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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the enclosed thesis of Mr. Sabir Rahman Registration No.621-FLL-MS-ENG/F-20 titled "**Between Submission and Subversion: A Study of the Traumatic Experiences of Displaced Afghan Women in *The Favored Daughter* by Fawzia Koofi and *A Woman Among Warlords* by Malalai Joya**" has been revised and improved in the light of the suggestions made by the Viva Voce Committee in its meeting held on July 29, 2024 and is according to the format and style of our Department.

  
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understandable even by ordinary readers. Therefore, there seems to be little necessity to quote from the Bible to further explain them. Such excessive citations may appear cumbersome and obscure, potentially adding to the reader's burden rather than enhancing their understanding.

According to the Skopos theory, translation activities should serve a specific purpose. Fu Guangming, when explaining his intention behind translating Shakespeare's plays, stated that he is dedicated to providing authentic Shakespearean dramas to contemporary readers. In translating *Hamlet*, Fu's goal is to help Chinese readers, who lack a Western cultural background, better understand Shakespeare's works. This objective shaped his translation strategy, which involves not only conveying the content of the original text but also helping readers comprehend its cultural and religious context.

To achieve this purpose, Fu Guangming retained a significant number of religious and cultural elements in his translation and included as many as 64 references to images, allusions, and metaphors derived from the Bible. This approach helps readers better understand the religious and cultural background and deeper meanings within Shakespeare's works, aiming to provide a reading experience akin to that of the original audience. These additional explanations and clarifications effectively bridge the gap for Chinese readers who may lack a Western cultural background, enabling them to fully grasp the rich connotations of Shakespeare's works. This strategy is ideal for readers who wish to gain a deep understanding of the original work's cultural context and enhances both the depth and accuracy of the translation.

In contrast, Zhu Shenghao's 1947 translation aimed primarily to introduce Shakespeare's literary works to Chinese readers of the mid-20th century, exposing them to classics of world literature. Given the constraints of the era and limited familiarity with the Bible and Western religious culture, Zhu Shenghao did not include additional annotations about religious and cultural elements in his

**Between Submission and Subversion: A Study of the  
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## ABSTRACT

This study examines how the unpleasant and unfortunate experiences of the displaced Afghan women in Malalai Joya's *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008) and Fawzia Koofi's *The Favored Daughter* (2012) transformed them from being subservient to resilient. The purpose is to analyze trauma and its repercussions using Michelle Balaev's pluralistic model, which centers on the contextual elements of the characters' experiences in the chosen texts. The study examines the selected texts by focusing on the central characters' role and the primacy of place in affinity to the trauma witnessed. Textual analysis techniques are used to support the conceptual framework. Utilizing these insights, the study also demonstrates how the personalities of the characters in the two chosen texts have been reshaped. The findings reveal a powerful connection between acts of subversion against societal norms and the characters' experiences of tragedy. The study demonstrates the value of Michelle Balaev's pluralistic model in understating trauma across ethnicities. This framework acknowledges the influences of cultural background on how individuals experience and respond to traumatic events. This study lays the groundwork for further exploration through feminist and formal paradigms. By considering feminist and formal paradigms, future research can offer a more nuanced understanding of the issues explored in this study and propose more effective solutions to support displaced women.

**Key Words:** Malalai Joya, Fawzia Koofi, Resilience, Pluralistic Model, Trauma, Displacement, Importance of Place.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, whose unconditional love, unwavering support, and encouragement have guided me through this transformative academic voyage. Their belief in my aptitudes and continuous inspiration has been instrumental in shaping the person and scholar I am today.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Overview of the Study

Due to the manifestation of numerous instances of incidents, the study of trauma is deemed necessary in contemporary times. Traumatic events like the 9/11 tragedy, the horrific intrusions in Afghanistan along with Iraq, the Arab Spring, and the most recent Afghanistan annexation by the hands of Taliban, which resulted in significant losses, including the forfeiture of Syria and another globally existing phenomenon; the Covid-19 pandemic, provide evidence that trauma is a constant factor in the life of war-affected area. Shoshana Felman utters, “The twentieth century can be defined as a century of trauma” (171). For the survivors who must face the outside world, this legacy of brutality has led to questions about reality and existence. Trauma theory is viewed as a crucial tool for addressing sufferer queries. According to Elissa Marder, even though the definition of trauma varies depending on the situation and the subject, in general terms, trauma is thought of as a wound, “a very peculiar sort of wound,” that is a deficit of accurate physical manifestations and almost always results in invariable, unpredictably blustering consequences. Trauma also consistently occurs after a protracted period of the initial experience. Since trauma typically results from situations that happen in social contexts and as a result of social dynamics, trauma could be observed as having immaculate, historical, and political repercussions (Marder 1-2).

In accordance to the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, DSM-5* (2013) by the Americans Psychiatric Association defined

trauma as an overwhelming and upsetting event or experience that poses a significant hazard to the physical, psychological, or sentimental well-being of the sufferer(s), in addition to that of his near and dears, friends, and other kith and kin. Typically, the first phenomenon is sudden and unanticipated. It could be a one-shot occurrence, occasionally happen again, or frequently enough to the point where it becomes chronic. Armed conflict, terrorism, catastrophic or man-made mishaps or disasters, violent loss of someone you love, traumatic distinctions from them, slavery, neglect and poverty, and other losses are examples of traumatic events. Due to the size, variety, intricacy, time frame, magnitude, and consistency of conceivable stresses, the definition of trauma has been hotly disputed and revised numerous times. For example, Rogers Lukhursts, in *The Trauma Question* (2008), states trauma is “a complex knot that binds together multiple strands of knowledge”(214). This is considered suitable given that trauma studies have substantially impacted various subjects, including the humanities, historical literature, study of law, literature, and not simply psychology. Trauma studies are interdisciplinary when someone considers how they address inquiries from domains like philosophy, psychology, literature, and history while focusing on fundamental issues with memorization, fiction, and forgetting.

In addition to this, in *Trauma Theory: Contexts, Politics, and Ethics* (2007), Susannah Radstone states that the notion of “trauma theory” observed its maiden appearance in Caruth’s *Unclaimed Experience* (1996). Susannah hints at the work of Luab, Felman, and Caruth as commencing “the humanities of trauma” (9-10). The writers mentioned above developed several innovative techniques to investigate how literature portrays trauma. Since literature is inclusive and founded on both the lucid and the vague,

it can be regarded as necessary for studying trauma. Language is used in literature to convey painful events—by trauma theorists like Lukhurst, Felman, and LaCapra. Caruth, etc., center their ideas on a physical basis through literary works.

The literary works examined for this study are two modern non-fictional texts by authors of Afghan origin: *The Favored Daughter* (2012) by Fawzia Koofi and *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008) by Malalai Joya. People who live in South West Asian or Middle Eastern countries frequently suffer from recurring episodes connected to civil wars, internal or external displacement, intra/intergroup strife, natural disasters or mishaps, etc., as claimed by psychologists like Yuval Neria, who specialized in handling PTSD and trauma associated with conflict. This suggests that there are more trauma instances in these nations, even though there is not much local commentary on the issue. Scientific research or media outlets typically depict significant events associated with personal, societal, or collective trauma, such as the Iraq invasion, Afghanistan intrusion, the Palestinian conflict, the Syrian civil war, the Kashmir issue, and the war in Yemen etc., Even though there has always been a great deal of repression, tyranny, war, conflict, and displacement, there is still a dearth of locally acquainted criticism of traumatic experiences. This particular study tries to accomplish this goal by bringing up critical notions of Afghani works to combat brutality and pain.

*A Woman Among Warlords* (2008) by Malalai Joya is a compelling text that delves into the traumatic experiences of a courageous woman living amidst the chaos of warlords. The text highlights the profound impact of trauma on Joya's life and examines the intricate layers of suffering she endures. Throughout the text, the woman confronts the horrors of war, displacement, violence, and oppression in a war-torn society. Her

narrative depicts the relentless struggle for survival as she witnesses and becomes a victim of atrocities committed by warlords and their militias. This text emphasizes the profound psychological and emotional consequences the woman faces as a result of her experience. It delves into the abyss of her pain, fear, and grief, as well as the lasting effects on her mental well-being. The narrative sheds light on the complex nature of trauma and its ability to shape and distort one's perception of reality. Despite the overwhelming adversity, Joya's resilience shines through, highlighting her determination to survive and resist the oppressive forces surrounding her. The story serves as a testament to the strength of the human spirit in the face of unimaginable trauma. On the opposite side, *The Favored Daughter* (2012) by Fawzia Koofi is a poignant text exploring trauma's profound impact on her life. Koofi's narrative revolves around the harsh realities she faced due to her gender. In a deeply patriarchal society, she was viewed as an unwanted daughter, a burden on her family.

Despite the odds stacked against her, Koofi rose above societal expectations and advocated for women's rights and political change. However, *The Favored Daughter* (2012) primarily focuses on the trauma that shaped her life. She endured the loss of her father and two brothers, who were killed during the Afghan conflict. These devastating events left indelible scars on her psyche, forcing her to confront grief, fear, and despair. Koofi's journey is marked by resilience and courage as she navigates through a tumultuous landscape. Her experiences highlight the profound psychological impact of trauma, illustrating how it shapes an individual identity and influences their choices. Through her story, Koofi sheds light on the collective trauma experienced by Afghan society, emphasizing the urgent need for healing and change.

The characters are marked as refugees in the two texts that have been chosen, according to Coughlan and Manley. They can be considered exotic and expelled from their landscape or nation due to persecution or an intense fear of persecution. They typically flee their country when it begins to experience significant violence and trauma, frequently for political reasons. Refugees or dislodged people usually experience an abrupt, involuntary departure from their homes, which causes them to feel profoundly empty, bereaved, and subversive. In the nation these dislodged people leave behind to escape brutality and despotism in their native countries, they are constantly confronted with the challenges related to concerns of adaptability. Hence, their displacement causes a profound sense of loss and trauma, which makes it difficult for them to resettle in the host nation. Displaced people belong to a social class that is not viewed positively but contrary to the blistered identity that they yearn to shed because it serves as a painful reminder of the life they lost as a result of displacement and the new identity they were compelled to assume, as well as the story of how they fled their homes in search of safety in an unfamiliar place. Forced displacement fragmentizes the relationship to the cultural rites or norms of their home country, and identity must be rebuilt (22).

Additionally, Michelle Balaev's conceptual framework is applied to both texts to illuminate the characters' horrific experiences and their ongoing struggles to deal with them. According to Balaev, attention must be given to strategies that depart from the conventional model of traumatic inquiry to widen the scope of trauma study. She advocates for a comprehensive approach incorporating multiple theories and considers the diverse contextual factors surrounding the traumatic event. She also acknowledges the significance of place in shaping literary portrayals of trauma. In her view, academics are

constrained to using only the conventional interpretation strategies when describing textual representations, so they should diversify their approaches. She asserts, "Literary trauma theory must throw a wider net to catch the manifold representations of trauma in literature" (11). Michelle claims that several concepts and elements from literary disciplines, along with other academic fields, are required to explain the phenomenon of trauma.

## **1.2 Rationale of the Study**

The concept of trauma has had a significant impact on the literary field, gaining increasing prominence in contemporary times. The contemporary era, particularly for the Afghan people, is marked by exile, displacement, and dispossession from their homeland by unrest and war. Elevating the voices of these underprivileged and displaced people becomes crucial in the face of such struggles. This critical exploration of trauma and displacement aims to reveal the profound effects on both the psyche and physical realities of their unsettled lives. Displacement, in all its forms- exile, expatriation, and defiance against central authority- is a recurring theme in Afghan literature, both fictional and non-fictional. However, despite their traumatic richness, these texts have not received the scholarly attention they deserve. The focus of the researchers and critics has been mainly on post-colonial diaspora applied to Afghan texts, primarily addressing the political and ideological aspects of displacement. The psychological dimensions within these narratives have been relatively neglected.

Moreover, analysis of the Afghani narratives has provided us with general reading, but they have yet to engage with deeper theoretical dimensions. This study, grounded in the theoretical framework of trauma theorist Michelle Balaev, examines how

the trauma of displacement impacts women and how it subsequently sparks acts of subversion, transforming submissive behaviors, as depicted in “*A Woman Among Warlords*” (2008) by Malalai Joya and “*The Favored Daughter*” (2012) by Fawzia Koofi. Analyzing Afghani writings and texts in the context of trauma theory is hardly even done or meager in number. No prior studies have comprehensively explored how Afghan women portray trauma, displacement, and subversion in their works from various theoretical perspectives. This gap in scholarship presents a significant opportunity. The concept emerges that the shift between submission and subversion arises from a severe reaction to loss, injury, and persecution, ultimately leading to a transformative act of defiance. This highlights how characters embodying this transformation demonstrate the female body as a central site- not only for patriarchal control but also embodying a powerful text of protest against such repression. This study addresses this gap by examining how chosen texts depict traumatic memories' individual and collective impact. It further investigates whether displacement has had a lasting effect on the character of women. Bridging this knowledge gap is not only epistemologically necessary but also holds the potential for positive outcomes. By bringing together history, text, and trauma, the study may generate strategies for preventing and remedying displacement and trauma. Including both theoretical and critical texts allows this study to contribute to the field of comparative literature potentially. Investigating these non-western texts is crucial to broaden our understanding of the trauma of displacement, as they will undoubtedly reveal new dimensions of this experience.

### **1.3 Why Non-Fiction over Fiction: A Comparative Analysis**

Traditionally, literary studies have been dominated by the analysis of fictional texts. However, the present work departs from this convention by focusing on non-fiction. This strategic shift is rooted in the belief that non-fiction offers a unique lens through which to explore the trauma of displaced Afghan women and their respective tragedies.

I preferred non-fictional texts because they offer distinct advantages for research compared to fictional counterparts. Firstly, it provides a direct portal into real-world contexts, offering an authentic lens through which to examine historical, social, and cultural phenomena as we will witness them in the lives of Fawzia Koofi and Malalai Joya in upcoming chapters. Secondly, non-fictional authors typically have clear objectives, making their perspectives and arguments readily identifiable. This clarity facilitates a deeper comprehension of the underlying messages and their implications for the research. Moreover, unlike fiction's reliance on imagination, non-fiction is anchored in verifiable facts, enhancing the research's credibility and robustness.

In contrast, while fiction offers valuable insights into human nature and the power of language, it is less suited to the specific objectives of the current study. Fictional narratives, being the product of imagination, may not provide the factual accuracy and authorial intent required for a comprehensive analysis of the subversion, displacement, and trauma. Additionally, the interpretative nature of fiction can lead to a broader range of potential readings, making it more challenging to draw definitive conclusions.

Focusing on nonfiction, this study aims to contribute to the field of literary studies by demonstrating the rich analytical potential of this often-overlooked genre. By comparing and contrasting the strengths and limitations of nonfiction and fiction, this section has established a clear rationale for the text selection and the story behind choosing nonfiction over fiction.

## 1.4 Objectives of the Study

- To examine the roles and functions of characters in the chosen texts within the context of a pluralistic model of trauma.
- To investigate the presence and influence of Michelle Balaev's notion of "primacy of place" within the textual landscape of the two selected texts.
- To analyze how these characters mentioned above represent the trauma of displacement in their works and become the voice of trauma.
- To find out how a character triggered by subversion meets tragedy.

## 1.5 Research Questions

1. How do the characters of the selected texts ascribe to the pluralistic model of trauma based on ethnicity, and what are the functions of characters in the chosen texts?
2. To what extent can Michelle Balave's notion of the importance of place be traced throughout the textual horizon of the two chosen texts?
3. What is the direct relationship between subversion and tragedy, and can the representation of the traumatized characters add something to subversion and tragedy?

## **1.6 Delimitations of the Study**

This ongoing study explores two novels: *The Favored Daughter* (2012) by Fawzia Koofi and *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008) by Malalai Joya. The focus of this study is merely on two Afghan texts because this allows for a thorough examination of these texts.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The exploration of trauma in literature boasts a rich history, with trauma theory itself emerging in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Early scholars like Freud laid the foundation by examining the psychological impact of traumatic events. However, the field blossomed with the second generation of trauma theorists, spearheaded by figures like Cathy Caruth and Dori Laub. This generation delved deeper into the complexities of representing trauma, focusing on the limitations of language in fully capturing the traumatic experiences. They explored concepts like fragmentations, silence, and repetition as critical aspects of how trauma manifests in literature. Michelle Balaev, a prominent voice in contemporary trauma studies, builds upon this foundation. Recognizing the evolving nature of trauma, Balaev emphasizes the progress of trauma theory in the modern era. Her work highlights the need to consider the social, political, and cultural contexts that shape trauma. This broadened perspective allows a deeper understanding of how historical events, societal power structure, and individual experiences intersect to create and shape traumatic realities. This chapter will investigate the progress of trauma theory in the modern era. By examining recent studies, we will witness how trauma theory continues to evolve, addressing social justice issues, cultural memory, and the ongoing quest for healing and resilience.

This literature review connects the present study to existing works, thus contextualizing the present survey and synthesizing relevant findings from previous studies. This chapter also aims to fill the gaps left in previous literature reviews. To

further elucidate the study of trauma in a clear and organized manner, this chapter is divided into sections that systematically explore trauma and its approaches from its beginnings to contemporary understandings. Literature reviews commence by writing a brief summary and then contextualizing the ongoing study within a larger structure or framework of previous research. Moreover, it attempts to expound the drawbacks of prior studies and come across by rectifying the bifurcation between the ongoing and previous research. In brief, this section of the study tries to explain the previous significant attempts at trauma and to explain and situate the contemporary notion of trauma infliction.

