

THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
ABDERRAHMANE MIRA UNIVERSITY OF BEJAIA
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



**Reimagining Utopia through an Islamic
Feminist Lens A Critical Analysis of
Begum Rokeya's *Sultana's Dream***

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of
the Requirement for a Master Degree in English Literature and Civilization

Candidates:

BELILITA Ziad

YOUS Riad Anis

Supervisor:

Dr. IDRES Ourida

Panel of Examiners:

Chair: Mrs. CHIOUKH Ounissa

Supervisor: Dr. IDRES Ourida

Examiner: Mrs. OUALI-HALIL Houria

Academic Year: 2022 / 2023

Dedication

To the guiding light in my life,

My mother, a source of unwavering support and inspiration,

This research paper is dedicated to you.

From the earliest days of my education,

You instilled in me a love for knowledge,

Nurturing my curiosity and encouraging my dreams.

Through countless sacrifices and selfless acts,

You have shown me the true meaning of dedication,

Guiding me with unwavering love and belief in my abilities.

Your strength, resilience, and unwavering faith,

Have been a constant source of motivation,

Pushing me to strive for excellence and never give up.

In moments of doubt and uncertainty,

Your unwavering belief in my potential,

Has provided me with the courage to face any challenge.

You have been my rock, my confidante,

Always there to listen, understand, and uplift,

I am eternally grateful for your presence in my life.

This research paper is a testament to your unwavering support,

A small token of appreciation for the countless sacrifices you have made,

Thank you, dear mother, for being my guiding star.

My deepest gratitude goes to my friends and colleagues for their encouragement.

Lastly, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to my family for their unwavering belief in me, unwavering encouragement, and unconditional love. Their constant presence and understanding have given me the strength to pursue my academic endeavours.

With all my love and gratitude,

Ziad

III

Dedication

To my cherished friends, beloved family, and above all, my extraordinary mother,

This endeavour is dedicated to each of you,

For your unwavering love, unwavering support, and unwavering belief in me.

Thank you for being the pillars of strength in my life.

With all my love and gratitude,

Anis

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the following individuals who have contributed to the completion of this research paper:

First and foremost, we are deeply indebted to our supervisor Madame Ourida Idres for her invaluable guidance, insightful feedback, and continuous support throughout the entire research process. her expertise and encouragement have been instrumental in shaping this work.

We would like to extend our appreciation to the members of my research committee for their valuable input and constructive criticism, which have greatly enriched the quality of this paper.

I am grateful to the staff and administrators of the English department for providing the necessary resources and facilities that enabled me to conduct our research effectively.

Without the support and contributions of these individuals, this research paper would not have been possible. We are truly grateful for their presence in our academic journey.

Belilita Ziad and Yous Anis

Table of content

Dedication	II
Acknowledgments	V
Table of content	VI
Abstract	IX
Abstract in French	X
Glossary	XI
General introduction	1
Chapter One: The historical background and contextual framework	3
Introduction	4
1. Author’s biography	4
2. The historical background and contextual framework	5
3. Story plot	7
4. Literary influence	9
Conclusion	9
Chapter Two: Feminism and Utopia: A Theoretical and Conceptual Framework	11
Introduction	11

1. Feminism.....	11
1.1 Feminist literature.....	12
1.2 Patriarchy and Women’s Subordination.....	13
1.3 Islamic feminism.....	15
1.4 Feminism in India.....	17
1.5 Islamic Indian feminism.....	19
1.5.1 Indian feminist writers and Activists.....	20
2. Utopias.....	23
3. Feminist Utopia.....	24
Conclusion.....	24
Chapter Three: A Utopian Feminist Analysis: Themes and Settings.....	26
Introduction.....	27
1. Plot analysis.....	27
2. Themes.....	31
2.1 Patriarchy... ..	31
2.2 Education.....	32
2.3 War and colonialism.....	33

2.4 Environmentalism	33
2.5 Women's Empowerment and Leadership.....	34
3. Feminism and Purdah.....	34
Conclusion.....	35
General conclusion	37
Works Cited.....	39

Glossary

Patriarchy: A society that is run by men or a male central figure, such as a father or male ruler.

Matriarchy: A society that is run by women or a female central figure, such as a queen or mother.

Purdah: practised in certain Hindu or Muslim communities; the act of sequestering women in separate spaces away from men within a house, thus restricting their movement, as well as hiding their bodies using certain items of clothing.

Zenana: The rooms or apartments where women are kept if practising Purdah.

Mardana: The male equivalent of a zenana.

Sultan: An Arabic term that refers to a male government official or ruler.

Sultana: The female equivalent of a sultan.

Koh-i-Noor: A diamond that was in possession of the Mughal rulers of India.

Peacock Throne: A famous jewel-encrusted throne that was built for the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan.

Magistrate: A civil officer that enforces the law.

Cheroot: A cigar.

Feminism: The belief in the equality between men and women.

Utopia: An imaginary, idealized society.

Calcutta/Kolkata: The capital of West Bengal, a state in India that was formerly a part of British India.

Darjeeling: A city in West Bengal.

Lady Principal: Women who are educated at and conduct research in universities.

Boon: A benefit or helpful piece of advice.

Solar: Derived from the sun.

Air-car: An invention of the women in Ladyland; a car that uses solar power to fly.

General introduction

This study delves into the literary history of feminist utopian novels, a genre often overlooked by the literature circles and excluded from the research field of serious feminist literature. The study identifies key issues relating to gender, such as sexism and discrimination against women, and aims to find proper solutions that will end them.

Through the utopian feminist perspective, the social issues that are often overlooked or misidentified by already present social theories are highlighted, and potential solutions are explored. Pfaelzer highlights this point in her article “The Changing of the Avant Garde: The Feminist Utopia (La Transformation de l’avant-Garde: L’utopie Féministe).” The main idea of Pfaelzer's article is to explore the intersection of feminist theory and science fiction, specifically focusing on the feminist utopia as a subgenre of science fiction. Pfaelzer examines how feminist utopias challenge traditional patriarchal structures and offer new possibilities for envisioning gender and power dynamics. She also explores how the feminist utopia has evolved, from the early feminist utopias to the more complex and nuanced visions of the new utopias. Ultimately, Pfaelzer argues that feminist utopias offer a powerful tool for imagining alternative futures and for critiquing and transforming existing power structures.

The study's significance lies in shedding light on the struggles of women to obtain basic rights and in introducing a whole different perspective about women and their struggle. The study could help students who are to conduct further research related to this topic in the future.

