

Critical Feminist Discourse and Authorial Identity in Contemporary Women's Writers: Woolf, Daneshvar, and Farrokhzad

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Abstract

Literature and culture are a propitious way to connect human life and the world and feminism is a universal affair and not to be limited to a society, geographical region, or time. Comparative literature is also a sphere of literary study in which the works of two/more two writers from different languages and nationalities are compared with one another and acts as a social, cultural, and literary brigade and cycle. This article explores feminism and femininity with an image of authorial identity in three selected modern women writers' works: Virginia Woolf, Simin Daneshvar, and Forough Farrokhzad from the schools of thought and points of view, which affected the writers' thoughts. The survey and analysis of their works report that the sharing point between feministic literature and the schools of thought lies in the attempt to revive women's rights, portray women's oppression, and introduce their innocence as well as their authorial identity and position in a patriarchal system regarding the sort of approach to human and life. The present study extends a synthesis of feminism and realism techniques to investigate women's status within these women's writings. The results show an independent authorial identity, feminine attitudes, realist perspective, existentialist thoughts and human-centered view in a patriarchal society are authorial recycling forms among Daneshvar, Farrokhzad, and Woolf's artwork borderless.

Keywords: Woolf, Farrokhzad, Daveshtar, Feminism, Feminine, Identity, Existentialism

1. Introduction

In the feminist discourse, the extension of feminism into theoretical, fictional, poetic, and philosophical discourse is employed to understand the nature of gender inequality. This study examines women's social roles, experiences, interests, emotions, chores, and feminist politics in the field of feminism. The concepts and themes of feminist theory explore in feminism include discrimination, objectification, oppression, patriarchy, stereotyping, and aesthetics. This theory also analyzes gender inequality. The history of Feminist literary criticism has varied from classic works of female authors such as George Eliot, Virginia Woolf, (Humm, 2003), and Margaret Fuller to recent theoretical work in women's studies and gender studies by "third-wave" authors (Barry, 2002).

Though the basis of the plot is Woolf's speech at a conference on women's literature, she figures out there is still a long way to go for women and so-called 'women's issues' in creative space (Woolf, 2012). Woolf suggests both rhetorical appeals and thoughtful descriptive language argue for the role of women and their limitations in society and professional life.

Femininity in women writers and its reflection and woman's roles in their writing is influenced by cultural and biological factors. The defining qualities of femininity are not universally identical, some patterns emerge such as gentleness, sensitivity, caring, compassion, empathy, sweetness, tolerance, deference nurturance, and sufferance are characteristics, which have traditionally been cited as feminine (Vetterling-Braggin, 1982; Worewell, 2001; Murray, 2000; Vorrath and Brendtro, 1985; Kalat, 2007).

The role of literature in culture and human life is remarkable. Poetry is the mirror of the history of literature of the countries and the novel reflects the pain, suffering, fears, hopes, and passions of humans. In addition to the attractiveness of the text, this literary style brings clear concepts from the writer's attitude, creativity, and imagination as a result; it provides a good place to express the author's worldview. Thus, using comparative literature can examine the similarities and differences, and influential factors on the authors' thought. Each writer uses effective literary methods in expressing her/his views. The novel is one of the many forms, which many writer women have used to describe the tangible facts of society. However, poetry also possesses its position in this way. The present study attempts to respond to the following questions by investigating the influence of the social perspectives of the three famous women writers: Virginia Woolf, Simin Daneshvar, and Forough Farrokhzad:

- What definitions and style do Woolf, Daneshvar, and Farrokhzad give on the concept of feminism and feminist discourse?
- How do the authorial identity and originality of a woman as a human being shape these writers' attitudes?
- Can the readers experience a unique synthesis of feminism and existentialism in the selected contemporary women's writing?

Virginia Woolf is a prominent figure and symbol of feminism and feminist criticism, her works have since drowned much attention and widespread commentary for "inspiring feminism" so far, and no end exists for her works. This study focuses on aspects of her writing style in "A Room of One's Own" as an important feminist text regarding women's problems in society and this essay argues for both a literal and metaphorical space for women writers in a male-dominated literary tradition. In this essay, Woolf writes the much-quoted dictum, "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction." *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* are her other novels which include women's subjects are explored in this research.

Simin Daneshvar (1921 –2012) was an Iranian academic, novelist, fiction writer, and translator, largely regarded as the first major Iranian woman novelist. Daneshvar took several first places. In 1948, her collection of Persian short stories, the first collection of Iran, was published. The first novel by an Iranian woman was *Savushun*, which became a bestseller. Daneshvar's *Playhouse*, a collection of five stories and two autobiographical works, is the first translated collection of stories by an Iranian author. As the wife of the famous Iranian writer Jalal al-Ahmad, she had a profound influence on his writing and wrote the book *"Dawn of Jalal"* in memory of her husband. Daneshvar was also a good translator; his translations include Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. Her last book is currently lost and was supposed to be the last book of her trilogy, which started with "the lost island". Daneshvar as a female Iranian storyteller has special attention to reflecting women's issues in her works.

