

## **I: Manju Kapur's *Home* as a Trauma Fiction**

This thesis intends to analyze Manju Kapur's *Home* from the perspectives of cultural trauma studies. This research not only examines the elements of the cultural trauma but also its impacts on the characters in the novel. It will also find out the features of Manju Kapur's writings in relation to the characters in the novel. To find out the gender, class and cultural trauma, the text is suitable.

Literally, trauma is a psychological wound or shock that remains for a long time in a person's mind. Trauma may be caused by various reasons. It is mainly related to the past memory or historical incident. Freud compares it with crisis that occurs during childhood. It remains unconscious in the mind and obstructs one to think strongly. Therefore, it is concerned with thanatos, death drive. Whatsoever the case is, it is related to the past and it always gives pain in the present and the future. When one goes to another country for business, or study or employment and so on, the new culture may not be adjustable to the person. Then, the person starts to think about the past life. The culture affects everyone right from the birth, how a person experiences in the childhood, and what kind of environment is given to him or her. S/he wishes the same environment throughout his/her life. If there is the slight change in the environment, the person feels uneasy. Such uneasiness also can be called trauma. About the trauma, the forthcoming chapter will have ample space with various critics.

The novelist intends to establish the harmonious society by making aware all the characters that the conflict is prevalent when there is the combination of the people having different views. The patriarchal society seeks to dominate the women. From house to the whole society, there is gender discrimination. The patriarchs do not think necessary to take the suggestion from women in their decision. Women have

become aware of the patriarchal domination due to the feminist movement. Thus, they do not want to follow the traditional people, rather they intend to escape from such society.

Moreover, the novel intends to show the changing society. The society is no more like the traditional one which follows all the rules made by the ruling people. Educated women intend to destroy the traditional society and establish new one. The new one is not fixed but at any time it can be changed.

In the novel, there is the conflict between two types of people. Some characters like Banwari Lal represent the traditional society. They want to continue the traditional business and the manners while other characters like his daughters-in-laws represent the new systems. They do not help the traditional manners. The main focus of the novel is to show the manners of the characters who want to subvert the old cultures as they believe it is not good for the new generation and establish new culture which can be appropriate for the new generation.

In this way, Banwari Lal represents the old systems and manners. The sons and daughters-in-laws want to escape from the house as a way of choosing new systems. In the same manner, Manju Kapur wants to show the plight of Indian women who have become the victim of the patriarchal values. She wants to subvert the traditional society and establish the new one where there is equality between men and women. The novel, *Home* is about the portrayal of the characters who want to escape from the traditional society and want to live modern life on their own. However, the trauma, the psychological crisis or wound does not allow them to adapt the new system in full-fledge.

Manju Kapur's third novel *Home* (2006) is an engrossing story of family life, across three generations of Delhi shopkeepers. When their traditional business –

selling saris – is gradually sidelined by the new fashion for jeans and stitched salwar kameez, the Banwari Lal family must adapt. However, instead of branching out, the sons remain apprenticed to the struggling shop, and the daughters are confined to the family home. As envy and suspicion grip parents and children alike, the need for escape – whether through illicit love or in making of pickles or the search for education – becomes ever stronger. Very human and hugely engaging, *Home* is a masterful novel of the acts of kindness, compromise, and secrecy that lie at the heart of every family.

Moreover, Banwari Lal's grandson, Vicky becomes a bone of contention. Banwari Lal, Vicky's grandfather, feels guilty about what happened to Sunita and hence responsible for him, but his sons and their growing families have less reason to make space for Vicky. Of the two sons, Yashpal falls in love with beautiful Sona and employs astute emotional blackmail to get his parents to accept her. The other son, Pyare Lal has a proper arranged marriage, and all the sons, daughters-in-law and, in due course, grandchildren pull their varying weights in the cramped family house and the family sari shop.

But the times are changing and, in the 1980s, the family is rife with tensions. With the death of the benevolent Banwari Lal, the shop was modernized and the family house was changed into self-contained flats. The joint family and even the business was fragmenting; the price of both cohesion and fragmentation was being paid in different ways by different characters. Of these, Nisha, Yashpal and Sona's beautiful daughter, are the brunt of the tensions that were tearing at the family, making home a site of manipulation, repression, even sexual abuse.

Kapur's previous novels have been good at delineating the ways in which women connect to and resist other women. That is her strength in *Home*, too.

However, she appears to have extended her art in two ways. Her sketches of the male characters are more convincing than in her earlier novels, and she has some memorable descriptions of spaces outside the immediately domestic arena, such as canteens and Banwari Lal shop. In this regard, the narrator says:

All day the Banwari Lal men nibbled something. Mid-morning snack, evening snack, feeling stressed snack, visitor snack. They worked long hours, six days a week. Their pleasures lay in discussing what to eat, in anticipation as the order was sent out, in the stimulation of the olfactory senses as the packets unfolded, in the camaraderie of sharing.

They unwound over fresh, crisp kachoris with imli chutney. (52)

*Home* belongs to what must now be counted as a subgenre of Indian writing in English: domestic fiction, stories of weddings and deaths, arranged marriages and love affairs, cooking and bickering in a joint or an extended family in South Asia or, with signal differences, among South Asian immigrants in the West. This can range from the magnificent breadth of Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* to the narrowly pulp dimensions of Shobha De's novels. It can be put to serious literary use, as in some novels by Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande or Bapsi Sidhwa. It can also become a little too dependent on certain clichés. *Home*, however, carries the reader along with its tender humour, its sparing but effective use of Delhi middle-class Indians and its subtle retelling of the clichés of north Indian family life.

The novel carries the universal significance in the people, regarding it, *Hindustan Times* writes: "In today's *Kahani Ghar Ghar Ki* Age, *Home* is infused with bits-and-bobs that you find at once so recognizable. What begins like a short story, perhaps bringing your neighbors to mind, stretches to as many as 337 pages, with nuances that are at times rather singular, and at others, so universal" (Cover Page).

Therefore, we can say that the novel, though shorter, brings the innermost feelings of the people living in the modern world with the old-mannered people.

Similarly, the female characters in the novel are not happy with the present system. The traditional society has been mainly dominated by the patriarchs. Male characters generalize the traditional system and want to manipulate women. In this regard, Aamer Hussein comments:

Nisha, the seemingly docile central character of *Home*, claims her space halfway through the novel when she demands an education. But life at university offers little more than cribs to help with her exams. More significantly, she has a clandestine romance with the boy who acquires them. But this is India, and the boy's unsuitable. Nisha has to find an alternative occupation, putting to use her entrepreneurial genes. From these few bricks, Manju Kapur creates a novel full of bright spaces and dark corners; her telling is brisk, unsentimental, and capable of turning domestic drama into suspense. (2)

It means, the female characters like Nisha have been depicted as docile who can be used in any way the male characters desire. But she demands education, which indicates that she is aware of the changing society. The education is the base through which she can compete with patriarchal system. In addition, when she intends to have romance with a boy at a university, this is the indication of going beyond the societal norms and values.

The novel has connection of three generations. It talks about the past history of India. During and after partition, many people moved from one place to another. They had to adjust them in the new culture in the novel way on the one hand; they had brought their own culture on the other. In this way, there is conflict between

traditional people and the new or modern people. Jyoti Babel comments in her review:

*Home* by Manju Kapur is a tale of three generations, of a traditional cloth merchant family in Delhi. After braving the partition the family had to leave Lahore and start their lives anew in Delhi. The novel chronicles their lives through three generations and how with the changing times the traditions and values of the family were put to test and changed to accommodate in the modern world. (1)

Kapur's episode of love with Professor unsettles her and drives her to move to Lahore.

The events in Lahore and her continuing love with Professor torment her. Professor's intermittent visits to Lahore do not let Virmati snap her relationship with him. Virmati longs for her due status and social recognition in the society. Professor however fails to accept her socially and continues his illicit love. The desire to be acknowledged as Professor's wife tortures Virmati driving her to take refuge in Shanti Niketan.

