



A STUDY OF ABJECTION IN FERYAL ALI GAUHAR'S AN ABUNDANCE OF WILD ROSES

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Abstract

This study investigates objects and actions that make the individuals especially female individuals fearful and uncomfortable by examining Feryal ali Gauhars An Abundance of Wild Roses through Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection. The concept of abjection by Julia Kristeva appears when exclusion among individuals' shape's identity, authority, and moral order. The concept of abjection helps the communities to stay united without external threats and horror of society. Theory of abjection focuses on the fearful events in the text like wounded strangers, rebellious women, and damaged nature which release horror among individuals. These individuals disrupt stability. They are not completely accepted and not rejected in the whole text. They remind about vulnerability and mortality. This study also examines patriarchal, religious and environmental issues through the theory of abjection by Julia Kristeva. It shows how the text uses abjection as an important theme. In the text sympathy for others becomes limited because some lives are seen as less valuable. Silence and repression in society create more suffering instead of solving problems. The research argues that the text criticizes social, religious, and patriarchal systems. These systems make cruelty appear normal because they treat certain lives as unimportant or not worthy of mourning. The study also suggests that the text encourages readers to think again about sympathy, responsibility, empathy, and peaceful coexistence in a society that shaped fear and exclusion.

Keywords: *Abjection, Ecological Dispossession, Kristevan Psychoanalysis*

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1. Introduction

Feryal Ali Gauhar holds an important place in contemporary Pakistani literature. She graduated from Kinnaird college in Lahore and Sweet Briar in Virginia, USA. Then she read political economy at McGill University, Montreal and studied media education at University of London. She served as the United Nations goodwill ambassador for population fund from 1999 to 2004. She was also lecturer at most prestigious institutions like National Defense University, Civil Services Academy and National Institute of Management. Basically, her fiction closely engages with issues of power, marginalization, and moral responsibility. She is famous in the world of literature for her little piece of fiction *An Abundance of Wild Roses*. In her writing, Gauhar repeatedly focuses on questions of social injustice, patriarchal voices, and the damaged relationship between humans and the natural world. She is also author of two more novels like *No space for further burials* and *A scent of wet in August*. Her fiction work shows a deep awareness of how authority functions within a small and localized community. These communities are often shaped by rigid patriarchal traditions, political neglect, and environmental vulnerability. Gauhar's work plays an important role to those voices which are usually ignored or silenced. Instead of focusing on elite or urban lives she places her narratives in remote and contested regions. These landscapes are marked by isolation, fear, and deeply rooted customs in society. Within these such spaces power is maintained through silence, tradition, and social pressure. This setting of her works allows Gauhar to examine how control operates in everyday life. It affects bodies, personal relationships, and moral choices of individuals. Her portrayal of rural life is not romanticized. So she presents these spaces as complicated sites where belonging and oppression exist side by side. Gauhar's strength in her works show suffering in a simple and real way without making it dramatic or exaggerated. She brings hidden pain of society in front of readers but stays careful and respectful. Her stories are not just only showing violence but left a deep think. But they ask important questions from society like how violence slowly becomes normal and accepted by people. Because her work connects with ideas about exclusion, rejection, and who belongs in society. This type of writing makes her an important figure in contemporary fiction. This research approaches Gauhar's *An Abundance of Wild Roses* through Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection. Kristeva's idea of abjection helps us to understand society works in a simple way. Society builds its own identity by rejecting factors that disturb order and stability. Basically abjection happens when boundaries of society break. Or when someone feels disgusted or disturbed mentally or socially. So these boundaries are between good and bad, self and other, pure and impure, life and death. The abject is not something outside the society but it is created by society itself or sometimes by nature. When society tries to remove it then it does not disappear. It stays and troubles the whole system from within. This theoretical perspective of text is relevant to *An Abundance of Wild Roses*. The text

