



RESEARCH PAPER

**From Silence to Testimony: Narrating Trauma and Memory of the
1971 War in Anam's *A Golden Age* and Khan's *Noor***

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ABSTRACT

The Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971 is one of the most traumatic events in the history of South Asia, which has deep psychological and emotional scars both for the people of Pakistan and Bangladesh. Literary narratives play a vital role in the reconstruction of memory and trauma and shaping collective memory. This article examines the comparative representation of memory and trauma in *A Golden Age* by Tahmima Anam and *Noor* by Sorayya Khan, focusing on how these novels recount the psychological and social trauma of the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971. The study analyses the narratives through the theories of trauma by Judith Herman and Jeffrey Prager by underpinning the elements of trauma in the texts, by digging out the memory, silence, and guilt of the characters in both the novels. The article argues that through personal memory, individual trauma can bring about the collective trauma and collective consciousness. By comparing Pakistani and Bangladeshi literary representation, the article highlights the similarities and peculiarities of the two national narratives of the same event.

KEYWORDS A Golden Age, Memory, Noor, Partition, Separatism, South Asian Literature, Trauma, Violence, Collective Consciousness

Introduction

The partition literature fails to establish comparative analysis among the three countries: Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. The partition-related scholarly studies mainly concentrate on Indian and Pakistani viewpoints specifically studying violence in Delhi and Punjab as their main areas of study. Most of the research relates to a single text in South Asian partition literature. This article focuses the comparative study of *A Golden Age* (Anam, 2007) and *Noor* (Khan, 2003) to highlight the common themes and narratives of Bangladeshi and Pakistani novelists on the shared common historical event of Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971. Bangladesh formerly known as East Pakistan exists as a missing aspect within prevalent partition studies which has been neglected in its historical significance. The omission fails to serve the purpose because the partition consisted of multiple stages which experienced distinct variations across regions. The experiences of Bengali people during partition extended beyond 1947 to involve conflicts that reached their peak when the Bangladesh Liberation War broke out in 1971.

Bangladesh was liberated on December 16, 1971, but the seeds of Bengali separatism started germinating since the birth of Pakistan as there was a great chasm between the two distant wings of the country with a hostile, cunning and eternal enemy between them. Along with this, they had diverse population, language and culture which added fuel to the fire and their domestic differences became so disputable and insolvable that they became hostile to each other and a sort of bitterness started within them since freedom. The people of the East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) had a feeling of deprivation

and suffering that prolonged almost twenty-five years, and they started feeling that freedom from British Empire was just a change of masters. They felt colonized by their own countrymen and expressed their distrust and disbelief in the government by West Pakistan.

In the national elections of 1970 two major parties emerged on the political scenario of the country, Pakistan People's Party and Awami League, which ran their campaigns mostly in their respective majority areas, that was West Pakistan and East Pakistan respectively. They showed very limited representation in the other wing of the country. However, Awami Party won 167 seats mostly from the East Pakistan whereas Pakistan People's Party won 86 seats from the West Pakistan (Office of the historian, 1970, pp. 2-3). There was a tussle over the transfer of power between the newly elected parties. The power was not handed over to the majority party, Awami League, which ensued political instability and insurgency in East Pakistan. Instead of finding an amicable and workable solution to this issue, West Pakistan sent its army to curb this mutiny.

Literature Review

The Bangladesh Liberation War ended in 1971, but its trauma continues to reverberate through generations. This study highlights how memory—both personal and collective—shapes contemporary South Asian identities, especially Bengali people's emergence as an independent nation. By analyzing transgenerational trauma in fiction, it investigates how narratives of loss, displacement, and survival influence subsequent generations' understanding of their heritage and history, and how they get from silence to testimony. *The Other Side of Silence* (1998) by Urvashi Butalia is the best example of from silence to testimony. The testimony of women who endured abduction, sexual violence, forced conversions, and forced marriages forms the foundation of her claim.

