

## Tracing Asymmetrical Heterosexuality in Zaib-Un-Nisa Hamidullah's *The Bull and the She Devil*: A Feminist Psychoanalytical Perspective

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### Abstract

*The study investigates the problematics of gender, sexuality, and identity by tracing psychological, cultural, historical, regional, social, and economic origins of asymmetrical gendered binaries in Zaib-Un-Nisa Hamidullah's *The Bull and the She Devil*. The complex relationship of Gulam Qadir, and Shirin in Zaib-Un-Nisa Hamidullah's *The Bull and the She Devil* is studied through Object relation theory. The research paradigm is qualitative, and textual analysis of the short story is done in order to highlight the conscious, and unconscious processes that influence Qadir's self-perception which is dictated by heterosexual norms. The study uses Nancy J Chodorow's *Femininities, Masculinities, and Sexualities: Freud and Beyond* to study Oedipal phase of gender development that defines roles, and enforces identities on males, and females, thus encouraging inequalities in the society. The research criticizes universal gender categories that exclude regional, cultural, historical, personal, and racial variations. This study also utilizes Marc Feign Fasteau's *The Male Machine* to interpret repressive patriarchal ideologies that limit Ghulam Qadir's sexuality.*

**Keywords:** *Oedipal, Conscious, Unconscious, Patriarchy, Heterosexual*

### Introduction

Stereotypical masculine, and feminine gender norms that are rooted in patriarchy result in suppression of both males, and females. Heterosexual men, or women's desires, and associated modes of conduct can be traced through individual's mental, and cultural circumstances (Chodorow 37). The study explores psychological, cultural, economic, and regional causes of sexual disparities by employing psychoanalytical framework of Nancy J Chodorow, and Marc Feign Fasteau. The research also examines the exploitative gender norms that create stereotypes for men, and women which represses their individuality. Marc Feign Fasteau's *The Male Machine* criticizes the conventional standards of patriarchy that result in suppression of males. Chodorow, a feminist psychoanalyst traces the role of mothering, and nuclear heterosexual family in developing the Oedipal complex for children in later stages of their lifespan.

The Object Relation theory explores the overlapping issues of sex, gender, and psychoanalysis by reexamining the universally accepted heterosexual norms which ignore individual variations. Chodorow's psychoanalytical framework underlines the problems of normative, and non-normative sexuality through the amalgamation of psychoanalysis, political, cultural, and social philosophies. Feminist psychoanalysts' critique questions the traditional psychoanalytical approaches which are biased, and "essentialist" in essence as are concerned only with two dominant paradigms of sexuality: masculine, and feminine (Chodorow 1). For psychoanalysts, sexual love, desire, and fantasy is problematic as it leads to the formation of identity which must be aligned with cultural constructs (71). This results in the fear of intimacy for males which might result in losing the power over female partner. The problem is also traced in complex conscious,

and unconscious processes related to one's self construct which further relates to one's conformity with a standard masculine, and feminine concept (71).

The traditional role of men as dominating, competitive, controlling figure results in the neurotic situations when their individual identities come in conflict with societal standards. Male machine is defined as an individual who is expected to perform his duties vigorously, be furious, unexpressive, and dominating towards women, and children (Fasteau 1). This burden of conformity to societal expectations diminishes his existence, and he becomes a machine who performs task as it is programmed to be. Male Machines try their best to imitate "stereotypical", "ideal image of masculinity", and try their best to be competitive in all aspects of life (2). This results in the problematic personal, and especially marital relations. Men are not encouraged to express their emotions, and this results in deterioration of their mental, and physical health (3).

The research aims to trace the asymmetries of stereotypical heterosexual identities perpetuated by historical, social, and cultural organizations through feminist psychoanalyst lens. Nancy J Chodorow's Object Relation Theory presented in *Femininities, Masculinities, and Sexualities: Freud and Beyond* is employed to explore intricacies of essentialist gendered relationship of Ghulam Qadir, and Shirin. Marc Feign Fasteau's notions of toxic masculinity, and its variations across different classes, and socio-political backgrounds introduced in *The Male Machine* are used to study the institutional repression of Qadir's identity. Gender is not derived merely from sex; the societal standards of normative masculinity, and femininity are a result of social, and cultural beliefs prevalent in societies (Lerner).

