma neurosis provided a chance for both to confirm, contrary to Charcot, the only.(Fassin & Rechtman, 2009.P.31)**.** The concept of traumatization is often misunderstood, with some arguing that it is impossible to grasp and empathize with due to its inherently difficult nature. This is evident in the "conspiracy of silence" observed in populations where massive trauma has occurred, where the victim or survivor has few words and feels too ashamed to relate, leading to isolation and isolation. The use of the trauma concept in clinical dialogues has obscured theoretical discourse, and the anxiety and wordlessness of the traumatic experience can hinder countertransference and theorizing.

Understanding trauma involves psychoanalysis as a theory and science, while the traumatized patient presents clinical challenges. Early debates between Freud and Janet reflect current controversies in the trauma field. Janet believed the traumatized mind had a "feebleness" of hereditary origin, while Freud argued that defense against traumatizing influence was motivated by mind dynamics, reflecting a cognitive and psychoanalytic perspective. The controversies in the trauma field continue to shape our understanding of trauma.

Freud's theories on trauma, anxiety, and the mind were influenced by his understanding of transference and repetition compulsion. He distinguished between anxiety, fear, and fright, and argued that trauma is a state of fright in response to danger. Trauma produces primitive anxiety states and cannot be processed without the appropriate effect. Freud also perceived the mind as inherently symbolizing, initially as binding energy but later as an attempt to connect and give meaning to the traumatizing experience. He developed several etiological models, including the bi-phasic model, which suggests that the second event where the experience is understood (symbolized) causes the traumatic reaction. Additionally, he proposed the complementary series theory, which posits an inverse relationship between the ego's strength and the event's seriousness, underlining complex dynamics between external and internal forces.

[Sverre Varvin](https://www.taylorfrancis.com/search?contributorName=Sverre%20Varvin&contributorRole=author&redirectFromPDP=true&context=ubx) claimed that Trauma, a concept in psychoanalysis and psychiatric theory, lacks a clear and well-defined meaning. It is often used loosely as a shorthand for burdening, abrupt, and distressing experiences, reflecting conceptual problems and the subject's failure of symbolization. Different types of trauma have been suggested, including shock, cumulative, seduction, strain, extreme, war, and incest trauma. These typologies refer to different situations, exposure types, and reactions. However, there is often confusion about the distinctions between the traumatic situation, the traumatizing process, the immediate reaction to the external influence, the later reaction, and the result in the form of a specific condition like PTSD or personality disorder. Extreme traumatization usually refers to situations that would have been traumatic for almost everyone, while other experiences may be traumatic only under certain conditions. Memory is a key concept in trauma research, and the diagnosis of PTS is also a key concept.

Also, Trauma is a complex concept that involves the immediate impact on the ego and the subsequent effects of posttraumatic conditions, which often result in impairment of ego capacities and anhedonia. Anna Freud, for example, argued for a restricted definition of trauma, distinguishing it from other ego-damaging circumstances like developmental disturbances. Posttraumatic conditions often lead to inhibitions of ego functioning, anhedonia, and lack of vitality. Developmental interference, on the other hand, results in inhibitions in ego functioning but often as adaptations to accumulated environmental failures. Concepts like cumulative trauma, strain trauma, and silent trauma refer to events that exceed a threshold, breaking the ego's protective shield and causing a traumatic situation.

Moreover, Posttraumatic state problems are significant as they reflect disturbances in the mental processing of experience. These problems can deeply disrupt relational needs and regulatory processes. Mistrust, lack of empathy, and difficulty understanding others in terms of mental states may be attributed to disturbances in internal relationships or dialogues, as internal good or empathic objects act as mediators between self and environment. (Varvin and Philos,2013. P.2-3-7-17-18-32)

In another reference, Balaey stated that the classic model of trauma removes determinate value from the experience, as it assumes an absolute inability to know a violent event. This view disallows specific determinacy of trauma on rheological, psychological, and social levels while still acknowledging an undying pathological influence on consciousness. This results in a loss of agency from the survivor by disregarding their knowledge of the experience and the self, restricting trauma's variability, and ignoring diverse values that change over time.

He continued in contrast, the pluralistic trauma model allows determinate value and social specificity, even when a survivor has little agency in the moment of violence. This model acknowledges the variability of trauma in its definition and representations, emphasizing the active potential for meaning in the moment of harm. Although the classic notion of trauma as a silent haunting or absolute indecipherable is useful for certain ends, the pluralistic approach highlights the ranging values and representations of trauma in literature and society, emphasizing not only the harm caused by a traumatic experience but also the many sources that inform its definitions, representations, and consequences.

Additionally, Contemporary literary approaches challenge the classic model of trauma by considering linguistic relationships but not forgetting that trauma occurs to actual people, bodies, periods, and places. The claim that "trauma is never simply one's own" and that "we are implicated in each other's trauma" raises issues about assigning responsibility for violence and understanding the relationship between direct and indirect action. The attempt to include everyone as victims of trauma risks including everyone as perpetrators, making the actor and recipient of violence anonymous. The danger of making collective the specific experience of a group or individual in the past is to create an unspecified action and effect, as well as an indeterminate meaning of experience. (M. Balaev, 2014.P.6.7)

**1.2 Freudian Concept of Trauma**

In the end, it all goes back to Freud.  Not that he invented the term ‘trauma,’ far from it.  It’s instructive to look at how Laplanche and Pontalis introduce the topic of trauma in their entry on the subject in The Language of Psychoanalysis:

‘Trauma’ is a term that has long been used in medicine and surgery. It comes from the Greek τϱαŭμα, meaning wound, which in turn derives from τιτϱοσχω, to pierce. It generally means any injury where the skin is broken as a consequence of external violence, and the effects of such an injury upon the organism as a whole; the implication of the skin being broken is not always present, however–we may speak, for example, of ‘closed head and brain traumas. (Freud’s Trauma, 2018.NP)

An exploration of all of Freud's writings on trauma from 1885 is proposed. Trauma, a central concept in his first works, always kept a place in his theory. He conceived it as a consequence of an external perception leading to a sudden effect that cannot be mastered by the psyche. For him, the excitation is so strong that it threatens the ego and provokes a breach of the protective shield. The idea that he would have renounced this topic at the end of the nineteenth century is irrational. (Darves-Bornoz, 2022.P.1)

Trauma, says Freud, is the result of fright, an emotion that he distinguishes from fear and dread, both of which anticipate the danger. Fright is the sudden experience of an unanticipated danger. “It describes the state that possesses us when we find ourselves plunged into danger without being prepared for it.” (p. 51). Apart from this, Freud as we have seen, sees psychic trauma as the result not of fear, but of fright, the sudden intrusion of an alien experience that was unexpected and unprepared for. The trauma lies more in the unexpectedness than the intrusion itself. The repetition that characterizes traumatic experience is an attempt to remember what was never originally experienced in the first place, for it happened before I was there, prepared to experience it. On another hand, this is what Cathy Caruth, and those who follow her line of thinking, such as Dori Laub and Shoshana Felman, mean when they say that trauma is an event without a witness. Trauma is the absence of presence. What if we think about the absence of presence along the lines of Winnicott? For Winnicott (1989), trauma is the disruption of the experience of going-on-being. What is lost in trauma is a sense of the continuity of one’s existence as a person. (Traumatheory.com, 2021. NP)

In Beyond the Pleasure Principle Freud introduces trauma through the notion of a nightmare. The dream reproduces the catastrophe and the shock experience stands for the dissociation of memory from consciousness; the actual event is separated from its understanding. The traumatized individual is possessed by the event and does not gain any control over it. He cannot possess his history. At the core of the nightmares, there is a collapse of meaning and a deep uncertainty as to its very truth. The crisis of truth poses the greatest challenge to trauma theory today.