The novel *A Golden Age* is a response to the colonial powers of West Pakistan and serves as a postcolonial response to the colonizers. It explores the identities of the colonized characters of East Pakistan. Aslam et. al. (2022) explores the identity issues in the novel. Rehana Haque, the protagonist is half Indian and half Bengali, which poses her questions of identity (p. 138). This study shows how the characters in *A Golden Age* "grapple with questions of identity, belonging, and heritage, highlighting the complexities and challenges inherent in reconciling multiple cultural influences within a postcolonial context (p. 139). The war creates "the third space" where different individuals unite for the pursuit of independence. Thus, they form a new collective identity and emerge as Bengalis to challenge the status quo of the prevalent power structures.

Fahima Yeasmin (2022) claims that *A Golden Age* is a "national allegory," a theory propelled by Fredric Jameson. *A Golden Age* by Anam (2007) represents the social and political condition of the Bangladeshi people during the 1971 War of Liberation. The individual characters represent national socio-political scenario of the time. The narrative shows the struggle of Bengalis against the colonizers from West Pakistan, and their freedom fight surfaces through these characters. She argues that Rehana characterizes Bangladesh and her children, Sohail and Maya as Bangladesh's assets who are under the occupation of West Pakistan (p. 17). The narrative of *A Golden Age* represents the pain, trauma, struggle, and fight against West Pakistan labels it as Fredric Jameson's "national allegory" (pp. 21-22). Miah (2020) also claims that Anam has knit the plot of *A Golden Age* in such a coherent way that "the sense of love and duty often argues against each other

but never falls out" (p. 74). Rehana fights both for her own family alongside the freedom fight. Rehana does not leave no stone unturned in her love for family and her duty towards the cause of Bangladesh's independence (p. 74).

The main themes of *Noor* are silencing, memory and trauma in the context of the partition of Pakistan. Farah Ishtiyaque (2015) demonstrates how *Noor* transcribes psychological and social trauma, and memory into collective memory of two nation states (p. 301). She demonstrates that Pakistan's role remains both as perpetrator and victim, and the history repeats the partition of 1947 in the form of "the same cycle of mechanical killing, rape and looting" (p. 302). Pakistan and Bangladesh, the two rivals have divergent memories. For example, Ali's memory converges with as well as diverges from the nation state's memory of the incident (Saikia, 2011, p. 10): "Ali refused to remember everything. He recalled returning home, tired and dirty, his child, Sajida, in his arms" (Khan, 2003, p. 75).

Pakistani and Bangladeshi see the same event from different angles, and interpret it differently. Sarwar (2025) claims that the civil war in East Pakistan is also treated in the history books in different ways which formulate the national consciousness in the respective nations. Sarwar (2025) argues that the textbooks of matriculation and intermediate do not mention "the atrocities perpetrated by Pakistan Army, such as rape, targeted killings, and the genocide of the Bengali people" (p. 167-68). On the contrary, Pakistan blames India for breaking the country into two halves. Sarwar (2025) claims that Sorayya Khan has constructed a parallel history of victimization of Bangladeshi people and rejected the "expressions of denialism" (p. 184).

Sarmila Bose (2011) interviewed Bengali nationalists, Indians and Pakistani army personnel and based her narrative on the facts and figures rather than on myths. She claims that "the architect of the December killings of Bengali intellectuals supporting the liberation movement was Maj. Gen. Rao Farman Ali of the Pakistan Army" (p. 153). He tried his best to wipe out the leading associates of Bengali intelligentsia. But Maj. Gen. Rao Farman Ali refuted these allegations. She argues that the war "has all the ingredients that shamed Pakistan Army the world over" (p. 97). She further says that people involved in Agartala Conspiracy Case were tracked down and killed (p. 63).