Freud's psychoanalysis argues that humans are bisexual naturally, but they internalize the norms defined by the external world. Although Freud made commendable contribution to psychology, but his theories were male-centered in approach. Lacan further develops Freud's idea by analyzing the impact of societal language on human psyche through symbolic and imaginary phases (Morris). Traditionally, feminism was a response against patriarchy, but cotemporary feminism debates over the gender inequalities faced by individuals of any sexuality. Nancy Chodorow's approach is multidisciplinary, and explores varying experiences across different cultures, and societies.

Freud postulates the "non-feminine" consequence of feminine developmental processes when she abandons her "phallic sexuality", and responds anxiously when her masculinity is in danger of extinction (Chodorow 8). Chodorow claims that Freud's psychoanalytical theories overlook the role of parents, especially the role of mothering in the psychosexual development of the child (14). For accomplishing "normal femininity", the girl identifies herself with the "narcissist mother" with whom she has an ambivalent relationship (16). This reinforces a sense of inferiority in females, and subsequently, the "asymmetrical heterosexuality" is formed (16). "Oedipal Asymmetries and Heterosexual Knots" highlights anxieties, and complications of heterosexual practices while tracing gender differences, and commonalities in the history of psychoanalysis (90). Beauvoir traces the feministic stances to the time of Aristotle who describes a female as the one who is deficient in certain abilities that a man possesses by nature. St. Thomas describes woman as an "imperfect man", so womanhood has always been studied by comparing it to its opposite binary i.e. manhood (Beauvoir 7)

*The Bull, and the She Devil* offers an insight to typical marital issues which are found in culturally, economically, and intellectually backward areas of Pakistan. The setting in which characters are interacting also plays an important role as freedom is not independently determined, it is determined by the society where you live and by the people with whom you interact (Sartre 482-483) Although, every society has its norms which are repressive for individuals who want to get

rid of imposed identities, but Hamidullah's writings are concerned with Pakistani society.

This paper analyzes how normative heterosexuality leads to multifaceted psychological, and social issues through an essentialist approach. The research questions that will guide this study are: What are the instances of toxic masculinity in *The Bull and the She Devil*? How *The Bull and the She Devil* articulates the problematics of heteronormative sexuality? How are gender binaries introduced culturally in Oedipal Stage?

The research aims to identify, and analyze hegemonic oppression within masculinities in *The Bull and the She Devil*, to study the repressive cultural, historical, and regional paradigms of heterosexuality in *The Bull and the She Devil*, and to elaborate the gender conformations introduced in Oedipal stage.

This research is significant as it pinpoints the gendered repression from multidisciplinary viewpoint by incorporating of feminist psychoanalysis with social, and cultural phenomena in *The Bull and the She Devil*. The proposed psychoanalytical framework is used to trace the development of feminine, and masculine gender configurations in Oedipal stage.

## Literature Review

*The Bull and The She-Devil* has been studied from the perspective of ecocriticism, hegemonic masculinities, and post-structuralism. The characters of Shirin, and Qadir are prototypical representative of sexual suppression faced by individuals of authoritarian heteronormative Pakistani society.

The monolithic patriarchal societies silent feminine voices through gendered binaries, but masculinity has been unable to dominate completely as female agency is ubiquitous. Shama Iqbal Hussain, and Bushra Siddiqui's research on subversive silent female voice explores a counter narrative of subalterns in *The Bull and The She-Devil* through the concept of Polyphonic Dialogism. The destructive silence of Shirin elevates her status from subaltern to a 'Silent Hero' who destabilizes the dominant, and dominated binary (43). The absence of communication is studied as a form of communication which overthrows the patriarchal discourse (44). Shirin's silence, and her elevating social status frustrates Ghulam Qadir who is a stereotypical man of Pakistan's rural area (44). Qadir is unable to vocalize his love, and admiration for Shirin; consequently, his hatred strengthened (47). This frustration alters him into an animal with no sympathy for his wife, and family members. The study explores the metaphor of bull in the title with reference to Qadir who becomes impossible to be tamed in the end, and ends up murdering his brothers (48). The chronicle of *The Bull and The She-Devil* is polyphonic as it explores variety of voices: masculine, and feminine (49). The traditional notion of silence as an archetype of silent submission is challenged as Hamidullah's narrative counters the patriarchal restraints through subversive silence (55).

