

**Affective Reconstruction: Trauma, Witnessing, and the Poetics of Emotional Survival in Contemporary American Poetry**

**Muhammad Abdulwahab<sup>1</sup>, Marrium Sayyed<sup>2</sup>, Fazal Rabi<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> MS Scholar in English Linguistics, Riphah International University, Islamabad, Pakistan,  
Email: [muhammadabdulwahabi555@gmail.com](mailto:muhammadabdulwahabi555@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> M.Phil. Scholar in English Linguistics, Riphah International University, Islamabad, Pakistan,  
Corresponding Author's Email: [syedmaryamgardezi@gmail.com](mailto:syedmaryamgardezi@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup> Ph.D. Scholar in English Literature, Muslim Youth University, Islamabad. & Senior Lecturer in English, Riphah International University, Pakistan, Email: [fazalrabi999@gmail.com](mailto:fazalrabi999@gmail.com)

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.70670/sra.v4i1.1967>

**Abstract**

This study analyzes the role of trauma as more than an experience of disruption and inability to communicate in the context of contemporary American poetry; rather, the author focuses on trauma as a transformative phenomenon that involves emotional restructuring. While the field of Trauma Theory has predominantly focused on such aspects of trauma as fragmentation, silence, and representation, less scholarly attention has been devoted to the transformational function performed by poetic language in relation to affective experience. Thus, the current research aims at addressing this issue by using the concept of affective reconstruction to analyze how trauma is not only depicted in the poetic works but is also altered by them. Following the interpretive qualitative method, the analysis in this paper will focus on several poems by four contemporary poets: Ilya Kaminsky, Ashley M. Jones, Carolyn Forché, and Ruth Awad. The choice of these poems is based on the fact that they provide an example of affective reconstruction in the context of trauma from various perspectives. This paper applies a theoretical approach that combines concepts and ideas of Trauma and Affect Theories. The conclusions drawn from the research show that current poetry is a medium whereby trauma can be transformed into affective meanings that help individuals and communities survive in the context of their experiences. The shift from discussions on the limitations of representation to those about emotional transformations will add another dimension to the field by showing the important role of contemporary poetry as a means of emotional survival. Thus, current poetry does not describe trauma but reconstructs it to provide individuals with a chance for survival.

**Keywords:** Trauma; Affective Reconstruction; Contemporary American Poetry; Trauma Theory; Affect Theory; Emotional Survival.

**Introduction**

In response to a series of increasingly severe global crises, including war, displacement, ecologically induced turmoil, and mass psychological anxiety, trauma has become a hallmark of our era, and therefore an important theme in contemporary twenty-first-century literature. In terms of literary genre, poetry is a form especially suited to express the experience of grief, mourning, and emotional disruption. The form of poetry itself – with its capacity for metaphor, brevity, and fragmentation – makes it an ideal vehicle for dealing with suffering that cannot be told in straightforward narrative. As the theorists associated with Trauma Theory have long noted, trauma defies conventional expression, appearing more often as a kind of silence, repetition, or discontinuity in time. On the other hand, theoretical innovations in affect theory have drawn critical focus away from language and toward embodiment and precognition, stressing how emotions circulate between people and texts through channels other than meaning alone. In light of these two theories in conversation, contemporary American poetry is an ideal venue in which to explore the role of language in trauma and affect.

Although there is a considerable amount of literature available regarding the topic of trauma in literature, the majority of scholarly research concerning this theme has been centered around issues of representation, where the emphasis has been placed on how trauma is narrated, represented, or symbolized in literature. While this approach has certainly proven fruitful in providing new insights into the issue at hand, it also

tends to place undue importance on the constraints imposed by language, particularly in terms of its difficulty in expressing trauma. As a result, insufficient emphasis has been paid to the manner in which poetic language itself can contribute to the reconstruction of traumatic emotional experiences. The contribution made by affect to the process of emotional restructuring, as well as its transmission from one individual to another, has not been extensively studied within the field of literary criticism when examining contemporary poetry.

This Study seeks to fill this crucial void in scholarship by looking at contemporary American poetry as an avenue for the reconstitution of emotions as opposed to its representation. In particular, the chosen poems from Ashley M. Jones, Ilya Kaminsky, Carolyn Forché, and Ruth Awad demonstrate how the use of poetic language is instrumental in making traumatic experiences understandable in terms of their emotional dimension. Despite their different styles and contexts, the poets are all interested in the boundaries of language in expressing trauma and how trauma can be made intelligible in terms of emotions through the act of rearticulation.

Thus, the main purpose of this paper is to explore the role of contemporary poetry as a mediator between the impossibility of talking about trauma and the need to communicate emotions. Specifically, this study intends to examine the potential that various poetic means and techniques have in transforming personal grief into a collective affective experience. To address this issue, the paper will focus on the following research questions: (1) What is the way contemporary American poetry uses fragments and non-linearity to recreate traumatic memories? (2) What is the role of affect as a translator of personal grief into a communicative act? (3) How do some poets translate their personal trauma experiences into collective acts of witness and emotional survival?

The theoretical foundation of this thesis is rooted in the core concepts of Trauma Theory and Affect Theory and also makes a unique contribution to the existing knowledge base. Trauma Theory, especially in its exploration of belatedness, fragmentation, and irrepresentability, provides a basis for the exploration of the structural difficulties involved in expressing traumatic experience. But with its preoccupation with lack and absence, there is a possibility that it can fail to account for the continued functioning of language despite these structural limitations. Affect Theory, on the other hand, allows a closer look at the experiential aspect of language and culture by focusing on the production, transmission, and transformation of emotions through art forms. In expanding on these theories, this research proposes the idea of affective reconstruction as the process of poetic transformation of fragmentary and inarticulate trauma experiences into emotionally cohesive forms. Instead of trying to solve the problem of trauma, affective reconstruction opens up a way of orienting oneself towards it.

The importance of this paper in terms of both theoretical and literary-critical discourse should be discussed. From the theoretical viewpoint, this work makes an important contribution by filling the gap that exists between trauma and affect studies and showing how the two fields could contribute to analysis of poetic literature by combining their approaches in a productive way. This combination goes far beyond the dichotomy of language failing and emotions becoming abstract concepts. From the perspective of literary criticism, the study provides important insights into the current trends in American poetry, paying special attention to the relationship between trauma and poetry in a broader sense. On one hand, the paper addresses the issue of poets discussing the problem of trauma in poetry, while on the other, it is dedicated to the analysis of poems dealing with trauma on several levels simultaneously, including thematic, form-related, and affective ones. In its discussion, the study starts off by presenting the theory of affective reconstruction and then follows it up by reading various poems which highlight the practice of affective reconstruction in action. Finally, it draws on all the analysis provided to argue that through poetic language, contemporary poetry helps rethink the interplay between trauma and emotional expression.

