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COLLECTIVE UTOPIA: TOWARDS POST-STRUCTURALIST FEMINIST
GENEALOGIES STUDY OF "SULTANA'S DREAM" BY BEGUM
ROKEYA

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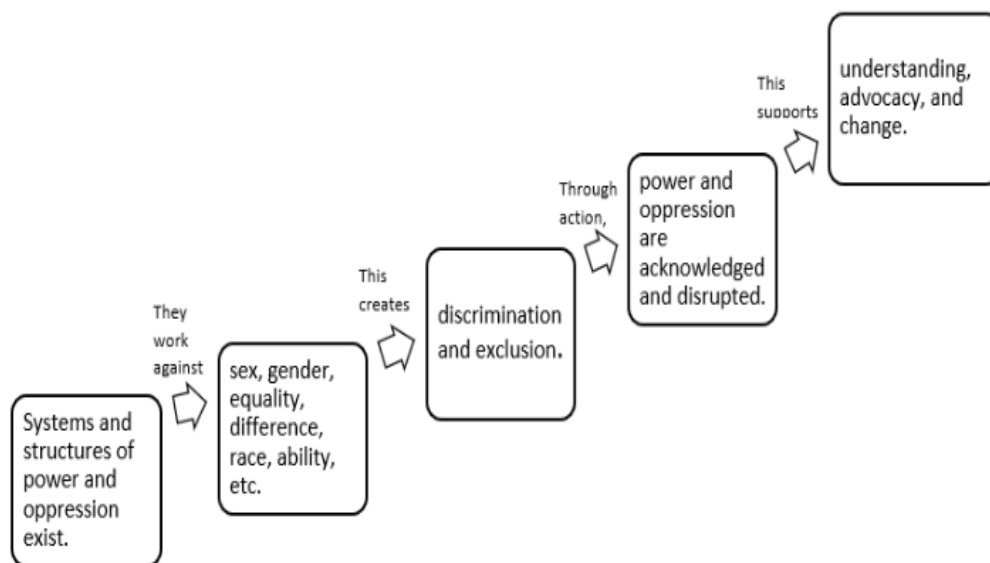
ABSTRACT

It has been long believed by feminists that men in this world consider women as mere extensions to themselves. They consider them to be some kind of ladder on which they can stand and reach the higher levels of their career. They only considered them to be mere bodies that have only one aim in their lives that is to satisfy men's desires and needs. They have never considered them to be the persons who can stand equally next to them or who can be respected in their own right. For long time women have been suppressed and kept away from social, economic and political centers of power. And when they started asserting their rights as human beings, they have been called radicals or raging feminists. In this research the researcher is going to analyze a short fiction story "Sultana's Dream by Begum Rokeya through the lens of post-Structuralist feminist theories, in which critics tends to raise a question that whether the gender is innate or God given or it has been socially constructed and therefore is mutable which can be put into play and can be deconstructed. Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain is an Asian writer who belonged to India and who aimed to embrace feminism in her writings and is well known for her feminist utopian fiction writings. She has fictitiously portrayed the need of women's rights to be fulfilled by using a very distinctive technique like utopia in her writing. In this research the researcher is going to analyze the aforementioned writing under the lens of Helen Cixous's Idea of L'écriture Feminine which means a female writing. It will be discussed in detail that when a female writes about herself, she reverses the system of binary oppositions like men/women, in which the term on the right side is always suppressed and the term on the left side is always privileged.

INTRODUCTION

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, the frontierswoman of Bengali Muslim feminism is a writer, social activist and also an educationist. She was born in 1880 in the district of Rangpur in a village called Pairaband, and had keen interest in the condition of women, their basic rights and their education. Her literary career started in 20th century and most of her writings primarily focused on feminism, its possessions and belongings.

Figure 1
Model of Feminist Theory



She was a feminist who encouraged women to be financially independent and emphasized on the importance of women education. She embraced cultural works and has established the thought that women must not be entangled and chained in the traditional roles as wives and mothers only, they can also perform social roles just as men do.