Hegemonic masculinity signifies men's oppression by internal, and external masculinities, and also studies the female repression of weaker masculinities. The article entitled, "An Analysis of Connell's Theory of Hegemonic Masculinity in *The Bull and She Devil* by Zaib Un Nissa Hamidullah" examines the precarious masculinities in *The Bull and She Devil* (Qamar et al. 86). The toxic masculinity forces a man to be rigid, and unemotional towards women which results in men's incomprehensibility of their own emotions. Connell's theoretical paradigm asserts that hegemonic masculinity is constructed by the patriarchal institutions which limit the individual identity of men. Qadir's inability to control his wife, and bull threatens his masculinity, and he

punishes them physically to pacify his threatened masculine identity (87). The study also employs Gramsci's theory of hegemony to explore supremacy that is achieved through individual's consent (88). The research also studies the impact of dominant masculine ideals on men's internal conflicts when Qadir disregards himself as a weak man, and commits suicide (91).

The patriarchal exploitation of women in the disguise religious, and cultural customs is prevalent in the rural areas of Pakistani society. The study traces the religious, and cultural origins of predominant gendered hierarchies in short story, *The Bull and She Devil* through the lens of Lacan's psychoanalysis (Saeed et al. 36). The research employs Mirror Stage to explore Ghulam Qadir's anger, and hatred towards his wife, and himself as he views himself through the eyes of his wife, Shirin. Women are considered as a commodity of men whom they can control, and punish according to their desire (37). The study probes on the projection of Qadir's lack on Shirin through the misinterpreted religious rights which declare him to be the protective of his woman, but he manipulates this religious duty to assert his control over Shirin (38). Religion permits a man to punish the unchaste wife, and in Pakistani society, this right is deployed for domestic violence despite of the fact that religion promotes quality, and gives rights to everyone irrespective of their cast, creed, and sex (39). Caine claims that unequal distribution of economic resources results in masculine dominance (40).

Ecocriticism examines the reciprocal relationship of man, nature, and other biological entities existing within the biosphere. Maryam Raza's study examines the sexual tension of Ghulam Qadir incorporated in the geographical space through Cheryl Glotfelty's ecocritical approach (872). The study employs the concept of BDSM to explore the sexual tension of Qadir when he inflicts his wife with pain for his pleasure. Freud put forward the concept of sadomasochism which is neurotic way of getting pleasure from sexual intimacy. The research refers to Izugabara's notion which asserts that women seldomly develop desire for intimacy while men are supposed to be full of desire, and anger (874). Glotfelty explores the interrelated aspects of human culture, and the geographical spaces. Ghulam Qadir's sexuality is immersed in the South Asian Landscape which he inhabits (875). BDSM is studied as a form of sexual confinement when one member is dominant, and the other is submissive (876). The story begins and ends in a well, and Shirin is described with terms closely related to nature which elaborates the closely related aspects of patriarchal oppression of women, and nature (879). The study pinpoints the psycho-sexual torments of Qadir which results in the chaos, but he mystifies Shirin's existence, and considers her as the culprit of his tragedy (884).