## **2.1 Commencement of Trauma Theory**

Upcoming reviews of lapsed literature attempt to pursue the trauma from its very beginning to dig out its clinical display to blend it with the literary field. The contemporary section provides an overview of the history of trauma theory, including its beginnings, changes, and development. This could be acknowledged as an essential part of understanding the trauma theory to determine the framework of this study. This research pursues the social and political happenings that paved the way for the development of trauma theory along with its paradigmatic progress. In addition to the study of trauma, trauma theory enables us to concentrate on the literary field from different angles. This theory displays various shades of literary genre comprising cultural norms, rhetorical strategies, and historical effects contrary to the psychological intake of the events and experiences, which include the impact of traumatic agony on the victim's psyche. It also concentrates on the physical alternation that a victim is subjugated by its repercussions. It is considered essential to know trauma and its notion. The very word

“trauma” originated from the Greek etymology “traumatize,” which shares the meaning with “wound.” Trauma is “a piercing of the skin, a breaking of the bodily envelope” (Garland 9). It steadily shifted far away from this statement of the physical wound to come across the sentimental scab a person has. But it is an acknowledged fact that psychological evidence of a traumatic incident happens time and again even after when a sufferer gets back to routine from his physical injury after a short lapse of time.

Therefore, traumatic events frequently result in both physical and psychological symptoms, suggesting that these effects are psychologically exhausting and may contribute to the victim’s psyche, or in severe cases, if not addressed promptly, physical disintegration occurs. A child psychiatrist, Lenore Terr, states that “Psychic trauma happens when an abrupt, powerful and overpowering emotional blow or sequence of blows attacks the victims from outside. Traumatic occurrences happen outside of a person but get ingrained in the brain” (7). Trauma is described by Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920),

The essence of the shock is the direct damage to the molecular structure or even the histological structure of the stimulus components as a result of a significant breach being produced in the protective screen against nervous system stimuli. We aim to comprehend the consequences of the actions on the organ of mind by a hole in its defenses against stimuli and by tissues that adhere to its trail. (25)

This definition of trauma supports the assertion mentioned above. At first, trauma was associated with significant catastrophic events, but its status has since changed. It can be seen as a sophisticated paradigm of research that has permeated several fields, including

literature, literary theory, history, and culture. As a result, it is possible to attribute the development of trauma theory to how people respond to conversations about politics, ethics, memory, and literary representation. The discussion of these issues picked up momentum in the 1990s, with a particular emphasis on the extreme forms of victimization and despotism that reached new zeniths following the Second World War. However, the current study differs from past analyses of traumatic events because it concentrates on literary works that deal with the effects of traumatic events on non-fictional characters portrayed in said narratives from these specific places, such as wars in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

Throughout history, there have been numerous natural disasters that have contributed to the development of trauma. The two world wars, which left an alley of devastation and obliterated many people, are one prominent instance. Additionally, historical tragedies like the carnage of the Holocaust, enslavement, and the Vietnamese and Afghanistan wars can also be the cosmological entities that influenced the growth of trauma studies. These events cannot be viewed historically as the only significant turning points that paved the way for trauma theory. Instead, it might be argued that the official beginning of trauma research began in the 18th century, probably in 1860, when accidents of the railway started and were recognized as potential sources of trauma. Those clinicians were prudently acumen and vigilant of the pattern that began to reveal itself in these situations repeatedly. The sufferers would no longer show traces of their physical injuries having healed but rather strange psychological ailments. One study found that the “Railway spine” (Harrington 28) condition was brought to light by trauma related to railway accidents. It showed up in various physical ailments in otherwise

healthy and unharmed railway accident sufferers. These unintentional accidents were thought noteworthy because they not only traumatized one person but also the entire community as they represented and hinted a clue:

The traumatic effect of quick industrialization and human independence was given to the neuroses of railway epoch that gave voice to the immense aptitudes of the machines of unmanageable speed and of sudden utter tragedy. (28)

Thus, the wounds to the sufferers' spines led to the concept of "railway spine," but they also experienced the breakdown of their cognitive state.

Thus, the discourse on trauma might be said to have started with railway accidents. A citation to psychologists like Charcot, Freud, and Pierre Janet could be viewed as a necessary supplement to learning more about the causes of trauma. In the *Female Malady* (1985), Elaine Showalter characterized hysteria as "faculty heredity aggravated by the biological and social crisis of puberty" (42) as the advent of strange behavior in women that had no apparent cause during the 1880s. Hysteria was, therefore, once thought to be a trait linked to women's weakened constitutions. The initial task of these psychologists was to examine the mental state of these specific women, who contributed to the development of the trauma field and discipline. Other doctors were conducting trauma studies before Freud started his studies; therefore, mentioning his innovations in this area would be insufficient without first mentioning his forebears. Among them was the French doctor Jean-Martin Charcot, who first discovered a link sharing parts between trauma and mental illness while treating traumatized and agonized women. Jean-Martin was the pioneer who realized that the symptoms his patient reported,

such as convulsion, sudden paralysis, lack of sensory input, and cognitive impairment, could have psychological origins rather than physiological ones. Following Charcot, his apprentice, Pierre Janet, continued the line of inquiry while focusing on how the patient's psyches and attitudes were impacted by the trauma they experienced.

In the aftermath, Jean Charcot, pupil Pierre, and Freud contributed to developing trauma studies. In this research on hysteria, Freud followed the lead of his mentor Charcot and adopted some of his ideas while strongly emphasizing historical events. In his book *Studies on Hysteria* (1995), he noted that hysteria was the trigger for the phenomena of disconnection, which could be conceptualized by serving the victim's consciousness into two parts. The patient experiences hysterical attacks frequently, which are simply repetitions of earlier experiences. This revealed to Freud that the physical condition that the sufferer has previously experienced is actually repeated in the symptoms that go along with the hysterical outbursts. The patients could feel more at ease by expressing their emotional turbulence and reenacting the traumatic past events (30). Subsequently, Freud revised and rejected his conclusions. He steadily altered away from the concentration on what he named "Seduction theory" in his paper, *The Aetiology of Hysteria* (1897). He concluded that traumatic flashbacks of sufferers were not held accountable for erupting any hysterical indications that incorporated the sensation of being assassinated, dismembered, as well as inexplicable captivity, even though, at first, the patient's memories were thought to be proof of childhood sexual abuse. He even started dissuading the sufferers from talking about their horrific experiences since he felt the ladies craved these kinds of sexual encounters, which they would otherwise avoid. Instead of concentrating on creating trauma theory, Freud began to focus more on

furthering theories on sexual evolution. Even though he may have changed his mind, there is no denying that he was a notable pioneer who established the framework for trauma studies in the future.

The field of trauma studies benefited from Freud's expanded dimensions. Due to World War I, the public's attention started to shift away from the topic of hysterical women, which facilitated continued development in trauma studies. In her book *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (1992), Judith Herman makes the argument that troops who displayed any character weakness, whether it be physical or mental, were stunned by society. Instead, they were held accountable for their incapacity. Thus, the commencement of World War II witnessed the introduction of the psychological idea of "first aid" (20). It was created for those soldiers who had "Shell shock" (20) syndrome to treat the indications that tormented them, including uncontrollable crying, shouting, memory loss, paralysis, and a general lack of reaction. Those soldiers were capable of concealing their traumatized situation and going back to duty right away after psychological first aid was used to treat the Shell shock syndrome of the injured soldiers adjacent to the front line (20-21). Additionally, in 1980, PTSD was formally acknowledged as a traumatizing event and was referred to as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. It was discovered that PTSD is a specific reaction to a circumstance that is outside the realm of what is typically experienced by humans and that it includes significant physical and psychological disturbances (APA).

In the course of these conflicts, doctors largely despised these soldiers. They were opposed to the idea of understating soldiers' trauma. One physician who can be used as

an example of helping patients to get through their trauma and offering backup by paying attention to their traumatic narratives was W.H.R Rivers. His most famous patient was the renowned war poet Siegfried Sassoon, who was encouraged to write down his terrible tales of the battlefield (22). Sassoon asserted that the idea of writing about his experiences had been quite profitable for him as he worked on his autobiography and heartfelt poetry. The connection between the expressions of trauma and the help of language is ultimately shown by possessing a powerful healing capacity (7). Literature is also an essential resource for understanding the trauma phenomenon. A literary work that depicts trauma evokes the suffering of the sufferer through the story, forcing the reader to develop empathy for the victims.

In the same way, that psychology has its viewpoint on consciousness, literature is accountable for giving a unique one. It is necessary to recognize the connections between psychology and literature. Although the methodologies of the two disciplines may differ, both are involved in the interpretation process. The researcher can develop a creative understanding of consciousness through literary materials. They analyze the regions of experiences society can overlook or deny, bringing trauma to surge (Michelle xix).

Joseph Heller is another prominent author who deftly captures the psychological effects of war on troops in his book *Catch-22* (1961). The book describes World War 2nd events and tells the tale of Yossi's army bombardiers—he witnesses the horrifying death of one of his friends while on one of his missions. Yossarian's fight between remembering and forgetting is used to create a complex web of opposing emotions that sheds light on the book's catastrophic narration. Such a disjointed story suggests that memories of the war and its aftermath tend to resurface, haunt, and torture. By the end of

this book, Yossarian may be physically unscathed, but his psychological trauma will never be able to leave this war. Another theme in the book is how, despite Yossarian's intense aversion to flying and seeming ease of deserting the army, his hard-line officials force him to stay in the military. This illustrates that abuse is meted out by bureaucratic forces who ignore the pain troops experience and keep raising the bar for how many missions must be completed before being let go from the army— something that never happens.

Additionally, the Holocaust during World War II and the terror associated with it have had a significant impact on history. The author Elie Wiesel's autobiography, *Night* (1958), can be viewed as one such related piece of documentation. In his autobiography, Wiesel describes the explained loss of human integrity brought on by violence and conflict. Because of the trauma he experiences at the expense of Nazi forces, he had an intrinsic deprivation of self while in the internment camp. Elie and the other captives were subjugated to humility because these camps did not follow the rules of civilized living, which separated them from their former selves. Judith Herman claims, "The same set of principles that had guided life before the trauma no longer applied" (18). In addition, among the many horrors described in the memoir, Wiesel and the captives suffered the barbarism of losing their individuality by having their names taken away and their identities erased from society. Elie claims, "I turned into A-7713. I had no other name after that" (42). In addition to the physical degradation they endured, Elie and the other inmates also suffered from the agony of losing their names. In the literature of the aforementioned age, the plight of everyone who suffered pain during the world wars has attained a symbolic value. Literary authors used cognitive trauma in their studies by using

characters as representations of pain brought on by conflict. It turned out to be vital because it helped the previously established scientific definition of war-related trauma establish itself in the cultural discourse.

Similarly, another traumatic event of dire proportions can be considered to be the Vietnamese war. The majority of the symptoms exhibited by the war's veterans and combined indicated physical and cognitive incapacity, which were a direct effect of the trauma they had endured. The manner in which psychiatrists such as Robert Jay Lifton dealt with these military veterans demonstrated how scientific trauma research and literary approaches may coexist. Based on earlier readings of Holocaust survivor literature that they examined with the clinical records of their Vietnamese victims, he documented his findings in *Home from the War: Neither Victims nor Executioners* (1973). Similarly, another psychiatrist, Jonathan Shay, uses literature to help rehabilitate these soldiers in his book *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming* (2003). Shay's theoretical foundations were built on understanding the long-term effects of trauma on Vietnam War veterans and soldiers with the help of Greek mythology. Shay used the narrative of Achilles, for instance, to encourage his diagnosis of veterans' and soldiers' severe psychological injuries (49).

Steadily, additional advancement in literary trauma study might be seen as connected to many causes. The extensive colonial period that covered most of the globe was one of the main reasons. As part of the massive undertaking of the continent of Africa and due to the rise of Europe using trading and commerce, areas of Asia and the Middle East fell under the influence of European colonizers. The crimes committed during colonization are the main topic of discussion for post-colonial writers. J.M.

Coetzee's book *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) is one such piece of literature that stands out on this topic. The book's protagonist is the Magistrate, who offers an endearing perspective on the colonizers. He lives in perfect serenity in a nameless town ruled by the nameless Empire. The book's allegorical storytelling, which Cotzee uses, makes it clear what a lousy thing colonialism is. The traumatizing effects on the lives of the masses are gravely attributable to colonizers exercising imperial authority. The invaders not only subject to tribal nomads— who are deplorably called barbarians--- to torture and other despotism but also interfere with their very survival. In addition to all the physical pain the barbarians endured, Colonel Joll's brutality, which hides itself under an aura of virtue and purity, brings attention to the barbarians' emotional suffering.

Although the colonial regime may have appeared to come to an end, it is impossible to ignore the underpinning effects of entailing a protracted period of victimization and despotism. Racism greatly emphasizes the consciousness of races other than white, adding a helping hand in causing extreme cognitive suffering experienced by the colonized along with post-colonial people. In conclusion, racism could be seen as a type of psychological trauma that affects its victim from the inside out, both historically and currently, even though it might or might not be visible in the sufferer's daily routine. The drama *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959) by Lorraine Hansberry posits textual proof that racism is a psychologically complex problem that traumatizes individuals through its portrayal of characters. This play's primary concentration is on the younger family, a multi-racial Negro family, and how racism is the primary source of tension in the relationship between whites and blacks. The point is that it is also causing concern among the family members. Mr. Linder, who represents the racist mindset of white people,

might be seen as the play's main adversary. As Mr. Linder attempts to pay the younger family to leave the all-white neighborhood, it is a significant cause of anguish for them. The whole movement of dislodging was based on skin color. Such horrors cause the younger family to experience intense internal difficulties but they finally triumph in this conflict because of their extraordinary subversion posing to racial grudges that was earlier devastated as well as alienated from one another and society too.

Additionally, 9/11 tragedy ushered in a new period of trauma in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The terror that these atrocities generated terrified the entire planet. Obliteration, catastrophe, awfulness, lack of temper, uncertainty, vulnerability, halted memories, delusions, hallucinations, and other sufferings plagued the victims. This is seen in Don DeLillo's novel *The Falling Man* (2007). The narrative centers on Keith and how 9/11 still affects him despite his survival. Keith's trauma is a result of witnessing his friend death in the very title of falling man. Although he was saved, Keith's vision of himself and everyone around him is still tainted by the stress of the experience. DeLillo's *The Falling Man* (2007) was not merely about one man; who perished that horrifying day, according to symbolic analysis. Instead, the falling man represents what survivors of such traumatic events continue to go through to this day. They are still free falling in midair as a result of their complex PTSD. One other aspect that is supposed to be emphasized is the 9/11 assault can be understood as both a personal and societal trauma on the cultural and psychological level. This incident had a lasting impact on the entire nation's sense of unity, not just on those who were the immediate victims of this tragedy.

Apart from depicting trauma brought on by major occurrences like the World Wars, Holocaust, post-colonialism, black slavery etc., trauma residing in people's lives

and particularly women may not be ignored. Feminist movement in 1970s could be seen as an illustration that how trauma can transfer from women's personal lives to public realm. Such awakenings had two purposes: to provide psychiatric therapy to the victims and to prompt significant changes in societal thinking and laws. In addition to this, the first crisis institute for rape opened its doors in 1971 and domestic violence trauma received more attention than ever before. In this sense, *Trauma and Recovery: the Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (1992) by Judith Herman possibly regarded as a significant work which mapped the cognitive or psychological investigation surrounding trauma studies. Judith primarily responded to the issue of complicated PTSD, focusing in particular on those who had experienced sexual and domestic abuse. Although Herman's work may not be considered a literary study, as it nonetheless has a significant impact on studies about trauma in the subject of literature: hence referencing this particular work is important for this investigation. Furthermore, Herman's work might be connected to the multi-disciplinary approach to trauma research highlighted by the current study. This is because literary researchers have examined the underlying misery of society using the groundbreaking psychological work.

It should not merely be viewed based on instances with huge consequences if we want to understand trauma better. Trauma on the other hand, can refer to everyday events that cause sentimental instability. This trauma can mostly be attributed to natural disasters, sexual assaults, destitution, prejudice based on religion and many other things, as detailed by Judith Herman in the study cited above. There are several authors who have accurately depicted these tragic events in their literary works. One such example is the writing of Nigerian author Buchi Emecheta. *Joys of Motherhood* (1979), her ground-

breaking work which tells the tale of Nnu Ego, the heroin, a Nigerian woman who must struggle to survive in a patriarchal culture despite severe conditions. In her first marriage, Ego is incapable of bearing a kid for her husband. As a result, she is exiled to Lagos, where she triumphantly bears children. With the start of World War II, her life takes a turn for the worst once more as her husband and her family mercilessly reject her and her children.

Nnu Ego's life possibly be viewed as a haze of painful events which poses the risk of irreparably shattering her. In a patriarchal society, women are expected to get married and have a large family. She unfortunately endures severe pain as a result of the clash of culture in her life. In addition to suffering as the wives of the two women, she is compelled to marry. There is a fundamental conflict among the communal vendetta, the customs of her birth place, and the urban environment she is compelled to live there. She suffers severe stress in her tribal Ibo society because she deviates from the expectation that she should cherish being a mother, "which is the main source of self-esteem and public status" (70). To the contrary facet, Lagos, the urban city where Nnu is thrown, fulfills her desire to become a mother but it causes her distress because of her husband's difficult financial circumstances and he several wives he must maintain. She has put forth a lot of effort over the course of her life, contributing to home costs, supporting her numerous children by toiling hard as a street vendor and fulfilling the role of a traditional wife. She was yet devastated by her children's cruel abandonment to an isolated life and demise.

Hanan al-Shaykh, a writer from Lebanon, is another author who concentrates on the representation of trauma in a typical environment. This novel *The Story of Zahra*

(1980) centers on Zahra's life from early childhood till her passing. Due to the numerous pimples on face, Zahra has had a physically tortured life. She receives regular criticism from them as a result of her father's rigorous discipline. She is also the only witness to her mother trysts which contributes to psychological anguish. She runs away and goes to live with her uncle in Africa. There she suffers another trauma due to her uncle's unrelenting love for her. Zahra marries in order to escape her uncle's repulsive conduct. She is unable to adapt to that role, therefore this also turns out to be futile for her. Zahra finds some degree of prowess as the Lebanese civil war breaks out and decides to betray a sniper named Sami in order to cease his murderer efforts. Her tragic life finally comes to an end in the novel's epilogue, when she is deceived by Sami. He shoots the Zahra when she denies to abort hers pregnancy with Sami. Zahra bewilderedly states, "He uses the bullets at his elbow to kill me.... He is crumpled from my presence..... he murders me... My voice does not make noise"(183).

