ABDUL RAZZAQ JUMAAH AYYED

Redefining War Novels:
A Psychological Approach with Reference to Pat Barker's Novels

SUMMARY

The First World War, which took place between 1914 and 1918, did not begin to be analyzed, thought and interpreted as it should be, because in 1939, two decades away, another more terrible war began. In the 20 years of peace, monuments have been erected to remember the millions of people fallen on the battlefields, memories have been written and published, and in the attics of millions of houses, in the shrouded and dusty cases, prized treasures – campaign logs, photos, military items – have been preserved. The outbreak of a new war, with infinitely greater violence than that of the Great War, placed it in a cone of shadow. In the six years of fierce fighting, World War II has left tens of millions dead, destroying destinies, lifting curtains, and setting up dictators, marking the international politics and relations of the coming decades. The deep sufferings left on the cheek of the old continent were hardly erased.

Collective memory has commemorated, celebrated and accurately marked the leap of years since the end of this conflict. Tens of thousands of war memorial works have been erected, for example, Paris is full of commemorative plaques of places where members of the Resistance were killed by the Germans. This is how the French historian Pierre Nora denounced the courage of this cult of marking the past, qualifying it as a commemorative bulimia. As the survivors and the passions faded through time, the World War I re-emerged in the historian's workshops, whose centenary was on the horizon. Unfortunately, all those who took part in the Great War have died. Gheorghe Pănculescu, the last Romanian participant in the Great War, died in 2007, Lazarel Ponticelli, the French veteran of the 1914-1918 age, died in 2008, and the last British World War II combatant, Henry Patch, died in 2009. This context allowed the event to be revised and viewed with other eyes.

A century after the peace of signed and despite the many conflicts that followed and sometimes surpassed it, the war of 1914-1918 still remains the Great War, as it has been called by its contemporaries since 1915.

The commemoration of the centenary is manifested, editorially, by an unprecedented influx of publications that recalls the privileged relationship that the Great War has always maintained with the written word. This is evidenced by the exceptional production of period texts, to which has been added the uninterrupted proliferation of comments. The sudden media attention given to scholarly works (dictionaries, encyclopedias, monographs) highlights the fertility of academic research on the subject, mainly in the field of human sciences. First World War Studies, as they have been designated by the Anglo-American taxonomy, continue to flourish and are undergoing a recent renewal that is not only due to the commemorative effect.

In this particular context, we have been interested in the literary side of the question, which proposes to study war as a subject of writing. It is clear that the study of the relation "literature and war" goes well beyond the framework of a theme traditionally inscribed in literary history to constitute a specific critical field. The breadth and diversity of the texts engendered by the First World War led to talk of "war literature" rather than military or historical literature. Is writing the war a matter of "the literary thing" or the document? And what status should be given to this mass of writings? We will see that these questions have aroused the embarrassment of both historians and literary critics. It turns out that the "writings of the Great War" do not always coincide with the boundaries allocated to literature, which themselves fluctuate with cultural changes.

There have always been psychological victims of war, but it wasn't until the Great War that medical science began to understand it and try the proper diagnoses that are familiar to us today. During the war, it was thought that "shell shock" or "war neurosis" was down to the physical impact of exploding military ordnance. Later, it was discovered that the causes were emotional, such as the frontline campaign, the close proximity to death, or those moments when a close friend) or enemy) met a violent end. The symptoms were shared by all the traumatised soldiers – speech difficulties, twitches, anxiety, digestive disorders, or even more comprehensive nervous indispositions. No plausible explanation was given to the fact that these symptoms would more than often manifest themselves when the patient was back to civilian life, and would persist long after the end of the war. Most of the patients did not recover sufficiently to return to the army or the front. Despite the great number of victims during the Great War, and countless more

sufferers in the WWII, it wasn't until 1980 and the aftermath of the Vietnam war that this condition was formally recognised as post-traumatic stress disorder.

