

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

<https://llrjournal.com/index.php/11>

**Negotiating Alterity: Transgender Predation and the Construction of
the Other in Shama Askari's *Queen Zarqa***

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Abstract

*This Study examines the portrayal of the tension between cisgender power and transgender survival in Shama Askari's *Queen Zarqa* (2025), focusing on themes of harassment, stereotyping and social exclusion of transgender individuals in Pakistan, especially in Pukhtoon society and Karachi. The study explores by using textual analysis of Catherine Belsey's that transgender characters such as Queen Zarqa, Madhubala, Guru, Rani, and Samita in the text experience different forms of predation and marginalization within a Pakistani society shaped by rigid gender norms. By applying Levinas theory of alterity, the thesis illustrates the marginalization, victimization, and oppression of transgender people living in Pakistani society by cisgender people.*

Keywords: Alterity, Predation, Otherness, Transgender, Cisgender

Introduction

In the literature of post-colonialism, the concept of alterity is linked with the idea of how one culture and race is made Other. It is in the rituals of colonizers that they make the colonized native as Other, making their cultures and traditions as other. According to Edward Said, in *Orientalism* in 1978, in the comparison of Asia, Arabs, and Africa the Europeans or colonizers present themselves as "self" and present these nations as "Others" and depicted them in their works as inferior, savages, and barbaric. The Latin term 'alteritas', which implies "Otherness", different from being us, remote diversity, and varied from being condition, is the root of the word alterity. In his book *Master-Slave Allegory*, German philosopher Fried Hegel was the first to establish alterity, or simply Otherness, as a state of identity (Herman et al., 2010).

According to Muhammad (2009), alterity is described as how people treat or perceive one another as weird and unlike themselves. Alterity can also be defined as a sophisticated concept that refers to being fully different or other. This concept encompasses issues like sexism, Racism, Islamophobia We are one group that is viewed as better and modern, whereas the other is regarded as less important, utterly neglected, or different. Normally means are just as crucial to recognize as what they are not. It is not just a difference in appearance or viewpoint; it is describing how society divides them and us based on race, gender, religion, and culture. This diversity makes alterity a strong term for comprehending prejudice and exclusion. For the first time highlighted in the book of Ashcroft (1997) *Post Colonial Studies*, the concept of Alterity is directly related to the ideology of exotopy (a Greek word which means an exterior position one must occupy to truly understand), which means an outsider. It is further indicated that Levinas' theory of alterity is totally based on two major concepts; self and other or them. It is used to limit and restrict one group, an individual, or any religion (Lim, 2007). Similarly, individual distinctiveness or uniqueness is called alterity. It may be a difference in mentality, in look, class, religion, race, geography (Sax; 2010). The term alterite is the opposite of identity which means identical and is mostly used in the French language. It is explained as two things, persons, groups are not identical but different (Smith and Johnson; 1990).

Further, alterity defined the concept that people are discriminated against unequally based on racial differences, and behavior of dominance toward them is unjustifiable. For Appiah, alterity is the concept that divides people into smaller groups and names them as races, and inculcates in their minds that they are different from others from biological moral, and intellectual perspectives. Additionally, according to the article, The concept of alterity: its usage and its relevance for critical qualitative researchers in the era of Trump, Muhammad (2023) highlighted that for Levinas and Simon De Beauvoir, alterity is that concept which is not cognitive, but created by ethics, responsibilities, and society. It is the practice of keeping someone as inferior or other and forcing them to adopt that position.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, alterity is defined as the state of being different, varieties are diverse from others. Philosophically and sociologically, alterity is the way of treating people as the other in relation to the dominant group or simply not like me (William, 1977). Likely, Alterity is the state of consciousness about the self that considers it unique, dominant in the relationship with other people, and

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

considers them as inferior (Martinez,2023). likewise, Alterity refers to both the quality of strangeness inherent in others and the fact that they are weird. Strangeness simply means that neither our past knowledge nor prior experience prepares us for the meeting with this other (Buchanan, 2010).

Transgender

Rosenthal (2023) asserts that the word transgender stands for a person who has spent their life with a deviation from their birth-assigned gender. This transformation or sometimes naturally but most of the time, happened through medical transformation.

Cisgender

Naumovska (2025), the term cisgender is the opposite of the transgender word. Cisgender is a person who follows and continues their life with the gender that is assigned to them at the time of birth. They never face the challenges and negative impact or discrimination as well as social rejection like transgender individuals.