Various evidences are used in a study in a book by Francesca Quigley to shed light on Zahra's tragic experiences. In her work "*The Orange and Navel*": *Trans-generational Transmission of Trauma* (2016) on Hanan al-Shaykh's story of trauma. Quigley emphasize on illustrating trans-generational trauma that is transmitted through many episodes in the book from Zahra's mother to herself. Analysis of two works in this study which also analyses the transmission of trauma from one generation to the next generation is important for the direction of the current investigation. Zahra experiences trauma at several times during her life including times when she is confined to bed and even admitted in the hospital for an unidentified psychological condition. Her mother is heavily involved in how her trauma is passed on to her daughter. A tragic incidence

which Quigley uses to support her claim is; the location of her mother's abortion. She claims that this scene demonstrates Zahra's unreliability as a narrator, but in reality it shows how eerily similar Zahra's memory of the abortion scene is to her mother's. She experiences the same strong emotions of relief and disgust at having to abort the child of their physical and mental abuser. Opposite to the present analysis that uses the story of Zahra's point of view. In her research, Quigley employs the potent symbol of the orange and navel to represent the umbilical cord role in uniting mother and child. According to Quigley, trauma can be communicated from the mother to the kid in the same way that nutrients for baby's survival are shifted into the womb (42).

## **2.2Second Generation of Trauma Studies**

To fully comprehend the topic of trauma, it is essential for the current research to trace the development of trauma studies' historical paradigms since their scholarly inception to the progressive addition of literary features. To understand that how the characters in the selected memoirs highlight pain they faced is made easier by research on trauma theory. Trauma victims suffer anguish which paralyses them, unable to comprehend and make them inefficient to the point that they lead a normal life. One of the most well-known figures in this area is Cathy Caruth, who made significant contributions to closing the gaps between science and study of trauma in literary field. Trauma theory attracted the attention of academics in the 1990s and gradually progressed in study. Cathy is renowned for being the top innovator in the field of trauma theory, having published two significant researches pertaining to trauma studies. In her book *Trauma: Exploration in Memory* (1996), she emphasizes on a clear along with a comprehensive overview to the field of trauma theory. By her work, Caruth makes the

argument that catastrophic loss is to blame for the victim's fractured perception of time. She asserts that it is impossible to fully identify or attribute the post-traumatic stress disorder that the subject is witnessing the experience to that particular traumatic event. Caruth contends that trauma instead causes,

....distortion of the event, achieving its haunting power as a result of distorting personal significances attached to it...the event is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it. To be traumatized is precisely be possessed by an image or event. (4)

Additionally, Cathy Caruth describes her preferences for the study of literature and literary techniques of analysis in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (1997), one other study of hers which looks at the composition of retarded traumatic events. According to Cathy, literature is giving us the power to testify about events which we cannot always understand and creates new ways for us to understand things that might otherwise go unheard and unspoken. Caruth conducts a number of textual analyses of philosophical, literary, psychoanalytical, and filmic texts in her work. Thoroughly observing close readings of these works, Cathy displays that traumatic experiences still acquire meaning despite their enigmatic nature, which suggests that they are incomprehensible and unknowable. For example, these incidents gain significance when people talk about them and heard by others.

In the book's introduction, Caruth claims that 'trauma' is more than mere a "simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always a story of a wound that cries out, that

addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is otherwise unavailable" (4).

Aforementioned assertion of her is comparable to findings of the current study because both works chosen for analysis demonstrate that how the characters are free from the pathological restrictions brought on by traumatic events. Instead, a character under examination use his "voice" (4) to express anguish and suffering he goes through, and even when he chose tenacity. He does so out of choice rather than for pathological reasons. Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub are two further literary scholars who together with Caruth, helped and made trauma theory acceptable in humanities field. *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History* (1992), a book on trauma theory, focuses on the idea of what they mentioned as testimonial entity. In their book Felman and her co-author extend the concept of testifying, it is characterized as having experience to any horrific event. The pile of essays examine the horrific historical occasions of World War II, the impact, and consequences of the Holocaust; by emphasizing that how common folks and practitioners respond to these horrific historical events through the use of language that includes stories, narratives, poetry and novels (19).

Subsequently, they look into the accountability placed on trauma witnesses. According to Felman and Laub, testimonial interpretation is distinct from linguistic usages and modalities. The fate of the speaker or witness is tragically described as "the profoundly, unique, non-interchangeable and solitary burden" (3). Justification in the present study regarding women's role and this specific idea about the witness burden are similar. The goal that a person must serve in order to stand in for the communal depiction of trauma and stand against all odds is the main subject of the current study. Felman

exclusively highlights the role of the witness and ignores the significance of the location where the victims suffer traumatic events. Through this research, an effort has been made to shed light on the importance of trauma and the sufferers' reactions to it.

In addition to this, Felman reiterates the importance of language in the aftermath of terrible events in her most recent work, *The Juridical Unconsciousness: Trials and Traumas in the Twentieth Century* (2002). She observes the differences between literary expression and that of the legal discourse. According to Felman, literature emphasizes the reality of horrific experiences, even when the reality is indescribable. While in the legal world, this is a barrier to finding closure. The sufferer is ordered to recount and excruciatingly the incredibly agonizing incident that is being tried to put to rest and to perform it (146). According to Felman, a witness cannot vocally communicate in legal discourse when the witness is required to testify in accordance with the language of the legal system. In the words of him, literature includes any literary use of language which seeks to communicate a reality during a trial that the trial itself is unable to express. It makes an effort to carefully give an ear and listen to the indescribable reality of a terrible events and which is repeatedly experiences but is unable to explain.

Felman claims that, it is because literature is so important during a time of historical stress and challenges. Literature is required to uphold the notion of justice, much like the law. "Literature is a dimension of tangible embodiment and language of infinitude that...encapsulates not closure but...in a legal case refuses to be closed...this rejection of trauma...to be closed that literature does justice"(8), Felman eloquently notes in the following description. In summary, Felman clarifies the idea of witness and offers a novel literary analysis of the relevant historical cases and writings. On the other hand,

the current study of trauma exclusively bases its analysis on literary works. On the other hand, the current study of trauma exclusively bases its analysis on literary works. In order to enhance the arena of trauma research, the present research project combines two essentially literary and modern Afghan texts, in contrast to Felman who, in *The Juridical Unconsciousness: Trials and Traumas in the Twentieth Century* (2002), does studying the assessments and who, in her book; *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (1991), use a variety of discourse tools, such as poems.

Two of the most well-known thinkers who made contributions to the field of trauma studies are Caruth and Felman. Their emphasis on the study of trauma in the context of literature set the path for subsequent researchers because their work combined the study of psychoanalysis, trauma, and literature. Trauma and a variety of academic fields, including Psychology, linguistics, Literature, Sociology, and Public Health, etc., have a “privileged and paradoxical relationship to interdisciplinary research”, according to one study (Marder 1). This antithesis speaks what is true that trauma studies defies categorization and transcends its confines. Furthermore, Elissa Marder asserts in her article *Trauma and Literary Studies: Some “Enabling Questions”* (2006) that the literature field has contributed to the development of influential and well-known insight into trauma studies. Trauma theory has gained new understandings as a result of its influence on the study of literature (1). The current study, which is possibly seen to be an effort to enhance the field of literary trauma scholarship and it is centered on a review of two literary texts.

The landmark book *Against the Unspeakable: Complicity, the Holocaust, and Slavery in America* (2006) by Naomi Mandel focus on expanding trauma theory's

conventional notion of speechlessness. She suggests that the “discursive creation” of the unspeakable trope in trauma studies (pp. 4-5). By emphasizing the “issues inherent in speech rather than considering the ethical obligations associated in such representations, it avoids moral accountability in the portrayal of suffering”(4-5). As she notes that “silence and forgetting are as much a purposeful and self-conscious act on the part of the subjugated as they are the product of the subjugating culture’s expectations and necessities”, she makes her position clear in critique of Toni Morrison’s book *Beloved* (1987). The argument made by Mandel in her writing is the same one made in this criticism since it also seeks to refute the concept that speechlessness is a characteristic that is inherently linked to traumatic experiences. The goal of the current study is to analyze how the strategy of silence is used in narration. The present study, however, contrast with Mandel’s, since she restricts her study to only illustrating that why, and how the word “unspeakable” are used. In contrast, this current critical approach severs as a pluralistic in nature because it makes an effort to treat various reactions to traumatic situations by using various tactics (as cited by Michelle on p. 187). Mandel’s paradigm of research is also limited to academics, which is willing to investigate trauma connected to anti-Semitism, racism, genocide, war wrecked havoc and its repercussion etc., according to the prevalent western dogmas in trauma studies. On the other hand, the current study explores a few novels about nations that are not the main focus of the research.

*Writing Trauma, Writing Time and Space* is a research on trauma. The standard approach of trauma analysis used in Jane Smiley’s book *A Thousand Acres and the Lear Group of Father-Daughter Incest Narratives* (2010) draw on thinkers like Sigmund Freud and Cathy Caruth. The researcher claims that through her reading of Smiley’s

book, the characters in *A Thousand Acres* (2010) adapt the same storyline as that of King Lear's story to reenact a delayed instance of father-daughter incest. Using Caruth's idea of the delayed revealing of trauma in the form of invasive pictures and enforced reenactments, she explores this. Additionally, the study's author emphasizes the relevance of examining trauma not just via references to time but also the utmost significance of location, whether it be physical or geographical in nature. The author uses both trauma and eco-criticism theory to achieve this goal. She researches "the articulation of psychic trauma in relation to descriptions of the poisoned farming landscape" to investigate links between the physical pain suffered by the female characters as a result of the environment's harm. By drawing a connection between the novel's polluted landscapes and the experience of sexual assault on the part of protagonists, the researcher analyses the widespread consequences of the subversion brought on by trauma (Jane 184).

This present approach also interprets the dominance that the scene of trauma has over the characters. Through the course of the current critical examination, the location of the traumatic events which acts as a witness to memories, that have been tormented. In contrast, this study focuses on the trauma experienced by women in their individual lives. It is relevant to but also distinct from the ongoing study, by discussing the psychological trauma experiences by women in their personal lives as a result of war. The influence of trauma that disturbs a person's domestic asylum is a prominent topic of debate in this current project, even if the protagonists of the chosen novels are not actively engaged in a fight.

Another piece of writing, *The Future of Trauma Theory: Contemporary Literary and Cultural Criticism* (2014) by Robert Eagleston, explores theory's future, which has

been viewed as an emergent critical discourse in modern theoretical criticism. This collection investigates and promotes a wide range of ideas and works that depart from the conventional field of trauma studies through the use of creative methodologies. This is consistent with the current research, which departs from the established and accepted ideas of trauma theory. *Beyond Euro-centrism: Trauma Theory in the Global Age* (2010), an essay in the current collection by Stef Craps, examines a work by Sierra Leonean author Aminatta Forna. Robert Eagleston, the writer of an essay in the same book, contends that in order to advance trauma theory, it is necessary to deviate from accepted Euro-centrism by considering the trauma of Non-Western, “for their own sake” and “on their own terms” as central. The idea is rejected by the meta-critical critique of Craps (Robert 48).

This particular interpretation of Craps is consistent with the ongoing study since it emphasizes the traumatizing events that occur in non-Western minority societies. In the current study, literary works from the Afghanistan culture is analyzed. These works have not yet received widespread attention. The current study resembles Carp’s work but also departs from it. This is clear from the volume’s neglect of the topic of gender concerns in traumatic inquiry and the fact that only roughly one-third of the authors are female. By focusing on female authors, prominent female characters, and the problems they face as a result of trauma, as well as the fact that the current research is built upon the ideas of contemporary female writers. An effort has been made to get around this since the present investigation is inevitably biased towards women.

Additionally, this happens clear that *The Future of Trauma Theory* (2014) offers a thorough overview of the theoretical dialogue around the modern critical trauma.

Trauma theories in cultural and literary studies, on the other hand, are an important issue that the volume does not support. In order to contextualize trauma theory outside of the pre-dominate poststructuralist, psychoanalytic paradigm of study, one may turn to the book *Trauma: A Social Theory by American* (2012) by sociologists Jeffrey C. Alexander and Ron Eyerman. The authors of this work emphasize the need of considering traumatic encounters as ensemble experiences that are not merely pure psychological in character and propose an alternate framework for trauma inquiry. The authors investigate how trauma shapes both the onset and fallout of significant social disputes. Whenever, individuals of a given civilization react in unison to a terrible incident then cultural trauma results. An incident that; “leaves irrevocable wounds onto their group consciousness” and fundamentally alters the group’s identity (6). The current study intends to contextualize the characters of the selected works adhere to the ideas advanced in this text in order to embolden the current position of approaching trauma discussion from a larger cultural perspective.

The depiction of traumatic events in contemporary American fictional and non-fictional tales is also thoroughly examined in Alan Gibbs’ book *Contemporary American Trauma Narratives* (2006). Trauma has become the preeminent paradigm of study for contemporary American literature, according to Gibbs’ assessment. This investigation offers evidence that the old trauma theory paradigm was commonly used, leading to clichéd and formulaic readings of texts, which supports the present criticism. Gibbs and contemporary research both reject the idea of studying trauma from a Freudian psychoanalytical approach. Instead, he applies theories from the field of narratology to analyze the literary techniques authors use to convey the effects of trauma.

Meta-fiction is one such narrative innovation that the book examines, and reading one of the works included in the current study is one such example. It is possible to interpret Gibbs' observation that "always come to the crank-turners, the little grey people who take the machines others have built and just turn the crank, and little pellets of meta-fiction come out the other end" (135) as a direct concern on the pervasive formulaic investigation of trauma. Although Gibbs' optimistic examination of trauma with the help of a modern paradigm may be seen essential, its reach is constrained. It only looks at American literature, whereas the current study attempts to broaden the focus by applying such narrative techniques to literary fiction written by authors of the Afghani diaspora.

### **2.3 Progress in Trauma Studies in Modern Era**

As the current study focuses on using ideas from Michelle Balaev's works *Trends in Literary Trauma Theory* (2008), *The Nature of Trauma in the American Novel* (2013), and *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory* (2015) discussion of the development of trauma coursework in present years possibly observed as relevant to the present analysis. She emphasizes the need for theoretical pluralism while examining trauma in literary narratives. This can be taken into account when reading the chosen literature. According to the current study, this unique perspective of trauma offers an understanding that encourages diversity, encompasses everyone, and goes beyond the pathological examination of the concept of trauma. The following will support this goal. The intergenerational notion is used in analysis to take trauma into account throughout several generations. Balaev further suggests that in order to investigate trauma from a fresh angle, a number of context-dependent factors, like culture and traditions, setting of place, terrain, and protagonist, etc., must be taken into account, which is highlighted in

this study. According to her, such diversified perspectives are essential for understanding the traumatic phenomenon in literary works.

The typical approach to researching trauma in literature, which “selectively uses psychology ideas that develops a single paradigm of disease to explain trauma” (Balaev, p.3) is criticized by Balaev in the opening of her thesis. The conventional method used by Caruth and others, according to her, “states that trauma is a wordless emptiness, unrepresentable, essentially pathologic, timeless, and repeating” (3). By pointing out the drawbacks of this paradigm, Balaev departs from the prior tendency of trauma investigation. Instead, she asserts that different people experience trauma in different ways. She makes the case that traumatic events are not always non-presentable. Not all victims experience dissociation or recover via remembering the traumatic incident. She strives for comprehension that encourages the blending of diverse societal and cultural variables affecting the victim’s healing and understanding. As a result, the current study aims to provide a novel viewpoint on contemporary literature written by Afghani diasporic authors using the pluralistic approach for the study of trauma proposed by Balaev.

Through specific non-fictional works, the current project seeks to shed awareness on the traumatizing predicament of Afghanistan’s displaced women. Politically speaking, the Afghan situation has completely changed as a result of the Russian invasion, the American war on terror, and public unrest. Traumatic incidents involving horrendous terrorist attacks, civil war-related conflicts, unrest, and repression have harmed the populace to the point where they have obvious psychological issues. By examining immigrant studies from various regions, including Eastern and Western Europe, Muslim

North and South Africa and the Caribbean, Madelaine Hron investigates the immigrant experience in her article, *Translating Pain: Immigrant Suffering in Literature and Culture* (2010). Through the use of a wide range of techniques, it illustrates the various types of psychological and physical trauma that can occur:

In real life, newly arriving immigrants find themselves figuratively ‘translating’ into citizens of the host country: they must transform their images of home, their idealized notions of the new country, their former values, customs, and, above all, their culture, into the context of the target host country. (16)

Nevertheless, Hron depends upon the study of any specific underrepresented section of immigrant literature, which notably includes well-known exo-tifying imagery of trauma like ill bodies, voodoo tropes, physical impairments, zombie-fication, etc. that adhere to the prior traditional attitude towards immigrants. The current research project, in contrast, examines novels in which the protagonists are predominantly from the middle class and are on the cusp of the upper class. This is done in an effort to interpret the chosen literature in a new way since, although being shielded by wealth: the protagonists in the texts are nonetheless deeply affected by physical and psychological pain that has left scars on their lives.

Even though the selected books largely focus on the experiences of refugees, the emotional way in which Hron captures the suffering that immigrants endure complements the present study. Through her research, Hron aims to clarify the suffering connected to the tribulation of dislocation and relocation, or what she refers to as “pedagogy of suffering” (237) in her book. This peculiar idea emboldens the present approach to

trauma research since it makes an effort to uncover the suffering brought on by the scene of the trauma along with the significance of the alteration in the society, environment, and time associated with that particular site. In Hron's words, "In immigrant literary texts, these traumatic sequel, represented by memory fragments, flashbacks, nightmares, or hallucinations, often eclipse the difficulties of integrating into the host country", the greater relevance associated with the context or site of trauma that is eloquently demonstrated in my critique (27). In addition, Hron contends that immigrants must also go through their own translation since they naturally adapt, transform, and reconstruct themselves, which is akin to the current debate of the reconfiguration of self that victims of trauma go through (Hron 39-40).