is deeply concerned with injured bodies, silenced women, marginalized lives, and a natural world pushed to its limits. Throughout the text Gauhar presents the figures which resist clear classification. These include an unnamed wounded stranger who exists between survival and erasure. They also include women whose desires and movements challenge patriarchal authority. The landscape itself refuses to remain passive under human control. These elements disturb the moral certainty of the community. As the writer unfolds the text which reveals how compassion becomes conditional. Certain lives of individuals judged by impure, threatening, or disposable. Once marked in this way they are denied care and recognition. Through these restrictions the text exposes the ethical cost of maintaining social order through exclusion. By applying Kristeva's theory of abjection this research argues that the violence in the text not isolated or accidental. It is structural. Abjection operates as a guiding logic. It justifies cruelty, sustains gendered oppression, and renders suffering invisible. At the same time the text simply represent abjection. It actively questions the social systems that rely on it. The text exposes how fear of contamination whether physical or moral destroys empathy and collective responsibility. By exploring the abjection this research positions *An Abundance of Wild Roses* as an important contribution to contemporary South Asian literature. It connects the text to broader discussions in psychoanalytic and ethical criticism. Ultimately the text forces readers to confront what societies habitually cast out in the name of order.

1.1. Research Objectives

- 1.To explore the objects or actions that make characters disgusted.
- 2.To identify key factors in the text that disturb social orders.

1.2. Research Questions

- What things create feelings of fear among individuals?
- How does objects or actions make the whole society fearful?

2. Literature Review

The concept of abjection by Julia Kristeva has an important theoretical tool in literary studies. In her book *Powers of Horror* Kristeva explains abjection as a feeling of horror and disgust that arises when boundaries of something break down (Krestiva 1-5). These suffering boundaries include self and other, clean and unclean, and life and death. The abject is not simply something dirty. But it is something that disturbs identity and order of community. It creates fear among individuals because it exists on the edge of meaning. This concept of abjection is useful for studying texts that deal with suffering, decay, violence of whole society.

Kristeva in her book argues that the human subject is formed by repelling what is considered impure. The abject must be pushed away from society to maintain identity and understanding. However it never be fully disappears. It remains close and continues to disturb the subject of society. This idea is important in literature where characters face

physical and emotional breakdown by nature or disturbing events. The abject often appears through the body especially by fluids, wounds, and decays of society. It also appears in the form of the corpse. That is one of the strongest examples of abjection in whole text. The dead body is both human and non-human. It breaks the boundary between life and death. Because it creates deep discomfort and social tension among individuals. Many scholars have extended Kristeva's idea of abjection in different directions. Barbara Creed was an acclaimed Australian feminist film criticist and academic theorist. She was well known for her work on gender representation in cinema, particularly in the horror genre. She was identified and prominent scholar in feminist film theory. Barbara Creed in her book *The Monstrous-Feminine* applies abjection to female bodies. She argues in her book that women are often shown as sources of horror due to their biological functions. She explains that female body is linked with impurity in many cultural narratives (Creed 8-11). This idea of Barbara Creed helps in understanding how female characters are treated in societies. In *An Abundance of Wild Roses* women are controlled and punished by patriarchal system which cause abjection for females. Their bodies and desires are treating as dangerous systems of society. Similarly a professor and literary scholar Judith Butler discusses the idea of exclusion in his book *Bodies That Matter*. He explains that society creates norms and values that excludes those who do not fit in society. These excluded bodies become as "abject. Butler's theory supports Kristeva's idea of abjection that identity is formed through rejection (Butler 35-40). In Gauhar's text characters who do not follow social rules are pushed aside in society. They are denied respect and voice. The connection between abjection and social power is further explored and discussed by Michel Foucault. In his book *Discipline and Punish* Foucault explains how power controls bodies and behaviour of individuals. He shows that society uses punishment and surveillance to maintain order which causes abjection among individuals. This idea is useful for understanding how abjection is produced (Foucault 38-64). In text of *An Abundance of Wild Roses* characters are disturbing through fear and violence. This situation reflects how power creates categories of purity and impurity. In postcolonial studies abjection linked with marginalization and identity loss. Homi K. Bhabha a great literary philosopher in his book *The Location of Culture* (1994) explains how identities of individuals are unstable and shaped by cultural conflicts in society. He argues that the "other" is seeing as inferior in society. This concept connects with abjection where certain people are rejected by society due to different matters (Bhabha 94-120). So Gauhars an abundance of wild roses deals characters like Lasnik are treated as less than human. This situation reflects social and cultural exclusion among individuals. Trauma theory also supports the idea of abjection in this text. Cathy Caruth a great literary scholar in her book *Unclaimed Experience* explains that trauma disrupts normal understanding of individuals. It creates confusion and repetition among society. Traumatic events return in disturbing

