



**HEGEMONIC POWER: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE
ANALYSIS IN AHMAD'S *THE WONDERING
FALCON* AND BAPSI SIDHWA'S
*THE PAKISTANI BRIDE***

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Abstract

This research paper compares the discursive construction of hegemonic power/gender discrimination in *The Pakistani Bride* by Bapsi Sidhwa and *The Wandering Falcon* by Jamil Ahmad in the framework of critical discourse analysis as presented by Norman Fairclough (1992). The paper explores the way these two novels portray the institutionalized oppression of women, orphans and displaced tribes within the tribal societies of the northwestern frontier of Pakistan, where there is a patriarchal society. The analysis shows that discrimination works in three interlaced processes: textual features like lexicalization and transitivity construct discriminative hierarchies as natural; discursive processes, like intertextuality and silencing, naturalize discrimination; and social processes demonstrate how discrimination fulfills ideological functions. The comparative aspect reveals that the psychological realism of Sidhwa uncovers discrimination in the depths of female consciousness; the detached episodic form of Ahmad introduces discrimination as an objective power, which is inherent in tribal social organization. The novels represent discrimination as victims internalize the sense of their devaluation; a process that the study defines as discursive victimhood. The work adds to the postcolonial feminist criticism by applying CDA to the situations where the discriminating power of the state is substituted by the power of kinship.

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis, Fairclough, Gender Discrimination, The Pakistani Bride, The Wandering Falcon*

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1. Introduction

The Pakistani Bride and *The Wandering Falcon* are notable novels of Pakistani literature in English that address complex issues of the power balance and problems with identity. This research uses Fairclough's three-dimensional method of critical discourse analysis to explore these themes under study in the novels. The primary focal point of the current research is the way the chosen texts construct and create problems of language/discourses, identity crisis, women's marginalization, abuses of power, and response to power under the umbrella of critical discourse analysis. Mullet (2018) argues that CDA is an interdisciplinary method that provides an elaborate framework to analyze social issues within a social context in literature.

This qualitative research examines how meaning is constructed/reconstructed in different discourses regarding ethnicity, gender, power exercising, and power relationships by analyzing interdiscursive features in the novels *The Wandering Falcon* and *The Pakistani Bride*. It is the examination of the relationship between diverse discourses to see the complex process of meaning production by multiple relations that produce new discourses. This paper explores the ways in which gender and power relations are constructed socially and the way they are interconnected with significant relationships among various discourses. Nevertheless, the purpose of the author does play some part in creating these texts as social spaces where individuals can debate and construct discourses. In addition, the present article attempts to discuss power relations and concerns of discrimination in the chosen novels through a critical discourse analysis using the three-dimensional approach suggested by Fairclough. Power abuse and marginalization of men/women are the key problems of the study. Critical Discourse Analysis is a multidisciplinary methodology that can deal with all these social problems.

Overall, *The Pakistani Bride* highlights the multi-issue form of power and identity, especially in Pakistani tribal areas in Kohistan. These complex and multiple issues, however, have historically been present in Pathan society and are being exercised through various waves. Gender inequality/discrimination and power abuse are standard practices in Pathan society, based on unequal social and ethnic distribution. Sidhwa's approach unveils that Pathans are cruel, uncivilized, savage, and rustic, yet Sidhwa has acknowledged them as good protectors, providers, and proprietors of their families (Rath & Mishra, 2023).

On the other hand, Jamil Ahmad served as a bureaucrat in Frontier province and Baluchistan, and he was posted as an ambassador in Kabul during the critical time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. *The Wandering Falcon* is a debatable book, grounded on his observation and experiences about the unsettled tribes inhabiting Waziristan, Baluchistan, and the Swat region in the tribal areas. Ahmad exposes the historical documents about the diehard culture codes, customs, and the traditional life ways of ethnic groups in the Pakistani tribal areas (Ahmed, 2023). *The Wandering Falcon* provides a historical account of tribal people and relates the concerns of language, identity, and power through the voice of Tor Baz. This novel by Ahmad, which takes place between Pakistan and Afghanistan, focuses on the tribal culture that is prevalent in the northern regions of Pakistan.

2. Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis is a multidisciplinary field that focuses on spoken and written texts to unveil formal and informal causes of power exercise, inequality, dominance, and bias issues in social science. An investigation into how such discursive presentations is reproduced and preserved within specific historical and socio-political contexts is also included. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a method that originates in several domains and emphasizes the social analysis of discourse (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). It is different from other approaches in the theory and methods it employs, as well as the types of research hypotheses it is designed to address. Currently, Fairclough keeps CDA on two platforms, i.e., theoretically and methodologically. Theoretically, CDA approaches the social ontological and abstract structure of social events (reality) as a dialectical point of view of a relationship between social elements and discourse or social practice and events. (Harvey 1996). CDA is a 'transdisciplinary' method that uses different types of dialogues with other theories and disciplines to deal with contemporary concerns of social change.

According to Sum and Jessop (2001), the term transdisciplinary is used to explain the fact that the theoretical and methodological development of CDA (the latter of which encompasses the development of methods of analysis) develops and builds on dialogues. It concerns working with (yet not at all merely appropriating) the logic and categories of the other in order to build up one theory and a methodology (Fairclough, 1995). Critical discourse analysis is research that belongs to the type of discourse analysis. The major interest of this kind of research, according to Van Dijk (2008), is to examine how text and speaking in the social and political setting enact, continue, and challenge social power abuse, dominance and inequality. Also, Wodak (2002) elaborates on the studies that have been conducted by Van Dijk (2008) by saying that critical discourse analysis (CDA) focuses on social inequality in its articulation, construction, legitimization, etc., using the language (or discourse). This paper aims to review two books covering issues of bias, such as identity crisis, power abuse, gender inequality, nationalism, and ethnicity. Consequently, it can be appropriate to apply Critical Discourse Analysis to the chosen Pakistani fiction in English to discuss the way in which the discourse producer brings the problem of identity and power up and exercises the patterns of the language use and patterns of language use (Griffin, 2005). The distinctive comparison of Critical Discourse Analysis, discourse studies, discursive presentation, and Three Dimensions of Fairclough (1989) will be given in Chapter II (Literature Review) of this study.

3. Gender Discrimination

Sexism is a social and conversational practice that unfairly treats women because of their gender distinctions. Van Dijk (2005) defines sexism as men's control over women based on false ideas about gender disparities. Sexism is not just social and discursive; it is also socio-cognitive because sexist discourses create sexist beliefs and attitudes and manifest them through discursive actions. Similarly, Lazar (2007) believes that gender is an intellectual framework in today's society that divides people into men and women based on sexual differences that make males more powerful and women more submissive.

These distinctions in sex also split men and women into two groups based on their traits, work, and life experiences. The concept of sexism is rooted in the artificial gender dichotomy and common beliefs and imagery that accompany it.

Mills et al. (2008) do not consider that 'sexism' is only the way one person talks and acts in a discriminatory way. She says that sexism is caused and kept going by bigger social factors and imbalances of power in institutions. She analyzes her study of sexism both linguistically and pragmatically. It does not merely seek to identify the problem of sexism in language but it also analyses the impact of the words used and their real implication on the situation by the person who is speaking or writing. According to the author, in order to understand sexism in totality, we must consider it as a judgment about the use of certain words and specific facts and linguistic and social histories are employed to support the judgment (Mills, 2008). She views the issue of sexism as a struggle for possession of resources and power (Mills, 2008).

4. Methodology

The framework of this study is based on Fairclough's (1992, 2001a) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for *The Pakistani Bride* and *The Wandering Falcon*. The study aims to be clear, systematic, and academic. The study's frameworks include the three-dimensional approach by Fairclough, at levels of text (Description), discursive practice (Interpretation), and social practice (Explanation). The 'text' dimension involves a detailed examination of the novels as texts for vocabulary, grammar, and text structure: it has to do with understanding how language works in books, of the patterns/ideologies embedded in linguistic choices. The 'discursive practice' dimension asks- how these texts are being produced, circulated, and consumed, considering both the socio-cultural context of the authors as well as that of readers. The social practice dimension ultimately investigates the broader social and political contexts in which such discourses are performed, linking textual traits to broader power dynamics and ideological frameworks present within Pakistani society. The approach will give depth to how Sidhwa and Ahmad illustrate themes of Power, identity, and cultural clashes.