## **Literature Review**

### **Trauma and Its Representation in Contemporary Discourse**

Trauma has become a crucial conceptual category in various fields of study because of the prominence of such phenomena as violence, conflict, and socio-political upheaval in the modern world. Recent interdisciplinary research suggests that trauma should not be viewed solely as a mental experience but as a multifaceted and developing phenomenon characterized by cultural, historical, and relational components. For example, Hamadeh et al. (2025) states that traumatic stress disorders should not be regarded as a response to some stimuli; rather, they should be seen as dynamic experiences that influence an individual psychologically and emotionally (Hamadeh et al., 2025). Likewise, Furtado and Auchter (2024) criticize existing theories that regard trauma as something unrepresentable and argue that trauma creates new meanings and political consciousness (Furtado & Auchter, 2024). In the context of literary criticism,

especially when viewed through the lens of Trauma Theory, the concept of trauma itself has generally been understood as something that is difficult or impossible to represent because of its fragmented nature, delay, and lack of coherent narrative structure. The theoretical framework of trauma within this tradition has thus focused on the limitations imposed by language in representing traumatic events (Javed Ashiq, Usman, Rabi, & Uzma, 2024). More recent literature, on the other hand, suggests a turn away from conceiving trauma as a representational crisis towards thinking of it as a transformative process. Empirical research in the field of post-traumatic adaptation, for example, shows how trauma can sometimes result in positive psychological growth (Kartol et al., 2025). Despite the progress made, current literature still tends to focus on issues relating to representation rather than reconstruction of trauma in literature. While there is undoubtedly value in focusing on the latter as well, there is also the danger of treating trauma as essentially ineffable and thus neglecting its capacity for transformation. In this respect, it becomes important to explore the possibility of examining literature not simply as a representational but also as a reconstructive practice.

### **Effect, Emotion, and the Reconfiguration of Experience**

Affect Theory has brought about a great change to the field of literary and cultural studies by focusing on experience rather than representation. Affect Theory focuses more on the pre-cognitive or sensorial aspects of emotions, focusing on how feelings move among individuals, texts, and even the environment (Hussain, Rabi, & Aziz, n.d.). Recent works within an inter-disciplinary setting have further proven the effectiveness of such an approach in the way that affective dynamics play a major role in the process of responding to trauma. For example, according to Rashid et al. (2025), emotions play an important part in the aftermath of traumatic experience. Furthermore, the recent research in the field of trauma indicates the connection between affect and cognition insofar as trauma can be not only cognitively remembered but also experienced in an embodied way (Rabi, Zahir, Aziz, Mukhtiar, & Bibi, 2025). Thus, Hellman et al. (2025) claim that traumatic experiences include continuous affective processes affecting perception, actions, and emotions that go beyond cognitive awareness (Hellman et al., 2025). This idea corresponds to the theories defining affect as a means of transmission that makes it possible to experience and interpret some events collectively. At the same time, despite being a widely discussed subject nowadays, affect theory is hardly used for analyzing literary texts in connection with trauma, especially poetry. On the one hand, the problem is that although the theory is very useful for describing the circulation of emotions and understanding their intensity, it tends to remain abstract. As a result, there is a gap between affect theory and its application to concrete literary phenomena. The proposed study will contribute to addressing this issue since it will deal with affect in literature.

### **Trauma, Memory, and Contemporary Poetry**

The modern American poets have been increasingly exploring topics of trauma, memory, and the ability of human beings to survive mentally in the midst of their suffering. Writers like Carolyn Forché and Ilya Kaminsky are some examples who use their poems as an expression of personal and communal experience with issues of loss, violence, and their own identities. The form of poetry employed by them consists of non-linear, fragmented style and uses silence to portray the difficulty of their experience (Ahmad, Rabi, Sardar, Khan, & Begum, 2025). On the other hand, recent studies in traumatology have highlighted the importance of memory in sustaining and rebuilding trauma (Latif et al., 2026). According to integrative theories on the subject, traumatic experiences can be constantly reconfigured due to interpretation, emotions regulation and sociability involved in the process (Neurobiology of Stress, 2025). However, even contemporary literary criticism of poetry tends to confine itself to purely thematic readings where poems are examined in terms of how they represent death, wars, or identity, but not in terms of affective structures which make such representations possible. Very often poets are seen as carriers of pre-existing emotions rather than active creators of them through the use of poetic means. Such an approach is especially obvious when it comes to works which do not address the problem of mediation of trauma through poetic devices (Hussain, Danish, Rabi, & Rabi, n.d.). Finally, an ethical aspect of trauma in poems cannot be overlooked, especially the problem of witnessing, which is becoming increasingly important. Poetic texts tend to be viewed as means of transformation of private suffering into something that becomes publicly visible and available to others (Rabi, Hussain, Ahmad, & Rabi, 2026). Nevertheless, excessive concentration on the problem of witnessing may cause scholars to lose sight of affective aspects of the same process. Thus, a new approach to trauma in contemporary poems is needed.

## **Research Gap and Conceptual Intervention**

The above discussion highlights a gap in current research. Though trauma studies have analyzed the problem of representation associated with trauma, and the study of affects has contributed significantly towards understanding the somatic and relational aspect of emotions, an inadequate amount of literature has emerged on the interaction of trauma theory and affect theory in understanding poetry written in the contemporary world. In other words, little emphasis has been placed on the role of poetic language in the process of emotional reconstruction wherein trauma is no longer represented but reconstructed via affects (Khan et al., 2026). In particular, given the growing research in favor of the dynamic approach to trauma, a significant gap emerges in literature. As shown in various studies, trauma implies constant adaptation, regulation, and meaning-making instead of being just an interruption (Hamadeh et al., 2025; Hellman et al., 2025). However, this area has not been thoroughly covered in literary criticism. In order to remedy this, the current research introduces the term 'affective reconstruction' as a new analytic framework for thinking through the intersections of trauma and affect theories. In brief, affective reconstruction denotes the process through which fragmentary and unrepresentable experiences are reconstructed through the medium of poetic writing into emotionally coherent discourses that can be shared with others. The focus on this concept thus allows this study to go beyond approaches that concentrate on the irrepresentability of traumatic experiences and the irreducibility of affects, in order to offer a more balanced approach to the interaction between literature and trauma. The significance of such an approach is that it shifts the emphasis away from a passive understanding of literature as an image of suffering into an active understanding of poetry as a practice that transforms traumas into something shareable and relatable.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This research is based on the interdisciplinary theory that draws from the two disciplines of Trauma Theory and Affect Theory yet expands on them using the idea of affective reconstruction. The theoretical basis seeks to surpass the traditional approach in trauma studies that focuses on fragmentation and unspeakably. Instead, the new theory highlights how poetic language allows for the reconfiguration of emotions. By bringing together ideas of trauma, affect, and ethical witnessing, the researcher aims at exploring poetry through the prism of emotional change.

