

Traumatic Repercussions of Women's Double Oppression In Atiq Rahimi's "The Patience Stone"

Ismail Khalaf Salih

Department of the Educational Supervision, General Directorate of Education in Anbar, Ramadi, Iraq
ismail_19702000@yahoo.com

KEYWORDS: War violence, Patriarchy, Afghan woman, PTSD, Trauma, Disability, Rape



Crossref doi

<https://doi.org/10.51345/v37i2.1308.g684>

ABSTRACT:

In all of the recent wars, women are oppressed and their voices have been stolen and banned by violence. This systematic silencing not only affects their immediate circumstances but also hinders the progress of society as a whole. It is imperative that we amplify these voices and recognize the crucial roles women play in conflict resolution. Moreover, the patriarchal system sustains double oppression, beside war violence, to women in most of these wars. *The Patience Stone*, by Atiq Rahimi, is the mirror of Afghan women's trauma and suffering due to war and the patriarchal system. The story bestows the woman with the power to speak and reveal everything to a paralysed husband injured in a conflict in a country similar to Afghanistan. This power is conjured by a Persian myth that tells about the stone that absorbs the torture of everyone who confesses to it. Thus, the story is of unnamed characters, an unnamed town, and even an unnamed conflict: "Somewhere in Afghanistan or elsewhere." This paper stresses that war violence and patriarchy are juxtaposed in the country of Afghanistan, which witnesses political and tribal conflicts causing people's PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), women's in particular. PTSD's most famous symptoms are continual hallucinations, flashbacks and nightmares. These symptoms can leave serious negative impacts. Finally, in this story, trauma, disability and rape are the main war violence issues that caused PTSD to women. All these concepts will be analyzed throughout the conceptual framework.

REFERENCES:

- Al-Ali, N. (2013) Iraqi women before and after the 2003 invasion. London. Interview, 23 December.
- Ashlyn K. Kuersten (2003) Women and the Law: Leaders, Cases, and Documents. ABC-Clio.
- Colley, R. 2011 The Afghan Wars: History in an hour. UK, Harper Collins.
- Columbus, A. (2008) Advances in Psychology Research. Social Sciences: V.53.
- Gordon, A. A. (1996). Transforming capitalism and patriarchy: Gender and development in Africa. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Hunt, S. (2005). Moving beyond silence: Women waging peace. Listening to the silences: Women and war, 251-71.
- Mustofa, A. (2013). The Woman's Silent Voice toward Patriarchy's Handcuff Reflected in Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone*. *Litera~ Kultura*, 1(3).
- Martha, N. (1995) "Objectification", *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 24(4): 249-291.
- Lasky, M. P., & Al-Ali, N. (2006). Iraqi women under siege. Code Pink.
- Povey, Elaheh Rostami. Afghan Women: Identity and Invasion. U.K; Zed Books, 2007. Print.
- Rahimi, A. (2010). *The patience stone*. Random House.
- Salbi, Z. Why women are less free 10 years after the invasion of Iraq? Special to CNN. March 18, 2013
- Tull, M. (2014) Post Traumatic Stress (PTSD) Expert. <http://ptsd.about.com/od/glossary/g/flashbacks.htm>
- Van Der Kolk, Bessel A. "Clinical Implications of Neuroscience Research in PTSD." http://www.traumacenter.org/products/pdf_files/NYASF.pdf. Web. 31 Oct. 2011
- Widmark, A. (2010). Experiences of Revenge as Reflected in the Contemporary Pashto Short Story. *Inter-Disciplinary. net*.
- Woods, T. 2013. From female sexuality and hysteria to feminine psychology: the gender of insanity in literature.

Introduction:

As the writer does not reveal the specific scene of the events in the story, there is an essential need to know something about the writer's life and background through which the receiver may guess and realize that scene. Understanding the writer's experiences and influences can provide invaluable context, allowing readers to draw parallels between the author's life and the themes presented in the narrative. This deeper insight encourages a more meaningful engagement with the text, allowing readers to recognise the subtle nuances and emotional layers that may otherwise go unnoticed. Moreover, delving into the writer's personal history can illuminate the motivations behind their characters and plot choices. Such connections enrich the reader's experience, transforming a simple reading into a profound exploration of human experience and creativity. Atiq Rahimi was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1962. He is a writer and a director. His father was a high-ranking government official. He spent the early years of his education in a Franco-Afghan school, the high school of Lycée Esteqlal. Atiq was forced to leave the country when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Then, he became a refugee in Pakistan for one year. Then, he moved to France in 1985 where he was given political asylum.