The study's methodology applies the feminist theory, which examines the characters' descriptions, language, attitudes, and relationships, as well as the author's explicit commentary

on society as a whole. The literary work reflects and shapes stereotypes and cultural assumptions and examines how it expresses or undermines patriarchal attitudes.

The thesis outline comprises three chapters. The first chapter discusses the theoretical and conceptual framework, introducing key concepts relating to the theory of feminism, utopia, feminist utopia, otherness, and patriarchy. The second chapter introduces the novel, providing a contextual framework and historical background, plot summary, insight into the author's life, and literary influences. The third chapter analyzes the selected novel in relation to the theory, breaking down the plot, themes, characters, and events, and exploring how they relate to the theory.

The study's research questions explore the idea of a "feminist utopia" in *Ladyland*, examining how the story explores this idea and whether there are any parts of the story that contradict it. The study's preliminary literature review focuses on Begum Rokeya's *Sultana's Dream*, a science fiction short story that depicts a changing society from one where women are required to live in their own private domestic space to a feminist utopia where women rule *Ladyland* and men are imprisoned.

Chapter One

Historical Background and Contextual Framework of the Novel *Sultana's Dream*

Introduction

This chapter aims to explore themes of gender, oppression, and liberation by studying the author's biography, the historical background and contextual framework of *Sultana's Dream*, and its literary influence with a plot summary that will help create a general idea of the story and its main events.

1. Author's biography

Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain (1880-1932) was a Bengali feminist writer, educator, and social activist. She was a pioneer in advocating for women's education and women's rights in what is now Bangladesh and India. Rokeya's mother was a strong advocate for women's education and played a significant role in shaping Rokeya's early life. Rokeya received a traditional education at home and learned Arabic and Persian from her elder brother. After her marriage, Rokeya moved to Calcutta with her husband. Despite her initial lack of formal education, she was eager to learn and was encouraged by her husband to pursue her education. Her husband not only supported her education but also encouraged her to write and express her ideas through her writing. Rokeya started learning English and Bengali at the age of 25 and went on to become fluent in both languages. She was deeply interested in literature, philosophy, and politics, and read widely in these fields.

Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain was a prolific writer and social activist. She is best known for her work in promoting education and women's rights in Bengal. Her most famous work, *Sultana's Dream* is a short story that envisions a matriarchal society where women are in charge and men are relegated to the domestic sphere. The story was published in 1905 and is considered a pioneering work of feminist science fiction.

Rokeya also founded the Muslim Women's Association in 1916, which aimed to promote the education and social welfare of Muslim women in Bengal. She started the Sakhawat Memorial High School for Girls in Calcutta in 1909, which was one of the first schools for Muslim girls in Bengal. Rokeya also started the Sakhawat Home for Widows, which provided shelter and vocational training to widows.

Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain was a pioneering figure in the struggle for women's rights and social justice in colonial Bengal. Her legacy continues to inspire generations of feminists in Bangladesh and beyond.

2. The historical background and contextual framework

Sultana's Dream is a short science fiction story by Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain, also known as Rokeya Begum, written in 1905. First published in *Indian Ladies' Magazine* and later republished in book format in 1908. It details an unnamed narrator's dream of an Indian feminist utopia. It came as a criticism of the Purdah system which is a practice originally used by Muslims in Persian culture before being adopted by Hindus in India, involves keeping women away from public life. Women had to live in separate spaces in their homes, known as zenanas, and often had to wear clothing that obscured or covered their faces and bodies to avoid men's eyes. The story is also the first known work of Indian science fiction.

Rokeya is a strong supporter of women's right to education and has spent much of her life writing essays, novels, and stories on the topics of women's rights, feminism, and gender inequality. Hussain was an early feminist and the founder of Calcutta's first Islamic school for girls (1911), as well as the Muslim Women's Organization (1916).

The first full anthology of Rokeya's work was published in 1973 for the Bangla Academy. But it was not until 1981 that Roushan Jahan edited and translated into English a text titled *Inside Seclusion*, which included a translation of Rokeya's 1931 *Avarodhbashini* (*The Secluded Ones*) and *Sultana's Dream*. Jahan's book was subsequently republished by the *Feminist Press* in 1988 but it was not until the 2000s that *Sultana's Dream* began to regularly appear in Western-published anthologies. Then it became a foundational text for women's liberation and feminism.

Rokeya Hussain's early 20th-century concerns as articulated in *Sultana's Dream*, like ecological degradation, feminist empowerment, and the power of technology, have had a particular resonance for the early 21st century. This has meant, in part, that, unlike the majority of twentieth-century Muslim women writers from South Asia, Rokeya Hussain herself has become the subject of multiple Bengali and English language studies. Most of these studies have focused on the content of Rokeya's various essays, her critique of gender norms, and her demand for women's education. Her essays have been compared with Mary Wollstonecraft's and her fiction with Charlotte Perkins Gilman's specifically her novel *Herland* (1915). This was shown in the article "The Utopian Concept of the Female in East and West. A Critical Comparison of 'Sultana's Dream' (1905) and 'Herland' (1909)". The main idea of "The Utopian Concept of the Female in East and West. A Critical Comparison of 'Sultana's Dream' (1905) and 'Herland' (1909)" is to compare and contrast the utopian concept of the female in two different cultural contexts, East and West, by analyzing two feminist utopian works of fiction, *Sultana's Dream* by Begum Rokeya and "Herland" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. The study examines how the authors use the genre of science fiction to envision an ideal world where women are free from patriarchal oppression and can realize their full potential. The study delves into the historical and

cultural contexts in which the two works were written and how these contexts influenced the authors' perspectives on gender and society. It also examines how the authors construct their utopian societies and how they challenge traditional gender roles and norms. The study analyzes the similarities and differences between the two works in terms of their portrayal of women's roles and their relationships with men, as well as how the authors imagine the future and how gender relations might evolve. It ultimately argues that while both works offer a utopian vision of gender equality, they are shaped by their respective cultural contexts and reflect different approaches to feminism and gender equality.

3. Story plot

The story is narrated by an unnamed woman who falls asleep and dreams of a place called Ladyland, a utopian society where women are the dominant gender, and men are kept in seclusion. The protagonist is taken on a tour of Ladyland by a woman named Sister Sarah, who explains how women have created a peaceful and prosperous society by using advanced technology and scientific knowledge.

