

Reimagining Postcolonial Trauma: Micro-Historical Perspectives in Northeast Indian Writing

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Abstract: The study explores the historical condition and narrative strategy of postcolonial trauma as it emerges as an object of interest in Northeast Indian Anglophone literature. Reading Mamang Dai's *The Black Hill*, Easterine Kire's *A Terrible Matriarchy*, Veio Pou's *Waiting for the Dust to Settle*, and Mitra Phukan's *The Collector's Wife* closely helps to place postcolonial trauma theory in conversation with micro-history. The novels displace national macro narratives by offering local experiences of colonial intrusion, insurgency, militarization, and patriarchal control as they are lived, particularly by women in homes and village communities. By centering domestic spaces, intergenerational memory, and marginalized voices, these texts operate as counter-archives that question official historiography. By fragmenting chronologies, including embedded oral traditions and gendered interior perspectives, they depict trauma as cumulative, relational and enduring, as opposed to "event based." From the peripheries of the Indian nation-state, Northeast Indian fiction provides theoretical insight into memory, survival and historical consciousness.

IndexTerms - postcolonial trauma, micro-history, Northeast Indian fiction, indigenous communities, militarization, gendered violence, oral histories, counter archive, memory and history.

INTRODUCTION

Northeast India is a region that has a unique and complex geopolitical position shaped by old colonial borders, different ethnicities, and prolonged political unrest. Colonial line drawing on maps by the British led to the fragmentation and reshaping of the original social and cultural identity. This failure was followed by decades of insurgency, militarization, and contested national identity. Narratives of political violence often reduce conflict to events, overlooking the long term and entangled effects that shape everyday life. Instead, it slowly emerges through ongoing emotional and social turmoil that puts a crack on familial relations, social practices and collective memory. Saikia (2004), Joshi (2012), Kikon (2019), and Wouters (2022) stress that the violence in Northeast India is resistant to official historiographical models, it highlights a rupture between state-based narratives and lived experiences. They call for ways of reading and writing that allow and privilege the fragmented, layered truths about trauma as inscribed in the everyday lives of subjects and in intergenerational memories.

Fiction from Northeast India reorients attention from spectacular episodes of violence to the slow transformations of affect, kinship, and temporal experience shaped by prolonged instability. In addition, the persistence of cultures among many communities in the area, especially those which are centered on oral history, ritual activities and kinship-based systems, functions as a mechanism of resistance and maintaining the history of instability. Practices here show how memory is transmitted and re-recorded across generations, thus complicating linear concepts of history and highlighting relationality and collective persistence.

NEED OF THE STUDY

A deeper understanding of the complex ethnic, gender and geopolitical identities in Northeast India is essential to fully grasp the region's conflict and trauma. At the forefront of this inquiry is the recognition of how women's experiences and stories have often been overlooked or silenced, both in official records and literary portrayals. As the repositories of memory, emotional labourers and the key characters in the domestic arena, women's positions represent important arenas of contestation and survival within prolonged violence. Although interest in Northeast Indian literature has picked up recently, a gap is visible in the form of comparative studies that incorporate postcolonial theories of trauma along with micro-historical approaches that focus on gendered domestic history. The gap is a reflection of the general difficulty of reconciling state-centric history with partial or hidden history from the perspectives of marginalized groups. The article attempts to bridge this gap through a focus on a selection of novels that reveal the micro-historical dimensions of conflict and trauma as a reflection of daily life as a site of collective or personal memory. Through focusing on the everyday experience of conflict, the project contests widely taken meanings of violence and trauma and presents insights into the continuation of instability and history as memory and identity, particularly in the Northeast of India.

