

## CULTURAL FEMINISM FOUND IN THE ASNE SEIERSTAD'S KABUL

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### Abstract

The result of this study may add to the research literature references and add insight to the reader about the image women with the feminism literature review. This research is expected to give contribution to this language teaching using novel as the authentic media, particularly in teaching reading. Novel is narrative text informing of prose with a long shape that including some figures and fiction event. In this case, the study attempted to analyze text about Cultural feminism that contains in the novel. The text analyzed is a novel entitled *The Bookseller of Kabul* written by Asne Seierstad, a Norway journalist who spent four months to write the novel after reporting civil war in Afghanistan. This novel mostly describes the portrayal of women in the context of gender relation in Afghanistan after the fall of Taliban, around 2001s.

**Keywords:** *novel, intrinsic, character*

### INTRODUCTION

In literature are recognized three genres that are prose, drama, and poetry. Prose as one of literary genre in its own elements that develop a story, such as theme, plot, characters, setting, point of view, language style, and it all related to elements of novel. According to R.J.Ress (1973:106) states that : “ *Novel is a fictitious prose narrative of considerable length in which characters and action representative of real life are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity.* ” Reading a novel for many people is just talking the enjoyment of the story. People just take the enjoyment of the story. They just take interesting part of story, so they will get just the general impression not

specific meaning, and uncleanness about plot of story so that the message that offered by the author can't accept by the readers. That's the problem when the people read the novel they just take for fun or spending the time. In actually if we analyze the novel, there are the benefits and the values from the novel that can we take as experience and contemplation for our life. It is more useful than just read it. Literature is often defined as a permanent expression in words of some thought or feeling idea about life and the world. Literature may be classified according to variety of arrangements such as language, national origin, historical period and genre. In terms of genre, literature can be classified

into two broad categories, namely fiction and non fiction. The term fiction refers to the kind of literature which is created from imagination, not presented as a fact, though it may be based on actual events or people. Types of literature in the fiction genre include novel, short story, and novella. Non fiction, on the other hand, refers to any literary work that is based on true facts, such as essay, biography and autobiography. Literary works such as poetry, drama, prose, novel, or short story can not be separated from human, they are created and enjoyed by human. Thus, literary works are considered as reflections of the human life including experience, feeling, and thought toward social life around them.

W.Guerin, 2005:222 “Feminism engage with biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic, Marxist, poststructuralist, and cultural studies, as well as ethnic and race studies, postcolonial theory, lesbian and gay studies, and gender studies.” Indeed, feminism has often focused upon what is absent rather than what is present, reflecting concern with the silencing and marginalization of women in a patriarchal culture, a culture organized in the favor of men. Unlike the other approaches we have examined thus far, feminism is an overtly political approach and can attack other approaches for their false assumptions about women. In recent decades this tendency has changed, in part because of the efforts of feminist critics but also because of social changes such as mass education, the Civil Rights movement, the Vietnam War, increasing urbanization, and the growing liberalization of sexual mores.

In this case, the study attempted to analyze text about Cultural feminism that contains in the novel. The text analyzed is a novel entitled *The Bookseller of Kabul* written by Asne Seierstad, a Norway journalist who spent four months to write the novel after reporting civil war in Afghanistan. This novel mostly describes the portrayal of women in the context of gender relation in Afghanistan after the fall of Taliban, around 2001s. Story about the father of a family as a bookseller in Kabul who should challenge the government that limits the bookselling for the political need is used merely as background about woman life there. Afghanistan women in general, is that women are covered in foreign cultures. Typically village women in Afghanistan do not speak with men, especially foreign men in military uniforms. Afghan women are restricted by their culture and are sensitive to cultural issues. They accept their lives and rarely question the restrictions placed on them by society, religion and Afghan culture. In Afghanistan the family is the most important element of a woman’s life. Often an Afghan family is made up of a woman, her husband, sons, daughters, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandmother, grandfather and grandchildren, and they all live under one roof. A typical Afghan family has from six to ten children. It seems that the author attempts to judge the gender relation in Afghanistan from the perspective of a western people as she stated in the foreword.

So in this case the writer tries to analyze the Cultural feminism that are found in the novel represented by the author as contemplation for the writer

and the writer's life and take good value from the novel. Also the writer wants to give information to the people who less understanding about fiction and to be better in comprehending the content of story. The writer has formulated the problems "What kinds of Cultural feminism are found in the novel The Bookseller Of Kabul by Asne Seierstad?

