

Juxtaposing Bangladeshi and Pakistani Narratives: A New Historicist Analysis of Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age* and Rao Farman Ali's *How Pakistan Got Divided*

Sobia Javed

MPhil (English Literature), National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Islamabad

Email: sob1ajavedbutt@gmail.com

Dr. Faiz Sultan (corresponding author)

Principal, Islamabad Model College for Boys Rawat, Islamabad

Adjunct Assistant Professor, NUML Islamabad

Email: faizsultan@numl.edu.pk / faizsultanphdnuml@gmail.com

Khadija Tahira

Lecturer, NUML Islamabad

Email: ktahira@numl.edu.pk

Abstract:

The purpose of this research paper is to offer a New Historicist reading by juxtaposing Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age* and Rao Farman Ali's *How Pakistan Got Divided*, two conflicting and contrasting narratives evolving from the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War. Anam's fictional work focuses on the personal, often gendered experiences of a newly created Bangladeshi identity in the heart of the anarchy of war, while Ali's memoir reflects an official Pakistani military perspective that seeks to rationalize, justify, and contextualize the state's role in the conflict. Using New Historicist tools, both as a theory and research method, this study analyzes how each text constructs history not as an objective and neutral chronicle, but as a discourse embedded in ideology, power, and cultural memory. It examines how marginalized and silenced voices, particularly those of women and civilians, challenge dominant historical narratives, and it interrogates the ideological function of narrative in the postwar nation-building process. Ultimately, this paper reveals how literature and memoirs serve as arenas for contested national histories, and how historical fiction and military retrospection diverge in their treatment of trauma, blameworthiness, and memory.

Keywords: *A Golden Age, Making of Bangladesh, New Historicism, War Narratives, Representation*

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to analyze the selected texts in the backdrop of a new historicist approach to see the potential of these texts in narrating, in their own perspectives, the important event of the Fall of Decca in 1971. For the analyses, the Bangladeshi literary author, Tehmima Anam's *A Golden Age* and Pakistan author, Rao Farman Ali's memoir *How Pakistan Got Divided* have been selected in the backdrop of the new historicist perspectives propounded by Anne B. Bobie in her book *Theory into Practice: An Introduction to Literary Criticism*. The primary focus of the study is to draw a comparison/contrast between the selected texts to critically evaluate the narratives in their political and social context that caused the event of the Fall of Decca to happen.

The War of 1971 between India and Pakistan which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh, a new state in South Asia stands as a significant moment in the history of this part of the world. The creation of Bangladesh triggered a war of narratives with diversity in perspectives reached the pinnacles of the contrasting discourses embedded in the respective nationalist and militarist points of view. The Bangladeshi nation celebrates/commemorates the war as a kind of undaunted struggle for their identity and freedom; whereas in Pakistan, it is lamented as a tragedy that divides a country into two states. They believe that this national tragedy emerged because of political chaos and Indian intervention. Such contrasting narratives in history have been vague since 1971 both in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Literary and personal writings both preserve and reinforce such contrasting discourses and perspectives. *A Golden Age* by Tehmima Anam, with its situatedness in the East Pakistan Context, underscores the war of 1971 as a personal loss, female agency, and domestic resistance (Anam 15). On the other hand, *How Pakistan Got Divided* by Rao Farman Ali gives a personal account of a military officer who tries to justify the military operation in East Pakistan. Both narratives reflect the ideological approaches of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi societies emanating from the underlying power structures.

The present study draws the theoretical foundations from the framework of New Historicism to juxtapose the selected texts. New Historicism rejects and challenges the objectivity of the historical narratives and emphasizes that the cultural, political, and ideological forces shape and affect the literary and historical narratives (Greenblatt 6). New historicism treats all narratives as constructions of different discourses and iterates that these texts need to be treated as contaminated with power dynamics. In this context, Michel Foucault's understanding of

discourses and his views on the relationship between knowledge and power shape the analysis of the texts. He challenges the neutrality of the so-called narratives and asserts that these are the discourses that support one group of the society and suppress the other. The dominant ideologies are institutionalized through language and narrative (Foucault 27).

