

RECONSTRUCTING PATRIARCHAL DOMINATIONS AND GENDER ROLES IN DEBORAH ELLIS AND RUKHSANA KHAN WORKS

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ABSTRAK

*Studi ini menganalisis isu-isu dalam tradisi patriarki dan merekonstruksi peranan gender pada tiga karya sastra yang dikategorikan sebagai sastra multikultural karena membawa tema perang dan kekerasan pada budaya Afghanistan, yaitu *The Breadwinner* (Deborah Ellis), *Parvana's Journey* (Deborah Ellis), and *Wanting Mor* (Rukhsana Khan). Hasil analisis menunjukkan bukti-bukti pola perubahan dan perpindahan dalam peranan gender, tergantung pada gender mana yang lebih menguntungkan dalam interaksi sosial. Terlebih perspektif institutional mampu menjelaskan alasan perubahan dan perpindahan peranan gender seseorang dalam interaksi sosial. Dengan mengamati praktik dan kebijakan pada budaya Afghanistan, karya sastra ini mendukung pendapat bahwa institusi sosial pada budaya ini 'bergender' pada sistem patriarki. Oleh karena itu, tokoh-tokoh utama pada karya sastra ini mengalami perubahan dan perpindahan peranan gender untuk membantu mereka terhindar dari diskriminasi sosial di masyarakat.*

Kata Kunci: *dominasi patriarki, peranan gender, budaya Afghanistan*

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the issues of traditional patriarchy and the reconstruction of gender roles of three books; *The Breadwinner* (Deborah Ellis), *Parvana's Journey* (Deborah Ellis), and *Wanting Mor* (Rukhsana Khan). All these three books are considered as multicultural literature because of the theme of war and violence in Afghanistan culture. The findings confirm gender roles are unstable and inconstant. These three books show evidences of how gender roles are adaptable

and changeable depends on what gender is favored in the social interactions. What is more, the institutional perspectives provide ways of reasoning gender roles are altered and changed. By observing Afghan social practices and policies in their culture, these books also confirm that most social institutions in this culture are gendered to favor patriarchy dominations. Therefore, the main characters of these books portray the shifts and changes of their gender roles to save them from ‘disparate treatment’ in the society.

Key word: patriarchal dominations, gender roles, Afghanistan culture

1. Introduction

In the after math 9/11, world politics has turned into different directions as the agenda of war on terrorism has influenced every person’s perceptions of Muslims’ world, particularly to a country such as Afghanistan. Almost in every aspect of life, we will see the ‘war on terrorism’ intervene policies of politic, economy, culture, technology, education and others. We, like it or not, have been shaped to see these Muslims societies and cultures differently than before the 9/11.

One of the educational policies that has been fitted to give more understanding on the impact of 9/11 was children’s books with war themes and topics. These types of genre has gained meticulous attention from educational experts and practitioners, parents, and societies in large. These books with war and violent themes are in excess considered as multicultural children’s literature in which these types of works brought the whole idea of understanding other culture differently and closely into our perceptions.

This study conducts the analysis of three books *The Breadwinner*, *Parvana’s Journey*, and *Wanting Mor*. These books were both published in Canada, where numerous multicultural children’s books are published as part of the enrichment of the educational curriculum for the children to understand culture and multicultural in their multi-ethnic societies. These issues of multicultural children’s literature have been around before these books were published. In the twentieth century, the children books were flourished by books that experienced holocaust and internment of Asians in North America. These books were considered as multicultural since they conveyed the voices of minorities and migrations to North America. Books with several themes such as world war I (e.g. Jean Little’s *Brothers Far from Home*), the holocaust (e.g. Lois Lowry’s *Number the Stars*, Uri Orlev’s *The Man from the Other Side* and *The Island on Bird Street*) and of narratives of

Asian internment in North America (e.g. Joy Kogawa's *Naomi's Road and Obasan*, Shichan Takashima's *A Child in Prison Camp*, and Yoshiko Uchida's *Journey to Topaz*). Other themes are also notable in demonstrating violence and war such as those concerning children who were evacuated during world war II (Nina Bawden's *Carrie's War*), boys surviving in bombed cities (Robert Westall's *The Machine-Gunners*), the Pearl Harbor attack (e.g. Adam Pelko's *A Boy at War*), and even the struggle of a girl during the civil war in Sierra Leone (Mariatu Kamara and Susan McClelland's *The Bite of the Mango*) had redefined the meaning of home, exile, silent voice, discrimination, and identity. Yet, after 9/11, these issues brought the voices of other minorities in North America such as Arabs and Muslims, who got discrimination as the impacts of terrorism event in 2001.

