

A Postmodern Study of Elif Shafak's Three Daughters of Eve



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Abstract: *The present study aims at a postmodern reading of Elif Shafak's Three Daughters of Eve (2016). Postmodernism is inherently a break from modernism since the prefix "Post" in the phrase "Postmodernism" denotes the end of modernity and the beginning of something new or progressive. A social, cultural, or economic state that developed in Western culture following the modern era is referred to as postmodernity or the postmodern condition. Being a postmodern writer, Elif Shafak has incorporated postmodern elements in her novel Three Daughters of Eve. The objectives of the study are; firstly, to explore the concerned text regarding the different characters' views about the concept of God in Elif Shafak's Three Daughters of Eve, and secondly, to identify the journey of faith and doubt in Shafak's Three Daughters of Eve in the light of postmodernism. The study is supported by the theoretical framework of Motak (2009), who claimed that individualization has evolved into a crucial concept for comprehending how postmodernism has altered the values of Western religion. According to recent sociological research on religion in Europe, the emphasis is gradually shifting to patterns of individualization of belief, which encourage people to independently develop personal philosophies that would give their lives purpose in accordance with their unique outlook, interests, aspirations, and experiences. The researchers have used a descriptive qualitative method for this study. They have read Three Daughters of Eve thoroughly and have picked the most notable information from the novel that was relevant to the research questions and objectives. They have examined the post-modernism individualism and doubts regarding religion in the novel.*

Keywords: Postmodernism, Pataphysics, progressive, social, Secular, individualism

Introduction

Arnold Toynbee, the renowned historian is credited with coining the phrase 'postmodern' in the 1940s. Modernism must be understood in order to comprehend postmodernism. Postmodernism offers ideas in opposition to modernism as a cultural trend. A worldview dealing with intellectual and technical advances evolved during the European Enlightenment,

which is typically associated with modernity. One of the main issues is separating postmodernism from modernism. The use of self-consciousness, parody, irony, fragmentation, generic mixing, ambiguity, simultaneity, and breaking down between two modes of expression, i.e., high form and low form, are all examples of postmodern artists and thinkers maintaining some strands of modernism

in a variety of contexts. Postmodernism may be considered as a development of modernism in this context. Postmodernism, however, differs from modernism in a few key ways. Extreme selfreflexivity is one aspect of postmodernism that sets it apart from modernism (Akbar, Majeed, & Karori, 2021).

Modernism and postmodernism were distinguished by Hassan (1993) using a table. Chance, Indeterminacy, Silence, Play, Pataphysics, Desire, Absence from the centre, Anarchy, Schizophrenia, and other concepts are among the postmodern aspects that he has identified. Since the name "Postmodernism" contains the prefix "Post," which signifies the end of modernity and the beginning of something new or progressive, postmodernism is inherently a break from modernism.

Turkish novelist and writer Elif Shafak was born in Strasbourg, France, in 1971. Her works focus on feminism, women, subcultures, immigrants, and minorities. She incorporates Sufism, philosophy, and history into her stories. She is a prizewinning novelist and Turkey's most widely read female essayist (Sakib, 2021). Elif Shafak is a writer of postmodernism. With seventeen books published, eleven of which are novels, she writes in both Turkish and English. In 2016, Elif Safak, published *Three Daughters of Eve*. The book was renamed *Confused Quest* and was recalled in numerous areas (Al-Zahrani, and Al-Sharqi, 2022).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Elif Shafak in her novel *Three Daughters of Eve* unfolds the postmodernist elements in the postmodernist societies. Individualism and doubt about religion are apparent in this novel. The novel highlights the cultural, ethnic, religious, and individual differences which are the major cause of disagreements and conflicts between people.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of this study:

To explore the concerned text regarding the different characters' views about the concept of God in Elif Shafak's *Three Daughters of Eve*.

To identify the journey of faith and doubt in Shafak's *Three Daughters of Eve* in the light of postmodernism.

1.3 Research Questions

What are the different characters' views regarding the concept of God in Elif Shafak's *Three Daughters of Eve*?