Our personal approach of Pat Barker's work, finalized in the present dissertation, was made possible through intensive reading not only of her novels, but also of a rich bibliography, and was based on a number of research objectives:

1. To highlight the historical importance and the devastating effects of the Great War, the impact of this world conflagration on the lives of the combatants and those behind the lines, and the relevance of the lessons learned (or not) for the following century;
2. To discuss the Great War as seen through the eyes of the British combatant poets – Robert Graves, Siegfried Sassoon, and Wilfred Owen – and the way their personal painful experiences were further re-created by Pat Barker in her novels;
3. To situate Barker's novels not only in the particular context of British fiction devoted to the Great War, but also in the more general context of European war literature, with references to other novels published in the participating countries: France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Romania, and others;
4. To discuss the treatment of war trauma (or, shell shock) and the special relationship between the psychiatrist and his patients as a central topic of Barker's novels;
5. To underline the central position occupied by *The Regeneration Trilogy* among the other novels written by Pat Barker;
6. To show how the "voicelessness" of the Great War veterans who were fighting the war to end all wars, and their silence regarding the "unspeakability" of their experiences on the battlefield turned into an arena that the post-war writers, such as Pat Barker, were eager to explore.

We are well aware that Pat Barker is not the only British writer dealing with the unhappy consequences of the Great War. Many others books have been written which are populated with the damaged veterans and wounded souls whose stories are still relevant today, and a comprehensive comparative study of some of these novels would be a benefic continuation of our present research project. A second limitation which could become a further direction of study that was only hinted at and that we could not properly develop is a comparative study of the novels written by writers belonging to the other countries involved in the war (see objective 3

above), among them: *All Quiet on the Western Front* ("Im Westen nichts Neues," 1929) by Erich Maria Remarque (Germany); *Fear: A Novel of World War I* ("La Peur," 1930) by Gabriel Chevallier (France); *The Case of Sergeant Grischa* ("Der Streit um den Sergeanten Grischa", 1927) by Arnold Zweig (Germany), *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* ("Los cuatro jinetes del Apocalipsis" 1916) by Vicente Blasco Ibáñez (Spain), *The Good Soldier Švejk and His Fortunes in the World War* ("Osudy dobrého vojáka Švejka za světové války" 1921-23) by Jaroslav Hašek (The Czech Republic), or *The Forest of the Hanged* ("Pădurea spânzuraţilor," 1922) by Liviu Rebreanu (Romania). And the list may continue.

The major approach we have resorted to is the psychoanalytical approach, due to the ample references to war trauma and the psychiatric treatment of the shell-shock afflicted patients at the Craiglockhart Hospital in Edinburgh, under the supervision of Dr Rivers whose personal method of treating neurosis, the "talking cure" was famous at the time. Freud had demonstrated that the initial causes of neuroses were the harmful effects of traumatic experiences which, repressed from conscious awareness, continue to control an individual's conduct, feelings and thinking. Freud's focus on psychic trauma and its unconscious effects manifested in human thought and behaviour made it possible to apply the scientific method to the study of consciousness, even if the science of the time was unable to establish the existing connections between consciousness and neurological structures and activities.

The second approach to Pat Barker's fiction in the context of the centenary celebrations of the Great War is mainly comparative. Among other approaches to comparative literature, we have relied upon René Wellek's definition: ""Comparative literature will study all literature from an international perspective, with a consciousness of the unity of all literary creation and experience. […] comparative literature is identical with the study of literature independent of linguistic, ethnic, and political boundaries. It cannot be confined to a single method: description, characterization, interpretation, narration, explanation, evaluation, are used in its discourse as much as comparison" (Wellek 1970: 19).