Post-structuralism studies the inconsistencies of language by exploring the variances in subjective meaning construction of a single word. The research entitled, "Application of Ronald Barthes' Five Codes on Zaib-un-Nissa's *The Bull and She Devil*" examines the multiple connotations of Hamidullah's short story by tracing the discursive binaries implanted patriarchal hegemony (Akbar et al. 292). The study is qualitative, and applies five codes of Roland Barthes through textual analysis (295). Post-structuralism contradicts the structuralist view which studies words, or texts by relating it to the wider structural categories. Barthes' *Mythologies* examines modern traditions in France, and decenters the fixity of interpretations prevalent in traditional criticism (296). The five codes are employed by the researcher to study enigmatic, suggestive, referential, and collective meaning by a close study of narrative, themes, symbols, and dialogues of the text. The text of story also hints at the rampant patriarchal norms through the characters of Ghulam Qadir, and Shirin. The employment of specific vocabulary which is rooted in Pakistani

culture further extends the process of meaning construction for the reader (297).

The study of patriarchal power dynamics, and the resultant female subjugation is a rampant concern of South Asian writers like Hamidullah, and Chughtai. Merhaba Rani, Nailah Riaz, and Qasim Shafiq's research examines the psychodynamics of female characters in works of Hamidullah, and Chughtai by using Mohanty's psychoanalytical study of womanhood (1). The short stories of the mentioned South Asian female writers represent their urge to be represented when they have been neglected by the patriarchy (2). The short stories of both writers reflect issues of women related to their specific region. Chughtai's works demand women to wage a unified rebellious struggle against the complex nexus of patriarchal oppression, while Hamidullah's writings are more oriented towards examining the psychological underpinnings of the feminine subjugation (5). The individual experiences of women are determined by wider social structures that limit's women's identity, and women's self-identity is also distorted through internalization of patriarchal codes (8).

Symbolism implies the artistic depiction of characters, setting, objects, and concepts by the author to induce certain meanings in the minds of the reader. The research on the symbolic significance of Hamidullah's *The Bull and She Devil* elucidates the author's approach through the lens of Reader Response Theory (Hashim et al. 335). Hamidullah is regarded as well-known Pakistani writer who explores feminine struggle against patriarchal constraints. The title of the story is symbolic where feminine identity is presented with evil connotations, and masculine identity is presented through animalistic approach (336). The research studies the cohesion of meaning through dialogues, setting, and symbols which portrays the problematics of marital relations especially in the rural locations of Pakistani society. Reader Response Theory opposes the arguments of New Criticism which consider text as the source of meaning as meaning is generated only through reader. Author narrated the story through Ghulam Qadir's perspective, and Shirin's point of view has not been clarified (337). The short story is also an implication of Foucault's notion of decentralization of power when Qadir is preoccupied with Shirin, a woman with silent agency towards his domination (339).

Masculinities are formed as a result of socially accepted norms that are closely related with the gendered norms of certain social, and cultural background. Asma Khalid's studies the socialization patterns of males that are based on gendered customs through Nancy Chodorow's Object Relation underpinnings. The research explores gendered social interaction in Pakistan based on cultural, and social models (765). Gender is a social construct that is simultaneously devised by religious, economic, social, racial, and interpersonal reinforcements (766). The forms of masculinity differ across different time, and space domains as it is maintained through hegemonic institutions (767). The inferior status of woman ultimately uplifts man's social stature, but he is also under constant surveillance of "socio-patriarchal" hegemonies (768). Chodorow's notions on personal construction of gendered meaning is analyzed through the interviews of males from different social classes of Pakistani society. The study also examines the mental tensions of males when they are separated from their mother after developing the fear of appearing feminine. The study also explores the role of mother in inducing sexual discriminations in children in Oedipal stage (768).

The existing research on *The Bull and the She Devil* explored hegemonic masculinity, Lacanian psychoanalytical implications, and also studied the character of Shirin from the perspective of Mohantay's postcolonial woman. This study explores the hegemonic dynamics of gendered

constructions imposed on individual through wider socio-cultural structures, and aims to challenge the dominant discourses of sexuality.