Cisgender Predation

Disparities in childhood abuse between transgender and cisgender adolescents, the article results presented that transgender adolescents in the United States have higher rates of psychological, physical, and sexual abuse than cisgender abuse since gender predicts them (Thoma et al.,2021).

Most of the time cisgender people are attracted to trans women, but if they are not willing to fulfill their desires, they face threats from cisgenderers. Mostly, transgender and non-binary people disproportionately experience torture (West et al.,2021).

Pukhtoon Society

The article of Pamir (2023), Some aspects of Pukhtoon culture, explores the traditions, customs, and rules set by society for Pukhtoon which can be practiced in daily life. Pukhtoon set different aspects for spending life and maintaining respect in which one of the prominent elements is button valley, which focuses on different values such as justice, hospitality which is known as millmastiya, nang, and bravery. In Pukhtoon society they never compromise on hospitality, giving respect to guests, although they are strangers to them. Another most important key role is the obedience of the elder, and loyalty to tribal rules. Any youngster is not allowed to make any decision without the interference or interest of their elders, which is quite wrong in some of the great decisions of life.

Furthermore, the study, Queering the Pashtun: Afghan sexuality in the homo- nationalist imaginary, Manchanda's (2015) asserts that how the sexualities of Afghans are depicted, controlled by the government and society. It is supposed and expected from the men of Afghanistan and the Pashtun areas that they should be masculine, having no compromise on honor, and must be controlling. With the help of this discourse, Afghan and Pashtun men must have these qualities, if they do not follow they do not belong to Afghanistan, nor are they Pashtun. The use of homo- nationalist imagery creates the idea that if a person who is not following the traits of masculinity created by them should be the thread for the society and nation. Most people are supposed to hide their identity just to secure themselves from otherness, suppression as well as rejection.

The behavior and roles assigned to transgender people by their community in Pakistan are the product of cultural and social pressure, and rejection of these individuals by their families. As this is gender transgender individuals have their own identity, and a structure of society where they are not welcomed because they are neither men nor women. Due to the rejection, lack of facilities, limited education, and having no jobs, their dear lives became harsh and it is the result of cisgender people considering their cells are superior to them. As a result of rejection, they often lead towards those activities which are not accepted in cisgender society, such as; hidden sexual relationships with men. Most of the time cisgender exploit the character of transgender and objectify them to fulfill the lust of men, they are pushed to beg because they have no alternative respectful job in the society of so-called perfect people. Within the transgender community, they have gurus who are responsible for providing them protection and guidance on how to live in this cruel world. The involvement of transgender people can never be seen in Pakistan from the perspective of poverty, exclusion, and so-called norms of the society (Nawaz, 2023).

Correspondingly, in the article Impact of gender binaries on Hijras life course and their access to fundamental human rights in Pakistan, Alizai (2017) illustrate about that people of Pakistan think that there are only two types of genders one is male and another one is female, and all of the people must be fit in the traits of male or female, But it create the discrimination and wrong influence over the lives of transgender in

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

Pakistan. Transgender cannot be fit into the traits of male or female, because they are excluded from their homes by their families, which influences their lives. In the age of family love, a child needs the support of their family in different points such as health, education, and employment but transgender individuals are left to be bullied and pressured to do such non-things; sexual satisfaction, begging, and massage. After practicing gender binaries in Pakistan, it can stop the legal end of basic human rights for transgender individuals. Although they are recognised as a separate gender, this recognition is not found in any legal practice. They are treated with insult if they go anywhere like hospital offices and schools because they are excluded and pushed outside by their family and never looked at them as how they are surviving. The concept of binaries is nothing but promoting the concept of alternative in cisgender and trans genders.

Likewise, Schroeder (2020) articulated in his work, Operationalizing the “new” Pakistani transgender, about their transgender, who are identified and accepted as the third gender and citizens of Pakistan under the Transgender Persons Protection of Rights Act. This recognition and inclusion as a citizen of Pakistan is limited to paperwork, having no concern or implementation in practical life. For accepting them as a Third Gender, the government should take some serious action and should pass some lawful and legal notifications as other countries have done. The act should include the facilitation of healthcare, providing them with a respectful job, having free access to make their CNICs, and supporting them the way the government supports cisgender individuals. Along with this, the government should start counseling their parents, to accept them and not leave them to society for predation.