Additionally, by focusing on the Victorian era, Alisa DeBorde's research thesis is *Observing Trauma: the Known and the Hidden in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (2018) offers a distinctive feature of critical investigation. DeBorde seeks to close the gap left by the abundance of theorists who regularly work on 20th-century literature about the Holocaust and wars. She does point out that the Victorian era was also incredibly traumatizing. She focuses on bringing light on a variety of incidences of all sizes in her research, including infectious diseases, industrial disasters, railroad accidents, and premature deaths, all of which have a negative psychological impact on those who witness them. To do this, the author promotes conversation on trauma by contrasting more recent views about trauma with earlier versions of this idea from the 19th century. The portrayal of psychical wounded, according to her, "opposed mid-nineteenth-century concepts of the unity of body and mind and prefigured late-nineteenth-century developments in the acknowledgment of trauma" (45). The broad assortment of Victorian

characters included for the critique are all subject to psychological wounds, which are the primary focus of DeBorde's study.

By emphasizing on both the trauma that the mind experiences and the influence of cultural norms upon the characters and the changes they perceive, the current research seeks to place the chosen works in a broader cultural context. DeBorde helps to open up new research areas in trauma literature by sharply analyzing only Victorian narratives while incorporating modern theories of trauma. This is in line with the present investigation, which uses modern trauma conceptualizations to examine current works of selected texts with a dearth of critical questions. As it advances our understanding of the trauma connected to Afghanistan's culture, people, and society, the current research aims to close a specific knowledge gap. The goal of the current study is to examine the pain brought on by war for Afghan women. Furthermore, by addressing the two works from a position which tries to move back to the conventional lens of viewing trauma from a Eurocentric perspective, this research strives to create a critical examination of both. Critical initiatives have emerged in recent years in an effort to decolonize the study of trauma from its pervasive trend of Euro-centrism, which frequently leans towards either homogenizing or, on occasion, revealing exclusive studies of human pain, social and psychological trauma. Trauma has also received criticism from a variety of perspectives for many years and is a recurring theme in literary and cultural studies. The subject of trauma is still highly relevant today because of the rising tides of war, insurgency, social unrest, and political upheaval occurring around the world. Examples include the barbarism perceived by female hysteria patients during Freud and Charcot's times, personal stories that include abuse, assaults, effects of criminal acts and genocides like

the Holocaust and the Vietnam War, as well as 9/11 attacks. The current study of the chosen novels about the Afghanistan region intends to conduct an investigation that pushes toward increasing intercultural engagement against subliminal Euro-centric assumptions that have a tendency to lean toward the pedantic. The inescapable necessity to advance toward a fuller comprehending of such terrains can end the cycle of despotism and contribute to closing the gap in this aura, an investigation into which this investigation also aims to contribute.

In addition, Stephan Milich questions the widespread practice of equating the concept of trauma with a single event both historically or biographically, the repercussions of which have a gravely adverse impact on person's mental health along with his interaction with society, in his text *Trauma in Contemporary Arab Literature: Translating Oblivion* (2016). The traumatic event may be over, but its after effects alter the victim's life or even the life of a certain people or community. Stephan modifies his perspective and stop pondering trauma, albeit bases his assertion on the idea that if the people are experiencing colonialism or its aftermath are given special attention, then the idea that develops can be seen the people striving for survival of norm as an abnormality. This study is not relied on digging out the events of colonization before and its aftermath, Stephan's perspective on trauma is different from mine. It is also comparable to my study in that, it concentrates on an area of study that has not been extensively covered before. More in-depth readings of the literature pertaining to the trauma of these specific countries can be done by examining the rationale behind the setting up of brutal regimes, as those in Sudan, Syria, Egypt, Algeria and Afghanistan etc. The goal of the current study is to demonstrate how the characters in the chosen texts experience trauma on

personal and collective level that ultimately changes them. Stephan figures out to this as traumatic turbulence and oppression becoming the notion of daily existence.

*Anxiety of Erasure: Trauma, Authorship, and the Diaspora in Arab Women's Writings(Gender, Culture, and Politics in the Middle East)* (2016), by Hanadi Al-Samman, is another important piece that contributes to the contemporary research of trauma. The book by Samman challenges preconceived ideas about the oppressive way of life of Arab woman; therefore one can see it as a counter-narrative. It offers a complex picture of Arab women writers who are diasporic and use their imagination to creatively convey their experiences. Samman takes on the responsibility of highlighting that how did the authors adhere to the general circumstances of their native country, while at the same juncture asserting the traumatic as well as the triumphant elements of life as a woman writer through her sensitive observation of female writers. Samman discusses in her study the trauma that these people experience as a result of their sense of rootlessness and disconnection. These claims about the ideas of belonging and un-belonging that emerge from the trauma of either leaving your own country voluntarily or being persecuted there are similarly addressed in the current critical study. The writers of the memoirs used are also members of the Afghani-American diaspora, which helps to give a nuanced analysis of the suffering they imaginatively express in their different fictional and non-fictional works.

The trauma that the characters experience as a result of losing their native country is emphasized in the context of the novels of the current study. Such themes have been figured out in a study named *Traumatic Movements: A study on Refugee Displacement and Trauma in Contemporary Literature* (2018). The study asserts that:

...As the media constructs these images of refugees as invasive, it becomes even more relevant to turn to literature... provided a prism through which to understand society and in the case of refugees that is no different...The need for representing refugees in a personalized way... to steer away from the generalized narrative... as one singular invasive body on the Global North equilibrium. (3)

Exit West, Little Bee and other works of fictions other than Afghani novels are used by the writer of the aforementioned study to track the phenomena of trauma in order to present a distorted image of the plight of displaced folks around the world. The present study's vehicle is the pluralistic refugee model of study that the researcher uses. Additionally, the researcher also uses Owen Manley and Reed Coughlan migration model to support the viewpoint of displaced people. The paradigm put out by these sociologists fits the current analysis and supports the literary interpretation of the two chosen novels. The use of different texts in these two studies, with the prior study's researcher is providing a comprehensive perspective on the trauma endured by the Arab people from Syria, when they are ejected from their homes and the cultural loss this involves. The current research, in contrast, emphasizes on the displaced folks and especially women from Afghanistan and emphasizing the subversion and resilience that uprooted people exhibit, is what notably distinguishes them from one another.

In addition to this, as it has been mentioned above as well through the examination of earlier research, there are some gaps in the study of traumatic inquiry that the investigation of the current research has attempted to fill. The main problem with the current tendency and scenario is the lack of criticism available for Afghanistan, the

location mentioned in the chosen literature. Even it may be said that the subject of trauma is no longer limited to a certain area. Instead, it can now be said that studying trauma is a part of the common conversation. Trauma discourse challenges preconceived notions about the world, how misery is expressed, cultural memory and the individual self. Being presented with the aid of current analysis, an effort has turned out to prove that these elements have more thoroughly fortified in Afghanistan. Due to the persistent connection between the rise in armed conflicts and the resulting psycho-medical and humanitarian conciliations, there is a clear necessity to talk about these concerns. There is a current need to prioritize the scope of this critical research on trauma related to Afghanistan. Past traumatic incidents of historical imports like Russian encroachment, the 1990s civil war on Afghanistan's soil, the American war on terror, the Taliban's authoritarianism and civil unrest have undergone exploration.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research methodology section will outline the framework for investigating the complexities of trauma in literature, drawing upon Michelle Balaev's influential "pluralistic model of trauma." Balaev's model emphasizes the multifaceted nature of trauma, acknowledging the interplay between individual experiences, cultural contexts, and societal power structures. The study will prioritize a deep understanding the role of place and characters in representing trauma. Place encompasses both physical settings and their symbolic significances within the narrative. Analyzing the characters' experiences within these settings will be crucial. The primary mode of inquiry will be textual analysis, a qualitative research method that involves a close reading of literary texts. By delving into the text, we can uncover implicit meanings and how the authors convey the experiences of trauma. Balaev's model will be a guiding lens throughout the analysis. This study will consider individual experiences, cultural background and broader social forces in exacerbating their trauma. By employing a combination of textual analysis informed by Balaev's pluralistic model, this section aims to offers a nuanced exploration of trauma in literature, acknowledging the interplay between individual experiences, cultural contexts, and societal power structure.

According to the literature analysis, trauma can be linked historically to events like railway accidents, Freud patients' hysterics shell shock from various wars etc., which gave rise to the Freudian concept of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) in the field of biological psychiatry. In response to the vehement expansion of peace campaigns in the

United States, feminist march, the traumatic wartime memoirs of Vietnam War veterans, etc., the study of trauma gained impetus. Such occurrences sparked interest in the study of trauma, which is still common today. People's conceptions of the world have changed as a result of the constant destruction brought on by the combination of misery, conflict, technology, humanity, science, etc. Due to the combination of the humanities and sciences, trauma has spread in the realm of theory and intervention at the centre of this. This supports the idea that, because to trauma's pervasive presence in all facets of existence, its transmission is not limited to the discourse of the arts and sciences but has instead created new channels for the daily discourse of people.

In *On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies* (1995), Geoffrey Hartman poses pertinent questions; "What is the relevance of trauma theory for reading or practical criticism?". He responds by saying that although trauma theory is a work in progress yet. "It stays longer in the negative and allows disturbances of language and mind the quality we give to literature" (58). Literature, by using of figurative language to illustrate that how people's minds can be torn apart, can therefore be seen as an extended strategy to handle traumatic situations. Herman pen downs "the conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud" (1). No matter if literary works don't use figurative language, they nonetheless provide a platform for addressing such issues. Hartman (1995) similarly states forcefully that "In literature, as much as in life, the simplest event can resonate mysteriously, be invested with aura, and tend toward the symbolic" (547). No one regards the symbolic as a "denial of literal or referential but its uncanny intensification" rather it clarifies the connection of literature to cognitive functioning in salient spheres such as "reference, subjectivity and narration" (547).

With the aid of literature, trauma theory thus offers forums for discussing the deformation and degradation of the mind, body, and language. It nevertheless permits a study of such incidents to give victims coping mechanisms like witnessing and the conversation that follows to handle their pain. It is controversial that if writing about horrifying events in literature compensates for the horrors experienced and offers some kind of resolution. This is what trauma theory typically looks at as it explores that how the sufferers manage their anguish and use language to challenge their struggles, no matter if it's in a detached way.

The chosen framework for analyzing the chosen non-fictional narratives is that of Michelle Balaev. *The Nature of Trauma in American Novels* (2012), *Trends in Literary Trauma Theory* (2008), and *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory* (2014), the latter of which she edited, are three of Balaev's works that has been used in this investigation. Balaev states trauma as, "a person's emotional response to an overwhelming event that disrupts previous ideas of an individual's sense of self and the standards by which one evaluates society"(150). She thoroughly dissects literary trauma theory, from its antecedents to its contemporary applications. To depart from the "discursive dependence" on a single psychologically oriented strategy to witnessing the idea of trauma, Balaev asserts a more adaptable and sophisticated comprehension of the trauma phenomenon (11).

In the beginning of her argument, Balaev makes reference to concepts like unspeakability and un-representability that have long been connected to the works of trauma. Previous trauma theorists supported the idea that trauma is a thing that happens that is illimitable in scope and that it eludes expression. Traumatic events cause their

victim such horror that it is impossible for them to understand the seriousness of the situation, and as a result, they are unable to articulate it or even speak about it incoherently. It silences them and draws attention to the verbal ambiguity, ambivalence and aporia. Richard McNally, a psychologist, presents a concept of trauma based upon three factors “an objectively defined event, the person’s subjective interpretation of its meaning, and the person’s emotional reaction to it” (78). There are several complicated steps in the definitional process. Balaev, in contrast, studies trauma theory to look into fresh approaches for its developing discussion.

### **3.1 Michelle Balaev and the Trauma’s Pluralistic Model**

Throughout in this article *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory* (2014), Michelle Balaev explores the old and conventional models of trauma as well as the pluralistic approach to understanding trauma. Michelle continues to make the case that trauma in literary narratives need to be examined from a theoretical pluralism standpoint, which not merely aids in understanding trauma depicted in literary texts but also dispels the notion that trauma is inherently pathological and unspeakable. In order to support her argument for pluralistic paradigm, Michelle also considers the contributions made by Cathy Caruth and Kali Tal to the field of trauma research. It might be argued that Caruth and Tal are both to blame for the idea that trauma are non-presentable experience. Theoretical ideas advanced by these academics said that the phenomenon of trauma posits an illogical issue involving the subject’s unconscious mind that highlights the fundamental mismatch between language and experience. The subject’s knowledge of that terrible experience is severed as a result of this contradiction, which leaves them with no language skills. Caruth specifically emphasizes the linguistic ambiguity connected to

the incidence of trauma and this idea of non-speakability acquired a key principle in relation to the traditional paradigm's research of trauma. The advancements in the psychological foundations of trauma in addition to the literary research have contributed to the growth in the study of trauma theory. The examination of trauma in the world of literature has steadily included rhetorical, sociological, and semiotic issues.

While Balaev claims that the idea of trauma is examined via a variety of lenses in the pluralistic model including but not restricted to the topic of the non-presentable. According to this perspective, reaction to traumatic events are not always characterized as diagnostic because the traumatic events do not control memory formation exclusively but is instead susceptible to contextualized influences like the cultural facets, social contexts, personality traits, and person's necessities of uttering the story (35). Balaev states:

...critics like Rothberg and Forter work within a neo-Freudian and postcolonial framework. Critics such as Luckhurst, Mandel, Yaeger, and Visser address the social and political implications of trauma within a variety of frameworks... Irene Visser employs a social psychology model of trauma within a postcolonial analysis... Laurie Vickroy and Paul Arthur situate rhetorical concerns of trauma within a cultural studies framework.

(3)

She also emphasizes how the traditional approach to trauma research still has appeal since it integrates semiotic theories, which look at language, symbolism, and associations, with neurobiological theories, which addresses the inner workings of the brain and memory. In addition, by focusing on its universal characteristics and impacts,

the pluralistic model of trauma research counters the conventional model's propensity to view trauma as a universal phenomenon. Balaev emphasizes the necessity to place the analysis of trauma in a broader concept-based framework which encompasses both social psychological theories and neurobiological theories.

Because there are many different ways to study traumatic experiences, Michelle by using her understanding that how pluralistic paradigm of trauma provides justification for such an evolutionary practice of considering the cultural and social circumstances while researching traumatic events in fiction or non-fiction. A more adaptable viewpoint can replace the focus on trauma as a non-presentable situation by using a pluralistic paradigm of reading. Balaev explains:

In a pluralistic model, the concept of trauma is theorized from multiple sources and not restricted to the discourse of the unrepresentable...Importantly, a pluralistic model describes the multifaceted functions and effects of a traumatic experience in terms that extend past essentialist notions of identity, experience, and remembering found within the traditional model because it conceptualizes memory differently. (8)

The pluralistic model is also important for this study because, according to Balaev, it is crucial to advance past earlier theories of criticism in order to gain a profound understanding of trauma. This in turn leads to a wide range of questions about the representation and event. It helps to put society and the individual in clear focus by evaluating the myriad meanings attached to trauma in relation to both public and private realms of the matter, "rather than condensing the experience of trauma into a single,

silent ghost" (5-6). Michelle emphasizes the importance of eschewing earlier theoretical frameworks in favor of more recent literary trauma studies, like those which utilizes the pluralistic paradigm of trauma analysis. According to this model, criticism might look at trauma as something that calls heed to the investigation of the relationship that exists between the subject's minds, language, and conduct. Without depending on the traditional conclusions drawn from the traumatic inquiry, which frequently emphasize the general pathology and unrepresentability of the event, this objective can be accomplished.

Additionally, according to Balaev, if the influence of the larger contextual factors is considered from the start, for example social details, economic, cultural details, and political details, later on these elements could be seen as "the background contexts or threads in the fabric of traumatic experience", confirming that "trauma's meaning is locatable rather than permanently lost" as unlike the ability to express oneself naturally promoted by the former classic model of investigation (9). According to Michelle's theories, it is unlikely that a single conceptualization of literary trauma criticism will take into account multiple and incompatible depictions of trauma occurrences in literature because literary works may organize their narratives around an enormous array of values that disclose cultural and independent understanding of society, self and memory. Through a range of "narrative inventions" (159), such as images relating to the environment, trauma, temporal ruptures, and silence etc., Balaev also recounts a number of acute emotional situations. In order to convey the sense of trauma, authors often use "a non-linear storyline or disruptive temporal sequences to indicate mental uncertainty, disorder, or reflection as a response to the experience" (160). These narrative techniques

have also been taken into account in the novels examined in this critical investigation. The idea of silence is made more accessible by Balaev as a storytelling technique that departs from the traditional view that it should only be viewed as a pathological notion of inscrutability. As Michelle makes progress, he discovers that quietness operates a range of cultural restrictions since it depend on the social culture as to what could be shared publicly and what needs to remain private. Balaev emphasizes the use of these pauses as “rhetorical strategies” that could create a “gap in time or feeling” allowing the observer to consider what might have happened whilst that pause (159). It amplifies the incident’s significance and impact as a result. She comes to the conclusion that these narrative devices help the author mould the text into a form that captures the characters’ disturbed psyches connected with separation and memory of trauma, which needs to be taken into account for a pluralistic interpretation of stories.

According to Michelle, memory could be studied as “a fluid and selective process of interpretation” (14), rather than as a literal recollection, when using the pluralistic model. Numerous external factors like place, demographic setting, time, culture, etc., as well as inherent factors like personality, individual traits, family history, and others, have an impact on the remembering process. Additionally, context-related elements like environment, societal values, and culture integrate and have an impact on the idea of remembering. In addition to implications for recollection, Balaev’s argument about memory also has implications for how traumatic experiences are evaluated and assigned meaning (14). Balaev likewise clarifies the impact of trauma on memory by sketching distinctions among the complex idea of viewing memory as a dynamic and transformative process expressed by authors and the past pattern of viewing traumatic

events as residing on a distinct plane, distinct from the individual's normal memories. The revisionary process of recalling adds fresh details to the prior with each new story or even creates the past from various perspectives, showing that memories of the event are changed in accordance with the person's mental state at that particular temporal period. As a result, traumatic memory is rarely described as an accurate remembrance of the past.