How does the journey of faith and doubt make Shafak's *Three Daughters of Eve* a postmodern novel?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Modern culture or postmodernity refers to the social, economic, religious, or cultural conditions that emerged in Western society after the modern age. This study has been done to represent the religious doubts present in the individuals through different characters of the novel *Three Daughters of Eve* written by Turkish author Elif Shafak. *Three Daughters of Eve* take us on a journey of doubt and faith. The novel aims to trigger our consciousness to raise important questions regarding, God and religion, faith and doubt, moral and immoral. It is when we read this novel we become self-critical and try to grasp the thoughts and beliefs of others.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

The study deals with postmodern elements present in Elif Shafak's *Three Daughters of Eve*. There are many postmodern elements like intertextuality, scepticism, magical realism, temporal distortion etc in this novel but the current study is delimited to the religious beliefs of different characters and their concept of god as depicted by Elif Shafak.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Modernism and Post-Modernism

Up to the first part of the twentieth century, literary studies were governed by literary criticism, an institutionalised profession that established standards for literary evaluation. There were discrete categories for literary and non-literary works, as well as interpretative frameworks, words, and approaches that were primarily literary. The non-literary was kept strictly apart from the debates of literature.

Modern criticism shifted towards textual interpretation while more traditional criticism focused on historical, moral, and biographical concerns that were seen as essential to understanding literature. This shift towards textual analysis was hampered by a number of other extra-literary methodologies and the focus of analysis shifting to language. Literary criticism started to be influenced by critical perspectives. This was the emergence of literary theory, which challenged many traditional and contemporary literary notions (Tulshiram, 2017).

The trend that dominated the first half of the 20th century's arts and culture was known as modernism. Is postmodernism opposed to modernism or a continuation of it? It should be emphasised that postmodernism has gained popularity since the 1980s. Postmodernism is defined by an eclectic approach, aleatory writing, parody, and pastiche. This demonstrates that both modernism and postmodernism share aspects such as the use of fractured forms, elements of chance and unpredictability, and the use of parody (Tulshiram, 2017).

Post-modernism was a phrase that several thinkers began using in the late 20th century as a response to modernism. Correlation with modernism is important in order to comprehend post-modernism and its traits. Numerous concepts advanced and considered by the modernists were rejected by the post-modernists (Tulshiram, 2017).

2.2 Post-Modernism in Different Fields

A wide range of fields, including psychology, art, architecture, literature, film, sociology, communication, philosophy, and others have been affected by new social, political, and literary theories that have recently developed as a result of postmodern discussions. Its power is also evident in the fields of culture, intellect, and aesthetics (Hossain, & Karim, 2013).

2.2.1 In Art

Postmodern art, according to Amiri (2016), is comparable to modern and unitary art in that it is pluralistic, self-aware, eclectic, blended, and contextualised. Fine art and commercial art are

equally valid in post-modern art. In order to provide sarcasm and humour, they were purposefully mixed together this time.

2.2.2 In Architecture

Through the fusion of traditional and contemporary architectural forms as well as detective, western, and other classic literary genres, post-modernism creates eclecticism and humour. The 1960s saw the emergence of post-modern architecture as a significant topic and movement, and infrastructure criticisms of contemporary architecture's logical and technological orientation were introduced (Ghobadian, 2003).

2.2.3 In Culture

The extreme questioning of earlier cultural and religious frameworks is a component of postmodern philosophy, according to Motak (2009). Due to this, promises of more freedom and opportunity have been made alongside condemnation of these notions as nihilistic and harmful to people's identities and beliefs.

2.2.4 In Politics

Hutcheon (2003) asserts that postmodernists in politics hold the view that individuals struggle against restrictive realism notions of power in order to preserve a sense of personal identity. The fact that this authority is being opposed in a way that compels people to choose a single identity or submit to a specific interpretation is what makes this resistance noteworthy.

2.2.5 In Psychology

Psychology has had to reevaluate how it conducts science and communicates its findings as a result of the dismantling of metaphysical frameworks and value systems. Identity and one's own self-concept have been emphasised in postmodern psychological theory. While some have suggested that psychology should give up its quest for morality in light of this, others contend that by incorporating postmodern philosophy into its methods, psychology may better the world by producing ideas that influence social and political change (Greenfield, 2000).