Additionally, Besides the non-symbolic character of the dreams and flashbacks, Freud was also struck by the belatedness with which the traumatic event haunted the one who had suffered from it, possibly a long time ago. In Moses and Monotheism, he refers to this gap of knowing as a period of latency that constitutes a time that lacks the registration of the traumatic event in memory:

Apart from this, the trauma tests the limits of understanding due to its belatedness. Freud previously discussed this concept in his case studies with hysterical patients, highlighting the interaction between two scenes. The first scene, the initial traumatic moment, is not fully processed at the time of occurrence due to its early timing in a child's development. The second scene, often a minor trigger, can later reactivate the first scene, leading to a retrospective understanding of the trauma. This paradoxical temporality challenges traditional notions of chronology and memory, as Freud pointed out in his work on Screen Memories. (Rabelhofer, 2019.NP)

Trauma, as described by Freud, is a disruption of the Symbolic order, involving the injury and penetration of the skin. This disruption occurs when the organism's shield against external stimuli falters, leading to lasting disruptions in energy functioning. Freud attributes this breakdown to an event that overwhelms the mind with an intense stimulus, causing lasting disruptions in the functioning of energy. In simpler terms, there is an overwhelming experience or concept that the individual cannot fully comprehend. According to Freud's theory, this overwhelming experience is often linked to an early childhood sexual encounter. However, the complexity arises from the fact that during the initial experience, the child does not recognize its significance. It is only during a subsequent experience, typically after puberty, that the true impact of the initial encounter is felt as a memory, breaking through the individual's ego defenses and causing trauma. In essence, the trauma is experienced retroactively, leading us to the concept of Nachträglichkeit. (Chapman, 2016.NP) Fletcher in Freud and Trauma stated that the restructuring of diagnostic categories in a newly unified field is a result of Freud's growing emphasis on identifying the source of trauma in specific sexual experiences, as well as highlighting the conflict between the ego's defenses and the conflicting sexual thoughts and emotions stemming from the trauma. Interestingly, neither sexual experiences nor defensive conflicts were prominent in the initial case of psychoanalysis, that of Anna O., whose treatment began fifteen years before the Studies, or in the general trauma model presented in the "Preliminary Communication" (1893a). This lack of emphasis on sexual experiences and conflicts is also evident in the evolution of the conceptual framework from a simple cause-and-effect model to a more complex temporal structure, where the initial traumatic event is accompanied by a series of additional scenes that contribute to the manifestation of symptoms. He continued Freud initially identifies two key characteristics that appear to define traumatic neuroses. Firstly, there is the element of surprise and fear. Secondly, there is the perplexing observation that a physical injury or wound reduces the likelihood of developing a psychological neurosis. Freud goes on to differentiate between three psychological states that are often mistaken for one another, both in terms of their relationship to a potential object and the preparedness of the individual to experience trauma. Fear is the specific apprehension of a known object, while anxiety is a state of anticipation or readiness for danger, even when the specific object of danger is unknown. Fright, on the other hand, occurs when one is unexpectedly overtaken by danger without any prior expectation or preparation. According to Freud, anxiety as defined cannot lead to a traumatic neurosis, as there is something inherent in anxiety that protects against the development of "fright neuroses" (1920g, 13). These distinctions, although not always strictly adhered to by Freud himself, revolve around the concepts of boundaries and defenses.

The typical traumatic neurosis, which was briefly discussed in sections II and III in connection with recurring dreams, is now being viewed through a specific topographical model. The concept of a significant breach in the protective barrier may seem like a return to the original meaning of the term 'trauma' (derived from the Greek word for wound), and to the "old naive theory of shock," which posited physical damage to the tissues at the microanatomical level of the nervous system. This model was linked to the Berlin neurologists Thomsen and Oppenheim, a model that Charcot challenged in Chapter 1 by categorizing traumatic cases as hysteria. Freud clarifies that his concern is not with biological organisms susceptible to histological damage and lesions, but rather that, at this point in his discussion, the vesicle has become a representation of the psychic apparatus: "What we are trying to comprehend are the effects on the mind's organ caused by the breach in the protective barrier against stimuli and the subsequent issues that arise" (ibid., 31). (Fletcher, 2013.P.60.289.304)

Etymologically, the word "trauma" has its roots in the Greek word "trauma," meaning "wound" or injury, which is reflected in both English and German. However, within the Freudian psychiatric framework, trauma is associated with harm inflicted on the mind rather than the body (Caruth, Unclaimed 3). Trauma theory has played a significant role in literary discussions, particularly in post-colonial criticism advocating for the rights of those who have experienced psychological or sexual abuse. Unlike physical wounds that can heal, the wounds inflicted on the mind are often considered incurable. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) utilized the concept of "trauma" to explain individual experiences of trauma (Meek 2). Traumatized individuals not only exhibit behavioral issues but also memory disturbances (Meek 5). According to Freudian psychoanalysis, trauma is not consciously processed at the time of the event but manifests later in symptoms like intrusive memories, nightmares, compulsive behaviors, and flashbacks (Meek 5). As a result, trauma remains inaccessible in terms of time and place, representing an absent experience for the individual. According to Ruth Leys in her book "Trauma: A Genealogy," trauma, as defined by the Freudian concept, refers to an experience that completely engulfs the victim in such a way that it prevents them from gaining a cognitive understanding of what occurred due to the lack of emotional distance (2000, 9). Furthermore, trauma is described as the disruption of the mind's perception of time, self, and the world, an event that is experienced unexpectedly and too soon to be fully comprehended and therefore remains inaccessible (Carth, Unclaimed 4). Moreover, trauma is not immediately realized during the original event, but rather the voice of the wound is heard and repeated in subsequent traumatic experiences. The traumatic encounter is so overwhelming that it cannot be integrated or understood, remaining unknown within the original event (Caruth, Unclaimed 4).

Initially, Freud argued that the primary source of trauma was violent sexual violations committed against the patient in the past. However, he later revised his stance, acknowledging that the violation could be sexual or non-sexual in nature. Trauma only emerges when it resurfaces after some time, triggered by a second event. The victim then relives the traumatic experience through repetitive nightmares, which they have no control over (Hecklinger 8).

Freud's theory, known as the seduction theory, suggests that the origin of hysteria can be traced back to sexual abuse. This theory implicates a patriarchal society that directs its violence towards women and children. Society, burdened by guilt, often suppresses revelations of sexual trauma. In essence, Freud separates the unconscious fantasies and desires from the actual experiences of women (Horvitz 13-14). He argues that the traumatized individual is already afflicted with sexual issues before the traumatic event. (Abd El-Sameea’ Monir, 2019.P.3.4.22.25) Freud describes trauma as a break or hits the protective psyche shield by shocking events that make an individual weak, not normal, or traumatized.

