

THE TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT OF DIASPORIC TRAUMA: TRACING THE PATHWAY FROM PTSD TO PTG IN SHIDA BAZYAR'S THE NIGHTS ARE QUIET IN TEHRAN

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Abstract

This study examines the psychological trajectory of trauma and transformation in *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran* by situating the narrative within an interdisciplinary framework that integrates diaspora studies and trauma psychology. It argues that the relationship between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG) is not linear but curvilinear, marked by oscillation, recurrence, and gradual reconfiguration of identity across generations. Drawing on PTSD models outlined by the American Psychiatric Association and PTG theory developed by Tedeschi & Calhoun (2004), the study conducts a qualitative textual analysis of the novel to trace how trauma is represented, transmitted, and transformed within a diasporic family. The analysis reveals that first-generation characters exhibit persistent symptoms of PTSD, including intrusive memory, avoidance, and emotional fragmentation, rooted in experiences of political violence and forced migration. In contrast, second-generation characters engage with inherited trauma through reflection and reinterpretation, demonstrating elements of PTG such as identity reconstruction, emotional resilience, and meaning-making. The narrative structure itself reinforces the curvilinear model, as it moves between past and present, illustrating the coexistence of distress and growth rather than a sequential progression. The study further addresses counter-arguments that interpret such transformation as mere cultural assimilation, arguing instead that the novel presents a deeper psychological process grounded in critical engagement with memory and history. By integrating theoretical models with close textual analysis, this research contributes to both literary criticism and trauma studies, highlighting the importance of viewing diaspora as a dynamic psychological process. It concludes that trauma in diasporic contexts cannot be adequately understood through linear frameworks and calls for further interdisciplinary research that bridges literary narratives with psychological theory.

Keywords: Diaspora, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG), Curvilinear Relationship, Trauma Narrative, Intergenerational Memory, Iranian Diaspora

1. INTRODUCTION

Diasporic writing frequently locates displacement within a continuing psychological and historical experience rather than treating migration as a completed act of geographical movement. In narratives shaped by political violence, exile, and forced displacement, the effects of traumatic experience may persist through memory, family histories, fractured belonging, and changing relationships with the homeland. Trauma may therefore remain active even when the immediate conditions that produced it have passed. This temporal persistence is particularly significant in multigenerational diasporic narratives, where traumatic experiences are remembered, narrated, inherited, and

reinterpreted by subjects who occupy different historical and cultural positions. Shida Bazayr's *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran* offers a compelling literary representation of this condition through its portrayal of an Iranian family across successive generations and changing political circumstances. The present study consequently examines the representation of trauma and psychological transformation in the novel, with particular attention to the relationship between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG).

Contemporary trauma research provides a substantial basis for questioning interpretations that position psychological distress and positive transformation as mutually exclusive outcomes. PTSD is clinically associated with persistent patterns of intrusive recollection, avoidance, negative alterations in cognition and mood, and heightened arousal following traumatic exposure (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Yet empirical research demonstrates considerable variation in posttraumatic responses, indicating that trauma does not produce a uniform psychological trajectory. Bonanno (2004) established the importance of heterogeneous responses to adversity by demonstrating that resilience, recovery, and persistent distress can follow traumatic exposure in different ways. More recent research has extended this position by demonstrating that PTSD symptoms and PTG may coexist within the same individuals and may develop through complex, non-linear trajectories (Fletcher et al., 2023; Gendreau et al., 2025). Such findings are theoretically important because they challenge the assumption that psychological growth necessarily follows the resolution of traumatic distress.

PTG provides an equally important dimension to this debate. Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) conceptualize posttraumatic growth as positive psychological change arising through the struggle to accommodate highly challenging experiences. Growth may involve changes in personal strength, interpersonal relationships, appreciation of life, recognition of new possibilities, and existential understanding. Crucially, PTG does not imply the disappearance of psychological suffering. Rather, contemporary research increasingly treats distress and growth as potentially coexisting dimensions of posttraumatic experience. Gendreau et al. (2025), for example, identify substantial variation in the trajectories through which PTG develops, while recent research on refugees and internally displaced populations reports a non-linear association between posttraumatic stress and growth and further emphasizes the importance of cultural context in understanding what constitutes growth (Pop et al., 2025). The relationship between PTSD and PTG therefore warrants examination as a dynamic psychological process rather than as a predetermined progression from suffering to recovery and subsequently to transformation.

This perspective assumes particular significance within diasporic contexts because displacement can extend the consequences of trauma beyond the individual event and the individual survivor. Political upheaval, exile, separation from family and homeland, cultural dislocation, and the transmission of memories across generations can alter the ways in which traumatic experience is subsequently understood. Refugee research increasingly indicates that posttraumatic responses are shaped by social relationships, cultural identity, continuing displacement-related pressures, and processes of meaning-making (Pop et al., 2025). Such evidence complicates approaches that isolate trauma from its historical and cultural circumstances. For literary studies, this complexity is especially relevant because fiction can represent dimensions of traumatic experience that are distributed across generations and articulated through memory, silence, narrative perspective, temporal shifts, and competing interpretations of the past. Trauma in diasporic fiction can consequently be examined not only as an individual psychological condition but also as an experience mediated by history, family, culture, and narrative memory.

Within this context, *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran* provides a particularly productive textual field for examining the relationship between traumatic distress and subsequent transformation. The novel traces the experiences of an Iranian family across generations and employs shifts in narrative voice and historical time to connect political violence, exile, memory, return, and changing forms of identity. The first generation encounters political upheaval and displacement as direct historical experience, whereas subsequent generations encounter aspects of that history through familial memory, inherited narratives, and their own negotiations of identity and belonging. This generational differentiation makes it possible to examine whether traumatic experience remains psychologically unchanged as it moves across generations or whether its meaning is altered through processes of remembering, reinterpretation, and identity reconstruction.

The novel's narrative structure further strengthens the basis for such an investigation. Its movement across different temporal periods and voices does not present trauma as a completed historical episode with a clearly defined psychological resolution. Instead, the return to earlier experiences through subsequent perspectives creates a textual environment in which past and present remain closely connected. The study can therefore examine not only what the characters experience but also how the narrative organizes the relationship between traumatic memory and subsequent reinterpretation. The article's textual analysis already identifies recurring representations of political violence, hyperarousal, avoidance, silence, inherited memory, agency, and identity reconstruction across generations. These

features make the novel particularly appropriate for investigating whether manifestations consistent with PTSD can coexist with forms of psychological reorientation associated with PTG.

The need for the present study is further established by the limited dialogue between empirical trauma research and literary representations of diaspora. Psychological studies provide increasingly sophisticated accounts of PTSD, PTG, resilience, and their possible coexistence, but such research necessarily operates through clinical populations, measurement instruments, and empirically observable variables. Literary narratives, by contrast, represent trauma through consciousness, memory, language, characterization, temporal organization, and narrative form. Diaspora criticism has likewise generated extensive discussions of displacement, hybridity, belonging, memory, and identity, yet these discussions do not always engage systematically with psychological models of posttraumatic distress and growth. Bringing these bodies of knowledge into sustained conversation allows the literary text to be examined as a complex representation of psychological and diasporic experience without reducing literary characters to clinical subjects.