Professor recognizes the need of the hour and marries her in haste. Virmati dresses herself up as a bride: "The only thing she said she wanted were the red ivory bangles that the women of her family wore when they married" (186).

Marriage, a social commitment between husband and wife which must put all emotions and desires at rest, does not prove of any solution for Virmati. Her marriage with Professor, for which she forever desired leaves her more disturbed and perplexed: "Though married, she was dispossessed. Well so be it. She would walk tight-lipped, mute, on the path her destiny had carved out for her" (196).

Virmati overcomes all her anxieties and marries professor but the married life again makes her restless and dislocates her. She feels homeless, regardless of being married. She resists living in the new home, which constantly reminds her of Geeta's presence, Professor's first wife. Virmati, on mentions of coming to home from

Amritsar, admits her dislike for home to Professor: "I don't mind going on a holiday with you, but I will not come home" (236). Manju Kapur in the end of the novel highlights the state of homelessness of Virmati: "She didn't care if she never had a home, children, if she cut off her nose to spite her face. Right now, everything about her was aching so much . . ." (242).

*Home* like *Difficult Daughters* is set against the background of partition. She comments in the very beginning of the novel:

The Banwari Lal family belonged to a class whose skills had been sharpened over generations to ensure prosperity in the market place. Their marriages augmented, their habits conserved. From an early age, children were trained to maintain the foundation on which these homes rested. The education they received, the values they imbibed, the alliances they made had everything to do with protecting the steady stream of gold and silver that burnished their lives. Those who fell against the grain found in their homes knives that wounded, and once the damage had been done, gestures that reconciled. (1)

The whole narration attempts to establish the safe and secure values of traditional set up. When Yashpal, the elder son of Lala Banwari Lal falls in love with a girl of ordinary family, the boy's mother creates hue and cry and calls the girl a witch. She recounts, "The bride had to bring a dowry, come from the same background and understand the value of togetherness" (4). Lala Banwari Lal, a pragmatic head of the family, soon approves of his son's choice. This was not a democracy, in which freewheeling individualism could be allowed to wreck what was being so carefully built. United we stand, divided energy, time and money are squandered. Sona, the wedded wife of elder son is inflicted with numerous taunts from her mother-in-law as

she is unable to bear any child for the family. She relentlessly prays to god: "Please, I am growing old, bless us with a child, girl or boy, I do not care, but I cannot bear the emptiness in my heart" (20). The growing up age changes her life style. She wants to discontinue with her past life. She wants to change the life style with the growth of her age.

In this way, the novelist presents the characters who are suffering from the past memory. They are attempting to be modern but they fail to do so because they remember the bygone days. Partition is one of the causes they are feeling apart with each other. Remaining in these main ideas, the researcher would like to bring some issues related to the situation in the novel. Some of the theorists are taken for the support of the situation with the appropriated theories. The main propounder of the theory, trauma, Sigmund Freud is taken for the support of the theory as well as others. The theorists have given the definition of trauma as presented below.

Trauma refers to the medical term denoting a mental condition caused by a severe shock, especially when harmful effects last for a long time. Trauma is related to the action shown by the abnormal mind to the body, which provides a method of interpretation of disorder, distress, and destruction. Freudian concept of psychoanalysis is the major foundation for trauma theory with various accounts of memory and psychological disorder. Trauma theory is a broad category which includes diverse fields with the specific focus on psychic, historical, cultural, philosophical, ethical and aesthetic aspects about the nature, subject and representation of traumatized events and situations. And, all these concerns of trauma theory "range from the public and historical to the private and memorial" (Luckhurst 497).

There are various types of trauma which are related to culture. Gender trauma



is one of the aspects of trauma in which it focuses on the gender, the social construction, in which women are dominated by culture in various respects. Trauma affects persons mentally so that they do not feel free to think and behave as they are grown up. They manifest all the manners which are related to the psychology which the victims have experienced in the past.

Kali Tal, one of the gender trauma theorists, focuses on the gender trauma on how women have the feeling of hurt when they get bitter experience in childhood, in her book *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literature of Trauma* (1996). She deals with the emotionally disturbing but poignant nature of narratives by rape and incest survivors. Much of this material is upsetting to read, but it is also different from most literary narratives. It expresses traumatic feelings in ways that urgently need to be understood and disseminated to a world often expressing willful ignorance about these experiences, whether in academic or everyday life. Tal has performed a valuable task in depicting this painful world and arguing for its inherent relevance. Traditional conceptions of literature and taste are irrelevant for understanding the nature of these different voices. She cogently argues, "Literature of trauma is written from the need to tell and retell the story of the traumatic experience, to make it real both to the victim and to the community. Such writing serves both as validation and cathartic vehicle for the traumatized writer" (25).

The various psychic journeys undertaken in trauma literature involve a move from fragmentation to wholeness marked by struggle in which survivors fight ideological battles over a struggle for meaning. Throughout this book, Tal often sees remarkable unities between the diverse narratives she examines, such as those linking Louise Wischild's *The Obsidian Mirror* with Ehrhart's prose narratives.

Tal says that trauma is the threat to life or bodily integrity or personal

encounter with death and violence. Trauma is a life-threatening event that displaces one's preconceived notion about the world. So, she writes about trauma:

The writings of trauma survivors comprise a distinct "literature of trauma." Literature of trauma is defined by the identity of its author. Literature of trauma holds as it centres the reconstruction and recuperation of the traumatic experience, but it is also actively engaged in an ongoing dialogue with the writings and representations of non-traumatized authors. It comprises a marginal literature similar to that produced by feminists, African- Americans, and queer writers – in fact, it often overlaps with these literatures, so that distinct subgenres of literature of trauma may be found in each of these communities.(17)

The literary works on trauma revolve around the traumatized or disturbed events and situations. Generally, those traumatized authors identify trauma writings. Trauma writings are similar to those marginalized writings of females, African-Americans and third world people.

Cathy Caruth, in her book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*, argues about the idea of 'latency,' in other words, when trauma first takes place is uncertain, but that "the survivors' uncertainty is not a simple amnesia; for the event returns, as Freud points out insistently and against their will" (6). She emphasizes that trauma can hardly be forgotten. She states on the part of latency of the temporary delay, which should not be misunderstood as repression because trauma by its very nature displays with a vengeance over a period of time, especially when triggered by a similar event. The term 'latency' means the period during which the effects of the experience are not apparent in trauma event. It has been described by Freud "as the successive moment from an event to its repression to its return" (Breuer

and Freud 7). Caruth opines that the victim of a crash is never fully conscious during the accident itself. The experience of trauma, the fact of latency, would thus seem to consist, not in the forgetting of a reality that can never be fully known, but "as inherent latency within the experience itself" (8).

Likewise, Urvashi Butalia, an Indian feminist, publisher and historian who established, *Kali for Women*, India's first feminist publishing house in 1984. *Kali for Women* is concerned primarily with publishing Third World studies on women. In her book, *The Other Side of Silence*, she talks about the partition of India into two countries, India and Pakistan, caused one of the most massive human convulsions in history. Within the space of two months in 1947 more than twelve million people were displaced. A million died. More than seventy-five thousand women were abducted and raped. Countless children disappeared. Homes, villages, communities, families, and relationships were destroyed. Yet, more than half a century later, little is known of the human dimensions of this event. In *The Other Side of Silence*, Urvashi Butalia fills this gap by placing people—their individual experiences, their private pain—at the center of this epochal event. In the book, she brings various references and presents the painful situation when people were separated from their country. The Gender trauma started from the moment when women were helpless and they had to depend on the males for their life. They scared to go anywhere alone. Butalia brings the reference of a woman named Damyanti Shagal and presents here:

When I tried to persuade my father he said, well if you feel scare you go. I said but babuji, he said, no bibi, if you feel scared you go. But where do I go? Then I came to Lahore. I remember asking what should I do, where should I go, my father was refusing to go. And they said the safest Hindu area is –what is called? Kamla, what is that, just north

of Beasa . . . my brain forgets very fast. (115)

It means there is threatening and underestimation of the women by the males that they cannot do anything without the support from men.