The narrator is amazed by the advancements made by the women of Ladyland. They have built flying cars, automated kitchens, and other technological wonders that make life easier for everyone. Women in Ladyland are educated, work in various professions, and have full control over their lives. They have abolished gender-based violence, war, and poverty, and have created a society based on justice, equality, and mutual respect.

In Ladyland, women have created a system where they take turns performing the necessary tasks, which ensures that everyone has enough leisure time to pursue their interests. The narrator witnesses women practising art, science, and philosophy, and feels empowered by

their freedom of expression. In Ladyland, there is no such thing as a gender role, and everyone is free to do what they are passionate about.

One of the most significant aspects of Ladyland is the absence of men. Men are kept in seclusion and are only allowed to come out on special occasions, like Eid. This is because women believe that men are responsible for all the wars and violence in the world. Sister Sarah explains that since women have taken over, there has been peace in Ladyland, and there is no need for men to be part of their society.

The story is not only a critique of patriarchy but also a critique of religion. In the dream world, Sister Sarah tells the narrator that they have discarded religion, which has been the root of all evil in the world. She explains that they follow a religion of humanity, which is based on reason and compassion. This idea is significant because it challenges the traditional role of religion in society and suggests that religion can be a force for good only if it promotes reason and compassion.

The dream ends abruptly when the narrator's husband wakes her up. The husband is angry that the narrator has been neglecting her duties as a wife and mother. He tells her that her place is in the kitchen and not dreaming about a world without men. This interruption highlights the reality of the patriarchal society outside the dream world, where women are expected to conform to traditional gender roles.

The story ends with the narrator realizing that the world she imagined in her dream is possible and resolving to work towards making it a reality. The narrator suggests that women should educate themselves and work towards gaining independence from men. She writes,

“Women should work on their own to become self-sufficient and to live life according to their own wishes and needs.”

4. Literary influence

Hussain won accolades for *Sultana's Dream* and her other works. The story is a significant work of early Indian feminism, as well as science fiction. Its idea of education for all women was radical for the time period. Hussain revisited the importance of education for women in a later novel, *Padmarag* (1924).

Sultana's Dream is a powerful and groundbreaking piece of literature that challenged the patriarchal society of its time and championed women's empowerment and equality. The story's significance lies in its message that a just and equal society can be achieved only by recognizing and challenging the structures of oppression. The dream world of Ladyland, where women have taken over and created a society free of patriarchy and oppression, serves as an inspiration for women to work towards creating a similar world in reality.

Conclusion

In conclusion, *Sultana's Dream* is a groundbreaking work of feminist science fiction that challenges patriarchy. It highlights the importance of education, independence, and self-sufficiency for women to achieve their goals and dreams.

Chapter Two

Feminism and Utopia: A Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Introduction

The fight for gender equality has been a long-standing battle, with roots that can be traced back to the beginning of human history. Women, who have played an important role in the making of society, have historically been subordinated to men, with limited access to political, economic, and social opportunities. Feminism, as a movement to end sexism and oppression, strives to empower women and achieve full gender equality in law and practice. This paper explores the theoretical and conceptual framework of feminism and utopia, highlighting the role of patriarchy, feminist literature, Islamic feminism, and feminism in India, while also examining the concept of feminist utopias.

1. Feminism

Feminism is about all genders having equal rights and opportunities. It is about respecting the diverse experiences, identities, knowledge, and strengths of women, and striving to empower them to fully realize their rights. Feminism can be seen as a movement to end sexism, exploitation, and oppression and to achieve full gender equality in law and practice.

The first wave of feminism took place in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the second in the 1960s and 1970s, the third from the 1990s to 2012, the fourth wave took place between 2012 and 2015, and the fifth wave from 2015 to present. The first wave of feminism was primarily led by white women in the middle class, and it was not until the second wave of feminism that women of colour began developing a voice. Mary Wollstonecraft is seen by many as a founder of feminism due to her 1792 book titled *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in which she argues that class and private property are the basis of discrimination against women, and those women as much as men needed equal rights.

Feminism is often divided into three main schools: liberal feminism, radical feminism, and socialist or Marxist feminism. Most feminists agree on five basic principles: working to increase equality, expanding human choice, eliminating gender stratification, ending sexual violence, and promoting sexual freedom. Liberal feminism is one of the earliest forms of feminism, stating that women's secondary status in society is based on unequal opportunities and segregation from men, emerging out of the abolitionist and women's movement in the US, this body of feminism focuses on eliminating gender inequality. Second is radical feminism a form of feminism that emerged from the American civil rights and peace movements of the 1960s, radical feminists admit the existence of a patriarchal system causes structural inequality in society, an important concept of radical feminism is patriarchy, they also believe that patriarchy is the root cause of unequal societies and aim to challenge and subvert its existence in society. And also, Marxist feminism is part of a feminist theory based on its views on Karl Marx's work on capitalism.

1.1 Feminist literature

A feminist novel is not just a story or an explicit treatment of women's lives. It's also a novel that sheds light on some aspects of the condition of women, makes a bold and clear political statement for the best interests of women, and provides a sort of urgency for change. Feminism has had a dramatic impact on the way literary works are read, taught, and evaluated. Feminist literary theory deliberately crossed the traditional boundaries between literature, philosophy, and the social sciences to understand how gender was constructed and expressed through language. Feminist literature existed long before the feminist movements gave us the words to describe it. Even when literary creation is considered a male occupation, some

female authors, such as the Brontë sisters, publish feminist literature anonymously under the guise of pen names.

Feminist literature continued to grow and evolve with the feminist movement, and it offers a lens through which we can explore the historical evolution of the equality of women. Feminist literature is an important channel through which women writers can express their dissatisfaction with established notions of women and femininity in patriarchal societies (where men are the main rulers). Furthermore, since the beginning of the feminist movement, many women have used feminist literature to express their thoughts about the movement itself. The feminist movement produced feminist fiction, feminist nonfiction, and feminist poetry, sparking a renewed interest in women's writing. In the 15th century, Christine de Pizan wrote *The Book of the City of Ladies*, which promotes the importance of women in society. In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft wrote her book titled *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in which she argues that class and private property are the basis of discrimination against women.

