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Narrativization of Cultural Trauma in Alexander Khan's *Orphan of Islam*

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Letter of Recommendation

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Abstract

An autobiographical text *Orphan of Islam* written by Alexander Khan depicts cultural trauma and its negative effects upon the major character of the novel Mohammed Abdul Khan. The novel *Orphan of Islam* clearly presents the cultural shock in Khan's childhood that affects his psyche throughout his life. In the novel a boy suffers on the hands of his own relatives. At the little age his identity is in crisis and he gets culturally shocked, he is taken from one religion to another time and again. He learns no culture or language properly. Alexander Khan narrativizes trauma and attempts to share effects of cultural trauma with readers through which he tries to keep critical distance with trauma or tries to be in 'working through' approach of trauma . Khan displays the critical and suffocated situation of a boy and his troubles he got during his childhood and up early teenage. He also depicts the boy's attempts to reduce the burden of trauma. In the novel a boy suffers culturally in two different cultures like cultures of Pakistan and that of England. Shift from one culture to another culture gives birth of hallucinations, chronic stress, pang and difficulties and in the beginning phase he 'acts out' trauma. His mind is haunted by the psychological pain which is caused by cultural clash.

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I. Introduction to Khan's *Orphan of Islam* as a Trauma Fiction

This thesis attempts to seek the traumatic experience of the protagonist of the novel *Orphan of Islam* by Alexnader Khan. The protagonist of the novel, Mohammed Abdul Khan, is snatched from his mother and taken to Pakistan, an alien culture from England. As he bears problems in learning the second language and has little knowledge on *Quran*, he is severely beaten by his teacher, Imam and is mocked by his friends in the class in such wrong. The boy is ill treated by his own relatives, teachers, language tutor and friends. The boy cannot learn the Urdu language and cannot achieve success in his study. He can never be familiar with such environment because of his cruel friends and betraying relatives. The boy is victimized by his own relatives and is made a real *Orphan of Islam*. The boy tries to escape from such jeopardy. He wants to get relief from his difficult journey and wants to meet his mother.

The protagonist of the novel truly becomes an *Orphan of Islam*. No one would listen, no one would help, and no one would care him in Pakistan. His step mother's brother, Rafiq becomes his great enemy forever. He thinks that he is totally isolated. On the basis of these incidents this thesis analyzes the traumatic experience of Alexnader Khan through his protagonist Mohammed Abdul Khan who bears psychological stress, emotional stress and physical stress through different problems, grief, and anxiety of beatings from his so-called relatives, friends and teachers. The main objective of this research is to assess the cultural trauma through his traumatic experience which he bears in different places especially during his childhood.

In *Orphan of Islam* Mohammed Khan suffers at the hands of Muslim, is deceived by his father and mother and gets dislocated. The culture of Islam was rigid. Everybody should respect the god Allah in the morning, the afternoon and the

evening. The verse of the *Quran* were too tough, however everybody should recite and memorize. The boy, Mohammed Abdul Khan cannot learn because of difficulty, therefore, he is rejected by the Muslim community. Similarly, he is betrayed by his father too. His father took him to Pakistan when he was small. He was taken to England and again to Pakistan. He is made like a pendulum. As he is alienated from his parents so gets trauma in his whole journey. Likewise, he is traumatized because of dislocation. His mother is English and father is Muslim. He is the product of hybridity. He belongs neither completely to English culture nor completely to Muslim culture. His identity is in crisis because of dislocation. He is treated brutally by his friends, gurus, teachers, and relatives. The boy is shocked culturally as he cannot get adjusted in alien culture.

During his childhood Khan is far from his culture. He is lost alone, abused and sent to fundamental camp on the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. He suffers at the hand of his family and almost everyone around him for having a white mother. He also gets sent away to Madarasa in Pakistan where he gets bullied by the other boys for being English and tortured by the teachers for being unable to read the *Quran*. Everywhere he turns he is betrayed by those he feels are closest to him.

Khan speaks no Urdu language and has little knowledge of the *Quran*. He is beaten regularly for such 'crimes' by his teachers and mocked by other students. He is not safe anywhere. The threat of being sent back to Haqqania hangs over his head and he remains under virtual house arrest. Only a dramatic turn of events would release him back to England.

The boy has been suffering from trauma and especially cultural trauma. He is never truly accepted by his family nor from the outside world. He is tagged as a son of a non-Muslim mother, a "Kafar". Longing for his mother the boy suffers in silence, if

he did speak up he would gain thing but pain and suffering both emotional and physical traumatize him. He lingers at the door waiting for the day he could escape his fate that his so called family restored for him. The turning point to get cultural shocks by Khan is the death of his father. He cannot get love or affection from his father rather he is frequently treated with ill manner by his kin. After his father's death he was taken to his step family's hand where they show him no love not kindness of any sort. At the age of 13 he is sent to Pakistan for a holiday-one that was planned to last a lifetime. His uncle, step mothers' brother, becomes his great enemy throughout his life since then. Uncle Rafiq treats him negatively even for the minor mistakes and in difficulty in cultural adaptation. The boy suffers a lot not only culturally but also psychologically. He has fear mentality to escape from the cruel world. The memory of his mother haunts his psyche when he gets trouble in his every steps. The boy's mind is full of tensions, turmoil's, and conflicts of thoughts. Because of cultural shocks, he also bears mental shocks by which his psychology is ruined.

Orphan of Islam, an autobiographical text written by Alexander Khan has many critical analyses since its publication in 2012. The story of the memoir itself makes us suffocated with the sense of troubles faced by the protagonist. The novel has been viewed from different critics who suggest the complex and problematic nature of novel, Leonard Turney in *New York Times* writes:

The writing is superb, the conversation between characters, their voices are authentic and sharp. The description of Pakistan is so beautiful. They make you fall in love with the country. Although some of the subject matter is difficult to read about, this is not difficult book to read. I raced through it, I'm so happy that Alex has now found

security and happiness and wishes him every happiness for the future.

An outstanding book very highly recommended. (3)

Turney in the above lines focuses mainly on the form and language. He sees only the natural beauty of Pakistan rather than the main issues in the memoir. He has emphasized on Khan's skill of writing easy and standard writing. Similarly, other critic like M.Z. Alobadi in *The Telegraph* writes:

This book not only gives a fascinating, if deeply uncomfortable insight into extreme of control that some adults force upon children in the name of faith but also important understanding of some the fundamental culture differences that exists in the UK. In another life Khan should perhaps have been the perfect ambassador to promote culture integration due to his mixed heritage. (4)

Alobadi in the above line proves that here of the novel is the mixed culture that belongs to England and Pakistan. Because of his dislocation he is taken from one country to another so that he gets the experience of both cultures. He has spread the idea of two cultures as he is oscillated like pendulum in two different cultures. His identity is in crisis because of double identity.

Moreover, another critic David Willets in *The Sunday Times* writes:

It is also impossible to think there is a story out there like Alexander Khan's. He tells the mind bogging story with searing honesty, heartfelt emotion and bucket loads of wit. He has gone from being a possible Taliban recruit to fighting on the front line. Against those who tried to brain wash him. He has risked death to tell this tale. It was worth the risk. (4)

In the above line the critic analyzes the memoir from its moral perspectives. He tells only the good parts of the story and about its interesting part. He critically says that the hero of the novel is taken in isolated area and not cared. He further says that he risked the death to release from suffocated circumstantial. Another critic Noori Passela in *The National* writes:

Orphan of Islam is a memoir by Khan of those lost years tainted by the abuse-he suffered at the hands of his own family. Birth to Pakistan father and white mother, Khan's earliest memories of family life are of the cramped Terrace house in which days were spent under the thumb of this domineering Aunt Fatima. Having already been whisked away from his "infidel" mother to be raised in a traditional Islamic environment, the death of his father unleashed a barrage of violent ill-treatment in the name of religion. (3-4)

Noori Passeela mentions that Khan suffered at the hand of his family from his early age. His creative time was exploited by his own sister in law and his uncle too. Although Khan had been grown in the culture of his father, he is badly behaved in the name of teaching culture of Islam.

Willets studies Khan's text only as a memoir. He says that the memoir is based on Khan's own biography. Passela further says that Khan's early life was in the cramped terrace house in which his days were spent under his own aunt Fatima, a cruel Pakistani woman. Khan is snatched from his infidel mother, lacking religiosity. And after the death of his father Khan falls under the Islamic religion. The critic in the whole expresses his view about livelihood of Khan and his punishment by his relatives in the name of religion.