LaCapra proposes a historical approach to trauma that would include the particularity of historical wounds, while recognizing the way in which this unguidable past continues to shape our current experiential and conceptual landscape. However, this past and its losses would also be subject to a collective process of mourning, 'working through' and moving on, a course that would finally release us from a cycle of continuous retraumatization and allow us to turn to future-oriented ethical and political projects. In this regard, LaCapra further writes:

In post-traumatic acting out in which one is haunted or possessed by the past and performatively caught up in the compulsive repetition of traumatic scenes—scenes in which the past returns and the future is blocked or fatalistically caught up in a melancholic feedback loop. In 'acting out' tenses implode, and it is as if one were back there in the past reliving the traumatic scene. Any duality (or double inscription) of time (past and present or future) is experientially collapsed or productive only of aporias and double binds . . . (21-22)

In traumatic memory, the event somehow registers and may actually be realized in the present. In acting out, a tendency to relive the past in the form of dreams or hallucinations creates trauma. And an aspect of working through includes both back there and here at the same time, and one can easily distinguish them.

LaCapra more actively associates working through as the medium of remembering traumatic event. Working through includes the channelization or obliteration of such traumatic acting out. These processes of working through include

lamentation or mourning or critical thought or practices that are recognized as traumatic ones. It requires going back to problem, working them over and perhaps transforming the understanding of them. For instance, "Germans wanted to do what they did to the Jews because their culture had made them almost Hitlersque in their anti-Semitism, but they nonetheless bore full responsibility for what they did because they wanted- and not forced- to do it" (115). Thus, working through includes perpetrators and victims in the past, working with that at the present. LaCapra prefers 'working through' of trauma to 'acting out' because 'working through' helps traumatized community to decrease the intensity of trauma, whereas 'acting out' intensifies traumatic burden.

Therefore, trauma is the past experience. In the gender trauma, women think that they are inferior, weak, submissive and so on, in their houses and whole societies. Because of the concepts they cannot make their life meaningful. They assimilate all the things and do in accordance with the patriarchal system. The novel deals with the real life of Indian people. The world is going on with twenty first century. Because of the traumatic past experience, the old generation does not want to change the conventional norms and values. They want to continue what they have experienced. Banwari Lal represents such people in India. On the other hand, new generation people intend to go against the existing system. They are conscious about their life, society, trend and the modernity. They are also conscious that none should confine in the ethnicity and gender issues. They have to go beyond the traditional rules.

The researcher will apply necessary theory in the second chapter. The main issues about the gender trauma theory will be applied to the novel, *Home*. The third or last chapter will be the conclusion. In the conclusion, the main gist of the whole thesis along with the findings will be contained.

## II. Exploration of Gender Trauma in Manju Kapur's *Home*

### Traumatic Experience

In this chapter, the researcher intends to focus on the female characters and what they think about their positions in traditional society. In such a society, women are evaluated in terms of their power to produce children. Male characters think that women can be perfect only after they give birth to the children. Women worry when they are not able to produce children. The example can be drawn from the beginning of the novel in which two sisters, Mrs. Sonal Lal and Mrs. Rupa Gupta are childless: "Mrs. Sona Lal and Mrs. Rupa Gupta, sisters both, were childless. One was rich, the other poor, one the eldest daughter-in-law of a cloth-shop owner, the other the wife of an educated, badly paid government servant" (1). In these lines, it is noticed that women are judged in terms of their capacity to produce children. They are suffering from the traumatic situation.

Infertility is one of the weaknesses of the female characters that do not lead them to spend their life successfully and happily. The property and education play very minor role in their life. Their status is determined by their fertility power. In the modern age, women are determined to fight against gender oppression within their own model of society. In this regard, Tyson writes:

Traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive; they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive. These gender roles have been used very successfully to justify inequities, which still occur today, such as excluding women from equal access to leadership and decision-making positions (in the family as well as in politics, academia, and the corporate world), paying men higher wages than women for doing the same job (if

women are even able to obtain the job), and convincing women that they are not fit for careers in such areas as mathematics and engineering. (85)

Traditionally, women are considered to be inferior in all aspects in contrast to men. Women are deprived of getting equal access to leadership and decision-making positions. The different sections are explained below.

Trauma is the main issue of the thesis in which gender trauma is discussed. Trauma is a mental state caused by a severe shock, especially when harmful effects last for a long time. The word trauma is also referred to crisis or death drive, to borrow the concept from Sigmund Freud. It leads to the weaknesses mentally and physically so that the affected person cannot find meaning in life. Lois Tyson says about trauma:

Trauma is also used, of course, to refer to a painful experience that scars us psychologically. Thus, I might experience the childhood trauma of losing a sibling to illness, accidental death, or suicide and, in later life, experience the trauma, or crisis, of being flooded by all the guilt, denial, and conflict I've repressed concerning the death. (21)

Therefore, trauma is the psychological matter which begins from childhood. It has the bitter experience in the earlier life and it lasts for the whole life. It may appear in any time in any form that remains repressed.

Freudian concept of psychoanalysis is the major foundation for trauma theory with various accounts of memory and psychological disorder. Trauma theory, on the other hand, is a broad category which includes diverse fields with the specific focus on psychic, historical, cultural, philosophical, ethical and aesthetic aspects about the nature, subject and representation of traumatized events and situations. And, all these

concerns of trauma theory "range from the public and historical to the private and memorial" (Luckhurst 497).

Most of the female characters in the novel *Home* have traumatic situation. They are struggling with their life. They regard home to be the best place to get rid of the trauma. In the title "Home" we can see trauma lurked because it is the displacement from the fragmented mind to sympathize psychologically. Trauma of the past can be seen everywhere in the novel. When the characters are not happy or they are in dilemma they remember the past incident:

Sona protested for form's sake that Vicky was being spoiled, in her time nobody had heard of tutors. She didn't raise too many objections though, because in her heart she was grateful to him for her children. That she couldn't bear to see him was another matter. Her womb had opened when he came. (65)

She thinks that during the ancient time, women were called unsuccessful when they could not bear children. The same thing happens to her as she cannot become mother for several years. The trauma of the past always tortures. Therefore, she feels grateful towards her husband that he gives her children.

Cathy Caruth is one of the major theorists of trauma. She opines that trauma is incomprehensible by nature and by the same token it is referential as well. The subtlest fact concerning it is referential. She claims that victim of trauma, however, reluctant to express one's hidden traumatic truth, unknowingly reveals certain personal truth. Caruth in this concern writes:

By turning away as we have suggested, from a notion of traumatic experience a neurotic distortion . . . Trauma is not experienced as a mere repression of defense, but as a temporal delay that carries the



individual beyond the shock of the first moment. The trauma is a repeated suffering of the event but it is also a continual leaving of its site. The traumatic re-experiencing of the event thus *carries with it* what Dori Laub calls the "collapse of witnessing"; the impossibility of knowing that first constituted it. (10)

Caruth identifies trauma as a momentous shock which is experienced throughout the passage of time. It is not 'repression' of the event but rather 're-experiencing' of the event. Furthermore, Caruth argues that latency is not so much concerned with the return of trauma as a departure from the knowledge and awareness of trauma: "For history to be history of trauma means that it is referential precisely to the extent that it is not fully perceived as it occurs; or to put it somewhat differently, that a history can be grasped only in the very inaccessibility of its occurrence" (18). Rather than the historicity, she more actively focuses on the individual psychic disorder out of certain shock in the past.

In the novel, because of traumatic situation, one cannot be happy completely in the present. The life becomes disorderly. The persons are anxious with their current life. It happens in the story of Lala Banwari Lal when he goes to the past at the age of seventy: "Lala Banwari Lal was now approaching seventy, but such was his heart, exclaimed the family, that he insisted on taking the boy to Bareilly himself. They would travel by the train, spend the day there, and return the next morning" (75-76). Even in his old age, he is not happy with the present life, but he remembers the childhood, which is the indication of trauma.

