



A Feminist Reading in Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*

Zaid Tayyeh M. Bakhsh^{1*}, Ahmed Kadhum Jassim^{1**}

¹ Ministry of Education, Iraq

* Correspondence: zaid.82master@gmail.com

** Correspondence: ahmedkadhum5454@gmail.com

Abstract: In his play "She Stoops to Conquer" Goldsmith explores a range of themes, from gender roles to the power of social class. What makes so remarkable is that it has endured for centuries, despite its outdated language and conventions. It is a testament to Goldsmith's skill as a playwright and his ability to write timeless comedies. It is also an exploration of the power dynamics in 18th century British society. The play is structured around the classic comedic form, with the protagonist at the mercy of a series of comic misfortunes. Goldsmith's exploration of gender roles is remarkable. Despite being the female lead, Kate is not the victim of Marlow's misguided advances. She is instead a powerful, independent woman who is capable of outsmarting the male characters. Goldsmith also delves into the concept of marriage, showing that it is not always a desirable arrangement. The play has been subject to many interpretations over the years. It is seen as a reflection of the power dynamics in 18th century British society, as well as a comedy of manners. It is also seen as a feminist play, due to the strong female character at its center. Overall, "She Stoops to Conquer" is a timeless classic that has stood the test of time.

Keywords: gender roles, timeless, misfortunes, remarkable, feminist

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1. Introduction

Almost two centuries have passed since the beginning of feminist literary criticism. This literary critique is predicated on the realization of women's particular and practical actions as well as a long-term evaluation of their own position. Feminist literary criticism so derives from feminism. There have been three waves of feminism. The First Wave, also known as liberal feminism, is the term used to describe the social movement that American and British women engaged in from 1890 to 1920 in order to secure their legal right to vote and other fundamental civic rights. During this period, women had effectively fought for their civic rights, the ability to pursue higher education, and employment opportunities in particular industries. The most significant was that this wave served as a prelude to feminists' later, more profound and nuanced social initiatives.

Meanwhile, second-wave feminism changed divorce and custody rules, raised attention to the problems of marital rape and domestic violence, and established women's shelters and rape-crisis centers. One of the main gathering places and economic drivers of the movement was a bookstore run by feminists, along with credit unions and eateries. The Women's Liberation Movement, commonly referred to as the Second Wave, examined the origins and mechanisms of gender discrimination in ideology, culture, and society while emphasizing the distinctions between men and women. Due to the feminists' worldview, the early feminist literary criticism attempted to find a way to bridge the gap between the political and personal in literature [1].

And third wave may be a women's activist movement that started within the 1990s, unmistakable within the decades earlier to the fourth wave. Within the third wave, the civil-rights progresses of the moment wave, grasped differing qualities and independence in ladies, and looked for to rethink what it implied to be a women's activist. The third wave saw the development of modern women's activist streams and hypotheses, such as intersectionality, sex inspiration, vegan ecofeminism, transfeminism, and postmodern women's liberation.

The modern women's activist development beginnings from *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir "one isn't born, but or maybe gets to be, a lady." Over these a long time, the concept of being break even with male has created into diverse stages and different women's activist schools have come into being: radical women's liberation, magnanimous woman's rights, communist women's liberation, dark woman's rights, post-modern woman's rights and psycho-analytical woman's rights [2]. Agreeing to the schools of philosophies and considerations, woman's rights can be primarily separated into four branches: 1) Magnanimous woman's rights, 2) Radical women's liberation, 3) communist women's liberation, and 4) Marxist woman's rights.

Since of contrasts of verifiable and social legacy, western women's activist scholarly feedback basically comprises of American school, British school and French school. These schools were not completely disconnected, instep they were communicated, influenced and advanced each other. No matter what kind of schools, they all made incredible commitment to the advancement and development of women's activist scholarly feedback. Agreeing to Lisa Tuttle, the ultimate objective of women's activist feedback is "to create and reveal a female convention of composing, to analyze women scholars and their works from a female point of view, to rediscover ancient writings, to translate imagery of women's writing so that it'll not be misplaced or overlooked by the male point of view, to stand up to sexism in writing and to extend mindfulness of the sexual legislative issues of dialect and fashion" [1].

There are numerous classic and far-reaching women's activist works made by those or maybe shrewd, genuine and vital women's activists. Such as *The Second Sex* (Simone de Beauvoir), *Sexual Legislative Issues* (Kate Millet), *Considering Around Ladies* (Mary Ellman), *The Modern Women's activist Feedback: Expositions on Ladies, Writing and Hypothesis* (Elaine Showalter) and other women's activist classics made by other women's activist pioneers all made extraordinary commitment to the advancement and development of women's activist scholarly feedback. Concerning the basic hypothesis of women's liberation, there are a few critical key terms: *the Patriarchy*, *the Other*, and *the Second Sex* will be talked about in points of interest underneath.