Though, there is a significant body of scholarship available that represents the war of 1971 yet there exists a visible gap regarding the comparative analysis of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi narratives. Most of the studies on these narratives are conducted in isolation leaving a gap where interdisciplinarity needs to be considered. Besides, the application of New Historicism as a research method remains a missing thread in the texture of research studies conducted so far on the Pakistani and Bangladeshi war narratives/literature. The present study, through the application of a comparative framework, tries to highlight the social and political tensions, military narratives, and the constructions of power that shape these texts. This study tends to illuminate the reader's consciousness regarding the shaping of the collective memory and formation of national identity in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

2. Literature Review

Shovik Dev has analyzed the novel *A Golden Age* from the perspective of postcolonial women and their empowerment. The study reveals that women of the postcolonial era were doubly marginalized, firstly by male dominated society of their own community and secondly by the higher authorities of the Pakistani military. These are the two key aspects discussed in the novel. "The female characters of *A Golden Age* re-define various social norms or traditions that are the result of colonialism and/or female marginalization that has been established through the generation of imperialism" (Dev 3). Later on, when they understood their due rights, they raised their voices on the international level and took empowerment over male oppression. The study also aims that "suppression of the Eastern women are different from the suppression of Western women" (5). Eastern women are mainly stereotyped on the basis of gender and hence no rights are given to them but the Western narrative is slightly contradictory. The Eastern women have made themselves so strong that they helped and supported their men in the field of war. The researcher also reveals how socio-political milieu destroyed Eastern women's private life and forced them to incarcerate themselves in houses.

Zeynep Harputlu Shah gives a feminist analysis of the novel *A Golden Age*. The study shows the prominent role of women in the Liberation War. "After the independence of Bangladesh (1971) from British rule, this nation-state underwent

the transformative effects of civil war in terms of postcolonial national identity, ethnicity, class, caste and religion” (Shah 285). This historical event changed the common aptitude of Bangladeshi women. They transform themselves and stand in a very delicate moment with their men. They put their gender aside and support their men in their hour of need. “Although women appear to be a sign or marker of political goals, national identity, and carries of cultural values and traditions” (286). They do not care about their lives and hence ready to sacrifice their lives for this sacred purpose. This study also aims that the set parameters in male-dominated societies partially free women from the constraints of the liberation movement. Therefore, this movement “allows them to take part in public and political spheres with men” (286). The female characters of the novel *A Golden Age*, basically belong to the patriarchal society but they also take part in the war of freedom and they help their men in this struggle. It “demonstrates that national struggles, political conflicts, generational dynamics, and migrant experiences have contributed to the improvement of women’s status and roles on the public, private and national levels” (290). They prove themselves that without their contribution their men cannot take freedom and as well as national identity. In this way, they set their own parameters in historically male-constructed societies, on which the females are relied and trusted. The role of women is not only restricted to the domestic sphere but on the national level their roles are welcomed as well as appreciated.

Ahmed S. Aziz has critically evaluated Tahmima Anam’s book *The Good Muslim*, in which he observes the perspective of post war trauma and its effect on the survivors of war and the Western narratives about good Muslims and bad Muslims. This binary of good/bad Muslims emerged after the horrific event of 9/11. “There is a rising tide of xenophobia in the world in the form of islamophobia against Muslims as a counter reaction against various terror activities in the West being regulated by a handful of terrorists who happened to be Muslim by faith” (Aziz 5). After the attacks, the Western world has openly declared the Muslims as terrorists and carried out hatred for them. “Since then that Muslims around the world have to prove their credentials that they come in which category, “if they are good Muslims” then they have to definitely join the war against “bad Muslims” who are responsible for all kinds of terror activities around the world” (5). These wars are considered inhumane, insane, and violated acts against innocent people which engulf the lives of thousands and millions of people. These not only demolish the personal property of people but also leave a long-term effect on the minds of the people.