Similarly, Ruth Leys, one of the pioneer theorists of psychological trauma, elaborates the ideas of Sigmund Freud (anxiety and repression) and Cathy Caruth (latency) and focuses on psychic distress in her book *Trauma: A Genealogy*.

Moreover, for the more precise and specific knowledge about the psychic trauma, the idea of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) must be at the core. The concept of PTSD was officially recognized by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980. PTSD is the human disorder of mind after the post-traumatic period like Vietnam War and Holocaust. Leys describes the concept of PTSD:

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is fundamentally a disorder of memory. The idea is that, owing to the motions of terror and surprise caused by certain events, the mind is split or dissociated: it is unable to register the wound to the psyche because the ordinary mechanism of awareness and cognition are destroyed. As a result, the victim is unable to recollect and integrate the hurtful experience in normal consciousness; instead, s/he is haunted or possessed by intrusive traumatic memories. (2)

The past bitter experience affects the present life. The persons are sick mentally because of the traumatic situation. They remain in the memory. The memory does not lead life happily. The terror and surprise are associated with the mind. The victims cannot bring painful situation in the front. As a result, they always suffer.

Furthermore, PTSD is the historical construct, which is the result of the traumatic event and experience in the historical period and its surrounding. In the post war scenario, people especially who were the observers suffered from mental breakdown, neurotic distraction, and the catastrophic hangover. Because of such horrific events they are still suffering from the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in psychic level.

The main characters have been affected by PTSD in the novel since the time of partition in India. At that time, many people experienced violence and separation.

The experience is not deleted from their mind though they do not realize consciously. It remains imprinted for a long time. Sometimes it passes to the next generation as the older generation may talk about it several times with their children. The traumatic situation is experienced when Rupa provides love to Nisha:

As Nisha grew, Rupa bestowed careful love on her, mentally standing before the tribunal composed of her sister and brother-in-law, defending herself against neglect on the one hand and stealing the child's heart on the other. The business that had occupied her attention so successfully seemed more meaningful when she saw Nisha peering into the pickle jars, or testing the sweet and salty aam paper drying in the sun under an old muslin sari. (91)

She provides careful love to her because of the traumatic situation that she has experienced in her life that what would happen without the children. She thinks that the child leads her life to the successfulness and the meaningfulness.

As the traumatic situation covers one's mind one cannot live meaningful life. The life becomes meaningless due to the past experience. It does not lead one to the happy life. In the novel, we can experience such thing when: "The misery Sona felt at Raju's performance was exacerbated on parent-teacher day. Every year he did a little worse, belying his promises and her hopes and expectations. This perpetual disappointment drove to violence" (97). It is because of the trauma that she compares present situation to the past. The violence comes when there is conflict in the mental state.

While dealing with the historical trauma, Dominick LaCapra, a leading theorist of historical trauma comes to the fore. LaCapra, to clarify his intention about writing, in the preface of *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, writes:

In my account, moreover, not only should transhistorical or structural trauma be distinguished from historical trauma and its attendant losses; it should also be correlated with absence in contrast to loss, notably the absence of undivided origins, absolute foundations, or perfect totalizing solutions to problems. Failure to make these distinctions eventuates in a misleadingly hypothesized notion of constitutive loss or lack, which may well be a secular variant of original sin. (xiv)

What does the writing of history have to do with the writing of trauma? How can a historical writing of trauma attest to the specificity of the past event while attending to its ongoing reverberation in the present? These are some questions examined in LaCapra's *Writing History, Writing Trauma*. As the comma between them suggests, writing history (writing about past) and writing trauma (conveying the past's resistance to writing) respectively symbolize his main concern about trauma: 'acting out' and 'working through' a traumatic past, on the 'inevitability of transference' and of 'second-hand trauma' in this past's reception, and on the impasses of deconstruction with regard to historical trauma.

LaCapra proposes a historical approach to trauma that would include the particularity of historical wounds, while recognizing the way in which this unguidable past continues to shape our current experiential and conceptual landscape. However, this past and its losses would also be subject to a collective process of mourning, 'working through' and moving on, a course that would finally release us from a cycle of continuous retraumatization and allow us to turn to future-oriented ethical and political projects. Defining trauma, LaCapra writes:

Anxiety is related to trauma and to the idea that at least humanistic and interpretive social-scientific disciplines should in certain significant

ways always be in a state of crisis, including a kind of posttraumatic identity crisis wherein what is open for debate bears on the identity or constitution of the discipline itself. Such a view is especially pertinent when the most important problems are themselves not simply interdisciplinary. (52-53)

Similarity to Freud, LaCapra also relates trauma to anxiety and crisis which leads to identity crisis.

Similar experience can be found in the novel. Most of the characters have been affected by the past history. It shows the transition between the old traditional and modern society. Yashpal, one of the main characters of the novel experiences such things and affected by the past:

For fifteen years Yashpal had been used to his father's protective shadow. He now felt bereft and abandoned. Speechless, dependent, the state of the old man created a similar helplessness within him. He could not bear it. 'How could this happen to one so good, where is the justice in the world? He mourned to Sona. (117)

It means the past experience has direct impact on one's present. Present is not the absolute thing but it is the result of past and determined by it. People cannot adjust well in the society remembering the past as Yashpal has done.

Likewise, LaCapra, while focusing on the historical trauma, explores more specifically in his book *History in Transit: Experience, Identity, Critical Theory*. He distinguishes between traumatic event and traumatic experience:

The event in historical trauma is punctual and datable. It is situated in the past. The experience is not punctual and has an elusive aspect insofar as it is related to the past that has not passed away- - the past

that intrusively invades the present and may block or obviate possibilities in the future. (55)

Thus, trauma is related to anxiety which can be both the event and experience; only the difference is in the punctuation of occurrence. It is all because of the transitory nature of the history because "history in the sense of historiography cannot escape transit unless it negates itself by denying its own historicity and becomes identified with transcendence of fixation" (1).

Indirectly, trauma pushes to the change and needs reformation. It mainly affects the personal life and the person wants to escape from the present situation. The novel covers such thing in the character, Nisha:

The forlorn misery that was Nisha's burden increased with every step made in the direction of her brother's marriage. Had her parents not been so determined to reject Suresh, she could have been reveling in attention as the groom's only real sister, instead of feeling a source of apology and justification. She wished she could disappear into some hole till the wedding was over. (249)

For Nisha, marriage is a burden; it gives pain to the people, especially to the women. Therefore, she is not happy with her brother's marriage.

#### Gender Trauma

Gender refers to the cultural or social role men or women have to play in the given role in the given society. Its meanings and roles are different as per the society. Even in the twenty first century, the roles of men and women are determined by men in the particular society. According to the traditional society, women are defined in terms of binary opposition to men. They are in the right side in contrast to the left. Men and women have relation in terms of strong/weak, head/heart, superior/inferior,

rational/irrational, independent/contingent and so on being women in the right side.

Today, women have realized that they are oppressed by the men in their own place. Because of sexual harassment, betrayal, gender discrimination, and the like, female characters such as Nisha in the novel, *Home*, suffer from gender trauma. In order to tackle it, she is determined to be an independent woman. Not only Nisha other characters like Mrs. Sona Lal and Mrs. Rupa Gupta have also the feeling of trauma of gender. Traditional society looks at women with different angles from that of men. Women are incomplete without the help of male counterparts. Males create such situation in their mind that women think that they cannot attain success without the assistance of males.

Gender trauma begins when women think themselves weaker in all respects than men. Consequently, they cannot go beyond the perimeter they are provided by the patriarchal society. Women feel that they are puppets of patriarchal world. They are created for serving and making happy to male characters. Kali Tal, referring to Susan Brownmiller's book, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (1975) says that there is political, racial, and economic oppression to the women in the patriarchal system. Tal says: ". . . clearly articulated the connection between sexual assault, and political, racial, and economic oppression" (155). Therefore, the society discriminates the masculinity and femininity in the artificial way. Kapur's *Home* depicts such characters who are feeling oppressed in the family and society. They have to act the role determined by the male society. Sona, for instance, has such feeling in her marriageable age. The text goes like this: "It was necessary for marriageable girls to blossom during such occasions, it being likely that cast a glance and hold it steadily upon her person. Then it was hoped subsequent enquiries would yield result" (2).