***The Breadwinner* (Deborah Ellis)**

The Breadwinner set the story of an eleven years old girl, named Parvana, who is forced to live in and after war in Afghanistan. She lives with her family in a small house where everyday, she have to help her father to work as a letters' reader and sell goods in the market. Despite of the rules in Afghanistan, that women are not allowed to work and go out freely without companion, she has to go everywhere with her father to earn money. After her father is taken away by Talibans for being educated in England, in constant she has to take care the rest of the family, works outside in disguise as a little boy and become the breadwinner. While in disguise, she meets her school friend, Shauzia who is in disguise as a boy as well. She learn so well from his father how to read and write, which make her has to replace her father job. She even adventure herself with Shauzia to dig human bones to sell in order to earn more money. Mrs. Weera, an old friend of her family soon comes and helps the family to raise up to live. She consoles Parvana's mother (Fatana) who has been depressed since her husband has been jailed by Taliban. Then, Fatana and Mrs. Weera team up to write again for the Afghanistan National Magazine.

Nooria and Parvana are siblings who do not have strong emotional bonds as sisters. As the first daughter of the family, she is not allowed to be the breadwinner because she is older and recognizeable as a woman if she goes out. However, the unpleasant emotional bonds are more horrified to Parvana when her mother always thinks her as her late brother who died in a bombing. Particularly when she has to wear her brother' clothes to disguise her as a boy. Her mother seems to look at her as her brother and it strikes her emotionally.

It soon comes to a sudden decision that Nooria will get married to a boy in Mazaar-e Sharif. The whole family decides to take Nooria over to Mazar E-Sharif. Parvana has to stay in Kabul to wait for her father in case he is released from prison. She is left with Mrs. Weera and continues to earn money in disguise as a boy. She

meets several people like a woman in the window who throws small gifts onto her blanket and a girl who came from Mazar E-Sharif and said that her home has been captured by Taliban. The news grows worries to Parvana's mind and makes her want to go to Mazaar E-Sharif to see her family.

When her father is released, Parvana agrees to visit Mazaar E-Sharif with her father to pick up the rest of her family's members. The father-daughter journey embarks the new journey to a place where Parvana hopes to be able to get out of Pakistan. She promises Shauzia to meet again in Paris at the top of Eiffel tower in 20 years.

Parvana's Journey

Parvana's Journey is the sequel of Ellis' *The Breadwinner* which sets Parvana and her father into a long journey to meet her mother and siblings in Mazaar E-Sharif. However, Parvana must continue her journey by herself after the death of her father who cannot survive from his illness. In her journey, she meets several kids (Asif, Leila and a baby who Parvana name him as Hassan) who are also alone and decide to continue the journey together. In this journey, Parvana shows the ability of leadership and stronger characteristics which are self-reliance and maturity. She even shows her maturity to stay stronger through rough life when she meets a wailing lady who cannot cope with war torn life. Towards the end of her journey, Parvana is reunited with her family in a refugee camp where she sense heartwarming hopes from women who organize the camp, a communal sisterhood that emphasis the empowerment of women in the land of war torn, Afghanistan.

***Wanting Mor* (Rukhsana Khan)**

On the contrary, *Wanting Mor* portrays more domestic problems that Jameela must cope with throughout her journey after the death of her mother. She is constantly under the oppression of her father and step mother who think of her as a burden in the family. She also has to hide her face from people because of her cleft. Her condition to hide her identity shows another form of patriarchal oppression that resembles to Parvana situations who has to be a 'boy' in order to be able to work outside.

Jameela set her journey to Kabul to follow her father who marries a rich woman in order to escape from poverty and miserable life in her village right after the death of Jameela's mother. Throughout her experiences in her step mother's house, she does not feel happiness at all because of the ill-treatment of her stepmother, while her father enjoys his new life as the husband of a rich lady in

Kabul. It becomes very clear that she is unwanted when her father left her in a market alone. From that moment she realizes that she must be independent to survive. Her mother's love and advices strengthen her mentality to keep her hopes that one day she will find happiness. In her adventures to survive in the market of Kabul, she meets several good people who help her until she finds an orphanage. In this place, she learns new things and gets chance to pursue higher education. She finds her new hopes to survive through in the orphanage that later she calls it as home.