Rizwan Ullah Kokab (2017) underscores that one of the early differences of Bengalis was their language and culture as they were forced to take Urdu as a compulsory language. These differences paved a way to separatism in East Pakistan. He contends that "[t]he state language issue was one of the tests for the country's leadership vis-à-vis East Pakistan. The discontents it generated and the protests that followed in its wake were the first signs of nationalist consciousness in the eastern wing" (p. 13). Moreover, he indicates that "the two wings of Pakistan had very little in common demographically, topographically, geographically or even culturally" (p. 1). Among other reasons of separatism, the most glaring was economic. He asserts that "[e]conomic disputes were the catalysts of Bengali nationalism alongside cultural issues [...] East Pakistan was being exploited like a colony" (pp. 18-19). He further explicates that during 1965 Indo-Pak war, East Pakistan was left vulnerable and the province had to defend itself, and had no economic resources of its own and no forces to defend it. In such circumstances the "complaints against the central government and the western wing of the country became bitter and intense" (p. 54). Kokab concludes that it was a crisis of leadership and management on the part of West Pakistan.

Yasmin Saikia (2011) emphasizes that 1971 war “was not friendly or nostalgic, but it was designed and expressed in violence and terror” for Pakistan, Bangladesh and India (p. x). Afterwards these three countries never had a common shared moment together. Her work focuses on gender violence in the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, dealing with “deep pain and unforgettable memories of loss for survivors” (p. xi).

Theoretical Framework

This research adopts an interdisciplinary approach, combining history, literature, and trauma studies. It not only examines fictional representation of various traumas, but also contextualizes them within historical events and theoretical discussions on traumas. This ensures a holistic understanding of the partition’s impact, making this study valuable for scholars in literature, history, psychology, and postcolonial studies. This study integrates multiple theoretical perspectives, including Judith Herman’s (1997) framework on psychological trauma and its recovery, and Jeffrey Prager’s (2011) social theories on trauma. By bridging literary analysis with psychological, cultural, and social frameworks, this research deepens our understanding of how trauma operates at both the individual and collective levels as well as social and cultural levels. This article explores how partition survivors and their descendants navigate trauma and memory through narrative representation, contributing to the interdisciplinary discourse on trauma studies. This article benefits from textual analysis that remains the most effective method for trauma studies of literature since it offers comprehensive understanding of how writings transform real human tragedies into narrative forms. The evaluation depends on historical, political and personal biases that exist within the authors along with analysts’ perspectives.

Herman (1997) says that if we want to keep in our consciousness a traumatic reality, we must have a social context that supports and shields victims, and that unites victims and witnesses in a shared coalition. For an individual victim, friends, family and followers can create this social context, but for larger social groups, this social context is provided by political movements that become the mouthpiece to the disempowered. Thus, psychological trauma has been studied under political support, and the war trauma or war neurosis has been studied after the soldiers lost their lives and bore lifelong pain and trauma in wars in the form of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Whereas, the sexual and domestic violence have been the major context of the study of psychological trauma, and this challenges the subordination and abuse of women and children. She further says that trauma has surfaced thrice in the past century, i.e., after the WWI, the WWII and the Vietnam War, especially post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has emerged into people’s consciousness after the Vietnam War. Every time the research of trauma has thrived in connection with a political context and war.

Herman (1997) defines trauma as “an affliction of the powerless. At the time of trauma, the victim is rendered powerless by the overwhelming force. When the force is that of nature, we speak disaster. When the force is that of human beings, we speak of atrocities” (p. 33). Traumatic events devastate the everyday system of care and attentions which provides connection and meaning to people. Herman further enlightens that the traumatic incidents are unusual, not for they happen infrequently, but because they devastate the everyday adjustments to human life. Unlike ordinary mishaps, these events most usually “involve threats to life or bodily integrity, or a close personal encounter with violence and death. They confront human beings with the extremities of helplessness and terror, and evoke the response of catastrophe” (p. 33).

Jeffrey Prager (2011) argues that trauma “as an event or series of events [is] remembered as so dangerous as to be impossible to preserve an equilibrating belief in a world that presumes our presence” (p. 429). He explains that psychological trauma “is always an after-the-fact experience, *Nachträglichkeit* (emphasis in the original). It is an internal psychic response generated after the dangerous event confronted is remembered (whether minutes later, or months, or years) and that proves emotionally overwhelming” (p. 446). He further endorses the fact that the subsequent sensation of helplessness is an unintentional memory, “returning the person back to a time when psychic structures of omnipotence were not yet in place” (p. 446). Prager claims that trauma occurs in a person because of their interaction with their environment, and it is interpersonal as well as intersubjective phenomenon that does not exist on its own or without any cause or reason. Therefore, it has social, psychological, and cultural aspects that have deep influence on the witnesses, victims, survivors, and perpetrators.

