



## 'Irreversible Damage to Psyche': Representation of Trauma in Fatima Bhutto's Narratives

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**Abstract:** Perception of trauma is central to Sigmund Freud's concept of psychoanalysis. Trauma is in vital relationship with the other fields of studies such as psychology, anthropology and sociology, world history, war, politics, and more significantly literature as trauma affects human mind and psyche, which contains lifelong experiences, emotions, and feelings. Qualitative in nature, the present study explores literary representation of trauma in the narratives of Fatima Bhutto; namely *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* (2013) and *The Runaways* (2018). Caruth's theory of trauma presented in *Unclaimed Experience* (1996) helps to understand the portrayal of trauma as irreversible damage to the psyche of fictional characters representing living people. The theory proposes trauma as a bewildering and widespread experience and an impenetrable issue of human psyche, which brightens the indebted inconsistencies in language and happenings. Through latent content analysis selected dialogues and utterances of fictional characters are evaluated to find various socio-psychological reasons behind trauma. It concludes that factors such as death, loss, terror attacks, language, blood, departure, and painful memories are considered to be the most common reasons of trauma affecting people's life. The narrative also focuses on the wave of terrorism in 21st century as a major cause of trauma. The study significantly establishes relationship between fiction and trauma by providing insight into literary representation of trauma. Future study can be conducted to understand relationship of trauma and terror by evaluating American literary fiction.

**Keywords:** Trauma; Literary Representation; Psychology; Irreversible damage; Bewilderment

### I. INTRODUCTION

Different societies and individuals encountered devastating and traumatic events. The events affected human psyche and also left permanent imprints on human mind, which turned it into a trauma for an individual as well as groups. Trauma involves tragic experiences, emotions, and feelings. Furthermore, trauma engrosses serious long-term negative concerns and consequences. Importantly, traumatic memories affect psyche and mind of the characters, confusion, abstraction, and insecurity caused by trauma.

Central to Freud's concept of psychoanalysis, trauma is related with something disorganizing and overwhelming that is faced by an individual in the past (Levine, 2014). It is caused by external reasons such as discrimination, work place, sexual abuse, ruthlessness of police, victimization, inland ferocity, war miseries, catastrophic events, treachery, loss and most specifically childhood harsh sufferings. Trauma at earlier age leads to a violent behavior and people with different belongings react contrarily to parallel happenings. Making it more understandable, it is not mandatory that all the people facing such experiences become psychologically traumatized. At interdisciplinary level, trauma is in vital relationship with the other fields of studies such as psychology, anthropology and sociology, world history, war, politics, and more significantly literature (Heidarizadeh, 2015).

The present study explores the traumatized psychological attitudes and behaviors of the fictional characters of the selected narratives. It explores the portrayal of trauma as irreversible damage to the psyche and highlights the social-psychological reasons of trauma reflected in the selected narratives of Fatima Bhutto.

### Trauma and Human Psychology

Trauma is a dominant issue related to human psychology. It entails a history of memory. Memories of earlier childhood are often recalled by the adults further in their lives. Freud's work on memory and mind provided backdrop to trauma studies (Caruth, 1996). Effects of trauma on memory, physical body and individual and collective identity became focus of trauma theory. It also focused psychic wounds caused

by the liberation war (Bernerd, 2016). Role of trauma and shame by looking to the issues of class, race, caste, and color in the narratives of Toni Morrison also reflected trauma (Bousan, 1999).

Trauma is related to disorganization and irresistibility faced by an individual in the past (Levine, 2014). At interdisciplinary level, trauma is in vital relationship with psychology, anthropology and sociology, world history, war, politics, and more significantly literature (Heidarizadeh, 2015). Role of terror and loss depicted as trauma in media and literature led to the integration of politics in developing the culture of trauma (Kaplan, 2005). Relation between history and trauma focuses on link of historical events with trauma (Lacapra, 2014)

Trauma constructed on textual basis is imaginary trauma (Berry, 2008). At some level, it is related to the present study based on the representation of trauma in Pakistani English narratives. Trauma destroyed the pattern of psychological life. It sometimes moved the relational system of human mind to chaotic object and exposed the victims of such uncertainty which was unbearable. Personal reactions and reactions of other individuals towards the attacks of 9/11 demonstrated the relational patterns which were produced by trauma (Brothers 2008).

