

Conflicting and Challenging Patriarchal and Liberal Feminist Ideologies and Norms in Afghanistan: Critical Stylistic Study of Khaled Hosseini's *And the Mountains Echoed*

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Abstract

The study unveils the Afghan patriarchal ideology and norms that are in conflict and challenge with liberal feminist ideology in Khaled Hosseini's (2013) *And the Mountains Echoed*, depicting the cultural and socio-political context of Afghanistan. Tools of critical stylistics, developed by Jefferies (2010), have been used to delve into the conflict as mentioned above. The conflict in ideologies leads to gender differences, and inequalities. Patriarchs view liberal feminism and its motive as a threat to patriarchal social structure. The study reveals how women challenge the monopoly and status-quo of patriarchs to raise their voice for their emancipation and free will in matters of their life. Women in Afghanistan are the *nang* (pride) and *namoos* (honor) of their families. Men, especially patriarchs, misperceive the status and image of women as damaging their reputation if they are granted full freedom in matters and walks of life. Nila Wahdati, a liberal feminist character in the novel, challenges the stereotypical image of women as fragile, fickle, and prone to sex. She even resists and negates the imposed traditional, conservative ideology and supremacy of her father. Through the use of language, women challenge the Afghan patriarchal thinking. The novelist has manipulated verb processes to represent the patriarchal ideology of the Afghan men, while the discourse-producers utilize nouns and modifications to indicate patriarchs' contrary thinking towards women. Linguistic tools, like nouns, pronouns, pre-modifiers, negative evaluative words, epistemic modality, and subordinate clauses, describe the conflict and challenge between patriarchal and liberal feminist ideologies.

Keywords: critical stylistics, gender discrimination, ideology, liberal feminism, patriarchy

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1. Introduction

The study aims to investigate how liberal feminism and the Afghan patriarchy are in conflict with each other and how women manipulate language to challenge the monopoly and norms of patriarchy in the chosen excerpt from Hosseini's (2013) *And The Mountains Echoed*. The novel is not a linear narration of different actions in the lives of the main characters. Instead, each chapter presents events from the perspective of the main characters. Researchers have highlighted several issues, like womanhood, the role of the economy as a trap, ethnicity, and post-colonialism in the novel under study. However, nobody has investigated the role of ideology in the discursive and social practices of patriarchal and feminist conflict. Discourse plays a vital role in the (re)presentation of the ideological construction of the issues mentioned above. The ideologies are constructed, presented, and resisted in discourse. The researchers consider Van Dijk's (1995) definition of discourse for the critical discussion of the interplay of discourse and ideology in the (re)presentation of conflicting patriarchal and feminist practices. Discourse-producers construct new ideologies, and confirm the already existing ones in discourse. In-text and talk, people express these ideologies explicitly or implicitly. Surface structures include "the variable forms of expression at the level of phonological and graphical realization of underlying syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, or other abstract discourse structures" (p. 23). They have hardly any specific meanings but manifest the underlying schematic sense having their own elaborate and systematic plans. The surface structures control the understanding of the speakers and listeners. However, schematic structures are not affected by ideologies. Moreover, schematic structures have their importance as they determine the order in discourse. As the study focuses on the role of ideology in the construction of conflicting patriarchal and feminist discursive and social practices, these variables/concepts are discussed in detail below:

2. Review of the Relevant Literature

This section discusses the different variables and concepts essential for the understanding of the issues under study.

2.1. Gender as an ideological, social structure of dichotomy

The word "gender" has been first used in the United States in the 1970s as a substitute term for "sex." The name "gender" counters the common belief that our social roles, as men and women, are biologically determined. Humans, as men and women, learn some attitudes, behaviors, and expectations in the society that define and distinguish our gender from the biologically controlled qualities of sex (Krieger, 2003). Likewise, Ford (2002) believes that hormones and genes control maleness and femaleness (reproduction) of an individual, and has nothing to do with the social role as a man and woman. Because of the socially controlled functions, the male is considered superior to the woman. Instead, society regards femininity as inferior and derogatory.

