

**WOMANIZATION, AND REPRESSION OF  
WOMEN IN RELIGIOUS/SECULAR SCHOOLS OF  
THOUGHT, AND FICTIONAL TEXTS**

**Dini veya Seküler Düşünce Okullarında ve Kurgusal Metinlerde  
Kadınların Baskılanması ve Efemineleştirilmesi**

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**Abstract**

The current paper is critically scrutinizing how females have been womanized in the course of the history. To further delve into this issue, the author juxtaposes two perspectives comparing them. One of the perspectives is religious and the other perspective is secular. In order to discover which perspective is weightier in terms of suppressing and exploiting women diachronically, two main religions in the world are cited as two influential factors to have womanized females. While making comparisons through juxtaposing both referring to tangible examples from the two religions' holy books, Bible and Quran, the author has endeavored to further evidence which religion has been tyrannically more suppressive and exploitative to women. When clarifying examples are presented, the author has tried to let the readership themselves search out the unjust know-hows utilized by the dignitaries of the debated religions to crack down women's acquisition of power in all aspects such as science and legislation. The other offshoot to be discussed in the article is nothing but the secular one which has been considered as a more lenient and developmental factor working towards the benefits of women in comparison with the former one, religion. In addition to the holy books of Quran and Bible, quotes from the renowned and prolific contemporary women activists together with the critical analyses of the two novels of *The Color Purple* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* lay bare that religion is the most significant apparatus to have womanized, and suppressed females.

**Keywords:** Womanized, diachronically, dignitaries, suppressed, fictional texts.

**Özet**

Mevcut olan bu çalışma, kadınların tarihsel süreç içinde nasıl "efemineleştirildiğini" eleştirel bir şekilde incelemektedir. Konuyu derinlemesine incelemek için yazar, onları kıyaslayan iki perspektifi yanyana koymaktadır. Bu perspektiflerden biri dini olmakla diğeri de sekülerdir. Diyakronik olarak kadınları kullanmada ve baskılamada hangi perspektifin daha ağır bastığını keşfetmek için dünyadaki iki ana dini, "femineleşmiş" kadınlara sahip olan iki etkili faktör olarak alıntılanmıştır. İki dinin kutsal kitapları olan İncil ve Kur'an'dan somut örnekleri yanyana koyup atıfta bulunarak kıyaslama yaparken yazar hangi dinin kadınlara karşı acımasız bir şekilde daha sömürücü ve baskıcı olduğunu ayrıntılandırarak kanıtlandırmaya çaba göstermiştir. Konuya açıklık getiren örnekler sunulduğunda yazar bilim ve kanun gibi bütün yönleriyle kadınların güç kazanmasına göz açtırmamak için sözü edilen dinlerin mevki sahibi kişiler tarafından kullanılan adil olmayan yöntemleri okuyucuların kendilerinin araştırıp öğrenmesine

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imkân vermeye çalışmıştır. Makalede tartışılacak diğer bir ayrıntı da kadınların yararına yönelik hizmet eden daha hoşgörülü ve gelişimsel bir faktör olarak görülen sekülerlikten başka bir şey değildir. Kutsal kitaplar olan Kuran ve İncil'e ek olarak, *Renklerden Mor ve Geniş, Geniş Bir Deniz* romanlarından eleştirel analizlerle birlikte ünlü ve başarılı modern kadın aktivistlerin alıntıları da dinin, kadınları "efemineleştirir", ve baskılayan önemli aygıt olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. **Anahtar Kelimeler:** Efemineleştirme, diyakronik olarak, dinlerin mevki sahibi kişiler, baskılama, kurgusal metinler.

### **Introduction**

The victimization of women has been underway since the earliest times of human beings: that is, the time of Adam and Eve. It could be stated that gendered injustice came about when the belief that the very first man was crafted of mud and vitalized by God breath and that woman is made of man's rib became interwoven in the fabrics of the folklore (Hillyard, 1920, p.364). As a result, God would be construed as the number one offender who paved the way for women to be labeled as an adjunct of men. In other words, Eve, as the first woman, was an offshoot created out of Adam's rib, the first man. This fact is indicative of how women have been victimized in all aspects from the very creation of human beings. Religions have bent over backwards to preach and indoctrinate a hierarchy of genderism. In Islam, for instance, one can perceive radical genderism. For instance, in some Islamic countries a married woman can be stoned to death if she has had sexual intercourse with a man outside matrimony, which is looked upon as glaringly bad conduct, while it might not be considered so in Christianity. Generally put, you can rarely see a tinge of hope for egalitarianism in religiosity, for it is seen as a threat to the fetishized and sacred religious teachings and doctrines in both Christian and Islamic countries. In the author's view, you can perceive a more radical form of this in some Islamic countries.

