



**THE REPRESENTATION OF FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE IN AYAD
AKHTAR'S *AMERICAN DERVISH***

THESIS

Written by :

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**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITY OF JEMBER
2016**



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THESIS

A thesis presented to the English Department,
Faculty of Humanities, Jember University
As one of the requirements to get
the Award of Sarjana Sastra Degree
in English Studies

Written by :

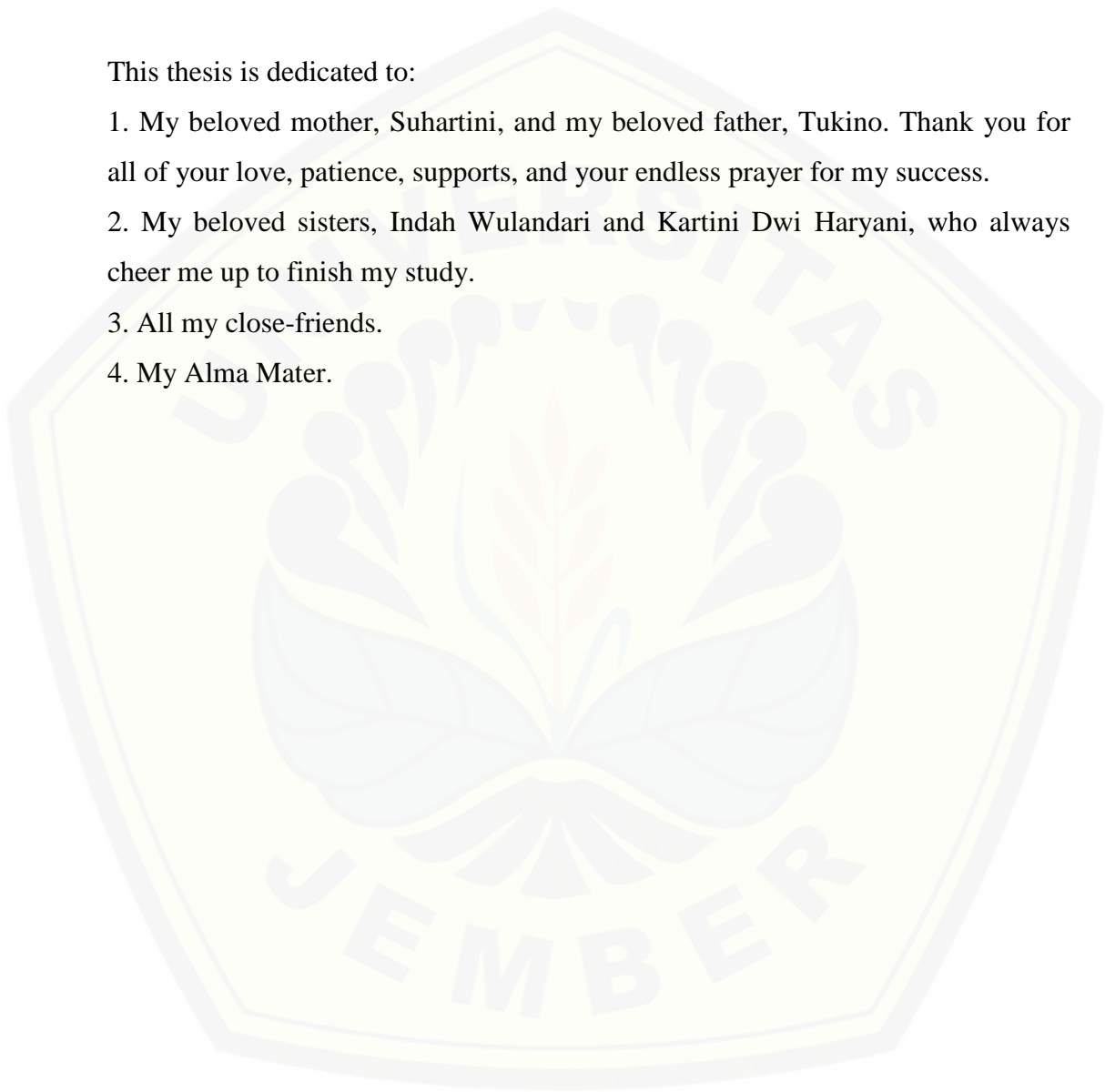
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