Consequently, gender is depicted and typified by an asymmetrical distribution of power in society, assigning, sometimes, specific responsibilities and entitlements only to men. The social construction of gender is used by people to discriminate against women, who are considered weak (Mhinda, 2014). Sex is a biological category, like age. Sex serves as an underlying force in the differentiation of expectations, attitudes, and roles for a man and a woman in society. Gender is, unnecessarily, based on these socially experienced expectations, beliefs, and roles (Eckert, 1989).

Similarly, Butler (1990) opines that sex, sexuality, and gender are social fabrications through a continuous practice of stylized acts. The recurring nature of these acts, over an expanded time, naturalizes these acts and makes them integral to gender. She refers to this practice as “performativity.” Gendering is an involuntary process as there is nobody that society has not gendered before their birth. Gender is not what one is; instead what one does. She opines, further, that gender is a manner attributed to a body, which is constructed and has no relevance to the elemental truth. It is more ideological. It tickles down to our routine life and structures our minds. In this process, gender permanently settles down in our minds. She believes that gender is constructed and (re)presented through discourse.

Stereotyping, according to Sunderland (2004), is one of the reasons for gender portrayal. The stereotypical portrayals depict women in disfavor. She uses the term “co-construction of meaning” because different people interpret these stereotyping in various manners. Not only the speaker but also the listener is engaged in the construction of meaning. Therefore, the issue of gender (re)presentation is not as simple as it seems on the surface. She also argues that “gender as a set of differences is being (at least) supplemented by a notion of gender as a construct, or idea, dissociated from dimorphically sexed human beings” (p. 25).

Rolleri (2013) argues that, historically, three schools of thought influence the definition of gender. These are: “evolutionary theory, social role theory, and social constructivist theory” (p. 1). The evolutionary theory estimates the social role and importance adopted by women by being the producers of children. In social role theory, gender is a static and fixed belief. The third theory (social constructivist theory) presents the changing position of masculinity and femininity with time. Most of the proponents of gender believe and support this third approach towards gender.

2.2 Ideology and language: a critical review

Language is an essential aspect of communication in society. The study of language is a researchable domain in linguistic, literary, and discourse studies. Language serves as a ground for ideology. Many researchers believe that it is useless to study ideology without the study of language (Fairclough, 1992; Fowler, 1991; Hall, 1982; Trew, 1979; van Dijk, 1993). Secondly, life and life practices are (re)presented through language (Scannel, 1998). Therefore, language is not an abstract phenomenon. Instead, it carries ideologies (van Dijk, 2002). Further, it is a source of instruction, and discourse-producers cannot use it in a vacuum (Garrett & Bell, 2005). Consequently, language is used as a political device that carries signals, images, and notions to construct, present, and replicate culture, social life, and politics (Alaghbary, Alazzany & Al-Nakeeb, 2015).

There is a close link between ideas, beliefs and ideology, and language. This link functions as a means and product in the political arena. Democracy, enlightenment, human rights, and emancipation are represented, and resisted through language (Dijk, 1998; Wodak & Weiss 2004; Wodak, 2006). Ideology may have two basic interpretations. Firstly, it is a false (re)presentation of truth, and secondly, it is a certain feature of thinking and acting (Wodak, 2007). Further, ideology has also defined as “perceptions and opinions about the social and political realities of societies, which aim at truths and generalizations, although they contain untruths, half-truths or

unfinished systems of thoughts and beliefs” (Wodak, 2007, p. 2). She also sees ideology as a means of constructing and sustaining asymmetrical power relations (Wodak, 2001).

According to Bhasin, patriarchy “refer(s) to male domination, to the power relationships by which men dominate women, and to characterize a system whereby women are kept subordinate in a number of ways” (2004, p. 3). Patriarchy justifies the dominant position of man and the subordinate position of women. Walby (1990) sees patriarchy as a system of practices and structure used for the exploitation and domination and oppression of women. By this, she means that patriarchy does not accept the equal role of men and women, and believes in biological determinism. It works as a system in society. Therefore, patriarchy depicts the systematized practice of men’s dominance over women.

Millett (1977) believes that this system is so secure that every oppressed woman gives consent to the oppression she meets. The structure of patriarchy pre-supposes the dominance and superiority of men over women. Men should have all power in their hands in family, society, and state. It deprives women of all legal rights. As a result, men impose restrictions on women’s mobility along with the rights for equality, and property. Violence, low wages, son preference, dowry, discriminatory laws, oppressive use of religion, and deprivation from education are the tools of patriarchy (Sultana, 2011).