2. Research Problems, Objectives and Limitations

This study focuses on three books, written by Deborah Ellis and Rukhsana Khan, which are; *The Breadwinner*, *Parvana's Journey* (both are written by Ellis) and *Wanting Mor* (by Rukhsana Khan). This intertextuality research explores two issues which are; rendering Ellis and Khan's portrayal of women against the patriarchy system of Afghanistan, and reconstructing gender roles in Afghan society through these works.

These two problems are arranged in order to understand how these two authors who are coming from different background, envision their perspectives of women portrayal against the traditional patriarchy system of Afghanistan which little or more is rooted in Taliban's power. The second purpose of this study is to see how the effect of war and violence may change our understanding of gender roles that influence the lives of many Afghanistan women through these books.

This study limits itself to focus and deepen its analysis in several aspects of patriarchy and gender roles, notably they are traditional patriarchy theories (internalised and 'recovering' patriarchal person) and gender in the perspectives of individualists (gendered person), interactions and institutions.

3. Theoretical Framework

This chapter explore the theoretical framework of feminism such as traditional patriarchy, gendered person, gender in social interactions and institutions. However, other concepts such as multicultural children's literature and traditional status of Afghanistan are also reviewed as supports to the main theories.

Multicultural Children's Literature

Multicultural children's literature as a genre in literary aspects, has drawn many attentions because it brings sensitive issues and debatable terms in regards of which kind of texts can be considered as multicultural children's literature. For many reasons, the texts that commonly called as multicultural literature draw their focus on the minorities or 'colored people'. However, many critics confirm that it is not only about races and ethnics, but also contains other contexts of minorities. It can be minorities in religions, races, ethnics, nations, sex and gender, and even to people with disabilities.

By definition, multicultural literature depends on how it is viewed; in intrinsic literary nature or in pedagogical aspect. Dasenbrock (1987) considered multicultural literature as "literary texts consist of explicitly about multicultural societies or are implicitly multicultural in the sense of inscribing readers from other cultures inside their own cultural dynamics (quoted in Cai (2002) p. 4)

While in pedagogical aspect, some experts define the multicultural literature as literary texts that are focus on people of color (Kruse and Horning (1990), quoted in Cai (2002), p. 5). Other definitions are as follows:

Books that feature people of color, the elderly, gays, and lesbians, religious minorities, language minorities, people with disabilities, gender issues, and concerns about class (Harris (1994), quoted in Cai (2002), P. 5)

Cai and Sim Bishop (1994) offers a conclusive pedagogical definition of multicultural literature that these texts are probable on the differences of dominant and dominated culture. These texts are also about group of people that are distinguished in race, culture, language, and in other ways from dominant white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, Patriarchal culture (quoted in Cai (2002), p. 5)

Futhermore, Cai (2002) offers three views of how to understand multicultural literature which are; (1) multi and culture, means that the texts should contains as many culture as it can without any distinctions of majorities and minorities, dominant and dominated (p.6), (2) the literature that focus on racial and ethnic issues whereas these texts center on people who are most excluded and marginalized, people of color (p.8), (3) the literature that every human being is multicultural. On reversed to the first view, this view denies the necessities of creating a type of literature about various specific cultures, whether dominant or dominated. This view advices readers to read any piece of literature multiculturally in order to discover, and deal with, the cultural issues it contains (p.9).

In regards to the three books in this study, Ellis and Khan have provided books that focusing on particular race and issues which is Afghanistan. However,

the third view also consider that these texts are multicultural in general since they portray human being issues that any readers from different cultural background may discover cultural issues of Afghanistan. However, from the first view, these texts do not contain multi or many cultures, it is specifically exploring the particular issues of Afghanistan and its people.

Traditional Patriarchy: Internalized and Recovering Patriarchal Person

Patriarchy is thus, by definition, *sexist*, which means it promotes the belief that women are innately inferior to men (Tyson, 85).

Traditional patriarchy justifies inequities of women in many aspects of life in which it forms the mindset of society to exclude women from equality access. It also embodies women with internalized patriarchal mindset where women are stipulated to accept their gender roles as emotional, irrational, weak, nurturing and submissive. Meanwhile the men embody their gender roles as rational, strong, protective and decisive (Tyson, 85).