Last but not least, we have touched upon the principles of feminist theory, and Pat Barker's position towards Feminism, and gender studies. One of the trends of gender studies is to question whether or not there is a female writing; that is, if women, because they are women, have a

perspective, a style, a way of writing different from those of men. Curiously, it never arises if there is a masculine writing; This implies that the paradigm is one, that of the writers, and what women do is judged and cataloged by comparison. Judging something "in comparison to" is necessarily reductionist but, if it is not from a comparative point of view, how can we speak of a feminine writing? If this categorization is not applicable in the case of authors of the masculine gender, we would be classifying feminine writing for what it is not: applying a qualification of differentiation with respect to its counterpart. And this is where Pat Barker's writing comes in and answers these questions.

Our dissertation is structured as follows: Introduction: *Psychology, Psychoanalysis and Literature*, Part One: *The Literature of the Great War* (Chapter One: *The Changing Concept of the (Great) War*; Chapter Two: *Writers at War – European Echoes*; Chapter Three: *British Literary Responses*); Part Two: *Pat Barker – the Work of a War Chronicler* (Chapter Four: *Pat Barker – A Literary Portrait*; Chapter Five: *Soldiers and Civilians – Post-War Trauma*; Chapter Six: *Toby's Room – a Historical Fresco, a Social Satire, or a Feminist Novel?*); Part Three: *The Regeneration Trilogy: A Case Study* (Chapter Seven: *Writing about War and Trauma*; Chapter Eight: *Psychological Treatment*; Chapter Nine: *The Doctor and His Patients*, followed by Conclusions: *The Regeneration Trilogy between Modernity and Postmodernity*, Illustrations, a list of Works Studied.

INTRODUCTION: *Psychology, Psychoanalysis and Literature* establishes the connection between the "psychological approach" mentioned in the title, and the complex analysis of Barker's *Trilogy* from the critical perspective offered by the psychoanalytical theory. We have based our account of the relationships between psychoanalysis and literature starting from Sigmund Freud's research on the unconscious and his interpretation of the psychic laws that govern the creative process and the world of fiction, literary characters and myths, etc. For some authors, the influence of psychoanalysis in the field of literature has been so decisive that it has even altered the way of reading literary works. It is even said that the techniques of psychoanalytic interpretation help to better understand the literary text and that they also suppose a great help for literary theory and criticism.

PART ONE: *The Literature of the Great War* is a general overview of the European literary climate during the Great War and immediately after, and contains concise presentations of several European war novels with a special chapter devoted to the work of the British combatant poets. It also covers the presence of writers on the battlefields of World War I, and discusses the responses of the British writers to the devastating tragedy of the war.

Chapter One: *The Changing Concept of the (Great) War* starts with a Prologue that connects the material damages, human losses and severe cases of war trauma (or, PTSD) caused by the Great War to recent events in my own country, ravaged by dictatorship, numerous wars, American invasion and the unending battle with ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). It ends with the only consistent example available to us that connects the Arab nations to whatever happened in the Great War: the presence of T.E. Lawrence (aka Lawrence of Arabia) and his book, *The Seven Pilars of Wisdom.* In between, we considered it necessary to discuss the PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) as the main psychological problem afflicting the war veterans, with all its different forms of manifestation: combat flashbacks, constant paranoia, and the inability to function in the family, social, and professional environment.

We consider war writings as a source of enhanced literary insight, as they keep the record straight, and make people think more carefully before engaging in major conflicts in the future. Pat Barker's fiction incorporates many features of the war novel. For this reason we attempted a detailed sequential analysis of Barker's work in light of the psychological techniques that will help justify Barker's methods, and heighten the appreciation and understanding of her works. For the last two decades, the English-speaking literary world has seen the return of the theme of the Great War in fiction with the novels of Pat Barker's *Regeneration Trilogy* and *Another World*, Sebastian Faulks's *Birdsong* (1993) or Julian Barnes's short story "Evermore", to choose only a few examples from the many that made historians specializing in the memory of this war speak of a genuine "memory boom".