ways of community. This is similar to abjection where the rejected element continues to disturb the subject. In the text characters experience emotional and physical trauma due to harsh weather. Their suffering is repeated and unresolved. The theme of violence in text is also significant in understanding abjection. Elaine Scarry a literary philosopher in her book *The Body in Pain* explains how physical pain destroys language and identity of society. She argues that pain reduces the human body to an object. This idea can be applied to Gauhar's novel, where violence is used to control and punish. The human body becomes a site of suffering and loss of identity. In feminist related literary studies abjection connected with patriarchy. Mary Douglas, in *Purity and Danger* explains how societies create rules about cleanliness and pollution. She argues that these rules are used to maintain social order of a community. This idea supports Kristeva's theory of abjection (Douglas 56). In patriarchal societies women are linked with impurity or treated with inequality. Their actions are strictly controlled by male individuals. In *An Abundance of Wild Roses* female individuals face strong social restrictions and barriers. They are punished for breaking norms and values. The other works of Feryal Ali Gauhar reflect many theoretical ideas. In her novel *An Abundance of Wild Roses* a dark and complex world is presenting. It shows the suffering of individuals under disturbed social system. Critics have strong opinion that Gauhar's writing focuses on themes of trauma, gender, and power. However the application of abjection theory to her novel remains limited and selected. This creates a strong research gap. In this novel abjection appears clearly through the human body. There are repeated descriptions of illness, wounds, and bodily fluids in text which causes fear and disgust. These images create discomfort and highlight the fragility of the body in whole text. According to Julia Kristeva these representations are central to abjection. They disturb the idea of a stable identity. The characters are unable to maintain control over their bodies. This situation reflects their weak position in society. The presence of injured stranger in the novel also reflects abjection. The dead like body creates fear and confusion among whole community. It is both familiar and strange. Kristeva explains the corpse forces the subject to confront death. Social abjection is another key point in text. Characters like Lasnik and injured men are treated as outsiders. They compared to animals and denied dignity. This situation reflects Butler's idea of excluded bodies. It also supports Bhabha's concept of the "other." These individuals exist on the margins of society. Their presence in society challenges social norms but they are not accepted in community. Muniha Saleem and her co author in their article *Female Marginality in Contemporary Pakistan: A Feminist Critique of Feryal Ali Gauhar's An Abundance of Wild Roses* describes how women are treated badly or exploited in a patriarchal society. It also causes abjection in female characters (Muniha Saleem 4). Another work related to female abjection performed by Sawera Bibi and her co author by using title of *ECOFEMINISM AND PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION: THE VIOLENCE OF EXTRACTION IN*

GAUHAR'S AN ABUNDANCE OF WILD ROSES. This article articulates the significant of female characters in society. It also analyses the causes of abjection among female characters in an abundance of wild roses. The novel critiques development models that depend on the exploitation of natural resources, demonstrating the interconnectedness of patriarchy and environmental degradation. The novel demonstrates an intersectional logic of oppression, where the degradation of the environment is inextricably linked to the subjugation of women. Gauhar portrays female characters not merely as victims, but as subversive figures who bear and preserve cultural and ecological tradition (Sawera Bibi 6). So another work related to gauhars an abundance of wild roses and abjection is Environmental Crisis and Trauma in Faryal Ali Gauhar's An Abundance of Wild Roses by Dr.Tayyaba Yasmin and her co-author. They describe trauma in text as abjection among individuals. This study of work representation of environmental trauma in Feryal Ali Gauhar's An Abundance of Wild Roses with the objective of understanding how ecological disturbance shapes the emotional and psychological lives of a rural community. Grounded in environmental trauma theory and eco-criticism, the research challenges conventional trauma narratives that prioritize war or personal loss by foregrounding the slow, pervasive impact of environmental degradation (Dr.Tayyaba Yasmin 8). Mostly studies on Gauhar's An Abundance of Wild Roses focus on its major themes like nature, culture, and survival. Some of them have explored the ways the novel which shows social and physical abjection. There is limited but not proper research on how abjection shapes the characters' identities and their relationship with society. No study related to this text fully examines the connection between the environment, human fragility, and social rejection in order to abjection. By exploring these aspects can provide new insight into the texts deeper social and psychological layers.