1.2 Patriarchy and women's subordination

The origin of female subordination goes back to the beginning of the human race. Men and women constituted humankind in history and women formed half of humankind. They shared the world with men and played a huge part in the making of today's society. This means that women, as equally as men, have contributed to creating and preserving history, which helped in understanding the past and linking it to the future. This was highlighted in the sociologist Gail Omvedt's article "The Origin of Patriarchy" which explores the roots of patriarchy and gender inequality in human societies. Omvedt argues that patriarchy is not a natural or inevitable social order, but rather a historically specific phenomenon that emerged

with the rise of class societies and the appropriation of women's labour and reproductive capacities. She traces the origins of patriarchy to the transition from hunting-gathering to agriculture-based societies, and the emergence of private property, social hierarchy, and the state. Omvedt further highlights how patriarchy has been maintained and perpetuated through cultural norms, religious institutions, and gendered ideologies that naturalize male domination and female subordination.

The term women's subordination refers to the inferior position of women and their lack of access to resources and decision-making. Historically, the term patriarchy has been used to refer to the autocratic rule of the male head of the family; however, since the late 20th century, it has also been used to refer to social systems in which power is held primarily by adult males. The word patriarchy means the rule of the father or the patriarch, and originally it was used to describe a specific type of male-dominated family, the large household of the patriarch which included women, junior men, children, slaves, and domestic servants all under the rule of this dominant male. Now it is used more generally to refer to male domination, to the power relationships by which men dominate women, and to characterize a system whereby women are kept subordinate in several ways. Patriarchy refers to male domination both in the public and private sectors.

Feminists primarily use the term patriarchy to describe the power relationship between men and women. Therefore, patriarchy is not just a term; feminists use it as a concept, and like any other concept, it is a tool to help us understand. Regarding the existence and origin of patriarchy, traditionalists do believe that men are born to dominate and women to be subordinate. They believe that this hierarchy has always existed and will continue, and like other rules of nature, this one too cannot be changed.

1.3 Islamic feminism

Secular feminists often argue that Islamic feminism is a controversial, incompatible, and contradictory term, supporting the idea that Islam oppresses women. Then there are mainstream scholars who believe that feminism is an imposed Western concept that does not fit into Islamic culture. Oppression, inferiority, and inequality, for many, are the first words that come to mind when thinking of women in Islam, these stereotypes confuse Islam with cultural practices and fail to recognize that Islam has given women the most progressive rights since the 7th century.

In Islam, women are not inferior or unequal to men. Islam honoured women in society by elevating them and protecting them with unprecedented rights. Islam gave women the right to education, to marry someone of their choice, to retain their identity after marriage, to divorce, to work, to own and sell property, to seek protection by the law, to vote, and to participate in civil and political engagement. Islamic feminism is an attempt led by Muslim women to have their own agency in preserving their culture and fighting for their rights. It is a form of feminism regarding the role of women in Islam. It aims at complete equality for all Muslims, regardless of gender, in public and private life. Muslim feminists advocate for women's rights, gender equality, and social justice within the framework of Islam. Islamic feminism is a movement that liberates women from the ongoing struggle between Islam and feminism, giving them a sense of harmony between their inner beliefs and rights rather than conflict. This is a way to break out of the stereotypes that Muslim women have always fallen into. Supporters of the movement seek to highlight teachings of equality in religion and encourage questioning of the patriarchal interpretation of Islam by reinterpreting the Quran and hadith.

Muslim feminists apply methods and tools from linguistics, history, literary criticism, sociology, and anthropology to help them better understand the Quran. In their approach, Muslim feminists advocate the importance of context when reading the Quran, in addition to adopting a holistic approach where core values of equality, harmony, and human justice are always considered when interpreting the verses. These scholars have all advocated for the importance of context and a holistic approach when interpreting the Quran, and have emphasized core values of equality, harmony, and human justice in their readings of the text.

Asma Barlas who is a professor of politics at Ithaca College and a scholar of Islamic studies has written on the Quran, Islamic feminism, and women's rights in Islam. In her book "Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an," she advocates for a holistic approach to interpreting the Quran that takes into account the principles of justice and equality, Amina Wadud who is an Islamic scholar and feminist who has written extensively on Quranic exegesis and Islamic feminism. She is known for her book "Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective" in which she emphasizes the importance of context in interpreting the Quran.

The article "Islamic Feminism: A New Feminist Movement or a Strategy by Women for Acquiring Rights?" by Amal Grami examines the concept of Islamic feminism as a possible new feminist movement in the Muslim world. The author argues that Islamic feminism is a strategy by women in Muslim societies to acquire rights within an Islamic framework, rather than a new feminist movement that seeks to challenge or overthrow the existing patriarchal system. Grami also explores the history of Islamic feminism and its relationship with Western feminism, as well as the challenges and opportunities that the movement faces in achieving its goals.

1.4 Feminism in India

Feminism in India is a set of movements aimed at defining, establishing, and defending equal political, economic, and social rights and opportunities for women in India. It is the pursuit of women's rights within the society of India. Like their feminist counterparts all over the world, feminists in India seek gender equality, the right to work for equal wages, the right to equal access to health and education, and equal political rights. Indian feminists also have fought against culture-specific issues within India's patriarchal society, such as inheritance laws. The history of feminism in India is seen as a mostly pragmatic and largely non-existent endeavour. Compared to other countries, there are very few theoretical papers on feminism. In India, the concept of equality was alien until it was liberally exposed and introduced by Western-educated Indians in the early 19th century. However, the term did not make sense in Indian life or become an operational principle until India gained independence and adopted a democratic government in 1947. It recognized equality and freedom from discrimination based on sex and religion and guaranteed freedom of religion. In addition, plans to provide women with health, education, employment, and welfare were created that also declares women to be development partners. In the Indian context, we can see the rise of feminism and the women's movement in two distinct phases, the pre-independence era, and the post-independence era. We can divide the women's movement into three phases:

First Phase (1850-1915): The social reform movement did not radically challenge the existing patriarchal structure of society or question the relationship between the sexes. They carried out reforms only on issues that the British pointed to as evidence of the deterioration of Indian society. Even the institutions and organizations of women that emerged during this period did not have an independent ideology but only derived from what men said. This is

understandable since it was the wives and sisters of the reformers who initiated the establishment of these organizations. The reform orientation and content defined by the reformers were unquestionably accepted by women's organizations. As a result, even when women speak for themselves, they speak only the language of men, defined by masculine parameters.

