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Course:

Date: (day/month/ year)

### **Question 1**

The major religions—Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are fundamentally masculine religions. The first three religions virtually have no recognition of women as key parts of their religious order or doctrine. On the other hand, Hinduism and Buddhism features both feminine and masculine language in equal measure. The presence of gods and goddesses renders Hinduism to be more acquainted to a gender-neutral language or the inclusion of both sexes in religious definition and practice (Burn 191). In contrast, Christianity which is a major world religion is based on a chord of patriarchy with God assuming the definitive gender of a man. The major characters are male, and as such the role of women in the church is in the periphery. Similarly, Judaism which is based on Jewish culture assumes a highly masculine definition. In the religious practice of Judaism, the Mosaic law or Torah which is based on the Old Testament interpretation of the world gives a solid background for masculine dominance (Burn 179; Burn 188).

The reformist ages of Christianity and Judaism offer leeway for female participation in the religious practices. For instance, the New Testament theology of St. Paul is based on equality of all persons (Burn 197). In this regard, there is no restriction on whom the persons can be, even though there is a fundamental silence on the role of women in church. Feminism in the church is a result of the protestant and Pentecostal movements which differed from the highly

masculine Roman Catholicism (Burn 197). Hence, it is assumptive that women should only serve as helpers. In Islam, the system is entirely patriarchal with an emphasis on women serving the role of subservient partners and home keepers. There are restrictive Sharia laws on the mannerisms that women should portray with women being forbidden from speaking in public or leading in religious practices (Burn 184).

The feminist theology is a post-colonial and neoliberal theological movement that seeks to empower women, and eliminate all forms of biases and discrimination whether by race, gender, or economic status. The feminist theology has been popular with the Black feminists who consider that the centrality of goddess in the religious practice (Burn 200). Among some of the key issues that arise from feminist participation in theology is emancipation of women from peripheries of religious practice. The empowerment considers the centrality of women in religion, and the divinity of the feminine order. For example, rather than sticking to a masculine or patriarchal order that is dominant in the main religions, the feminist theology taps into feminine essence. The invention of the goddess as a deity which the women trap into has created an alternative to the patriarchal deities which are entirely masculine.

In the feminist theology the roles of women in the religious practice have been elevated. Among the key roles that women hold in the feminist theologies include that of being a priestess, a prophetess or even a witch (Burn 201). This is contrarian to the main religions where women were considered subservient to the men, who served all the roles that impart and impact on the religious order. The feminist spirituality movement started in the 1970s in the US, Australia and Britain and involves religions where the women are religious leaders (Burn 200). They tap into ancient beliefs of women religious foundations (Burn 200).

**Question 2**

Globalization is the gradual interconnectivity of the world, with people being able to share a common global culture, and interact with ease with persons from other parts of the world. The impact of globalization on women is the transfer of women to other countries either as workers, sexual slaves, or marriage partners (Burn 164). This has created an increase in the overall suffering by women. In many cases, women from the global south are forced to seek better opportunities in the more developed world. In effect, there has been a rise in the number of cases of human rights violations including sexual and labor rights abuse. For instance, many women from South America and Africa migrate to Middle Eastern countries to work as domestic workers, the impact is victimization (Burn 164).

On the other hand, there has been an increase in internet or mail order brides in the India and Asian countries (Burn 164). This has resulted in the brokerage of women, which is a form of human trafficking where women are sold off as brides to men who want to have traditional weddings but are living in the European countries or developed cities in Asia (Burn 164). The impact of human trafficking has been an increase in the suffering of women as some of them are sold off as brides even before they finish school, or attain the marriage age. There is no consent in such arrangements which infringes on the rights of freedom of choice or association. In some instances, the mail order brides turn to be cases of sexual slavery in the developed world where women from South America and Asia are sold off to work in brothels (Burn 168). This is on the rise especially with the rise of sex tourism in some parts of the world (Burn 168). Some of the nations where this is rampant is Hong Kong and the Dominican Republic (Burn 168).

In modern times, globalization has yielded significant influence on global female political activism. Some of the key global figures in the effort include Nobel Laurette Wangari Maathai,

Nobel Prize winner Malala Yousafzai and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf among others. The story of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as the first president of Liberia created an inspiration for women in the global South to believe in their capacity to influence change (Johnson 78). In her autobiography, Ellen Johnson challenges women to take the initiative of participating in politics and rising against the patriarchal chords (Johnson 41).

A similar show of courage is found in the story of Wangari Maathai who rose to be a celebrated environmentalist. Her work in environmental activism played a crucial role in Kenya's environmental conservation efforts (Maathai 61). She also played a pivotal role in democracy standing against authoritarian regimes in defense of public property. In recent times, women from India have drawn inspiration from the story of Malala Yousafzai who has been at the forefront of women's rights in India (Lamb and Yousafzai 35). It is through her work that she has created global influence and inspiration for other women to rise up. Thus, globalization has created a wave of activism that transcends national borders.

### **Question 3**

The three stands of national women movements include: Women's Rights Activist Groups which focuses on changing national policy; Women's Research and Advocacy Groups which includes raising public awareness on women rights, and Nongovernmental Organizations which concerns itself with mobilizing women and providing services at grassroots level (Burn 253).

Characteristics of global or transnational feminist movements is that they involve political, social and economic activism. The spectrum of the transnational feminist movements is that they seek to empower women in their political capacity such as their participation in new democracies, and their public participation. The social aspect is the rights of women in society

such as issues of marriage, education and social participation. The economic rights include facets such as labor involvement, and labor rights as anticipated in UN (Burn 285).

Women's rights as human rights is an approach that considers that women's rights are better protected when considered as fundamental human rights. In this case, there is no exception to the manner in which women are treated. While there has been a case for human rights to be those which regard public sphere, women rights have been often considered as extra rights and as such of less relevance. Thus, by making the women's rights to be considered as human rights elevates the status of the rights of women (Burn 185). In this case, whether a nation is progressive or retrogressive, it is obliged to respect and observe the rights of women as they form a fundamental part of human rights. In any case, there will be no claims that the government or culture does not observe women's rights. In contrast, the governments of the world are obliged to respect, protect and uphold all human rights (Burn 186). This is under the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other global conventions that make human rights foundational doctrine in constitutions and in international law. This makes a better case for protection of rights of women as they are considered as humans, and as such deserving of the rights.

The key challenges to Women's Human Rights Agenda include transitioning from identifying the abuses to taking accountability for abuses, incorporating women's human rights to the other human rights agenda, and creating a balanced or inclusive women's rights agenda (Burn 290). These challenges exist because there is a challenge in taking action of the abuses or violations of women. This exists due to the lack of governmental action in implementing the punitive actions that should be taken against those who abuse rights of women (Burn 191). There is also a difficulty in the manner of framing women's rights as integral human rights. Further,

there is a challenge in creating a robust women's rights agenda which takes care of all rights (Ebadi).

Works Cited

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