Sabine Lauret-Taft observes *A Golden Age* as a political novel. Her study shows that on March 25, 1971, an operation was conducted under the command of Yahya Khan that brought a large amount of destruction and chaos just to sweep

away East Pakistan into genocide. A report was also sent to the US by Archer Blood but it remained at the periphery and found no favorable answer. This study explores that under the leadership of Sheikh Mujeeb, East Pakistan won significant political representation in the national assembly but unfortunately elections were cancelled and on the command of General Yahya, martial law was imposed on the country. As a consequence, the election was ceased and Eastern Pakistan was deprived of its due rights. Lauret-Taft reveals that women are the unexpected heroes of one's nation, they build nation, construct heroism, and plunge into war without any fears. She highlights how female experiences of the 1971 Bangladesh War of Independence are foregrounded, offering a "counter-memory" to the nation's official history (Lauret-Taft 94). In this way, the writer of the novel gives an unusual voice to ordinary women and calls them invisible heroes who not only know how to defend themselves but also know how to guard their country. Lauret-Taft situates her analysis within broader feminist historiography, drawing on scholars like Joan Scott to emphasize the significance of "experience" as a category of historical analysis (95). By doing so, she critiques the marginalization of women's voices in historical narratives and underlines the importance of literature in recovering these silenced perspectives. The article demonstrates how *A Golden Age* blends personal and political spheres, where domestic spaces become sites of resistance and maternal figures like Rehana are reframed as active participants in national struggles.

Mohammad Moniruzzaman Miah has analyzed the novel from the perspective of the fusion of love and duty. The study finds that love and duty both are frequent themes of the novelist. He observes that in the novel *A Golden Age*, at some points, it seems that both love and duty go parallel. Miah writes, "Anam's narrative explores how war percolates into domestic spaces, disrupting familial bonds and forcing characters to negotiate between personal love and patriotic duty" (Miah 4). The line implies that war is not just a political issue but it is an intrusion into domestic and personal life. The novel exhibits the effects of the Liberation War on family relationships, forcing the protagonist and other characters to balance their emotional attachments with national responsibilities. This escalation of war reflects a huge price humans pay, where private lives are inevitably shaped by public events. Anam uses this connection to highlight the complex choices people face during times of national crisis. Furthermore, Miah finds another theme of identity and nationhood, interpreting the novel that presents identity as a dynamic framework shaped by personal and historical forces. He argues that "the forging of a new nation is inseparable from the redefinition of individual identities" (Miah 7). From this perspective, Miah interprets the characters' inner struggles as symbolic of Bangladesh's quest for independence and self-definition.

Rofiqul Islam gives an insightful view of how Anam intertwined the themes of nationalism and religion in her book *A Golden Age*. He argues that Anam's purpose in highlighting these themes is to show the complex socio-economic and political realities of post-coming-into-existence Bangladesh, "where religious identities and nationalist ideologies often intersect and conflict" (Islam 2). Islam explores that Anam does not portray religion in a purely spiritual and monolithic sense but as a socio-political force that both unites and divides. He notes that "Anam's depiction of religion moves beyond personal faith, illustrating how it becomes a tool for both resistance and oppression in the context of nationalist struggles" (3). Islam also observes that in her novels, Anam shows religion as a tool that can inspire others to resist oppression, but it can be misused to take control and justify violence.

Inshah Malik gives a comprehensive critique of the *History of Armed Struggles in Kashmir* by Rao Farman Ali. The book explores the multifaceted aspects of resistance and oppression faced by the people of Kashmir. "He alludes to the fact that the violent political action in Kashmir is older than 1989 and has its roots in early Kashmiri political consciousness that rose alongside the Indian subcontinent's anti-colonial politics" (Malik 206). The book helps us understand that the violent political efforts of the Kashmiri people are not new rather they have a much older history. It further deals with the indigenous efforts, narratives, the shawl weaver movement in the 19th Century against Dogra rule, and the political agency of the Kashmiri people. "Similarly, artisans' rights were an issue that brought Kashmiri shawls-weavers together to observe a 'first demand day' on April 29, 1865" (206). After acquiring Kashmir from British colonialists, the Dogra rulers entered Kashmir and took charge of them in 1809. Malik argues that "Kashmiris unified in a protest against an imposed foreign ruler" (206). This marked the new history of the resistance movement by Kashmiris against the Dogra rule.