One of the most well-known women in the history of Persian literature, Forough Farrokhzad (1934 –1967)) Milani, 2016) was born in Tehran to a middle-class family of seven children. She married at 17 and divorced within three years, painfully and unwillingly giving her only son to her husband and his family. She never married again. Instead, Farrokhzad turned to poetry and film and led an independent life. Farrokhzad was an influential Iranian poet and film director. (Dabashi, 2012). She was a controversial modernist poet and an iconoclast, (Elton and Abkar, 2006) writing from a female point of view (Afary, 2009; Paidar, 1997). Farrokhzad's poetry was banned for more than a decade after the Islamic Revolution (Elton and Ali Akbar, 2006) A brief literary biography of Forough, Michael Hillmann's *A lonely woman: Forough Farrokhzad's poetry* was published in 1987 (Afary, 2009). Farzaneh Milani's work (1992) *Veils and words: the emerging voices of Iranian women writers* included a chapter about her. Nasser Saffarian has directed three documentaries about her life: *The Mirror of the Soul* (2000), *The Green Cold* (2003), and *Summit of the Wave* (2004), and Sholeh Wolpé (2007) has written a short biography of Farrokhzad's life in *"Sin--Selected Poems of Forough Farrokhzad"*.

A short introduction to the social and political context of Iranian society in the 20th century would be useful to make. In Iran in the late 20th century, similar to many other societies, ethnolinguistic affiliations, and provincial and tribal ties, often compete with national identity. Despite these diverse identities, a deep-rooted cultural awareness and historical awareness of continuity in the country's long and special history served as a strong unifying force that helped overcome various divisive currents. The findings of a national survey, conducted in the provincial capitals of 28 provinces in 2001 show people's strong ties to their "Iranian" identity. In answering the question, "to what extent are you proud of being an Iranian?" 68 percent of respondents indicated that they highly value their Iranian identity, including 35 percent who answered "fully" and 33 percent who answered "very high". Furthermore, 27 percent of respondents valued their Iranian identity moderately too highly, with 19 percent at the higher level, and 8 percent at the medium level. Only 5 percent of respondents had a lower level. When the sample was divided according to respondents' level of education, the sense of national identity was higher among the educated: 92 percent of those with no education or primary education expressed a greater sense of national identity compared to 86 percent (Wezarat-e Ersad-e Eslami, 2020).

There are also many illiterate people who know verses from the Divans of Hafez and Saadi and the Shahnameh of Ferdowsi by heart and often refer to them in their daily social discourse (Encyclopædia Iranica, 2022). During the last two centuries, women played an important role in Persian literature. Contemporary Iranian poets include Simin Behbahani, Forough Farrokhzad, Parvin Etesami. Simin Behbahani wrote passionate love poems as well as narrative poetry enriched by a mother's love for all people (Iranian Studies, 2021). Behbahani used to be the president of the Writers' Association of Iran and was nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1997.

These women writers span two main periods: the Pahlavi dynasty and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Pahlavi Shahs ruled Iran from 1925 to 1979 and implemented many reforms regarding women's rights. An example of Reza Shah's early reform was the "Forcible Exposure of Women by the Special Decree of January 8, 1936", which, as the name indicates, included the forceful removal of the hijab by the police even from religious women (Pappe, 2005). The participation of women in social life has generally increased. Iranian women have increasingly participated in the economy, the education sector, and the workforce. Literacy has also improved. Examples of women's participation: Women received high officials such as ministers, artists, judges, scientists, athletes, etc. During the reign of Mohammad Reza Shah, the successor of Reza Shah, many other important reforms were implemented. For example, in 1963, the Shah gave women the right to vote, and soon after, women were elected to the Majlis (Parliament) and the Upper House and were appointed as judges and cabinet ministers (Pappe, 2005). In 1967, Iran's family law was also reformed, which improved the position of women in Iranian society. It was added to the Civil Code and was intended to protect women, children, and female divorcees. The general goal of the reforms was to promote equality between men and women in society. After the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Iran became an Islamic Republic. During the post-revolutionary government, Iranian women gained more opportunities in some areas. One of the striking features of the revolution was the large participation of women from traditional backgrounds in the demonstrations that led to the overthrow of the monarchy. Iranian women, who gained self-confidence and higher education during the Pahlavi era, participated in anti-Shah demonstrations to overthrow the monarchy. The culture of women's education was established during the revolution, so even after the revolution, a large number of women entered the civil service and universities (UNGEI, 2006), and in 1996 fourteen women were elected members of the Islamic faith. Women encountered some paradoxical problems. Women gained influence in certain fields but still faced some political obstacles to achieving equality with men. For example, women were allowed to serve in the military, often in paramilitary groups, but were restricted in many areas of education. However, after a while, women have been allowed to study in most majors in higher education.

