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The Language of Dreams: Understanding the Psychological Impact of Border Partition in Akhtaruzzaman Elias's Series of Works

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Abstract

This research paper examines the psychological and impact of border partition as depicted in Akhtaruzzaman Elias's novels, Chilekothar Sepai ("The Soldier in an Attic", 1986), Khwabnama ("Dream Epic", 1996), and Anyo Gharey Anyo Swar ("In Another Room, Another Voice", 1976). By analyzing the language of dreams in these works, the study aims to understand the profound psychological experiences of the characters and their responses to the trauma caused by the division of borders. This paper provides a historical and socio-political context, explores the symbolism and themes present in the characters' dreams, and delves into the psychological consequences of trauma, displacement, identity crisis, and cultural loss. In this article, using trauma theory to explore how the characters' fragmented narratives and struggles with memory contribute to their psychological experiences of trauma and the challenges they face in navigating their post-partition realities.

Keywords: Akhtaruzzaman Elias, Trauma, Identity crisis, Memoir, Border partition

Introduction

The partition of Bengal in 1947 resulted in East Bengal becoming part of East Pakistan, which later became an independent nation known as Bangladesh in 1971. This partition, often referred to as the "Bengali partition," was a significant development in the history of South Asia and had profound implications for the people of the region. The partition emerged as a result of the extensive separation of British India into two independent entities, namely India and Pakistan. East Bengal, with its majority Bengali-speaking population, was geographically separated from West Bengal, which became part of India. This division was driven by religious and political considerations, as West Bengal primarily had a Hindu majority, while East Bengal had a Muslim majority. This catastrophic historical event has exerted its lingering psychological effects on the minds of the victims of the Bengal partition, as well as on the generations that follow. The trauma associated with the partition creates an unavoidable confrontation with the painful past, inevitably leading to a recurring reference to that trauma. Partition of Bengal mostly affected the Bengal in India (Wast Bengal) and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The division of these two provinces was rooted in religious differences, resulting in an unprecedented refugee crisis. The outcomes of the partition were varied and tragic,

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encompassing looting, killings, sexual violence, moral corruption, murder, the devastation of lives and properties, and rampant vandalism throughout the affected areas. The psychological consequences of the partition of Bengal has great witnessed to be more substantial than the acts of violence that afflicted the population of Punjab. The extent of the violence has spanned over multiple genres, and the curious academic intellects, particularly from South Asia. Among the numerous creative authors, Akhtaruzzaman Elias stands out for his detailed examination of this history of violence, recounting events through a lens of traumatic experience. Hasan Al Zayed is a short-story writer and novelist, says that "Elias in the milieu of great writers like Garcia Marquez, Carlos Fuentes, Chinua Achebe, Naguib Mahfouz, and Salman Rushdie" (Zayed, 2017). Mahasweta Devi talks about about Elias in an interview:

> "the more I read Elias, the more conscious I become of his importance in world literature. Elias spearheaded a group of immensely powerful Bangladeshi writers who began writing in the 1960s" (Devi).

The partition of borders has long been a topic of interest for scholars and researchers studying its traumatic stress on individuals and communities. Within these narratives, the partition is not merely an event or an insignificant deviation that can be easily forgotten, but a traumatic environment that allows for the expression and articulation of a profound sense of disorientation and homelessness. The theme of exile and the restless, homeless condition of the migratory self reflects a profound lack of peace and stability. Analyzing narratives that allude to the partition, whether directly or indirectly, reveals a noticeable pattern or echo. This exploration offers a clear articulation of the self's connection to fate, serendipity, sorrow, and loss, all of which arise from the trauma associated with the partition. In Elias's series of works, *Chilekothar Sepai* ("The Soldier in an Attic"), published in 1986, the narrative unfolds during the tempestuous period of 1969, characterized by the East Pakistani people's impassioned uprising against the West Pakistani military dictatorship. *Khwabnama* ("Dream Epic"), published in 1996, is set between 1946-1948, a time that coincides with the Pakistan Movement, the Partition of Bengal, and the Tebhaga Movement. The Tebhaga Movement emerged in the northern region of Undivided Bengal, where peasants, obligated to share half of their harvested crops with the landowners, demanded an increased share of two-thirds. *Anyo Gharey Anyo Swar* ("In Another Room, Another Voice", 1976) narrates a journey that originates from a different realm, intertwined with Pishima's recollection of her past. These novels offer profound insights into the traumatic dimensions after the border partition of bengal and shed light on the profound effects it has on the characters' dreams and overall psychological well-being. Through the dreams depicted in the novels, the characters subconscious thoughts and emotions are unveiled, allowing readers to glimpse the profound psychological consequences of border partition. If i have to judge Elias's enormity of creative propensity, *Khwabnama* and *Chilekothar Sepai*, *Anyo Gharey Anyo Swar*, are one among them. In examining Akhtaruzzaman Elias's body of work through the framework of trauma theory, I begin by presenting the historical context of the partition of East Pakistan and the critiques surrounding it. The discussion section delves into the theoretical aspect of psychic trauma as it pertains to the partition of India, and i have translated all titles and quotations from their original Bengali language into English.