Internalized patriarchy emphasizes the points of how both men and women accept the patriarchal programming mind that is showed through their traits, behavior and interactions in the society. An internalized woman for example shows no refusal to believe that women cannot do math and perform less-logical mindset. She will show these traits through her behaviors and interactions in the society which confirm her as a woman. It goes the same with an internalized patriarchal man in which psychologically performs the mindset of men to show no fear and perform more logical behaviors. Moreover, it is also a taboo for men to fail at anything because it implies failure to his manhood. For example, it is important for men to be succeeded economically to support his family because it is essentially his biological role as provider (Tyson, 87). Consequently, patriarchy may also give pressure to men to fulfill the patriarchal society's expectations.

Lest, this patriarchal programming can be altered progressively into some understanding that an internalized patriarchal women and men may progress their mindset into 'recovering' patriarchal person. When a patriarchal woman comes to an awareness of patriarchal programming mindset has oppressed and discriminated her, she will show rejections to the patriarchal expectations. She will show her rejections through refusal thoughts of what society think of her as a woman. Then it continues to her refusal actions in the society, either by hidden gestures, or through spoken mind against the patriarchal oppressions.

Recovering from patriarchal oppressions also means being aware that patriarchal culture has divide women and men into destructive mindset in which not

only women may feel the oppressions, but men may also be suffered from patriarchal expectations because of the pressures to show his patriarchal manhood. Therefore, ‘recovering’ patriarchal person often described as empowered woman and man against patriarchal oppressions to be free from gender roles programming of the patriarchal society.

The Social Construction of Gender

Wharton (2005) attempts three approaches in understanding gender in social construction. These approaches are **individualist, interactional and institutional** in which each approach contains different viewpoints to fathom the gender construction. In this study, these approaches are going to be used as the measuring tools for readers to value the authors’ (Ellis and Khan) process in reconstructing gender roles in their works. From these approaches, the process of social construction in gender should be able to give relation of how gender is discerned culturally from its people or other races and ethnics.

Gender in Individualist Approach

For the first approach, gender is understood individually as a characteristic of people. The attention of this approach is focusing on traits, characteristics, and identities of women and men. It also suggests that gender operates mainly through these aspects of individuals (39). Furthermore, this approach complies that sex distinctions are the primary concerns, which sex is the source of gender and set limits on traits, behaviors, and identities of people (40). Since gender is a part of people individually, then it is more possible to be constant and stable.

From this perspective, the idea of analysing social of construction of gender in these three books is viewed from the sex types of the female characters and this study explores each character from the expectations of their traits, behaviors and identities.

Gender in Interactionist Approach

The interactionist views does not consider traits and abilities as stable and constant. It is more focus on the outer context of gender which is in social interactions.

Although these perspectives acknowledge that women and men may differ in some of the ways noted by individualists, interactionist approaches place greater attention on forces operating outside the individual (Wharton, 54).

Thus, the interactionists argue that people's reactions, behaviors, traits and abilities vary depends on the social context they interact to. For instance, women may behave more nurturant and feminine in their interaction with the social context where they are placed as caretakers rather than in the society where such expectation is not a necessity. This approach also points the importance of social categorization in which through this categorization, gender differences and inequality is possible to be seen and valued. Social categorization is defined as "the processes through which individuals classify others and themselves as members of particular groups" (Wharton, 55).

Interactionists divide social categorization into three major ways; (1) **Ethnometodological's view "doing gender"** – believes that the social interaction is a vehicle through which people present themselves to others as women or men.

Ethnomethodologists believe that sex categorization and the "natural attitude" are social constructions rather than biological or physical realities. Understanding how social interaction produces a gender differentiated world is the central goal of these approaches (55)

Succintly, this first social categorization argues that through determining sex categorization and natural attitude, it will be able to see how social interaction may see differences and inequality in gender.

(2) the second social categorization which is **status characteristics theory or Theory of "expectation states"** – complies that in order to understand how and why categorizing others by sex produces and gender expectations, and stereotypes, then it is important to know status characteristics in the society. Status characteristics is "an attribute on which individuals vary that is associated in a society with widely held beliefs according greater esteem and worthiness to some states of the attribute (e.g., being male) than others (being female)" (Ridgeway 1993: 179, quoted in Wharton, 57).

(3) Homophily and Gender is the third social categorization in which emphasizes the consequences of people classifying others as similar or different from themselves. This perspective generally assumes that being different from or similar to others is more important in shaping interaction than *how* one differs or is similar (55)

As a conclusion on this approach, social categorization, particularly sex catergorization is a primary social process and gender is reproduced and emerged

in social interaction. Interactionists also believe that social interaction and its contexts influence the expression and significance of gender.

