
ANALYSIS OF PATRIARCHAL PRESSURES AND THE STRUGGLE OF A PAKISTAN WOMAN IN *MY FEUDAL LORD*

*Hassan Bin Zubair
Fahmida Aslam
Mashooq Ali Khowaja*

ABSTRACT

*This research paper explores the social class differences, issues of oppression related to Pakistani women and role of agency presented in the autobiographical text *My Feudal Lord* by Tehmina Durrani. This research is qualitative in nature with textual analysis. Theoretical framework for this research is based on Deniz Kandiyoti's theory, Pactical Bargain; which also relates the post-colonial feminism, Muslim and western feminism. This paper presents the condition of Pakistani Muslim women in the society under the influence of political pressures. It also discusses the fight to gain the basic women rights and struggle for agency. There is always a patriarchal pressure on the South Asian Women, about which Tehmina Durrani has tried to present the real condition of Muslim Pakistani women. Durrani's autobiographical element in the text enhances its importance in the presentation of the truths and figures. This research provides the clear picture to what extent they get the agency and basic women rights for them. In this research paper, male dominance, gender inequality and high level political influence remains under scrutiny.*

Keywords: Muslim Women, Oppression, Pakistani Culture, Agency, Politics, Society.

INTRODUCTION

Tehmina Durrani's *My Feudal Lord* is the feminist autobiographical book that had created controversy during its publications in 1991. This novel was also criticized, rejected and banned in Egypt and Pakistan. She wrote about certain explicit details and painful truths about Muslim women's plights that were greatly considered as taboos before and during the nineties' Muslim societies. However, it was such a struggle for Tehmina that even her father disowned her after the novel's publication. This tendency of criticizing, rejecting and banning women authors' narratives can be explained through Taslima Nasreen's words. She argues that people who speak against such writings "are insecure misogynists" (Nasreen, 2017). "This misogyny or male insecurity is only a symptom of the disease that is patriarchy. Until society gets rid of this malady, the symptoms will remain" (Nasreen, 2017). There is a myth that a Muslim woman cannot be a feminist, she is either a Muslim or a feminist, because, feminism is in favor of

emancipation, whereas, Islam, as most people wrongly perceive, is an oppressive religion (Chavura, 2017). Hence, these two opposites cannot become one. However, this is a complete misconception, especially among the Western feminists. For example, if the Western feminists see Muslim women wearing a veil or a “hijab”, they think they are highly subjugated. Actually, the truth is, if someone thinks the veil as an oppressing agent, then a simple veil can become burdensome and can create hindrance towards a woman’s progress. On the contrary, if a Muslim woman thinks that a veil gives her the spiritual power by complying with the Islamic *sharia* or law, then that simple veil can become a useful tool for emancipation. It is actually the varied perspectives and perceptions that lead to such controversies. The truth is, Islam is not an oppressive religion at all and wearing veil does not make a woman subjugated. Only the willingness of accepting and complying with the rules of Islam is what women need in order to feel empowered both at home and outside. Thus, Stephen Chavura rightly states, “One thing is certain: the notion that Islam and contemporary feminism are mutually compatible.....” (Chavura, 2017).

The struggles for Muslim women writers are even harder because they take up a profession that is something out of the list of few jobs considered as suitable for women. This is so, because language is male dominated. In relation to this, Nasrullah Mambrol explains French feminist, Helen Cixous’ theory of “écriture féminine”. According to Cixous, Mambrol writes, “Writing is also structured by a “sexual opposition,” one that favoured the male and reduced writing to his laws” (Mambrol, 2017). Male writers are free to write whatever they want to, but this is not the same for women authors. Women use the men’s language in order to portray their experiences and stories to the world. Hence, they get very limited freedom through writings. “The need is thus for a woman’s writing, one that will be a flow of luminous torrents, excess, never-ending and open, without hierarchy, repressive logic or control” (Mambrol, 2017). Nasrulla Mambrol then explains Helen Cixious’ term, “écriture féminine” by quoting her, it is “a feminine writing practice, Cixous suggests that such a feminine writing can never be theorized enclosed, coded” (Mambrol, 2017). Thus, “The subversiveness of scripture feminine is the rejection of such a repressive binary logic of man/woman, theoretical/creative, nature/culture, and inside/outside and therefore of the *reality* the logic represents. The stories need to be retold without the oppressive logic of patriarchal society” (Mambrol, 2017). The reasons and the effects of patriarchy on Muslim females starting from their childhood to adulthood are profound. It is not that Muslim girl children and women always remain subjugated under patriarchy or male dominance. Rather, after a certain point, these females become rebellious to some extent if not fully. They often gain their agency that is not