Contemporary writers on women in Persian literature include Simin Daneshvar, Mahshid Amirshahi, Shahrnush Parsipur, Moniru Ravanipur, and Zoya Pirzad. Daneshvar's work spans pre- and post-revolutionary Iranian literature. His first collection of short stories "Atash-e khamush" ("Extinguished Fire") was published in 1948. It was the first collection of short stories published by a woman in Iran. In 1969, he published the novel Savushun (The Mourners of Siyavash), which reflected the Iranian experience of modernity in the 20th century. It was the first novel published by a woman in Iran. Daneshvar was the first president of the Union of Writers of Iran. Shahrnush Parsipur became popular in the 1980s after the publication of his short stories. Her 1990 novel Zanan begin-e Mardan (Women without Men) dealt with issues of sexuality and identity, but it was banned. The works of Moniru Ravanipur include the collection of short stories Kanizu (The Slave) and his novel Ahl-e gharq (The People of Gharq). Ravanipur is known for its focus on the rituals, customs, and traditions of coastal life (Golbarg Bashi, 2006). However, two of the most influential Iranian women writers, Daneshvar and Farrokhzad, were selected for study in that study and were compared to the main literary figure Woolf.

A common concern of writers like Virginia Woolf, Simin Daneshvar, and Forough Farrokhzad is to ignore the authorial identity and existential position of women in society, which is represented as feminine writing in the pervasive layers of their works. Woolf and Farrokhzad are two important figures of feminist criticism who presented their theories about the rights and ideas of women. Simin Daneshvar also describes the stories of the self-confidence of Iranian women. Their similarities, differences, and positions on the defense of women's rights can be explored by comparing the critical perspectives of the three authors.

The reflection on the ideas of Woolf, Daneshvar, and Farrokhzad in their work illuminates the significance of this study. This study used a library method and content analysis. There are certainly comparative studies on gender and authors, e.g. Elliott (2017) analyzes the gender of authors and protagonists of English-language serials in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. From such a comparative feminist point of view, the work of these women writers has not been done so far. The most important studies were as follows:

Many studies were done on Woolf's feminism (e.g. Shihada, 2015; AlGweirien, 2017; Black, 2004; Kaufman, 2018; Kathmann, 2012), but no comparative studies with some Iranian writers. Hasan Li and Salari (2003) examine signs of feminism in the works of Simin Daneshvar. Ghobadi (2010) reviews Daneshvar's dominant discourse analysis of Suvashon. The reflection of the mother paradigm in Farrokhzad's poetry has been analyzed (Mahmoudi and Jamshidi, 2012). Bakhtiari (2017) studied the image of women in Farrokhzad's poetry and thought.

This research was conducted through a comparative literary study. Comparative literature is an academic field that studies literature and cultural expression across linguistic, national, and scientific boundaries. Comparative literature "plays a role similar to the study of international relations, but works with languages and artistic traditions to understand cultures 'from the inside'" (Brown University, 2022). While most frequently practiced with works of different languages, comparative literature is also performed on works of the same language if the works originate from different nations or cultures among which that language is spoken. The characteristically intercultural and transnational field of comparative literature concerns itself with the

relationship between literature, broadly defined, and other spheres of human activity, including history, politics, philosophy, art, and science. Unlike other forms of literary studies, comparative literature emphasizes an interdisciplinary analysis of social and societal relationships, cultural production, economy, political dynamics, cultural movements, historical changes, religious differences, urban environment, international relations, public policy, and sciences (Princeton University, 2020).

Femininity (girlishness, womanliness, or womanhood) is a set of attributes, behaviors, and roles generally associated with girls and women. Femininity is partially socially constructed and is made up of both socially defined and biologically created factors (Wijngaard, 1997; Martin and Finn, 2010; Dunphy, 2000; Joan, 2012). This makes it distinct from the definition of the biological female sex, (The World Health Organization, 2017; Joan, 2012) as both males and females can exhibit feminine traits. Traits traditionally cited as feminine include gentleness, empathy, and sensitivity (Vetterling-Braggin, 1982; Worell, 2001; Murray, 2000). However, characteristics associated with femininity vary according to place and context and are influenced by various social and cultural factors (Witt, 2010). Feminism is the belief in the social, economic, and political equality of the sexes. Although largely originating in the West, feminism is manifested worldwide and is represented by various institutions committed to acting on behalf of women's rights and interests (Brunell and Burkett, 2005).