Second Phase (1915-1947): The second phase saw the birth of three major associations: the Indian Women's Association (WIA), the National Council of Women in India (NCWI), and the All India Women's Conference (AIWC). All of these organizations were founded by women between 1917 and 1927 after World War I. During this period, the struggle against colonial rule took place strongly. Nationalism becomes the preeminent cause. Gandhi legalized and expanded the public activism of Indian women by introducing them to the nonviolent civil disobedience movement against the Raj. In the decades that followed, women showed active participation in the liberal movement that paved the way for several women-only organizations.

Third Phase (1947-Present): It was primarily due to the efforts of women and their role in the freedom struggle that women got the right to vote and complete equality in the constitution of India. The third phase can be further classified into three sub-phases:

The Period of Accommodation (1947-1960s): The NFIW (National Federation of Indian Women), the wing of the Communist Party of India, established in 1954 by several leaders, worked for the empowerment of women and women's rights. The National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) is affiliated with the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), composed primarily of women from socialist countries; the participation of women in the struggle for freedom developed their critical awareness of their role and rights in independent India. This led to the inclusion of women's suffrage and citizenship in the Indian constitution.

The Period of Crisis (1960s-1975): In the post-independence era in the early decades, the primary concern was overall economic growth. Soon after that was another decade that saw a growing interest in equity and poverty alleviation. Gender equality issues are subsumed under poverty issues and there is no specific program for women.

1975 - To date: Since 1975, the number of women's welfare organizations in India has steadily increased. There are various issues that the women's movement deals with during this time like alcohol, missing girls, and violence against women.

In Radha Kumar's article "Contemporary Indian Feminism" which provides an overview of the feminist movement in India in the late 1980s the author discusses the historical context of Indian feminism, including its roots in the colonial era and the influence of Western feminist thought. Kumar also analyzes the different waves of feminism in India and their respective agendas and strategies, such as the focus on women's rights in the early wave and the emphasis on gender roles and patriarchy in the second wave. The article also touches upon the intersectionality of feminism in India, with considerations of class, caste, and religion. Overall, Kumar highlights the diverse and complex nature of Indian feminism and its ongoing struggles for gender equality and social justice.

1.5 Islamic Indian feminism

Muslim feminist movement in India aspires to achieve gender equality within the framework of individual Muslim law. According to them, the Quran's political, economic, and social empowerment is an indication that Islamic feminism is theoretically an approach to the empowerment of Muslim women. Muslim women in India face considerable challenges as citizens and as members of the largest minority. A significant development in recent years has

been the emergence of Muslim women's activism seeking to promote women's rights rather than focusing solely on changing personal laws. Muslim women's rights activists assert their right to read the Quran for themselves and interpret it in a woman-friendly way. Muslim women's movement in India openly supports reform of the Personal Law in India to raise awareness which shall help to inform Muslim women about the rights that are guaranteed to them in the Quran.

The emergence and development of Islamic feminism in India and its role in advocating for reforms in Muslim personal law were explored in Vatuk's article "Islamic Feminism in India: Indian Muslim Women Activists and the Reform of Muslim Personal Law." The article examines the challenges faced by Indian Muslim women activists who are advocating for gender equality within the framework of Islamic law and tradition. It analyzes the strategies and tactics used by these activists to challenge patriarchal norms and practices that discriminate against women in matters related to marriage, divorce, and inheritance. The article also examines the debates and controversies surrounding the interpretation of Islamic law and the role of women in Islamic societies, as well as the political and social implications of Islamic feminism for the broader feminist movement in India.

1.5.1 Indian feminist writers and activists

Indian feminist writers have made significant contributions to the global feminist movement by using their writing to challenge patriarchal norms, highlight the experiences of women, and advocate for gender equality. this paragraph will introduce some of the most notable Indian feminist writers and their works.

Rashid Jahan

Born in Aligarh in 1905, Rashid Jahan was born to a father who was the pioneer of women's education in India and also an Urdu language writer. She penned short stories and plays. Jahan got her early education from the Aligarh Muslim University and later joined the Isabella Thoburn College in Lucknow in 1921. Though she trained as a gynaecologist, Rashid Jahan had a strong interest in writing short stories. She published *Angaaray* in 1931 which got caught in a lot of controversies. *Angaaray* was a collection of short stories that talked about the struggles of women in a patriarchal society, the double standards of clerics, and the inequalities in society.

Meena Kandasamy

Ilavenil Meena Kandasamy is an Indian poet, fiction writer, translator, and activist from Chennai, Tamil Nadu, and India. Meena published two collections of poetry, *Touch* and *Ms. Militancy*. From 2001-2002, she edited *The Dalit*, a bi-monthly alternative English magazine of the Dalit Media Network. Her 2017 novel *When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife* tells the story of an unnamed female narrator whose husband, a university professor, rapes and bullies her into giving up her career. Through the protagonist's story, Kandasamy attempts to break down the concept of toxic masculinity prevalent in society and portray the battle some women are forced to undertake under the guise of traditional wedlock.

Jyotirao Govindrao Phule

Jyotirao Govindrao Phule was an Indian activist and reformer who brought about a drastic change in the lives of women in society. During his time, women belonging to lower

castes were not allowed to attend school and receive an education. He vowed to change that and began by educating his wife. Together, they started their first school for girls, despite being ostracized by their families. He advocated widow remarriage and also started an orphanage to reduce the incidence of female infanticide.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy

One of the early abhorrent Indian practices was Sati, a ritual that forced a widow to sacrifice herself at the funeral pyre of her dead husband. Prominent among the voices raised against this barbaric practice was that of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who fought to abolish this system. Ram Mohan Roy created the Bramho Samaj that sought to break the shackles of the caste system, and the fight against Sati that saved the lives of many women. He also advocated for property rights for women and fought child marriage.

Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain

Born in 1880, Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain is one of the most important feminist figures in Indian history. Begum Rokeya is considered a pioneer in the women's rights movement in Bengal. As a writer, philosopher, educator, activist, and feminist, she has a long legacy of defending women's rights through her writings. Her name was included in the BBC's list of the greatest Bengalis of all time in 2004. Begum Rokeya has used her writings to promote gender equality. Through fiction, poetry, short stories, science fiction, satire, treatises, and essays, she argues that men and women should have equal rights and representation on all fronts. She argues that the reason women do not have equal rights and representation is the lack of education. Begum Rokeya went against the patriarchal mentality of society and launched initiatives to educate women in the region. Among her most notable works is *Sultana's Dream*.

Her utopian feminist novel talks about a world where gender roles were reversed and women ruled. The story also talks about technological advancements and refutes common gender stereotypes with logic and reasoning.