### Previous Research

According to Hernawati, Yuke. 2011. *Analyze of the feminism of the novel 'twilight' by stephenie Meyer.* Based on theoretical studies, the result of the analysis and discussion that has been done can be conclude that the novel 'twilight' describe some feminism. There are essensialist feminism, cultural feminism, and erotic feminism. Feminism's most dominant described in the novel twilight is essensialist feminism.

According to Daviana, Irma. 2008. *Analyzing the Choice of Social Setting and Characterization in the Novel "Para Priyayi" by Umar Kayam.* The choice of social setting occur in the novel had good effects to the main characters in the novel. Patient, loyal, sensitive to each other, are the effect from the way of living, traditions, the way of thinking, belief, and social status of the characters that effected the characters. This also happen in the novel *Para Priyayi*. According to Azizah, Lina. 2008. Gender perspective in the novels of Women at Point Zero works of Nawal El-Saadawi: Feminist Literary Review. The study sought to reveal the gender perspective in the novel PdTN Nawal El-Saadawi's work, because in this novel presents as issue of subordinated women

and experiencing various form of justice stemming from a partriarchal ideology associated with the various systems, such as religion and culture, manifested in the ideology of socialization gender roles, and equality of women.

### Character and Characterization

Character is one of the elements in a literary work. The character creates the story. In literature, a character is a personage in a novel, short story, drama or poem. The term of character also denotes the essential qualities and personalities traits of fictional or real individuals. A character is a person, animal, initiate object or group representing a unique approach to dealing with the story's problem (Hawthorn 1985).

Brooks and Warren (1959:168) stated that every character in fiction must resemble ourselves; that is, he must be recognizably human even as we are human.

According to Peck (1989:105) character is the people in a novel that are referred to as characters. Another point to remember is that the characters are part of a broader pattern, they are members of society, and the author's distinctive view how people relate to society will be reflected in the presentation of every character.

In novel, there are two kinds of characters; first, flat character which means a character described only from one side. It is usually found in fables. The characters are presented in black or white categories without other things. It is also known as a character with one or two personalities (Hawthorn 1985). A flat character is usually the representative

character from certain group in society; a way of life and it is not an individual characteristic (Eastman 1965). Meanwhile Kenney (1966) voices that like the stereotype, this kind of character may be summed up in a formula. But he differs from the stereotype in that his formula is his own; there is no other character in fiction that it exactly fits. The last is round character which means a character described from a lot of sides. This character is owned by a lot of people and closest to the real life.

Usually, a round character plays as the main character, meanwhile flat character as the additional character. This thing occurs to make the story more interesting because of the changing of the character.

Besides that, in term of character, it also knows stereotype and archetype character. Stereotype means the description owned by a group of people. Archetype means a character described as human. He has the characterization as the human has. For example, cry, hungry, laughing and honest.

Based on its development, character divided into static and dynamic. Static character means a character, which is does not change in the story. Dynamic character means a character, which changes in the story. It depends on the situation.

Some Kinds of characters are:

a. Flat Characters

Flat characters are minor characters in work of fiction who do not undergo substantial change or growth in the course of a story. Learn more about flat characters and how they differ from round characters.

b. Static Characters

When people say that a character is “static” they’re referring to the fact that a character doesn’t change.

c. Round Characters

As a writer, your focus will be on developing your round characters. For readers, these are the characters you’ll put the most effort into following and understanding.

d. Dynamic Characters

The opposite of static characters, dynamic characters will undergo some kind of change in the course of the story.

e. Stock Characters

Many people think the term “stock characters” is just another way to describe static characters, but not so. Find out why not.

f. Protagonists

What do protagonists have in common with round characters? And what makes the best protagonists in a work of literature? Know what to think about when you begin writing.

g. Antagonists

The antagonist is essential to many works of literature, but is it really just a matter of bad guys vs good guy? These examples illustrate more complicated scenarios.

## **Characterization**

According to Jones (1968:84) characterization is the drawing of clear images of a person. Characterization is the way the writer presents the character in his story (Aminuddin 1995). Then, Baribin (1985) says that characterization is the presentation of characters and the creation of character’s images in a

literary work. Peck (1989:41) articulates the author may present his persons in two general ways namely directly telling the reader the person's qualities and through actions showing the reader the person's deeds, by which his character may be known.

