



Lorestan University

Qualitative Inquiry as Praxis in L2 Studies

Journal homepage: <https://quipls.lu.ac.ir/>



Widows' Status in Ali Mohammad Afghani's *Madam Ahou's Husband*

Maliheh Mahmoodabadi^{a*}  

^aIran Language Institute, Tehran, Iran

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Article Type

Research Paper

Article History

Received: 2025-10-01

Received in Revised Form:

2025-10-24

Accepted: 2025-11-13

Available Online: 2025-11-13

Keywords:

Widowhood
Tradition
Feminism
Unclean
Victimized

The current article meets the status of widows at Pahlavi Time at which the observing of traditions leads them to victimization. On the very important front, widows are not understood by traditional male standards- they are seen unclean. Therefore, the significance of this study is to imply the miseries of these victims' suppression in the novel Afghani's *Madam Ahou's Husband*. The research work examined that the widowed Homa Zandy is so gritty and irrepressible woman whose remarriage to Seyed Miran Sarabi and whose leaving with Alborz is just a means of escaping her first and second widowhood. The applied literary Feminism attempts to re-examine widow's position in the society at Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's Time. In conclusion, this feminist literary analysis ultimately demonstrates that the character of Homa serves as a powerful indictment of the oppressive social conventions of the Pahlavi era. Her actions, while appearing as personal choices for survival, are revealed to be direct responses to a system designed to marginalize and penalize widowhood. The study therefore asserts that the novel *Madam Ahou's Husband* functions not merely as a narrative of individual struggle, but as a critical social commentary, exposing how patriarchal traditions systematically victimized widows, forcing them into desperate acts of rebellion to reclaim their autonomy and identity.

1. Introduction

Consigned to oblivion as an unknown writer, Ali Mohammad Afghani managed to enter modern literary –critical consciousness via his long masterpiece *Madam Ahou's Husband*. He wrote the novel *Madam Ahou's Husband* while in prison and took over to publish it by himself since no publisher accepted to release such a long novel. However, after its publication, many prominent writers took delight in it. Jamalzadeh sees *Madam Ahou's Husband* as a 'miracle', Bozorg Alavi finds it as the largest Persian novel, Sirous Parham takes it as a large encyclopedia (Parham, 1961), and Mirsadeghi considers its Iranian wife and its customs and traditions real and exact. It

Cite this article: Mahmoodabadi, M. (2025). Widows' status in Ali Mohammad Afghani's *Madam Ahou's Husband*. *Qualitative Inquiry as Praxis in L2 Studies*, 1(2), 171-184.



© Author(s) retain the copyright.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22034/quipls.2025.2078643.1019>

Publisher: Lorestan University

was Mohammad Ali Nadooshan whom he first assessed the novel *Madam Ahou's Husband* in his article entitled *About Madam Ahou's Husband* academically and announces it a Persian masterpiece (Nadooshan, 1961).

The novel got adapted into a film under the same name by Davood Molapour in 1968. It also won the royal award of the best-selling book (Sharifi, 2008). It is, indeed, significant to indicate that Afghani contributed to the emergence of a new field of serious academic enquiry, modern writing as the date of the edition hints. Its appearance in 1961 coincided with his clandestine political activities in the Tudeh Party comprising army colonels and his opposition to the leader of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. In 1953, his political activities got disclosed after Zahedi swept to power, leading Afghani to a five-year-imprisonment. Shorter then, most critics were concerned with the text's perceived polygamy. While commenting on the text's polygamic subject matter, the critical consciousness has so far suggested that Afghani rejected polygamic discourses in order to disseminate his feminist ideas. Although, some critics have initiated a reassessment of Afghani's perceived polygamy, his novel is mainly examined for what it divulges about early modern consciousness. It is also accounted to be viewed by the broad term widow's persecution depicting the appalling life of the widows of the community in that era. The present research work examines the persecution of the widowed Homa meeting stumbling blocks in the community. She abhors her appalling widowhood for it causes great humiliation. She has gone through huge suffering undergoing suppression. She is accused wrongly according to which she is withdrawn from the public for abandoning her family and being a divorcee for third. Women notice her as a scarlet once she left her husband who had accused him of having affairs with the men passing by their home. The widowed Homa is simply the target in the community. Her husband imprisons her in the house in which she barely could notice the light.