The people of East Pakistan ultimately succeeded in the creation of a new state which emerged on the globe of the world as an independent state. While for Pakistan, it was a watershed moment, they were not willing to get separated from this terrain from their own legislative body. Khadim Hussain Raja in his book *A Stranger in My Own Country*, gives his Pakistani perspective and states that the Fall of Dacca is a complete reflection of the failure of political and military incompetency. The political tension between both countries was so strong that it collapsed the faith of both nations. Although a few voices were raised against the Pakistani Army, however, they were too weak to compel the Army to change their progressions. At that time Pakistani Army was strong enough that no one could dare to change its firm decisions. They were not ready to accept their defeat, therefore, they forced the people of East Pakistan not to leave the country. On the

other hand, the people of East Pakistan had become so adamant that they were ready to lay down their lives for a separate homeland.

The Betrayal of East Pakistan, written by A.A.K. Niazi unravels some facts from the event of 1971. This book also reveals the secret of the fall of East Pakistan. The separation of East Pakistan is a historical event, therefore, it has a larger scope to debate upon. Many historians around the globe have talked a lot about this event and have given their own opinions. The main agents and stakeholders of this event were Pakistan and Bangladesh and both of them presented a biased account of the event. Voices that emerged from both sides are not only different but also conflicting. Keeping in view a large volume of conflicting narratives, the literary works from Pakistan and Bangladesh have been selected to analyze and see similarities and differences.

3. Theoretical Framework

Keeping in view the scope and the objectives of the study, the framework seems pertinent to the analysis of the selected texts in terms of their comparison, the theoretical framework is embedded in New Historicism, a poststructuralist approach that challenges the legacy of the metanarratives and looks at them in new nuances and variations. The epistemological stance is founded upon the grounds which pose a challenge to the metanarrativity of the texts and place them in entirely new perspectives. For this, I have applied the theoretical understanding propounded by Anne B. Dobie in her book *Theory into Practice: An Introduction to Literary Criticism*. Her theoretical understanding of New Historicism will also act as a research method for the analysis of the selected texts.

New Historicism is a critical approach that “proposes that text and contexts must be read together as sites of power relations and all texts as constituting the social configurations and social exchange” (Pramod 2010), Texts, being the product of social constructs narrate what represents the voice of the dominant classes and in return influence and inform the social consciousness. This negates the claimed neutrality of the cultural narratives. Thus, the texts produced in a certain epoch of history are discourses in themselves. The new historicism challenges the traditional historicist approaches and ideologies. Instead, they support the point that history is known subjectively and is deeply influenced by the recorder/observer. These recorders are usually men of “power” (Dobie 178) and are usually from the side of the winners or victors. My focus, while comparing the two texts from Pakistan and Bangladesh, would be “to hear all the stories and recognize all the voices” (Dobie 178) as to how these socially diverse voices record the same incident and how these are colored by the national context of the authors. Dobie furthers her debate by mentioning a complication and iterates that these narratives are “also subjectively read and interpreted” (178). The theory is relevant to my research design because whereas the historians of the past see an account as an event, the new historian sees

them as 'texts, to be interpreted, just as a poem or a novel is interpreted by a critic' (179).

The new historicism, as Dobie puts it, denies any single narrative or voice on an event and rejects this claim on the grounds that it would be an oversimplification. "The new historicists recognize many narratives produced by institutions and social strata (and by individuals of course) that may hold contrasting bodies of belief and practice or different modes of behavior" (Dobie 179). Contrary to this point of view, multiple worldviews appear which record and interpret certain events and happenings. These narratives are at times supporting and contradicting viz-a-viz have ambivalent positions. The comparison and juxtaposition of these narratives take the readers closer to the truth which otherwise may be tarnished by the single discourse.

Dobie, in her debate on the application of new historicism both as a theory and method, enlists some 'wh' questions which focus upon the texts under study and thus guide the researcher to make an unbiased analysis of the texts. These questions relate to the writer's personal experiences, biases, nationality, and political stance as these surely inform the ideology of the author and thus make the narratives subjective. This is the duty of the researcher to avoid these pitfalls and take an impartial analysis of the texts under study (195).