This way of thinking and criticizing works can be remarked to have changed the way literary texts are viewed and studied, as well as changing and expanding the canon of what is commonly taught. It is used a lot in Greek myths (Plain, 2007). Traditionally, feminist literary criticism has tried to examine old texts in the literary canon with new horizons. Specific goals of feminist criticism include both the development and discovery female tradition of writing, and rediscovering of old texts, while also interpreting the symbolism of women's writing so that it will not be lost or ignored by the male point of view and resisting sexism inherent in the majority of mainstream literature. These goals, along with the intent to analyze women writers and their writings from a female perspective, increase awareness of the sexual politics of language and style (Tuttle, 1986). Mehrpouyan et al. (2014) stated Feminism has become a dominant force in contemporary literary criticism and it has made considerable advancement during a small period. Feminism is difficult to define precisely because there are disputes between feminists.

Feminism generally focuses on the history of male dominance and oppression in all aspects of life (Mehrpouyan et al., 2014). Women are writing more today than ever before. These writings vary by class, ethnicity, race, age, and cultural and linguistic background. They are more educated than their predecessors are and have the advantage of using the works of a rich tradition of male and female writers. In Daneshvar's stories, although the connection between male and female is dominant and defeated, it is moreover based on respect for the parties e.g. Yousef and his wife in Suvashun. Feminist Realism is an exclusive term to the critical literary world. Many scholars are aware of critical realism, recognizing it as a strong alternative to the poststructuralist perspectives, which presently dominate feminism and gender studies. This trend has coincided with increased interest among feminist theorists in the issues of ontology, materiality, and nature, which have always been at the heart of critical realist interventions (Gunnarsson et al., 2016). Yet, critical realism and feminist theory are critical emancipatory, and the critical realist approach continues to have a marginal role in feminist and gender studies discussions. The field of critical realism has remained decidedly 'masculine' in nature, both in the sense that men dominate it and in terms of the issues with which critical realists have most commonly concerned themselves. Recent critical realist feminist work, the International Association of Critical Realism's adoption of a proactive policy to enhance the representation of women in its organs and activities, and the growing critical realist preoccupation (particularly in Bhaskar's philosophy of meta-reality) with historically 'feminine' topics such as love, mark a potential shift away from these trends (Gunnarsson et al., 2016). The most important aim of this study on Critical Realism, Gender, and Feminism is hence to intensify and refine the conversations between critical realism and feminist theory, and gender studies. This research can encourage more critical realist work on feminism and gender, and increase exchanges between critical realism and current forms of feminist theory and gender studies. The contributions are organized as productive dialogues between critical realism and more established gender studies and feminist perspectives (Swahnberg, Gillman, Griffiths, and Smirthwaite). The most influential contributions of feminist theory have centered on epistemological concerns, especially the interrogation of 'malestream' notions of objectivity and scientific truth (Gunnarsson et al., 2016). In relation to realism, feminist theory is clear: realism is the opposite of achieving gender equality, and in discourse and practice, and even in war and security instruments, patriarchy remains a central theme. States are actors and the individual does not matter much. If the individual is denigrated, the female individual is even less recognized, which makes feminist discussion impossible. Realism's pessimistic approach to international relations ignores the role of individuals. Today, feminist theory brings new perspectives to international relations.

Existentialism is a tradition of philosophical inquiry associated mainly with certain 19th-20th century European philosophers who, despite profound doctrinal differences, (Crowell, 2010; Macquarrie, 1972; Honderich, 1995) shared the belief that philosophical thinking begins with the human subject not only the thinking subject, but the acting, feeling, living human individual (Macquarrie, 1972) While the predominant value of existentialist thought is commonly acknowledged to be freedom, its primary virtue is authenticity (Thomas, 2006).

