

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

**Muslim Females' Resistance to Their Culture:
A Study of Mumtaz Nawaz Shah's *The Heart Divided***

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Letter of Recommendation

Miss. Bhagwati Karki has completed her thesis entitled "Muslim Females' Resistance to Their Culture: A Study of Mumtaz Nawaz Shah's *The Heart Divided*", under my supervision from March 2010 to October 2010. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "Muslim Females' Resistance to Their Culture: A Study of Mumtaz Nawaz Shah's *The Heart Divided*", submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Bhagawati Karki has been approved by the undersigned members of Research Committee.

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Abstract

Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's *The Heart Divided* is an effort to depict how Muslim women attempt to assert their identity and are able to resist the patriarchal domination though they are being segregated in *Zenana* and are restricted within their private world. Society gives negative attributes to female by taking help of religion: the male suppresses the females. Unless patriarchal domination and gender-bias of societies are changed, women will not get equal position and opportunities in their own societies. Mumtaz Shah Nawaz opines that men should respect women's existence and provide equal opportunity to them, welcoming all sorts of positive changes in the dominating conservative and traditional patriarchal society. Women should realize their potentiality and empower themselves to resist the dominations that cause their identity crisis. If women want to get freedom from conservative social boundary, they want to revolt or dare to change the rigid norms and values existing in the society. In *The Heart Divided*, Mumtaz Shah portrays the character Zohra who never regrets for her decision. She does not follow the rigid types of norms and values of the Muslim society. She leads Muslim society in proper way. She changes her family members, society or those rigid norms and values of the Muslim society.

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I. Introduction to Mumtaz Nawaz Shah as a Muslim Female Writer

This present thesis is based on Pakistani novelist Mumtaz Nawaz Shah's *The Heart Divided*. In the novel, Mumtaz portrays the Muslim female protagonist Zohra as a rebel who fights against the unwanted rigid norms and values of the Muslim society, Mumtaz Nawaz Shah in *The Heart Divided* critiques discriminating practices such as *Janana* and *Burka*, which are still prevalent in the Muslim society. In this novel, the protagonist Zohra is a revolutionary character who breaks the superstitious situation of Muslim society and she leaves her home for her existence. Human beings realise their existence only by searching and bearing wounds. To show that existence, the novelist creates the unexpected problem in the novel. When Zohra revolts her family, they are extremely hurt by this situation. At last, through excessive pain, the characters are forced to think that life is not only pleasant but also the part of tragedy. In this way, Mumtaz Nawaz Shah tries to explore female existence in the society.

Mumtaz Shah Nawaz or 'Tazi' as she was affectionately known, was born in Lahore on the 14th of October, 1912. From her earliest childhood, she showed a remarkable intelligence and wrote her first poem at the age of seven. She was a bright sparkling little girl, a favourite among her family, and with all those who met her.

Sarojini Naidu, perhaps the most famous English poetess of the subcontinent of India, and a woman of considerable stature, always called Mumtaz her 'adopted spiritual daughter'. She once described their first meeting:

It was at her grandfather's house in Lahore that I first saw Mumtaz many years ago; an elfin creature in a bright satin tunic and trousers, a gossamer veil slung across her shoulders. She looked at me with great appraising eyes and by some process of her little mind, reached a quick

decision. She had been told that I was a poet and she loved poetry. She smiled at me... her smile was the charter of my adoption (vi).

This ability to charm, and in later years to influence, remained throughout her life. When she visited London in 1930 with her grandfather, Sir Muhammed Shafi, and her mother, Begum Shah Nawaz, she was received in literary circles as a child prodigy. The spectator printed one of her poems; and she was asked to give several readings including at the famous P.E.N. Club. On one occasion George Bernard Shaw said to her, "You are a diabolically clever girl; you won't come to a good end!"(vi). In an obituary written for the *London Sunday Times* eighteen years later; the famous English commentator 'Atticus' recalled this visit by Mumtaz to London, and wrote about the tremendous impression that this young girl of seventeenth had made on him(vi).

In 1948, at the age of thirty-five, Mumtaz died in an air crash while she was on her way to the United States to attend a session of the United Nations, and also to have this book published. Her death was tragic and was mourned not only by the general public and by those women who looked at her as a role model but also by heads of government which included Mr Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, and the prime ministers of Pakistan, India and the United Kingdom, all of whom knew her personally. The nature of her death was also ironic. She always wanted to be cremated and for her ashes to be scattered over open fields. The plane that she was on crashed over Ireland. Her body was never found.

In the years between her visit to England in 1930 and her death in 1948, Mumtaz had passed from a brilliant young girl to a mature intellectual individual; and an important activist in the political arena that propelled the formation of the state of Pakistan. Her intellectual growth is not only apparent in her political life but also in

her poetry and her writings, of which *The Heart Divided*, like many first novels, is partially autobiographical.

On her return from England, Mumtaz recognized that the greatest problem facing young Indian girls was the reluctance on the part of their parents to send them for university education. This was particularly true of the Muslim community, and having heard in England of the new approach to the teaching of science and economics through the home itself, Mumtaz not only helped to found the Lady Erwin College for Home Economics in Delhi, but also became one of its first pupils. While she laughed at her attempts at cooking and other aspects of home economics, she excelled at debating, tennis and other extracurricular activities.

Mumtaz's interest in education continued after leaving college, especially her concern that the teaching materials available were inadequate, and she wrote several books for schools and colleges. Her 'real' interest, however, lay in the political field, and she began working on women's committees and organizing workers' welfare centres in the Amritsar factory area.

Her family and that of Jawaharlal Nehru had a long association, and it was natural that at this period in her life she should see in Nehru- with his cosmopolitan background, his Urdu and his Hindustani, as opposed to Hindu, upbringing and his secularism- the future leader of the subcontinent of India did a majority of the young Muslims, particularly the intellectuals. Inspired by him, Mumtaz started writing regularly. Much of this correspondence still exists in the Nehru Archives.

Nevertheless, Mumtaz, idealistic as ever, blamed this on the sinister influence of the Hindu right wing, and did not lose her faith either in socialism or in a united India. During the years 1939 to 1942, she wrote the best of her socialist poetry. June

1941 (when Germany invaded Russia) found Mumtaz selling flags asking the question 'who lives if Russia dies?' on the streets of Lahore! (ix).

But 1940 proved a watershed in Mumtaz's position regarding a homeland for the Muslims of India. The Muslim League held a session in Lahore in that year and passed the 'Lahore Resolution'. This was the first time that the Muslims of India articulated the need of a place where they could govern themselves. Mumtaz's house was the main guest house for the women's part of the session. Mumtaz therefore came into contact with many Muslim women and she realized that the leaders of the Muslim women, such as the Begum of Bhopal, were not just 'nice' ladies of the old order, but people who recognized the problems of Muslim women and were committed to struggle for their emancipation. A mutual respect grew which was to become fruitful some two years later.

After the Congress started its 'Quit India Movement', Mumtaz broke completely with the Congress and decided that her future lay in organizing Muslim women to demand their rights as women and as Muslims. Mohammad Ali Jinnah encouraged her to organize Muslim women in Delhi, where she was then, and from, 1942 until the end of the Second World War, this was her most important task and her consuming occupation.

Interestingly the last of her poems are dated 1943, around the time when she became a Muslim League worker, and it is still staunchly socialist. The poems were collected in 1944, but her growing involvement in politics never allowed them to be finally edited for publication, nor for her to write any more poetry. Her latent creativity gave way to political activism, although she brought her interest in socialism, the emancipation of women, and her artistic creativity to bear on her

politics and her vision of a future which rested on equality among people and between men and women.

In 1945, the Second World War ended and it became clear that the struggle would now focus on the future of India. Until this time, only two short years before the partition of India, many people were still envisaging a Muslim- dominated area called Pakistan within a federal India. But by 1945, Mumtaz had moved from this idea and felt that Pakistan as a separate state had become inevitable. When the Cabinet Mission came to India in 1946, Mumtaz learnt of the British proposals for the transfer of power (through her contacts and friendships with the U.K. Lahore Party) long before they were finally put to Mr Jinnah. She told Mr Jinnah about these and he commended her for this. The Cabinet Mission Plan envisaged an undivided India with the Muslim majority protected by guarantees that would be included in the future Constitution of India. Both Jinnah and Nehru accepted this, but Nehru then stated that this agreement would not necessarily be binding on the future constitutional arrangement. Jinnah had no choice then but to call for 'direct action'... action for a separate state for the Muslims.

The rest is history, Mumtaz played a prominent part in the movement that followed. She shifted her scene of action to Lahore and helped set up the Women's Branch of the Muslim League in the Punjab. During this time she also took part in organizing relief work for victims of communal riots. During these years she was arrested and imprisoned by the Unionist Government of Punjab. The independent state of Pakistan was conceded in May 1947.

Mumtaz told her mother that her work for Pakistan was now over, and she felt that she must go back to her writing. The first thing that she wanted to write was a novel about these dramatic years, and from this *The Heart Divided* came to be written.

The first draft was ultimately completed in March 1948, because Mumtaz's writing was interrupted by her work in trying to rehabilitate the Muslim refugees pouring in from India. At this point she founded the women's Volunteers Service, one of the first women's organizations in the country. She was also in Kashmir during the war over Kashmir that followed the partition of India.

The Heart Divided is a pre- partition Saga centered on two sisters Zohra and Sughra, who quarrel over the merits of the Congress and the Muslim League. Mirroring the author's own 'conversion' to the idea of Muslim State, the novel weaves political events the 1938 League session in Patna, the Lahore Resolution into a series of love stories. With a breeziness ahead of its time, Mumtaz tweaks traditional marriage from four significant angles: the girls' brother and Zohra's Hindu friend Mohini fall in love; Sughra's arranged marriage is painfully unhappy; Zohra's friend Najma is forcibly wed to a widower, mercifully divorced, and then considered unmarriageable; and Zohra falls for a man her family deems lower-class. Some manage to break the rules some do not, but all dream of unions based in intellectual parity.

The Heart Divided gives us a clear- glass window over the social landscape of elite Lahore, through the eyes of a brilliant woman who died too soon after the formation of Pakistan to let her vision or memory be ideologized by the nation- building process. In her meticulous etching of everyday life, framed by the stories of two sisters, we witness the unfolding of modernity in the family, in the community and in politics.