given to them but it emerges out of conditions. They struggle and persevere, only then do they get their honor and recognition in their society. There are many prolific female writers and poets from South Asian and Middle Eastern countries who have been breaking this dominating tradition since many decades and recently Indian female novelists, such as, Ismat Chughtai, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Arundhati Roy, etc. There are also Pakistani female authors, such as, Bapsi Sidhwa, Kamila Shamsie, Tehmina Durrani, etc.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To present the struggle of Pakistani Muslim women to gain their basic women rights and agency.
- To highlight the issues related to the political pressure and patriarchal oppression on women in Pakistan.
- To investigate the acceptability of the specific autobiographical elements and points presented by Tehmina Durrani in *My Feudal Lord*.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How has Tehmina Durrani presented the real women struggle under the extreme patriarchal and political pressures in Pakistani society in her autobiography *My Feudal Lord*?
2. How has the writer projected her narrative about oppression, correlation between struggle and agency in Pakistani male dominant society?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper is rather, based on patriarchy, and in order to analyze this issue, it focuses on various types of feminism, such as, postcolonial feminism, Muslim feminism and Western feminism. For theoretical grounding, I will look at the Turkish author and academic researcher, Deniz Kandiyoti's paper, "Bargaining with Patriarchy". It is also important to consider how the factors such as, religion, nationality, gender, culture, etc intertwine or intersect in order to investigate and produce the exact image of the Muslim women in Middle Eastern and South Asian patriarchal nations. This research is qualitative in nature, it investigates the reasons and the effects of patriarchy on Muslim females starting from their childhood to adulthood are profound under this specific theoretical framework. It is not that Muslim girl children and women always remain subjugated under patriarchy or male dominance. Rather, after a certain point, these females become rebellious to some extent if not fully. They often gain their agency that is not given to them but it emerges out of conditions. They struggle and persevere, only then do they get their honor and recognition in their society. Otherwise, they remain the weak, silent beings who do not have any choice and right of their own.

ANALYSIS

Tehmina Durrani, the Pakistani author of the autobiography, *My Feudal Lord*, was also the victim of “cultural, social, religious, patriarchal, gender and sexual oppressions, despite the fact that she belongs to an affluent family with influential political background” (Nadaf, 2015). She also faced discrimination when she was a child, and that was from her mother’s side. She had a “difficult childhood relationship” with her mother (Durrani, 1995:129). Her mother, Samina, has Anglicized family as she “came from the Hayat family of Khattar tribe” (Kaur, 2016:35). Hence, she has fair complexion. However, her daughter, Tehmina, has dark complexion. Her family criticized her for her dark skin; especially her mother never used to adore her. About this Tehmina writes, “Only over time would I come to understand what a shock I was to my mother. She was light-skinned beauty and proud of it; her family was fair-skinned and considered itself to be superior by that fact. A dark child was condemned to neglect. And yet there I was, arriving in the world in 1953, with a dark skin. It seemed evident by my mother’s attitude that she regarded me as ugly and was embarrassed to present me to friends and relatives. Even as a baby I felt my inadequacy. My surroundings seemed hostile to the way I looked, and very early I withdrew into an isolated, ‘condemned-by-nature’ cell. I never remember my mother hugging or kissing me when I was little (Durrani, 1995:23). This is because, in Pakistan, like in many other countries, a woman with dark skin color is not eligible for marriage. Pakistani men tend to choose fairer skinned wife. This tendency of giving little importance to women with dark skin is aggravated due to the racism weaved within the community. According to Maria Sartaj, “the theory being that a fair *bahu* will produce fair grandchildren, which will ultimately lead to a *gora* Pakistan!” (Sartaj, 2015). For this reason, Tehmina’s mother also taunted her own daughter most of the time. Conversely, her father loved her, but because of her mother’s command, he was unable to show his affection towards his daughter. Only her maternal grandmother, Shamshad, took her sides every time she fell into troubles.