### **Research Methodology & Theoretical Framework**

The research employs Marc Feign Fasteau's, and Nancy J Chodorow's psychoanalysis to explore the power structures that develop, and maintain gender hierarchies portrayed through characterization, plot and the setting of Zaib-Un-Nisa Hamidullah's *The Bull, and She Devil*. The study employs qualitative research to examine disparities of stereotypical heterosexuality in *The Bull, and She Devil* through textual analysis. Fasteau resists the normative, and non-normative norms, and imagines a world where individuals are not under the control of dominant patterns. He encourages multiple variations in masculinities and stresses that to be oneself must be "practiced, and mastered" (Fasteau 19). *Male Machine* compares males to mechanical performers who internalize masculine ideals, and responds outrageously when someone threatens their masculine identity. Fasteau studies internalized masculine ideals by men when their self-perceptions are transformed if they are unable to perform the role of a conventional male. The masculinity protects itself from "unmasculine feelings" because they think being emotional brings "vulnerability" (5). The patriarchal norms also create a masculine hegemony among male members of the society as weaker men feel intimidated by the stronger men, and that's why they only expose their weakness before men who cannot be their competitors (6). The predominant rivalry among masculinities results in the neurosis, and distorts the personal, and communal relations (11). Sentiments are associated only with women, and homosexuals, so men try not to express their emotions verbally, and consequently, repressed emotions come in uglier forms (15).

Chodorow's *Femininities, Masculinities, and Sexualities: Freud and Beyond* puts emphasis on the mother-child relationship in Oedipal stage that induces superiority of men by reinforcing cultural constructs (Chodorow 84). The sense of lack, or scar accompanies the female child for the rest of her life (84). Chodorow also stresses on the importance of interpersonal relations which appropriate desires, and fantasies in men, and women through a diverse "cultural repertoire" (79). Chodorow's study traces Freud's approaches which consider feminine as subjects by correlating it with women's psychoanalytical approaches (5). Daniel Stern criticizes Freud's psychoanalytical theories which are based on clinical experiences of adults to be "pathomorphic, and retrospective" as they overlook the psychological processes of infants (5). "The Dissolution of the Oedipal Complex" debates over the construction of male-centered norms in Oedipal stages, and contrasts the developmental processes of both genders on the basis of bodily differences (6). Females' "envy for the penis", and her innate "phallic sexuality" is studied by Freud to rationalize the Oedipal conformations of the female child. The feminist theorists claim that the problem of sexuality, and gender construction is more complex, and cannot be explored by focusing on Oedipal desires. The deficit of sexual longings in the stereotypical feminine is a consequence of "postoedipal atrophy" since her intimate desires are suppressed by the mother who plays an important role in child's sexual development (7).

### **Discussion and Analysis**

The conflict of personal feminine, and masculine individualities with the essentialist heterosexual norms represses the individuality of Qadir, and Shirin in *The Bull and the She Devil*, originally published in Hamidullah's short story collection "*The Young Wife and Other Stories*". The author

highlights the exploitive patriarchal traditions of Pakistan through portrayal of abusive marital relationship of Qadir, and Shirin. The study explores the character of Qadir as a victim of Punjabi masculine standard which disrupts his interpersonal relations, and he is unable to make sense of the chaos he creates out of his insecure masculinity.

Fasteau's conception of performative machinery employs the concept of androgyny to deconstruct the binaries of masculine, and feminine, and their associated social, cultural, and psychological constructs. He advocates for a society where "masculinities" and "femininities" can exist simultaneously, and individual's autonomy on his body, and performance is not challenged (Fasteau 196). The masculine standards make men insensitive towards the sentiments of females, and they become estranged to their existence too. In the same way, women also become skeptic of their abilities as they are bound to live in a defined sphere (197). Young children are allowed to observe their older fellows, and ideals of adult manhood are not introduced. Consequently, Oedipal complexes are minimal in their society. In the beginning of the story, Qadir is standing by a well, and throws water on his face, but his inner thirst has not been quenched which demands his bull, and wife to be wholly compliant to his demands (Hamidullah 61). The character of Qadir has been delineated in a such a manner that it reveals the multiple layers of repressive ideological burdens that he is bearing on his Punjabi masculine body, and mind. He appears agitated like "a possessed man" who is trying to protect his masculinity by disregarding the beauty of his wife, and thinks about her with a deep hatred (62).

