



## Psychological Violence Reinforcing Patriarchal Power Structure in Uzma Aslam Khan's *Trespassing*: Narratological Analysis of Temporality in Novel

Afshan Abbas <sup>1</sup>

Dr. Munazza Yaqoob <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer, Ph. D Scholar, IIU, Islamabad

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, IIU, Islamabad

### Abstract

The present study explores through Genette's model of narratology, the theme of psychological violence as the outcome of housewifization and how it works in multiple ways to reinforce patriarchal power structures in Uzma Aslam Khan's novel '*Trespassing*'. The purpose of the research is to identify the various factors responsible for propagating the evil of psychological violence and suggest ways in which this violence can be curbed. The methodology selected for this research is qualitative. Through qualitative research, the researcher has attempted to analyze the narrative structure of the novel and explore how psychological violence inhibits women's psychological and social growth? Further analysis of the novel attempts to extend some interpretations of the novel's analepsis and prolepsis and precisely determine the duration through the accelerated techniques.

**Keywords:** Genette's model of narratology, psychological violence, housewifization, Locus of control

### Introduction

Even though there is a substantial literature on the subject of domestic violence, it has remained under-researched and unexplored in the context of South Asian women's psychological violence as depicted in Pakistani fiction. This study aims to bridge the gap with the narratological analysis of Khan's novel '*Trespassing*' from the perspective of psychological violence as the outcome of housewifization. According to *Humanity Divided: Confronting Inequality in Developing Countries* (2015), "gender is sophisticated social stratification regardless of one's socioeconomic class, it's differences systematically vary across cultures and over time". Gender disparities in most communities lead to males being promoted to higher socioeconomic and political positions than females. Promoting gender equality has long been a top priority for nearly all international organizations and national initiatives. Gender Gap Index (2020) ranked Pakistan second from last in a list of 151 nations in terms of the prevalence of gender-based inequalities. Pakistan's ranking on the list reflects the country's deplorable living circumstances for women, which shows domestic violence as a result of gender inequality. Marxist feminist philosophers emphasize that the distinction between men and women is social rather than biological. Men and women are divided into masculine and feminine genders when



they are assigned various societal roles. According to Hans Bertens (2013) in *Literary Theory*, basic gender roles are culturally assigned to the countless generations of women. The same can be said for masculinity, which is associated with strength, logic, and self-reliance (p. 98). Women are supposed to be financially meek and subordinate to men because men work outside the home and achieve economic milestones. Patriarchal mindsets do not provide women with financial independence. According to Griffin and Koss (2002), domestic violence is recognized as a global societal issue and one of the top causes of injury among women. According to a common misperception in Pakistani society, women are considered a burden in many regions since they are economically and emotionally dependent on men, whether they are mothers, wives, or sisters (p. 21). In this context, female writers in Anglophone Pakistani fiction have made a significant contribution. They have conducted themselves as enlightened and conscious females. Early Anglophone fiction depicted women as either cogs in the patriarchal system or targets of patriarchal tyranny in various forms, especially in the works of Bapsi Sidhwa, Qaisra Sheraz, Monica Ali, Sara Sulehri, Faryal Gohar and Tehmina Durrani. Nonetheless, the shift in 21<sup>st</sup> century became visible when female characters/protagonists questioned the nature of patriarchal and coercive customs and traditions. In the case of living in Pakistan or not, their fiction or compositions share a similar political, ideological and social point of views. With all these growing consciousness and female emancipation, Pakistani writers, regardless of their gender seem to recondition gender representational tropes. This transition can be traced through the fiction of Mohsin Hamid, Kamila Shamsie, Muhammad Hanif and Uzma Aslam Khan. The present study focuses on Khan's novel *Trespassing* (2003) as a startlingly feminine voice in the context of Pakistani fiction. Female character of 'Anu' a silent wife in Khan's novel *Trespassing* (2003) remains the center of discussion in the selected narrative as a true example of 'housewifization' and victim of psychological violence. Maria Mies (1998) defines Housewifization as a societal process in which women are socially labelled as housewives who rely on their husbands' income for survival. Regardless of their real contribution to their family's livelihood, Women's social definition as housewives is contrary to men's social definition as breadwinners (180). This study argues that psychological violence is the outcome of housewifization and can be analyzed in terms of "locus of control". Locus of control is the concept of learned helplessness (Seligman 1975). Abused women often present with the inability to make decisions, inability to fight back, and preoccupied with very negative feelings



about themselves. “Trespassing” does not follow the temporality in a chronological order. Therefore, applying Genette's theory is appropriate for a detailed analysis of its narrative structure. This research provides a valuable opportunity to analyze the psychological violence identified through the categories of time in the narrative structure of *Trespassing*.

