



## **The Political Economy of Gender: A Marxist-Feminist Reading of Patriarchy and Resistance in *A Thousand Splendid Suns***

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<b>ARTICLE INFO</b>  <b>Keywords:</b> Political Economy of Gender, Marxist Feminism, Social Reproduction, Domestic Labor, Afghan Women's Resistance, Hosseini, Patriarchy as System.  <b>Corresponding Author:</b> <b>Zareena Qasim</b> Associate Professor, Department of English, University of Sargodha,  Email: <a href="mailto:Zareena.qasim@uos.edu.pk">Zareena.qasim@uos.edu.pk</a>	<b>ABSTRACT</b> This paper analyzes Hosseini's <i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i> (2007) in the context of Marxist feminism and the ways in which the novel exposes the politics of patriarchy as not only a cultural but also a political-economic institution. The institution that takes advantage of women bodies and labor to generate value. The paper suggests that women such as Mariam and Laila are oppressed as a twofold exploitation: they are exploited as gendered subjects subject to patriarchal control as well as economic entities whose domestic and reproductive labor are seized with no payment in the situation in Afghanistan. Through the implementation of essential Marxist feminist terminology such as social reproduction, the domestic labor debate, and the base-superstructure dynamic, this reading proves the way Hosseini constructs the emergence of opposition in women not as an act of rebellion but as a needed disruption to a system based on material and emotional exhaustion. The study contributes to the resistance, finally envisions liberation not by individual flight but by unity and community recovery of reproductive power. This provides a literary example of history of trying to understand gender oppression as an economic phenomenon.
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### **1. Introduction**

Mariam, the Harami illegitimate daughter in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Hosseini, is hearing her mother Nana tell her that as a woman, the accusing finger of a man will always know where to find her, when her mother tells her, just as she is learning a cultural proverb. When she tells her daughter learn this now and learn it well, my daughter, like a compass needle that points north, a man will always know where to find her. She is getting inducted into the working logic of a political economy- an economy where blame, similar to capital, moves and gathers along

gender divisions. In this paper, a Marxist feminist approach is used to discuss Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) and it highlights how capitalism leans on the oppression of women at work and at home. The study is built on the idea of Afghanistan's history from Soviet influence to Taliban women's rights, which provides a context for understanding Mariam and Laila's troubles. It discusses how the economy leads to gendered violence and provides information on why linking the analysis of stories to the study of economics is vital. In this review, the reviewer notes that studying Taliban policies using a gender lens is crucial. Research methods for the study consist of looking closely at relevant scenes and connecting them to events in the history of Afghanistan. One can see the difference and the suffering experienced by Mariam as a Harami and Laila as someone whose privilege is gone. The Analysis chapter is based on themes and the first section focuses on unpaid domestic work (for example, Mariam noticing that her hands were blistered from taking care of Rasheed's shirts). According to Federica, it maintains the system of patriarchal capitalism. Secondly, by wishing to marry onto families' undesirable daughters, men crystallize view that women were simply property. Thirdly, resistance is highlighted by the way the young people look at each other stealthily in glances measuring disobedience.

### **Background of the study**

Ibrahimi and Maley (2019) argue the failure of the inflow of world capital and world models of governance to undermine patriarchy but instead replace it with a new pattern of accumulation. In this light the commemorated but fragile gains of a few Afghan women especially in urban governance and NGOs served as an ideological and economic currency to legitimize the foreign supported order and to allow the movement of aid structurally relying on the further exploitation of women unpaid reproductive labor in the domestic arena to further reproduction in society. Therefore, the partial and highly specialized empowerment of women was a super structural weapon which masked the material reality of the fact that international capital and new local patriarchal networks were all beneficiaries of a gendered division of labor which was no less fundamental to the most. This movement highlights the Marxist feminist claim that patriarchy is also a versatile material relation which can be modernized and instrumentalized to fulfill the requirements of a globalizing but far more insightful, political economy.