Likewise, the author Mclaughlin in *The Squaddie* writes:

Orphan of Islam is a story of brutally stolen childhood. A childhood that wasn't just stolen but kidnapped and cruelly cast out, to crash on the rock of an alien culture, like a fragile life-raft smashed into dust. It is the story of displaced two warring identities and tribes belonging in neither one nor the other, but being despise by birth. Like a pinball he was forced to play a game of survival not of his choosing and was utterly helpless at the hands of those whom should have protected him, but abused him instead. (2-3)

In the above lines, McLaughlin puts his idea in this way, the story is the story of a child who is stolen from his mother and cruelly behaved. He is taken to the alien culture and smashed his dreams into dust. His displacement from one culture to another culture and is made like a pendulum oscillating to and fro. In such circumstances he becomes totally helpless those who should have protected him abused instead. The author of *The Squaddie* finds his cultural problem in two culture, the culture of English society and culture of Pakistani society. Although these different critics interpret the novel from different perspectives, this research will be based on traumatic psyche of the protagonist in search of his root. Cultural trauma will be the major tool for providing the objectives of this thesis.

From the beginning of the memoir Mohammed Abdul Khan does not have the easiest start to life. He is born from a white mother and a Asian father in the racially divided years of the 1970s, his world collapses when he is snatched from his mother following the breakdown of his parents' 'marriage'.

Khan's father dies suddenly; his step family in Lancashire stepped in and raises him. But they showed him neither love nor kindness of any sort. At the age of 13 he is sent to Pakistan for a holiday-one that was planned to last a life time. He is

abducted by an uncle and sent to Haqqania a fundamentalist Madarassa (Islamic school) on Pakistan/Afghanistan border, now notorious for training some of the Taliban's top scholars and fighters.

Khan does not have knowledge in Urdu so he speaks no Urdu language and has only little knowledge of the *Quran*. He is beaten regularly for such 'crimes' by his teacher and mocked by other students. But with the help of a brave fellow pupil known escaped making his way across the Pakistani desert and teaching the village his relatives lived in. He is just fourteen years old. Even he is not safe there because he is rejected by the family as he is from white mother and has cultural shock. He is sent to Haqqania from where he could not escape easily, only the dramatic turn could lead him far from there towards England, a world that was rapidly becoming anti-Muslim. Khan now has a choice, does he follow his friends and attend the Jihadi training camps in Pakistan and Afghanistan or does he take another path altogether and what happened to his mother? After 26 years of searching for the truth, would Alexander find his long lost mother? And the truth about why he was treated so cruelly by the relatives who should have loved and protected him?

He gets a lot of trouble in his life because of cultural trauma. He cannot get the solution from his difficulty because he cannot get adjusted in alien culture. The culture is totally new for him. Neither he could learn language nor made any friends. Rigid culture in Pakistan, betrayal of his parents, and dislocation are the major things to make him feel the cultural shock.

The term 'trauma', in general refers to a profound emotional shock or wound those damages to the psychological development of a person. Jeffrey C. Alexander in his text *Towards a Theory of Cultural Trauma* defines trauma. "As we develop it here cultural trauma is first of all an empirical, scientific a concepts suggesting new

meaningful and causal relationship between previously unrelated events, structures, perceptions and dictions” (1). Ron Eyerman in *Cultural Trauma* expresses his idea about trauma in this way:

As opposed psychological or physical trauma, which involves a wound and the experience of treat emotional anguish by an individual, cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion. (61)

His title *The Cycle of Memory* implies that direct experience is not a necessary condition for the appearance of trauma. It is time delayed and negotiated recollection that cultural trauma is experienced, “a process that places representation is a key role. How an event is remembered intimately entwined with how it is recollected” (71).

Other theorist Dominic LaCarpa in his book *Writing History ,Writing Trauma* writes, “Working through is an articulatory practice: to the extent on works through trauma (as well as transferable relations in general), one is able to distinguish between past and present and to recall in memory that something happened to one (or one’s people) back than while realizing. This doesn’t imply either that there is a pure opposition between past and present or that acting out-whether for the traumatized or for those empathetically relating to them can be transcended forward a state of closure or full ego identity.

Kali Tal in her text *Worlds of Hurt* gives us idea that “an individual is traumatized by a life threatening event that displaces his or her preconceived notions about the world. Trauma is enacted in liminal state outside of the bonds of “normal” human experience and the subject is radically underground” (15). Jenny Edkins in *Trauma and The Memory of Politics* under sub-tiuple practice of trauma says: “After

traumatic events, there is a struggle over memory. Some forms of remembering can be seen as ways of forgetting: ways of recovering from trauma by patting its lesson to one side, refusing to acknowledge that anything has changed, restoring the pretence (16). Ron Eyerman under his title *Collectie Memory* further says, “Memory is usually conceived as individually based, something that goes on “inside the heads” of individual human beings. Memory has three meanings the mental capacity, content and the location (64). As Bernhard Giessen in *Collective Memory* points out, “Collective memory provides both individual and society with temporal map, unifying national a nation or community though time as well as space. Collective memory specifies the temporal parameters of past and future, where we came from and here we are going, and also why we are here now (60).

The present work has been divided into three chapters. The first chapter presents an introduction to Khan’s traumatic experience in his life from childhood to adult and an introductory outline of the literary reviews of literature. The second chapter presents the detail cultural traumatic experience of the protagonist of the novel. The important issues of the novel are linked with different cultural and psychological trauma. Theorist of trauma and their related theoretical concepts are applied to analyze the text *Orphan of Islam*. This part serves as the core of this work. Similarly, the third chapter will conclude the whole the theses drawing the important events of the novel and is the finding of this research. In other words, on the basis of the textual analysis in previous chapter, it will conclude the explanation and arguments of the whole research.

II. Narrativization of Trauma in Khan's *Orphan of Islam*

This research on Alexander Khan's *Orphan of Islam* seeks the traumatic experience of the protagonist Mohamed Abdul Khan. This project analyzes the cultural shock of the protagonist in the novel.

The protagonist of this novel, Mohammed Abdul Khan, loses his worlds on the anonymous street of Lancashire; North West England. He is cruelly snatched from his English mother and taken to an alien culture. Since then his life is never same again as he was with his mother. When his father dies untimely; the little boy is thrown into a huge regime of fear at the hands of his step mother and her brother Rafiq. Rafiq makes plan for Muhammed. Muhammed is kept under the strict rules and regulations of his uncle for the long time of his childhood. He is compelled to stay under Islamic rules and cultural religiosity. Khan is strictly forbidden to go anywhere without permission of his uncle Rafiq and forced to follow Islamic culture. He has to wear Kameez Suruwal and go to mosque thrice a day on different time of the day. His childhood is totally in despair just because of culture. The strong belief in religion in Pakistan binds Khan and he is trapped in to follow this. He cannot escape and get rid of from such circumstance for many years.

This is the true story of how one Muslim boy's journey to discover his roots in Pakistan became a relentless nightmare of devastating betrayal and unthinkable cruelty and a tale of his race for survival, against all the odds.

It is an autobiographical story of Alexander Khan. Khan reveals his traumatic experience of his life through his protagonist of the novel Mohammed Abdul Khan. Mohammed Abdul Khan did not have the easier start to his life. Born to a British mother and Pakistani father in the racially divided years of the 1970s, his world collapsed when he was snatched from his mother following the breakdown of his

parents' marriage. Khan's father died suddenly and his step family in Lancashire stepped in and raised him. But they showed him neither love nor kindness of any sort. At the age of 13 he is sent to Pakistan for a holiday. He was abducted by an uncle and sent to Haqqania, a fundamentalist Madrassa (Islamic School) on the Pakistani/Afghani boarder now notorious for training some of Taliban's to scholars and fighters.