The present study is therefore grounded in the proposition that PTSD and PTG should be examined as dynamically related dimensions of traumatic experience within diasporic narrative rather than as mutually exclusive conditions or fixed stages of recovery. This proposition is consistent with recent empirical findings concerning the coexistence and changing trajectories of posttraumatic stress and growth (Fletcher et al., 2023; Gendre et al., 2025; Pop et al., 2025), while also responding to the particular demands of literary representation. In *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran*, traumatic experience is neither confined to the generation that directly encounters political violence nor detached from the identities of those who inherit its memories. Its psychological meanings are repeatedly negotiated as characters confront the relationship between historical experience, familial memory, cultural belonging, and their own sense of self. Examining these processes through a curvilinear conception of PTSD and PTG consequently provides a means of understanding how distress may persist alongside reflection, adaptation, and transformation. The study thus seeks to contribute an empirically informed yet textually grounded account of diasporic trauma in which psychological suffering and posttraumatic transformation are understood as interconnected, temporally variable, and shaped by the transmission and reinterpretation of traumatic memory across generations.

1.1 Rational of the study

The rationale for the present study emerges from a significant conceptual development in contemporary trauma research: psychological responses to traumatic experience can no longer be adequately understood through a simple opposition between pathological distress and successful recovery. PTSD remains an important clinical construct for explaining persistent responses to traumatic exposure, including intrusive recollection, avoidance, alterations in cognition and mood, and heightened arousal. However, contemporary trauma research increasingly demonstrates substantial heterogeneity in the ways individuals respond to adversity. Fletcher et al. (2023), in a systematic review of empirically derived patterns of posttraumatic stress and growth, identified several configurations in which posttraumatic stress and posttraumatic growth occur simultaneously rather than as mutually exclusive outcomes. Their findings are particularly significant because they challenge interpretations in which psychological distress is assumed to disappear before positive transformation can occur. The emerging evidence therefore calls for a more dynamic understanding of trauma in which distress, adaptation, meaning-making, and perceived growth may remain psychologically entangled.

This development becomes particularly important in relation to Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG). Tedeschi and Calhoun's (2004) model established that individuals may experience substantial positive psychological changes following highly challenging experiences, including greater appreciation of life, increased personal strength, altered interpersonal relationships, recognition of new possibilities, and existential or spiritual change. Yet contemporary research cautions against treating PTG as an inevitable consequence of trauma or as evidence that psychological suffering has been resolved. Gendre et al. (2025), in a systematic review of PTG trajectories, demonstrate that growth may follow different patterns, including increasing, decreasing, stable, constructive, illusory, and distressed trajectories. Such findings are theoretically consequential because they position growth as temporally variable and psychologically heterogeneous rather than as a predictable endpoint of recovery. Similarly, Zhou and Zhen (2024) propose a dynamic process model in which PTSD and PTG may coexist and develop through changing interactions among cognitive processing, emotional regulation, and social support. The contemporary evidence therefore provides a stronger basis for examining trauma and growth as relational and evolving processes rather than as discrete psychological states.

The relevance of this perspective becomes more pronounced when trauma is situated within diaspora. Forced migration is rarely confined to the moment of geographical departure. Political violence, exile, separation from homeland, disrupted social networks, cultural dislocation, uncertainty regarding belonging, and the persistence of memories may continue to shape psychological experience long after physical movement has occurred. Recent evidence concerning displaced populations is especially pertinent. Pop et al. (2025), in a systematic review and meta-analysis of posttraumatic growth among refugees and internally displaced persons, found considerable heterogeneity

in PTG and reported evidence of a non-linear association between PTSD and PTG. Importantly, the authors also caution that conventional measures of PTG may fail to capture culturally specific understandings of growth, calling for approaches that attend more carefully to context and lived experience. This observation has particular significance for literary representations of diaspora, where psychological experience is mediated through memory, family history, cultural identity, narrative voice, and changing relationships with the homeland rather than through clinical measurement alone.

The intersection between trauma psychology and diaspora studies consequently offers an especially productive field of literary inquiry. Existing diaspora scholarship has generated sophisticated accounts of displacement, identity, hybridity, belonging, memory, and cultural negotiation, while trauma studies have developed extensive conceptual and empirical explanations of psychological distress and posttraumatic adaptation. The two bodies of scholarship, however, do not always meet at the level of literary form and character representation. The article under consideration itself establishes that the selected novel represents trauma across generations and connects experiences of political upheaval, exile, memory, identity, and psychological reconfiguration. The significance of the present study therefore lies not simply in applying a psychological terminology to a literary text, but in examining what becomes visible when psychological trauma and diasporic identity are interpreted as historically and narratively interconnected experiences. Shida Bazayr's *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran* provides an especially compelling textual site for such an investigation because its representation of trauma extends beyond an isolated individual and develops through a multigenerational family history. As established in the article, the narrative follows Iranian experiences across different historical periods and generations, while shifts in voice and temporality connect political violence, exile, memory, return, and changing forms of identification. This structure makes the novel particularly suitable for investigating whether trauma remains psychologically static across generations or whether its meanings and manifestations are altered as it is remembered, narrated, inherited, resisted, and reinterpreted. The literary form is therefore not merely a vehicle through which trauma is represented; it becomes part of the evidence through which the changing relationship between distress and transformation can be examined.

The study is further warranted by the growing recognition that the relationship between PTSD and PTG is empirically complex. A systematic review by Fletcher et al. (2023) found recurring patterns of co-occurring posttraumatic stress and growth, while recent research has continued to question the assumption that greater psychological distress necessarily corresponds to an absence of growth. More recent work has strengthened this position. Zhou and Zhen (2024) conceptualize PTSD and PTG as dynamic processes whose relationship changes across phases of posttraumatic adaptation, while Gendre et al. (2025) demonstrate that trajectories of perceived growth can change over time and vary according to distress, coping resources, social support, and the nature of the traumatic experience. The recent meta-analysis of refugee and internally displaced populations is particularly important for the present study because it identifies a non-linear PTSD–PTG association while simultaneously emphasizing cultural and contextual variation. These findings provide empirical justification for investigating the PTSD–PTG relationship as dynamic rather than assuming a predetermined progression from trauma to recovery and then to growth.

This theoretical position also offers a productive way of reading the novel's representation of intergenerational experience. The first generation's experiences of political violence and displacement may remain associated with fear, loss, anxiety, recurring memories, and disrupted assumptions about safety and belonging. Subsequent generations, however, encounter this history differently: they inherit memories without necessarily reproducing the same experiences, confront identities formed through familial narratives, and negotiate relationships with a homeland that may be remembered more than directly experienced. The article identifies precisely this generational differentiation, with first-generation characters carrying more direct experiences of political violence and exile, while younger characters negotiate inherited memory, identity, distance, and reinterpretation. The rationale for examining PTSD and PTG together therefore rests on the possibility that transformation in diasporic narratives may occur not through the disappearance of traumatic memory but through changes in its interpretation and significance.

Such an approach also avoids an overly celebratory understanding of posttraumatic growth. PTG should not be equated with uncomplicated recovery, resilience, happiness, or the disappearance of psychological suffering. The contemporary literature itself remains cautious about whether reported growth always represents substantive psychological transformation or, in some circumstances, perceived or illusory growth. Gendre et al. (2025) explicitly identify this distinction as an important issue in current PTG research. Likewise, Pop et al. (2025) emphasize the cultural limitations of existing PTG measurement practices among displaced populations. A literary investigation can contribute to this debate by examining growth not as a measurable psychological endpoint but as a process of narrative and identity reconstruction. In Bazayr's novel, therefore, signs of agency, reflection, relational reorientation, and changing perceptions of identity need to be considered alongside continuing distress rather than interpreted as evidence that trauma has been overcome.