Therefore, by analysing how the female characters of these three books interact within Afghan communities, the nature and expectations of sex categorization of Afghan Society, and the consequences of sex categorization in Afghan society, should be able to determine gender distinctions and inequalities of Afghan women.

Gender in Institutions

In this perspective, Acker (1992) argues that every institution is gendered as it is quoted as follows;

gender is present in the processes, practices, images and ideologies, and distributions of power in the various sectors of social life. Taken as more or less functioning wholes, the institutional structures of the United States and other societies are organized along the lines of gender . . . [These institutions] have been historically developed by men, currently dominated by men, and symbolically interpreted from the standpoint of men in leading positions, both in the present and historically. (Acker, qtd in Wharton, 65)

Institutional perspective focuses its observation in understanding of how gender is embodied in organizational social systems and structures such as education, workplaces, family and others. Thus, both interactional and institutional tend to be different from the individualist perspective. However, the essential difference will be shown in the context of in what degree or form institutions may be valued as gendered or not? Since individualist perspective rather seeing gender from the individual attribute and characteristic in which almost every individual will show degree differences in every individual, whilst the interactionist and institutionalist tend to convey degree and form of gender in consensus context in the societies.

Gender thus is not viewed as something individuals possess, but rather is conceived as an aspect of social organization. But are all organizational structures and practices “gendered”? Or is the “gendering” of institutions a matter of degree and form? (Wharton, 69)

England (1998) offers two ways in identifying whether or not an institution is gendered or not. The first one is any practices, policies, or procedures that treat women differently represent “disparate treatment” can be justified an institution as gendered, and or any practices, policies, or procedures that do not embodies

differential treatment but it still conveys “disparate impact” on women and men, it also identifies institution as gendered. (Wharton, 69)

Traditional Status of Afghan Women

In order to clarify the concepts of how Afghanistan in the socio-cultural context carries a long tradition patriarchal system in the society, it is important to understand the Afghan society from the historical context and the socio-cultural context. Within these two aspects, the results should be cohesive to the context of traditional patriarchy and gender roles issues within the texts that are being discussed in this study.

Historically, Afghan women for many century have long paths of unfavorable lives where many of them are the victims of what they called it as gender discrimination. In several aspects, such as education, economy, politic, and even marriage life, most Afghan women are considered as victims of socio-culture traditions that are run by men. However, it must be underlined to this study that the traditions that are applied to these women cannot considered as the implementation of religion as law, but more to the implications of how society and culture interpret the law of religion itself. As we have seen that law in religion may be applied differently in different countries and nations as the impacts of how it is understood throughout different societies and cultures. For instance, the Islamic law that is understood by Afghanistan is different from one that is understood by Indonesians where many Muslim women in Indonesia actively participate in many aspects of life such as having professions, become parliament members, can go to work outside of their house. While, Afghan women do not have rights to experience those practices and policies.

In historical perspective, the status of Afghan women are portrayed as follows;

- a. Traditionally inferior, where women are practically considered as the slaves of her husband, father and brothers.
- b. Her most valued characteristic was silence and obedience
- c. Raised to be good mothers and tolerant wives
- d. Get married in young age, even sometimes to old men.
- e. Their marriage are with price (Toyana)
- f. Divorce was an easy act for husband but women did not have right to ask for divorce
- g. Women in general are not supposed to earn a living (can not work outside of their house)
- h. Women did not usually receive proper education

- i. They are actually patriotic. They love their native land, thus they helped during war such as carrying supplies, removing bodies, helping wounded soldiers etc. (Rahimi, page 6-8)

Meanwhile in the socio-cultural context, the status of Afghan women highlights the long list of their historical portrayal in which it is indicated in several aspects as follows;