In his studies in Sorbonne, Rahimi received a Ph.D. in audio-visual communications. After that, he worked with a production company in Paris, where he was involved in the production of all types of commercials, as well as documentaries for a French television. In the late 1990s, he decided to take a long pause so that he could focus on publishing of his first book. His Novel *Earth and Ashes* (2000) a bestseller both in Europe and South America. However, the novel was written in Dari, the Persian language which is officially spoken in Afghanistan, , became a triumph,

Rahimi returned to Afghanistan in 2002 when the Taliban was driven out in Afghanistan in 2001. Soon after his return, he filmed and directed an adaptation of *Earth and Ashes* in 2002. This movie was indexed in 50 festivals, winning many awards; among them were the prestigious Prix du Regard vers l'Avenir at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival the Golden Dhow award at the Zanzibar International Film Festival for best feature film. Rahimi then went on to win the most prestigious literary prize that France offered. He won Prix Goncourt for his novel 'Syngue Sabour' or 'The Patience Stone' in 2008. It is Rahimi's first book in French and the fourth one of his own. The novel was adapted into a film directed by Rahimi himself. In his native, Afghanistan, Rahimi became the senior creative advisor for Moby Group, Afghanistan's largest media group. He continues to support the Moby Group in developing genres and programs for its media channels. In addition, Rahimi has his prints in developing and training a new generation of Afghan directors and filmmakers.

Before moving to the novel, it is important to know something about the context of the story which is Afghanistan under the Taliban. After the Soviet Union troops had withdrawn from Afghanistan at the beginning of 1988, civil war broke out between groups of Afghan people. During the early 1990s, the Taliban appeared on the scene. Within a few years, they controlled the capital Kabul. Immediately, they began imposing their codes of conduct and severity upon the people and enforcing the strictest punishments on those who failed to obey. During the years of the earlier and later fight, women suffered terribly. Afghan women had been killed, bombed and raped. Taliban claimed that women were to be respected and so their honor must be protected (Rupert Colley, 2011). In fact, Colley adds, suppression came instead of protection. Girls were forced into marriages without questioning the marital conduct of Taliban husbands. Taliban prevented women from working, studying or participating in any activity in society.

The Patience Stone is the mirror of Afghan women's trauma and suffering due to war and patriarchal system. However, the writer does not only portray Afghan women's tragedy, "Somewhere, in Afghanistan or elsewhere". It could be found in the Middle East or Africa or any country that witnesses war and conflict. It is the story of unnamed characters, unnamed town, unnamed conflict and even unnamed fractions. The main plot of the story is based on a Persian myth which tells about the stone that absorbs the torture of everyone confesses to it. According to myth, when the stone absorbs all the person's suffering and pain, it would explode and free the person from his or her anguish (Povey, Elaheh Rostami: 2007). The story bestows the woman power to speak and reveal everything to a paralyzed husband injured in a conflict in a country similar to Afghanistan.

The husband, who has already been injured in his neck with a bullet, is abandoned by all his family except his wife and the two daughters. The wife sits next to his body, fingering her prayer beads, as the Mulla instructed her that she must do that well with chanting Allah's ninety-nine names so that the husband can regain his health. Although taking care of a paralyzed heavy man is a truly difficult job for a woman, but she seems to suffer less with changing, medicating and protecting him. This is because she is given a great chance to speak and to confess as long as he is present but cannot take response or an action. Rahimi offers the woman as a proxy for the complaints of millions of women. The woman who had to absorb previously everything, pain, torture, anguish, humiliation and abuse, now she explodes with a volcano of confessions and reproaches.

At first, she recalls her life's experiences, including her terminated dreams, her forced marriage to a husband always on the frontlines, her grave wedding day, and the day when her father sold the only 12-year-old sister to an old man for settling his gambling loss. She insults men and their recycling wars, curses her combatant husband, a hero defeated by his male pride. Moreover, she reveals her inner secrets and thoughts. She reveals her hatred of her mother-in-law, who did not treat her as a human being whose insistence on delivering children made the women commit adultery to deliver illegal children. In addition, she scorns the brothers-in-law who were spying on her when she washed herself, but she could not even object. Two warriors enter her room. Her plan to pretend that she sells her body saves her from the boss but fails to work with his follower who rapes her in her room.