According to the preceding prominent psychological tendency in literary trauma theory, the fragmentation of a victim's consciousness is the most common reaction to traumatic circumstances. The various imageries used to describe trauma in literature, according to Balaev's conceptualizations, calls for the usage of a pluralistic theoretical paradigm. A model which participates in analysis and draws from several theories about memory and trauma while concentrating upon the various representations found in books. In order to deal with the various answers and imagery etc. connect with trauma in literary works, Balaev sets out on a journey through her critical examination in which she makes an effort to an approach that collaborates in theoretical diversity and progresses from the widely accepted traditional paradigm.

### **3.2 The Primacy of Place**

*The Nature of Trauma in the American Novels* (2012), published by Michelle Balaev in 2012, is a quest that reexamines the essence of a traumatic event, its values and significance by showcasing the range of its manifestations. In an endeavor to broaden the conversation on trauma beyond the disease-directed pathological paradigm currently in use in the area of literary analysis, she uses modern American novels. Her examination of the conventional view of trauma as an experience that is essentially unaccounted for and shatters the subject's psyche pathologically helps the current study of a few literary

works since it hovers around on using a fresh paradigm of the analytic method. This innovative method views trauma within a theoretical framework that emphasizes the variety of reactions to a troubling incident and the benefits of the contextual factors engaged in emphasizing the significance associated with those traumatic events.

The conceptualizations that were used in the current interpretation of the chosen texts came from Michelle's examination of the works, she highlighted in her texts. The place of trauma is used by authors to represent and shape the protagonist's experience and worldview while taking into account the anguish and suffering they portray in literary works. The significance of geography in the context of trauma has been emphasized for the current critique. The goal of the current study is to explore the effects of the two texts' protagonists along with all other characters featured in the chosen texts. The utilization of imagery that depicts the terrain of trauma also contributes significantly to communicating the impact of trauma. This textual support for the significance of setting or place highlights the importance of the surrounding circumstances in determining how much weight to give a traumatic event.

Balaev emphasis the significance of place in *Trends in Literary Trauma Theory* (2014), saying that it "works to convey trauma's repercussions through metaphoric and material means"(31). She departs from standard methods of simply considering psychological theories while examining traumatic experiences. The subject is placed within a larger cultural framework that consists of societal values and affects both the memory of the incident and the "reconfiguration of the self" by providing a description of demographic location of the agonizing endurance and its commemoration. A rewriting of one's preceding perception of the outside world and oneself is brought on by the variety

of absolute meanings that are produced inside the story and the numerous new meanings that develop as a result of the traumatic occurrence. This suggests that each author gives a different perspective on the semantics of traumatic circumstances, emphasizing the modification of identity rather than the destruction of the self. In order to analyze the current study, Balaev's concept of "primacy of place" which suggests that trauma strengthens the victim's experiences in a cultural context that determines the essence of the traumatic experiences and its memories were used (150–152).

Additionally, importance of scene of the trauma strengthens the traumatic event for the person inside a larger cultural framework since the scene derives its core meaning from two sources: the individual's perception of it and then the symbolic weight that culture bestows on it. According to Balaev, each author places the conditions of trauma in various ways inside specific cultural structures that shape how that experience is remembered and how it is understood (159). The writer can distinguishably untangle the myriad meanings associated with that experience by starting with the exact location of the trauma and the memory to lack or loss someone connected to that location. When protagonist has a painful memory, authors typically focus on the natural surroundings since the physical environment represents the victim's sense of self. This is done to emphasize the internal struggle that exists within the mind as well as the various ways that "the individual seeks to interpret, absorb, and explain the traumatic incident" (161). To put it briefly, Balaev's viewpoint combines the study of trauma with the help of ecological theory, allowing her to derive a novel hypothesis about trauma which highlights the component of the location is painful situations as opposed to temporal. Michelle novel idea of the pluralistic paradigm of analysis emphasizes the diversity of

responses to trauma while taking into account diverse points of inquiry. Although there is no denying that Freud had a significant impact on how trauma theory evolved, academic researchers have recently begun to refute his claims and go in a different direction. *The Nature of Trauma in American Novels*, (2012) by Balaev is an example of such an endeavor.

### **3.3 The Role of Protagonist**

Another Balaev topic that has been used in the current study is the protagonist's role in the analysis of traumatic events. While discussing trauma in fiction, Balaev preserves the protagonist's tremendous enormity. She highlights how the main character acts like a "representative cultural figure" (155). The central character serves as a symbol: who is tasked with portraying not just his own unique traumatic experience but also the agony and suffering endured by a great number of individuals. The protagonist, according to Balaev, imparts the assurance of a subjective traumatic experience connected to "bigger societal causes and cultural ideals or ideologies" through the performance of this particular responsibility (155).

She also thinks that the protagonist's purpose is to portray a compilation of people or a certain caste, culture, race or gender who underwent a terrible ordeal together and whose hardships are highlighted by the eminent literary figure of the central character. Additionally, main character in this story increases any terrible incident where thousands have been subjected to great despotism and violence. Additionally, Michelle reaffirms the idea that when trauma is discussed in relation to the unification of political and personal identities, the specific instances the protagonist encounters are typically the result of stronger cultural forces. In essence, the central character advances the notion of the

inherent strength of a complex human intellect that endures events of agony and transitions to an identity generally denoted by a prior trauma (159).

### **3.4 Methodology**

The selected texts, *The Favored Daughter* (2012) by Fawzia Koofi and *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008) by Malalai Joya, both portray a world where trauma is an inherent and ongoing part. Aforementioned already in the conceptual framework, the ongoing study is focused on the analysis of displacement and trauma. Therefore, the analysis of the selected works uses a qualitative method. In accordance to Denzin and Lincoln's handbook of qualitative research, this methodology is all-inclusive.

“...an interpretative naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomenon in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (3).

Additionally, the qualitative approach used in the current study's analysis and description of the data helps to understand how pain and suffering affect the human psyche. In the current study, textual endeavor has also been applied as research methodology. Textual analysis paradigm presented by Catherine Belsey in her essay “*Textual Analysis as a Research Method*” (2013) has been used. By using textual analysis as an inquisitive research technique, the qualitative approach can better understand trauma by using a variety of pluralistic paradigms.

### 3.5 Research Method

The numerous techniques a researcher use to better comprehend and discover new information about a given field of study are referred to as research methods (Griffin 3). Textual interpretation could be acknowledged as the most popular study techniques utilized in the humanities. It depends on elements like uniqueness, inventiveness, and the cultures we inhabit or study (McKee 73). McKee continues by saying:

Textual analysis is a way for researchers to gather information about how other human beings make sense of the world. It is a methodology- a data-gathering process – for those researchers who want to understand how members of various cultures and subcultures make sense of who they are, and of how they fit into the world in which they live. (1)

Furthermore, notably textual analysis presented by Catherine Belsey in 2016, is organized in this investigation to back up both methodological and theoretical designs. This operating method aims to provide a clear and thorough evaluation of the chosen literary works.

The current study is centered on the historical, cultural, and social backdrop examined in the chosen books, and it is organized around Belsey's claims as she contextualizes the textual analysis. Through this analysis, it is shown that Belsey and Balaev are combined. This is evident from the current research's concentration on fields of interpretation that incorporates the intricate cognitive and societal aspects that significantly affect the sufferer's perception of a traumatic event. The blending of various contextual factors, such as protagonist, setting, time period, culture, geography, etc., has been used to analyze trauma which organize the characters, horrific experiences,

emotions and narrative in the chosen texts. However, Balaev uses the analysis of contemporary American literature to present her viewpoints. Whereas the study that follows, which spans three chapters, is based on two recent non-fictional writings with protagonists who are from Afghanistan.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter delves into the core themes of trauma, subversion, and the characters' struggle to reclaim a sense of home. This section will analyze how the function of traumatized characters, particularly focusing on Koofi and Malalai as the embodiment of war-trauma and displacement, drives the narrative. This analysis will explore the complex relationship between trauma and acts of subversion. How do the characters' traumatic experiences shape their actions and their resistance against oppressive forces? This study will examine the potential for a connection between the experiences of personal trauma and a broader act of rebellion against political trauma and persecution. A central focus will be placed on the characters' experiences of exile and the lingering effects of post-displacement trauma. The analysis explores the significance of the characters' relationship with their homeland and how it influences their sense of identity and belonging. This discussion acknowledges the nuances of the presented themes. Are there limitations to viewing all acts of resistance solely through the lens of trauma? Can trauma lead to destructive impulses as well as acts of subversion? By examining the characters' journeys and the function of trauma within the narrative, this chapter aims to illuminate the complex interplay between individual experiences, political realities, and the enduring human desire for a place of belonging.

#### 4.1 The Function of the Traumatized Central Characters

A trauma novel, in Balaev's definition, is a piece of literature that expresses profound loss or intense dread on both collective and personal level. The transformation

of the self that occurs as a result of the external, frequently violent experience that highlights the self and the world and it is one of the most important features that can be reckoned with a trauma book. The external experiences might be a variety of events like war, natural disasters or personal encounters like forced rape, and sexual abuse etc. (Michelle 149).

This accurate portraying of Balaive's trauma book fits the two chosen works under discussion. *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008) by Malalai Joya, is one of the books that explores a pressing issue of the day: the suffering that Afghanis continue to experience as a result of American onslaught on their country and their ongoing battle to start over as refugees in foreign lands. Malalai Joya (2008) paints a picture of her traumatic experiences across her life to represent the effects of such a complex issues. She follows the journey of dislodging and uprooting. She initially resides in Farah province but due to civil war and American invasion, it makes her compelled to abandon her native homeland.

Subsequently, the text *The Favored Daughter* (2012) by Fawzia Koofi writes the terrible experiences of her life throughout in this text which includes poverty, political violence, physical and emotional distress. She also talks on how gender inequality and women's oppression as well as segregation in Afghan society were cultural and societal standards that led to her hardships. Koofi's (2008) writing, which may be at times raw and emotional but it reveals the suffering she faced throughout her childhood. She discusses the suffering and grief she experienced as a result of the displacement, harassment and violence she encountered. It also reveals the effects it had on her mental and general well being.

In addition to this, both of these texts serve as a mirror of one another as they both depict uniformly horrific events that capture the characters' dislodging from their native countries and the subsequent eviction from their familiar communities. Furthermore, it can be said that the two works covered in the literary research adheres to Balaev's definition of "trauma novel" (149). This can be understood since the analysis frequently portrays the characters' profound experience of pain and agony on both an individual and group level. Both texts convey a narrative having sentimental and family-oriented notions. The trauma caused by losing their hometowns and the accompanying domestic situation predominates. Also, female authors who feature female central characters have produced the texts. Male characters are portrayed as conservative and stereotypical men engaged in some active exertions instead of possessing a harsh and subversive mentality whilst the feminine characters are acknowledged by promoting the action of the narrative. Contrary to the refugees typically portrayed in such writings who live in highly precarious circumstances, these texts frequently convey the experiences of aristocratic families who are fiscally secure and independent.

The main characters in the two memoirs depict the suffering of a greater population by emphasizing a greater stress on the routine lives of those who are not directly affected by conflict but rather on the families who endure the effects of civil war and intrusion and are compelled to flee their homelands. According to Balaev:

The trauma novel provides a picture of the individual that suffers but paints it in such a way as to suggest that this protagonist is an "every-person" figure. Indeed, a significant purpose of the protagonist is often to reference a historical period in which a group of people or a particular

culture, race, or gender, have collectively experience massive trauma.  
(155)

Like Balaev suggested afore, the current endeavor tries to depict a tattered central character which depends on his aptitude to recognize the specificity associated with personal pain that is usually adhered to extensive cultural ideas and societal traits. While analyzing trauma in the chosen works, it can be shown that the central characters are regular people, who experience endurance. One of their functions is to identify a historical period during which a group of people belonging to a particular gender, culture, community, or race experienced trauma collaboratively. As a result, the misery and destruction that can result from social unrest or war, forced rape, uprooting, despotism or torture, or any other type of cognitive or physical barbarism are amplified. Subsequently, the traumatized protagonist illustrates that how trauma is felt and commemorated in a particular setting and culture.

The central characters or protagonists' function is of utmost importance for the textual-based analysis evaluation of trauma in literature due to the wide variety of multiplicity of meaning they represent. It is peculiarly backed by Besley's idea of a plurality of meaning. The interpretation improves upon the pathological viewpoint from the earlier one. Textual depictions usually imply that traumatized characters possess unique abilities and information that might benefit others. For example in *The Favored Daughter* (2012), several traumatic incidents in Koofi's life have had a significant negative influence on her mental health and general wellbeing. But she was tenacious and committed to fighting for women's rights and the Afghanistan's development despite these challenges and obstacles. In *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008), Joya's experiences

serve as a reminder of the severe stress and the difficulties that people bear who live in conflict-based areas, particularly those who speak out against despotism, injustice and oppression. Joya persisted in her battle for justice and human rights in Afghanistan despite these barriers. Despite being imprisoned, receiving death threats and facing assassination attempts, she was still dedicated to her cause. Joya has inspired and given hope to women in Afghanistan and all over the world through her advocacy.

Both of the under discussion literary works' protagonists or central characters can be viewed as fundamentally distinct. Fawzia in her memoir *The Favored Daughter* (2012), she is a potent witness to her fortitude, resilience, and steadfastness in the face of animosity, and her distinct experiences and viewpoints make her an engaging figure in the history of Afghanistan. Koofi's past is also a uniqueness of her persona. She was raised by a large traditional Afghan family and experienced discrimination and hardships because of her gender from a young age. She overcame these obstacles and went on to earn a degree and become an effective politician in Afghanistan, tearing down barriers for other women. Koofi's story is also distinctive because it illuminates Afghanistan's political and social climate especially how the Taliban government affected women's rights and the difficulties experienced by people attempting to reconstruct the nation after a war. Koofi preserves and rises to prominence as an effective fighter for women's rights in Afghanistan despite experiencing numerous difficulties and threats to her life. On the other hand, in *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008), Joya also poses unique characteristics. Joya was the youngest female ever to be elected to the Afghan parliament when she was 27 years old. This is an impressive accomplishment, especially given how patriarchal, traditional and conservative Afghan society is. Afghanistan: where women have

historically been persecuted and disenfranchised, but it is a country where Joya is a determined advocate for women's rights. She has advocated against domestic abuse, child marriages and other forms of segregations based on gender. She is renowned for her ardent opposition to war. Joya has criticized the Afghan government's corruption and cooperation with warlords, as well as the American led invasion of the country.

In addition to this, a diverse and multifaceted picture of memory is presented in both texts, one that is not confined to a single and overarching interpretation of the pain that heralds the central characters. Instead, the memory-making for the characters is a flexible revisionary phenomenon. It is susceptible to impact from current circumstances like the person's requirements, personality and the relevant social and cultural components. Balaev also argues that the memories which are connected to a traumatic experience play a role in altering one's previous perception of themselves, society and the wider world. It is witnessed that the individuals are not portrayed as having a pathologically split existence. In contrary, it is determined that the suffering they endure gives them the opportunity to reshape themselves in contrast to their lapsed years. Victims are thought of as individuals who reformulate their awareness rather than spreading their polluted selves to others.

#### **4.2 Fawzia Koofi: An emblem of war-trauma and displacement**

In her text, *The Favored Daughter* (2012), Fawzia Koofi describes her incredible journey from an orphan in Afghanistan to becoming a member of parliament and a well known supporter of women's rights. Koofi had to overcome a great deal of challenges along the way, such as war, trauma and displacement. She opened her eyes into a large joint family in an isolated and mountainous district in Badakhshan, Afghanistan. Political

rivals assassinated her father when she was only two years old, leaving her mother to raise Koofi and her siblings by herself. It was a devastating experience but she was determined to seek an education despite the challenges of growing up without a father and in a conservative culture that constrained the choices available to women. As a result of this incident, Koofi made it her life's work to defend the rights of Afghan women and girls. As a result of her advocacy, she also received threats to her life, but she resisted being intimidated. She states:

Reaching Pamir high school, Faizabad first, I brimmed with confidence.

Though a haircut to fit in with the girls enraged my brothers, my mother, I suspect, secretly revealed in my newfound boldness. Watching female teachers, I marveled- how could a woman lead such a crowd, speak with such power? These questions ignited a spark within me. (44-45)

This is further emphasized that by the thoughts about Koofi's past with her father that run through her head as the text progresses. The fact that none of the other characters had these recollections of the deceased family member is significant because it highlights Fawzia's status as the only character who can tell the story of this recent loss through her eyes. As a result, Koofi might be seen as the only owner of the trauma that she carries within herself and on behalf of other members of the family. Fawzia moves through multiple recollections of her father at various points in her memoir, each of which corresponds with, what she is going through at that particular instance of experience rather than describing the trauma of his death through a single excruciating memory that haunts her incessantly. Also, it is noticeable, that Koofi makes a quick transition from her

father's memories to the present. Textually speaking, this might be understood as the multiplicity of meaning given to the various recollections of traumatic calamities.

The 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and more than ten-year civil war that followed had a lasting impression on Koofi's childhood. She and her family were compelled to abandon their home numerous times during this time, looking for safety in Iran and Pakistan, which were nearby. Koofi was deeply affected by these encounters because she witnessed the terrible toll and displacement take on individuals, families and even entire communities. Her perseverance and tenacity ultimately inspired her to pursue a career in politics. She was one of just a few women to hold such a post when she was elected to the Afghan parliament in 2005. Koofi used her platform to promote women's rights, especially where changes have been gradual like in the fields of education and healthcare. She reiterates:

Fleeing after ransacking, my mother led us away from our ravaged home.

Each desperate step felt like the crumbling of my life's work, years of hardship building a life now abandoned for survival. Witnessing this exodus as a child, it became my first glimpse of a life forever marked by displacement and fear. (41)

The aforementioned utterance captures the character's experience with a nuance blend of innocence and harsh reality. Leaving their belonging signifies the immense sacrifice forced upon them. The mother's despair at each step emphasizes the weight of their loss—not just material possessions, but a life they had painstakingly built. It portrays not just physical danger but emotional devastation of displacement and the shattering of peaceful life.