Begum Rokeya an Asian writer who belonged to India, she aimed to embrace feminism and is well known for their feminist utopian writings. Begum Rokeya wrote *Sultana's Dream*, a short story which mainly speaks against the oppression of women. It gathered much attention of the readers as it sheds light on the exploitation and suppression of women. *Sultana's Dream* emphasizes on the need that woman must get education and self-employment. In her other books and this story as well, Begum Rokeya ridicules the society in which women have to suffer the tragic consequences of 'Purdah' but men who misbehave are left free to move anywhere.

During Begum Rokeya's time, women lagged behind in every respect. Lack of awareness and social conservativeness were the major obstacles in the advancement of women. Women were not independent, as they were only restricted to the four walls of their houses. 'Purdah' has been considered necessary for women as men thought that women's safety only lies in 'purdah'. *Sultana's Dream* has been considered to be an outstanding and significant

example of the feminist fiction. The story is tempting, humorous and is a contentious analysis of the continental life where illiteracy and purdah were the norms for Muslim women.



Demands for women's rights are fictitiously portrayed by using a very unusual writing method like utopia in this story. In the lady land all the gender roles have been reversed and women seem to enjoy them. Rokeya's utmost desire of making women free from the shackles of social and religious prejudices has been depicted in her writing. Women of the lady land have been shown as masters of everything, whether its houses or businesses. But all these happen in her dream only. The whole situation is impermanent and the awakening of the Sultana who was dreaming portrays that the empowerment of women is a temporary dream for women.

The facet of reverse segregation of the sexes in Sultana's Dream has been the most tinted and the contentious side of the story. Hossain does not just interrupt the traditional role for sub continental women in the Twentieth Century, she is absolute contemptuous and critical of women who have allowed themselves to be spellbound within a limited role.

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain has been considered distinctive among other feminist utopian writers as she has earned a prominent place among the writings of feminist critics. She has refused the traditional gender roles and in order to achieve this aim, the feminist utopian fiction Sultana's Dream focuses primarily on the cultural boundaries between the two genders male and female.

Begum Rokeya through her utopian writing encourages her readers to question the boundaries of gender roles, which describe behavior on the basis of conventional and stereotypical male and female gender roles. The major theme of her writing is an indirect analysis of the masculine and feminine gender traits which has been analyzed through the comparison of Indian society to the society of the ladies of the lady land presented in Sultana's Dream.

The writer has efficiently presented such world in her writing in which a feminine identity stands out to be the ultimate power. Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain has shifted the stereotypical roles associated to female/woman. As far as Sakhawat Hossain's short story is concerned, it begins with a first-person narration by a narrator Sultana. It is not much clear in the text; she may or may not have fallen asleep in her easy chair when she was thinking about the pathetic condition of women in India. When looked up she saw someone who resembled

her friend Sister Sara. She invited Sultana to see her garden and Sultana thought that it would not be any harm going out at this time of the night as all men must be sleeping.

I looked up again at the moon through the open window and thought there was no harm in going out at that time. The men-servants outside were fast asleep just then, I could have a pleasant walk with Sister Sara. (Hossain, 2005)

She walked with this woman into a world, which she never in her life thought would have existed. It was a Lady Land and Sister Sara explained her that it was a place ruled and run by women where men are supposed to be living confined in the four walls of 'Mardana':

Now that they [men] are accustomed to purdah system and have ceased to grumble at their seclusion, we call the system "Mardana" instead of "zanana". (Hossain, 2005)

Only women were to be seen in public, the war won by the intellectual powers of women made them to rule the Lady land entirely and men on the other hand are kept in Mardana a male version of Zanana and are engaged in domestic works only because according to Sister Sara, "no one can trust these untrained men out of doors" (Hossain, 2005). By presenting such world Hossain encouraged her readers to break the shackles of the gendered notions and the binary opposition which kept women to the oppressed side.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND:

Theories which tend to examine gender existed long before structuralist feminist thoughts and concepts. Gender is a cultural universal, which means all societies' marks gender distinctions in some way, but of course all societies make those distinctions in a different way. Feminists since the Middle Ages have been asking whether the gender is biological or cultural or whether is socially constructed and therefore mutable. (Klages, 2007)