On the other hand, liberal feminist ideology believes in the basic ideas of democracy, equal citizenship, autonomy, and universal rights (Tong, 2009). Ideology supports the rights of the individual on the concept of justice, equality, and equal opportunities (Maynard, 1995). Liberal feminism works on the presumption that there is no fundamental biological difference between a woman and a man. Therefore, women should have equal educational, social, political, and legal rights (Nienaber and Moraka, 2016). The ideological basis of liberal feminism rests on the perception that “gender differences are not based in biology, and therefore that women and men are not all that different” (Lorber, 1997, p. 9). Women and men are equal with equal civil rights. Therefore, society should treat both equally, and their sameness demands equality before the law (Lorber, 1997; Khattak, 2011).

2.3. Theoretical perspective

The critical analysis is done in its textual, cultural, and socio-political contexts to investigate the topic, in light of the selected data. The analysts apply Jefferies’s (2010) critical stylistic tools to the chosen passage from a critical feminist perspective of Lazar (2005, 2007). Ideology, gender, and power are elusive. Further, the society ascribes gender because of social practices like “social identity, including sexuality, ethnicity, age, (dis)ability, social class and position, and geographical location” and patriarchal ideological system (Lazar, 2007, p. 141). Gender ideologies, within a context, are discursively structured, asserted, and defied in text and talk. She believes that gender is “an ideological structure that divides people into two classes, men and women, based on a hierarchical relation of domination, and subordination, respectively” (p. 146). The hierarchical relation results in segregation of responsibilities between men and women, depending on the context of time and place.

Patriarchal ideology is structural; that is, it is the outcome of social practices and social institutions. Therefore, it is difficult to explain the asymmetrical relations between genders. Institutions, in a culture, are so much structured on gender ideology that they are male-centered. Not only men but also women are an accomplice in the pervasiveness of gendered ideology in their social practices through their accustomed different attitudes and conduct. In some cases, overreacting against stereotyped gendered roles strengthens them further. Gender ideology remains domineering. However, it seems more acceptable and destined than hegemonic to the people in the patriarchal setup. Discursive sources sustain the taken for granted and common sense nature of these ideologies. Resultantly, asymmetries are mystified and obscured in discourse. One such ideology is the “naturalness” of the belief of “two sexes.” The “twoness” of gender has resulted in the exploitation, oppression, discrimination, and victimization of women. Therefore, the primary concern of critical feminists is to critique the taken for granted notions about women.

3. Research Method for Data Analysis: Jefferies’s Critical Stylistic Tools

The analysts carry out analysis of the selected text in light of the critical stylistic tools developed by Jefferies (2010). She has developed a new approach to the study of texts by plugging the gap between stylistics and CDA (Xiang, 2011). The tools developed by Fairclough, for his three-dimensional model, are further expanded by Jefferies in her book *Critical Stylistics: The Power of English*. Reeve (2014) argues that Jefferies has combined the strengths of stylistics and CDA to uncover hidden ideologies in a text. Alaghbary (2013) opines that ideologically loaded language consists of structures, and critical stylistics offers the tools of critical analysis to identify and understand the ideological layers. The author considers the work an extension of the works done by Fowler et al. (1979). The tools are not new; instead, she adds to the already existing tools of modality and transitivity by plugging the gap in the tools developed by Fairclough (1989), Fowler (1991), and Simpson (1993).

She has presented ten tools for the critical analysis of ideologically loaded discourse. The first tool is naming and describing, through which the analysts critically analyze nouns, names, descriptions of nouns, and nominalizations. The second tool is representing actions/events/states. This tool analyzes transitivity, actions, and verbs. In the equating and contrasting tool, the researcher analyses the structure of language and the effect constructed through parallel structures, copula structures, apposition, and oppositions. The fourth tool is exemplifying and enumerating, through which the analysts critically analyze the nature of examples given in the text, and the listing structure of a sentence. The next tool is prioritizing. In the application of this tool, the researcher takes into consideration the given and new information structure of a sentence, the low-level structure of a sentence, cleft sentences, active and adjectival transformations, and focuses on the compulsory last portion of the sentence for the prioritized information. The implying and assuming tool critically analyzes the structure of a text for the presentation of suppositions and implicature. The seventh tool is negating. In this tool, the researcher analyzes negative particles (e.g., not, no, etc.) and negative pronouns for an alternative, hypothetical, and possible situations presented in the text. The eighth tool is hypothesizing, where the hypothetically constructed worlds are critically examined by analysts through modality, nature of the narration, and conditional structures. In the ninth tool, presenting other’s speech and thoughts, the researcher analyses others’ speeches and thoughts. The tenth tool is representing time, space, and society, through which the

