

Anxiety and Memory of 1971 War Mothers in the Literature of Bangladesh

Shahnaz Parvin

Assistant Professor

Department of English Language and Literature

Premier University

Chattogram

Email: sp_ctg@yahoo.com

Abstract

The position of women on the battlefield is a kind of being victimized in wartime; as a result in war literature, mostly, writers have designed their plots related to the abasements of the women in the combat. No doubt, the mothers' anxiety for the freedom fighter sons while participating in the war and the unbearable remembrance of losing their dear and near ones throughout the life is abandoned in most of the war discussions. The freedom fighters' mothers of the Liberation War of Bangladesh are no different in this regard, though having all their anxieties and memories of the wartime, they have impeccable sacrifice and support to create a new country, Bangladesh, on the world map in 1971. The article has chosen a memoir, namely Jahanara Imam's *Ekatturer Dinguly* (1986) and two fictions, *Maa* (20012) by Anisul Haque and *A Golden Age* (2007) by Tahmima Anam, and also interviews are also taken from a few real-life mothers of the freedom fighters of Bangladesh to conduct the article and to portray the war mothers' anxiety of sending the sons to the war field, and the haunted memories that they carry throughout their lives;

Key Words: Mother, Freedom Fighter, Anxiety and Memory.

In a war, generally, the battlefield is taken as the domain of men and the term War usually is considered as a male-oriented job. Madelein Bunting (2002) in the essay "Women and War" depicts the idea about the involvement of men in war and says, "This is reinforced by the impression that virtually all the people involved in handling this crisis are men.... The power structure is exposed at such times, as the token women slide into the background, leaving war to men" (Bunting 310). Again, it is also referred

that the term war goes with the man because “the oldest gender stereotypes about women’s tendency to nurture life rather than destroy it” (Bunting 310). In reality, women are seen as “the victims; women are cast as passive” who undergo the war-time suffering, and anxiety for their fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons; and carry out the long-term memory of the lost ones for the rest of their lives. Women are thought to be physically and emotionally weak to endure the brutality of the war. Moreover, women are subject to be sexually harassed and suffered during wartime as they have given birth to war children. Sometimes, the mother as in the short story *Mother Courage and Her Children* is a capitalist war profiteering one who values making money in the war more than her children. According to Henry Glade (1967-68) in this short story, the mother has been “broken and grief-stricken after the death of Katrin, harnesses herself to the wagon upon hearing the call of trumpets” (137). He also has referred to several critics who have observed: “something animal-like about her as she stamps her feet, tries to move the wagon with one pull, falls, and dies” (Glade 137). However, Micaela di Leonardo (1985) raises the fundamental question “What do women have to do with war?” (Leonardo 599). Again, the analysis also comes from his study “most of the contributors to *Over Our Dead Bodies* emphasize popular education over appeals to women as mothers and nurturers” (Leonardo 604) and also reviews the fact that, “...aside from its equivocations on certain male pacifist leaders, has a clear theory on gender and militarism: women are Moral Mothers with both the strength and more righteousness needed to end male military terror”. (Leonardo 607) It is to remember that war cannot be a gender-biased phenomenon, yet people from all walks of life and all types of relationships are the victims of war; as the article finds out the mothers’ psychological turmoil due to the anxiety for their sons in a wartime situation and recalling the memories of losing them throughout their remaining life.

The anxiety and the memories of the mothers of 1971 wartime become obvious when the remembrance of those moments has been projected through different memoirs, short stories, and fiction of the Bangladeshi writers. The freedom fighters of Bangladesh fought for the sovereignty of their motherland in 1971. They were young people, students, workers, villagers, and Bengali regulars who worked in the Pakistan Armed Forces who had dynamically formed the invincible spirit of Freedom Fighters of Bangladesh after the proclamation of Bangladesh’s independence on March 26, 1971. Mukti Bahini or Freedom Fighters of the country operated as an effective guerrilla force to keep the enemies on the run. People of all strata of society joined the Mukti Bahini. The nation remains

indebted to the collective of regular force members, urban and rural youths of Bangladesh. The concern of the mothers during the liberation war for their freedom fighter sons since the decision-making moment of forming the Mukti Bahini and sending them to the Warfield and the unbearable memory that has been carried out by those mothers after the independence are vital issues to discuss and bring before the world.