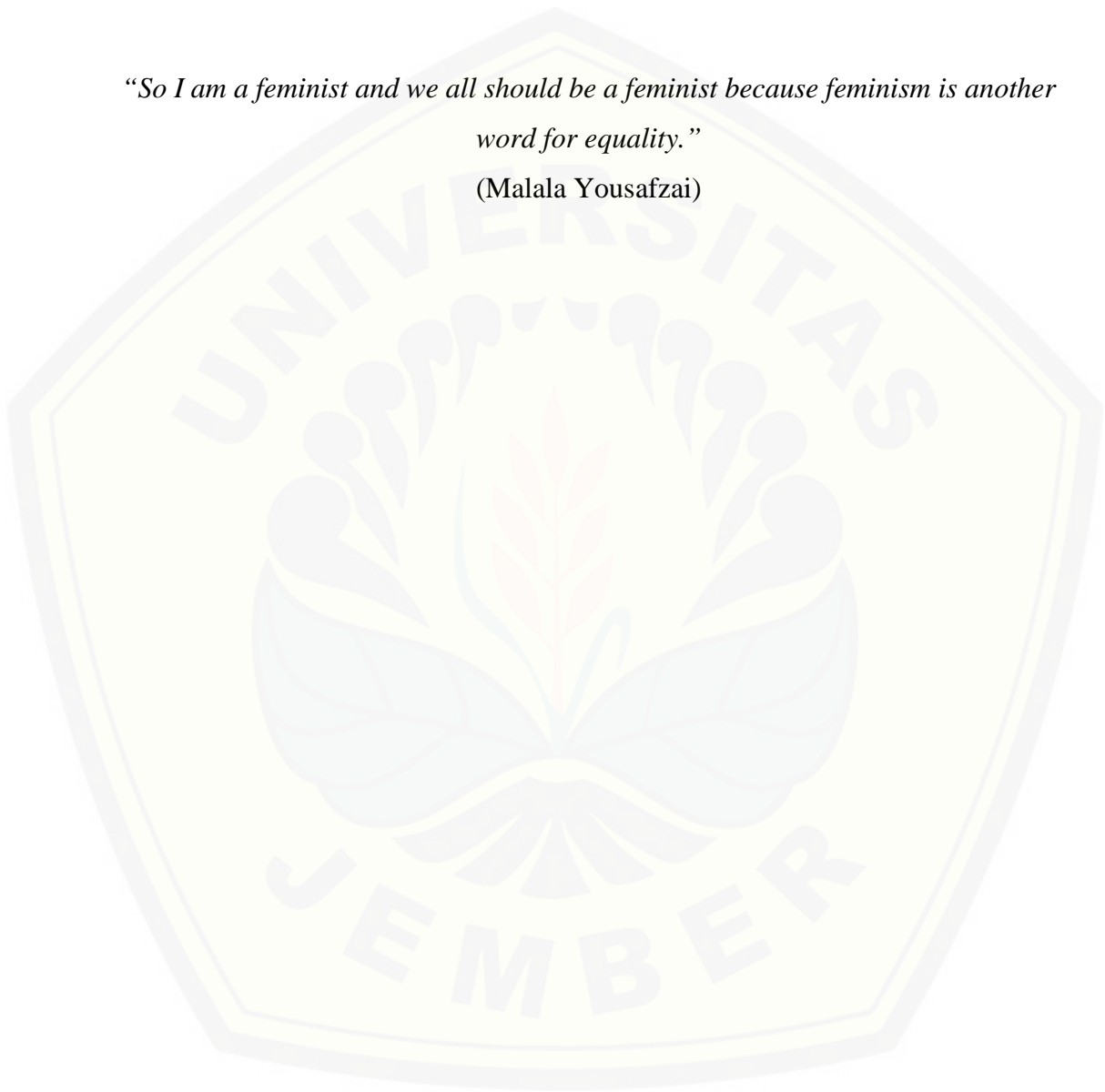
1. My beloved mother, Suhartini, and my beloved father, Tukino. Thank you for all of your love, patience, supports, and your endless prayer for my success.
2. My beloved sisters, Indah Wulandari and Kartini Dwi Haryani, who always cheer me up to finish my study.
3. All my close-friends.
4. My Alma Mater.



MOTTO

“So I am a feminist and we all should be a feminist because feminism is another word for equality.”

(Malala Yousafzai)



DECLARATION

I hereby state that this thesis entitled “*The Representation of Feminist Perspective in Ayad Akhtar’s American Dervish*” is an original piece of writing. I state that the analysis and the research described in this thesis have never been submitted for any other degree or any publications.

I certify to the best of my knowledge that all sources used and any helps received in the preparation of this thesis have been acknowledged.

Jember, October, 2016

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praises to the Highest and the Almighty God to whom I kneel down and pray for His blessings and mercies so that I can finish my study. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to those who have given me great and helpful contributions in supporting my study. Thanks to:

1. Prof. Dr. Akhmad Sofyan, M.Hum, the Dean of Faculty of Humanities, Jember University.
 2. Dr. Eko Suwargono, M.Hum, my first advisor, and Dra. Supiastutik, M.Pd, my second advisor who give me all your guidance and advice for a better academic writing.
 3. Dr. Mochamad Ilham, M.Si and Mrs. Irana Astutiningsih S.S.M.A, who give me support and guidance to finish my thesis.
 4. All of the lecturers of the English Department who have taught me the valuable knowledge during my academic years.
 5. The Library Officers of Faculty of Letters and the Central Library of Jember University.
 6. My beloved family.
 7. All my friends of the 2011 class in English Department for the nice friendship.
- Hopefully, this thesis can give contribution towards the English Studies, especially those who intend to develop their knowledge on the study of literature.

Faris Ibnu Fajar

Jember, October, 2016

SUMMARY

The Representation of Feminist Perspective in Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish*; Faris Ibnu Fajar; 110110101001; 2016; 45 pages; English Department; Faculty of Humanities; Jember University.

This research analyzes the representation of feminist perspective in *American Dervish* novel. It is portrayed in Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish* by its female characterization. In literary work, character can be used as an equipment to deliver the idea of the author through the story to the readers. Through *American Dervish*, Ayad Akhtar tells an interesting story about Pakistani-American culture. There are three problems to discuss in this research. The first is the women's oppression in the novel, then, the representation of feminist perspective in the novel, and the last is the author's ideology that constructed behind the novel.

This research is significant because it discusses about gender inequality that often happens in Pakistani-American society. This research aims to gain understanding about the representation of feminism in the midst of Pakistani American Muslim societies that is considered as strong patriarchal culture.

To support the analysis, I use the Stuart Hall's theory of representation and Chandra Mohanty's feminism approach. Theory of representation is used to analyze the feminist perspective in the novel that supported by Mohanty's feminism approach. Then, from the results of analysis, finally I found the author's ideology from connecting previous analysis results with the social context of the novel, and the social background of the author. Specifically, the social context and social background that I discuss is about Pakistani American Muslim life in 1980's, even until nowadays. This research is qualitative research. This research is divided into two kinds of data, primary data and secondary data. The primary data are taken from the narrative and descriptive dialogues in Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish*. I use literature journals, essays, articles, relevant books and e-sources as the secondary data.