These above examples portray that being within her home, Tehmina could not be her own self because of her mother’s strictness. This kind of extreme strictness is also a kind of mental torture. Her suppressed self was unbearable to the extent of becoming mad. Tehmina observes: “There was no question of discovering oneself. Identity and individuality were crushed. Personality failed to develop. My mind became a sanctuary for secret thoughts of escaping from this household. But for that, there was no other goal but marriage.” (Durrani, 1995:30)

Thus, we observe that at a very tender age, Tehmina was constantly under pressure to live up to her mother’s expectations and in case of her inability to do so, made her suffer from inferiority complex. Her mother’s

strictness towards her children, especially towards Tehmina, is perhaps due to the social demand. This means, living in a Muslim country, such as, Pakistan, a girl is expected to be within her limits and suppress her childish enthusiasm so that she could grow up as an obedient woman. We may relate this to what Simone de Beauvoir says, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (Beauvoir, 1997:295). However, we all know that being adults, we cannot expect such strict obedience from any child, but as the society expects girl children and women to always remain under total subjugation just like slaves, the mothers also push their daughters to follow the patriarchy. We may relate this to what Simone de Beauvoir says, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (Beauvoir, 1997:295).

According to Laura Maguire, this statement by Beauvoir means, “the roles we associate with women are not given to them in birth, by virtue of their biology, but rather are socially constructed. Women are taught what they’re supposed to be in life, what kind of roles they can or can’t perform in virtue of being of *the second sex*” (Maguire, 2016). Beauvoir has given childhood a place in her book, *The Second Sex*, because childhood is the early phase of gender construction, and it is during this childhood phase that the socialization of boy and girl takes place. Another reason for her mother’s strictness towards her children could be the “patriarchal bargains” as Deniz Kandiyoti terms it (Kandiyoti, 1988:285). Even though Tehmina’s father never dominated her mother, rather she would every time command him, she made a patriarchal bargain with her daughter. That is, as the culture and society pressurized her to raise her children properly with full guidance, she herself perhaps found it too much to comply. She even said that she felt ashamed to present Tehmina to her friends and relatives because of her dark skin. Thus, Kandiyoti explains, in classic patriarchy women “often adhere as far and as long as they possibly can to rules that result in the unflinching devaluation of their labor” (Kandiyoti, 1988:280). “The cyclical nature of women’s power in the household and their anticipation of inheriting the authority of senior women encourage a thorough internalization of this form of patriarchy by the women themselves. In classic patriarchy, subordination to men is offset by the control older women attain over younger women” (Kandiyoti, 1988:279).

Tehmina’s second husband, Mustafa also did not spare his daughters from his brutality. Tehmina heard the stories from the servants that when Mustafa’s daughter from his fifth wife, Sherry, “howled as he tried to sleep, Mustafa picked her up and shoved her under the bed!” (Durrani, 1995:113). He was equally ruthless with Naseeba – Mustafa and Tehmina’s daughter. “On a number of occasions, Mustafa stifled Naseeba’s yells with his hand or with a cloth” (Durrani, 1995:113). On another occasion, Mustafa exceeded all his limits and mercilessly inflicted extreme violence on his baby girl for

wailing. He pushed Naseeba's head into the water-filled bathtub and held her there for a few seconds until he was satisfied of punishing her. He was so merciless that when Tehmina continuously begged for her daughter's life, he became even more violent. The poor little girl was all shocked and suffocated when finally her mother took her out of the water. Mustafa proved to be tyrannical on girl children because he wanted complete obedience from them as well. The earlier they learn, the better for them, because then these girl children would grow up to be the perfect inferior beings, just as the way the patriarchal society wants them to be. In case, the girl children disobeyed his orders, it became a punishable act for them. Hence, for their "betterment", the lesson was taught to them with extreme brutality, but it is a punishable offense according to the law that the abusive men tend to over power.

i) MARITAL ISSUES AND PATRIARCHY

Women's plights become double or even triple when they get married. This is not to say that all marriages end up as a complete failure. However, we get the examples and knowledge of the torture done on wives by their husbands in few cases. As Huma Iqbal writes on her blog: "Seen in the larger context, violence against women is not the result of random, individual acts of misconduct, but rather is deeply rooted in structural relationships of inequality between women and men in our society. The deeply rooted patriarchal values and norms and the prevailing social attitude that violence against women is a private domestic issue is a huge impediment in curtailing the ugly practice" (Iqbal, 2010).