Results and Discussion

Both *Noor* by Khan and *A Golden Age* by Anam are debut novels written about the traumatic calamities inflicted on the Bengali people in the East Pakistan by their own countrymen. *Noor* narrates the events and casualties of liberation movement posthumously whereas *A Golden Age* chronicles the struggles and sacrifices of the Bengali freedom fighters and their sufferings during the war. Both the novels narrate the story of pain and trauma through domesticity and the narratives develop around the families of the protagonists. *A Golden Age* portrays directly through the omnipresent narrator and protagonist, Rehana, the trauma of victims as well as the inflictions of perpetrators, whereas *Noor* records the anguish and pain of the Bengali people through transgenerational trauma by the third generation through paintings.

Silencing of Pakistani Fiction on Bangladesh

Cara Cilano (2011) claims that Pakistani government intentionally suppressed news about the conditions and circumstances in East Pakistan by putting total ban on press and by silencing independent international observers (pp. 16-20). But the novelists, Khan and Anam dig out the hidden and unspeakable history of the War of Liberation in Bangladesh through their works. Khan relates the story of loss, genocide, and rape through a mentally instable girl, Noor’s art and paintings. It comes in the form of perpetrators and victims’ forgotten memories of the past. The grandfather, Ali represents perpetrators, and the foster daughter, Sajida represents victims. They both play no active role in exposing the genocide, rape, and abduction of the Bengalis during the War of Liberation in Bangladesh. Whereas, Anam narrates the predicament and catastrophe through the protagonist, Rehana and her family who actively take part in the war and fight back the atrocities of Pakistani armed forces inflicting torture and trauma to the Bengali people. She delineates the terror and fear of the people of East Pakistan. She draws a vivid and clear picture of the struggles of the ordinary Bengalis, and the student movements taking active part in fights against Pakistani forces, and people migrating to India and other safe places. The protagonist uses her house as a headquarter of the freedom fighters and depot of ammunition and logistics.

Khan, through the novel *Noor* (2003), explores how previous generations who failed to address the partition trauma of East Pakistan, which caused psychological effects which appeared later in the following generation. She demonstrates that families who hide traumatic events use this strategy to handle their burden of history by silencing and denial, which shapes individual identities. The South Asian fiction shows the

partition through direct portrayals of hostile violence, moral confrontations and survivors' guilt with detailed and authentic accounts of massive population displacements and public religious disorders. Pakistan does not admit the atrocities of mass murder, rape and abduction in their entirety in East Pakistan. It partially confesses its perpetration and negligence, and it uses the hedging language to conceal their war crimes in Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi literary tradition perceives the partition of 1947 as an initial stage leading to the 1971 Liberation War while showing how displacement forced Bangladeshis to rebuild their nation and create new identities. Whereas, Bangladesh is not fully mourned by Pakistani people and this national loss is not fully regretted yet.

A Golden Age: The Burden of Proof is on Pakistan

A Golden Age illustrates that trauma emerges from previous historical instances of colonial aggression and national chaos which continues to perpetrate trauma among the people. Nation-based research perspectives enable this study to reveal how diverse historical accounts affect partition memory and the literary depiction of its events which provides understanding about conflicting border-based recollections and interpretations of partition. In *A Golden Age*, Anam gives a detail of women abused during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. Sharmeen, a young Bengali college girl is abducted, raped, and found in a hospital pregnant and dead. Hundreds of Bengali women are abducted, raped and killed by Pakistani soldiers. Anam (2007) says that "Tikka Khan's soldiers [...] looted homes and burned roofs. They raped. They murdered. They lined up the men and shot them into ponds. They practiced old and new forms of torture" (p. 129). When Rehana's home, Shona, is raided by Pakistan Army, she is scared for her daughter's safety and honor. She notices how the young soldiers look at Maya with lust in their eyes. Anam levels undeniable accusations of war crimes and perpetration of atrocious trauma on the Pakistan Army, government administration and politicians through her novel, to which Pakistan has no refutation.