As the result of the discussion, it can be inferred that the author delivers his feminist perspective through the female characterization in his *American Dervish* novel. Mina and Muneer are two female characters who have feminist perspective in the novel. The feminist perspective in the novel mostly emerge in merely the way of thinking or mindset like criticizing, complaining, etc, but female characters cannot escape from this oppression that is resulted by the patriarchal culture that have been practiced for a long time ago. Basically, the author criticizes the fundamentalism in Islam that also affects to gender issues. Above all, the author tries to advocate gender equality. By this research, we can know that Islam actually holds woman in high esteem, and woman has some equal rights with men. The patriarchal culture that occurs in most Muslim societies is resulted by many factors, such as misinterpretation, misconception, etc.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter shows the basic reasons of conducting the research. The background of study as the foundation or base in guiding how the significance of the research will be. It also presents the research topic, the research problems, the research questions, the goals of the study, and the scope of study.

1.1. The Background of Study

According to Wellek and Warren (1949: 9), literature essentially results from a creative and imaginative process operating under the impulse of feeling expression, idea, or the thinking of writer from a situation process and social condition which is defined as everything in print. Literature was also a media of social criticism or reflection of social life that has message to the reader about social phenomenon and also used to analyze the social problems that happened. One example of social problems that appears in literary work is about gender inequality which is unfair to women. We cannot talk about what is said as gender in the literature without reference of feminism. I choose to discuss about this topic because woman is an interesting object to discuss that caused by her social representation. Social representation that appears in my research is specifically about gender inequality that happens in Pakistani-American Muslim societies.

We can analyze Eastern and Western values that are juxtaposed in *American Dervish* novel. Eastern values come from Pakistani societies who deal with strong religiosity, tradition, norms, and politeness. Meanwhile, Western values come from American societies who are dominated with logical thoughts, modernity, liberal view, and independence. All these values affect the characters' behavior in the novel. Moreover, the uniqueness of diasporic life that will be connected to the representation of feminist perspective will give us some new horizon of knowledge in this topic. Besides, there is a social phenomenon that considering Muslim societies have strong patriarchal culture that also encourage me to discuss deeply about this topic. Ayad Akhtar, a Pakistani-American novelist, writes a novel entitled *American Dervish* which is published in 2012. He tells a story about Pakistani immigrant family who live in Milwaukee, United

States during 1980s. It is a kind of a semi autobiographical story of his life because Hayat Shah, the main character of his novel, is a Pakistani-American, having similar background with the author who also lives in Milwaukee (<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/tavissmiley/interviews/actor-writer-ayad-akhtar/>) (accessed on March, 29 2016 at 9.30 pm)

The book is obviously fictionalized to give him more artistic freedom. Each character in the novel takes his or her own journey to discover themselves, and what it means to be American and Pakistani Muslim. The author also tells hard truths about how religion can be used as a tool for oppressing free spirited women in particular. In the story, the author uses a young boy character named Hayat Shah as a main narrator who tells his life story in first person perspective. The story takes place when Hayat was about 10 years old, he was given wisdom beyond his years as a flashback.

So, in the whole novel, it is actually an older and wiser Hayat reconstructing the actions and experiences that brought him to present day. Hayat has a father named Naveed Shah, and a mother named Muneer. In the novel, Shahs Pakistani family had been long time moving to United States of America, then in 1980s there is a beautiful Pakistani woman named Mina who get oppressed and abused in her hometown Pakistan moved to America and lived with Shahs family. Mina is Muneer's bestfriend. Mina emigrates to United States of America to rebuild her life after a terrible marriage and family abuses in her hometown Pakistan. She also brings her son Imran to United States in order to avoid her husband's menace about child custody rights after she is divorced by her husband.

Basically, Mina is a smart and independent character, she is also a devout and committed Muslim who use more contextual or personal interpretation (ijtihad) in religion issues. Meanwhile, Shahs family is secular Muslim family that no longer does religious practices due to certain reasons. Then, Mina influences feminist perspective, enlightenment, and other effects in the process of her socialization with Shahs secular Muslim family and her surroundings. The feminist perspective, enlightenment, and other effects deal with multiculturalism

objects, such as religion, and gender issues. Linda Lindsey proposes that gender is different with sex:

“Sex refers to the biological characteristics distinguishing male and female. This definition emphasizes male and female differences in chromosomes, anatomy, hormones, reproductive systems, and other physiological components. Gender refers to those social, cultural, and psychological traits linked to males and females through particular social contexts. Sex makes us male or female; gender makes us masculine or feminine. Sex is an ascribed status because a person is born with it, but gender is an achieved status because it must be learned.”

(Lindsey, 2010: 4)

From this gender issue, I focus on analyzing the representation of feminist perspective in the novel because Ayad Akhtar uses female characters as the subject that represent feminist perspective in the midst of patriarchal Muslim culture in United States. Walby defines that patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women (1990: 20). Above all, my research uses Stuart Hall’s theory of representation to analyze the signs, languages, and ideas with supporting approach of feminism that will be used to analyze representation of feminist perspective in the novel.

1.2 Research Topic

Through *American Dervish* novel, Ayad Akhtar represents feminist perspective in the midst of patriarchal Muslim culture in the United States. Thus, the research topic in this thesis is social representation especially on feminism. Murray states that a research topic is the broad subject matter addressed by the study (2005: 42). It means that I have to describe first what I want to explain generally in the thesis. As it is explained in the background of study above, this research is conducted to analyze feminist perspective represented in Ayad Akhtar’s novel entitled *American Dervish*.

1.3 Problems to Discuss

In social life, media, and literature; men are mostly portrayed to be more powerful and dominant than women. Women are mostly oppressed and

considered to be inferior than men. Then, gender inequality appears, and encourages the existence of feminist movement to struggle for gender equality. Generally, female characters in *American Dervish* novel are destined to be oppressed by man. It is because of the Muslim's misinterpretation of Qur'an (Islamic holy book), hadith (stories from the Prophets life), shari'ah (Islamic law) that leads to a strong patriarchal culture of Muslim societies; and also encouraged by the domination of Western's stereotype toward Muslim women. In the novel, Mina who used to get abused in her hometown Pakistan tries to against the patriarchal culture in Pakistani Muslim culture in United States through her feminist perspective that represented in the novel. Besides, there is a character named Muneer who also represents feminist perspective in the novel. Above all, the main problem that is dicussed in this thesis is the representation of feminist perspective that constructed through the female characters in the novel.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How are oppressed women represented in the novel?
2. How is feminist perspective constructed through female characters?
3. What is the ideological position of the author beyond the novel?