At the end, while she reveals the biggest and devastated secret of her having two illegal girls and that the husband was infertile, surprisingly and unexpectedly, the man awakes and stands up grasing the woman's head on the wall. She falls down. She thinks that her patience stone, as she used to call him, explodes when she reveals most of her secrets to him. Actually, he has heard everything. Hence, he tries to kill her but she takes the *khanjar* and drives it into his heart.

As a contribution to analyzing Rahimi's *The Patience Stone*, two concepts are chosen; war violence and the patriarchal system which both cause the unnamed woman's PTSD under the issue of women's double oppression. Definitions of the issues and concepts will be taken from different sources. Simple diagrams will be created to illustrate the conceptual framework for a wider explanation. Finally, to express the theory of PTSD in the novel, important quotations will be quoted whenever needed.

Literature Review:

The story of *The Patience Stone* might happen in any of the countries whose women suffered from war or conflicts, like Yugoslavia, Burma, Sri Lanka, Palestine, and more recently, Iraq and Syria. Atiq Rahimi is mostly well-known for *Earth and Ashes* (2003), *A Thousand Rooms of Dream and Fear* (2007), *The Patience Stone* (2011) and *A Curse of Dostoevsky* (2013). In most of his works, Rahimi utilizes the history of Afghanistan to generalize events and issues on the human beings' experiences in war and conflicts and their repercussions on lives of peoples.

Three scholarly articles written on Atiq Rahimi's works will be taken in this section of the paper. Each article argues an issue or issues concerning one of Rahimi's novels. The first is **"The Woman's Silent Voice in Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone*"** by Ali Mustofa. Ali Mustofa (2012) discusses the Patriarchy system, which is constructed by the society where all concepts of social life are controlled by men. He quotes Beauvoir, 2003 that "Classically, women are an unequal creature, and it is added by Aristotle who views women as an imperfectness of nature" (Mustofa 2012:5). He uses Feminism theory to explain women's oppression and marginalization in the Patriarchy system which is recently represented to a literary works, Rahimi's *The Patience Stone* is one of them. Moreover, Mustofa discusses the issue of gender through the lens of Islam. The article delivers two main objectives; the first, portraying of patriarchy's chains through the absence of women's voice in the story. The second is to identify the impact that absence in it.

Before explaining the objectives of the article, he moves to identify the concept of Patriarchy. Thus, he points out that feminists utilize the term of patriarchy as a common term for male supremacy, domination and privilege denoting to their present as well as past forms. He argues that hundreds of years before feminists commenced their activities in the process of women's emancipation and equality, Islam had its wide enlightening guidance (Mustofa: 2012). Mustofa (2012) points out that misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the Holy book of Muslims, Al-Quran, led to extreme fundamentalism and men's domination. Hence, in Afghanistan, for instance, "women, even until the beginning of the 20th century, are still being the slaves of their father, husband, father-in-law, and elder brother" (7). So far, women's silence and obedience depict their status in some cultures of what so called Third World Countries.

In *The Patient Stone*, Atiq Rahimi states that the woman lacks her voice by which she shows what she feels, but when the husband became in comate condition because of the war, she, finally, can reveal the pain of long years:

She voices something, something that is always hidden and repressed. This repressed voice, finally can be seen as the silent voice, because silent literally mean cannot be uttered directly, it exists but it is not heard and listened, even it cannot be heard nor listened (Mustofa 2012:8).

Mustofa (2012), in brief, analyzes the concept of patriarchy in Rahimi's *The Patience Stone* where women's voice has been stolen and banned by the patriarchy system in Afghanistan. Mustofa concludes that Afghanistan, among many other countries, whose tradition and culture have eroded the teachings and guidance of the religion, is depicted as a voice women's silence. The woman is governed by wrong understanding of what Islam legitimates. He asserts that the prophet Mohammad never enforced his wife to be pregnant, never blamed women and never belittled women (15).