Her fictionalized documentary tells us that historians and political analysts of partition miss the point when they seek the reasons for that monumental tragedy within the triangle of the Congress, the League and the British. The division of India

and Pakistan had already taken place in the 1930s in the heart, i.e in the universe of emotions and relations. Modernity tends to be explicit and angular. In its early spring, it presented to the Hindu and Muslim elites an impossible demand: mix more deeply, or separate. In this novel, we see that demand in the love story of Mohini and Habib. In the character of Zohra, the heroine, we witness the weight of circumstances and pulls, forcing the transfer of the most important issues of her time to future generations. As the novel closes, we see Vijay staring into the distance with haunted eyes, noticing a sea of tears and blood. All the young characters who inhabit this thoughtful and moving book would now be either dead or too old to adopt the new, deceptive discourse of confidence- building measures, but the sea of tears and blood is still rising.

Thus, the novel *The Heart Divided* has drawn the attention of numerous scholars and critics since its publication. Mumtaz Shaz (1912- 1948) was an extraordinary woman: a freedom- fighter, socialist, poet and women's advocate in Delhi and Lahore. Some critics have viewed this text as a realistic portrayal of the then society of India. In this regard, Krishna Kumar says:

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The critic has represented the novel which longs for modernity of Muslim women in family, society as well as whole country.

Similarly, Wazir Khan says that, *The Heart Divided* is pre-partition saga centered on two educated sisters, Zohra and Sughra Jamaluddin, who quarrel over the merits of Congress and the Muslim League. Mirroring the author's own 'conversion' to the idea of a Muslim state, the novel weaves political events- the 1938 League session in Patna, the Lahore Resolution- into a series of love stories of love stories (67). This critic views this text as a love story in the unfavourable condition or the pre-partition of India and Pakistan.

Judith Rosen says, "Sentimental, full of details that seem to combust completely, her delicate realism helps us recognize, with compassion and awareness, the stories and feelings of which Muslim females live are composed. Fiction does not get much better than this." (156) This critic has valorized it as a novel attached with our lives and the incidents that are common among in Muslim society.

Likewise, Donna Seaman says, "Shah's lucent and tender story telling gently unveils the strange interplay between self and family, the private and the political, and most mysteriously, the erotic and the spiritual" (476). Seaman interprets the novel as a simple novel with spiritual and familial issue.

Shah's work has been interpreted from the historical and social perspective. It has not been interpreted from the perspective of Third World Feminism and this point of research is the one which this researcher undertakes. Her fiction will find a new light through this study.

In the novel, Mumtaz has politicized the anxiety as a means to explore the existential consciousness. Humans have two parts of life one good and other bad, one comedy and other tragedy, happiness and sorrow. If a person goes through both of these parts then s/he can know the existence of life. If a person knows only one part, then s/he is unaware about other which is unhelpful to know about life. If a person is

unknown about the trauma and pain of life, then he would not give any importance to that god gift life. We have to struggle and should go through each and every ways either it is fine and fit or scornful. This is what actually existence of life is. In the novel also, we feel the same case. In this novel, in *Nishat Manzil*, we see the practice of *Zenannah*- the two parts that were almost like two different worlds, one a man's world reflecting in its myriad activities all the rush and turmoil of the world outside, and the other a serene and sheltered domain, a woman's world, where none but the closest of male relatives could enter and where clothes and food and children were the chief interests and the main topics of conversation.

It shows how women exercise their sense of identity and are able to resist the patriarchal domination though they are being segregated in *Zenannah* and are restricted within their private world. In this way, Mumtaz Nawaz tries to explore human or female existence in the society through the female protagonist Zohra, she is a rebel who fights against the unwanted rigid norms and values of the society, Mumtaz Nawaz Shah in *The Heart Divided* critiques discriminating practices such as *Zenannah* and *burka* which are still prevalent in the Muslim society.

Thus, the present text is analysed in the light of Third World Feminism and especially Muslim feminism with special reference to Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Uma Narayan, Ketu Katrak, Sara Suleri, Benita parry, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and others. It is commonly accepted that feminisms are historically culturally, and geographically specific. This does not eliminate hegemonic tendencies in certain schools of feminism that continue to be universalist, perhaps not overtly, but subtly, and hence more dangerously, and even with the challenges of black and third world feminist theorists. Third World Feminism is the Modern philosophy to interpret Third World female existence. It takes female as an isolated existence into an alien universe.

This deals with the ideas that have to create their own truths and values in the world where the traditional values do not work. The certainties and scientific reasoning that ruled the twenty first century smashed into anxiety, absurdity and uncertainty. As people experienced untold suffering into an incoherent, disordered and chaotic universe, they did not believe on the concept of unity, rationality, morality, values, and faith on Muslim. There was nobody to accompany each other and to guide and help them. Therefore, one has to make choices to create the self. One exists because of the freedom of choice.

The present research has been divided in four chapters. The first chapter introduces the objective of the research including literature reviews and discussing on the property and significance of topic and it's hypothesis. The second chapter deals with the theoretical modality which evolves around Third World Feminism. It seeks to engulf the given texts, hypothesis and objective. The third chapter applies the theoretical tool in text to prove hypothesis. It brings forth the writer's tendency of politicising of rebel characters in order to explore the female existence. Finally, the last chapter summarises the major contention of the research.

II. Third World Feminism

General Introduction to Feminism

Feminism is basically a social movement related to the voices raised against pervasively patriarchal viewpoints in the domains of familial, political, religious and economic issues. This movement seeks equal rights for women giving them equal status with man and freedom to decide their own career and life pattern.

Feminism is a broad concept that has occupied the socio-political-literary fields. It is a movement that includes ideologies of women's liberation and identity. Feminism sees the oppression and subordination of women in patriarchal society as a political problem and not a consequence of natural law. Feminist writings and critical works got world-wide importance only from the 1960s 'women's movement.' It looks about two centuries of struggle for recognition of cultural roles and achievements for women's social and political rights. Mainly the literary discourse has played significant role for the germination, extension and gradual development of the discourse of feminism. Although female authorial voice reacted against extremity, due to the unshakable roots of patriarchy.

Feminism is viewed as a political discourse to question the existing discourse of patriarchy that unanimously dominated all patterns of society from the ancient era to the present. Patriarchal discourse always valorizes the personality of males and patronizes women trapping them inside certain restrictions of unnecessary rules and regulations to raise the staunch voice against such male worldview of the society. Feminist undertakes the steps for the extension of awareness to change the conventional mentality of the women inherited from the ethics of patriarchy and culture. In fact, patriarchy was unfathomably grounded ethos since the beginning of human society and civilization. Male ideology and unanimously dehumanizes and

degrades women in all spheres of life and creativity - intellectual, political and social. To rescue the women from monolithic male normatively, to empower them for their co-existence with men in the society, feminist theories plays the pivotal. More explicitly, the politics behind the discourse of feminism is to empower women in all sphere of life resisting the patriarchal norms of the society.

The task of feminist critic is to find a new language, a new way of reading than can integrate our intelligence and our experience, our reason and our suffering, our skepticism .This enterprise should not be confined to women.

A woman in patriarchal society is always treated as powerless, helpless and victim in the hands of man while male is synonymous with strength and aggression. Such categorization of men as superior beings and women as inferior beings is the cause to all forms of domination in the human society

Most feminists have attacked the traditional political theory for excluding or marginalizing women. They have always demanded equality and liberation from domination and subordination. They have fought for the end of discriminations imposed on them on the basis of their sexual differences. Their main task is to fight against the patriarchal dominations and gender inequality. They regard all the women of the globe regardless of class, race or location as sisters in the struggle, a homogeneous group sharing same subordinations. But recently, feminism itself has been accused of universalizing the assumptions and needs of white women in Europe and America and largely ignoring the very different perspectives of black, ethnic and third world women. They criticize the making of white western women as norm for all women throughout the world concealing the vast differences among women of different parts of the world. They argue that the feminists should keep the issues of the more marginalized at the center.

Blindspots in Western Feminism

The word 'feminism indicates the well-educated and privileged class of white women who have time and are bored with men and homes. White feminist scholars address the theories of subjectivity, concept of binary oppositions such as male versus female or equality versus difference but they hardly give attention to race. They continue to analyze their own experience in ever more sophisticated forms. They totally ignore the existence of all non-White women.

White feminism has created woman's tradition and history but often only by silencing and making the black woman as well as third world females absent. Feminist historians describe the specific differences in Third World women's history, economic and social situation as white women are more likely to have access to education, have fewer children and earn more.

Though feminists have attacked traditional political theory for excluding or marginalizing woman, feminism itself has been accused of universalizing the assumptions and needs of white women in Europe and American and largely ignoring the very different perspectives of black and third world women.

Ketu Katrak argues that in the works of postcolonial women writers the female body is in a state of exile- including self exile and self- censorship, outsidership and unbelonging to itself within patriarchy. She proposes the idea of external and internal exile of bodies in patriarchal societies. The external exile manifests migration and geographical relocation such as political persecution, material conditions of poverty and forms of intellectual silencing in the third world societies, whereas the internal exile exists where the body feels disconnected from self as though it does not belong to it and has no agency.

In Western culture, female bodies are politicized. The politics of the female body includes the constructions and controls of female sexuality, its location socio-culturally, even materially, in postcolonial regions. Third world women writers represent the complex ways in which women's bodies are colonized. They represent the struggle of protagonist to resist patriarchal objectification and definition as daughter, wife, mother, grandmother and mother-in-law. In certain African cultures where the women were reproductive unit, a widow is sometimes remarried to the deceased husband's brother, so that she may continue to reproduce and augment the family's property in the form of children. Thus, politics of female body involves the demystification of these several roles that reinforce control over women's bodies.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty draws link among the histories and struggle of third world women against racism, sexism colonialism and monopoly capitalism. She argues that third world feminism, black and minorities feminism and the first world feminism, i.e. white feminism have common issues but differences are also plentiful. Thus, claiming universality of gender oppression in mainstream White feminism is not the same as arguing for the universal rights of women based on the particularities of our experiences. Locating feminism in their contexts, she argues further that "the challenges posed by black and third world feminism can point the way toward more precise transformative feminism politics based on the specificity of our historical and cultural locations and our common contexts of struggle"(107).

