

**THE WOMEN STRUGGLE
OF *THE STORY OF LAYLA AND MAJNUN* NOVEL
IN ENGLISH VERSION BY DR. RUDOLF GELPKE**

A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for Gaining the Bachelor
Degree in English Literature



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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this thesis is definitely my own work and I completely responsible for the content of this thesis. For other writer's opinion and findings which are included in this thesis are quoted and cited in accordance with ethical standards.

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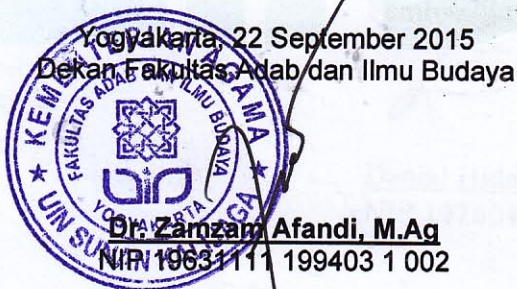
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Women's Struggle in English Version of *The Story of Layla and Majnun* Novel

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ABSTRACT

The title of this graduating paper is “Women's Struggle in English Version of *The Story of Layla and Majnun* Novel by Dr. Rudolf Gelpke”. This is descriptive qualitative research. The theory that is used in this research is feminist theory that is focused on the way the men characters threat the women character. This research aims to describe the women oppression; the way of the oppressed responds the oppression and the effect of the oppression in the oppressed trough *The Story of Layla and Majnun* novel. The results of this research are the oppression experiences by Layla and her mother mostly occur in family relation and marriage. Layla respond her father oppression in silent and she defends her thought, meanwhile Layla show her movement in respond her husband oppression. Furthermore, Layla's mother responds her oppression in silent and does not show any movement, the consequence of her silent is she is alienated by her daughter and she becomes powerless. The effect of oppression in Layla is she cannot express her feeling and thought, she does not have any chance to finish her education, she is separated from her beloved Qays, she gets psychological violence, but at last she can gain her freedom to express her feeling.

Keywords: Gender Issue, Feminism, Patriarchy, Women's Struggle, The Story of Layla and Majnun.

Women's Struggle in English Version of *The Story of Layla and Majnun* Novel

By Dr. Rudolf Gelpke

Oleh: Safrina Dyah Ayu Kartikasari

ABSTRAK

Skripsi ini berjudul “Women's Struggle in English Version of *The Story of Layla and Majnun* Novel by Dr. Rudolf Gelpke”. Ini adalah penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah teori feminis yang focus pada bagaimana karakter laik-laki memperlakukan karakter wanita. Penelitian bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan penindasan terhadap wanita, bagaimana wanita yang tertindas itu menanggapi penindasan tersebut, dan bagaimana efek dari penindasan tersebut melalui novel *The Story of Layla and Majnun*. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah penindasan yang dialami oleh Layla dan ibunya sebagian besar terjadi dalam hubungan keluarga dan pernikahan. Layla menanggapi penindasan yang dilakukan oleh ayahnya dengan berdiam dan mempertahankan pemikirannya, sedangkan Layla menunjukkan perubahan sikap saat merespon penindasan dari suaminya. Selanjutnya, Ibu dari Layla merespon penindasan yang terjadi padanya dengan berdiam diri dan tidak menunjukkan perubahan apapun, konsekuensinya dia menjadi tersingkirkan dari anaknya dan menjadi lemah. Efek dari penindasan yang terjadi pada Layla adalah dia tidak dapat mengekspresikan perasaannya dengan bebas, tidak mendapatkan kesempatan untuk menyelesaikan pendidikannya, dia dipisahkan dari Qays kekasihnya, mendapatkan kekerasan secara psikologis, tetapi pada akhirnya dia bias mendapatkan kebebasannya untuk mengekspresikan kesedihannya.

Kata Kunci: Issu Gender, Feminism, Perjuangan Wanita, Layla dan Majnun Novel

THE DEDICATION OF THIS GRADUATING PAPER

IS GIVEN TO MY BELOVED PARENTS:

Mr. BUDI HARYANA, Mrs. KARTINI

AND

MY SWEETEST LITTLE SISTER: NADA YULISA DYAH

ANGRUM

MOTTO

"Everyone has his or her own way of learning things. His way isn't the same as mine, nor mine as his. But we're both in search of our destinies, and I respect him for that"

-Paulo Coelho, The Alchemist-

Simple things become complicated when there are so many expectations. -Safrina Dyah Ayu K-

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Furthermore, the writer realizes that this paper is far from perfect due to the limited knowledge of the writer. Therefore, for the suggestion and criticism are do welcomed. Finally, the writer really hopes this paper can be useful for the readers.

Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.

Yogyakarta,

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The Story of Layla and Majnun that is adapted into a novel by Dr. Rudolf Gelpke collaborating with E. Mattin and G. Hill in 1966 from the Persian language to English. A well-known story from Middle East which is the original writer is still anonymous, because it is the legendary folklore in the Middle East. The first form of this story is on narrative poetry written in 8000 lines poetry and using Persian language by Nizami Ganjavi. He was the first person who introduced the local legend by composing it as poetry. It made him as a guide to other poets in created the love story. Some people believe that this story is based on the true story as Dr. Rudolf Gelpke, he states, “it is not certain but still possible if Majnun or Qays ever lived in the second half of seventh century A.D., somewhere in the western half of the Arabic Peninsula, about 500 years before A.D. 1188” (1966:215).

The story of Layla and Majnun tells about two young lovers, Layla and Qays. Qays is described as a handsome young man from Bani Amir tribe, the Arabian Peninsula and Layla is described as an Arabian moon that has long black hair with shining face. They were falling in love until Layla’s father prevented Layla to do not have relation with Qays because Qays become Majnun (madman).

After Layla’s father hearing about the rumor of Qays madness, Layla’s father confined his daughter in home. Every day Layla hides her sadness in front

of her father. Even, she has no power to rebel her father's decision about her marriage. After she is marrying with Ibn Salam, Layla got time to find out her way in. When Ibn Salam forces Layla to give her virginity, she defends it with her power by threatening Ibn Salam with knife. Layla also tries to escape from Ibn Salam palace and finds out the way to meet Qays.

The common goal of feminism based on the Literary Theory book by Carter is "to raise awareness of women's role in all aspect of literary production (as writers, as characters in literature, as reader, etc.) and to reveal the extent of male dominance in all of these aspects" (2006: 91). Since *The Story of Layla and Majnun* consists of women characters as the inferior and men character as the superior in the all aspect such as in the family relation, society and culture. According to the common goal of feminism above, this research also want to raise the awareness of gender issue and women role in this novel.

In this occasion, the researcher prefers *The Story of Layla and Majnun* by Nizami Ganjavi translated into a novel by Dr. Rudolf Gelpke collaborating with E. Mattin and G. Hill as the data under four considerations. First, this novel has more detail in describing the plot and the characters rather than the folklore version that only talks about the separation between Layla and Qays. Meanwhile, Nizami attaches the information about the war between Layla's tribe and Nawfal's men, the description of Majnun living in the wilderness, and the fable story (1966: 217). He is skillful in arranging words by maintaining the literature sense. To exemplify such as the poet by Qays for Layla below:

I am yours, however distant you may be!
 Your sorrow, when you grieve, brings grief to me.
 There blows no wind but wafts your sent scent to me,
 There sing no bird but calls your name to me.
 Each memory that has left its trace with me
 Lingers forever, as if part of me (1966:96).

Second, *the Story of Layla and Majnun* is one of literary works that offer more than one conflict and it is usually known as novel. A novel invites the readers to involve the creativity in imagining the action of the story and to feel the act sensation of the plot longer than a short story. Furthermore, Hawthorne states that "two basic of prose fiction is the realistic novel and the romance" (as cited in Abrams, 2009: 228). *The Story of Layla and Majnun* is the kind of romantic novel because some terms matches with the romantic novel term by Hawthorne,

Romantic novel usually deploys characters who are sharply discriminated as heroes or villains, masters or victims; its protagonist is often solitary, and relatively isolated from a social context; it tends to be set in the historical past, and the atmosphere is such as to suspend the reader's expectations that are based on everyday experience. (2009: 228).

Third, regarding to the characters and the plot explanation above, Qays or Majnun and Layla as the main character in *The Story of Layla and Majnun*, both of them are isolated from social life. Qays got the experience of discrimination because he sings poem expressing his feeling to Layla, and his society judges him as a madman. As well Layla is discriminated by her father and people around her. Based on that idea, it can be inferred that this novel does not only present the romantic story, but also deal with the relation of family, the social class, the treatments between one tribe to others, and the gender issues. Besides, the plot of

romantic novel usually informs about adventure like Qays lives in the wilderness and hides in cave. It is also similar to pursue the pleasure in nonrealistic way such as Qays can communicate with the animals. Other terms are supported by desires, hopes, dreams and terrors deeply appear in *The Story of Layla and Majnun*.