Fasteau also traces the origins of misogyny to be rooted inside the traditional manhood roles which dictates them not be feminine, and they develop a hatred towards the femininity which can be found inside, or outside them (Fasteau 40). The differential treatment of boys, and girls in childhood fosters gender inequalities by inscribing gender roles on the basis of sexual differences (45). The masculine, and feminine traits are not determined by sex, but are social constructs, so they can be adopted by any individual regardless of their biological sex (49). The institution of marriage is oppressive for females as female's world shrinks, as their efforts must be centered around their men (77). The representation of Shirin as an embodiment of beauty, and passivity who only stares at her husband is also a hint towards traditional femininity of Pakistani society. Mystifying evil identity is ascribed to women whom patriarchy finds incapable of subordinating; similarly, Qadir entitles her as "Shaitaan", or "She Devil" (Hamidullah 63). His unfathomable disgust for Shirin can be traced to patriarchal institutes of rural areas of Pakistan which label a man who loves his wife as feminine.

Men find sexual intercourse to be a source of conquest over the male gender, and the pressure of appearing controlling towards the feminine results in the loss of their "potential for intimacy" (Fasteau 21). Men think of having an emotional control over the female bodies to maintain their sense of self intact (25). They expect "ecstasy" from female partners which is not for emotional connection, but for satisfying their manhood (27). Ghulam Qadir expects that his matrimonial bondage should reinforce the master-slave binaries, but he finds Shirin's resistance through her smile, and carefree attitude (Hamidullah 61). He is determined "to possess her" (2) even though he has complete authority over her body, but he was powerless. Qadir reminds himself of the time when he got married to Shirin, and she was just a female body who quenched his sensual desires. As the time passes, Qadir observes that his wife has a resistance in her untroubled eyes, and subversive smile (64).

Kate Millet asserts that typical masculinity is inherently violent as most violent longings

are considered to be masculine in nature (Fasteau 147). Levinson proposes that co-existence of feminine, and masculine traits in an individual is unavoidable. The concept androgyny further elucidates that relationship of male, and female is not static as it is dynamic, dialectical, and collaborative (198). The study employs Maragaret Mead's reflection of Samoan society within which individuals have balanced personalities because "sex roles are not distinguished as aggressive-passive, tough-tender, independent-dependent, superior-subordinate" (202)

Freud asserts that all individuals are bisexual by birth, and the desire for sexual object is culturally programmed (38). The disgust for anything feminine also persists through interpersonal psychodynamics prevalent in heterosexual society (45). Male's tendency to be cruel, and aggressive towards the opposite sex is a result of their traumatic sexual identities (48). Qadir tortures his bull, and wife physically in the fits of anger when he finds himself helpless to assert his superiority (Hamidullah 68). Kernberg's person's identification theories are more concerned with discrimination, and power structures that emerge out of stereotypical heterosexuality (54). Chasseguet Smirgel refers to Jaque Lacan's theory which postulates genitals to be "implicitly unequal" governed by the law of the father ( Chodorow 54). Qadir's internal conscious patterns change when he internalizes the patriarchal ideals, and becomes estranged to his own desires. He wanted to be the king of Shirin's heart, but she does not desire her. The destitute Qadir asks his wife if she was happy with her only to listen the words of affection, but she did not answer his question (Hamidullah 64).