Khan spoke no Urdu language and had little knowledge of the *Quran*. He was beaten regularly for such 'crimes' (having lack of Urdu language) by his teachers and mocked by his own classmates. But with the help of a brave fellow pupil Khan escapes making his way across the Pakistani desert and reaches the village where his relatives live. He was just 14 years old. Khan was not safe anywhere. He fell into the ditch of pain and suffering. Khan could not reach England to meet his mother escaping from such suffocated circumstances. Only the dramatic turn of events would release him back to England with his mother. In such a chaotic setting of his life Khan had a choice-whether he had to follow his friends and attend the Jihadi training camp in Pakistan and Afghanistan or had to take another path altogether to seek about what happened to his mother. Khan almost spent 3 decades searching for the truth about his life. He was always in great confusion whether he could find out his mother or not. Although Khan has a good Position in England, he time and again recalls his past traumatic experience and sinks into it.

Mohammed Abdul Khan was born in 1975 in England from Pakistani father, Ahmed Khan and English mother, Margaret Firth. Ahmed khan's sister Fatimah had already gone to England as a first person of all her family. She called Ahmed to England for job or earning purpose. Ahmed went to England following his sister Fatimah and did several jobs in several places of England. While doing so once he fell

in love with Margaret at a factory, mill. He married her latter and became the father of two English kids, Mohammed Abdul Khan and Jasmin. Though Khan married English woman, himself was not totally satisfied with his white wife or his sister Fatimah was happy with her brother's wife. Fatimah did not like the white woman at all. Ahmed Khan left two children and his wife and moved to Pakistan saying his wife 'family business at home' without explanation or apology, with no idea when he would come back; he left Bury (a town in England).

Margaret Firth desperately moved to Hawesmil (England) to Fatima's house, determined to find out what her husband was up to. But she found that her husband had already married another woman before he married her and he had kept this matter secretly. The final result was that Mohammed's father moved out of the house and into Fatimah's leaving them with custody (90). Fatimah did not accept English woman as her sister-in-law even after bearing two children by Margaret. One day Ahmed took two children to Pakistan from England in 1978 when Mohammed was 3 and his sister was 2. He takes them to Tajak, a place of Pakistan leaving their mother alone in Hawemill, England. He leaves these two children in the care of various aunties. After spending three years in Pakistan, Ahmed takes his children to England again. Where upon Khan's troubles begin, at this time he is just 6 years old. Now Ahmed leaves two children under care of his sister Fatimah and goes to earn money. Ahmed sometimes visits there but later he stops to visit them and never comes. Fatima misbehaves the children; she looks them into the room without any reason or even in minor error. Muhammed in pain memory says that many times his father's sister raised her hand, and while she never hit him or Jasmine, the threat is clear. Perhaps she is afraid that they would tell their dad and she would get in trouble. Her problem was that she could not use simply as her brother's kids. Khan further says

that they belong to that Englishwoman, the woman who had entered this close knit family and taken her brother away. Fatimah who had to love the children with motherly affection always hates them, gives them little food untimely and treats like servants. Fatimah shows her inner cruelty towards the innocent kids who do not know about the fact of their reality to stay at her home. She does not allow them even to play for some minutes. She doesn't allow them for short trip to the park, the playground or the seaside. They do not go to town too. Khan wonders why they do not go to school and why don't the school inspectors are on Fatimah's tail but may be back then they do not care whether Asian kids attend or not.

Fatimah's strong belief on religiosity affects on badly upon the kids who were born from English woman. She also forces the kids to go to mosque according to Islamic rules and regulation.

The protagonist of the novel suffers a lot with cultural shock. In the beginning he belonged to English culture because he was brought up in English culture from English woman, who taught them English language, her tongue. According to the story of novel, England has tribes of Muslim. Muslim group of people and their little settlement is found there. Everybody who follows Muslim culture has to learn verse of the *Quran*. Muhammad is taught Urdu language but he cannot learn it properly because of linguistic problem He finds it very difficult to learn the language. Imam's wife teaches him the language twisting tongue all over the place and with an expression like vinegar. Her teaching style annoys and irritates him. Instead of learning to read and speak the verses properly, Khan becomes more world-blind and tongue-tied.

Muhammed Abdul Khan becomes an orphan after untimely death of his father, Ahmed Khan. Now his real tragedies in life begin. Everybody hates him wherever he

goes. His relatives who should have loved and cared him reject him and pay no attention towards him. His identity is in crises because he belongs to not any country nor and religions. He is totally alone in this world in his little age. His step mother is responsible for his care but no attention is paid about his physical, mental, emotional development. Instead of such things he is frequently beaten, punished and traumatized by his step uncle and other member of the family. Khan is deprived of child rights and responsibilities.

After the death of his father his step mother's brother becomes his great enemy. Fatimah always scolds him and frequently beats even without any reason. She forces Muhammed to move according her will and desire. Khan has to go to Mosque to worship Allah at least thrice a day. Rafiq time and again beats Khan in different trifle and minor error. He slaps him many times when he disobeys to go mosque. Khan becomes victim of beating by his own so called uncle. He is traumatized by his uncle and other relatives.

When Khan hesitates to go to mosque, Rafiq scolds him with piercing words and punches too. He has punched Khan on his nose many times to break the nose. Poor Khan cannot take any action against his cruel uncle, Rafiq. He breaks all the bad activities done for him by his uncle. His uncle orders him to wash mouth, nostrils, face, right and left arms, ears and neck and feet usually or every time he goes to Mosque. Muhammed is also beaten by some white lads without any reason while he is returning from Mosque; he was 11 at that time. At the age of 12 Khan again comes to Pakistan to his relative from father's side. As he belongs to not any culture he cannot speak Pakistani sub language and he is mocked by his friends, Hussein and Ajmal. The kids giggle and a memory floats back of a journey from an airport to the north of England many years before. Khan switches to English with Yashir, his friend, which

courses the little one to stare open mouthed at the Pakistanis who spoke aliens.

Khan's face blushes. Red cheeks, he has never seen a Pakistani boy blush red before but experiences himself because of language problem. Here he knows neither Pashto nor English well.

Khan's another shocking experience is that he is kidnapped from Pakistan and taken to Haqqania, a border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. His uncle Rafiq kidnaps him, takes to Haqqania and keeps him in a school of Muslim where culture of Islam is taught rather than any formal education. He cannot read and write the language properly because he does not have any knowledge on the culture of Islam. Other children are expert in learning except one that is Muhammed. The hours of reading are very difficult, monotonous and boring for him which creates pain in his mind. Khan gets all these sorts of pain, anxieties, and sufferings just because of cultural traumas.

Another reason Khan gets traumatized is strong religiosity of Islam and Islamic culture. The school kid, adult, and old everybody has to respect Mosque and Allah. They have to go Mosque every day at least three times a day. They have to learn religious verses thoroughly and recite them in need. The teachers in the Islamic schools are also quite strict. They treat every student individually and pay full attention. Mohammed's teacher tells him to obey him and recite the lines of the *Quran*. The teacher highly orders him to memorize the verses from the heart. His teacher says him:

I have told you all before and I will tell you again anyone unable to read the holy book at whatever age will be punished. If they continue to show disrespect to God, there will be worse to come, understand?

You must respect to god, respect to teacher and follow the Islamic culture. (151)

Completely innocent, poor Khan was unable to read the verse of *Quran* according to the desire of his guru. But his teacher forces him read the lines in very rude manner. The little ignorant Khan must respect his seniors and stay in discipline despite these worse activities. According to Khan his teachers scold him further in this way:

‘What do you mean, you don’t understand Arabic?’ You’re Khan aren’t you? I have heard . . . things . . . about you. Mr. Khan is going to read us, let’s see how well he knows his *Quran*, boys, Ready Khan Begin. (The teacher jabbed his finger at a paper) (153-54)

Khan is not ready to read as he is not prepared mentally. He cannot read the lines because of shyness, fear, hesitation and new faces behind him waiting to listen to him and checking his mistakes. On Khan’s such situations and suffocated circumstance, his teachers make the class silence and try to insult him before the class. He asks question on large voice so that Khan's mind is filled with terror and horror. In such condition he further expresses his pain in this way:

I felt like a runner on the starting blocks. The teacher jabbed his finger at a page, but I was nervous I didn’t notice which it was. To be honest, it wouldn’t have made any difference if he’d pointed at the beginning, middle or end of the book-I couldn’t read and write of it, and the only bit that had ever stuck in my mind was the ‘Al-Fatiha’-the opening seven verses I shook a breath and breadth. (154)

Here Khan's teacher forces Khan to learn the Arabic any cost. He also tries to insult him among the students. But Khan cannot read as expected by his teacher. Various trauma theorists have various kinds of ideology regarding trauma, and its

representation in the text. The writer himself experiences such pain, suffering and various cultural factors cause trauma in him.