1.1. Basic introduction to the Patriarchy

Patriarchy is one of the key terms in women's activist scholarly feedback [3]. Women's activists consider that it could be a social framework in which men are the central specialist figures who are the central to social organization, control of property, involve driving parts of ethical specialist, political authority and where male family individuals hold specialist over ladies and children in household. Generally, patriarchy has made itself within the political, social, financial and lawful organization of an arrangement of diverse societies. It moreover alludes the educate of male rule and female subordination. The patriarchal social orders are moreover patrilineal which suggests that title and property can as it were be acquired by the male heredity. Patriarchy too alludes to the part of guys within the society in which men take the chief duty over the community welfare by and expansive.

The word "patriarch" inferred from two Greek words: *patria*, and *-arch* which suggests family and run the show separately. "Traditionally, patriarchy allowed the father about add up to proprietorship over spouse or spouses and children" "classically, as head of the family the father is both beggetter and proprietor in a framework in which

family relationship is property" [4]. In a word, guys are the outright specialist while females are subordinate and second rate to guys wherever within the family and society. Agreeing to Eisenstein, Patriarchy belief system is as a pound at "destroy woman's awareness around her potential control, which infers from the need of society to replicate itself [5]. The patriarchal philosophy moreover can be called masculinist or androcentric which is winning in most awesome classical scholarly compositions that were primarily made by male for male up to presently. In these works, male scholars as a rule portray female characters, ignoring female with their possess characteristics but utilizing the male values and ways of considering, feeling and activity. Consequently, the female perusers continuously act as an outsider or pariah and are incapable to get it and acknowledged the heroes who were depicted by the male essayist and indeed female may create anti-emotions against the works [4].

All in all, patriarchal thoughts can be caught on as male-dominated, male preeminent over female and androcentric within the society. It is known to us all, within the patriarchy society, men are the completely dominators in each social perspective. Since the rise of the woman's rights, women's activists have done their best to lead all ladies to battle against the male-dominators. In fact, in show disdain toward of the truth that they have got extraordinary triumph, the root of the patriarchy hasn't been emptied. Females still persevere inside the male-dominated society. More precisely, it suggests the female subordination and female average quality. Moreover, patriarchy has as of presently shaped by both female and male, for which males are the rulers though females are the ruled. By and large, patriarchy thought winning in all social zones and rejecting patriarchy is the key step to the flexibility of the female.

1.2. Basic introduction to the Other

The other is another critical key term in women's activist scholarly feedback. It alludes to those distanced human being who hasn't or has misplaced the self-awareness, is beneath control of other individuals or environment, acts as a protest position and loses subject identities. It could be a convention that men choose themselves to be the subject, perform the male mastery in all social viewpoints and characterizes human creatures by their will. No wonder that female respects the androgynous (Androgyny is the ownership of both manly and female characteristics) as the positive or standard treats ladylike as the insignificant or negative. Hence, since of being need of activity and their acquired weakness—passivity, women are the other of man within the patriarchy society relentless.

In 1949, De Beauvoir distributed *The Second Sex* which respected as the "Scriptures of Women's Rights" and classic of women's activist hypothesis. In this book, Simone de Beauvoir utilized the existentialism as a term to analyze and consider female issues. In the meantime, she investigated Freudian, Marxist, Hegelian and other classical basic hypotheses to uncover the acquired qualities of female to be the other. Beauvoir too intensely pointed out that the Western society was completely male-dominated, and female in this society are "the second sex", the "other" of men: "She is characterized and separated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the accidental, the inessential as contradicted to the basic. He is the subject!! Absolute—she is the Other" [2].

Kate Millet, a popular women's activist extremist, had moreover pronounced the comparative sense of the other in her classic work—*Sexual Legislative issues*. She reported "patriarchy has as of now been built up and the male has as of now set themselves as the human frame, the subject and referent to which is the female is 'other' or alien" [4].

1.3. Basic introduction to the Second Sex

"The Second Sex" as a key term beginning from the celebrated work *The Second Sex* distributed in French in 1949 by Simone de Beauvoir. This term is the substitution of the

“female” or “woman”. She pointed out that ladies continuously characterize themselves “I am a woman” whereas men never bother but position them as the agent of human creatures, which demonstrates that “men” and “women” are unquestionably not the symmetrical terms. In other words, since of the second-rate nature of ladies, equities between genders will be an illusion until the end of time [6,7].

Concerning around the dialog of sexual orientation contrasts, precisely as Beauvoir had once said “lady is fair a uterus”. That's to say, female's destiny was chosen on this life structures and when confronting this Nature Arrange, all the endeavors which endeavor to challenge the female' unjustifiable treatment of sexual orientation separation dissolve into lean discuss. Moreover, talking almost talk, female talk has been stifled by male's administering dialect on a very basic level. In case Michel Foucault' s so called “truth” [8] which depends on who controls the propositional utterance is satisfactory, there's reason to believe men's control, control may be a trap to initiate ladies drop into men' s “truth”. In this way, female scholars ought to stand up to men's control of talk but withdraw into a harbor for female talk latently and contrarily [2,8,9].