### Review of the Related Literature

The present study focuses on the analysis of locus of control as part of psychological violence in the Khan's novel ‘Trespassing’ in terms of Genette's theory of narratology and Maria Mies's concept of ‘housewifisation’. Feminist Pakistani writers highlight and critique how patriarchal ideology operates in the male-centered texts by depicting multiple realities and stereotypical ideas of gender. Men's power to dominate within a family can be sanctified, as patriarchy is perpetuated and reproduced through the socialization of patriarchal norms and beliefs transferred from generation to generation (Dobash and Dobash, 1979). Male violence towards women is not only sustained, but also validated within such households (Dasgupta, 2000, Sagot, 2005). Hunnicutt (1992) agrees with Dobash and Dobash (1979) that patriarchy is perpetuated both ideologically and structurally: patriarchal ideas are exhibited and reinforced by social structures and institutions, perpetuating gender inequities throughout society. According to Allan Johnson (1997), a culture is patriarchal if it is male-dominated (men hold positions of authority), male-identified (values about what is good/preferred are linked to masculine standards) and male-centered (attention is focused on men and their actions). According to feminist thinkers, domestic violence is associated with patriarchy and is directly linked to the historical development of the isolated nuclear family in a capitalist society. Gender role has to do with the segregation of public and private spheres, the establishment of suitable gender roles are social which reinforce the legal and moral obligations of wives to their husbands (Bograd 1988).

More than a decade ago, Goldner (1998) stated:

The feminist perspective to abuse and trauma adds a basic, ethical, and political framework to the debate of domestic violence. On these bigger concerns, there must be no compromises or ambiguity, especially when it comes to safety. However, now the moral bottom line has been established, namely a zero tolerance for violence and a focus to safety, accountability, and equity above all else, there should be room for a variety of opinions and approaches to this serious and complex issue. (p. 267)



Women traditionally play the role of wife in the home, assisting and serving their husband as the head of the household, and assimilating with the role of the mother nurtures and rears children. As a result, the gender role of women is socially and culturally built and rooted in patriarchal expectations. Women in Pakistani society are taught to downplay the violence they face from men, which has an impact on women's views of the brutality of domestic violence they have witnessed. Women are trapped in the middle of dominating mainstream conceptions of acceptable behaviour and their own personal experience. Male domination, often known as patriarchy, has its roots not only in governmental policy, but also in men's power over women's bodies (Millet, 1970). The domestic labour discussion, which took place between 1973 and 1979, did not cover other types of non-wage work that capital uses in its accumulation process. This includes all work done by subsistence farmers and marginalized individuals, the majority of whom are women, in developing countries. In her study *Production Relations without wage Labor and Labor Division*, Claudia v. Werlhof (1983) emphasized two non-wage labour production relations in the colonies, namely housework and subsistence work. Maria Mies' concept of 'housewifisation' was introduced in her book *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a Global Scale* (1986). *Patriarchy and Accumulation* expands and deepens arguments about domestic labour first made by Maria Mies in her classic case study *The Lace Makers of Narsapur* (1982).

Violence, according to Walby (1990), is a crucial and relatively autonomous pillar of gender hierarchies. Individuals and families are the focus of analysis in the literature on domestic violence. In their study of the 1990s literature, Johnson and Ferraro (2000) focused on work that dealt with domestic abuse on an individual and family level. The American Medical Association defines domestic violence as a pattern of physical, sexual, and/or psychological abuse by someone with whom the victim had a close connection. Intimidation, threats of physical harm to oneself or a spouse, property destruction, and forced isolation from family, job, and other activities are all examples of psychological abuse. Second-wave black feminists coined the term "psychological abuse" to describe the complex ways in which psychological behaviours related to sexuality, ethnicity, gender, class, race, disability, and other factors intersect and experience oppression and power based on their social status. The studies on psychological violence highlights, income inequality and patriarchal division of labour as perpetuating factors for victimization and violence against women (McCloskey,2013). 35