Chapter Two: *Writers at War – European Echoes* discusses the importance of the Great War as the experience and trauma of a generation which the writers referred to in their works. It is a literature born out of the tragic experience of war, a plea for pacifism in an attack on paradise heroism; it is a mythifying medium that helps us recall and remember the dreadful reality of war,

the irony of which was that it lasted longer than expected, and it was "reducible to one great incongruity, the appearance of free and self-valued goal" (Muecke 1969: 121). It was an effervescent climate that made possible the appearance of Expressionism and Cubism, while psychoanalysis was highly fashionable. Artists abd writers responded by enlisting (the example of Ernst Jünger, Robert Musil, Georges Braque, Guillaume Apollinaire and C.S. Lewis), or by adopting a pacifist, anti-war attitude (Siegfried Sassoon, Heinrich Mann, Tristan Tzara, Valentin Bulgakov, or Bertrand Russell).

We selected a few significant novels that illustrate the writers' response to the Great War and its consequences. For example, Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* is a reference text for the study of war experience, containing a fine phenomenology of the experience of a sensitive young man on the front. In *Fear: A Novel of World War I* Gabriel Chevallier offers a strong and realistic account of the horror of the WWI battlefields, explores a sordid daily life, a physical, organic reality; he spares no escape to an ideal or transcendence, no lyricism, simply fear, the primary, wild fear that seizes every man: fear of dying, fear of being hurt, fear of the unconsciousness of the commandments, fear of annihilation. In *The Case of Sergeant Grischa* Arnold Zweig exemplifies the change in values between German pre- and post-war society by reducing the highly complex transformation of European society in the first three decades of the twentieth century to the question of justice and the relationship between law and injustice in the state. The protagonist of Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Svejk* becomes the symbol of the absurdity of the First World War: he is no longer the fool of the battalion, but an honest but naive and incompetent man who goes through the war with unconditional optimism and enthusiasm for the patriotic and the military that gives rise to many absurd situations and manages to denounce and ridicule militarism more efficiently than any criticism. Special space has been devoted to Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, to the contribution of the Russian novelists (such as Alexey Tolstoy and Alexander Solzhenitsyn), and to Romanian WWI literature (Liviu Rebreanu's *The Forest of the Hanged*).

Chapter Three: *British Literary Responses* deals with the "bloody game" of war as seen by the British combatant poets – Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Isaac Rosenberg – with a few introductory remarks on Pat Barker's understanding of the war. Our analysis is informed by the

almost obsessive presence of shell shock and its effects in the writings of the war poets taking an active part in the conflagration, who found their voice during the war.

Evacuated to Scotland at Craiglockhart Hospital and discovered by Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen wrote an original work, whose theme, both descriptive and protest, is beautifully served by a special technique, the masterly use of pararhyme, the consonantal rhyme which rhymes consonants to the detriment of vowels. However, his great originality and modernity are based on the ultimate and innovative exploration of the potentialities of ancient means, from which he draws maximum efficiency. There is a lot of compassion in Owen's poetry, while anger is the main feature of Sassoon's verse, which explains the poet's predilection for the short form. His inspiration is shared between the melancholy evocation of a lost paradise – the pre-war Georgian society – and the harsh and uncompromising criticism of the British society that condemned to the slaughterhouse of the battlefield the innocent victims of their egoism and their incompetence. In Isaac Rosenberg's poems, protest and denunciation are never direct, but induced. The horror and the extreme character of the situations, described with a unique and striking sense of detail, render any revolt as vain and inoperative, by the distancing and the intellectualization of the intention it introduces. A close reading of the works of these poets, and many others, helps us realize the magnitude of WWI, offering an insight on the emotions, thoughts and feelings of those who have experienced war and expands our abilities to view events through literary works. Pat Barker, in *The Regeneration Trilogy*, successfully re-creates a story based on the personal accounts of the real characters, those who do not want to fight and who are heroes for that very reason; thus, she avoids the claims of feminist criticism, and focuses on a humanistic point of view as a suitable means to criticize the war.