In the autobiographical novel, *My Feudal Lord*, Tehmina Durrani, in spite of the fact that she belongs to an affluent family with political background and the proper education that she has, she faced brutal torture from her husband, Ghulam Mustafa Khar, a politician during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's regime in Pakistan. Since her childhood, Tehmina was taught to stay away from boys and men. "And yet, clearly a man was the only future available to a Pakistani girl" (Durrani, 1995:28). She writes, "Despite the fact that our mother had divorced her first husband, we were taught that marriage was a sacred and irrevocable institution. If a husband turned out to be a brute, it was the wife's duty to persevere until she changed his character. A broken marriage was a reflection of a woman's failure" (Durrani, 1995:29). Tehmina's first marriage to Anees at the age of seventeen was the consequence of this social norm. Initially, it was her urge to get out of the restrictive environment at her home. As mentioned earlier, during her childhood, her "Personality failed to develop. My mind became a sanctuary for secret thoughts of escaping from this household. But for that, there was no other goal but marriage" (Durrani, 1995:30). Hence, she accepted the twenty-seven years old Anees' proposal in the hope of getting a little

freedom. When at first her mother had turned down the proposal because Anees was not well off, her best friend insisted her into accepting the proposal saying, “Samina, she’s not your best-looking daughter. It won’t be so easy for her to find a boy who’ll love her as Anees does. I suggest you agree to the proposal. You still have three daughters for whom your position will be stronger” (Durrani, 1995:34). However, later on Tehmina had changed her mind. When she informed her family and Anees that she was not interested to get married to him anymore, she in turn was pacified by saying that it was just her nervousness regarding this big event (Durrani, 1995:37).

ii) POLITICAL AND FEUDLISTIC OPPRESSION

There is no doubt that patriarchy and fake religious beliefs are the main reasons for Muslim women’s plight, but there is also one section of this patriarchal system where the dominance of women reaches its extreme form. Tehmina Durrani blames the feudal system that causes the extreme form of torture on women. According to Tehmina, feudal lords think it is their right to subjugate females, whether it is their wives, sisters, housemaids or even girl children. By its very own crafted law, feudalism gives men the power and authority to be brutal on the so called weaker sex. In relation to this, Tehmina states: Feudalism was a license to plunder, rape and even murder. In the areas that were later to become Pakistan, some feudal families utilized Islam as a weapon of control. The patriarchs were venerated as holy men, who spoke with Allah. And, indeed, at some earlier time many were pious and righteous. But gradually power passed to elder sons who were neither pious nor particularly moral, yet were revered by the illiterate people of the area and perceived as ‘envoys of Allah’. They had the authority to justify their every deed on the basis of their own, quite convenient, interpretation of the Koran. A feudal lord was an absolute ruler who could justify any action (Durrani, 1995:40-41).

Thus, it turns out that women are greatly subjugated in feudal system as well and they accept their subordinated position to some extent because the male chauvinistic society, especially the feudal lords, have the ability to justify their every action. Husbands think that it is their right to dominate and abuse their wives and any attempt on the women’s side to avoid such oppression and violence is a pure sign of rebellion. Hence, according to the men’s law, such women should be punished.

Tehmina Durrani’s devastating condition in the second marriage with Ghulam Mustafa Khar is the result of feudalism. Although Mustafa claimed that he is against feudalism, it is his learned characteristics of a feudal lord that lead to the devastating relationship with his sixth wife, Tehmina Durrani. He also oppressed and abused his previous wives, Wazir, Firdaus, Safia, Naubahar and Shahrazad (Sherry) and had several extra marital affairs. He

was able to do so because his impromptu actions and decisions were justified by feudalism. Moreover, no other wife of his had ever before dared to go against his will and injustices. Despite knowing the fact that Tehmina is married to Anees, he tried his best to impress her with his charm and strategy. He was inclined towards her only because of her prettiness, long hair and the fashionable dresses that she wore. Only her outer appearance excited him, but she was unable to comprehend that for a long time. Tehmina also fell in love with him, because as mentioned earlier, she had become bored of Anees. After several obstacles and her family's disagreement, she was finally able to get married to Mustafa. When she married Mustafa, he was already married to his fifth wife, Sherry, and it was from Sherry that she first came to know the bitter truth about Mustafa. Sherry revealed to Tehmina that "When he had discovered Safia's infidelity, he had, apparently, beaten her without mercy and broken several of her ribs. But, even worse, he had ordered one of the maids to insert red chili powder into the vagina of poor Dai Ayesha, the nanny, for not informing him of the affair" (Durrani, 1995:94).