2. Utopias

Equality, peace, and universal access to food, education, healthcare, and employment; utopia is characterized by these important factors. Utopias are attractive because they give people a chance to retreat from their problems and enter a world of happiness. They are so far from reality, that the term itself means nowhere. The term "utopias" is in plural because it refers to multiple idealized worlds that have been imagined throughout history by various individuals or groups. Each utopia is a unique vision of a perfect society, with its own distinct set of values, ideals, and rules. Furthermore, the concept of a utopia is inherently pluralistic, as it suggests that there are many different ways in which a perfect society could be constructed, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. While some utopias may share certain features or principles, they are ultimately separate and distinct from one another. Therefore, the plural form of the term "utopias" reflects the diversity and multiplicity of these imagined worlds.

A Utopia is an ideal place, state, or condition which is perfect in terms of politics, laws, customs, and conditions; that does not mean people are perfect, but the system is perfect, a world free of social injustice, hunger, poverty, criminality, pressure, violence, and pollution.

The term “utopia” was coined by the English philosopher Sir Thomas More in his book *Utopia* (1516) which is a frame narrative primarily depicting a fictional island society and its religious, social, and political customs. The name of the book recalls the ancient Greek words meaning “good place” and “no place”. Throughout history writers, philosophers, architects, and

intellectuals have toyed with the idea of imaginary worlds where society is motivated by harmonious living. The goal of a utopian society is to promote the highest possible quality of life, there is no greed, corruption, or power struggles in Utopia because there is no money or private property. Examples of utopia are The Garden of Eden which is an aesthetic place where good and evil are not known and also Heaven which is a supernatural religious place where God, angels, and humans live in harmony. Islamic texts describe life for the immortal inhabitants of the Jannah as happy and without hurt, sorrow, fear, or shame. They are young, in their early 30s, living a life of bliss that includes wearing sumptuous robes, bracelets, and perfumes.

3. Feminist utopia

A feminist utopia can be defined as a narrative about a society that is free from the patriarchal subordination of women. Feminist utopia imagines a society free of gender oppression and envisions a future or alternate reality where men and women are not trapped in traditional roles of inequality. These novels often take place in worlds completely devoid of men. While utopian women have to serve their husbands in their family unit, they experience relative equality with men in utopias outside of the family. A feminist utopia example would be Christine de Pizan's *The Book of the City of Ladies*. The spirited defence of her sex was unique for its confrontation of the misogyny of her day and offers a telling insight into the position of women in medieval culture. *The Book of the City of Ladies* provides positive images of women, ranging from warriors and inventors, scholars to prophetesses, and artists to saints.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the fight for gender equality continues to be a relevant and pressing issue in contemporary society. Patriarchy, feminist literature, and feminist movements have shed light

on the struggles of women and paved the way for progress. However, there are still challenges to be overcome, including the intersectionality of gender with other forms of oppression. Islamic feminism and feminist movements in India demonstrate that the fight for gender equality is not confined to Western contexts but is a global issue that requires global solutions. Feminist utopias provide a vision for a future where gender equality, peace, and universal access to basic needs and opportunities are a reality.

Chapter Three

A Utopian Feminist Analysis: Themes and Settings

Introduction

This chapter will examine *Sultana's Dream* through a close reading of the text and an exploration of its themes, symbolism, and language. Through this analysis, we will gain a deeper understanding of the story's meaning, its significance within its historical and cultural context, and how it continues to resonate with readers today.

1. Plot analysis

The story begins in a dreamlike space where Sultana is in the unknown, appearing in Ladyland from night to day. This transition from darkness to light serves as a metaphor for Sultana's transition from the “darkness” of patriarchal India to the female-dominated society of Ladyland. The Ladyland landscape filled with various flowers, plants, moss, and grasses is another figurative detail of hers that symbolizes the idyll that Ladyland offers. The safety and sanctuary that Ladyland offers women allow them to thrive, just as flowers and wildlife can thrive there.

Ladyland is the reverse of the Hindu and Muslim religious practice of “purdah”, in which women are confined to women-only rooms or spaces known as zenanas. This practice was common among the Hindu elite and severely restricted the freedom and movement of women. Sultana alludes to this practice when she mentions how uncomfortable and exposed she feels without the veil.

In Ladyland, Purdah is reversed. Instead of women men are the ones isolated from society and unable to step outside of their restricted areas. Rather than functioning as a male-run patriarchal society or male-dominated structure, Ladyland creates a female-dominated

matrilineal society. Sister Sarah's attitude toward men is a fundamental denunciation of men's behaviour. She likens them to madmen who deserve to be held in a secluded "asylum" when she said: "Lunatics escaping from an asylum".

Sister Sarah likens men fleeing locked rooms to madmen fleeing mental hospitals. If the men escape chaos and destruction will be caused, so they must be imprisoned for their insanity and accuses them of making the outside world dangerous for women and the need to cut them off from normal society. Sister Sarah also characterizes men as "timid" contrary to what is traditionally seen in men.

Sultana asked more conservative questions, and Sister Sarah explained to Sultana during the course of the conversation how her views are distorted by standard Indian patriarchal practices. On the other hand, Sister Sarah's perspective is in stark contrast to Sultana's. She accuses women of passive acceptance of male dominance and says that women have lost their "natural right" to liberty.

Through the conversations between Sister Sarah and Sultana, Sister Sarah uses metaphors and allegories to explain social structures, beliefs, and power relations. She compares men to madness, and when Sultana tries to express her belief that women are dominated by men, she finds that women are weak and therefore dominated by men. Sister Sarah explains that men cannot be dominated by lions even though lions are stronger in the metaphor: "Lion is stronger than a man".

Sultana explains that although lions are stronger than men, men do not let lions hold them captive. Likewise, she argues, women shouldn't let men imprison them just because they are

physically stronger. Men are physically stronger than women, but women should not be dominated by them.

The story continues to explore the reversal of gender stereotypes, with Sister Sara contradicting Sultana's assessments by explaining the lack of patriarchal influence in Ladyland society. Sister Sara challenges all of Sultana's assumptions about gender hierarchy. When Sultana was surprised that Sister Sara was able to do both her office and her embroidery work, Sister Sara laughed and dismissed the idea that men are productive, explaining how much time they wasted instead. Sister Sara is able to perform both men's work, such as clerical work, and women's work of embroidery, thus dispelling the notion that there must be separate duties. Otherwise, women would not be able to manage the society that they have.