White feminists draw a norm for universal category of 'woman' and those who do not share those norms are excluded as 'other', quiet, ignorant, unable to represent themselves so that somebody else has to represent them. Third world feminists note that "the notion of commonality among women is not just complicit in power in that it enable comparatively privileged women to enables such women to speak for all with

impunity" (Beasley 76). Though the presumption of shared subordination, ironically, the white feminists experience the power over the women of black race, ethnic groups and third world in the name of speaking for them.

Critique of Western Feminism

It is regrettable when any discussion of women's issues is dismissed as "feminism equals westernism equals not relevant for third world women" (138). Even as feminism in western locales must contend with attacks to its perceived power, it has a vocabulary and a system of ideas to contend with that¹⁹. This academic engagement is more recent in postcolonial societies, not to imply that indigenous women whom we would describe as feminists are also a recent phenomenon. Naming is important, whether one defines feminism for African, or Indian, or Caribbean women. Without a name, it is that much more difficult to contend with attacks and as the following discussion reveals, when the "feminist flag" is raised, it can be shot down since feminism is regarded as "western" and irrelevant for third world context (Ketu Katrak: *The Politics of Female Body* 147). The need then is highly significant for postcolonial women writers to define feminism for their own purposes, and to identify issues that demonstrate how relevant feminism is for their societies.

It is commonly accepted that feminisms are historically, culturally, and geographically specific. This does not eliminate hegemonic tendencies in certain schools of feminism that continue to be universalist, perhaps not overtly, but subtly, and hence more dangerously, and even with the challenges of black and third world feminist theorists.

For the women belonging to third world, there are more significant differences that gender differences to address such as racial and ethnic differences and national origin. In the cases of racial oppression and colonial oppression, there is "the strategic

necessity for solidarity, between men and women of culturally marginalized groups. [Here] the power divide is no longer simply located between the sexes" (*Western interest in "Third World Culture"* 76). In such cases the gender difference doesn't become the crucial emphasis for women of minority groups. In Jonnae Hollow's words:

[White] feminism's insistence on sisterhood and a sexual politics as the fundamental form of politics, fails to take account of the realities of racism which links black women to black men. Once the cultural differences between women are taken into account, it becomes even more problematic to talk about an authentic female voice.(105) ... Many women belonging to white feminism "generalize from their own experience to the experience of all women who don't see gender as the central side of their oppression(105).

Depending upon the race, class, ethnicity and location, there are many cultural differences and accordingly there are differences in priorities and emphasis. Most often the struggle for nationalism and identity are considered crucial before gender cases. Third world women's, their level of subordination, their struggle process and their experiences all differ from the more privileged white women. In the struggle for liberation since 1960s and 70s, third world women, struggle together with third world men against imperialism or colonization and they struggle with third world men about patriarchal oppression and gender inequality. These feminists believe that they have necessity to have this solidarity for nationalism which the white separatist feminists do not need or understand. Third world is much more crucial than any other issues since the root of one's cultural heritage and identity can not be separated from one in order to achieve true liberation and true identity.

Third World Feminism and Its Basic Tenets

Unlike the history of western (white, middle-class) feminism, which has been explored in great detail over the last few decades, histories of Third World Women's engagement with feminism are in short supply. There is a large body of work on "women in developing countries," but this does not necessarily engage feminist questions. A substantial amount of scholarship has accumulated on women in liberation movements, or on the role and status of women in individual cultures. However, this scholarship also does not necessarily engage questions of feminist historiography. Constructing such histories often requires reading against the grain of a number of intersecting progressive discourses (e.g. white feminist, Third World nationalist, and socialist), as well as the politically regressive racist, imperialist, sexist discourses of slavery, colonialism, and contemporary capitalism.

During the 1980s, many feminist critics from third world like Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Sara Suleri began to argue that "western feminism, which has assumed that gender overrode cultural differences to create a universal category of the womanly or the feminine, was operating from hidden, universalist assumption with a middle-class, Euro-centric bias." They charged western feminism that it failed to account adequately with the experience of third world women. The western feminist assumption that all of us of the same gender across classes and cultures are socially constituted as a homogeneous group is criticized by these third world feminists. They argue that this homogeneity is produced not on the basis of secondary sociological essentials. Here, women are characterized as a singular group binding them with the sociological notion of the 'sameness' of their oppression. It is at this point that the third world feminists find an elision between 'women' as a discursively constructed group and 'women' as material subject of their own history. Mohanty argues that "the

discursively consensual homogeneity of 'women' as a group is mistaken for the historically specific material reality of groups of women"(262).

When western feminism establishes a norm for homogeneity based on shared oppression, the 'third world women' are made the others who have to follow these norms. The western feminist texts depict such third world 'other' women as singular, monolithic subject often depicting the western women as primary referent and codifying the other as non-western. Mohanty argues that the assumption of women as an already constituted coherent group with identical interests and desires, regardless of class, ethnic or racial location and a homogeneous notion of the oppression of women as a group "produces the image of an average third world woman"(261). In her view:

This average third world women [represented by the western feminism] leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constructed) and being 'third world' (read: ignorant poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimized etc.) [...] in contrast to the (implicit) self-representation of western women as educated, modern, as having control over their own bodies and sexualities, and the freedom to make their own decisions(261).

Mohanty claims that when western feminist writings situate third world woman as an oppressed group, Western feminist alone becomes the subject of the counter-history, leaving third world women in the situation from where they can never rise above the "debilitating generality of their 'object' status" (qtd. in Bhari 212). And by claiming that they are privileged of "preparing the way for [their] unfortunate sisters [of third world], the western feminists create an insuperable division between 'I-Who-Have-

Made-It and You-Who-Can not-Make-It"(Gandhi 85). Thus, power is exercised in western feminist discourses by implicitly creating binary of first and third world in the "process of homogenization and systematization of the oppression of women in the third world"(Mohanty 260).

Western feminist texts re-present women of third world as a homogeneous sociological group characterized by common dependencies or powerlessness. In the global framework of western feminism, "the third world women are typically seen as an undifferentiated group uncomplicated by the heterogeneity that characterize their conceptual counterpart in the more developed [first] world" (Bhari 212). The western feminists implicitly construct their superiority and heterogeneity by constructing the third world women's inferiority and powerlessness in their binary opposition. The supposed homogeneity of the third world women on the basis of "sexual difference" in the form of cross-culturally singular, monolithic notion of patriarchy or male-dominance leads to the construction of a "similarly reductive and homogeneous notion of 'Third World Difference' and with the construction of this 'third world difference ' that "western feminism appropriate and 'colonize' the fundamental complexities and conflicts which characterize the lives of women of the different class, religion, cultures, races and castes in these countries "(Mohanty 260).

'Third World Women' in terms of the underdevelopment, oppressive traditions, high illiteracy, rural and urban poverty, religious fanaticism, and "overpopulation" of particular Asian, African, Middle Eastern, and Latin American countries. Corresponding analyses of "matriarchal" and "docile" Asian domestic workers also abound in the context of the United States. Besides being normed on a white, western (progressive/ modern) or non- western (backward/ traditional) hierarchy, these analyses freeze Third World Women in time, space, and history. For

example, in analyzing indicators of Third World Women's status and roles, Momsen and Townsend (1987) designate the following categories of analysis: life expectancy, sex ratio, nutrition, fertility, income-generating activities, education, and the new international division of labor. Of these, fertility issues and Third World Women's incorporation into multinational factory employment are identified as two of the most significant aspects of 'women's world' in Third World countries.

While such descriptive information is useful and necessary, these presumably "objective" indicators by no means exhaust the meaning of women's day-to-day lives. The everyday, fluid, fundamentally historical and dynamic nature of the lives of Third World Women is here collapsed into a few frozen "indicators" of their well-being. *Momsen and Townsend* (1987) states that in fact fertility is the most studied aspect of women's lives in the Third World (36). This particular fact speaks volumes about the predominant representations of Third World Women in social-scientific knowledge production. And our representations of Third World Women circumscribe our understanding and analysis of feminism as well as of the daily struggles women engage in these circumstances. Thus, if the above 'social indicators' are inadequate descriptions/interpretations of women's lives, on what basis do Third World Women form any constituency? First, just as western women or white women cannot be defined as coherent interest groups, Third World Women also do not constitute any automatic unitary group. Alliances and divisions of class, religion, sexuality, and history, for instance, are necessarily internal to each of the above groups. Second, ideological differences in understandings of the social mediate any assumption of a natural bond between women. After all, there is no logical and necessary connection between being female and becoming feminist (4). Finally defining Third World Women in terms of their 'problems' or their 'achievements' in relation to an imagined

free white liberal democracy effectively removes them (and the liberal democracy) from history, freezing them in time and space.

A number of scholars in the United States have written about the inherently political definition of the term "women of color" (a term often used interchangeably with "Third World Women",) (5). This term designates a political constituency, not a biological or even sociological one. It is a socio-political designation for people of African, Caribbean, Asian, and Latin American descent, and native peoples of the United States. It also refers to "new immigrants" to the United States in the last three decades: Arab, Korean, Thai, Laotian, and so on. What seems to constitute "women of color" or "Third World Women" as a viable oppositional alliance is a common context of struggle rather than color or racial identifications. Similarly, it is Third World Women's oppositional political relation to sexist, racist, and imperialist structures that constitutes our potential commonality. Thus, it is the common context of struggles against specific exploitative structures and systems that determine our potential political alliances. A further example of the use of 'women' as a category of analysis is found in cross-cultural analyses that subscribe to a certain economic reductionism in describing the relationship between the economy and factors such as politics and ideology. Here, in reducing the level of comparison to the economic relations between "developed and developing" countries, any specificity to the question of women is denied. Mina Modares, in a careful analysis of women and Shiism in Iran, focuses on this very problem when she criticizes feminist writing that treats Islam as an ideology separate from and outside social relations and practices, rather than as a discourse that includes rules for economic, social, and power relations within society. Patricia Jeffery's otherwise informative work on Pirzada women in purdah considers Islamic ideology as a partial explanation for the status of women in

that it provides a justification for purdah. Here, Islamic ideology is reduced to a set of ideas whose internalization by Pirzada women contributes to the stability of the system. However, the primary explanation for purdah is located in the control that Pirzada men have over economic resources and the personal security purdah gives to Pirzada women.