2. The Literary Analysis

The female character Homa in Afghani's *Madam Ahou's Husband* is described as 'frailty'. It is too diminutive to call Homa 'frailty' (Afghani, 2020). And Seyed Miran named her so, so belittling as half-wise (Afghani, 2020), of all these sorts.

"O humiliating exorbitance, O cynical tyrant! How small do you seem, when as yet you see them too weak? What's become of your small mind, when you bring yourself to the ignorance, to the

small-mindedness of your wife- Homa? ‘Your narrow-mindedness is your own, but not mine’, Homa stated” (Afghani, 2020, p. 728).

Homa swells with anger when Seyed Miran judging her on her frailty as a woman. Her frailty, that is, lack of wisdom, is the weakest to the desires of the flesh. All the frailty and inconstancy were built upon opinion of men at Afghani’s time and has in itself no real being, than from the mouth of a small man. Men’s bewilderment at Homa’s breathtaking beauty, along with Seyed Miran’s narrow-mindedness and cynicism towards men- Gorgali, Darvish, the religious man, the ice seller, Lady Safi’s son, Nilofar’s Sarab, and Mirzanabi were from the very first place, touched (Afghani, 2020). There is a plausibility that she will be exploited and corrupted in the society, and there be an ill care of her as a poor widow that there is no safety, when calling Homa weak in flesh. However, we attribute one privilege to Homa’s beauty, above Ahou, that she as a white flower, blossoms out of snow (Afghani, 2020), naturally strong and beautiful but falsely disposed to the accusations of society, as the following extracts indicate:

“As a widow, it is a pity she is a slave to the profligate time- she is young and beautiful but unlettered and vulnerable” (Afghani, 2020, p. 46).

“Her lustful outstanding ought to be the model of the European painters of the 18th century’ (Afghani, 2020, p. 636).

“A woman, whose delicacy was as a violet, whose strength as a horse, and whose morals and virtues were wise in immaturity and demure and manly in the ultimate freedom” (Afghani, 2020, p. 101),

“What a charming woman! (Afghani, 2020, p. 43),

“I adore your beauty” (Afghani, 2020, p. 568).

As a model for widows, Homa’s only attempt is to acquire an independent status as a victimized and oppressed widow. Although she didn’t manage to alter all widows’ positions in the community, she succeeded in withstanding for excellent status in which they might not be humiliated or persecuted for their widowhood. She was into befitting an underlying status for the widows. She wishes to obtain the right to be untied of demeaning mistreatment of widowhood resisting hijab. Homa, as a widow, has made a great deal of effort to more feminist standards about her position. In the case of her, a twelve-year-old (Afghani, 2020) gypsy married Hajibana and then to a man- Seyed Miran- far older- a ‘thirty-year-old’ age gap (Afghani, 2020). She

rejected the oppressive laws inflicted on widows made her a victim for persecution and suffering. Homa craved to be viewed as a female subject not a housewife. Her being a housewife was meant to defend the numerous measures concerning the veiling of women at Pahlavi Time. According to Seyed Miran, women ought to be kept from sight in order to ensure that their one and only concern would be the family for keeps. He also was keen on keeping women out of the eyes of men, who might be seduced by their enticement and be adrift from their own families. She affirmed that she, “the lady in the height of fashion” (Afghani, 2020, p. 515), would attempt not to wear the veil, and could thus gain freedom.

Homa also craves for the autonomy in dress. Dr. Asadollah Vahed persuasively states that freedom, one of the fittest characteristic, springs from Romanticism (Vahed, 2020). The hijab means nothing in her point of view. She abhors it as it prevented men from laying eyes on her beauty and to be freely chosen by them. This hijab seems unduly limiting and onerous for her. She is obliged to wear a charghad, and a chador when going to buy bread at Seyed Miran's bakery. She “holds her chador with her teeth” (Afghani, 2020, p. 30) so that “only half of her face could be visible” (Afghani, 2020, p. 30). This outfit severely restrains her and is mandatory even in the scorching and the intense heat of the bakery. Her mission, however, successfully accomplishes and makes Seyed Miran concur with not wearing a chador. Miran thinking it best that the mien of an unveiled woman in public is a threat to the pillars of his Islamic religion, letting her slope off home without chador and even drinks wine with her watching her “dance in a ceremony in Hosseinkhan's” (Afghani, 2020, p. 496) in Sanati Valley across from Sartip's bathroom. She believes that both men and women can find fulfillment in employment.

