

**THE MAIN CHARACTER'S
INDEPENDENCE
IN QAISRA SHAHRAZ'S
*THE HOLY WOMAN***

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to point out the main character's independence in Qaisra Shahraz's *The Holy Woman*, and to identify measures that she has undertaken to fight for her independence in confronting the tradition in Pakistan. Using descriptive qualitative methods and feminist studies, it is learned that the main character is a common but strong woman who must serve as a "Holy Woman" and "marry" the *Quran*. Because of the old tradition and culture that still exist in Pakistan, the main character gradually develops her traits and becomes a dynamic character accordingly.

Keywords: culture, feminism, Pakistan, patriarchy, tradition

INTRODUCTION

Background

Pakistan is one of the Muslim countries in the world. It is officially named the Islamic Republic of Pakistan because it is a country with the second largest Muslim population in the world, with a population of around 95% to 97% after Indonesia

according to an article on the website written by Oishimaya Sen Nag entitled "Muslim Population by Country". Pakistan became a country famous for its culture. According to Sulasman and Setia Gumilar (2013: 20) in their book entitled *Cultural Theories: From Theory to Application*, culture is a way of life that is developed and shared by a group of people. Culture regulates that every human being understands how they must act and determine attitudes when dealing with others. One form of culture that is still inherent in the State of Pakistan is patriarchal culture. In the family, a figure called the father has authority over women, children and property.

According to Fatimah in her article entitled "*This Reason Becomes the Cause of Thousands of Pakistani Women Being Killed by Their Own Fathers*", mentioned that in Pakistan, women are often victims of patriarchy from their own families. Pakistanis believe that some acts that are deemed to be dishonorable or shameful are worth paying for their lives, including adultery or dating men who are not condoned by the family, infidelity in marriage, being raped by other men, teasing and flirting with men, and other negative deeds.

The most common reason for murder against women in Pakistan is their refusal on an arranged marriage. This is known as "Honor Killings". According to Anna C. Korteweg and Gökçe Yurdakul in her journal entitled "*Religion, Culture and the Politicization of Honor-Related Violence A Critical Analysis of Media and Policy Debates in Western Europe and North*

America" states that honor killings are most often defined as a response to the belief that a woman has violated the honor of her family, usually because of perceptions about sexual irregularities. The family positions men to maintain the honor of their family and one sign of honor killings is killings planned by their own families.

In this modern era, Pakistan still preserves the practice of Honor Killings towards its own family members. According to a source named Mohamad Asruchin who is an observer of socio-political issues in his article entitled "Honor Killing in Pakistan (Women as Property and Men of Honor)" on the website, adding that due to the many complaints from the public, the Pakistani government finally passed a law that impose a prison sentence until the death sentence for perpetrators Honor Killing. However, the law has not been proven effective because some regions still have strong ethnicity, causing law enforcers to ignore it because they consider it a family matter.

Mohamad Asruchin said that some group leaders in Pakistan noted Islam as a justification for their actions in support of Honor Killing, this led to the assumption that Islam "justified" the action. However, this notion is disputed by Islamic leaders inside and outside Pakistan. In fact, Islam teaches not to do violence in any form against women.

The Holy Woman is one of the novels in which the story tells about the conflict of becoming a woman in a patriarchal society, the customs that becomes an important part of the setting, and men who are considered as the dominant ones in the region leading to

women becoming victims of patriarchy. The author of the novel introduces the definition of a *Holy Woman* or known by the term *Shahzadi Ibadat* which means that the woman cannot be married, because she has been "married" to the Koran. *Shahzadi Ibadat* is a term for a holy woman, *zahidah*; women who devote their whole lives only to worship God; similar to nuns found in Catholic. This term itself is not known in real society. Qaisra Shahraz deliberately coined this term to describe a father's efforts to seclude his daughter.