The second article is **"From Female Sexuality and Hysteria to Feminine Psychology: The Gender Insanity in Literature"** by Tania Woods. In this article, Tania Woods (2013)

explores the gender insanity in literature by discussing on female sexual experiences in modern Western and Middle Eastern texts. Woods focuses on the link between past sexual experiences and psychological disorders, "It is important to understand the value of female sexual expression and consider the impact that sexual repression and abuse can have on the development of certain psychological symptoms". (Woods 2013:1)

Woods points out that during many life stages, women are objects of violence and sexual abuse. This is why psychological conditions are chiefly suffered by women. Unfortunately, the experiences of women have been disregarded by the work of early psychoanalysts. They preferred maintaining many conditions under the umbrella term neurosis. According to the Psychologist Karen Horney, neurosis is "a common condition in both males and females but believed that it is only when we are overwhelmed by external conditions that [this] condition surfaces" (Woods 2013:3). According to the World Health Organization, Woods adds, women suffer from violence in their lifetime within 16% to 50% and at least one among five women suffers rape or attempted rape (Woods 2013:4).

Rahimi's *The Patience Stone* is one of the Middle Eastern works that Woods discusses in this article. Woods conveys the image of blood during the woman's period as a source of abuse and humiliation by the abusive husband although it is a biological female nature. Consequently, the husband treats the woman as a second-class citizen. However, the woman reveals that menstrual blood is not unclean and unnatural as the husband himself is born of it and that the unnatural is the patriarchy system imposed by him, "She is a second class citizen due to the very blood that she is made up of. She was sentenced the moment she was born a woman. Her menstrual blood was viewed as unclean by her abusive husband". (Woods 2013:32)

Woods concludes that woman's pain and torture that she revealed in the story largely occurred because of sexual experiences that made her mad to speak and reveal her psychological condition. **The third article is "Experiences of Revenge as Reflected in the Contemporary Pashto Short Story"** by Anders Widmark. He points out that "the revenge, included under the Pashto concept of *badal*, is an essential element constituting Pashtun identity" (1). He argues male and female narratives concerning revenge. He discusses the concept of revenge in the contemporary Pashtu short story. In respect of revenge, Pashtu narratives reflect a thought that may be known in how female and male narratives deviate in their attitude concerning revenge. It could be believed that female narratives may be difficult to find due to restrictions of women's admission to the public space in general. Widmark states that, "Female exclusion from the literary space is even more apparent. The female voice is still mainly articulated through a male proxy narrator, i.e. women are generally depicted and represented by male authors from an inevitable masculine (imagined feminine) perspective" (5). Widmark (2010) also discusses Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone* as a feminist work. He considers the novel as "an act of revenge for male". The woman had more space and unexpected opportunity to speak, to attack, to complain and to accuse her comate husband for his cruelty and brutality.

At the end of this section, It may be concluded that each writer of the three articles which discussed above argues an issue or issues in Rahimi's *The Patient's Stone*. First, Mustafa (2012) explains the issue of the patriarchal system through which the male dominates and abuses the woman in the story. He also asserts that wrong interpretation of religious guidance results in the patriarchal system. In his article, Woods (2013) argues the link between sexual experiences the woman undergoes and her psychological condition. Finally, Widmark (2010)

argues the concept of revenge and how the concept has been tackled in Afghan male and female narrations.

Analysis: Concepts and the Novel

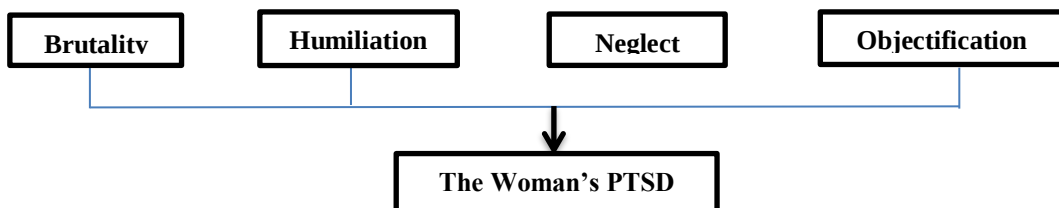
War violence and the patriarchal system are recently related to each other. Afghan women, and millions around the world, do not suffer only from patriarchy, and simultaneously, do not suffer only from the war. War violence and patriarchy are juxtaposed in the Middle Eastern societies that witness political or tribal conflicts causing people's PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), women in particular. Actually, Rahimi made the setting of the story more extendable, "Somewhere in Afghanistan or elsewhere".