The last, this story confirms the woman's condition especially the discrimination and the oppression that occurs to the main female character, Layla. To examine this novel, the researcher concerns on Layla who is treated unfairly as the inferior although she is the daughter of a noble man, and another woman who treated unfairly in this novel. The researcher assumes that father as the male centered in the family has a reason to protect his women from the wilderness of the world. It is similar with Layla's cases because her father limits her activity and her movement. Layla's father is unconscious that her protection makes Layla feel inferior and oppressed.

Based on *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* written by Peter Glick and Susan T. Fiske, "the case of women oppression could happen in family and it is called Paternalism that literally means relating to other "in the manner of a father dealing with his children" (1996:493). It reveals that women have big risk of getting the oppression. Moreover, this condition is stimulated by male domination in environment and they do not allow woman to have more contribution than a man in society.

Arguing this issue, Islam teaches the followers to decrease this issue by the values that show God creates all humankind in equality and they will help

each other even, admittedly, Allah differs His creatures are only based on their deeds. Indeed, it is declared in Quran surah *Hujurat* verse 13.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ
لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nation and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things), (1968: 1407).

This verse indicates that all of human kind has the same right because God created human kind, men and women in the perfect shape with the most honored position. Human was also created with their intelligent, feeling, and have same right in the God eyes, so there is no superiority. God created human kind in pairs so that they can have peaceful life to love each other. The researcher assumes that this perspective can succeed decreasing the inequality unless men and women receive each other.

However, to support the analysis, the objective criticism is to conduct the intrinsic elements to seek the empowering point. Specifically, this element is limited in theme, character-characterization, setting, and plot

1.2 Research Questions

From the background study above, it is possible that the analysis deals with feminism theory. Concerning the interest issue, the main problems that will be answered are:

1. What kind of oppression that experienced by Layla? And does this oppression, generally experiences by any women in this story?
2. How Layla and the other women respond to the oppression?
3. What is the oppression effect to Layla and other women character?

1.3 Objectives of Study

The objectives of this research are:

1. to identify the kind of oppression experienced by Layla and the oppression experienced by any women character in *The Story of Layla and Majnun*,
2. to describe the way Layla and other women character responds the oppression in *The Story of Layla and Majnun*, and
3. to identify the oppression effect to Layla and other women in *The Story of Layla and Majnun*.

1.4 Significances of Study

Through this research, the researcher divides the significant of study into two terms, theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research can be one of reference for students, lecturers, or other researchers that also focus on patriarchal issues.

Practically, this research can find some alternatives to the social life in this age in solving the issue of gender. Then, people in this age can notice that men and women should support each other in their ability, responsibility, and skill to progress the community.

1.5 Literature Review

After the researcher searching several previous researches that have the same topic, the researcher concludes that some researchers have been previously analyzed *The Story of Layla and Majnun*. Here are the related literature reviews:

First, Susan Footohi writes relating to the topic on her journal entitled, *An Analysis of the Story of Layla and Majnun by Nizami Ganjavi* (Faranghyan University, 2013). In her research, she uses the extrinsic elements of this novel such as the author background, the socio-historical of this novel. Then, she combines the intrinsic elements of this novel with the terms of lingual, literary, psychological and sociological aspect that involves inside the story. She finds out three things. First, people's perspective on the story reflects on how Nizami Ganjavi saw women. Second, she states that although Layla and Majnun cannot life together but their love is the kind of perfection that unites as the unphysical fulfilled. The last, she finds that as a man Majnun possible expresses his love bravely, but Layla should be concealed her love expression.

Second, Said Mawardi writes his article entitled, *Analisis Gaya Bahasa Dalam Novel Laila Majnun Karya Nizami* (Maritim Raja Ali Haji Tanjung pinang University, 2013). His research is a qualitative and he uses descriptive method. In his research, he describes the figurative language inside *The Story of Layla and*

Majnun. He concludes that *The Story of Layla and Majnun* use 11 figurative languages which are applied in 99 times. He defines the figurative language into two categories: contradiction style and comparison language style. