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# GENDER REPRESENTATION IN MONI MOSHIN'S NOVEL *DUTY FREE*: A FEMININE PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDY

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**Abstract**

*This study explores Moni Mohsin's novel Duty Free (2011) by employing Psychoanalytic feminism as a theoretical framework. Psychoanalysis explains how gender identity or the role is constructed out of societal, cultural and family influences. This research aims at critically assessing the portrayal of gender roles and the journey of the central female character (unnamed narrator) in depicting internal and external determinants in self-construction by utilizing the framework of psychoanalytic feminism theory, whereby it has assess the implications of the norms of a society on women's lives, the implications of consumerism on their lives, and how the influences of parents on them play in building their identities. This study uses a qualitative method and textual analysis to look at the narrative and character depiction in Duty Free. Thus, the female characters in Duty Free are, in reality, highly prone to patriarchal norms and social expectations that make them appear to be more conventional but, simultaneously, struggle to find their own freedom. This study reflects how the heroine is produced by her society, though all of her deeds are performed under the lines of a conflict between the conformity with rules and subversive practices. Thus, societal rules, as well as those established by families, which shape the femininity outline in the context of external factors, show how pressure for conformity clashes with one's desire to be approved of and secured. Thus, the criticism of social conventions about femininity suggests an even greater critique - about how those traditional, 'conservative' gender conceptions are perpetuated.*

**Keywords**: Psychoanalytic feminism, Gender representation, *Duty Free*, Nancy Chodorow,

## INTRODUCTION

In *Duty Free* we encounter characters whose behaviors echo the archetype of the conventional woman prevalent during Jane Austen's era. Through the narrative, we glean valuable insights into the intricate dynamics of femininity and the ways in which women navigate their traditional societal roles. Drawing inspiration from the groundbreaking theories of Chodorow, this study steps into the realm of psychoanalytic feminism. Specifically, we scrutinize the protagonist depicted by Mohsin, often hailed as a modern- day counterpart to Jane Austen, in Unveiling the Feminine Psyche: Analyzing Protagonist Actions that Align with Traditional Gender Representation in Mohsin's *Duty Free*. The protagonist seemingly embodies traits of materialism, illiteracy, and self-centeredness, juxtaposed intriguingly against her husband. Our objective in undertaking this research is to elucidate the complexities inherent in the portrayal of gender roles and individual agency within the context of *Duty Free*.

Mohsin's *Duty Free*, interpreted psychoanalytically with regard to Nancy Chodorow, reveals complexities about identity growth in gender and about a desire for agency as set against conformity within a wider society. Materialism as well as the character of relationships and perception, a product of the deeper penetration by maternal socialization as well as patriarchal ideology, is discussed as such because it furthers this work toward understanding why traditionally placed women's imagery often subsists within current fictions, both undermining as it reinforces traditional images. Through these dynamics, the study calls on readers and scholars to ask whether this modern literature indeed represents a more developed understanding of gender or rather recycles outdated archetypes with a guise of modernity. Finally, the portrayal of the protagonist is a mirror used to criticize the continued

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battles of women in achieving balance between societal expectations and individual desires.

**Research Objectives**

1. To analyze the representation of gender roles in shaping and identities in Mohsin's novel *Duty Free*.
2. To examine how familial and social structures influence the development of gender identity and interpersonal relations in the novel.
3. To navigate the ways in which cultural norms, expectations, and traditions shape the construction of femininity and masculinity in the novel.

**Research Questions**

1. How do gender roles influence the shaping of identities in Mohsin's novel *Duty Free*?
2. How do familial and social structures impact the development of gender identity and interpersonal relations in the novel?
3. In what ways do cultural norms expectations, and traditions influence the construction of femininity and masculinity in the novel?

**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Rich makes a critical qualification between organic generation and the social organization of parenthood. She contends that while birthing and nursing are normal cycles, parenthood as an establishment is formed by social, customary, and power elements. This qualification takes into account the chance of progress, not at all like Chodorow's methodology, which conflates nature and culture and proposes that parenthood is an inescapable outcome of ladies' organic jobs. Rich criticizes the patriarchal institution of motherhood, highlighting the struggle between women's potential for autonomy and the institutional control that limits it. Her analysis provides a basis for criticizing the institution and understanding women's struggles for autonomy. Rich's personal experiences and those of other women illustrate the conflict between fulfilling the good mother role and maintaining personal autonomy (Westkott, 1978).

Rich's life, where she and her children spent a late spring without the limitations of male centric standards, encountering a freeing and independent approach to everyday life. This model highlights the potential for new friendly relations liberated from male centric control. Adrienne Rich and Chodorow on the mother-little girl relationship in a man centric setting. Rich stresses the impact of the dad in molding this relationship and thecommon compliance of mother and little girl to male centric guidelines. Rich contends that the recognizable proof among mother and girl occurs through shortcoming because of an absence of influence and decision, not simply mental designs. She recognizes the organic parts of generation and the social foundation of parenthood, which is molded by social and power elements (Westkott, 1978).

Rich's examination offers a dream of independence and opportunity, featuring the chance of progress and censuring the man centric organization of parenthood. She gives individual instances of breaking liberated from male centric standards, which exhibit an option in contrast to customary parenthood and the potential for ladies to declare their independence. Although Chodorow's analysis is deep and thorough, it is criticized for being deterministic and universal, with little room for change. Be that as it may, her new work shows a shift towards considering social and relevant impacts, which is viewed as a positive turn of events. The text concludes by emphasizing the complexity and contradictions in the mother-daughter relationship within patriarchy. It calls for a deeper understanding of how patriarchal structures influence these relationships and affect women's lives, suggesting that both the acceptance and rejection of traditional motherhood roles need to be critically examined to tell the full story of mothers and daughters in patriarchy (Westkott, 1978).

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Adult men's and women's patriarchal and phallic fantasies, which feminist psychoanalysis typically addresses through theories based on infancy, requires understanding adolescence. By looking at the fantasies of preteen and teenage high school students, Janet Sayer wants to show that these fantasies are relevant to adolescence, which will broaden the application of the psychoanalytic theories that are already in place (Sayers, 2000).

In 1974 book *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, Juliet Mitchell highlights how societies are male-centered due to the patriarchal exchange of women (Mitchell, 1974). She discusses Freud's theory of the Oedipus and castration complexes, which were later reinterpreted by Lacan. These theories explain how both genders position themselves in infancy through the phallus fantasy, which represents the father's imposition of the incest taboo. Julia Kristeva (Kristeva, 1982)and Luce Irigaray build on these concepts, Irigaray specifically advocating for women's freedom from these estranging structures, extending the ideas to prenatal and pre-Oedipal stages (Irigaray,1993).