2.2.6 In Sociology

According to Preda (2001), postmodernism in sociology is "an extension of sociological inquiry," "new forms of sociological expression," "a form of social analysis," and "a kind of sociological sensibility." This idea first appeared in sociological theories since many sociologists began to assume that our society is moving towards a strange and novel sort in which modernity's conceptions are becoming muddled and deceptive. In sociology, postmodernism is also characterised by the concern that reality is neither absolute nor unified.

2.2.7 In Literature

Although postmodernism was not created by literary critics, literature may undoubtedly claim to be one of the most significant laboratories for postmodernism, according to Connor (2004). Postmodernism has become more important in literature as a result of the sheer volume of works that exhibit its traits. In addition to art, history, architecture, and cinema, etc., many researchers worked in the 1970s and 1980s in accordance with postmodernism. After that, postmodern theory suggests that there are numerous literary examples in literature from all around the world.

2.3 About Author

Elif Shafak, a writer from Turkey, was born in France Strasbourg and had her education at Colegio Británico de Madrid. As a result of her cosmopolitan upbringing, English has become her second language. She has written in both languages, and *The Bastard of Istanbul*, her second book written in English, was released in 2006. Shafak is her mother's first name, which means dawn, and Elif is the Turkish term for Aleph, the first letter of the Hebrew and Persian alphabets (a reference to Borges, whose novels are read by Armanoush Tchakhmakchian). This is the chosen name (and, presumably, genuine identity) of a writer who laments the fact that women frequently change their names, which do not accurately reflect who they are (Radu, 2015). Elif Shafak spent most of her youth and adolescence in Madrid, Spain, and Amman, Jordan. She has lived and worked in

Arizona in the past. She splits her time between London and Istanbul at the moment. She has published a number of books in recent years, including *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* (2004), *The Bastard of Istanbul* (2006), *Black Milk* (2007), *The Forty Rules of Love* (2009), *Honour* (2011), *The Architect Apprentice* (2013), *Three Daughters of Eve* (2016), and others. One of her most famous pieces is *Three Daughters of Eve*. Elif Shafak constantly mentions reading a lot as a youngster while talking about her life. We remember how, while writing his book, Cervantes got close to his main character, who turned from a ridiculous parody - meant to put an end to chivalresque mania - to almost a self-portrait (Radu, 2015). She mentions *Gulliver's Travels*, *Arabian Nights*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and *Don Quixote* among her favourite books, those that have influenced her.

Three Daughters of Eve, published in 2016, follows the lives of three women—"the believer, the confused, and the sinner"—as they attend Oxford University. Beginning with Peri, "the confused" protagonist, who grows up in a chaotic home because of the struggle between her secular, alcoholic father and her extreme, resentful mother, she portrays the tension that the three women endure over their identities as Muslim women. Peri, a young woman from Oxford, meets Shirin, a self-assured person from Iran who also recently relocated there. Peri and Shirin, who lack a feeling of community, encounter Mona, an Egyptian-American who openly describes herself as a religious feminist. All three ladies decide to attend the same God seminar offered by Azur, an influential lecturer who exposes contentious debates and concepts about God, good and evil, science and religion, and existence and death, in an effort to learn their actual views. However, they choose to attend the session at separate times. Shafak follows the three ladies as they seek their actual selves during the course of the book. Shirin refuses to acknowledge how her own opinions define her, but Mona is certain about her viewpoints. Instead, she starts a conversation at random to defend her actions and traits, which leads to harshness and a confrontation with

Mona. Peri, who is equally perplexed as to why she would watch her parents fight, spends the majority of the time watching Mona and Shirin. Similar to how she was with her parents, she is sandwiched between Shirin and Mona. As a result, Peri never understands the nature of her identity or who she really is (Al-Zahrani and Al-Sharqi, 2022).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Paradigm

In order to analyse Elif Shafak's novel *Three Daughters of Eve* through a postmodernist lens, the researchers have utilised a descriptive qualitative technique, and only qualitative information was gathered. To support the assertions made in the study, the researchers have emphasised the language and offered quotations from the original text.