## **Trauma Theory: Fragmentation and the Crisis of Representation**

The Trauma Theory offers the basis from which it can be understood how traumatizing experiences affect the coherence and consistency of narratives and language. Cathy Caruth (1996), in her book on trauma theory, explains that trauma involves being late, which means that while the experience is not entirely comprehended during its occurrence, it surfaces later in the form of intrusion. In her view, trauma does not allow complete representation since it cannot be contained within consciousness. In a similar vein, Dominick LaCapra (2001) talks about “acting out” versus “working through” trauma, whereby repetition can entrench the subject within traumatic reoccurrence or provide the opportunity for reflection. This concept is relevant to literary studies since literature can facilitate either process. Nevertheless, despite the importance of Trauma Theory in demonstrating the dislocating power of trauma, this approach has also been accused of excessive attention to lack and ineffability. Insofar as Trauma Theory tends to conceive of trauma as a deficiency of representational capacity, there exists the danger of underplaying the generative power of language. Such a problem is particularly prominent in contemporary poetry, in which linguistic disruption and rupture coexist with an abundance of affective energy.

## **Affect Theory: Emotion, Intensity, and Embodied Experience**

In order to overcome some of the challenges posed by representative models, the present study considers the contribution of the theory of affects, drawing mainly upon the contributions made by Brian Massumi (2002) and Sara Ahmed (2004). The approach proposed by Massumi (2002) understands affect as an intensity that precedes linguistic expression. From this standpoint, affects cannot be considered simply as expressions of thoughts; rather, they are intensities that run through the body, influencing perception and reaction. As such, they become especially interesting in poetry, a literary genre that relies heavily on rhythm and imagery as means of communicating ideas. Similarly, Sara Ahmed (2004) views emotions as socially and culturally circulated energies that attach to both bodies and objects. Emotions are thus not mere inner feelings, but rather relational processes that have an effect on identity formation and the creation of social boundaries. Psychology is also consistent with the significance of affect in the processing of trauma. For instance, emotional regulation has been found to act as a mediator in the process of trauma and reconstruction of meanings after distress (Rashid et al., 2025). This is consistent with the idea that Affect

Theory emphasizes both the bodily and relational aspects of emotions. Despite its richness of concepts, Affect Theory has mostly been theoretical in the context of literary works. It requires more methodological attention for the purpose of applying the theory to the analysis of texts, particularly poetry.

### **Witnessing, Ethics, and Testimonial Responsibility**

Another aspect of this theory involves the notion of witnessing, especially the theory of witnessing as developed within trauma and testimony studies. According to Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub (1992), witnessing is an integral component of an ethical discourse of trauma, enabling the individual experience of pain to be incorporated into historical memory. As per this theory, testimony is less about description than about performance, thus producing a space of relation between the speaker and the listener. Witnessing is an important concept when it comes to contemporary poetry, wherein fragmented testimonies rather than narrative descriptions are common. Poets like Carolyn Forché epitomize the ethical practice of witnessing individual and political history intersect each other using poetry. Nevertheless, contemporary scholarship largely focuses on the ethical nature of witnessing, while overlooking its affective construction. In this thesis, witnessing will be extended with the inclusion of the theory of affectivity, suggesting that witnessing in poetry is an affective process as well, one that changes emotional experiences and makes them different from what they were before.

### **Affective Reconstruction: Conceptual Synthesis**

In an expansion of Trauma Theory, Affect Theory, and witnessing literature, the study proposes the notion of affective reconstruction as the foundational paradigm. Affective reconstruction entails the poetic method by which fragmented, interrupted, or unspeakable experiences of trauma are converted into emotionally comprehensible and communicable expressions. While conventional trauma theories focus on the disruptive and inexpressible nature of trauma, affective reconstruction calls attention to the productive role of poetic discourse. The term does not denote the completion of traumatic experience but its ongoing rearrangement through language and emotions. This framework operates through three interconnected dimensions:

1. Fragmentation (Trauma Theory) – disruption of narrative and temporal coherence (Caruth, 1996).
2. Affective Intensity (Affect Theory) – circulation of embodied emotion beyond representation (Massumi, 2002; Ahmed, 2004).
3. Ethical Witnessing (Testimony Theory) – transformation of private suffering into shared meaning (Felman & Laub, 1992).

Together, these dimensions explain how poetry functions not merely as a reflection of trauma but as an active site of emotional reconstruction.

### **Analytical Implications**

The theoretical framework is essential to the analysis of contemporary American poetry in this research. The framework offers an opportunity to conduct a critical analysis of poetry that addresses issues of trauma, affect, and witness. In so doing, there is an appreciation of the ways in which poets like Ilya Kaminsky and Ashley M. Jones have transformed fragmented experiences to affective formations. Finally, the theoretical framework situates poetry within the realm of emotional survival, in which trauma finds neither full representation nor resolution, but transformation via language.

### **Methodology**

This study employs the qualitative interpretive research design framework, which is located within the wider scope of literary analysis and textual studies. In essence, the main purpose of such an approach is to investigate the ways in which contemporary American poetry shapes and reshapes traumatic experiences, feelings of sorrow, and emotional resilience via the medium of language and affect. As opposed to quantitative research designs which are concerned with measuring and generalizing observations, qualitative literary studies focus on constructing meaning out of textual data, providing context-based interpretations, and examining the complexities of literary works. Within this context, poetry can be regarded as an ongoing process during which emotional, linguistic, and ethical significance is created. The theoretical assumptions behind this research paradigm assume that literary texts do not contain any inherent meanings and that it is the interaction between text, theory, and critical interpretation which leads to meaningful conclusions about literature. In particular, the interpretive paradigm is quite suitable for studying trauma poetry since it allows researchers to uncover the complex layers of meaning that are often fragmented and ambiguous. The collection of texts for analysis in this study will be selected among a

number of poems created by contemporary American and diasporic poets whose works are related to the issues of trauma, grief, memory, and emotional survival. This choice of texts is deliberate and based on certain topics in accordance with the conceptual background of the research, which is the idea of affective reconstruction. The major poets to be analyzed include Ashley M. Jones, Ilya Kaminsky, Carolyn Forché, and Ruth Awad. The choice of texts was made according to four key aspects. First, these poets' work is focused on the themes of trauma, grief, or historical/ emotional breakages. Second, poets use different styles in their creative process, and thus, there is a range of formal approaches that can be represented by such categories as fragmentation, lyricism, and testimonial poetics. Third, all chosen poets are representatives of contemporary poetic practice, specifically twentieth-first century American or diasporic poetry. Finally, their work is characterized by high affective intensity.