This novel was written after the writer got traumatic events and experience in his life. The author time and again suffers from the past events which he experiences almost half of his life or more than that. Kali Tal in her *Worlds of Hurt* expresses:

An individual is traumatized by a life-threatening event that displaces his or her preconceived notions about the world. Trauma is enacted in a luminal state, outside of the bounds of “normal” human experience, and the subject is radically undergrounded. Accurate representation of trauma can never be achieved without recreating events since, by its very definitions, trauma lies beyond the bounds of normal “conception”. Textual representations, literary, visual, oral are mediated by language and do not have the impact of the traumatic experience. (15)

Here Kali Tal focuses that when one suffers from traumatic experience he/she suffers from life threatening events he/she is displaced as a result. Traumatic events haunt an individual. Traumatic situation of an individual is identified with his/her language, writing and facial experience.

Ganendra Pandey in his *Prose of Otherness* mentions that literature of other is hated and ignored. Not only that, the people of the other country are also ignored and ill-treated. Pandey further writes during colonialism the British regularly dominated the Indian and their literature. Pandey writes:

British Colonialism in India regularly represented the 'native' as the primitive other, and violence—and, other time, its exact opposite, complete passivity—as his history ('her' being subsumed in

'his'). Indian nationalism in its turn represented certain kinds of violence, and most kinds of violence, as the work of the 'backward' – people who were unfortunately ill-treated and insufficiently enlightened. It is my connection that historians' history has maintained this tradition especially in respect of certain or ethnic violence. (195)

Here, Pandey opines that the people of other country are treated cruelly by the colonizer or the ruler. The British behaved the Indian very badly during their colonization. They treated Indian people and their literature as other and British as own. They imposed their rules and culture in India. In the same manner Khan is ill-treated by his powerful relatives before whom he could not do anything. He had to obey them whatever they told.

When some people once are victimized, they suffer from the events forever or later they come to their earlier positions. Some forget their past and improve their life further and some never forget the past. With such conditions of human, LaCapra in his *Writing History, Writing Trauma* argues:

'Acting out' and 'working through' are two broadways of coming to terms with transference or with one's transferenceal implication in the object of study. Acting out is related to repetition and even the repetition compulsion- the tendency to repeat something compulsively. This is very clear in the case of people who undergo a trauma. They have a tendency to relive the past, to be haunted by ghosts or even to exist in the present as if one were still fully in the past, with no distance from it. (142)

Here, LaCapra's saying is that in acting out there is repetition of the events compulsively who undergo with trauma. Those who have experienced traumatic

experience relive occurrences and that intrude on their present existence. 'Working through' is different from acting out. LaCapra puts his argument that in working through one tries to struggle further for his good life. He writes:

In working through, the person tries to gain critical distance on a problem and to distinguish between past, present and future. To put the point in drastically oversimplified terms: for the victims, this means ability to say oneself: "Yes. That happens to me back then. It was distressing, overwhelming perhaps I can't entirely disengage myself from it, but I am existing here and now, and this is different from back then." (144)

LaCapra here opines that the victimized is now in present and he can distinguish present from the past and future. Therefore the victimized no more involves in past rather he thinks about future living in present. Moreover, LaCapra further argues, Working through doesn't mean avoidance, harmonization, simply forgetting the past, or submerging oneself in the present. It means coming to terms with the trauma, including its details, and critically engaging the tendency to act out a past and even recognize why it may be necessary an even in certain aspects desirable at last compelling (144). In this novel *Orphan of Islam* Muhammed Khan's present life resembles with the theory of working through introduced by LaCapra. His present life is easier than the past.

In other words, all forms of writing on traumatic experience is based on two forms of remembering trauma: acting out and workingthrough. Both concepts come from Freud and have been developed in such a way that it could be used in historical studies. In the novel *Orphan of Islam* written by Alexander Khan, a boy suffers because of the ill treatment and betrayal of his family. When his father deceives him

snatching him from his mother's lap making him motherless, he gets a lot of traumatic experience. And when he is taken to Pakistan he gets cultural trauma in his childhood. The main character of the novel Mohammed Abdul Khan was born from English mother and Pakistani father. He was born in England and grows up different places of Pakistan and England.

Likewise, when Khan is unable to read and write Urdu and some of its verses in his early life, he is circumcised although this rule was not mentioned in the *Quran*. He expresses his suffering:

I do remember the searching pain as the razor-sharp butcher's knife cut through my little foreskin and my blood staining the carpet a deep red Iodine must have been applied very quickly, as I remember looking down and seeing my genitals covered all over with a substance the colour saffron. For days after wards I suffered burning agony when I tried to pee. If I called out for my mummy at any time during those hazy, fractured few years, it would have been then. (13)

When Ahmed Khan is taken to Pakistan from England by his father, he is left in his stepmother's family when Ahmed cannot adjust himself due to various cultural challenges. Khan must learn the culture and rituals of Pakistan which is very difficult for him. When he cannot learn the language and culture, he is severely punished. The priest even circumcises him for his deed. The strong faith on culture tries to bind Khan in its deeply rooted tradition.

Regarding with this issue Jeffery C. Alexander in his book *Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma* writes:

Traumas are occurring events that shattering an individual collective actor's sense of well being. In other words, the power to shatter the

“trauma” is thought to emerge from events themselves. The reaction to such shattering events “being traumatized” is felt and thought to be an immediate and unreflective response. (2)

Alexander mentions his arguments that events of trauma in one’s psyche remains collectively when one has already suffered from such events. Human beings experience the traumatic events of the past gradually when they come up with new events. Alexander further says that one needs love, security, order and connection etc for his betterment. He says that the events of the past haunt one who experiences it and gets traumatized.

After spending three years in Pakistan, not knowing who they are or if they really belong to anyone, Khan is taken back to England. That is when his troubles really begin (now he is six years). Ahmed Khan, Mohammed’s father keeps him and his sister at his sister’s house in England whose name was Fatimah. Ahmed goes for job and only sometimes visits Fatimah’s house. In his absence, Fatimah treats Muhammed and his sister very negatively. Khan says:

As time went on and Dad’s visit became fewer, Fatimah took less trouble to discuss her feelings towards us. She’s never been what you might describe ‘warm’, but she definitely got worse. She ashamed and shouted endlessly and it always seemed to be me who provoked it.

Many times she raised her hand, and while she never hit me or Jasmine, the threat was clear. Perhaps she was afraid of that we’d tell dad and she’d get in trouble. Her problem was that she couldn’t see up simply as her brother kid. (28)

Muhammed Khan says that he was tortured by his own relatives badly in the absence of his father. His own sister in law becomes his cruel enemy who does not give him

proper treatments; she rather misbehaves him like a slave. She treats them not like her own brother's offspring; rather she treats them like the servants or enemies' kids. She also raises her hand many times to beat them. Her mind is full of anger and thought of violence towards the kids. For her, little Khan and his sister really is the burden of her house. Because of the reason they belong to English mother, they are ill-treated. Khan further writes:

We also belonged to 'that Englishwoman', the woman who'd entered this close. Knit family and taken her brother away. That he'd betrayed his western wife and taken her kids abroad didn't count. Fatimah seemed to believe me were with Kuffar blood and would always remain outsides. So why didn't she and the family set us free? The logical discussion would've been to return us to our mum. (28)

Khan puts his arguments that his own sister in law disrespects him and treats him badly. He suffers in the hand of his own relatives. He views he is treated badly because he is son of an English woman.

Sister in law is dissatisfied with the English woman therefore Khan thinks that he is misbehaved. He is not released from such uncomfortable environment and that time he remembers his mother. If he was with his mother, the problem would not be there. His life would be happier either. Jeffery C. Alexander in *Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma* writes:

There is "enlightenment" version of this lay trauma theory. The enlightenment understanding suggests that trauma is a kind of rational response to abrupt change, whether at the individual or social level. The objects or events that trigger trauma are perceived clearly by actors, their response is laced and the effects of these responses are

problem solving and progressive. Then bad things happen to good people, they become shocked, outraged and indigent. (3)

Alexander writes trauma can change an individual or society suddenly. The main character receives trauma whose responses are then clearly visible readily understood. The effects of these traumatic problems are rather problem solving too. Alexander waits that an innocent or good man suffers much when he is traumatized, shocked, outraged and becomes aggressive.

