

NEW TRENDS IN FEMINISTIC THINKING IN HOSSEINI'S *THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS*

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Abstract

This paper explores the new trends in feministic thinking. Khaled Hosseini is an Afghan-born American novelist. Hosseini's second novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* was published in 2007, and set in Afghanistan. The primary focus of this study is the aspect of feminism in the novel and how the author has described his ideas about women and their miseries in a patriarchal society. By using feminist and womanhood perspectives Hosseini could successfully reflect there all image of Afghan women as shed light on the discrimination and victimization of women by patriarchal lifestyle imposed in the society. In the novel, the author paints a picture of two women, their love, emotions, and sacrifices, how both of them struggle in their lives and how by fate they meet and build a great and unbreakable bonding with each other. Born within a generation apart with very different ideas about love and family, Mariam and Laila are two women jarringly together by war, loss, and fate. Their life will ultimately alter the course not just their own lives but of the next generation.

Keywords: *gender discrimination, victimization, women's attitude.*

Introduction:

This study will highlight the representation of female in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khalid Hosseini. The research will be helpful for the students of feminism. This will help in developing the understanding of the problems of females which they face in their lives and the way they challenge.

This study will tell society the real face of a real man as well. The study will prove that the real king or hero is not the one who hardens a woman but one who treats a woman with generosity and kindness. That is the basic teachings of all cultures to show kindness to the weak which is vanishing day by day because of the selfishness. This type of very selfishness must be removed from the eyes of humans. Thus, I will try to remove this tape with health education and argument.

It will tell the society especially women that they must not pretend as a fragile thing in the hands of a man. If women show these ideas to the opposite sex it will be convincing that they are roses to be crushed and the hands of men are the thorns. In this way, women themselves are inviting men to the destruction of their own very being.

It will highlight the representation of women in the selected novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* which depicts the real struggle of women in a close-ended society for women. It is studied with the perspective of a woman as it talks through the very describe of Mariyam the protagonist of the novel. Mariam and Rasheed's second wife Laila are the victims of patriarchy with its different aspects. Feminism is basically a social theory which argues for the equality of both genders. It describes the rights of women to society and protects women from male oppression. It demands equality in all aspects of public and personal life.

New Trends in Feministic Thinking:

Thousand splendid suns are the representation of women and their burning desires. There are thousands of desires in the hearts of Mariam and Laila of which mostly get burnt under the strong heat of patriarchy. Rasheed does not tolerate Mariam's fate of not producing him a child. He does not want to accept it as their collective fate rather he keeps on blaming his wife for something which is impossible as a human being to do.

In the bright of the story a man always finds a woman to be blamed for every misfortune in life. As, Nana said to Mariam; Learn this now and learn it well, my daughter: "a man's accusing finger always finds a woman. Always. You remember that Mariam" (Hosseini 7).

Women who raise their voice for their rights are termed as feminist. There is no ease for women to be professional in any of the profession. Women are bound to be at home behind the walls of their husband's house, and they are meant to serve their masters no matter what. The protagonist of the novel is a true picture of a miserable lady slave and a toy in the hands of men. First, her father demolished her psyche as a child and then her husband took every advantage of her innocence.

In the novel, we see Laila as a most voiced woman who has tried to voice her opinions every now and then for the rights of women. On the other hand, Mariam we see is one of the quietest women who has carried every torture but did not say a word. Yet in the end, we see her frustration and aggression when she killed Rasheed to save Laila. This is symbolic and gives the message that she has killed patriarchy Sun is also a symbol which represents hope for the better future of Afghanistan and it represents the ideals of Laila the second major character of the novel. It also represents Hakim Laila's father who wants her daughter to learn and groom as a literate person.

He wants Laila to be like the sun which shines and give light to everything as it brings life to all objects of nature similarly, he wants Laila to get quality education Therefore, Hakim and Tariq symbolize the sensibility of an ordinary human being who is neither jealous, nor afraid of his same being but opposite gender. There are no insecurities in their heart.