According to Sherry, "Women were his obvious victims. He was out to destroy us (Durrani, 1995:95). However, at that moment Tehmina could not completely believe what Sherry said. Tehmina faced Mustafa's wrath for the first time when she had a dental appointment and she was asked by her husband to register herself at the doctor's as "Begum Mustafa Khar". As she did not want to humiliate Sherry, she did not register herself as Mustafa's wife (Durrani, 1995:95). To Tehmina's dismay, Sherry reported this to Mustafa and he got infuriated. He scolded Tehmina by saying, "Never – ever – disobey me! You have to do what I tell you to do" (Durrani, 1995:95). This incident portrays that Mustafa suffered from both superiority complex and inferiority complex. As he considered himself a superior and a powerful feudal lord, if anyone disobeyed his orders, he could not tolerate that, because according to his mentality, going against his will is a way of considering him as an inferior being. His wrath continued to shower upon Tehmina even for trivial matters. "A feudal lord understands... the power of physical violence" (Durrani, 1995:134). Hence, Tehmina acted according to his commands. Mustafa was such a merciless person that he used to beat up his housemaids as well. For instance, once Mustafa had ordered their Dai (servant) to bring milk for Tehmina. As she had forgotten to do so, "Mustafa thrust his foot squarely against Dai's backside, sending her flying through the doorway" (Durrani, 1995:100). Gradually, Tehmina realized that "she had fallen into the trap of a typical Pakistani marriage" (Durrani, 1995:100). Tehmina writes, "I had fallen into the classic trap of the Pakistani woman. The goal is marriage and, once achieved, the future is a life of total subordination. I had no power, no rights, no will of my own" (Durrani,

1995:100). From that point onwards, Tehmina faced continuous verbal and physical abuse from her husband for various reasons. Even during her pregnancy with her first child with Mustafa, he exerted extreme torture on her. As she was unwilling to talk about every detail of her wedding night with Anees, Mustafa, “Sitting astride my belly, he slapped me in the face repeatedly with his open palm, forehand and backhand. I fought to stifle my screams as he pulled at my hair, thrusting my head from side to side” (Durrani, 1995:102).

iii) CORRELATION BETWEEN STRUGGLE AND AGENCY

There is a correlation between struggle and agency. When people are in struggle, they want to get the agency. Through their struggle, they try to find specific ways or various means of dealing with problems. Hence, it is necessary that we analyze the types of agency that the female protagonist, Tehmina had adopted and the extent to which they had the capability to make their choices and to actions in order to get their ultimate freedom. Agency in a literary context means: “The freedom and capacity to live or act in a defined world. In a literary sense, we can interpret this in a few different ways. We could look at a specific character in a novel, and see his/her ability to make choices, act freely, and control their respective lives within the novel. The character is able to engage socially, take action on desired things, and have control over their own life” (Yamaguchityler, 2014).

According to Kelsy C. Burke, to understand agency: “The resistance agency focuses on women who attempt to challenge or challenge some aspect of their religion. The empowerment agency approach focuses on how women interpret religious doctrine or practices in ways that make them feel empowered in their everyday life. The instrumental approach focuses on the non-religious positive outcomes of religious practice, and a compliant approach focuses on the multiple and diverse ways in which women confirm to gender traditional religious teaching” (Burke, 2012).

Agency is not about how to utilize freedom; rather it is the ability or “the power to make choices”, to take decisions and “the ability to act” (quoted by Wrede, 2014). Tehmina’s first rebel against Mustafa was when on one occasion he was kicking her down a staircase (Durrani, 1995:134). This time Tehmina did not remain silent. She revolted by saying, “This is my father’s house and I do not think that you should dare to lift your hand on me here!” (Durrani, 1995:134). However, this brought only a moment’s “stunned silence” and he resumed thrashing her (Durrani, 1995:134). Tehmina gradually built up her confidence to face Mustafa when she had confided the truth about her turmoil to Bhutto’s wife, Husna, who in turn had advised her to divorce him. Next time when she was in the hospital to deliver her second daughter, Nisha, she mustered her courage to vent her anger on Mustafa in

the hospital thinking he would not dare to hit her in this public place. However, she was mistaken because after she was done with venting her anger, he slapped her hard on the face and twisted her forearm (Durrani, 1995:156). In spite of all this, she suppressed her scream. When she spoke her heart out about this matter to her obstetrician, she advised her softly, “Nobody can help you unless you help yourself” (Durrani, 1995:156). This piece of advice later on made her realize that she did a big mistake by not shouting to get the doctors’ and the nurses’ attention; she had simply let him beat her because she let herself to be the weaker one. However, according to her, she did not scream because she thought that the doctors would call the police but the police would only “admonish” him and eventually she would be alone with Mustafa all over again who would torture her even more (Durrani, 1995:156). She thought that by not screaming she was protecting herself and not Mustafa, but she was actually mistaken. This idea was nothing but an extension of her misconception and fear. In this instance, Tehmina had the chance to take a decision on her favour and to act accordingly. She could have made a choice of reveling her husband’s real character to the public, but she did not do so. Consequently, she missed the excellent opportunity and failed to gain her agency at that crucial moment.