Branach-kallas (2016) defined trauma as “wounds of the mind” in his study. The study explored war and its effects on the individuals. All the great wars caused a huge number of war neuroses in different countries. Concept of trauma built new grounds generally focused on trauma felt by men in the war fields. Alexander (2012) discussed another type i-e cultural trauma in his work. It defined cultural trauma as such events which were faced collectively by different individuals at the same time and such events left marks on their memories which took part in changing their identity and future. Levers (2012) explored that counseling was the important stage in curing traumatized patients. The study revealed the most relevant issues of disastrous and traumatic events from a systematic angle.

Smith (2004) analyzed the representation of trauma in children literature as restricted by the investment of the adult in the innocence of childhood. Ultimately a child was the victim of trauma who needed the protection of an adult (Smith 2004). Furthermore, the author believed in a third way to understand the relationship of trauma and childhood. War has a close relation with trauma. Dalley (2013) tried to evaluate the paradigm of ‘trauma theory’ for the literature produced after Nigerian civil war. Previous studies have shown a noticeable gap as the representation of trauma in South Asian fiction to understand horror and damages to individuals’ psyche.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study qualitative in nature follows trauma theory introduced by Caruth in *Unclaimed Experience* (1996). Caruth proposed trauma as a bewildering and widespread experience and an unsolvable issue of human psyche brightening the indebted inconsistencies in language and happenings. Trauma affects human psyche in a way that prevents the representation of the fragmentation in language. To understand the process, the present study analyzes selected dialogues or utterances of selected characters through content analysis (Shank 2000).

### **Trauma as Irreversible Damage**

Since long human individuals have confronted distress and disturbance. In *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* (2013), characters like Sikandar, Mina, Samarra and Malalai suffered trauma due to some great losses. As victims of trauma, their lives were full of pain and sorrows. Mina and Sikandar’s life changed after the death of their only child. The death and memories of her child haunted Mina all the time. The situation reflects Caruth’s claim that trauma was an irreversible damage to their psyche and it occurred as a result of distressing events (1996).

On the other hand, Sikandar also wanted to forget his son but pain and sorrows follow him everywhere. Due to the tragic loss, life only meant an episode of pain to them. Sikandar was also the victim of a traumatized event and he always tried to escape from the memories of pain. It affected the lives of the entire family as pain recurred itself frequently whenever there was news of a horrible event. Not only Sikandar and Mina faced horrible events but Samarra and Malalai also faced the disappearance of Ghazan Afridi (Bhutto, 2013: p.6). After the disappearance of Samarra’s father, they both lived a tumultuous life, full of griefs and sorrows. Grief never let the characters relieved throughout their lives. It penetrated into them. Victims of trauma struggled to cope with situations and at the end they led towards serious consequences.

*The Runaways* (2018) depicted characters whose lives were full of traumatized events. Layla’s life was full of sufferings and personal pains. And due to painful memories, she tried to live a new but troublesome life and even then she failed to live a new life. Due to socio-psychological problems, she decided to leave everything and lived a new life but she failed. The traumatized events of her personal life damaged her

mind and she took such steps, which changed her and disturbed her life forever. Zenobia's face is the true reflection of painful life. Her social and economic conditions ruined her life. After her husband's death, she embraced the responsibility of her children.

Sulaiman Jamil in *The Runaways (2018)* remembered his wife, who died of cancer. Pain and memories of his marital life haunted him throughout his life. He found himself unable to escape from the painful memories because trauma damaged his psyche permanently. And at the end his only son also left him and joined a terrorist group.

### **Trauma of War**

Inayat, father of Sikandar clarifies his reservations by making an argument about the policies of state and behavior of other people towards Mir Ali (*The Shadow of the Crescent Moon, 2013*). An individual cannot ignore a discriminated behavior of the state towards its own people. They treat their own citizens like Indians and those who fought against the country's flag in the wars as if they rebel to live under the shadow of the crescent moon and a star shining overhead. But the shadow of the moon never faded over Mir Ali, it hung over every house in Mir Ali, condemning the lives of the people.