However, the theoretical framework that will be applied within this study is not considered as a separate, external element but rather incorporated into the methodology itself. Trauma Theory and Affect Theory constitute the two main interpretative frameworks that will be used for analyzing texts. The notion of trauma is explored using the concepts offered by Cathy Caruth and Dominick LaCapra; these concepts include the notion of a traumatic experience as fragmented, temporally interrupted, and resisting narrative closure. On the other hand, Affect Theory offers a way to explore emotions as embodied and pre-discursive phenomena (as defined by Brian Massumi and Sara Ahmed). Within this research, these theories are integrated together using the concept of affective reconstruction. According to this theory, the process of affective reconstruction implies a poetic reconstruction of traumatic experiences so that they become affectively sensible and relationally relevant. This concept enables one to shift from representational models and focus on the process of affective and emotional change as facilitated through poetry. From the perspective of methodology, this theoretical approach can be employed in textual analysis through paying attention to fragmentation, affective power, and witnessing. The methodology that will be used in this research is mainly based on close reading along with affective interpretation. With close reading, it becomes possible to analyze language and form. Amongst the things that can be analyzed with close reading include imagery, metaphor, rhythm, syntax, fragmentation of structure, among others. These are important elements to consider when trying to decode trauma as conveyed through poetry. Apart from close reading, affective interpretation methodology will also be considered. Through this methodology, the creation of meaning will be explored. This includes production of affect within poems, how the poems make use of language and position the reader in the context of emotional and ethical perspectives. It is important to consider all these aspects in analyzing trauma poetry since it is not about decoding messages explicitly stated in the poem. On the contrary, trauma poetry relies on silences and gaps within the poems.

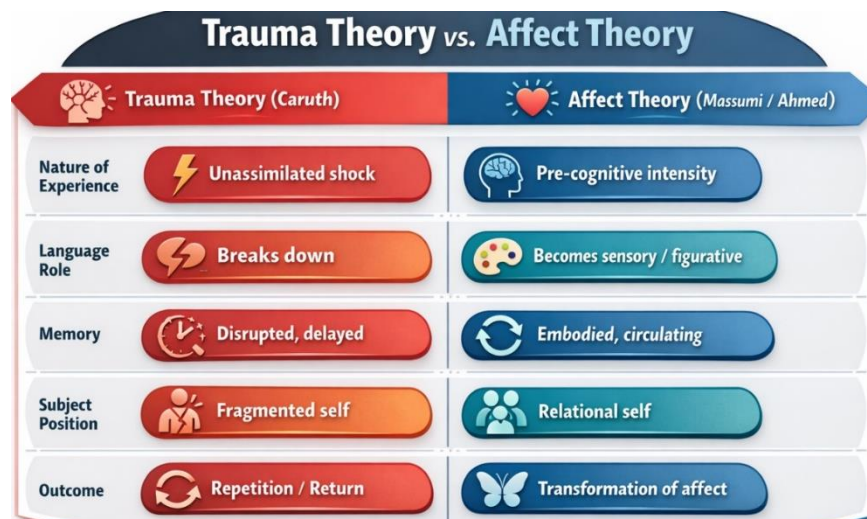
Data collection and analysis involved a rigorous approach to publicly available poetic texts. Firstly, the chosen poems were read from beginning to end to determine thematic orientation and the presence of recurrent themes associated with trauma, grief, and emotional survival. Thereafter, an intensive analysis process was conducted in which affective characteristics, including tone, emotional charge, and sensory language, were determined and classified. Further, attention was paid to structure, particularly aspects like fragmentation, enjambment, repetition, and silences, all of which play a role in shaping traumatic meaning in the poem. The findings were then subjected to interpretive analysis by way of the application of Trauma Theory and Affect Theory to gain a greater insight into how emotions and structure intersect in the process of meaning-making. Lastly, comparative interpretation was carried out among the chosen poems to ascertain repetitive affective construction patterns. Despite the fact that no human subjects are involved in this research, there is an issue of ethics to consider due to the highly delicate and sensitive topic under investigation in terms of trauma and trauma-related literature. Interpretations are provided responsibly with a focus on representing suffering, grief, and even acts of violence in literary pieces in an academic context, rather than trying to use it for personal gain and to make an impression through sensationalism. All texts selected for discussion are accessible published literary works and references will be provided accordingly. This research also considers the issue of ethics with regard to discussing trauma literature and problems related to voice, representation, and witness. However, the research suffers from certain drawbacks. For one thing, the research is based only on a chosen selection of contemporary American and diasporic poets, which can limit the application of the results on a larger scale and outside the sphere of interest. Secondly, since qualitative analysis implies an element of interpretation, the process will necessarily involve a certain level of subjectivity, depending on the theoretical approach used. Lastly, although the idea of affective reconstruction is valuable from a methodological standpoint, it is still a relatively new theoretical construction that may need further development in future work.

## Analysis

## Fragmentation and Silence in Trauma (Ilya Kaminsky)

The poem “*Letters*” by Ilya Kaminsky provides a concise yet potent expression of traumatic fragmentation wherein linguistic economy serves as a reflection of emotional disintegration. “*Rain has eaten 1/4 of me,*” the first line of the poem, clearly indicates that the speaker exists in a state of partial annihilation wherein his/her entire being is now incomplete, weakened, and compromised. The imagery of rain operates beyond a mere natural symbol to imply a process of erosion wherein trauma is depicted as a lingering phenomenon rather than an instantaneous event. In light of the Trauma Theory, the speaker’s condition mirrors the definition of trauma offered by Cathy Caruth, which states that trauma refers to an experience that cannot be immediately comprehended by consciousness but persists through disruptions and distortions. The brevity of structure and fragmentation of syntax in the poem add to this notion of disjuncture. The lack of continuity in punctuation and the sudden change in ideas reveal an unstable narrator who has difficulty in maintaining coherence. The lines “*yet I believe / against all evidence*” show a contrast between affective faith and mental breakdown. The dichotomy of belief versus evidence is crucial to traumatic consciousness because there is a difference between what is believed and known to be true by empirical evidence. Therefore, through this dichotomy, the idea of trauma as disruption both of memory and cognitive connection to reality is shown.