It has been long believed by feminists that men in this world consider women as mere extensions to themselves. They consider them to be some kind of ladder on which they can stand and reach the higher levels of their career. They only considered them to be mere bodies that have only one aim in their lives that is to satisfy men's sexual desires and needs. They have never considered them to be the persons who can stand equally next to them or who can be respected in their own right. For long time women have been suppressed and kept away from social, economic and political centers of power. And when they started asserting their rights as human beings they have been called radicals or raging feminists. Post-Structuralist feminist theories investigate that Gender is a set of signifiers that are attached to sexually dimorphic bodies and that these signifiers work to divide social practices and relations into the binary oppositions of male/female and masculine/feminine. (Klages, 2007)

From A Poststructuralist Feminist View

Gender is a relationship established between signifiers, things that signal gender, and signified, taken to be the physical sex of the person. Like all signifier and signified connections, this relationship is arbitrary. (Klages, 2007) This shows that the theories tend to investigate that the gender is not innate rather is socially constructed and therefore mutable which can easily be put into play and can be deconstructed. Gendered notions can be changed and can be attached to any person in the world. For example, let's consider high heels be the signifier, everybody generally when sees high heels thinks of a vagina and breast attached to it because in our culture, we have taught throughout our lives that high heels are a signifier of femaleness or femininity. But anyone can wear high heels but will be considered feminine because of it.

Gender operates within Western Construction of Binary Opposites, so that gender signifiers always point to either male or female body, and to masculine or feminine traits. (Klages, 2007)

Since it has been claimed by the post-Structuralist feminist theories that the gendered roles or the gender itself is unpredictable, vague and non-arrangeable, therefore it can be deconstructed.

Since 'gender' is constructed through arbitrary links between signifiers and signified, the connection between the two can be weakened, changed, or broken. Since the signifiers of gender help maintain the system of binary oppositions that shape the Western thought by dividing the world into 'male' and 'female' and valuing 'male' over 'female' gender can be deconstructed, and the elements that constitute stable notions of gender can be put into play. (Klages, 2007)

The facet of reverse segregation of the sexes in Sultana's Dream has been the most tinted and the contentious side of the story. Hossain does not just interrupt the traditional role for sub continental women in the Twentieth Century, she is absolute contemptuous and critical of women who have allowed themselves to be spellbound within a limited role.

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain has been considered distinctive among other feminist utopian writers as she has earned a prominent place among the writings of feminist critics. She has refused the traditional gender roles and in order to achieve this aim, the feminist utopian fiction Sultana's Dream focuses primarily on the cultural boundaries between the two genders male and female.

Gilbert and Gubar questions the same idea of signifiers and signified which leads towards the binary opposition as they investigate the metaphor pen=penis. They argued that The predominance of this metaphor relies on the idea that woman's bodies give birth to babies, which are mortal and limited, while men's bodies give birth to immortal things like books and art. (Klages, 2007)

Men see women as mere extensions of themselves, as rungs where they step on to reach the heights of their careers, and also as mere bodies to satisfy their

sexual desires and needs. They do not consider them as equals or as persons to be respected in their own right. For centuries women have been suppressed, kept away from the social, political and economic centers of power. Feminism's aim is to change this degrading view of women so that all women will realize that they are not 'nonsignificant Other' but instead each woman is valuable person possessing the same privileges and rights as every man. Through history it is evident that women seek chance to show men that they are not second-class citizens, but individuals who can and must set their own goals, dream their own dreams, and help change their own world into a better place to live.

What enrages me is the way women are used as extensions of men, mirrors of men, devices for showing men off, devices for helping men get what they want. They are never there in their own right, or rarely. The world of the western contains no women. Sometimes I think the world contains no women. (Tompkins, 1987)

Under the umbrella of feminism, there comes the poststructuralist thought which examines that gender is something universal and all societies practice gender distinctions in some way, even though all societies do it differently. Feminists from ages have been addressing whether gender is biological or cultural, whether it is innate and natural and God given or whether it is socially constructed and therefore can put into play and is mutable.