Many existentialists have also regarded traditional systematic or academic philosophies, in both style and content, as too abstract and remote from concrete human experience (Breisach, 1962; Kaufmann, 1956). Kierkegaard (1992) is generally considered to have been the first existentialist philosopher, Crowell, 2010; Gordon, 2004; McDonald, 2009) though he did not use the term existentialism (Kierkegaard, 1992). He proposed that each individual—not society or religion—is solely responsible for giving meaning to life and living it passionately and sincerely, or "authentically" (Watts and Michael, 2003; Walter, 1969) Existentialism became popular in the years following World War II, and strongly influenced many disciplines

besides philosophy, including theology, drama, art, literature, and psychology (Guignon and Pereboom, 2001). Simone de Beauvoir, a major existentialist who spent much of her life as a companion of Sartre, wrote about feminist and existentialist ethics in works including *The Other Sex* and *The Ethics of Suspicion*. Although often overlooked due to her relationship with Sartre (Debra, 2010), de Beauvoir integrated existentialism with other forms of thinking such as feminism, unheard of at the time, resulting in alienation from fellow writers such as Camus (Akhter, 2014). On the other hand, Mehrpouyan (2022) highlights examining the role and place of women in the writing of stories of any country can clarify the cultural, social, and civilizational situation of that society by studying comparative literature.

2. Research Methodology

This study was conducted through descriptive-analytical using library sources. Data were collected library method, a step-by-step process used to gather data, through the selected writers' original works, books, essays, analogous studies, and papers on identifying and analyzing feminism within Woolf's selected works: *A Room of One's Own*; *Mrs. Dalloway*; *To the Lighthouse*; *Orlando* Daneshvar's works: *Savushun*; the trilogy *Wandering*; *Wandering Island* (*Island of Wandering*); *Wandering Cameleer*; Farrokhzad's works: *Captive*; *Wall*; *Rebellious*; *Rebirth*; *Belief at the beginning of the cold season*. Many studies were conducted on Woolf's works but no comparative study presents an analysis of the conventions of contemporary feminism among Iranian women writers in the Middle East.

In light of the objectives of the study, the survey of feminine, feminism, and feminist discourse was investigated in each writer then a mode of critical discourse, which focuses on culturally gender-determined differences in the literary interpretation of their works was carried out. The content of Woolf, Daneshvar, and Farrokhzad's works was done as a research technique to follow and track replicable and valid inferences on femininity, feminism, and women's roles and authorial identity by interpreting textual materials of their works and treating the female characters. In the study, feminism is considered as a movement and school of thought, which establishes a frame for discourse and identity. In the following, the researchers develop the concepts of feminism and its meaning in more depth, spelling out how they feed into feminist discourse and authorial identity as shown in a conceptual framework (Figure 1).

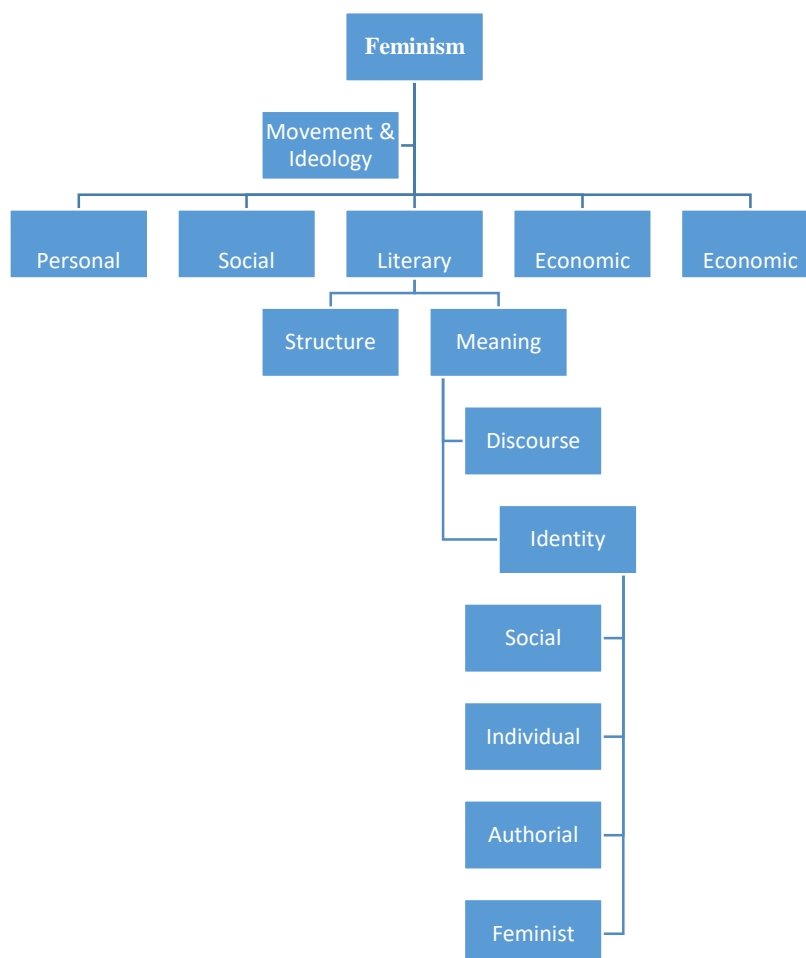


Fig.1. Conceptual Framework of Feminism and Relevant Discourse and Identity

Then some threads of Realism and Existentialism were found in common. Hence, the data were analyzed in a unique synthesis of Feminism, Realism, and Existentialism modes on different literary elements. Ultimately, the researchers highlighted key findings in the analysis and result by noting important implications and contextualizing the research problem in the conclusion section.