In the historical Encyclopaedia of 'Women and War' (2006) referring to Richardson, it is noted that the soldiers and the mothers have such an intimate relationship that in true sense focuses "sentiment as mateship, and a closer, more established, more emotional and even more romantic tie than many marriages" ("Women and War", 27) with a belief that the mothers can endure the anxiety with "A belief in patriotic duty eased the pain of separation..." ("Women and War", 27). They have shaped up the eternal umbilical relationship, though mothers suffer and bleed internally sending their beloved sons to the war fields, "You know how we mothers are suffering just now...I'll miss your little homecomings, I'll miss your kisses and...smile and miss your...everything dear...as we have been as close as friends and companions, as well as being your own mumie..." ("Women and War" 27). Not all mothers have been wholehearted supportive towards sending their sons to the battlefields. Ellen Derham supported her son to join World War I, but she announced: "I want no Victoria Cross, I want my son" ("Women and War" 33) and traveled her journey of grief alone by sending the son to the battlefield.

In the wartime situation, the anxiety of parting between mother and son has known no bounds; however, the degree of the separational anxiety has determined the maternal conduct and the emotion begets not only worry or sadness but also accelerates the passion of the mothers for their freedom fighter sons through proper guidance, support or sacrifice. There are multiferous anxieties that the mothers come across for their children in wartime. At the very outset, the mothers of these literary works are anxious to be assured enough regarding their sons' logical thinking about the emancipation of the motherland. They want to be confident whether their sons want to attend only because their friends have joined the war or the sons really can realize the wartime needs. In *Ekaturrer Dinguly* Rumi, son of the martyr mother, Jahanara Imam, and in *A Golden Age* Sohail, son of Rehana are students, and Azad, son of Safia Begum in *Maa* has just completed their studies. This is usually the time to take preparation for launching a career,

but the sons of the mothers feel as Rumi shares with his mother, “But haven’t the events of March 1971 turned it (giving priority to self-career-building activity) into an untruth? Our condition is worse than the Roman gladiators. The gladiators had at least a slim chance of escaping from the clutches of the lions but we don’t even have that...Is it the proper environment for studies? Is this the time to pore over books in preparation for the future?” (Imam, 66). When patriotic young blood like Rumi manages to contact the Liberation Forces Headquarters, his mother becomes worried and wants to be sure about how far the young heart is firm in his decision, “I just wanted to make sure that your desire to join the War of Liberation was genuine and not a decision was taken on the spur of the moment” (Imam 76). She wants to be certain about the implication of his decision, as she says to her son “...to realize the seriousness of your decision. I wanted to realize that you were voluntarily courting danger, even death” (Imam 76). Thus the apprehension of a mother of 1971 prepares her son to realize the responsibilities and go-ahead to protect the beloved country. The assurance of Imam’s son echoes in her heart Khalil Gibran’s words: “Your children are not your children/ They are the sons and daughters of Life’s/ longing for itself” (Imam 77).

The fresh blood sons are worried about their motherland and become restless to join the war that gradually making it possible to have the psychosocial functioning of the mothers and sons, who finally come to the baseline keeping aside their anxiety and becoming the absolute moral support to each other. The worried mothers are convinced as the sons have clarified them with logic about their active participation in that particular history-making movement. Accommodating with the anxiety individual mothers have become ready to sacrifice their loving sons for the larger cause of the motherland as Jahanara Imam says, “I sacrifice you to the cause of the nation. You may join the war” (Imam 66). When Azad seeks permission from Mrs. Safia Begum, she asks for some time to think over it. Finally, she feels that her son should work for the motherland and her people. In the morning, she calls Azad and says, “Alright, you can go to the war. I bless you” (Haque 181). Being puzzled, Azad wants to read the mind of his mother whether she is angry with him knowing about his decision and be assured, “Why should I be angry. Should you not work for the independence of our country?” (Haque 181). In the novel, *A Golden Age* Sohail wants to join the Mukti Bahini without informing his mother because he feels if anybody asks her about him, she can answer that she does not know anything, yet the mother says, “I want to know the moment you step out of