This paper is going to analyze the deconstruction of the stereotypical roles attached to the female identity under the umbrella of the concept of L'écriture Feminine, the Cixousian concept of woman's writing will be discussed on the basis of theory of Helene Cixous and her essay 'The Laugh of the Medusa' in which she encourages women to write about themselves, specifically their body and pleasures in order to break the spellbound of patriarchy. She introduces the deconstruction of the phallogocentric system introduced by Derrida and also by Lacan. She privileges the one which has been treated as another (that is women). Helene Cixous reverses this binary opposition where man is privileged and women are oppressed. She encourages women to write about themselves in order to shift the structures of language where women then become the active subjects and get the pleasures they want. Under such lens of L'écriture Feminine the story Sultana's Dream has been examined to see how the writing has been celebrated by the female writer which couldn't have been treated the same by the male writer.

Begum Rokeya through her utopian writing encourages her readers to question the boundaries of gender roles, which describe behavior on the basis of conventional and stereotypical male and female gender roles. The major theme of her writing is an indirect analysis of the masculine and feminine gender traits which has been analyzed through the comparison of Indian society to the society of the ladies of the lady land presented in Sultana's Dream.

The writer has efficiently presented such world in her writing in which a feminine identity stands out to be the ultimate power. Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain has shifted the stereotypical roles associated to female/woman. As far as Sakhawat Hossain's short story is concerned, it begins with a first-person

narration by a narrator Sultana. It is not much clear in the text; she may or may not have fallen asleep in her easy chair when she was thinking about the pathetic condition of women in India. She as a feminist has encouraged women through her writing to be financially independent and emphasized on the importance of women education. She embraced cultural works and has established the thought that women must not be entangled and chained in the traditional roles as wives and mothers only, they can also perform social roles just as men do.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

- The paramount objective of this research is to analyze the short fiction writing "Sultana's Dream" by Begum Rokeya under the lens of the Post-Structuralist feminist theories.
- The pivotal aim of this research is to critically analyze the writing "Sultana's Dream" to be the prominent example of the L'écriture Feminine, the concept of female writing presented by Helene Cixous.
- The objective of this research is to prove that, when a female writes about herself then the gendered notions are put into play and a new structure emerges where women are the active subjects.
- The objective is to reconstruct the feminine identity and to deconstruct the stereotypical notions attached to it.
- The objective of this study is to prove that gender is not something innate or God given rather it is socially constructed, therefore is mutable.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. How the gender evolves?
2. And how gets trapped into this relation of binary opposition?
3. How society treats both the components of this binary opposition, and how the one is privileged and other is oppressed?
4. How a woman is producing a framework free from male assumptions thus, allowing reconstructing the feminine identity and its stereotypical notions?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This research uses the qualitative method, particularly the Qualitative Content Analysis. In which I will determine the aspects of the authors or narrator such as their experiences, opinions and their feelings the situation of the text-production, the socio-cultural background, the text itself and the aim of its interpretations.

The text Sultana's Dream has been analyzed on the basis of the theory, writings of critics and some material taken from journal articles. The aspects of text interpretations have been analyzed step by step, following the research questions and objectives. Mainly the research has been divided into four chapters, first was introduction, in second chapter there will be a literature review where the theory will be discussed in detail with reference to the comments of different critics and then the analysis starts in which the textual references from the text "Sultana's Dream" by Begum Rokeya will be provided

and it will be explained with reference to the applied theory. Lastly there will a conclusion of the whole research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

System of binaries is culturally universal and all societies deal with these distinctions in some way. Gender based binary oppositions are questioned by the feminists, as feminists since ages have been addressing whether gender is biological or cultural, whether it is innate and natural and God given, or whether it is socially constructed and therefore can put into play because it is mutable.