1.5 The Goals of The Study

Every research always has goals. There are some goals of this research that should be achieved. The first goal is to provide some descriptions of oppressed women that represented in the novel. The second goal is to know the representation of feminist perspective which is constructed through female characters. The third goal is to show the ideological position of the author beyond the novel. By doing this research, I hope it can give a useful contribution of thought in the literary works to the readers who are interested in learning and understanding gender issues, specifically in the eyes of Pakistani American Muslim women who against patriarchal culture. Above all, from this research, we can learn and understand on how we should know the importance of feminism and how to treat women in equal rights with men.

1.6 The Scope of The Study

The scope of the study is designed to make this research not too general or not too broad, based on that motive, a limitation data source is used in this research. This research is mainly focused on analyzing the representation of feminist perspective in *American Dervish* novel by Ayad Akhtar. The analysis leads to know how the representation of feminist perspective in the novel. In addition, this research will lead to find out the ideological position of the author beyond the characterization, events, and narrations in the novel.

The theoretical framework of this research uses Stuart Hall's theory of representation as the primary theory. Moreover, this research only focus on female characters in the novel who represent feminist perspective.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is used to support the analysis. This chapter is divided into two subchapters. The first subchapter describes the previous researches that are related to the topic of the research. The second subchapter explains the theory that is used to analyze the representation of feminist perspective in *American Dervish* by Ayad Akhtar. The theory used in this research is taken from Stuart Hall's theory of representation.

2.1 Previous Research

Literature review is an important framework in conducting a research. It can determine the gap and similarities of the analysis between the previous one. Blaxter (2006: 111) states that the main functions of literature review are to discuss relevant research carried out on the same topic or similar object, and to a conceptual and theoretical context in which is suitable. For this reason, the literature review of this thesis is offered, consisting of the previous researches, the explanation concerning with the subject matter and the theory.

The first previous research is Fitri Aningsih's *The Death of Victorian Morality and The Emergence of Post-Victorian Female Subject in D.H Lawrence's The Virgin and The Gipsy* (2015). She uses Stuart Hall's Theory of Representation which is same with my primary theory in my research. She uses this theory to analyze the language, and the meaning behind the language which is used to find out how the representation of Victorian morality and post-Victorian morality that showed in the novella. The representation comes under four following classifications: fashion, marriage, human relationship, and sexuality. In her research, she concluded that D.H. Lawrence agrees toward Post-Victorian morality. Above all, the contribution of this research towards my thesis is to give a guidance to apply Stuart Hall's theory to the work of fiction like novel.

The second previous research is Shameema T's *Resisting Islamic Orthodoxy: A Reading of Akhtar's American Dervish* (2014). She chooses *American Dervish* novel as main object which is same with my thesis, but she analyzes it with other approach that discusses about the resistance toward the orthodox Islam that can be explored in the novel. She considers that the novel is full with questioning, subverting, and critiquing some of the traditionally held beliefs, concepts, and practices of Islam. She concluded that *American Dervish* is a novel of resistance to the ways and convictions of orthodox Islam. This research gives contribution to my thesis in understanding the concept of orthodox Islam in the novel that also ruling gender issues. Therefore, by studying this previous research, we can get enough additional information about gender issues in the eyes of orthodox Islam.

By reviewing both researches, this thesis is intended to be designed talking about the similar issue. To support this research, books, journals, articles, and other related sources are applied as the secondary data.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical approaches are presented briefly in this chapter. It discusses and explains some important theories and concepts related to the topic discussion. The theories are used to analyze the problems in the next chapter. It is also used to make the discussion clearer. This chapter is important to give the other clarification related to the theory, in order to make the appropriate application in this analysis. Furthermore, the descriptions of the theory will be employed based on dictionaries, books, and expert opinions in literature and references.

2.2.1 Theory of Representation

This subchapter explains Stuart Hall's theory of representation. This theory becomes the tool to analyze the representation of feminist perspective in Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish*. The representation of feminist perspective of female characters in the novel will be analyzed through the language, the way they communicate, signs, ideas, and also the symbols which represent feminist

perspective through female characters. Hall through his book entitled *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practice* states:

“Representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people... Representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of culture. It does involve the use of language, of signs and images which stand for or represent things.”

(Hall, 1997: 15)

Hall's quotation above means that representation is a main part of the process of production and exchange meaning of the concepts in our mind to other through language. Language is one of the media through which thoughts, ideas, and feelings are represented in a culture (Hall, 1997: 1). Language also functioned as a sign. The signs whether they are sounds, written words, electronically produced images, musical notes, even objects are used to stand for or represent our concepts, ideas, and feelings to other people.

Representation works through the concept of signs and meanings. The concept itself can be changed, and it always has new meaning. Representation is changed as the result of the changing of meaning. Furthermore, representation is not a static process because it can change along with the knowledge and the necessity of the users. Representation is a constructive process about new ideologies that resulted new meanings and the result of human thought construction. Through representation, the meanings is produced and constructed.

Representation becomes the significant role to occupy a new and important case to the study of culture. Representation connects meaning and language to the culture (Hall, 1997: 13). These components are related to each other. Through the concept of a thing, we have pictured in our mind to understand about the meaning. However, the meaning cannot be communicated without language. If we want to communicate with the other people, we need language as the medium to deliver our idea and message so that we can understand the meaning. It makes language become the essential part to convey the message and to understand about the meaning itself. Above all, to understand about the

meaning, we have to understand about the concept of meaning itself because not all meanings can be expressed using language and it will help to understand the meaning by others.