The trauma of war casts a dark shadow over Koofi's life. Growing up in Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion and subsequent civil war, she witnessed the brutality and devastation inflicted upon her people. The constant threat of violence, the loss of loved ones, and the obliteration of her country left deep scars on hers' psyche. She explicitly portrays the psychological toll of war and the challenges she faced in navigating a world plagued by conflict. Displacement further compounded Koofi's struggles. As a member of the Hazara ethnic community, she faced persecution and discrimination. Her family was forced to flee their homes several times, seeking refuge in different regions of Afghanistan. This constant uprooting disrupted Koofi's education, shattered her sense of stability, and intensified her experiences of trauma. She exhales words like:

Witnessing global political turmoil as a young child in Afghanistan, I saw the world erupt into violence with the Soviet invasion. My childhood home became a battleground, forcing friends' families to flee and leaving me grapple with fear and displacement- a trauma that continues to shape my life. (29)

It links the period of significant political shifts worldwide with a time of immense suffering for Afghans. Koofi uses her childhood experiences to highlight the contrast between a child's natural need for love, security, home, and harsh reality of war and displacement. It doesn't dwell on the specifics of the conflict, but focuses on its lasting emotional consequences- depression, anxiety, nightmare, fear and mistrust.

In her text, Koofi discusses the difficulties she had as a woman in Afghanistan including prejudice, violence and cultural conventions and rituals that constrained her

chances. She also sheds lights on Afghanistan's complicated past and present problems by providing insight into the country's larger and political and social environment. Fawzia stayed committed to pursuing her goals of academic success and political influence. She finally became the first female speaker of the Afghan parliament after teaching herself to read and write. She exhibits resilience in the face of adversity. Even in the face of what seems to be insurmountable hurdles but she does not give up on her aspirations. She continues to have a great sense of empathy and compassion, striving to support others in her community and promoting women's rights in Afghanistan.

According to her:

In war-torn Kabul, a resilient woman with a disability became a symbol of hope. Witnessing her struggle alongside countless others, I saw the unwavering strength of Afghan women facing hardship with courage and dignity. This experience instilled in me a profound sense of hope and the enduring spirit of the Afghan people. (142)

It hints the complexities of life in a war zone. It acknowledges the hardships but also highlights the strength and determination of ordinary people particularly Afghan women. Koofi highlighted a story of disable women, struggling to care for her family in a chaotic environment. Despite the woman's hardships, she is not defined by them. The description of her being "tough" hints at resilience even in the face of adversity.

Due to the cruelty and neglect she and her sisters experienced at the hands of her father, Koofi's relationship with him was a significant source of pain for her. Her father was a well known political figure in Afghanistan and a great ally of Taliban. However, despite his influential position, he was often absent from his family life. Fawzia and her

siblings grew up without their father's presence, as he was frequently away due to his political engagement. This absence took a toll on Koofi and her siblings, as they yearned for their father's attention and affection. The emotional trauma caused by their father's neglect created a sense of abandonment and a void in their lives. Fawzia and her siblings longed for a deeper connection with their father, which remained unfulfilled. In spite of this pain, she has managed to remain strong and resilient by drawing strength from her experiences and empowering other women. She utters:

For my family, losing my father meant losing everything: our lives, our wealth, our figurehead, our reason for being. My father's murder was just the first of many more tragedies and deaths to hit our family. (36-37)

Koofi's personal experiences, including the trauma of displacement and the loss of her father, have undoubtedly shaped her resilience and determination to bring positive change to Afghanistan. Despite facing tremendous adversary, she remained steadfast in her commitment to improving the lives of Afghan women. She serves as an inspiration and a symbol of strength and subversion of individual who have experienced displacement and trauma. Her dedication to women's rights and her unwavering spirit in the face of established authority have made her an emblematic figure in Afghanistan and beyond.

#### **4.3 Malalai Joya: An Embodiment of Trauma, Displacement and Subversion**

Conflicts frequently result in war trauma and displacement, both of which may have catastrophic long term effects on people, families and communities. The very term of "war trauma" describes the physical and mental suffering that people go through as a result of being exposed to traumatic war related events such as violence, death, injury and

displacement. The term “displacement” describes the forced or voluntary dislodging of people from their homes, which often results from hostilities, persecution or natural disasters. Trauma from war and displacement has serious negative impacts on one’s physical and emotional well being, social and economic stability and general standard of living. Loss of property, social networks and access to fundamental services like healthcare and education are just a few of the difficulties that displacement may bring about for both individual and communities. In addition to an exacerbated jeopardy of exploitation, violence and abuse, those who have been displaced also run a higher risk of developing mental and physical health problem. Vulnerable populations like women, children and those with disabilities may face additional difficulties. Economic activities can be disrupted by displacement which can result in social disparities and impoverishment.

Malalai Joya is not just a representation of bravery and tenacity in the face of persecution and conflict but also of the severe trauma and uprooting that millions of Afghans have witnessed over the past few decades. She was raised during the horrors of Soviet occupation and the subsequent civil war. She utters:

.....for the thirty years I have been alive, my country has suffered from the constant scourge of war. Most Afghans my age and younger have only known bloodshed, displacement, and occupation. Millions of Afghans were killed or exiled, like my family, during the battle-torn 1980s. (9)

She is not directly associated with trauma of war, her activism and involvement in the war ravaged country have undoubtedly exposed her to the suffering and trauma witnessed

by Afghan people, particularly women, due to years of conflict and violence. She saw personally how people were uprooted and how homes and towns were destroyed.

Joya later developed into a political activist and a supporter of social justice, women's rights and democracy. She persisted in speaking out against corruption and human rights violations in Afghanistan in spite of intimidation, assault and assassination attempts. She grew up during the terrible Soviet occupation of her nation as a little kid. Millions of people including Joya herself were displaced as a result of the civil war that broke out in her nation following the retreat of Soviet Union. She has seen first-hand the destruction caused by the war, the anguish it caused and the dislodging and uprooting of communities. Joya gained a strong feeling of empathy and resolve from these events which inspired her to strive for political change as a mature girl. She writes:

The war with the Soviet Union was only getting worse. The bitter conflict showed no signs of ending soon and, by 1982, already tens of thousands of Afghans were pouring out of the country to escape the war and its brutalities. Our family joined the exodus. (27)

Joya's life story serves as an instance of the lasting consequences on people and communities that trauma and displacement caused by war. Her personal experiences and those of her fellow Afghans serve as instance of the psychological and physical toll that despotism, displacement and brutality take. She emphasized on subversion, fortitude and resolve needed to endure trauma and upheaval in order to rebuild herself.

She became a member of Afghan parliament in 2005 despite war-lords threat, where she continued to lash out against the injustices taking place in her nation. Joya has established a reputation as a symbol of resistance against war trauma and displacement

by refusing to be intimidated or hushed by Afghanistan's corrupt political culture. She says:

My goal abroad has always been the same as when I am inside Afghanistan: to unite people and to build power to destroy the domination of the warlords and the Taliban, and to end the occupation of our country. My wish is that this international solidarity will build strength and unity, and that when people became aware, they will rise like a storm that brings the truth. (269)

She remained firm in her dedication to aiding individuals who have been uprooted and injured by conflict, as well as giving hope and inspiration to those who have suffered from war trauma. Joya international campaign for human rights especially for Afghan women has had a considerable influence. She has raised awareness of the necessity of establishing democracy, stopping conflict and defending women's rights all around the world by using her voice and platform. She exhorts others to denounce the idea that using violence to effect change is ever required.

Since Malalai Joya has spent a large portion of her juvenility in battling against the horrifying affects of war and displacement on her community, particularly women. She is a subversive character to war trauma and displacement. She has acted as a strong advocate for reform in her own native country despite tremendous personal risks. Joya has long been an outspoken opponent of the Taliban, corruption and conflict in Afghanistan, drawing on her own horrific experiences as a child growing up in Afghanistan.

#### **4.4 Interdependency between Subversion and Tragedy**

History is replete with instances of subversive movements or individuals facing violent suppression and experiencing tragic consequences. Subversion, by its nature, challenges the status quo and threatens the power and privileges of those in authority. When individual or groups engage in subversive actions aimed at challenging existing power structure or norms, those in power often respond with suppression. The interplay between subversion and tragedy is explicit in numeral examples of persecution and retribution faced by subversive individuals or groups. Suppression, persecution, increased risks, and societal backlash are some of the interconnected factors that contribute to tragic consequences. In such cases, subversion can be a catalyst for tragedy. The history of Apartheid in South Africa is a stark illustration. Figures like Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC) challenged the racist regime, leading to their imprisonment, torture, and even deaths. The tragic consequences of their subversive actions are a testament to the risks associated with challenging oppressive systems (Mandela 61).

The risks and dangers faced by those engaged in subversion are well-documented. Subversion often triggers societal backlash and repercussions, leading to tragedy on a broader scale. The Arab Spring uprisings in the early 2010s exemplify this interdependency. Subversive movements and protests seeking political and social change led to violent crackdowns by authorities and subsequent civil wars in countries like Syria. The tragic repercussions include immense loss of life, displacement of millions, and the destabilization of entire region (Gelvin 39).

Malalai Joya, like many subversive figures who challenge societal norms and powerful entities, faces significant tragedies and dangers as a result of her activism. Here are some notable instances:

**4.4.1 Dismissal from the Parliament:** In 2007, Malalai Joya was dismissed from the Afghan Parliament due to her criticism of warlords and influential figures who held positions of power. This move was seen as an attempt to silence her and prevent her from speaking out against corruption and human rights abuses.

**4.4.2 Threats and Assassination Attempts:** Joya has received numerous death threats from those who oppose her outspoken views. In 2010, an assassination attempt was made on her life during a public gathering in Afghanistan. She survived the attacks, but it serves as a testament to the dangers she faces for her subversive stances.

**4.4.3 Exile and Safety Concern:** Due to ongoing threats to her safety, Joya has spent significant periods of time in exile, living outside of Afghanistan. While this has allowed her to continue her activism and raise awareness internationally, it has also meant that she cannot safely return to her home country.

**4.4.4 Social Isolation:** Joya's subversive views and activism have placed her in opposition to powerful individuals and conservative elements of the society. This has led to societal isolation, with many people disapproving of her outspoken views and viewing her as a threat to the status quo.

These tragic experiences underscore the risks and sacrifices that Malalai Joya endured as she worked towards positive change. Despite the hardships she has faced, Joya remains committed to her cause and continues to advocate for human rights, gender equality, and democracy in Afghanistan.

Fawzia Koofi, another prominent Afghan activist and politician, has also faced tragedy and danger as a result of her subversive actions. Here are some notable instances:

**4.4.5 Discrimination and Threats against Women in Politics:** As a female politician in a male-dominated society, Koofi has faced discrimination and marginalization based on her gender. This has included threats to her personal safety and attempts to undermine her political career.

**4.4.6 Assassination Attempts:** Koofi has survived multiple assassination attempts by those who oppose her political views and progressive stance on women's rights. These attempts on her life highlight the risks she faces as a subversive figure challenging traditional political structure.

**4.4.7 Personal Tragedy and Loss:** In addition to the dangers she faces as a political activists, Koofi has also endured personal tragedy. Her father, who was a notable politician, was executed by the Soviet-backed regime during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Koofi has also experienced the loss of her husband, who was killed in a Taliban attack.

**4.4.8 Societal Backlash and Criticism:** Koofi's activism and subversion have drawn criticism and backlash from conservative elements within Afghan society. She has faced social isolation, condemnation, and even accusations of being unpatriotic due to her outspoken views and advocacy for women's rights.

In brief, Joya's and Koofi's lives vividly exemplify the tragedies that can befall individuals who engage in subversion. Through their writings and activisms, they challenged and subverted the oppressive regimes in their home country Afghanistan, ultimately paying a heavy price for their defiance. Joya and Koofi faced persecution,

imprisonment, and even torture, experiencing first-hand the brutal tactics employed by those in power to suppress dissents. Their subversion of the status quo led to personal tragedies and immense sufferings, yet their unwavering commitments and courage in fighting for justice remain in inspiration.

#### **4.5 Importance of Native Place in the Quest of Traumatic Experiences.**

In the current study, importance of place as claimed by Michelle in relation to the traumatic paradigm could be examined for a clear understanding of the two literary texts. Both *A woman Among Warlords* (2008) and *A Favored Daughter* (2012) feature persons that enable to establish themselves in their native countries which pave way to “an ironic tension that highlights the paradoxes of the modern human condition” ( 91). The variety of locations those appear in both memoirs elicits a range of traumatic reactions. The importance of place may also be understood by looking at how a particular setting for the traumatic event changes for the characters in such a manner that it no longer merely remains a common space but instead acquires other values. As the meaning associated with trauma is relational and mutable so this emphasizes its flexibility. A further indication of the part that these rituals take part in as contextual aspects defining trauma in the chosen memoirs is the blending of both the norms of the past & present associated to the scene of perplexing occurrences. For the individuals in two books “Home is a place geographically situated and proximally close, yet uninhabitable, thereby creating perceptions of the self and world that feels at times discordant” (Balaev 100).

Additionally, the theory of migratory phases advanced by sociologists Reed Coughlan and Judith Owens-Manley seems to complement Balaev’s conception that helps with the current textual study of the chosen texts. Their writing, *Bosnian Refugees*

*in America: New Communities, New Cultures* (2006) is based on research that looked at a sample of 100 Bosnians families living in a town in upstate New York. It details the lives and situations of these people. It illustrates the numerous ways in which Bosnians refugees have adapted to their new lifestyles, including economically, emotionally and socio-culturally. It also underlines that how war has affected Bosnians. The upheaval and ensuing cultural estrangement can be compared to the circumstances of the current study. Although the book primarily focused on Bosnians refugees but it can be considered useful for the critical research of the current chosen literary texts because the core subject matter primarily focuses on the daily existence of Afghan displaced women.

According to Reed Coughlan and Manley, refugees belong to a social group that is frequently not viewed favorably by society. “It is a stigmatized and negative identity” (22) which refugees desire to shed since it serves as a distressing glimpse of the life they lost as a result of being uprooted and the fresh persona they were compelled to embrace, and how they were compelled to flee their native dens in order to find sanctuaries in unknown areas. Their relationship to the cultural norms of their native country is shattered by forced displacement, and as a result, their identity must be rebuilt and reformulated as Balaev mentioned in her theoretical conceptualization. The paradigm put forth by Coughlan and Manley enables an examination of the lifestyles of the individuals while having on eye on their cultural context, in order to appreciate how the narratives of their trauma emerge. This model is referred to as a “temporal framework” by the author because “major disruptions occur in the natural evolution of the ecosystem during times of war and displacement” and these traumatic instances and its effects are a subject of conversation of a “refugee’s migration path” (16-18).

It may be identified that how the distortion in these people's lives differs at many intersections and their unique results, which in response results in a traumatic living, by using this paradigm to the chosen texts of the current endeavor. These migration stages are divided into four categories: prewar life, wartime experience, displacement and transit and finally resettlement. The central characters of the chosen texts adaptation to their new livings as uprooted people, the catastrophe they experience, and trauma they endure as a result of displacement and travel may all be seen through the lenses of all these stages of migration. It may be said that each of these phases is essential for comprehending the different intricacies of their lives. In particular, a refugee's prewar existence highlights the fundamental difference between their current circumstances and their prewar lives. A refugee's prior life might be used as a point of comparison to assess and differentiate their current situation in the host nation. They are affected by distortion and a lack of normalcy due to displacement and the war experience stages, which makes them feel as though they are in limbo until they are able to relocate. The final phase of resettlement paperwork, which serves as a catalyst for post-migration stress and includes social alienation, isolation and language difficulties etc.(14). Additionally, to create a greater sense of clarity and comprehension, these phases could be neatly divided into three phases; the antecedent-displacement era, displacement era and subsequent-displacement era (Isaken et al. 14).

The individuals involved in these migration stages must also learn to adjust to shifting conditions. As the subsequent examination explores the trauma they experience, the anguish of dislodging and the mental stress linked to adapting to a fresh setting in their lives, this provides more support to Balaev's conceptual theorization. The trauma

they witness as they attempt to integrate into a new way of life while being plagued by flashback from the past. The current endeavor or investigation of the two selected texts uses psychological, cultural and sociological facets of investigations, which donates a modern pluralistic study of trauma. In addition to this, a reference to this paradigm of study adheres significantly to Balaev's idea of presenting trauma from the pluralistic notion of study. This paradigm of study, that encompasses a critical study of dislodged people while having an eye on the culture and society that is asunder from them. It corresponds to the tremendous influence of the cultural and the socio-economic environment to which Balaev steadfastly adheres in her research of trauma. The use of textual interpretations an investigative tool, which Balaev promotes is crucial for cultural criticism, thus lends credence to this concept.

#### **4.6 The Primacy of Place and the Traumatic Wounds in Central Characters**

Present analysis of the chosen non-fictional texts follows characters' trajectories in light of Balaev's theory of the significance of location in trauma's study. It is a textual interpretation which makes an effort to emphasize the significance of location of traumatic events by placing it, in the context of larger cultural and social environment and natural landscape. In essence, location is crucial in detecting trauma and its significance for the characters engaged in (Balaev 54). The texts *The Favored Daughter* (2012) and *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008) are a moving and potent tales that emphasize the significance of place in defining one's identity and experiences. She asserts:

The primacy of place in the representations of trauma anchors the individual experience within a larger cultural context because place attains its meaningful import based on individual perception and symbolic significance accorded by culture. (Balave 56, 160)

She argues that place plays a crucial role in shaping how we understand and experience trauma. She highlights that our perception of place and the cultural significance we attach to it influence how we represent individual experiences of trauma.

The text *The Favored Daughter* (2012) by Fawzia Koofi places a strong emphasis on the significance of geography in her life, notably Afghanistan, where she was born. Koofi describes her childhood in Afghanistan; the hardships as a woman in a patriarchal country and her eventual ascent to political prominence are influenced by her sense of location, which is an essential part of her identity. Koofi's early years were impacted by her family's nomadic lifestyle which allowed her to travel throughout Afghanistan and get a profound understanding of its many cultures and traditions. She was even more entwined with the land and people because her father was a prominent political figure and chief of the Koofi tribe. However, obstacles and restrictions were prevalent, particularly when it comes to accessing opportunities and education due to her mother status as a second wife and her own gender.