2. Method

Discourse analysis approach was chosen in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the feminist reading in Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*. The data presented in this study were obtained via review of relevant literature, such as studies of feminism.

Data analysis results were then interpreted in the following section.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Gender Roles in *She Stoops to Conquer*

Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* addresses the common subject of sex parts in spite of the fact that in to some degree distinctive ways; particularly, the play is certainly patriarchal, meaning male-dominated, however there are signs of switched sex parts, whereas the content is not as it were patriarchal but moreover sexist.

Conventional sex parts are most effectively identifiable in scenes concerning the romance of Mr. Hastings and Miss Neville, and Mr. Marlow and Miss Hardcastle. In any case, typically, the two individuals sustaining the patriarchal custom are the fathers, Mr. Hardcastle and Sir Charles Marlow, which is obvious since their talk shows that organized relational unions were normal. For case, Mr. Hardcastle illuminates his girl that, “I anticipate the youthful noble man I have chosen to be your spouse from town this exceptionally day” [10]. Whereas he does guarantee her to “Depend on it, child, I'll never control your choice,” he quickly endeavors to blame her by including that Mr. Marlow is the child of a great companion [10]. Additionally, Sir Charles has certain conjugal desires of his child, in spite of the fact that his are centered more on Mr. Marlow's character than on the off chance that he will wed his friend's girl. For illustration, after Miss Hardcastle portrays the cherish and energy her suitor has for her change sense of self he confesses, “. . . On the off chance that I discover [my child to] what you portray, all my joy in him must have an end” [10]. That Sir Charles is so concerned around the ways his child ought to carry on with ladies, since he considers it is the as it were way for him to wed a “good and high-minded girl” that, at to begin with, he overlooks almost Miss Hardcastle [10].

In any case, two scenes afterward, he restlessly inquires,

“What a circumstance am I in? In the event that what you say shows up, I should at that point discover a blameworthy child. In case what he says be genuine, I might at that point lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.” [10]

In other words, indeed in spite of the fact that Sir Charles was briefly more concerned approximately his son's conduct, his contemplations before long return to the organized marriage. His word choice, especially lose and wished, demonstrates that he was so sure within the course of action that he had as of now started to think of Kate as

a girl; subsequently, on the off chance that she did not ended up it, she would be misplaced and his wish would be unfulfilled. Of the four more youthful characters, Miss Kate Hardcastle is the one who challenges the conventional sexual orientation standards the foremost, which is identifiable in her unexpected intelligent with Sir Charles in two ways. To begin with, whereas he appreciates his son's "modest and submissive" conversational aptitudes, Kate is decided to "teach him a small confidence," and afterward succeeds by inquiring Mr. Marlow, "Do you think I seem ever capture at the sure address of a secure admirer?" [10]. In other words, rather than complying with Sir Charles' desires of his child, she intentionally seeks after her unique objective of ingrains certainty in her suitor, which illustrates her dismissal of patriarchal English society. Moment, Mr. Marlow's recently discovered certainty comes from Kate's purposefulness choice to "preserve the character in which I stooped to conquer" [10]. That is when she chooses once more to utilize her modify self-image that she misleadingly made in arrange to win Mr. Marlow's affections, it appears that she takes on the self-assured, regularly male part, whereas he shyly slips into the tame, ordinarily female part [6,11, 12,13].

4. Conclusion

All in all, a genuine of conception around ladies: delicacy, defenseless, affectability, resilience and considerateness, etc. are the items of society and culture, are shaped by male based on their needs but not the comes about of female's particular physical structure. As a result, Simone De Beauvoir proposed to utilize "the second sex" this term to substitute for the term "female". She accepted that this substitution may likely debilitate different partiality and segregation which are constrained on ladies by conventional belief system and at last accomplish the objective of sex correspondence.

On the other hand, Goldsmith targets conventional sex parts in *She Stoops to Conquer*, looking at modern male-female intelligent whereas switching the era's standards. Within the relationship between Hastings and Constance, perusers see a conventional design of sexual orientation relations and romance. In any case, in Kate's interest of Marlow, the standards are turned on their head. Goldsmith's play too investigates the objectification and sexual badgering of ladies, particularly ladies of the working lesson. In spite of the fact that displayed in a comical way, Marlow's treatment of working-class ladies as objects is demonstrative of the threats and troubles those ladies confronted. Sexual viciousness was a common issue of the day, with increasingly ladies entering residential benefit, frequently beneath the work of ruthless men and their families.

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