3.2 Data Collection

The postmodernist conception of God and scepticism towards religion were investigated by the researchers in the novel. In conducting their study, the researchers used both primary and secondary data. The text of Elif Shafak's *Three Daughters of Eve* served as the foundation for the primary data, and for the collection of secondary data, the researchers consulted a variety of books, papers, research studies, and websites that dealt with the particular study issue.

From the beginning of the study, the researchers used the following stages:

Three Daughters of Eve was extensively reviewed by scholars. This reading was necessary to fully understand the narrative.

After giving the book a second reading, the researchers selected the content they felt was most noteworthy and pertinent to the study's goals.

The researchers gathered information regarding analysis from earlier studies, specific papers, books, and websites.

3.3 Data Analysis Method

Words rather than numbers make up qualitative data. Thematic analysis and content analysis

approaches are typically employed for the examination of qualitative data. Content analysis has been applied to the current study. Analysing qualitative data with thematic analysis is one way. This strategy is adaptable because it may be used in many study designs. Researchers frequently employ thematic analysis to examine patterns in qualitative participant data, including interview data. The main groups of data that are shared by many participants are called themes. On the other hand, content analysis is not limited to simply using interviews; it can also be used with other types of textual data. Data quantification occurs even in qualitative content analysis because content analysis aids researchers in tracking code occurrences. Finding specific words, topics, or concepts within a given set of qualitative data (i.e., text) is done through the use of a research technique called content analysis.

3.4 Theoretical Framework

The essential component of postmodernism, individualization, is one of its many components. According to Motak (2009), individualization has evolved into a crucial concept for comprehending how postmodernism has altered the values of Western religion. According to recent sociological research on religion in Europe, the emphasis is gradually shifting to patterns of individualization of belief, which encourage people to independently develop personal philosophies that would give their lives purpose in accordance with their unique outlook, interests, aspirations, and experiences. There is disagreement about the definition of the word "religious individualization," despite the fact that it is one of the criteria that is used most frequently in analyses of contemporary religiosity.

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Each character in the novel *Three Daughters of Eve* has his/her own unique perspective on the concept of God, shaped by his/her personal beliefs and experiences. The novel delves into their internal struggles, ideological conflicts and the search for meaning and identity in a complex world. The concept of God in the views of

different characters is as:

4.1 Mensur (Secular)

4.1.1 Perceives God Lonely as Human Beings

"Because He is lonely, Pericim, like me...like you. but hardly anyone goes to the trouble to get to know Him." (Shafak, 2016, p.38)

In these lines, Mensur is expressing his belief about God that God is a male and referred to as "He,". He believes that like human beings, God is lonely. He implies that he and Peri can relate to the loneliness of God. He believes that God may still want for deeper company or conversation despite having angels to converse with. He held the opinion that despite angels existing, they might not be able to fulfil God's desire for company or connection. Mensur thought that the differences between the prayers of people and the potential loneliness of God could be seen by the billions of people praying to God for diverse worldly wants such as success, wealth and material belongings (give me a Ferrari, do this do that).

4.1.2 Gender of God

"If I were a woman, I'd be twice as critical of religion..... 'Because God is a man.'"

(Shafak, 2016, p.87)

Mensur's viewpoint on the gendered components that constitute religious belief is shown in these words. He claims that because God is portrayed as a male, he (Mensur) would be even more critical of religion if he were a woman. He thinks that religion significantly contributed to the idea that God is a male. He contends that the teachings and interpretations of religious authority are to blame for this belief's establishment in society. He claims that by portraying God as a man, religious organizations have been influenced by masculine power structures and relationships.