Most Pakistanis thought of Mir Ali with the same hostility they reserved for India or Bangladesh; insiders – traitors – who fought their way out of the body and somehow made it on their own without it (Bhutto, 2013: p. 10)

Inayat had some horrible memories from past, it was the reason due to which he was unable to walk out from the trauma he had, and he constantly recalled the flashbacks from the memories of war. And the memories of war were subsequently catastrophic that he had nothing else in his mind to share with his children. His mind was completely captured by the horrible memories of war. Bhutto (2013) portrayed the traumatized events of the war and pain of a certain region which then led to trauma. The tribal region was constantly struggling to regain its position because it faced war against terror at the front and it affected its culture and the lives of the people. As Berry highlighted the effects of war, pain and trauma in the context of Chinese culture. He reiterates that the depiction of trauma in Chinese films, and novels was because of the war history and pain that they had (Berry, 2008).

"The summer Samarra turned seventeen, she didn't come to camp" (Bhutto, 2013: p. 6). The story of the novel was not only related to the family of Inayat but it also portrayed the life one another family who lived in Mir Ali. Ghazan Afridi, father of a beautiful daughter, Samarra Afridi. She spent her childhood with her father. In Chitral, she met Aman Erum who was also spending summer there with his father. When Samarra turned adult, Ghazan Afridi decided to leave the town for an unknown reason. It was a life changing moment for Samarra and her mother because she was not used to it.

Another traumatized character in the novel *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon (2013)* is Mina; Sikandar's wife reads about the *namaz e janaza* of a young boy. She eagerly wants to attend the funeral because she carries the pain of the death of her own son in her heart, a pain which cannot be vanished or can be cured with any curing balm in the world. Terrorists killed her son and the traumatized event changed her life forever, the trauma permanently damage the psyche of Mina. And then the time comes when the body of the young boy needs to be washed. Mina also says that Shaheeds are pure, they are like the saints. As Bhutto writes "The women clucked their tongues and shook their heads. One must never wash the body of a shaheed..." (Bhutto, 2013: p. 34)

### **The Brutality of Institutions**

The present study illustrates how tormented and helpless people are treated in the government institutions. Later on, some of the people secretly tell the father of Balach about a green Pajero in which his son is kidnapped. Therefore, he decided to meet the army officials in the town. The government official suggested professor's father that his son had links with Al Qaeda's jihadi wing and he fought with them at the front line. The whole meeting was full of humiliation and mistreatment. Trauma destroys the pattern of psychological life. It sometimes moves the relational system of human mind to chaotic object and exposes the victims of such uncertainty which is unbearable (Brothers, 2008). 'When the next morning came and there was no sign, either professionally or personally' (Bhutto, 2013: p. 44).

Behavior of the officials brings pain and shame to the helpless father. Kidnapping of his son and the brutal behavior of the officials in *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon (2013)* were the leading reasons of trauma for the old man. Balach's father remained unable to find his missing son, for a father it is very difficult to cope with such a situation. Despite his struggle, he is unable to take himself out from the trauma.

'His teeth had all been removed from his jaw bone' (Bhutto, 2013: pp. 45). The narrative brings painful incident of the town people for the family of junior professor. The brother of Balach, Azmaray's long hair gives his body the looks of conventional masculinity, 'was scorched off' (Bhutto, 2013: p. 45). His arm is fractured at five different places and twisted above his shoulder. Azmaray's right arm is laying few feet

away from his body, the one who held picture of his missing brother, Balach, in the protests for missing persons. People gather, weep and mourn the death of Azamaray and they offer a spontaneous *namaz e janaza* at the university campus.

### **Portrayal of Psychological Trauma**

The present study explores psychological trauma in the character of Mina, when Sikandar arrives to take Mina back home from house of the young boy who is killed in an attack. "Mina,' Sikandar whispers. She doesn't hear him. 'He was a child,' the young man whimpers between gulps for air. 'He was a child' (Bhutto, 2013: p. 52). The quoted text highlights she does not hear and starts convincing her inner painful feelings by saying that he is just a child. And the militants bomb the road, the boy travels in a bus on the same road. The bus carries school boys to the governor house to perform Eid day presentations. And the terrorists think that it is a government vehicle and they target children in schools with RPG. She is unable to control herself, she is not in her senses, and the only thing which she feels is pain. Death of each little boy refreshes her pains and wounds, which are caused by the death of her son.