Another opinion comes from Barnet (1985), there are five ways of characterizations; first is from what the person says (but remembered that what he says need not to be taken at face value; the person may be hypocritical, or self deceived or biased. Second is from what the person does. Third is from what others (including the narrator of the story) say about the person. Fourth is from what others do (the actions may help to indicate what the person could do but does not do). The last is from what the person looks like—face, body, clothes. These may help the reader to convey the personalities, or they may in some measure help to disguise it.

Based on several points of view, the writer concludes that a characterization is the way the writer of the story describes the physical and personal images of the characters in his story.

### Feminism

W.Guerin, 2005:222 "Feminism as they engage with biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic, Marxist, poststructuralist, and cultural studies, as well as ethnic and race studies, postcolonial theory, lesbian and gay studies, and gender studies." Indeed, feminism has often focused upon what is absent rather than what is present, reflecting concern with the silencing and marginalization of women in a patriar-

chal culture, a culture organized in the favor of men. Unlike the other approaches we have examined thus far, feminism is an overtly political approach and can attack other approaches for their false assumptions about women. In recent decades this tendency has changed, in part because of the efforts of feminist critics but also because of social changes such as mass education, the Civil Rights movement, the Vietnam War, increasing urbanization, and the growing liberalization of sexual mores.

At the same time as women have been re-read in works by male writers, feminists have promoted the underappreciated work of women authors, and the writings of many women have been rediscovered, reconsidered, and collected in large anthologies such as *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women* including women who had never been considered seriously or had been elided over time. For example, Harriett E. Wilson, author of the first novel by an African American woman, *Our Nig*, the story of a free black (1859), was "discovered" one hundred and fifty years later in a rare book store by Yale scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr. However, merely unearthing women's literature did not ensure its prominence; in order to assess women's writings, the preconceptions inherent in a literary canon dominated by male beliefs and male writers needed to be reevaluated. Along with Fetterly, other critics such as Elaine Showalter, Annette Kolodny, Sandra Gilbert, and Susan Gubar questioned cultural, sexual, intellectual, and/or psychological stereotypes about women and their literatures using both

essentialist and constructivist models, which we discuss below. The focus upon the silencing and oppressing of women gave way to deeper interrogations of what a history of women's oppression meant. As Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan ask, "Was'woman' something to be escaped from or into?" (528). Though much of the early "sisterhood" solidarity of the women's movement was lost as the field diversified, a good deal of philosophical and political depth was attained as these interrogations became more complex.

### **Research Method**

The study employed a qualitative research design embracing characteristics of a case study in a form of text analysis. Maxwell (1996) states that qualitative research design focuses on specific situations or people and emphasizes on words rather than numbers. The purposes of qualitative research design are to understand the meaning of events, situations, and actions; to understand the particular context of the events, situations, and actions and the influence that this context has on; to identify unanticipated phenomena and influence, and generate new grounded theories; to understand the process by which events and actions take place; and to develop causal explanations of the events, situations, and actions (Maxwell 1996: 17-20).

The method used in this research is descriptive method. Sources of data in this study is the text of the novel *The Bookseller of Kabul* by Asne Seierstad. The data in the form of text units that contain a description of women's

personal existence, a description of the existence of women in the family, and a description of the women in society. The data was collected by reading the source data and the researcher role as an instrument of (human instrument). Researchers conducted the identification, classification, and codification of data based on problems that were examined. This research data collection techniques using the techniques of documentation or library research. Data analysis was performed descriptively with selecting, classifying, interpreting, and interpret data and draw conclusions.

### **Research Finding**

This research use of feminism in the novel *The Bookseller Of Kabul* by Asne Seierstad after analysis, document data obtained as many as 20 datas. The sentences containing the Cultural Feminism are presented partially in the following findings

In the situation that Sharifa, the pensioned-off wife, is waiting in Peshawar. **She has no peace.** She knows that Sultan will turn up one of these days, but he can never be bothered to tell her exactly when he is leaving Kabul, so Sharifa expects him home every hour for days on end.