3. Critical Feminist Discourse and Authorial Identity

3.1. Woolf and Feminist Writing

During her lifetime, Woolf wrote many books and articles about apartheid. Above all, the writer paid attention to equality. Woolf also gave some lectures on women and literature. Woolf wrote *Orlando* (1928) and *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Woolf's first book focuses on feminism, in which the writer dwelled on women and literature; in addition, she described the hardships and challenges the women have encountered. In *Orlando*, Woolf explains the struggle and conflict between genders. The precision in describing the details of women's characteristics can be observed in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Woolf's aim in her novels does not to create any kind of confrontation between man and woman, but she wants more independence for women in the intellectual and economic aspects. A woman who, as she remarks in *A Room of One's Own*, wants to write a story, has to have money and room for it. Before World War II and long before the second wave of feminism, Virginia Woolf argued that the experiences of women, especially in the women's movement, could be the basis for transformative social change. Virginia Woolf admitted that her premises were suspect in the great literary canon (Verwaayen, 2014). Grounding Virginia Woolf's feminist beliefs in the everyday world, Black (2004) reclaims *Three Guineas* as a major feminist document. Rather than a book only about war, Black considers it the best, clearest presentation of Woolf's feminism. Woolf's changing representation of feminism in publications between 1920 and 1940 corresponds to her participation in the contemporary women's movement (suffragism and its successors and the pacifist, working-class women's cooperative guild). Black guides us through Woolf's feminist connections and writings, including her public letters of the 1920s, as well as *A Society*, *A Room of One's Own*, and the introductory letter to *Life as We Know It*. This female writer assesses the long development of *Three Guineas* from the 1931 lecture and how the book's format and illustrations functioned as a feminist subversion of male scholarship. Virginia Woolf as a Feminist concludes with a discussion of the continuing relevance of Woolf's feminism for third-millennium politics (Black, 2004). Boileau (2021) argues that Woolf's novel reveals contradictions that are not considered feminist because they do not reflect a strong political commitment in which the heroines are considered advocates of the cause. However, these contradictions are feminist if feminism is recognized as a question, not a solution, placed on the ability of women to participate in some kind of collective action, and if feminism is based on finding ways to define women outside of patriarchal standards. This echoes back to the question of Woolf's inclusion in the tradition of realist writers and women's writing (Boileau, 2021).

3.2. Reflection of Feminism in Daneshvar's Works

Daneshvar has a special approach to the political and social developments of contemporary humans in her novels. In Daneshvar's works, many manifestations of tradition, culture, identity, morality, public morality, and religion are reflected by the nature of this border and canvas. Daneshvar in her novels has challenged the only passivity against modernity and Western culture and she believes that paying attention to any advancement, modernity, technology, and social consciousness is acceptable if it is consistent with the Iranian and religious traditions and culture (Ghobadi, 2010). Suvashun, her first novel explores how the novel can play an important role in Iran's historical literature along with feminist issues, gender, and politics, and women's problems in the patriarchal paradigm. Daneshvar's works reflect reality rather than fantasy. These stories include themes such as child theft, adultery, marriage, childbirth, sickness, death, treason, profiteering, illiteracy, ignorance, poverty, and loneliness. The issues she involves with are social problems in the 1960s and 1970s, which carry immediacy and credibility for the readers. The people around her have received Daneshvar's inspiration. In her own words: "Ordinary people have many to offer. They must be able to give freely and quietly. Instead, we must give them our best our hearts, try to help them get what they deserve." (Mafi, 2019).

Yet, Woolf does not deny women's marriages and she tells in the mouth of one of her characters in *The House Light*, "everyone must marry" and she encourages others to marry. This is not to state why a woman without a husband is deprived of the taste of life. A realist view towards women's position in the community emerges in her works. In processing the woman character, Daneshvar attempts to create a woman who should be via symbolism. This adaptation is the result of self-conscious and sometimes unconscious domination in the male-dominated society. Daneshvar portrays traditional and arranged marriage, variety seeking, women's unpleasant behaviors, feminist arguments, women's social rights, Mother-child relations, motherhood senses, and working out of a home and she demonstrates her feminist trends and Proponent of women's rights in this way. However, Daneshvar has some Islamic religious beliefs, which cause her to gain moderate feminist trends to play her role effectively in that kind of society. Daneshvar always seeks equal rights for women and men. Her principal purpose to bring up the above-mentioned subjects in her novels is to call women for dynamics and mobility to provide women all-around and then change the whole society with the cooperation of men and women. Daneshvar wants women to interfere with their fate; hence, she calls for women to present in different fields in society.