She travelled to many other locations along the road, including Kabul, where she attended university and started her political career as well as other international conferences where she spoke out in favor of women's rights. Koofi never lost touch with her roots or her nation despite the many obstacles she had to overcome. She also never

stopped appreciating the significances of the people and places that had influence her.

She says:

But girls, the one I do not ever want you to be is a snob. We came from a poor village and we are no better than these children in their rags. Negative circumstances may take you either one of you back there one day. And remember this, the place you come from will always welcome you back. (179)

Even in the face of extreme hardships and dangers, she stayed dedicated to helping Afghan women. The notion that one's place of origin may be both a source of strength and a limitation is one of the main themes in her memoir. She throws lights on that how being a Badakhshani woman from a marginalized region made it challenging for her to negotiate the male-dominated society of Afghan politics, but also how it provided her distinctive viewpoint on the social and political concerns facing the nation.

Koofi emphasizes the significance of place in forming her identity and experiences throughout her memoir. She talks about the stunning scenery of Badakhshan, including the imposing mountains and narrow valleys that form the landscape. Her perception of the place in the world and connection to her family and community are shaped by this environment, which serves as more than just a background. She makes a point of highlighting that how her identity as an Afghan lady is directly connected to her relationship to her home province throughout her memoir. She describes the magnificence and splendor of the area's mountains and valleys as well as that how the challenging living conditions there helped in developing resilience and tenacity. Koofi also emphasizes the significance of cultural practices and traditions in forming herself

and how her upbringing in Koof shaped her views on social justice and gender roles. She asserts:

The noises I recall from my early childhood are of a donkey braying, the sound of hay swishing as it cut, the sound of the trickling river water, and the peals of children's laughter. Even today my village sounds just like the same. And Koof remains the only place in the world where I can close my eyes and fall blissfully, peacefully asleep within seconds. (18)

In general, the relevance of place in her memoir highlights that how place, identity and culture have big impact on turning out people's experiences and worldviews. She also comprehends that how geography and culture impact our experiences and identities. Koofi reminds us that through her compelling storytelling, our sense of place is not just a question of geography but also a vital component of who we are and who will become?

Malalai Joya emphasizes the importance of place in her memoir *A Woman among Warlords* (2008), specifically that how did it shape her experiences and viewpoints as a woman in Afghanistan. She recalls:

My experience in the refugee camps taught me a lot about the Afghan people. I saw suffering and injustice with my own eyes, and I learned about the power of education. These experiences affected how I thought about the world. (53)

She talks about her growing up in Iranian refugee camps, where she saw the struggles and injustices endured by Afghan refugees. It gave her a sense of empathy and inspired her to strive for justice.

Joya also discusses her time as an elected member of the parliament as well as her experiences as a resident and worker in several regions of Afghanistan. She describes how the distinctive political and cultural dynamics of each area affected her relationships with local officials and common people, as well as how her identification as a woman and a feminist occasionally ran afoul of conventional beliefs and patriarchal standards. According to her, Afghanistan has been torn apart by war of decades, with various areas and ethnic groups frequently pitted against one another. In order to comprehend the dynamics of Afghan politics, she emphasizes the significances of comprehending the nations' intricate ethnic and tribal differences as well as the involvement of international powers. She defines:

Men and women were separated for the delegate selection meetings, which took place in Herat and Farah city. This gender segregation was done partly to prevent men from intimidating or otherwise influencing their wives' decisions. Many men in Afghanistan, sadly, still do not agree at all with the concept of women participating in politics. (99)

She highlights gender segregation at every level of the daily life. This act limited access to power houses for people of others ethnicities. It also highlights stereotypes about what jobs are suitable for women.

Afghanistan shapes her perspective and experiences. Farah is a region with deeply entrenched patriarchal and traditional power structure, which often suppresses the rights and agency of women. The political landscape of Afghanistan, including the role of warlords and their influence on the country's governance, is central to Joya's character. She confronts the warlords' dominance and challenges their authority through her

activism and political career. By positioning herself within this political place, she becomes a symbol of resistance against the central authority that has plagued her country. The interdependence of place, politics and people in Afghanistan is emphasized throughout her story. She contends that genuine change must originate domestically and be based on knowledge of the nation's intricate history and culture. She asserts:

Far beyond location, Farah, my afghan home province, embodies the fierce spirit of its people. Here, pride, bravery, and a relentless fight for justice flow through generations, etching the essence of my identity. (14)

The interdependence of place, politics and people in hers' narrative underscores that how these elements shape and influence each other. The physical and social condition of Afghanistan impacts the political scenario, while politics and power dynamics determine the lived experience of the people. At the same time, the actions and aspirations of the people, like Malalai Joya, have the potential to challenge and transform the political and social fabric of the country. Joya's advocacy for women's rights and her condemnation of the oppressive treatment of women under the Taliban and subsequent regimes highlight the importance of gender dynamics within Afghan society.

#### **4.7 Exile and Post-Displacement Trauma**

Two facets have been explored to describe the exile and post-displacement experience. One aspect is positive while the other one is negative. The protection and opportunity offered were the two beneficial and fruitful aspects of exile life. Malalai discussed the benefits of being in exile life. She argues that while fleeing Afghanistan and seeking asylum in other countries, it gave me a lot. Being in Afghanistan, I was in jeopardy, seeking protection from being persecuted. Exile confers me safety from

physical harm and persecution, advocacy to struggle for human justice and social reforms, education to comprehend wide global and domestic issues, networking to build coalition and harmony among masses and other people around the world, and last but not the least it gave me the sense of writing to pen down the calamities inflicted on my people. She describes:

Though forced into exile, my story found an international audience. This unexpected journey brought me face-to-face with passionate advocates for justice, broadened my worldview through education, and fueled my fight for democracy and freedom. (156)

Although, the amplitude, degree and discomfort varied, post-displacement stressor is carried out to explain the unpleasant features of living in exile and mentioned by both main characters. Balaev suggested, “The overwhelming sense of loss one experiences as a result of being forcibly uprooted is the main emotional impact” (15). The characters discussed that how the post-displacement involved things like loss of family or restriction on social support networks, loss of status, loss of identity, and other significant socio-cultural aspects of life that one may enjoy in his or her native country. She says:

The war transformed my childhood into a refugee’s experience. Crammed into camps alongside millions of displaced Afghans in Iran and Pakistan, we faced prejudice and harsh conditions. This exile, a harsh reality for countless Afghans, added to the tragic toll of the Soviet occupation, which claimed over a million lives. (28)

Asylum and shelter seeking are described as a scrutinizing and bitter experience. Malalai Joya’s case is used to illustrate that how an exiled and displaced person could experience

limitations in the host country. She faced multifaceted problems while being in the host country Pakistan. She pens down that I faced language problem, cultural clash, discrimination, racism and lack of agency and emancipation.

Addressing the trauma associated with exile and post-displacement requires a holistic approach that considers the unique needs and experiences of each character. This may include access to mental health services, counseling, social support networks, community integration programs, and efforts to promote cultural preservation and a sense of belonging.

#### **4.8 Consequences of Political Persecution and Trauma**

This subsection covers themes that illustrate the negative repercussions of political persecution and trauma caused by displacement. It confused not only the persistence of such effects but also the pervasiveness of the traumatic experiences that affected individuals, families and entire communities. This subsection that made is easier to build this category are the effects on the families, bodily repercussions, psychological repercussions and psychosocial consequences.

##### **4.8.1 Effects on Families**

This is a subsection that is developed as the central characters describe that how their uprooting and persecution had an impact on both their personal lives and the lives of the families. The effects of socio-political and cultural values that affected that how communities behaved to the displaced people and their families are also included in this area.

The political onslaught on the opposition has serious effects on society and families. The established authority started “psychological warfare, as the part of socio-

political war in society in addition to imprisoning, torturing, and killing specific activists" (Martin-Baro 138). As a result of the displacement of their cherished children, numerous families suffer financial and fiscal hardships, numerous kids become orphans, and plenty of parents lose their health and means of support.

Martin-Baro stated that propaganda efforts, the open or covert dissemination of rumors, news and interpretive schemata are all the examples of psychological warfare. Threats, routine acts of harassment and persecution are used in conjunction with these tactics to show how pointless and jeopardize it is to support the resistance (139). The dissemination of rumors about the fate of female activists, which has an impact on the families in a society that supports the ideal of chastity and honor where discussing sex is frowned upon, is one instance of how the established authority uses psychological warfare in the Afghan community.

As previously stated, the traumatizing situations faced by the displaced person are suggested to be not only personal but also domestic and societal by the narratives mentioned above. These events occurred within the framework of Afghani society and had an impact on the entire populace.

#### **4.8.2 Physical Consequences**

This kind of repercussion is described in terms of the body's immediate and long-term impacts. The most prevalent repercussion of physical persecution is said to be the straight away ones such as pain, dizziness, feet swelling and shattered bones. Such impacts can result from various events, including violence, accidents, and other jeopardized situations. Fawzia Koofi describes the physical repercussions that she feels after being persecuted. She reveals the physical hardships faced by her and the people of

Afghanistan. The country has been marred by decades of war and conflict, resulting in widespread violence and suffering. The physical toll of war is evident in the destruction of infrastructure, the displacement of communities, and the struggle for basic necessities such as food, water, and shelter. Koofi delves into the political turmoil that Afghanistan experienced, particularly during the Soviet occupation, the civil war, and the rule of Taliban. Koofi witnessed the devastation caused by these conflicts, including the displacement of her family and the oppression of women under these brutal regimes. The political trauma affects not only Koofi but also the entire nation, leading to a sense of instability, fear, and uncertainty.

#### **4.8.3 Psychological Consequences**

Notwithstanding chronicling the physical effects of persecution, the central characters felt that dealing with the mental repercussions of torture and displacement had been the most challenging and relentless. There are several of these effects, and the following effects are some of those that are reported. Lack of confidence, complexity, or in certain instances, inability to begin new tasks, lack of tenacity, feeling as though the general public don't comprehend and could not sympathize with them, even those who share a similar background of political engagement but are able to avoid imprisonment and torture. While the central characters greater dislike for larger groups can be understood, they all express a wish to avoid a chance of encounter and a desire to hang out with people who have things common with them. Hypersensitivity, heightened alertness and extreme emotional need have all been addressed.

Other immediate psychological effects of exile and persecution that the characters encountered included insanity, though the characters analysis of people who have never been able to regain their mental equilibrium and function normally to this day.

Other reported lasting and temporary impacts of displacement and persecution included detoxification, melancholy, feeling psychologically exhausted as a result of the cycle of belief and terror prior to persecution and fear. Fawzia Koofi discussed some of the immediate effects of isolation in isolated exile. She says:

The war didn't end when the guns fell silent. It continues to rage within me, a relentless battle for peace. Some days, I feel like a survivor. Others, like a ghost wandering in a desolated wasteland. (71)

She tells that long-lasting conflict and violence in Afghanistan have subjected women to various forms of trauma, violence, loss, and leading insecurity, resulting in severe psychological repercussions. Those women: who have been exposed to direct and indirect violence, including witnessing or experiencing bombings, attacks, or the loss of dears ones. Such traumatic events lead to the development of PTSD, thus evolved factors of depression, anxiety, emotional numbness, complex trauma and dissociation as well as substance abuse and addiction.

#### **4.8.4 Psychosocial Consequences**

The functioning of the person within the institutions of home, work, education and generally the greater society are the subjects of these repercussions. Some of the psycho-social effects seen in the characters included changes in relationship with spouses, problems expressing sentiments when needed, overly lofty standards in impersonal relationships, damage in their private lives and aversion to disapproval vs.

need for a sense of belonging. This is Malalai description of how his uprooting and torture influenced her life. She utters that war political persecution has profound social repercussions, affecting the physical and social status and overall quality of life. She says:

We fled, a frightened flock, clutching nothing but fear. The journey was a graveyard of hope. We lost everything-homes, loved ones and innocence. Yet, the worst wounds were invisible, scars etched deep within our soul.

(87)

Displacement and homelessness lead to disrupt their social network, community ties, and access to basic services, leaving them vulnerable and marginalized. Other shrieking consequences of political persecutions are loss of family and support, physical and psychological health issues, gender based violence and discrimination, disruption of education and limited opportunities and stigmatization or social ostracism.

Themes, sections and subcategories in the aforementioned section show the traumatic circumstances, including the events that the characters had in their childhood and juvenility. The key categories covered were resilience growth and development, which illustrated the early experiences of the people who had a significant impact on worldview. The pervasiveness of political trauma in Afghanistan was then used to show various tactics used by the authoritarian regime to harm political activists physically and psychologically. Maintaining sanity in the face of madness described the coping mechanisms and internal and external resources used by the major characters to resist. In order to demonstrate the persistence of trauma after displacement or exile, post-displacement stress and trauma was created. Repercussions of political oppression

including imprisonment and torture, also served to highlight a special follow-up of trauma that was politically based and described by the characters.

#### **4.9 Linkage between Trauma and Subversion**

From 400,000 displaced people in 2012 to over 600,000 conflict-induced relocated people nationwide in 2014, Afghanistan is distinguished by a crisis scenario that escalating conflict, political overhaul and increasing displacement from their native homes. Notwithstanding the statistics that more than 76% of Afghans have experienced displacement due to armed conflict, catastrophes or human-caused disasters at some point in their lives, analysis on gendered sensitivities is still lacking. This displacement paves way to trauma which onwards creates subversion in individuals. Subversion and trauma are two interrelated ideas that can coexist and have an impact on one another. Trauma is defined as an occurrence or experience that exceeds a person's capacity for coping and may have detrimental psychological and emotional effects, whereas subversion is the capacity to adjust to, overcome, and move on from adversity.

Not everyone who experiences trauma will go on to build subversion, and not everyone who exhibits subversion has gone through trauma. But there is a strong association between the two:

##### **4.9.1 Subversion as a result of Trauma**

Some people who have gone through trauma can grow subversive intention as a reaction to their traumatic experiences. Traumatic experiences can act as a turning point or accelerators for coping mechanism and personal growth. These people may use their painful experiences to develop their inner fortitude, tenacity and capacity to face difficulties in the future.

In *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008), Malalai Joya demonstrates that subversion can emerge as a result of trauma. Her journey serves as an inspiring example of how personal experience can shape individuals into agents of change, determined to subdue adversity and fight for a more just and equal society. Joya's subversion is not limited to her personal experiences. She draws strength from the resilience of the Afghan people as a whole, acknowledging their enduring spirit in the face of decades of conflict and hardships. By highlighting the subversion of both individuals and communities, Joya emphasizes the collective power of resilience and its potential to bring about transformative change. The trauma Joya experience serves as a catalyst for her activism, providing her with the motivation and passion to confront the oppressive forces that have ravaged her country. Her subversion is deeply rooted in her desire to create a better future, where justice and equality prevail over violence and corruption. Joya's resilience is evident in her unwavering commitment to speaking out against the warlords and war criminals those have plagued Afghanistan. Joya pens down a story of her resilience at the parliament in:

Someone next to him muttered, 'She hit a hard blow to the reputation of jihadi people, saying they are treacherous'. One of the member face grew angry and said, sister, look what you have done! He yelled. You have made upset everybody here. (114)

Despite facing constant threats to her life and enduring numerous assassination attempts, she remains steadfast in her mission to bring about positive change and improve the lives of her fellow Afghans, peculiarly women and marginalized communities.

On the other hand in the text *A Favored Daughter* (2012) by Fawzia Koofi, subversion as a result of trauma is the central theme. Throughout the text, Koofi describes the various traumatic experiences she faced, including the loss of her parent, the oppression of women under Taliban rule, and the challenges she encountered as a female in a patriarchal society. These experiences undoubtedly shaped her life and had a profound impact on her resilience. Despite the hardship she faced, Koofi demonstrates remarkable strength and determination to overcome adversity. She becomes an advocate for women's right and education, and she enters the political arena, ultimately becoming the first female Deputy Speaker of the Afghan Parliament. Her aptitude to rise above her traumatic past and use it as a catalyst for positive change is a testament to her subversion. Koofi's story highlights how trauma can fuel subversion. Instead of succumbing to despair or remaining a victim of her circumstances, she transforms her pain into a driving force for progress. Her subversion is the result of her determination to not only survive but also to thrive and make a difference in the lives of others. By sharing her personal journey, Koofi offers hope and inspiration to those who have experienced trauma. She shows that it is possible to heal and grow stronger in the face of adversity. Her narrative serves as a reminder that subversion can be cultivated, and that even in the darkest of times, there is the potential for personal growth and positive change.

#### **4.9.2 Subversion as a Trauma protective Factor**

Subversion can serve as a trauma protective factor by assisting victims of trauma in mitigating its harmful effects. A person's capacity to overcome tragedy, trauma, or difficult circumstances is referred as subversion. People that are resilient may have traits including an optimistic outlook, problem-solving abilities, social support system and

adaptive coping mechanism. These elements can lessen the effects of trauma and aid people in making a fuller recovery.

In the context of *A Favored Daughter* (2012), Fawzia Koofi demonstrates remarkable subversion in the face of various traumatic events. From her early childhood, she faced the loss of her mother and later experienced the hardships of growing up in a male-dominated society marked by conflict, oppression and violence. Throughout the text, Koofi's resilience acts as a protective factor against the trauma she endures. Despite the adversities she faces, she consistently demonstrates determination, perseverance, and a refusal to be defeated by the circumstances. Koofi narrates:

I would not be intimidated by anyone, and as I promised, I used my position in Parliament to expose the abuse of power, women exploitations and corruption wherever I found it. (207)

Her subversion enables her to confront and subdue the challenge she encounters, including political hurdles, discrimination against women, and personal tragedies. By highlighting the role of subversion as a trauma protective factor, *A Favored Daughter* (2012) emphasizes the importance of inner strength and the ability to adapt and recover from traumatic experiences. This narrative entails that subversion can help individuals overcome adversity and work towards positive change, even in the most challenging circumstances.