Scrutinizing the concept of the repression of women from secular spectrum, undoubtedly one can be given the liberty of envisaging a more realistic profile of the concept of women repression, as opposed to religious standpoint or school of thought not sparing the right and leniency towards having illuminative debates on different aspects, ranging from women's deprivation of basic social and human rights, such as having the right to decide on a marriage partner, to the most decisive social rights, like enfranchisement, owning property and so on.

With that said, the author deals with the issue in depth from different vantage points. One is said to be the victimization or repression of women in Islam and Christianity (religious aspect), having a radical and dogmatic view of the female due to the idolized and sacred proscriptions and codes in Holy scriptures, and the other is the secular view that is more dynamic and less dogmatic.

Further quotes from both Islamic and Christian scholars together with quotes from secular scholars such as Irigaray, Cixous and others are given in addition to referring to two fictional texts of *The Color Purple* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* with their relevant analyses to portray how women are victimized or repressed. The paper concludes that religion is the main source of victimizing or repressing women, and that other secular perspective is less repressive being more tolerant of developmental ideas of female status quo.

### **The Repression of Women in Religious Schools of Thought: Women Image in Islam**

It is believed that approximately 1400 years ago Islam was introduced by the Prophet Mohammed to enlighten and emancipate the Arabs, who at that time buried their daughters alive, as they held the belief that a girl is the embodiment of misery and

misfortune. The next phase of women's suppression came about after the Prophet Mohammed's demise: the emancipative mission was perverted by the superstructure of Islam lands such as caliphs succeeded the Prophet. Women were suppressed by religious statesmen through their overgeneralization of the Holy Quranic scriptures.

Sayings of the Prophet Mohammad (called Hadith) appeared in the beginning days of Islam dissemination in Medina. What's more, hadith was utilized as a permeating political vehicle when in calamities (Mernissi, 1991, p. 34).

As vehemently stipulated by Fatima Mernissi, as a well-known Muslim woman writer or activist in the Islamic world, the post-Mohammad dignitaries of Islam kept benefitting from the contrived hadith for them to be in the service of their political and economical aims and urges. One of the measures based on false hadith was both to deprive women of the right to vote and to tuck pre-Islamic women hatred in the infrastructure of Islamic statehood.

Mernissi identifies two hadith in particular as critical weapons in the male arsenal used to continue debates about and argument against female equality. The first of these hadith was transmitted initially by a Companion of the Prophet Mohammed who states: "Those who entrust their affairs to women will never know prosperity." The second, which originated from Abu Hurayra, places women in the same polluting category as animals and excludes them from the sacred spaces (Mernissi, 1991, p. 65).

According to the science of hadith, the transmitters of hadith must be both qualified and reliable for their hadith to be valid. Mernissi argues this is not the case for both of the originators of these two hadith. Examining the history and the reputations of the influential caliph and Abu Huraya, she argues that both had personal reasons for originating anti-female hadith. They spread their own malevolence towards women in the form of hadith. In order to be welcomed by the illiterate public of that period, they announced these hadith in the name of both Allah and the Holy Prophet. What is more, the caliph – one of the most highly influential statesmen of his time – used his reputation and power to instill his patriarchal thought in the minds of people. People had to accept these hadith; otherwise, they would be called outcasts from Islam. Therefore, these hadith became part of the tradition and men still continue to rely upon them despite their working contrary to the mission of Muslims to question everything, even "authentic" hadith. The examination of the hadith and of the tradition in which they became firmly established is as part of Muslim practice (Mernissi, 1991, p.2).

As it is perceived, this contrived tradition of patriarchal hadith by the above mentioned statesmen has been pursued and preached by narrow-minded preachers and biased religious scholars. Consequently, this has yielded gender hierarchy and schism aimed at benefitting the Islamic denomination or denominations they belong to.