The most profound change, however, takes place in the symbolic construction of natural objects in terms of linguistic structure: “*these raindrops / are my letters of recommendation.*” It is through this poem that Kaminsky offers a radical interpretation of fragmentation as displaced communication. While rain was previously understood as an element of destruction and decay, it is now represented as “*letters*” to show that processes of fragmentation also involve the creation of language. It is at this point that the concept of *affective reconstruction* comes into play because it is important to recognize that while trauma causes the destruction of self, it also facilitates language construction. In terms of the Affect Theory approach, the process described above can be seen as a transition from affective dislocation to affective circulation. In this context, Brian Massumi’s definition of affect as intensity is clearly discernible in the fact that sensory imagery replaces the coherent logic of narrative, thus enabling emotional intensity to function without relying on rationality. Rather than providing any explanation for trauma, the poem simply conveys emotional intensity through the use of imagery and metaphorical substitutions. On the other hand, Sara Ahmed’s description of emotions as things that “stick” to the body and objects finds expression in the way the rain merges with the identity of the speaker. The phrase “here is a man worth falling on” marks the onset of an important ethical and relational inversion. The voice changes from the victim of weathering to the one upon whom rain falls—this time metaphorically referring to the power of experience or emotion. In this way, rather than signifying identity’s loss, the speaker here represents its re-emergence as a relational exposure, or a subject capable of receiving, absorbing, and being affected. This perspective makes it possible to argue that in fact, trauma entails a radical change to relational life, rather than its end. In sum, what is crucial about Kaminsky’s poem is that through linguistic fragmentation, metaphorical displacement, and affective intensity, the poem reveals how linguistic destruction can lead to the emergence of linguistic meaning. Within the context of the current study, the poem under discussion constitutes the first stage in affective reconstitution; that is, it reveals the phenomenon of fragmentation as both the manifestation of trauma and the potential for further emotional articulation.



### **Intimate Grief and Emotional Repair (Ashley M. Jones)**

In contrast to Kaminsky's "Letters," Ashley M. Jones's "Lullaby for the Grieving" redirects our analysis away from traumatic fragmentation towards an intimate and reparative practice of emotional expression that is not just felt but arranged into rhythms and images through physical actions. While the former poem displays linguistic fragmentation and disruptions in syntax, the latter poem establishes an atmosphere that regulates its emotion through softness, repetition, and sensuous attention. Indeed, the very title of the poem—"Lullaby"—provides us with a first hint about its tonal orientation towards soothing. Within the context of Affect Theory, such a shift in tone gains significance as it illustrates the capacity of affect to regulate emotions rather than being purely intense. The first part of the poem, "*at the Sipsy River / make small steps,*" introduces the mournful character to the threshold space of nature, wherein actions must be done slowly and thoughtfully in accordance with the body's needs. By being asked to "*make small steps,*" the mourner knows that there are certain things about mourning that cannot simply be fixed in a short time, but must be carefully walked through. The natural world in which the act takes place is not merely the backdrop to these actions, but imbued with threats and possibilities of recovery. This is seen in the juxtaposition of "*signs of life / everywhere*" against "*sharp spaces, too.*"

The sensory description of "*the slip of a rain-glazed rock / against my searching feet*" emphasizes the importance of the body in the process of emotional experiences. The poet does not see grief as an abstract entity but instead experiences it through bodily means such as motion and balance. The feet are described as searching feet, indicating a transitional figure moving amid ambiguity. This can be related to the idea of Sara Ahmed, according to whom emotions are not experienced as feelings or sensations within the body but as an encounter between bodies (Ahmed, 2004). The repetition of "*small steps,*" along with the simile "*like prayers— / each one a hope exhaled / into the trees,*" implies the incorporation of a ritual into emotional healing. In this poem, the activity of walking assumes a quality of a prayer; physical activity turns into spiritual and emotional work. "*Hope exhaled*" into the environment indicates that emotions are externalized and spread, thus implying that affect moves around in interaction between a human being and the environment, not residing inside the person as a fixed entity. This movement plays an important role in affective reconstruction, which means reorganization of emotionally fragmented experiences through interaction with environment.

The continual appeal, "*please, / let me enter. please, let me / leave whole,*" creates a scene of vulnerability that explicitly addresses the longing for wholeness following emotional damage. Unlike Kaminsky's disrupted identity, in this case, the poet seeks to negotiate the edges of wholeness. Yet, wholeness does not exist as a permanent entity but as a delicate ideal that relies upon the external world to carry emotional weight. The poet's call for wholeness remains unfulfilled and constantly postponed, implying that healing is an indefinite process.

With the focus of the poem on auditory imagery, namely, "*the tiny sounds / of faraway birds. the safety / in their promise of song,*" it is clear that subtle sensory experiences can also play an important part in stabilizing emotions. It is as though sound is made into something comforting, not by the removal of one's grief but by the placement of the subject within the natural world around her. It can be seen as a "*promise of song*" – as an assured future that will come about through perceptual experience. In the final section, the appearance of natural imagery like "*the golden butterfly / against the cave-dark*" and "*the crown of light / atop the leaves*" evokes a nuanced dialogue between dark and light. This imagery does not heal the speaker from their pain, but rather allows that pain to be channeled aesthetically and creates an opening for both beauty and emotional vulnerability to coincide. In the final rhetorical question, "*what else can i call / my footsteps forward, / small, small, sure?,*" the overall premise of the poem is crystallized into a concise statement: grieving involves slow, uncertain progress toward the future.

In the larger context of this essay, the poem by Jones serves as the second phase of affective reconstitution in which sadness is neither annihilated nor obliterated, but rather carefully restructured in terms of embodied attention, environmental interaction, and rhythmic language. While the work of Kaminsky foregrounds fragmentation as a beginning to trauma, Jones highlights how poetic structure can provide moments of emotional restoration without denying the existence of vulnerability.