In addition to this, Joya highlights the importance of subversion as a protective factor for individuals, especially women, who face tremendous hardships and trauma in such volatile environments. She emphasizes that subversion enables individuals to maintain their mental and emotional well-being, preserve in the face of adversity, and

continue fighting for justice and human rights. Throughout her memoir, Joya shares her own experiences of subversion and the resilience she witnessed in other Afghan women. Joya reiterates:

During my days in Parliament, I was frequently insulted and threatened with death by other members of the chamber. A person who turned around a made a menacing motion in my direction and said something, I answered that “Shut up! I will make you silent forever. We are not in Paghman here, so control yourself. (196)

Despite living in a deeply patriarchal society and facing constant threats to their lives, women like Joya discovered her inner fortitude and resolve to confront against the warlords and the oppressive system. Their subversion allowed them to endure unimaginable trauma and continue advocating for change, even it seemed impossible. Joya's portrayal of subversion in *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008) serves to inspire and shed light on the power of individual to rise above the circumstances, challenging the status quo, and work towards a better future.

#### **4.9.3 Complex Trauma and reduced Subversion**

In some circumstances, exposure to traumatic events repeatedly or even an extended period of time, known as complex trauma, can weaken a person's resilience. This can happen when the accumulated trauma effects overwhelm the person's coping skills, decreasing their capacity to recover. Complex trauma can have significant negative effects on a person's sense of self, interpersonal connections and general well-beings.

Complex trauma refers to prolonged exposure to traumatic events, often occurring during childhood or over an extended period. It can result from experiences such as war, violence, abuse, or living in chronically unsafe environments. Complex trauma differs from a single traumatic event, as it involves repeated exposure to multiple traumas and ongoing stressors. In her text *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008), Joya describes growing up in war-torn Afghanistan, which was plagued by conflict, violence and the oppressive Taliban regime. She witnessed and experienced first-hand the horrors of war, including the loss of family members and the constant threat to her own life. She says:

Women are seen as second-class citizens and where fundamentalists preach and day and night that women should be either in house or in grave. But as a woman I challenged the most powerful people in the country, who only speak in the language of guns, and my voice is echoed and welcomed by the majority of people. (145)

These experiences shaped her understanding of complex trauma and its long-lasting effect on individuals and communities. One of the consequences of the complex trauma is the reduction of subversion. Subversion refers to the individual's aptitude to tackle with and recover from adversity. It is the capacity to bounce back from difficult experiences and maintain a positive outlook. However, repeated exposure to traumatic events can erode this resilience and make it challenging to overcome the associated difficulties. Joya highlights how the women in Afghanistan, including herself, have been subjected to immense trauma due to war, violence and gender based oppression. The constant fear, loss, and discrimination they face have a profound impact on their mental and emotional well-being. This sustained exposure to trauma can weaken their subversion, making it

difficult to break free from the cycle of violence and oppression. Despite the significant challenges, Joya's subversion and determination to bring about change in Afghanistan are evident throughout her text. By speaking out against warlords and advocating for women's rights, she demonstrates her subversion in times of animosity. Furthermore, she also acknowledges the toll that complex trauma takes on individuals and emphasizes the need for support systems, healing, and international solidarity to rebuild subversion in war-torn communities.

Reduced resilience, in the context of complex trauma, refers to a diminished capacity to cope with stress, adversity, and challenges. It stems from the cumulative impact of traumatic experiences and the resulting psychological, emotional and physiological changes. People with reduced subversion may find it challenging to bounce back from setbacks, regulate their emotions, remain stable relationships and adapt to new or difficult situations. In the context of Fawzia Koofi's text *A Favoured Daughter* (2012), it is possible to see that she discusses her experiences with complex trauma and how it affected her subversion. Growing up in Afghanistan, Koofi has faced numerous challenges and traumatic events related to war, violence and gender inequality. These experiences leave lasting impressions on the individual's psychological well-being and aptitude to cope with adversity. Koofi's memoir has provided insights into how she navigated these challenges, what strategies she employed to build subversion and the impact of her experiences on her personal and professional life.

#### **4.9.4 Trauma and Subversion as Dynamic process**

Trauma and subversion are dynamic processes that evolve through time rather than being static states. After a terrible experience, a person who initially struggles with

resilience may eventually learn coping mechanism and heal. On the other hand, someone who initially demonstrates subversion may face obstacles and difficulties that put their capacity for adaptation to the test.

Throughout the text, Malalai Joya provides firsthand accounts of the violence, oppression, and injustices she witnessed and experienced. These experiences undoubtedly had a profound impact on her psychological well-being, as she was exposed to constant danger and the atrocities of war. Malalai Joya expresses:

Women and those critical of the government have been targeted. A young woman, who appears on Herat TV, was stabbed after being threatened never to appear on television again. A Presenter on Tolo TV was warned by the fundamentalists about her un-Islamic programming. (238)

The trauma she endured as a result of these experiences is evident in her narrative. Joya's narrative demonstrates that trauma and subversion are not static concepts but rather dynamic processes that interact and evolve over time. On a person's mental sentimental health, trauma can have enduring Impacts but it does not necessarily define their future. Joya's subversion is a testament to the human capacity to heal, adapt and be resilient in the midst of difficulty. This very text emphasizes the importance of supporting individuals who have experienced trauma by providing them with the necessary resources and opportunities to rebuild their lives. Joya's story also highlights the needs for collective efforts to address the root cause of trauma, such as violence, oppression, and conflict with the objective to create a society which is more ethically and peaceful.

The memoir *A Favored Daughter* (2012) also emphasizes subversion as a dynamic process. Despite the hardships she faces, Fawzia demonstrates remarkable

strength and perseverance. She recounts the ways in which she overcomes adversity, including her pursuit of education, her involvement in politics, and her efforts to advocate for women's rights. Through her own journey, Koofi highlights the resilience of Afghan women as they navigate challenging circumstances and subversion. This text portrays trauma and subversion as intertwined and evolving processes. Koofi acknowledges the lasting effects of trauma while also emphasizing the transformative power of resilience. The book affects the dynamic nature of healing and subversion, showing how individuals can find strength and hope in the face of immense challenges. Koofi's personal narrative serves as an inspiration and a testament to the subversion of Afghanistan's women as they navigate and overcome trauma. This text offers a nuanced exploration of trauma and subversion as dynamic processes. It highlights the complex interplay between these two themes, showcasing the lasting impact of trauma while also emphasizing the transformative power of subversion in the face of adversity.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The present endeavor objective is to paint a sketch of the research questions in the introduction chapter. *The Favored Daughter* (2012) by Fawzia Koofi and *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008) by Malalai Joya are two non-fictional narratives analyzed by using Michelle Balaev's conceptual paradigm, which emphasizes trauma through a pluralistic lens in order to achieve multiple perspectives of trauma. In conclusion, exploring the relationship between subversion and tragedy in the context of domestic trauma, along with the significance of place, offers a nuanced understanding of this complex issue. Utilizing feminist and formalist approaches provides a richer tapestry for analyzing trauma narratives, particularly those focusing on the domestic sphere. By analyzing power dynamics, gender roles, and the emotional weight of place, this study gains a deeper appreciation for the complexities of trauma and the human spirit's resilience in the face of adversity.

While coping with question 1<sup>st</sup>, I utilized the pluralistic model trauma by Michelle Balaev to un-shroud the functions of the central character as well as their representation from ethnicity. At the very onset, painting the heading with "**Function of the central traumatized characters**" on page 56 and "**Fawzia Koofi: an emblem of war-trauma and displacement**" on page 61. As acknowledged, the pluralistic model of trauma offers a valuable tool for analyzing the functions of the characters, particularly those who have experienced trauma. By acknowledging the interplay between individual experiences, cultural context, and social factors, this model allows us to understand how trauma

shapes characters not just in terms of their internal struggles but also in their relationship with others, their role within a narrative, and their overall contributions to the story. Portraying Joya's *A Woman Among Warlords* and Koofi's *The Favored Daughter*, those explore a pressing issue of the day: the suffering that Afghani women continue to experience as a result of American invasion of their country and start over as refugees in foreign lands. Both writers try to paint a picture of their traumatic experiences across their lives to represent the effects of such complex issues.

These characters, particularly Fawzia Koofi, who is from an ethnic background, can function as witnesses to historical and ongoing traumas. Through their perspective, I tried to sketch their experiences and the impact of these traumas not just on an individual level but also on a community or cultural level. Here, the character's function is to bear witness to the past and keep its memory alive. Trauma does not exist in a vacuum. The pluralistic model highlights how social and political structures can exacerbate and mitigate the impact of traumatic events. An ethnic character might experience trauma not just from a personal event but also from systematic displacement. In the analysis and discussion chapter, I marked the functions of the central characters. I pinpointed with numeral references that characters with unhealed trauma can become catalysts for change. Their struggle can spark discussions about social injustices, the need for cultural sensitivity, or the importance of community healing. The crux of Koofi and Joya's struggles aligns with the model's emphasis on the impact of trauma on a broader social level and the potential for personal transformation from being submissive to being subversive.

As I mentioned in the aforementioned headings despite the challenges they face, characters can also embody resilience and hope. Joya and Koofi's journey towards healing can inspire readers and demonstrate the possibility of overcoming trauma. This aligns with the model's focus on human resilience and the importance of social support system in the healing process. So, by applying the pluralistic model, I sketched the rich complexity of Joya and Koofi, who have experienced trauma. Their function within the narrative goes beyond simply being victims. They became multi-faceted individuals shaped by their experiences, cultural context, and capacity to grow and heal. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of trauma's impact on the human psyche and its role in shaping individuals and collective narratives.

Furthermore, I responded to 2<sup>nd</sup> question in the analysis and discussion chapter with the subsequent headings "**Importance of native place in the quest of Traumatic experiences**" on page 73 as well as "**The primacy of place and the Traumatic wounds in central characters**" on page 76. According to the pluralistic model, the place provides a conceptual framework in which emotions tied to trauma arise. The physical environment surrounding a traumatic event becomes intertwined with the memory itself. It also highlights the cultural dimensions of a place. I specifically emphasize the primacy of setting and place while analyzing trauma in these two memoirs. The location of the study is seen and observed as an important aspect adjoining these characters. By examining the trauma of place, this study uncovers how traumatic experiences damage the relationship between a person and another. The place can represent and symbolize trauma as it includes the physical setting and background, the cultural, historical, and social backdrop, and the background of the traumatic event for the person engaged. The

textual scanning reveals the different manners which trauma displaces and evolves characters, such as Malalai Joya and her family from *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008), who traveled to several different countries after several failed assassination attempts and compelled her to bear the burden of the trauma that ultimately shifts them during their journey. The two texts used for the analysis depict a range of traumatic events, and the location of these eye-witnessing experiences is seen as a key factor in the analysis. This study illustrates how different characters suffer trauma related to a specific place and how their behavior is influenced by the surrounding social, cultural, and physical factors. Additionally, the current study highlights how the central characters are executed, Fawzia and Joya from the chosen texts having a universal gesture as someone backing up the narrative as both collective and personal catastrophic events.

The primacy of place is a significant concept in understanding how environments can contribute to trauma. A place where a traumatic event occurs can become a trigger, bringing back memories and causing emotional distress. On the contrary, living in a war zone, a crime-ridden area, or a place with natural disasters can create ongoing threats and create a sense of constant unease. So, the primacy of place isn't the sole cause of trauma. Individual experiences, social contexts, and personal history all play a role. Overall, the primacy of place is an important concept to consider in understanding how environments can significantly contribute to or even perpetuate trauma.

In 3<sup>rd</sup> question, I sought to bridge subversion and tragedy and its interdependency upon each other. In the analysis and discussion chapter, I responded to the asked question in the subsequent headings “Interdependency between Subversion and Tragedy” on page 69, “Consequences of Political Persecution and Trauma” on page 83, “Exile and Post-

displacement Trauma" on page 81 and "Linkage between Trauma and Subversion" on page 87. The concomitancy and interdependency between subversion and tragedy is a compelling and intricate relationship observed throughout this study. This study emphasizes that subversive actions, rooted in the desire to challenge the writ of the oppressive systems and bring about change, often face significant risks and dangers. Traumatized characters can add a powerful layer of complexity to both subversion and tragedy. Trauma, a deeply disturbing or shocking experience, can wrap up a character's perception and motivation. When such a character engages in subversion, it can be driven by a deep sense of injustice and a desperate need for change fueled by their past experiences. Their actions become more unpredictable, and the potential for collateral damage arises. Malalai Joya and Fawzia Koofi are both acknowledged as subversive figures by portraying defiance of the established norms of the Afghan male-dominated society. While engaging in subversive deeds, Joya and Koofi experience persecution, exile, violence, assassination attempts, and even the loss of their dear ones as a result. Simultaneously, the tragic outcomes of the subversive actions can fuel further subversion, as individuals are driven to resist and fight against a system that inflicts suffering and injustice. Thus, the ongoing work reveals this interdependency underscores the complex nature of subversion and its repercussions, highlighting the need for a nuanced understanding of this relationship to navigate the complexities of social and political life.

Subversion and tragedy have a direct relationship. Sometimes, the act of subversion itself can trigger tragic consequences. Malalai Joya challenged the powerful system, only to be subdued by its might. This creates a tragedy where the readers admire both the character's resilience and grieve her downfall. Tragedy doesn't have to be about

passive acceptance of fate. A character facing a tragic situation might subvert expectations by finding a way to fight back, even if it leads to their own destruction. This can add a layer of complexity and defiance to the story. To sum up, the intersection of subversion and tragedy with traumatized characters can create powerful narratives that explore the human condition, challenge societal norms, and evoke empathy for those who struggle.

### **5.1 Findings of the Study**

To comprehend the trauma suffered by the characters in the selected texts, this research uses Balaev's position on the pluralistic paradigm. The current study makes use of the two nonfictitious texts that are relatively contemporary and help to alter the perceptions and preconceptions that are typically connected with people from this specific location of the world. Additionally, the ongoing study of literary nonfictional texts related to this region enables one to comprehend the horrific existence of Afghan people because the strife between Afghanistan and Western powers is an increasingly expanding dilemma together with the occupation of the preceding one. This study revolves around the examination of trauma, which adheres to the pluralistic framework of the study; along with this, Balaev's line of analysis is based on a similar strategy in which she renounces the rooted debate around trauma, albeit emphasizing several literary aspects. It erects a paradigm that highlights the primacy of native place, characters, and languages as exhibited through textual interpretation. If the traditional paradigm of trauma research also acknowledges the variety of contextual factors that play a role in traumatic experiences, the interest surrounding it can remain. The ongoing work sheds

light on how well social theories of psychology and neurobiological theories can be studied concurrently within the same paradigm or framework.

The textual analysis also reveals the characters in the chosen two texts as plaintiffs to the traumatic impact in a domestic environment. Both Malalai Joya and Fawzia Koofi have been identified as the recorders of the heinous events that their respective people have been subjected to and continue to suffer, thus leaving them with an existence that is uncertain and traumatized and alters their personalities. Although the novelists are Afghani Americans who have spent the majority of their lives in America, their stories serve as a testament to the agony of their assigned homelands. The illustration of trauma is made exceptionally authentic by the small, seemingly unimportant elements, the use of specific terms from their native tongues, and the courteous appreciation of the customs and rites. Analysis of the chaotic sequence of scenes in which Joya and Koofi are constantly dislodged and displaced is presented. Trauma is mentioned as an unusual sort of wound in the beginning. Joya, in the very prologue, utters that I belong to a country that is replete with tragedies. She alludes to bloodshed, displacement, and uncertainties, which are constant inhabitants of Afghan soil. Koofi also hints at her unwanted birth and when she was left in the scorching sun. It could be comprehended that analysis of these two books shows how the stories are like scars which uses narrative to reveal the traumatic events' brutal severity. In ongoing work, the severe events that took people's lives and the devastation of Afghanistan brought on by war and occupation are plainly depicted.

Throughout the study, multiple factors annexing to trauma among displaced Afghan women have been explored. These include the loss of homes, separations from

families, exposure to violence, and the challenges of living in unfamiliar and often unsafe environments. The study emphasizes that displacement exacerbates the existing gender disparities in Afghan society, further marginalizing and disempowering women.

While this study uncovers valuable insights into the trauma experienced by Afghan women due to displacement, further research is warranted to explore additional dimensions of the issue. Future studies could delve deeper into the specific experiences and coping mechanisms of displaced women, as well as the long-term effects on their socio-economic status, empowerment, and reintegration into society. In brief, this endeavor significantly advances and broadens our awareness of trauma resulting from displacement among Afghan women. It serves as a call to action to prioritize the emotional and psychological well-being of these women and advocate for comprehensive support systems and interventions to address their needs. By recognizing and addressing the trauma experienced by displaced Afghan women, we can strive toward a more equitable and inclusive society that promotes healing, subversion, and empowerment for all.

## **5.2 Suggestions for Further Research**

To sum up, it is impossible to comprehend any topic from all essential and known perspectives due to the constraints of time and the range and scope of investigation. Another feasible way for the research field of examination for academics could involve the analysis of the aforementioned specific books from a Formalistic point of view; however, this study is likewise restricted to a specific feature. Both authors have a lyrical style of writing that is occasionally poetic in character, which allows for an expansion of the literary forms and the utilization of literary techniques in the texts used for this

analysis. The formalist paradigm may also be viewed as a preliminary method of study, but when combined with texts like *The Favored Daughter* (2012) and *A Woman Among Warlords* (2008), it can help to pique readers' interest in the field of Afghan literature.

Subsequently, the feminist field of inquiry is another hermeneutic approach that has prospects for further research. The lives of female characters predominate in both texts, and the daily affairs of masculine characters are largely eclipsed by this feminine gender. The present endeavor focuses on this portion of whether it represents the character's trauma, but an in-depth investigation could be conducted by focusing on the particular queries surrounding the types of positions that women have, how stereotypes of women are portrayed, how the writers treat both genders who appear in texts. Similar study prospects can open up new research directions for researchers in academia.

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