The tragic character Muhammed Khan gets a lot of suffering from people of his own blood relations especially from Fatimah and her brother. During the living in Fatimah's house Khan and his sister Jasmine are kept in the bedroom by locking from outside. They are not allowed to go out of the house very much. They are also not allowed to go to park, playground or the sea. He says:

There were times when Jasmine and I clearly had not done anything wrong, but we were locked in the bedroom anyway. We ourselves weren't allowed out of the house very much. A walk to Dilwar's shop with Fatimah or Ayesha was as far as we get. There were not trips to the park, the playground or the seaside. We did not go to the town. Our life was 97 Mile Street and a couple of streets around it. We didn't even go to school. Now I wonder why no school inspectors on Fatimah's tail. (29-30)

Muhammed Khan is imprisoned in his sister in law house with his sister Jasmine. Other kids in Fatimah's house are allowed to do whatever they want and wherever they go. They are fed according to their demand but the poor little kids Muhammed and his sister Jasmine are quietly discriminated in everything. They are not allowed to go anywhere or do anything. They are kept inside the house just like the war prisoners

and treat them brutally. Muhammed Khan's father Ahmed Khan dies suddenly and he becomes a poor infant. Now he becomes parentless, his little hope towards his father is distorted and collapsed. Now he really becomes an orphan of Islam. After the death of his father Khan is grown up with his step mother.

Khan's step mother's brother, Rafiq is so cruel who often beats him even in the minor mistakes. Rafiq sees his every activity from different angles and treats him badly even in the trifle matters. Once immediately after the death of Khan's father Khan disobeys to sleep upstairs because of frighten and some right mares with his father's ghost. At this very moment his uncle Rafiq beats Khan mercilessly.

Therefore, Khan states:

Rafiq let me drop the floor, walked across the room and turned off the light. Then he came back towards me. 'I warned you, you little bastard', he said. He pulled me again and slapped me as hard as he could across my cheek. The blow knocked the breath right out of me and slumped against my bed. Then he left the room. His violence had worked. I was no longer screaming and crying. I was too shocked to react and I sat against my bed for what felt like hours as the force of the blow seeped into my whole body. Filling me with fear, shame, embarrassment and anger, I could not understand why he'd lashed out like that but from that moment onwards I knew that nothing in my life would ever be the same again. (50)

Khan here expresses his grief, torture, trouble etc given to him by his step mother's brother Rafiq to whom he has to say maternal uncle. His father's death is the turning point for Khan to be tortured by his kinship. Uncle Rafiq openly hits Khan with fists without any mistakes. Khan is beaten severely by his uncle closing the door. His step

family gets profits from Khan over his innocence because there is nobody to talk in favor of Khan. His kinship themselves are responsible about Khan's life. Muhammed Khan continuously gets punishment in different issues and titles. His ruined memory of the childhood still haunts Khan time and again. That's why he compels to write this novel. Regarding with such traumatic issues Dominic LaCapara in his *Writing History, Writing Trauma* argues:

Trauma is a disruptive experience that disarticulates the self and creates holes in existence; it has belated effects that are controlled only with difficulty and perhaps never fully mastered. The study of traumatic events poses especially difficult problems in representation and writing both for research and for any dialogic exchange with the past which acknowledges the claim it makes of people and relates it to the present and future. (41)

LaCapra argues that trauma is disorderly progressing events which interrupts and cause to separate the self and makes lonely in the existence. Such belatedness affects the whole existence and creates difficulty which distorts one's life.

Trauma, according to LaCapra, studies the past of the traumatized character and links with future affair. He further says:

Trauma brings about a dissociation of affect and representation: one disorienting feels what one cannot represent, one numbingly represents what one cannot feel. Working through trauma involves the effort to articulate or rearticulate affect and representation in a manner that may never transcend, but may to some viable extent counteract, a reenactment or acting out of that disabling dissociation. (42)

LaCapra argues that traumatic experiences are registered in memory and get relived in the present in the repetitive manner. They return in nightmares, flashbacks, anxieties attacks and other forms. As he writes:

In traumatic memory the event somehow registers and may actually be relieved in the present, at times in a compulsively repetitive manner. It may not be subject to controlled, conscious recall. But it returns in nightmares, flashbacks, anxiety attacks, and other forms of intrusively repetitive behavior characteristics of an all-compelling frame.

Traumatic memory may involve belated temporality and period of latency between actual or fantasized early event and a later one that somehow recall it and triggers renewed repression or force closure and instructive behavior. (89)

Here, LaCapra means that if an individual is traumatized by different, frightening, and terrible incidents. He frequently suffers at present with different frightening things like nightmares, flashbacks and anxieties. Past events haunt him time and again in repetitive manner. The reality of the past event is recalled and it triggers an individual with new repression. Traumatic events never give solace to the wound rather it continues the wound, which means ruins the psyche of the victim.

Pakistan has the strong religiosity which is applicable to all the people of Pakistan from a child to old. Circumcision (*tahara*) is a long established ritual in Pakistan or Islam. It is to do with clean liners and purification, particularly before prayer. It is Muhammed's first experience of physical injury. Rafiq also beats Khan in the name of religion. All the people including children have to go to Mosque at least three times a day in the morning, in the afternoon and in the evening. They have to

stay under rules and regulations of the religion. Poor Mohammed gets punishment from his uncle when he disobeys him, then he writes with great pain:

Again he sat close to me, “you didn’t go to Mosque tonight did you Mohammed?” I shook my head in response. He fatted, “That was wrong. You know what the holy prophet, peace be on him, says about going Mosque?” “As a Muslim I am obliged to go Mosque I mumbled. ‘That’s right’, so why didn’t you go?’ ‘I warned you bastard’ he said raising his hand, shut fist and punched me full in the nose. I heard a delicate bone crack on impact and I went straight down on the carpet. Blood was gushing over my mouth and onto my clear jumper. I tried to wipe my nose but it was too painful and the sight of thick blood oozing across my palm made me feel sick. (56-57)

Khan here means to say that he is tortured by his uncle in the name of religion.

Pakistani culture has strong belief in religion. People of all the age have to go to Mosque in order to respect their god.

If anybody disobeys or refuses to go to Mosque he is punished and discarded from their society. At least thrice a day they have to go mosque. If anybody does not go to mosque, he/she is thought to be impure person. The religion imposes this rule from the child who has societal sense of feeling. Muhammed is ignorant about this religion and he does not go to mosque. But his uncle step maternal uncle, Rafiq beats him physically and tortures psychologically. The mosque has some rules in which every time one goes to pray, he/she has to wash his/her in certain sequence-usually hands, mouth nostrils, face, right and left arms, ears neck and feet. After he/she has to go into the prayer hall and line up or rows facing Mecca. There are prayers and readings from the *Quran*, plus a religious or cultural speech on being a good Muslim

the mosque has a strict heraldry: elders at the front; their sons behind and boys at the back. All the prayers and readings from the *Quran* are in Urdu. Some Muslim picks this up very easily.

Muhammad always struggles and he is eventually able to repeat phrases parrot fashion, it is almost impossible for him to understand what they mean. Having no one of guide him, he feels far behind in this respect. The entire time beady eyes Rafiq is on him. Feeling these all activities difficult and unnecessary Khan Stops to go there at mosque so that his vulture eyed uncle gives him much penalties. Khan therefore believes that Islamic culture is very difficult to learn. There are many rules and regulations in this culture. Because of hard and fast rules of Islamic culture the new comers obviously face difficulties. When some people of one culture move to the country of another, they are watched differently by these hosts. It is because the people of two cultures are identified by their language, culture, dress, bodily structure and color of skin. Khan writes that he is hated not only by his relatives but also by the street bullies and little kids of host country. If anybody goes to another country, the other country's people or even children recognize new person and behave accordingly. In the name with cultural trauma Khan has to bear psychological trauma too in this novel. Muhammed Khan says that when once he was coming from mosques he was beaten by two white lads. As he was alone and belong to Asian descent, the two bullies beat him walking on the road of subway. Khan writes:

One night, just after I'd turned 11, I was coming home from evening prayers alone. To reach the mosque you had to go through the subway which went under the main road that cut Hawesmill into two. I'd never liked the tunnel. One of the two boys aggressively, pushing said 'where have been?' I relied 'I've been mosque . . . to church, you

know? I'm going home now. Can I go pasta? "No, fucking can't", not until you say please sir". I was started to run, but he grabbed my coat sleeve and swung me round, punching me in the eye. His mate laughed and tried to swing a kick in my direction, but missed and overbalanced, failing to ground. I ran away in haste. (64-65)

Khan is not beaten only at home but he is beaten at roadside too. Even the street boys beat him without any particular reason. He is traumatized everywhere of different frightening events. At home he has to be afraid of his pitiless uncle, at church with priest and at the road with what he calls bullies. Nobody loves him, nobody cares him.