Feminism Aims to Define

Gender as a set of signifiers attached to sexually 'dimorphic bodies' and that these signifiers work to divide social practices and relation into binary oppositions of male/female and masculine/feminine. Gender is a relationship established between signifiers that signals gender, and signified taken to be the physical sex, but this signifier-signified connection is arbitrary. Since gender is constructed through this arbitrary link between signifier and signified, the connection between the two can be weakened, changed, or broken. Since the signifiers of gender help maintain the system of binary opposition dividing the world into male and female and valuing male over female can be deconstructed and the elements that constitute the stable notion of "gender can put into play". (Klages, 2007)

In the year 1975 the French feminist author Helene Cixous published an essay called "The Laugh of the Medusa". In it, she develops an entirely new theoretical concept with the aim of giving rise to feminist voice. She states her project has two aims, to breakup and destroy, and to foresee and project. She wants to destroy or deconstruct the phallogocentric system which Lacan and Derrida describes. She wants to project some new strategies for a new kind of relation between female bodies and language. She reverses the binary oppositions and privileges the one which has been considered inferior in phallogocentric system, she values the right sided terms.

I shall speak about women's writing: about what it will do. Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies-for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text-as into the world and into history-by her own move. (Cixous, 1976)

Cixous believed that woman is the source and provider of every symptom of life. the survival of humankind is impossible without women because she is the one who gives birth to life itself. In life as well as in language the systematic deprivation of woman is a fact. Helene Cixous while exploring the relation between gender and discourse and particularly while deconstructed the gender differences in language introduced a new form of writing that is L'écriture Feminine which is also known as feminine writing.

Cixous destroys and deconstructs the symbolic order of binary opposition presented by Lacan and represents feminine in western discourse. Cixous wrote

an essay "The Laugh of the Medusa" in which by rejecting all the male oriented theories she asserts that women should write beyond the symbolic order of binary opposition.

I wished that that woman would write and proclaim this unique empire so that other women, other unacknowledged sovereigns, might exclaim: I, too, overflow; my desires have invented new desires, my body knows unheard-of song. (Cixous, 1976)

Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar examine the difficulty while allowing the two words 'woman' and 'writer' to be combined together. They examine the metaphor of 'pen=penis' and they argue that the preponderance of this metaphor depends upon the idea that Women's body give birth to babies, which are mortal and limited while men's body give birth to immortal things like books and arts. Gilbert and Gubar then ask, with what organ can female generate text? (Klages, 2007)

Poststructuralist feminist theories argues that women are closer to the boundaries of the symbolic order and are not held in the center rigidly which is the to be in limelight, so because women are in the position that is less fixed than the position of men therefore their language is more fluid, more flowing, more flexible than men and their language. Women's language is unstable and free flowing a language that surpasses the boundaries and restrictions of fixed meaning and reason. When such language is used in writing gives woman access to her strength, gives back her goods, her pleasures. Women's marginal position in the symbolic order favors women.

The concept that gender is socially constructed has been accepted as common understanding for a long time. Like Helene Cixous, Judith Butler also believed that gender is something that can be put into play and could be deconstructed. She proposed that gender is performative. Her perception of gender performative implies that gender identity is unstable. Gender norms are always changing. She believed that the distinction between gender and sex intended to show that biological sex does not determine the gender. She wonders that if gender is socially constructed how that construction works. If gender is constructed is not necessary constructed by people. It may even be the opposite, that people are being constructed. "One is not born, but, rather, becomes a woman" (Beauvoir, 2011).

Butler insists that nobody is gender prior to doing gendered acts and that gender should not be interpreted as a stable identity. She writes In this sense, gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time. (Butler, 1988)

So, a female herself is a complete entity, a gender, a sex and a human being as Cixous argues she needs nothing to complete herself but her language in which she could write about herself in order to explore, know, and describe herself.

Post-Structuralist Feminist study of 'Sultana's Dream': Discussion

Begum Rokeya an Asian writer who belonged to India, she aimed to embrace feminism and is well known for their feminist utopian writings. Begum Rokeya wrote *Sultana's Dream*, a short story which mainly speaks against the oppression of women. It gathered much attention of the readers as it sheds light on the exploitation and suppression of women. *Sultana's Dream* emphasizes on the need that woman must get education and self-employment. In her other books and this story as well, Begum Rokeya ridicules the society in which women have to suffer the tragic consequences of 'Purdah' but men who misbehave are left free to move anywhere.