5. Data Analysis

This research is specifically based on the discursive construction of gender and ethnic discrimination in *The Pakistani Bride* and *The Wandering Falcon* using the three-dimensional critical discourse analysis framework by Norman Fairclough (1992). At the textual level, the analysis explores linguistic aspects that create gender discrimination, such as lexical aspects that refer to women as property and a woman as a victim of violence, transitivity patterns that place men as active actors and women as passive victims of violence. In the case of ethnic discrimination, the discussion centers on lexicalizations which form tribal identity as savage, backward, or honorable, and the use of pronouns which establish we/they divisions between tribal insiders and state outsiders.

At the level of discursive practice, the paper tracks intertextuality in how both novels invoke discourses of Pashtunwali (tribal honor code) to justify gender discrimination and how state bureaucratic discourse is invoked to disenfranchise ethnic tribal identities as an illegible and threatening other. The analysis further looks at the way female characters engage and resist oppressive discourses and tribal voices that are

mediated by state narratives. At the social practice level, the analysis relates gender discrimination to the patriarchal formations that make women the storehouses of male honor, and ethnic discrimination to the historical discrimination of tribal people by the post-colonial Pakistani state.

The comparative aspect shows that the novel by Sidhwa foreshadows gender discrimination in a way of the mental exploration of Zaitoon. On the contrary, the novel by Ahmad focuses on ethnic discrimination by depriving nomadic tribes. Nevertheless, both readings end up proving that gender and ethnic discrimination are intersected and mutually reinforced under the tribal patriarchal system.

5.1. Discrimination in The Wandering Falcon

In *The Wandering Falcon*, discrimination is working across several overlapping dimensions, which include the women, ethnic minorities, and the nomadic tribes of the tribal heartland of Pakistan in its northwestern frontier. The treatment of women is most clearly seen as gender discrimination where they are sold and bought at slave markets indiscriminately, traded as a means of redressing blood feuds, and honor killed in case of sexual transgression. This brutal reality is set by the first story of the novel when the couple eloping across the tribal boundaries are hunted and killed, as the woman is killed due to her father, the tribal chief, and the death of the woman was a question of honor. In the novel, women are always presented as objects of exchange, but never as agents, with their bodies as the currency by which male honor is calculated and conflicts resolved.

5.1.1. Discourse on Patriarchal Hegemony

This passage is a strong literary part where we see how firmly patriarchal oppression is rooted. The concept of hegemony of Antonio Gramsci, applied in the context of Fairclough in CDA, does not imply direct domination (Donoghue, M. 2018). It also implies disseminating a ruling ideology as common sense, in a way that its power structures are perceived to be so natural, inevitable and beyond challenge that all, even the oppressed in the society, feel the same.

1) Text

"Who is it, wanting to know?" a woman's voice shouted back. "It is I, Hamesh Gul, Amir Khan's son-in-law." "Which daughter of mine have you married?"... "The one after the eldest. I have brought two guests." After a minute or two, the door was unlatched and an old woman beckoned us inside. We tied the mules outside. As we entered, she caught Hamesh Gul by his sleeve. "How is my daughter?" she asked. "She is well," he replied. "I will ask her to look you up." It was not until later that I came to know that Hamesh Gul had never visited his in-laws, nor had the old woman seen her daughter after the marriage. That was now more than twenty years ago" (Ahmad, 2014; p.115).

2) Description

The use of language is a social construction that women are nonexistent and disposable at the textual level. The obvious side of the identity is that of the daughter who is completely unidentified. The noticeable aspect of identity is the daughter's total lack of identification. The expressions "Amir Khan's son-in-law," "Which daughter of mine," and "The one after the eldest" are used to describe her in relation to males. It is the consequence of this nominalization that deprives her of a name and even a distinct identity herself by

reducing her to a category holder within a kinship system that men have constructed. She is a unit of exchange rather than a human being. The discourse is not just a family bond but more like a business deal. In the line "Which daughter... married?", the question the mother poses indicates that her children are a group of some sort (my daughters), and she must be told which of these group members is being referred to. It influences her position in the chain. The identification procedure is finished with Hamesh Gul's response, "The one after the eldest," which lacks any personal or emotional resonance. This discussion is one of barter and not individual connections. Hamesh Gul's pledge, "I will ask her to look you up," has a noteworthy modality, or level of boldness. It is a meaningless display of authority. His authority on the topic is never questioned, and he declares an action he has no intention of carrying out. This empty promise reinforces his position as the gatekeeper of the connections and mobility of his wife.