Even when he returns from the mosque praising the God he is beaten. The two bullies had already known Khan as Asian so they beat him mercilessly. Khan got punishment worthlessly but because of culture. He suffers psychologically here because of culture. Nobody is there to talk to him and speak on his behalf. He thinks himself totally isolated and deserted. He bears terrified atmosphere everywhere. Alexander Khan time and again has the nightmares of the past and happens to write this novel. Kali Tal in her *Worlds of Hurt* writes:

An individual is traumatized by life threatening events that displace his or her pre-conceived notions about the world. Trauma is enacted in a luminal state, outside of the bounds of 'normal' human experience, and the subject is radically undergrounded. Accurate representations of trauma can never be achieved without receding the event since by its very definition, trauma lies beyond the bounds of "normal" conception. (15)

In the view of Kali Tal, it is clear that when an individual is traumatized his preconceived idea about the world is displaced. His/her every mode of dream cannot

be accomplished and he wanders without any aim. Tal further says that in normal situation there is no trauma but when one is traumatized it is acted in a luminal condition which is farther than 'normal'. In normal situation there is not any issue but in case of trauma it is radically undergrounded. Without the experience of the trauma, Kali Tal says that 'accurate representation trauma can never be achieved without recreating the event' which means one needs to experience traumatized events there wise trauma never lies in definition.

Trauma lies farther beyond the definition of it. The experience of trauma is an individual in much more tragic or panic than the conception of trauma. With this novel Tal's idea is quite referential and appropriate as the character represents us as the traumatic character of the novel, *Orphan of Islam*. He is traumatized everywhere where he steps to go. His life is completely traumatized from his childhood. The experience of trauma experienced by Mohammed in the story is much above than the definition of trauma which people read with their 'normal' conception with this same reference Kali Tal further writes: "textual representation literary, visual, oral are mediated by language and do not have the impact of the traumatic experience. Chaim Shatan, psychiatry and pioneer of trauma research, explains that the victim enters the catastrophic environment of trauma through the "membrane" that separates sense from nonsense, narrative from chaos and "reality is torn asunder or leaving no boundaries and no guideposts. There are, in this case, no substitutes for experience only being in believing" (15). Kali Tal in the same book writes that "the victim of trauma survivors comprises a distinct "literature of trauma". Literatures of trauma survivors comprise a distinct "literature of trauma". Literature of trauma is defined by the identity of its author. Literatures of trauma hold at its centre the reconstruction and recuperate one of the traumatic experiences, but it is also actively engaged in ongoing

dialogue with the writings and representation of no traumatized authors. It comprises a marginal literature similar to that produced by feminist, African American 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).

Alexander Khan happens to write this novel, *Orphan of Islam* as the past traumatized experience haunts him in his present age. He has so many experience of being traumatized from his little age. When Khan, the major character of this story is beaten by the street boys, then he complains this event to his so called uncle Rafiq. In response to the complaint Khan did with his step uncle. Rafiq, again punished Khan without listening to his matters. Khan express:

‘Please uncle Rafiq I’m scared. Will you come with me then? Uncle-
 ‘what are you scared of?’ he snapped.’ You said they were white boys.
 So tell them you are white boy too, kuffar,’ with that he grabbed me
 and pulled me out of the living room. ‘Here we go again,’ I thought.
 But he didn’t go upstairs. Instead he pushed me down the hall way,
 through the kitchen and into the backyard. (66-67)

His uncle Rafiq took him in suspicious place instead of hearing his things and he plans for something unwanted matter to Khan. Khan is beaten on the way to home from the mosque. So he reveals this matter to his so-called uncle but he takes no care of it rather forces Khan to go to mosque and also knocks him down mercilessly. Khan with great agony further writes:

In one corner there was an outside toilet, left in fact form Victorian days. It still worked and was occasionally used when bathroom was occupied. I hated going in there. I was dark, smelly and full of spiders. Rafiq knew I didn’t like that, and without further add, he pushed me in

and locked the door from outside. That's where pigs belong', he said walking back into the house. (66-67)

Khan is behaved like a street dog by every relatives and unknown persons too. He cannot find peace in his life anywhere. He tries to escape from outsiders and complains his uncle but cruel uncle rather locks him into the toilet which was old, deserted and smelling offensive. Khan does not know about his uncle's whereabouts because he left him there in anger. He is not sure how long he has to stay there and when does his uncle come and open the door of the toilet. His mind is filled up with so many question and suspensions.

Little Moohammed has nothing to do with his uncle although he is locked inside the room of toilet. He does much practice to come out but his entire attempt becomes futile. Into the suffocated atmosphere Khan compels to stay but ignoring him his uncles abandons him. With the greater psychological pain Khan writes:

I kicked the bottom of the door and yelled, but it made no difference. Rafiq had shut the kitchen door and no one could hear me. I groped for the toilet seat, pulled it down and sat down on it, keeping as still as a statue in the hope that I would not disturb the spider's webs hanging in sinister drapes above my head. After an hour or so I heard footsteps in the yard. The bolt was pulled back. (67)

In this way, Khan is time and again suffers from different kinds of physical and mental penalties. He is traumatized in different titles every time without any reason or cause. Khan further writes. "The bolt was pulled back, then the latch was lifted and the door swung open. Outcome bastard", Rafiq says. "I hope you have learned your lesson. Tell me again-what are you doing this evening? 'Going to mosque, uncle

Rafiq'. 'Good, now get gone'. And if I here anymore from you, that toilet will be your bedroom from the night. I did as I was told" (67).

Muhummed does according to his uncle's desire otherwise he is beaten like a dog. All the time he has the fear psychology in the name of obeying culture. Pakistani strongly believes in God therefore the kids to follow the religious faith. In the name of religion poor Khan suffers with various kinds of problems and frightens by different people including his own relatives. He cannot escape from this family because he doesn't have such king of thinking power as he is a small boy of little age. Khan's uncle makes him like a parrot in a cage. Khan's life is limited only in narrow domestic walls. He is not allowed to go anywhere except mosque and home. Therefore he says:

I kept my word and never went Haani and Sadeeq (his kin), or any white girls, again. Literally put head down not daring to look up if I felt there was a woman close by me on the street-life became a strict routing of mosque home-mosque-home-mosque-home and such using back streets wherever possible to avoid Rafiq. (83)

Khan here says that he has to totally devote himself to the mosque. He must go to mosque everyday each time as indicated. In case he stops to go to church he is brought under the line of punishment. He forgets everything and does according to the will of Rafiq. His life limits between house and mosque. He does as much as he can to devote himself to the worship of God Allah. Khan remarks:

I prayed reverently to Allah to forgive my sins and listened carefully to the verse from *Quran* that I still didn't understand. Difficult thought it was, I tried not to think about Debbie's cleavage or Carlo's shapely leg. I did everything that a good little Muslim boy should do to please

his elders and any other Muslim family would have been proud of me.

But not mine. Rafiq's quest for perfection and his unstoppable bullying meant he was never satisfied with my efforts. (84)

Little Muhammed tries his best to please his seniors by obeying them specially his uncle. With great pain he says that if other Muslim kids have been devotedly involved with god, their relatives would have been glad with them. But Muhammed's devotion to god is not evaluated by any. Although he followed the ways properly, his uncle pretends of not understanding him.

