

The Representation of Women at in Broken Verses by Kamila Shamsie: A Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

This study explores the representation of women in Broken Verses by Kamila Shamsie at discourse level by using part of Sara Mill's toolkit. In this novel, the woman's greatest dilemma always concerns her relationship with men, as if the woman's worst weakness is her very own attraction and helplessness towards them. Finally, the study reveals that sexism and gender stereotyping are found in the novel, characteristic of the writing of a female author expressing herself as a woman living in a male dominated society.

Keywords: Feminist Stylistics; Discourse; Broken Verses; Stereotypes.

1. Introduction

Feminist movement has drawn many scholars from different fields of study to conduct exploration using different frameworks and approaches to address issues of gender which are observed to be present in language use, whether it be spoken or written. It is important to know how and what kind of language gets involved in gender issues. The following lines overview views of different scholars on the relationship of gender and language.

In their book entitled Gender Voices (1989), Swann and Graddol point out that language is personal and that it is "a vital part of our personal and social identity; our

linguistic habits reflect our individual biographies and experiences” (p. 5). The way we use language can disclose our personalities, characteristics, as well as the environment we live in. Swann and Graddol (1989) also restate the view that language is social and it is essential for communication and social maintenance between individuals (p. 5). Feminists observe inequity between men and women in language use especially in English users. The gender bias present in any language makes it Sexist language. Sexism is defined as an “unrelated and derogatory reference to gender; sexism generally consists of statements which are derogatory to women” (Mills, 1995, p. 211). Drawing on different opinions by noted scholars, Swann and Graddol (1989) précis the relationships between language and gender as follows:

1. Language reflects social division and inequities;
2. Such divisions and inequities are made through sexist linguistic behavior;
3. Both procedures apply, and any full account of language and gender must explore the tension and interplay between the two (p. 10).

It is often reflected that society position the women as secondary in terms of “relative poverty, economic dependency, sexual misuse and weakness, poorer health, overburden, lack of civil and legal rights – and the list goes on” (Cameron, 1992, p. 4). Feminists who take a knowledgeable approach try to notice and comprehend the reflection of men and women through language in which they sound created rather than natural ones. For this purpose, Linguistic theory has been expended by feminists since the late 1960s because they have seen that language is an influential “medium of representation” (Cameron, 1992, p. 6).

Sara Mills, noted for her several works on feminist stylistics, reveals sexism in language in her books *Language and Sexism* (2008) and *Feminist Stylistics* (1995) and points out different familiar instances of sexist language in texts and images.

By keeping these instances in view, this article employs the framework of Sara Mills in conducting a feminist stylistic analysis of novel *Broken Verses* by Kamila Shamsie. Highly inspired by previous sociolinguistic feminist work done by scholars such as Deborah Cameron and Jennifer Coates, Mills frames a complete “toolkit” that can reveal depictions of men and women in both literary and non-literary texts (Mills, 1995).

1.1 Scope and Limitations:

By using Mills’ theory the study tries to show that by looking at discourse, words and phrases the pattern and structure in texts can be investigated which show the gender ideologies. Hussain & Jabeen (2019) applied Mills’ framework at the word and phrase/sentence level on *Broken Verses*. This study focuses on analysis at discourse

level. The study focuses on finding how the text at the discourse level constructs the gender differences.

1.2 Literature Review:

Sara Mills provides a comprehensive guide in the form of a questionnaire that serves as a helpful toolkit for any stylistician attempting to make a thorough stylistic analysis of a particular text using a feminist approach. It covers analysis at various levels, namely, word, phrase/sentence, and discourse. In this regard, a study on short stories by Kerima Polotan-Tuvera has been done by Mary Madeleine P. Denopra. This research employed the feminist stylistic framework of Sara Mills to determine the difference between male and female characters by identifying the writer's practice as a fictionist.