During Begum Rokeya's time, women lagged behind in every respect. Lack of awareness and social conservativeness were the major obstacles in the advancement of women. Women were not independent, as they were only restricted to the four walls of their houses. 'Purdah' has been considered necessary for women as men thought that women's safety only lies in 'purdah'. *Sultana's Dream* has been considered to be an outstanding and significant example of the feminist fiction. The story is tempting, humorous and is a contentious analysis of the continental life where illiteracy and purdah were the norms for Muslim women.

Demands for women's rights are fictitiously portrayed by using a very unusual writing method like utopia in this story. In the lady land all the gender roles have been reversed and women seem to enjoy them. Rokeya's utmost desire of making women free from the shackles of social and religious prejudices has been depicted in her writing. Women of the lady land have been shown as masters of everything, whether its houses or businesses. But all these happen in her dream only. The whole situation is impermanent and the awakening of the Sultana who was dreaming portrays that the empowerment of women is a temporary dream for women.

The facet of reverse segregation of the sexes in *Sultana's Dream* has been the most tinted and the contentious side of the story. Hossain does not just interrupt the traditional role for sub continental women in the Twentieth Century, she is absolute contemptuous and critical of women who have allowed themselves to be spellbound within a limited role.

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain has been considered distinctive among other feminist utopian writers as she has earned a prominent place among the writings of feminist critics. She has refused the traditional gender roles and in order to achieve this aim, the feminist utopian fiction *Sultana's Dream* focuses primarily on the cultural boundaries between the two genders male and female.

Begum Rokeya through her utopian writing encourages her readers to question the boundaries of gender roles, which describe behavior on the basis of conventional and stereotypical male and female gender roles. The major theme of her writing is an indirect analysis of the masculine and feminine gender traits which has been analyzed through the comparison of Indian society to the society of the ladies of the lady land presented in *Sultana's Dream*.

The writer has efficiently presented such world in her writing in which a feminine identity stands out to be the ultimate power. Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain has shifted the stereotypical roles associated to female/woman.

The concept of L'ectriture Feminine, which is a female writing, show us the gender structure as something constructed, not something that is inevitable and essential. Thus, allow us to deconstruct the gendered notions and binary oppositions where a man is privileged. In the light of above mentioned details when the short story Sultana's dream will be discussed it will be evident that when a female writes of herself and discovers herself through the language they become the active subjects, not just being passively acted upon. Their position as subject in language shifts. They create a new kind of signifying system which will have more fluidity than the existing system of binary opposition.

Begum Rokeya, in her writing have also deconstructed the rigid system of binary oppositions, which divides world into male/female binary opposition yet privileging the masculine part and considering the female one to be fragile, weak and insignificant Other. She reverses the set of signifiers and attaches the masculine one with the feminine identity. When write about women her language is more fluid and by writing about femininity, she has reversed the stereotypical gender roles attached to female or male body. By presenting the Lady lands they have deconstructed the fixity and stability of the structure of language where women have always shown weak and something to remain under masculine protection. She has put signifiers [gender roles] into play and made them slippery and indeterminate.

The art of fiction is being re-born in these days. Life is discovered to be longer, wider, deeper, richer, than these monotonous players of one tune would have us believe. The humanizing of women of itself opens distinctly fresh fields of fiction. (Gilman, 2001)

Sultana's Dream is a story which deals with the binary opposition of men/women. It questions the stereotypical notions given to the both genders by the society and reverses it. In a sense it deconstructs this binary opposition, while emphasizing that it is something socially constructed and is mutable. It is a portrayal of constant urge to challenge the masculine authority. Begum Rokeya questions the patriarchal customs of confining women to the domestic realm and 'pardah'. She encourages her female reader to know their own worth. Sakhawat Hossain's short story is concerned, it begins with a first-person narration by a narrator Sultana. It is not much clear in the text; she may or may not have fallen asleep in her easy chair when she was thinking about the pathetic condition of women in India. When looked up she saw someone who resembled her friend Sister Sara. She invited Sultana to see her garden and Sultana thought that it would not be any harm going out at this time of the night as all men must be sleeping.