**SECTION 2: trauma and its aftermath in silence of girls**

The concept of "Trauma" has garnered significant attention in the field of literary studies. Within psychoanalytic approaches to literary analysis, trauma theory serves as a crucial framework that facilitates fresh perspectives in reading and listening. (Kurtz, 2018.P.1)

In her latest novel, The Silence of the Girls (2018), Pat Barker offers a fresh viewpoint on the Iliad by delving into the stories of Briseis and other women who were forcibly taken and subjected to a life of sexual slavery during the Trojan War. Barker's work courageously questions the gaps and omissions present in the original Homeric text. By giving voice to those who were silenced and marginalized in the epic narrative, she challenges a fundamental myth of Western civilization.

The author's exploration of war goes beyond the surface, delving into the raw and chaotic realities of life in a rat-infested army camp. By highlighting the devastation, excess, and waste that lead to pestilence, she raises significant questions about the true cost of wars waged by men and the broader implications of human activity. Pat Barker's interest in war stems from what remains unspoken, as she skillfully portrays soldiers silenced by trauma, grieving relatives numbed by loss, artists and reporters grappling with the unspeakable, and war-torn families harboring dark secrets. Her novel, The Silence of the Girls, further exemplifies her fascination with the overlooked aspects of the Iliad, one of the oldest narratives in Western literature. Barker's exploration of silence, particularly concerning women's experiences, challenges the traditional male-centric perspective prevalent in European literature. The initial silence of the Iliad resonates with Elinor Brooke in Life Class, prompting Barker to shift her focus from history to myth.

The novel faithfully adheres to the original Homeric storyline, ensuring that the reader remains firmly rooted in the harsh realities of the tale rather than being captivated by the heroic elements. Barker sheds light on the grim and often overlooked details that bards tend to ignore, such as the brutalities of rape and murder, the decay and filth of the battlefield, and the harsh truths of a rodent infestation. By consistently emphasizing these harsh realities, Barker echoes the sentiments expressed by Elaine Scarry in her influential work, The Body in Pain, which argues that the primary purpose and outcome of war is to inflict harm. Barker's reinterpretation of the Homeric story effectively conveys a strong anti-war message, presenting a raw and unapologetic portrayal of suffering and destruction, thereby challenging the notion that art can glorify warfare. (Curyłło-Klag, 2020.P.13-14)

Pat Barker's most recent novel offers a distinct perspective by telling the story from the viewpoint of Briseis, a queen who is transformed into a slave. "The Silence of the Girls," which was published in 2018, revisits The Iliad to bring attention to the untold tale of Achilles' captive, who happens to be Briseis. In the original Greek myth, Briseis is the wife of King Mynes of Lyrnessus, an ally of the Trojans. As a Postmodernist writer, Pat Barker reimagines the Trojan War in her novel by drawing parallels to World War One and its prevailing ideologies. The book not only portrays Briseis's resilience and survival in the face of her traumatic past but also delves into her journey toward healing and rebuilding her shattered life. While Homer's epic poem predicts the downfall of Troy, Barker's novel begins with the destruction of Lyrnessus, Briseis's homeland, at the hands of Achilles and his warriors. Through intertextuality, Pat Barker skillfully weaves together elements of the ancient epic tradition with the harsh realities of the modern world, infusing new vitality into the Trojan War by vividly depicting the horrors of war through the lens of World War One in her narrative**.** (Borgohain, 2021b. P.10) In addition, Contemporary trauma theory in literature posits that trauma induces an inexpressible dread, which in turn fractures or obliterates one's sense of self. However, relying solely on a singular psychological framework for understanding trauma can result in a uniform explanation of the various manifestations of trauma narratives and the intricate interplay between language, lived experiences, memory, and location. The significance of place in trauma fiction is paramount, as it portrays the repercussions of trauma through both metaphorical and tangible means. Novels depict the rupture between the individual and others by meticulously delineating the site of trauma, as the physical environment provides an avenue for exploring personal and cultural histories. The centrality of place in trauma representations firmly grounds individual experiences within the broader societal context. Trauma, in this context, refers to an individual's emotional reaction to an overwhelming event that disrupts preexisting notions of self and societal norms. Trauma narratives convey profound loss or intense fear, emphasizing the transformative impact on the self-triggered by an external, often harrowing encounter. (Balaev, 2008.P.2-105-149)

Freud in his book War and Death mentions that how war affected our emotions in wartime, we often rely on one-sided information and are too close to the changes that have already taken place or are beginning to. This confusion makes us question the significance of our impressions and judgments formed. We feel that no event has debased what is highest, and science has lost its passionless impartiality. Anthropologists and psychiatrists often label non-combatants as inferior and degenerate, but our sense of these immediate evils is disproportionately strong. Non-combatants feel bewildered and inhibited in their powers and activities, and they welcome any indication that will help them find their bearings within themselves. Two factors responsible for the mental distress felt by non-combatants are the disillusionment evoked by the war and the altered attitude towards death that this war forces upon us. These factors make it difficult for them to find their bearings within themselves and to struggle against the heavy task of navigating the war. (Freud, 1964.P.1)

Pat Barker's literary style has undergone a complex evolution. By delving into the mechanisms of constructing ideologies and the resistance of the individual psyche against them, her realistic viewpoint also challenges the boundaries of representation. By grappling with the ineffable, it paradoxically opens up space for a new form of expressive power, within the voids left by repressed collective traumas. In examining the intricate and at times painful connection that contemporary English literature maintains with history, the past, societal conventions, and concealed elements, Pat Barker's writings occupy a pivotal role. Her exploration of history can be interpreted as a critical and rejuvenated approach to artistic expression, unveiling a stripped-down realism that adeptly alters perspectives. Through this method, a world of anguish can be encapsulated in a single grain of sand, and seemingly insignificant fragments can unravel into elaborate evocations. Rather than insignificant, these fragmented components act as a direct conduit to the past, functioning as a cryptic language of remembrance. (Bernard, 2007.P.173-175-176)

The haunting presence of traumatic memories for survivors is a result of the dislocation of a traumatic event in a specific period in the past. According to Caruth, psychoanalysis, literature, and literary theory all engage in the profound narrative of traumatic experiences. The concept of the unspeakable holds a central position in trauma theory, as Caruth coins it as "unclaimed experience." This discourse emerges from the suppressed accounts of psychological and sexual abuse throughout history. Caruth proposes that the revelation of these experiences can contribute to the healing process for individuals who have experienced trauma. Additionally, she explores the victim's capacity to recover repressed memories after a period of latency inherent in the traumatic experience. In her book, "Unclaimed Experience," Caruth illustrates the challenging nature of fully comprehending trauma due to its paradoxical characteristics. The immediate witnessing of a violent event may lead to an absolute inability to comprehend it, and this delay becomes intertwined with the repetitive and incomprehensible nature of trauma.