The study is consequently grounded in a clearly defined interdisciplinary necessity. Psychological research provides robust evidence that PTSD and PTG may coexist and that their relationship can vary across time and contexts; diaspora studies explain how displacement, memory, identity, and belonging shape experiences of cultural rupture; literary

studies provide the interpretive means to examine how these experiences are embodied through character, voice, temporality, memory, and narrative structure. What remains insufficiently developed is an integrated literary account of how these dimensions interact within a multigenerational diasporic narrative. The present study responds to this need by reading *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran* through PTSD and PTG while retaining the historical, cultural, and narrative conditions within which trauma is represented. This orientation is consistent with the article's methodological design, which treats narrative description, dialogue, interiority, and broader narrative structure as textual evidence for interpreting trauma and transformation.

The rationale ultimately rests on the proposition that the psychological meaning of diaspora cannot be fully understood by examining either trauma or adaptation in isolation. Bazayr's novel provides a literary representation in which political violence becomes memory, memory becomes an intergenerational inheritance, and that inheritance is subsequently subjected to reinterpretation by later generations. The significance of the proposed study therefore lies in examining whether this movement produces a genuinely curvilinear relationship between PTSD and PTG, in which distress and growth may coexist, recur, intensify, recede, or acquire different meanings at different points in the narrative. Such an investigation moves beyond the familiar opposition between victimhood and resilience and instead treats diasporic subjectivity as a continuing process of negotiating traumatic inheritance, historical memory, identity, and psychological reorientation. In doing so, the study seeks to extend trauma-informed literary criticism while also demonstrating how literary narratives can complicate psychologically derived models by representing temporal, relational, and intergenerational dimensions that are difficult to capture through clinical categories alone.

1.2 Research Questions

1. How is trauma represented across generations in the novel *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran*?
2. In what ways do characters exhibit symptoms consistent with PTSD as reflected in *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran*?
3. Does the narrative demonstrate transformation aligned with PTG as discussed in *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran*?
4. How can the relationship between PTSD and PTG be conceptualized as curvilinear within a diasporic framework of *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran*?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research lies in its interdisciplinary approach. By treating literary characters as sites of psychological inquiry, the study contributes to both literary criticism and trauma theory. It also offers a framework for understanding diaspora not merely as cultural displacement but as a psychological process involving cycles of disruption and reconstruction. The conceptual framework guiding this study integrates three key constructs. PTSD represents the initial disruption caused by trauma. PTG represents the potential for transformation. The curvilinear model connects these constructs by suggesting that movement between them is non-linear and often recursive. In diasporic contexts, this movement is intensified by the persistence of memory, cultural dislocation, and intergenerational transmission of trauma.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Literature

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a clinically recognized trauma- and stressor-related condition that emerges when an individual's cognitive, emotional, and neurobiological systems remain persistently dysregulated following exposure to a life-threatening or deeply distressing event. Rather than representing a transient reaction, PTSD involves a prolonged pattern of intrusive recollections (such as flashbacks and nightmares), avoidance behaviors, negative alterations in mood and cognition, and heightened physiological arousal, all of which collectively impair daily functioning. Contemporary psychological theory situates PTSD at the intersection of memory processing and fear conditioning, where traumatic experiences become maladaptively encoded, leading to recurrent re-experiencing and an exaggerated stress response (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Neurobiological research further indicates that abnormalities in brain regions such as the amygdala, hippocampus, and prefrontal cortex contribute to heightened threat perception and impaired emotional regulation (Yehuda et al., 2015). Importantly, PTSD does not affect all trauma-exposed individuals equally; its development is mediated by risk factors including prior vulnerability, lack of social support, and the intensity of the traumatic exposure (Brewin et al., 2000). Despite its complexity, PTSD is treatable through evidence-based interventions such as trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy and pharmacotherapy, underscoring the importance of early diagnosis and sustained psychological care.

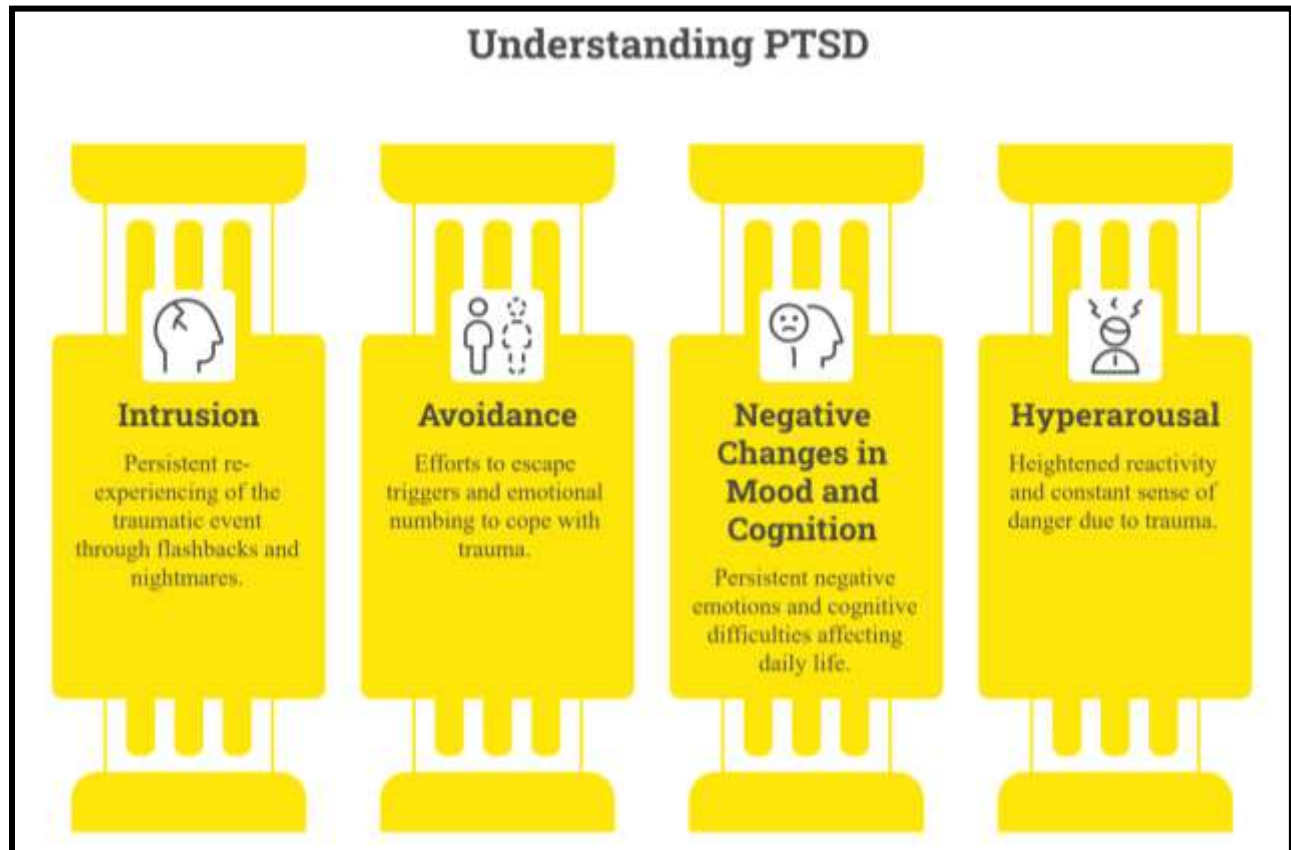


Figure 1. PTSD and components

2.2 Post Traumatic Growth

A coherent understanding of Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG) in literary and psychological discourse requires moving beyond bullet-pointed categories and instead tracing how each major dimension unfolds as a narrative of transformation. What follows is a connected, interpretive account of the four broader sections i.e. domains, process, theoretical frameworks, and literary relevance, so that each reads as a conceptual storyline rather than a static schema.