According to an article entitled "*Married to the Quran*" in an Arabic newspaper called Asharq Al-Aswat, in Pakistan there is a tradition of marrying the Koran intended for an unmarried woman to protect her family assets. The reason for this unreasonable tradition is because family members fear that their wealth will go to the husband after the woman marries. A Holy Woman must wrap her entire body in a black burqa. In return, she will get the entire inheritance out not in the form of land and acreage of fields. This tradition is run by families who don't have sons as heirs.

Problem Identification and Limitation

The novel *The Holy Woman* is chosen as the main material of the study because of the context regarding to gender issues experienced by the main character who is a victim of patriarchy in the area of their residence. The present researchers identify that the main character experiences various kinds of problems, namely the patriarchal culture and traditions inherent in her family, and whether or not it is

customary to “marry” the Koran. In this study, the problems are limited to two aspects of discussion; namely strength, courage, independence, and exceptional independence from the main character, as well as any efforts made by the main character in fighting for independence in the face of tradition in Pakistan.

Problem Formulation

1. What is the proof of the main character’s strength and independence in the novel *The Holy Woman*?
2. What efforts were made by the main character to fight for her independence in dealing with tradition in Pakistan?

Research Purposes

The purpose of this study is to show the the main character’s strength and independence as well as to show what efforts are made by the main character to fight for her independence in the face of tradition and patriarchal society in Pakistan.

Research Methods

This research is conducted using descriptive analysis method, and also intrinsic approach by describing what elements are contained in the novel with library research techniques. This technique is applied by collecting data containing theories and criticisms about the novel *The Holy Woman* as a reference in building the subject and supported by data obtained from the media or the internet relating to the writing of this thesis.

Literature Review

Intrinsic Element

The intrinsic element of the novel is the main element of building the novel from within. Intrinsic elements are divided into plot, character and characterization, setting, point of view, mandate, and theme. But not all elements are discussed in this study. The Intrinsic elements discussed in this research include characters and characterizations, settings, conflicts, symbols and irony.

Characters and Characterization

A character is a fictional individual who experiences the events in the story. Nurgiyantoro in his book entitled *Theory of Fiction Studies* (2012: 167) states that the characters occupy a strategic position as a carrier and messenger of messages, morals, or something intentionally intended to be conveyed to the reader.

People or characters in literary works are usually presented in several dimensions. According to Harymawan (1998: 25) in Wicaksono et al (2018: 266) in a book entitled *About Literature (Orchestration Theory and Learning)*, the dimensions are divided into three, physiological, sociological, and psychological dimensions.

Then, Aminuddin (2015: 80) in his book entitled *Introduction to the Appreciation of Literary Works* states that the characters divided based on their quality are known as the protagonist and the antagonist.

This study also used the theory of foil character proposed by Karen Bernardo (2011) stating that foil character is an important supporting character (usually an antagonist) whose personal quality is different from other characters (usually the protagonist). In addition, Laurence Perrine

in *Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense*, divides characters into several categories, including:

- Dynamic character and statuses, and
- Simple character and round character.

The characterization also refers to the technique of the embodiment and character development in a story (Nurgiyantoro, 2012: 166). Characterization covers the problem of who the character and the characterization are, and how the placement and depiction in a story are, so as to be able to provide a clear picture to the reader.

Settings

Setting is the place and time behind the event in a story. According to Robert Stanton's *Fiction Theory* (2012: 35), the setting is the environment that covers an event in the story, the universe that interacts with the events that are taking place. The setting usually includes things such as the setting in relation to time space, including socio-cultural setting. In addition, the setting to be studied in this research is the socio-cultural background which includes social life as well as the traditions and culture that accompany a story.

Conflict

Conflict is a conflict between ideas, lust, will, and treatment. Conflict occurs when there is a conflict between at least two sides. It takes two conflicting people or two things to cause conflict based on a plot, without the plot there will be no conflict.

There are several types of conflicts according to Ari Nurhayati (2004) in his book *Elements in Fiction Stories* that refer to the emergence of problems, including:

- Conflicts that occur between character and character (man against man),
- Conflicts that occur between the character with himself (man against himself), and
- Conflicts that occur between characters and their environment (man against environment).