Because of religion, Khan has to be a scapegoat under the hard rules and regulation of Islam. Jeffery. Alexander in his book *Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma* regards:

According to lay theory Trauma, traumas are occurring events that shatter an individual or collective actor's sense of well-being. In other words, the power to shatter the "Trauma" is thought to emerge from events themselves. The reaction to such shattering events "being traumatized", is felt and thought to be an immediate and unreflexive response. (2)

Alexander argues that trauma can shatter either an individual or a group in their well being. The reason of trauma, he says, is that "events". Because of events such individual or society is traumatized. Traumatic events are main factors of suffering agony, lamentation and regression of the present. He further includes, "accordingly to lay perspective, the trauma experience occurs when the traumatizing events interacts with human nature. Human being needs security, love, order and collection. If something happens that sharply undermines these needs, it hardly seems surprising, according to the lay theory, that people will be traumatized as a result: (2-3)

Similarly, Ron Eyerman in his book *Cultural Trauma* contends:

As opposed to psychological or physical trauma, which involves a wound and the experience of great emotional anguish by an individual? Cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion. In this sense, the trauma need not necessarily be felt by everyone in a community or experienced directly by any or all.
(61)

From Ron Eyerman's view it is clear that a traumatized individual experiences with grand emotional anguish and pain. When one loses his identity in a dramatic manner, he calls it a cultural trauma. It breaks the social relation and arrangement of the constituents of the society through the break down. Cultural trauma either affects the whole community or an individual. He says that trauma can also be experienced by an individual. Eyerman's idea of cultural trauma is quite significant in the context of this novel *Orphan of Islam* in which an individual has faced trauma culturally from his little age. Under the same title Eyerman writes:

While trauma necessarily refers to something experienced in psychological accounts, calling this experience traumatic requires representation. National or cultural trauma (the difference is minimal at theoretical level) is also rooted in an event or series of events, but not necessarily their direct experience. Such experience is mediated, through news papers, radio, television, for example, which involve a spatial as well as temporal distance between the event and experience. (62)

Although the writer of this novel Alexander Khan happily married with his wife and has a happy life, the past events obsess in his mind time and again. He suffers from his past painful moments very often. He possesses the recollection of events in his mind and such memories bad events haunts his psyche. Khan continuously writes that at the age of 12, again he comes back to Pakistan with his friend as well as relative Yashir. He comes to Pakistan for the purpose of spending holidays. In Pakistan when he speaks in Pakistani language, he is mocked at by his own relatives, He has to speak three languages in different places where he goes, therefore he has problem in learning languages and responding. When he is mocked at his language, Khan then opines:

When I tried speaking to Hussein and Ajmal in Pastho, the kids giggled, and a memory floated back of journey from an airport to the north of England many years before. I switched to English with Yashir, which cause the little ones to stare open mouthed at the Pakistanis who spoke like aliens. I blushed and they laugh. Red cheeks, I have never seen a Pakistani boy blush red before. (99)

Having been to Pakistan before and seen the videos from Tajak, Khan knows that he has culture shock. While he was little he was in Pakistan, he had knows little on Pakistani language. Without having knowledge of Pakistani language Khan is taken to London by his father. Therefore Khan has little knowledge on Pastho. However remembering the past experience he tries to speak some words but gets failure in uttering the words. He stumbles and cannot speak the language.

Khan has to bear problems of language so that communication cannot take place and he is laughed at. He becomes hot and red because of shame and hesitation. He has never experienced such situation before his equal groups. When Khan is there

in Pakistan he is planned for abdication to take him in Afghanistan. He is kept in a car. Imran and Yasir, his relatives take him to there. He denies going there but they forcefully take him there. He is kidnapped although the little boy trying his best not to ride in the car. He is brutally kidnapped. He narrativizes his traumatic experience:

I turned to face a snaring Imran. I tried to pull away from him but his grip was too strong. He pushed me against the van door and my bag fell on the ground. Again I screamed for Yashir, but he either heard was taking no notice what so ever. Get me go, Let me go, I'm not going anywhere with you, get off me. I screamed a, wept bitterly and cried for help, but all was in vain. They took me however I tried my best to escape from them. (131)

When Muhammed is kept in the car, he becomes restless and does his best to run away from them. His relatives once more deceive him. He says, "I kicked and struggled and shoved and bit, but it was hopeless" (13). Imran and the youth bundled my back into the van and Slammed the door, then locked it from outside. Quickly Imran slid into driver's seat and gunned the engine, then slammed the van into first gear and sped out of Eslambad airport as if every cop in Pakistan was on tail:

I was still shouting, but Imran took no notice at al. Every time I yelled, the youth give me a dig in the side with his elbow, though, accompanied by a look that promised a beating if I carried on. I was helpless, I'd been tricked and betrayed and not idea what the hell was going to happen to me when this maniac finally stopped driving. Would he abandon me by the road? Would he take me to some old building and shoot me like a dog? I tried to keep the rising panic down,

but it was not good and wishing seconds my sobs were drowning out the overworked diesel engine. (13).

In this way, Khan is taken to Tajak. He is pulled into Little Fatimah's house and forced upstairs into a room he had never been before. Imran quickly shut the heavy wooden door and locked it from the outside. He shouts a couple of times but it was pointless. The only window is meshed and barred and faced outwards. If anyone could hear me, they were taking no notice. Locked in a small room, a virtual prisoner far from home, He cries himself to sleep that night. His dreams are far from home, cried myself to sleep that night. His dreams were fermented by visions of what had happened so unexpectedly that day. Several times Khan shouts out loud and works himself he up. The door is opened and Imran spoke quickly and harshly in Punjabi. I had no knowledge of and he immediately gets up and leaves without saying another word.

Khan's life is made like prisoner. He spends his traumatic life all the time. He is enclosed like a prisoner. He does not know about his future. Is he kept in domestic prison for ever or let go? What's the solution? Nobody is responsible for these questions to answer. His destiny is on the hand of his so called own relatives.

Likewise, Khan is taken to baytuk, a café in the middle of Tajak. On that place Khan is insulted by his relatives like Yashir and Simran and other outsiders. Khan says "Journey's end was baytuk, a cafe in the middle of tajak.. As we arrived there men, I had never seen before were waiting there. They surrounded me and i was bundled out of car and into the baytuk. One of them had a length of plastic rope. Once inside I was pushed to the floor and arms and legs tighten together. I could barely breathe with fear. I was certainly too frightened to speak. I'd seen bits on the tally about kidnappings and they always looked like this: One victim, several men and quiet time

of day. The shipped usually ended with the police lifting a body out of the boot of a car, or, worse still, the body not being found at all. I wanted to cry. But was scared that if I did. I would be tortured or killed (135).

Regarding with such traumatic experience of life of Muhammed Khan in his little age, Alexander Khan writes this novel with the beating of such memories. The events are life threatening and challenging. They can never be forgotten through the life. When he returns to his past, the nightmares of the past settle in his memory.

Dominic LaCapra in his text *Writing History, Writing Trauma* mentions:

Working through is an articulator practice: to the extent one works through trauma (as well as transference relations in general). One is able to distinguish between past and present and to recall in memory that something happened to one (or one's people back then while realizing that one is living here and now opening to the future). This does not imply either that there is pure opposition between past and present or that acting out-whether for the traumatized or for those emphatically relating to them-can fully transcend towards a state of closure of full ego identity. (22)

In this kind of trauma the victimized is in present. He remembers his past and can distinguish it from the present. He longs for torture plan. Here the traumatized character gradually out of his nostalgia and he tries to forget. He gradually moves further for his bright future. The poor, homeless, parentless and relativeless Khan in the past has different social status at present. He longs for positive changes in his future days and steps ahead accordingly. He always does not suffer from past and become hopeless but he has optimistic vision in his life. He writes articles, novels and earns for his living. LaCarpa further adds:

Those traumatized by extreme events, as well as those emphasizing with them, many working through because of what might almost be termed as a fidelity to trauma, a feeling that one must somehow keep faith with it. Part of this feeling may be the melancholic sentiment that, in working through the past in a manner that enables survival or reengagement in life. One is betraying those who were overwhelmed and consumed by that traumatic past. One's bond with the dead, especially with dead intimates, may invest trauma with value and make its reliving a painful but necessary commemoration or memorial to which one remains dedicated or at least bound. This situation may create a more or less unconscious desire to remain within trauma. (22)

In traumatic memory the event somehow resisters and may actually be relived in the present, at times in a compulsively repetitive manner. It may not be subject to controlled, conscious recall. But it returns in nightmares, flashbacks, anxiety, attacks and other forms of intrusively repetitive behavior characteristics of all-compelling frame. Traumatic memory (at least in Freud's account) may involve belated temporality and a period of latency between a real or fantasized early event and later one somehow recalls and triggers renewed repression or foreclosure and intrusive behavior (89). In memory as an aspect of working through the past, one is both back there and here at the same time and one is able to distinguish (not dichotomize the two. In other words, one remembers- perhaps to some extent still compulsively reliving or being possessed by- what happened then without losing a sense of existing and acting now. This duality (or double inscription) of being is essential for memory as a component of working over and through problems" (90).