2.1. Text Analysis

An Abundance of Wild Roses presents a society where fear, silence, and anxiety disturb the lives of individuals. These disturbing actions realized through Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection. Julia Kristeva explains that abjection happens when something disturbs the social order of individual's life. It threatens the boundaries which give the people a sense of stability, meaning, and safety. Abjection refers to something that is treated as dirty, disturbing, or unwanted event that individuals try to reject it. It is not something openly violent or physically harmful. But it is the action that feels uncomfortable, confusing, and dangerous. Because it cannot be clearly named or controlled. In the text fear does not come directly but from hidden tensions inside the community. Where individuals are constantly judging each other and protecting themselves. This type of fear becomes stronger when characters face harsh objects that break the normal rules of society like suffering, difference, freedom, or moral responsibility. The text of An Abundance of Wild Roses shows how abjection in society

affects the lives of individuals. In the text men individual holds social and cultural power. While women individuals are expected to remain obedient and silent. So female characters are facing emotional pain, restriction, and lack of freedom in society. Their emotions and feelings are not considering equal and not give them importance in society. So the concept of abjection referred by Julia Kristeva used to understand this affected areas. In the text many individuals experience this type of harsh rejection. They are pushed to the margins of social life. But their identities and actions are weakened by abjection. The text also describes how an affected society tries to control individuals actions and behavior. individuals are expected to follow traditional rules and cultural expectations. When they cannot meet this type of expectations then they face criticism and social pressure. This condition of society reflects abjection because the individual's identity becomes limited or suppress. Through this experience the text also presents a critical view of individual power in society. It shows unequal power relations among individuals which create suffering and emotional struggle for women of society. To this extent the text highlights the effect of abjection in society and reveals how social systems can push certain individuals to the margins of society. So the shadow of abjection from Julia Kristeva placed over *An Abundance of Wild Roses* by Feryal Ali Gauhar. The story begins to reveal many darker layers. Abjection appears in story whenever a person is treated as fearful, shameful, or socially unwanted. In this text the feeling of abjection grows out of social fear, and silence. It is present in different events. It spreads across the lives of several characters like a long shadow. So there are different examples of abjection in text which analyses the objects. In the text abjection appears in both physical and social orders. The story shows a place where normal life is disturbing by violence, loss, and environmental disorders. These conditions of society create feelings of fear and rejection. There are different points where abjection appear in whole text. Basically physical abjection directly disturbs individuals physically. But social issues create tension and discomfort among individuals' minds. In the text abjection first appears among individuals in the condition of environment. The land of village is dirty or disable to grow crops. It is shown as damaged and polluted land. This condition of land makes the individuals feelings uncomfortable. Nature the most important segment for individuals living which should give a comfortable life does not look healthy. It feels strange and disturbing among society. The reader of text also feels that something is wrong and disturbing in this society. In community there is no clear line between life and decay. Living and non-living or dead elements seem mixed together in whole society. This situation creates unease. In this way the environment becomes abject because it loses the natural purity and balance of society. In text abjection also appears in human suffering. The characters of community face illness, pain, and deep sadness due to harsh weathers. Their bodies become weak and tired. This condition of individual shows how fragile the human body is. When the community saw an injured person whole community feel