Trauma is defined as the emotional and psychological reaction to distressing events or experiences that exceed an individual's capacity to manage, frequently leading to enduring emotional, cognitive, and physiological consequences. Psychological trauma can significantly impact long-term memory, causing changes, missing memories, and intensified memories due

to war, partition. According to Erikson, "the word 'trauma' denotes a form of stress or impact that may lead to chaotic emotional responses or behaviors, reflecting a psychological condition arising from such experiences" (Erikson, 1994). According to Cathy Caruth, "Trauma' is a "shock that operates much like a physical threat, although it truly represents a rupture in the way the mind experiences time" (Caruth, 1995). Based on the definition of trauma, it refers to an event that is extremely adverse, which can destroy a person's feeling of security and disrupt their joyful existence. In his book, Harvey defines 'trauma' as a specific term that pertains to "extreme psychological and psychological reactions to major losses, such as the death of close other" (Harvey, 2002). The emotions that emerge from a traumatic experience can lead to significant reactions in both an individual's psyche and psychological state. This indicates that trauma can result from events such as the loss of family members, or close acquaintances. Sigmund Freud's defines trauma refers to "any external forces that are strong enough to breach the mind's protective mechanisms, leading to an uncontrollable surge of stimuli that overwhelms the mental system and binds these experiences together" (Freud, 1910). Dipesh Chakrabarty discusses the traumatized memory of partition in the collection of essays tilted as *Chhere Asha Gram* which is translated as *Remembered Village*. In this work, he discusses two aspects of memories:

> A memory influenced by trauma follows a narrative pattern that is fundamentally different from that of typical historical storytelling. At the same time, for this memory to be identified as traumatic, it must embed the Event in a past that lends credibility to the victim's narrative (Chakrabarty, 1996: 2143).

The study of psychic trauma cannot be fully realized without acknowledging the contributions of Cathy Caruth, a key theorist in trauma research. In the book, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*, she presents the concept of latency, suggesting that trauma initially manifests as ambiguous. However, she emphasizes that "the survivors' uncertainty is not merely a form of amnesia; rather, the event resurfaces, as Freud consistently notes, against their will" (Caruth, 1996). According to her, trauma is fundamentally incomprehensible, yet it also possesses a referential quality. The most nuanced aspect of trauma is its referential nature. She also says, trauma is very difficult to forget. A person who is victim of trauma is feel hesitate to disclose their concealed traumatic reality to the world:

> Trauma involves not only the recurring pain associated with an event but also a persistent departure from its origin. The re-experiencing of trauma leads to a breakdown in the act of witnessing, highlighting the challenge of fully understanding the initial experience. By acknowledging this challenge, trauma invites us to engage in a new form of listening—one that focuses on the very impossibility of comprehension (Caruth, 1996: 10).

When an individual encounters a traumatic event, they may experience a range of effects stemming from that experience. These effects can manifest as shock, denial, and anxiety. According to Thom Spiers in his book, *Trauma: A Practitioner's Guide to Counselling*, describes trauma is "exhibits a clear pattern that can manifest through various responses, including shock, disorganization, denial, depression, guilt, anxiety, and aggression" (Spiers, 2001). The impact of trauma on personality can differ significantly depending on its underlying causes. As noted by Giller, "trauma can present itself in numerous forms, and there are considerable differences among those who experience it" (Giller, 2011). From the definitions provided, trauma can be characterized as a profoundly negative event that undermines an individual's sense of safety and disrupts their overall happiness. Such traumatic experiences can lead to various psychological effects, including insominia, shock, PTSD, depression, anger, guilt, anxiety, and aggression.