Another work is Feminist Stylistic Analysis of the Short Story "Prelude" by HeWei (2006). He studied the feminist theme in "Prelude" with feminist stylistics as the main critical tool and narrative analysis as the supplementary method. First, according to the complementary feature of narratology and stylistics in examining fiction, he studied the point of view and the narrative methods in "Prelude", making use of the narrative theories. From these analyses researchers have a deep insight into the works' multi-personal points of view, and the narrative methods of accretion and reproduction. Second, he tried to disclose the feminist theme of "Prelude" in three analytical perspectives—transitivity choices, pragmatic interpretation of conversation, and formation of symbols. Hussain & Jabeen (2019) analyzed Broken Verses by using the part of Mills toolkit to explore gender presentation at the word/phrase and sentence levels and conclude that "the foremost difference that the novel highlights is not much on the physical attributes of women and men but rather on their attitudes, beliefs, morals, priorities and preferences in life". (Hussain & Jabeen 2019)

2. Method

Beyond the levels of phrase and sentence, analysis can still be extended by exploring the text at discourse level. Mills relates it with an overall discourse theory that sees content "as somewhat which is the negotiation of textual elements and codes and forces out the text which effect both the way that the text is built and the way we decode what is written" (Mills, 1995, p. 159). In terms of gender, Mills shares Foucault's opinion that "discourse is intensely gendered" (Mills, 1995, p. 159). This proposes that there are actually patterns and structures in discourse which present gender difference and Mills terms them "gendered frameworks" (Mills, 1995, p. 159). At the level of discourse, Mills identifies four zones which reflect stereotypical ideas on gender; i.e. characterization, fragmentation, focalization, and schemata (Mills, 1995).

2.1 Characterization

Mills asserts that “stereotypical ideas often inform the language choices which are made when describing characters” (1995, p. 159). According to Mills in texts there are patterns of differences in describing male and female characters. Male characters, more often are presented by indicating their overall appearances and professions. On the other hand female characters’ descriptions made of women relate to their sexual attraction and availability according to the sexual desires of men (Mills, 1995). In relation to this, there appear to be more thorough descriptions and evaluation given to their body parts, which has not been the case with male characterization (Mills, 1995). Women are subjected to “a position of thorough cataloguing” (Mills, 1995, p.162). Moreover, they are also frequently described according to their relationships with other characters, as in “mommy of three” or “Mrs. Smith” (Mills, 1995, p. 163). There were also contrasts made on how gender differences are seen in characterization in a work condition, where women are characterized as mother, housewives, and girls serving their mothers and playing dolls, secretaries, and tutors (Mills, 1995). Mills (1995) also presents earlier studies that show that “broad structures present women and men as having different priorities in relationships” (p. 169). For example, women are described in texts to be emotional and “frequently ask for emotional support or carefulness” (Mills, 1995, p. 169). Mills cites Joanna Russ’s conclusion that “the roles that women characters have are determined by stereotypes of what women are like: that is, concerned with emotion rather than action, downgraded to the private sphere rather than the public sphere, seen as the attachments of males rather than characters in their own right” (p. 170). Correspondingly, Mills (1995) points out that within the female gender itself, there are differences in descriptions based on the different classes in society which a female represents.

2.2 Fragmentation

Fragmentation is “the procedure whereby characters in texts are described in terms of their body-parts instead of as people” (Mills, 1995, p. 207). One noteworthy statement on linguistic studies is that “women’s bodies are seen to be fragmentable and composed of a number of distinct objects which may be attractive in their own right; women’s bodies instigate to assume the traits of the elements to which they are compared: that is, natural, submissive, and replaceable” (Mills, 1995, p. 173).

2.3 Focalization

Focalization is a process in which events of a story are conveyed through an external or internal narrator. Focalization is also known as point of view, so the story is narrated by looking at characters and events through specific lenses. Internal narrator-focalizer can be a character of the story who tells the story. Internal narrator

has limited knowledge of events and characters. On the other hand, external narrator-focalizer is “the bird’s-eye view” which has “all-knowing access to all characters, wherever they happen within the universe of the narrative” (Mills, 1995, p. 181). The significance of this area of examination to gender is that focalization has the power to “manipulate the reader’s considerations by means of the vision which is presented and the evaluation which is understood in that representation” (Mills, 1995, p. 181-182). For example, a specific text that has an internal focalizer position may either draw sympathies from a male or female audience depending on the dominant gender beliefs that the text presents or agrees on.