By taking a specific version of Islam as the Islam, Jeffery attributes a singularity and coherence to it. Modares notes:

Islamic Theology' then becomes imposed on a separate and given entity called 'women'. A further unification is reached: women (meaning all women), regardless of their differing positions within societies, come to be affected or not affected by Islam. These conceptions unproblematic possibility of a cross-cultural study of women. (63)

In Islamic Theology all women are considered same whether they are affected by Islam or not.

Marnia Lazreg (1988) makes a similar argument when she addresses reductionism inherent in scholarship on women in the Middle East and North Africa:

A ritual is established whereby the writer appeals to religion as the cause of gender inequality just as it is made the source of underdevelopment in much of modernization theory in an uncanny way feminist discourse on women from the Middle East and North Africa mirrors that of theologians' own interpretation of women in Islam. The overall effect of this paradigm is to deprive women of self-presence, of being. Because women are subsumed under religion presented in fundamental terms, they are inevitably seen as evolving in

nonhistorical time. They virtually have no history. Any analysis of change is therefore foreclosed. (87)

While Jeffery's analysis does not quite succumb to this kind of unitary notion of religion (Islam), it does collapse all ideological specificities into economic relations and universalizes on the basis of this comparison.

Most third world cultures, rather than naming sexuality as such, displace this category onto a variety of other forms of control over women's bodies. Traditions such as dowry, polygamy, that in fact control the uses of the female body are mystified as social custom with the weight of ancient, at times, scriptural authority. And social custom is regarded as distinct from anything to do with sexuality although that is often its major arena of control in terms of regulating marriage arrangements, childbearing, socialization of daughters and sons. To borrow from Eve Sedgwick Kosofsky's provocative text, *Between Men*, the uses of "traditions" to mystify controls of the body are precisely examples of " 'sexualizing' social or political relationships"(15)" 'what difference does the inclusion of sex make'(390).She asks, "To a social or political relationship"(6)? The researcher would take Sedgwick further and add the categories of spirituality and religion as explanatory indices for controls of female bodies. Often, what is 'sexual' is presented as 'religious ecstasy' the longing for union between the physical and the divine. Where the body is sublimated into the godly, where sexual abstinence, fasting and starving the body become acts that will lead to that union. A demystification of sexuality mystified as spirituality is an important element of a politics of the body.

In cultures where any talk about female sexuality is repressed and silenced, we need to look more carefully for the relations between "sexual desire" and "political power." Sedgwick's focus on "the ways in which the shapes of sexuality, and what

counts as sexuality, both depend on and affect historical power relationships. A corollary is that in a society where men and women differ in their access to power, there will be important gender differences, as well as, in the structure and constitution of sexuality" (qtd. in Katrak 2).

Many of these "cultural" conflicts between western colonizing cultures and colonized indigenous cultures involved issues pertaining to women's roles and female sexuality, rendering the figure of the "colonized women" an important site of the political struggles between "women's culture" and the "culture" of the colony (390). Veiling, polygamy, child-marriage, and Sati were all significant points of conflict and negotiation between colonizing "western culture and different colonized Third World Cultures. In these conflicts, western colonial powers often depicted indigenous practices as symptoms of the "backwardness and barbarity" of Third World Cultures in contrast to the "progressiveness of western culture" (390). The figure of the colonized women became a representation of the progressiveness of the entire "cultural tradition" of the colony.

Male-dominated Third World elites often responded by constructing these very practices as sacred and longstanding traditions that were constitutive of their values and world views, and as practices that were tied to the spiritual place of, and respect for, women in their cultures. There were both 'modernist' and 'traditionalist' sides in a number of anticolonial nationalist discourses. 'Modernist' segments of these anti-colonial nationalist narratives accepted to a greater degree that some aspect of their "traditions and culture", including practices affecting women, were in need of a certain degree of reform and change. However, they often combined endorsement of such change with an insistence that "their culture" had distinctive, special, and valuable views about women and their "cultural place, "views preferable to those of

"western culture". The "traditionalist " tended to be more resistant to some of changes in their 'traditions' that the 'modernists' endorsed, seeing them as deeply corrosive of their way of life and a capitulation, to the cultural domination of a colonizing western culture(Uma Narayan 29).

Given a background where colonial agenda faced-off against anti-colonial nationalist agendas, it often became impossible to extricate discussions of indigenous practices that adversely affected women from this conflict- laden political and discursive background. There could be little serious discussion of the impact of these practices on women's well-being and agency that could escape becoming embroiled in their struggles between colonialism and nationalism. This situation left women and women's issues vulnerable to co-optation by both colonialist and nationalist agendas. Discussions of problematic practices affecting women often became hostages to a discursive background of cultural muscle-flexing about the relative moral superiority of 'western' culture and the 'culture' of particular colonies. Partha Chatterjee points out that the "woman question" in the nineteenth-century India "was not so much about the specific condition of women within a determinate set of social relations as it was about the encounter between a colonial state and the supposed 'tradition' of a conquered people"(30). The sound and fury of these "my culture is better than your culture" conflicts between male-dominated colonial governments and male-dominated Third World nationalist movements often served to obscure the fact that women were clearly second-class citizens in all these cultural contexts(30).

The "unproblematized" picture of tradition shared by both Daly and contemporary Hindu fundamentalism assumes that "traditions" are:(1) unchanging practices; (2) of extreme longstanding; (3) clearly recognized as "dictates warranting submission" by virtually everyone in the relevant cultural community; and (4) clearly

sanctioned as requirements by religious texts or uncontested customary norms. Not only Daly's chapter on "Indian Suttee" ("suttee is the practice of 'bride-burning' or wives being burned in cooking oil fires.... for having insufficient dowry.") but also her chapters on "Chinese footbinding" and on "African Genital Mutilation" subscribe to this "unproblematized" view of "tradition." The picture of "tradition", at work in Mary Daly's analyses of patriarchal practices affecting Third World Women, pays little attention to the "politics of tradition formation" that is revealed by historical investigations of these "traditional practices" (Uma Narayan 60).

The *Rig Veda's* reference to a ceremony where the widow lay on her husband's funeral pyre before it was lit and was raised from it by a male relative of the husband seems to have been reinterpreted in the sixteenth century as "Vedic Sanction" for Sati, overlooking the fact that the original text endorses niyoga or levirate, where the widow is permitted to marry her husband's brother (50).

Many Indians, intellectuals and others, assume that the practice of sati corresponds to or is an "imitation" of the act of "wifely nobility" depicted in the mythological story, Sati's father insults her husband Shiva by excluding him from a sacrifice, and Sati flings herself into a fire in protest. Driven almost insane with grief, Shiva carries her corpse throughout India, until Vishnu dismembers her body strewing bits over the earth, each becoming a site of pilgrimage. While this mythological Sati kills herself by fire in "devotion to Sati-the practice, since Sati acts in defiance on her father's sacrificial fire, and pre-deceases her husband, leaving him to suffer over her death. In Sati-the-practice, the widow immolates herself on her dead husband's funeral pyre as a sign of wifely devotion, but does not act in defence of the husband's honor. If

anything, her act brings glory to herself and good fortune to the family, Gayatri Spivak hardly exaggerates when she says that the "story of the mythic sati (reverse) every narrateme of the rite" (56). Seems that not only westerners but also Indians have a difficult time noticing the variations between different kinds of cases of Indian women going up in flames (57).

To return to colonial Indian history evidence suggests that Sati's centrality as "Indian tradition" was an effect of the extensive and prolonged debate that took place over the very issue of its status as tradition. As a result of this debate, *Sati* came to acquire, for both British and Indians, and for its supporters as well as its opponents, an "emblematic status," becoming a larger-than-life symbol of "Hindu" and "Indian" culture in a way that transcended the actual facts of its limited practice. This result seems to have been facilitated by the fact that none of the participants on the various sides of the debate seem to have raised serious questions about why this particular practice was receiving such an extensive amount of attention. Other forms of mistreatment of widows that were considerably more widespread-their stigmatized status in most Hindu communities, and the deprived and miserable existence they were confined to as a result of their status- did not become equally important bones of contention between British Colonials and Indian elites (58). They, thus, did not get constituted as "Indian" traditions in the same manner as Sati. It is important to note that this "obsession with sati," overlooked not only more routine forms of mistreatment of women, but also other important dimensions of ongoing human suffering. While "thounds of pages of parliamentary papers" were devoted to sati "the mortality of millions from disease and starvation was only mentioned incidentally" (59).

Muslim Feminism

Feminist theory and the urgent political necessity of forming strategic coalitions across class, race, and national boundaries. Third World Scholars and especially Muslim scholars who write about their own cultures and employ identical strategies. Women are defined consistently as the victim of male control- as the sexual oppressed.

Remarkably female domesticity, and sexual purity and chastity, deemed appropriate in Europe and aggressively prompted at home, were presented for Muslim Women as 'evidence' of sexual slavery and signs of a peculiar moral and religious deficiency of the other. The point is not whether the imagery of Muslim Women's role and status corresponded to the reality, but rather that female 'sexual slavery' and domesticity were not completely out of tune with Western Christian values, explicit in the writing of men of literature and philosophy.