researcher analyzes the relation between the discourse-producer(s) and the respondent, and time and place deixis.

To analyze a passage, the analysts have numbered the sentences. The tools with their respective double-quoted function features are in a separate portion for the sake of convenience. Finally, analysis is done in a separate section. A large number of passages, in the text, present the topic under study. However, the analysts have selected a sample passage for analysis in the study.

3.1. Ideological conflict and challenge to the Afghan patriarchal norms

The chosen excerpt is taken from chapter six of Hosseini's *And the Mountains Echoed* (2013) and is part of the interview conducted by Etienne Boustouler from Nila Wahdati. The interviewer asks questions regarding her poetry, and she says that she is proud of her poetry. However, people did not appreciate her poetry in Kabul. People considered her to be the "pioneer of anything but bad taste, debauchery, and bad character" (p. 211).

- (1) What I can tell you, however, is that no one was touting me in Kabul.
 - (2) No one in Kabul considered me a pioneer of anything but bad taste, debauchery and immoral character.
 - (3) Not least of all, my father.
 - (4) He said my writings were ramblings of a *whore*.
 - (5) He used that word precisely.
 - (6) He said I'd damaged his family name, beyond repair.
 - (7) He said I had betrayed him.
 - (8) He kept asking why I found it so hard to be respectable...
 - (9) I told him I did not care for his notion of respectable.
 - (10) I told him I had no desire to slip the leash around my own neck.
 - (11) I suppose that only displeased him more...
 - (12) But I do understand his anger...
 - (13) He was a patriarch, was he not?
 - (14) And you were a direct challenge to all he knew, all that he held dear.
 - (15) Arguing, in a way, through both your life and your writing, for new boundaries for women, for women to have a say in their own status, to arrive at legitimate selfhood.
 - (16) You were defying the monopoly that men like him had held for ages.
 - (17) You were saying what could not be said.
 - (18) You were conducting a small, one-woman revolution, one could say.
 - (19) And all this time, I thought I was writing about sex...
 - (20) Well, I *was* angry.
 - (21) I was angry about the attitude that I had to be protected from sex.
 - (22) That I had to be protected from my own body.
 - (23) Because I was a woman.
 - (24) And women, don't you know, are emotionally, morally, and intellectually immature.
 - (25) They lack self-control, you see, they're vulnerable to physical temptation.
 - (26) They're hypersexual beings who must be restrained lest they jump into bed with every
- Ahmad and Mahmood. (Hosseini, 2013, pp. 211-212)

1.

2. ,” “direct challenge,” “legitimate selfhood,” “physical temptation”)
3. Representing actions/events/states: Material Action Intentional (“touting,” “damaged,” “betrayed”), Mental Cognition (“considered,” “understand,” “thought,” “know”), Intensive Relations (“They’re hypersexual beings, “He was a patriarch”)
4. Equating and contrasting: Contrastives (“a pioneer of anything but bad taste...”), apposition (“to all he knew, all that he held dear,” “small, one woman”), simile (“men like him”)
5. Exemplifying and enumerating: three-part listing (“emotionally, morally, and intellectually”)
6. Prioritizing: adverb (“precisely”), adjectival transformation (“I was angry,” “They’re vulnerable”), subordination (“Because I was a woman,” “lest they jump into bed...”), prepositional phrase (“in Kabul,” “beyond repair,” “to be respectable,” “for his notion,” “of respectable,” “through both your life and your writing,” “for new boundaries,” “for women,” “for ages,” “about sex,” “from sex,” “from my own body”)
7. Implying and assuming: Implicature (“No least of all,” “to slip the leash around my own neck”), iterative (“more,” “every”), state verb (“restrained”)
8. Negating: “No one,” “did not,” “no,” “displeased,” “not,” “defying,” “don’t,” “lack,”
9. Hypothesizing: epistemic modality (“can,” “could,” “had to be”), boulomaic modality (“desire”), lexical verb (“kept,” “suppose”),
10. Presenting other’s speech and thoughts: Narrator’s Report of Thought (sentence 2)
11. Representing time, space and society: deixis of the person (“my father”), deixis of time (“And all this time”)