Chapter Four: *Pat Barker – A Literary Portrait* introduces the writer, who started her career as one of the 20 "Best Young British Novelists" and the cooperation with the Feminist publisher Virago, which led to her being labelled as a working-class feminist. Besides the feminist approach, she also dealt with the problems of gender and class. In *Union Street* (1982) we have a good example of her feminist outlook: the men characters are relatively marginal, though they figure as predators, bad husband or obsolete sexual partners. The novel focuses on the condition of life in the wasteland of England's industrial communities: it defines Barker's fiction and connects the events of rape, murder, domestic violence, abandonment, and sickness with the life

of the post-industrial community. Similarly, *Blow Your House Down* (1984) depicts the lives of the prostitutes in a community full of poverty and neglect. Barker fully succeeds in getting her readers' sympathy for for these women exposed to abuse, violence, and poverty, who under the pressure of limited sources, have turned to a life of prostitution, in which they must sell themselves to feed their families. Both novels share a common main theme, following the lives of several women, living in the derelict community of a north-eastern city, who embody a feminist critique of their plight. *Liza's England* (1986) is a novel about war, violence, psychology, history and politics, in which the protagonist lives the experience of survival during the wartime and the crises of poverty and dereliction. Barker deals with war and causalities of war indirectly by presenting the idea of wounding and death among combatants who survive the horror of war. Last but not least, *The Man Who Wasn't There* (1988) represents a transition station between the two phases of Baker's career and this was revealed by Barker herself when she said that this novel represents "an intermediate book" because after that her oeuvre has turned to a new territory, e.g. the world of men.

Chapter Five: *Soldiers and Civilians – Post-War Trauma* is a more detailed presentation of Pat Barker's next novels – *Another World* (1998), *Border Crossing* (2001), *Double Vision* (2003) – in which the writer moves away from the feminist concerns of her previous novels and highlights the atrocities of war that cast a shadow over the lives of civilians. *Another World* explores the trauma and effects of the disturbing memory of the First World War on one of its survivors, and represents the burden of the past in the present, and how the effect of the First World War can still be felt 80 years later, through the mental suffering of its veterans. In this novel, Barker produces a complex picture of class, gender, and family relationships. Trauma lies at the core of this text that explores contemporary fear and random violence, and depicts the family as a space of violence, cruelty, and resentment. Geordie, the protagonist, escapes the experience of the traumatized past during his day to find it occupies his nights, bringing him to the wartime in which he had spent the night in working parties and on patrol. What troubles him is that he has not just remembered these events but he relives them again as if they were happening now, and when he wakes up, he feels as if they are still happening. *Border Crossing* focuses on the post-war period in which Barker, interested in Dr. Rivers' "talking cure" therapy, continues her exploration of this analytical process and unsettles the reader, allowing the causes and cures to

remain ambivalent, while perusing the way in which they impact each of us. Set in the aftermath of 9/11, *Double Vision* deals with violence, rehabilitation, child crime, and the power of memory and shows how Barker uses art to represent the horror and destruction of war: she represents war's destruction, horror, and its effects on human life through different art forms such as photography, writing, sculpture (in *Double Vision*), and painting and writing (in *Life Class*). In this novel Barker presents the pastoral and rural land as a place of ultimate dangerous contrasting the image of the pastoral in her *Trilogy* in which the patient is turned to such places seeking for safety and inner peace. In *Life Class* Barker returned to the topic of the First World War because she was identified in the public mind with this kind of historical war novels as in the *Regeneration Trilogy*. *Life Class* was set in the same era, the WWI time, and included the same characters of *Toby's Room* that make them believed to be parts of a new trilogy. Merritt argues that there are many similarities between these two novels and the *Regeneration* trilogy and she figures, in this respect, the war as a main event in both and the mixture of facts and fiction in both works.