Conventional psychoanalysis is incapable of underscoring the complexities, and differences that lie beyond heterosexuality. The feminist theorists consider Freud's psychoanalytical approach to be male-centered as he describes women as "subjects" in his "theory of femininity" (Chodorow 3). Later psychoanalysts further develop the idea of subjectivity of women by considering women as "subject-object" by being an object to her personal subjectivity. This duality comes in conflict with conventional male psyche which considers women as objects. Freud also hints at the social, cultural, and historical process of gender classification (3). Women as subject highlights on the role of women as "a self, actor, agent, experiencer" (4.) Freud criticizes the social, cultural, and familial constraints that construct a male or female sexuality (17). Freud's psychoanalysis also investigated the "implicit" and "explicit" psychodynamic interpretations of perception of women from men's point of view (21). Karen Horney, and Melanie Klein's criticism on Freud's writings also reveal women's, and men's contempt for women to be rooted in Oedipal processes, but they also consider to be preoccupied with the study of male psyche (21). Ernst Kris traces cultural origins to be grounded in "personal myth" which signifies the use of fairy tales, books, and myths that are perpetuated by a certain cultural community (37). *The Bull and the She Devil* also reflects regional cultural norms when the matchmaker Amna persuades that Qadir is lucky as he has got a wife who will sway to his "slightest desires" ( Hamidullah 68). The role of parents in encouraging sexual inequalities is delineated through Shirin's brought up in family which programs women to be unaware of their surroundings (3).

McDougall recognizes authorized heterosexuality's tendency of normalizing phallogocentric assumptions which assign the qualities of power, passion, and fertility to the phallus (54). In *Dreams of Love*, Person, a feminist accepts intrinsic disparities in heterosexual relationships by claiming that Women desire for love of men, and men ignore their inner feelings which ultimately results in submission of women, and supremacy of men (Fasteau 54). Shirin pacifies the bull whom Qadir could not control, and this incident is observed by the people of the town who made fun of Qadir. This makes him furious, and he slaps Shirin in front of everyone to preserve his threatened



masculinity, and to maintain a sense of ownership over bull, and the Shirin (Hamidullah 68).

These inequalities are further embedded in “object relations”, “asymmetric structures of Oedipus complex”, and “cultural imperatives” (Fasteau 55). Love relationships are complicated when individual’s personal meaning contradicts with the cultural meaning (72). Women are portrayed as objects of sexual desire as Mexican cultural heritage portrays women’s “evil sexuality” which deceived men of Aztec to Spanish warriors (77). Qadir punishes his wife for public disgrace that he feels when he could not control the bull, and Shirin does. Gul Muhammad, his brother comes to protect Shirin from violent treatment, and Qadir kills him. (Hamidullah 72). He feels a deep disregard for himself in her eyes, and feels “dizzy” because he is in trauma, and disbelief (12).

Robert Connell suggests that there are class, racial, and cultural variations of dominant, resistant, and submissive masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity prerequisites its hegemonic domination over women, and weaker men culturally, socially, and psychologically (Fasteau 80). The elder brother of Qadir reprimands him on his “callous” attitude towards his wife, and says that he is observing the increasingly furious attitude of Qadir after marriage (Hamidullah 79). Qadir’s turmoil grows, and he rationalizes his brother’s sympathy towards Shirin, a result of herbewitching manners (80). Allah Wasaya is considered feminine by Qadir, because he is interested in music, flowers, moon, and other aesthetical objects which are associated with womanhood (11). He runs to the well, tears roll down his cheeks, but he did not cry as men are supposed not to cry (83). Qadir commits suicide, and this study interprets the suicide of Qadir as the end of his miseries that cultural, social, and religious institutions imposed on his individuality. Inwardly, Qadir wanted to love Shirin, and also desired her to reciprocate his love, but he could not express his love.

### Conclusion

The short story is a representative of Hamidullah’s deep observation of mental conditions of individuals who are vulnerable to society’s criticism, and torture. Hamidullah prompts her readers to rethink on different stages of an individual’s life, and their role in developing phallogocentric society which is troublesome for femininities as well as masculinities. There was a communication gap between Qadir, and Shirin which was the result of unemotional, and unexpressive attitude of Qadir which he developed out of ideal masculine identity. He gets disturbed when Shirin appears to her as individual with an identity, and agency. This study contends to put an end to men’s obsession with control, and dominance whereas women’s silent, and passive attitude is also challenged through Oedipal processes. This study aims at developing an androgynous society where individual’s autonomy will not be challenged by regional, cultural, and political constraints.

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