4. Critical Analysis and Discussion

The passage under study highlights ideology, power abuse, discrimination, oppression, and victimization in the Afghan patriarchal society. The epistemic modality “can” in sentence 1 shows that the Nila Wahdati stretches her statement that she is not sure whether she is proud of her poetry or not. Still, she is sure that nobody advertised her positively in Afghanistan. The negation “no one” presents the possibility of being promoted by someone. The ideologically loaded prepositional phrase “in Kabul” is of significance. First of all, Kabul stands for the country Afghanistan, and secondly, it constructs the effect that her own country is a patriarchal society, where a woman, especially that woman who writes about her sexual affairs, is not promoted. Instead, she is killed. It also constructs the effect that in France, she is touted (as is clear from the interview).

The second sentence also uses the same phrase in the subject area of the sentence. In this way, Nila Wahdati presents an idea, which is not the main proposition. She introduces an NRT in the sentence with the help of MC “considered.” The information which follows the MC is Nila’s presentation of people’s thinking about her. A contrastive (X but Y) is given in the noun phrase part of the sentence. The phrase is in the form of three-part listing. She presents two negative modifications (“bad taste” and “immoral character”) and a negative noun “debauchery.” Ideologically, the focus is on the negative pre-modifiers “bad” and “immoral.” As a result, the negative thoughts of people (ideology) about Nila, in the Afghan patriarchal society, are constructed. People in Kabul do not value her poetry.

Sentence 3 presents an implicature in the phrase “Not least of all.” The phrase particularizes “my father.” All the people (as shown by “no one”), particularly her father, are against her, and her poetry. The phrase separates and prioritizes the deixis of the person (“my father”). The sentence constructs the effect that, now onward, the displeasure of a father has been presented. Through an Indirect Speech (IS), in sentence 4, Nila Wahdati presents two nouns “ramblings” and “*whore*.” Even her father declares her poems to be playful activities of a prostitute. As the statement is in IS, so the readers/listeners have presented the narrator’s interpretation of the speaker’s words. In Afghanistan, it is unlikely that a father may use such words for his daughter, rather he, in the name of honor, may kill her. The noun “*whore*” is presented in italics, which means that it has been taken by Nila from the original statement, and secondly, it communicates that it is ideologically loaded. The word “*whore*” depicts that her poems are about her sexual experiences. In the same interview, Nila herself declares that if you dig her poems, “you will find all manner of dishonor” (p. 210). She prioritizes “*whore*” through a narratorial comment in sentence 5. The adverb “precisely” is the focal point in the sentence. Her father has no misconception about her and her poems.

Sentence 6 is also an IS, and Nila Wahdati presents the speech of her father. A material action intentional (MAI) “damaged” is used, which depicts that she is intentionally involved in such activities because of which he feels ashamed. The verb “damaged” also serves as an iterative (state verb), which assumes that the family enjoys respect before the adventures of Nila. The noun phrase “his family name” is used as an object of the sentence and supposes that in the patriarchal societies, male represent their families. However, women are the honor of their families. Any misadventure, on the part of women, leads to shame for the whole family. The prepositional phrase “beyond repair” signifies that in the Afghan society, if a family’s name is damaged once, it is not easy to repair it, and people remember the matter of shame for generations. Another MAI “betrayed” is used with the pronoun “I” (Nila) in sentence 7. Her father believes that she has “damaged” and “betrayed” him. The verb processes show the perception of her father about her poems. The MAI nature of actions suggests the active role (real actions) of Nila behind the poems. He thinks that she is the custodian of her honor and pride, but she disgraces him.