Man-to-man conflict and man-to-environment conflict belong to external conflicts, whereas man-to-himself conflicts belong to internal conflicts.

Symbol

Symbols represent something to give a different meaning from the real meaning. Kennedy in his book, *Literature and Intoduction to Fiction*, states that symbols usually represent something else. Albertine Minderop in *The Method of Characterization of Fiction Studies* (2011: 78) also believes that symbols in literature can be in the form of written expressions, images, objects, settings, events, and character that are usually used to impress and strengthen meaning by organizing and uniting meaning overall.

According to Rene Wellek and Austin Warren in *Literature Theory* (2016: 220), symbols as objects refer to other objects, but also require attention to themselves as an embodiment. Symbols can be found on an object to represent abstract ideas or concepts. The nature of the symbol represents something else.

Irony

Irony is something which has a series of meanings that are contradictory, incompatible, contrasting, and even each of those meanings can mock one another.

According to Perrine (1988: 177-178), irony is divided into three kinds, namely:

- Verbal irony,
- Dramatic irony, and
- The irony of the situation

Extrinsic Element

The author also uses extrinsic elements as a reference in analyzing the representation of female characters in this novel, namely through the approach of feminism. This approach focuses on concepts that describe equality between women and men in the social, political, and economic fields.

Qaisra Shahraz wrote the novel *The Holy Woman* as a form of criticism towards the dominance of men in the family and the social environment of the main character. This condition makes women isolated and depressed because of the inner pressure of their environment so that they can do nothing but obey what men are instructing their families.

Gender Concept

According to *the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language* (KBBI), the term gender means the classification of types of words according to sex, namely feminine, nouns that refer to the female or female gender and masculine, nouns that refer to the sex of male or male. Gender equality between men and women is the view that all people must receive equal treatment and not be discriminated against based on their gender identity. Gender equality is one of our human rights. The right to live in dignity, free from fear and free to make choices about life is not only intended for

men, women also have the same rights to their nature.

According to Sugihastuti and Itsna Hadi Saptiawan in the book *Gender and Women's Inferiority: The Practice of Feminist Literary Criticism* (2010: 95), gender is a trait attached to men and women that is formed, socialized, strengthened, even socially or culturally constructed, through religious and state teachings.

Feminism

Feminism emerged as an effort to resist the various efforts of male control above. In broad terms, feminism is a women's movement to reject everything that is marginalized, subordinated, and denigrated by dominant culture, both in the political and economic fields and social life according to Ratna in *Literature and Cultural Studies: Representation of Fiction and Facts* (2004 : 184).

In *The Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language* (KBBI), feminism means a women's movement that demands equality between women and men. Meanwhile, according to Arivia in the book *Feminism: A Word of the Heart* (2006: 149-150), feminism is a political discourse that has political practice or theory that is committed to the struggle against patriarchy and sexism. Feminism not only fights for gender issues, but also for humanity. The core purpose of feminism is to improve the position and degree of women to be equal or equal to the position or degree of men. Sylvie Meiliana in *Sociology of Literature & Feminist Sociological Theory* (2016: 133) argues that in general men and women

deserve equality in all opportunities, treatment, respect, and social rights.

Then, Sugihastuti (2010: 87) said that as opposed to men, women are interesting objects of exploitation, not only from the sexual side, but also from the stereotypical side of women as weak creatures. According to Mansour Fakih (2013: 100) in *Gender Analysis and Social Transformation*, the feminism movement is a struggle in transforming an unjust system and structure, towards a system that is fair to both women and men. This social change movement for women eventually gave birth to a theory called feminism theory. Dwi Susanto in *Introduction to Literature Studies* (2016: 183) says that the theory of feminism is a set or combination of ideas that seek to study social life by positioning itself in the defense of women.