McDowell (1999) echoed in *Gender, Identity and Place Understanding Feminist Geographies* that some women spaces have been traditionally, religious and politically determined to be either male or female spaces and we also know that when it comes to a woman space as being the latter these were and still are largely tied to nurturing and providing role in all human societies without exception. The spaces which we call the public ones are presumed to be male and during centuries men have excluded females to the public where all major decisions concerning power are discussed and enacted. Based on the description given above the space to which men belong is titled as the public space hence, a woman has no place to be but in the domestic sphere where her role is to care and keep home. Such restricted area placed women in hard position because all other conditions including academic knowledge, professional work that allow one to build her own personal life are in the masculine front. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is the narrative of helpless and oppressed women who are destined to bear all the tortures of patriarchal, economic, political and cultural system of Afghanistan. The novel portrays the story of two women, Mariam and Laila, who are living their lives as oppressed beings under hegemonic patriarchal and political credo. Struggling against all kinds of abusive experience of physical beating and psychological exploitations, these two women Laila and Mariam represent the sufferings of every Afghan woman living in the terrible scenario of socio-political extremism.

They are forced to bear the oppressive conduct of their husband Rasheed because both Mariam and Laila are inferior to him in their economic status as they cannot earn money to fulfill the financial needs of life.

The patriarchal system constructs the space of women in all the key aspects which provide the greatest impact in any society like religion, culture and political system. Hence it does not come in as a surprise that over the ages in the majority of culture, religion and political structure women are prone to subordination. The novel portrays the bitter reality of women's lives as enslaved creature. Effects of patriarchy in the lives of women are overshadowed in the novel by portraying the accounts and different incidents of forced marriages, domestic violence, forced pregnancies and economic inferiority. The role that a stereotypical society expects from a woman is of a housewife with all abilities to obey her man. The financial and economic dependence in a patriarchal society adds more to the subjugation of women within the system of economy

### **Research questions**

With regards to the statement of the background of the study, the researcher develops the research questions:

1. How do the female characters in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* experience the interplay of gender discrimination and subordination?
2. In what ways do Mariam and Laila's experiences fit into the Marxist feminist critique of unpaid domestic labor and financial male dependence?

### **2. Review of Literature**

Dalla Costa and James (2017) in their 1972 manifesto, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community* ignited it in their own conception of the household. Dalla Costa and James did not see it as an autonomous domestic space but as the inseparable social factory that produced the key commodity the labor power and that housework was a direct or direct productive force on capital. The concept of feminism is described as the campaign against cultural and historical inferiority of females as well as the fight towards civic, cultural and social liberation. Feminism is an aesthetic that gained mainstream and importance in the early twentieth century that led to emergence of numerous female writers including George Eliot, Virginia Woolf, Charlotte Bronte and Hosseini. Their provocative, strategic demand of Wages for Housework was not an end in itself but a political instrument aimed at making this exploitation visible and to organize its rejection, thus striking a major pillar of capitalistic accumulation. Women struggle to be emancipated because they are regarded as a sort of inferior beings, and not as belonging to the human species. The common belief by most feminists is that, as a group, women are oppressed and treated differently than men and that women are discriminated both personally and institutionally.

Qayyum and Syed (2023) explore that the idea of lower and upper class is inherently connected with gendered representation in the text showing that women linguistic agency and framing of description is undermined systematically because of their socio economic positioning. (el Saadawi, 2015) Feminists also believe that the society is structured in a way that it generally operates to the advantage of men than women. In other words, the society is patriarchal in her book *The Hidden Face of Eve: Women in the Arab World*. Cott (1987) explores that women place is not fixed in society and therefore it is constructed by society in both historical and social ways. Rights of women are linked to the fact that women are not subjected to any form of violations and oppression. As feminism emerged, the theorists and feminist activists began discussing the rights that women should have and the equality of the genders in general context

of feminism and she has mentioned that in her book *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*. This social construction makes women to believe that, they do not deserve equal rights as men and they are below men in status. In Marxist feminist approach, reproduction is historicized in compare to production. To emphasize this, it does so in order to stress this. Under capitalism exploitation and oppression of women other theories by Marxist feminist theorists theorize as well revolutionary subjectivity and anti-capitalist future. This philosophy adheres that the power must be the reason of all this endless gender-based violence and oppression institutions in the male dominating society, where a crime of the male gender against the female is supported through the backing up of the crime. In built patriarchy.