In the domain of trauma theory, the relationship between destructiveness and survival is deeply intertwined. Caruth, in her critical essay "Traumatic Departures: Survival and History in Freud," prompts readers to confront the notion of the "enigma of survival." She argues that recognizing traumatic experiences as a paradoxical interplay between destructiveness and survival is essential to understanding the enduring sense of incomprehensibility inherent in catastrophic events. To delve further into this concept, Caruth delves into Freud's seminal works, Beyond the Pleasure Principle and Moses and Monotheism. These texts, composed during the tumultuous periods of World War I and World War II, offer compelling evidence of a direct correlation between Freud's trauma theory and historical violence. Caruth posits that Freud's analysis in these works underscores the inexplicable nature of human survival within the framework of trauma theory. Freud's examination of the shattered psyche of war survivors revealed that their recurring nightmares and flashbacks were uncontrollable and devoid of clear meaning within the psyche. Traumatic neurosis, according to Freud, represents a puzzling and distinctive form of survival. The flashbacks and nightmares, serving as silent witnesses to survival that eludes comprehension, manifest unconsciously and are not directly tied to the experience of survival itself. Caruth attributes this paradoxical indirectness in psychic trauma to the origins of unconsciousness and survival. Freud suggests that the experience of survival remains beyond the grasp of consciousness, as it does not manifest in recognizable symptoms, dreams, or flashbacks.

Pat Barker has made a commendable effort in depicting the suffering endured by British society during the First World War. Within Barker's works, history emerges as a central theme. In her introduction to Critical Perspective to Pat Barker (2005), Sharon Monteith asserts that history exerts a pervasive and all-encompassing influence on the lives of Barker's characters. While recounting traumatic experiences, particularly those of war veterans, aids in obtaining a clear understanding of history, Monteith acknowledges that the characters in Barker's novels possess significant insights into their social and psychological circumstances, yet they often find themselves constrained and oppressed by societal frameworks. Barker's narratives of trauma extend beyond the individual realm. Alongside portraying the individual traumas of working-class women and war veterans, Barker also highlights the social trauma they endure. Monteith further argues that historical events, such as war, have the power to profoundly alter both individual and social identities. By choosing historical settings for her novels, Barker establishes a foundational framework for perceiving and comprehending present-day traumas, to prevent future ones. Consequently, Barker seeks to establish a connection between the past, present, and future by narrating past histories and giving voice to the memories of the traumatized in the present. (Bakhtiar Sadjadi and Farnaz Esmkhani, 2016.P.1-2-3) Pat Barker by retelling the illad story opens a new path to focus on voiceless characters and what does war affects individuals in human society.

***2.1 The impact of sexual and emotional trauma***

War, abuse, rape, molestation, and other traumatic events cannot be "treated" or undone. However, it is possible to address the lasting effects of trauma on the body, mind, and soul. These effects may manifest as crushing sensations in the chest, which can be labeled as anxiety or depression, a constant fear of losing control, hypervigilance towards danger or rejection, self-loathing, nightmares, flashbacks, difficulty staying focused, and an inability to fully connect with others. Trauma strips away one's sense of self-leadership, the feeling of being in control of oneself. The journey of recovery involves reclaiming ownership of one's body and mind and regaining a sense of self. This means being able to acknowledge and process one's thoughts and emotions without being overwhelmed, enraged, ashamed, or emotionally collapsed. (Van Der Kolk, 2014. P.219-220). The recent novel by Pat Barker, The Silence of the Girls, draws parallels to the psychological horrors found in The Silence of the Lambs, while primarily highlighting the lack of agency and voice among the female characters within the narrative. These opening passages of the book hint at the untold story within Homer's The Iliad - a narrative that Euripides delves into in The Trojan Women: the tragic fate of the defeated side in the Trojan War, particularly the women and young girls. Barker skillfully captures the traumatic ordeal faced by Briseis, the spouse of King Mynes, as she becomes a prisoner following the fall of her city, Lyrnessus, at the hands of Achilles, his fierce Myrmidons, and other Greek soldiers. This cruel destiny is shared by all the captured women. The Silence of the Girls presents a deeply unsettling narrative, showcasing the graphic depiction of violence committed by these merciless warriors. What intensifies the distress is the deliberate, brutal dominance, degradation, and dehumanization inflicted upon the captive women. The most esteemed and lovely girls and women are then coerced into a new existence as sex slaves, enduring the customary humiliations and being treated as mere possessions, akin to Briseis. Upon her initial enslavement, Greek Nestor advises her to forget her past life and embrace her current circumstances. However, she adamantly refuses to comply. She is resolute in holding onto her sense of self and is determined to remember and assert her voice. While this decision amplifies the daily indignities and brutality she faces, it enables her to maintain her identity. At the tender age of nineteen, she stands firm in her resolve. The degradation commences as she is paraded alongside other female captives before the triumphant Greeks following the fall of her city, subjected to scrutiny as potential spoils by the leaders. Briseis perceives herself as 'a cow, tethered and awaiting sacrifice.' Despite attempting to recollect her past life with closed eyes, she is met with a cacophony of jeers and menacing jests from the inebriated soldiers. Achilles seizes her chin and angles her head to assess her appearance. As he departs, she opens her eyes to his declaration: "Cheers, lads. She'll do." The entire assembly erupts in laughter, every man in the vast arena joining in.

“The women of Lyrnessus are transported to Achaean Camp where they undergo a kind of bodily examination. “Two men, who never spoke except to each other, walked along the line of women, pulling down a lip here, a lower eyelid there, prodding bellies, squeezing breasts, thrusting their hands between our legs” (Barker, 2019, P. 19).

Throughout a significant portion of the remaining sections of the novel, we are presented with a series of personal humiliations and incidents of sexual assault that she is compelled to endure, initially while under the authority of Achilles. At first, his sudden sexual encounters are compared to a soldier's rough eagerness to don new armor, the only distinction being that the subject of his desire is a living woman who is reduced to nothing more than a desired object. As time goes on, his nightly sexual activities become more intimate and frenzied when she joins him in bed with the scent of the sea, symbolically purifying herself each night. However, Barker, the author, does not offer us comfort at this moment. Instead, she portrays Achilles as being reminded of the fragrance of his Nereid mother, illustrating his passion as disturbingly Oedipal and consequently even more degrading and humiliating for Briseis. Nevertheless, once his desires are fulfilled, he barely acknowledges her existence as a sentient human being. It is this consistent depiction of misogyny within the narrative that makes it exceedingly difficult to persevere in reading. (Lavery, 2018.NP)

“I cried that night. So, what did he do that was so terrible? Nothing much, I suppose, nothing I hadn't been expecting. But then, when I thought it was over and I was at last free to go, he took my chin between his thumb and forefinger and tilted my face up to his. For one insane moment I thought he was going to kiss me- but then, inserting a finger between my teeth to prize my jaws apart, he worked up a big gob of phlegm -leisurely, taking his time about it -and spat it into my open mouth. "There," he said. "Now you can go."(Barker,2019. P.107)