About Pakistan

One of the actions that robbed a woman of her social rights occurred in Pakistan. The act was a marriage to the Koran or better known as *Haq Bakshish*. Literally, this term means giving up his right to get married. According to Shahal Khoso in the article "*The Taboo of Haq Bakshish in Pakistan Where Women are Forced to Marry the Quran*", on a web site says that women who are forced to marry the Koran are taboo in Pakistan, because the tradition is so inhumane. , women will be forced to give up their right to marry and they will live in isolation.

Women who experience the *Haq Bakshish* tradition dedicate themselves to memorizing the Koran. The woman will lay her hands on the Koran and swear that she

would be married to the Koran to death. They are not allowed to have relationships with other men or marry anyone. Men in the area feel afraid of being cursed if they have a relationship with a woman who is married to the Koran. This tradition is more prominent among wealthy and feudal families in the Sindh Province, Pakistan, because the elders mentioned that the retribution for the woman who was made a *Holy Woman* was the inheritance of her family.

The Arabic newspaper called *Asharq Al-Aswat* in the article entitled "*Married to the Quran*", argues that a father who comes from such family group feels scared and insecure if his inheritance is passed on to outsiders through his daughter or sister (their spouses or their children). The woman who experiences such terrible tradition is called the "Sacred Woman" or The "Holy Woman" by her family and those around her, which is translated from Urdu, *Shahzadi Ibadat*. *Shahzadi Ibadat* is a woman who devotes her whole life only to worship God; a kind of nun. This term is a symbol in the novel *The Holy Woman* because this term is not known in real society. Qaisra Shahraz as the author of the novel intentionally coined this term to describe a father's attempt to seclude his daughter. As a result, a *Shahzadi Ibadat* is required to wear burqa clothes that cover the entire body throughout her life.

In Pakistan, the destiny of a daughter is determined by the elders in her family, the destiny of a Pakistani daughter is created and determined by her father or brother. As the opinion stated by Muhammad Zia Ullah in his journal *Honor Killings in Pakistan Under Theoretical, Legal and*

Religious Perspectives: An Analytical Study of Honor Killings Abuse and Disconnecting Islam from This Ancient Brutal Tradition, said that in the male-dominated world, his job was to maintain control over women's behavior, especially in the internal sphere. Ullah also added that the patriarchal system opens the way for discrimination in an institution and claims that women are different from men in all respects. Thus, Pakistani women cannot choose their future husbands themselves, if they dare to do so, they will be sentenced or even killed.

The Arab newspaper, *Asharq Al-Aswat*, also mentioned in its article that the tradition of marrying the Koran had happened to around 10,000 girls in Sindh Province. Pakistani intellectuals and intellectuals claim to have worked with the government, sociologists and political activists in the province to try to eliminate such marriages. However, in Ullah's journal, he mentioned that the tradition of honor killing occurred under the pretext of disobedience in Pakistan. Family members who commit murder are rarely convicted and prosecuted by law because they consider the killing to be legitimate as a form of self-respect. The top brass in the country did not interfere in the personal actions of the so-called honor killings committed by most men. In fact, one member of Parliament defended this murder because it was a "tribal custom" practice.

Officials said the practice of marrying the Koran aims to exploit religion in preventing women from their natural rights to get married, have children, inheritance, even their personal lives. Ullah, in his journal, said that currently women are

still treated as second-class creatures and lose various basic rights enjoyed by men. In Islam, both men and women have the same status in their economic, political and domestic fields. Both are free to choose or take any profession. However, because its control and dominance are measured in terms of land ownership, the problem of inheritance is very difficult to overcome.

The opinion of the main character towards a tradition that harms her is also supported by government policy. It is said that in an article published in the Arab newspaper, *Asharq Al-Aswat*, the Pakistani government, President Pervez Musharraf, had spoken out against this phenomenon to the people of Pakistan. Following the government's amendment of the sentence determined as part of the Women's Protection Bill, General Musharraf promised that new laws would be issued to prohibit and burden all those involved in such marriages. According to Ullah, the 2004 amendment regarding the crime of honor killings was submitted and approved by the government under the pressure from human rights organizations and other countries.