3) Interpretation and Explanation

The selected excerpt illustrates how hegemony is continued through collective, implicit cultural knowledge.

The passage's strength lies in the shocking revelation that follows: Hamesh Gul had not seen his in-laws, nor had the old woman seen her daughter since the marriage. It had been over two decades since then. The important thing about this plot in CDA is that it is revealed to both the narrator and the reader, but it is not a conflict among the characters. This is a normalized, albeit painful, reality for Hamesh Gul and his mother after 20 years. This is the culture of hegemony; a highly repressive norm is embraced as the way things are.

The Complicit Silence of the mother: The actions of the old woman primarily indicate hegemonic control. She does not insist on visiting her daughter; she does not object. She is waiting, stealthily seeking news, and taking the vain pledge. She has internalized patriarchal system rules and this is indicated by her quiet desperation. She is aware of her location and the scope of her influence and this shows how the operation of hegemony works by getting the subordinated to give consent.

The discourse's relation to broader sociocultural practices constructs the severe, materialistic reality it supports.

The convention constructed in the selected text is not a social tradition as it is, but a sociocultural tradition aimed at consolidating patrilineal authority. The system guarantees a woman's complete economic and social reliance on her husband's clan by permanently severing her final connection to her maternal family. She is his possession, and any interference with her birth family is destroyed. This is a way of managing reproduction, succession and tribal affiliations.

The Ideology of Erasure: The text shows that discourse is the main instrument of this ideology. Anonymity is an active language that generates the social erasure of women (which daughter?). The discourse renders their personal pain and solitude invisible and inaccessible to the workings of the tribal society by not referring to them. The authority of the patriarchs (both the father and the husband) is replicated each time a daughter is mentioned in this transactional, anonymous manner.

5.1.2. Discourse on Gendered Agency and Passivity

The text (discourse) performs gender roles with its discourse. It is a naturalization of a world in which male identity is connected to mobile action (that is often destructive) and resource-provisioning, and female identity is connected to immobile fidelity, the preservation of patrimony and the silent responsibility of male failure.

1) Text

"Oh, he remembered now what had happened to Sherakai, the Tiger's Daughter. He had sold her to somebody before he left, for a pound of opium and a hundred rupees.

He spent a number of years in the plains--how many, he could not remember, but it was a long time before he came back. Hard as he tried, he could not live without the mountains. He could not die anywhere else.

On his return, he found his wife faithfully looking after the small patch of land he owned. She was alone. He never dared to ask her about the children in case she was reminded of his failure to provide for them. It was strange, he mused, that he could not remember the names of any of his children other than Sherakai--the one that by rights he should have forgotten" (Ahmad, 2014: p.142).

2) Description

The textual characteristics of this passage do the vital ideological labor by means of certain lexical, grammatical, and modal options. The main, appalling act is put in the cold, exact terms of business: "He had sold her... a pound of opium and a hundred rupees". The daughter, whose name is Sherakei, is syntactically regarded as a direct object of the verb sold, and her price is written into the list of the goods. This vocabulary makes her fungible property in a male-dominated economy natural.

The adverb "faithfully" and the verbal phrase "looking after" define the wife. Her whole life is semantically related to passive preservation and undying devotion to his property (the small patch of land). This is in opposition to the vocabulary used to characterize Sher Beg: 'spent', 'came back', 'tried', 'live', 'die', all verbs of self-directed, though unsuccessful, action and movement.

One of the contradictions is lexically encoded. He says that he has a memory failure (he could not remember the names of all of his children), but he recalls the one that he should not have. The transactional fact of the sale and the symbolic name of the sale, Sherakei; the Tiger's Daughter, is a verb of remembering, and the other children are relational beings, whose names are forgotten. This word "forgotten" is an act of psychological obliteration of his paternal loss.