Hooks (2000) posits that feminism is a movement whose aim is to eliminate sexism, sexist exploitation as well as oppression (p.1) in her book *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. (Hooks, 2000) claims that men receive all the advantages of belonging to patriarchy and presuppose that they are superior and extraordinary compared to women and that is why they should control women in her work *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*. Marxism Feminism is a branch of feminism that involves the suppression of females in terms of economic and social results. One of the simple concepts that form the basis of Marxist feminism is the emancipation of women through the destruction of the patriarchal and capitalistic hierarchy of the society. Hartmann (1979) discloses that the subordination of women to gender discrimination is a constructed practice in society as it entails that people are born female to be made women and male to be made men. The Marxist feminists are of the opinion that the liberation of women can be achieved through toiling on the economic, social and cultural roots of the exploitation of women.

Lorber (2013) asserting that gender discrimination is a social creation in her work *Gender Paradoxien*. The products of gender discrimination in a society are the marriage, religion, and economic as well as cultural factors. The ideologies of some stereotypical societies that women are treated as inferior beings are revealed in Gender discrimination in a construct of society. The division of roles that are designated to particular genders is an outcome of numerous social and cultural standards that exist in human beings. Thus, by treating men and women equally a problem of society can be destroyed. Economic realities have come to influence lives of people and women in particular during this age of globalization.

### **3. Conceptual framework**

Literature serves as a powerful medium to reflect and critique societal structures, and this study employs Marxist feminist theory to analyze Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007). Rooted in the works of Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), Marxist theory critiques capitalist exploitation and class struggle, while feminist theory exposes patriarchal oppression. Together Marxist feminism reveals how economic and gendered systems intersect to subjugate women particularly in postcolonial contexts like Afghanistan. Federica in *The Caliban and the Witch* (2004) uncovers how capitalism can only exist by not paying women for the labor they provide at home. By watching the shift to capitalism she shows that child-rearing, household labor and cooking had to become less precious so that wage jobs could become possible. Federica explains that feminine autonomy was persecuted through sexual abuse and violence as in what happened in the witch hunts in Europe. The Marxist feminist a critical theoretical framework that combines Karl Marx critic with the feminist criticism of gendered oppression of a population is a contextual framework that explains the relationship of women lives to the larger political economy in ways which are at once passionate and dispassionate, descriptive, and prescriptive. This lens is especially effective for reading Hosseini's *A Thousand*

*splendid suns* (2007) a novel that can expose the ugly crossing of class oppression and gendered violence of the economic deprivation in a land devastated by war in Afghanistan. Character means the main person or player in a story and character and characterization means the context and description there are two types of characters that exist within a story major characters and minor. Meanwhile Minors are characters with a small part and little power in every scene within the plot. That kind of character is generally reflected in the novel's plot. Heart of the novel usually relies on when a character faces a challenge or conflict.