Notwithstanding the expanding number of studies of Northeast Indian fiction, there is a paucity of peer-reviewed texts that approach these texts together using micro-histories, narrative witnessing, and other related frameworks. Most research has focused on an individual writer or an individual work, with the shared narrative techniques in novels about ongoing political conflict being inadequately addressed. This research attempts to fill the gap by considering the novels collectively and demonstrating the ways in which the character, the narrative voice, and the events of daily life contribute to an innovative approach to the understanding of

history. Much of the research has focused on political history, ethnicity, or the body of work of an individual writer, yet the overall understanding of the day-to-day realities has not been adequately addressed.

The research aims to identify the ways in which the novels under consideration have created microhistory around the conflict. Additionally, it aims to understand the complex links between memory, land, and daily life. The research uses postcolonial trauma theory as a framework to examine these relationships at a regional level. The paper asks how the chosen texts represent postcolonial trauma within everyday life. It also looks at how micro-histories challenge mainstream, state-centered views of conflict, exploring how trauma appears as both cumulative and intergenerational. It considers how women's narrative voices play a role in encoding and preserving cultural knowledge within the archive. The study also analyzes the narrative techniques these texts use to express silence and fragmentation as key elements of storytelling and memory.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study uses qualitative close reading by focusing on narrative voice, characterizations and perceptions of what memory can and cannot accomplish within context of militarization. The texts are not used as traditional histories but rather as narrative interventions that are affected by form, silence, and perspective. The study employs a comparative lens to explore how various concerns are manifested differently in the four novels such as insurgency, displacement, gendered memory, and ethical witnessing through language and structure. The inclusion of children and youth, and the elders who carry memory, is used to address commonalities and unique storytelling styles within the texts by using ideas from trauma studies, memory studies, and postcolonial studies as guiding lenses. The analysis draws on key trauma theory ideas of post-traumatic witnessing to provide a framework for understanding how trauma is represented and processed within narrative forms, while applying these concepts with caution in the specific context of Northeast India. Secondary sources such as journal articles, critical essays and others, are employed for setting the readings in focus and grounding the study in current scholarship. The texts are used dialogically to enhance the analysis without replacing them.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

The paper explores the theoretical frameworks that inform the analysis of Northeast Indian fiction, focusing on concepts such as postcolonial trauma, micro-history, memory and gender. The theory of postcolonial trauma surpasses the conventional Western psychoanalytic notion of trauma. Trauma, from the point of view of postcolonial investigations into mental suffering, is not an event or an instant in time but an ongoing process rooted in the history of colonization, political conflict, and structural inequalities. Re-imagining trauma as entwined with ongoing political instability, cultural dislocation, and social fragmentation among others, Pramod K. Nayar (2010) calls for a more nuanced recognition of silences and fragmented subjectivities that avoid explicit narrative fusion.

In the Northeast region of India, trauma is not only created through overtly violent acts. It is created through years of militarization, surveillance and a pre-existing fear of what is to come next. Mamang Dai's *The Black Hill* is a work of fiction that embodies this, describing a land that is marked by the violence of colonialism and displacement. Dai's poetic and layered style of storytelling reflect trauma's nonlinear temporality, prioritizing survival and recall without resolution. In a similar manner, *Waiting for the Dust to Settle* by Veio Pou foregrounds trauma as ambient instead of episodic. Yet here fear and waiting are primary states of being, a displacement of time that speaks to postcolonial trauma theory. The way the novel depicts militarization changing the rhythms of social life but with limited dramatic rupture accents the lived experience of trauma as an ongoing problem, unending and never resolved. Postcolonial trauma theory similarly demands that memory be seen as fragmented and contested. Yasmin Saikia's *Fragmented Memories* (2004) critiques dominant official histories as overlooking victims' perspectives and underestimating the detail of violent experiences. Northeast Indian fiction addresses this gap through narrative techniques such as silence, absence and rupture to convey the ongoing struggle towards complete expression. Mitra Phukan's *The Collector's Wife* exemplifies this approach through its fragmented narrative structure and introspective monologues. It vividly evokes the emotional residue endured by individuals living amidst conflict and the aftermath of social fragmentation. The novel's portrayal of memory's transience parallels trauma theory's emphasis on the inadequacies of linguistic or narrative representation to convey trauma's depth.