There is no such fixed rule for the boys what they should do. However, for the

women they should do according to the rules made by the patriarchal society. They feel frustrated, disappointed, betrayal and so on. They have realized psychologically what they have to do after marriage when they go to their in-law's house. For instance, Nisha follows the tradition as she has experience in her childhood. As she gets married she has to submit herself as a descent wife and daughter-in-law in the new house: "Nisha first touched her mother-in-law's feet, and then moved into the kitchen to see how the maid was managing. She was now a daughter-in-law, she had to anticipate responsibility, not wait for her lack of involvement to be pointed out" (321). Therefore, Nisha has the feeling of domination in the patriarchal society. This is the example of gender trauma that women are appropriated by the patriarchal society.

Moreover, Kali Tal brings the issue of war in which women are victimized more than men. Although women are conscious because of feminism in the twentieth and twenty first century, their past is full of frustration due to sexual abuse. The witnesses of war express that women were mistreated systematically. She says, "The narratives of female sexual abuse survivors bore witness to the fact that violence was perpetrated systematically and regularly by American men upon American women in a society that supported the oppression and subjugation of women"(156). Therefore, in every society there is discrimination between men and women in which the latter are oppressed and subjugated throughout history. They consider women as the providers of sexual pleasure. Wives are expected to give pleasure at their husbands' desires. The text shows such in this novel: " Her (Sona's) husband looked at her with approval. 'You are my everything,' he murmured into her ear. His parents in the next room were sleeping, he could now lock his door, now undress his wife, still shy. With the lights off, he at last got what he had longed for all day"(9). In this way, Tal says that gender discrimination is not confined only to the women as a whole but it has



different levels according to the race.

Gender trauma, which is related to feminism as well, is the movement in which women's voices are being raised to uplift themselves from the traditional gender discrimination. Although women's movement began, the western middle class white women highlighted themselves. With many types of societies and different patriarchal norms, feminism is not a singular theoretical orientation today. Feminists seek to escape from what seems to be a universal definition of womanhood by asserting the heterogeneity on the lives of women. Chandra Talpad Mohanty argues:

Thus, the discursively consensual homogeneity of women as a group is mistaken for the historically specific material reality of groups of women. This result in an assumption of women as an already constituted group, one that has been labeled powerless, exploited, sexually harassed, and so on, by feminist scientific, economic, legal, and sociological discourses. (23)

She asserts that diversity and difference must be acknowledged and respected, not erased in the building of alliances. Western feminist discourse defined Third World feminism as a group or category. They are automatically defined as religious, family-oriented, illiterate, and domestic. Such definition of Third World women asserts the homogeneous image of the Third World women that is very dangerous and monolithic. Western feminist discourses again create a binary opposition by presenting themselves as secular, liberated and in control of their own lives and by presenting monolithic image of Third World women. The process of 'othering' is inextricably linked to self-representation of Europe. So, the Third World feminists seek to address the challenges of representation. They are recovering and representing the perspectives of those who have not been able to represent in structure of power.

Kapur's characters are psychologically affected that they are weaker in every aspect not only from the male counterparts but also from the white educated women. The third world women are confined to their houses and their tiny problems like having children, spending luxurious life, serving the family and the like. These women only focus on children. Their life is complete only after they are able to produce children, otherwise, their husbands may marry for the second time. One of the main characters of the novel Rupa has also such view about children:

Look at me, thought Rupa. I also don't have children, or half the other things she has. From the time we were children, she was the special one, always noticed for her fairness, her prettiness, and every day I had to hear how well she would marry, while I would be lucky to find anybody, dark and ugly I was. (27)

It shows the women's narrow concept of their life and their position in the family. Women are thought to focus on the physical structure rather than their mental capability.

Third World feminists try to give response to the problems faced by Third World women, such as domestic violence, dowry murders, early marriages, polygamy and other social discriminations, which are different from the problem of western countries. Third World feminist's argument is that oppression, which is related to colonial experience, particularly racial, class and ethnic oppression, has marginalized women in postcolonial society. Third World feminists' target is to challenge the notion that gender oppression is primary force of patriarchy. They try to see the portrayals of women of non-Western societies as passive, voiceless and portrayal of western women as modern, educated, empowered. Third World feminists have developed strategic skills that enable them to counter western stereotypes and they

continue to develop feminist analyses of problems women face within their communities.

Most of the girls get married at their early age in Third World countries. Parents show negligence towards their daughters. In the rural areas, a majority of girls are expected to look after their sibling and assist in household chores from their early childhood. Parents teach their daughters how to behave with her husband and teach how to make other family members happy in order to make her place safe in her husband's house.

Manju Kapur's novel, *Home* brings the issue of trauma of third world females. As the story opens, trauma can be felt. It is about the marriage of Sona. However, the family does not feel happy about the future as she is affected by the past wound: "Sona's marriage had not in fact led to a brilliant future for Rupa. No proposal had forced her to give up her education. She finished her B. A. after which her father arranged her marriage to the son of a retired colleague, based in Karol Bagh" (15). Because of the past experience they thought of education and its importance in one's life.

In the traditional society, marriage, children and family are crucial entities for women. They are not treated as real women unless they give birth to children. The ancient society considers women as the weak, irrational, contingent, dependent and so on. Therefore, they become happy when they are married and conceived. On the other hand, if they cannot become pregnant, they regard themselves to be failure. There is competition among women for having children: "It turned out that Rupa too failed to conceive. Sona hid this fact as long as she could from her in-laws, she knew exactly the kind of comment it would elicit"(15). When Rupa is revealed to have failed producing children Sona becomes happy and optimistic because she is also barren.

She sympathizes herself that she is not alone to be infertile.

As the novel begins as a love story of Sona who marries in a cloth merchant's family and finds herself barren. After many years of prayer and fast, she is finally granted a baby girl, Nisha, and then a son in the coming years. Here, she feels as a successful woman being able to give children to the in-law house.

In traditional gender role, women are taken as the weaker and objective being analyzed through the eyes of patriarchal society. Women are defined and evaluated in terms of men. In this manner, Tyson puts:

Traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive; they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive. These gender roles have been used very successfully to justify inequities, which still occur today, such as excluding women from equal access to leadership and decision-making positions (in the family as well as in politics, academia, and the corporate world), paying men higher wages than women for doing the same job (if women are even able to obtain the job), and convincing women that they are not fit for careers in such areas as mathematics and engineering. (85)

Therefore, they are not independent in the society. They are dominated in the society economically, politically and socially.

However, with the movement of feminism they have become aware of their position in their society. They are getting education; they are participating in politics and are showing their capacity to perform as males. In the novel, Nisha is all of 25 when she decides to take her life into her own hands and begins her own small business. However, her astrological fallacies prevent any relationship from stabilizing

and she watches her friends and younger family members marry around her. In fact, people admire girls who are independent. Although there is rise of feminism, women are still victimized in the different societies. They cannot expose anything how they are suffering and abused by the males in their own house. In the novel, Nisha is then sexually abused by her cousin brother and while the family realizes who the culprit is, they do not oust him but simply ensure there is distance between them. Yet another probable situation ensuring the family pride is honored.