- a. Marriage: the most common portrayals of this aspect are arranged marriage, where the girl is not allowed to choose to whom she will marry to. Also the cultural context create a tendency that the men may have more than one wife, men may marry a non-muslim woman, while the women do not have that privilege. There is still bride-price where the men will give the girl's family based on the the fixed law of Afghanistan. The modern family usually do not ask for the bride-price, instead they demand for a grand wedding ceremony. (Rahimi, 11)
- b. Polygamous Marriage
For this particular tradition, polygamy has been justified as one of the religious practice (in this case is Islam) that man may have wives up to four where it become practiced by many Afghan men. In fact, All Afghan ethnics are polygynous (Rahimi, 12). The Afghan had gone through this system despite of the overvalue polygamous principle of Islam where some men will provide one house for all of wives to live in one house or when a man marries more than four. Other practices that are very common to Afghan Society are sororate (the husband marries his wife's sister when she died), and exogamous. The indication of Afghan Parents tend their daughters to marry men from higher class or at least similar to their level (Rahimi, 13)
- c. Divorce
Contradict to the principle of Islamic law, divorce in amongst Afghan society tends to be unlawful. Divorced women and men can not live in their natal community since it is considered shameful to the family. Thus, although it is permitted in Islam, they do not seem to comply this act as probable.
- d. Women Inheritance
Islamic law influence strong controls on many aspect of lives in Afghanistan. Theoretically all member of the family of deceased one entitled for inheritance. only amongst the deceased' close male heirs. Whereas according to Islamic law;

Female offspring receives one-half the amount of the share of a male offspring. If there are two daughters they are entitled to have two-thirds of what the deceased leaves. When the only heir is a woman, she receives half of the inheritance. If there are no children, the mother receives one-sixth of the estate of the deceased and the wives receive one-fourth of their husband's estate. If a deceased does not have a son and a father, his sisters inherit half of his estate (Rahimi, 14)

Consequently, Afghans are patrilineal, patriarchal, patrilocal and patronymous. They are mostly exogamous, but some instances of endogamy are also found (Rahimi, 10).

4. Discussions

Internalized Patriarchy and Recovering Patriarchal women in Ellis and Khan's Works

Both Ellis and Khan portray the traditional patriarchy practices rooted in many aspects of life in their books. It can be seen from several characters in these books that are portrayed as internalized patriarchal persons which highlights the reasons of how the society of Afghanistan is culturally patriarchal.

In *The Breadwinner* and *Parvana's Journey*, Ellis depicts several characters such as Parvana's mother and sister as patriarchal women. In several occurrences, Parvana's mother is described as weak and submissive woman. She cannot cope with the reality of her husband is in jail and no one can go out to work to make living for the whole family. She spent her days lying down and crying for her husband to come back (Ellis, *The Breadwinner*, 49). Her characteristics as a weak and emotional woman affect Parvana to step up to replace her father roles to work and earn money so the entire family can live. She is also forced to dress up as a boy so that she can find a job (Ellis, *The Breadwinner*, 63). Ellis clearly describes the communal patriarchal culture that is deep rooted in the society. Women are definitely described as member of society with limited access outside of their houses. They do not possess the equal rights to work and cannot go outside of their house without the companion of male family member. Therefore, Parvana must become a boy who continues her father job as the reader and writer in the market.

Parvana's sister, Nooria is another character of internalized patriarchal woman who shows her acceptance as a submissive girl and hang on her life onto marriage. Her characteristic resembles to the traditional patriarchal women in the Victorian times in the western culture. Nooria seems very proud of her family plan to marry her off with distant relative in Mazaar E-Sharif. She is the typical character

of traditional patriarchy that has been shown in other stories from different genres such as fairytales and folktales. Nooria resembles to Cinderella in fairytales who relies on marriage as the best future of a girl can have in life and the only way for girls like them to escape from savage life of war-torn country like Afghanistan. The trait of submissive to man through arranged marriage without any refusal and questions is a strong indication of internalized patriarchy in Nooria character.

Feminists have showed long criticism of fairytales genre as promoting patriarchy that is destructive to young girl's imagination. Many traditional fairytales content the ideas of young girls to be submissive, waiting to be rescued and be married with a man. Nonetheless, the roles of man as the 'Prince Charming' are also destructive because he must be wealthy and strong to be able to save his woman and make her happily ever after (Tyson, 88).

By the same token, Nooria's arranged marriage is destructive as she does not have any other choices in life to survive in the savage war conditions. Her mind set her dream to be married as the only happiness she can have in life. For her, the only way for her to be able to go to school again and free from wearing *burqa* is by getting married in Mazaar E- Sharif.

Meanwhile, Parvana who is not internalised by the patriarchal system is able to choose other dream in her life beside marriage. She and her friend, Shauzia are free from the patriarchal programming of their society and dream to be able to get out from Afghanistan and travel the world.