#### **Islamic Textuality and Science: Victimization and Absence of Women**

An American female convert to Islam has expressed that most comments on and interpretations of Islamic texts and scriptures are women hatred. He has stated that in some cases Muslims have been conceited about their legacy of overt debates of womanliness and manliness overlooking the omnipresent nature of patriarchal and anti-matriarchal statements in those texts (Ali, 2016).

There is a serious need to encourage reconsidering the ideas and comments of traditional Muslim jurists through scrutinizing and enlightening firm ethical beliefs of Muslims (Ali, 2006, cited in Naoual, 2016, p.5). Once Ali's book called "Sexual Ethics and Islam:

Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith and Jurisprudence" is investigated, it becomes clear that she calls for a serious reconsideration of religious texts, and suggests that females' sexuality and intermarriage issue should be valued and taken into consideration with a display of flexibility (Ali, 2016, p.16).

In addition to the perspectives of Ali and the author, the American convert Aisha Bewley criticizes the nonappearance of women in the Islamic sciences, elucidating how they are overlooked and quieted. Having a thoroughgoing inspection of Islamic chronicles, Aisha realized that traditionally there were a host of women with active roles in all aspects of life who later had to stop pursuing the same role. Actually, there could be factors inactivating the women role in the course of the past three centuries to the point where even now seeing women engaged in scientific studies of Islam has become a rarity compared with further past. It might be a remote idea to come across a Muslim man to be taught by a Muslim woman. One of the factors inactivating women role ought to be inspected outside the Muslim community. The other preventive factor would be sought inside the named community (Bewley, cited in Naoual, 2016, p.5).

As a matter of fact, Bewley in the aforementioned passage juxtaposes the status of women in the early and contemporary worlds and concludes that women are not authorized and empowered to take part in the scientific studies of Islam. Moreover, American women converts to Islam are of the opinion that in nature Islam is in adamant favor of women's rights; thus, the current women hatred discernments ought to be probed again in order to divulge the genuine teachings of Islam. After Holy Prophet demise, males in power were the ones who firstly debated and construed women's concerns. Therefore, accessing women involved in scientific studies of Islam was far-fetched. Still, nowadays women have commenced to go out of their ways in order to interrogate critically why women have been marginalized in this ground. A wealth of works have been written in this terrain of which to name one is "The Veil and The Male Elite" by Moroccan feminist, Fatima Mernissi. In this book, she questions traditional male attitudes of women's rights in Islam (Naoual, 2016, p. 6).

#### **Women's Partake in Islamic Enactment**

As she has faith in women right to participate in codifying and legislating Islamic law as regards gender equity, Amina Wadud, a female American Muslim activist and author, believes that one of the best detours is to amend the law compatible with the Quranic conventionalities given Inclusive Quranic Analysis. According to this analysis if patriarchal dignitaries let the public have access to Islamic law can extend active and equal nation in order to be able to express their taqwa (Wadud, cited in Anwar, 2009, p. 98). Her writings are unique in this regard. As Wadud further stipulated for wiping out any trace of discriminatory injustice against women in the religious field, they need to have a voice in crafting Islamic mandates. She also goes against patriarchy influence in altering Islamic decrees (Wadud, cited in Naoual, 2016, p. 8).

It has been noticed that in some Islamic countries women and men enjoy the even-handed right of taking religious lessons, but in practice they are not considered sufficiently competent to work as Imams, or even to discuss subjects with male Imams. Women are permitted to attend a male Imam's speech, but they are only able to listen meekly. This has demonstrated how religion relegates women to the marginalized positions solely because of certain fossilized stereotypes built up in Islamic societies against women. To wrap up the paragraph, including women voice to have an active part in sharing their ideas and vantage points in the re-elaboration of Islamic provenances would annul the stereotypes spawned and sprawled out of male interpretations. They

principally depended on males' aspirations and urgencies, whereas women have been kept voiceless (Wadud, 1999, p.2).

It, however, appears that to utterly reclaim and effectively redefine their position in a religious context is almost impossible for women in Islamic countries. In Iran, for instance, women attending mosques must sit in the attic. They are not permitted to take a seat in the main hall of the mosque in order to listen to Imam's speech. The reason for this is that in Sharia (Islamic law) women must be seated at a detached place not to distract men arousing them sexually. Similarly, in administrative affairs in some Islamic countries, women can never be leaders or presidents in the society since in their Sharia women can share opinions only about minor domestic issues if they are turned to for any advice, but they cannot opine about major Islamic issues that have to be left to male religious scholars because these issues are considered to be beyond their conceptual capacity. To name only one of these positions in Iran, the board for the Expediency Council has to be directed by males only.