The traditional society believes in inequities between men and women. But the anti-discriminatory laws have been passed, such as the law that guarantees women's equal pay for equal work. However, these laws are frequently side-stepped. Traditional society cannot go beyond the domination of men. They are only limited in the papers. In practice they are oppressing women in many ways. For instance, an employer can pay a woman less for performing the same work as a man does (or for doing more work than a man) simply by giving her a different job title. Therefore, women still are paid roughly between fifty-five and eighty cents, depending on their ethnicity and age, for every dollar earned by men. One of the famous critics, Fine argues:

When gender is salient in the environment, or we categorize someone as male or female, gender stereotypes are automatically primed. For several years, social psychologists have been investigating how this activation of stereotypes affects our perception of others. But more recently, social psychologists have also become interested in the possibility that sometimes we might also perceive our own selves through the lens of an activated stereotype. For as it turns out, the self-concept is surprisingly malleable. (7)

In the novel, almost all the female characters are dominated by the male characters. Women are considered to the contingent being. They are recognized by the male members: by father's name or children's name or husband's name. They remain silent even though they are suffering from the patriarchal society: "Sona's position forced her to bear these remarks in silence but her internal repartee was fierce and pointed: How can I be his mother? Or make up for anything? If it is in my fate not to have children, it is in his not to have parents. I have to accept that as much as he" (25-6). Here, Sona is silent because she is conscious about her position in the family. She assimilates that she should not expose her internal fierce with others.

The problem of wastage and stagnation also adds to female illiteracy rate. The differential socialization process, sex stereotyping of professional activities, and inadequate attention to the special problems faced by girls in pursuing their studies, have all contributed to the growing disparity between the educational status of men and women. The situation can improve only through concerted efforts of women themselves, and by initiating programs aimed at bringing changes at the grassroots level.

Moreover, traditional gender roles believe in the discrimination between men and women. Tyson takes the example of Hollywood and says that the camera is focused on women by the males: "[. . .] the camera eye (the point of view from which the film is shot) is male; the female characters, not male, are the objects gazed on by the camera and often eroticized as if a male eye were viewing them, as if the point of view of the 'universal' moviegoer were male" (84-85). It shows that traditional gender role always dominates women as weaker in every aspect. The role has been established by the males in the society. Moreover, according to the patriarchal society, women are evaluated in terms of physical structure rather than their mental capacity.

The evaluators are males who judge women, as they appear to them not what they really are.

In the novel, we can find gender discrimination everywhere. Women are psychologically oppressed by the patriarchal society. They like to only focus on the bodily attraction rather than the mental ability. They are happy when their body is attractive with good clothes, dressing, nail painting and so on. Nisha also thinks in this way: "Nisha slept between her uncle and aunt in the middle of a big double bed, the tips of her soft feet and hands shining with the nail polish her aunt had applied to amuse her" (66).

Moreover, there is gender difference in the third world society in terms of marriage. Women have to leave their birth place and have to go to husband's house. They should be servants in the new house serving every member in the family. Therefore, they cry when they are led to husband's house. The story goes:

The bride continues to weep as she is escorted inside the bus by her mother and sister, both crying as much as she. Her aunts and cousins look covertly at her new relatives jammed on the seats –who who is what relation to their girl is remembered, noted, and filed away, to be brushed up later. (89)

In this way, in the weeping moment we find the gender discrimination that they are victimized in the patriarchal society.

For Kali Tal, trauma writings are similar to those marginalized writings of females, African-Americans and third world people. According to her, trauma stretches from psychic life to public history, reading materials that can include romantic poetry, psychiatric histories, accounts of sexual abuses, memories, testimonies, documentaries, the symptoms, silences, omissions and so many other

aspects in individual psyches and national histories. Trauma theory can be understood as a 'terrain' where different critical approaches converge. In a way, it is cross-disciplinary in which different disciplines contest with each other.

In this way, the novel occupies most of the spaces with the traumatic experience throughout the book. The characters do not feel adjusted in their life in a way and another. The traumatic psychology begins from the personal thought spreading to the society affecting the whole society:

The bridal couple spent all their time in their unit, their desire to be alone shamelessly palpable. Home from the shop, Raju could barely be greeted, let alone fussed over, before he disappeared into the maw of his bedroom, shutting the door softly but oh so firmly behind him. After a while Pooja emerged to make tea. Only two solitary betraying mugs on a tray, ringed with little bowls of dry fruit, spicy mixture, and biscuits. (257)

It means, trauma is individual psychological experience but it spreads to the society because the society is formed by the group of individual people. What characters behave in the novel, it is due to their past experience.

For the further analysis of trauma theory and its approach, the cultural aspect, and the necessity to study the cultural side of trauma is the most significant factor. Jeffrey C. Alexander, a professor of sociology at Yale University, foregrounded the concept of 'cultural trauma' through his essay "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma". The main objective of Alexander's cultural trauma is to show ongoing affair: "Societies expand the circle of the we" (1). According to Alexander, throughout the twentieth century, people always have focused on the traumatic situation caused by an event, an experience, bloodshed, violence, and war in relation to certain organization



or institution. The shift of concern from individual to collective, to a certain cultural location is the foreseen demonstration. Because of this kind of shifting, people think sociologically. In the traumatic level too, common experience and event is internalized by certain community or group. Thus, trauma is something covering the matter not only minds: "For trauma is not something naturally existing; it is something constructed by society" (2).

In general, psychologists and sociologists agree that trauma and event are 'separate'. Trauma is an act of signification, hence something social, and event is an act of occurrence therefore something individual. Alexander as a sociologist writes:

Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to horrendous event that leaves indelible mark upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways. Cultural trauma is first of all an empirical, scientific concept, suggesting new meaningful and casual relationship between previously unrelated events, structures, perceptions and actions. (1)

Alexander indicates that cultural trauma is a result of the group practicing for distinct collective identity. The aim with Alexander's notion of cultural trauma is to criticize both what he calls 'lay trauma theory,' which focuses that "traumas are naturally occurring events that shatter an individual or collective actors' sense of well being and to offer a perspective for considering social and cultural processes of collective traumas" (2).

The novel mainly revolves around cultural trauma. It affects everyone in any way. The whole Banwari Lal family has such trauma. They have felt uneasy to adjust in the present because of the past experience. Cultural trauma can be felt in these

lines, for instance:

Nisha had helped her mother by hating Pooja, but now her mother and acquired an interest in the girl from which she was excluded. After the baby's birth, she supposed there would be another battle of possession, claim, and counter-claim, though even that state would not last- neither the hate nor the love was permanent. (277)

It shows their culture that how they are startled by the past and the surrounding people when they have something. They hate other people who represent another culture and they love their own.

Moreover, Alexander gives cultural trauma an ethical dimension although he does not explicitly use the notion of ethics. So far, Alexander gives the social process of cultural trauma as an ethical dimension:

For traumas to emerge at the level of the collectivity, social cries must become cultural cries. Events are one thing, representation of these events quite another. Trauma is not the result of group experiencing pain. It is the result of this acute discomfort entering into core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity. Collective actors "decide" to represent social pain as a fundamental threat to their sense of who they are, where they came from, and where they want to go. (10)

Thus, Alexander's aim to deny that trauma is grounded in something objective (external or real), becomes a way of stressing the ethical character of the cultural trauma process. However, one of the key questions is how to expand the circle of 'we' and still withhold the ethical imperative.

Nisha has cultural trauma for several times. But she does not show it because it is the matter of society, ethics, relation and friendship. Indian culture takes great

matter having a child or childless, or son or daughter. They still believe in the traditional society. They talk about such familial matters. Thus, Alexander's views can be matched here:

Nisha was fascinated by the baby, but since it was Pooja's, she was a reticent with her affection. O weekends she watched from a distance as her mother oiled in the sun in the veranda, while Pooja sat near by. Up and down Sona gently massaged the little baby's laughter. On such occasion Nisha stretched out her hand to stroke the fine, soft, black hair. (279)

In this way, the culture plays a very important role in one's life. Though people are individual and free to think about themselves, nobody can go beyond the culture.

The collective consciousness is not the final to determine the event and representation in 'trauma process' but it is agents who do. So, the crux of his idea can be as follows:

Experiencing trauma can be understood as a sociological process that defines a painful injury to the collectivity, establishes the victim, attributes responsibility, and distributes the ideal and material consequences. Insofar as traumas are so experienced, and thus imagined and represented, the collective identity will become significantly revised. This identity revision means that there will be a searching re-remembering of the collective past, for memory is not only social and fluid but deeply connected to the contemporary sense of the self. Identities are continuously constructed and secured not only by the facing the present and the future but also by reconstructing the collectivity's earlier life. (22)

Cultural traumas are experienced, imagined and symbolized as a sociological domain. Collective identity is the main factor of such trauma. Peoples' search for the collective life in the present and future evokes cultural trauma. The identity revision is the symbol of the traumatic events ever seen.