2.2.1 Domains of Post-Traumatic Growth

In the foundational work of Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun, the domains of PTG do not function as isolated categories but as overlapping trajectories through which a traumatized individual gradually reconstructs a viable sense of self and world. These domains collectively narrate a movement from rupture to reorientation. After trauma destabilizes fundamental assumptions, the individual begins to re-experience life with an altered sensibility: the ordinary becomes charged with significance, suggesting a renewed appreciation of existence itself. This perceptual shift is accompanied by a reconfiguration of identity, where strength is no longer defined by invulnerability but by the capacity to endure and reinterpret suffering. As this internal recalibration unfolds, the future reopens in unexpected ways, allowing for new possibilities that are not mere substitutions for loss but transformations of desire and direction. Simultaneously, relationships deepen as the individual becomes more attuned to the fragility and value of human connection, often cultivating empathy rooted in shared vulnerability. At its most profound level, this process extends into the existential or spiritual domain, where prior belief systems are unsettled and reconstituted, enabling a more complex engagement with meaning, purpose, and uncertainty. Taken together, these domains form a layered narrative in which growth is not the negation of trauma but its re-inscription into a broader, more nuanced life structure.

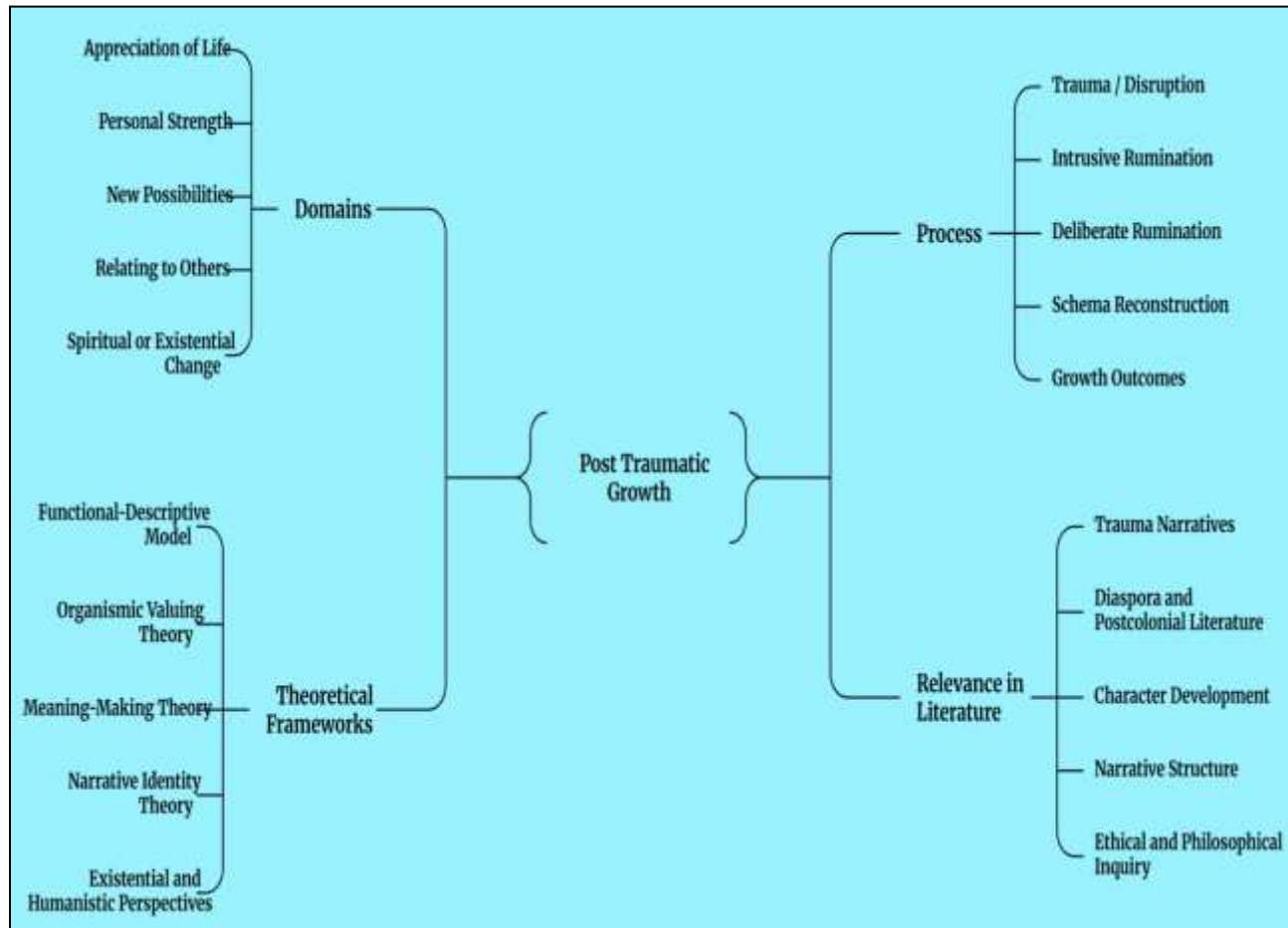


Figure 2. PTG and Components

2.2.2 Process of PTG

The process of PTG unfolds as a temporally dynamic and psychologically intricate narrative rather than a linear sequence of steps. It begins with a disruptive event that fractures the individual's assumptive world, creating a crisis of meaning in which previously stable beliefs about safety, identity, and order collapse. In the immediate aftermath, cognition is dominated by intrusive rumination—unbidden, repetitive thoughts that reflect the mind's struggle to process the incomprehensible. This phase is often marked by fragmentation and emotional intensity, where the self appears overwhelmed by the weight of the experience. Gradually, however, a transition occurs toward deliberate rumination, in which the individual begins to engage the trauma more consciously, asking interpretive questions and seeking coherence. This shift is crucial, as it signals the emergence of agency within the cognitive process. Through sustained reflection, the individual undertakes a reconstruction of their cognitive schemas, revising core assumptions about self and world in ways that can accommodate the traumatic event. What emerges from this reconstruction is not a return to the pre-trauma state but a reconfigured identity that integrates loss, vulnerability, and newfound insight. The "outcomes" of PTG, therefore, are better understood as narrative resolutions that remain open-ended, continually renegotiated as the individual encounters new experiences and contexts.

2.2.3 Theoretical Frameworks of PTG

The theoretical grounding of PTG reflects an interdisciplinary convergence of cognitive, humanistic, and narrative paradigms, each offering a different lens on how growth becomes possible in the aftermath of trauma. The functional-descriptive model developed by Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun provides a structural account, mapping the relationship between cognitive processing and growth outcomes. Expanding this perspective, Stephen Joseph's Organismic Valuing Theory demonstrates PTG within an inherent human tendency toward psychological integration, suggesting that trauma disrupts but does not extinguish the organism's drive toward growth. Complementing this, Crystal Park emphasizes the centrality of meaning-making, arguing that growth emerges from the effort to reconcile situational experiences with global belief systems. Meanwhile, Dan McAdams's narrative identity framework reframes PTG as a storying process, in which individuals reconstruct their life narratives to incorporate trauma as a transformative turning point. Finally, existential perspectives, influenced by thinkers such as Viktor Frankl, foreground the search for meaning in suffering, proposing that growth arises not despite trauma but through the

individual's capacity to derive significance from it. Together, these frameworks do not compete but intersect, offering a multidimensional understanding of PTG as simultaneously cognitive, affective, and narrative.