4. Analysis and Discussion

The selected texts *A Golden Age* by Bangladeshi writer Tahmima Anam and *How Pakistan Got Divided* were written by Pakistani writer Rao Farman Ali, published in 2007 and 1992 respectively, and represent an insightful view of the major causes of the fall of Dacca. Similarities and conflicts may occur in both texts. Tahmima Anam was born in Bangladesh but soon along with her family went to America. Keeping the fact in mind that she and her family had gone far away from their country, her upbringing was done in a quite nationalistic way. Right from her early childhood, her ears have been listening to the event of the separation of East Pakistan, and she was also told the major causes of this incident. She appropriately endorsed all those facts in her debut book *A Golden Age*. In the novel, through a single family, Anam foregrounds the history of the Liberation War fought between Pakistan and Bangladesh. All three family members; Rehana (mother) her daughter Maya and her son Sohail are patriotic and nationalist. Sohail joins the Guerilla Force, and Maya also participates in a fighting group to get freedom from the Pakistani Government. Not only is this family so much concerning about freedom but every character in the novel is all set by Anam to show how passionate they are to get their independence. Everyone gears up his/her speed in preparation for the war. "Ready with their sewing kits" (Anam 107), all the people of the community, gather every week at the bungalow of Rehana to make good preparations for the war. The ladies seem busy sewing the kits, Mrs. Rehman is busy in cutting saris

and Mrs. Akram helps in cutting the sacks and then sews saris with them to make it more bulky for the soldiers. From March, they have started preparations and now it is the month of May when they openly disclose their “unstrange” (Anam 108) things. The writer wants to show her readers that the people of Bangladesh need revenge from the Pakistani Military. According to their point of view, it is only them who are showing resentment for their freedom. On the other hand, Ali, who at that time was Maj. Gen. Civil Affairs in Pakistani Military, in his book, states that till 2nd March 1971, the Pakistani government was incognizant about the fact that Bengalis need separation. He narrates that Generals from West Pakistan do not want to impose anything heavy upon East Pakistan. If they want freedom, they should be given it because this is their basic right. Pakistani Government knew very well that if elections were held in the country, Sheikh Mujeeb Ur Rehman would definitely win it with the majority of seats. According to Ali, the only problem they were facing was all about politics “The problem, we felt, faced by us, was a political one”. (Ali 80). The statement clearly shows that it is the Military that wants war with the people of Bangladesh but it is the Government that does not want any kind of separation. After careful reading, it has been analyzed that both of the writers do not stand on the same point. They are contradicting in their statements. Anam considers the Pakistani military as the culprit that is responsible for the killings. On the other hand, Ali holds the point of view that it is not the Pakistani Military that does not want separation he terms politics responsible for the failure of separating East Pakistan.

In history, there was a pertinent role of India in dividing East Pakistan from West Pakistan. One day when Rehana and her daughter were listening news on the radio, it was announced that a large number of refugees were heading toward West Bengal and the number had crossed one million. The International Red Cross gives the statement that refugee camps have been arranged between the borders of India and Bangladesh. Due to this massive amount of number both the countries can suffer the problem of “clear water, sanitation and medical facilities” (Anam 108). After hearing this news, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi headed ahead to support Bangladesh, and she stated that “freedom-loving Bengalis” (Anam 109) one day would get rid of the undemocratic administration of Pakistan. The statement clearly shows that Indira Gandhi came up with the complete support of Bangladesh and the people welcomed her sustenance. It was the hour of the need that someone may come in support of them and help them to draw them out of this dreary situation. Apparently, it was aid provided by the Indian Government that was going in favor of Bangladesh, but actually, India was setting it up for its own status and position in the world. It was all done to clear its position before the world that it is one of the peace loving countries in the world. Ali contradicts this statement and produces the opinion that actually India was doing it to undo Pakistan. The resistance given by East Pakistan has been tried to resolve from the