2.4 Schemata

Even larger than character focalization are the schemata, which are larger-scale frameworks that “appear to function over a wide range of texts to produce different ideas of males and females” (Mills, 1995, p. 187). Schemata are well-defined as “a set of pre-constructed narrative choices” (Mills, 1995, p. 211). In learning the schemata of texts, earlier works have found out that women are “represented as objects, typically sexual...vigorously working towards their own destruction” (Mills, 1995, p. 188). Women are also depicted as dependents even in their difficult times, they seek advices from others/men, “which gives an image of the female as someone reliant on and needs to be counseled (Mills, 1995). They are also presented in many texts to be “victims of dreadful accidents or difficult situations which they go on to overcome, because of their own personal strength” (Mills, 1995, p. 197). The men, on the other hand, are depicted as the superior gender from whom women seek advice; having fearless behavior by always being leading and commanding in different circumstances given in the text.

Data Presentation and Analysis

It is observed that in *Broken Verses* the text draws on conventional gender information in the context of Pakistani men and women and in a conventionally male-controlled society. The foremost difference that the novel highlights is not much on the physical attributes of women and men but rather on their attitudes, beliefs, morals, priorities and preferences in life.

It is observed that in *Broken Verses* the text reveals on the conventional gender differences in the context of male controlled society of Pakistan. The novel presents the physical attributes of men and women but the more emphasis is not their beliefs, morals, priorities, preferences and attitudes. The men represented in the novel mirror much of the leading male stereotypes present in a Pakistani male-controlled society. It doesn’t mean that the stereotypes mirrored in the novel as dominantly positive or dominantly negative. In fact, the novel explicitly, reflects a difference in the attributes of both genders.

3.1 MALE CHARACTERS

3.1.1 Mir Adnan Akbar (Ed)

Mir Adnan Akbar (Ed) is described in the following excerpts taken from Broken Verses:

CH.I.Pg.L1: He is going to give you proper work that makes use of your abilities.

CH.IV.Pg.43.L2: He was officially a producer, but seemed to take on all the responsibilities.

CH.I.Pg.6.L3: I disliked him intensely for being the person who convinced Shehnaz Saeed there was a choice to be made between acting and motherhood.

CH.IV.Pg.44.L4: It was hard to think Ed as boyish.

CH.IV.Pg.44.L5: Men who'd crack one joke and smile one smile, that would be enough...to know the heroines would live happily ever after with them.

CH.V.Pg.59.L6: He is not always the easiest man in the world to be around, I know.

CH.VIII.Pg.101. L7: When I acted, he hated that it took me away from him. When I stopped acting, he hated that I'd given up that part of myself. He kept hounding me to act again, and now that I've said yes, he's even more moody than before.

Ed is characterized in the novel as the most responsible and proficient person. The willingness to accept responsibility on his own life is the source from which his self-respect springs. He can predict the abilities of others as described in L1, "He is going to give you proper work that makes use of your abilities", it shows he has capability to make use of other abilities. In line 2, it is explicitly stated but his profession is "producer" but he can take all other accountabilities. He is a man who became beacons of hope and decency. Here maturity and responsibility are concepts that are attached to his character. In line 3, there is depiction that he has convinced his mother to make a choice between acting and motherhood. Here the attribute of egotism is attached to his character because egotism is not living as one wishes to live; it is asking others to live as one desires to live. Intensely self-centered people are always very decided as to what they desire. They do not waste their energies in considering the good of others. So what the Ed did instead of supporting her mother to gain a name in society, he wants her just to be his mother but nothing else. In line 4, there is another portrayal of his attribute as a mature man because for the other character it was hard to think him an immature or as boyish. Maturity comes not with age but with the acceptance of responsibility and his character in the novel constantly is clear depiction of responsible and mature man. He is a man of mid-thirties but as age is just the acceptance of a term of years. But maturity is the glory of years. Maturity, selfishness and responsibility are his major characteristics. In line 5, writer tells the

readers that men wore a killer smile, absolutely devastating. It was a smile that could twist women's heart. Women could fall in love just being on the receiving end of that smile. As there is depiction in line 5 that men crack joke and smile on smile and it would be enough for heroines to live happily. There is also mortification of women that they can be easily melt on men's smile instead of making work with maturity but men are presented cool and bright that their smile are enough to make heroines happy. In line 6, Ed is presented as a man all that is rare, unique, different, and unpredictable. He is having a dynamic personality who keeps growing and learning. His is a firm personality who does exactly what he wants to do. He is unpredictable because at one side he is acting like a mature and responsible man but another side he is acting as a egocentric man so how can a person be so mature but egocentric at the same time. It can be seen as in line 7, writer tells the reader that he hated his mother in all the situations even when his mother fulfilling his desires. He is a man of rare understanding as described by his mother in line 7 that when he asks her mother did what he wanted, he became angry even more moody than before. He is cruel, very selfish, but love is always selfish; the more ardent the more selfish. How jealous he was because he wanted her mother to be just her mother and nothing else. There is no such word as indifference in his apathetic nature because for him love is the most selfish of all the passions.