Susan Brownmiller, the author who revolutionized the discussion on rape with her influential treatise, shed light on the role of rape in upholding male dominance. She emphasized that the realization of men using their genitalia as a weapon to instill fear is a significant discovery in human history, comparable to the utilization of fire and the primitive stone axe. Throughout history, Brownmiller argues, rape has served as a crucial tool, perpetuating a conscious process of intimidation that keeps all women in a constant state of fear. (Herman, 1997.P.97)**.** Recalling and subsequently recounting her personal experiences could serve as a means of transcending the limitations imposed by history. In her narrative, she discloses that the act of sexual intercourse with Achilles was akin to his acts of violence and death. This encounter left a profound impact on her, as she states, "Something in me died that night" (Barker, 2019, p. 28). She characterizes her involvement with Achilles in terms of him testing out a newly acquired possession. Had his prized possession been the armor of a nobleman, he would not have rested until he had tested its capabilities (Barker, 2019, P. 28). Briseis, in her role as a slave, is reduced to an object, a reward, and Achilles' bed companion. She even considers this title as the most flattering description of her identity (Barker, 2019, P. 71). Through Briseis' accounts of her sexual encounters with Achilles, we also witness the vulnerable side of this renowned hero. Achilles becomes infatuated with Briseis due to the scent of her hair, reminiscent of the sea, just like that of his mother, Thetis, a sea nymph. (ALTIN, 2021. P.8-15-55)

Freud claimed that how fear affects the libido he mentioned that, He previously mentioned that the relationship between fear and the libido, which is otherwise clearly defined, does not align with the assumption that genuine fear should be the manifestation of the instinct for self-preservation in the face of danger. However, this assertion is hardly questionable. What if the emotion of fear is not challenged by the egoistic impulse, but rather by the ego-libido? The state of fear is always purposeless, and its lack of purpose becomes evident when it reaches a higher level. At that point, it disrupts the purposeful action of either fleeing or defending oneself, which serves the purpose of self-preservation. If we attribute the emotional aspect of actual fear to the ego-libido and the accompanying behavior to the egoistic instinct for self-preservation, we have successfully overcome all theoretical obstacles. (Freud, 1917.P.365)

Therefore, it is evident that the severity of a traumatic event holds minimal pathological importance on its own; rather, the outcome is contingent upon the specific circumstances. This provides us with a crucial insight into the concept of "predisposition."

The concept of "predisposition" raises the question of how a seemingly insignificant impression can have such a profound pathological effect. This question holds great importance and, as we will later discover, it plays a crucial role in the overall theory of neurosis. We must comprehend why events from the past, which may appear irrelevant, still hold so much significance that they can disrupt our reactions in present life mysteriously and unpredictably.

However, the early pioneers of psychoanalysis, as well as their successors, made every effort to identify the unique quality of these original traumatic experiences as the cause for their lasting impact. Freud delved the deepest, being the first and only one to recognize that a sexual element was intertwined with the traumatic event. This mixture, often unbeknownst to the patient, was primarily responsible for the effects of the trauma. The unconsciousness of sexuality during childhood sheds light on the enduring effects caused by the initial traumatic experience. The true emotional significance of that experience remains concealed from the patient, preventing it from entering consciousness. As a result, the emotion never dissipates or becomes exhausted. (Jung, Sonu Shamdasani and R F C Hull, 2012.P.15-16-17)

I lost myself in that work – and I found myself too. . . I started

to think: I can do this. And that belief took me a step further away

from being just Achilles’ bed-girl – or Agamemnon’s spittoon.

(Barker 2018.P.140)

The protagonist delivers a powerful and appropriate response to Priam's words, immediately directing our attention to the untold horrors endured by women in the war. By stating, "And I do what countless women before me have been forced to do. I spread my legs for the man who killed my husband and my brothers," the protagonist highlights the unimaginable suffering experienced by women. Barker's novel, The Silence of the Girls, further emphasizes the plight of the Trojan women, including Hecuba, Andromache, Cassandra, Polyxena, Iphis, Hecamede, Uza, Ritsa, Tecmessa, Chryseis, and countless others, who have endured even more degrading treatment at the hands of the victorious Greek heroes. Through the perspective of Briseis, Barker offers a unique opportunity to reexamine the events of The Iliad and shed light on the experiences of these enslaved women. Barker reminds readers of the situation of Briseis in her hard and traumatic manner like an old father coming to bring back his son's corpse to home.

When Priam, alone and unarmed, arrives in the darkness at the enemy camp to implore Achilles to return the lifeless body of his son Hector, the aged Trojan king utters a profound statement: "I engage in an unprecedented act, for I bestow a kiss upon the hands of the man who has taken my son's life" (Barker 2018, 267). Nevertheless, these poignant words of entreaty fail to stir any emotions within Briseis, as Barker portrays her character. Furthermore, upon witnessing the plight of Andromache, Hector's widow, who has tragically lost her only child in a heinous manner and is now assigned to Achilles's pimply adolescent son Pyrrhus, with the expectation that she will submit herself to him tonight, Briseis declares: "Indeed, the demise of young men in the throes of battle is a heart-wrenching tragedy – I have suffered the loss of four brothers, and no one needed to remind me of its magnitude. It is a tragedy deserving of countless laments – but their fate is not the most wretched. As I gazed upon Andromache, who must endure the remainder of her existence as a slave, I realized that we are in dire need of a new anthem.". (Barker 2018, 313–14) (Sen, 2020.P.52-53-54)

I wish I could forget it, but I can’t—he put his foot on my brother’s neck and pulled the spear out. Blood spurted from the wound, and my brother struggled for a full minute to go on breathing and then lay still. I saw my father’s sword drop from his loosening grip. Achilles had already moved on, to the next man, and the next. He killed sixty men that day I don't know how my third oldest brother died, but somehow or other. whether by the gates or on the Palace steps, he met his end. For the first and only time in my life, I was glad my mother was dead. (Barker, 2018. P. 20.21)

Leo Ettinger, a psychiatrist renowned for his research on survivors of the Nazi concentration camps, highlights the distressing conflict that arises between victims and bystanders. He observes that society often wishes to bury the memories of war and its victims, creating a shroud of forgetfulness over anything painful or unpleasant. This leads to a poignant confrontation between the victims, who may yearn to forget but are unable to do so, and those with strong, often unconscious motivations, who fervently desire to forget and successfully achieve it. The resulting contrast is deeply agonizing for both parties involved. In this silent and unequal dialogue, the most vulnerable individual inevitably becomes the losing side.