Psychological violence can be studied in terms of locus of control. In brain research, the locus of control is viewed as a critical part of a character. The idea was first evolved during the 1950s by Julian Rotter in his book *Locus of Control: Antecedents, Consequences and Interventions*. According to psychologists, individuals who accept they have authority over what happens are considered to have an inside locus control. Repeated acts of violence reduce a woman's motivation to respond by decreasing her self-esteem; she becomes passive, and she abandons her attempt to leave a battering relationship.' The locus of control alludes to an individual's comprehension of the fundamental essential reasons of events in their day-to-day existence. Individuals accept that their lives are in their grasp or in the possession of outer forces, to put it another way (like destiny, God, or incredible others). The locus of control in psychologically abused women reinforces their sense of powerlessness and may lead them to view themselves as "stuck" in a relationship, which can be viewed from the lens of narratology. Genette's theory enables the reader to dissect the fiction and thoroughly examine its structure and thus, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the text. Genette provides a range of ideas concerning narrative components that can be applied to any literary text. These ideas facilitate the understanding of the actions and events of the narrative as it unfolds the understanding of the narrative of text as well as the consequences of what is happening. Additionally, Genette's focus on story, narrative and narration encompasses all the general elements of a story: plot, setting, character, theme, and conflict. Khan's "Trespassing" combines these structural elements in a precise manner, making the fiction receptive to Genette's narratological analysis of time. Khan's novel 'Trespassing' unfolds in a non-linear order, make it suitable for the study of narrative time, or more specifically, analepsis (flashback) and prolepsis (flashforward). Prince (2012) believes' Narrative theory highlights temporality and human beings as temporal beings, performs something that shows the structure of narrative. 'Narrative theory's significance for our comprehension is crucial. Narrative theory, according to Bal (1991), is the study of narrative texts. According to Genette (1983) "narrative statement is a kind of oral or written discourse that analyze the event or a series of events in the narrative" (p. 25).

In other words, a narrative consists of a story made up of a plot, which involves characters, events, action, and dialogue. Genette established three levels of narrative, namely stories, text, and narration. These three levels relate to each other, represented by time, mood, and voice. The present study deals with temporality to explore the psychological violence in 35



the selected fiction. In the arena of domestic violence, psychological abuse tends to be given comparatively less attention than physical abuse. One major reason for this belittling of psychological abuse is that amongst mental and legal professionals there is a lack of consensus on what would be the appropriate definition for this abuse. Also, there tends to be a general feeling in the masses that physical abuse has greater psychological consequences as compared to psychological abuse. However, statistics indicate that psychological abuse had a much more adverse impact on women as compared to physical abuse. Psychological abuse is almost always followed by physical one, so necessary steps need to be taken for both its prevention and treatment (O' Leary and Daniel, p. 21). 'The general views of the feminism movement, which suggest that males have the locus of authority and so are the most common perpetrators of violence. The woman's identity is her body, but the man is a well-known qualified human who deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. The present study intends to explore how Genette's model of narratology helps to explore the psychological violence in Khan's novel 'Trespassing' and how the model connects the concept of locus of control with housewifization?

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research focuses on the psychological violence in terms of the theory of 'Housewifization' by Maria Mies (1986). The concept of 'housewifization' given by Maria Mies in her book *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale* (1986) focuses on the patriarchal-capitalist sexual division of labour, whereby women's household labour is defined as non-productive and hence non remunerated. It also investigates the 'Locus of control' as part of psychological violence. Cowan and Mills in 2004 in their book, "personal inadequacy and intimacy predictors of men's hostility toward women" claim that the 'locus of control' is the most potent attitudinal predictor which defines and prompts the violence of men towards women. Genette's narratological analysis is combined with housewifization to explore the context of the psychological violence as the outcome of the asymmetric, division of labour between men and women. The present study investigates how women are vulnerable at their own houses, working like labourers, Genette develops four analytical categories mood, instance, level and time, each with its subcategories. Genette (1980) claims that time has the unique ability to structure a novel, it allows the reader to know from which the main point a story is being told. The present study applies the analytical categories of mood and time as an





analytical tool for getting a deep understanding of the intricate narratological design of the novel *Trespassing*.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