3.1.2 Poet Omi

Poet Omi is depicted in the following quotations:

CH.V.Pg.51.L1: It is an embarrassment to watch a man we hold in such high esteem brought so low...

CH.XIX.Pg.273.L2: But omi give me all the answers. He'd come back and teach me how to be the girl I could have been. He'd teach me how to step forward instead of circling old wounds.

CH.XXIV.Pg.326.L3: What struck me most was, simply, the greatness of his heart. Here was a man who faced exile, imprisonment, betrayal, and deprivation without losing his sense of wonder.

Poet is valued with such a high esteem as in line 1; it is revealed that it is an embarrassment to watch a man that has high self-respect brought so low. Poet is considered a man of self-esteem who endeavors to make a constructive difference in other people's lives. So if he brought so low, it is degradation of his self-respect. One more feature is described in line 2 that is his wittiness which was depicted by Aasmaani. She was waiting for him because according to her only he can bring her forward instead of remaining in old pain. He is projected as a strong man who doesn't bother troubles like, exile, imprisonments etc. he doesn't lose his intellect during these bad circumstances. . In a nut shell his character is described as a figure of

intelligence and courage.

3.1.3 Father of Aasmaani

Aasmaani's father is portrayed in the following excerpts:

CH.III.Pg.33.L1: He said, 'if she hadn't married me, I wouldn't have you. If she hadn't left me, I wouldn't have Rabia.'

CH.VI.Pg.67.L2: 'It's not that we're allowed. It's just that we're less significant and so less capable of doing damage', he had replied.

CH.XVIII.Pg.250.L3: Fathers were efficient in matters of finance, and rewiring. They didn't lack emotion; they simply didn't express it except in tiny bursts. And they were always there. That was their most abiding quality-their thereness. That was dad, that was fathers.

In line 1, Aasmaani's father is showing his thoughts about a woman (his wife) who has left him because she was involved with another man. He hasn't seen any other quality in his wife except delivering his child. As he said, 'if she hadn't married me, I wouldn't have you'. He has found another benefit of leaving her that was also his daughter from second wife. He is shown most responsible father who has concern only with his kids not with anyone else. In line 2, he is depicting his thoughts about men because he is also a man so he cannot do anything wrong. He is talking that men are less capable of doing damage that means they can only do right things in a right way. He agrees that no one is perfect but men can be right with all the imperfections and flaws. That's why he said that they (men) are less significant in doing damage. In line 3, Aasmaani is giving readers a major description of fathers with including her own father. Fathers are efficient in matters of finance because they support their families. It is stated by a famous philosopher that 'One father is more than a hundred Schoolmasters', 'The heart of a father is the masterpiece of nature'. The same concept has been given here up above in line 3 that fathers have controlled on their emotions. Their hearts can't burst out in expressing emotions and this is their long-lasting quality. Her father has same eminence as she said, "that was dad".

3.1.4 Mirza

Mirza is described in the following quotes:

CH.XII.Pg.161.L1: An angel undomesticated and with no need for earthly morality.

CH.XV.Pg.214.L2: Mirza's voice wasn't arresting, but it was beautiful. Words leaped clear from his throat.

In line 1, Mirza is symbolized with an angel who needs no earthly morality because he is like an angel came from heaven. In his character, if nothing is good but still writer portrays something good about him. In line 2, though his voice wasn't impressive but

still there is something good as it is mentioned “it was beautiful. Words leaped clear from his throat”. Words mean more than what is set down on paper and it took Mirza’s voice to infuse them with deeper meaning. The truth is that his voice can paint and create unimaginable experiences that no one can show. He knew very well that uttering words with the right emotions is the ultimate way to touch people.

