



Exploring Motherhood and Feminine Nationality during the Liberation War of Bangladesh: A Contrastive Analysis of Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age* and Selina Hossain's *River of My Blood*

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Abstract:

At times of war and national crisis, mothers take on a unique role where they are defaulted as the caregivers of society. However, there is evidence to prove that nationality itself is gendered, and feminine nationality imposes the role of the caregiver mother onto the mothers of society. This paper tries to explore 'motherhood' against the backdrop of the Liberation War of Bangladesh and the imposition of the feminine national identity onto the protagonists of two novels: Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age* and Selina Hossain's *River of My Blood*. The research aims to demonstrate the exploration of the feminine identity, especially the maternal identity, in times of national crisis. The research is qualitative and uses textual and content analysis. The war imposes a set role of nationalism on the females, which proves to be a traumatic experience. The research recognises how nationalism is used as a ploy to create an identity in females, which subjugates them as the caregivers of the nation. The different approaches of the two protagonists are explored: where Rehana weaves her individuality by navigating the feminine national identity, and Boori succumbs to it and therefore suffers.

Keywords: Motherhood, Maternal identity, Nationality, Feminine nationality, Liberation war of Bangladesh.