Moving on to the analysis of Rahimi's *The Patience Stone*, the story portrays the suffering of women from double oppression, both patriarchal system and war violence, leaving women in traumatic injuries both physically and psychologically. Atiq Rahimi makes his protagonist unnamed 'the woman', the setting 'elsewhere' and the conflict unknown. In doing that, Rahimi intends to make the reader cross Afghanistan's border to other countries where women also struggle to survive because of the war and its impact. The writer's description of the setting in the first poetic lines in the story depicts the level of the shrinkage and darkness of the place and the poverty and deprivation that war creates to people:

The room is small. Rectangular. Stifling, despite the paleness of turquoise walls, and the two curtains patterned with migrating birds frozen mid-flight against a yellow and blue sky. Holes the curtains allow the rays of the sun to reach the faded stripes of a kilim. At the far end of the room is another curtain. Green. Unpatterned. Concealing a disused door. The room is bare. Bare of decoration. Except between the two windows where someone has hung a small khanjar on the wall, and above the khanjar a photo of a man with a moustache.

(Rahimi 2011:1)

Patriarchy is defined as "a system of interrelated social structures which allow men to exploit women" (Walby1986:51 cited in Gordon, A. A. 1996:18). However, the domination of this system in a society depends on social, cultural and political factors. In this novel, the women live in a society of a devastated political and tribal conflict that preceded by a long war. The writer informs us, by the woman's monologue, of her misery and anguish because of the oppression she undergoes by the husband, mother-in-law, brothers-in-law as well as her father and others. Patriarchy system that dominates the woman in the story causing her PTSD can be illustrated in the following diagram:



Before going further in discussing patriarchal system in the story, it is important to give a definition of (PTSD) which is defined as "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that may develop after exposure to a terrifying event or ordeal in which severe

physical harm occurred or was threatened. Traumatic events that may trigger PTSD include violent personal assaults, natural or unnatural disasters, accidents, or military combat." (Psychology Today Dictionary)

The husband's brutality is vividly depicted when the woman had to marry him as a combatant whom she did not know or even see until three years after the grave wedding day when she marries with his photo as he was on the frontlines. In literature, it is familiar to see such images but not familiar to see the opposite. Like the woman, one of the female characters in the Iranian writer Marjane Satrapi's book *Embroideries*, sits beside her husband's photo whom she has also not seen before. However, it is not familiar to read about a man sits beside his wife's photo. This is an obvious application of the societally structured patriarchy. The following quotation may support this argument:

They celebrated our engagement without the fiancé. Your mother said. "don't worry, victory is coming! It will soon be the end of the war, we will be free and my son will return!" And so I had to be married, despite your absence. At the ceremony, you were present in the form of photo and that wretched *khanjar*, which they put next to me in place of you.

(Rahimi 2011:54)

Sexually, the man's brutality prevented him from sharing the pleasure of sex with his wife. The first time he sleeps with her, after three years of wedding day, he notices that she is bleeding. He did not know that it was her period not her virginity blood. Obviously, she had no right to speak to him in bed. "When you and I went to bed for the first time – after three years of marriage, remember! – anyway, that night, I had my period" (28). Moreover, the man abuses his wife's desire by depriving her as a female to practice her right in having pleasure with him. Actually, she undergoes severe psychological conflict as for ten years of marriage she couldn't touch or kiss him until he has been paralyzed since three weeks.

We've been married ten years. Ten years! And it's only that three weeks that I'm finally sharing something with you. Her hand strokes the man's hair. I can touch you ... You never let me touch you, never!' she moves towards the man's mouth. 'I have never kissed you.' She kissed him. 'the first time I went to kiss you on the lips, you pushed me away.

(Rahimi 2011:54)

Another phase of the patriarchal system in *The Patience Stone* is the cruel treatment of the mother-in-law of the woman. The former treats the latter as a machine brought to the house for producing children, no more. She humiliates the women by the way she asked for her hand, by marrying her with a photo and by preventing her from going out of home for years and from any other choice, even where to sleep. Humiliation is "mak[ing] (someone) feel very ashamed or foolish" (Merriam Webster Dictionary). She used to call the woman as infertile, threatening her to find a second wife to her son. Because of her insistence delivering children, the woman commits adultery as the husband was infertile. The woman reveals this biggest secret to the comate husband:

'... those two girls are not yours!' she sits up. 'And do you know why? Because you were the infertile one. Not me!' ... 'Everyone thought it was me who was infertile. Your mother wanted you take another wife. And what would have happened to me? I would have become like my aunt'.