Discussion

The setting of this novel takes place in Sindh, Pakistan. Zarri Bano is a very lucky woman; beautiful, growing up in a rich Muslim family, living with luxury, and highly educated. She has captivated the heart of a man from Karachi, Sikander Din, and falls in love for the first time. The engagement party was officially held. The conflict began when Jafar, Zarri Bano's younger brother, died suddenly in an accident. Based on the prevailing ancestral

tradition, when the only male heir dies, the heir is passed on to the first daughter. The woman was required never to leave her father's house. As a result, she could not get married and had to become a *Holy Woman*.

Zarri Bano must also accept her destiny as a *Holy Woman*, a *Shahzadi Ibadat*. The figure of a woman symbolized as an Islamic scholar, a moral and religious teacher for hundreds of young women in cities and regions, a woman who became a symbol of purity and worship in the purest form. Story conflict develops until the end of the story. Zarri Bano's identity was also disturbed. As a woman who has a master's degree, she strongly supports the feminist movement. She had rejected all forms of tyranny, either by men or by certain societies. What she experience now is contrary to what she had believed in, when her father wants her to be a holy woman, Zarri Bano is like a wax doll that can be changed into all sorts of shape according to her father's wishes.

This all happened only because of Habib Khan's jealousy, Zarri Bano's father, towards the man who loved his daughter. With the reason and desire to save his land and property, the father sacrificed his own daughter to commit celibacy. A tradition which in Islamic teachings itself never existed. As a result, family integrity must be at stake. Shahzada, Zarri Bano's mother, disapproved that her beloved daughter could not become a normal woman who married and gave her grandchildren.

Then, conflicts escalated again when the man Zarri Bano loved, Sikander, had to marry her own younger sister, Ruby. This makes Zarri Bano experience inner struggle,

but with the determination, she is able to get through the bitter reality. Being a holy woman, both traditionally and religiously, is not easy. She must master the religious teachings very well. She was required to visit several regions and countries to convey the messages of God contained in the Qur'an. However, once again, the opportunity to perfect life by achieving happiness in marriage becomes futile. This is the emotional spectrum game that collides between religion and sin.

In this novel, *The Holy Woman*, Zarri Bano becomes the protagonist as well as a major character because of her extensive involvement in building the story line. The main character is physiologically described as having an ideal height. Zarri Bano makes anyone who looks at her interested and falls in love with her beauty. Zarri Bano has almost everything - intelligence, personality, beauty, a wealthy family that supports it, and always campaigns for women's rights. She became one of Pakistani women who fought for women's rights or was popularly known as a feminist. She is described as a woman who pity other women who experience tyrants.

This made her father very protective. In fact, he still refused the proposal of a man whom Zarri loved, making it into an irony of situation, because what the main character expected was different from the reality she received. There is a conflict between characters (man against man conflict), which is the conflict between Habib and Shahzada, Habib asserted Shahzada that in his tradition, the destiny of a daughter is determined by the men who are elder in his

family. Habib felt he had the power to determine his own daughter's destiny.

As head of the family, Habib appointed Zarri Bano to be *The Holy Woman* or a *Sacred Woman* who would become his family's heir. This decision was made by Habib to the people around him, especially Zarri Bano. These heirs are required not to leave their homes and cannot get married. Thus, in the contents of the story, Zarri Bano's ancestors created the status of *Shahzadi Ibadat* or a *Holy Woman* to ensure that the land remained family owned.

In the tradition they believe in, sons become the absolute heir to the family. Then, if the boy dies, the inheritance of the father or family is passed on to his eldest daughter. In Pakistan, boys are traditionally worshiped, boys are merely puppets which are priceless treasures above all worldly wealth for a father. Therefore, losing the only son is like loss of life itself - the biggest defeat of all the evil enemies that can be faced.