#### **Islamic Fundamentalists' Anti-Democratic Positions: Women Oppression**

Lily Zakiyah Munir has stated that fundamentalists can be considered anti-democratic because they believe in excluding the other gender, women, recalling them as othered beings. In this way they can easily propagate their prefabricated patriarchal approach and teachings. Ostensibly, fundamentalists are always panicked at the idea of any changes in gender relations, which may be caused by disseminating capitalism and feminism. As an example, in some fundamentalist Islamic countries, non-Muslim female citizens face serious difficulties to be hired in governmental bodies. They have to leave the country to non-Muslim countries so that they can get the chance to be employed. Women from other religions have to wear veils and are not allowed to be school teachers or principals without dark colored scarf and dress. Saudi Arabia and Iran are two good examples to mention. By contrast, there are female friends and relatives who are working in executive and academic positions in countries like the USA, UK, Finland and Sweden.

Therefore, non-Muslim and secular countries are more democratic when compared to some Islamic countries as there is always an equal opportunity for both veiled and unveiled women, Muslim and non-Muslims, generally put. According to the fundamentalists, there exist pious tenets restricting women. In their standpoint, women's domesticity given *Islamic canonical law* and *force of nature* is categorically a must. Hasan al-Bana, a moderate zealot from Egypt, expressed that housekeeping, being a wife, and being a mother at home are right to-dos for the women. Women are also banned and not allowed to have the liberty of blending with men. Moreover, seclusion of women from men's gaze to protect their virginity is maintained by making them into staying at home as mentioned by Abul A'la al Mawdudi (Mayer, 1995, cited in Munir, 1998, p.3).

Additionally, the fundamentalists are committed to imposing Islamic doctrines on women's status. To make it happen effectively, they identify medieval Islamic texts that prescribe their own moral codes based on their personal whims and flavors in addition to devising their own rules of conduct in the name of the divine and the Holy Prophet Mohammed. For example, in 1979 a dress code, which had been practiced in Iran back in the 1500s, was revived by the current fundamentalist system of the government. According to this dress code, women have to wear dresses with a black veil covering their hands up to their wrists and covering their legs to the ankle. All females aged between six and eighty must abide by this law, which the fundamentalists announced as a binding code for the females living in Iran. The enforcement of this law, stemming from the

fundamentalist Sharia, has caused women in Iran to suffer from identity stability or self-alienation. Ironically, secular Iranian women or girls get rid of this imposed veil as soon as they go abroad. They feel proud and self-confident when they are without the veil abroad, but when they are back to their mother land, Iran, they have to veil themselves. This paradox suppresses them psychosomatically (the author). The imposed veil is literally a code to marginalize women in Persian Gulf countries in order to detain them in their husband house without even asking for their tacit consent.

#### **Women in Christianity**

Seemingly, Christ perceives women as having an innate worth equaling the men. He also bids that male and female are the emobdiments created by the Creator at the very genesis (Matthew 19:4; cf. Genesis 1:27). As quouted in the first chapter of the book of Genesis, women and men are both created in the likeness of God. For their own behaviors and measures they both enjoy personal liberty, accountability, self-cognizance and will power. He also talked to women in prudent and solicitous manner (Borland, 1991, p. 106). This is the image created in the very flourishing period of the Christianity, but glimpsing Genesis hereunder states opposite when it comes to seeing this just image in practice mainly after Christ.

In Genesis, where “original sin” is discussed, Adam and Eve, instead of cultivating their breath of life and gradually transforming it into love, listening, words, and thought, wanted to eat the forbidden fruit in order to acquire a power that was not theirs to possess. According to Genesis, woman's breath was generated, at least in part, by man's breath. Now, in the announcement to Mary, it is from woman's breath that man's breath is generated with regard to the redemption of the world (Williams, 2011, p. 318). So, in Genesis, man is taken as a cause while a woman is looked upon as an effect.

Likewise, the anti-women interpretations of the Bible given often relegate the women position drastically in comparison with men when she marries a man. And the way gender roles have been defined in churches have led to the marginalization of women (Hansen, 2007, p. 214).