2.2.4 Relevance of PTG in Literature

Within literary studies, PTG functions less as a psychological diagnosis and more as an interpretive framework that illuminates how narratives of suffering evolve into narratives of transformation. Literature provides a unique space where the internal processes described by PTG theories are externalized through language, structure, and form. In trauma narratives, characters often move through fragmentation, silence, and disorientation before arriving at a rearticulated sense of self, mirroring the cognitive and emotional processes identified in PTG research. This makes PTG particularly valuable for analyzing contemporary fiction, diaspora writing, and post-conflict literature, where identity is frequently shaped by rupture and displacement. Moreover, PTG reshapes our understanding of character development: growth is no longer linear or purely progressive but emerges through crisis, regression, and reconfiguration. Narratively, this is reflected in nonlinear timelines, recursive memory structures, and shifting narrative voices that embody the struggle to integrate traumatic experience. At a broader level, PTG enables literature to engage with enduring philosophical questions about suffering, resilience, and meaning, without reducing them to simplistic resolutions. It allows critics to trace how texts negotiate the tension between damage and renewal, often revealing that growth, when it occurs, is partial, contested, and inseparable from the very trauma that necessitated it.

2.3 Curvilinear Relationship of PTSD & PTG

The notion of a curvilinear relationship has gained attention in psychological research as a way of explaining complex human responses that do not follow linear patterns. Bonanno (2004) challenges the assumption that trauma leads inevitably to dysfunction, arguing instead that individuals display a range of responses, including resilience, delayed distress, and recovery. This variability suggests that trauma and growth may coexist rather than occur sequentially.

In trauma theory, early models focused primarily on pathology. Herman (1992) conceptualizes trauma as a condition that disrupts the individual's sense of safety and continuity, particularly in cases of political violence. She emphasizes that trauma is not only psychological but also social, shaped by power structures and collective experiences. Similarly, Caruth (1996) argues that trauma is characterized by its resistance to representation, often returning in fragmented and repetitive forms.

However, these models have been critiqued for their emphasis on suffering without sufficient attention to transformation. PTG theory addresses this gap by proposing that trauma can lead to positive change. Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) identify five domains of growth, including personal strength, new possibilities, improved relationships, appreciation of life, and spiritual change. They argue that growth emerges through cognitive processing, as individuals attempt to make sense of their experiences.

Recent studies have further developed this perspective. Joseph and Linley (2006) propose that growth is not an automatic outcome but depends on the individual's ability to engage with trauma meaningfully. This aligns with the curvilinear model, where movement between distress and growth is dynamic rather than fixed. In diaspora studies, identity has been a central concern. Hall (1990) describes identity as fluid and continuously reconstructed through memory and representation. Brah (1996) introduces the concept of "diaspora space," where multiple identities intersect. While these frameworks are valuable, they often overlook the psychological impact of displacement. The novel under study provides a unique opportunity to integrate these perspectives. It traces the experiences of an Iranian family across generations, revealing how trauma is transmitted, transformed, and reinterpreted. Its narrative structure, which shifts between voices and time periods, mirrors the non-linear nature of trauma.

Table 1: Theoretical background of the study

Author	Year	Focus	Key Findings	Gap
Herman	1992	Trauma and recovery	Trauma disrupts identity and safety	Limited literary integration
Caruth	1996	Trauma narrative	Trauma is fragmented and repetitive	No focus on growth
Hall	1990	Cultural identity	Identity is fluid	Ignores psychological trauma
Bonanno	2004	Resilience	Multiple responses to trauma	No diaspora context
Tedeschi & Calhoun	2004	PTG theory	Growth emerges from struggle	Limited narrative application
Joseph & Linley	2006	Growth process	Meaning-making is central	Lacks literary perspective

The review of these studies reveals a clear need for an integrative framework that combines trauma theory, growth models, and diaspora studies. The theoretical framework of this study therefore positions PTSD and PTG as interconnected processes within a curvilinear model, applied to literary analysis.

Research on trauma has moved well beyond early models that treated psychological injury as a fixed pathological condition. A growing body of empirical work now suggests that trauma produces a spectrum of responses, where distress and transformation often coexist. This shift is particularly important for understanding diasporic narratives, where trauma is not confined to a single event but extends across time, space, and generations. The present review synthesizes studies on PTSD, PTG, and diaspora using an argumentative meta-analytical approach, examining convergences, tensions, and unresolved gaps. Early trauma frameworks emphasized disruption, fragmentation, and long-term psychological damage. Clinical models such as those codified by the American Psychiatric Association identify PTSD through symptoms including intrusive recollections, avoidance, hyperarousal, and cognitive disturbance (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). While these criteria remain foundational, they have been increasingly supplemented by research demonstrating variability in trauma responses. Bonanno (2004) challenges the universality of pathological outcomes by introducing resilience as a common trajectory. However, resilience in his formulation tends to imply stability rather than transformation, leaving open the question of how individuals move beyond survival toward meaningful psychological change.

This limitation is addressed more directly in PTG theory. Foundational work by Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun reframes trauma as a catalyst for positive transformation, identifying domains such as personal strength, relational depth, and existential reorientation (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). Subsequent empirical studies have strengthened this position. Dell’Osso et al. (2022) argue that PTG does not replace distress but develops alongside it, suggesting a dual-process model in which suffering and growth are interdependent. This argument is further reinforced by systematic reviews indicating that cognitive engagement with trauma, rather than avoidance, is a key mechanism through which growth emerges (What Promotes Posttraumatic Growth, 2021). Despite this theoretical advancement, a tension remains within the literature regarding the temporal relationship between PTSD and PTG. Some models imply a sequential process in which distress precedes growth, while others suggest simultaneity. Longitudinal evidence provides critical insight into this debate. Kautz et al. (2022), in their study of World Trade Center responders, demonstrate that PTSD symptom trajectories can predict levels of later growth, indicating that distress may function as a precursor rather than an obstacle. Similarly, recent meta-analytical work shows that peritraumatic reactions, including intense emotional responses during the traumatic event, can act as catalysts for subsequent transformation (From Turmoil to Transformation, 2026). These findings challenge linear recovery models and support a curvilinear understanding, where individuals move back and forth between distress and growth rather than progressing in a straight line.

However, this emerging consensus is not without critique. Some scholars caution that the concept of PTG risks overstating positive outcomes or imposing normative expectations of recovery. The concern is that framing trauma as an opportunity for growth may inadvertently minimize suffering or overlook structural conditions that perpetuate distress. Yet empirical evidence complicates this critique. Studies such as *From Trauma to Growth* (2026) demonstrate that PTSD symptoms themselves may mediate growth processes, suggesting that distress is not bypassed but actively contributes to transformation. This perspective does not deny suffering but situates it as an integral component of psychological reorganization.

The relevance of these debates becomes even more pronounced in diasporic contexts. Trauma in diaspora is rarely limited to direct exposure; it often includes displacement, loss of homeland, cultural dislocation, and intergenerational transmission. Research on refugee populations provides valuable insight here. Sultani et al. (2023), in a comprehensive systematic review, show that refugees frequently experience both persistent trauma symptoms and significant growth. Their findings emphasize the role of narrative reconstruction, where individuals reinterpret their experiences through storytelling and identity negotiation. This process closely parallels literary representations of diaspora, where memory and narrative serve as primary sites of meaning-making. Similarly, studies on collective violence extend the scope of trauma beyond individual experience. Brooks et al. (2025) argue that exposure to political upheaval, such as revolution or war, produces shared forms of trauma that can foster both vulnerability and resilience. Their scoping review highlights that survivors of collective violence often derive a sense of purpose and solidarity from their experiences, which aligns with key dimensions of PTG. This is particularly relevant for diasporic literature, where political events are not merely background context but central forces shaping identity.