Uzma Aslam Khan is a Pakistani diaspora writer who converges on ever-evolving institutional practices in the Pakistani society. One such prominent issue is family institution in Khan's *Trespassing* (2003), on which the present study is based. This research focuses on women's representation in Khan's novel '*Trespassing*' with a feministic approach, it aims to breach the stigma regarding women's oppression in Pakistan. Feminism in the novel concentrates on the description of various ways in which female characters are oppressed in a patriarchal society, as the novel's goal is to inform the reader into action. Since the female body is supposed to be kept veiled and silent, exposing violence and injustice through the female body reinforces the message of psychological violence. The present study also uses Genette's narrative approaches to comprehend the narrative of '*Trespassing*.' All narratives, according to Genette, must be diegesis (telling). By making the narrative real, they will never be able to achieve the illusion of Mimesis (showing). Genette comprises four analytical categories, each with its own subcategories: mood, instance, level, and time. The first category, Mood, is defined by Genette as the distance between the narrator and the narrated text. The narrator can choose from four different subcategories of mood. To achieve the desired effect, the author may shuffle among them at times. Uzma Aslam Khan in her novel '*Trespassing*' has employed the strategies of free direct and narratized speech to allow the characters to narrate their experiences i.e.

"I'll be back soon," Dia told her driver. "You needn't to follow me" (Part 1).

"He's gone mad," she whispered, clutching Dia. "I shouldn't have told him." (Part 1)

The narrator's dominance in the second dimension of mood, function, is evident in the ideological predictions in '*Trespassing*'. The imperative questions provide the testimonial for the patriarchal supremacy of male characters on female characters:

"That is all you ever have to say: Is it cold? Do you want more? Are you well? Is it good enough? Woman, why can't you ever make conversation?" (Part 2)

In the narrative of *Trespassing* the writer's perception is heterodiegetic because each character tells everything through their actions and the writer does not appear in the story. She is authorial as well because she narrates the novel from the points of view of the characters based on their material and mental processes. Second, there's the issue of narrative time. When does the story's narration commence with a reference to it? A writer may narrate events from



the past, or he or she may predict or dream about the future. The narrative and the event can be narrated at the same time, or a writer can interpolate any two of them.

In Khan's *Trespassing* the major events have taken place in a form of subsequent narration indicating chronological order of novel. Focalization, the narrative perspective through which we readers perceive, is the third sub-category of Instance. The author used zero focalization in the present research. Genette's final category is narrative time. It assists in the analysis of the time relationship between the narration and the storyline. Writers have a variety of options when it comes to achieving specific outcomes. *Trespassing* employs various strategies to transpose the speech of the characters. Admitting time as a broad concept. Uzma Aslam Khan does not convey her characters' inner lives and motivations in a traditional linear manner. Instead, she breaks, alters, and manipulates time, extending out the plot over years. Through a succession of analepsis, the readers learn about the character's life (flashbacks). For example, the narration starts with the story of Shafqat and Dia's mother in 1960. The narrative of *Trespassing* has a lovely blend of analepsis, in that within one broad analepsis, another analepsis may be located, and within the second, a third instance can be found; therefore, a layer of analepsis is generated. Within those analepsis, however, some prolepsis (flashback) occurs. The kind of narrative speed found in the selected fiction is scene based on the dialogues of the characters.

### **Housewifization as a Social Structure**

Economy, in this contemporary age, plays a significant role in determining the worth of individuals. Men with powerful financial stature, lead privileged lives whilst women are considered worthless. This study then seeks to address this situation and shows how the deprivation of property and money relegates the status of women in the world. Household labors assigned to women as obligatory compulsions, are unpaid tasks whereby women toil from dawn to dusk, assuming the role of domestic slaves. Women remain deprived of their basic rights whereas men attain more privileged position in the family unit primarily owing to their control on system and sources of production. This allows married men the liberty to abuse women physically and psychologically. On the other hand, domestic chores have no significance and remain unpaid labor, assigned to women, who are also kept out of property ownership. A woman is supposed to suppress her feelings, compromise her viewpoints, and give up her own ambitions, because they are financially dependent on their husbands. The character of 'Anu' in Khan's novel '*Trespassing*' is portrayed as passive character, an unpaid





labourer, dependent and therefore, submissive, and obedient. She is overburdened with domestic unpaid and unappreciated household chores. Anu is a helpless character, and her such submissive attitude has certain reasons. The patriarchal roles of men and women define the social upbringing of both genders in distinct ways. Not only are men active, productive, and responsible, but they are also aggressive. Gender-based social roles, lifestyles, distribution of labour, and stereotypical mind sets are all influenced by patriarchal frameworks. Society and culture have been telling us that 'women need men' for the completion of women's identity and to achieve economic stability but even after getting married they must suffer from psychological violence from their husbands because they are economically dependent subjects to them as shown in the character of 'Anu'.