The condemnation of Islam for its treatment of women, curiously combined with a continuing indulgence of the signifier of female enslavement (the harem, the veil, polygamy), helped obscure and legitimize sexual and cultural repression of women in Europe, their non-person status and the sexual double standard. The European male establishment also appropriated feminism and used it against other cultures. This 'colonial feminism as Leila Ahmed has remarked, was to legitimize Europe's 'civilizing mission. 'Lord Cromer's words and actions in this area provide a glaring example. On the home front, against white man, feminism was to be resisted and suppressed: but it could be taken abroad, and directed against the cultures of colonized men. Ahmed's study reveals a curious paradox in Cromer's gender politics in Egypt and in England. Lord Cromer condemned Islam 'first and foremost' for its treatment of women: to attain mental and moral development, Egypt must abandon women's seclusion and the veil. In England, however, Cromer was a 'founding

member and sometime president of the Men's League for opposing Women's suffrage' (Ahmed 153). Women's subordination would continue at the centre of Empire, but the idea that other men-men in colonized societies or in societies beyond the borders of the civilized West- oppressed women was used 'to render morally justifiable its project of undermining or eradicating the cultures of colonized people (Ahmed 51-153). Against the colonial backdrop, the role and status of the Muslim women would become a stick with which the West could beat the East (Malti-Douglass, 3). The Muslim woman was to be exploited by the Western man but protected from enslavement by the Muslim man; she was to be liberated from her own ignorance and her culture's cruelty.

The question, however, is if Islam is not any more obsessed with human sexuality and female sexuality purity than other religions, why is female sexuality is so tightly linked with communal honour and politics in Islamic Cultures? What are the socio- historical structures and processes which legitimize the regulation of female sexual and moral conduct by Islamic states? According to one argument, the blame must be laid at the door of European Colonialism. The colonial construction of 'Muslim Woman', her sexuality, sexual power and sexual enslavement, could cause cultural anxiety and rage in the Muslim man. The 'civilizing' and 'liberating' colonial policies in the area of women's rights would inevitably further aggravate the Muslim male, the colonized. Hiding Women from the gaze of the western viewer, and guarding women's bodies and their minds from changes produced by foreign intervention, symbolized protection of Islamic identity, communal dignity and social and cultural continuity, which is to say that perhaps the resistance of Islamic societies to changing women's familial status is the reaction of a culture that has been shamelessly stereotyped and inferiorized like none other for its treatment of women.

Hence, on this view, it was colonialism which made the 'Muslim Woman' and her rights central to its imperial policy in the Middle East.

The argument which tries to justify the resistance of Islamic societies to changing women's familial status as a cultural reaction to colonialism. This over-emphasis on the role of colonialism is as inconclusive and debatable as the totalizing and universalizing approach which looks only to Qur'anic injunctions and Shari'a laws to explain the surveillance of women in Islamic societies, disregarding the basic fact that Islam, like any other religion or ideology, has a contingent nature and is the product of its articulation with indigenous cultures and societies. In fact, the spatio-temporal existence of Islam points to the heterogeneity of 'Islamic culture. ' The idea of Islam as a kind of meta-culture obscures the reality that as Aziz Al- Azmeh has noted there are as many Islams as the conditions that sustain them-as many 'Islamic cultures' as different geographical, social conditions, size of wealth and educational levels can produce (Al- Azmeh, 6-8). That is to say, the similarities among Islamic societies in the application of principles of shari'a, therefore, should not cloud significant differences between various interpretations of the Qur'an and the shari'a in different time frames and in different settings, and the political context which determines the extent of their observance. For instance, polygamy, taken as Islam's engendering signifier, is prohibited in some countries in Muslim World, such as Turkey and Tunisia: the temporary marriage, mut'a1, practice limited only to the shi'i shari'a, allowing a man to 'marry' as many women as he wishes for a set time and price, is strictly prohibited among the shi'i East Africa. The constitution of shi'I Imami Ismailis, in fact, provides that a marriage 'may be solemnized between two members of the community only if neither party has a spouse living at the time of marriage' (Anderson 110-11). Likewise, there are differences among shi'i and sunni

maliki, Hanbali and Hanafi schools of law on such issues as compulsory marriage and child marriage, that is, a guardian's right to contract a marriage on behalf of his minor ward.

Indeed, the relative variance in a religious and political tradition, stretching from Indonesia and Malaysia to Morocco, suggests that Islamic traditions and values could be accommodating and mouldable in proportion to the strength of local customs and cultural practices and to the processes of social and economic development. Nigerian Islam, which represents an accommodation between shari'a injunctions and pre-Islamic African customs and mores, is different from the secularized Islamic practices in Azerbaijan where Islam represents a cultural-ethnic identity rather than a way of life. The impact of seventy years of Soviet legislation and secular social policies on Azerbaijan is that nearly all adult women work at salaried jobs, people eat pork and drink alcohol, and few Muslims are well-informed about Islam (Dragadze, 156-62). Both Nigerian and Azarbaijani Islams have significant differences with Khomeinist Islam in Iran, where state legislation, invoking shari'a interpretations, invent 'Islamic' rules to further restrict women's physical mobility and participation in public life. The existence of different Islams practised in the Muslim World means that the local custom and practices, urf, have made effective contributions in the stipulation of personal status legislation within territorial borders. Hence, Islam cannot be taken, perhaps, as the sole signifier of the situation of women in Islamic societies. Even under Islamic rule, class and wealth, to a great extent, define women's life options and gender experience.

Moreover, colonial rule in other parts of the world also involved the invention of stereotypical images for the native population, the brutal abuse of female sexuality, and sexual objectification and exploitation of native women. Everywhere women and

the conquered territories ‘were concurrently exploited as part of the bounty due to the conquering Europeans.’ For example, the myth about the ‘New World’ was that there were ‘young and beautiful women, who everywhere were naked, in most places accessible, and presumably complaisant’ (Atkinson 88). However, in the Americas we cannot see the stubborn resistance to change the legal status of women after the fall of colonialism that we observe in Islamic societies.

The point is that colonial or home-grown, externally imposed or locally generated, compelled by Qur’anic injunctions and shari’a rulings or the erratic interpretations of local ulama, ‘Muslim Woman,’ her sexuality and her moral conduct, has remained a central preoccupation of Muslim men over many centuries. This preoccupation has been translated into institutions, policies, legal practices and personal status codes which determine women’s life options and the extent of women’s participation in public life. Which is to say that despite the capacity of Islam to adapt and to change face and force under the influence of various social, political and economic stimuli, the systematic, vigorous and often violent opposition to change is a grim reality in many Islamic societies. Seen as the symbol of Islamic social order and cultural continuity restraining and disciplining female sexuality seems to draw the boundaries between ‘Muslim culture’ and non-Muslim other.

Nationalism and feminism in Asia have gone hand in hand historically. Populist Nationalism could not afford to ignore the women. It was the women who thus formed the vanguard of popular movements, struggles, electoral battles and even war. Annie Besant, the famous English theosophist, could be regarded as one of the pioneers of women’s participation in politics. So too were women like Sarojini Naidu and Ruttie, Jinnah’s wife who rose to fame as quick-witted Indian Nationalists. Amongst the conservative Muslims we saw the Ali brothers’ mother Bi Amman jump

into the fray at a ripe old age in the non-cooperation Khilafat movement. Later, the Gandhian freedom struggle also saw active women's participation. Kasturba Gandhi, Kamala Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Arun Asaf Ali are some of the names of the more famous women in the Indian freedom struggle. This was not all. It was in Lahore in 1931 that the Asian women's Movement was born. That first conference of barely 20 activists today has grown into a vibrant movement with networks all over Asia. However, by and large Muslim women remained oblivious to such developments.

It was the exponential rise of progressive Muslim nationalism of the Aligarh variety in 1930s, based on the twin planks of modernity and reform, that brought the common Muslim woman out of seclusion and into the mainstream. It was around this time that Shaista Ikramullah became the first Muslim woman to earn a PhD and Abida Sultan became the third woman pilot in the entire Islamic world. Both were ardent Muslim Leaguers and later served Pakistan in several official and unofficial capacities. But more than this it was the Muslim League and its leadership that for the first time asked the common Muslim Women to shun "chador" and "char dewari" to become a part of the political struggle. It had all begun with the Muslim League resolution in 1932 promising complete and total political equality to women. Later the League became more active in supporting Muslim women's liberation. For one thing Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, had been an activist for the suffrage movement in his student days in London. He was genuinely distressed to see the state of women in the Muslim community, something which he alluded to on several occasions. He famously said: "No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you; we are victims of evil customs. It is a crime against humanity that our women are shut up within the four walls of the houses as

prisoners .There is no sanction anywhere for the deplorable condition in which our women have to live."("Pakistan- A Country Study")

In order to reinforce, this notion he made sure his sister was always by his side during his campaigns and political engagements. He no doubt realized more than anyone else in the Muslim community how essential women's participation was to his struggle. After all, women's participation meant doubling the number of voters and twice the number of agitators. Anis Haroon writes in her essay that women threw off their dupattas and made flags out of them for the movement. Thus Jinnah galvanized the Muslim women into a lean man fighting machine and enlisted the feminists amongst Muslims to work for the cause of Muslim women and to break the shackles of the religio –feudal order that had reinforced chador and char devari particularly in the areas of Punjab and NWFP. The effect was electric. Muslim women came out in large numbers attending Muslim League meetings, talking against the maulvis and agitating against the Unionist government. In the closing stages of the civil disobedience movement in Punjab more than 500 Muslim League women courted arrest in one day. It was here that the most famous incident of the Pakistan movement saw a young woman, Fatima Sughra, jump the fence of the Lahore secretariat, climb up onto the top, throw away the British Union Jack and hoist the Muslim League flag up instead. In NWFP, Muslim League women courted arrest without a purdah while protesting against Dr Khan Sahab's ministry. Brilliant young women, poets and writers like Mumtaz Shaz Nawaz were amongst the agitators. Mumtaz Shah Nawaz, whose mother Jahanara Shah Nawaz was a stalwart of the Pakistan Movement and the first woman in Asia to preside over a legislative session, has left behind a touching novel on the crucial events of partition called 'Heart Divided'. Written from the

Muslim League perspective, it tells the story of the struggle for Pakistan and the women's sacrifices for the nation state.

III. Muslim Females' Resistance to Their Culture: A Study of

Mumtaz Nawaz Shah's *The Heart Divided*

In the novel *The Heart Divided* Mumtaz Nawaz Shah portrays the Muslim female protagonist Zohra as a rebel who fights against the unwanted rigid norms and values of the Muslim society. She critiques discriminating practices such as *Janana* and *Burka*, which are still prevalent in the Muslim society.