Micro-history is a study that was created within the realm of historical study as a way of combating the grand narratives of history that are created through a state-centric view of history. Nayar (2010) provocatively argues that literary works are a form of micro-archive, a way of storing subaltern knowledge and memories that are able to hold histories that are either unable to or need not be captured through formal means of documentation. Easterine Kire's *A Terrible Patriarchy* stands as a significant work offering a nuanced and intricate portrayal of private, domestic life under the shadow of political turmoil. The novel charts the way that patriarchal structures and militarized social orders overlap for life inside the home with family ties being potent microcosms of larger power structures. Avoiding larger political narratives, the text shows how control and trauma permeate intimate social lives. Spatiality is presented as a central topic in micro-historical readings of these novels. The texts, to a large extent, critique the invisibility of borderlands and peripheral places from national memory through place and location, situating trauma in specific areas scarred by past and present violence. In *The Black Hill*, geography becomes a narrative subject with a colonial, cultural memory and a reminder that the land is witness to the successive waves of displacement and oppression. The resonance of the land as a living archive can also be found in *Waiting for the Dust to Settle*, where pathways and the terrain features of villages become fraught sites of anxiety influenced by militarization. We see in these spatial narratives that micro-history is not just about individuals and their families, but that space and location are conduits of traumatic memory and contention.

One of the major themes that permeates the novels is the portrayal of memory in the novelistic, fragmented, sometimes unspoken forms of non-linear narrative and non-linear ways of processing memory. This approach mirrors the novel's understanding that trauma is not easy to articulate and often is present without words. It remains in lack, omission, and space, in gaps and in emotional dust. These quiet gaps are not just gaps or misspoken words. They are strategic communications that demonstrate the ephemeral nature of memory. They illustrate the limitations of language in attempting to communicate experiences of trauma and violence. Perhaps the clearest expression of this can be found in the dialogue that exists between oral tradition and written text. Both these are vital components for the safekeeping and transmission of shared memory. *A Terrible Matriarchy* and *Waiting for the Dust to Settle* portray storytelling as a vital cultural practice. It is a form of survival and resistance sustaining identity and community in the face of ongoing political upheaval. In *The Collector's Wife*, memory is presented as fragmented, as the product of the internal architecture of the stream-of-consciousness style, and the strategic use of space that serves to illuminate the human psyche in the face of war. Time, inner thoughts, and space accumulate to form a fractured timeline. This disjointed narrative style speaks to the ephemeral quality of trauma and the contested quality of memory itself. In both works, a space has been created that is both a comment on the absence and complexity that characterizes the world, and a symbol for that complexity itself.

Conflict as Lived Reality: Everyday Trauma and Micro- History

This study will consider the ways in which Northeast Indian fiction treats conflict as not a distant event from the past nor as a dramatic explosion of violence, but as a quotidian condition whose effects impact normal life, emotional worlds, domestic spaces and relationships. By close reading *The Black Hill*, *A Terrible Matriarchy*, *Waiting for the Dust to Settle*, and *The Collector's Wife*, the analysis shows how postcolonial trauma is narrated through waiting, disrupted habits, and fear, often a gradual form of violence passed down through families that reflects the experience of living under the constant presence of war. Across these texts, violence registers through duration and habit rather than spectacle. In *Waiting for the Dust to Settle*, this is most vivid through Rakovei's eyes, as his initial admiration for the army slowly turns to fear while militarization seeps into the rhythms of village life. Army personnel become part of the everyday rhythm, not an unusual occurrence, as soldiers go in familiar paths, conversations become gentler in volume, and children learn to read danger before they even understand it. Pou foregrounds waiting as an ordering condition of everyday existence. The wait for news, safety, and normalcy implies that trauma does not happen with explosion but with suspension.