4.1.3 Perception about Success

"I don't gamble, I don't steal, I don't accept bribes, I don't smoke.... Allah will spare His old creation this much misdeed." (Shafak, 2016, p.17)

Mensur holds the opinion that one should refrain

from behaviours widely regarded as immoral or negative, such as avoiding gambling, stealing, taking bribes, smoking, or having affairs with women. In many religious and cultural contexts, these actions are frequently viewed as unethical or evil. This demonstrates Mensur's belief that the only way to guarantee heavenly favour and forgiveness is given to an individual by keeping himself free from wrongdoing. These lines also demonstrate Mensur's lack of interest in the worship of Allah and his belief that success comes from abstaining from bad behaviour.

4.1.4 Opposes animal sacrifices

"Mensur was against the ritual of sacrificing animals... and no animals would have to die in the process." (Shafak, 2016, p.292)

In these lines, Mensur strongly objects to the practice of animal sacrifice. He thought it would be better to donate the money used to purchase a lamb to people in need. In this way, the hungry might satisfy their need and no animals would need to die in this process. Mensur had the view that by using the money to help those who were in need, the hungry may have their stomachs filled and people could take satisfaction in their kind deed. He questions the prevalent religious beliefs and argues that by allocating resources to assisting individuals, he idealizes a society where the well-being of people is given priority.

4.2 Selma (A staunch believer)

4.2.1 Views about Progress

"Westerners might be advanced in science and education and technology, but what about their morals?" (Shafak, 2016, p.99)

This line reflects Selma's belief that material progress does not necessarily connect to moral superiority. This statement of Selma suggests a belief that Western society has made progress in the fields of technology, education and science, which are always considered to be associated with the development of a society but in the views of Selma, it is not as such. However, she questions the state of the moral values of Western society and implies that these advancements may not be accompanied by a development in ethical conduct. According to Selma, everything should be viewed through the

prism of Islamic teaching.

4.2.2 Views about Commands of God

“There was a reason why God had wanted things to be this way, she said. ‘If only you cared to read the Holy Book, you’d understand.” (Shafak, 2016, p.292)

These lines reflect Selma's belief that religious texts include the solutions and justifications for all of life's occurrences. Selma claims that the Quran's teachings offer insights into the purposes and desires of God. She thinks that a thorough study of these texts can help people gain a better understanding of the divine plan and the causes behind the world's order and structure. She suggests that a lack of familiarity or commitment to religious texts can result in a lack of understanding by urging her husband, Mensur, to read the Holy Book (as her husband was against animal sacrifice).

4.2.3 Extreme Religious Caution

“She now not only declined to shake hands with the opposite sex... even if he had vacated it for her.” (Shafak, 2016, p.19)

This line reflects perception of Selma regarding the separation of gender and her devotion to practices that maintain religious guidelines. Selma's refusal to shake hands with people of the opposite sex and her refusal to sit on a bus seat that had previously been occupied by a man are choices that were influenced by her religious convictions. There are Islamic teachings that advocate keeping unrelated men and women physically apart in order to maintain distance. By declining to shake hands with men, Selma seeks to uphold her religious principles and preserve her personal boundaries when it comes to dealing with men.

4.2.4 Love for Religious Items

“One by one packages were unwrapped: dates, honey, miswak, colognes, prayer mats, musk, rosaries, scarves and Zamzam in tiny bottles.” (Shafak, 2016, p.74)

This line demonstrates Selma's attraction and love for various religious symbols and objects. At the same time, this line shows the following religious convictions when someone is coming

from Macca or Madina. The act of opening these packages demonstrates Selma's adherence to religious customs and the importance she attaches to these objects. Within the context of Islam and Muslim culture, each item in these lines has a religious or symbolic meaning. Dates, honey and Zamzam water are often consumed during religious occasions because they are thought to bring blessings. In the context of Islam, they are regarded as symbols of sacred nutrition and have spiritual significance.

4.3 Prof. Azur

4.3.1 Respect Everyone's view related to God

“But God had to be discussed in a circle” (Shafak, 2016, p.221)

In a circle, everyone's input is valued equally and everyone's opinions are taken into consideration. Prof. Azur is emphasising the need for respectful discussion when dealing with issues of faith and the concept of God by saying that God had to be discussed in a circle. It also implies that discovering God necessitates collaborative work. It also emphasises the importance of taking into account everyone's viewpoints when debating matters of faith and God. One opinion should not be taken as the only valid one. Everyone has the same right to express their opinions about faith, religion and God.