Additionally, Individuals exposed to prolonged, repeated trauma may experience a gradual, advancing type of post-traumatic stress disorder that infiltrates and undermines their personality. Unlike those who undergo a single acute trauma and may temporarily feel disconnected from themselves, those enduring chronic trauma may perceive themselves as permanently altered, or they may even lose the perception of having a self altogether. (Herman, 2015.P.19.97)

During the sacking of Lyrnessus, Achilles and his soldiers are mercilessly slaughtering the male population, including Briseis' brothers and husband. The citadel, where women and children seek refuge, is filled with the unpleasant odors of sweat, milk, infant waste, and menstrual blood. From her vantage point in the tower, Briseis witnesses the horrifying scene as Achilles, drenched in blood from his plumed helmet to his sandalled feet, celebrates his triumph by embracing another young man. The women are subjected to repeated acts of rape, while boys of fighting age are brutally killed in front of their mothers. Even pregnant women are not spared, as they are impaled through the belly in the hope of preventing the birth of a male child. Briseis' account exposes the sheer brutality of war. (Altin, 2021. P.14-854)

Freud's psychoanalytic understanding of trauma is defined as an overwhelming event that cannot be processed normally at the time of its occurrence, blocking its memory but haunting the victim until it is appropriately confronted and dealt with. William James compared trauma to a "thorn in the spirit," comparing it to a foreign object lodged in the psyche. In Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Freud emphasized the overwhelming nature of trauma, acting like a breach in the psyche's defensive wall, representing "excitations from outside which are powerful enough to break through the protective shield." Trauma is a foreign object lodged in the psyche, causing problems that can only be treated by being uncovered and extracted. Briseis main character steps toward recovery, she struggles in her mind and her new life however, she searches for peace and she finds sea water as a Gate for another world that renews her.

Literary trauma can be seen as a way to address the crisis of subjectivity, where the experience of finding oneself at a loss indicates a consciousness that is inadequate to reality. Freud's Four Fundamental Concepts emphasize the recognition of this inadequacy in psychoanalysis. From a trauma-theory perspective, finding oneself at a loss can be seen as the sudden discovery that our consciousness is an illusion or lie. This discovery threatens the near-total disqualification of normal defenses and triggers a reaction on the part of the ego. This wounding in the psychical grasp of selfhood puts the identity emerging through and dependent on the complex interplay of various psychical processes and states at risk. The discovery of what we might prefer would stay hidden is wounding in the sense that the psychical grasp of selfhood is injured to the point where the identity emerging through and dependent on the complex interplay of various psychical processes and states is put at risk. Traumas that are severe or pathological often escape the ego, creating a "posthumous" primary affective experience. This occurs when the original experience, initially not troubling, becomes a trauma after the event, indicating that the original experience is not initially a significant issue. (Kurtz, 2018.P.3.22.23). Achilles After the death of Patroclus faces trauma and does not accept what happened. After killing Hector and expressing his anger he returns to being himself again.

Individuals who have been exposed to prolonged and repeated trauma often develop a progressive and insidious form of post-traumatic stress disorder that gradually infiltrates and erodes their personality. Unlike those who have experienced a single acute trauma and may temporarily feel disconnected from themselves, individuals who have endured chronic trauma may perceive themselves as permanently changed or may even lose their sense of self entirely. The most profound fear for any person who has experienced trauma is the possibility of reliving the horrifying moment, and this fear becomes a reality for victims of ongoing abuse. Unsurprisingly, the repetition of trauma intensifies all the symptoms of hyperarousal associated with post-traumatic stress disorder. Chronically traumatized individuals remain in a state of constant hypervigilance, anxiety, and agitation. Psychiatrist Elaine Hilberman aptly describes the perpetual dread experienced by battered women, where even the slightest reminders of violence such as sirens, thunder, or a door slamming can elicit intense fear. These individuals live with a chronic sense of impending doom, always anticipating something terrible to happen. (Kurtz, 2018.P.86)

The initial responses of survivors following a traumatic event are multifaceted and influenced by various factors such as personal experiences, availability of support systems, coping mechanisms, and the reactions of the community. While the intensity of these reactions may vary, even the most severe responses are considered normal reactions to dealing with trauma and should not be viewed as indicators of mental illness.

The emotional responses to trauma can differ significantly and are heavily influenced by the individual's sociocultural background. Apart from the initial emotional reactions during the traumatic event, other emotions that are likely to emerge include anger, fear, sadness, and shame. However, individuals may struggle to recognize these feelings due to various reasons. Some may have limited exposure to emotional expression within their family or community, leading to difficulties in identifying and expressing their emotions. Others may associate intense emotions with past trauma, perceiving emotional expression as risky or a loss of control. Additionally, some individuals may deny having any emotional response to their traumatic experiences, describing their reactions as a sense of numbness or lack of emotions. (National Library of Medicine, 2014.NP) Briseis and her response to the trauma that she faced was quiet and trying to understand what happened.

In the encampment, the women undergo evaluation for allocation. This marks a pivotal moment in Briseis’ life as she is deprived of her status, her position, and most significantly, she is deprived of her sense of self. She is assigned to Achilles, the individual responsible for the slaughter of her siblings and spouse, as a spoils of war, a concubine, and a bed-slave. Nestor, a venerable figure of the Achaean army, counsels the women to erase their past lives from memory. Failure to do so, he warns, would lead to profound discontent. However, Briseis harbors a divergent strategy. She declares, forget. So, there was my duty laid out in front of me, as simple and as clear as a bowl of water: Remember” (Barker, 2019, p. 20). Remembering becomes an act of rebellion, a defiance against her predetermined fate. (Altin, 2021. P.15-855). The main character Briseis was going through sexual and emotional traumatic events that could happen to anyone or at any time.

**2.2: The aftermath of silence**

Silence plays a crucial role in unlocking the hidden realm of the patient. Instead of viewing silence as a defensive tactic, the therapist can see it as a direct path to the patient's past traumatic events. The writer suggests identifying these traumatic silences during therapy sessions and in the patient's transference as a way of reliving previous, uncontrollable traumatic emotions and memories. In this framework, silences represent a recurrence of a disconnecting encounter and a reflection of the patient's identification with the initial source of silence. (Ritter, 2014. P.176)

Silence is frequently perceived as a manifestation of profound psychological distress. In her 2014 article titled "Silence as the Voice of Trauma," Maria Ritter emphasizes that silence serves as a gateway to the unspoken realm of the individual. Instead of interpreting silence solely as a defensive tactic, Ritter suggests that analysts should view it as a direct path to the patient's traumatic encounters. (Mazumder, 2021. P.3-50)

[Lewis Herman](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&sca_esv=7b4f5aad248322ac&sca_upv=1&q=Judith+Herman&si=AKbGX_qWtsfHufXsq_1jeDkJp50FstNngDxsch3EVTUjn7imcHEkmkofruSY4pi60Tyz8YpL2xUmJj7o7dvl28hfcNkQ0JoC2SW4H0V3142UTRAlfHXt_R91xSIg7zhGGH9cl-H8tqCBaifvWB9G82d_ZouKwgMBRkIqMKSVNukKzeVuDh8aha6iwZt9c4wBFhNZ7Av5-PzerOcaSIfEfRiQqQOkus1KIw%3D%3D&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjN9pX2i5qFAxXwVfEDHW4ZD6EQmxMoAHoECC0QAg) in his book mentions that Exploiting traumatic experiences within a group can have a disorganizing effect on a survivor during the initial stages of recovery. However, once the survivor progresses to the second stage, this same work can become highly productive. A well-structured group offers a powerful catalyst for reconstructing the survivor's narrative and serves as a vital source of emotional support during the mourning process. As each survivor shares their unique story, the group fosters a profound sense of universality. By bearing witness to the survivor's testimony, the group imparts both social and personal significance to their experiences. While confiding in one person emphasizes the private and confessional nature of the survivor's story, sharing it with a group signifies a shift towards a more public and judicial aspect of testimony. Ultimately, the group aids each survivor in expanding their narrative.