Using this framework Federica, (2004) points out that staying at home as a full time giver was necessary for Mariam due to the patriarchal nature. In Rashid's home, women do all the work without recognition or reimbursement, allowing the men to benefit financially. The household economy consists of reproductive labor which is the invisible and consistent side behind the production in the novel that fits into the Marxist feminist conceptualizations of the priceless yet unacknowledged nature of domestic efforts. The never ending chores, particularly cooking, cleaning and childcare, done by Mariam and Laila allow Rasheed to be economically active although they do not get paid or are acknowledged. This process parallels one put forward by feminist economist Silvia Federica, who argues that capitalism has relied on women to reproduce labor power unpaid. The fact that the Taliban cannot allow women to work outside the family compound worsens this exploitation by law, where they are required to be home serving the family without a salary. n. Rasheed represents the flagship of patriarchy as he exercises complete authority over Mariam and Laila in the form of physical beatings, economic means and manipulative psychological mind games. His orderly harassment is reflective of the macrocosm of Taliban regime, where male domination is cemented in the form of practices of depriving women of education, work, and the right to roam freely. Mariam and Laila belong to the exploited proletariats even though they do all the domestication work that is required to enable the survival of the household; they are never resourced, given freedom of choice, or compensated. Their oppression resembles the study by Marx who studied the class antagonism where working people are the ones to keep the exploiting class at the top. This process further develops under the Taliban rule, which institutionalizes the proletarian status of women by denying educational and job opportunities systematically. Even when Laila is in such poverty that she has to work as a secret beggar, her income is made into the possession of Rasheed, and this shows the mutual benefiting of patriarchy and capitalism as they both exploit the working and breeding abilities of women. The novel therefore exposes the material foundation of women oppression, whose labor feeds the whole society but is systematically undermined and robbed.

#### **4. Data analysis**

As per the outcome of the data analysis the researcher discovers the kind of oppressions being subjected to the leading female characters, Mariam and Laila. Exploitation is when one can use the labor of people to make a profit without duly recompensing them and that some individuals use their abilities at the mercy of others according to their wills and to their gains. In the discussion next, it is Mariam who gets exploited. She undergoes exploitation from Rasheed. Mariam the wife has always fulfilled her roles in the family without dreaming of any pay but comfortable and joyous matrimony. Rasheed however is also not being fair towards her, he does not provide her with a solace a merry marriage even worse and he treats Mariam in a poor manner of bringing out her faults all the time. He was more susceptible to times like these when he could blame her food, pester her with the messiness of the yard or the fact that even a very little bit of insanitation was there in the house. "He tended more and more to blame her cooking.... to grumble at the mess in the yard to notice even the slightest traces of untidiness in



the house (p. 100). Moreover, Rasheed also commits an offense of speaking ill to Mariam. He is not exhausted because he can readily perceive the innocence of Mariam as a stupidity he even snorts. The fact that he does indicating Mariam fault is like what the employer does when he is not happy with the work done by the slave and what he indirectly wishes that Mariam does better and commands her to not repeat her fault during the other occasions. "What's the matter he mewled and mimicking at her? What's the matter is that you have done it again. But I boiled it five minutes more than usual ...That is a bold lie I swear." (p.109). These lines shows Rasheed anger and accusation towards Mariam portraying a dynamic of power imbalance and potential exploitation. The exploitation that Rasheed undergoes is not over, it continues. He passes a judgment on Mariam as a cooker, in the sense that Mariam is not doing it as she should. This is because he continues to attempt when he points out the fault of Mariam he is drawing near to the word exploitation. The exploitation in this novel is not the same as the exploitation during the period in colonialism, what needs to be highlighted here is the compensation made by Rasheed to Mariam. These we have evidences to tell how evil Rasheed becomes in adding Mariam work. "He shook the rice angrily from her fingers and pushed the plate away then spilling sauce and rice on the sofrah. Mariam watched... as he stormed out of the living room and then Out of the house and just slamming the door in his way out" (p. 109-110) Mariam despises Laila despite the fact that both were forced by the situations albeit in a differently. The communal use of a husband may lead to big competition between the women, but they understand that unless they establish peace, they are worse; helpless and wretched. The humiliating practice is brought up by the fact that Mariam is initially unhappy over the marriage between Laila and Rasheed. We may look at the demonstration here with each disappointment with six miscarriages Rasheed had grown more distant and resentful. "Now nothing she did that pleased him". (p. 98). The oppression of the women in male controlled society of Afghanistan is however further exhibited by the fact that, Rasheed is more than a dramatic character, who is symbolic of evil and agency that Islamic law inflicts on the women. The comparison is drawn between the Taliban and Communist regarding the concerns of women. The communists opened the door to allow the women to receive education and to work in offices. There was a special environment against which a woman could find it intolerable to obtain education and be able to operate independently as specifically in the case of the Taliban. The wives are forced to tie burqas on themselves after their weddings by Rasheed joyfully. This evil is what comes out of Rasheed how happy he was when the restricting laws by the Taliban happened and that got him a bad personality. It can be evidenced by the quotation. "In the eyes of the Taliban being a communist and the leader of the fearful KHad made Najibullah only slightly more hateful than a woman" (p.272). The above quotation proved that the Taliban laws did not change the way of life of Rasheed in any way. It made him even more detestable than a woman. The laws were helpful in his head since it placed restrictions on his wives and the authority they lacked significantly. The marginalization and alienation oppresses an individual by casting a person out of some useful compassions in the societal life (Young, 1999). Certain groups of undesirable people are socially marginalized in the society due to their differences which decrease their capacities and strength. It is as they are the ones who were in lack of equality and said as the dependent people. It can be said that both Mariam and Laila are marginalized in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007). Mariam is born as a Harami, Harami was an illegitimate birth. You are a fumbling little Harami. This is what I have got out of all I have been through. "A Harami, an heirloom-shattering, awkward, little thing." (p.4). When Mariam was at the age of five she could not figure out what was the anger and hatred in the mind of Nana but this is something she regrets later in life.