(Rahimi 2011: 132)

The woman's father represents another member of the patriarchal system in the novel. He has not defended his daughter when they asked for her hand to an unknown warrior. He neglects his family. Neglect is defined by Merriam Webster Dictionary as "to fail to take care of or to give attention to (someone or something)". He is obsessed with fighting quails. The father didn't care of his daughters. Admittedly, neglecting the family by the father creates a gap between them. It will be a dismantled family. This gap stimulates him to prefer caring for his quails on caring for his family. He spends money and time on the quails only. Surprisingly, when he lost, he uses his young daughter to settle his loss:

'...All my dad cared about were his quails, his fighting quails! I often saw him kissing those quails, but never my mother, nor us, his children. There were seven of us. Seven girls starved of affection.' ... He had no money left to honor his bet, so he gave my sister instead. At twelve years old, my sister was sent to live with a man of forty!'

(Rahimi 2011:59)

The woman is an object of sexual assault by her brothers-in-law. They used to gaze at her while she washed herself during the long absence of her husband. Denial of subjectivity as a feature of objectification is defined by Martha Nussbaum (1995) as "the treatment of a person as something whose experiences and feelings (if any) need not be taken into account" (257). Moreover, loss of confidence among family members results in anxiety and domestic alienation. According to the patriarchal system, she cannot object or complain as she is a woman.

Your brothers have always wanted to fuck me! They ... spied on me constantly, for the whole three years you were away ... spied on me through the little window in the bath house while I was washing myself and jerked off. They spied on us too at night ... They jerk ... The fuckers! ... The bastards!

(Rahimi 2011:52)

Consequently, the woman suffers from PTSD because of all grave experiences resulted in the patriarchal system she has been living in for years. PTSD's most famous symptoms are continual hallucinations, flashbacks, difficulty to sleep and nightmares. These symptoms can affect the mind in a negative way (Vender Kolk 2011). The woman's experiences with her husband, her father, her mother-in-law and her brothers-in-law make her terribly suffer. These sufferings are reflected in her monologue and her bodily movements which are brilliantly portrayed by Atiq Rahimi, the writer and filmmaker.

Her confessions, although were intended to be a woman's stop-silence, but psychologically are considered a repercussion of the ugly past the woman had lived. Sometimes, her confessions are said as a kind of hallucination that can be explained with this quotation: "And [she] can immediately be heard weeping and begging: 'What I am saying? Why am I saying this? Help me, God! I can't control myself. I don't know what I'm saying...' She walls up herself in silence." (Rahimi:52). Flashbacks are defined as "one of the re-experiencing symptoms of PTSD. As the name implies, in a flashback, a person may feel or act as though a traumatic event is happening again" (Matthu Tull 2014). The following quotation may express this definition:

I felt a hand stroking me, I couldn't move. I heard my father's voice. I gathered every ounce of strength, and turned around. He was there. With his white beard. His little eyes blinking in the darkness. The worn-out shape of him. In his hands he was carrying the

quail I had given to the cat. He claimed that everything I told you yesterday had brought his quail back to life! Then he embraced me. I stood up. He wasn't there. Gone, taken by the wind. The rain.

(Rahimi 2011:68-69)

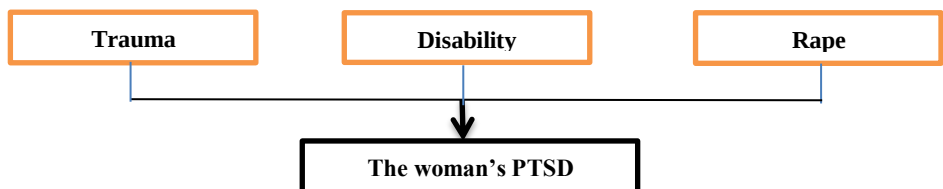
Another symptom of PTSD is nightmares. A nightmare is "a dream occurring during rapid eye movement (REM) sleep that results in feelings of strong terror, fear, distress, or extreme anxiety" (Psychology Today). The woman experiences a dreadful and terrible repeated nightmare of a recurring theme. The nightmare recalls her biggest secret, her sin when she committed adultery with an unknown man to have children:

That dream haunted me every night when I was pregnant with my first child ... I had the same nightmare every night, I saw myself giving birth to a boy, a boy who had teeth and could already speak ... he looked just my grandfather ... that dream terrorized me, it tortured me ... the child used to tell me that he knew one of my biggest secrets! And if I didn't give him what he wanted, he would tell that that secret to everyone.