The representational systems are divided into two important components, they are: the mental component and the language component. Hall states that:

“Mental representation: all things which we carry around in our heads. Meaning depends on the system of concepts and images formed in our thought which can stand for or represent the world. Language: to represent and exchange meanings and concepts we can only do that when we also have access to shared language. Language depends on constructing a set of correspondences between our conceptual map and a set of signs, arranged or organized into various language which stand for or represent those concepts.”

(Hall, 1997: 17)

Both these components have relation to each other. The concept which exists in our mind makes us understand the meaning of things. Otherwise, the meaning cannot be understood without using language. For the example: if we recognize the concept of “glass” and we know the meaning. We will not be able to communicate the meaning of “glass” (for example, a thing which is used to drink by people) if we cannot utter it by using language that is understood by the other people.

The meaning of construction process become very different in a culture or in a group of people because each of them has their own way to interpret something. People who have different understanding background toward the specific cultural codes will not able to understand the meaning of something which is produced by other communities. Therefore, in order to produce and exchange meaning people must have the same understanding background toward the cultural codes.

Besides, there are three important approaches in theory of representation. Hall states there are the reflective approach, the intentional approach and the constructionist approach (1997: 15). First, in the reflective approach, language has a function as a mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exists in the world

(Hall, 1997: 15). This approach means that language reflects the meaning of something. It can be called as mimetic because language works by reflecting the truth of objects or things that are already there. Thus, people create a meaning by using language through media, symbol, idea, and so on.

Then, in the second approach is intentional approach. Through this approach, language is used for representing what the speaker or the author's purpose. Hall argues that words mean what the author intends they should mean (Hall, 1997: 25). It means that the use of language is to present or to describe the meaning toward the object or the things. The meaning itself is based on the speaker's individually intended meaning. As Hall states in his book (1997: 25), "The speaker, the author, who imposes his or her unique meaning on the world through language."

However, we cannot be the single or unique source of meanings in language. Our private intended meanings, however personal to us, have to enter into the rules, codes and conventions of language to be shared and understood (Hall, 1997: 25). Then, the third approach is constructionist approach. This approach is different from reflective and intentional approach. This approach does not relate to both approaches because constructionist approach has own perspective toward the meaning of object or things. As Hall explains in his book about the constructionist approach below:

"Things don't mean: we construct meaning, using representational system-concepts and signs....we must not confuse the material world, where things and people exist, and the symbolic practice and processes through which representation, meaning and language operate."

(Hall, 1997: 25)

It means that the meaning does not depend on the material quality but on symbolic function. Hall describes it is because a particular sound or word stands for, symbolizes or represents a concept that it can function, in language, as a sign and convey meaning – or, as the constructions say, signify (1997: 26). In this case, the meaning is constructed through the language to deliver our concepts. Aningsih states that this approach combined the relation between thing in the world, our

concept in thought and language (2015: 12). It means that the meaning is constructed in and through language in representational systems.

In this case, I choose the third approach that is constructionist approach. I use this approach because the object that will be analyzed is the female characters who construct feminist perspective in the novel entitled *American Dervish*. Akhtar tries to represent feminist perspective through the characterization in the novel. She uses the text in the novel as the media to represent her critical perspective. Hall explains that there are two major variants or models of the constructionist approach that are semiotic approach by Ferdinand de Saussure; and discursive approach by Michel Foucault.

In this case, I use discursive approach by Michel Foucault. Foucault mentions that there are three ideas in discursive approach to representation, which are: concept of discourse, the issue of power and knowledge, and the questions of the subject (Hall, 1997: 43). As Foucault explains in Hall's book that representation does not only use language to construct meaning but also use discourse as a system of representation to analyze the meaning by using knowledge.

“By ‘discourse’, Foucault meant a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment. Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language.”

(Hall, 1997: 44)

In this case, the concept of discourse is about language and practice. It is to overcome the distinction between what one says (language) and what one does (practice). Foucault also argues that discourse constructs topic. It defines and produces the object of our knowledge to make a topic can be meaningfully and talked about and reasoned about (Hall, 1997: 44). Foucault says that discourse never consists of one statement, one text, one action, or one source but it appears across a range of text, and as forms of conduct, at number of a different institutional sites within society. Thus, the similarity occurred in discourse is included in discursive practice.

Foucault states that he was concerned with the production of knowledge and meaning, not through language but through discourse (Hall, 1997: 44). As has been explained before, it means that the construction of meaning is concerned through the discourse. Foucault also states, “We can only have knowledge of things if it has a meaning, it is discourse -not the things in itself- which produces knowledge.” (Hall, 1997: 45). It means that a knowledge is produced by discourse. Thus, the use of discursive practice is to analyze the representation because it uses discourse as a system of representation. Therefore, I use this approach in this research in order to confront the representation of feminist perspective through the female characters in Ayad Akhtar’s *American Dervish* and the ideology of the author.

2.2.2 Feminism Approach

According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (1995: 428), feminism is a belief in the principle that women should have same rights and opportunities as men. It develops not only because women want to get an equal position with men, but also to avoid oppression and abuse that happen in women’s life in the society. It increases response from feminist to transform literary critical approach which in the literary studies known as feminist literary criticism. In *Feminism and Its Fiction* (1998), Lisa Maria Hogeland explains that as a kind of literature, feminist sees that writing is a part of political process of resistance as an act of writing as women, reading as women, and writing for women.

Feminist literary criticism began when woman students and teachers working within the patriarchal institution of the University in English Department. They began integrating explicitly feminist oriented approaches to text as part of the second wave, at the end of the 1960s in a few pioneering cases and more widely, into the 1970s and 1980s. The critical attention of these feminists focused on representation of woman on male authored works. This kind of criticism often takes the of hunting out stereotypes of women and using them as means of identifying the ways in which these restricted cultural representation support women’s oppression.