Khan's *Wanting Mor* also poses an internalised patriarchal person, which is Jameela's father. He shows the typical description of patriarchal men who is strong and cannot show his emotion, even after the death of his wife. Because he cannot show his emotion, he drags himself into a destructive path by getting drunk after the death of his wife (Khan, 36). He is also a decision maker in the family who will not consult his opinion to women. He is also oppressed to this patriarchal system because his role to provide economic support to his family brings him to pressurized situations and causes him depressed to get out of poverty. A sudden decision is made for him and Jameela to get out the miserable life in the village by marrying a rich woman in Kabul. He thinks that decision will bring a better life for him and Jameela. On the contrary, his choice brings a better life for himself, but not for Jameela who suffers from ill treatments of his wife. For that reason, Jameela's father shows destructive traits and actions of an internalised patriarchal man who put himself into aggressive and patriarchal manhood.

Parvana and Jameela are two characters who possess the mentality of 'recovering' patriarchal persons. It is interesting that this genre, war and multicultural books, exposes the main heroines as 'recovering' patriarchal persons. Throughout stories, both Parvana and Jameela show their awareness of the

negativity of patriarchal system in their society by arguing the phenomenon and or refusing the patriarchal attributes to be attached to them.

Parvana grows her dream to be free from war-torn condition and go to Paris. She also dreams to be able to get education again instead of thinking of waiting to get arranged for marriage. Many young girls like her may have the same dream, but since the patriarchal system of Afghanistan limit the rights of women in public, these young girls throw away their dream to go to school and just wait for men to marry them off. Moreover, Parvana is not afraid to speak up her mind to refuse any discontentment of her situations. She is also described as a brave girl who steps up to work outside for her family. Not to mention in the second book, *Parvana's Journey*, she shows independence and leadership traits; the characteristics that have been always attached to men in the patriarchal society. Parvana manages herself to step up taking care of a baby in an abandon village in her journey (Ellis, *Parvana's Journey*, 32). Her maturity has grown into courageous and more self-reliant in her journey. Her leadership trait is shown throughout the journey when she leads other kids, Asif and Leila, throughout their journey by making decisions and taking care of those kids.

Jameela is also a girl who is aware of the destructive patriarchy system in Afghanistan. Although her refusals mostly come from how her mind speaks up against the systems, she also shows some actions to refuse the patriarchal attributes that are forced on her. A case in point is when she makes a big decision not to come back to her father when he wants to take her back from the orphanage school. She is able to elevate herself to be independent and makes decision against her father who abandons her in the market. Consequently, both Parvana and Jameela are the symbol of women empowerment against the traditional patriarchy system of the society. They both are surrounded by the oppression of patriarchal culture of Afghanistan, yet they manage to free themselves from internalised patriarchy.

Children books about war often conveys the empowerment of women from internalised patriarchal culture through the use of girls as main characters with typical traits as brave, strong, critical and independent. These traits are needed to expose the oppressions of patriarchal culture in the societies. This genre definitely brings the feminism notions against the patriarchal system and male dominations in any culture. By the same token, these notions often offer the communal sisterhood of women as the alternative society for women to be cured from the savage world of war. The refugee camp that is run by women volunteers and the orphanage are the proposed models for communal sisterhood for women and children to be saved and cured from the trauma of war and the oppressions of male dominations.

Gender Construction of Parvana and Jameela in the Patriarchal Culture

In the perception of individualist approach, both Parvana and Jameela are identified as girls who carry limitations of their roles in the society. Before Parvana's father is taken away by the Taliban, she shows her traits as a girl who has to wear *burqa* when she goes out to accompany her father working as a reader and writer. Although her femininity attribute is attached onto her physical appearance, her father embodies her with belief that even though she is a girl, she is capable to study and learn like any other boys. Thus, she and her sister are exceptionally educated and value the rights for education is equal for men and women. However, soon after that, she has to disguise as a boy to work outside which results on her feminine roles are altered into more masculine. Her gender traits are no longer being submissive and dependent. She also shows leadership traits to maintain her disguise as a boy. Although the individualist approach believes that gender roles are supposed to be constant and stable, the changes of Parvana's roles as the breadwinner of the family proves the interactionist approach is more suitable to confirm Parvana's gender construction.