At first, we observe Nana's character in the novel how she has been treated by society and what type of person she has become. She is a very conventional character. She bears everything but in her own way. She keeps on telling her daughter to come out of the illusions which she has made for her father. Nana knows the reality and she wanted Mariam to know it too rather, to know it by heart. That is why she is quite harsh towards Mariam as she does not want to lose her and secondly, she wants to teach her the harsh reality of life. Then comes Mariam, she is a black picture of bearing tortures of life. Life whips her over and over again and she bears it with the hope of a better future. That hope is a failure. Her life has not changed even after such great input as the other members in her life like Nana, Jalil and Rasheed have not put any effort to make things better for her. She suffered from emotional to physical torture but remained quiet and hopeful. That is the fault of a victim especially, of a woman when she does not make a sound against the victimizer. Mariam does not say a word because she knows that she does not have anyone to stand by her side. In the novel, Mariam is the kind of character who is a victim from the start to the end. But while reaching towards the end, Mariam's personality has a change. She tells the world that as a human being we have some certain limits even to bear something. At the end when she hits Rasheed and kills him that is the First and the last decision which she has made on her own. This very act shows that she is not ready to bear more and to see more of depression. Therefore, instead of killing herself she decides to kill the reason of all depressions.

Laila's Character is probably the only character which has a happy ending though she has lost Mariam and misses her yet she has a stable life by the end of the novel. As a woman, Laila also has to face a lot of social tortures. Firstly she has lost her brothers for which she has lost the love and affection of her mother too. Secondly, she has to marry Rasheed who is quite older than her. Thirdly, she has to give up her love for Tariq for her family. Lastly, she lost Mariam who has given her a new life by saving her from Rasheed. Laila is emotionally broken but time has made her personality strong and mature.

Bindu Ann Philip's "Endless Endurance" (2016), in this Journal the writer speaks about the height of patience which the characters of the novel observed throughout the story. Mariam, Laila, and Nana all have observed plenty of patients throughout their lives. The author of the novel has drawn the picture of these ladies to create a feminist piece of writing. All female characters have been bestowed this quality of patience and endurance. As, in the text the characters of Mariam, Nana and Laila are the pictures of immense endurance of brutality. "Learn

this now and learn this well, my daughter: Like a compass needle that points north, a man's accusing finger always finds a woman"(Hosseini 7).

Laila also has suffered a lot in her life even then some of the days of her life are pleasant and memorable. On the other hand, Mariam does not have anything in her hands which is good and pleasant to be recalled There is no escape for her. The writer has shown no escape or way out for Mariam in the text. Yet at the end of the story, she finally finds it in the face of death. She receives death as an honor as she has killed Rasheed and patriarchy with her hands. This very impression of killing Mariam for Rasheed's murder is similar to the killing of Tess the protagonist of Thomas Hardy in The Tess of D'Urbervilles. Both have suffered throughout their lives with disrespect and accepted death with a high grade. It seems that Mariam has no guilt after killing her husband as she has killed him to save the life of her daughter like friend Laila. Laila is again symbolic here as she represents feminism and Rasheed represents patriarchy. Therefore, Mariam saved feminism and murdered patriarchy and won the battle with her life. She represents the war between feminism and patriarchy.

In the text, there are numerous depressions which the female characters are facing. This show of depressions and pain is not to display the weaknesses of women rather; it communicates the strength of their inner abilities. They can endure more than men and they can bring changes in the society. And the self-realization and self-confidence is the strength of Laila.

Conclusion: The author mentioned the word modern a number of times in the novel which indicates that there is some liberty. In the novel, all the happenings which have shown the characters of women are representing the strong power of bearing in women. The level of patience and their way of connecting with each other. It clearly shows that women are very pure and strong emotionally. But, Everything and every perspective differ from person to person and society to society.

The story conveys the message of peace under the appearance of destruction. It is a technique that when you want to give value to some certain notion you explain it with its opposite force. They have no personal space. They do not get any chance to think of themselves. They must respect themselves so that others see them with the eyes of respect. A woman should never doubt her abilities rather; she should trust herself and prove everyone wrong with the show of their guts. In this paper, Laila's character represents the new trends in feministic view.

Works Cited

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