Empirical work on diaspora populations further supports this integrated perspective. Gebremeskel et al. (2025) find that diasporic communities frequently experience what may be termed “extended trauma,” where psychological distress persists through indirect exposure, memory, and ongoing socio-cultural challenges. At the same time, these communities exhibit adaptive strategies that resemble PTG, including community building and identity reconstruction. This duality reinforces the argument that trauma and growth are not opposing outcomes but interconnected processes. Natural disaster studies offer additional support for this position. Bilge et al. (2023), examining survivors of earthquakes, demonstrate that PTSD symptoms and PTG can coexist within the same individuals. Their findings show that higher levels of distress do not necessarily inhibit growth; in some cases, they are associated with greater transformation. This evidence further undermines linear models and strengthens the case for a curvilinear framework. Consequently, the literature reveals a clear pattern. PTSD and PTG are best understood not as sequential stages but as dynamically related processes that unfold over time. Distress, rather than being an endpoint, often serves as the

foundation for growth. At the same time, growth does not eliminate trauma but reconfigures its meaning. This relationship becomes particularly complex in diasporic contexts, where trauma is layered, recurring, and socially embedded.

The gap that emerges from this synthesis lies in the limited application of these psychological models to literary analysis. While empirical studies provide robust evidence of the PTSD–PTG relationship, they rarely engage with narrative forms that capture the lived experience of trauma. Conversely, literary studies of diaspora often focus on identity and memory without integrating psychological frameworks. This study addresses this gap by applying a curvilinear PTSD–PTG model to a literary text, thereby bridging empirical research and narrative representation.

Table 2. Meta analysis of the previous researches

Author(s) / Year	Focus of Study	Theoretical Orientation	Methodology	Key Findings	Identified Gaps / Limitations
American Psychiatric Association (2013)	Clinical definition of PTSD	Biomedical / diagnostic model	Clinical classification (DSM-5)	PTSD defined through intrusion, avoidance, hyperarousal, cognition changes	Neglects cultural, narrative, and growth dimensions
Bonanno (2004)	Human resilience after trauma	Resilience theory	Theoretical + empirical synthesis	Many individuals show stable functioning after trauma	Underdevelops transformation (PTG not fully integrated)
Tedeschi & Calhoun (2004)	Posttraumatic Growth theory	Constructivist psychological model	Theoretical + empirical model building	Trauma can produce positive psychological transformation	Limited attention to structural or cultural trauma
Dell’Osso et al. (2022)	PTG in traumatic experiences	Integrative trauma-growth model	Narrative review	PTG coexists with PTSD symptoms rather than replacing them	Lacks longitudinal cultural/diasporic focus
What promotes posttraumatic growth? (2021)	Mechanisms of PTG	Cognitive processing theory	Systematic review	Cognitive engagement and meaning-making drive PTG	Limited application to literary or diaspora contexts
Kautz et al. (2022)	PTSD symptom trajectories and PTG	Longitudinal trauma-growth model	Quantitative longitudinal study	PTSD symptom patterns predict later PTG	Population-specific (WTC responders), limited generalizability
From Turmoil to Transformation (2026)	Peritraumatic reactions and PTG	Integrative trauma model	Systematic review	Early trauma responses can trigger PTG pathways	Still emerging field; lacks literary application
From Trauma to Growth (2026)	PTSD as mediator of PTG	Mediation model of trauma-growth	Empirical synthesis	PTSD symptoms can facilitate growth indirectly	Limited cultural/diasporic validation
Sultani et al. (2023)	Refugee PTG experiences	Trauma + migration psychology	Systematic review	Refugees show both PTSD and PTG through meaning-making	Limited focus on intergenerational transmission
Brooks et al. (2025)	Collective violence and PTG	Social trauma theory	Scoping review	Political violence can produce both distress and growth	Does not integrate literary narrative analysis
Gebremeskel et al. (2025)	PTSD in diaspora populations	Migration trauma framework	Quantitative synthesis	Diaspora communities experience prolonged trauma and adaptive resilience	Limited qualitative narrative exploration

Bilge et al. (2023)	PTSD, PTG, resilience in disasters	Stress-growth dual model	Empirical quantitative study	PTSD and PTG can coexist in same individuals	Focus limited to natural disasters, not political diaspora
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3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical design of this study is grounded in a qualitative, interpretive research paradigm that treats literary narrative as a site where psychological processes are represented, mediated, and reconfigured. Rather than aiming at empirical generalization, the study adopts an explanatory and exploratory orientation, arguing that diasporic fiction can be systematically analyzed through established psychological frameworks. In this sense, the novel *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran* by Shida Bazayr is approached not merely as an aesthetic text but as a structured representation of trauma and transformation, where meaning emerges through narrative form, characterization, and temporal shifts.

The research is qualitative in type and operates within a constructivist epistemology, which assumes that psychological realities—such as trauma, memory, and growth—are constructed and expressed through language and narrative. The sampling strategy is purposive and theoretical, focusing on selected characters as embedded case studies representing different generational positions within the diasporic continuum. These characters are not treated as empirical subjects but as narrative embodiments of distinct psychological trajectories. The first generation is interpreted in relation to persistent trauma responses, while subsequent generations are analyzed in terms of reflective engagement and transformation, allowing the study to trace variations in the relationship between distress and growth across the text. Data for analysis consists of carefully selected textual units, including narrative descriptions, dialogue, and interior monologue, which encode psychological states and processes. The analytical procedure is theory-driven and relies on qualitative content analysis combined with thematic interpretation. Coding is conducted in a structured yet iterative manner: initial open coding identifies instances of trauma representation and emotional response; these are then refined through axial coding into broader thematic categories; and finally, selective coding is employed to trace patterns of continuity, rupture, and transformation across the narrative. This process ensures analytical rigor while preserving the interpretive depth required for literary analysis.

The content analysis framework is anchored in two major theoretical constructs. First, PTSD is operationalized using the diagnostic criteria outlined in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.) by the American Psychiatric Association (2013). The DSM-5 is a standardized clinical classification system used globally to define and diagnose mental disorders; in this study, it provides a structured lens for identifying narrative representations of trauma through indicators such as intrusive memory, avoidance behavior, hyperarousal, and cognitive or emotional disruption. Second, Post-Traumatic Growth is operationalized through the model developed by Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun (2004), particularly its emphasis on meaning-making, identity reconstruction, and cognitive reorganization. The integration of these two frameworks enables a dual-layered analysis in which distress and transformation are examined as interconnected rather than opposing processes.

The broader analytical framework of the study is interdisciplinary, combining trauma theory, narrative theory, and diaspora studies into a unified model. It is conceptually anchored in a curvilinear understanding of the PTSD–PTG relationship, which challenges linear recovery models by proposing that trauma and growth coexist, interact, and recur over time. This position is theoretically supported by trauma scholars such as Judith Herman and Cathy Caruth, who emphasize the fragmented and recursive nature of traumatic memory, as well as by resilience research associated with George Bonanno, which highlights variability in post-trauma responses. At the same time, the study incorporates diaspora theory, particularly the notion of identity as fluid and continuously reconstructed, as articulated by Stuart Hall, thereby situating psychological processes within broader cultural and historical contexts. Analytically, the framework operates on two interconnected levels. At the micro level, individual textual elements are examined for linguistic and thematic markers of trauma and growth. At the macro level, the narrative structure—its non-linear temporality, shifting perspectives, and polyphonic form—is interpreted as a formal manifestation of the curvilinear model itself. This dual approach allows the study to demonstrate that the oscillation between PTSD and PTG is not only represented at the level of character but is also embedded in the structural logic of the text. Ultimately, the methodological design advances an argument that literary narratives can be analyzed with systematic rigor while still preserving their complexity, showing that trauma and transformation are dynamically intertwined rather than sequentially resolved.