'None of them are the same anymore. Everyone has slowly broken down over the past year' (Bhutto, 2013: p.53). The text mirrors pain in Mina's mind does not let her go, she cannot feel anything rather than pain and loss. Reason of her pain and trauma is the murder of her son by the militants. Things are not the same anymore for her; psychological condition of Mina is shattered. Mina's Character is a perfect epitome of trauma. Death or loss of her only son does an irreversible damage to her psyche. War, massacre and killing of the innocent people causes social pain and trauma (Alexander, 2012).

Mina starts washing the dead body very tenderly, stopping her Pashto poetry, she starts reciting *Fatiha* over the head of the boy. She switches the languages from Pashto to Arabic. She performs some Islamic rituals by reciting verses from Quran and blowing her breath from one ear to other ear of the murdered boy in order to remove the devils from both the sides. Sikandar again calls her in the tiled bathroom, where they are giving bath to the young boy. But she pushes her husband back and says she is not finished yet. A relative of the boy told Sikandar that Mina heard about the boy and then she comes to them. He asks Sikandar not to take her away as he is in grief and unable to do his job of washing the dead body. Murdered person is his fourteen-year old nephew, and the only son of his eldest sister. He is in immense pain and grief because in front of him lies body of the boy whom he saw playing cricket as a child. He is unable to wash those legs, which took him to his uncle's house. But he does not want to leave his place because he wants to perform his duty. The doctor sedates the child's mother who lost her senses due to the shock. Like all mothers, Mina has enormous emotional attachment to her son. Her behaviors and role in the narrative reveals that she is the victim of 'emotional trauma', which causes severe psychic damage to the human psyche (Levers, 2012).

'The young man hadn't heard Mina ask any of those questions. He had been in the bathroom, cowering' (Bhutto, 2013: p. 55). The narrative describes position of the characters in a way to arise pity and fear among the readers. The characters demonstrate they are traumatized. It not only represents trauma but also unravels the socio-psychological reasons of trauma which affects the characters during the action of the novel. Death of a close person is perceived as one of the main reasons of trauma in the novel. However, there are various other reasons, which traumatize characters. For instance Balach's father not only mourns his son's kidnapping but finally he is traumatized by finding corpse of his son on the university campus. Likewise, Malalai and her daughter also cry after Ghazan Afridi, who leaves them in Mir Ali alone. Therefore, the reasons leading to trauma are many and vary to situations making low or intense effect on characters, which imply variation in its frequency and force.

### **Social Psychological Reasons of Trauma**

*The Runaways* (2018) is a tale of personal loss, pain, death, terrorism, leaving home and trauma. Most of the characters leave their homes to follow the path of terrorism out of sheer frustration caused by socio-economic deprivations. Introducing the character of Zenobia, mother of Anita Rose, the narrative describes the oval shape face of Zenobia becoming round with the passage of time. Small pouches around her eyes looks heavier and her lips which are already swollen, bulged slightly, 'the way the face looks when it cries and cries and cries' (Bhutto, 2018: p. 9). The quoted description highlights that Zenobia's life is devoid of happiness. Her face reflects a succinct history of her painful life span. Her brown and rounded face seems to be the symbol of pain, cry, and sorrow. Without a husband, she is shouldered with the responsibility of a daughter and son and goes through hard time for earning bread and shelter for her children. The difficulties in common and domestic life cause enormous and unforgettable pain to the psychology of a person. It shows that social or economic problems lead to cause trauma in the victims. 'Anita's mother worked as *malishwali*, massaging the tired bones of rich women' (Bhutto, 2018: p.35).

At a point Anita enquires from her brother reasons for people drinking wine. 'It makes you forget all your sorrows', is Ezra's reply (Bhutto, 2018: p. 12). The content shows how pain and sorrows are common in the lives of every person. Even a little child interprets drinking as an escape from the life burdened with pains and sorrows.