A Harami was... a bastard who would never have a rightful claim to the things... love, family, home and acceptance. (p.4). these lines show that an illegitimate child does not claim legitimate aspects of life like love, family and home. This was due to personal disappointment of Nana being discarded to reside in a shanty with her Harami, Mariam that motivates her to despise Jalil and detest Mariam due to her faithfulness to Jalil. . She even said that “a man has a wretched, wretched heart, Mariam. It isn't like a mother's womb. It is not going to bleed; it is not going to stretch to fit you in”. (p.27).

The author of this novel compares the feelings of Nana to the naive feelings of Mariam when she was still a girl. She idolizes her father, his family and his wealth though this is not shared by her. Their occasional visits of Jalil to Kolba are satisfying since she does not have any other alternative other than reality. It is because of such aspect as the desire of Mariam to enjoy her moments with Jalil, even praying to have his long life, which illustrates that most women are a product of ignorance by birth. Mariam has been clueless about the reckless attitude toward her adopted by Jalil until she is also deceived by him. Jalil is the character of the rich men who are more obsessed with how he looks and the position in his life rather than an own son, his blood. He spends most of his days in ignorance of how harmed he treated Mariam and also allows her to sleep by the doorsteps after she comes to his house the first time. That is the harshly negative perception of Harami by the society. Why Jalil will act so. Nana finds herself helpless regarding the matter just like women are basically helpless in the society. On the same note both of Mariam's parents denied her, Jalil was ashamed of her and in her uttermost misery Nana enact suicide and rejected Mariam and thus left her to live under the unkind hands of the society. This order opens our eyes to the frailty of a woman which is assigned to her by the patriarchal society by nature cannot be denied. This case suggests us to the violation of the right. And this error is never in mind conscious of the society. The issue of this domination or oppression is relative to the rights of women equality and that should be fought. The manner that Rasheed intimidates them is in fact the way of demonstrating how strong he is. He wants to make them believe that they are helpless and could not do anything to struggle against them.