By the third phase of recovery, the survivor has reestablished some level of trust. She can trust others when it is appropriate, and she can also withhold trust when necessary. She has developed the ability to differentiate between these two scenarios. Additionally, she has regained her sense of autonomy while still maintaining connections with others. She can assert her perspective and boundaries while respecting those of others. She has started to take more initiative in her life and is in the process of forming a new identity. She is now prepared to deepen her relationships with others and seek genuine friendships that are not based on performance, appearance, or maintaining a false persona. In romantic and familial relationships, she is now open to greater intimacy.(Herman, 1997.P.205.222)

But it's the girls I remember most. Arianna, held her hand out to me on the roof of the citadel before she turned and plunged to her death. Or Polyxena, only a few hours ago: "Better to die on Achilles's burial mound than live and be a slave." I stood there, in the cold wind, feeling coarse, lumpen, and degraded in comparison with their fierce purity. But then I felt my baby kick. I pressed my hand hard against my belly and I was glad I'd chosen life. **(**Barker,2018, P.275)

Levinas (2003) briefly touches on the topic of suicide in "On Escape," emphasizing that death is not a solution or an exit from existence. He argues that suicide is not a viable way out of being, as it does not resolve the issues that life presents and fails to diminish the significance of earthly values. This perspective is further explored in Totality and Infinity (Levinas, 1969), where Levinas delves into the complexities of suffering and death.

According to Levinas (1969), the fact that an individual would choose death over enduring certain circumstances is a tragic indication that suffering, not death, is the ultimate test of one's willpower (p. 239). Opting for death rather than enduring pain not only reflects an unhappy will but also a defeated one, where the desire for control, as Freud (e.g., 1905c, p. 198) described it, has ceased to exist. Illness and persecution erode the will, transforming it into a state of extreme passivity. "In suffering, reality exerts its influence on the inherent nature of the will, which ultimately surrenders completely to the will of others" (Levinas, 1969, p. 238). (Atterton, 2007.P.11.12)

However, ensuring safety becomes a challenging task when dealing with a patient who is still entangled in a previously abusive relationship. It is crucial to always be mindful of the potential for violence, even if the patient claims to no longer feel afraid. It is not uncommon for a victim of abuse to agree to a couple's therapy with their abuser shortly after a violent incident. In many cases, the abuser may promise to never resort to violence again and may even agree to undergo counseling to demonstrate a willingness to change. The victim, hopeful for a better future, may be eager to participate in therapy to salvage the relationship. As a result, she may downplay or ignore the ongoing risks involved. (Herman, 1997.P.168)

The concept of transference in Freud's theory of the human psyche highlights the compulsion to repeat traumatic events, a concept he found challenging to understand. He proposed that the human psyche is driven by two major instinctual drives: Eros, or sexual instincts, and Thanatos, or the death instinct, a natural desire to restore a state disturbed by life. This concept helped Freud understand the human tendency towards destruction, including self-destruction, and the importance of addressing this compulsion in his work, Beyond the Pleasure Principle. (Anon, 2017.NP)

Pat Barker wants to show that this story is not a love story in contrast, is a story of a horrifying situation and rape and humiliation, and all different types of trauma and its aftermath. what will they make of us, the people of those unimaginably distant times? One thing I do know: they won’t want the brutal reality of conquest and slavery. They won’t want to be told about the massacres of men and boys, the enslavement of women and girls. They won’t want to know we were living in a rape camp. No, they’ll go for something altogether softer. A love story, perhaps? I just hope they manage to work out who the lovers are **(**Barker, 2019, P. 324).

On the contrary, even though Barker’s Achilles is also handsome, ‘the most beautiful man alive’ (Barker 2018, 49), the codes of romance fail to apply. Unlike Rissa, a former prostitute, who finds it easy to give her body, and Tecmessa, a younger captive, who convinces herself that she is in love with her captor,1 Barker’s Briseis watches Achilles constantly yet feels no desire for him, always remembering that he killed her bothers and husband: ‘You never mention his looks. And it’s true, I don’t, I find it difficult. How do you separate a tiger’s beauty from its ferocity?’ (49).

Briseis’s survival is therefore defined in terms both of silence and a voice. Briseis refuses both the romance scenario and the tragic scenario: she does not hurl herself from the tower in the beginning and will do what it takes to survive, even though she is turned from a queen into a slave. She wears an impassive face and smiles when serving wine at dinner, she controls her body when Achilles wants her. Barker works within the limits of the silence enforced upon a character numbed by shock and trauma, by her refusal to let herself feel too much, and by the wordlessness of slaves. There are degrees in this silence. (Lanone, 2020.P.2-7)

Briseis defines the days she spends in the hospital as a “happy time”. She explains: “I lost myself in that work – and I found myself too. . . I started to think: I can do this. And that belief took me a step further away from being just Achilles’ bed-girl – or Agamemnon’s spittoon” (Barker, 2019, p. 140). (Altin, 2021. P.18-858)

Survivor faces the task of creating a future. She has mourned the old self that the trauma destroyed; now she must develop a new self. Her relationships have been tested and forever changed by the trauma; now she must develop new relationships. The old beliefs that gave meaning to her life have been challenged; now she must find anew a sustaining faith. These are the tasks of the third stage of recovery. In accomplishing this work, the survivor reclaims her world. Survivors whose personalities have been shaped in the traumatic environment often feel at this stage of recovery as though they are refugees entering a new country. (Trauma and Recovery P.196)

Individuals who have experienced trauma often endure harm to the fundamental aspects of their identity. They may struggle to trust themselves, others, and even their faith. Their self-worth is under attack due to feelings of shame, guilt, and powerlessness. The ability to form close relationships is hindered by conflicting emotions of dependency and apprehension. The sense of self that was established before the traumatic event is permanently shattered. (Herman, 1992.P.56) Barker's portrayal of trauma as a fundamental force in her seemingly commonplace story holds great importance in revealing the intricate connection between historical traumatic events and individual or familial experiences. Furthermore, this depiction goes beyond personal relationships to propagate and spread trauma within larger societal frameworks. (Atkinson, 2017.P.1)

Despite her anger and grief, these emotions held no significance in the grand scheme of things. Presently, Achilles has passed away, leaving Briseis carrying his unborn child. By bravely shattering the long-standing silence and sharing her encounters and emotions, Briseis manages to reclaim her self-worth and restore her confidence. (Altin, 2021. P.20-860)