Feminist literary criticism aims to know the standard of literary work by using feminist perspective when the man dominate the literary world, and woman as an active reader or writer. It is caused by their belief about the influence of the feminism's growth and the rising of woman's consciousness to the literary work. Feminist literary criticism is aimed to attack misinterpretation and stereotyping in literary work to increase more balance representation of woman in the literary work.

As an additional reference, Selden, et al, through the book entitled *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* (2005) also give some explanations that can be concluded as follows that there are four main goals that had been sought through centuries by feminists which are: to disturb the complacent certainties of a such patriarchal culture, to assert a belief in sexual equality, to eradicate sexist domination in transforming society, and to free feminism from naturalized patriarchal notions of the literary and the literary critical. For an example in the literary works, women as objects, whereas men are subjects. Feminists then deconstruct these texts to show readers that men made ideologies, which are not biological but socially constructed; the dichotomous comparison between these two genders are created by men as well.

In *American Dervish* novel, we can see feminist perspective specifically from the eyes of "third world" and Muslim women. According to Cheryl Johnson Odim, the term "third world" is frequently applied in two ways: to refer to 'underdeveloped' or over-exploited geopolitical entities, such as countries, regions, even continents; and to refer to oppressed nationalities from these world areas who are now resident in 'developed' first world countries (1991: 314). Generally, the image of "third world" and Muslim woman in the West is very schematic and prejudiced. Mohanty (1991) who belongs to third world woman who is same as the main female characters in the novel states that feminist discourse picked up on this trend in its production of the third world woman as a singular monolithic subject.

She notes that the images of degraded third world women are in contrast to the self-representation of Western women as educated, modern, having control

over their own bodies and sexualities, and the freedom to make their own decisions, in contrast to the stereotype of the third world or Muslim women who have been portrayed as submissive, oppressed, sexually constrained, ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimized, backward, etc. In fact, not all women in the West are secular and liberated, just as not all women in Muslim societies are ignorant and backward. In addition, not all Muslim women have the same idea about Islam. Their ideas are influenced by their class status, cultural background, education, and position in society.

We should also investigate women as social agents within their own social, historical, cultural, class backgrounds and contexts. No culture is static, and any culture is constantly open to contestation and renegotiation by all those who are engaged in it. She proposes that the universal image of the third world woman is constructed by adding third world's differences to gender relation. Actually, there is no universal patriarchal structure that conspires against all women universally as a group. Rather, economic, cultural, religious and political factors can intersect in various historically specific moments to create situations in which women are oppressed.

Women do not enter into social relations as oppressed people. They may become oppressed due to a variety of factors, such as misinterpretation or abuse of the religion like in the novel. Misinterpretation or abuse of the religion that happens such as strict and textual interpretation of Qur'an that leads to a legitimation tool for oppressing woman in order to maintain patriarchy. Then, some feminist perspective appear in here such as having freedom to make decision in her own life; work outside domestic sphere; questioning the patriarchal Muslim society; being an independent and educated woman, etc.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

The chapter describes how the research is conducted. Some steps mentioned hereby are the suitable ways of processing the data. It tells the reader the type of the research, how the data are collected, how the data are processed and how the data are analysed.

3.1 Type of Research

This type of research is a qualitative research. According to Blaxter, et al, qualitative method focuses on collecting and analysing data as much as possible without using numeric data (1997: 60). Meaning that, the data cannot be completely counted on numbers scale. Meanwhile, the data are essentially sentenced. The main field as the medium is taken from library research. By doing library research, the researcher can design the methods, approaches, theoretical frameworks, and finishing concepts in connection to the data.

The primary data in this research are in the form of text data such as narration, quotations, dialogues, description or sentence that taken from Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish*. Thus, I use discursive approach of representation theory to show how the discourse represented in the novel and to understand the ideology of the author. Finally, the analysis will absolutely be explained and concluded on sentences.

3.2 Data Collection

Data are the important thing in conducting a research. In order to collect the data, I use documentary method as the technique of collecting data. Blaxter et al. (1996: 141) state that documentary method is used for collecting data by using documents or written material as a basic for the research. Moreover, Blaxter et al also explain "researchers are expected to read, understand, and critically analyze the writings of others, whether fellow researchers, practitioners, or policy-makers" (1996: 167). It can be said that collecting data by using documents is studying,

classifying, and analyzing the data. Therefore, the data in this research are divided into two kinds. They are primary data, and secondary data.

The main source is the novel entitled *American Dervish* written by Ayad Akhtar. The primary data are focusing on the description and representation of feminist perspective which is presented in *American Dervish*. The primary data includes the dialogues, paragraphs, and narratives in this novel which are used as proof of my analysis. Then, to continue the analysis, the data are supported by the secondary data which are taken from some related books, journals, articles, essays, literary work reviews, internet sources, etc.

3. Data Processing and Analysis

In the research, briefly, the ongoing analysis process uses interpretative method. Blaxter et al (1997: 197) state that interpretation is the process by which researcher puts his own meaning on the data he has collected and analyzed. It makes the researchers free to express their own point of view. There is no boundary or border in doing analysis and making an argument. As far as the research, still the thesis is composed in scientific ways to result a hypothesis. Furthermore, the description of the thesis remains constructed by the writer's argument which is supported by expert references. Henceforth, the thesis is factual.

Processing and analyzing data is the next step to do after collecting the data. In the way of processing the data, to be the first one is close-reading. The reading activity in this case is done by more than once. It can be so many times. For this will ensure and strengthen the understanding the whole parts of the novel. In addition, the data are collected from the novel itself, Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish*. By breaking down all the important factors in the novel, afterward, the activity is briefly continued to a routine close-reading to the theoretical criticism by experts and any researchers. So, at the end of this study, there will appear a result not only as a pleasure comment but also an academic achievement. The reading in this activity is largely due to expert guidance to accomplish applying the suitable theoretical framework.