Similarly in the article, Quality of life of HIV positive transgender and homosexual population in Karachi, Pakistan, Hussain (2023) articulates they people who have positive HIV-are mostly those people who are rejected by their families, having no financial support to survive their life, no access to job by compulsion they are supposed to involved in those activities which are not accepted in any society and in any religion which is sexuality illegal. This study includes a survey of 100 people in Indus hospital in Karachi where 58% are those who are transgender and have no idea of dealing with such a critical disease. Some of them know that they are suffering from the disease but they keep silent and are uncomfortable going to the hospital for treatment because people look at them with a narrow-minded perspective. Such non sense are this is gender lead towards the stress, anxiety, and depression, which transgender individuals often face and lose their lives because they are marginalised in society from all perspectives.

Queen Zarqa

There is a baby boy born in a Pakhtoon family after eleven years of his parents' marriage, whose name is Zeerak Khan, a very handsome boy. After 11 to 12 years, there are some changes beginning to be exposed: he is more attracted to his female cousin's dresses and sometimes wants to wear bangles, and playing with girls and dolls is a normal thing. Due to his beauty and body gestures, for the first time, he is exploited by his female cousin Mohabati and then by another male cousin, Fanoos Khan aka Mirgati. Everyone in the streets, mosques, and schools begins to laugh at him. When his patience reaches its limit, he runs with the help of Kakavaan to Karachi, where he meets two people like him. There he begins to enjoy all selfhood, never missing any prayer, and the head of the community praises him because due to Zeerak, the prayers have started again. His name is changed by his guru from Zeerak Khan to Zarqa. It's a safe place where nobody laughs or teases him or touches her with bad intentions. Once a Sindhi elite is out of control, when touched with bad intentions, the guru takes action and cuts his genitals. For the second time, when another elite came and by force asked the guru to give Zarqa to him so that he could cool himself, the guru also took revenge on him and threw him in a rural place where, on the next day, he was found dead. The novel highlights how so-called humans (male and female) exploit them.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the ways in which *Queen Zarqa (2025)* transgender are predate by cis-gender.
2. To analyze the role of cisgender predation in constructing transgender as “others” in *Queen Zarqa (2025)*.

Statement of the Purpose

All humans are the citizens of the global community, but they are divided into “Self” and “Others” just to exercise their power and domination over others. This study examines how transgender people are depicted as a tool in Pakistani society by applying Alterity by Levinas to this dual marginalization and dishonest portrayal of Queen Zarqa, Madhubhala, Rani, and other characters in the novel *Queen Zarqa (2025)*.

The study's goal is to investigate the junction of this theory in *Queen Zarqa* by Askari, examining the narrative tension between inclusion and emphasizes exclusion and dehumanization.

Significance of the Study

This work *Queen Zarqa*(2026) is important for literary scholarship and gender studies because it use Alterity by Levinas, to depict transgender suffering and how society demands them. It crosses critical discourses and demonstrates how writing may push moral and cultural limits.

Literature Reiew

In this regard, humiliating and otherizing transgender people is against the teachings of the Qur'an and Islam because Allah has made it clear that He is the creator of all .they have the right to get married if their gender is specified either male or female, along with all this they have the right to inheritance as well (Beck, 2013).

Various terminologies are used for transgender people based on certain meanings, which most of the time create ambiguity in understanding their problems daily. The following terminologies are used by these people which are highlighted in the Islamic text ;

1. Khunthā (خنثى): In Islamic Law, the Khuntha name indicates those persons who are born with physical features of both male and female both or simply we call them having an ambiguous genital part and they are called the “intersex” (Manzoor, 2022).
2. Mukhannath (مخنث): This terminology covers a person who is by birth or biologically a male but behaves like the opposite gender(female) and this term was used in Islamic times.
3. Mamsuh: Another category is those people having no genitalia of male or female which can help in identifying them .
4. Transgender: the most commonly used word for the third sex in these modern times is transgender which focuses on the identity of gender, in this case, biological sex at birth is different from what they feel inside (Sara et al, 2024).
- 5.
6. Mutarajjul: It is the category of transgender people who are by birth a female but attracted and follow male dress, use male expressions in their talking (Haskifi, 2002).
7. Terminologies used for transgender individuals in the culture of South Asia
8. Khusra / Hijra: these words are found in South Asian culture for those people, who are not suitable in the typical constraints generated by society to be a man or a woman. These words cover up those people who live within the Hijra community, transgender women, or intersex people (Sa'di, 2000).