Mumtaz Nawaz Shah, a third world Muslim writer, tries to show the female's condition in third world context. By doing this she wants to appeal the females to be aware of their rights. She through the novel tries to awake the females. The male-dominated society always marginalizes and treats females as inferior to males from time immemorial and considers that women should serve them, obey them and stay within the home circle. Females cannot voice their disapproval and even if they voice, nobody cares or listens. Their voice is suppressed so that it will not be heard.

It is really a challenging work to awake the Muslim people and especially Muslim females are deeply devoted towards the religion, whose roles are to serve the family, do household works, rear child and remain away from outside affairs like decision making, understanding politics, getting education, working for earning and many more. The dominant discourses characterize them as 'feminine' who are shy and introvert and who are ignorant and secondary human beings. The dominant groups or discourses keep the women dominated and rob them of their freedom to speak and show their capabilities. Muslim are away from the discursive power and the hegemonic power makes them suppress their feelings and desires. If these subordinated females get opportunity to empower themselves and, they may resist the oppression in any way they may, either through silence, indifference, or through direct revolt.

Generally, religions have a patriarchal view of the relationship between the genders. The relationship between Adam and Eve signifies how religion views women. In this regard, Al Hibri writes, "God was declared male, Eve became the symbol of temptation and sin. The woman was consequently judged as a less likely candidate for salvation and an everlasting life in heaven than man" (176).

In the patriarchal social system, the status of women is no more than that of a mute animal. Women are dictated to follow the hierarchical norms of the society where they cannot find their respectable positions. The patriarchal society regards female- sex as secondary to male- sex. Regardless of caste, class or religion women are subjected to gender discriminations and are differentiated as secondary objects. The society keeps them aloof from social matters like decision making, participating in political matters, problem solving, social and familial discussions and in financial sectors.

In *The Heart Divided* Shah attempts to show the different status of male and female relation. Shah shows that how patriarchal societies treat women and how women are separated from the world outside. Through this novel, we come to know that the woman is made to live under the domination of her parents and the society since the day of her marriage. Najma is a Muslim girl, who is engaged to a widower. But she cannot raise her voice against her marriage.

'You are engaged!'

'You never told us!'

'Who is the man?'

'When did it happen?'

'Yes, I am engaged, and I wish that I were dead!'(105).

Marriage plays a vital role in woman's life but in Muslim society it is as if getting married is the main task in a woman's life and she requires no further knowledge.

No one asks about her views regarding marriage Najma is engaged at the early age with a widower. It shows that getting married is the main task in a woman's life.

'We went to Europe, and I enjoyed that. He seemed to be very fond of me- and then gradually the fondness began to wear away. You see, the- the new toy - was becoming old.'

'He began to voice his disappointment at my not having a child. I went to many doctors both here and abroad - but -'

'What did they say?'

'They said there was nothing wrong with me but my husband continue to blame me, and began to call me a useful, barren woman'(239).

She further says that, initially her husband infatuates with her but at last he hates more for not having a child.

'I heard rumours that he was infatuated with some cinema woman - at last one day he brought a loud, heavily painted woman into the house and introduced her to me as his new wife' (239).

Najma's marriage is imprisonment for her because she has to shut up in her own room. It is not Najma's faults for a child rather it is her husband's mind shaped by male dominated society that needs a child for which he does not mention his own disability. He feels proud to have a child and does not care whatever tensions and troubles Najma has to go through. The social construction in the patriarchal mind in such societies is so rigid that it does not think other than what the conservative norms dictate. Najma's husband represents the rigid and blind follower of conservative male-

dominated norms and an oppressive male who feels superior while dominating the opposite sex. Najma goes to many doctors but her husband accompanies her only as a passive observer; eating, drinking and enjoying with another woman. In following the superstition also, men do not have to suffer any pains. Women have to observe all the superstitious rituals going through the series of pains. The more wives one has, the more 'masculinist' one is considered. Such traditional, conservative, dominating and narrow- minded social thinking promotes female exploitations in society that marginalizes and neglects women's status and uses women as their objects of possession that increase their prestige if collected more.

'What's all the argument about?' asked Sughra.

'Najma's coming to tea and mother objects.'

'I don't object to her coming to tea today, but Zohra has been constantly with her these last few days, and after all she's just been divorced - and -' Mehr paused.

'And what?' asked Sughra.

'A divorce is not exactly a good thing, you know. It's not the sort of thing that happens in respectable families.'

'Najma's family is as good as any'

'That's the pity of it. It's such a disgrace for them' (253).

Exploited women were loaded with suffocation and torture of being isolated; seem to have lost their voices. Mehr is ignorant and illiterate. She does not get chance to expand and exercise her mind, her knowledge is very limited. She thinks that if a woman gets divorce, it is the disgrace for her as well as her family members.

She is going away with a man who was a complete stranger to a new environment, among another set of people, and she cannot utter the little voice that

whispered within her; "You are leaving all you love for a new life, a new life you know nothing of - will you be happy? Will you be able to adjust yourself to your surrounding?" (75). She cannot answer her own questions. Married life would be so different. It is the difference that worries her. She needs love and tenderness and understanding to help her to adjust herself to the new ways and the man who can give these to her- she does not know at all: "And will you be able to make him happy?" the voice would whisper again. 'How can you know? How can you know, when you don't know him?' 'I shall make him happy', she would tell herself," by love and devotion and service!"(75).

Sughra is going to marry an unknown guy. She has no choice. She has to follow the order of her parents and sacrifice her own will. In the third world the woriness of the parents grows with the growth of their daughter most of the time are regarded as burden by the family. The parents are much more apprehensive until they get married to their daughter.

All through the night Sughra has been strangely silent. Like one in a daze, she has gone about her task and the doctor has marvelled at her self-control. Now she sees the doctor shake his head and move away, and heard mansur's sobbing.

'No!' she whispered. 'No!'

'Take her into the next room,' the doctor told Mansur.

'No' she cried. 'No!' and her voice was a shriek. 'He's mine- he's not dead! 'and falling upon the little body, she clasped it in her arms (249).

Naturally females worry more than males do. It is said that man has stronger heart than female. After the death of Sughra's son (little Khalid) she is too much worried. She neglects everything. Her motherhood doesnot permit that her son is dead, she thinks that her son is still alive. She is worried for her dead son: "Oh, how I've always

hated you,' Sughra went on. 'I only tolerated you for his sake, and now you have killed him, you and your mother!' And she fell sobbing on her bed" (250).

Later in the day, Sughra attends the session of the Muslim League and listens to spell-bound among thousands of others when Jinnah addressed them in pin-drop silence. Upon Sughra's mind this speech leaves a "never-to-be-obliterated impression" (318).

Besides, following the tradition since she is the product of the traditional society, time and again she displays her modern attitudes. She keeps on playing the role of traditional mother and a wife until she gets the way to break it. Sughra gets free from her traditional duty that had chained her to walk-out and gets involved in her determination towards freedom. Especially, in the third world countries, a mother is chained by her children to protest and discard her dominating husband, family (especially mother-in-law) since a mother is emotionally attached to her children with love:

'No, no, sister,' said Fahmaida. 'No one can be educated at home. It's the discipline at school and the company of other girls that makes all the difference.'

'And fresh air and games and-'

'I'm afraid we think differently,' cut in the eldest sister. 'We have done well enough in our life and our daughters could do no better than to follow our example. Besides, having a governess for them is all right, but my husband would really never dream of sending the girls to school. As for her father,' she smiled, 'he'd have a fit. (335)

The novel depicts the restricted women's psyche. They are kept ignorant and illiterate. Their world is narrowed into the home circle. Being women, their feelings and desires

do not count in the narrow world they live in. Sughra and Fahmida might have some privilege of being free from domestic labor since they are educated, but Begum Haider and Kamal sisters are belonging to illiterate. They cannot understand anything about the outside world, the veils hides not only their faces but also voices: "Oh Apa, stop quibbling. Many of the younger Muslims don't agree with you. I wish we were in this. Look at Mohini. Look at other Hindu women. How they are working and suffering while we sit idle in our homes. They are marching ahead and we are still entangled in the toils of purdah" (27). This explains why the Muslim women don not take part in social as well as political Movement like Hindu women. Once, Zohra directly or indirectly participates in Congress, there are lots of debate between Zohra and Sughra in the context of Muslim League and Congress. Sughra is Zohra's elder sister. Sughra supports the Muslim League but Zohra supports the Congress. Most of the time they quarrel each other.

Sughra is busy all day and Zohra does not get a chance to speak to her. Then Saida and two of her friends come from Patna as delegates to the session, and Zohra is surprised to see their enthusiasm. Dozens of other ladies from all over India continued to Lahore to stay with various friends and it becomes evident that Muslim women are at last playing a significant role in the political life of the country.

Mumtaz raises the serious voice of women and the religion in this novel. Generally speaking male and female are equal by birth. By birth no one belong to any religion. But slowly with the growth of child the society shows the hidden demarcation line created by the society in order to show male as a primary and female as secondary. Talking about religion we can see every society has belief towards certain religion and the people follow what the society teaches. In fact man has created religion in order to show woman as inferior. Male members are the spokes

person of the religion. They treat woman as the second class people. Mumtaz vociferously refuses the notion of a female essence prior to individual existence and attack patriarchal myth of women that presumes the false essence.

Mumtaz Nawaz Shah includes the stories of women belonging to different religions, different status and different ages in order to show the different ways of dominations these women are made to endure. A Muslim girl cannot marry anyone except a Muslim boy, the reason given being that the children of such a marriage would follow the father's faith and be lost to Islam. Among Hindus, it was still difficult even to marry out of caste in their own community and a marriage with a non-Hindu was considered monstrous.

Talking about marriage in every culture has its own type of practice. It would be really difficult to get married if the girl and boy belong to different religions. If the boy and girl who love with each other belong to different religions then the ending will be really gloomy.

Mohini sees Habib, coming across the lawn, and all at once she feels so weak and weary that she cannot even stand up to greet him. Only her pale hand trembled towards him and he grasped it firmly in his own.

'It's been- torture, unbearable- oh, I can't explain. Only father-mother-Grandfather!'

'I can imagine.'

'And you your father?'

'He's furious, of course. Things are bad enough, but it's easier for a man'(152).