All people are born into a culture a complex of common beliefs regarding how reality is, the criterion of right or wrong and ideas of understanding social dynamics. These concepts are applied into actions and physical objects. Reared-brought up as total dependent infants; a process of socialization tells us the rules, the functions, and the network of relations of the social world in which we are about to be placed. When we go through the growing up process we learn how to think, how to act and how to feel the way we are supposed to. Being the adults, we are surrounded by the assumptions of and images of gender of our culture. In this scheme, patriarchy has preside over the roles to provide the perception of how the idea could be transferred and adopted in the society. Moreover, patriarchy initiates to make the ideas a system of society. However, unfortunately, they gain sets of the ideology which makes the women under the influence of their power and always under them. Here, patriarchy desires the women to understand that their fate is natural and there is no way of declining it but they have to accept it. To the opinion of researchers, it is acceptance of destiny or consciousness of the same that has been forced. However, in reality, the author intends to provide this pattern as female consciousness of the struggle, which has to be established as resistance. In this, the author takes this case of neglect to show opposition of patriarchy by the voice of women. The review of gender phenomena in patriarchal society is based on the inequality of right in this novel. The cause of abuse in this instance is emotional neglect, which is normally grouped under the aspect cultural imperialism. “And the daughter he had to be so ungrateful: of all the daughters I might

have, sir why God... You are nothing!" (p.17). The above data is verbal form of aggression denoting disaffection of some condition. It is the judgment of sorts to note that woman is sacrificed to the children. In this state man is not in a position to pay the sacrifice of woman when she gives birth to her children. It is not clear in what way smarting woman face their baby is worked out. And the question will be why she has to go through with her shellacking when she triumph and pass through of it. The clarification is, in fact, the outcome of emotional neglect which endangers woman as the victim. That is the emotional outpouring of sufferings. Everybody desires charity and love as a reward to her sacrifice. Nana is just giving Mariam a warning that Nana will be her only person in this world. By the time Nana dies, she would have nothing. It is clear to us in the following manner: "I am everything you have in this world, Mariam, and with me... you will have nothing. You'll have nothing. You are nothing!" (p.25).

It implies that when Nana dies, no one will know that of Mariam to take care. The Harami will never be accepted by the society as a legal system since it is the law of the social as well as being regarded as the morality crime. The society traditionally has imposed standards of the value of the right and the wrong. However, the patriarchy society standards appreciate the value of the social culture, but this value is always applied on the patriarchal paradigm, where equality of the right of women is overridden. We may observe as follows: "I wonder," the young Talib said. "We, women and we men, are different made by God That is why... we must have only one male witness, and two female ones (p. 191). Laila challenges the systemic confinement of women by arguing that a society cannot functionally imprison half of its people in domestic idleness. This critique of gendered oppression becomes terrifyingly personal when she realizes Rasheed intends to murder her. Witnessing this, Mariam reaches a profound breaking point. After twenty-seven years of a marriage defined by deprivation and control, she resolves that he will not claim Laila's life as his final act of theft. In a moment of decisive agency, Mariam plants her feet, grips the shovel, and calls his name, ensuring he witnesses her defiance. She strikes him across the temple, the force knocking him away from Laila. Then, with a resolve she had never before possessed, she raises the shovel vertically and brings it down with her full strength. In this act, Mariam understands she is exercising authority over her own destiny for the very first time. With that clarity, she delivers the final, liberating blow. Such a scenario started when Zalmai (the second born child of Laila) was interrogated by Rasheed. During those moments, Rasheed was querying Zalmai what his mother was doing when he was not being present at home. In a smooth way, Zalmai responded truthfully about the fact that someone (Tariq) approached his mother and talked to Laila at home. That is where the origin of this violence and the fight of Laila and Mariam is directed to Rasheed.

It was part and parcel of Rasheed, as the head of house hold being unable to receive other individuals who came to his house without his consent. Further, he has already known that the man that came to Laila is her friend when they were youngsters. It seems that Rasheed is envious to this man. And rule of that it will not hap no one will go to the wife. After that incident, Rasheed started beating Laila with his belt. Laila feels like she is being strangled by him and she believes that in her death. All of a sudden, she understands that she is able to breathe again and Mariam asks her whether she starlight. Laila understands what has happened to Rasheed and that he is actually dead due to the activities of Mariam. Mariam and Laila wish Zalmai should not see Rasheed and thus pull Rasheed behind a work bench all the way to the backyard. Mariam also attempts to mend the wounds of Laila. Firstly, through that event, Mariam makes her fate and decides her own life. She is forced to kill Rasheed even though, she has to pay the price. Now, she is bound everything as a dream come to pass soon. In other hand it will be the hustles in their



life. But she feels one thing that what she has done is a pride that she has saved respectability of women. She is also of the opinion that there is always a way even she is sure that she cannot conceal herself before the death penalty punishment. Mariam knows that, and it is waiting to her.