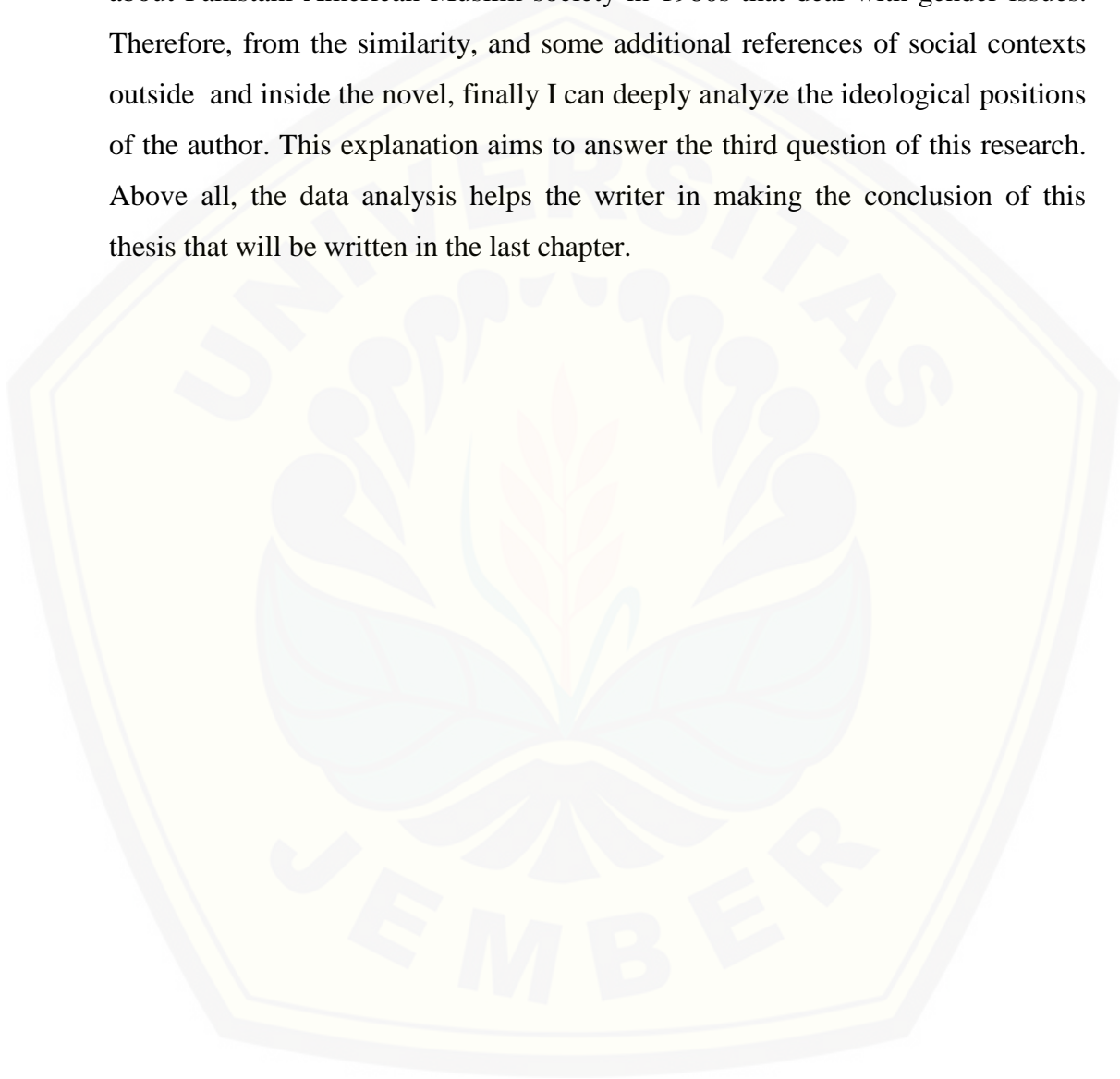
The data processing is a part of a research where all of the data are categorized. Data processing is started from categorizing data taken from the novel. The data are categorized on the basis of problems to discuss. This categorization is used as the way to examine representation of feminist perspective in the novel. The data which have significances to my problems are used for this research, in order to get the specific or detail explanation for my discussion in this thesis.

The first category is the data of oppression toward female characters that represented in the novel and the second category is the data which related to feminist perspective. Therefore, there are some steps in order to achieve the subject matters of this research. The first step, according to Stuart Hall's theory of representation, discursive approach is used as the system of representation. Hall states that Foucault has mentioned that there are three ideas in discursive approach to representation, which are: concept of discourse, the issue of power and knowledge, and the questions of the subject (Hall, 1997: 43).

By using discursive approach, all of the collected data related to gender inequality are classified into three categories. The first category is the data of oppression towards female characters represented in the novel, the second category is the data related to feminist perspective in the novel, and the third category is the data social context of the novel, and the author's social background. First and second data are described and analyzed in order to answer the first and second question in the research. Specifically, I analyze some aspects of feminist perspective from the text in the *American Dervish* which are: family (marriage, domestic violence, abuse, love affair), work (domestic sphere and public sphere), and education (to get well-educated).

Then, these aspects in the text will forming a discourse of feminist perspective based on the cultural representation of Pakistani American Muslim women. The next step is explaining about the ideological positions of the author represented in the novel. From the previous results of analysis about representation of feminist perspective, then I can discuss further to ideological position of the author.

Therefore, I analyze the social context of the novel as well as background of the author that lead the ideological construction in the novel. Basically, the novel deals with Pakistani-American Muslim culture which is same with the social background of the author. Above all, the social context that I analyze is about Pakistani-American Muslim society in 1980s that deal with gender issues. Therefore, from the similarity, and some additional references of social contexts outside and inside the novel, finally I can deeply analyze the ideological positions of the author. This explanation aims to answer the third question of this research. Above all, the data analysis helps the writer in making the conclusion of this thesis that will be written in the last chapter.