A Terrible Matriarchy also shows how conflict seeps into everyday life. The novel portrays domestic spaces as sites of subtle but constant psychological strain rather than open violence. Here, trauma appears as psychological pressure, silence and the internalization of fear within a family. Without dramatic scenes, there is no peace. Conflict serves as the background noise, and thus temperament, discipline, and emotional control are trained. Kire's narrative approach is consistent with postcolonial trauma as something that is 'non-linear,' 'off course' as an aftermath, and 'embedded' in everyday life subjectivity, rather than signposted by a sense of closure (Nayar 2010). In *The Collector's Wife*, daily trauma is organized around the slow destruction of domestic security wrought by the Assam agitation. Rukmini becomes involved in combat, not in the streets first but within the home, through fear, isolation, and the slow dawning knowledge that the administrative power is not protective against collective violence. Equally, in *The Black Hill*, Mamang Dai locates that trauma within the rhythms of frontier life, where the colonial encounter wrecks the fixed patterns of local community living. Violence is not of an earlier spectacle but an intrusive force that disturbs trust, land relations and social balance. Saikia (2004) asserts that violence in the Northeast must be viewed not through the lens of institutional chronologies but fragmented memories and long-term emotional ramifications. The homes in these novels, like Rakovei's, with his grandmother Toukhue, act as living archives of memory, revealing how domestic spaces quietly preserve histories that official accounts often overlook. She is described as a living legacy of stories about the past and cultural lore. Her history, silence and memory are not inherited as written facts but as lived experiences. Her presence is the perpetuation of micro-histories as oral traditions and intergenerational transmission, which subverts any state-imposed narrative that reduces insurgencies to figures and policy dialogue. Similarly, *The Black Hill* forms its narrative from the perspective of indigenous people and communities who are wrestling with colonial encroachments. Dai's focus on daily conversations, negotiations and misunderstandings brings out how these large historical processes of colonial expansion, of missionaries reaching into territory, and of borders being drawn are not uniformly experienced locally. These narratives disquiet linear colonial historiography by revealing how power is implicated not in documents of administration but in homes, rituals and land use.

In *The Collector's Wife*, however, micro-history occurs through a protagonist who begins observing more closely the sense of social disrepair, neighbours who are seen to be suspicious, friendships that break down on ethnic lines, and fear of entering into casual encounters. The novel chronicles how political agitations reconstitute local culture into an emotional ecology. And thus, the community's history of fear is largely undocumented.

In *The Black Hill*, colonial power comes into being through surveillance, missionaries, land and community relations being reordered. Dai does not dramatize conquest and instead reveals how colonial power shapes the ordinary system of decision making, trust and spatial belonging. In *A Terrible Matriarchy* and *Waiting for the Dust to Settle*, the Naga insurgency and counterinsurgency influence domestic life through fear and regulation, moral ambiguity and paranoia. As Rakovei's slow disenchantment reveals the ways the state's violence seeps into preteen minds, and the ways adult characters try to survive in silence and conformity. Wouters' (2022) study of Naga nationalism offers a useful framework to situate such stories, in particular the way in which insurgency breaks down social solidarity without providing clear moral oppositions.

The Collector's Wife situates the Assam agitation in bureaucratic and domestic spaces. The state is both there and not there, visible in the curfews of administrative rules and regulations, but it cannot protect the most intimate matters of life in an individual. This resonates with Joshi (2012) on how the political process changes routine social relationships, generating trauma that endures long after the evidence of visible conflict has faded. In *A Terrible Matriarchy*, domestic authority becomes a tool for the circulation of