that door, the moment you cross that gate. I want to say Aytul Kursi and Surah Yaseen” (Anam 82); and allows her children, having anxiety within, to actively participate in the war because to the mother “It is too great a thing” (Anam 81).

Ragnhild Dybdahl (2001) in his study of the victimized mothers and children of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina has brought the severe trauma experienced by them. Amidst the political violence, when male members are away to the battlefields, family means the “mother” centric code. In war the absence of male members like father, husband, brother, or son can be reported as the source of stress, anxiety, and traumatic mental condition, “Therefore, one important factor in accounting for family support may be the mother’s state of health, especially her mental health” (Dybdahl, pg 1215). The increasing tension of the mothers for the freedom fighters has involved them on a greater scale to serve the motherland. Their anxiety for the sons promotes their support in the crisis of the nation. They are assigned to convey the message to different places on behalf of the freedom fighters. They collect money and other necessary things like medicines and clothes for the freedom fighters. To Jahanara Imam and the other mothers of Freedom Fighters, the term “Freedom Fighter has an electrifying effect.... It creates a sense of awe” (Imam 94). She accomplishes her responsibilities “Number one, a message to be conveyed to Mrs. Shamsunahar Musa, Manager of the Ladies Branch of the Muslim Commercial Bank...Number two, a letter to be delivered to the Director of Bangla Academy, Dr. Kabir Chowdhury” (Imam 106). Her active participation is seen when she has contacted Mrs. Shamsunnahar Musa. In a whisper, she replies to her, and their conversations mark their whole-hearted and active participation:

“As you know, the War of Liberation is intensifying. The trained guerillas are coming to Dhaka and carrying out their operations. They need some safe houses where they can take shelter in an emergency. They also need medicine, doctors, and safety clinics for treatment when they get wounded. Besides, a lot of money is requested for their (Freedom Fighters’) operations.”

“Of course. This is a matter of our life and death. Just tell me how I can help (Imam 108). The mother sends money from time to time to the freedom fighter son she can collect from different sources. The commander of Sector Two asks for a list of bridges from Rumi’s parents which has been needed to be destroyed to encumber the communication of the Pakistan

troops. When Mr.Sharif, Rumi's father, is making the list with two other supports of the Liberation war, Shahadat and Alam, Mrs, Imam are guarding the gate to keep the secrecy of that noble task. She also has given them, "a few bottles of Belladonna Six, a few nail cutters and three sunglasses... gave Rs 200. . ." (Imam 127). She keeps herself busy for the Freedom Fighters, even then her eyes become moist now and then and she has trouble breathing thinking of Rumi, "When is my Rumi coming back to me?" (Imam131)

During wartime, it becomes more intensive to remain with the revolutionary-minded sons because, in war or peace, no mother wants to keep her child away from her eyesight. Similarly, Mrs. Imam does not want her Rumi to be away from her nearness even for a single moment when he comes back from Melaghar, India, where he has received training, "You better smoke before me. You have come only for a short period and I want you to remain within my sight as much as possible" (Imam 140-141). The mother can understand the tension of the time and the psychological state of the freedom fighter son. So, forgetting even to take him to the task, she becomes friendly with the son. The anxiety-ridden bosom of a mother all the time has been centered on her son and his safety, "I don't know where Rumi is now and what he is doing. Is he sleeping in somebody's house? Is he out on the streets in this rain? Is he in a car or a boat? There is no way of knowing" (Imam 150-151). That is how our awaiting mothers spiritually are portrayed as the inevitable part of the Liberation War of 1971, although they remain far away from the war fronts.