The Pakistan Army treats the Bengali freedom fighters as traitors, and they jail them, torture them, and kill them. Men, and women are abducted and put behind the bars without any trial, where they are deprived any basic human needs like light and toilet. They are tortured beyond any limits of cruelty, and ultimately reduced to insane and broken people. Major Sabeer is the finest example of this torture. When Rehana gets him from the jail, he has lost his senses and his reactions to coming out of the captivity show that he no more is a normal human being after bearing all the torture. He says "No, please, I didn't do it!" His voice was thick and gummy" (p. 200). He is reduced to a senseless person. He had "no nail; only red-tipped fingers" (p. 200). Ultimately, he dies shortly after his release from the jail. Mr. Sengupta is also murdered along with so many Muslim Bengalis. All the Hindus are considered traitors and Pakistan Army had a special way to differentiate Muslims from Hindus, by checking their circumcision. After losing her husband and son, Mrs. Sengupta loses her voice and is so shocked and terrified that she is unable to speak.

The Transgenerational Legacy of Trauma

Anam covers displacement beyond 1947 in her novel *A Golden Age* by depicting how the partition generated subsequent refugee crises particularly during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. Through its protagonist, the novel illustrates how partition's traumatic effects constantly pursued and displaced people for many years beyond the 1947 partition. These stories dispute the standard belief about refugee recovery showing

how the pain of losing a homeland proceeds through multiple generations as a persistent desire of returning home. The story of Rehana in *A Golden Age* follows female resilience when she fights against war and displacement while protecting her children formidably. Through its literary narrative, the novel confronts stereotypical views about partition women victims by displaying their motivated role in surviving and rebuilding history.

Through the character of Rehana in *A Golden Age* by Anam readers discover how historical trauma perpetuates through successive generations when a person survives both 1947 partition and the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh. Rehana, temporarily migrates to Calcutta, India, to escape turmoil in East Pakistan. There are hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children living in the refugee camps in India under the worst conditions in which they do not have their daily needs like food, medicine and shelter. Mrs. Sengupta has to migrate to India for protection from Pakistani Army. She is traumatized and unable to speak. Maya also moves to Calcutta because she wants to serve the refugees in the camp and the author says that “[s]he’d had to get out of Dhaka. *It’s not safe*” (emphasis in the original) (p. 206).

Many texts portray partition as an event that led to the birth of the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War which reignited and intensified the original suffering of 1947. In *A Golden Age* Anam shows interconnectivity between the two partitions. Thus, Anam shows how historical events create persistent negative cycles that generate new catastrophes. After the independence from the British, the Bengali people do not get their just rights, and their social and economic benefits which the West Pakistani people enjoy. Thus, a sense of deprivation and hatred develops among them, and they start their independence movement when they realize that they will never be treated equal and their political right will never be admissible. All the characters in the novel demonstrate the same intensity of anger and grief and their shared collective memory urges them to revolt against Pakistan Army.

When people of East Pakistan are forced to learn and speak Urdu and relinquish their own language, Bengali, as a medium of instruction, they are forced to alienate themselves from their linguistic and cultural heritage. Pakistan government as well army behave like colonizers and they are therefore, hated by the Bengali people (Kokab, 2011). On the other hand, physical torture, abduction, rape and murder added insult to the injury. Anam uses this narrative to demonstrate that repeated psychological, social and cultural traumas trigger the development of political instability in the region. Through her own tale of survival following the partition trauma, Rehana portrays how nation-building processes in Bangladesh incorporate partition-related memories.