Sentence 8 is a narrator’s report of speech act (NRSA), where verbalization “asking” is used with the lexical verb “kept.” Its primary function is that of modality because it shows consistency and regularity of the action. The lexical verb also functions as iterative because it presents the frequency of the question. Her father asks her the same question regularly. The discourse implies that Nila Wahdati does not care about her father and his anger. The prepositional phrase presents the ideologically loaded information. The phrase “to be respectable” is an adjectival transformation as well. The focal point is that her father is worried about society, instead of her daughter. He considers “his family name” important, and believes in the societal norms of respectability. In the Afghan patriarchal society, a woman is respected if she wears a veil, stays inside her home, and is submissive to her parents. The discourse helps in understanding the filial expectations in the patriarchal society.

To a question asked by the interviewer about her response to her father’s questions, Nila responds that she is not bothered by his questions. The negation “did not” presents the possible situation of “care” in patriarchal societies. The low-level information is in the prepositional

phrases. The modification “his notion” suggests that Nila and her father have different notions of respectability. There may be difference in the opinions and ideologies of people in a society. In addition, respectability is a relative term but her father imposes his thoughts over her. The second phrase, “of respectable,” presents the standards of society, as the norms for being respectable. In a patriarchal society, a daughter cannot say the same to her father. If she dares, then she can go to any limit to enjoy her life. However, it is challenging to talk like this, especially in Afghanistan. The next sentence uses boulomaic modality “desire” to show the wish of Nila Wahdati. The phrase “to slip a leash around my own neck” uses an implicature that constructs the meaning that she wants no restraints in her life. She wants to live a free and liberal life, without the thought of being respectable. Sentences 9 and 10 use parallel structure to reject the patriarchal norms of respectability. Men oppress women in the name of respectability. A society develops women’s perception from their childhood that they are the custodian of their family’s honor. The practice is common in patriarchy, especially in the Pashtun culture. In the given discourse, one ideology conflicts with another. The discursive construction of values of the patriarchal society and resistance towards it underpins Lazar’s (2007) ideas that gender ideology is discursively constructed, asserted, and defied as well.

Sentence 11 is the narratorial comment of the interviewer. The lexical verb, “suppose,” functions as modality and constructs a hypothetical situation in the sentence. The interviewer retains the focus of the interview by manipulating and controlling the interviewee. The negative verb “displeased” presents the alternative action of being pleased. The lexical verb (modality), along with negation, strongly constructs the imaginary world of displeasure in the mind of the readers/listeners. The iterative “more” suggests that her father is already not happy with her (as is evident from the analysis). The interviewer, again, uses the dummy “do” to shift focus to “understand” in sentence 12. The mental cognition (MC) “understand” is the sensor of cognition, and the phenomenon is “his anger.” The discourse focuses on issues of filial ideology against that of a liberal and educated daughter.

In sentence 13, the discourse-producer (interviewer) uses an RI structure to equate “He” with “patriarch.” The structure of the sentence establishes the fact that her father was a patriarch. He was behaving more like a patriarch than a father. The negative tag question in the sentence stops the reader/listener from searching for any other alternative of “patriarch.” The conjunction, “And,” at the beginning of sentence 14, links the present idea with the preceding one. The two ideas challenge each other. The RI structure of the sentence establishes a stable relationship between the actor (“you”) and the attribute (“direct challenge”). The pre-modifier, “direct,” downplays the noun. She is his daughter, who lives inside his home. She seems to have challenged her father in the face. If it is some other woman, it will not be that much trouble for her father. The preposition, “to,” introduces apposition/parallel structure. The iterative “all” limits his cognition (“knew”). The effect constructed by the sentence is that her father is a patriarch, and that is what he knows only. He considers patriarchy to be the only values of a society, which Nila challenges. In patriarchal societies, fathers think more like a man than a father.

The interviewer uses nominalization “arguing” in sentence 15, so there is a lack of dynamism in it. Secondly, because of the lack of enough details, the word remains ambiguous. Nominalization dilutes the modification, “direct challenge.” The sentence lacks dynamism because

of the lack of action verb. The prepositional phrases quickly process the information. However, it constructs the effect that the interviewer, being a man of the West, supports and encourages Nila, because she stands against her father for the benefit of the rest of women to discover new things in life, outside home, in expressing themselves as women. This stand will help women to reach their “legitimate self-hood.” However, the pre-modifier downplays the noun and supposes the illegitimate nature of the affairs Nila has with men. The apposition structure constructs the effect that it is the birthright of women to do whatever they desire, even if that is at the cost of their parents’ displeasure, and disgrace.