Marriage between Muslim and Hindu is almost impossible. Love between Muslim and Hindu most of the time results into break up. Pain of separation will be more with

females than with males. Here too, Mohini suffered more than Habib. Habib and Mohini love each other but their family cannot accept their love. Habib is in love with Mohini, a Hindu girl. He is set to marry Mohini, but the marriage does not take place when Habib's mother Mehr demands Mohini to convert her religion and become Muslim.

The girl's family as well as boy's family do not approve of her Hindu suitor. In this regard Habib's father commands Habib to abandon Mohini. Here, both Mohini and Habib's dream of marrying with each other did not come true because of different religion:

'That's different.'

'It's not, Darling! Try to understand.'

'I'll do anything for you, my son, but this I cannot let you do.'

'Forsake your faith! How can you? How can I let you? I have to show my face to my God one day!' (198)

It is supposed that religion aims at peace and tolerance. But here it has created a lot of disorder and unrest. It is indeed a pity that even at the close of the twentieth century; they are so many atrocities in the name of religion. Instead of saving society and humanity, it has created complexity. But religion is not blameworthy. It is the mark of those who are circulating religious discourse. When religion is used by power holders, then it creates destructive consequences. Even religion should be independent of power structure. Only then, it can serve society and humanity otherwise it will turn towards destruction which results in the destruction of life and property.

Habib wants to marry Mohini but his mother Mehr cannot accept his proposal saying that one day she has to show her face in front of God. If Hindu and

Muslim marry with each other how can a Muslim show his/her face in front of God.

In third world countries religion plays vital role in marriage case:

I've told you, Hindus and Muslims don't marry each other. Must I go on repeating myself?

'Why don't they marry each other?'

'Ours laws, our customs- oh, you fool!' (186)

In Third World countries religion and custom plays vital roles in human beings life. If they abandon their culture they think that they become naked. Talking about the marriage Habib's father tries to show the differences of Muslim and Hindu culture. Generally speaking culture is related with the totality of belief system, social manner, political values and economic system. Culture is the product of social consciousness that provides identity to a nation in the global context; it vitalizes nation.

Muslim society has valued women in terms of secondary objects. Not only the Muslim society, women are suffering in Hindu society too. Males treat females as the 'second sex.' females are compelled to follow the path shown by her father, husband and the community in the name of rules and regulations or norms and values constructed in patriarchal society. Females are denied by religion, culture and society too: "Don't be a fool. Listen to me. Habib may like her and all that, but it's absolutely impossible. There can be nothing between them. There's a whole world of religion, custom, tradition and public opinion to keep them apart" (128). We suppose that religion, custom, tradition leads us peace and tranquility but its not true its always leads us destruction if it turns into religious chauvinism or fanaticism:

'I tried to judge whether my uniting my life with yours would be harmful or beneficial to the cause to which I have dedicated my life, and I decided that if I were to remain true to my ideas, I should not

hesitate.' Once again, her voice was like a bell, and a light like the sunrise transfigured her face. 'If we are to be a free country, we must break down these walls that divide our people. So many communities inhabit this land of ours and each has its own creed and way of life, but that should not lead to disunity. Yet we are disunited, because we don't mix and mingle together as well should. Now we must build a nation. A nation that can take its rightful place among the peoples of the world; and young people, like us, must have the courage to break down such customs and traditions as come in the way of unity. You are not merely you, and I'm not just I. We represent two parts of a great people. Two parts that must harmonize and pull together if we are to gain freedom. (166-67)

Mohini is a Hindu girl and Habib is a Muslim boy. They love each other so deeply. If a Muslim boy and Hindu girl love each other there, creates a big problem or there creates a Muslim male and Hindu female's relation, not only geographical division but also psychic partition.

But Mohini and Habib want to break that wall that divides Muslim and Hindu. When we mix and mingle together, there comes unity, harmony and peace.

I've told you, Hindus and Muslims don't marry each other. Must I go on repeating myself?

'Why don't they marry each other?'

'Our laws, our customs- oh, you fool!'(186)

Hindus love country as Muslims do. Mohini and Habib are fighting for individual freedom. Any oppressed group is victimized by the dominant power structure and is also capable of resisting or transforming the power structure. Mohini and Habib love

with each other and want to marry but their family member's don't accept their relationship: "Don't ruin our good name, don't trample our honour in the dust, see, I plead with you! [...] We believe in the brotherhood of mankind and they in the caste system" (195).

Jawala Prasad is Mohini's grandfather. He says that Mohini is going to ruin his family status doing marry with Muslim boy. But Mohini replies him if we (Hindu and Muslim) mix and mingle together, there comes unity.

In this novel, in *Nishat Manzil*, we see the practice of *Zenana*-- the two parts that are almost like two different worlds, one a man's world reflecting in its myriad activities all the rush and turmoil of the world outside, and the other a serene and sheltered domain, a woman's world where none but the closest of male relatives could enter and where clothes and food and children are the chief interest and the main topic of conversation(11).

It shows how women exercise their sense of identity and are able to resist the patriarchal domination though they are being segregated in *Zenana* and are restricted within their private world. In later years Zohra often wonders when the change in her life begins. The change that has led her, a young Muslim girl, born and bred behind the *pardah*, to a life of independence and adventure. It is not easy to define when it begins, for the lives of all the girls of her generation have changed so much and they are woven together in such a manner, like many- coloured threads of an intricate pattern, that it is difficult to decide when the change in her particular life began: "Perhaps it started on a quiet November evening in 1930"(1). Zohra, a muslim girl, represents the entire muslim women of 20th century who are made to hide within the *burkha* and remain separated from the outside world. But in Zohra's life, there is

change she wants to live her life meaningfully. She is a protagonist of the novel *The Heart Divided*.

Zohra always longed for uniting people. Zohra always thinks that unity is necessary without unity there emerges the violence in the society, in the name of religion. If Hindu and Muslim unite themselves, there creates mutual relationship in different religion. 'Zohra, my point is different- what I say is this-Unity is most essential. Without that we can not be free. To achieve unity, certain sacrifices have to be made and it's up to the majority community- the Hindus, and the older and stronger organization, the congress- to meet the Muslims and the League more than halfway and to be the first to make sacrifices'(310).

Surrayya had been two years senior to her at school and she had always looked up to her. She was one of the few Muslim girls out of purdah, and belonged to a well-known family whose ladies were the first in the Punjab to discard the veil. She had been a brilliant student at Q- School and was now in her third year at the Punjab College, where she had won several prizes at inter-university debates, and often beat the boys with her eloquence. Zohra longed to be like her, but dared not to go against the more conservative ideas of her own family (8).

Surrayya is Zohra's Muslim friend, she was one of the few Muslim girls out of purdah, and belonged to a well-known family whose ladies were the first in the Punjab to discard the veil. Surrayya, whose family casts off the veil and goes to shops and restaurants with their faces uncovered. Zohra wants freedom from the veil and wants to live as a modern girl, daring and liberated. She wants to observe the world and exercise her potentials. But her conservative family as well as religion doesnot allow her the freedom she desires. Her family is such a conservative family but she revolts with her family as well as society too.

Zohra does not know what to do. On the one hand, she knows that she would incur the severe displeasure of her family, and on the other, she does not wish to appear timid and full of fear before the girls, especially before Surrayya. Besides, it would be fun. It would be great fun going along the mall in a tonga with no cumbersome veil to hamper her. She would feel as free as a bird. Surely no one would know.

Muslim fundamentalism is the obstacle and danger to modern face of life, and freedom. Religion, despite its illusory and contradictory existence, provides identity, symbol for emotional ties and common sharing, therefore, the forceful reification, of that fortune, creates void and identity crisis. But here, Zohra crosses her own religious boundary. It is her first step crossing the religious boundary as well as her conservative family's norms and values. She is a revolutionary type of character. She revolts the unwanted norms and values of the Muslim society but she revolts with her family as well as society too: "How horrible! yes, the history books say nothing about it? "Of course not, you are only taught what our rulers wish you to know."(41) However, to continue as a first step to their policy of "divide and rule," the British encouraged the Hindus, and at the ports and in the presidency provinces, the re-awakening of the Hindus began" (41).

It shows the colonial rule in India and the exploitations made by the British in India. Hidden policy of the British colonizers in India, is the religious riot between Hindu and Muslim. Many people are killed in violent. It is the policy of British government not to allow the people to unite against imperialism. The British rule planted such riots to divide Hindu and Muslim so that the British colonizers could rule the country without problems. The divide and rule policy of the colonizers in India is the way to continue their Raj.

Next time, when Surrayya takes her out shopping in her car, she folds away the *burqah*, goes gaily into the shops, spends a pleasant hour and only puts on the *burqah* when, on their way back, they enter the drive that led to Nishat Manzil.

Thus, she takes her first step towards a free and independent life, but she does not know it then (17). It is Zohra first step for her rigid type of conservative family. Her grandfather thinks that purdah of muslim women is sacred but slowly and gradually she revolts with her family:

Perhaps it was all the accumulated frustration of the many times when she had wanted to do this or that and had been stopped by the family, or by the fear of the family, that lay behind her words. In any case a little devil seemed to have suddenly enter her for she exclaims, 'I don't care what you all say, you can stop me now, but one day I shall come out of purdah, yes, I will.' Sughra rushed forward to stop her, but it was too late, she had said what she wanted to (71).

When Zohra asks to represent her college at the response of her, grandfather and she challenge her family saying that one day she shall come out of *purdah*. She first discard her *burqah* and wants to participate in-inter college debate but her family member (especially her grandfather) does not agree with her. "Oh please, please allow me, father,' begged Zohra as she came in. She came and sat very close to him on the sofa, looking pleadingly up at him. This decided Jamaluddin. 'All right,' he said, 'you have my permission and mind you, win the first prize" (224).

Zohra has achieved appreciable progress. In such a conservative and traditional time, a Muslim girl discarding the *burqah* and experiencing the freedom that many women would not even dream of is really a great individual success. 'The first prize is won by Miss Zohra Jamaluddin of the Punjab College for women whose

remarkable oration has greatly impressed the judges. After the death of her grandfather, she gets chance to participate in inter- college debate and she wins first prize.