Time passes by and the anxiety of the mothers grows up. The houses of Jahanara Imam, Mrs. Safia Begum, and Mrs. Rehana are the places to keep weapons and meet to plan operations. All the Bengalis are moved by strong nationalistic feelings. In Haque's Maa Azad's mother has heard about the Pakistan forces' merciless killing of Bangladeshi innocents without any cause. She feels, "... This kind of apprehension should not be expected. This is unethical. She should help the freedom fighters" (Haque174). Azad's friends are also participating in the war and Safia Begum believes that Azad should help his Freedom Fighter friends. She asks her son, "Bring your friends" (Haque174). Syed Ashraful, cricketer and the youngest friend of Azad, shares from his memories that the single sentence permission of the mother turns the house into a mini cantonment "In 1971 Azad's house was looking like a mess for the Freedom Fighters" (Haque 176). She also always cooks food, as done by Jahanara Imam, for the Freedom Fighters and whoever comes to her house.

In the novel, *A Golden Age*, Tahmima Anam turns the personal agony of a mother who has been worried about losing the custody of her children into the wartime anxiety of Mrs. Rehana, who works as a catalyst to have self-discovery by becoming a nationalist. After the death of her husband, Iqbal, Mrs. Reahana's brother in law has got custody of her children and is off to Karachi. Finally, she has got back the custody of her children bribing the judge and the incident makes her always worried about the separation from her children. Though at the beginning of the novel she is in an extreme dilemma about her identity in Bangladesh as she was born in Calcutta and is good at Urdu speaking, she has overcome all the hesitations to be involved in the Liberation War of Bangladesh with her children. Like her son, who "loved Bengal...the swimming mud of the delta; the translucent, bony river fish; the shocking green palette of the paddy and the open, aching blue of the sky over flat land" (Anam 34), she gradually becomes a true patriot's nationalistic mother. Mrs. Chowdhury's comment about Sohail is heart-aching to Mrs. Rehana that "He is too busy with politics-he'll never make a good husband" (Anam 32). But, as a pro-independence mother, Mrs. Rehana prioritized the spirits of her children regarding their anticipation in the Liberation War of Bangladesh, because, "Ever since '48, the Pakistani authorities had ruled the eastern wing of the country like a colony" (Anam 33). She has developed every logic of her children to be involved in the politics at this crisis period of the motherland, "One general after another made promises they had no intention of keeping. The Dhaka University students had been involved in the protests from the very beginning, so it was no surprise Sohail had got caught up, and Maya too" (Anam, 33). Once departed from the children, she has now seen the logic, "...what sense did it make to have a country in two halves, poised on either side of India like a pair of horns?" (Anam 33). Her children who have direct participation in the Liberation War of Bangladesh, help her to throw out all her hesitations regarding the motherland they belong to, and Rehana's silent participation is started on the very morning of 26 March 1971 when she has found refugees at her veranda, "I'm going to bring over some food" (Anam 62). Then she becomes restless to know what grief has caused these people to run from their homes and seek shelter at her doorsteps.

The tension of the war, gradually, along with the personal anxiety of losing children once again, makes Mrs. Rehana part of the Liberation war of Bangladesh. Maya, daughter of Mrs. Rehana, declares to her mother that

they need warm clothes for the Freedom Fighters and she realizes “We’re at war, and my daughter says I have to do something” (Anam 92). Rehana opens her old almirah, she has not opened for years that carried her dead husband’s loving memories. When Mrs. Rahman advises her not to use her clothing and they would find some old cotton, she reacted: “Why not? Everyone has to make sacrifices, why not me? It’s my country too”(Anam 92).

