



# Trauma Studies

An Echo of Ignored Screams

*Editor*

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*Past Imperfect:*  
**Intense Adaptations of Trauma**

Debnita Chakravarti

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Trauma has been a key concept in contemporary self-representation. The term "trauma" is "from the Greek meaning 'wound,' [and] refers to the self-altering, even self-shattering experience of violence, injury and harm" (Gilmore 3). There are different theoretical and therapeutic schools of thought regarding the articulation of trauma. Gilmore discusses the paradox that trauma is largely considered "unspeakable" or "unrepresentable", that language is inadequate to articulate trauma as trauma denotes an experience which devastates the individual and resists linguistic representation. Yet, at the same time, writing and speaking are authorised as the primary modes for healing trauma (Gilmore 6). These are a means via which the previously disempowered person (for example a child) can "write back" (as an adult) after the fact, to offer a revised version of events. Traumatic autobiographies have long been recognised as therapeutic "silence-breakers" for individuals who have suffered pain or distress.

The term trauma fiction may similarly appear to be a paradox. This fictional category indicates the recent journey of the notion of trauma from medico-scientific discourse to the area of literary studies. The origin of contemporary trauma studies can be traced to 1980, when post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was first included in the diagnostic canon of psychiatry.