4. Textual and Contextual Analysis

4.1 Summary of the Novel

The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran by Shida Bazayr is a polyphonic, multi-generational narrative that traces the emotional and political afterlife of the 1979 Iranian Revolution through the intimate story of one family. Spanning four decades,

the novel unfolds through four distinct voices, each capturing a different temporal moment and psychological position within the diasporic experience. The narrative begins with Behzad, an idealistic young revolutionary, whose hopes for justice and freedom collapse as the revolution gives way to repression, forcing him and his partner Nahid into exile in Germany. In exile, the tone shifts from political fervor to quiet endurance, as Nahid's perspective reveals a life shaped by waiting, memory, and the persistent anxiety of displacement. The second generation, embodied by their daughter Laleh, returns physically to Iran but encounters a homeland that feels both familiar and estranged, exposing the fragile gap between inherited memory and lived reality. Finally, the son Mo represents a further stage of diasporic distance—detached from Iran yet subtly marked by its unresolved past, observing political upheaval from afar without fully belonging to it. Across these shifting perspectives, the novel constructs a deeply layered exploration of exile, identity, and intergenerational memory. Rather than offering closure, it emphasizes continuity: trauma persists, but it is reinterpreted differently by each generation. The structure itself—nonlinear, fragmented, and voice-driven—mirrors this condition, illustrating how history reverberates not only through public events but through private lives, relationships, and inner worlds. Ultimately, the novel portrays diaspora as an ongoing negotiation between loss and adaptation, where the past is never fully left behind but continually reshaped in the search for meaning and belonging.

Bazyar (2025) portrays as a multi-generational narrative that traces the emotional, political, and psychological journey of an Iranian family across four decades. Structured as a polyphonic text, the novel is divided into four major temporal sections, each narrated by a different family member. This shifting narrative voice allows the story to present trauma, exile, and identity from multiple perspectives, thereby resisting a singular interpretation of history or belonging. The novel begins in 1979, at the height of the Iranian Revolution, through the voice of Behzad, a young communist revolutionary filled with hope and ideological conviction. The political atmosphere is charged with anticipation, as many Iranians believe that the fall of the Shah will lead to social justice and freedom. Behzad's narrative captures this optimism, as he participates in clandestine political activities and imagines a transformed future. His revolutionary zeal is intertwined with personal developments, particularly his relationship with Nahid, who shares his intellectual and political engagement. However, this hope gradually collapses as the revolution is overtaken by authoritarian forces, forcing Behzad and others like him into danger and eventual exile.

The second section, set in 1989, shifts to Nahid's perspective and marks a transition from revolution to survival. By this point, the family has relocated to West Germany, where they live as political refugees. Nahid's narrative reflects a quieter but equally intense struggle, one defined not by overt political action but by emotional endurance. She spends long hours listening to the radio, waiting for news from Iran and from those who were left behind or forced into hiding. Her life becomes characterized by waiting, uncertainty, and the burden of maintaining stability for her children. The exile experience is depicted not simply as physical displacement but as a persistent psychological state in which the past intrudes upon the present.

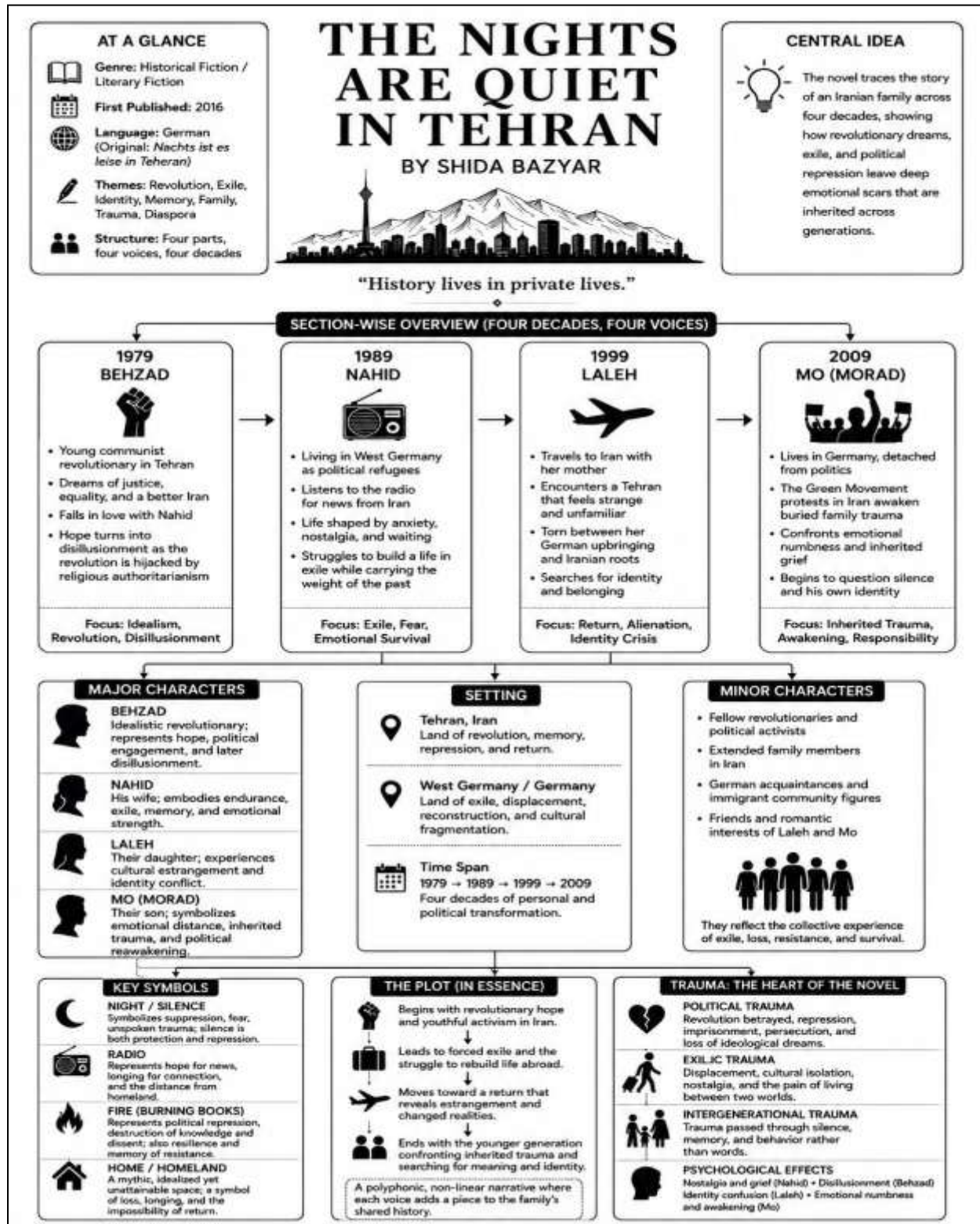


Figure 3. Overall description of *The Nights are Quiet in Tehran*

The third narrative phase, set in 1999, is told through the perspective of Laleh, the daughter who has grown up in Germany but carries an inherited connection to Iran. Her journey back to Tehran with her mother marks a pivotal moment in the novel, as it confronts the tension between memory and reality. Laleh's perception of Iran is shaped by stories and silences, yet her actual experience reveals a more complex and nuanced society. She observes contradictions, such as expressions of resistance within constrained environments, and begins to understand that her

identity cannot be reduced to either Germany or Iran. This section highlights the process of rediscovery and reinterpretation, as Laleh negotiates her place within both cultural and familial histories.