Noor as a Testimony of Forgotten War Wounds

Through their narrative representation, partition fiction exposes the suppressed historical events by depicting the sexual abuse alongside the forced marriages, and displays the survival instincts of women after the trauma occurs. Khan illustrates gendered violence in *Noor* through trauma perpetuated in Bangladesh. This trauma affects subsequent generations, as it is seen in Ali, Noor's grandmother, who suffers from unresolved past trauma. The novel *Noor* demonstrates how partition related trauma inflicted on women is regularly ignored, but remains active in the unconscious and collective consciousness of subsequent generations.

In *Noor* the traumatic experience of sexual abuse passes from generation to generation when Noor's mother refuses to share any information about her personal

history because of societal taboos regarding violent sexual events during the Bangladesh Liberation War. D'Costa (2011) says that it is not easy to know the exact number of women raped during the Bangladesh freedom fight, but it is estimated by genocide scholars that 200,000 women were sexually abused by Pakistan Army and its collaborators. As a result of these rapes, 25,000 women got pregnant. Pakistan Army used rape as a genocidal tactic. The stories of "Birangonas," the rape survivors of liberation war have been published, but people hesitated acknowledging the rape victimization due to social stigma. Through its narrative, *Noor* shows that trauma which women experience throughout history frequently gets erased by shame, yet deep psychological harm affects family dynamics and trauma may reappear in the later generations, and keeps haunting the families of victims.

In *Noor*, Khan describes the sexual violence done to the women during the Liberation War of Bangladesh. Ali observes many dead bodies of women who were raped by Pakistan Army. D'Costa (2011) says that it was difficult in the villages to hide the abduction and rape of women. The villagers said that the Punjabis have taken her away forcibly. The psychological and social trauma always followed the women and their families, but they were not considered responsible for what happened to them. Rather it was considered their 'sacrifice' that helped create Bangladesh. These rapes had their impact on the victims as well as on the perpetrators. According to the novel, *Noor*, the horrible atrocities afflicted on Bengalis were so cruel that when the war was over, Ali who belongs to perpetrators, could not sleep for many nights remembering the horrors. His personality changed after the war. Noor's grandmother feels the difference in Ali when he comes back from war. He remembers the dead bodies of Bengalis and atrocities inflicted on them by Pakistan Army: "He was reminded of the penises his commander had pierced with a bayonet [...] obeying orders to sever genitals with nothing but a blunt kitchen knife and his own hand" (Khan, 2003, p. 76). He has everlasting change in his personality due to the trauma of perpetration.

The novel *Noor* by Khan examines displacement through its impact on emotional separation during the partition, which influences how people define themselves generationally. Noor battles a familial legacy of the partition of Pakistan because she experiences its hidden emotional effects even though she lacks clear knowledge about it. Through its narrative the novel demonstrates that displacement trauma exists not only in original victims but also in subsequent generations through concealed family histories together with emotional burdens. The freedom fighters had to displace themselves to various places including India to fight back with Pakistan Army as it is seen in *A Golden Age* by Anam.

In *Noor* art serves as the unconscious method for the main characters, Ali and Sajida who heal from traumatic pain they acquire from their suffering in the war. Although victims themselves do not openly speak about their trauma, and emotional response, it is represented through the unconscious artistic expressions which demonstrate the impact of their pain. Noor portrays through her paintings the bloated buffalo floating on the surface of water, which symbolizes the dead people and women raped and killed during the war of 1971. This is what her mother, Sajida had witnessed: "she'd seen corpses floating in a muddy river" (Khan, 2003, p. 163). Even Ali, the grandfather of Noor is haunted by the memory of "burying the no-breasted women" (p. 166). The trauma comes from Sajida to Noor, and it goes back to Ali and Sajida through her pictorial description of the traumatic events faced and silenced by them. Ali remembers the day when "he'd buried a woman" (p. 167).

The narrative framework in Khan's *Noor* adopts a non-linear format to gradually expose discontinued traumatic history of Bangladesh Liberation War. Through her artistic ability Noor unknowingly brings to life images that match what her grandfather cannot speak about in relation to the civil war. The novel uses present-day Pakistan storyline alongside historical past events of 1971 to reveal a traumatizing history that Pakistan has always been neglecting. The scattered storytelling pattern resembles how trauma survivors typically avoid addressing their experiences directly which bequeathed to the next generations who reconstruct the traumatic memories from several scattered and distorted versions.