Homa, who is the significant other for Seyed Miran, commenced to usher in Seyed Miran's thoughts about how he ought to be thoroughly equalized with her, in the way of socializing, employment, and the dressing code. Wrapped in a blanket of hope to be employed when getting her twin's custody, she couldn't carry on dreaming since women are kept aloof at home or covered in hijab so that no men could see them. She would like to establish the “full equality of men and women” (Afghani, 2020, p. 409) to get immense pleasure in the particular rights. She defends the full right for women to liberally work under felicitous and fitting conditions just like the men though Seyed Miran believes that women in the community cannot work without their husbands' permission. As Miran states: “Never have I seen a woman in your status, could have a position like men in the community. Will you intend to break the hierarchy?”

Will you want to be stoned to death?” (Afghani, 2020, p. 98). She reckons that she nowadays is suppressed and shackled. She feels she is being degraded, regarding herself as a powerless widow, belittled till she finds it vital to usher off widowhood on the freedom of women and equality with men, as the following quote indicates:

“What sin have I committed that I ought to lay my eyes fixed on your hand as a woman for I am entitled a woman?” “Because woman is not a perfect being. Man is the little God of woman” (Afghani, 2020, p. 413).

So to speak, Saffari and his co-authors indicate that women’s independency was not welcomed among the middle class and the common at Rezashah Time (Saffari et al., 2017). Homa believes that the position of her widowhood at Pahlavi Time is really degrading, fraught with humiliation. She is judged as an unclean widow, tagged as lechery without any rights. It is irritating that Hassan Mirabedini credited Homa as “lustful and irrepressible” (Mirabediny, 2007, p. 224). Her situation in the community was much more despicable and despondent. Homa had a desire to seek for a husband by letting her chador vanish. She is the property of the society, possessed and might be exploited by the men in the society for she is a widow. Thus, she abandoned her husband gestures towards a feminist act.

The ferocity Homa receives from her husband is blatantly depicted. Homa, still held in her aloofness “a prisoner for 4 years” (Afghani, 2020, p. 423), suffers the ferocity she gets from her husband with abusive words on her when hearing the man singing by their window.

“She was in an environmentally hazardous status as a widow dealing with homejail and beatings” (Afghani 2020, p. 653)

“Her ex-husband’s house was a prison for her with hard labor” (Afghani 2020, 193),

“Her husband disrespected her. He had a wish that she were not only limp but also blind so that she couldn’t leave home seeing anyone or anywhere” (Afghani 2020, p. 385),

She received great social abuse from her husband Hajibana when being kicked in her belly during her 4 –months –pregnancy (Afghani, 2020). Instead of shouldering or reducing onerous burdens to ease her, he builds up considerable pressure, enhances the stress. At a time, when she widely needs his support, he turns on her, beats her up, kicks her swollen belly to abortion. The violence got worse as the pregnancy wore on. It got worse when controlling her-

she was not allowed to visit her cousins and brothers. She even couldn't tell them apart if she saw them (Afghani, 2020). Her pregnancy had been the trigger for violence. She even couldn't go to the bathroom for months. Whenever she wanted money for the bath, her husband would wear a grin saying, "What is the bathroom? Is it to eat or to wear?" (Afghani, 2020, p. 36). Indeed, her husband, Hajibana and her sister-in-law, Malous, accused her so unjustly that the rumors would even explode the mountain (Afghani, 2020). The more Homa makes her pace faster, she fears the more, because she seems a valor in valuing herself, while fears of devaluing of opinions and estimation. All the men Homa meets, Seyed Miran and then Alborz, it seems, were just a widowhood escape. She even had "a humble desire" (Afghani, 2020, p. 373) to get hitched to Dariush, Safia Banu's son. She abhors her status so widely for she had to carry a child with her when leaving home (Afghani, 2020) and that she found herself so wretched since she bared her soul with a seller (Afghani, 2020). Although she is under apparent condition of injustices, Afghani explicitly represents Homa of being victimized for her husband's ignorance. Homa's humiliation is an indication of widowhood's miseries at Pahlavi Time.

Her immediate yearning to remarry to Seyed Miran would definitely save her from rumors. When seeing the devastating moment of her existence as a widow, Homa attempts her best to defend her dignity through her remarriage to a man much older. Her marriage which is not grounded on love is doomed to failure. She has not satisfied her lot in the community. While escaping from Seyed Miran through that dire polygamy, Afghani aims to show that Homa should oppose to polygamy and save her life. Homa as a dignified woman challenges Seyed Miran's false performance of masculinity seeking to objectify a woman. Homa claims her own individuality and dignity when opting to abandon with Alborz. She also determines to express that polygamy does devalue women saying "love is not dividable like money" (Afghani, 2020, p. 376). Afghani supports the women's independence by breaking the widows' oppression through inconvenient traditions through his protagonist, Homa. He utilises her to express his disapproval of the wrong practice of polygamy in the society. Homa's dogged determination makes her oppose to concurring with the wrong precepts of widows and polygamy set by her society "I have neither love nor a husband" (Afghani, 2020, p. 374).

Seyed Miran advises Homa as no women's life makes sense without a man in such a traditional community

“I do not accept the fact that you can be independent of the man of the time” (Afghani, 2020, p. 158),

“The best thing for a woman that protects her from heat and cold is her husband. A couple is both necessary and obligatory as a lining and togs” (Afghani 2020, 158),

“You have to marry’ (Afghani 2020, 39).

Seyed Miran, furthermore, states to Homa the importance of choosing a new husband in order to avoid rumors. Rejecting his advice, she determines to follow her footsteps by planning to work. Afghani pictures Homa as a strong and brave woman, whose dignity lies in the fact that she is a woman who realizes her strength and would not let the views of others preclude her from making the right decision for herself. She shows this impressive act when it happens to choose Seyed Miran as tradition demands. For fear of being unclean, and most importantly to regain her dignity, she has to leave with Alborz so that she would not be tagged a widow again. However, Daneshvar’s attitude is a far cry irritating as “Homa did the escapade” (Daneshvar, 1974, p. 79), and Asgari Hassanklou and Bayat’s choice of “the final winner ‘Ahou’” (Asgari Hassanklou & Bayat, 2013, p. 37) is on the fringes of the minds. Ghasemi and Jalali Pandari’s views are in the same vein (Ghasemi & Jalali Pandari, 2015) and so are Kahdouiee and Shirvany’s (Kahdouiee & Shirvany, 2009). Through this touching novel, Afghani has given his support to reject this wrong tradition by using the character of Homa as the winner. As Asgary and Bayat state Afghani wrote to help improve the society (Asgari Hassanklou & Bayat, 2013).

Homa is reduced to poverty as a result of being a divorcee. Her perilous living conditions are the ramifications of the lack of her economic activities. She lives in a poor condition. Her “patched socks and cheap shoes” (Afghani, 2020, p. 26) reflects poverty as she desperately appears at the bakery. She goes under any humiliation by the musician since she owes her much. Despite her poor conditions, Homa considers sewing as the only vein to her widowhood escape. She determines that she ought to attend in sewing classes when perceiving that some women including Shahzanan and Marzieh can support themselves financially because they are seamstresses (Afghani, 2020). As a widow, she thinks that sewing will give her freedom as it has given freedom to “Shahzanan” (Afghani, 2020, p. 413),
“If I could sew like Marzieh, then I would tell you that a woman is no less than a man” (Afghani, 2020, p. 414),

“Rest assured that when I could earn Sanar Se Shahi sewing, I would not stay in this house a second” (Afghani 2020, 442),

“Marzieh received 15 Qerans for this shirt [...] She is her own husband. She is the breadwinner of herself, her children, and her mother” (Afghani, 2020, p. 412).

Also, Saffari et al. (2017) considered Homa as a ‘modernized woman’ eagers to work her fingers to the bone as a man (p. 226). She goes against the grains to overcome her status persuading Seyed Miran to buy her an exorbitant ‘Singer sewing machine’ –her only means of rescue. She pursued it to death, as it was what she hoped. Going to sewing classes “three times in the mornings and thrice in the afternoons” (Afghani, 2020, p. 429), she hoped to get her own financial means, but she doesn’t succeed in obtaining the objective. Through employment, Afghani portrays Homa as a strong and irrepressible woman keen on making her own future prosperous without men’s presence. Taslimi sees Homa as ‘an urban woman’, as well. The young widowed gypsy, Homa, is desperate to have her own room, employment, and freedom. She is unable to pay for her room due to economic problems. Her inability to support herself financially seems to shatter her hope. She finds herself exposed to new challenges: the lack of chador or charghad- on which her hopes depend and which she retrieves after overcoming huge humiliation. Doing some other petty jobs to make ends meet, she had to dance in parties in other people’s houses, because she failed to support herself in other veins. Since she has no alternative left, she accepts to live with the musician, Hossein Khan.

In addition to being born “as a dancer” (Afghani, 2020, p. 102), Homa respected the Islamic interpretation of ‘instrument and trumpet’ produced by the musician Hosseinkhan. She considered how her dancing has caused outside and inside undermining of her widowhood status. It is inappropriate for her that she has dancing experiences and working conditions with a musician. And like a lot of work done primarily by Hossein Khan, including housing and food, dancing isn’t seen as work worthy of full benefits; rather, it’s stereotyped as an unclean profession. The boundaries of dancing status made it obvious that Homa wasn’t just about betraying her art and talent. Her denial of dancing in public made it clear that no matter what she thought the differences between art and instrument- society isn’t going to make that distinction Homa faced ignominy. The reasoning changes, but the intended effect remains the same. Pushed to art, Homa danced in city ceremonies. She received degrading treatment by people, some of

whom took pleasure of her art and made lewd comments about her as a widow. She had no taste of success as an artist repudiating her art. Her staying with Hossein Khan has roots in debts. She owes him much. Homa determines not to work more as a dancer so that she could have a degree of honor. This is the attitude toward dancing in Islam, “Its beginning is wretched and its ending is worse” (Afghani 2020, 102), ‘Art, for us Muslims, means lust and deception. And in the world of lust, Harut and Marut, who were close to God, left thousands of years of workship” (Afghani, 2020, p. 103). Homa stepped away from dancing, the art that she was born with, “It seems that Almighty God has created me from the first day for the noble profession of dancing” (Afghani, 2020, p. 102), belittled her status in society, and led her through rumors. She had another artistic interest outside of dancing that she wanted to explore and that was sewing. But the truth is, no single one of these reasons was enough to lead her away from the world that built her up and moulded her into a dancer. She sacrificed too much to turn away. And that label of ‘unclean’ became a part of her. So, tagged by the society, seen unclean by her people, and labelled in hands, she quit dancing. She broke out of the boundaries and experienced a different frame of art life, sewing, when realizing ‘Instrument and trumpet means dishonourable bread, meaning a business that its beginning is wretched and its ending is worse. It has neither the world nor the hereafter. We drag ourselves to vulgarity and ignominy. We sludge our artistic status by applying light and inappropriate actions- unfortunately, before their art and talent blossomed, they rolled in the mud of prostitution, betraying their art and talent’ (Afghani, 2020). This convenience came at a price. She loses a certain freedom. She felt too limited in what she was pursuing- she felt like a prisoner of circumstance. There was too much calling her to experience a world outside of dancing, and that was clear to her that leaving give her a better perspective on the life she had lived thus far. She made sure not to fulfill others’ expectations but hers. Whatever the future holds, Homa feels fortunate that she has the chance to experience another art-sewing. Being caught up in rumors; Homa got bounce back and forth until making her decision to quit. However, there was a great chance her passion of dancing may lead to success in this field. Homa as “a divorcee for third” (Afghani, 2020, pp. 251-2-191) is deprived of every right in divorce proceedings. For Seyed Miran, remarrying her would rescue her “The brother and sister would forget the grudges of the bygone past and would welcome her return. The stumbling block was her being a divorcee for third” (Afghani, 2020, p. 229). Homa, however, disobeys Seyed Miran and thus concerns for her rights of personal suffering by arguing that:

“He has divorced me three times”, “I abhor them for the rest of my life” (Afghani 2020, 229).

She longs to express her disapproval of injustices when thinking to have the status to be equal to a man. However, she would be particularly excluded to men, since any resisting act on men is regarded as a law violation. Seyed Miran could divorce Homa forfeiting her marriage portion. When divorcing her, she financially lost all of her possessions from the marriage even her personal belongings, though Seyed Miran showed great mercy giving her some:

“The hundred Tomans is my wife’s marriage portion”,
“I have paid his quarterly alimony twice she deserved” (Afghani, 2020, p. 658).