Khans (2025) argues that transgender characters have appeared in different serials and dramas in both cinema and television with the help of the Green TV drama *Guru*(2023) and the movie *Joyland* (2022), a short movie. Most of the time they are presented according to the stereotypical concept of society, presenting them as either they are begging, an object of cosmic relief, or implementing the negative concept of society regarding them. search depictions ignore the real-life struggles and hardships, and the dream of transgender individuals. On the other hand, those media channels that are independent such as film industries, documentaries, and projects that are based on specific websites, present the real struggles of transgender characters and present them as humans not as objects. They presented their characters, emotions, and choices positively instead of capturing and presenting a negative image. This media channel challenges the false depiction and stereotype among reviewers.

Similarly, in the last few years, Urdu dramas in Pakistan have added increasingly transgender characters, who reflect consciousness of problems faced by diverse genders and their communities. Famous drama serials i.e., *Khuda Mera Bhi Hai* and *Alif Allah Aur Insaan* played a significant role in presenting the narratives of transgender people to the mainstream. Both of the serials contribute to the consciousness of transgender individuals and problems, but often describe it superficially not fully addressing their real-life economic, social, and structural problems they face (Ullah et al., 2024).

It is observed by scholars that in *Khuda Mera Bhi Hai*, the major character of the drama is Noor, who is an intersex child, and becomes the focus of the drama. Her mother Mahgul tries to support and protect Noor from the pressure of social acceptance and rejection by the family. The drama highlights the central character Noor, an intersex child, who becomes the focus of the narrative. Noor's mother, Mahgul, struggles to protect and support Noor despite societal rejection and family pressure. The drama opens up and shows how Noor is

abused verbally and how she is excluded. Although the mother is supportive, she never lets her do anything for herself to make her own choices to grow as a person. It shows that all the time in Urdu Pakistani drama transgender people are not capable of doing something for themselves but must depend on cisgender people. Additionally, it projects that society is not in favour of accepting them or their struggles (Wahab Ullah et al., 2025).

Likely, in another drama serial in *Alif Allah Aur Insaan*, the transgender character Shammo is depicted as how transgender individuals suffer from social stigma and otherization. In drama characters like Shammo, Nurgis, Firdos, Neelam, and Aslam (Salma Bhai) are shown as doing those works which are accepted by society like dancing in the street or providing beauty services to earn a living. The story of drama focuses on the struggles of emotions and social work for living like insults, ridicule, and a very marginalized acceptance, but ignores the major issues like discrimination in jobs, no health facilities, and no legal actions for their safety and security. This shows that this drama only shows personal suffering but neglects systemic problems transgender people face (Ahmad et al., 2023).

Cheng (2010), for Japan, America similarly functions as a transformative “other” in the post–World War II context. The introduction of American political structures, technological advancement, and cultural influence disrupts the traditional Japanese belief systems and results in an epistemic uncertainty. The cultural stability is replaced by reinterpretation, negotiation and doubt. In this regard, identity is not stable but is reconstructed in the process of historical contact with an outside power (Cheng 2010). Philosophically, this shows that cultural identity is always relational, with reference to the pressure from outside rather than self-generated.

A similar pattern of alterity is also apparent with the postcolonial and cultural study of marginalized belief systems. As pointed out by Mukherjee (2025), there is a tendency in western discourse to denigrate, if not demonize, Vodou in magical realist texts as primitive or irrational. Vodou is, however, in its native setting a meaningful cultural system which incorporates aspects of the spiritual, historical, memory and identity. It is not about “going off the deep end” but an alternative epistemology, a way of knowing where the supernatural and the material are present. On a philosophical level, Vodou is in direct opposition to Enlightenment Western ideas of knowledge that are based on rationality. Its marginalization, therefore, is not about the absence of meaning, but the supremacy of euro-centric constructions that make “real” or “valid” knowledge, which are valid for Eurocentric society.