(Rahimi 2011:116-117)

The second concept of the issue of women's double oppression in the story is war violence. In general, civilians are recently no longer out of the circle of conflicts. Civilians became subjects of death, maiming and torture. Men, women, boys and girls are killed, maimed, injured and displaced during war. These traumatic events happen to women as they are more vulnerable in war and post-war than men. Systematic mass rape, for example, is done by the combatants as an ideology of ethnic cleansing and enemy humiliation. In most of recent wars, soldiers were told that raping and torturing enemy women were the best means to humiliate the enemy. On the other hand, mass rape helps ethnic cleansing by reducing the ethnic purity of the enemy by imposing the forced impregnation. Such women are often cast away from communities making them suffer from life difficulties and deprivation.

Atiq Rahimi depicts the long, religious, tribal, and various wars that fought in Afghanistan and their repercussions on the society in general and women in particular. The setting of the story is devastated by the blind war, which does nothing for people but death, fear and torture. The issues of war violence that affect the woman in *The Patient Stone* causing her PTSD, and that intended to be analyzed are trauma, disability and rape. The following diagram may help to illustrate the issues:



A traumatic event is defined as "an experience that causes physical, emotional, psychological distress, or harm. It is an event that is perceived and experienced as a threat to one's safety or to the stability of one's world" (United States National Library of Medicine). Generally, since the second half of the 20th century, regional conflicts and civil wars have replaced combat that was mainly determined to military clashes between official armies. In

Afghanistan, for instance, this expansion in frontlines included communities' religious, racial, and ethnic lines. Thus, civilians are highly targeted and victimized in the name of war. Violence of war leads to trauma for those civilians, women in particular.

In *The Patience Stone*, the woman lives with her comate husband and her two daughters in the middle of the conflict. She knows nothing about her future or her destiny. Death, bombs and shelling terrify her almost every day. Carnage in her neighbor's family makes her almost mad, "Suddenly, a howl. From the woman. Horrified. Horrifying. Her footsteps stagger over the flagstones, stumble through the ruins, cross the garden and enter the house. She vomits. Weeps. Runs around the house. Like a madwoman". (Rahimi 2011:46-47)

Disability is one of the war impacts that does not affect an individual only, but it affects the whole war-torn country. In Afghanistan, the main factor that affects to do sustainable development work is the war, which curbed all educational, medical, scientific and economic development. Individually, a disabled person is defined as "someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

In *The Patience Stone*, almost everyone is disabled either physically or mentally. Fundamentalists are only able to kill each other. Afghan women are disabled. The Woman's voice is no less important than her hand, leg, or eye. The war has robbed her voice. Gunfire voices are much higher than her own:

Suddenly, the blinding flash of an explosion. A deafening blast makes the earth tremble. Its breath shatters the windows. Throats are torn apart by screaming ... outside, some are yelling, some crying, and some firing their kalashnikovs, who knows where from or towards whom ... just firing, firing.

(Rahimi 2011:32)

The last war impact to be discussed here is rape. It is defined as "sexual intercourse accomplished against the person's will by means of force, violence, duress, menace or fear of immediate and unlawful bodily injury" (Ashlyn K. Kuersten 2003:143). One of history's great silences is the torture and sexual violence against women and girls during the periods of conflicts. However, the data brought from the last decades' wars has underlined these issues and made people highlight them. Admittedly, men are killed more than women in battle, but there is another phase of the story of war not far from the battle, rape, which affects women in particular.

The woman in *The Patience Stone* becomes the object of rape. Because of the war, she is set alone in her small house. Her husband is totally disabled because of the war. Combatants do not care that rape is religiously taboo and is culturally banned. They consider rape as a weapon by which they can humiliate their enemy. The woman is aware of their will, "I had to tell him that [I sell my body] – otherwise, he would raped me ... raping a whore is not rape. But raping a young girl's virginity, a women's honor! Now that's your creed!" (Rahimi: 82). However, she got rid from one of the soldiers. But the young soldier came back to her later, paid and raped her:

'Listen, I'm not what you think I am. I ...' She is interrupted by a cry from the boy, fierce to start with, "Sh-sh-sh...shut up!" and then calm, 'How ...m-m-much? She tries

to move back, but is halted by a barrel of the gun against her belly ... She says 'I'm a mother ...' But the boy's tense finger on the trigger prevents her from continuing.