3.1.5 The young man

The young man is represented in the following extracts:

CH.XII.Pg.171.L1: The young man takes an axe, bursts into newly wed’s bedchamber, and kills the couple. The tribal Jirga acquits him of murder, saying he did what was necessary for family honour.

CH.XII.Pg.171.L2: The fact remained that honorable men could be convinced into most dishonourable actions who knew just how and where to place the right degree of pressure.

In line 1, there is description the world was a terrible place, cruel, pitiless, and dark as a bad dream. Not a good place to live. Representation of the young man in the novel is like a cruel man but still tribal Jirga found him not guilty for murder but said that he did what was necessary for family honor. It usually happen when a girl did something wrong it will be wrong till the end but if a man did something against humanity then there would be some exceptions. It is true people speak sometimes about the "inhuman" cruelty of man, but that is dreadfully unjust and offensive to beasts, no animal could ever be so cruel as a man, so artfully, so artistically cruel. In line 2, again there is favor for honorable man even if he does some wrong actions still he considered right one as it is stated “who knew just how and where to place the right degree of pressure” which means that the man knew how to handle pressure. But actually cruelty is not a quality of honorable man. It is the strife of all honorable men of the twentieth century to see that in the future competition of the races the survival of the rightest shall mean the triumph of the good, the beautiful, and the true; that we may be able to preserve for future civilization all that is really well and gallant and strong, and not continue to put a premium on voracity and indiscretion and cruelty.

3.2 FEMALE CHARACTERS

3.2.1 Aasmaani Inqalab

Aasmaani Inqalab is depicted in the following quotes:

CH.I.Pg.2.L1: I shrugged off the dressing gown and for a moment I was giddy with imagining all the flats around me that might be filled with single occupants wandering nudely around their homes.

CH.I.Pg.2. L2: I stepped into the kitchen. There were no blinds over the kitchen window. So much for my one woman nudist colony.

CH.I. Pg.3.L3: Looking around into the emptiness, I had to admit her hope was not without foundation. You're a grown woman. I told myself. Behave like one!

CH.I.Pg.4.L4: One of the only fortunate things I inherited from my mother was the ability to be entertained by a mediocre joke for a very long time.

CH.I.Pg.11.L5: You're not one of the eyeliner girls? The ones who come here to find husbands.

CH.I. L6: I don't have abilities.

CH.II.Pg.22. L7: He is going to give you proper work that makes use of your abilities, nor just, this quiz show rubbish you're pretending to be happy about.

CH.III.Pg.31.L8: How easily I had slipped out of her life, just as I had slipped out of the lives of everyone with whom I had ever worked.

CH.IV. Pg.42.L9: The truth was, there had been nothing more appealing alone than the thought of having my own kitchen.

CH.XI. Pg.152.L10: You are not embarrassed or angry that your mother was involved with a man she never married.

CH.XV.Pg.219.L11: ...Aasmaani-weather you keep on hitting or you keep on obsessing or keep on lying or keep on deceiving-

CH.XVI.Pg.234.L12: You didn't want your mother to have anyone in her life other than you.

CH.XIX. Pg.273.L13: But omi give me all the answers. He'd come back and teach me how to be the girl I could have been. He'd teach me how to step forward instead of circling old wounds.

In line 1, the heroine of the novel is characterized as "giddy". To gather the consideration of the readers she is dressed up to get attention. From the length of women's skirt, the tightness of their jeans to the depth of their cleavage, from the height of their heels to the color of nail paint people tend to judge women by their exterior. That is what presented that women just like to show off a certain part of their body, just to get noticed as in line; it is stated as "I shrugged off the dressing gown". In line 2, the word "nudist" is used. The statement is "so much for my one woman nudist colony". Nudist means a person who engages in the practice of going undressed wherever possible and here woman is presented that she has so much in naked colony. Here it means that woman is an attention seeker and she will be happy in being exposed. The trait of low self-esteem is characterized with her character. In