Similar to Parvana, Jameela's gender traits shift from being dependant to her father into self-reliant and more courageous. Physically, she is identified as a girl who possesses limitations of rights in the society. However, when her father abandons her in the market, her traits must make changes to survive alone. Consequently, the interactionist point of views is more probable to construct Parvana and Jameela's gender roles as they are seen from their social interactions. Since the patriarchy culture is deep rooted in the Afghan society, both Parvana and Jameela as the 'recovering' patriarchal persons must make changes of their gender roles to make differences and free themselves from the dominations of patriarchy culture.

In terms of the interactionist approach, both Parvana and Jameela are not inferior to the feminine roles that are attached to them as girls. However, since their society and culture treat men with more rights in the public, they are forced to change themselves in order to get equal rights and treatment in the society. Even Parvana must disguise herself as a boy to be able to work in the market. In the *homophily and gender* perspectives, it is important for these girls to being similar to boys or men to gain equal social interactions in the public. Significantly, this perspective believes that gender roles shifts are needed to influence and empower the inferior gender to achieve equality.

By the same token, the institutional perspective is able to bridge the reasons of how Parvana and Jameela gender roles are unstable and inconstant. The social system of Afghanistan in common is not favorable to the gender that is attributed

to these two characters which is femininity. Social structures such as stadium, market and family lives give more spaces and rights for men than women. Since women are associated with their feminine roles, it is essential for these young girls, Parvana and Jameela, to perform more masculine traits and attributes in the society. With that being said, it is convinced that most social institutions in Afghanistan are gendered. As England (1998) confirms in the first category of gendered institution that any practices, policies, or procedures that treat women differently represent “disparate treatment” can be justified an institution as gendered (Wharton, 69). The market in Kabul in these three books is obviously described as a place where women must be accompanied by their male family members and women are not allowed to work. This place is only for men to have a job and earn money. Other institutions such as stadium and bone yard are also described as places where only men can earn money for living. Consequently, practices and policies in these places treat women differently from men and confirm the gender inequalities.

However, places like refugee camp and orphanage in these books have shown practices and policies for women to work and learn equally with men. The practices and policies in these places are apparently the exceptional alternatives for women to show their gender roles without any oppression from ‘disparate treatment’ of patriarchy system. These books describe refugee camp and orphanage as the social institutions for women and children to be cured from the war and violence trauma, as well as to reconstruct their gender identity and roles as women.

Convincingly, both Ellis and Khan have shown similar archetypal pattern of stories to support feminist perspectives to raise the awareness of the discriminations and oppressions of patriarchal system. By exposing internalised patriarchal characters and set their main characters as girls who are ‘recovering’ from the patriarchal system in their culture, these two writers create the archetypes of multicultural literature as the feminism apparatus against the patriarchal discriminations and dominations which can be found in many fairytales and folktales.

Through unraveling the gender construction of the characters of these books, it is confirmed that Ellis and Khan also create similar archetypes of stories to underpin the ideas of gender roles as unstable and inconstant. These writers obviously have shown compelling similar pattern of how gender roles are adaptable and changeable depends on which gender is favored in the society. Additionally, the stories ideas of providing institutions for women and children to work and learn in refugee camp and orphanage strengthen the support for women and girls to have courage against the patriarchal dominations. Therefore, these similar patterns may become the foundation of multicultural literature archetypes against the patriarchal discriminations.

5. Conclusions

The three books that are being discussed in this study have shown strong feminist concepts against traditional patriarchy. Unlike other genre such as traditional fairytales which often criticised because of its common description of traditional patriarchy as positive and powerful, children's books about war often proposes their main characters as the 'recovering' patriarchal persons against the destructive roles of internalised patriarchal persons. Parvana and Jameela, two main characters in these three books, are considered as the 'recovering' patriarchal persons that can be seen from their traits as brave, independent, and critical against the patriarchal culture.

In terms of gender construction, these three books confirms the interactionist approach that gender is unstable and inconstant as it is shown in Parvana and Jameela traits. Their traits shift and change because of their needs to survive in the patriarchal society. The institutional perspectives also strengthen the interactionist points by providing reasons of how gender is unstable depends on whether or not social structures such as school, market and family provide different treatment for women. The market of Kabul in these three books is an example of 'gendered' institution in Afghanistan where its practices and policies are favorable to men rather than women. Significantly, the discriminations in such place motivate girls like Parvana and Jameela to alter their gender traits and change their gender roles in order to avoid discriminations. Nonetheless, these three books have offered another perception that practices and policies to favor women rights such as refugee camp and orphanage may become the cure from war and violence trauma for women and children. In these places, women and girls are also able to reconstruct their gender identity and roles.

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