The influence of traumatic memories and a profound sense of nostalgia for a once-glorious past is prominently reflected in the narratives and testimonies surrounding the Bengal partition. Bengali literature addresses themes of displacement and dislocation, illustrating how the division of space profoundly impacts personal experiences. The concept of "*udbastu*" (refugee) is crucial in the dialogue about the Bengal partition, as it brings to light a crisis of displacement and a deep sense of being out of place. The re-location of India has led to an identity crisis among refugees, disrupting their sense of self and introducing an unfamiliar environment that challenges their self consciousness. The construction of both individual and collective identities is significantly influenced by geographical or physical space. The intricate connection between space and identity highlights the dynamic nature of identity, which involves movement from one location to another. Dispossession of the citizens of East Bengal has destabilized the ties between one's own geographical space and individual identity. A displaced self attests a sense of belonging to the landscapes, rivers, different natural objects of homeland left behind and reclaims the past through memorialization. So, memory, geography, and identity are interrelated with each other in the process of "becoming". Memory is the vehicle through which past is remembered. It is an act of recollection of something related to the past but that recollection occurs in present. The narratives surrounding the Bengal partition include numerous memoirs that create a space for dialogue between personal experiences and broader societal events. Memoirs, as a literary form, are considered a subset of autobiography; however, they distinguish themselves by prioritizing the author's engagement with public occurrences over their individual life stories (Quinn, 2006:256). A memoir serves as a personal account that captures an individual's experience and observations of a significant historical event. The subjective nature of memoirs allows for a public understanding of how individual identities are formed. They document the private grief of displaced individuals, express a longing for a homeland that can never be revisited, and articulate the complexities of trauma. While memoirs offer insights into the psychological dimensions of those affected, they can also present challenges due to their deeply personal and emotionally charged perspectives. Excessive sensitivity may obscure a clearer understanding of events. A memoir creates a personal space for the recollection of memories, which often extend beyond conscious awareness. Memory interrogates the violence recorded in history, revealing the intricate relationship between memory and trauma. In the context of the Bengal partition, narratives highlight the pervasive "silence" surrounding this event. The memoirs related to the Bengal partition primarily focus on the psychological experiences of the victims, emphasizing how spatial dislocation affects the identities of migrants. The division of the nation resulted not only in the partition of land but also in the fracturing of numerous families, with the perpetrators of violence often targeting women. The most traumatic experience of Partition has made by males confining within their narrow religious identities and succumbed females to be something more than just victims of the partition event. It is only the event of partition that had unlocked the door of fragile fraternity, enmity, devastation and carnage and that had led peoples to the hell where they could neither live nor die. It was the event of partition that had left peoples with most traumatic condition inside and the most drastic condition outside of their bodies and homes too. The writer of our selected novels of Akhtaruzzaman Elias's *Khwabnama*, *Chilekothar Sepai*, and *Anyo Gharey Anyo Swar*, his short story, explore the pathetic and traumatic devastation of partition of Bengal.