Chapter Six: *Toby's Room – a Historical Fresco, a Social Satire, or a Feminist Novel?*) deals *Toby's Room*, a novel which explores the canons of art during the Great War in England. In writing this novel, Barker started from the assumption that the Great War opposes the idealism of volunteers engaged by feelings of patriotic duty to the unspeakable reality of everyday life in the trenches and that, in the popular imagination, the battle of the Somme and the heavy losses inflicted on the English is a reality. It can be read as a historical fresco, a social satire, a feminist novel. Just like Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room*, Barker's novel explores the tragic end of an intellectual unable to envision the future, since he disappeared in the flower of his age in mysterious conditions. The masculine world is opposed to the feminine in Barker's novel, which questions in the manner of Woolf the ambivalences inherent in the myths of beauty and happiness. She explores the nature of female anger and wonders if women are more belligerent than men, even if they have to worry about war. is divided into two historical phases, the time of peace in 1912 and that of the war in 1917, and in each of the two units Elinor writes a brief diary. The first part of the story reveals the feminine inner wounds and the propriety that imposes its repressive laws without being written while the rest of the novel is a questioning on the pain caused by the wounds of Paul Tarrant and Kit Neville, painters and friends of Elinor, inscribed in

the flesh of men. In the two hemistiches of the text Tonk has an admirable role, that of professor of the fine arts then that of brother of the surgeon Gillies and in a certain way that of adoptive father of Elinor. *Toby's Room* explores the canons of art in England during the Great War, then the work of plastic reconstruction of the face by Henry Tonks and the ethical issues it poses.

PART THREE: *The Regeneration Trilogy: A Case Study* is an ample discussion of Pat Barker's *Regeneration Trilogy* which underlines the individual and collective traumas of the actors of the First World War, certainly served as a catalyst in the creation of this sub-genre that could be designated as "trauma literature" in Great Britain. The first installment of the *Regeneration Trilogy* – *Regeneration* (1991), *The Eye in the Door* (1993), *The Ghost Road* (1995) – in which one of the protagonists, in a real superlative effect, is the psychologist William Rivers (who worked very early on war neuroses) – certainly contributed to the foundation of a kind of criticism devoted to this particular work and to Barker's production in general. All the subsequent four chapters deal with different aspects of the writer's approach to understanding of the treatment of trauma in the context of the tremendous revolution in psychiatry brought by Freud and his theory of psychoanalysis.

Chapter Seven: *Writing about War and Trauma* covers several aspects of Barker's approaches to WWI, starting with her personal childhood memories – the imaginary loss of her unknown father in the war, and the real bayonet wound of her grandfather – and continuing with her genuine concern with the different aspects of the war: the home front, the psychotherapist and his work to help broken down soldiers and send them back to the active service, the fifth column and the war, pacifists and dissenters, the contradictions between civilization and war. The result is the trilogy that tells the story of the victimized British soldiers, and narrates the attempts to heal these shell-shocked patients by Dr. W. H. Rivers.

Dealing with the problems of class and gender distinction, *Regeneration* marks a dramatic shift in terms of class, and touches upon the condition of the homosexuals in the army and on the battlefield. Barker uses an experimental discourse, a prototype of feminine literature that offers us an intermediate state between a clearly patriarchal root literature and that generated by a certain feminist radicalization, in some cases, formally explicitly speaking, but effective and clear in its purposes. She seems committed to the creation of a female subject and female

language, in accordance with the intention of Cixous and Irigaray, to encourage their readers to use language to express a feminine reality. It is concordant with the opinion of Foucault to whom language is not only an instrument of communication, but also as an instrument of power.

The novel is multi-layered, and its themes range across many areas of society, highlighting cultural tensions brought to the surface by the war: the "regeneration" treatment of traumatic soldiers; the antiwar feelings and the soldiers' protests "through their bodies"; the dichotomy duty-morality; the supporters and the pacifists; gender and class; the generations gap; and the theme of imagination.