Mohsin's Wittig (1980) challenges the notion that women must rely on men or the phallus to define their womanhood, asserting that women are inherently women from birth and do not need external validation or alteration (Witting, 1980). Chodorow (1978) utilizes psychoanalytic theories to illustrate how early maternal relationships shape adult gender roles (Chodorow,1978). She proposes that boys' differentiation from their mothers leads them to adopt instrumental roles as adults, while girls' early identification with their mothers influences their emotional expressiveness. Dorothy Dinnerstein (Dinnerstein, 1976) was influenced by Melanie Klein (Klein, 1957) and looked at how both boys and girls try to navigate complex emotions towards their mothers during infancy. For boys, this might involve idealizing their masculinity, while girls may lean towards idealizing their fathers, thus contributing to societal patterns of male dominance. Jessica Benjamin proposes that men's social dominance partly originates from their mothers being perceived as unable to withstand early infantile conflicts (Benjamin, 1988). She contends that as a result, boys often identify with dominant male roles, while girls may seek recognition within submissive roles, influenced by societal power dynamics. Social Change from a Psychoanalytic Perspective: Benjamin, Dinnerstein, Chodorow, Kristeva, Mitchell, Irigaray, and Others examine the harm that men's social dominance causes to women and girls. They look for elements that are essential for changing society. Clinical Focus of Psychoanalysis: By examining and resolving the childhood conflicts thought to be the root cause of psychological problems, psychoanalysts in clinical practice concentrate on individual transformation. In order to restructure defenses against maternal inadequacy, Winnicott suggests going back to infancy (Winnicott, 1965). The Kleinians approach aims to make patients aware of early fears associated to parental separateness, love, hate, and self-image (Klein, 1957).

It addresses the harm caused by idealizing the phallus. From a Lacanian perspective, phallus-related illusions have their roots in early Oedipal and mirror stage experiences that mold desire and identity (Lacan, 2006).Kristeva's Perspective: Kristeva suggests using phallic theories and the dynamics of transference in therapy to sexamine and comprehend how people try to break free from early emotional entanglements with their mothers (Kristeva, 1982). All things considered, these methods emphasize psychoanalysis's twin focus on comprehending society structures and bringing about personal psychological transformation by investigating early developmental conflicts and illusions. The influence of early childhood experiences on psychological development and adult behavior is highlighted in Freud's psychoanalytic theories. Early Influences Freud attributes psychological problems in his patients to feelings of guilt and sadness that stem from late childhood, specifically from identifying with a critical and idealized father figure or from projecting this critical figure onto other people. Maternal Idealization and Marital Dynamics: In his discussion of how women may idealize their husbands and fathers, they also address the topic of maternal conflict that

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arises in their marriages. Superego and Oedipal Complex: According to Freud, therapy aims to reveal and resolve the idealized father as a crucial superego character, which is derived from unfulfilled oedipal desires and fears associated with being castrated. Influences from Adolescence and Early Adulthood: Although Freud's primary concentration was on infancy, psychoanalysis eventually extended to encompass. The overall effect of early familial dynamics and unconscious desires on later psychological functioning is highlighted by Freud's approach, which directs psychoanalytic treatment toward identifying and resolving these fundamental conflicts.

Theories of Freud and Greenson regarding boys' separation from their mothers and the resulting psychological effects during adolescence. It implies that while males need this separation to forge their masculine identities, it can also result in recurrent dreams or nightmares that represent loneliness and loss. Themes of separation anxiety, attempts at symbolic reconnection with absent mothers, and sensations of being threatened by eerie or abstract things are frequently present in these nightmares. The impact of early maternal estrangement on teenage psyche and unresolved emotional problems are reflected in this phenomena, which is more common in boys than in girls. Important new information about the psychological experiences of teenage guys, especially in regard to their nightmares and dreams. According to Freud and other theorists like Ralph Greenson, boys go through a crucial developmental stage where it is crucial for them to separate from their mothers in order to acquire a male identity. However, this disconnection frequently shows up as clearly expressed sentiments of loss, loneliness, and fear in dreams. Dreams reported by boys frequently depict scenarios of being pursued or threatened by abstract, formidable entities such as rocks, boulders, and unidentified figures (Freud, 1900). These dreams unfold with a sense of slow motion or heaviness, where escape feels impossible and voices are mute. Unlike girls, who tend to dream of recognizable figures, boys often confront faceless, ominous figures depicted as tyrants, monsters, or surreal beings that symbolize their unresolved emotional conflicts. The prevalence of such nightmares underscores the lasting impact of early maternal separation on boys' emotional landscapes. These dreams, characterized by themes of alienation and existential threat, reflect the psychological repercussions identified by theorists like Wilfred Bion, who emphasized the infant's need for maternal containment of anxieties.

This literature review illuminates how early developmental experiences shape adolescent boys' inner worlds and underscores the ongoing relevance of psychoanalytic insights into gendered psychological development. This literature review explores Freud's and subsequent theorists' perspectives on the developmental trajectories of girls' attachment to their mothers and the corresponding psychological manifestations in dreams. Freud argued that girls, lacking a penis and therefore not fearing castration, maintain oedipal attachments to their families, persisting through infancy and beyond. Chodorow extended this idea, suggesting that girls' identity formation does not require detachment from their mothers, leading to prolonged attachment into childhood and adolescence (Chodorow, 1989).

Terri Apter expanded Chodorow’s and Freud’s viewpoint by pointing out that adolescent girls persist in resolving ambivalence by continued closeness and commitment to their mothers, despite the complexity of their sentiments toward them. Compared to boys, girls in the research frequently reported dreams that represented this attachment, including cozy toys or reassuring proximity with their mothers (Apter, 2001). These dreams emphasize gendered disparities in dream content and emotional processing, standing in stark contrast to boys' nightmares of solitude and separation. The review highlights how themes of closeness and comfort within familial connections are often reflected in girls' dreams, illuminating ongoing psychological dynamics that Apter and others have examined. This analysis emphasizes how gendered patterns of attachment and emotional development from

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childhood into adolescence can be understood via the lens of psychoanalytic theories (Sayers, 2000).

Analyzes Chodorow's writings critically in the perspective of gender studies and sociology, focusing on her book *The Reproduction of Mothering*. In her investigation into the reasons behind women's customary assumption of lead parenting duties, Chodorow makes the case that daughters' protracted premedical stage and close bonds with their mothers influence their psychological preparation for motherhood (Chodorow,1978). She places a strong emphasis on psychoanalytic interpretations, addressing topics such as the relationship dynamics that are intrinsic to mothering, ego limits, and primary identification. The review notes that Chodorow bases her conclusions on psychoanalytic theory and clinical case histories, but it critiques the limited body of evidence which is largely dependent on personal accounts and interpretations for its strength. It contends that a thorough understanding of gendered parenting responsibilities is constrained by Chodorow's disregard of more extensive structural elements in favor of psychoanalytic explanations. Even while Chodorow touches on structural factors in passing, she eventually gives intrapsychic dynamics precedence over behavioral and social assessments.

On the other hand, the review stresses how crucial it is to take institutional and social factors into account when determining parenting styles and gender roles (Hirsch, 1983). It makes the case that parenting styles and values that are instilled in children are greatly influenced by family dynamics and cultural expectations. The paper argues that social institutions both dictate and allow particular patterns of interaction that shape people's personalities and affect their chances in life. Overall, the literature review critiques Chodorow's theoretical framework for its overemphasis on psychoanalytic theory at the expense of broader structural considerations, advocating for a more integrated approach that encompasses both psychological insights and social structural analyses in critically engages with Chodorow's perspectives on mothering, highlighting both the strengths and limitations of her analysis. Chodorow posits that modern women's intensive mothering practices are deeply rooted in psychological and relational needs, emphasizing the historical and cultural specificity of these practices within middle-class, nuclear family contexts. However, the review argues that Chodorow's framework overlooks the diversity of parenting systems and their impacts on personality development across different societies and times (Hirsch, 1983). Chodorow for putting too much emphasis on psychoanalytic interpretations and for suggesting shared parenting as a solution without properly addressing real-world issues like men's alleged inability to be affective parents (Chodorow,1999). It raises concerns about whether shared parenting approaches can effectively disrupt ingrained gender norms in the absence of more significant cultural shifts, such attaining gender parity in income. Based on observations from anthropological research and matrifocal civilizations, the review makes a case for the significance of structural elements in determining parenting styles and psychological growth. It implies that more equitable and varied parenting styles may result from changing social institutions, such as advocating for gender equality in income and caregiving duties. The review ends by arguing for a reassessment of parenting standards in light of changing family configurations, such as same-sex, single-parent households.

Chodorow's study of how mothers affect a child's development, with an emphasis on how early bonds help boys and girls negotiate their identities (Chodorow, 1978). According to Chodorow, boys generally distance themselves emotionally from their mothers in order to conform to male identities that are linked to self-reliance and an outward focus. This process is made easier by the way they interact with dads and the expectations of society. Girls, on the other hand, tend to have stronger emotional bonds with their moms, which helps them become more internally oriented and prepared for life after childrearing. Chodorow’s research disproves conventional wisdom regarding gender roles by relating family dynamics to larger social mechanisms that uphold male dominance. She

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contends that the division of labor in families influences how boys and girls form their identities and skill sets, reflecting societal hierarchies that place a premium on male dominance (Hirsch, 1983).

This review builds on Chodorow's observations by arguing that emotional attachments must be broken to some extent in order for a person to become masterful and progress cognitively, and it contrasts girls' and boys' reported field dependence with field independence (Chodorow,1989). This conceptual framework clarifies gender disparities in cognitive styles and academic achievement by integrating psychological processes with social relationships. Chodorow's argument that early maternal attachments significantly shape gendered identities and behaviors, influencing broader societal dynamics around gender roles and divisions of labor. This literature review engages with Chodorow's psychoanalytic theory on gender development, focusing on how early maternal attachments shape lifelong behaviors and relationships. Chodorow posits that boys, in distancing themselves from their mothers to embrace masculine identities, may develop a complex around masculinity that detaches them not only from their mothers but from women in general. In contrast, girls' closer emotional ties to their mothers can lead to ambivalence in adult relationships, influencing marital dynamics and family solidarity.

Chodorow's theory for not addressing why societies universally adopt and maintain these gendered patterns of socialization (Hirsch, 1983). It suggests extending Chodorow's psychoanalytic framework with Claude Levi-Strauss's structural explanation, which posits that marriage establishes systems of exchange between families, preventing self- sufficiency and maintaining societal cohesion. This perspective argues that boys' outward orientation towards fathers and societal roles facilitates their integration into broader exchange systems, contrasting with girls' closer ties to the domestic realm. Review integrates psychoanalytic insights with structural theories to explain how gendered patterns of socialization contribute to familial and societal dynamics, emphasizing the roles of attachment, identity formation, and societal maintenance through gendered roles (Hirsch, 1983).

Chodorow's perspective on gender roles under capitalism, arguing against the notion that women have lost out due to men's minimal participation in family life. Instead, it posits that women's separate spheres increase their autonomy and reduce husbands' control, akin to the alienation and empowerment dynamics seen in labor relations under capitalism (Hirsch, 1983). The review suggests that such dynamics have laid the groundwork for feminist movements by highlighting the need for greater equality and shared responsibilities in parenting. Modern social conditions support and even encourage shifts towards more involved fathering and less emotionally exclusive mothering, particularly evident in middle-class settings. It questions whether these changes are desirable across broader social contexts and whether current conditions facilitate or hinder such transformations (Hirsch, 1983).

Traditional gendered divisions within families, where mothers nurture and fathers guide externally, may be ill-suited to modern economic and social realities (Judith Lorber, 1981). It suggests that evolving economic structures, such as the growth of office-based work, require more generalized social skills traditionally associated with women's roles in family settings. Synthesizes Marxist perspectives on labor relations with feminist critiques of familial and societal structures, advocating for a reevaluation of gender roles to enhance emotional solidarity within families and effectiveness in broader economic spheres (Judith Lorber, 1981).Discusses the author's experience teaching a course on mother-daughter relationships at Dartmouth College, emphasizing its interdisciplinary nature and feminist perspectives. The selection of texts reflects the author's interests in literature and psychoanalytic theory, tailored to both undergraduate and graduate students. Teaching this subject challenges traditional educational boundaries by integrating personal experiences with scholarly

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inquiry, highlighting the complex formation of female identity within patriarchal societies and the exploration of gender differences.

Mother-daughter relationships cannot be studied in isolation from broader family dynamics or from the intersection of personal and academic perspectives. It advocates for a feminist approach that accommodates various methodologies and perspectives, aiming to break down generic distinctions between genres like literature, theory, autobiography, and fiction. The bibliography curated for the course includes texts that defy traditional genre boundaries, experimenting with new forms and perspectives on silence and absence in mother-daughter dynamics. Moreover, the review acknowledges the evolving availability of material on mother-daughter relationships, cautioning against superficial or anti- feminist popularizations. It calls for the inclusion of diverse sources such as diaries, oral histories, and primary documents from non-Western, non-middle-class, and LGBTQ+ perspectives to enrich the scholarly discourse on this topic (Hirsch, 1983).