line 3, she is supposed to be act like a 'woman' because she has grown up. She can't want to be an angst-ridden teenager who can confront her own inner demons and takes it out verbally on other people instead because a woman is supposed to act no idiocy. Growing up is losing some illusions, in order to procure others and she has to act like this. In line 4, again there is degradation for woman as Aasmaani is stating that she has learnt only ability from her mother to enjoy the unexceptional jokes for a long time. There is nothing as influential as mother's love and nothing as curative as a child's soul but here it is not shown something like this as Aasmaani has learnt something not about act of maturity from her mother. Our world is unfair to women in thousands of different ways. A strong mother teaches her daughter how to traverse the challenges of womanhood with dignity, elegance, and veracity but here mother is degraded because in the story she left her daughter when she needed her most. Instead of understanding her reasons behind leaving, she is morally dishonored and this is hard work being a strong woman because the world does not make it easy. In line 5, girls are supposed that they worked wherever just to find good husbands and nothing else. Girls are associated with make-up to feel attracted as stated in line 5, "you aren't one of eyeliner girls" who get prepared themselves to find husbands. For girls beauty and worth are found in a makeup bottle, or a salon-fresh coiffure, or a tremendous outfit. But maybe their sparkle comes from somewhere deeper inside, somewhere so pure and trustworthy and real, it doesn't need gloss or polish or glitter to shine which the world doesn't understand it. In line 6 and 7, there is description that Aasmaani doesn't have capabilities to do some work and she is happy in doing a small quiz show that will not make good use of her abilities. Despite the advances women have made in science and machinery, there are still way too many girls who end up dropping the microscope for lipstick because of society's (lack of) expectations like Aasmaani. In line 8, her character is portrayed to be someone whose work is not appreciated even she thrown from others' lives so easily. Her life comes with no guarantees, no time outs, and no chances as she described herself that she has been removed from lives of others so easily. She has learned that making a living is not the same thing as making a life. Women have always been involved with food: gathering food; growing food; processing food; cooking food; presenting food; feeding their families. In line 9, Aasmaani is happy on just having a thought of her own kitchen. Certainly most, women have inclined to be poorly characterized at higher-status activities related with food. Think of the Michelin chefs, famous chefs, and head chefs – do we habitually think of men? It is captivating that, even in societies in which women are considered "open-minded" from the restraints of old-fashioned gender mores, and protected at work from the most egregious cases of gender judgment, women are significantly under-represented as top chefs, and women's writing about food has been typically downgraded to the areas of domestic and family life. Men are tough and strong, and should be in authority for stuff like bringing home the bacon

and fixing the car, whereas women are elusive and delicate, and should really only handle things like raising the kids, cooking, and cleaning. Like in line 9, Aasmaani is happy on just thinking of having own kitchen. In support of this, there is a proverb 'A woman's place is in the kitchen' shows that women are capable of doing only house work not outside work. Like every other girl in the world, her most embarrassing moment had to do with a mother who completely turned her down. In line 10, Ed was asking Aasmaani to be embarrassed about action that has done by her mother not by her. We frequently attribute key features to one of parents: "He gets his litheness from his father." "Her rapidity to anger—that's all her mother." Girls are mostly associated with their mothers. So is the case with Aasmaani that she is asked to be embarrassed because her mother was involved with another woman. In line 11, Aasmaani is again relegated because she is represented as a girl who is only a hitter, deceiver, obsessed or liar. She is regarded as faithless, swindler, treacherous, nearest a ditcher and someone that's up to no good, maybe a liar to the level of betrayal, never caring about the others and a person who don't deserve to be trust because of its never sincere intentions. Even in line 12, her one more feature is presented that is selfishness because she doesn't want that anyone else comes in life of her mother except her. In line 13, she is depicted as reliant because she is waiting for the Omi to come and teach her to move forward.

3.2.2. Samina Akram

Samina Akram is described in the following quotes:

CH.II.Pg.18.L1: Why Wuthering Heights was a story my mother could love when it was so choked with misery.

CH.VI.Pg.67.L2: But if a woman was a mother, Dad was simply unable to view her life in any way except as it might relate to the well-being of her child.

CH.VII.Pg.95.L3: I remember going to her house...and finding her with vicious bruises on her back and arms...sometimes she was taken into police custody for anywhere.

CH.X.Pg.141.L4: What connected all the women in those images-the activist, the mother, the lover, the mourner, the dancer, the deserter? What allowed a single 'version' to arise from such variedness? There was a word for it: character. That imaginary tyrant.

CH.XIX.Pg.272.L5: Here it is; she saw the falseness in everything she had believed. She saw the futility – in activism, in protest, in peaceful resistance, in all those things she had built her identity around.