In *The Eye in the Door*, Barker refers to the spy phobia of the turn of the century that had intensified during the war: the "eye in the door" of the prison cell becomes the symbol of constant surveillance and punishment.

Bill Prior brings into the limelight the class system on the home front, and the other important themes of the *Trilogy*: homosexuality, the conditions of women, supporter *versus* pacifist, old generation *versus* new generation, the role of imagination, and anti-war protest are explored in more detail. Prior is the carrier of a series of personal traits that make him a prototype of a postmodern character that brings together in himself contradictory traits: working class, bisexual, and divergent loyalties. The main concern of the novel is the condition of women – not on the battlefield but on the home front – and the high degree of their own suffering during the war. One significant aspect is intertextuality, which links the novels of the *Trilogy* to predecessor texts: the books written by Dr. Rivers and the therapist Dr. Lewis Yealland, Elaine Showalter, Sassoon's memories and war poems, the studies of Richard Slobodin, or Eric J. Leed. The third volume of the trilogy, *The Ghost Road* (1995), tells the last phase of Prior's story and his return to the front in France beside the story of Rivers and his psychological crisis, as he returns back in his imagination to his memories and flashbacks to grapple his own jinn and ghosts of the past.

We have considered it necessary to particularly develop on the different approaches to war neurosis, and the psychoanalytic and disciplinary approaches in treating war neurosis casualties. Barker brings Rivers and the therapeutic techniques that he had used to rehabilitate his collapsed patients alongside with Dr. Yealland and the practices he had depended on to cure and restore his

patients. Barker is in favour of Rivers's therapeutic methods, which are themselves validated in part by their positioning as the direct opposite of Yealland's.

Chapter Eight: *Psychological Treatment* highlights the condition of the British officers undergoing psychiatric treatment at the Craiglockhart Military Psychiatric Hospital under the care of neurologist and psychiatrist William Rivers. Their traumas manifest themselves through a multiplicity of more or less incapacitating symptoms, indicative of insurmountable tensions that inhabit and tear the traumatized fighters. Pat Barker demonstrates how the military culture of silent obedience can be harmful to the individuals who suffer it, particularly in the context of the Great War when the notion of "bravery" was still fundamentally linked to the idea of absolute "obedience" tinged with extreme self-censorship of opinion and expression. Through the perspective of these officers, Barker questions not only the effects of a culture of war that led to individual suffering as well as mass death, but also, and above all, the radical inadequacy between a martial culture based on traditional values, often chivalrous, inherited from the past and a new form of war, as it emerged in WWI, whose complete mutation modalities has often been rendered obsolete by the values of the past.

The writer underlines the similarities between the psychiatric institution and other disciplinary institutions, such as the army or prison, because what all these institutions have in common is to want to control, even to subjugate, the bodies as well as the spirits. Military psychiatry became a relays of the army in the company of control of the bodies and souls of the combatants. Barker tries to deconstruct an official story, made of heroes, reconstructing it from the review of elements such as the use of language by the main characters or actants, the psychological conception of memory, the characteristics of masculinity vs. femininity, religion, etc. The novels contain history and fiction in the same hierarchical relationship that they have in reality, a hierarchy based on authority to designate the real in a consistent way. The officers and soldiers in Pat Barker's novels tend to resort to silence and muteness in the situations that they could not talk about, or they could not reveal or talk about their fear and horror. Rivers's relationship with his patients is like the relationship of father to his sons and when he keeps silent with them most the time, it seems to be like a technique that he uses to encourage them to talk about their fears and horror, in order to cure them and brings them back to their normal mentality. We have devoted ample space to the different methods of treating the war trauma (as in the case of

Siegfried Sassoon and Prior), mentioning Freud's opinions about silence and mutism. Barker shows how Freudian theory influences the trilogy and distinguishes between Freud with all real content of his theories and the unique psychoanalytic method of Rivers, who rejected Freud's theory of wish-fulfillment and presented his own theory based on conflict saying that the dream is a way the dreamer, in his sleep, tends to solve the state of conflict of his awakening life.