### **Psychological Violence and Locus of Control**

The portrayal of the female character 'Anu' is very significant and a reflection of the potent controlling effect of patriarchal power structures in the lives of women. The novel 'Trespassing' reflects how threatening, and intimidating is the influence of her husband's psychological violence on her. Her very nature is crushed, her spirit is killed and simultaneously she is ordered to stay silence. Any expression of her pain is obliterated, and she is expected to bear it all alone, having no confidant except God. It is important to note how men have always assumed the center of power throughout the lives of women and by doing so have altered and decided the course of life of the woman as her life partner, compels her to stay at home and work like a mule, taking care of her kids and household work. Therefore, it can be observed that even though Anu was the victim of the psychological violence, however she is silent and helpless. The male locus of control tended to assume authority and strip off her inherent right to live her own life. Not only is Anu's life affected but her son also suffered from these abuses by his father. As depicted in the novel 'Trespassing' Daanish, in distress chewed apple too loudly. Anu's husband is depicting the male locus of control which has dominated women's lives since eternity. Psychological violence is evident in the conversations between Anu and her husband in the novel. It is specifically stated how women are treated at their homes. It is often the feminine gender that suffers from psychological violence, as the result of men's unpleasant and domineering behavior. A woman is supposed to hide her feelings, compromise her viewpoints, and give up her own ambitions. Lack of self-esteem, lack of confidence, anxiety, and inability to function are psychological implications of this dependency and conflict, as seen in the quiet wife 'Anu.' In the novel *Trespassing*, there is also an emphasis



on being feminine, working in feminine jobs and raise children. The doctor's inflated sense of self Importance and violent demeanor toward his wife is quite normal and acceptable by society. A man can vent his frustrations on his wife without fear of retaliation from other family member in marital conflict. Moreover, as in the matter of Anu the study underscored that it is a challenge for a married woman to return to her family because doing so would jeopardize her parents' honor. The analysis of Anu's character revealed that being female meant caretaking, servitude, and sacrificing one's own wants, but men's violent behavior in the household is considered as acceptable by society. Men is portrayed as having the ability to make decisions not only for themselves but also for their wives. It is also acceptable for a man as depicted in the character of Anu's husband to use physical or psychological violence when a woman fails to behave according to gender norms. Ideologically loaded words are significant in the novel to depict women physical and psychological violence i.e. "women being killed", "woman's reputation." slammed", "cold" "Women as a product" "You've no idea how hostile society gets if you/woman challenge it". The repetition of "product" in the novel 'Trespassing' for women is derogatory to women because goods are often used and discarded, not humans. The writer uses the character of Anu in *Trespassing* as the instrument to illustrate the women dependency.

### Conclusion

From the textual analysis, the researcher deduced the following findings which also answered the study's research questions. The findings of the study are stated below:

- Psychological violence strips women off their sense of security, safety, identity, worth, integrity and self-respect. They lose faith in themselves and their abilities as a person. It is evident through the character of "Anu" who kept trudging on through all the oppression inflicted upon her because repeated instances of violence had muted her mind and made her feel that perhaps she deserved this treatment and perhaps this is how it is supposed to be. Psychological violence which is also the outcome of Anu's economic dependency on her husband affects the individual's ability to perform in all these domains and thus breaks her, while simultaneously reinforcing patriarchal power structures.
- Gender differences are enhanced owing to differential socialization, since not only are men and women brought up differently, but they are also taught that different behaviors and attitudes are expected from them. Keeping in line with this the treatments which they receive at the hands



of each other also vary from each other. These gender differences mostly lead to patriarchal terrorism where men are the perpetrators of violence and women are the victims of violence. This is mainly because, women are submissive and financially dependent on their husbands. Men are taught to be controlling and authoritative. They are taught to abuse women who are free labourers for them.

- It was concluded from the study that a reader can have a clearer grasp of the complicated design of the novel 'Trespassing' by using Genette's narratological schemata. The analysis of the temporal categories of novel showed the locus of control of male characters which resulted into psychological violence. The author mocks the existing connection, claiming that the feminine gender should not be handled in such a cruel and barbaric manner. She advocated for a rethinking of the existing male-female relationship.



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