The most noticeable yearning that Homa accomplished was in regarding the permanent marriage so that she could establish a family:

“Her being pregnant in Seyed Miran’s was his great wish” (Afghani, 2020, p. 381),
“I have to get pregnant anyway. God! May Homa have a child!” (Afghani, 2020, p. 381),

And opposes to the temporary marriage for it simply humiliates her.

“Indeed, the conjugation is an indication of humiliation and degradation of women” (Afghani 2020, p. 165).

She, as a widow, doesn’t want to be unjustly treated like a commodity since Seyed Miran could abandon her at any time, concluding the contract in the temporary marriage. The social shame associated with a temporary marriage is a stigma:

“How helpless a woman must be to endure such humiliation! The miserable and wretched concubine!” (Afghani 2020, pp. 257-258),
“Give me a name so that there could be no rumors” (Afghani, 2020, p. 166),
“I do not want anything, let alone a name” (Afghani 2020, 166).

Homa as a lower class widow doesn’t want to be degraded in a temporary marriage- “ultimate humiliation of Eve’s daughters” (Afghani 2020, 257-258) and makes Seyed Miran do the permanent contract, “Even though the shrewd woman’s first day offer to the man was a temporary one. At the definite moment, she considered it a failure for herself and did not give in ... They went to the notary public together... He married her” (Afghani 2020, 260).

Homa has confronted the tragic circumstance after her divorce. She thoroughly deals with the “wrong accusations” (Afghani 2020, p. 94) according to which she is blamed for her affairs. She doesn’t receive any respect when being divorced; she is constantly the unclean victim. The conditions of widows at Pahlavi Time were swamped with degradation “Death is a wedding for her” (Afghani 2020, p. 34). She is first introduced as ‘The Woman with White Chador’ (Afghani 2020, 27). Later, she is named as Homa. So, it is expressed that she is utterly judged as the wrong woman. More blatantly, her husband accuses her of having affairs with the men passing by their window house singing (Afghani 2020, 35). She opposed to obey him when not buying her a new Chador, enraged him when leaving home without Chador (Afghani 2020). Since Homa has a gypsy background due to her childhood, her husband’s accusations constitute another big problem for her wilderness. In addition, she is parentless and relies on a man simply to achieve her rights. She has apparently been treated as ignominious. There is a social “stigma of defamation and disgrace’ attached to her widowhood” (Afghani, 2020, p. 92). Even when her old friends see her, they hide themselves behind the door as if a lunatic makes a dash out of the psychiatry hospital (Afghani, 2020):

“Oh, Madam, who brought such a neighbour for you? You definitely don’t know anything about her bygone past. Madam, this woman is disreputable!” (Afghani, 2020, p. 292),

“This woman is so disreputable and disgraced that they have excluded her from Sartip’s bathroom” (Afghani, 2020, p. 300).

Naneh Asghar stated. The novel *Madam Ahou’s Husband* shows how accusations lead people to wrongly accuse widows at Pahlavi Time as Afghani states:

“She, like a farming hen, is into fresh air, seeing and being seen. But she is not whimsical or licentious” (Afghani, 2020, p. 652),

“Seyed Miran: Have you seen or heard anything from her in the last few years? Ahou: I ... I ...”

“Actually I cannot lie. But for God’s sake, never, never” (Afghani 2020, 507),

Kadkhoda: “Whoever she is, she is not salacious” (Afghani, 2020, p. 670).

Daneshvar states: “The writer does not clearly show Homa’s spirits and psychological pains and does not delve into her consciousness” (Daneshvar, 1974, p. 28). Afghani presents the suffering and the humiliation which widows, namely Homa, have gone through. She stands all the degradation at the hands of her husband and her sister-in-law, Malous. They have gone too far by

locking her up in the safe of the house and gave her bread and water while leaving, hoping that she will suicide as a result of her betrayal. "Like slaves, I forgave my marriage portion and freed my life" (Afghani, 2020, pp. 36-7). This surmised belief seems to be futile since she has done no mistakes. Also, Saffari et al. (2017) state her husband's false and traditional beliefs were to be blamed. People treat her to numerous forms of degradation, including lacking Chador, living with a local musician—Hossein Khan, and leaving her husband with a twin.