Similarly, Berning (2015), in her application of alterity theory to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Americanah*, demonstrates how identity is continuously reshaped through migratory experience and social perception. This is not abstraction of alterity, but a very flesh-and-blood thing. When the protagonist Ifemelu moves from Nigeria to the United States, she undergoes a process of transformation of identity as she is racialized in a manner with which she is not familiar. Her body features are translated into differences, her skin color, hair texture, accent, making her stand out in the hierarchy of race. She is a presence in the stereotypical and reduced to another, thus showing how identity is formed by what the outside is categorising her as and not what she is, in essence. Her experience suggests a notion of the socially constructed nature of selfhood, as it is constituted by the dominant cultural looks.

This is supported by Obinze's background in the United Kingdom. He strives to succeed academically and professionally, yet his intentions and achievements are dismissed as unearned and of little value, demonstrating the role of national, racial and linguistic exclusion in the construction of systems of belonging. His condition of self is constantly policed by structures which cannot allow for the full recognition of his humanity. These stories collectively illustrate how migration is not just about travelling from one location to another, it is also a reconfiguration of identity, in a context of social othering (Berning, 2015).

Overall, these theoretical and literary perspectives suggest that identity is fundamentally relational rather than essentialist. Whether in the geopolitical tensions of Ishiguro’s novels, the epistemological challenges of Vodou narratives, or the lived experiences of migration in *Americanah*, the self is continuously formed through encounters with difference. Alterity is not just the act of ‘excluding’ or ‘separating’ but rather it is a dynamic process in which people, cultures and nations make sense of themselves in relation to others.

Research Methodology

This study is qualitative. Catherine Belsey textual analysis is used for the interpretation, analysis and discussion of the text *Queen Zarqa*(2025) by Shama Askari.

Theoretical Framework

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

Alterity is the division tendency that categorizes the human being into the category of smaller groups which are known as races. All the people of society believe that this person is biologically and intellectually belong to a specific group and varied from the other members of society (Madsen, 1999). Furthermore, Turkkan (2011) defines that alterity is the post-colonial theory, which clarifies the concept of how people become categorized discriminated, and subjugated as a result of the imperialist or society or powerful people for the sake of making them otherwise and create a wrong discourse about them to define them as other not the people who belong to the society where they live.

As observed by Nayar (2025), alterity is the combination of self and non-self. It means that considering oneself dominant in the society and the other people of the society who are different in gender, class, or race are categorized as other or non-self. The discrimination is created for the sake of controlling people, putting them in an inferiority complex, spoiling their identity, and torturing them.

With the help of alterity, people create wrong discourse about other people to justify and defend themselves through binary opposition, morally correct and incorrect, civilized and uncivilized, and corrupt (Gandhi, 1988).

According to Roger Begrich (2018), alterity consists of two major concepts; one is the self and the other is others. Which means that the alterity is the concept that is opposite to identity and promotes discrimination and otherness among people. People are discriminated against based on those things which are created for identification not for discrimination such as race, gender, class, and jobs. Correspondingly, Alterity is simply focusing on the distinctiveness of an individual, and that distinction creates the foundation of the self. And distinction creates an identity, which is not possible in isolation. In general, alterity is the identity that varies from one group to another, which creates the person as superior and makes other people inferior to him. Additionally, it reflects that alterity helps in the realization of understanding who the person is (Roberto, 2010).

Alterity focuses on those concepts that are based on lies. It has no concern with reality to present the real image of outsiders, but for the justification of themselves, people create drawn discourse and discrimination to distinguish people from the society in which they live. Alterity promotes the concept that people of one society otherize another not for the sake of defining their identity and appreciation of living in that society, but for the sake of controlling them, limiting them, and spoiling their identity for the advantage of themselves (Overgaard, 2018).

Data Analysis

Likewise, transgender people are bullied first of all by their family. Her relatives are not allowing their cousins to sit with them talk with them or show any empathy towards them. Therefore alternative theory is used in different studies to understand how society, culture, and even family use various kinds of methods and create different kinds of distance in order to feel the other person is other, not welcomed, and to feel that a person is unwanted(Nayar, 2005). By applying this statement to the novel of Sharma Askari *Queen Zarqa* (2025), the author explains the condition of *Queen Zarqa*, when she faces such kind of discrimination by his family:

“He had been a lonely child, and his feminine attributes had drawn the family’s attention. He left home when he was eighteen. Kameelai was also told to stay away from him. Firdous had a hungry wolf living inside him, and outdoors, there had been many hungry beasts with lolling tongues to get him” (p.98).