The impulse of the freedom fighter son is transmitted to the mother, as a result, when Sohail informs his mother that the guerrillas require a place in the city to keep their arms, “A safe place to hide out before and after the operations” (Anam 101), without a second thought she offers, “My house is yours” (Anam 110) so that they can do their revolutionary activities smoothly. Because of her heart-felt support to her children for the cause of motherland the Major, a freedom fighter who has received shelter being wounded at her home, called her “a true Nationalist” (Anam142).

Amidst the national crisis and complete national disaster due to the war, none can avoid the very private attachment, and right that moment one’s tension becomes the others’. Sohail wants her mother to help Sabeer to be brought back from Pakistan’s custody. It is “the most distasteful, gruesome task” (Anam 169) on Mrs. Rehana’s part to request her brother-in-law, Faiz, who has some connections with the Pakistani Army. But she goes to Faiz for releasing the tension of her son, Sohail, and to support the other freedom fighter, Sabeer. Rehana goes alone with a release order from Faiz to Mirpur Thana to bring out Sabeer. Again, with all her grief and restlessness of mind for her children, she cannot adjust to refugee life and does not want to go back to the camp but she stays in the camp finally and tries to help Supriya, who has been her friend, neighbor, and tenant from Dhaka. Supriya has lost her husband and son before entering the refugee camp. She wants to be the ultimate shelter of this completely heart-broken lady, “The war will be over soon. It’ll be like it was before. You can stay at Shona-we’ll be neighbors again...It’s your home too. Come with us” (Anam 237). Such words sow the seeds of hope for a newly independent nation and demonstrate the contribution of an optimistic mother.

Throughout the world, the anxiety of the revolutionary sons’ mothers is the same. In the beginning, the war mothers of the Freedom Fighters resemble Maxim Gorky’s mother in his remarkable historical novel *Mother*.

The novel is based on two actual events like the May Day demonstration of workers in Sormovo in 1902 and the subsequent trial of its members. At the very outset of the novel, Pelagea, Pavel's mother, is no different from the rest of the working women of Russia who toils in factories throughout the day and put up with wife-beating men at night. But later she starts feeling that she is no less part of the socialist circle of which her son has gradually become a key figure. Gradually she becomes an active part of the social movement as the mothers of ours have been in 1971. She disguises herself as a peddler and begins a life of an active social worker, "Give them to me! I'll do it. I'll find a way" (Gorky 93) and also assures them saying, "Tell him I'll do everything that has to be done-let him know that" (Gorky 94).

As the houses of the freedom fighters Rumi, Azad, and Sohail, Pelagea's house also becomes a centre of revolutionary activities. On the very crucial May Day demonstration Pavel decides to carry the banner at the head of the column. With the usual motherly affection, Pelagea also wants her son to stay back but she says, "I won't stand in your way" (Gorky 149). Finally, the court exiles Pavel. After getting the speech of her son cyclostyled, she leaves for a railway station in high spirits to distribute copies. She is finally caught there by the gendarmes and while they beat and choke her, she echoes as the mothers of our Freedom Fighters, "Not even an ocean of blood can drown the truth" (Gorky 405). Once Pavel has regretted, "When will we ever have mothers who send their sons to death with a smile?" (Gorky 149) and his mother mitigates his longing by being such active support in time of a social revolutionary movement; and also, the war mothers of Bangladesh send their sons to death with a smile for the cause of the beloved motherland as shown in these three very significant novels.

All the suffered mothers are recalling the good and bad memories of the wartime with their sons and counting the days of their sons' safe arrival from the very day the freedom fighters have been taken to the Pakistan Force custody on 29th August 1971. In *Ekatturer Dinguly*, Jahanara Imman reminiscences how Rumi, Azad, and other freedom fighters are tortured mercilessly to reveal the names of their co-fighters. From the very moment, they are taken to the torture cells prepared for them by the Pakistan Army, the mothers of the freedom fighters have completely lost all their peace of mind. They run here and there in search of their sons. From the cheat Pir Shahib (fake religious man) to thana (Police custody) and then to MP hostels they look everywhere for their sons. But despite their very personal agonies

they do not forget to support the other wounded and suffering freedom fighters around them. Soon after Azad and other young guerrillas are captured throughout the country, Azad's mother shifts the hidden arms of her house. She can understand that the Bengali agents of the Pakistani Army would come in search of those arms. The mother does not allow Azad to reveal the names of the other Freedom Fighters even in the face of torture. She asks Azad, "My dear son, I wish, you don't reveal anybody's name." and also "...when they will beat you, tolerate it. Keep patience. Don't reveal anybody's name" (Haque 230).