In her article “Divine Women” Irigaray suggests that it is quite indispensable for women to gain and be granted the prerogative of achieving divinity as men do (Irigaray, 1993, p. 57). Religions' alignment and alliance with males have added divinity to the patriarchal society, whereby they have taken the vigor and valor to act however they will towards the feminine. To avoid finiteness, man has endeavored to be a unique male God who never sets limits on himself. Man has never allowed himself to be defined by another gender. According to Christianity, God exists in three persons, three manifestations. The third is a wedding between the spirit and the bride. Divinity is to become free. Every single society is established with the help of the divine. To share a little, we need to have an infinite. Irigaray further explains a driving need to elaborate the opacity of the subject woman (p.67).

Therefore, mothers and fathers are crippled by the burdens and duties imposed on them by religion and society. These hurdles erected before women hinder their becoming represented as the trinity God. Magnifying the myth of Melusine, women can see the key to their identity and redemption. As a matter of fact, Melusine is against resorting to mere deification. Together with the deification, the women need to investigate the reasons for becoming divine women. At the same time, people need to pay respect to nature in its

cycle aiming to further enter into womanhood. In doing so, we must not turn to hierarchy for making unjust progress exploiting the women. This is the notion imparted to us via holding mere faith in divinity and religiosity.

In addition to what mentioned earlier, as Buckley (2017) states some who are in charge of interpreting the women subordination parts in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 (Christianity) endeavor to adapt similar passages to their presupposed impression of the women. Others believe passages including 1 Corinthians 7:10-16 persuade women to display their total subjugation to a husband in order to please Christ. Actually they are indoctrinated to welcome some other suppressing advice such as “respect him more,” “give him better sex,” “bear your cross” and “persevere in suffering for spiritual growth.”

In *The Essence of Christianity* Feuerbach interrogates whether or not females can own the capacity to abolish the predicate to the subject. The feeling of splendid subjectivity is essential for women. It is unfortunate that just religion fundamentalism suffices to authorize them to bring to light and consummate irrefutable aims. As mentioned by Irigaray the objectives of females have always been ordained from outsiders including man, kid and city. It is dejecting that women have fallen short of lodging their goals inside and outside themselves due to the fact that this enterprise could only be a male’s job. Then this project can be qualified as being a deity project. Ostensibly God perceives and adores himself not an outsider who is herself if any. It is sad to confess that this dimension of God has always driven us back. Bearing this in mind, we need to destroy the master to escape slavery. We progressed a lot since this notion-changing movement has started in the course of the history. The controversial point is that no one has taught us love of God. They taught us only love of neighbor. The obstacle is also an economic one (Irigaray, 1993, p.68). Thus, man is identified on account of being aligned and allied with God. His finiteness is defined by his reference to infinity, God. Thus, man’s social sublimation is due to religion. So, to posit a gender, a God is necessary. As women are not given this divine-aligned strength, they are suppressed by men who are empowered by religion (Irigaray, 1993, p. 63). Having a God and becoming one’s gender go hand in hand. God is the other we cannot survive without. Therefore, a female god is still to come.

In fact, love of God is the incentive for a more perfect becoming that marks the horizon between the more passive and the more active. The only obligation is to become divine men and women. But abiding by this obligation means nothing but the complete submission of the women to men.

#### **Victimization of Women in Secular Schools of Thought**

Secular schools of thought are generally more open-minded and realistic about women’s status. They interrogate potential victimization of women through an evolutionary and constructive criticism of the issue. To illustrate this point, the author will touch on different viewpoints raised by different feminist activists such as Mulvey with the concept of male-gaze; Irigaray’s Silence of Mary with Godzich and Schulte-Sasse concept of hysteria. “The Color Purple” and “Wide Sargasso Sea” are two fictional novels making up the last part of this section.

