

**TRAUMA AND PSYCHOANALYSIS: AN INTRODUCTION**

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**ABSTRACT**

Psychoanalysis is a system of psychological theory and therapy which aims to treat mental disorders by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind and bringing repressed fears and conflicts into the conscious mind by techniques such as dream interpretation and free association. The meaning of the term trauma has been taken from a "stress or blow that may produce disordered feelings or behavior" to a "state or condition produced by such a stress or blow". In other words, the term trauma refers to the state of mind which results from an injury. It is a fantasy which can be read as an articulation of trauma. It is a devastating and damaging experience. It is an experience lived belatedly at the level of its unspeakable truth which is revealed in psychoanalytic theory. So that psychoanalysis can consider the "textual anxieties" surrounding the representation of trauma.

**Keywords:** Psychoanalysis, Trauma, Stress, Psychological, Emotional, Literature.

**INTRODUCTION**

The object of psychoanalytic literary criticism, at its very simplest, can be the psychoanalysis of the author or of a particularly interesting character in a given work. The criticism is similar to psychoanalysis itself, closely following the analytic interpretive process discussed in Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* and other works. Critics may view the fictional characters as psychological case studies, attempting to identify such Freudian concepts as the Oedipus complex, Freudian slips, Id, ego and superego, and so on, and demonstrate how they influence the thoughts and behaviors of fictional characters.

However, more complex variations of psychoanalytic criticism are possible. The concepts of psychoanalysis can be deployed with reference to the narrative or poetic structure itself, without requiring access to the authorial psyche (an interpretation motivated by French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan's remark that "the unconscious is structured like a language"). Or the founding texts of psychoanalysis may themselves be treated as literature, and re-read for the light cast by their formal qualities on their theoretical content (Freud's texts frequently resemble detective stories, or the archaeological narratives of which he was so fond).

Like all forms of literary criticism, psychoanalytic criticism can yield useful clues to the sometime baffling symbols, actions, and settings in a literary work; however, like all forms of literary criticism, it has its limits. For one thing, some critics rely on psychocriticism as a "one size fits all" approach, when other literary scholars argue that no one approach can adequately illuminate or interpret a complex work of art. The danger is that the serious student may become theory-ridden, forgetting that Freud's is not the only approach to literary criticism. To see a great work of fiction or a great poem primarily as a psychological case study is often to

miss its wider significance and perhaps even the essential aesthetic experience it should provide.

Literature has a great influence in the life of human being. It has empowered language to display the inner world of man. There is a space for memories, introspection, retrospection, foreshadow, flashback and awful remembrances that are colored by pain, wound and trauma. Now, it is the time of producing the plot of anxiety in modern world. Psychoanalysis is concerned with the psyche of the people on the one side and on the other side literature concerns with literary texts which illustrate the imaginary people as representations of the real individuals. Significantly, individuality and subjectivity are the great terms for both of them.

The meaning of the term trauma has been taken from a "stress or blow that may produce disordered feelings or behavior" to a "state or condition produced by such a stress or blow". In other words, the term trauma refers to the state of mind which results from an injury. It is a fantasy which can be read as an articulation of trauma. It is a devastating and damaging experience. It is an experience lived belatedly at the level of its unspeakable truth which is revealed in psychoanalytic theory. So that psychoanalysis can consider the "textual anxieties" surrounding the representation of trauma.. Trauma significantly in Literature Trauma or traumatize means a traumatic event which involves a single event or experience; it involves the feelings and emotions. Moreover, psychoanalysis trauma engages serious long-term negative consequences. Essentially, past trauma and traumatic memories affect the mind of the characters. Confusion and insecurity cause trauma; typical causes of psychoanalysis trauma are sexual abuse, employment discrimination, police brutality, bullying, domestic violence, and particularly childhood experiences. Significantly, childhood trauma can lead to violent behaviour. Psychoanalysis trauma are caused by catastrophic events, war, treachery, betray and sexual abused. However, the main point is that the different people will react differently to similar events. In other words, not all people who experience the same traumatic event will become psychoanalysis traumatized. Interdisciplinary, trauma has a close relationship with the other field such as psychology, sociology, history, war, politic, and significantly literature.