3.3. Feminine and Feminist Perspective in Farrokhzad's Poetry

Farrokhzad's strong feminine voice received much negative attention and public disapproval both during her lifetime and in the posthumous reception of her work. In a radio interview, when asked about the feminist perspective in her poems, Farrokhzad replied, "If my poems, as you express, have an aspect of femininity, it is of course quite natural. After all, fortunately, I am a

woman. However, if you speak of artistic merits, I think gender cannot play a role. Even voicing such a suggestion is unethical. It is natural that a woman, due to her physical, emotional, and spiritual tendencies, can pay more attention to certain things that men usually do not pay attention to. I believe that if those who choose art to express the inner self-feel that they must do so with their gender in mind, they will never progress in their art and that is not right. Therefore, when I write, if I keep thinking, oh, I am a woman and I must address feminine issues rather than human issues, then that is a kind of stopping and self-destruction. Because what matters, is to cultivate and nourish one's positive characteristics until one reaches a level worthy of being a human. What matters is the work done by the person, not the work labeled as male or female. When a poem reaches a certain level of maturation, it separates itself from its creator and connects to a world where it is valid based on its own merits." (Wolpe, 2007 and 2010) Farrokhzad was a poet of great audacity and extraordinary talent. Her poetry was protest poetry, revealing the inner world of women (so far taboo), their intimate secrets and desires, worries, longings, and aspirations, and sometimes expressed through silence. Her expressions of physical and emotional intimacy, much lacking in Persian women's poetry up to that point, placed her at the center of controversy, even among the intellectuals of the time. On February 14, 1967, at the age of thirty-two, he died in a car accident. Her poems are still relevant in their advocacy for women's liberation and independence (Wolpe, 2018).

In the comparison of Woolf and Farrokhzad, some similarities and differences exist. Initially, Woolf suggests there were never any women in literary works or they were formed about their opposite sex; she also points out by uttering that women have never been men of any character, male characters, whom themselves can perform a historical activity that they have not even had a story. The gender approach to women has prevented women from having an independent identity, and consequently, the issue of women's relationships in various works by itself is eliminated. From a social and gender perspective, the issue of the literature of women and women writers originated from the Marxist critique of literature, women, even the writer's dreams, suffered from many problems in the fatherly community, and even a woman writer could not look like a male writer. Woolf noted George Eliot as a female writer who had to choose a man's name for having the entire authorial identity of a writer. Nevertheless, Farrokhzad, besides having his feminine view, always has his narratives and dialogues with women. "For example, Farrokhzad wrote in her work, for instance: "I told my mother that it was over, always more than you think. We should send the message to the newspaper in consolation "and " I encountered that little woman who had a look like a Simurgh's nest "and " And the mothers breathed "under the tent of the grandmother, even when the blaze with faces like Sayyid Javad's father and his brother raises and challenges these male characters ..." And Sayyid Javad, who owns all the rooms in his house, is not afraid of himself and is also a brother of Seyed Javad ..." and "Why the Father is only sleeping in sleep" and "Why the Father who is not so small does not do any that whoever is in my dream comes forward earlier". Further, Woolf remarks about women's gender perspective, "Women in literary works are mostly either mistresses or prostitutes." While Farrokhzad easily disposes of this equation. Women in her poems not only find an independent identity and have the opportunity to narrate but the narrator of Forough's lyrics also judges the world around her, which can be understood as the product of a patriarchal society e.g. "This world is filled with the sound of the movement of the feet of the people who, like those who kiss you, knit you in the mind of your cord" and "What kind of black clouds are you waiting for the sun's day?" This is how Farrokhzad challenges the world around her with a feminine look and language and ridicules all the recorded criteria. On the other side, Woolf expresses her idea about Emily Bronte: For her, the men were not against the opposition, and she did not need to waste time by opposing them. In her work, fear and hatred of men are lost. Addressing her audience in 1929, Woolf notes that authors such as Jane Austen and the Bronte sisters have made important contributions to literature, but much remains to be done. Woolf famously insists that creative works require freedom, both financial and intellectual; a woman must have independent means and a room of her own. At the time this essay was published, Woolf's message was unprecedented and radical. Additionally, Woolf quotes Samuel Taylor Coleridge: a big mind is a bisexual one. A bisexual mindless adheres to its distinction more than the single-minded one, and this mind does not regard any as the superior sex. Bisexual minds exacerbate and permeate voices, convey emotions without hindrance, and be creative, vibrant, and coherent. Woolf agrees with Coleridge in his assertion that "a great mind is androgynous." Woolf also suggested one of the signs of a great mind is it does not specifically think of gender. However, this Woolf's statement is contradictory to Woolf's approach to feminist literary criticism. Although, this issue somehow can be justified by appealing to Farrokhzad's view of her male characters. The male characters of Forough's poetry are representing a patriarchal attitude. All people in Forough's lyrics live in another world. Farrokhzad believes in equality for both genders, men and women divided in two equally e.g. "Who does not like anyone; no one is like a father; no one is like Ensi; no one is like Yahya; no one is like a mother." Male and female characters are chosen from two to two. These doubles of two, which are not opposite, but are raised together. Volná (2005) stresses that it is only through the synthesis of both female and male recognition and effort that can stop women from the oppressive conditions of patriarchy.

Woolf is shocked to encounter the way, which is treated women, and feminine in literature and reveals the slightest emphasis is on oppression against a woman is destructive. Woolf stresses whenever literature is utilized as the sole means of inducing personal or group intentions, it will endanger its authorial identity. In Farrokhzad's poems, the feminine and human views are centered on each other and they do not violate anyone else. However, one question might rethink Farrokhzad how she not only rebuts her male audience with all his feminine views but also drags them with herself.

3.4. *Existentialism in Woolf and Farrokhzad*

The two concepts of 'freedom' and 'will' are two essential features of existentialism, and Woolf and Farrokhzad show these two principles in their works. Virginia Woolf in *Mrs. Dalloway* portrays the courage of Clarissa Dalloway to lead a meaningful life, to lead a life of meaningful existence. She makes her choice and marries Richard instead of her beloved Peter. Clarissa

knew that in the male-dominated society of England in the 1920's she would have no freedom. However, Richard would give her complete freedom. Clarissa's existential struggle, quest, and anxiety are present throughout the novel. Woolf also brings out the existential angst of a meaningless life in the character of Septimus Warren Smith in his despair and consequent suicide. The impact of existentialism has been significant in the writings of Virginia Woolf (Jena, 2014). On the other hand, Babaie Fard and Zarepour (2019) note an Iranian female writer, Farrokhzad asserts:

"I wish for the freedom of Iranian women and their equality with men. I am fully aware of the suffering that my sisters are going through in this country because of the injustice of people and I use half of my art to depict their pain and suffering. Wishing to create a favorable environment for women's artistic and social science activities."

The evolution of Farrokhzad's existential condition during her short life indicates she was not pleased with her predestined destiny and fate, and she stepped up with the courage and freedom of will to change her nature and way of thinking, and personality. By resorting to the principle of the primacy of existence on the nature of the school of existentialism and her poetry in her Five Notes, there can be considered as an existentialist view and reading in Farrokhzad's lifeworld.

4. Conclusion

The principal objective of the present research was to investigate the feminine, feminist, and feminist discourse of authorial conventions within three modern women writers' (i.e. Woolf, Daneshvar, and Farrokhzad) literary works from the west to the Middle East. The researchers also aimed to examine female identity and character defined in their works. The present study identified a synthesis of two literary techniques of Feminism and Feminist realism that is a helpful and well-defined method to explore female identity, authorial identity, and position in modern women's writing even some marks of existentialism were found in Farrokhzad and Woolf. In this study, the scholars evaluated the authorial identity and originality of a woman as a human that shapes these women writers' attitudes. It does not matter what type of literary genre women writers choose for representing the social status of women in their era but the important point is their attempt to revive women's rights and demonstrate the oppression of women, which has been the common theme of women's literature in the East and West without a border. What distinguishes the works of Woolf, Daneshvar, and Farrokhzad is their point of view, which is influenced by their thought, beliefs, and attitude toward human beings and the world. Woolf also suggests women gain financial independence and endeavor to achieve equal rights as men, and Farrokhzad breaks the cultural tradition of patriarchy and portrays the image of a modern woman who is a woman who protests and wants independence and freedom. Women writing in any genre, fiction, or poetry, shout about ignorance and loneliness throughout history.

Simin Daneshvar adopts to current dominant Iranian-Islamic thought in the light of religious and moral values for the rights of men and women; however, Woolf and Farrokhzad, adopting a secularist (existentialistic) view, believe that women's natural characteristics such as family, marriage, and motherhood are obstacles to their progression. Woolf, Daneshvar, and Farrokhzad are crying out about gender inequality and oppression in their literary works. The meek voice of Woolf becomes more resonant in Daneshvar's novels and becomes a yell in Farrokhzad's poetry.

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