### **Discrimination causing Trauma**

The narrative describes the character of Anita Rose, when she faced troubles in her school life. In her grade 4, she did not worry about her poor conditions but her schoolmates shared the same bench and used to kick her at her heels. Anita learns other ways to protect her narrow tendons of her ankles by crossing her legs and with the help of her black school shoes. But the girls never let her go normal. They used to taunt her 'Go home' (Bhutto, 2018: p.12), Mira hisses and knocks her copybook off the desk. The teacher also beats her with a wooden scale whenever she makes a mistake. However, the suffocation she felt the most was due to her classmates. The girls tried to squeeze her between them, Anita struggles for her defence but could not escape. Mira used to pull her hair and use slam words for her mother. And the other girls used to beat her harshly to make it impossible for her to sit on her bench. As the writer writes: 'At that time, when she was in class four, Anita had her own troubles. She didn't have time to worry about being poor' (Bhutto, 2018: p. 12). As a poor child, faces problems and discrimination in the school. It clearly illustrates how children are suffocated frequently in their schools by the teachers and other students. These discriminations face by the students at school level become one of the reasons of trauma. Many of the victims are unable to take themselves out from such traumas in the future as they live with the fear, which they carried from school life. It is a learning stage for a child and facing these problems he or she only learns fear and pain. Amanda (2017) also addresses the same issue that 25% to 50% of the students face trauma at school. Due to this, they remain powerless to learn at schools. Environment of Anita's school proves to be a fatal reason traumatizing fictional characters representing live examples.

The narrative also highlights Safia Begum as another example who feels ashamed of her large breasts and the smell of the death surrounding her. Her hairs used to fall like dandruff on her husband's shoulder. However, her husband remains around her and at the end death alone lets her away from her husband. 'Safiya Begum hadn't turned to her husband and taken his hand. She said she was ashamed' (Bhutto, 2018: p. 24). The quoted text reveals memories of Sulaiman Jamil filled with pain, sorrow and unsuccessful marriage life. He does not find any way to forget his painful memories; those memories haunted him when Sunny grows up. Existence of trauma in the life of Sulaiman Jamil lies in tragedies leading to sufferings, pain, and trauma. He wishes his son to live a life free of from all sufferings. He never let himself forget his wife even after her harsh behavior towards him. He cleans her photo with a wet tissue and runs his hands over face; the color of her skin is like the color of burnt toffee to him. The action reveals negligence and indifference of wife carry traumatic influence.

Mr Alter introduces the Holocaust by writing '#never forget' on the white board (Bhutto, 2018: p. 87). Killing of the Jews at a larger scale is an unforgettable moment for the entire world, especially for the Jews themselves. It is a haunting and as traumatic moment for the Jews because most of their loved ones died in the Holocaust. But Layla, who changed her name from Anita Rose, criticizes the statement of Mr. Alter by stating that people do not talk about the killing of millions of people during partition of India and Pakistan. Whereas thousands of brown people are killed in the Latin America and nobody cared about the death toll. The narrative posits a significant question as who are the people deciding only few events to be historical and worth commemorating. Primarily, it focuses on killing of the Jews in a huge number as illustration of existing extreme and traumatic events in society. (Laub 2017).

The dialogue exchange between Layla and her teacher also highlights various traumatic events. Time of partition between India and Pakistan became a traumatic event because a very large number of people were killed from both the sides. The whole journey reflected pain and tragedy. Many people died and many people left their homes and towns with grief and sorrows.

### **Linguistic Representation of Trauma**

Trauma represented in the novel reflects dilemma of Layla. At school, she decides to read books from the Urdu section of the library. Reason behind reading Urdu books is her consideration and assertion of language. 'it was the language she suffered in, a language that encompassed all her sorrows' (Bhutto, 2018: p. 106). She is familiar with Urdu language words only, which represents her pain and distress. It equally portrays comprehending trauma through a language. Everything excruciating and grief-stricken she feels or faces are understood only through Urdu language. She herself is unable to describe her traumatic feelings in her own words and the existing Urdu literature mirrors her inner anguish. She finds appropriate words for her feelings in Urdu language only. Behavior of Layla echoes her life full of