	Kaminsky "Letters"	Jones "Lullaby"
Emotional mode	Fragmentation	Repair
Language	Broken / minimal	Rhythmic / repetitive
Body	Disintegrated	Embodied / active
Nature	Erosive force (rain)	Restorative space
Movement	Static suffering	Walking / progression
Outcome	Disruption of self	Partial reconstitution

### Witnessing and Ethical Memory (Carolyn Forché)

In *"Night Shift in the Home for Convalescents"* by Carolyn Forché, the progression of this analysis shifts from intimate grief to collective memory and testimony, in which trauma goes beyond the realm of emotion into history and loss and into cultural disappearance and human forgetfulness. In contrast to the internal and physical mending seen in Ashley M. Jones's poem, Forché creates a scenario in which human memory is itself fragile and vulnerable, both in the form of an archive and in its ethical significance. The poem uses repetition and cataloging to accumulate objects, noises, and sensations that exist as much as they do not, thus creating what Trauma Theory describes as loss through fragmented recollection rather than narrative cohesion.

*"The drawer holds many things that have been put aside"* sets the stage for the contrast between preserving memories and putting something aside to forget about it. Thus, the very drawer becomes an object of archiving, containing things that had some meaning at one point in time but are now disconnected from their source. Examples include *"a notebook," "a tortoise-shell comb,"* and *"a prayerbook bound / in mother-of-pearl"* – all of which are described with precision while being deprived of any kind of context and significance. The use of *"mother-of-pearl. / Mother-of-pearl"* adds to this effect by turning something tangible into an abstract image that repeats itself. The poem thus describes how memories are lost over time due to them losing their significance.

The shift from the physical disappearance of objects to the non-tangible sound of *"blurring bees in the air / no longer heard in the wild"* highlights the move from concrete to intangible modes of disappearance. In this instance, memory is aural and atmospheric, with emphasis on the missing rather than the present. This is true to the logic of trauma, where loss leaves a sensory residue but not necessarily a story to be reclaimed. With *"Everything at once, she had said. All that you / remember must be written down,"* there is a call for witness. Yet this call is immediately undermined by its own impossibility, the fact that everything cannot be remembered *"at once."*

The poetics of witnessing associated with Forché's work comes out more strongly in the imagery of the changing landscape that comes after. With the erasure of physical space—*"The field gone. The house. The road now under a newer road"*—a deeper meaning of the erasure of the past is brought out, in that the past is literally covered up with something else. This brings out a history associated with traumatic experiences, where the pain is not only in memories inside someone but in the way the environment itself changes. Through repetition of the erasure—*"The field gone. The house."*—a rhythm of loss similar to that found previously within this essay is created, but on a wider scale and one with time included. With the help of the imagery related to the environment, *"skunk cabbage and buttercups, / cattails, / polliwogs and crayfish,"* the speaker makes the process of witnessing even more complicated since he talks about an environment which had sensory qualities once but can only be experienced with the help of memory now. The very act of capturing *"them in jars of pond water"* implies a certain moral dilemma since despite the speaker's assurances that *"Not for eating no. To watch them live,"* the idea of capturing those creatures in bottles is reminiscent of the entire poem, which aims at preserving those living creatures through memory. In the conclusion – *"Wash your mother's clothes one last time and put them away— / like wrapping a scoop of snow in tissue paper"*—we find an extremely intimate expression of the sense of loss and, at the same

time, a metaphor with symbolic value. Indeed, the snow wrapped in a tissue is doomed to melt because the only thing that can be preserved from a memory of something is its destruction. Thus, we get another example of the ethical nature of witnessing: it is an impossible act that nonetheless preserves the object of memory because it is performed as part of this very act. From the standpoint of our research, this poem is another step in the affective reconstructions of trauma. Here, too, the speaker is responsible for the transformation of the traumatic past into a cultural memory. But unlike Kaminsky's split personality or Jones's repairing intimacy, Forché presents her poem as a result of witnessing. Yet, in sharp contrast to Jones, Forché's speaker experiences witnessing as an unstable and emotionally loaded task rather than an ethical act. Ultimately, "*Night Shift in the Home for Convalescents*" redefines poetry as a space where trauma is not only felt or repaired but borne witness to on behalf of others. The poem thus produces a nuanced sense of memory through its engagement with material and evocative traces of memory as both individual and communal. In this way, it helps to advance the primary thesis of this paper, which is that poetry allows for trauma to be transformed into an ethic of memory that is experienced affectively and communally.

### **Resilience and Emotional Re-emergence (Ruth Awad)**

Awad's "*Reasons to Live*," which represents the final movement in the trajectory of affective reconstruction in this essay, stands apart from the previous literature in its portrayal of resilience and re-emergence. While previous texts document rupture and the process of emotional reconfiguration, the latter is characterized by resilience as a continuous process of affective interaction with the surrounding environment, which does not deny the experience of trauma but incorporates it into a relational sphere of life. What is emphasized in the poem is resilience as an extremely delicate state of being in the present moment through attentive, repetitive, and sensorial immersion. In terms of the intersection of Trauma Theory and Affect Theory, the shift towards resilience may be perceived as the point when trauma, although not erased, transforms into the practice of life that is receptive to affective potentialities. The poem begins with an opening "*if*," which suggests that survival occurs in iterations and is not a state that once achieved never leaves one again. "*Violet night*" in this context is a metaphor for psychological darkness that, like beauty, contains an element of peril and suggests that trauma happens not once but repeatedly throughout life. Repeated usage of the verb "*survive*" makes endurance of pain a temporal process that corresponds with what is known from trauma theory as its persisting aspect, not a single instance of pain followed by peace of mind. Yet at the very beginning of the poem there is an opposition offered to this "*darkness*," an anticipation of the future happiness: "*the fig tree will ache / with sweetness for you in sunlight*." In this case, affective experience is being projected outward to the external world, and it does not mean that the trauma disappears but that the survival means engaging with surroundings actively. The use of the second person point of view by Awad, specifically the word "*you*" is especially crucial because it converts the poem into an emotional address. Unlike the distant witnessing done in Carolyn Forché's poem, the direct addressing in Awad's poem brings the speaker close to the reader, making the reader partake in the experience that the poem evokes. The phrase "*even when you can't stand it*" recognizes the threshold at which one must endure, thus defying the simplified idea that perseverance means always being strong. Additionally, the images of "*the heavy whining floorboards / of the house you filled with animals / as hurt and lost as you*" position survival within an ecological framework of shared vulnerability.