After Briseis everything changed for her, she is not alone anymore it can be hope that a step toward recovery from her trauma. The central contradiction in dealing with psychological trauma lies in the conflict between the desire to deny horrific events and the need to speak out about them. Those who have endured atrocities often recount their experiences in a highly emotional, contradictory, and fragmented manner, which undermines their credibility and serves the dual purposes of revealing the truth and maintaining secrecy. When the truth is finally acknowledged, survivors can begin their journey towards recovery. However, secrecy often prevails, and the traumatic event manifests itself not as a verbal narrative, but as a set of symptoms. These symptoms of psychological distress simultaneously draw attention to the existence of an unspeakable secret and divert attention away from it. This is most evident in the way traumatized individuals oscillate between feeling numb and reliving the event. As traumatic syndromes share common features, the recovery process also follows a common path. The key stages of recovery involve establishing a sense of safety, reconstructing the trauma narrative, and reconnecting survivors with their community. The second part of the book provides an overview of the healing process and presents a fresh conceptual framework for psychotherapy with traumatized individuals. The characteristics of traumatic disorders and the principles of treatment are exemplified through the testimonies of survivors and case examples drawn from a wide range of literature. (Herman, 1992.P.1.3)

Traumatization is a complex mental process that involves the ability to make meaning and create a cohesive sense of time, reality, self, and experience. This process requires a higher level of mental functioning than synthesis, particularly mental efficiency. Traumatization-related dissociation of the personality is known as a syndrome of nonrealization. The core issue in traumatization is that survivors have been unable to fully realize what has happened to them and how it affects their lives and who they are. Chronically traumatized individuals often have difficulties with realizing not only their traumatic experiences but also in understanding the function of reality (function du réel). This capacity is often impaired in trauma survivors, both in organizing a timeline of their experiences and in knowing what is real at the moment. Terr (1983, 1984) noted that time sense is a relatively recent evolutionary acquisition, and as such, is readily disrupted by traumatizing experiences. This makes it difficult for trauma survivors to realize their experiences and their identity. (Der, E R S Nijenhuis and Steele, 2006.P.171.182).

Furthermore, Traumatic life experiences and significant losses can greatly increase the likelihood of developing PTSD and other mental and behavioral health issues [2,3]. This perspective on risk has led to a generalized approach to the care of trauma and loss victims, assuming that everyone requires some form of crisis intervention or grief counseling to build resilience. However, this "equal risk model" lacks a solid foundation and the intervention strategies that stem from it are problematic because they lack evidence-based support [4]. Instead, these strategies often arise from the genuine desire of organizations to take action in the face of tragedy. Historically, early interventions for trauma victims have involved external parties implementing short-term strategies that have proven to be inadequate in various ways. (Litz, 2014.NP)

Trauma research focuses on memory and the diagnosis of PTSD is a way of structuring traumatic memory. Freud's original idea was that traumatic memories were formed after the event, rather than the event itself. Traumatic memories were constructed post hoc based on the effects and needed a second factor to become traumatic. A distinction was made between the immediate overwhelming of the ego and subsequent psychic trauma. A shock may later become a psychic trauma when experienced as memories in context. (Varvin and Philos,2013. P.17-18)

Furthermore, Humans are a resilient species, but traumatic experiences leave traces on our histories, cultures, minds, emotions, joy, intimacy, biology, and immune systems. Trauma affects not only those directly exposed to it but also those around them, such as soldiers returning home from combat, depressed wives, and insecure children. Trauma is unbearable, and many victims, soldiers, and children try to push it out of their minds to move on. It takes tremendous energy to keep functioning while carrying the memory of terror and vulnerability. (van der Kolk, 2014.P.12)

Caruth's research suggests that traumatic memories may be suppressed, but they persist in the survivor's psyche as symptoms like nightmares, hallucinations, depression, and anxiety. These reactions solidify the body's role in recollecting the event. Psychotherapy sessions can help restore mental well-being by facilitating the recovery of repressed memories through free associations. Caruth suggests that overwhelming experiences blocked by repression or amnesia do not resurface in flashbacks but are shaped by their lack of integration into consciousness. (Investigating Trauma in Narrating World War I: A Psychoanalytical Reading of Pat Barker’s Regeneration, 2016)

Moreover, In the aftermath of every atrocity, a range of arguments emerges, spanning from outright denial to sophisticated and elegant rationalizations. It is predictable to encounter the same apologies: it never occurred, the victim is lying, the victim is exaggerating, the victim is to blame for their suffering, and, in any case, it is time to let go of the past and move forward. The more influential the perpetrator, the greater their authority to shape and define reality, and the more their arguments triumph. The study of psychological trauma must constantly grapple with this inclination to discredit or render victims invisible. Throughout the history of this field, there has been a contentious debate regarding whether individuals with post-traumatic conditions deserve care and respect or should be met with contempt, whether their suffering is genuine or feigned, and whether their narratives are true or false, and if false, whether they are products of imagination or malicious fabrication. (Herman, 1997.P.19). Briseis silence breaks by telling her story, like a patient in her therapy session, she talks about her traumatic experience. She gives a meaning of her silence.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, Psychoanalytic theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the trauma of war depicted in Pat Barker's novel "The Silence of the Girls". Through the lens of Freud's concepts such as repression, trauma, and the unconscious mind, we can analyze the psychological impact of war on the characters in the novel, particularly the women who are often silenced and marginalized in narratives of conflict. Barker's portrayal of the aftermath of war highlights the deep-rooted psychological scars that soldiers and civilians alike carry, shedding light on the complexities of trauma and its long-lasting effects. By delving into the unconscious motivations and defense mechanisms of the characters, we gain a deeper understanding of their behaviors and struggles as they navigate the horrors of battle and its aftermath. Moreover, Psychoanalytic theory allows us to explore the interplay between individual experiences and societal norms, shedding light on how trauma is both personal and collective. Through this lens, we can appreciate the nuanced ways in which war impacts not only the individual psyche but also the broader social fabric. Overall, Psychoanalytic theory offers a rich and insightful framework for analyzing the trauma of war in "The Silence of the Girls", allowing readers to delve into the complexities of human experience in the face of violence and conflict. It invites us to engage critically with the characters' struggles, motivations, and coping mechanisms, while also highlighting the resilience and strength that can emerge in the aftermath of trauma.

Additionally, the concept of the unconscious mind can shed light on the repressed desires, fears, and traumas that shape the characters' actions and decisions. By analyzing the unconscious motivations of characters such as Briseis we can uncover the hidden depths of their psyches and how their past experiences impact their present circumstances. Furthermore, exploring defense mechanisms such as repression, displacement, and projection can offer insights into how the characters cope with the traumas of war and navigate their inner conflicts. In Pat Barker's poignant novel, "The Silence of the Girls," we are transported to a realm where the echoes of sexual and emotional trauma reverberate through the lives of the characters. Through their stories, we witness the profound impact of war on the human spirit, seeing how women are stripped of their autonomy and silenced in the face of unspeakable horrors. Barker's storytelling lays bare the painful truths of trauma, exposing the festering wounds beneath the surface and the enduring scars that persist long after the conflicts have ended. The aftermath of trauma extends beyond the individual experience,

encompassing a collective confrontation with historical scars and the responsibility to recognize the muted voices among us. Barker's novel delves into the repercussions of silence, emphasizing the lasting impact of unspoken suffering and unattended trauma. This story delivers a powerful message—to actively engage in listening, empathizing, and fostering spaces for healing and reconciliation. The examination of psychoanalysis and trauma interwoven with the complex narrative of "The Silence of the Girls" offers a profound understanding of human suffering, showcasing the resilience and strength ingrained in the human spirit.

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