What is prevalence at Pahlavi Time is that when a woman gets a divorce, she encounters all kinds of humiliation. Afghani presents Homa as a widow to reflect the grim reality of this condition at Pahlavi Time. Her freedom is trampled underfoot by the male-chauvenism. Unlike Ahou, Homa defends herself by opposing to the obsolete traditions. Poor and defend-less, she had left her late husband and had nothing in her hands. Living parentless, poor, and widowed, she was watched by men in all ways. All eyes watched every footstep she took. And all minds ready to seduce her. These people were completely depended on degrading her and ruining her reputation. People repudiated Homa, blamed her for her remarriage.

3. Conclusion

Afghani in the novel, *Madam Ahou's Husband*, notices the falseness of S. Miran presenting a manly image of Homa. What is explicitly understood is that Homa is not to be understood by traditional male standards. Afghani eyed the social climate to be polluted with an unhealthy, cynicism on widowed women. Certain of the close plausibility of avoiding polygamy, Afghani instead ended it through monogamy. Blatantly more concerned with Homa, the oppressed widow, and precisely more concerned with the obstacles she faces in her struggles to define her own identity. Afghani lays importance on the freedom of his character Homa attempting to grow the same consciousness in the readers as Homa does in Miran.

Miran advises the widowed Homa to be a commodity whose only concern ought to remarry, have children, and eager to gladden him. Homa is remarkably a target of circumstance in which her full significance lies. She stood firm to merely her rights to simply get the objective of being a subject not a housewife. She also goes against the grains, ignoring her kids with an insistence on the fundamental rights for herself as a widow with her remarriage to Seyed Miran. She could not claim for a better home, and conserved her time to express disapproval of her oppression of her widowhood. What Homa wants more than everything is the ability to see as

equal as the other women around and set a cluster of objectives, together with a workmanlike purpose to accomplish. Therefore, her leaving with Alborz seems a good chance to escape her widowhood status. Afghani is concerned with the obstacles Homa experiences because the people in the society have wrongly blamed her of being unclean. He also suggests how she has strived to endure. Afghani has concluded that the widowed Homa has undergone a lot of humiliation in the community because of observing traditions and escaping rumors.

Bio-data

Maliheh Mahmoodabadi: Maliheh Mahmoodabadi works as an English language teacher in Iran Language Institute.

Declarations

Acknowledgements: Not applicable.

Data availability statement: Further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Funding: The author did (not) receive financial support.

Competing Interest: No conflict of interest is reported.

Declaration of generative AI-powered tools in the process of writing: The author declares that she has not used AI-generated tools in preparing the present paper.

References

- Afghani, A. M. (2020). *Madam Ahou's husband*. Negah Publication.
- Alavi, B. (1962). *Kaveh Jomleh*. Monikh
- Asgari Hassanklou, A., & Bayat, H. (2013). The place of "Showhar-e-Ahoo Khanom" novel in Iranian fiction. *Language and Persian Literature*, 21(74), 30-47. <https://jpll.khu.ac.ir/article-1-1666-en.html>.
- Daneshvar, S. (1974). *Savushun*. Kharazmi Publication.
- Eslami Nadooshan, M. A. (1961). *About Madam Ahou's Husband*. Yaghma.
- Ghasemi, M. Jalali Pandari, Y. (2015). An analysis of Madam Ahou's husband's characters. *Modern Persian Literature*, 5(1), 86-124. https://contemporarylit.ihcs.ac.ir/article_1737.html?lang=fa
- Kahdouiee, M. K., Shirvani, M. (2009). The female protagonist's characterization in Madam Ahou's Husband and Savushun. *Persian Letter*, 48, 71-85.
- Mirabedini, H. (2007). *Hundred years of writing Iranian stories*. Cheshmeh Publication.
- Mirsadeghi, J. (2003). *The best modern Iranian stories*. Eshareh Publication.
- Parham, S. (1961). Contemporary Iranian literature: The husband of Ahu Khanum. *Book Guide*, 10, 970-971.
- Saffari, J., Mousavi, S. K., Sadeghi, E., & Zaheri, E. (2017). Modernity and the traditional structure of Iranian families based on the novel: Shohar-e Ahoo Khanom. *English Language and Literature*, 25(82), 217-240. <https://doi.org/10.29252/jpll.25.82.217>
- Sharifi, M. (2008). *Dictionary of Persian literature*. Nashrenow.
- Taslimi, A. (2009). *Propositions in contemporary Iranian literature*. Ketab-e Ameh Publishing
- Vahed, A. (2005). Madam Ahou's Husband and literary schools. *Bahonar University: Faculty of Literature and Humanities*, 14(17), 208-229.