

Comparative analysis of the concept of motherhood in world literature

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Annotation: Since the beginning of human history, motherhood has been regarded as the most sacred and permanent attribute in many cultures. Although the roles and responsibilities of women have changed over time, due to social, political and economic events, the main responsibility of women has always been perceived as "motherhood". With the modern era, women have participated in social spheres therefore, certain expectations and expectations about motherhood were formed in terms of one-sided views. Although motherhood has evolved over the centuries, the expectations of mothers reflect similar characteristics in almost all cultures. They evoke patience, selflessness, compassion, charity, and unconditional love for children. There are various studies based on the concept of "motherhood" in psychology, anthropology and literature. However, for this study, in order to exemplify the mother concept, "motherhood" described by Adrienne Rich in "The Born Woman" (1976), as well as some mother images from the fiction texts of world literature were selected and comparatively analyzed. The purpose of this study is not to generalize the concept of "motherhood" for every culture in world literature, but based on the results of the analysis, it was to observe that the concept of "motherhood" is reflected in a similar way in many literary works belonging to different cultures. Therefore, this study will serve as a model for further comparative literature studies on motherhood and motherhood in world literature.

Keywords: Motherhood, birth woman, world literature, comparative analysis

INTRODUCTION:

The politics of motherhood is one of the most controversial issues explored in literature over the centuries. Since the beginning of human history, motherhood has been regarded as the most sacred and permanent attribute in many cultures. Although the role and responsibilities of women have changed over time, due to social, political and economic events, the main responsibility of a woman has always been perceived as "motherhood". Research on the problem of motherhood and based on analysis, in many patriarchal societies, women are considered to be "the primary caregivers and femininity is associated with motherhood" (McMahon 1995; Arendell 2000). During the Industrial Revolution, although motherhood was recognized as an honorable and important duty of women, women were confined to the domestic environment to take care of children and busy themselves with housework (Eyer 1996: 37). , selfless, expected to create a proper shelter for their family and restrain their interests, gently guiding their children along prescribed paths (Thurer 1994: 183). With the modern era, as women participate in social spheres, old expectations and different perspectives on motherhood have been formed. Although motherhood has evolved over the

centuries, the expectations of mothers reflect similar characteristics in almost all cultures. They evoke patience, selflessness, compassion, charity, and unconditional love for children.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCHES :

The main tasks of mothers are to raise a child, to take care of the social, economic, emotional and intellectual needs of children with feelings of joy and satisfaction, deep pleasure and pride, personal satisfaction, love and joy. (Arendell 2000). Moreover, since the rise of women's social status (Ruddick 1989), motherhood has become synonymous with words of strength and resilience against tyranny or political order (Collins 1994). In 1953, British pediatrician and child psychoanalyst Donald Woods Winnicott (1896-1971) argued that motherhood includes physical care, love, and emotional affection with maternal intuition; however, according to Arendell, "motherhood is neither a unifying experience for individual women nor a condition experienced by all women" (2000: 1196). For many feminist scholars, motherhood brings about two changes: biological change due to pregnancy and social change due to domestic constraints. For example, Dally (1982) argues that motherhood is a limiting trait because society has many expectations for women to maintain certain behaviors. However, as Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986) points out, when women become mothers, they are considered to take the place of God (2010: 597), because they are perceived as closer to God's power to give life (Gray 1994: 26).

Motherhood includes not only giving birth to a child, but also raising and raising them to adulthood. Therefore, mothers make a moral and spiritual contribution to society: it forms and sustains a wider network of relationships in which questions of mutual consideration, rights and justice, utility and virtue must be raised." (Held 2006: 102).

In the field of literature, motherhood is widely accepted; however, only a few studies have yielded results on comparing mother images in world literature. Therefore, this study forms a broader field that describes motherhood based on Adrienne Rich's theories in *The Birth Woman*. To shed light on this uncharted territory, it is of particular interest to compare and contrast mother figures in world literature to draw conclusions about how motherhood is represented in different cultures.

Performance of motherhood in world literature

Since the mid-1980s, feminists have discussed and analyzed the concepts of "motherhood" and "mothers" as oppressed victims in patriarchal societies (Fromm 2004: 27). As a canonical text in women's studies, Adrienne Rich's *Born Woman: Motherhood as Experience and Tradition* (1976) is a groundbreaking work that explores the author's examination of motherhood as a "ritual" and her personal experience of motherhood. includes reflection. A widely read poet, teacher, activist, feminist, and mother, Rich, as she describes in her book's Introduction, attempted to place motherhood in a social context that operates within a patriarchal framework: women remain under the control of men. necessary" (Rich 1995:3). Although motherhood has contributed to women's status in society, many feminist scholars argue that motherhood confines women to domestic life and destroys women's potential as the ultimate sacrifice in life, believed to be (Firestone 1993: 68). In the chapter "Wrath and Tenderness" in *The Birth of Women*, Rich argues that men define women's roles by manipulating and controlling motherhood, and that "patriarchal thought limits a woman's identity to her narrow biological characteristics" (1995: 27). ; and thus says that women lose power and autonomy in their own lives.