catastrophes. When Layla disappears, everyone makes false statements about her disappearance. Bearing all the loss 'Monty's heart ached' (Bhutto, 2018: p.355). It also hurts him to imagine her as a runaway bride because one student tells him about her marrying an old man and living with him. The silence she leaves for Monty hurt him more. 'It hurt him to imagine her as a runaway bride but it hurtless than the silence she had left him in' (Bhutto, 2018: p. 348). Running away of Layla causes him shock. The quoted content reveals that losing a person leaves imprints on an individual mind causing irreversible damage to psyche. Trauma is like 'the pain building so deep in his lungs, so heavy, that he needed lies to keep it inside' (Bhutto, 2018: p. 349). Layla leaves Monty and Karachi, Monty's life appears shallow. He is unable to see and feel anything rather than his true love. The condition of Monty represents a traumatized lover, who lost his beloved. Pain is his ultimate destination. Sorrow becomes his only boat in which he sails in the river of pain. The reason of trauma for Monty is the disappearance of Layla and the socio-psychological reason of trauma affecting mind of Monty to an extent that he did not even remember when he took shower last time. Trauma is understood as an 'unpresentable' event in life (Smith and Goodrum 2011). Many times tragedies are extremely horrible and cannot be explained in words.

Finally, Monty gets a clue behind the disappearance of Layla. Kashif, one of his school friends shows him a sex-tape of Layla with an old man. The tape shows her naked, all naked, however, it does not provoke him to hate Layla. He realizes the reason of Layla's escape from Karachi. The narrative describes escape of Layla in the very first chapter of the novel when she packs her bags and leave Karachi. Layla realizes everything and she is distressed for all that has happened to her. Kashif keeps his eyes down, focused on his shoes. Shavez conveys to Monty. 'You have to let her go. Monty frowned, he didn't understand. Let who go?' (Bhutto, 2018: p.360). The unbearable circumstances compel Layla to take decision of leaving Karachi. Monty hears from internet about Layla joining a Jihadi group in Iraq and he decides to follow her. Monty and Sunny follows their journey to meet the leader of the Jihadi group at Mousal. They both travel in the desert for weeks to meet the final destination. However, concerns of these travelers are different. Sunny intends to join the terrorist group but the actual intentions of Monty are different from Sunny as he wants to see Layla and bring her home. He is completely broken after being separated from his beloved. Monty's character represents a perfect example of a traumatized lover. It is his trauma which drags him to the desert of Mousal. The character also reflects how personal trauma leads a person to take life threatening decisions. Monty experiences fear and death at Mousal. 'Monty breathes through his nose. His tongue feels heavy in his mouth' (Bhutto, 2018: p. 381). The act of terrorism also causes trauma to the other individuals. Monty is completely traumatized due to the event. After the killing of one traitor, Sunny voluntarily decides to execute the other, who is the city's mayor. Monty watches him, he breathes heavily and his tongue feels heavier in his mouth. Sunny takes the mayor to the place where he is going to slaughter him with his dagger. After slitting the dagger on the throat of the mayor, his body jerks in a shock and the blood spills over the torn windpipe of his throat. It is true that the war is men's concern and men are leading at the front but women are also suffering from the brutalities of war. In opposite to it, Layla is traumatized because of her involvement in war. Idea of 'quiet trauma' challenges the notion that atrocities of war affected the psychology of both men and women; fighting at war and or staying at homes (Kallas 2016).

Slaughtering human beings reflect tragedy as well as trauma. Monty is absolutely horrified in the situation but he tries to control his nerves to meet his destination. However, portrayal of such scenes in the narrative makes it traumatic and agonizing. Furthermore, the pain drives Monty wild when Layla asks him at Mousal 'Go home Monty. Leave me alone' (Bhutto, 2018: p. 384). Her rejection shatters him and shakes his faith in love and affection. All he has done for her goes in vain. Memories of Layla haunt him like ghosts. Mousal for him appears as desert of pain and sorrows. Despite all the tragedy, he lets his hope shine in the desert of Mousal.

Last part of the narrative demonstrates Uzair sending an email about the sex tape of Layla to his cousin, Sunny, who decides to show the disclosed video of Layla to Abu Khalid. Watching the video, Abu Khalid decides to teach her a lesson for bringing shame to the movement. She is believed to have disgraced all the brothers. However, the motif behind Layla's joining the group remains a puzzle. She decides herself to be cleansed in the Fire of Ummah movement (Bhutto, 2018, pp. 404-5).