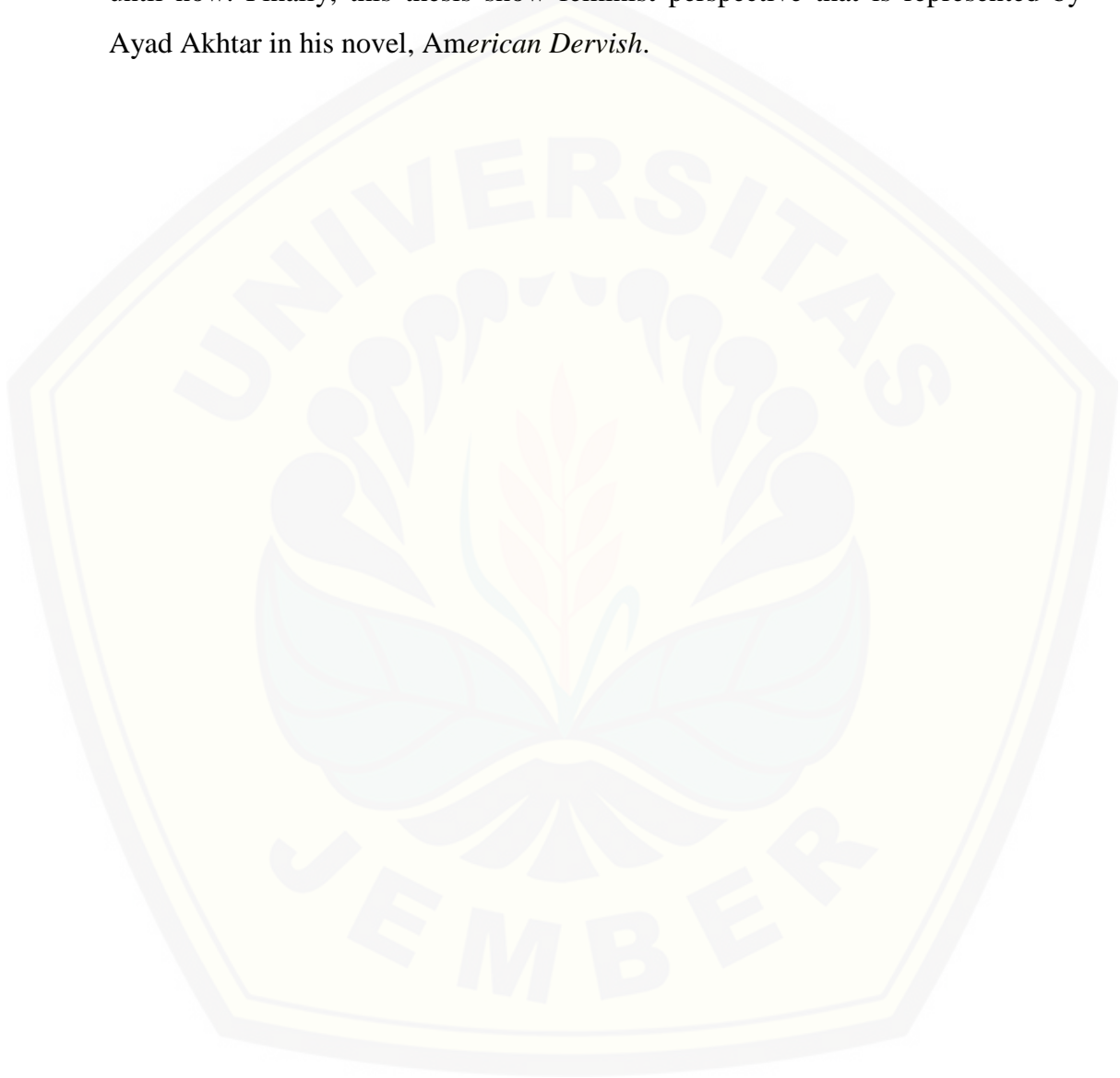
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

American Dervish is a debut novel written by Ayad Akhtar. In my research, *American Dervish* is analyzed using theory of representation by Stuart Hall which emphasizes to find the discourse of feminist perspective and its effects through the female characters' life and social condition in the story. Feminism approach is applied in order to find the feminist perspective toward gender issues especially women's oppression. By reading this novel, Akhtar represents the social condition of the Pakistani American Muslim society. He portrays the life of oppressed women in the patriarchal society, and how the women criticize and try to against patriarchy through their feminist perspective.

The representation of feminist perspective in the novel is represented by two female characters, Mina and Muneer. They face some oppression that are physical oppression, and mental oppression. Through their feminist perspective in the novel, we can conclude that the Pakistani Muslim women are not always like the common stereotype: uneducated, backward, etc. Discussing the problems in the novel, it is necessary to discuss the contextual background of the novel. The contextual background of the novel, especially in religion gives a big influence to Ayad Akhtar's writing. He said that Qur'an and Islam give him artistic and spiritual inspiration. In fact, misinterpretation or abuse of Qur'an gives some bad impacts to Muslim women's life such as gender inequality of Pakistani women.

Many people cannot distinguish between the real Islamic law and cultural practices. The real Islam teaches and accepts gender equality. Moreover, gender inequality that still happens in many Muslim societies such as Pakistani is actually resulted by cultural practices, not religion. The last discussion is the ideological position of the author. *American Dervish* is a literary work that represents the author Ayad Akhtar who criticizes fundamentalism in interpreting Qur'an. The merely textual and politicized interpretation of Quran leads to gender inequality.

Therefore, Akhtar who concern about this issue uses female characters who act as a tool to criticizing Islamic fundamentalism that leads to patriarchal culture. At the end of discussion, I also specifically discuss the social context and social background that deal with Pakistani women with their gender issues in 1980's until now. Finally, this thesis show feminist perspective that is represented by Ayad Akhtar in his novel, *American Dervish*.



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