month of March to the date 10th May 1971. The governments of both countries were trying to resolve their issues and prepare the agenda in a way that goes in favor of both parties. Both parties somehow or the other expressed their consensus. They started thinking of using the same channel, but in the meantime, India embarked on its own intervention and destroyed the covenant that was about to be signed between East Pakistan and West Pakistan. Ali also narrates that India was lurking and ambushing among the bushes and left no opportunity to undo Pakistan. "The main trouble arouse to and from India" (Ali 90). Being opportunistic, India took advantage of the situation where Muslims were busy "killing Muslims" (Ali 90). Although, all the weak nations had gone into antagonistic hands, on the other hand India had "started welcoming" (Ali 90) those Hindus who migrated to India. Hence, India had left no stone unturned to destroy Pakistan. The government of India, through its filthy plans, had succeeded in contaminating the minds of the people of Bangladesh. When the negotiations, after the Indian mechanism, between both governments failed then, unfortunately, "a hacked military operation was launched" (Ali 91). The outrageous Bengalis revolted against this action and plunged into this short encounter which lasted for a few days. The thing that was in favor of Pakistan was that the people of East Pakistan were still in the territories of Pakistan, they did not move to India. Here, again both the narratives are conflicting and hence, contradict each other. Bengalis considered the Indian Government as supernatural beings that explicitly drew them out from the dungeon of miseries but actually pushed them to the havoc of troubles. The Pakistani government had already anticipated the odious and detestable plans of India. Therefore, the Pakistani military was trying to take East Pakistan on the safer side. But unfortunately, it could not happen the same and the people of East Pakistan decided to part ways with Pakistan.

After facing so many trials and tribulations, the people of East Pakistan were all set to be free and they, with thousands of sacrifices snatched their beloved land from the hands of West Pakistan. It was the day of 16th December 1971, when all their efforts bore fruit. They endured pain, gave sacrifices of near and dear ones, saw bloodshed all around, and faced mortification but they remained resolute and determined in their sacred mission. Therefore, they won their war of freedom. For Bengalis, the month of December was a rejoicing one because in this month they got victory and conquered the land for which they slaughtered themselves. The last chapter of the novel is a representation of the inner feelings of Bengalis. The way Anam ends her novel in a happy mood clearly depicts how everyone was feeling triumph after so long. In the last chapter of the novel, she talks about those plants which had withered during the war, but now they are blooming in full bright colors. All three main characters of the novel are happy. Rehana goes to the grave of her husband and makes an announcement of the end of the war. "Dear husband, the war will end today" (Anam 279). This announcement is the voice of every Bengali. They are inwardly contented and satisfied that at last, they have gotten what they are striving for. Not only human beings but nature is also smiling and greeting those

who really put in strenuous efforts to win this battle. It is the month of winter, and it is mythicized that mostly, no life is observed in this month but Rehana counts the names of flowers and tells her belated husband that all the flowers are blossoming with full strength and power. "The flowers she had planted at the start of the war now studded the green" (Anam 269). This proclamation of blooming nature evidently shows that the clouds of war have gone away forever, and the land has been purified from polluted politics. After taking breaths of serenity and pleasure, everyone is running in the streets and knocking on the doors with happiness. "They would fall on each other, as after very long crossing" (Anam 269). All the characters in the novel seem very happy and they are pouring their happiness on each other, hugging and congratulating everyone. They gather at the Bungalow of Rehana and make some arrangements to celebrate this victory. Whereas, in Pakistan, there is an environment of mourning, as they have lost their body part. The politicians were throwing the responsibility of failure on each other. They have lost their senses and cannot grasp the gravity of the situation. The nation of Pakistan is looking with the eyes of speculation at the Armed Forces as they were the culprits and responsible for the tragedy of 1917. To hide this shame and disgrace from the world, the politicians of Pakistan started making speeches against everyone. Rao Farman Ali, in the last chapter of his book "Politicians Responsibility in Break-up of Pakistan," identifies the causes of failures and also tells the narratives of different politicians. As Bhutto said, "Leaders fail the people" (Ali 177). The narrative of Bhutto shows that disasters and failures do not fall suddenly, they are descendent upon the people. But some people do not sense the gravity of the situation and hence they drown others as well. Talking about successors, he throws the responsibility of the fall of Dacca on their shoulders. He also criticizes them that they handled the state poorly that some external force came and asserted its power upon them, and they went away parting them so easily. He directly hits the government and says that the situation could have been handled in a better way if the government of Pakistan adopted better strategies. In his next speech, he considers language responsible for this tragedy and he says that it is the issue of language which introduces controversies between "two wings of the country" (Ali 177). In addition to his discourses, he further quotes Machiavelli that "wrong political decisions are like tuberculosis" (Ali 178). Some maladies are easy to control if they are diagnosed before the time, otherwise, they become fatal to the extent that they take away the lives of the people. He is pointing towards the government that some political decisions cannot be taken earlier but later, they become blisters and spread into the body and cannot be cured so easily. It was the accountability of those political leaders who were in the reign to anticipate the seriousness of the situation and make the right decisions at the right time. The internal conflicts of Pakistan had soared so high that none of them was ready to take responsibility for this catastrophe. Once Bhutto held a meeting with Yahya, and he received a cold response from Bhutto