CH.XX.Pg.284.L6: Mohtarma, I am impressed that a woman such as your- self should have taken the time to read our Holy Book...But as Shakespeare said...'the devil can cite the scriptures to his own purposes'

Curiosity has its own reason for existence. In line 1, Samina cannot help but be in awe when she contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of

reality. She was complicated and not unpredictable that's why she liked things that are mysterious like the novel "Wuthering Heights". Samina Akram always loved mysteries. And in everything that came afterward, readers could never stop thinking that maybe she loved mysteries so much that she became one. More recent stories about women warriors similarly propagate the image of mother as "Other." In line 2, there is description of Samina's motherhood that her husband couldn't find any benefit of her except a well-being mother of her child. No any other achievement of her is praised because her husband doesn't think of any of her capability. In our patriarchal, male-dominated culture women are habituated to think of themselves as "less-than" and not deserving or praiseworthy. This feeling of "less-than" has been adopted and passed down through countless generations of women. The cruelty which Samina has suffered during activism is portrayed in line 3. "Vicious bruises on her back and arms" described her pain and even sometimes she was also taken to police custody and it all because she was a woman who can't do too much to get rid of such situations but only to stand in front of this oppression. Being a "woman" and "mother" in our society is unspeakably difficult. It is heard many women say "No one ever tells you how hard it is" and "Nothing prepares you for when you get home with the child and realize what is being asked of you." Our culture, especially the Pakistan: is very hard on mothers, offering little backing and many are raising children alone. Samina Akram description is in line 4 as "the activist, the mother, the lover, the mourner, the dancer, the deserter", there is nothing portrayed good about her. When society doesn't see her with right sight then how she can see herself a right woman. In line 5, she is depicted as a "pessimistic" that see nothing good neither in her work nor in herself. She saw uselessness in her work that was "activism" and in all those things that has built her identity. In line 6, she is symbolized with "devil". She was an activist that doesn't mean she was not a Muslim. There is mocking on her personality that such woman can't find time to read the Holy Quran if she there is no benefit in reading it. There's a lot of talk about 'embodying the divine feminine' and being an 'awakened woman.' But the reality is that people cannot be a strong container of the power of the divine feminine if they have not yet addressed the place where there is felt banished and in exile from the Feminine.

3.2.3. Shehnaz Saeed

Shehnaz Saeed is described in the following excerpts:

CH.I.Pg.6.L1: Her son from her first marriage was raising hell at university by then, telling anyone who would listen that all mothers should stay at home with their children otherwise the children would grow like him.

CH.V.Pg.61.L2: I convinced myself I wanted to be a wife and mother and daughter-in-law and high-society hostess. It was my worst performance ever.

CH.V.Pg.62.L3: Seven years of marriage, one son, and he wakes up one morning,

says to me, “you bore me”, and leaves.

CH.XI.Pg.156.L4: I would tell her she didn't have the intelligence to sound like the poet. I would tell her all she'd done was make her son unhappy...I would tell her she was wrinkled and that everyone knew her husband couldn't bear to touch her any more. I would say 'casting couch' and 'neglectful mother' and 'has-been' and 'mediocre talent'.

Shehnaz Saeed was a great actress of her time but all the relatives weren't happy with her because she can't satisfy everyone. Her son was angrier because he wanted that her mother should stay at home and not do any other except raising him. In line 1, her son has made an ironical comment on his brought up that if mothers will not stay at home then all children would be like him. The stereotype of "All mothers should be adoring all the time" strips women of their full humanity. Because women are not given permission to be full human beings, society feels justified in not providing full admiration, provision and resources to mothers. Being woman, there is a vague but powerful sense that her empowerment will injure her relationships. And women are taught to value relationships over everything else. They cling to the crumbs of their relationships, while their souls may be deeply longing for the fulfillment of their potential. But the truth is that their relationships alone can never adequately substitute for the hunger to live our lives fully. In line 2, she herself described that being a mother, daughter-in-law, wife, and high society hostess; all was her worst experience because society doesn't accept her properly in any role. There is a quote "Abusive relationships: Why it's so hard for women to 'just leave'" and it fits on the situation described in line 3 that Shehnaz bored her husband and her husband left him. It is easy for man to leave but not for woman. Woman always suffered but not man. How simple it is for man to ruin woman's life like in line 3, it is stated as "Seven years of marriage, one son, and he wakes up one morning, says to me, "you bore me", and leaves". Her husband woke one morning and left her just saying one sentence and that was the end of their relationship. Her husband belittled her intelligence and destroyed her confidence. Shehnaz was again degraded as stated in line 4. The speaker is commenting on her personality and judges her intelligence from her appearance because she is "wrinkled", "casting couch" and "neglected mother"....all these wordings declare her a failure as a wife, mother and a poetess. She is referred as a "casting couch" a reference is used to the supposed rehearsal whereby actresses are awarded parts in movies or dramas in return for granting sexual favors to the casting director. Then she is presented as a careless mother who cannot take a good care for her child. She is also stated as an actress having ordinary talent. The cultural atmosphere of female oppression puts children in a double bind that's why her son doesn't keep any good thought for his mother. She didn't leave her husband because first was the fear of ruining his partner's career and the second reason for staying