“Laila was muttering in an encouraging tone. It would be a life full of troubles... she thought, yet of a pleasant nature”. (p.185) the promise of future struggles became something to cherish, like a treasured family heirloom passed down with pride. Mariam's maternal voice soothed Laila, offering a measure of comfort. They would manage, Mariam assured her; they would know the next steps by morning and act decisively. Perhaps by the next day, they could embark on a journey toward a different life one abundant with opportunity, joy, and even hardships they could face together. Laila felt profoundly grateful for Mariam's steady leadership, her calm and reasoned mind guiding them both through the crisis. In stark contrast, Laila felt herself unraveling a tangle of nerves and confusion. As Mariam stood, she gently instructed Laila to tend to her son. Yet in that moment, Laila saw a profound, haunting distress etched on Mariam's face, an expression of anguish deeper than any she had ever witnessed Mariam knows the implication of her action that she will take the penalty and will leave Laila. Laila Forced Marriage is an Asset to Liability. Laila is fluid and her value is dependent on her utility. Prior to the rocket attack, she is an asset, a learned and beautiful woman. Having turned into an orphan, she is a liability. The offer of Rasheed is to rescue when in reality his calculation is to acquire. He tells her that I'm a man of means. I own a home, a stable and good income. I can provide for you and protect you. It is the lingo of an agreement. He reveals himself as actually being driven by action later to Mariam coldly as he says to Mariam, You are old, and you are clumsy, and you are not able to produce me a son. Young she is, and healthy, and capable of giving me a son. The body of Laila is the body that is evaluated on the basis of its reproductive use-value. The Body as a Site of Production and Control: Control of female reproduction is a major economic issue. Once Laila gives birth to a daughter, Aziza, Rasheed is angered like a disappointed investor. You did this willfully, he often snarled and says You give me a daughter A dokhtar Sure I do, I want to get down and bite your thigh, just now, till I can taste my own blood. This gut response is a reminder that the female body is a machine that gives birth to male heirs and its inability to give the desirable product is subject to violent punishment. The invisible, tiresome household work of Mariam and Laila such as cooking, cleaning, and submission to the marital rape are the active imitation of the Social Reproduction Theory (Bhattacharya, 2017).

## **5. Conclusion**

Oppression against women and their subjugation in every field of life is pervasive in patriarchal cultures of all societies. Oppression which scars the freedom and lives of women in Afghanistan lies within the roots of Afghan culture, societal norms, economic subordination and political scenario supported by strict cultural standards. This article while analyzing Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) from the perspective of Marxist Feminism highlights the oppression women face on public and private spheres in Afghanistan. It reveals the violence which a female face to be a victim of forced marriages, domestic violence, financial deprivation and psychological exploitation. All these forms of violence combine to cause obstacles in the development of women in such societies. If women dare to go outside unlike the cultural and political codes, they face severe acts of physical violence by those who are in power. This article explores the severity of oppression women face in such scenario by exposing the characters of Laila and Mariam. They both become victim of patriarchy with all its consequences. The writer has also made an attempt to deconstruct the protagonist with respect to how he perceived patriarchy and oppression. Through Marxist feminism conception, the writer concentrates on the