Story conflict develops to the top. Zarri Bano's identity was also disturbed. This tradition, according to Zarri Bano, makes her not "normal" as a woman. This means she does not have the right to her freedom to determine her own way of life. Zarri challenged this fact, she also admitted to her father that she was not a pious woman, rarely did she pray in her life, nor was she diligently opening the Holy Qur'an and using it as a guide. She sees herself as an educated modern woman.

Habib argues that if Zarri becomes a wife, then Zarri will be bound to a man. Such a life is nothing compared to izzat or

honor and fame if she becomes a *Holy Woman*. In the end, Zarri's knowledge of feminists, as well as their feminist campaigns and books, was not useful against the patriarchal tyranny of their feudal landlords. The patriarchal tyranny has become a strong fortress for the Habib family. This gender discrimination has been regarded as one of the defining features of all conservative societies in the world, and Pakistan is no different in this regard.

Sikander resides in the city of Karachi, a city where tradition is not as thick as that in the village. This shows that the different settings affect the thoughts of the characters in the novel *The Holy Woman*. He said that in Islam, there is no term for a woman to marry the Holy Qur'an or becoming a nun, women must be able to decide their own lives. Women have also been outlined by nature to be a wife and a mother. Sikander who is in the city, has a more rational point of view compared to people in the village regarding the right of women to take care of their husbands and provide offspring, they are still following a strong tradition in modern times. Sadly, even Sikander could not fight the strong traditions that had been passed down through the family of the girl he loved.

The most terrible and despicable practice in Pakistan is clearly rude and un-Islamic. This certainly has nothing to do with religion. It's about strength, control and greed. A woman is not respected enough to consider how their whole life, and the dreams or hopes they have. It is corrupted by an inhuman tradition and goes beyond any rational explanation. With the aim of devoting their lives to the Koran, the lives of

the women in this country must be obliterated and destroyed.

It was the will of her father and grandfather who made Zarri Bano the next owner of the fields. This makes the character Zarri put into the category of round figures and developing figures, because Zarri Bano decided to change her identity, she replaced the old Zarri Bano with a new one. Zarri Bano clearly experienced an inner conflict which made her hate Habib so much. Zarri could not accept the fact that her independence, identity and womanhood were exchanged for acres of her family's land. There is an irony of situation because the land that has been guarded by her family like gold powder for centuries is in fact more valuable to them than humanity itself.

At the beginning of the use of the burqa Zarri Bano had felt tightness, but she then managed to fight the black shroud that enveloped her body and proved that she was not weak as a woman who was oppressed by her own family so that she was gradually accustomed and comfortable when wearing a burqa cloth. The dress was also interpreted as a symbol of her readiness in making her new position as Zarri Bano the Holy Woman.

Full support for the tradition comes only from the male elders in Zarri Bano's family members, such as his father, grandfather, and uncles, while the women have been bound by centuries of patriarchal customs and agreements on obedient, silent women, and can be easily threatened. Thus, Zarri Bano experienced man against environment conflict. This environment changed the old Zarri Bano into her new soul, and made it clear that this figure was a

developing and round figure. Zarri Bano who has begun to read and recite the Holy Qur'an with quite rapid progress.

In the process of becoming a sacred woman, the main character has a new task in her life, namely by returning to university and studying Islam at a higher level. In addition, a Holy Woman is also required to have her own madrasa or college, and must attend Islamic conferences all over the world whenever and wherever they are offered. That thing is one of Zarri Bano's efforts to prove her independence as a woman to her father, Habib. In terms of education, Zarri Bano managed to prove to everyone who knew her that she had now turned into Zarri Bano who was religious and had knowledge of the subject.

Efforts that prove Zarri Bano's courage and independence in facing her unjust life were also shown in the situation when Sikander, whom she still loved, married her younger sister, Ruby. Even though Pakistani women are good at hiding their sadness, but they must be able to survive in a culture that they don't really like, they can only obey.