silent was fear of not being believed but her husband didn't bother anything. In short, she is shown up as a total failure as a mother, actress and poetess.

3.2.4. Rabia

Rabia is depicted in the following extracts:

CH.III.Pg.30.L1: She clicked her tongue- there were moments when it was frighteningly easy to see what she'd be like as a grandmother.

CH.XII.Pg.166.L2: ...Rabia, weeping over her favorite pair of jeans which the dhobi had lost.

Daughters mostly copy their mothers or grandmothers as in line 1, it is depicted that Rabia was worried about how she would be like as a grandmother. In line 2, Rabia's description shows that she is kind of emotional person, who cries out of no reason or on trivial e.g. losing her favorite pair really set her off. .

3.2.5. Laila

Laila is portrayed in the following excerpts:

CH.V.Pg.49.L1: But all her attempts to find her beloved's copy lead only to frustration. So, she starts to adopt his manner of speech, his gait, his dress, and his expressions.

CH.V.Pg.49.L2: She becomes an outcast, shunned by all for her madness.

Laila was a character in the poetry of Omi where she has portrayed in depression that leads her only to frustration. Reason was that her beloved died and then she adopted his way of living, the way he dressed up, his gait, and his manner of speech. In line 2, there is depiction that she was shunned by all for her madness. According to research, Women are about twice as likely as men to develop major depression. They also have higher rates of cyclical affective disorder, depressive symptoms in bipolar disorder, and dysthymia. Some research recommends that women may be more likely to reflect over events than men do, and are more disposed to to anxiety. These emotional traits may dispose some women to depression. Laila was also depicted as "mental" and emotionally disturbed.

3.2.6. Beema

Beema is presented in the following quotations:

CH.II.Pg.20.L1.I thought my wife might have need.

Beema, step mother of Aasmaani, is a minor character in the novel. She is portrayed as "dependent" on her husband as it is stated in line 1 "my wife might have need". She is dependent that's why she finds difficulty making everyday decisions without advice and reassurance. A dependent personality faces everyday decisions from a position of hesitation and fear. The difficulty is the terror of being wrong. She needs others to assume responsibility for many major areas of life. According to a research the

dependent person has spent time and energy trying to hold on to relationships that constantly impend to slip away. To settle, they must see the value in spending time and energy in establishing relationships based on truth.

To conclude it can be said that in *Broken Verses* gender differences are represented in the context of Pakistani society which conventionally is a male-dominated society. The text of the novel portray male and female characters' attitudes, beliefs, morals, priorities and preferences in life and for this purpose physical appearances is also posturized at many places to highlight these attributes in their personalities. For women there is degradation but not for men in the novel. By analyzing characters, there are unspoken messages to women that mostly world gives to women:

- If life is difficult then it's your own fault.
- Shame on you if you're not super-human.
- There are "natural mothers" for whom maternity is easy. If you are not one of these, there is something intensely wrong with you.
- You're supposed to be capable of handling it all with ease: having well-mannered children, being sexually good-looking, having a prosperous career, and a solid marriage.

Women have definitely begun to degrade themselves, there's no doubt about it. On contrary to this, men are depicted as a "free bird" even if they did something wrong it will not be considered as wrong. In other words, men are more impulsive when making decisions. Men are uncompromising. They bulldoze the opposition, and then pick cruelly through the rubble, just to make sure. It is true enough some of the time: in a deep, instinctive way, men need to be right.

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