uncomfortable. In this society an injured stranger is often ignored or avoided. People do not want to face such pain. This situation of society creates distance. The normal image of a healthy body is broken. The body no longer feels strong or safe. In this way bodily weakness becomes abject and disturbing for both the character and the reader in whole text. A third point of abjection defending in the text shows social abjection. Some characters like injured stranger, nurse, Sabiha, are treated as less important and are ignored by society. They are pushing to the margins and are not given respect or voice in society. These are looking like exploited or marginalized voices. This situation of community reflects how society creates “others” and rejects them. These characters of society feel isolated and powerless which causes their suffering. Another important aspect in text is psychological abjection. Many characters in society struggle with fear, memory, and inner conflict due to harsh effects of community. They feel lost and disconnected from other individuals of community. Their identity becomes unstable due to harsh sufferings of community. This condition shows how abjection is not only external but also internal. The characters cannot fully understand or accept their own experiences in society. One of the clearest social abjection examples is the harsh experience of Sabiha. When her father Moosa Madad finds the love letter his reaction is not based on care or understanding. He believes that his daughter has damaged the honor of the family. By using as a base of this belief he slaps her and locks her in a small dark storeroom. So this is harsh event of abjection for his daughter. She becomes a source of shame. This is the shadow of abjection. Patriarchal like honor turns a young girl into something that must be hidden and controlled. The same fearful shadow also falls on Fatimah, Sabiha’s mother that can cause abjection. She feels deep sympathy for her daughter and tries to defend her but she cannot openly challenge Moosa’s authority. Because females are facing harsh patriarchal orders. Her silence against Moosa shows another form of abjection. In community she lives inside the same house but exploited. Her marginalized voice carries little value in the patriarchal community. This harsh suffering reveals how women are pushed into a position where they must face injustice without protest. So a darker form of abjection appears in the story of Kulsoom. Her husband wants a son but she repeatedly gives birth to daughters. Due to this natural order he punished his wife. In this system the worth of a woman individual becomes tied to production of a male child. Kulsoom begins to feel fear and shame because she cannot meet this expectation. Then she has marginalized or exploited voice which have not any physical sound. Her suffering not loudly discuss in society. So that this is showing another sign of abjection among individuals. Another character Zarina the witnesses in this painful reality. As a health worker in community she moves through the community and sees the silent wounds of women. When she prepares Kulsoom’s dead body for burial and notices the bruises it’s like how violence has been concealed behind ordinary village life. The reactions of Zarina shows compassion which she also realizes how deeply these

problems are rooted in social traditions or culture. In the text abjection also appears through social attitudes and works. When a woman is accused of dishonour people quickly judge her. Sympathy becomes limited in community. Because society believes that family reputation is more important than feelings of the individual. In such cases the community itself becomes part of the system that pushes many people to the margins. As women are treating badly through patriarchy as the nature is treating male individuals with harsh events and actions. A stranger in community is harshly injured through storm which is natural phenomenon. Another male or female characters are facing harsh storm which directly affected by nature. The weather in text is harsh and affecting by natural disorders. So individuals are facing abjection by harsh weather as women by patriarchy. Through these examples of abjection the text shows how patriarchy produces abjection again and again in a community or males are affecting. Women are silenced, blamed, or ignored in a patriarchal community when they fail to follow strict social rules of males. Their actions, emotions, bodies, and identities become controlled by ideas of honour and shame in whole society. The writer is quietly exposing this cruelty of women in whole text. And invites the reader to see the hidden suffering that exists behind everyday social order. So the whole story reveals that abjection is not only a personal feeling but it is a social condition created by power, fear, and tradition among individuals. So the lives of Sabiha, Fatimah, and Kulsoom show how deeply this condition can shape human experience and suffering. Basically, Literature sometimes works like a lantern in a dark room. Once the light is turned on, the hidden structures of power begin to appear. So as women are rejecting patriarchy as male individuals are repelling harsh storm. But they cannot because it is natural phenomenon and patriarchy is culture. The text also connects abjection with trauma. Violence and loss leave deep remarks on both individuals and the environment. The characters cannot easily escape these experiences. As a result, abjection becomes a constant presence in their lives.

3. Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative research approach. It focuses on close reading of text. The original text for this study is *An Abundance of Wild Roses* by Feryal Ali Gauhar. The research does not use numbers or surveys or quantitative methods. It only studies the text in detail by applying Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection. So the study applies Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection as the main theoretical framework. This concept helps to understand ideas of suffering, fear, and the breakdown of boundaries between self and other. The research also reads the text carefully and selects important scenes, characters, and events that show suffering, death, illness, and social destruction. In this research the text is thematically analyzed by using the concept of abjection. The main focus is on how characters face physical weakness, emotional pain, and social rejection in community. The research also studies how society in the text treats some individuals as outsiders or

strangers. In this study Special attention is given to women, children, and weak individuals in society that are facing fear and social pain. The research uses secondary sources including books, journal articles, and previous studies on abjection theory and the text. These sources help to support the analysis of research and give a better understanding related to topic. Descriptive and interpretive research methods are using in this study. The research explains the meaning of different ideas and connects them with the main theory. Simple examples from the text are used to support each point. So this methodology explore how abjection is present in the text and how it shapes characters and society in a clear and meaningful way.

3.1. Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection. Abjection refers to feeling of fear, disgust, or rejection when something breaks normal boundaries of something. It happens when there is confusion between self and other, life and death, or clean and unclean. According to Julia Kristeva individuals and societies create order by rejecting what they see as disturbing or impure matters. In this research abjection is used to understand the text of *An Abundance of Wild Roses* by Feryal Ali Gauhar. The theory of abjection helps to explain how characters face suffering, illness, death, and social rejection. These situations create fear and discomfort among individuals. Basically the framework focuses on three main areas. First physical abjection where the human body shows weakness through pain, injury, or illness. Second is social abjection where some characters are treated as outsiders and are not accepted by society or social disturbance. Third is the psychological abjection where characters feel fear, shame, or emotional pain in society. So the framework helps to study how boundaries are broken in the text. It also shows how identity is shaped when people are rejected. By using abjection theory the research explains the deeper meaning of human suffering and social conditions in the text. Overall this theoretical framework provides a clear way to analyze the text and understand how abjection plays an important role in shaping characters and their experiences.

3.2. Delimitations

This study only focuses on Feryal Ali Gauhars *An Abundance of Wild Roses*. It does not include any other novels or texts. The research also uses only Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection. Other theories or ideas not discussed in this study. The study is limited to selected themes in text such as suffering, illness, death, and social rejection. It does not cover all themes of the text. Only important characters and key events are analyzed. Minor details are not discussed. This research is based on qualitative analysis. It does not use surveys, interviews, or numerical data. The focus is mainly on literary analysis. Historical and political details are not deeply explored.

4. Conclusion

Feryal Ali Gauhar's *An Abundance of Wild Roses* presents a vivid imagery where human life, harsh nature, and disturbed society are closely connected. The text shows how characters are facing suffering, fear, and loss. These harsh experiences reveal how physical fragility of human and vulnerability of people in harsh environments. Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection analysis the text which portrays what society rejects or ignores. Characters who are facing illness, injury, or social exclusion become abject. This situation highlighting the tension between self and other. The text also shows social abjection through harsh traditions of weather, gender roles, and power structures in whole community. Women and children are especially vulnerable, and their marginalization reflects the societal fear of disorder. Acts of violence against individuals show how communities maintain order by excluding those who threaten norms and values of society. Abjection in the text is not only physical but also emotional and psychological. Characters in text struggle with trauma, grief, and shame. Abjection allows readers to see how these forms of rejection shape identity and behavior of individuals. The text also emphasizes that human suffering is intertwined with social and environmental forces. By applying abjection concept the research highlights the texts focus on the limits of human endurance and societal norms. So collectively this study shows that *An Abundance of Wild Roses* can be better understood through the lens of abjection. It reveals the unseen pain, fear, and rejection that shape the lives of characters in story. So this conclusion underscores the importance of studying abjection to understand both the physical and social dimensions of text. Through fear and discomfort in society *An Abundance of Wild Roses* illustrates how abjection operates within everyday life of individuals. Characters fear what disrupts order and feel uneasy when moral boundaries are challenged or pushed to margins. By applying Kristeva's theory of abjection it is clear that violence and exclusion in text are not accidental but planned. They are sustaining by fear and silence of society. Gauhar's text exposes the emotional and ethical costs of maintaining social order through abjection.

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