To start with, Elias's *Khwabnama*, published in 1996, the novel is a reflective memoir of the partition, focusing on the emotional scars of a victim of displacement. It tells the story of a Tamij lives in a modest village in East Pakistan (Bangladesh) with his father, Tamijer Baap, and his stepmother, Kusum, who looks after their household during the 1946's. Tamijer Baap is a visionary man, but it remains unclear when he sleeps or awakes. His dreams vividly illustrate what he firmly believes to be reality: the presence of Munshi, a soldier who was battled the British during the Fakir-Sannyasi rebellion in the late eighteenth century, alongside Bhabani Pathak. Tamijer Baap built up a strong emotional bond with Munshi but when he is flung from his house and brutally killed by the British commander, Taylor. Tamijer Baap is shocked to hearing this but he believes "he (Munshi) become the sunlight during the day and spread himself all over the lake and reigned over the lake all night from the fig tree" (Elias, 1). The incident is such a devastating impact on Tamijer Baap that he struggles to understand its lasting consequences. This traumatic experience drives him to conceal all his psychic memories of the past. The memoir explores the trauma of partition which is highlighting the author's awareness of his victimhood and the futility of escaping his troubled past. Dipesh Chakrabarty in his essay *Remembered Village* talks about two kinds of memory: "the sentiment of nostalgia and the sense of trauma, and their contradictory relationship to the question of the past" (Chakrabarty, 1996:2143). During the world war second, everywhere around the world is being affected by rapid price hike, food and other commodities. Elias also tries to portray in his novel where an unusual and rapid increase in commodity prices, affecting the remote agricultural economy of Bengal. "Famine and massacre of hundreds of thousand people are the two common result of the war" (Mazumder, 2016). Hunger was a major concern of Elias's novel, *Khoabnama*, we see how Tamijer Baap and Kusum are desperately to show their concern about food when Tamijer Baap says "I want to eat. Rice is cooking, I want to eat" (Elias, 9), and similarly Kusum shows her concern about 'lacking of food' in their house, she always says "waking up late in the morning after trudging all night through the mud and water, he could consume an en enormous quantity of rice. Where did the old fellow stow away so muc food in that scrawny body of his…she had made some of the rice she had made the day before yesterday…Kusum had bailed her belly out yesterday morning with two or three potato-like shankalus…they did have a stove inside the house too, but where would tomorrow's rice come from?" (Elias, 12-13) These lines show how Tamijer Baap and Kusum are victimized by trauma of food so they are always thinking of food's presence behind their eyes because of the shortage of food in their house, and even Kusum, she does not get the enough food at the end of the day. She gets angry to Tamijer Baap who eats all the food at alone, but she does not say any single word to him and starts to do tension about next day's food for her husband like a typical bengali wife always thinks for her husband. Bengali writers who were written a thousand years ago began with "the revelation about the scarcity of rice is troubling. People who are hungry experience significant pain in their stomachs. It is clear that starvation and inadequate nutrition are key contributors to the occurrence of gastric ulcers" (Dasgupta, 2002).

According to Gramsci, 'subaltern' is a term that describes individuals who experience subordination based on their community, caste, class, race, ethnicity, physical attributes, gender, or sexual orientation. This term highlights those who are deprived and whose voices have been muted. The concept is significant in the examination of developing and under developed nations, particularly in Third World War Countries like India, Bangladesh, and Pakisthan. Gayatri Spivak's in her outstanding article "*Can the Subaltern Speak?*" (1988)examines the concept of the subaltern through a highly theoretical lens. According to Spivak, "The

Subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with women a pious" (Spivak, 2009:308). Now, this major theoretical idea is being intersected in this story, Elias introduces women who are equally representative of peasant backgrounds as the men. Kulsum and Phuljan stand in stark contrast to the other female characters in this novel. Elias portrays the daily realities of peasant women, highlighting Phuljan's labor in her father's rice field, which often goes unnoticed. Likewise, Kulsum is a largely underdeveloped character, remaining mostly silent throughout the narrative. However, her presence underscores the patriarchal oppression faced by women, as her security depended solely on the life of her guardian, Tamijer baap. Elias departed with nothing but the scars of trauma and the harsh truths he had witnessed. Elias shows the harsh story as "With his death, Keramat and Kalam Majhi both try to take advantage of her" (Elias, 175). They always tried to touch her body physically and rape her. During that condition, Kusum wanted to cry but her eye did not help. All kind of conservatism keeps women like Kulsum immobile, dark and deaf. This immobility is shown as part of poor landless subaltern women's life, where their voices are being suppressed by the characters like Keramat and Kalam Majhi. This passage illustrates Kusum's profound trauma stemming from the absence of her husband, Tamijer Baap, and her stepson, Tamij, a consequence of the communal riots that occurred without any specific provocation. Such brutal events are intolerable to any decent human being, yet these tragic narratives were tragically commonplace during the partition. 'Trauma of Caste' is also a major thing that can see during partition. In Thenmozhi Soundararajan's *The Trauma of Caste: A Dalit Feminist Meditation on Suvivorship, Healing, and Abolition*, we see how minorities are actually faced some of the challenging religious and caste violance in their own commonities, and later it creates a big issue to loose the fight for liberation. The vision of an India where all Muslims coexist without the divisions of wealth and poverty can be classified as a manifestation of "false consciousness." In this larger context Elias countered partition by bringing Tebhaga, where all poor lower-caste farmers are Muslims and Zamindars are Hindu, and this interplay of class dynamics presents his readers with a more intricate reality. In *Khwabnama*, Tamij a landless peasant at his early thirties dreams for a higher share of his production tilled by his labour, later fisherman, and then turns into a sharecropper Tamij. But after the partition when Tebhaga was actually crumbling, he opts to "fight at the moment of Pakistan's freedom" (Elias, 244). In the Tebhaga movement, class and nation did not come together. Prashanto, a compounder, refuses to take even tea or a banana in Kader's (a Muslim League member) house. Doctor Sisir Sen, a practicing Hindu, finds humor in the situation and advises Kader not to take the matter seriously, explaining that Prasanto has an intense fear of breaking the rules regarding physical contact. "As a son of Brahman, he won't even eat anything in my home, you see" (Elias, 78). In response, Prasanto states, "As impoverished Brahmans, we lack financial resources and political influence. If we lose our caste, what remains for us?// Kader counters: Maintain your caste distinctions. We consider ourselves a distinct race and desire separation. Why, then, do you resist the idea of granting us a separate nation?" (Elias, 78) The relationship between Tamij and Phuljhan generates tension within their communities of fishermen and farmers. Altaf Mandal of Chandiharh expresses his disapproval of the new League members by stating, "What sort of Muslims are they? They often mingle with the Santhals....and under their guidance, these swine are gathering grains for their own households. The Santhal Muslim sharecroppers stand united; what Pakistan are you imagining?" (Elias, 120) The marriage between Gafur and the ex-wife of Bulu Majhi sparks a tension in the village people, and leter Gafur is being isolated by the villagers beacuse he is belonging to a lower caste community. Through these above lines, Elias recounts the suffering experienced by

individuals from various religious and caste backgrounds during the devastating partition violence, emphasizing the internal strife within their communities. The ongoing instances of violence in the subcontinent's history, particularly in relation to partition, illustrate a deep-seated trauma, representing a wound that never fully mends. Elias shows all characters in this novel, have their different dreams for Tebhaga movement Cherag Ali's song is recalled by Tamijer baap, highlighting Bhavani Pathak's struggle against the East India Company, which sees an alliance with Muslim fakirs: "Bhavani joins the fight with the Pathan general, commanding, 'Strike down the whites' (Elias, 41). Majnu Shah, the Pathan general, is accompanied by his follower, the fakir Cherag Ali, who follows the traditional practices of dream interpretation. Cherag Ali performs songs that revive historical memories and recites 'sholoks' that elucidate dreams. His Khwabnama is in high demand among folk-singers Keramat and Baikuntha, serving as a traditional text for dream interpretation. A pivotal change occurs in the transition from Cherag Ali to Keramati Ali. Keramat distinguishes himself by not reciting poetry derived from a detached mystic tradition. Rather he is a singer who creates and claims ownership of his own original songs, although he also seeks inspiration from Cherag Ali's writings. His performances highlight the challenges faced by peasants in their pursuit of *Tebhaga* and their dreams for an 'egalitarian' society in Pakistan. At a gathering of Muslim League supporters, Kader urges him to take the stage. Even under immense pressure, he sings: "The true adversaries of the peasant are the Zamindars and Jotedars; this is a rightful assertion. Therefore, raise your voices for Tebhaga, shout with conviction, and declare victory for the peasants" (Elias, 170). Through this transformation, Elias aims to create an opportunity for a disruption and the formation of a new ontology. However, unless labor successfully challenges the authority of capital, it is not possible to portray "real" situations in which labor achieves success.

Chilekothar Sepai ("The Soldier in an Attic") is another narrative by Elias which takes place a few years following the country's partition, and it addresses the independence movement and the partition of East Pakistan. Elias describes the 'basic democrat 'in this novel, and interpreted the 1969 movement as a considerable participation of the working class, conveyed in his distinctive language 'bus conductor, driver, helper and Rickshaw puller'. Elias, in his depiction of the substantial involvement of the general populace in the movement, employed historical examples, asserting that it marked the culmination of various uprisings against colonial rulers, from the Fakir Sannyasi revolt to the martyrdom of Somen Chanda, a radical writer, in Dhaka prior to independence. Elias effectively depicts the proletariat individual by analyzing the significance of the name Haddi Khijir, where "haddi" is rendered as "bone" in English, in conjunction with the instruments he carries. The initial description of Khijir portrays him as a "notably tall individual, yet he is better known by his nickname that reflects his gaunt physique. It is often noted that he is rarely seen without a screwdriver and pliers in his hands" (Elias, 7). During the insurgency of Dhaka in 1969, Elias depicts the subalterns as purely impulsive and violent in nature. This is particularly evident when Khijir responds instinctively to the kidnapping of a passenger's wife, who is taken by members of the NSF party for the purpose of rape. "Nothing too worry about. We need maximum one hour to complete this. This young group of 3 people took the girl by the arms and went to the opposite side of the sidewalk" (Elias, 57). Khijir promptly instructs the passenger to report the incident to the police station. Nevertheless, in that circumstance, the man prioritizes his future security over rescuing his wife, expressing his concern by stating, "If I attempt to pursue legal action, these beast will ruin my career." (Elias, 57) This extract exemplifies the traumatic fearing of NSF party where his voice are being silenced even though his wife is kidnapped and raped,

but he cannot even give a complain against them to the police station. It is inconceivable for any reasonable individual to endure such barbaric events, particularly after the rape of his wife, but unfortunately, these tragic accounts of inhumanity were all too common during the partition of bengal. In discussing Elias's significance in world literature, Zayed points out the depiction of subalterns in *Chilekothar Sepai,* where he observes that "Haddi Khijir is a unique character in Bengali literature, representing a subaltern who not only voices his opinions but also confronts prevailing norms" (Zayed, 2017). In *Chilekothar Sepai*, Elias reveals the crude, violent, and irrational aspects of human relationships during the partition period. The deteriorated connections among individuals serve as a source of regret in the present. Through the portrayal of characters engaged in such actions, Elias highlights the harsh realities of the partition era, where individuals revel in a climate of theft, murder, abduction, and sexual violence. Joteder's powerful men always steal poor villagers' cows from their cowsheds and keep those in their territory. Later they send a message to the suffering villagers that only after paying a large amount of money will they release the cows from their territory. In addressing this question, Hosen Miya, the devoted helper to joteder Khoybar Gazi, replies: "Negligent, irresponsible, and envious individuals allow their cows to roam onto other people's farmlands to damage the crops, and their cows are captured by the Joteder's men. Only after paying the high penalties, Joteder's men releases those cows from the cowshed" (Elias, 176). These details clearly illustrate that Joteder's men exploit the poor villagers by looting their cows, snatching crops, kidnapping the family members, etc. The above extract reveals Elias's portrayal of a harsh reality where common people are suffering with trauma, and no one is safe from the characters like Joteder and his groups. Elias portrays the overwhelming insanity that individuals exhibit in their pursuit of sexual pleasure and their domination over the lower socioeconomic classes, which fundamentally contributes to the emergence of trauma. To depict the overwhelmed state of men in sexual pleasure, Elias elaborates on the various aspects of Mahajan Rahamatulla, who is a dominating character throughout the novel. At first we see he is taking money from farmers and later see his dominance among the villagers when he gave marriage to Jummon's mother with Haddi Khijir even though she has her husband. But when Khijer get the news his mother and his wife is being rapped and brutally killed by Rahamatulla, khijir protestes against him. But what he actually do against him is 'nothing'. Even his wife (Jummon's mother) is again sitted for marriage with Qamaruddin even though she is pregnant by khijir and later trapped him into a protest. This excerpt explicitly highlights the dangers that men embody in their pursuit of sexual intercourse. Rahamatulla brings Khijir's mother and his wife to his residence after offering them job, not out of goodwill, but to indulge his profound sexual urges. His uncontrollable sexual thirst compels him to exploit others, engaging in sexual intercourse without consideration for whether they are alive or died. By presenting this grim and brutal condition, Elias reveals that the elite members of society are lacking in humanity, behaving in ways that are even more despicable than animals. Their oppressive actions, which include murder and rape, are the ultimate sources of trauma experienced during the partition.

In Elias's novel the main protagonist, Osman is a member of the lower middle class. He is actively present at all meetings and rallies throughout the 1969 insurgency; however, he refrains from engaging with any of the political parties involved. Khijir is also curious about this aspect of his character as he says, "Osman can come forward in these matters. This man goes to processions, listens to meetings, gives slogan, then why does he object to cooperate with Alauddin Miya?" (Elias, 59) Osman is consistently depicted as distinct from his companions, including Altaf, Anwar, and Shawkat, who are active members of various political parties. A

significant relationship exists between Haddi Khijir Ali and Osman. The demise of Khijir and Osman's descent into madness occur in a parallel manner, as both experience a simultaneous loss of their ability to articulate thoughts. Following Khijir's death, the fervent subaltern spirit of Khijir Ali is transferred to Osman and his son Jummon. The symbols such as 'fire' and 'screwdriver-plier,' which represented Khijir Ali's rebellious, proletarian essence, are now appropriated to signify Osman. The previously ambiguous, cautious, and narcissistic nature of Osman has dissipated. He perceives him distinctly among other people; in fact, several significant insights regarding Anwar emerge from his anxious discussions with Khijir: "Khijir is urging him to hurry up. He is not getting how difficult it is to come out of the grip of this animal..... 'Why are you afraid? 'Khijir urges again, 'Didn't you see how that rustic peasant jumped out of it this noon? This bloody Military shouted from back a lot, could he do anything?" (Elias, 298-299) we see when Osman becomes mad, khijir's character under him trying to kill Ranju from dropping down from the rooftop. Elias compiles the various interpretations of 'lunatic' to construct a broad spectrum that can be generalized to some extent. He says: "Osman has been seeing someone in the void for quite some time, What's new? 'Hey Khijir, keep it, don't kill it. Leave it to me! Saying that, Osman came to the roof'…Osman tries to kiss Ranju on his face. Osman was shouting, 'Ranju, this is the last time! Final! Farewell?" (Elias, 283). Elias's use of "lunatic" due to trauma of partition, is to indicate Osman as a mad man but also a hero because it is the madness of him that can kill Ranju and exits from that attic and breaking all the boundaries of that army. Foucault in his book *Madness and Civilization* (1989) explores how the understanding of madness is influenced by the social and cultural frameworks of various eras and societies. He argues that the definitions of madness are not inherent but rather fabricated by society for distinct social and political reasons (Foucault, 1989). In that case scenario, we can see where the mad people is not getting communicate with the modern people, because their voices can not be understood, or being rejected by them. Elias also depicts the same thing when Osman comes out from the attic at the end of this novel, but it does not end the problems cause when he tries to communicate with his family members and friends, no one is tried to understand his deeper messages. "Osman has been seeing someone in the void for quite some time, What's new? 'Hey Khijir, keep it, don't kill it. Leave it to me!" (Elias, 283). At this moment, the themes of Foucault's madness are effectively linked into Osman's characterization, illustrating his transformation into a doubly marginalized figure, where he only communicates with khijir and refuses to talk with others because he knows, his language can not able to understand by them.

Anyo Gharey Anyo Swar ("In Another Room, Another Voice", 1976), another work by Elias, exposes the underlying trauma that affect the characters in diverse contexts. In this work, Elias portrays the 1971 Liberation War which ends with the people's traumatic past and memories. The story starts with the character called Pradeep who travels to his Pisima's house in Bangladesh to reunite with them after the partition. But when he comes to this new land, *Shonar Bangla*, (a land of golden expectations) Pradeep finds himself as a confused and anxious traveler. He says: "In their '*Shonar Bangla*', did the silver moonlight glitter so, even inside a room?" (Elias, 86). The partition of 1971 in East Pakistan has transformed Dhaka into a vastly different city, the city that has expanded to incorporate other surrounding districts such as Narayangunj. This slowly growing city now has various issues and challenges like corruption, domestic issues, threating, and power conflicts, all of which contributing to a collective sense of trauma. In the article "*Can the Subaltern Speak?*" (1988), Spivak explores the notion of the 'Subaltern', mainly a study among Third World countries, indicates a deprived person whose voice has been suppressed. Now, this major theoretical idea is being intersected in this story

where it starts with a conversation of old past memory when non-muslims are raising their voice for their 'identity' but their voice are being suppresed by the political parties and goons by killing and raping and buring their homes, and to safe their life they are fleeing from Bangladesh, to go in Calcutta, and Agartala, "duing the commotion, everyone fled to Calcutta, Nonida went to Agartala" (Elias, 90). It shows they are subalterns not solely because of their social disadvantages; rather, they are subalterns due to their subjugation and marginalization stemming from their 'inferior' caste affiliations. Their voices remain unheard, akin to those of the 'subalterns,' when they seek to express their experiences of societal rejection. Nonida, the brother of Pradeep, engages in small-scale trading, and his life largely devoted to keeping political workers happy, as he is always fear of them Noni says: "What business? How do you live in this country? If the business is a little better, everyone come for donation one by one…There are three or four conferences, meetings and gatherings in a week. Tricks to collect money, do not you understand that?" (Elias, 90) these examples ultimately show us how the government, non government, and goons are actively showing their corruption and dominance to the new build nation citizens and trying to suppressed their voice, isolated and killing them and making them again in a deep trauma even after independence. Even later we see an argument happens between Noni and his wife, and when she heard about the corruption, she advices Noni to go to India and start a new trading business. Even Noni also trying to find a way to start a business in India and send their daughter, Indira to India for safety from local street villain; his wife says "just eat and sleep. Will you not give your daughter marriage? Can not safely send her to college, how will you give her marriage?… not taking her admission in Pakistan. Send her to Kolkata. Will study from her sister's house" (Elias, 91). This lines actually portray the harsh scenario of Bangladesh after the independence, people are still in trauma of fear, as they are afraid not to send their daughter to college just because their daughter is not safe from the societal goons, "these boys look like my son's age, just look at their angry. Girls can not go outside just to feel afraid of them" (Elias, 91). Elias creates the title *Anyo Gharey Anyo Swar* ("In Another Room, Another Voice") through the songs of Pishima. When Pradip hears Pishima's songs from another room with her ups and downs voice which reminds Pishima about the scacrifies of Pradeep's family during the liberation war. "The sound of half-ripe *kul* plopping on the sand-bank of the Padma woke him up. As the last bit of sleep and dreaming leaves him, he sees the verandah light and hears Pishima's song... Her voice rises, it falls; sometimes it is so soft that Pradip can hardly hear. The garland of notes, high and low, fall softly on his eyelids, the notes wet. The eyelids peel off, his eyes come open, taut" (Elias, 94). Pradeep understands that the past is difficult to recover, as it slips away like a dream. Nostalgia serves as the link between Pishima's memories, which are rich in tenderness, fear, and death, and Pradeep's perception of what the new nation has chosen to keep or forget from that past. In this extract exemplifies Pishima's memoir, which recounts the trauma of war, partition, dreams, and visions, is as relentless as the ebb and flow of the Padma River. It poignantly illustrates the fragility of reconstructing lives amidst the remnants of history.

Conclusion

In Akhtaruzzaman Elias' novels, *Khwabnama*, *Chilekothar Sepai*, and *Anyo Gharey Anyo Swar*, the psychological impact of border partition is masterfully depicted through trauma theory and the characters experiences. By applying trauma theory to this analysis, we gains valuable insights into the characters subconscious desires, fears, and unresolved conflicts, as well as their struggles with memory and the lasting effects of trauma. People who are suffering with

immense pain during the partition are silenced or their voice are being suppressed for various reasons, are portrayed here. Particularizing the stories among several, the researcher has gone through *Khwabnama*, *Chilekothar Sepai*, and *Anyo Gharey Anyo Swar*, where Elias reveals the traumatic experience of those partition victims. Elias's series of work mostly describes the history of Bengal Partition which portrays the religious conflicts among common people, rape, torture by the jomindars (Landlords). Elias beautifully highlights the harsh activities done by the elite peoples and fails to address the voice of common peoples through his works. During the liberation war in 1971, people losses their lands, property, families and everything which brings them back to think of their old memories. They lament for their old past memories which Elias portrays through his works as rapists, looters, murders, thieves, lunatics or so on. In order to reveal the brutality, inhumanity, and anguish experienced by the victims, Elias employs irony to expose the suppressed cries and imitative responses of those who suffered. Through this ironic narrative, Elias delves into the genuine experiences of pain, suffering, and trauma that the victims are suffering during the peak of the violence. After all, Elias exposes the harsh realities faced by the victims of partition, whose current state of misery and suffering compels them to connect their fragmented present with a nostalgic past, where their's voice are unheard by the society, or being suppressed by killing, looting, rape, etc. Through Elias's storytelling, the psychic minds, traumatic situations, torturing of individuals are providing a true depiction of the experiences endured by all victims of partition. Partition not only divides people from their lands and political authority but also alienates them from their historical roots, which results in psychological pain that often leads to mental disorders. Elias beautifully captures this struggle in his writings through the lens of psychic trauma.

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