Resurfacing of the Silenced Past Trauma

Through the protagonist, Noor, the grandfather, Ali finds his suppressed memories returning to life by observing his granddaughter's unconscious artistic creations thus proving that trauma can manifest itself indirectly when kept suppressed from expression. The novels display their temporal shifts between different periods to show how trauma survivors experience spontaneous memories which create an indistinct fusion between historical occurrences, personal memories, past and present moments. These literary devices maintain that the partition operated as a persistent psychological disruption survives through generation after generation and may manifest in any generation. Through symbolism and metaphorical representation authors find ways to represent the unspeakable agony of the partition by using material objects as well as physical sites and through artistic representations. Through the character of Noor, the novelist creates paintings which represent the sufferings and the trauma of the Bengali people. Caruth (1996) explains that trauma manifests itself by using nonverbal courses which cause symptoms to appear through dreams as well as art and in fragmented memories.

The paintings in Noor's artwork symbolize the hidden legacies of trauma which passed from previous generation to the next. Although Noor remains oblivious to her grandfather's perpetrator's experiences, yet she creates paintings which display the same brutal images from that time thereby showing that trauma may pass without words between generations. Through art as a metaphor for hidden suffering the story shows how partition's emotional injuries continue past verbal records by becoming permanent subconscious elements in next-generation's collective consciousness. The narrative of the novel tracks down how Noor discovers the concealed traumatic history of her war survivor grandfather, Ali as well as her mother, Sajida. Trauma escapes verbal description according to Caruth (1996) thus the novel employs disruptive fragmented narrative structures along with non-chronological order. The hidden violent and forceful imagery in Noor's brushstrokes demonstrates how family trauma passes down the genetic ladder although family members fail to communicate it. The Pakistani nation experiences difficulty in handling the Bangladesh Liberation War history because official sources emphasize political messages instead of addressing personal hardships of the Bengali people.

In *Noor*, Khan shows the suppression and reappearance of the Bangladesh Liberation War memories through her protagonist, Noor's grandfather, Ali who avoids discussing his lived war experiences and the protagonist's mother who does not speak about her own fight for independence in 1971, and resurfacing of their memories through her paintings. During his encounters with his granddaughter's paintings, Ali shows signs of traumatized behavior because he cannot express the agony he carries from his past experiences. Despite his refusal to speak about his wartime experiences, Noor begins to

represent in her paintings, the suffering matching to her grandfather since she feels an unexplainable strain in her family. She unconsciously portrays damaged scenarios of violence and destruction through her drawings which allows her to show her hidden family trauma. Through Khan's narrative, the readers experience how survivors who refuse to disclose their pain may be forced to the testimony of their past through the next generation without direct expression.

Conclusion

This research article compares the major catastrophic and traumatic events that take place in the East Pakistan which lead to the disintegration of the country and nation. Khan and Anam both have shown the details of torture, trauma, rape, killing and abduction through their fictional works, *Noor* and *A Golden Age* respectively. The former novel shows a detached retrospective perspective of the war through memory and transgenerational trauma, whereas the later shows the fight of Bengalis as it actually takes place in East Pakistan through the fictional characters. Both narratives provide us with insight into the inflictions and agony of the Bengali victims at the hands of Pakistan Army's perpetrators. Khan's calm and impersonal narrative style brings forth all the torture and catastrophe to the light which is represented in *Noor*. But Anam portrays the war and trauma with passion and national fervor as it happens in Bangladesh, and how it forms and represents the Bengali nationalism, separatism, and collective consciousness. Herman's trauma theory highlights how narrative becomes the source of healing and catharsis and how it builds a connection between the present and the past. These two novels represent Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971 in its possible authentic way which becomes an alternative parallel history of the region, and brings to light the silenced trauma and memory to testimony. To conclude, we would say that 16th December is celebrated in Bangladesh as an Independence Day, but it is observed as a black day by patriotic Pakistanis.

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