Also, in *The Fright Call*, Rich argues that motherhood appears as a biological identity, denying the individual potential of women, and that motherhood is institutionalized in such a way that women's maternal instinct rather than intelligence, selflessness rather than self-awareness, rather than self-creation, it leads to relational demands on others (Rich 1995:3). In other words, this confinement of women as responsible, powerless, and idealized beings limits women's potential. Therefore, when motherhood combines the unconditional love for the child and the sense of self-fulfillment, it creates a loss of freedom and feelings of shame, depression, hopelessness and guilt. Sarah

Ruddick (1935-2011) echoes Rich's idea of institutionalized motherhood when she says, "Mothers, in the eyes of others, surrender their authority [and] lose confidence in their own worth. " (1989: 111-112). In other words, rather than being guided, supported and praised when women become mothers, they are controlled and shaped. Thus, when women become mothers, they gain an undeniable power and exalted status, but at the same time, they are disempowered by the demands and rules imposed on them by patriarchy and society, "as mothers, women idealized and exploited" (Rich 1995: Introduction: 17). As a result of this patriarchal oppression and biological changes, as explained in *The Kingdom of the Father*, mothers can have psychological changes: "Impotence can lead to exhaustion, self-denial, guilt, and depression." (Rich 1995: 13). In "Violence: The Heart of Motherhood's Darkness," Adrienne Rich explains the limitation of female potential: "We are the power that is stolen from us. and we do not think of the power that has been taken from us in the name of the institution of motherhood' (1995: 25). Related to this issue, in Susan Rawlings's *Nineteenth Chamber* (1965), we as readers observe the failure of female intelligence. After motherhood, Rawlings became a loving housewife, which limited her opportunities as a publicist. As soon as she gets married and has children, she quits her job and becomes a householder; however, in her internal research, she believes that there is a huge gap between the dominant patriarchal ideology based on women's roles and her identity (Quawas 2007: 113). When she decides to rent a hotel room where she can find her true self, she questions her life, her decisions, and her marriage. Room 19 is the only place in the play where he can escape from his other roles: She was no longer Susan Rowling, mother of four, wife to Matthew, employer of Mrs. Parkers and Sophie Traub, with one or another relationship with friends, schoolteachers, and merchants. She was no longer the mistress of a big white house and garden with clothes for this or that job or event, she was Mrs. Jones and she was alone and she had no past and no future (Lessing 1965: 278). Another mother figure oppressed by society and her family is Harriet in Doris Lessing's *The Fifth Child* (1988). In the late 1970s, Harriet, a mother of five living in a small village near London, was sacrificing her career for her family. His youngest child, Ben, is a bad-tempered and nervous boy. Struggling between her family and Ben, Harriet becomes the culprit and society expects her children to grow up with "normal" behavior, but Ben was not a well-behaved child. Both society and her husband have "failed" to raise the child. Blames Harriet. When Harriet consults Dr. Gilley to solve Ben's problems, she also accepts the doctor's blame: "I'll tell you straight, Mrs. Lovatt, the problem isn't with Ben, it's with you. You don't like him very much" (2001: 124). Furthermore, when Harriet brings Ben from the hospital, the family accuses her of breaking the family alliance and accusing her of being "irresponsible," "selfish," and "crazy" (2001: 140). the expectations of the mother and patriarchal society bring about the tragedy of both the family and herself.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, it can be said that the problem of "motherhood" is one of the most controversial topics in psychology, philosophy, social sciences and literature, and it means similar concepts for many cultures, i.e. excessive joy, boundless love, compassion. , a sacrifice, a difficult task, or a sacred burden. During the Industrial Revolution, women were imprisoned in domestic conditions, i.e. child care and housework. However, in modern times, motherhood has evolved and expanded as women have participated in social spheres. With the rise of feminism in the 1980s, the concepts of "motherhood" and "motherhood" became a controversial issue for researchers. In conclusion, the purpose of this study is not to generalize the concept of "motherhood" for all cultures. However, the findings of this study, based on Rich's *Of Woman Born*, highlight the way in which "motherhood" is depicted in many cultures. It is described in world literature based on the requirements of society and the principles of patriarchy. It is reasonable to conclude that motherhood and motherhood reflect similar influences and concepts in many cultures, especially in societies dominated by men for many centuries.

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