4.3.2 Solitude in Seeking God

“The best way to approach ‘the question of God’ ... one was more likely to commune with the devil than with God.” (Shafak, 2016, p.341)

These lines convey the idea that solitude, not religion or scepticism, is the best way to approach the question of God. He makes the claim that there is a rationale behind why ascetics and hermits have historically withdrawn into the desert in order to find spiritual enlightenment. Professor Azur contends that it is simpler to be influenced by evil forces like the devil when one is around other people but when one is in solitude, one can have a sincere relationship with God without being influenced by others.

4.3.3 Balance between Faith and Doubt

“One wishes to deny faith, the other doubt... We celebrate it. That’s the way of the Third Path.” (Shafak, 2016, p.180)

Prof. Azur emphasises that doubt or uncertainty in religious matters can actually be a blessing. He thinks that doubts should be celebrated rather than suppressed. There is a chance to learn new truths if one is uncertain about religious matters. Opportunities for exploration, development and discovery are presented by uncertainty. It promotes a deeper understanding of the world by encouraging people to reflect on and discuss various viewpoints. Professor Azur suggests that these two seemingly opposing viewpoints play complementary roles in his comprehension of the world by saying that he needs both faith and doubt. By allowing both faith and doubt, Prof. Azur called it a “Third Path.” Given that both faith and doubt exist, this third path emphasises a balanced viewpoint on both.

4.4 Peri (The confused)

4.4.1 Religious Pluralism/ Different Views of God

“I think God comes in many pieces and colours... Or maybe I'll build nothing.” (Shafak, 2016, p.39)

These lines demonstrate Peri's belief in the individual's subjectivity and personal construction of God. Peri views God as something that can be moulded and built in accordance with personal convictions, targets and experiences. In the views of Peri, God can be assembled and customized, allowing for various interpretations and representations. These lines also convey Peri's idea that God can be perceived as peaceful and all-loving, showing traits of peace and kindness.

4.4.2 Diversity on the Concept of God in a Family

“there was no fight more hurtful than a family fight, and no family fight more hurtful than one over God” (Shafak, 2016, p.21)

This line shows that the Peri family is deeply divided over religion. Peri believes that when family conflicts are based on religious beliefs,

they are especially painful and challenging to resolve. According to Peri, there is a chance of disagreements over religious issues even within families. There are religious differences even though they share a single shelter. Conflicts over religious customs, traditions, or interpretations can become problematic when family members have strong religious beliefs.

4.4.3 Belief in Unseen God

“Peri slid down in her chair as a new thought entered her mind... but should we still believe in Him?” (Shafak, 2016, p.37)

These lines demonstrate the difficulties with faith that not only Peri but many other people face. There may be uncertainty and doubt when one cannot physically perceive God. However, faith in God frequently goes beyond concrete evidence and is based on subjective perceptions, mystical insights and logical justification. It is philosophical to consider whether or not to believe in God despite the absence of direct sensory perception. This phenomenon is approached in various ways by various people and religious traditions. Some argue that faith itself is a form of knowledge that go above any evidence while others are the other way around.

4.4.4 God as a Lego Set

“God is a Lego set.” (Shafak, 2016, p.39)

By comparing God to a Lego set, Peri emphasizes the subjectivity of religious beliefs. The word Lego highlights that people have the capacity to construct their own understanding of God by arranging different religious pieces to form their unique viewpoint. It highlights the diversity of religious interpretations. The idea behind the Lego set illustrates the adaptability and flexibility of religious convictions, emphasising that each individual has the freedom to create their own conception of faith based on their particular experiences and reflections. She understands that everyone has a different perspective on religion and God and that these perspectives can change and develop over time.

4.5 Mona (Believer)

4.5.1 Accountability of Human Beings to Allah

“Only humans have consciousness. It’s the divine order. That’s why Allah holds us humans responsible for our behaviour.” (Shafak, 2016, p.213)

These lines reflect Mona's belief in the unique nature of human consciousness and its connection to the concept of accountability in the eyes of Allah. According to Mona, humans are the only beings capable of consciousness. In other words, she believes that humans possess self-awareness, the ability to think, reason and have subjective experiences. Here, Mona expresses her belief that because humans have consciousness, Allah, as the divine authority, holds them accountable for their actions.

4.5.2 Struggles as a Muslim

“I’ve been bullied, called names, pushed off a bus, treated as if I were dumb... It’s just a small piece of cloth.” (Shafak, 2016, p.310)

These lines highlight the challenges and prejudice Mona faces due to her choice of religious attire. Mona's statement reflects her frustration and pain at being subjected to various forms of mistreatment solely because she wears a headscarf. She expresses how the negative treatment she has endured, including bullying, verbal abuse and physical aggression, has deeply affected her. She conveys a sense of injustice and seeks to highlight the disparity between the significance of her headscarf as a personal choice and the disproportionate mistreatment she receives because of it. Mona explains to Shirin that although the headscarf may appear as a small piece of cloth to others, it holds great personal and religious significance for her. She emphasize that wearing the headscarf is a reflection of her faith, identity and commitment to her beliefs.

4.5.3 Mona Faith’s dilemma

“I’ve studied the Prophet’s life... I don’t even know why I agreed to move in with you!” (Shafak, 2016, p.312-313)

These lines show her deep connection to her

religious beliefs and her frustration with Shirin who may not understand or appreciate the significance of her faith. Mona's statement reveals her personal journey of studying and learning about the life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). As she delves into the Prophet's life, she discovers qualities and characteristics that she admires and finds inspiring. This admiration serves to strengthen her faith and deepens her connection to her religious beliefs. Furthermore, Mona expresses that her faith brings her a sense of peace and tranquillity.

4.6 Shirin (Sinner)

4.6.1 Shirin's Scepticism Journey

“But I really worked hard for my scepticism... Yeah, I’m proud of my journey.” (Shafak, 2016, p.312)

Shirin takes pride in her decision to adopt scepticism. She asserts that she put a lot of struggle and courage into developing her scepticism. This suggests that Shirin actively explored concepts, analyzed convictions and questioned social norms. She actively participated in forming her worldview rather than simply accepting what was offered to her by others. Shirin emphasizes the fact that she struggled to develop her scepticism. She disassociated herself from gatherings and congregations, demonstrating her desire for independent and individual thought. This suggests that Shirin was not solely influenced by group thinking or societal pressures, but rather went through struggles and reflection to develop her own beliefs.

4.6.2 Frustration with Religious Violence

“Innocents slaughtered,’ cut in Shirin almost shouting... believe they’ll go to paradise if they kill in the name of God.” (Shafak, 2016, p.217)

In this statement, Shirin expresses her frustration and rage at the killing of innocent people in the name of God. Shirin's outburst demonstrates how strongly she disagrees with the notion that some people engage in violent behaviour and murder in the hope that doing so will earn them a place in paradise. She calls these people "depraved bastards" to emphasize how

despicable she finds their behaviour and improper use of religious principles. Shirin draws attention to the tragic loss of innocent lives by emphasizing the phrase "Innocents slaughtered," suggesting that the victims were unfairly targeted and that their deaths were senseless.

4.6.3 Religious Extremism Concerns

"Hello-o, wake up, sister... Maybe not mine, but definitely yours. Doesn't that bother you?" (Shafak, 2016, p.308)

Shirin's attempt to alert her friend or sister to the destruction committed by extremists who claim to be loyal to their shared religion. Shirin emphasizes their shared religious background by calling her companion "sister," demonstrating that these actions are being carried out by people who claim to belong to the same religion. Shirin clarifies that she does not agree with such extreme views by saying, "Maybe not mine, but definitely yours." This implies that even though she calls herself a Muslim, she does not identify with the extreme kinds of faith that encourage violence or bad conduct. "Doesn't that bother you?" Shirin asked. She expresses worry about her friend's or sister's indifference to these disturbing acts carried out in the name of religion.