The cycle of memory of a person leads him for a long time with its impact. The traumatic person suffers from negative impact of the past. If such negative impacts hover around the mind, it obviously disturbs for future destination. Jenny Edkins says, "[. . .] trauma was a matter that was dealt with by memorial ceremonies and practices of remembrances" (215). Regarding with such traumatic events Dominic LaCapra insists:

[A] Past that intrusively invades the present and may block or obviate Possibilities in the future so-called traumatic memory carries the experience into the present and future in that the events are compulsively relived or re-experienced as if there were no distance or difference between past and present. In traumatic memory, the past is not simply history as over and done with. It lives on experimentally and haunts or possesses the self or the community. (55-56)

Here, LaCapra puts his opinion that the memory of the past bitterly destroys the present and will disturb and block the future of an individual. Some people cannot overcome the trauma and live with traumatic memory. Consequently they cannot progress in their life. But some people move forward ignoring the past. Khan in *Orphan of Islam* is an example of progressing the future despite his terrible memories of his past.

In Khan's novel the power of his father places Muhammed in a Pendulum state. It is Muhammed's father who oscillated him from one place to another place using his power. In this book *Trauma and the Memory of Politics* Edkins says that family, friends, community gives "order" but if the order betrays us or anybody then their meaning of existence is changed. When Muhammed's uncle orders him to do this and that, Khan honestly obeys and that obeying betrays his future. In the line above

Edkins explores how we remember traumatic event such as wars, feminine, genocides and terrorism, and questions the assumed role of commemorations as simply reinforcing state and nationhood. Edkins further explains, “This can be devastating because who we are, or who we think we may depend very closely on the social context in which we place and find ourselves. Our existence relies not only on our personal survival as individual beings but also, in a very profound sense, on the continuance of the social order that gives our existence meaning and dignity: family, friends, political community, and beliefs. If that order betrays us in some way, we may survive in the sense of continuing to live as physical being, but the meaning of our existence is changed.

When one feels difficulty in achieving culture he suffers from cultural shocks. He becomes just like dumb cattle on ignorance of culture and remains with negative attitude. To be adopted in culture, language plays significant role. But Khan does not know language which creates trauma on him. Smelser further writes:

When the trauma fails to be integrated into the totality of a persons’ life experience the victim remains fixated on the trauma. Despite avoidance of emotional involvement, traumatic memories cannot be avoided; even when pushed out of waking consciousness, they come back in the form of reenactments, nightmares, or feeling related to trauma . . . Recurrences may continue throughout life during periods of stress. (41)

She defines cultural trauma this way; a 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). She argues, “Trauma is a part of the human condition that life is a continuous struggle, in the sense that any individual is forever experiencing, defending against, capitalizing on and coming to terms with both external and internal dangers and threats of danger” (47).

Alexander Khan, the author of *Orphan of Islam* writes this novel because he can never forget his traumatic experience he bore in his life. He is now spending his life with post traumatic position. However the past dreadful and terrible events tortures and shocks him. The main reason behind writing this novel is traumatic events of the past in Khan’s life. Khan bears and struggles with different shocking events in the name of culture, language, dress, and education. He is betrayed by his own father, mother, relatives and friends. After the death of his father his relatives do monopoly over his innocence in the name of teaching culture. As he belongs to not any culture permanently he finds himself very difficult to adjust in any culture that is either in England or different parts of Pakistan. When Khan is in his 13, he is kidnapped again and taken to the place called Haqqania, the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. In this place Khan is supposed to learn religious slogans, spells and religions properly and smartly. But he cannot read and write properly there too because of difficulty in Urdu language, culture, religion and rituals. There too he sees new faces and cruel behaviors of the teachers as well as students. When Khan cannot read the verses of Kuran his teacher shows a brutal manner to him.

Khan’s life is not very easy. He is ill-treated everywhere. Nobody helps him, nobody supports him. He finds himself alone in the world. As he is discarded by his kin, he is therefore not liked by others. He is tortured in his little age so he can not progress in his life in any field because of cultural shock.

Khan is a brave boy; he did everything for the betterment of his life. He never got harassed although he was given penalty throughout his childhood. Despite those bitter facts Khan slowly and gradually gets progressed. His optimistic ideas aid him for the progression of his life. Present job he has done, peace and prosperity has supported to a large extent therefore he has been able to reduce his burden of historic-cultural trauma.

III. Working Through of Historical Cultural Trauma

in Alexander Khan's *Orphan of Islam*

The autobiographical text *Orphan of Islam* exposes the traumatic condition of Muhammad Khan, son of English mother and Pakistani father caused by cultural clash. He is traumatized and compelled to bear it silently. This research reflects the inarticulate grief of Muhammed Abdul Khan being wounded and shocked by cultural aspects. He loses his own identity and becomes the true orphan because of deception by his parents. This novel depicts traumatic experience of Khan in different steps of his life. Khan's miserable condition in his childhood is vividly displayed in the novel *Orphan of Islam*. Although Khan's intensity of trauma gets reduced and gets some sorts of relief in his present life; he has to suffer from past terrific experience time and again. Brutal behavior shone by his uncle, sister-in-law teacher and students, street boys, and friends is never forgotten.

Orphan of Islam written by Alexander Khan exposes the hideous effects of cultural trauma. Muhammad Khan, the victimized character of an autobiography, suffers from different sorts of problems like hallucination, chronic stress, re-occurring dreams and haunts of memory. Khan was born in England and was grown into English culture for three years of his life in the first step of his life. After that he was taken to Pakistan by his father. When his father dies he is kidnapped and taken to Haqqania, border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Khan cannot learn language and follow the culture in different places. He is forced to follow different culture and learn different language but he cannot read and write the language because of difficulties. He is severely beaten by his teacher upon his ignorance. Similarly, his uncle Rafiq frequently gives him punishment even in his minor mistakes. Rafiq also beats Khan in the name of teaching culture. Poor Khan is punished everywhere; even the unknown

school boys beat him without any mistakes and at school he is mocked when he cannot learn. Nobody asks about his identity and nobody is concerned about him. His so-called relatives hate and torture him instead of giving love and care.

This is the true autobiography of one Muslim boy whose journey to discover his roots in Pakistan becomes a relentless nightmare of devastating betrayal and unthinkable cruelty. He wants to get rid of such unwanted events and he efforts for spending easy life in the culture he likes.

Therefore, Muhammed's life is full of pangs, tension, and quest for roots, quest for his mother and journey to seek his real identity. He does not know who is he and where does he belong to. He is culturally and psychologically tortured. In the name of teaching culture, he is ill-treated and behaved brutally by his teachers, Imam, and gurus. Khan's life is in distracted; he does not know where to go, and who his relatives are. His parents deceive him in his early age since then his life is totally in dark and full of trauma. He gets cultural shock because of his frequent displacement.

Although Khan suffered a lot in the past his present life is running smoothly on the basis theory of 'Working through'. His present life is stepping towards progression. Now he is happily married with a rich woman. He wears his best clothes and well polished shoes. Now he is in England and has better life. He writes novels, stories, articles etc. which is the main earning of his life. Now he is known by his novels. Slowly and gradually his past bitter memories are decreasing and his beautiful life is starting. He has married Jessica, an English woman with her huge property. Khan has become a husband of a rich life. His life is totally changed because of availability of everything. Present happy and prosperous life has favored him all the best for reducing his sad memories of the past. His wife also fully supports him for his progresss.

Therefore, Khan's life is moving forward similar to the theory of 'Working through' by the trauma theorist Dominic LaCapra. In this theory one forgets his past bitter experience because of present deeds and some kinds of favorable environment. In the same way, Khan is also optimistic and hopes for good things and positive change in his life.

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