Feminist texts on motherhood and gender relations. Chodorow's *The Reproduction of Mothering* (Chodorow, 1978) critiques Freudian and Neo-Freudian theories, advocating an object-relations psychology perspective. She explores how exclusive mothering shapes gender identities, arguing that female identity, rooted in rationality and affiliation, is influenced by blurred boundaries between mothers and daughters. Chodorow proposes shared parenting as crucial for achieving balanced relationships and individual development. Adrienne Rich's *Of Woman Born* examines motherhood as a patriarchal institution through literature, sociology, and personal reflection, revealing its complexities from tenderness to violence (Rich, 1976). Rich critiques compulsory heterosexuality and introduces the "lesbian continuum" concept to redefine relationships among women outside patriarchal norms. Both texts significantly contribute to feminist scholarship by challenging traditional views on motherhood, offering nuanced insights into women's experiences and identities (Rich 1976).

Jean Baker Miller's *Toward a New Psychology of Women* (1976) reevaluates female attributes within patriarchal hierarchies, positing women's relational sense of self as a strength crucial for humanity's advancement (Miller, 1976). Dorothy Dinnerstein's *The Mermaid and the Minotaur* (1976) explores patriarchy's roots and women's perpetuated subordination (Dinnerstein, 1976). Jean Strouse's anthology *Women and Analysis* (1974) juxtaposes Freudian views on femininity with feminist critiques, emphasizing the formative role of early mother-daughter relationships (Strouse, 1974). Jane Flax's essays examine conflicts within mother-daughter dynamics and critique patriarchal biases in psychoanalysis and philosophy (Flax, 1993). Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's study (1975) illustrates nineteenth-century American women's primary relationships and new historical insights (Smith-Rosenberg, 1975). Sara Ruddick's *Maternal Thinking* (1980) analyzes maternal practice and its liberation from biological determinism and patriarchal norms (Ruddick, 1980). Finally, Jane Gallop and Carolyn Burke's discussion (1980) contrasts French psychoanalytic feminism with American perspectives, highlighting reevaluations of maternal roles (Burke, 1980).

Key texts in feminist scholarship on mother-daughter relationships and gender dynamics encompass a variety of perspectives and analyses. Luce Irigaray's works underscore the French feminist experimentation with female discourse and identity, placing particular emphasis on themes of maternal interdependence and plurality (Irigaray,1985). Erich Neumann's *The Great Mother* delivers a comprehensive analysis of the archetype in mythology and ritual (Neumann, 1955). Marianne Hirsch's essay surveys mother-daughter scholarship from 1976 to 1981, addressing methodological and ideological divisions within the field. Chodorow Friday's *My Mother/My Self* faces critique for its popular yet anti-feminist portrayal of mother-daughter dynamics (Friday, 1977). Judith

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Arcana's *Our Mothers' Daughters* presents a nuanced perspective within the context of a patriarchal society (Arcana, 1983). *The Lost Tradition*, edited by Cathy N. Davidson and Esther M. Broner, offers literary criticism focused on mothers and daughters (Broner, 1980). Lastly, Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* examines psychological theories on women's development,

Mother-daughter relationships examines various literary and mythological texts from a feminist perspective, exclusively featuring works by women writers. It explores how these texts intersect with autobiographical elements, historical contexts, social circumstances, literary conventions, and genres. The curriculum includes analysis of Colette's fictional and autobiographical writings, Toni Morrison's *Sula* set in post-World War I America, and traditional literary forms such as the courtship plot and Victorian orphan narratives. Additionally, the course steps into mythic paradigms like the Homeric hymn "*To Demeter*," which highlights themes of mother-daughter reunion and life cycles (Foley., 1994). This is contrasted with Sophocles' *Electra*, which explores themes of matricide and the division between private and public values in Greek mythology.

Literary works that explore mother-daughter relationships through various lenses, emphasizing feminist perspectives and intergenerational dynamics. It includes Mme. de Lafayette's *The Princess de Cleves* (Lafayette, 2011), which covertly explores mother-daughter symbiosis amidst themes of honor and passion. Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* examines the plight of a motherless heroine benefiting from diverse maternal models (Brontë, 2000), while Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* portrays a mother seeking fulfillment beyond traditional roles. Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* steps into the complex bond between mother and artist-daughter, intertwining memory and reconciliation. Colette's *My Mother's House* and *Sido* reminisce on childhood within an earth mother's realm, contrasting with her later novel *Break of Day* reflecting on maternal influence.

Willa Cather's *Sapphira and the Slave Girl* explores three generations grappling with power dynamics (Cather, 1940), while Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* reimagines Bertha Mason's tragic legacy from *Jane Eyre* (Brontë, 2000). Doris Lessing's *Martha Quest* (Lessing, 1962)and le Marshall's *Brown Girl, Brownstones* portrays a young girl's growth influenced by her ambitious mother, contrasting with Alice Walker's exploration of cultural and generational clashes in *Everyday Use* and her advocacy for unrecognized creativity in *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*. Walker's *The Color Purple* further steps into diverse female relationships in the American South. (Hirsch, 1983)
The historical intersection between feminist scholarship and psychoanalysis, highlighting their shared interests in uncovering subjective histories. It notes that early feminist history aimed to recover women's experiences and transform historical knowledge, much like psychoanalysis aimed to reveal the unconscious through symbols and language. This connection is rooted in Freud's work with Anna O (Breuer, 2000)., where psychoanalysis shifted the understanding of neurosis from women's bodies to psychic life, emphasizing memory and female desire in the etiology of hysteria. The historical convergence and occasional tension between psychoanalysis and feminism around the concept of femininity. Both movements emerged around the turn of the twentieth century with a shared interest in deciphering and understanding femininity. Psychoanalysis, focusing on unconscious processes and sexuality in identity formation, initially neglected female desire until after World War I, when questions about how femininity is constructed became prominent. Similarly, feminism in the 1920s debated whether to advocate for women's rights based on gender-specific needs or universal principles of citizenship and labor rights. Ultimately, both psychoanalysis and feminism faced internal challenges and external pressures during the 1930s, shifting their focus away from femininity debates to other social and political issues.

In the 1970s, the relationship between psychoanalysis and feminism diverged notably. In the

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USA, radical feminism rejected Freud, viewing psychoanalysis as diagnosing femininity as a problem without offering political solutions that feminism sought. Conversely, in England, some feminists integrated Freud's ideas through Lacan's interpretation, using them to explore female subjectivity shaped by language. Historically, scholars like Cora Kaplan (Kaplan, 1986)and Passerini (Passerini, 1996)examined how women poets and autobiographical narratives used metonymy and psychodynamic concepts to express suppressed experiences and resist dominant discourses. Carolyn Steedman (Steedman, 1986)critiqued nostalgic portrayals of motherhood in working-class autobiographies, highlighting poverty and absence in shaping female desire. Despite feminist historians' interest in psychoanalysis, broader academic resistance persists, critiquing it's a historicism and individualism, though historian Peter Gay advocated for integrating psychoanalytic methods into historical analysis to uncover unconscious motivations in cultural artifacts and personal narratives.

Maria-Antonetta Macciocchi explores the complex relationship between women and fascism, particularly under Mussolini's regime in 1920s Italy (Macciocchi, 1976). She argues that despite the exploitation and oppression they faced, women's support for fascism was sustained through promises like suffrage (later revoked), the establishment of female paramilitary groups, and the promotion of traditional gender roles emphasizing childbirth. Drawing on Brecht's analogy of the pimp/whore relationship and insights from Woolf, Gramsci, and Reich, Macciocchi examines the irrationality and psychological underpinnings of women's consent to fascism. She suggests that female masochism and the death drive played significant roles, challenging the notion of women's innocence and urging a deeper exploration of their complicity in fascist structures.

Claudia Koonz's study focuses on women in Nazi Germany (Koonz,1987), arguing that while women were not directly involved in planning or administering the Holocaust, a significant number supported the National Socialist Party and its policies, particularly those promoting traditional family values and gender roles. Koonz challenges the perception of women as passive bystanders, noting their active participation in supporting the regime's social order. Despite the strict gender divisions and exclusion from direct participation in genocide, women's complicity in sustaining Nazi ideology through their societal roles is a central theme in Koonz's analysis. Claudia Koonz's analysis suggests that psychoanalytic concepts are implicitly relevant to understanding the Nazi state. She argues that National Socialism established a societal structure centered on gender and race, promoting eugenics and genocide as core principles. Despite the regime's contradictions, its idealized vision emphasized a partnership between a strong man and a gentle woman, guided by a disciplined state. Koonz highlights how administrators of the death machine maintained a semblance of sanity by compartmentalizing their public duty to obey orders from their private lives as family men. This dual reality allowed them to reconcile their actions with a self-perception of moral decency, shielding themselves from acknowledging their role in atrocities.

Klaus Theweleit (Theweleit, 1987)and Claudia Koonz (Koonz,1987) emphasize the internalized authoritarianism and psychological formations within fascism. Theweleit's study of the Freikorps literature posits a direct link between their ideologies and deep- seated fears of women and sexuality, seeing anti-Semitism as rooted in these primal fears originating from infancy. Theweleit suggests these fantasies are universal among men, contrasting with Barbara Ehrenreich's assertion that not all men act on such extreme impulses and contextualizing these men's emergence from the trauma of World War I rather than solely primal emotions. This discussion underscores complexities in understanding fascism's psychological dimensions, prompting some feminist historians to move away from psychoanalytic interpretations of sexual difference. Joan Scott (Scott, 1988) and Denise Riley (Riley, 1988)advocate for perspectives that challenge traditional views of gender and identity

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in feminist history. Scott favors deconstruction, which removes the individual subject from the core of historical and linguistic analysis. She emphasizes gender as a concept that delineates power relations between women and men, devoid of personal psychic subjectivity. This approach allows for multiple interpretations of sexual difference, while often sidelining race in European and North American feminist histories. Denise Riley, drawing from Foucault's ideas, focuses on the discursive construction of the category 'women'. She anticipates a dissolution of all identities through this discourse, questioning whether anyone can fully embody a gender identity without experiencing some form of distress. Her reflections echo Mary Wollstonecraft's cautionary view that women should ideally disregard their sex, except in intimate relationships (Wollstonecraft, 1792).

The argument underscores the challenges and implications of excluding psychoanalytic notions from historical scholarship, particularly in feminist history. It contends that understanding memory as contingent, culture as resistant to drives, and mental life as beyond consciousness complicates historical narratives. Excluding the unconscious diminishes the understanding of psychic instability and the generative role of fantasy in mental processes. Julia Kristeva's (Kristeva, 1982)perspective adds that women, through their roles as mothers, may embody a timelessness and repetition akin to Freud's unconscious time. However, rather than accept this division of temporalities for female subjectivity, there is a call to integrate awareness of repetition, fantasy, and resistances into histories of women and sexual difference. This approach seeks to enrich understandings of psychic life and mentalities in historical contexts (Alexander, 1991). The complex dynamics of identity, gender, and theatrical representation in *The Taming of the Shrew* (Shakespeare, 1988). It begins by questioning the ease of self- orientation and choosing sides within the play's intricate scenes. Specifically, it highlights the layers of performance: a woman observing the scene, a page disguised as a woman, and a boy playing the page, creating a multi-faceted spectacle of gender and desire. The narrative steps into the audience's role as voyeurs, engaged in the masquerade of femininity, and notes the lustful reactions elicited by these performances. The character of Sly's "madam wife" emerges as a pivotal figure, embodying both audience and actor, male and female, servant and mistress (Shakespeare, 1988). This character blurs the lines between reality and play, representing the ambiguity and fluidity of gender roles.

Traditional notions of gender, reflecting Freud's ideas about the perception of the female as a castrated male. However, it also posits that this character represents the essence of sexual difference, embodying both excess and lack. The page becomes a metaphor for the inherent ambiguity and performativity of gender, demonstrating how cultural representation and language mediate and construct sexual identities. Ultimately, the passage emphasizes that the drama of the page is a reflection of the drama of language itself, illustrating the interplay between cultural norms, sexual identity, and the per formative nature of gender. The character's flirtatious and fraudulent behavior highlights the fictional and constructed nature of sexual difference, underscoring the power of language to shape and define human experiences and identities.

The concept of sexual difference through the lens of Lacanian psychoanalysis (Lacan, 2006), particularly focusing on how language shapes and engenders the subject.

Chodorow argues that contemporary feminism must examine how the arrangements of and between the sexes are being understood outside of these historical political arrangements. She warns against the new matricentrism in postmodern object- relations feminism, which could unintentionally support conservative politics by echoing the exaggerated maternal power narratives of the Cold War era. The author expresses sympathy with Chodorow’s social perspective, which aims for justice for women, healthier children, and an end to male aggression against women. However, the author is skeptical about achieving these goals through a combined psychoanalytic, socially progressive, and

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critically vigilant feminism. Despite Chodorow's wishful thinking, she maintains objectivity and is critical rather than prescriptive, especially regarding the unresolved relationship to the mother in feminism. Chodorow criticizes the notion of the all-powerful mother, which she argues leads to blaming mothers and unrealistic expectations of maternal perfection (Chodorow,1999). This viewpoint ultimately empowers the child rather than the mother. Chodorow also critiques the narcissism and male dominance in the theories of Herbert Marcuse and Norman O. Brown. She is generally averse to the unconscious and hostile to drive theory because it politically disempowers women. The author appreciates Chodorow's effort to historicize feminist concerns in sociopolitical contexts, particularly through her critique of Seventies Questions for Thirties Women. However, Chodorow's focus on normal psychology and avoidance of more abstract theoretical language limits her ability to address the absence of sexual relations in cultural systems. The author believesthat Chodorow's avoidance of Lacan's Symbolic prevents her from fully addressing the social and cultural interactions that shape the child's self.

Chodorow's emphasis on the self, influenced by object-relations theory, overlooks the need for a symbolic transaction to relate parents to each other in the child's socialization. The author argues that Chodorow's reluctance to engage with more complex theoretical frameworks hinders her ability to provide a sociosymbolic alternative to Oedipus. Chodorow's reliance on universally shared emotions, while a strength, also reveals a gap in her analysis of the social and cultural work that emotions perform. The author criticizes Chodorow and Flax for not addressing the process of internalization and symbolization in their theories, which leads to an overemphasis on an imaginary self and opens the door to narcissism. While the author values Chodorow's critical insights and social goals, they find her theoretical approach limited by its avoidance of deeper symbolic and cultural analyses. This limitation prevents Chodorow from fully addressing the complexities of gender and sexual relations in contemporary feminist discourse (MacCannell, 1991).feminist theory provides a framework to deepen our understanding of how femininity is constructed and critiqued in the narrative (Dimen, 1997). Furthermore, the study seeks to analyze how these theoretical insights shape interpretations of the protagonist's character and influence reader responses. By undertaking this investigation, the research not only enriches scholarly discourse on gender dynamics in literature but also contributes to a broader understanding of how psychoanalytic feminist perspectives can illuminate nuanced aspects of literary portrayal and interpretation.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design and Methodology

Psychoanalytic feminism will formulate the theoretical framework. Novel *Duty Free* is the source of data. The primary source of data is the text of the selected novel. The secondary sources are research articles, research journals and theory-related books. The main data is the text of the novel that reflects elements of psychoanalytic feminism in our research, we discussed several psychoanalytic feminist aspects related to the novel *Duty Free*. Some of the key aspects we explored include Gender Identity and Representation: We examined how the protagonist's materialistic and self-centered behavior may be influenced by societal traditional gender representation. This study applies a qualitative methodology that investigates the complex relationship between gender, social norms, and self-behavior as conceptualized in Moni Mohsin's Duty Free. The study is conducted using the psychoanalytic feminism theoretical framework in order to unveil such deep-seated motivations or subconscious influences that shape and inform the decision-making process of the protagonist. This is beneficial in understanding the protagonists' identities and the cultures and societies they belong to. Research discussed several psychoanalytic feminist aspects related to the novel *Duty Free*. Chodorow argues that the formation of gender identity is deeply embedded in the mother-child relationship. Since women, most of the time, play the major role in caring for their children, girls will

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identify with them more than their fathers. This proximity will result in a close identification with the mother that will be reflected in the view and internalization of femininity. In the context of the protagonist in Duty Free, her materialistic and self-centered behavior can be analyzed as a form of societal gender expectations reflected in her due to family and cultural conditioning.

**Contextual analysis**

In *Duty Free* we examined how the protagonist's materialistic and self-centered behavior may be influenced by societal traditional gender representation. This approach helps to uncover the underlying psychoanalytic dimensions of the character's actions and the societal pressures that shape them. By doing so, we aim to provide a deeper understanding of the protagonist's motivations and the broader implications of gender roles within the narrative.

The study steps into the intersectionality of the protagonist's identity, considering how other factors such as class, race, and culture interact with gender. This intersectional analysis allows us to see beyond a singular focus on gender, recognizing the multifaceted influences that contribute to the protagonist's development and behavior. By integrating these various dimensions, the research offers a comprehensive view of how psychoanalytic feminism can be applied to literary analysis, enhancing our understanding of the complex interplay between individual identity and societal structures in *Duty Free*.

**ANALYSIS**

The resistance of Jonkers to materialistic values around him is another form of masculinity that craves an emotional contact instead of one based on status or power. And whereas Jonkers wants a life full of balance and 'fulfillment' instead of a life purely motivated by achieving 'money and wealth', it consequently showcases that masculinity here is not merely about power or wealth but about emotions and partnerships. Even so, his preference for relationship over transaction reveals something against the prevailing cultural norms, such as the way masculinity is always defined by power and monetary success.

This novel points out the fact that class and tradition play important roles in shaping gender identities. In this regard, obsession of the protagonist with the class structure shows the intensification of cultural traditions to the extent that they rule the behavior of men and women. For instance, her argument that Jonkers is not worth Tanya simply because of his class status clearly indicates how existing societal traditions dictate the who's who in the context of marriage as prescribed by the class, thereby resulting in relation transactions. *Duty Free*, the protagonist's remark to Jonkers on page 23 reveals deep materialism as well as class-consciousness. Her claim, "Girls are girls. Some are nice, some are not so nice because they are not from good backgrounds," and then defining a "good background" it was when they had same-to-same money as you and knew the same people and went to same places'' (Mohsin, 2011, p. 23).

**The Impact of Cultural Norms and Gender Roles on Relationships in *Duty Free***

*Duty Free* and its representation of traditional gender roles can be seen as fitting the broader themes of the novel and as a nuanced response toward how cultural norms, expectations, and traditions are formative of constructing femininity and masculinity. Here's how your points justify the question. You make use of Chodorow's theory on intergenerational transmission to explain how femininity is constructed in the novel. The close identification of the protagonist with her mother, internalization of values around marriage, social status, materialism, and behavior-focused approach on external appearances, marriage, and social standing are all reflections of prevailing cultural ideals of femininity. All these inherited notions of what it means to be a woman find direct relevance in the tradition of expectations passed on from generations. The absence of a strong father figure emphasizes the centrality of the mother-daughter relationship in shaping the protagonist's identity, reinforcing the traditional construction of femininity. This dynamic follows Chodorow's psychoanalytic feminism, where the mother-daughter bond is crucial to the transmission of conventional feminine traits, such as emotional dependence on men and preoccupation with domestic and social concerns. The intellect

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and morality with which the novel is endowed are divorced from emotions. Traditional male gender expectations Janoo feels frustrated, at least on a superficial level, about his wife's apparent lack of intellectual curiosity and his role as a provider and intellectual leader. He epitomizes a cultural norm where men are supposed to be the rational, moral leaders of the family, and women are relegated to less intellectually taxing concerns, thus emotionally distancing them.

The rigidity of gender roles that precipitate misunderstandings and emotional distance is the tension between Janoo and his wife, particularly as marked in the Dubai trip scene. His disdain for his wife's preoccupation with mundane matters reflects cultural expectations that women must concern themselves with household matters while men must have broader issues that separate them from these mundane concerns, involving instead intellectual and political considerations. This conflict of roles depicts how emotional and relational disconnection are a result of social expectations over forged relationships. "Your country is in flames and all you can think of is partying! Are you off your head?" (Mohsin,2011 p. 58).

The novel critiques these straitjackets of gender, showed how they strain relationships. Showing the vast emotional gap between Janoo and his wife, *Duty Free* subtly questions the very feasibility of these norms, stating that they limit personal fulfillment and satisfaction. The novel criticizes how cultural expectations about gender lead to insatiate demands and conflicts, rather than channeling them into meaningful personal relationships.

This character also acts both victim and enforcer of patriarchal expectations. She is worth whatever her husband's wealth is; such is the cultural icon, and the last point rings true to a cultural expectation in which women often are judged by the success of their husband rather than by what brings them fulfillment in their own right. The protagonist's materialism and obsession with status must therefore be seen as a direct result of the social pressures that built her feminine identity. In the scene where the protagonist expects Janoo to sympathize with her frustration over the maid's leaving, the emotional disconnection between them reflects the deep-seated traditional gender roles. That Janoo cannot engage emotionally; she shuts up the volume instead of answering, is a cultural norm that shows how men are rational, emotionless, and women need emotional support. In the protagonist's reflection about, I should not have married him, is a clear frustration of the emotional disconnection that she finds - which is a direct consequence of the rigid roles that reduce the emotional closeness between them.

"I knew I shouldn't have married him. At least he could have done some 'look-at-her-what- a-backstabber-may-she-rot-in-hell' talk with me like Mummy did, like Aunty Pussy did. But no, he has no feelings for me, not even this much of sympathy. One thing I know, I shouldn't have married him" (Mohsin,2011, p. 66).

This passage is an exemplary example of emotional separation between the main character and Janoo because of sticking to the strict gender roles. The disappointment of the protagonist of the unsupportive attitude of Janoo reflects the expectation to receive from her husband those emotional roles that were played by females in her life. Janoo's reaction-or lack thereof-however, shows the deficiencies of such traditional gendered roles, put into narrowly defined behaviors and responsibilities for both men and women. Thus, Janoo, the intellectual and morally superior figure, is shown to be emotionally detached, a quality the protagonist increasingly finds alienating. By refusing to engage her at any level emotionally, he evidences the failures of the patriarchal society that insists upon men as rational beings in authority, too often at the cost of emotional intimacy and connection. Through these characters, the novel also criticizes strict gender roles and materialistic attitudes that control their lives. The internalization of such values by the protagonist leads her to continued discontent and feelings of incompleteness. While trying to meet societal expectations, she remains in a state emotionally deprived and disconnected from her husband, who feels equally strained with expectations placed on him. Whereas Janoo's intellectual superiority and moral detachment have earned him great social rewards, these are precisely the factors that have caused

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emotional distances between himself and his wife and limit deeper communication between them.

Contrarily, Jonkers defies that expectation as he tries to identify with people on more personal levels than status. His insight, then, into the personal relationships surrounding him reflects a censure of the material attitude evident in the other characters' lives and suggests that emotional compatibility is far more important in relationships than materialistic ones. The way Jonkers has taken to relationships contrasts, however, sharply with the hold the protagonist and Janoo have on traditional gender roles: how those persons are free to go beyond the limitations and make themselves more real and satisfying for a deep connecting? Ultimately, *Duty Free* invites readers into reflection on the broader implications this might have in today's society. By depicting the turmoil of gender identity within the framework of family and societal expectations, the novel highlights how rigid gender roles dampen close personal relationships and even the fullness of the self. The critique that the novel gives to those structures calls into question values upon which gender roles and interpersonal relationships are based. It therefore implies that there is a reality wherein more equitable and emotionally rewarding relationships are possible when individuals resist such constraints from traditional expectations in society. It is in Duty Free that crucial points are left to be understood by the reader as to how women and men, mainly within the circle of cultural norms, expectations, and customs, have been constructed. The main character's fear about having to go to the wedding of a rich family reveals how much she treasures social appearances and what norms go along with her class. Her statement that if they do not attend others' marriages, nobody will go to their son's marriage one day points out how her female self is constructed in terms of approval by society, status, and reciprocity. It also reveals that the heroine is depicted as an identity constructed through the maintenance of class expectations. Her roles as a woman are usually social, to keep appearances, and continue family reputation. In contrast, there is another construction of masculinity where he doesn't care about attending the party or the consequences ("he said he didn't care"). Here, it portrays him as more logical and pragmatic, but not attached to those superficial aspects of upper-class life. His negation of his wife's whole insistence on obligations in society translates into an important part of the screenplay. His masculinity here is grounded in an independence from such social pressures and alienation from the performance of any social status.

This dynamic also shows a tension between the more traditional roles. The wife is to maintain social harmony and to see that the family was well-placed in elite society, a traditionally feminine task tied to social diplomacy. The husband, on the other hand, would appear to care little for these responsibilities-they point toward a gendered division, where women are expected to care about the sort of social relations with others and in that sense men can afford to ignore them. His disdain for social mores presents a kind of masculinity that adores all sorts of independence from societal expectations. " If janoo didn’t bother to go to anyone’s wedding today nobody would come to kulchoo's wedding tomorrow and everybody would say "haw, poor things, what a disaster their wedding was." and he said he didn’t care and i said fine, be like that and i was going and he said be my guest. I said, no ji, I’d be Khayam Butt and Talwar Khan's guest. It’s not your wedding, okay? and then he said something back and then i said something back and then it became a proper fight with him shouting at me or being shallow and stupid and me shouting at him for being bore and a loser' (Mohsin, 2011, p. 80).

In *Duty Free*, the influence of cultural tradition on marriage forms the perception that gives women. The bitter attitude of the heroine who refers to any bride for Jonker as "things" underscores deeply rooted in the mind of the same culture pattern where a woman's value is determined by her chances for being married and finding economic security behind a rich husband's back. As you pointed out, the main character's perception is a reflection of the greater society that treats women as disposable objects within a marriage market. By having Mohsin refer to these women as "things," he restates how these cultural values objectify and turn them into mere resources to be "chosen." This internalization of those norms is shed light on by the psychoanalytic feminist theory of Chodorow.

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According to the theory, Chodorow suggests that women, as caretaking mothers, actually pass down the norms relating to gender, which perpetuates cultural expectations upon both femininity and masculinity. One would see this in the behavior of the protagonist in the novel, because she is unwittingly upholding those very objectifying norms that keep women back. She has started casually assessing marriageable grooms for her cousin and declared some of them as not good enough, which shows how cultural conditioning brings changes in women's perceptions of themselves as well as others. Her act is a prime example of how these norms have been internalized by the female characters as well as men, meaning that in such structures, women too become agents who further objectify themselves."Girls, tau, as you know, are plenty, but we are picky, you know." Unlike all these easily satisfied people who'll be happy with the first thing that they see" (Mohsin,2011, p. 84).

In the narrative with Sana, Tanya, Tasbeeh, Miss Shumaila and Irum, it can be observed that the subject matter concerns the protagonist having an in-depth belief that social class forms part of the essence measuring the self-worth of women. Rather than coming to judge their virtues, personalities, or compatibility with Jonkers, the protagonist reduces them to their socio-economic "background." This fixation with class, where a woman's worth is measured primarily by her family's wealth and status, makes clear the cultural assumption that femininity is synonymous with a woman's ability to secure a socially prestigious marriage. In this society, the protagonist shows how these women are socialized to degrade their own qualities and other's only for wealth and status by reducing themselves and others into goods in a transactional system of marriage.