The fourth section, set in 2009, is narrated by Morad (Mo), Laleh's brother, whose relationship to Iran is markedly different. Unlike his parents and sister, Mo feels detached from Iranian identity, having grown up entirely in Germany. His narrative coincides with the Green Movement in Iran, a moment of political unrest that rekindles global attention. Despite this, Mo remains emotionally distant, more concerned with personal relationships than with political developments. His detachment reflects a form of assimilation but also suggests a subtle sense of loss, as he lacks the connection that defines his parents' and sister's identities. The novel concludes with a brief epilogue from Tara, the youngest sibling, who represents a new phase of diasporic consciousness. Unlike Mo, Tara engages actively with political and cultural issues, embodying a more confident and hybrid identity. Her perspective suggests a shift from passive inheritance of trauma to active engagement with history and identity. Across these narrative layers, the novel constructs a continuous dialogue between past and present, homeland and exile, trauma and transformation. It emphasizes that the effects of political upheaval extend beyond immediate events, shaping personal lives across generations.

The plot of the novel does not follow a traditional linear trajectory but instead unfolds through episodic segments that correspond to different historical moments and narrative voices. The central plot revolves around the Iranian Revolution and its aftermath, but the novel's focus is less on the events themselves and more on their long-term impact. The initial phase establishes the revolutionary context, depicting the optimism and eventual disillusionment experienced by Behzad and his peers. This is followed by the exile phase, where the family relocates to Germany and confronts the challenges of displacement. The third phase introduces the return motif, as Laleh travels back to Iran and confronts the gap between memory and reality. The final phase shifts to a more global perspective, reflecting the fragmented identity of the second generation and the evolving nature of diasporic belonging. Rather than offering resolution, the plot emphasizes continuity. The family's story remains open-ended, reflecting the ongoing nature of exile and identity formation.

Behzad emerges as the ideological center of the novel's early phase. His character represents the hope and eventual disillusionment of a generation that believed in revolutionary change. His transformation from an active revolutionary to a displaced exile reflects the psychological cost of political failure. Nahid's character introduces a different dimension of resilience. While Behzad's narrative is marked by action, Nahid's is defined by endurance. Her emotional labor, particularly in maintaining family cohesion in exile, highlights the often-overlooked gendered aspects of diaspora. Laleh represents the transitional generation. Her journey to Iran signifies an attempt to reconcile inherited memory with lived experience. She embodies curiosity, ambivalence, and the search for identity. Mo, in contrast, represents detachment. His lack of connection to Iran reflects the challenges of second-generation diaspora, where identity becomes fragmented and uncertain. Tara, though briefly present, symbolizes a new form of engagement. Her character suggests that diaspora can evolve into a space of agency rather than solely loss.

Table 3: Characters and Roles

Character	Phase (Year)	Role in Narrative	Psychological Position	Symbolic Function
Behzad	1979	Revolutionary activist	Hope, later disillusionment	Failed revolution, political trauma
Nahid	1989	Exiled mother	Anxiety, endurance	Survival and emotional resilience
Laleh	1999	Returning daughter	Curiosity, identity conflict	Rediscovery and negotiation
Morad (Mo)	2009	Second-generation son	Detachment, ambiguity	Assimilation and loss
Tara	Epilogue	Youngest generation	Emerging agency	Future transformation

The novel's narrative structure and character development collectively demonstrate that diaspora is not a singular experience but a continuum shaped by historical events, personal memory, and generational change. Each character inhabits a different point along this continuum, revealing how trauma evolves into new forms of understanding and identity.

The novel opens with a tone of quiet unease, immediately signaling the persistence of trauma. The father figure reflects on his past with a sense of dislocation, stating, "I carried Tehran with me, but it no longer belonged to me." This line captures the essence of diasporic trauma, where memory becomes both a source of identity and alienation. The first generation exhibits clear PTSD symptoms. Intrusive memories are evident in recurring references to political violence. One character recalls, "The streets were filled with shouting, but all I could hear was the sound of my own heartbeat." This reflects hyperarousal and sensory distortion, consistent with clinical descriptions (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Avoidance is another recurring theme. Characters often refuse to speak about their past, suggesting an attempt to suppress traumatic memories. However, this avoidance is not entirely successful, as memories resurface in fragmented forms. This aligns with Caruth's (1996) argument that trauma resists containment. The second generation, however, demonstrates a different engagement with trauma. While they inherit the emotional weight of their parents' experiences, they also reinterpret it. A younger character reflects, "Their silence was louder than their stories." This statement indicates an awareness of trauma as something transmitted indirectly. This shift marks the beginning of PTG. Characters begin to construct new identities that incorporate, rather than reject, their past. One character notes, "I am not only what happened to them; I am what I choose to become." This reflects personal growth and agency, key components of PTG.

A counter-argument might suggest that such statements represent assimilation rather than growth. However, the narrative provides evidence of deeper transformation. Characters do not abandon their past but engage with it critically, leading to a more integrated sense of self. The structure of the novel reinforces the curvilinear model. The narrative moves back and forth between past and present, mirroring the oscillation between trauma and growth. Moments of despair are followed by reflection, suggesting that recovery is not a straight path but a continuous process.

5. Meta-Synthesis

The findings of this study confirm that trauma in diasporic contexts follows a curvilinear trajectory. PTSD symptoms persist across generations but are gradually transformed into forms of growth through processes of reflection and meaning-making. The research questions are addressed as follows. Trauma is represented as both personal and collective memory. Characters exhibit symptoms consistent with PTSD, particularly in the first generation. The narrative demonstrates PTG through identity reconstruction and emotional resilience. The relationship between PTSD and PTG is curvilinear, characterized by fluctuation and coexistence. This study contributes to both literary criticism and trauma theory by demonstrating that literary narratives can serve as valuable sites for psychological analysis. It also highlights the need for more interdisciplinary approaches that integrate cultural and psychological perspectives.

6. CONCLUSION

The present study set out to examine how trauma and transformation unfold within a diasporic narrative, and the findings affirm that the movement from distress to growth cannot be understood as a straightforward progression. Instead, the analysis of *The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran* demonstrates that PTSD and PTG are intertwined in a dynamic and recursive relationship. The first generation remains marked by unresolved trauma, as reflected in their fragmented memories, silence, and emotional withdrawal. Yet this condition does not remain static. Through intergenerational transmission, trauma is re-encountered and reinterpreted by the second generation, who neither fully inherit nor entirely escape it. Their engagement with memory, identity, and belonging reveals a gradual reconfiguration of the self that aligns with the dimensions of growth theorized by Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun (1995). This confirms that growth does not replace trauma but emerges through continuous negotiation with it. At the same time, the study challenges reductive interpretations that equate adaptation in diaspora with assimilation or emotional resolution. The narrative resists closure, instead presenting trauma as an enduring presence that shapes but does not entirely define the characters. By applying PTSD criteria from the American Psychiatric Association alongside PTG constructs, the analysis demonstrates that distress and resilience coexist in complex ways. The curvilinear framework proposed in this study provides a more accurate account of this coexistence, capturing the fluctuations between rupture and repair that characterize diasporic subjectivity. In this sense, the novel does not offer a narrative of recovery in the conventional sense, but rather one of ongoing reconstruction, where meaning is continually negotiated rather than finally achieved. These findings suggest that diaspora intensifies the psychological complexity of trauma by extending it across time, space, and generations. Linear models of recovery are insufficient to account for such layered experiences. A curvilinear understanding allows for the recognition of contradiction, recurrence, and partial transformation as central to the human response to displacement. This perspective not only deepens literary interpretation but also invites trauma studies to engage more fully with cultural narratives as sites of psychological insight. Future research may build on this approach by examining similar patterns across other diasporic texts or by integrating reader-response and empirical methods to further explore how such narratives resonate with lived experiences of trauma and growth.

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