fear, control, and emotional repression. The family household consumes external conflict and turns it into internal discipline and silence. Violence here is not always physical. It is practiced through emotional disengagement, heavy regulation, and the repression of weakness. Rakovei's household also mirrors the forces of militarization. Conversations are based on what cannot be said, and childhood has an early understanding of peril. Family is a refuge and an area of fear, and it is the site of the domestication of trauma, as Saikia (2004) argues. The home is no longer an area of refuge in *The Collector's Wife*. The isolation of the wife is increased by the invasion of the private sphere by the turmoil in the political sphere. These domestic micro-histories convey how trauma persists not in long story lines but in disfigured couples, routines, and human psychology all at once. Landscape serves as a passive witness to violence in the texts. *The Black Hill* thus positions land as an actor rather than a simple backdrop, invested in the imprint of colonial invasion and cultural dislocation. Dai's focus on space, borders, and movement highlights that geography becomes tied up with an identity and a loss. And in *Waiting for the Dust to Settle*, village landscapes embrace militarization, turning familiar pathways into terrain of anxiety. Dolly Kikon's (2019) work on militarization and resource politics reinforces this reading, especially the argument she makes that land in the Northeast is layered with histories of extraction, control, and resistance.

Gendered Trauma and Women as Micro-Historical Archives

Women's lives, bodies, and silences become living archives, carrying traces of trauma, memory, and survival in the conflict-affected spaces of Northeast India. Instead of being positioned as passive footnotes to larger political stories, women are made into focal locations for conflict processing and memory. They surface through restraint, emotional labour and patterned silence. Such silence is structurally produced by patriarchal standards, militarized surveillance, and cultural standards that construct survival as a feminine virtue. This is a problem that Spivak (1988) explores in relation to subaltern speech, as women within these texts exist where discussing violence openly exposes them to risk, whether socio-political or otherwise.

In *A Terrible Matriarchy*, Dielieno's upbringing shows how female trauma is internalized and controlled within family life. For women such as Sanei and Toukhue, within the world of *Waiting for the Dust to Settle*, life is dominated by a pervasive fear and silence. Every movement is a pragmatic exercise of staying alive. Through discipline, negligence, and power structures, all of these are internalized rather than confronted directly, hence shaping the way trauma is felt and internalized. Sanei faces conflict as chronic indecision, waiting for family members to return, keeping fear at bay in the home, and dodging eyes from authorities. Their silence is a recognition that speech itself invites suspicion or violence. The conflict does not break down patriarchal power structures. It solidifies them further. In these narratives, women are expected to provide sustenance, remain stable emotionally and care for others even as their own lives are impacted by conflict. Patriarchy is therefore simultaneously working with militarization, with women being overburdened to deal with emotional and domestic difficulties. In *The Collector's Wife*, Rukmini Bezbaruah's status as the wife of a state official locates her in the nexus of political power and personal fragility. As her husband interacts with the administrative responses to the Assam agitation, Rukmini internalizes the psychic costs of unrest, fear, isolation, and moral uncertainty, for the most part in private. The trauma affecting her is not only directed towards direct violence but also the necessity of keeping face and maintaining domestic coherence in a region of increasing instability (Phukan, 2005). Likewise, in *Waiting for the Dust to Settle*, women like Toukhue and Sanei perform constant emotional labour in militarized domestic worlds. They navigate fear and intergenerational anxiety and protect the younger family members from the burden of the conflict. This unpaid work is a testament to how women's endurance is a strategy for perpetuating conflict within communities (Joshi, 2012).

Even in silence, women play a crucial role in keeping memory alive, ensuring that memories are preserved through the telling of histories within daily lives. The oral history that is passed down within families is a way of preserving experiences that are not documented within written records. Kire positions women as the stewards of collective memory and responsible for preserving the consciousness of the past from one generation to the next. Toukhue's stories in *Waiting for the Dust to Settle* connect contemporary insurgency to earlier histories of displacement, as well as resistance, placing present suffering within an extended continuum of struggle. Her storytelling is not a cure for trauma. It opens the door for younger generations to think of violence not as a singular crisis, but as a lived continuity. The narratives are not only emotionally powerful but are also politically significant as a combination of storytelling and the reclaiming of history. Focusing on continuity rather than destruction, women in these texts shift private memory to a collective recollection. It is in the retrospective narration of Lieno that a childhood experience of gender-based violence becomes reframed as situated instead of as solely pathological and forged in historical context, thus rendering memory not simply as a memory but as critique itself (Kire, 2007). Mothers and grandmothers in particular serve as the holders of memory who maintain cultural traditions, moral attitudes, and historical memory in times of crisis. Toukhue stabilizes the home through ritual and story and day-to-day routine even as violence and disruption threaten its communal order. Her role demonstrates how cultural identity is maintained not by resistance alone but through perpetual repetition of the practices of ordinary everyday life. Trauma and memory coexist here. The past is not erased but carefully carried forward.

By contrast, *The Collector's Wife* exemplifies the frailty of kinship networks in urban, bureaucratic environments. Rukmini's relative isolation makes her even more vulnerable, further explaining how under conflict, the dismantling of familial support networks multiplies women's trauma. The lack of shared memory-making spaces further marginalizes women's experiences from collective historical consciousness. The way women's trauma is represented in these novels is shaped as much by narrative form as it is content. The narrative is disjointed and fragmented, weaving together inner thoughts and unexplained breaks that suggest a mind accustomed to physical damage. Rather than the neat, resolved storytelling often found within the genre, the pieces emphasize the absent, the paused, and the emotionally controlled, with a quiet, unmistakable force. Episodic memory and fragmented narration in *A Terrible Matriarchy* mirror Lieno's fractured emotional development, implying that trauma resists cogent storytelling. In a similar way, *Waiting for the Dust to Settle* heavily depends on interior perspectives to illustrate momentary fears and repressed anxieties that go unmentioned in the household. These approaches align with feminist trauma theory, which considers silence a significant representational technique rather than a failure in the narrative. Trauma in such stories is written on women's bodies

through routine, affect, and persistence. It becomes not primarily physical trauma as much as fatigue and vigilance and changed body habits that result from chronic insecurity. “Scars in Silence: Gendered Narratives of the Assam Agitation and Insurgency in Contemporary Assamese Literature” (Singha, 2024) contends that women’s bodies can be living archives, preserving history by habitual action, not outright testimony. In *The Collector’s Wife*, Rukmini’s heightened vigilance and emotional fatigue mirror how the political unrest becomes embodied and has thus materialized as emotional violence. In *The Black Hill*, women’s uprooted lives and shifted relationship to land illustrate the way colonial violence leaves physical and spatial scars.

Rethinking Conflict Narratives

This section synthesizes the study’s analysis of postcolonial trauma and micro-histories in Northeast Indian fiction, maintaining a continuous dialogue with the four novels under consideration. In *The Black Hill*, *Waiting for the Dust to Settle*, *The Collector’s Wife*, and *A Terrible Matriarchy*, violent encounters rarely appear as singular climactic moments. Instead, violence permeates mundane habits and alters perspectives over extended periods. From *The Black Hill*, it is apparent that colonial encounters disrupt land, belief systems, and kinship in ways that cause displacement to extend beyond short-term upheaval. Insurgency as portrayed in *Waiting for the Dust to Settle* does not materialize as a warfare spectacle. It is a prolonged anticipation where families await safe returns and households adjust to curfews, and where conversations carry the weight of caution. It is the background noise, the ways that it has become part of the routine. In *The Collector’s Wife*, the focus is on the ways that civil unrest has become part of the offices and streets. The turbulence of the Assam agitation is not confined to public demonstrations or administrative edicts. It seeps into domestic spaces. Emotional turmoil, moral ambiguity and social isolation define everyday experience in this context. In *A Terrible Matriarchy*, the focus moves inward to domestic space where patriarchal structures normalize suffering well before overt political violence manifests. Trauma here is embedded in discipline, expectations, and inherited authority.

When read collectively, these texts indicate that colonial domination, insurgency, state militarization, and domestic patriarchy operate along intersecting trajectories rather than as parallel or discrete histories. Each reinforces vulnerability through distinct yet often overlapping mechanisms. A crucial finding of this study is the narrative privileging of micro-historical perspectives. None of the novels frame conflict primarily through official documentation, policy discourse, or strategic rationales. Conflict emerges through intimate details such as disrupted meals, fractured childhoods, strained marriages and altered speech patterns. Through this emphasis, novels challenge historiographical frameworks that associate significance solely with large-scale events. Politics is not found only in the laws and the wars. It is found in the ways it touches the lives of the people and the relationships they have. This micro-historical lens also reframes narrative temporality where linear progression gives way to suspended time, wherein characters endure extended periods of waiting, uncertainty, and vigilant care. Resolutions are deferred or withheld, mirroring realities of sustained instability and offering narratives where closure rarely takes definitive form.

Trauma unfolds through repetition and endurance rather than ruptures of sudden intensity. Consequently, the novels align with postcolonial trauma theory’s emphasis on cumulative suffering. The narrative treatment of silence further contributes to this reconceptualization of conflict. Speech is often constrained, restricted by surveillance, social hierarchy, or fear of reprisal. Yet, absence of explicit declaration is not absence of meaning. Interior monologues, fragmented structures and measured dialogues enable texts to convey what cannot be spoken openly. Here, silence emerges as a communicative strategy that registers caution, grief or resistance. By portraying voicelessness as an embodied form of expression, the novels resist assumptions that equate agency exclusively with audible protest. The juxtaposition of difference and convergence described here also underscores the comparative method employed in the study. *The Black Hill* examines the impact of colonial intrusion on space, *Waiting for the Dust to Settle* expresses the common anxieties resulting from insurgency, *The Collector’s Wife* reveals the psychological impact of living in proximity to insurgency, and *A Terrible Matriarchy* reveals the micro-hierarchy existing in home life. What all of these works reveal, in terms of trauma, are the varied forms it can take, depending on the region, history, and context in which it is being written. And it is the varied nature of trauma in these works that allows Northeastern Indian fiction to be reclaimed as a field of study in postcolonial and trauma studies, in direct opposition to the heroic, progress-oriented narratives of heroism and resolution found in so much of the rest of the world. Extending these insights, the study argues that micro-historical constructions are not supplementary to political history but central to understanding how violence transforms everyday life.

Conclusion

This study explores the ways in which the trauma of post-colonialism and micro-histories are presented in some selected novels from Northeast India. By examining the novels side by side, it becomes apparent that there has been a shift from macro histories of political conflict towards micro histories of everyday life. The texts frame instability as a sustained and relational presence across generations, extending beyond bounded historical episodes. It can also be the ways that everyday life has been disrupted, the ways that people speak, the ways that people distance themselves from one another, and the ways that people care for one another.

Fear, waiting, constant adaptation and vigilance become recurring patterns shaping ordinary life. Trauma is thus expressed through repetition, oral storytelling, embodied habits and relational continuity. The study’s gender analysis brings further clarity, showing how conflict unfolds within domestic spaces where women’s emotional labour, caregiving responsibilities, and vulnerabilities occupy key narrative spaces. This focus challenges narrower definitions of political agency that privilege overt and visible acts of resistance. Instead, it highlights survival, persistence, and everyday negotiation as significant responses to social turbulence. Throughout, the importance of place and narrative remains paramount, consciously avoiding the homogenization of diverse regional experiences into a single explanatory framework. They extend the scope of academia with regard to the narratives of memory, testimony, and history, with a focus on the mundane and the extraordinary. They pause in moments of vulnerability, attachment, and survival, without resorting to a conclusive ending. By engaging with the micro-history and shared traumas, the fiction suggests

that survival is a form of history. In that sense, fiction is a space where memory survives through the mundane, a form of shared history that remains outside the boundaries of history and still remains a part of our collective memory.

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