Sultana's Dream is generally classified as a science fiction story because it incorporates technology that, at the time of writing, is still unknown. Technological advances that make *Sultana's Dream* a sci-fi work are instrumental in shaping the setting of Ladyland, which, by the power of technology, becomes an idealized paradise. There is no epidemic in Ladyland; there is no smoke and coal dust, for women have found a way to properly harness solar heat and turn it into energy.

By connecting Ladyland with innovation and technological advancement, the story shapes Ladyland as the nation of the future. In Ladyland, where traditional routines like Purdah and spaces like zenanas are reversed, society can improve and progress to a degree that was not possible when men were in power.

The story of Ladyland's birth is fundamental, as it establishes a clear relationship between women's access to education and the creation of Ladyland, a space of liberation and freedom for

women. Without the education the Queen provided to the people of Ladyland, there would have been no discovery that would have aided women in their war against another nation and ultimately led to their self-governing government.

It is important to note that in *Sultana's Dream*, although gender differences remain, the story focuses on establishing how women were able to overcome their “inferiority complex” towards men. Sister Sarah agrees that men are stronger than women, but the women who founded Ladyland overcome this inferiority complex by using their brains rather than their physical strength. Women lure men into zenanas with their cunning and can win wars without them and the use of violence.

At the end of the story, Sultana learns more about the idyllic and progressive nature of Ladyland society. Ladyland and its institutional structures; the judicial system, agricultural production and manufacturing, and transportation are all designed to contrast with the traditional patriarchal societies that existed at the time the story was made. Punishment There is no bureaucracy to enforce the law, but it operates under a pacifist ideology that believes in administering justice without physical violence.

Rather than using physical force to extract maximum resources from the natural land, women focus on respecting the land and making it prosperous. All of the women's innovations are used to create a harmonious relationship between the women and the land they live in.

The Queen's speech also introduced criticism of India's rule and territorial expansion. Her two items mentioned by the Queen, the Kohinoor, and the Peacock Throne are both items present in Indian society and symbolize the wealth of an extravagant monarch. Kohinoor, which means “Mountain of Light”; is a diamond that was a part of the Mughal dynasty, as was the Peacock

Throne, a gem-encrusted throne. The Mughal Empire, which ruled India from the 16th century to the 19th century, relied on military warfare to maintain its displays of power and wealth.

By declaring that her kingdom does not aspire to these riches, the Queen demonstrates Ladyland's rejection of the pursuit of material wealth and luxury. It focuses on scientific innovations that enable women to thrive independently of patriarchal structures and to trade with outside societies. Unlike patriarchal societies, they can develop by using science and technology to create peace and happiness without oppressing other women or destroying the land around them.

Sultana's sleep at the end of the story reminds the reader that her experience in Ladyland, however vivid, is still a dream, thus reminding the reader that Ladyland is still a fictional ideal. Sultana was forced to return to a patriarchal society; Ladyland remains an inaccessible and imaginative place, despite its many advantages.

2. Themes

2.1 Patriarchy

Sultana's Dream satirizes the patriarchy that still holds the reins on women, forcing them to conform to established values consistent with male hegemony. In this case, the Muslim Bengali society of Rokeya's time was no exception. As a result, Muslim women strictly uphold the Purdah system, their stay in zenanas, and the refusal to educate them, all within the framework of the existing system of values and traditions.

“In India man is lord and master. He has taken to himself all powers and privileges and shut up the woman in the zenana.” Sultana, p. 9. Sultana's reaction when Sister Sarah asked how

men and women interact in their home country outlines the patriarchal power structure facing women in India. Purdah practices oppress women and deprive them of agency.

Contrary to social reality, Begum Rokeya puts men in women's shoes and pushes them into places traditionally reserved for women. This provocative role reversal in the story is intended to hold men accountable for their behaviour and treatment of women in general. In addition to criticizing patriarchal hegemony, Begum Rokeya also criticizes men's senseless behaviour of engaging in unnecessary wars, bad habits like smoking, wasting time, talking a lot but doing less work, and many other activities. She boldly rejects the pseudoscientific claim that women have weaker and smaller brains, and dismisses men's relative physical strength as something valid, drawing interesting metaphors. She also spoke out against girls' early marriage. Begum Rokeya challenges conventional values and traditions to initiate a better society for women, through her satirical presentation of gender role reversal.

2.2 Education

Another important aspect of the Sultana dream is that it emphasizes the need for education to empower women. Rokeya expects women to study science and technology and engage in intellectual activities for the further development of society. For example, there is the story of a college student inventing a device that collects water from clouds. They have also developed a system to supply water wherever and whenever it is needed. In a healthy dose of competition, another university student invented a machine that stores heat from the sun for multiple purposes. The women of Ladyland use scientific discoveries and inventions for the advancement of society. They once used solar technology to protect their land from foreign invaders. The usual mode of transportation is the aircar, which helps avoid traffic accidents and

casualties. Streets are for free movement. The point is that Begum Rokeya dreams of a society where education, science, and technology culminate and where women are an integral part of that process.

2.3 War and colonialism

Sultana's Dream was bold in its anti-war and anti-colonial stance. By denigrating those willing to engage in bloodthirsty wars and take over foreign lands, Rokeya established her anti-war stance and anti-colonial commitment like in: "While the women were engaged in scientific research, the men of this country were busy increasing their military power." Sister Sarah, p. 12.

This story creates a contrast between two areas: science and military power. Ultimately, it is women armed with scientific innovation and engineering who can win the war against aggressor nations and drive men into zenanas in a non-violent way. They use science to improve society, eradicate violence, accidental deaths, and natural disasters, and establish utopias. The bloodless hunt of the invaders and the burning of their arsenal is a prime example of the writer's anti-war proposition. In short, war and colonialism received strong opposition from the author.

2.4 Environmentalism

Environmentalism is a key component of Rokeya's utopian society and is incorporated into *Sultana's Dream* story. All of Ladyland's cities are green, free of chimneys, coal, and other pollutants. The kitchen is in the vegetable garden. Flowering plants and shrubs are used in the construction of attics and gazebos and for decorative purposes. Being environmentally friendly is part of their aesthetic. Solar heat is used instead of firewood for cooking. The whole country

becomes one big garden. In summary, this story demonstrates Begum Rokeya as a progressive environmental thinker.