The interviewer uses negation, “defying,” to present another aspect of reality. The reality challenges the idea presented in the preceding sentence. The object, “monopoly,” expresses the idea that, in patriarchal societies, there are certain kinds of men who want to sustain and maintain the patriarchal system. These few men control the whole society. The subordination clause starts with “that.” As it is not a higher level of information, it is not open to scrutiny. She has been encouraged to challenge the patriarchal norms, but she is not made aware that she has challenged her father. The simile equates her father with other people. Therefore, “her father” loses its value because he is just like the rest of the men.

In sentence 17, the interviewer uses verbalization, where the goal is “what could not be said.” The modality is epistemic because it presents the strong certainty of not saying anything against the patriarchal norms of the society. Negation presents the alternative of saying. The goal, in passive construction, prioritizes “You.” The effect of the sentence is that she is the first to talk on sensitive issues in Afghanistan. Then, the interviewer uses pre-modifiers “small” and “one-woman” (in sentence 18). The pre-modifiers downplay the noun and suggest a large scale revolution brought by a large number of women. Only then will Afghanistan be modernized and enlightened. The interviewer uses past continuous verbs in sentences 16, 17, and 18 (“defying,” “saying,” and “conducting” respectively) to focus on the continuity of the action till a certain time. Before Nila goes to France, she struggles, according to the interviewer, against the monopoly of men. The subject of the verbalization part (“one”) is vague, so the statement seems uncertain, but as the statement is presented first (fronting), so Nila’s focus is retained on it. The tense of the discourse depicts that, in Kabul, Nila fights against the patriarchal ideology, all her life. Now in France, she has stopped fights against patriarchal values, as the country provides the freedom to women.

In sentence 19, Nila Wahdati uses the deixis of time. The demonstrative, “this,” to the time suggested in the statement of the interviewer. The subordinate clause mentions the thought process and uses past continuous verb (focusing on the continuity of the action). The prepositional phrase “about sex” is mentioned at the end so that readers/listeners could focus on the main proposition of writing, rather than sex. The statement is believed in by the readers/listeners because it is an indirect thought. The interviewer tries to encourage and support her poetry. However, Nila knows the nature of her writings. Her discourse seems to stand directly opposite to that of the interviewer. The interviewer mentions some of the “overtly erotic” poems, and tells Nila that sex is part of her “creativity.” He believes that the poems are “angry indictments of Afghan gender roles.” In this way, he comes to the point of Nila but again molds the discourse in another direction.

Sentence 20 is an adjectival transformation and prioritizes the word “angry.” The tense of the sentence is in the past. The italics, “*was*,” stresses the feelings of anger in the past time. The next sentence repeats the same adjectival transformation to emphasize the feeling of anger once again. The prepositional phrase “about the attitude” contains the ideologically laden information. Most of the parents, in patriarchal societies, consider it their responsibility to protect their children from the wrong. In Afghanistan, a father never wants his daughter to get involved in illegitimate sexual drives. Nila Wahdati talks about this attitude and presents her point of view. She does not favor this attitude of her father. The subordinate clause has a passive structure with epistemic “had to” (strong certainty). Being a woman, she is not allowed to have sex outside marriage.

Sentence 22 starts from “That” and functions as a subordinate clause of the main proposition that she “*was*” angry. It is in the passive structure, prioritizing “I.” The epistemic modality illustrates strong certainty. A woman has her own body, but in the Afghan patriarchal culture, she represents her family and the honor of her parents. She is not an individual but the custodian of the honor of her parents. She has no right over her body. Sentence 22 is in parallel structure with sentence 21. Thus, “sex” is made synonymous with “my own body.” Nila believes that it is her body, and she should decide her body needs. Sex is the basic need of a body. She is angry because her father interferes in her biological needs. In patriarchal societies, women are repeatedly told by men (and women too) what to do and what not to do. As a result, the “ritualized repetition” materializes sex in society (see Butler, 1990, for more details).