Laura Mulvey says that the conventional movie form has established a patriarchal unconscious that originates pleasure from the concepts of “voyeurism and narcissism.” Voyeurism and narcissin means getting sexual satisfaction by secretly watching other people without their awareness. Here the victim of voyeurism is women. She argues that the movie industry uses women to provide an enjoyable visual experience for patriarchal society because the heterosexual man is in control of the sector. Therefore, the concept of

“male-gaze” comes to being when making the woman as the object of it. It is literally the woman’s lack of the phallus which has created it as an emblematic being; thus, a woman has a key role in the system (Mulvey, 1991, p. 432). Moreover, Mulvey asserts that the woman functionality in shaping the manly dominion is dual sided as below:

Woman symbolizes the castration threat as she lacks a penis, as a result, she raises her children into the symbolic. What is more, Mulvey argues that in the patriarchal order and perception, a female that resonates as a signifier for the male is obedient to a symbolic hierarchy where the man has the potency to fantasize and obsess via imposing linguistic dominance on the quieted woman. This is still dependent on her zone as the meaning bearer (Mulvey, 1991, p. 433). In addition to this, Luce Irigaray in her *"Mystery of Mary"* states that the figure of Mary is definitely not as integral in Christian theology and sacramental as she is in favored idea for artists. The logic underpinning Christian theology has got more and more of a male metaphysical logic, and has grown at the expense of the significance of flesh – primarily female flesh – for our redemption. Irigaray further adds that Mary’s silence manifests her belonging to a less patriarchal tradition. Mary’s silence evokes – as Irigaray puts – the touching together of the two lips that provides a perception of herself for the woman (Irigaray, 2010, cited in Panaioli, 2017, p. 444). In Western culture, to talk is regarded more highly than to be silent. Someone who speaks is able to demonstrate his abilities, while those who keep silent are considered to be exhibiting their impotence, or submission. The value of the spoken word, as compared to silence, however, is reversed in certain traditions, such as in some Eastern cultures (Buddhism). With the imposed silence on women in religions varying in degree from one to the other, they have been visualized as secondary to the male counterpart.

It is also believed that there is a pre-sexual trauma leading to hysteria, whereas pre-sexual enjoyment results in fetishistic mental disorder followed by being remodeled into a feel of culpability, Freud thinks. There are a number of trauma victims or hysterics who have been abused by a father or by a male member of the family. Consequently, the pangs that the hysterics feel as a result of the symbolic infringement and the relevant memories are the same in proportion and modality. She is the sufferer because of her kin functioning as sexual breachers evoking the feelings to convert to anguish, to hang-ups, and the like (Godzich & Schulte-Sasse, 1986, p. 44). As it can be perceived, females are the main victims of the kinship sexual harassment due to the glaringly adverse influence of the patriarchal society because they are placed under men in all aspects by the ideologies imposed historically.

### **The Color Purple**

In *The Color Purple* the majority of women are made either to struggle vigorously against men assiduously or to disclose a submissive gesture. Thus, for them to get the chance to fight for their own sole rights without any potential repercussions, the only requisite for the women to satisfy is have autonomous financial security. With this requisite if met properly, women can improve their situations, provided that they band together supporting each other. While you are perusing the opening section of the book, it would occur to you that Celie’s appreciation of the color purple created for both males and females by God to indulge in is in fact inoperative. She is continuing her life physically, but not practically and emotionally that's why she never stops to smell the roses she bumps into. In fact, she’s just surviving. Shug is mentioned to be the one indicating the notion of the color purple to Celie. Shug states that for the sake of pleasing people in their lives little things such as devising the color purple are done by God for the people expecting them to realize the elegance of his/her creation.

The protagonist, Celie, narrates the whole novel by writing a number of related memos addressing God. At the very outset, she takes God as a white man favoring white men mostly, construing God as an old white man (Walker, 2003, p.193). As Celie is a black woman abused by men, she ultimately protests against God. By the end of the novel, she realizes that *God is without gender and race*. The only thing he wants from humans is for them to enjoy their lives as much as possible – from nature, to sex, to the color purple. Given Shug, benefitting from the elegance of God’s creation is meant to be whatever God has created, sex, for instance. Celie is taught by Shug about the belief that God expects us to enjoy life not other way round; this is in fact the path to extend the passion of our love to God. Having acquired how to love life, Celie adorns all bedroom fixtures of hers as purple and red; therefore, reading the novel, we notice that God is just in nature and in himself, but the reason for injustice between men and women is the way the justice itself is enforced and displayed by the people in charge. As the story implies the way the physical world, with its governing variables, is arranged and operates is not fair. It has been established in this way to benefit patriarchy. Being color-less is looked upon as an advantage. As a result, women should be bathed by the same divinity that men enjoy.