As expressed by Alexander, trauma cannot be single experience but is the matter of the whole society. He focuses on the cultural trauma in the sense because trauma is experienced by the whole culture or society. In this regard, Nisha has traumatic experience:

Homebound, Nisha felt more part of her mother's life. When Rupa came, Nisha joined them on the bed as they lay down after lunch, food heavy in their stomachs, dark curtains drawn across the windows. Rupa put her arms around Nisha, lying in the middle half-dozing, half-listening to the plaintive whispers that floated about her. (264)

Nisha's feeling is not only singular, but familial and social; it gives effect on the whole community.

Another prominent theorist Neil J. Smelser in his essay "Psychological Trauma and Cultural Trauma" (56) appreciates cultural trauma comparing it with psychological trauma. He brings the relevance and generates insights about cultural trauma. He stresses both the promise and limitation of theory and research at the psychological level for understanding it at the cultural level. He, in doing so, does not avoid psychological reductionism. He prepares the avenues of psychic trauma while defining cultural trauma. Smelser relates his idea with Sigmund Freud's psychic trauma and its relation to hysteria: "Freud conceived of hysteria as having a definite cause, course of development, outcome, and cure" (32). Smelser further supports that the memory related with an event or experience repressed from consciousness

involves catharsis and working through which transfers into the memory of trauma as argued by Freud. Moreover, for Smelser some events like natural disasters, massive population depletion, and genocide are themselves traumatic.

Smelser shifts his idea to cultural trauma demanding prerequisites of cultural trauma. As he argues that several accomplishments should be made before an event gets termed as cultural trauma. These situations are as follows: firstly, the event must be remembered or made to be remembered. Secondly, the memory of such event must be culturally relevant, i.e. it must work as integrity in affected society. Finally, the memory of the event must be associated with negative aspects like disgust, shame, filth, horror or guilt. For example, American history is full of such aspects, such as the institution of slavery qualifies for a cultural trauma. Thus, for cultural trauma, there should be traumatized historical events. In this concern Smelser adds:

The theoretical basis for the proposition is that the status of trauma as trauma is dependent on the socio-cultural context of the affected society at the time the historical event or situation arises. . . . Historical events that may not be traumatic for other societies are more likely to be traumas in afflicted societies. . . . then, that cultural trauma is for the most part historically made, not born. (36-37)

Smelser expands cultural trauma relating it with psychological and social trauma. Some historical events can be regarded as both cultural and social as well as the psychological ones. For instance, *The Great Depression of Thirties* qualifies this kind of trauma. This historic event is not limited within the boundary as it traumatized at various levels such as: social level, psychological level, cultural level and national level: "Furthermore, once a historical memory is established as a national trauma for which the society has to be held in some way responsible, its status as trauma has to

be continuously and actively sustained and reproduced in order to continue in that status" (38).

Smelser, in this process also, shows the difference between cultural trauma and psychological trauma in terms of the mechanism. The mechanisms related with psychological trauma are the intrapsychic dynamics of defense, adaptation, coping and working through but the mechanisms at the cultural level are mainly those of social agents and contending groups. Sona, for instance, has such conflict between psychological trauma and social trauma. For her marriage is burden and waste time because she knows that women are used objectively in this social bond: "Sona was not pleased at this new development in Nisha's life. 'She is going to get married, why waste time and money in all this'" (289). In this way, Sona is suffering from the psychic problem of the past.

Psychological adaptation, intrapersonal emotions, and working with individual's depression are some major symptoms of psychological trauma. Anxiety, mental disorder, guilt, shame, humiliation, disgust, anger are the category of psychic situation which, according to Freud, work to communicate between 'perceptual apparatus' and 'adaptive apparatus.' While, certain community, group of agencies/institutions, and mass affected out of some historical event is related with cultural trauma. Presenting all these ideas and evidences, Smelser gives the formal definition of cultural trauma:

A memory accepted and publicly given credence by a relevant membership group and evoking an event or situation which is a) laden with negative effect, b) represented as indelible, and c) regarded as threatening a society's existence or violating one or more of its fundamental cultural presuppositions. (44)

For a trauma, a related group of same race evoking some horrible event or situation should be at the core. Furthermore, Smelser necessitates three kinds of requirements within such event: full of negativity, having irremovable motif, and the disorder of the fundamental cultural presuppositions.

Nisha plays greater role to have the ample examples of cultural trauma. The person feels alienated, disorderly, scared and so on when one is separating from the home or original culture. Nisha is being married and she is in bridal make-up but frequently she is thinking not to go to another's house: "In a few hours she would be married. She wished she could see beyond the ceremony, but she couldn't. his family was just him and just mother"(309)

Therefore, *Home*, is about Nisha, who grows up with changing times, taboos and cliches in a North Indian middle class family. There is oppression and sexual abuse in the joint family. Nisha experiences these things during her childhood when her family imposes rules on her and her family members. Nisha assimilates the problems of castes and social status. Later in her life, familial experience comes in the mind and determines her behavior that has been taken as trauma which creates boundary in the mind so that none can go beyond the painful situation. Jenny Edkins, another major critic of trauma also stresses on the past memory that comes in the mind of people when they experience some catastrophe. In case of winning they celebrate and commemorate renewing the nation with new strength. Private grief is nationalized and the authorities take the responsibilities to perform the task. However, the combatants have the deep wound in their mind they cannot forget the nightmares and the devastating situation. Jenny Edkins in her book, *Trauma and the Memory of Politics* says:

In the aftermath of a war or catastrophic comes the reckoning. The

dead and the missing are listed, families grieve and comfort each other, and memorials are erected. If it is a war that has been won, commemoration endorses those in power, or so it seems at first glance. Victory parades, remembrance ceremonies and war museums tell of glory, courage and sacrifice. The nation is renewed, the state strengthened. Private grief is overlaid by national mourning and blunted or eased by stories of service and duty. . . . But returning combatants tell a different tale. Survivors are subdued, even silent. Many witness the deaths of those around them. They cannot forget, and some are haunted by nightmares and flashbacks to scenes of unimaginable horror. (1)

thus, trauma always haunts the people who have witnessed the catastrophe. It is related to the mind and the concerned people cannot forget it forever. They are sometimes startled by the past memory.

In the novel, it is found similar incidence in some of the characters. They are not free from the traumatic situation they experienced in the past. Partition has troubled them all the time. They have the sense of aloofness when they are alone. Although they do not realize all the time that they are suffering from trauma of past, as they do, it can be realized. As the narrator says:

They sat in the crowded waiting room, during the free consultation period, pressed close to each other. It was hot, and Nisha was perspiring. Above them, a fan suspended from the high ceiling on its long pole moved slowly. It was once a big room, and a partition made of white-painted plywood stretched halfway up. A sagging, rickety door served as the entrance to the doctor's section, scraping against the



floor as patients went in and out. (234)

It means the family members come closer to each other because they want to feel mutual protection. Their sitting together makes them feel sense of affinity. They fear that they cannot live meaningfully when they are separated. It was not the actual war, they experienced but it was the pain they felt when they got tortured in partition. Therefore, trauma haunts the characters all the time, whether they realize or not.

Similarly, Edkins says that trauma is related to force and violence. It gives negative thinking to the people as they feel threat. It may involve rape, torture or child abuse or sometimes-dreadful death experience. They feel helpless in the present life by remembering the past painful situation. In her own words, she expresses in the introduction of the same book:

Events that give rise to what we categorize today as symptoms of trauma generally involve force and violence. Often this is a threat to those people involved, their lives and integrity, as in rape, torture or child abuse; sometimes it also involves witnessing the horrific deaths of others, for example in wartime combat or in concentration camps. The victims of trauma feels they were helpless in their enforced encounter with death, violence and brutality. This is not always the case. For example, on the whole, Vietnam veterans were not in situations where they were trapped in the same way as First World War soldiers in the trenches or concentration camp victims. (3)

Therefore, it is always concerned with the negativity or painful situations like death, violence and brutality. It may be anywhere whether in war, or in concentration camp or any place they got tortured.

*Home* brings such issues that are related to trauma. The characters, especially

main including Nisha, are not sure of the future life because of the past bitter experience. Nisha even does not feel happy when she is married. She is not confident with her future. It is because of the past memory. The text goes in this way: "Arvind did tell his mother and she responded by silence and withdrawal. Still Nisha went, but without the support that would have made her comfortable and secure. She saw every inch of the way to Karol Bagh covered with fragments of her broken future" (323). Nisha is newly married but she is not happy because she feels uncertainty about the future. Therefore, trauma haunts the people in every manner whether they realize or not.

### **Coping with Trauma**

Trauma does not remain stable forever. It changes psychologically finding out the correct way of life. There are two ways of coming out of traumatic situation. Firstly, the affected persons may be extremely sad and find no meaning in their life and end their life. Secondly, they get stronger and stronger and fights for their life so that they become able to face every problem in their life. They want to change prevalent situation and establish new one. Here, it is good to bring the issue of historico-cultural trauma as mentioned above by taking the reference of LaCapra.

Kapur tries to release the characters from the traumatic situation and gender discrimination through the characters. Nisha, the central character, is all of 25 when she decides to take her life into her own hands and begins her own small business. It is because of the patriarchal society which has dominated her all the time. The patriarchs think that women cannot decide about their life without them. Nisha, thus, takes the life in her own hand and shows the society that women also can do many things. However, this step is not tolerant to other characters like Sona because they are appropriated by the males. When Nisha decides to do new business, Sona is not

satisfied: "Sona was not pleased at this new development in Nisha's life. 'She is going to get married, why waste time and money in all this?' A business was not like teaching, resignable when the bridegroom reached the door" (289). Here, conflicting ideas are manifested: old and modern. Sona believes in the traditional gender discrimination that women should not do business, Whereas Nisha believes in the new concept that women can go beyond patriarchal society and establish their new life.

Nisha is determined with her goal. She does not give attention on what other people comment about her steps, "Nisha didn't care what people said or thought"(289). Therefore, she has become able to resist the traditional gender discrimination and shows others that she is capable to do herself. She calculates the money she has to spend for the rent and other expenses. She is confirmed that she can perform, despite the fact that she is brought up in the patriarchal family. Her father decides to buy the suits from her on condition that if they are not sold, he will give her back. It indicates that father is not confident in his daughter but she is bold.

It is not the easy task for Nisha to do business. She faces lots of difficulties in course of selling suits in the shop. She gives charge to her mother and Sona to take the responsibility but they make fault because they are not used to managing the business: "The first time Nisha left her mother in charge, she came back to find her bursting with accomplishment. She had shown them. Masterji had actually lain down after lunch, was Nisha paying him to rest? Masterji showed his displeasure by not coming for two whole days" (293). It means Nisha's mother does not know how to manage the shop and the importance of regularity. It is because of the inability to do business as women are dominated by the patriarchal society. They are suffering from gender trauma.

Then Nisha becomes furious with her and says: "Mummy, what have you

done? Wailed Nisha. Even if he sleeps he never cuts less than five suits a day. I promised Gyan's twenty by day after, if he doesn't come, my reputation will be spoilt. Do you know how competitive the market is"(293). It is the result of the challenge Nisha takes against the patriarchal society. This indicates conflict between traditional and modern society. Patriarchal society follows the traditional system oppressing women while most of the women have accepted the system. Nisha and some of the modern women do not like the traditional society. They do not like the joint family and want to escape from their house.

In conclusion, trauma is the physical wound in the scientific term. It is also the psychological term, which affects a person's whole life. Trauma does not have its independent effect but it starts from the history permeating throughout the life. The affected person may be unaware of the situation; it explodes at any time indirectly. Nisha, the principal character, also suffers from the traumatic situation or psychological wound that bothers her whole life.

### III: Conclusion

This thesis studies the gender and trauma theories especially created from the time of partition that are related to the culture and personal experience as well with reference to the novel *Home*. The researcher has reached conclusion that the life of people becomes complicated when they have to settle in new place and system from that of earlier. The feeling of trauma haunts them throughout their life, even if they settle down well. Moreover, women are discriminated in the traditional Indian society. Women have to play as determined by the gender role artificially rather than naturally.

*Home* tells the story of people especially women who have been victimized by the patriarchal society. Women lose their chastity, identity, freedom and so on in the hands of male characters. However, it does not run for long time because the modern era has made them conscious about their position in the society. They now are ready to go against the patriarchal values and assumptions. The novel talks about the family of Banwari Lal who comes to India after partition and with the help of his wife's jewellery, starts out a sari business in Karol Bagh, Delhi. He succeeds gradually as he is forced to marry his daughter, Sunita, to a man of dubious credentials. Even as the family gets richer, Sunita is abused and then, perhaps, murdered by her husband - leaving behind a son, Vicky, to be brought up by the Banwari Lals. Thus, it shows the domination and discrimination of women in patriarchal society. When the family comes to new place, they are feeling alienated on the one hand, and the women suffer in the patriarchal society on the other.

The novelist intends to establish the harmonious society despite the conflict prevalent because of the combination of the people having different views. The patriarchal always attempts to dominate the women. There is the smell of gender

discrimination inside and outside the family. Patriarchs do not like to consult women in their decision. As a result, women have become aware of the patriarchal domination as also helped by the feminist movement. It leads them to think that they do not feel compelled to follow the traditional people.

Moreover, the novel shows the changing society. The society follows all the rules made by the ruling people. Now women have been acquiring education, they intend to destroy the traditional society and establish new one. In the same manner, in the novel, there is conflict between two types of people: traditional and modern. Banwari Lal represents the traditional society and they want to continue the traditional business and the manners while other characters like his daughters-in-laws represent the new systems.

Therefore, Manju Kapur wants to show the plight of Indian women who have become the victim of the patriarchal values. She wants to subvert the traditional society and establish the new one where there is equality between men and women. The novel, *Home* is about the portrayal of the characters who want to escape from the traditional society and want to live modern life on their own. However, the trauma, the psychological crisis or wound does not allow them to adapt the new system in full-fledge.

Most of the female characters in the novel *Home* have traumatic situation. They are struggling with their life. They regard home to be the best place to get rid of the trauma. In the title "Home", we can see trauma lurked because it is the displacement from the fragmented mind to sympathize psychologically. Because of gender trauma, women are thinking themselves weaker in all respects in comparison to men. Their psychological periphery does not allow them to go beyond the perimeter they are provided by the patriarchal society. They feel that they are puppets

of patriarchal world. They realize and assimilate that they are created for serving and making happy to male characters.

Consequently, there is no such fixed rule for the boys what they should do bound by the rules. However, for the women they should do according to the rules imposed by the patriarchal society. They feel frustrated, disappointed, betrayal and so on. They realize that they have to follow the patriarchal norms and values after their marriage as they go to their in-law's house. Nisha, one of the protagonists of the novel has to follow the tradition as experienced in her childhood. After her marriage, she is compelled to submit herself as a descent wife and daughter-in-law in the new house. Nisha has the feeling of domination in the patriarchal society.

In conclusion, the novel depicts the male and female characters going through the various difficult adversity of life. They suffer in their own ways. Although male characters dominate women, the formers suffer in their own ways. They have to struggle in new place, which is completely new place for them. Partition has made their life traumatic. They are not able to remove the bitter past experience in the present time. Although they are attracted by modernism, traditional concepts do now allow them to adopt modernism. Women are suffering from the patriarchal society. There is dual psychological problem for them, one from the traditional concepts and another from the patriarchal society. Therefore, the modern women, daughter-in-laws of Banwari Lal family go beyond the familial values.

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