Chapter Nine: *The Doctor and His Patients* is the last segment of our analysis of the psychiatric treatment of war trauma patients at the Craiglockhart Hospital. It sets the ideological context of the *Trilogy*, characterized by an epic and glorious, even chivalrous, idealized representation of war as a test of traditional values such as bravery and patriotism. In this context, the combatants suffering from war trauma undermine these idealized representations of martial virility because they no longer correspond to a fantastical image of a stoic masculinity, capable of boldness, ready to sacrifice itself without a word, and run the risk of moral condemnation. Pat Barker criticizes the lack of authenticity of this culture of idealization of martial manhood, especially through his main character Billy Prior, and highlights the tragic gap between a pastiche representation of a martial and valiant ideal of masculinity and the reality of the Great War, a modern conflict in which daring and ability of an individual can do nothing against the chance of shells. The issue of the management of soldiers' traumas during the First World War thus appears, in *Regeneration*, as an opportunity to reflect on the meaning and value of a certain martial culture that was omnipresent in Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century. For the psychic sufferings of combatants pose ideological as much as medical problems. This explains the fundamental ambiguity, again well brought to light in Pat Barker's work, of the report of the psychiatric institution to these most disturbing sufferings.

Pat Barker, through this novel, reminds us how much the psychic disorders of soldiers of the Great War have posed multiple problems to the psychiatric institution: the terminological problems, the morally oriented questions about these psychic disorders, and full recognition of these disturbances, which would entitle them to a form of legitimate compensation. On the other hand, the class concept is visible in the two kinds of relationships that Rivers allows to develop between him and Sassoon on one hand and between him and Billy Prior on the other hand: Sassoon has the privilege for this position considering his class background, while Prior and Wilfred Owen do not enjoy any class privilege.

One significant aspect that we underline is the importance of Dr. Rivers's speech therapy in *Regeneration*: it makes the fighters' voices heard, and allows them to resume a form of control over themselves. However, "giving voice" to war trauma is not trivial because their words / evils can be subversive and, by making their grievances heard, the fighters open the way of a space of contestation of the official speeches of a certain dominant martial ideology, at risk for those who are attentive to these words/evils, to be profoundly transformed. Barker in *Regeneration* dramatizes Rivers's psychoanalytic method by reproducing the central theory in his studies, the talking cure, and presenting it as the most successful psychological way to cure shell-shocked soldiers.

The CONCLUSION: *The Regeneration Trilogy between Modernity and Postmodernity* starts from the assumption that the essence of the literature of the Great War is the characters' personal development seen as a *rite de passage* – the protagonists' passing from innocence to experience. Having reached the end of our critical endeavour, we have provided answers to the question whether Pat Barker's novels show any signs of discontent beyond the lives of Billy Prior and Dr. Rivers, and if such a discontent marks the convergence between the historical time of the work, the end of modernity and the time of its production, postmodernity. The answer is affirmative: there is a definite link between Modernity and Postmodernity, as demonstrated by the Romanian critic Matei Călinescu, and supported by Malcolm Bradbury, James McFarlane, Allan Bullock, Arthur Marwick, and Hans Bertens. Barker's trilogy provides enough examples in favour of the existence of various degrees of dissatisfaction in the British society at the beginning of the 20th century, questioning the essence of authority, observance of the existing rules and practices, the justification of war, happiness, and the existence of God. Answering these questions, Pat Barker reconstructs the war novel from a modern perspective, re-writing the past in a new context. The meaning of her trilogy is derived from texts written about the WWI, like Sassoon's declaration letter, Owen's poems, Dr. Rivers's book *Conflict and Dream* etc., and references to historical figures like Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, Robert Graves, and William Rivers, a psychologist and anthropologist. It is a creative rewriting and re-cycling of previous texts.