Helen Cixous, a French feminist writer best known for her article called “The Laugh of the Medusa”, describes the prevalent graded worth that women are cognizant of. For this purpose, Cixous establishes the oppositions which encompass culture/nature; head/heart; colonizer/colonized; and, speaking/writing. With this said, Cixous generalizes these binary opposition to the ones between men and women followed by getting involved in political and philosophical repudiation of these relations because they have faith in the unjust axiom that they are dependent on power and exclusion in order to exist (Cixous, 1975, cited in Blyth and Sellers, 2004). As Cixous states it is the father who always exists coming to being. In this way, the father leaves no room for the woman to express. Woman is not calculated but it is she who is taken as passive, whereas man is considered as active. She does not make a couple with father. In literary history, there are always men. Literature is under the control of phallogocentric ideas, which means it is dominated by male attitudes (Cixous and Sellers, 1994, p. 39).

According to Dexter, the forebears of the Hebrew myth demonstrate quite ostensibly that at least the lionized woman, the goddess, had a revered image in early Near Eastern societies. Later, the Near Eastern goddess, among the Hebrews, declined into a mortal scapegoat, the one responsible for the “greatly multiplied sorrow”, and the subservience of woman in the following centuries (Stanton, Anthony, & Gordon, 1997, p. 463).

#### **Wide Sargasso and the Victimization of Women**

The women in *Wide Sargasso Sea* are victims of patriarchal society, especially Antoinette and her mother Anette. Antoinette and her mother are victimized by men, leading to their madness. As Irigary puts it, women are not heard by men and are ignored and marginalized by men. In *Wide Sargasso Sea* the case is exactly as she puts it. When Anette realizes the danger of the natives and warns Mr. Mason about it, he dismisses her worries and thinks that she is not sufficiently aware of the situation to recognize the danger. Ignoring all her warnings, he leaves her under the unbearable fear and stress and when the natives attack them and set fire to their house, resulting in the death of her beloved son, it is too late and madness is the result. When her daughter, Antoinette, is grown up, it seems nothing has changed and the same patriarchal system is at work, victimizing women. Antoinette, after marrying a stranger who is given no name in the novel, is accused by him of insanity. Deprived of her wealth, she is considered mad by her husband. In this case she is a victim of the patriarchal law as well. By marrying, she

loses her control over her wealth and property, whereby seemingly women in the presence of men are not allowed to own anything. Women, as victims of a male-dominated law system, are considered so immature that they are unable to manage their finance so a man is assigned for them to manage them with their properties. That is to say, they are physically, mentally and economically victims of a patriarchal system. A full victimization of women is carried out by making them completely dependent on men.

As we detect in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Antoinette is marginalized and neglected at the end by her husband. She is totally dependent on her husband or more broadly speaking on men in order to survive. She is not allowed to act freely because a victim is allowed to move only in a limited circle. She is confined and even portrayed as half animal and half human. She is degraded to the rank of an animal. All is done to keep her in the margins and to let her know that she is a woman and a victim and that she has to live under the rules of a patriarchal system in which man is at the center and a woman is in the margins. Any protest against the established order is suppressed even with cruelty that we can see in Antoinette's case. A victimized woman always has to live with the possibility of cruel treatment if she depicts any sign of resistance or protest. In the case of a victim's protest the result can be madness or deaths, which are the destiny of the main characters of this novel.

#### **Conclusion**

To conclude, it is vehemently stated that women's victimization was launched when religion was introduced to people by males. It was predominantly men who dealt with the ins and outs of the religious scriptures and works. It is of significance to mention that in both Christianity and Islam there is a tendency to serve patriarchy rather than matriarchy, and men are favored much more than women. The main cause of the gender inequality is due to males, who occupy the superstructures, the top religious leaders, in both Christian and Islamic countries.

As evidenced above, men have distorted the original messages of a just God and prophet to make the system work well for them, enslaving women. In regard to the Islamic world, this disaster happened after Holy Prophet's death, which gave a chance to the opportunists to exploit the gap that then came about. In regard to Christianity, Christianity used to be extremely discriminating and suppressing, but its instructions are changeable and changed in time and managed to shift from extreme suppression of women to average status in gender inequality. Compared to the religious schools of thought, women are also victims of repressing patriarchal system in secular and fictional schools of thought. If the hierarchal system in religious schools of thought is as God, man then woman, in secular and fictional school is as Man then woman. The same oppressing system is still at work but possibly in a different form. As the former school of thought, the secular and fictional schools of thought share the same doctrine of marginalization and victimization of women.

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