Sher Beg as Active Agent: He is the agent and the subject of just about all the processes of failure and shame: "He had sold," "He spent," "He could not live," "He came back," "He never dared to ask." His agency is absolute, and both the destruction and the decision to be silent.

Women as Passive Objects or Conditions: The wife and daughter are instead the objects of his actions or passive attachments in his situations. Sherakai is the object sold. The wife is discovered and is the unnamed cause of his terrified silence (lest she be reminded of it). They do not behave towards him; they behave, or they can become the initiators of his emotional distress.

This passage is narrated in categorical, past-tense modality (he had sold, he spent), making these heinous facts appear as something straightforward and indisputable. This grammatical formulation discourages moral enquiries.

The text is based on a strong presupposition: the man has the right to dispose of his daughter as property and the main virtue of a woman is to remain a dutiful keeper of the property of her absent husband. These ideological premises are not argued, but the premises that lie behind the explicit discourse, the underlying assumptions.

3) Interpretation and Explanation

It is a discourse of broken masculinity and selective memory, created out of a perspective of intense embarrassment and aimed to bring a fractured world into focus. The entire text (discourse) is created within the unexpressed code of male provision. His incapacity to provide is the primary, unspoken disgrace that manages the memory and the existing silence.

This is violently superimposed on the system of kinship, and a monstrous hybrid is produced where a daughter is assessed in nothing short of opium and money. The obedience of the wife is presented as the desired object, in comparison with the man's own negligence of the role of the man as a provider and protector.

Narrative as Self-Justification/Survival: This is a discursive effort to cope with an implausible reality by telling this story (even to oneself). Language serves to downplay and limit the magnitude of his moral breakdown by linguistically constructing the sale as a transactional fact (for a pound of opium...) and by obliterating the rest of the children. This is enabled by the fact that she is addressed by her symbolic title, which translates to Tiger Daughter (Sherakei) and by ignoring the human price. The Silencing Function: The strongest rhetorical gesture is the one that is mentioned: "He never dared to ask her..." This is not an omission but a discursive practice that is acted upon and made. It maintains its authority by dictating what should be discussed and placing the grief of the wife and destiny of the children in a silent and subservient domain. Her narration is made unutterable.

The conversation represents a literal mirror and support of the material and ideological social practices of a patriarchal tribal periphery.

The text exposes the ideology's essence, namely that women are a form of capital in the male economy. Females are expendable commodities; wives are the guardians of male property (land). The ownership of these resources is associated with a man's identity. His crisis comes when he is unable to meet the role of a provider and he decides to sell the human capital (his daughter) to support himself.

Power, in this case, works discursively through control of narrative and memory. The fact that Sher Beg can dictate the terms of remembrance (forgetting the children, remembering the sale as a transaction) and even enforce silence on the household is an indication of his power, even in ruin. It is the unfaithfulness of the wife, which is actually unfaithfulness to his story and his estate in the face of his disastrous failures.

Social Reproduction of Gender Roles: The discourse supports such extreme gender roles. The use of the wife's fidelity as a praiseworthy and sale of a daughter as a sad but real phenomenon in the reasoning of surviving naturalizes the order of society, where

women bear the responsibility for stability and serve as shock absorbers to male failure. It educates us, unconsciously, about the laws of this world: men are active, in many cases destructive; women are passive, loyal, and silent.

In this excerpt, the author points out the clash between the mythical tribal code (honor, family defense) and the material realities of poverty and harsh displacement. The discussion reveals the code's weakness and how its logic of patriarchy can turn into its ugly counterpart when survival in the material realm is at stake, all the while employing the language of the same code (faithfulness, patrimonial land) to contextualize the outcome.

5.2. Discrimination in The Pakistani Bride

In Sidwah's *The Pakistani Bride*, discrimination is most effective in the gender aspect, as it was organized to make women subordinate to the male system in the city and tribal patriarchy. The novel follows this discrimination in the life of Zaitoon, an orphaned girl who grew up in Lahore and was married in one of the Kohistani tribes in the mountains. The tribal code of honor is the most inhumane area of gender discrimination because females are regarded as property to be traded, defended or abandoned at the will of a male.