Further expression of this idea is given by the protagonist when the protagonist kills Irum using obviously Irum doesn't count, as the protagonist deems lesser-class women not even worthy of consideration in their lives. This class-based rejection goes hand in hand with the apparent construction of a sense of femininity in Duty Free relative to a woman's socio-economic status rather than to anything related to the personal attributes of the individual. It's a reflection of how the upper-class woman is stuck in a value system stripped bare of any individuality, where they are forced to fit into these cultural norms centered on material wealth rather than intrinsic value. Protagonist's view of Sana and the other women also shows how cultural heritage, commodifying women, is not only echoed by males but by females as well. The protagonist acts to enforce patriarchal hierarchy where their worth is vested into how much they can raise a male's status by marrying them. From the psychoanalytic feminist approach, as defined by Chodorow, this can thus be viewed as a phenomenon of the internalization of patriarchal values, passed from one generation to another. Women like the protagonist internalize the values and convey them by judging their worth and that of other women on the basis of social class and prospects for matrimony.

However, through this process, the heroine becomes the victim of the system she advocates-assigning values to the worth of the women based on how much they can donate to a man's social status rather than their individual identities. Her class obsession supports a perception of femininity which is defined along the lines of social expectations of marriage and status, leaving the freedom of the women outside that strict definition to find their own identification.

'I am a bit double minded about Sana. I don't I don't have anything against her personality, but I feel maybe Jonker could do a little bit more better not much but a little bit….. Sana is much niecer than both Tanya and Tasbeeh and with Shumaila' (Mohsin, 2011, p. 185).

Although she describes Sana as "much nicer than both Tanya and Tasbeeh," the protagonist, nonetheless, is still "double-minded" about her suitability for Jonker which suggests that Jonker could "do a little bit better." It reveals the conviction internalized by the protagonist that women are evaluated in line with their ability to contribute to improving a man's social status. Sana is, in many ways, a good match, but the protagonist's hesitation shows that she believes Jonker's wife should not only be "nicer" but provide something more something probably related to social status or prestige.

*Duty Free* clearly portrays how cultural norms, expectations, and traditions influence the

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construction of femininity and masculinity in the novel, especially in terms of class and family background. This is how this passage connects directly to the question. The heroine expresses concern over how her social circle or "kitty" would view the marriage of Jonker to Sana. This reveals a deep-rooted cultural belief that a woman's value is truly judged against the amount of wealth and status that her family holds. The protagonist dreads the judgment that would come when she married a man from "no family," reinforcing the notion that a woman's worth is not merely determined by personal attributes or education but by the prestige of the family she comes from. This is a reflection of cultural norms in which women are rated according to their potential to enhance or restore social status to the family through marriage, rather than by who they are.

‘When all girls in my kitty will ask, ‘so who did your cousin marry then? And I say Sana Raheem, I know what they will say. ‘From which family?’’ and I’ll have to say from no family.’’ And they’ll think, ‘Poor things, couldn’t even get a decent family’’ (Mohsin, 2011, p. 185).

In this context, womanliness is built around the social status of a woman-her family's affluence, network, and prestige. The anxiety of the narrator regarding what others might say marks how this becomes an in-grained attitude. It doesn't matter whether Sana is a good person as such, but the fact that she is not from the prominent or mighty family of people makes her less precious in the eyes of the narrator, demonstrating how cultural values reduce a woman to the status of being a sign.

## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

This study, employing Chodorow’s psychoanalytic feminist theory, explores the gender representations in Mohsin’s *Duty Free.*In addressing the first research question, Duty Free indicates that gender roles play the most important role in the formation of individual identities and more so for females because she acts in accordance with societal expectations as portrayed through the novel. Her own angst at attending such high- society events, such as weddings, certainly suggest that she will not miss maintaining an awareness of where her family stands in society but also might depict how constructions of femininity are tied to enacting the right protection of looks and social status. The way she equates attending social events with securing her son's future chances, like making sure "people will come to his wedding," could reveal the intrinsic relation of women's lives to the perceptions of success and honor by society. The materialistic ways of the heroine might further illustrate a pressure to perpetuate gender roles. Her identity appears to be about achieving acceptance by acting according to the standards of the upper class. Women in the novel appear as people that have to keep such societal pillars in check so as to get in with their systems. Thus, the gender role may be seen as limiting women's freedom of agency, entrapping them in a narrow range of roles more aptly focused on the money and beauty and social demands than on any form of fulfillment. The husband of the protagonist can be another form of masculinity that is less bound to external compulsory forces. The fact that he does not want to go out or attend events, such as his friend's wedding in the novel, may indicate that males could probably be more able to avoid peer pressure and conformity to elite culture. Masculinity in *Duty Free* might be based on an alienation from the same societal expectations that constitute feminine forms of existence. This may cause a gulf between the heroine and her husband as they have differences in gender roles that affect identity development, and priorities seem to differentiate them, with the woman being driven socially and the man being more independent.

This does answer the second research question of this study in that familial and social structures seem to play the most important role in establishing gender identity and other interpersonal relationships for the character in *Duty Free*. Because this character is one who adheres to the ideals of behavior expected from her, it reflects not only personal choices but, more importantly, the larger family and societal structures guiding behavior. In the novelistic representation of elite Pakistani society, women might be expected to take their roles as protectors of family reputation. The sense that protagonist has of duty to her family, and her concern with public perception, could suggest that family honor and gender are closely entwined. Such an

identification is especially likely to happen in female lives.
While women in the novel are expected to keep their family's honor, men such as the protagonist's husband hardly seem to bear the weight of that responsibility; thus, this comparison might suggest that patriarchal family structures, in setting unequal burdens on women, shape their identities towards collective family honor rather than personal growth. For instance, the main character's compulsion to attend social gatherings is of primary concern for the fear of losing social status, so maybe her identity is more being formed according to the desires of her family rather than her own. These expectations seem to strengthen the trend that women are custodians of family reputation, while men have more freedom to define their identities independently of such societal demands.

Furthermore, social structures at the elite level appear to give rise to competition and envy among women, thereby further delineating their identities. Such intense criticism exhibited by the protagonist towards other women, especially those who are not model citizens among the elite class might be an indication of the socially constructed hierarchy among women. It somehow appears that through social structures, women at the elite level do not embrace any form of unity but rather teach one another on how to judge each other based on their looks, amount of money, and mannerisms among others. Perhaps such a lack of solidarity can be attributed to the general patriarchal structure under which women are spurred on to competition over the right to recognition, rather than uniting in resistance to the role.

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