Zeerak Khan became alone, when his family came to know that he wanted feminine things, act like females, so his family began to keep distance from him. The reason behind leaving the home is not a happy process but he is fed up with the separation from his family. Nobody tried to understand him and welcome his new identity but everyone is trying to keep his child away from him so that his identity may influence their kids. One of his cousins, Camille who was his childhood friend was warned by her mother to break her friendship with Zeerak Khan because he is a shame to them. On the other hand, the writer used such a beautiful metaphor that Firdous had a hungry wolf living inside him which clarifies that Firdous's intention for Zeerak is not pure he was in search of chains to catch Zeerak Khan and fulfill his lust, desire, and to fulfill his physical needs. Additionally, when his family members were all trying to bully him and kept themselves aside, the society began to predate him the author uses hungry beasts words for them. The outsiders also want to exploit Zeerak Khan and harm him. It creates a double threat for him one is predated by family and the

other is predated by society. If his family would not ostracise him so nobody would dare to look at him with wrong intentions. In order to rescue himself he left his home to make himself safe.

As a Lustful Object for Cisgender

In Pakistan and in the media it is depicted that when transgender people are young they love to participate in parties, dance, and become objects of cosmic relief but with the passage of time as they get older they are bound only to begging and massages in the park. The old age of transgender are very painful because the reason behind begging is that there is no other way to earn a living and to spend the remaining life (Khan, 2025). The concept of alterity focuses on the fact that the identity of a person is not fixed but it is dynamic and influenced by society, and a person is judged and rewarded by their contribution to society (2015). By linking this Idea to the novel *Queen Zarqa* it is clear that transgender value depends on their age, beauty, and features. If any of these features are affected and change with time, then they must influence their value. It is mentioned by Askari in the novel *Queen Zarqa* (2025) as:

“You are like two peas in a pod,” this comment made Madhubala look carefully at Zeerak and she continued staring at him a... found my identity, that truth broke me.” (p. 86-87).

This conversation between Madhubala and Zeerak Khan shows the miserable condition of transgender people, which is fully influenced by admirers and society. Madhubala expresses her feelings that once she was like Zeerak Khan and several admirers watched her many times and everybody knows and praises her beauty, which provides a sense of identity and she considers herself as ‘self’. As time passed from youth to old age, her beauty was dimmed so Madhubala lost all her admirers and they all went for other youngsters. All of a sudden, a change of force forced her to live and stand without the praise of admirers. It is quite painful to be influenced by society and the interest of viewers makes her ‘other’. There she realized that her identity is created by the gaze of others not by her true inner self. At the end, she realized that she was nothing but a tool of entertainment for admirers not even a human.

The Legal System Fails in Providing Recognition

The roles and behaviors assigned to transgender is the product of cultural and social pressure and the rejection of their own family in Pakistan. Transgender people are not welcomed in the Society of cisgender people because people claim that they are not in the two true genders one is men and the other is women. Due to rejection, lack of facilities, limited education, and having no jobs their lives are harsh and miserable. Even transgender people are mocked even in the center of CNICs, although they are recognized by the Government of Pakistan under the Transgender Persons Protection of Rights Act, but still they face discrimination in society (Schroeder, 2020). The same discrimination happened with Madhubala when she went for an ID card application. The scene is described by Askari in *Queen Zarqa* (2025):

Once, during the early days when Madhubala had gone to apply for her ID card, ... ‘I can’t figure out if you are a boy or a girl. What am I supposed to write on your ID Card? Remove yourself from here.’ (P. 91-92).

The scene of the novel presented how miserable and fearful Madhubala is living in a world where she is not accepted by anyone, regardless of her being away from her, just like people trying to save themselves from dirt. Everybody is rejecting her instead of accepting her as a human. When she went to the identity card center she had an opinion that they would simply make her card and she would be back soon, but the environment and people treated her very differently, in a way she didn’t deserve. At night time many respectful people came to her to fulfill their desires and during the day they showed themselves as respectful people. When she stood in the line of men, they started pushing her away from their line and saying, You are a woman so go and stand in their line she went to stand in the row of women, and the women shouted with hate and said, you are a male, go and stand with them not with us. She’s continuously treated with hate, and she starts thinking of herself that’s why people are treating me in that way. she didn’t answer herself even when the officer who know that the law is passed for the rights of transgender by the government of Pakistan and accepted them as a citizens of Pakistan instead of the rules he started bullying her and making joke of her by calling her as a boy and then suddenly change his statement and call her as a girl and on the spot he changed his statement that what should I ask to you you are not neither men nor women So what should he would write in gender which is necessary for applying ID card. The government is still silent and never practices the rules that are created for the rights of transgender individuals. They are continuously tortured, traumatized, mocked, and Otherized by society and cisgender who consider themselves as ‘Self’.