(Rahimi 2011:100-101)

Conclusion:

Identifying women's roles and giving voice to women to end their silence is the mission of most nationalists in the process of nation-building. In his *The Patience Stone*, Atiq Rahimi gives Afghan women, or maybe the Middle Eastern women, a voice to express oppression they undergo from the patriarchal societal system and war violence. Rahimi has not made the place and events restricted in Afghanistan only. The story might happen in any war-torn country.

Three articles written by Ali Mustofa (2012) Tania Woods (2013), and Anders Widmark (2010) have discussed the Afghan women's status and argue some issues in Rahimi's *The Patience Stone*. However, this paper focuses on Women's double oppression in the novel. PTSD is suffered due to severe incidents or experiences, natural or unnatural. The woman in the story represents almost all Afghan women. She suffers from double oppression, the patriarchal system and war violence. She undergoes brutality, humiliation, neglect and objectification by the patriarchy that constructed her family and, in general, her society. On the other hand, the woman undertakes the events of war that she experiences almost every day. She suffers from trauma, disability and rape.

Rahimi has opened the way and revealed what happened behind the chador. He made us recognize the extent of Afghan women's agony and struggle. This is accomplished by the woman's monologue through which she reveals her many hidden secrets, small and big, critical and serious to her paralyzed husband as well as the world.

تداعيات الصدمة بسبب ثنائية الظلم الواقع على النساء في رواية عتيق رحيمي "صخرة الصبر"

م. اسماعيل خلف صالح

قسم الاشراف الاختصاصي التربوي، المديرية العامة لتربية الانبار، الرمادي، العراق

ismail_19702000@yahoo.com

الكلمات المفتاحية: العنف الحرب، النظام الذكوري، المرأة الأفغانية، الكتابة ما بعد الصدمة PTSD، الصدمة، الإعاقة، الاغتصاب

<https://doi.org/10.51345/v37i2.1308.g684>

المستخلص:

مؤخراً، في جميع الحروب، تُقمع النساء ويُسلب صوتهن ويُمنعن بالعنف، هذا التكميم الممنهج لا يؤثر على ظروفهن المباشرة فحسب، بل يعيق تقدم المجتمع ككل، من الضروري إعلاء هذه الأصوات والاعتراف بالأدوار الخورية التي تلعبها المرأة في إمكانية حل النزاعات. علاوة على ذلك، يُكرّس النظام الأبوي (الذكوري) قمعاً مزدوجاً للنساء إلى جانب العنف الحرب في معظم تلك الحروب. "صخرة الصبر" رواية لعتيق رحيمي يمكن أن تكون مرآة لصدمة المرأة الأفغانية ومعاناتها جراء الحرب والنظام الأبوي. تمنح تلك القصة المرأة القدرة على التحدث والكشف عن كل شيء لزوجها المشلول الذي أصيب في صراع في بلد يشبه أفغانستان. هذه القدرة مستمدة من أسطورة فارسية تحكي عن حجرٍ يمتص عذابات وأخطاء كل من يعترف بما عندها. هكذا، تدور القصة حول شخصيات مجهولة، ومدينة مجهولة، وحتى صراع مجهول: "في مكان ما في أفغانستان أو غيرها". تركز هذه الورقة البحثية على تداخل العنف الحرب والنظام الذكوري في أفغانستان، التي تشهد صراعات سياسية وقبلية تُسبب اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة لدى الناس، وخاصةً لدى النساء. ومن أشهر أعراض اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة الهلوسة المستمرة، واسترجاع الذكريات، والكوابيس، وتكون لهذه الأعراض آثار سلبية خطيرة. وأخيراً، تُمثل الصدمة والإعاقة والاغتصاب في هذه القصة أبرز قضايا العنف الحرب التي تُسبب اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة لدى النساء، وسيتم تحليل جميع هذه المفاهيم من خلال الإطار المفاهيمي.