4.6.4 Shirin Views on Parda/ Scarf

"First, it's just one, then it's ten, then millions... your small piece of cloth sent us into exile!" (Shafak, 2016, p.310)

According to this statement, the practice of wearing a headscarf begins with a single individual before gaining acceptance and spreading more widely. It emphasises the idea that a seemingly insignificant action can have a lasting impact and ultimately affect a large number of people. This could be seen as a reflection of the increasing power of religious conservatism in Iran, where the wearing of headscarves by women became a more common requirement. Shirin further states that the cumulative effect of individual choices to wear headscarves suggests that when a significant number of people adopt the practice, it can create a social and cultural environment where

wearing a headscarf becomes the norm or even mandatory.

5. CONCLUSION

Elif Shafak in her novel *Three Daughters of Eve* discussed characters who represented various religious ideologies. The analysis of the novel revealed different religious beliefs and concepts of God in different contexts. The religious concepts and beliefs of Selma, Mensur, Azur, Mona, Peri and Shirin have been analyzed. Through this novel, Shafak revealed the religious issues of modern-day society.

The character Selma is portrayed as a staunch believer in the novel by Elif Shafak. Selma is depicted as having a strong commitment to Islam and follows its principles and norms in every aspect of her life. She is a committed and religious woman who has strong convictions about her religion. She is a devout Muslim who faithfully and consistently practices her faith. The character of Selma offers an opposing point of view to the other characters throughout the entire novel, especially Peri, who is more uncertain and doubtful of her own beliefs. Selma not only is devoted towards Islam but also she is seen as a character who loves the sacred thing of Islam. Selma finds stability and direction from her firm commitment to her religion.

Contrary to the beliefs of Selma, her husband, named Mensur is portrayed as a secular character. The conversation of Mensur with Peri and the other characters inside his family reveals his approach towards his religious beliefs as a secular. His character reveals the diverse belief system that exists in a society, even inside a single family. Mensur is seen as a character whose belief is that success is possible by stopping doing wrong things instead of worshipping God or following the commands of religion.

On the other hand, the main character Peri is depicted as a character who is confused and uncertain about her religious beliefs and identity. Peri is a confused character because she has experienced various worldviews and contrasting points of view throughout her life. Peri's interactions with Mona, Shirin and Prof Azur expose her to a variety of ideologies and

beliefs, which causes her to doubt her own beliefs. Uncertainty of Peri towards religion and the concept of God is particularly apparent in the novel. She struggles with her upbringing in a traditional Turkish family and the conflict between her desire for intellectual exploration and her religious upbringing. Peri's journey is characterised by an ongoing search for understanding and clarity throughout the course of the novel. In an effort to get the answers she seeks, she attends lectures given by Professor Azur who teaches a course on God and theology. Her uncertainty is only increased by these intellectual disagreements. Every passing time increases her doubts.

Another character, Shirin is depicted as an atheist in the novel by Elif Shafak, who does not believe in the existence of God and rejects organized religion provided to an individual in inheritance. She holds a critical point of view towards her religious beliefs and challenges traditional beliefs. She is in the view of understanding the world through rational and scientific reasoning. Throughout the novel, Shirin communicates and disagrees with other characters, especially Mona, who has strong religious beliefs. Their different perspectives and beliefs contribute to the exploration of spirituality and faith in the novel.

On the other hand, Mona is portrayed as a devoted Muslim who appreciates her spiritual practises and beliefs. Mona is shown to be an adherent of the Islamic religion in the novel. The character of Mona represents a traditional and religious point of view. She adheres to the fundamentals and teachings of Islam and has strong religious beliefs. Mona's religious convictions serve as a source of comfort, direction and determination for her throughout the course of the novel. Her devotion constantly stands in contrast to the points of view of other characters who hold dissimilar beliefs or have doubts about religious institutions.

Mona's character stands for the sincerity and dedication of those who fervently uphold their religious beliefs.

In a nutshell, the novel *Three Daughters of Eve* is a wonderful lesson regarding faith and doubts,

the changes of personal struggle and the conflict between modernity and tradition.

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