At the end of the war, keeping the sons in mind, when Indians had dogfights with Pakistani warplanes, the houses of these mothers become the shelter of suffering people. The Pakistani armies with the collaboration of traitors take Azad, Jewel, Bashar, Monwar, Secandar, and Chanchol from Azad's house. Safia Begum's son, Azad, is in the custody of the Pakistanis, while she with all her suffered soul and worries for her son has to take care of her two severely wounded nieces at the hospital.

Interviews with mothers of real-life freedom fighters have also been taken to enrich this study. While looking for the real-life mothers of the liberation war it has been found that most of the freedom fighters' mothers died or they had been above ninety years old. Either they couldn't talk or abruptly circulated the information due to old age complexities. The most sensitive fact is that whether they are in conscious or subconscious condition, the moment they have been asked about their freedom fighter sons, they go back to the year 1971 with all the installed memories of the wartime. It seems their intense attachment with their sons makes us be part of the liberation war period. The real-life mothers and the fictional mothers of the freedom fighters share the same standpoint of motherhood during the liberation war to prove again literature is the mirror of factual incidents through the remembrances of their freedom fighter sons, their sufferings, and sacrifices that bring the new dawn to the sky of independent Bangladesh.

This is the story of anxiety and reminiscing the wartime memory of Mrs. Mahbuba Begum from Bashabo, Dhaka; mother of Mojammel Haque (18 years old). In the beginning, the mother was not ready to send her son to the war out of the very motherly anxiety of losing the son on the battlefield. When the country had been under the bloodshed of mass killing, rape, and tyranny; at one point the mothers felt, "This or that way we are dying. Let's die facing them on the battlefield." (Mrs. Mahbuba Begum, mother of Mojammel Haque. She lost her sanity at one point thinking about the

adversity of her son. She used to pour cold water on her head, most of the time she spent on her prayer and fasting. One midnight the son came to visit his mother and on that very night, the Pakistani Army intruded to the house getting information about the freedom fighter who had been back home. The information of the freedom fighters was given to them by the country traitors, namely, rajakar, al badar, and al shams. Then after she could not get any information about her son for six months and turned to be a depression patient for the rest of her life. After the independence, the son came back, but the mother could not get out of the trauma she had to face for the nine months war of 1971. While taking the interview she has been almost 90 years old and sighed very distinctly every now recalling those days of anxiety and tension.

Another freedom fighter's mother is Mrs. Jahanara Begum; the mother of martyr Saifuddin Khaled Chowdhury (19years old) of Patya, Chattogram. She has been bedridden for a long time and in a sub-conscious state of her mental condition. One of her sons has shared the details of his mother during wartime. The mother permitted the son to participate in the liberation war of 1971. The moment the name of her son was uttered before her, it seemed she went back to the days of Pritilata and Master Da Shurjo Sen, Bengal revolutionary nationalists from the Indian Subcontinent and were influential in the Indian independence movement, from where she received the patriotic essence. The son might receive the zeal of patriotism from the mother and gradually became part of the nationalist movement for the liberty of his beloved East Bengal (Bangladesh). The memory of the nationalist movement has remained vibrant even in the mind of the bedridden, half-faded memory of the freedom fighter's mother, Mrs. Jahanara Begum. It is to be noted that soon after the appointment of this brave mother of a courageous martyr, she died of old age after a couple of weeks.