Zarri Bano's series of efforts to get rid of her pain are by way of worship and prayer, Zarri Bano who previously rarely performed worship, now after becoming a Holy Woman has never been absent from not doing so. It was proven that after worshipping and praying asking to discard all of her bad thoughts and feelings, also erasing all traces of her past to start a new page in a pure state, she gained peace of herself. Zarri Bano became a stronger and stronger figure, feeling confident that she

could meet her sister and share happiness without something raging inside her.

Then, to prove that she had conquered her problem, won herself, and all her desires, Zarri Bano increased her devotion to religion more than she had ever done before. In addition to Zarri Bano's efforts mentioned earlier, Zarri Bano's bold and independent traits defeated the harsh reality in her life, that is when Habib and Ruby died. Due to Ruby's death, Haris, the only son of Sikander and Ruby, had to lose his mother at a very young age of two years. Zarri Bano finally experienced man against man conflict in the face of coercion that her family sent to Zarri now regarding Sikander's proposal, Zarri Bano finally relented on the grounds that everything she did was only for Haris. Little Haris needs a mother figure, and the only woman who is very close and loves Haris fully is her aunt, Zarri Bano.

The discussion above has proven that although the main character is a character who is developing (dynamic) and also included into the round character, where the father and his environment managed to shape the identity of Zarri Bano as they wish. However, the feminist figure in Zarri Bano has not completely disappeared, various reasons have turned her into a new Zarri Bano. In fact, her courage and independence have proven to those around her that women are not fragile. They are only weakened by hereditary tradition, but not by their souls.

The Holy Woman novel, in the end, did not only tell certain people. Although in local packaging, the values implicit in it are broad and universal. The local tradition

displayed in this novel is just a portrait of how a tradition survives in the whirlpool of an all-modern era. This story teaches us to get to know each other's different traditions, religions and cultures, and teaches manhood to behave, find one's identity, and sincerity to forgive.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the discussion on the development of the character of the main character who is at the same time a central figure and major figure in the novel *The Holy Woman* by Qaisra Shahraz, it can be concluded that the character Zarri Bano is a central and major figure because of her involvement in the plot and conflict of stories.

The factors that made Zarri experience changes internally. This factor is most prominent because of the inner conflict and feminist spirit within Zarri Bano that makes her able to get through every problem. This problem has robbed her of her rights as a woman, which is to "marry" the Koran (*Haq Bakshish*) in Pakistan. She was forced to obey in order to fulfill the wishes of her father and the elders in her family. Such traditions can occur in the families of feudal landlords, because their male inheritance does not exist or dies. So it was replaced with the eldest daughter who was not allowed to marry any man. If the woman rejects what has been determined or marries another man without her family's blessing, that will be a family disgrace and the woman will be killed. This action is called *honor killing*.

The courage and independence of the main character proves that her feminist

thought did not disappear after her father and environment tried to change Zarri's identity into someone who was not herself at all. The existence of strength, courage, and independence in the main character, proves that the figure is considered as a woman with a strong soul, independent, and not weak.

A number of attempts have been made by Zarri Bano to prove herself as a feminist figure. With a strong soul and determination, she decided to change her old identity into a new one. She boldly resisted the heat of wearing a burqa so that on the fifth day she became accustomed and comfortable using it. The main character is able to adapt to her new duties and status and forget the past so that she embraces herself as a religious woman, and other efforts that characterize the feminist figure in Zarri Bano.

These figures ultimately fight for their rights as women who are not oppressed by men and are able to gain pride and respect from those around them for their efforts to become independent and strong women. Viewed from the psychological side, in one side, this character has a fragile complex character but on the other side, she is tough, independent, strong, and never gives up because she is able to control her emotions and prolonged sadness after facing various kinds of problems. The character became a strong figure, steadfast, good at controlling herself, and open-minded feminist. Independence from the main character also influenced her in fighting for and resolving her conflict under patriarchal tyranny. All the characters show a strong

personality in accordance with the concept of feminism.

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