I looked up again at the moon through the open window and thought there was no harm in going out at that time. The men-servants outside were fast asleep just then, I could have a pleasant walk with Sister Sara. (Hossain, 2005)

She walked with this woman into a world, which she never in her life thought would have existed. It was a Lady Land and Sister Sara explained her that it was a place ruled and run by women where men are supposed to be living confined in the four walls of 'Mardana':

Now that they [men] are accustomed to purdah system and have ceased to grumble at their seclusion, we call the system "Mardana" instead of "zanana". (Hossain, 2005) Only women were to be seen in public, the war won by the intellectual powers of women made them to rule the Lady land entirely and men on the other hand are kept in Mardana a male version of Zanana and are engaged in domestic works only because according to Sister Sara, "no one can trust these untrained men out of doors" (Hossain, 2005). By presenting such world Hossain encouraged her readers to break the shackles of the gendered notions and the binary opposition which kept women to the oppressed side.

She portrays two worlds in her writing; one is real world and the other one imaginary world. There are two major characters Sultana and Sister Sara. Sultana is typical girl from real world of India and Sister Sara is from imaginary world [lady land]. The story starts by showing that Sultana was concerned for the condition of women in India and she may or may not fall asleep. And she dreamt of Lady land. As we look into Sultana's dream we can see that the real world of Sultana was subjugated by men and it was full of capitulation and submission for her. On the contrary, the imaginary world of Sultana was an opposite mirror of her real condition, which shattered the center of male/female binary opposition by putting women in an array of this binary opposition.

Purdah system was harsh for Muslim women at that time. They were not allowed to go outside and even they went outside they would cover their head with veil or they had to wear burkha. And even they were not allowed to go for a walk in the presence of a single man. This condition was revealed in the story through Sultana's thought:

I look again at the moon through the open window and thought there was no harm in going out at that time. The men-servants outside were fast asleep just then and could have a pleasant walk with Sister Sara. (Hossain, 2005) This situation of women was addressed as "Zenana" by the Author. That is a place, only for women in their house. As they were not used to go outside in the presence of men, Sultana felt very shy and awkward of walking in the street in widespread daylight. On the other hand, in the imaginary world of Sultana, men were confined to the house. And Begum Rokeya addressed it as "Murdana" a place where men are kept shut. Begum Rokeya through the voice of Sister Sara told that, "In their proper places, where they ought to be... we shut our men indoors" (Hossain, 2005).

The system of the world that has long been followed has put into play the author and the new strategies have been introduced by which there would be new gleams of freedom and independence for women.

Both men and women thought at that time that men were stronger than women. And they were the all in all the power in decision making process. They could

have power over and women and could dominate them. They had the right to do so as they were the earning member of the family and women were dependent upon them. As women were constrained in the purdah system, men were the strongest voice in the social affairs. And from these kinds of feelings sultana found it funny that in the lady land men were confined in the four walls of house and women were the all in all in the public place. The real picture of women in t India then was expressed in Sultana's dialogue:

We have no hand and voice in the management of our social affairs. In India man is Lord and master. He has taken to himself all powers and privileges and shut up the women in the Zenana. (Hossain, 2005) Sister Sara was not of that opinion. She did not believe in the superiority of men and through the voice of this character, Begum Rokeya wanted to show that both men and women are born equals and men possess nothing that makes them superior to women or their masters. And she believed that the only reason which makes men superior to women is that women themselves allow men to rule them. They wanted to be ruled and that's where women are neglecting the duty they owe to themselves.

A lion is also stronger than a man but it does not enable him to dominate over human race. You have neglected the duty you owe to yourself and you have lost your natural rights by shutting your eyes to your own interests. (Hossain, 2005) Men don't have the right to dominate over women. In the lady land women were more advance in the scientific knowledge than men. They invented solar missile, captive balloons for climate control, aviation technology and fields tilled by means of electricity. They also used them in their day to day life as well as in the war field to save their land from the opponent and enemies. And they were able to save their land without dropping a shade of blood. "If you cannot save your Country for lack of physical strength", said the Queen, "try to do so by brain power" (Hossain, 2005). Such scientific development has never been expected from women in the real world but portraying the capabilities of women in the imaginary world the writer has been trying to emphasize on the idea that women must be given the chance to prove their strengths, not only in domestic realms but also in societal and scientific affairs.