attribute possessed by Laila which means a distinctive, bold, resolute, seasoned and free. Laila has to face the unfair treatment by her husband but it has also made Laila as a feminist character who lived in the world around her full of men and she tried to battle against it. This is what is unfamiliar to her and against her principles of right and wrong. The courage of Laila to make the decision by leaving her husband can be considered as her success to be liberated with the patriarchal system and the reflection of the concept of feminism. The researcher infers that the violence, oppression, discrimination and also the gender inequalities certainly feel to the world of women. The novel carefully traces the process of developing gender discrimination and subordination of the female characters specifically Mariam and Laila not as a cultural phenomenon but as a physical reality imposed by poverty and war. The male-chauvinist which Hosseini depicts is weaponizing the socio-economic collapse the perpetual threat of poverty and violence in the Taliban regime deprives women of the rights to the law and agency in society. A new form of submissive, frequently abusive marriage is their only survival tool. This is a literal example of the main Marxist feminist argument, where the lives of Mariam and Laila are characterized by being trapped in the private sphere where their essential domestic and reproductive work, preparation of food, cleaning, and child-rearing, is being made invisible and free of charge and exploited to sustain the patriarchal household economy. The fact that they are financially dependent on Rasheed is not just a personal issue but a systemic process of control, which shows how capitalism and patriarchy are inter-complicated to make the commodification of the body and labor of women a basic premise of material existence. This thesis has contended that *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) by Hosseini is not a fight against the tragic tale of personal victimhood but a complex literary experiment with an application of Marx-feminist beliefs in action. By carefully reading this novel we have been able to follow how the interaction between the systems of patriarchy and capitalism have commodified women bodies and expropriated their domestic labor and how this subjugation is enforced by ideological state apparatuses that solidarity is created through collective material conditions. Which can create a potent class awareness that can produce revolutionary action.

The main innovation of such a thesis is its logical implementation of the modern Marxist-feminist theory especially the work of such scholars as Bhattacharya (2017) and Federica (2004) to restructure the main conflicts of the novel in very economic language. Rasheed has been rightly reported by previous studies as a patriarch but this work has just made him a petty capitalist in the domestic sphere. His possession of Mariam and Laila is not just a social domination but also a control and exploitation of free reproductive and housework. This reading gives them a materialist basis of their suffering as it transcends a critique of culture to an imputation of the economic infrastructure of the patriarchal household. This thesis suggesting that Mariam is devalued as an infertile woman and Laila is valued because she is young brings us a new and very economic explanation to their situation and adds to the sense of their objectification. The problems of a woman are the central topic in this novel and the major character who portrayed the problem of a woman is Laila the main character in this novel. We are aware that the violence, operation, discrimination and even the inequalities among the genders are commonly referred to as a critical issue that women face in the world and it was contributed by the diverse gender. It is this different gender which creates the process of division of labor that is a man in the sphere of public and woman in the sphere of domestic. The parameter which segregates the sphere of labor is referred to as the patriarchal system in other words it is the power of the men in some zone like politics, religion, law, economic, education and even domestic sphere. *A Thousand splendid suns* (2007) is a memorable novel about a

devastated nation and an unsurpassable narrative of family and friendship. *A Thousand splendid suns* published in the year 2007 has sold more than eight million copies around the world. It has concentration on violence, men supremacy, discrimination and oppression too. According to the writer in knowing the story of novel we had to learn characters and characteristic. These are crucial features that can build the story even the character can be the minor only. The people will learn to know the moral message of the novel that the authors desire to convey through the character and characterization that which is related to the approaches.

Summing up, the contribution of the novel on the academic discourse is a theoretical relocation of the forces in the novel. This discussion shows that the domesticity depicted in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) is a micro-cosm of a capitalistic state that has its own ruling class (Rasheed) the workers it exploits (Mariam and Laila) and a pattern of class formation leading to a revolution. Using the modern paradigm of the Social Reproduction Theory the current work will advance the ongoing discourse by offering empiric material to prove that the continued relevance of the novel lies in its sub textual expression of one of the most fundamental libertarian ideas of Marxism-feminism the quest towards female liberation is inherently bound to the struggle against the economic systems that enjoy the fruit of their unpaid labor.

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