5.2.1. Discourses of Patriarchy, Honor and Resistance

The following excerpt is precisely what it depicts: a moment when the lexicon is the war zone, and it is the dialectic of the systems of meaning that defines who a woman should be, what is important to her, and what awaits her.

1) Text

"Miriam blew her nose into her shawl. She wiped the damp left on her fingers on the strings of the charpoy. She had no control over the tears that slipped down her face. "Sister! I gave him my word,"... "Your word! Your word! Your word! What has your word to do with the child's life? What? Tell me!"... "Brother Qasim,"... "how can a girl, brought up in Lahore, educated--how can she be happy in the mountains? Tribal ways are different; you don't know how changed you are ..." And as rancor settled on Qasim's compressed lips, she continued in a rising passion, "They are savages. Brutish, uncouth, and ignorant! She will be miserable among them. Don't you see?"...

Qasim tried to control his fury... It's my people you're talking of." "But you've been with us so long, you're changed. Why, most of them are bandits; they don't know how to treat women! I tell you, she'll be a slave, you watch, and she'll have no one to turn to. No one!" Qasim flushed. He glared at Nikka while directing his icy remarks at Miriam. "How dare you?" he said. "You've never been there! You don't understand a thing.

I have given my word! I know Zaitoon will be happy. The matter should end." "I know she won't! Oh dear, how I love her. She's like my daughter ... I've reared her ..." "But she is my daughter!" Qasim cut in with biting finality. Miriam flushed into hysteria. "Is it

because that Pathan offered you five hundred rupees, some measly maize, and a few goats? Is that why you are selling her like a greedy merchant? ...

Qasim was in an angry sweat, ashamed, and touched. "Sister Miriam, it is not for the goats and maize, please believe me. It is my word--the word of a Kohistani!" (Sidhwa, 1990: pp.93-94)

2) Description

As seen in this passage, Qasim uses deontic modality (the language of duty and obligation), which is based on a personal honor-based order: "I gave him my word;" "I have given my word!" The declarative sentences "The matter should end" and "But she is my daughter!" highlight the issue of decisiveness. This modality is characterized by undisputed authority (Fairclough, 1992).

Miriam uses the appeal to emotion and evaluation modality in the expression "What has your word to do with the child's life?" Her questions are rhetorical, and they question his reasoning. Her words are even more aggravated as she is coaxing "Brother Qasim, how can a girl..."; she is passionate (savages... she will be miserable among them.); she starts pleading in the patriarchal frame and then directly opposing it.

This is an important ideological struggle using words. Miriam portrays the tribal people as savages, brutish, uncouth, and ignorant, and the mountains as a seat of backwardness. Qasim proudly recovers this identity: "I am those hills. It's my people." The difference between being educated (Lahore) and being ignorant (mountains) creates a dichotomy that replicates colonial and modernist ideas of civilization and tribalism (Fairclough, 1992).

Concerning transitivity and agency, all the clauses employed by Qasim are usually written in the active voice, such as the phrases "I gave", "I know", and "I have given". The passive recipient/goal is called Zaitoon: "I gave him my word" (about her). In his most important sentence, "she is my daughter," she is the one who is grammatical subject, but semantically a possessed object.

Miriam's transitivity provides hostile forces that are acting on Zaitoon: "She will be a slave; she will have no one to turn to." This literary structure emphasizes Zaitoon's victimization within the social order suggested.

The difference in the usage of the terms of address is notable. Miriam replaces the honorific 'Brother Qasim' with the accusatory 'you'. The manner in which Qasim addresses the term, that of "Sister Miriam", carries with it an impression of trying to sustain a tone of familiarity, or a kinship, yet the message behind the phrase portrays a very unrefined fatherly dominance. The disintegration of the courteous forms signifies the distortion of the mutual understanding

3) Interpretation and Explanation

The text (discourse) constructs the conflict between two super-hegemonic but conflicting discourses within Pakistani society. It is a discussion between the law of the tribe or an unwritten but authoritative law to preserve collective honor, patrilineality, and hypermasculine agency (Lindholm, 1982). The intertextual allusions of Miriam are to the modernist, urban-nationalist project of Pakistan, as theorized by Alavi (1972), the juxtaposition of education and urbanity as a reaction to feudal and tribal backwardness. Her neoliberal rebranding of herself (selling herself) also brings a neoliberal discourse of commodification, which diminishes social kinship ties into market exchange (Nosheen, 2019).