However, the poem gains momentum through its use of imagery associated with nature, such as "*bearded irises*," "*scorpion grass*," "*redbuds*," and "*rivers*." Such images are not ornamental; they perform the function of connectivity and rejuvenation. In addition, the imperative phrase "*live, live, live, live!*" creates a sense of rhythm and insistence, interrupting the process of description and becoming an order and an invocation at once. Although the phrase "*small steps*" from Ashley M. Jones's poem resonates with the present line, it gains additional significance in the context of living rather than walking. Here, the emphasis on survival becomes more pronounced due to its direct connection to reality.

Notably, an important philosophical shift takes place when the speaker says "*you'll understand an afterlife isn't promised*." Indeed, in contrast to Jones, this poem renounces transcendence in favor of immanence. In other words, instead of relying on metaphysics to prove the point, it focuses on the actual experience of existence. This approach correlates with a recent trend in trauma studies in which embodiment, and thus survival, is considered more relevant than redemption. This philosophy becomes even clearer with the line that follows: "*but the spray of scorpion grass keeps growing*." The concluding section of the poem enhances its relational affectivity through a number of actions performed by nature that appear to act according to the dictates of the subject: "*the dogs will sing their whole bodies / in praise of you*," and "*the rivers / will set their stones and ribbons / at your door*." By attributing life to nature, the poet creates a

situation where nature becomes another agent that participates in the act of the re-awakening of emotions. Nevertheless, such a relation is dependent on one condition, *namely* “if only / you’ll let the world / soften you with its touching.” It is vital to remember this point since here resilience is no longer understood in terms of resistance and toughness but rather in terms of openness to external affective influence. In relation to Affect Theory, such a condition implies the openness of the subject to affects coming from outside. In this study’s context, “*Reasons to Live*” can be seen as the ultimate process of affective reconstruction in which trauma becomes a way of being. While Kaminsky fractures her identity in a fragmented self, Jones repairs his through intimate acts, and Forché bears witness to injustice with ethical integrity, Awad’s poem focuses on the ability to keep living without finding solutions to the circumstances of death. Resilience in Awad’s poem does not entail a return to normalcy but an orientation towards the world marked by sensitivity, vulnerability, and affective responsiveness. Finally, through this analysis of “*Reasons to Live*,” it becomes evident that emotional resilience is never found in a state of closure but in the ongoing practice of living itself. Through a poetics of resilience that draws on ecological, sensorial, and interpersonal relationships, the poem broadens the scope of trauma studies beyond suffering and memory to consider life following the traumatic experience. In this sense, it constitutes the end point of affective reconstruction by transforming trauma into a kind of relational existence.

### **Synthesis: Stages of Affective Reconstruction in Contemporary Poetry**

When placed within a comparative framework, these analyses show that the chosen poets do not represent mere encounters with trauma; rather, their poetry represents a cohesive sequence of *affective reconstruction*, which is the term used throughout this study to describe the processes involved in trauma. Unlike how trauma can be regarded as a fixed state or simply a theme within poems, the poems written by Ilya Kaminsky, Ashley M. Jones, Carolyn Forché, and Ruth Awad illustrate specific stages in disruption, rearrangement, dissemination, and finally, preservation of emotional experiences. Together, these poets show that contemporary poetry’s treatment of trauma should not be seen as a finality marked by a break from something but rather as a process of negotiating meaning. The notion of fragmentation, as represented in Kaminsky’s “*Letters*,” provides the ground for trauma to arise through the failure of linguistic and subject matter coherence. The use of fragmented structure, distorted imagery, and displacement of meanings within the poem represents some of the central ideas of Trauma Theory, namely the concepts of delayed reactions and limitations of representational power. For Kaminsky, language fails to convey the true essence of experiences, resulting in a fragmented expression that implies indirectness, incompleteness, and lack of certainty. Nevertheless, as the analysis proves, there is more to fragmentation than just disintegration; rather, it marks the beginning of reconstructive processes through affective expression.

On the contrary, in “*Lullaby for the Grieving*,” by Jones, the mode of affect turns to be more therapeutic, as it becomes evident that the process of emotional disturbance is being restructured by means of rhythm and repetition. Indeed, instead of denying or solving their grief, people should navigate it through “*small steps*” and thus learn to cope with such an emotional condition. It becomes apparent that in Affect Theory, poetry may provide the basis for regulating emotions and establishing partial stability among individuals. In this way, Jones’s poem is an illustrative example of how poetic form is capable of becoming the container of emotional state, enabling the process of affective reparation without negating vulnerability.

In Forché’s poem, “*Night Shift in the Home for Convalescents*,” the analysis widens in scope as she incorporates an ethical and historical context for understanding trauma. By extending her analysis from a narrow focus on the realm of grief to consideration of witnessing, the poem shifts our understanding of trauma as an archival process that is vulnerable yet ethically loaded. In the act of constructing memory, the poem uses images that are fragmentary and archival, thus revealing the vulnerability of memory as well as its ethical nature. The act of witnessing is an important one, which requires the readers to participate in an act of bearing witness to the disappearing past.

In “*Reasons to Live*,” by Awad, the trajectory comes to fruition with the formulation of a poetics of resilience and renewal. While trauma can be conceptualized neither as a disruptive force nor as a memory phenomenon in itself, trauma in the poem takes place in relationship to a continual existence. The poem moves away from individualistic narratives of recovery in which healing involves achieving an endpoint. Instead, resilience is depicted as an ongoing process in which one is able to stay vulnerable and responsive. As such, the invitation to “*let the world / soften you with its touching*” embodies the transformation of resilience from a concept of closure to one of openness. In sum, the four poetic forms analyzed in this paper—fragmentation, repair, witnessing, and resilience—offer an approach to thinking about trauma that reimagines trauma as an experiential phenomenon that can be explored, articulated, and reconstructed via the medium of poetry. Instead of perpetuating the assumption that trauma is an event that is by definition

unspeakable or un-healable, the study proves that poetry can provide a framework for restructuring traumatic experience into something new via language, form, and affect. Each poet offers a unique contribution to the project: Kaminsky shows us the dissolution of experience, Jones exemplifies the process of emotional restructuring, Forché places trauma within an ethical and historical context, and Awad writes from the perspective of living on after being disrupted. The synthesis of ideas outlined above not only validates the idea of *affective reconstruction* but also highlights its importance. Through bringing together theories from Trauma Studies and Affect Studies, this study suggests that the concepts of trauma and emotion cannot be separated from one another in analysis.

Indeed, through this comparative analysis, it is possible to assert that American poetry does not simply illustrate trauma but rather plays a role in its reconstruction. By engaging diverse formal techniques and emotional registers, the poets selected herein succeed in developing a complex framework of emotion—a framework that begins with the process of rupture but progresses through relation and ends in ongoing participation with the world. Through such processes, the poets present an innovative vision of trauma in which this concept does not mark the end of loss but rather marks its continuous beginning.

**Table 1: Comparison Matrix- Affective Recommendation Across Four Poets**

Poet	Primary Stage	Poetic Technique	Affect Mode	Trauma Theory Link	Outcome
Kaminsky	Fragmentation	Fragmented structure, distorted imagery	Disruption	Linguistic failure, unspeakability	Beginning of reconstru
Jones	Repair	Rhythm, repetition, 'small steps'	Therapeutic regulation	Coping without closure	Partial stability
Forché	Witnessing	Archival fragments, witnessing	Ethical/historical	Memory vulnerability	Reader as witness
Awad	Resilience	Invitation, openness	Ongoing vulnerability	Trauma as continuous existence	Renewal without endp

## Conclusion

This paper has shown that contemporary American poets do not understand trauma simply as a state of rupture or silence but rather as a living, ever-evolving process that allows the reorganization of emotions and feelings. Based on the analyses of Ilya Kaminsky, Ashley M. Jones, Carolyn Forché, and Ruth Awad, this paper has identified a specific evolution of trauma from a state of fragmentation and rupture to a state of healing. Although Kaminsky’s poetry of rupture highlights the disintegration of language and self, it at the same time provides the space for the emergence of other means of communication; Jones’ poetry transforms suffering by way of lyrical intensity and focus on embodiment and rhythm; Forché extends the limits of trauma and makes it transcend beyond individuality into the realm of witnessing and ethics; finally, Awad re-orientes trauma toward relational survival and acknowledges the necessity of vulnerability for one to live further. Overall, the poetic approaches discussed in this paper undermine traditional notions promoted by Trauma Theory and challenge its emphasis on inexpressibility of trauma.

The notion of *affective reconstruction* is significant since it makes the current study one of the critical interventions into the dialogue between Trauma Theory and Affect Theory. The proposed framework takes into account both the fracturing of experience and its rearticulation via the mechanisms of poetic practice. This approach is based on the assumption that what matters is not how much experience can or cannot be represented but rather what happens to it once it is being processed by poets and readers. In addition, the analysis reveals that poetry neither resolves nor restores anything but maintains an important tension between loss and continuity where emotional life can constantly be renegotiated. Poetry becomes thus a fundamental tool for emotional survival that makes it possible for people and groups of people to relate to trauma on multiple levels. It is necessary to emphasize that contemporary poetry neither represents nor explains trauma but rather gives it new meaning and helps people to survive through affective reconstruction.

## References

- Ahmad, M. B., Rabi, F., Sardar, N., Khan, T., & Begum, R. (2025). Simulated Realities and Digital Identities: A Postmodern Analysis of The Film Logout (2025). *Journal of Media Horizons*, 6(3), 2615-2630.
- Ahmed, S. (2004). *The cultural politics of emotion*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Caruth, C. (1996). *Unclaimed experience: Trauma, narrative, and history*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Felman, S., & Laub, D. (1992). *Testimony: Crises of witnessing in literature, psychoanalysis, and history*. Routledge.

- Furtado, H. T., & Auchter, J. (2024). Demystifying trauma in international relations theory: From incomprehensibility to the liberatory real. *Security Dialogue*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09670106241265637>
- Hamadeh, A., El-Khoury, J., Torales, J., Atoui, M., Aggarwal, N., Campbell, M., Lashley, M., Narvaez, J. C. M., McMahon, A., & Ventriglio, A. (2025). A critical review of the evolution and interrelation of traumatic stress disorders. *PLOS Mental Health*, 2(7), e0000385. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmen.0000385>
- Hellman, N., Haft, S. M., Woodbury, A., Sherrill, A. M., & Rauch, S. A. M. (2025). The pain of PTSD: A systematic review. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20008066.2025.2479923>
- Hussain, A., Danish, Y., Rabi, F., & Rabi, U. (n.d.). *Impacts of the Negative Religious Identities on a Society in The Prisoner by Hamid*.
- Hussain, A., Rabi, F., & Aziz, E. Fluid Identities in Digital Spaces: Pakistani Influencers' online Narratives Through The Theory of Zygmunt Bauman.
- Javed Ashiq, U., Usman, T., Rabi, F., & Uzma. (2024). Dominance and hegemony: A study of Marxist class conflict in Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke*. *International Journal of Contemporary Issues in Social Sciences*, 3(3), 1004–1010.
- Kartol, A., Üztemur, S., Chen, C. Y., et al. (2025). Trauma and related measures one year after the 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye. *Current Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-025-07563-y>
- Khan, A., Rabi, U., Rahman, H. U., Ahmad, W., Rabi, F., & Khalil, S. (2026). *Sacred knowledge and secular learning: An Islamic epistemological reading of Nadeem Aslam's The Wasted Vigil*. *International Journal of Social Sciences Bulletin*, 4(1), 08-18.
- LaCapra, D. (2001). *Writing history, writing trauma*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Latif, A., Seyab, M., Shakil, A., Hussain, A., & Rabi, F. (2026). Reconceptualizing the Teacher's Role: A Facilitative Approach Through the Lens of Educational Psychology. *Pakistan Journal of Social Science Review*, 5(2), 520-533.
- Massumi, B. (2002). *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation*. Duke University Press.
- Neurobiology of Stress. (2025). Mechanisms of childhood trauma: An integrative review. *Neurobiology of Stress*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ynstr.2025.100737>
- Rabi, F., Zahir, K., Aziz, L., Mukhtiar, M., & Bibi, M. (2025). Queering Motherhood: Transgender Identity and Alternative Kinship in the Vicks Ad Featuring Shreegauri Sawant: <https://doi.org/10.55966/assaj.2025.4.1.0120>. *ASSAJ*, 4(01), 2304-2321.
- Rabi, U., & Rabi, F. (2025). The Protection of Human Life in Islam: A Critical Reading of the Wasted Vigil. *Journal of Social Signs Review*, 3(12), 154-166.
- Rabi, U., Hussain, A., Ahmad, B., & Rabi, F. (2026). The Commodification of Religious Identity: Economic Exploitation in Nadeem Aslam's *The Wasted Vigil*: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18303686>. *Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review*, 4(1), 228-240.
- Rashid, A., van der Kaap-Deeder, J., Abbate, M., & Costa, S. (2025). The mediating role of emotion regulation in trauma recovery. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 26(2), 178–199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15299732.2024.2429474>