Trauma as a new phenomenon makes an interdisciplinary role for itself. It starts a movement to illustrate an episode of changing; the path of suffering and pain continue to reach to a point of knowledge and understanding. Literature is one of the ways we tell one another about aspects of human experience that cannot be contained by ordinary modes of expression and that may even exceed human understanding. Literary critics and psychoanalytic thinkers work and reach to the assumption that talking about the past will bring their greater clarity, knowledge and insight. Freud as a psychoanalyst highlights these terms "the talking cure", "cleansing of the soul" and being healed.

Margaret Atwood as a literary writer wants to go beyond the entanglement of past trauma, however profound and obsessive it has been. She begins with a psychoanalytic examination of the characters' trauma and ends with their self-knowledge. Remembering the past and retelling the history are only part of the solution, as revealed in her novels such as *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Cat's Eye*. The revelations of past traumas and the efficacy of psychoanalytic practice are the main theme of her fiction. The traumatized narrator has certain (traumatic) experiences. The narrators belatedly acknowledge their pain and loss and are subsequently able to

contemplate a return to society and Traumatic pathology cannot be located in a traumatic event. Trauma makes people imagine that traumatic events do not simply occur overtime, event comes into being belatedly. The impact of the traumatic event lies precisely in its belatedness, in its refusal to be simply located, in its insistent appearance outside the boundaries of any single place or time. Atwood's work is the return from death and/or the underworld. The survival, the return from the dead, the shape of a ghost and the repressed memories are making the details of psychoanalytic practice. The novels contain repressed trauma which affects the memory. The novels represent a secret or repressed knowledge that is associated with the return of the dead.

There is a close relationship between memory and trauma.. Literature in the form of novel, poem or short study conveys the truth of life which is full of trauma for female characters. It is necessary to say that the source of trauma can be man or a mute woman. An exotic is a strange woman who has the language to express the traumatized conditions to the witnesses. Her aim is to reshape and become extract that condition for finding more evidences.

Arguably, the effect of trauma on the psyche of women brings future dystopia and horrifying universe; accordingly, fertility stops and women are forced to bear children. The mute women are the prisoners in the world; betrayal and jealousy are common; the privilege of sex and gender is for men; the strict gender rules must be obeyed by females. Cruelty and terrible things crystallize in Atwood's novels in which women do them to each other.

They are mute in the time of trauma. They are the witnesses of the hard times. They rely on their belated experiences. Atwood uses them to illustrate menace and the trees of the universe in the dystopia, and futuristic fiction. They are concerned with the pitiless, ruthless, criminal, jealousy and naughty women. They are wanderers. The traumatized past forces them to make a journey from reality to imaginary. They depart to their introspection, memories and remembrances to get the power of not be mute but express the trauma and find a solution for not being a victim. They attempt to survive. There is no escaping the fact that to be survived is a result of self knowledge.

The haunted subject who is muted in different field of the study no longer wants to be hunted by the hunters and she makes a decision to get rid of anything. It is widely supposed that she rejects to be victimized and to be dominated or controlled by the hunters. Significantly, she breaks the rules. She makes a distance with trauma; after that her aim is to free herself from the boundaries of the society. Continuously, there is a moment in Atwood's novels, when the character makes a critical discovery. It is, seemingly, the time of understanding or anagnorisis. It is the hero's sudden awareness of a Real situation. In this revelation, the hero no longer is a mute and passive character, but she gets the new insight; she expresses her interior mind, she represents the knowledge and the recognition that she has got after suffering and pain in different fields of study. The notion is attractive when we accept it has been down for emphasizing on the significant role that trauma can have on different fields of this study and outstanding its role of interdisciplinary.

Hero gains self-knowledge and self confidence to improve her life. More specifically, she teaches a lesson to the other female characters she makes a new form of archetypal figure of herself; she becomes an anti hero in different fields of a study. Thus, not only there is a woman as a

survival, but also she is a winner. She is full of hope and prosperity to change the world of dystopia into a utopia, and by her power she wants to extinguish the disastrous past days.

Literature illustrates the mental trauma by the literary studies. It is a social challenge for gaining the new, fresh, and sharp knowledge by self. Interestingly, trauma has an inherently ethical, social, political and historical dimension. Therefore we cannot limit it only in the psychological studies. It influences naturally to the different fields of the studies in order to show its interdisciplinary role and its profound impact that it has both within and beyond the field of studies.

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