It is assumed that everyone in Miriam's argument accepts the developmentalist narrative, according to which education and urban living inherently result in female empowerment and an improved life, a premise. According to Zaidi (2020), city spaces can recreate the patriarchal regime in a different form. Qasim makes an ontological assumption in his argument that the oral contract and tribal identity in his argument have an ontological precedence over the written law or desire, which are the pillars of Pashtun social structure, as documented by Glatzer (2002).

The best discursive act is Zaitoon's silence throughout the conversation. She is what Spivak (1988) has so infamously called the subaltern, who is not able to speak within the overriding discursive structures. She tells narratives of her future, indicative of systemic symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1991), in which her social world is determined without her involvement. A tragic mark of this marginalization in her writings is her silent presence at the balustrade.

Ideological Function and Power Relations: The ideology of the word as 'honor' that Qasim used serves to mystify material and social power relations. As Fairclough (1992) explains, the ideology tends to act by making the contingent appear as something that has to be and the political as something that has to be natural. The accusation made by Miriam carries out an ideological demystification and reveals the possible economic foundations (five hundred rupees... goats) and the existence of gendered oppression (she'll be a slave). This is in line with the critiques of (honor) as a regime that tends to govern female sexuality and movement to protect patriarchal domination (Khan, 2018).

This micro-argument indicates a macro-hegemonic struggle in post-colonial Pakistan. The prehistoric, kinship-based hegemony of the tribal periphery (the world of Qasim) is a crisis that is confronted by the centralizing, modernizing hegemony of the urban core (the world of Miriam).

The character of Qasim symbolizes millions of rural-urban migrants with plural and contested identities, who must live in the tension between what Said (1978) would call filiation (birthright) and affiliation (chosen belonging).

This discussion, based on Fairclough, makes it clear that the passage is not just a family quarrel but a constitutive situation of social conflict being played out in language. The textual aspects represent the conflict, while the discursive ones show the clash between whole worldviews (tribal honor vs. urban modernity), which presents a larger hegemonic struggle over gender, space, and identity in Pakistan.

The speech by Qasim aims at the restoration of a broken-down conventional power, but the speech by Miriam counters it with a counter-discourse of nurture, modernity, and criticism. This struggle can be embodied through the silent Zaitoon; her individuality brings the struggle to define reality to its climax and makes her an eloquent illustration of how discourse is the crucial tool of social power and transformation (Fairclough, 1992).

6. Conclusion

As this discrimination discussion on *The Pakistani Bride* and *The Wandering Falcon* shows, both novels, though distinct in their narrative techniques and writing stances, converge to a common perception of the functioning of discrimination within the patriarchal tribal societies of the northwestern frontier of Pakistan. Discrimination in the two texts is not revealed as some extraordinary form of brutality or personal pathology but as a normal, systematic, and highly entrenched aspect of social organization, built into the fabric of the language, custom, law and common daily practice.

The two novels lead to a critical interpretation of discrimination as a social force in the form of discursive and systemic and highly harmful. They show that it is not an individual opinion or isolated cases of inhumanity but a constituent of the language, law, customs, and institutions that regulate everyday life. They show that the most pernicious kind of discrimination is the one that makes its victims believe that it is right. And they demand, in their harsh descriptions, in their rejection of comfortable solutions, that the business of criticism is to reveal these processes, to testify to pain, to project other possibilities, when they are, in any case, inaccessible. The tales of Zaitoon and Tor Baz, of Sakhi and Hamida, of the eloping couple and the woman sold at the slave market have much to say to everyone who has ever been made to feel that he or she is discriminated against somewhere in his/her life.

The work of the critical discourse analyst is to listen to those stories; to examine the way power operates as these stories tell us about it, and to play her part in the continuing project of creating the world in which discrimination is no longer an organizing principle of the terms of human belonging.

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