Transgender Otherization in Karachi

In Pakistan in every province transgender are not safe and living freely. Nobody missed the chance to misuse or exploit them. Alternative theory focuses on how one group of people, race, gender are prioritized and considered as self to exploit the innocent, to make them otherwise, to play with their respect, to show themselves as dominant and self (Cheng, 2010). The same scene is described in the novel *Queen Zarqa* when Roshni is insulted by one of the elite at the party:

"Once an affluent men had fallen madly in love with Khawaja Saras called Roshni. . I am unrecognizable to them, but I still consider them my own"(p. 101)

The scene clearly explained the alterity concept between transgender person and a wealthy man of Karachi. When a wealthy man fell in love with a transgender woman named Roshni, he wanted to use her and had no intention of hearing no. Because he belongs to the wealthy and most importantly he is cisgender, which means he is superior to transgender and according to norms he must be superior because he is a man and considers transgender as Other a puppet for fulfilling their desires. But Rani is not willing to do such acts. She want to free herself from the wealthy men so another transgender person came in front of the wealthy men and stopped him, requesting him to leave the Roshni alone so the wealthy men began insulting and cursing his mother and sister, grab her by her hair, and threw her out of the room. Nobody is trying to help the innocent transgender people just because they are afraid of wealthy men and transgender people are considered a sign of sin. The reason behind not stopping the torture of wealthy men is that transgender people are not considered human and they are marginalized by cisgender people. Rani began to cry and she was thinking that it was happening with her because of her mother, when she became an amateur so she forced her to leave the house because her sisters considered her a shame for themselves and otherized her and made themselves selves as self.. Additionally by authorizing Rani claimed that it doesn't mean that we weep loudly but we face every torture, cruelty with silence, and cisgender and family think that they believe.

As it is explained above, the age of transgender individuals does not matter. When they are at their young age they are at the peak and there are a lot of admirers. As they age, they move toward boldness so their admirers become down. Similarly, it is described under the lens of alterity theory, how powerful people, considering themselves as superior treat one another as weird and unlike themselves. Playing with the others the way they want to use them for their own purpose and as their need, when it is fulfilled they throw them in the way the powerful want. It is beautifully written in the novel of Shama Askari *Queen Zarqa* (2025), to describe the miserable condition and life of transgender people in society, and having no social power, when Samita begs Seth to leave Zarqa and use her, just to save the respect and dignity of Zarqa :

Instead of stopping him, she fell at his feet and said, ...

'A lion does not eat grass!'

'For the love of God leave her' . She pleaded. (P. 114)

With the help of alterity theory, this scenario describes the relationship between power and otherness. How does power play a significant role in authorizing and describing them as others instead of self and understanding them not the way they deserve. When the Saith start attacking Zarqa, Samita offered her own body for the protection of Zarqa, which exhibits them as objects and a puppet just to rescue the respect of Zarqa, it reveals how the patriarchal system left the men without hope. At the same time, the Zarqa is also portrayed as miserable and innocent having no power and waiting for the movement that maybe someone would come and save her because she herself can do nothing in front of the powerful. When Samantha presents herself in front of the set, he describes that a lion does not eat grass which describes that you are now older and he's no longer interested in the aged or older, and he wants to predate Zarqa because she is young beautiful, and untouchable. By giving the sake of God to him didn't influence him and presented how transgender and women are helpless and have no dignity, respect and they are treated as "Others" and male dominance shown as "Self" allows them to do anything to transgender because they are men.

Conclusion

The analysis has established that the novel constantly rejects the exclusion and marginalization of transgender people by emphasizing the themes of universal humanity, dignity, recognition, ethical responsibility and collective belonging. The chapter's analysis of the texts uncovers a complicated yet complex picture in which transgender characters are neither simply victims of discrimination but also agents of creating alternative communities based on compassion, solidarity and mutual care.

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

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