For Surrayya's family does not share her radical views, and in spite of being out of purdah, she does not dare openly flaunt their more moderate views and join the struggle. While Zohra, being in purdah, can not possibly take any part in political activities, though she often sulks over this fact. However, both of them have secretly collected money for the congress and have given it to Mohini, and they have held private meetings and discussions among the students at their college (36). Surrayya is one of the few Muslim girls out of purdah, and whose family belongs to a well-known family but her radical views are shared and she does not dare to openly participate or join the struggle. Until now, Zohra is in burqah and she too not take part openly but both of them are collecting money and supports the movement Being in burqah, Zohra and Surrayya, her Muslim friend who is out of burqah, both of them are help to Mohini or movement for collecting money:

"I've formed no friendship,' cut in Zohra, not of the type that leads to love and marriage and all that. But one thing I insist upon. When I do marry, it shall be for love and I shall choose my own husband!"

'Zohra! This is unheard of! My child, you've gone mad. Girls of respectable families don't fall in love until after marriage" (283).

Zohra's family members want to marry her but she neglects their proposal and says that she will get marry when she falls love. Listening her views about marriage her mother Mehr rebuke as well as persuades her and Mehr says respectable families do not fall in love until after marriage but Zohra does not accept her views and she always remain in her own views.

Sughra's arranged marriage and kamal arranged marriage is painfully, unhappy and Zohra's view on marriage is different than her parents. She always favour in love marriage. When her mother force to marry her she replies arranged marriage or her sister Sughra's arranged marriage is unsuccessful but her mother, Mehr can not accept her views about Sughra's marriage. Kamal is also a Muslim man. He is also suffered from mentally because of his early aged arranged marriage. He is not happy with his arranged marriage:

'I'm sorry, father, but I have other plans. I want a career!'

'A career?'

'Yes. I want to teach.'

'You have no need to earn your living.'

'It isn't that, I don't want to live on my parents. I want to be independent' (303).

Zohra tries to challenge the discriminating practices prevalent in the Muslim society. Zohra was not a dreamer, she was essentially practical and she began to make plans.

When Zohra finishes her education, she wants to make career in teaching. Her family members (especially mother) cannot accept her proposal. But Zohra is not a dreamer, she is a realist. She does all sorts of thing for making her career. Zohra wants to free from her conservative dependency. She wants to live her life meaningfully being in independent. 'Zohra's gone. "Gone? What do you mean?" 'Gone away. Left the house!' (367). Zohra proves that she was not a dreamer, she is a practical person. She leaves her home for teaching in Amritsar;

Zohra, sick at heart, looked at the faces around her and in their eyes she saw the fading of her dream, the dream of Hindu-Muslim unity in an India free and whole. But she also saw in these very eyes the dawn

of a new ideal, an ideal that had already gripped their hearts. It was as if someone had said to them, 'you shall be free!' - and this and this alone is the way...' And they had lifted up their eyes to gaze at new horizons and their minds had raced ahead of them down fresh vistas of thought. (390)

Zohra always dream of free and whole India, which is now impossible. Hindu and Muslim unity is going fade. She feels sick looking the situation of India. She always longs for Hindu- Muslim unity but it is not possible. Partition is inevitable. Where it be Hindustan or Pakistan, the worker in the fields and the labourers in the factories will be the brick and mortar of which the edifice of their future will be constructed, for the hands that built the Taj are the hands that will build the dreams of the future and give them shape and reality.' There is renewed cheering. "Freedom is necessary. Unity is necessary" and she takes hold of Zohra with one hand and the congress woman with the other (432).

India has been divided into Hindustan and Pakistan. Once, Zohra directly or indirectly involved in Congress, she always longed for the unity between Hindu and Muslim but it is not possible. There is the emergence of geographical partition between Hindustan and Pakistan but in heartly they are remain in same land. Unity is necessary between Congress and Muslim League. Now, Zohra and Sughra are on the same way. Zohra also supports the Muslim League: "That it would be a disgrace for the family if you married him, for his family is not in the same class as ours. Besides, they belong to a lower caste" (438).

Zohra falls for a man her family deems lower- class and Sughra also support to the Zohra. In saying and doing Zohra always remain in one position. When her family members ask about her marriage at that time she told that she told that I will marry

when I fell love. Now, she fells love with Ahmad, he is the son of his father's clerk. Her family members can not supports her saying that he is in lower class as well caste too. But her sister, Sughra supports her. She challenges her family and determines in her decision. Even in the last condition too, she is not far from her decision.

This time, however, Zohra and Sughra do not quarrel though both of them are depressed at the turn events has taken. The past has brought them closer together, for Zohra had come to realize that people can not be coerced and they must have their right of self-determination, and Sughra has begun to believe that they have achieved of Pakistan was not enough and that it is equally essential to build it into a free and democratic state, where non- Muslims as well as Muslims may attain happiness and prosperity. To be a democratic state, there must be unity. Unity is essential.

In Zohra's mind there is conflict or confusion. She is determined to marry Ahmad and nothing can shake her in her resolve. She feels that her parents are narrow and unreasonable in their objections and that they are being unduly influenced by their relations. She was sad at the thought of hurting her father and her mother are estranged from them, but is confident that once she is happily married, her parents would change their opinion and a reconciliation would follow:

'I'm deeply indebted to you, sir,' said Ahmad, and Sheikh Jamaluddin placed his hands on both their heads.

'God bless you, my children,' he said.

Zohra was crying unashamedly and she hugged her father. 'Oh, you are the dearest, the most marvellous father in the world,' she said. (447)

In the last her family members agree with her and gives permission to marry with Ahmad.

Zohra wants to work in Muslim League. She thinks that in Muslim League there are lots of uneducated and marginalized women, she wants to work among women, especially Muslim women.

'I want to work among women, especially among Muslim women. They need me most, that's where I'll be most useful...'

'And so?'

'I feel I join the Muslim League.'(448)

And in her decision Ahmad also supports and says that 'Zohra, as long as you are honest, and I know you are, it will not matter to me how you serve your people. But remember that you must serve your people. Take up political work if you want to, but work for principles not for power or personalities.'

Both sisters Zohra and Sughra are successful in their lives. They are successful in resisting against *Zenana*, *burka* and other patriarchal domination. It shows how women exercise their sense of identity and are able to resist the patriarchal domination though they are being segregated in *Zenana* and are restricted within their, private world. Zohra fights against the unwanted rigid norms and values of the Muslim society. Zohra is an extraordinary woman, she is a freedom-fighter. Zohra resists against unwanted rigid norms and values it shows that woman can not get liberation until they are aware of patriarchal domination and empower themselves to resist it. The struggle becomes more complicated when she has to negotiate with patriarchal oppression. Shah through her novel tries to awaken the people to change the mentality in order to create a prosperous and happy society. She tries to convey the message that we should learn from our past mistake and should stop repeating the mistake in the days to come. The most important thing is that the rigid cultural and

traditional norms should be changed and remoulded in order to make it appropriate for the modern time.

IV. Conclusion

Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's historical novel *The Heart Divided* protests religious domination upon women. Her novel is part of a broad political movement especially rigid against Islamic religion. She often raises the issue like women domination, resistance and religious fundamentalism. This patriarchal society tries to put women under its control giving negative attributes to women. Society ignores women's desires and voice. Najma's desire to study is not fulfilled. Mumtaz raises the serious voice of women in this novel. She vociferously refuses the notion of a female essence prior to individual existence and attacks patriarchal myth of women that presumes the false essence. This society is patriarchal. So, femininity and masculinity are defined as opposite poles. Femininity is defined a in negative way and masculinity in positive.

Different Muslim women characters seek to subvert patriarchy in order to attain freedom and happiness in their lives. Patriarchy manipulates the knowledge to believe that women are unable to know and do anything the men would do. The dominant power and discourses never provide Muslim women access to critical thinking about the other fields of possibilities. Some women who get privilege to exercise their minds and innate qualities of critical thinking question and resist the dominations and marginalization claiming their position in the center. The main female characters of Nawaz's novel, especially the one under study, are in somewhat privileged position and have realized the domination imposed upon women. They resist and liberate themselves from whatever means they have access to.

Nawaz realize the undermining of female potentials by males, and therefore, attempts to subvert patriarchal gender bias, that is women are unable to speak for themselves and represent their sex so that somebody else has to represent these mute creatures. But the author has made it quite visible time and again that males are most

of the time mistaken about the potentiality of the females. Zohra is a protagonist, who as a rebel fights against the unwanted rigid norms and values of the Muslim society. She crosses the boundary of conservative norms and values. She first of all casts off the veil and goes to participate in inter-university debate. Zohra tries to challenge the discriminating practices prevalent in the Muslim society. She is not a dreamer; she is a practical person. She leaves her house and starts teaching in college. Zohra falls for a man her family deems lower class and caste too. She always thinks that unity among the females is essential for their empowerment. She breaks the walls of restrictions imposed upon her and liberates herself from that extreme subordination from the conservative religious society.

Mumtaz explores the lives of women belonging to rural as well as city areas of different age groups, social status and religion in order to study heterogeneity of their problems and various types of discriminations imposed upon them with respect to heterogeneity of their lifestyle. Marriage between Muslim and Hindu is impossible, it always results into break up. Hindu girl Mohini and Muslim boy Habib love each other. Pain of separation will be more with females than with males. Mohini suffers more than Habib. Their family can not accept their love; it leads Mohini's death.

Muslim girl is expected to hide herself inside uncomfortable hideous cloak called burkha which is suffocating even to breathe. They are practising the Jananah -- the two parts that were almost two different worlds, one a man's world reflecting in its myriad activities and all the rush and turmoil of the world outside, and the other a serene and sheltered domain, a woman's world where none gets the closest of male relatives could enter and where clothes and food and children were the chief interest and the main topic of conversation. The novel depicts the restricted women's psyche.

Sughra is worried for her dead son. Later, she knows her self existence and plays active role in politics.

The three female characters' resistance against patriarchal domination shows that women cannot get liberation until and unless they are aware of domination and empower themselves to resist it. The struggle becomes more complicated when they have to negotiate with patriarchal oppression simultaneously. Mumtaz Shah opines that a nation can progress and get true liberation when male- female hierarchy is abolished and women are given equal rights and opportunities.

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