FINDINGS

Tehmina found her separate identity and recognition as an individual human being by divorcing Mustafa. For example, after freeing herself from the oppressor, she started socializing, or in other words, she was learning to be social. She enjoyed the social gatherings and parties as a silent spectator and got inspired by other independent women. She missed all this in her life when she was married to Mustafa. She also removed herself from politics and started painting as a means of portraying her experiences of the world. Her paintings now portrayed the explicit images of the rapes on women executed in the goals. Moreover, when they were married, although Mustafa abused her in the name of fake religious beliefs, Tehmina on the contrary, got hold of the true religious beliefs and used it as a shield against her husband’s wrath. She remained faithful towards her religion and profusely prayed to the Creator during her crisis and used her prayers as her power and strength to face the tormentor. In other words, instead of opting for the other two approaches of agency (mentioned at the beginning of this chapter), she was more inclined towards the resistance approach and the compliant approach where she rejected the fake religious beliefs by embracing the true religious beliefs and sought multiple possibilities in order to get her autonomy.

The most important example of her autonomy could be that she broke the traditional silence of Muslim women in general by writing her first autobiography, *My Feudal Lord* (Durrani, 1995:375). According to her,

exposing hypocrisy is the best answer to the injustice done (Durrani, 1995:375). Hence, women should not remain silent; they should raise their voice against injustice so that Mustafa and other feudal lords do not “thrive and multiply on silence” (Durrani, 1995:375). This is her social message to the oppressed women, especially in the Muslim context. Later on, Tehmina started up working for women’s rights. Tehmina’s another crucial identity is that she was is no longer Mustafa’s wife. When once Mustafa told her that she has “no identity” and importance of her own, she is only Tehmina Durrani and the “ex-wife” of Ghulam Mustafa Khar, Tehmina became helpless because his words had stung her deep and at that moment, she had no strong answer for him (Durrani, 1995:374). Yet, she rejected the suggestion of keeping her surname “Khar” because she “did not want to lean on a pillar that had fallen upon” her “instead of supporting” her (Durrani, 1995:374). Later on when the newspapers announced the “pending international publication” of her autobiography *My Feudal Lord*, with full courage and confidence she replied to Khar’s previous statement saying, “Well, Mustafa, now the world will soon know you only as Tehmina Durrani’s ex-husband” (Durrani, 1995:382). With these very few words, she had completely freed herself and built her new independent identity as Tehmina Durrani and the master of her own will. Although Mustafa, being a man, his identity as the master in the patriarchal society did not yet change, Tehmina did get the new identity as a master because she was no longer tied up with her husband’s surname and she no longer had to act upon his demands. In her autobiography, *My Feudal Lord*, Pakistani novelist, Tehmina Durrani has explicitly pointed out all the oppressions she had to endure since her childhood and the reasons behind being considered as inferior being by others. As she was of dark complexion, her mother never used to adore her. Her mother’s tendency of making her do tasks, such as, organizing her jewelry, dress, etc., made Tehmina nervous because she was afraid of losing something or the other, which her mother would not tolerate at all. Moreover, the restrictive environment at home and the obligation of remaining as an obedient child without having any enjoyment, made her somewhat schizophrenic.

CONCLUSION

Tehmina Durrani’s autobiography, *My Faudal Lord* is one such novel that reveals the bitterest truth of the sufferings of a Pakistani Muslim woman who had to undergo mental and physical abuses for almost thirteen years of her married life with her second husband, Ghulam Mustafa Khar. This is not only Tehmina’s story; rather it is the representation of the majority of the battered married women. This true story would otherwise have remained blanketed if Tehmina’s strong will to expose her husband to the world had

not worked in her. Her marriage to Mustafa had devastated her so much that the only way to make other women aware of this abusive relationship was through writing this book. In this way, several other women will get the courage to raise their voice against injustice and hence, become stronger. In other words, through her first autobiographical novel, Tehmina Durrani has paved the path for the battered women to rise up higher from their subjugated position with exuberance.

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