which directs that he was not happy with Yahya's premature decisions. One of his premature decisions is that he helped Sheikh Mujeeb Ur Rehman become one of the ministers. Had he not been helped, he would not have created troubles and problems for Pakistan. In response to this allegation, Yahya cleared his position that the majority of the people elected him and it is people who have brought him here, "Mujib's majority had" (Ali 180).

5. Conclusion

Tahmima Anam and Rao Farman Ali in their respective novels give readers some detailed accounts of the tragedy that happened in 1971. On their biased attitudes, they develop their own discourses about the separation of East Pakistan and West Pakistan. Anam in her novel *A Golden Age* in the true sense shows the golden period of her country. The age is shining and sparkling because the people of her country have started real efforts to get the land for their own living. Although they are living with their Muslim brothers in Pakistan having the same religion and same ethnicity, yet they need their own state. The people of East Pakistan are so vigorous and persistent in their ambition that in the end they are capable of getting to their motherland. Anam begins her novel with a tragedy of a family in which the woman Rehana has lost her husband in a car accident, since then she has been making efforts to look after her family. Her sufferings match with the suffering of every Bengali. It seems that Anam deliberately constructs a story of a miserable woman who is actually representing the story of the people of her nation. With the help of the story, Anam portrays the actual efforts of the people of East Pakistan. The happy ending of the novel depicts the victory of Bangladesh. The story which Anam builds seems manipulative as it arouses sympathy in the hearts of the readers. Whereas, Ali in his book *How Pakistan Got Divided* gives his own point of view about the fall of Dacca. In this journey, Ali himself is an eyewitness of the whole incident. He is a General at that time, hence, defines everything in a more appropriate way. The incidents which Anam narrates in her novel, contradict the incidents Ali describes in his book. The description of every occurrence and event is quite contrasting and conflicting.

Works Cited

- Ali, Rao Farman. *How Pakistan Got Divided*. Lahore: Jang Publishers, 1992
- Anam, Tahmima. *A Golden Age*. UK: Routledge Publisher, 2007
- Aziz, Ahmed. "Questioning Global Muslim Diaspora: Tahmima Anam's *The Good Muslim*" in *Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism*. 2019
- Dev, Shovik. "Postcolonial Women and Their Empowerment: A Study of Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age*." *DELL Journal*, vol. 805, 17 May 2017, pp. 1-9.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. University of Chicago Press, 1980
- Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Translated by A. M. Sheridan Smith, Routledge, 2002
- Hussain Raja, Khadim. *A stranger in my Own Country*. Oxford University Press, 2022
- Islam, Rofiqul. "Representation of Religion and Nationalism in the Select Novels of Tahmima Anam" in *IJCRT*. 2021
- Lauret-Taft, Sabine. "You're Just a Housewife. What on Earth Could You Possibly Do?" The History of the Bangladesh War of Independence Told by Women in Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age*" in *Open Edition Journals. SEPC (Société d'études des pays du Commonwealth)*, 2020.
- Malik, Inshah. "Review of *History of Armed Struggles in Kashmir* by Rao Farman Ali." *HIMALAYA*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2018, pp. 206–208.
- Miah, Mohammad Moniruzzaman. "Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age*: A Family Saga of Love, Duty and Identity against the Backdrop of War" in *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*. Saudi Arabia: Jazan University, 2020
- Niazi, A.A.K. *The Betrayal of East Pakistan*, Bangladesh: Oxford University Press, 2000
- Rahim, Abdur. "Postcolonial women and their empowerment: A study of Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age*" in *DELL* 805. 2017
- Shah, Zeynep Harputlu. "Women and the Nation's Narrative in Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age*" in *Rumeli DE Journal of Language and Literature Studies*. 2018
- Zakaria, Anam. *1971: A People's History from Bangladesh, Pakistan and India*. UK: Penguin Publishers, 2019