

Women, Patriarchy and Islam: A Critique of Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero*

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Abstract :

The present paper is an attempt to critically analyze the status of women and the role of religion in a male dominated society in a Muslim majority country where women are oppressed in the name of religion and culture. The question of women's rights and status in Islam has been a major concern of scholars among Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Feminists, activists, and Islamic Scholars have different perspectives and different answers to the 'woman question'. Some scholars associate Islam with gender oppression and misogyny while the other views that Islam emphasizes on rights and status of women and treats men and women equally. In view of the 'women question' this research focuses on the rights and status given by Islam and the actual status women have in Muslim majority countries ruled by the Sharia Law by analyzing the main woman character 'Firduas' from the novel *Woman at Point Zero* by Nawal El Saadawi.

Keywords: Women oppression, gender discrimination, sexual politics, rights and status of women, Islamic/ Sharia Law.