2.5 Women's Empowerment and Leadership

Women's empowerment and leadership are very important themes in *Sultana's Dream*. Rokeya shows how female leadership can bring peace and stability to a country. "You have neglected the duty you owe to yourselves, and you have lost your natural rights by shutting your eyes to your own interests." Sister Sarah, p. 9. Although much of *Sultana's Dream* blames men for oppressing women, Sister Sarah also alludes to the role women play in subjugating themselves. She accused women of neglecting their rights and giving up their free will, which she also accused Sultana of doing. In Ladyland, on the other hand, women can exercise their rights and powers, free from the power structure and threats of men.

The Queen of Ladyland is an anti-war leader who promotes peace and friendship over colonial and imperial ambitions. A woman is the natural custodian of household chores, so she is better at managing state transactions. This is a very feminine element that transforms Ladyland into a big garden. In short, women's empowerment is critical to overall social and national development.

3. Feminism and Purdah

All of Sultana's hopes and fears were brought to a head by Purdah's reversal when she found herself in Ladyland. Men are confined and women are free to roam. Through this fictional inversion, Begum Rokeya can offer a different vision of what society could be like without the restrictive and gender-biased practices of the Purdah. Without Purdah, women can lead society

into unprecedented realms of progress. Natural disasters are undone by a woman's ability to harness solar energy and create water balloons that artificially create rain on demand. Because flying cars are used, there will be no car or public transport accidents. Military expansion, warfare, and other colonial projects are discontinued. Women can also engage in a variety of other hobbies that men could not pursue while they were in society. Changes will occur in all areas: personal, domestic, technical, and political.

In reversing Purdah, *Ladyland* exposes all the ways women face oppression in patriarchal societies and the flaws that exist in that social structure. It highlights the burden of unpaid domestic work that deprives women of their ability to engage in activities. Industrial machinery has been replaced with sophisticated “sci-fi” elements such as flying cars and solar energy, showing the benevolent potential of science under female dominance. Through women's knowledge and action, *Ladyland* emerges as a feminist utopia to rid society of grievances and create peace, security, and progress.

At the time of writing the story (1908), Begum Rokeya's attitudes towards women's access to education and other rights were considered very radical, especially in British India. Rokeya believed that women's lack of access to education created gender inequality that needed to be addressed. Through *Sultana's Dream*, Rokeya can picture a world where these differences are not only resolved but reversed in favour of women's agency.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can see how the author uses symbolism and imagery to convey deeper meanings and themes. By examining the characters' motivations, actions, and relationships, we gain insight into the author's critique of societal norms and values. The author invites us to think

critically about the story's central message and its implications for our lives. In this way, the story becomes more than just a simple tale; it becomes a reflection of our own experiences and a vehicle for exploring the complexities of the human condition.

General conclusion

This study sheds light on an often-overlooked genre of literature, feminist utopian novels, and highlights the struggles of women to obtain basic rights. By using a feminist perspective, the study identifies key issues related to gender and explores potential solutions to end discrimination against women. The work comprises a tripartite structure that consists of three chapters.

The first chapter is dedicated to an exploration of the theoretical and conceptual framework, wherein key concepts pertinent to the field of feminism, utopianism, feminist utopianism, otherness, and patriarchy are introduced to provide a contextual backdrop of the principal themes and ideas that are central to the study.

In chapter two, the novel is introduced, and a comprehensive contextual framework is provided that encompasses its historical background, a summary of the plot, a glimpse into the author's life, and an exploration of the literary influences that shaped the novel's creation. This contextualization is deemed essential for a comprehensive understanding of the novel from multiple perspectives.

The third chapter delves into an in-depth analysis of *Sultana's Dream* in light of the theoretical framework established in chapter one, deconstructing its plot, themes, characters, and events, and examining how they relate to the theoretical underpinnings of the study. This analytical exercise aids in establishing a connection between the novel and the concepts of feminism and utopia. The study's significance lies in its ability to introduce a different perspective on women and their struggle and help students conduct further research related to this topic in the future.

Through the feminist theory methodology, the study examines how literary works reflect and shape stereotypes and cultural assumptions and explores how they express or undermine patriarchal attitudes. Overall, this study contributes to a greater understanding of feminist utopian literature and its significance in addressing gender-related issues in society.

Works Cited

Primary source

Hussain, Rokeya Sakhawat. *Sultana's Dream and Selections from the Secluded Ones / a Feminist Utopia and Selections from the Secluded Ones*. Feminist Press, 1988.

Secondary sources

“Feminism.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 9 Mar. 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/feminism>.

“Utopia.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/utopia>.

Dickert, Matthias. *The Utopian Concept of the Female in East and West. A Critical Comparison of “Sultana’s Dream” (1905) and “Herland” (1909)*. Comenius University, 2016, *GRIN Verlag*, <https://www.grin.com/document/323697>, Accessed 3 Apr. 2023.

Grami, Amal. “Islamic Feminism: A New Feminist Movement or a Strategy by Women for Acquiring Rights?” *Contemporary Arab Affairs*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2013, pp. 102–13. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48600673>. Accessed 3 Apr. 2023.

Kumar, Radha. “Contemporary Indian Feminism.” *Feminist Review*, no. 33, 1989, pp. 20–29. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1395212>. Accessed 3 Apr. 2023.

Omvedt, Gail. “The Origin of Patriarchy.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 22, no. 44, 1987, pp. WS70–72. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4377665>. Accessed 3 Apr. 2023.

Pfaelzer, Jean. "The Changing of the Avant Garde: The Feminist Utopia (La Transformation de l'avant-Garde: L'utopie Féministe)." *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 15, no. 3, 1988, pp. 282–94. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4239898>. Accessed 3 Apr. 2023.

Vatuk, Sylvia. "Islamic Feminism in India: Indian Muslim Women Activists and the Reform of Muslim Personal Law." *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 42, no. 2/3, 2008, pp. 489–518. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20488028>. Accessed 3 Apr. 2023.

Abstract

This research discusses the concept of a feminist utopia, defined as a society free from the patriarchal subordination of women, where women have equal rights and influence in society. The paper specifically examines the story "Sultana's Dream" by Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain from the perspective of a Muslim feminist utopia. This paper includes a theoretical framework defining key concepts such as feminism, utopia, feminist utopia, otherness, and patriarchy, an introduction to the novel, and an analysis of how the story relates to feminism as a theory.

Keywords

Utopia, Islamic Feminist, Begum Rokeya's, Sultana's Dream.