Harsh memories leave imprints on individual's lives. Painful memories of Layla follow her even in the deserts of Iraq. Trauma remains the part of an individual's own mind. Reason behind pain, sorrows, leaving home, and being traumatized are related to socio-psychological contexts of individuals. Society compels individuals to take her in taking all the steps. In the last part of the novel Abu Khalid chooses Sunny and Monty to kill Layla, in order to purify their movement (Bhutto, 2018, p. 406). On their arrival, where Layla has to be executed, Monty asks Sunny about her job. Sunny gives the blade to Monty and the body of Layla shakes due to fear. When Sunny is filming the scene, Monty put the blade in the ribs of Sunny instead of Layla (Bhutto, 2018, pp. 420-21). The mentioned text echoes pains due to traumatic

events. Sunny also dies at the end. Death is the frequently occurring event in the novel and it occurs again and again in the novel.

Bhutto (2018) is all about the runaways and there are reasons given in the novel due to which characters leave their homes. Sunny leaves England because of his discomfort over there. He wants his mental satisfaction which he cannot find in Portsmouth. He faces betrayal of his cousin, Uzair. During the journey to Mousal, he comes to know about Uzair who has changed the side and now he is against the brothers. He wants to kill him because of the pain. 'Just to show you a dusting of the pain I feel right now, I'd climb the world to find you' (Bhutto, 2018: p. 250).

His personal problems and sorrows lead Sunny to a traumatic journey. Monty faces failure in love and to cure his own pain he goes out to find Layla. When it comes to Layla, her life is also full of problems and sorrows. She leaves Karachi due to her leaked sex tape with an old man. She wants to leave everything which reminds her old life. However, her harsh and cruel memories follow her everywhere. One thing is common in all these characters that all of these characters runaway due to their personal problems and sorrows. The narrative depicts characters in a way that their personal pains and sorrows push them towards war.

War has a special connection with both the texts *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* (2013) and *The Runaways* (2018). Both the narratives portray war. Representation of war in the novel implies war affects the psyche of each and every individual, and everyone can associate to the memories of the war. The narrative highlights the political situation of Pakistan and Middle East because she has some special attachment with both the places. Fight against the militants in Pakistan caused immense pain to the people of the country. The novels focus on trauma developed in the context of ongoing war in the region. People of the region are psychologically and mentally affected due to war (*The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*, 2013). The situation mirrors representation of Nigerian civil war in Chris Abani's work causing trauma (Dalley, 2007).

Conversely, *The Runaways* (2018) reflects war as a recurring phenomenon in Middle East. The narrative shows how people are joining Jihadi groups which are active in Iraq. Young and psychologically distressed individuals join Jihadi groups for curing and cleaning themselves but the war adds more to the pain they carried in their hearts. Trauma thus is depicted in the novel within the context of war and personal pains and sorrows. The text represents how people are being traumatized due to their personal losses and pains. Every major and historical event in the history has a trail of traumatic events (LaCapra 2014). Trauma holds an individual in close connection to society and history.

### III. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study attempted to explore representation of trauma in fiction through character portrayals. It highlighted the socio-psychological reasons leading characters to develop trauma by recalling tragic and dreadful moments of life. *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* (2013) represent characters like Sikandar, Mina, Samarra and Malalai suffering from heavy losses. As the trauma victims, their lives became resemble pain and sorrows. Not only Sikandar and Mina faced horrible events but Samarra and Malalai also faced disappearance of Ghazan Afridi. After the disappearance of Samarra's father, they both live a tumultuous life, full of grief and sorrows. The study found that grief never left the characters throughout their lives and they completely sank into it. *The Runaways* (2018) depicted characters such as Layla, whose life reflected personal pains. Her social and psychological problems did not let her live a contented life. Traumatized events of her personal life damaged her mind and she took steps, which consequently changed and disturbed her own life forever. The selected narratives discussed serious problems damaging human psyche thus traumatizing individuals in the context of Pakistani society. The works highlighted impact of war and socio-psychological problems as driving forces causing irreversible damage to psyche. Future studies can be conducted to explore trauma leading to destruction by establishing a relationship between trauma and phobia represented in electronic media. Study can also be conducted to understand relationship of trauma and terror by evaluating American literary fiction.

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