In the real world of Sultana it was not safe for women to go outside because men do mischievous and atrocious deeds to them, but Sister Sara's logic was so enough that that if a lunatic run away from the asylum and being to do all sorts of disturbance than we would catch them and shut in the asylum and like that men do mischief to women so men should be shut indoors, "And you do not think it wise to keep sane people inside an asylum and let loose the insane?" (Hossain, 2005).

In our day to day life we see that men do their office work minimum in the time of 6 to 7 hours a day. But in the lady land all the ladies finished their office works within 2 hours and they adequately managed their duties. And when sultana enquired of policemen then Sister Sara cleared that from the moment men went indoors happening of crime decreased and even it vanished from the society.

Since the "Mardana" system has been established, there has been no crime or sin; therefore, we do not require a policeman to find out a culprit nor do we want a magistrate to try a criminal case. (Hossain, 2005)

CONCLUSION

It has been long believed by feminists that men in this world consider women as mere extensions to themselves. They consider them to be some kind of ladder on which they can stand and reach the higher levels of their career. They only considered them to be mere bodies that have only one aim in their lives that is to satisfy men's sexual desires and needs. They have never considered them to be the persons who can stand equally next to them or who can be respected in their own right. For long time women have been suppressed and kept away from social, economic and political centers of power. And when they started asserting their rights as human beings they have been called radicals or raging feminists. In this research the researcher has analyzed a short fiction story "Sultana's Dream" by Begum Rokeya through the lens of Post-Structuralist feminist theories, in which critics tend to raise a question that whether the gender is innate or God given or it has been socially constructed and therefore is mutable which can be put into play and can be deconstructed. Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain is an Asian writer who belonged to India and who aimed to embrace feminism in her writings and is well known for her feminist utopian fiction writings. She has fictitiously portrayed the need of women's rights to be fulfilled by using a very distinctive technique like utopia in her writing. In this research the researcher has analyzed the aforementioned writing under the lens of Helen Cixous's Idea of *L'écriture Feminine* which means a female writing. It has been discussed in detail that when a female writes about herself she reverses the system of binary oppositions like men/women, in which the term on the right side is always suppressed and the term on the left side is always privileged.

The facet of reverse segregation of the sexes in Sultana's Dream has been the most tinted and the contentious side of the story. Hossain does not just interrupt the traditional role for sub continental women in the Twentieth Century, she is absolute contemptuous and critical of women who have allowed themselves to be spellbound within a limited role.

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain has been considered distinctive among other feminist utopian writers as she has earned a prominent place among the writings of feminist critics. She has refused the traditional gender roles and in order to achieve this aim, the feminist utopian fiction Sultana's Dream focuses primarily on the cultural boundaries between the two genders male and female.

Begum Rokeya through her utopian writing encouraged her readers to question the boundaries of gender roles, which describe behavior on the basis of conventional and stereotypical male and female gender roles. The major theme of her writing is an indirect analysis of the masculine and feminine gender traits which has been analyzed through the comparison of Indian society to the society of the ladies of the lady land presented in Sultana's Dream.

The writer has efficiently presented such world in her writing in which a feminine identity stands out to be the ultimate power. Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain

has shifted the stereotypical roles associated to female/woman. As far as Sakhawat Hossain's short story is concerned, it begins with a first-person narration by a narrator Sultana. It is not much clear in the text; she may or may not have fallen asleep in her easy chair when she was thinking about the pathetic condition of women in India. She as a feminist has encouraged women through her writing to be financially independent and emphasized on the importance of women education. She embraced cultural works and has established the thought that women must not be entangled and chained in the traditional roles as wives and mothers only, they can also perform social roles just as men do.

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