Md. Shamsul Alam, son of a proud mother Begum Rasheda Khanom, joined in sector two, Akhaora of Kashba at B-Baria in Bangladesh. All through her interview, the anxiety of the wartime situation, after allowing her son to join the war, has been the reflection of an intense feeling of a mother commemorating the moments of the 1971 liberation war. She detailed the wartime struggles of her son with teary eyes. She informed that the war mothers helped to extinguish the fire that the Pakistani Army lit to the houses of the villages with water. The reminiscence of the mother echoes her anxiety for the freedom fighter son. Her son suffered in want of food and

clothing in the adverse situation and weather. The mothers of the Liberation War of Bangladesh has been bearing the legacy of Titumir's mother, Ayasha Begum, who inspired the women of the British Colonial period of Bengal to fight against the Zamindar and the British in Narikel Baria and supported her son (Kabir and Mujib 19-20).

For ages in the greater Bengal the mothers have been standing strongly along with all their agonies besides the freedom lover sons as the mother of Muhammad Mohsin (known as Dudu Mia), shouldered the Forayezi Revolution at Noyabari in Dhaka, also assembled young ladies to be inspired to take part in the Liberation War; offered shelter to the freedom fighters; kept the arms and ammunitions in the secret places; and provided nursing to the wounded warriors. The mother then supported the son of tender age staying behind the curtain. When her son Dudu Mia was captivated by the British soldiers in 1857, the mother announced: "my son fights for the valid cause, I am proud of him" (Kabir and Mujib 20).

The British and American female writers have been recording their memories of the First World War and Vietnam Wars and the common context "for these writings, wherein the woman's role as a nurse to the injured men occasions her traumatic seeings, drawn attention to the role of vision as a gendered activity" (Acton 54). The above-mentioned non-fiction and fiction of Bangladeshi writers have truly portrayed the war mothers' anxiety, memory, suffering, and support for the cause of the Liberation war of Bangladesh. The writers are very minute to tell about the dilemma, anxiety, support, and sacrifice of lots other mothers of the wartime of Bangladesh. Mrs. Jahanara Imam, Mrs. Safia Begum and Mrs. Rehana who have smiling faces sent their sons to the risks of their lives for the sake of this beloved country and her people are the representatives of those apt mothers during the liberation war of Bangladesh. This paper has tried to present mothers of Jahanara Imam, Anisul Haque, and Tahmima Anam as idealized characters, who stay back at home but have become the strong supports of the Freedom Fighters to bring forth the Freedom of the nation by the way of providing shelters and guarding weapons of the resting Muktis (warriors), cooking and serving food to them and also giving medical care at home supplying first-aid medicines, braving the risk of being assaulted by the brutal Pakistan Army. Regarding the responsibilities during the war period, the mothers of these three works are impeccable in the history of Bangladesh in 1971. Now the time comes to record and recognize that war mothers' anxiety, open-cry, individual and personal awaiting, long and deep sigh they have left for shaping the history of the independence of Bangladesh

and keep alive the memory of the wartime values of war mothers during the 1971 Bangladesh.

Different documents about the anxiety and memory of the mothers inscribed in the memoir, fiction, non-fiction, and interviews of the real-life freedom fighters' mothers can strongly uphold the contributions of the mothers in the war literature of Bangladesh. The recollections that the mothers cherish in a broken heart for the sufferings in many ways during the war when the sons are at the battlefield, and with pride when the mothers can feel the sacrifices of their sons' life, who bring a national flag, are to be more discussed academically. When the war literature will highlight the impartial, noble, and nationalistic approaches of the mothers with all their griefs and nightmarish days of 1971 to the upcoming generations with profound glory and significance, only then their anxiety and memory of the wartime would be honoured and remembered ages after ages in the minds of the readers of the war literature.

Notes: 1. *Ekatturer Dinguly* is a memoir written by Jahanara Imam from her personal experiences of the time.

2. Quotations from Anisul Haque's *Mother* have been translated by the writer of the article.

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