The next sentence is also a subordinate clause, which starts from “Because.” She justifies her anger; that is why the RI statement is present in the subordinate clause. No parents, in the Afghan culture, want their children to get involved in illegal sexual gratification. In particular, women need protection because such women are not only rejected by men to marry, but most of the girls of their family bear the consequences because they are not married by anyone. In the Pashtun society, every woman of the village is considered as a sister and is respected so. However, Nila is not happy with this attitude and makes affairs with men because of her anger against society and her father.

She starts sentence 24 with a coordinating conjunction. The ideology of male in patriarchal societies has been presented with the help of three-part listing to represent women as “immature” and weak symbolically. She appeals to the mental cognition of the interviewer by using “know” in an interrogative manner in the middle of a sentence. Not all people consider all the women as weak and immature. However, the statement is the RI structure to present the idea as a stable relationship. She tries to present the statement as a fact. Women are weak and prone to mischief.

In sentence 25, Nila Wahdati uses negation in “lack” to present the alternative position of having “self-control.” It means that men have self-control, while women do not. The second clause of the sentence is without conjunction to present the statement in parallel construction to the previous statement, hence semantically synonymous. There is an adjectival transformation to prioritize the word “vulnerable.” However, essential information is in the prepositional phrase, “to physical temptation.” It constructs the effect that women are more prone to temptations as compared to men. Because of their weakness, women need protection. It is a common patriarchal ideology and a tool to oppress women (see Lazar, 2005, 2007, for more details).

Sentence 26 uses the circumstantial relation (RC) structure, where women “They” are considered to be obsessed with sex in Afghanistan. Women may cross any limit to satisfy their sexual needs. They are “hypersexual.” Therefore, men consider it their duty to keep women under control. The subordination clause presents another ideologically loaded idea that women start making love with anyone. The names, “Ahmad” and “Mahmood,” make the sentence a circumstantial relation, and place it in the context of Afghanistan. It constructs the perception that women in Afghanistan are sensuous. They indulge in sex with anyone who comes their way. Consequently, they are restricted to make them respectable.

5. Conclusion

Critical analysis of the selected passage shows that ideology plays a significant role in the construction or de-construction of patriarchal norms. In the Afghan patriarchal society, women are inferior to men. They are the honor and pride (*nang* and *namoos*) of their family. Women are the custodians of their family’s honor. Nila belongs to a relatively enlightened part of Afghanistan, Kabul. However, even here, the perception of men towards her poetry is not favorable. People in Kabul declare her poetry as the presentation of “bad taste, debauchery, and immoral character.” Her father goes to the extent to claim her poetry as the “ramblings of a *whore*.” In an Afghan patriarchal society, women are not allowed to have illicit sex. Writing about sex or sexual experiences is never expected and allowed. Based on her poetry, even her father believes that she is a whore. Nouns and modifications construct the disapproving ideology of men towards such kind of poetry. Nila depicts, through the use of past verb “*was*,” that her sexual enterprises are the result of strict patriarchal norms of the Afghan society. Her reaction shows that she challenges such norms in her way.

Her father believes that Nila’s poetry has “damaged her family name beyond repair.” The lines assume that her father is not aware of her real character. It is because of this reason that he only considers her poetry to be responsible for damaging his family reputation. As they live in a patriarchal society, so her father calls the family “his family.” The verb processes “betrayed” and “damaged” are used to present her father’s patriarchal ideology. On the other hand, the interviewer, through nouns and prepositional phrases, has depicted a contrast in patriarchal ideology and resistance of Nila against such a doctrine. The last section of the excerpt highlights the common belief of men in a patriarchal society. Women are viewed as “immature,” weak, “hypersexual,” and lacking “self-control.” The proper names, “Ahmad” and “Mahmood,” contextualize the discourse in the Afghan society. Men do not consider women as rational beings. It is men’s misperception about women that they may scar their safety and sanctity if women are free in every matter and walk of life. Language has been used, by the interviewer and interviewee, as a literary source to represent women’s challenge to the Afghan patriarchal ideology and norms in the text. Several linguistic tools, like nouns, pronouns, pre-modifiers, negative evaluative words, epistemic modality, and subordinate clauses, in the passage represent the conflict between patriarchal and liberal feminist ideologies and norms.

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