This content included to the **Cultural Feminism**, because Shafira feel depressed and not have the strength strength to fight with the conditions. It is cultural feminism that contain type of **Natural Feminine Quality** because in this content contains the sensitive of women in touch with emotion that show in the paragraph. It is related to the

theory of Cultural feminism on women's inherent differences from men, including their "natural" kindness, tendencies to nurture, pacifism, relationship focus, and concern for other. Opposes an emphasis on equality and instead argues for increased value placed on culturally designated "women's work".

In the situation if she does not agree to his wishes, he must become more dramatic. '**If you leave me, kill me first! Or I will set fire to the whole world!**'

This content included to the **Cultural feminism**, because Rahimullah does not love to Mansur, and Mansur purpose to kill Rahimullah if she does not accept his love. It is cultural feminism that contains **Mother Earth** because in this content contains the emotional sensitivity and attunement in touch with morality that show in the paragraph. It is related to the theory of Cultural feminism on women's inherent differences from men, including their "natural" kindness, tendencies to nurture, pacifism, relationship focus, and concern for other. Opposes an emphasis on equality and instead argues for increased value placed on culturally designated "women's work".

'What have you done, what have you done? You're a whore,' the uncle screams. '**You are a disgrace to the family. A stain on our honour. A rotten branch.**'

This content included to the **cultural feminism**, because Shaliqa making a mistake and the her uncle was very angry to her, he said Shaliqa are a

disgrace for her family. It is cultural feminism that contains **Natural Feminine Quality** because of their biological and psychological nature, are naturally nurturing, intuitive, sensitive, in touch with emotions, contextual that show in the paragraph. It is related to the theory of Cultural feminism on women's inherent differences from men, including their "natural" kindness, tendencies to nurture, pacifism, relationship focus, and concern for other. Opposes an emphasis on equality and instead argues for increased value placed on culturally designated "women's work".

The aunt hits Saliqa hard on the mouth when she returns, locks her into a room and phones the mother in Islamabad. When the uncle comes home the whole family enters the room and demands to know what she has done. The uncle shakes with anger when he hears about the taxi, the park, and the bench. He grabs a piece of broken wire and beats her repeatedly over the back while her aunt holds on to her. **He hits her face until she bleeds from mouth and nose.**

This content included to **Cultural Feminism**, because because Saliqa weak and helpless, and the visible differences between women and men position there. and different ways to treat women there. It is cultural feminism that contains **Natural Feminine Quality** because of their biological and psychological nature, are naturally nurturing, intuitive, sensitive, in touch with emotions, contextual that show in the paragraph. It is related to the theory of Cultural feminism on women's inherent differences from men, including their

“natural” kindness, tendencies to nurture, pacifism, relationship focus, and concern for other. Opposes an emphasis on equality and instead argues for increased value placed on culturally designated “women’s work”.

## **Discussion**

There is close relationship between the novel literature with English language education is what we can know the language of allusion, imagery, and symbols such as language or style in mind style encompasses all kinds of other meaningful expression with the usual literal meaning of word, phrase, or larger syntactic unit. Therefor, the novel is very important in English language education because the novel is product of man and the created deliberately, always with purpose and meaning, has some values, these values is a function of the novel form. So we know the positive and negative aspects of the value contained in the novel.

*The Bookseller of Kabul* mostly describes the portrayal of women in the context of gender relation in Afghanistan after the fall of Taliban, around 2001s. Story about the father of a family as a bookseller in Kabul who should challenge the government that limits the bookselling for the political need is used merely as background about woman life there. Afghanistan women in general, is that women are covered in foreign cultures. Typically village women in Afghanistan do not speak with men, especially foreign men in military uniforms. Afghan women are restricted by their cultureand are sensitive to cultural issues. They accept their lives and rarely question the

restrictions placed on them by society, religion and Afghan culture. In Afghanistan the family is the most important element of a woman’s life. Often an Afghan family is made up of a woman, her husband, sons, daughters, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandmother, grandfather and grandchildren, and they all live under one roof. A typical Afghan family has from six to ten children. It seems that the author attempts to judge the gender relation in Afghanistan from the perspective of a western people as she stated in the foreword. In this case the writer analyzed the characteristics of Afghan women under burka in the novel represented by the author as contemplation for the writer and the writer’s life and take good value from the novel. Also the writer wants to give information to the people who less understanding about fiction and to be better in comprehending the content of story.

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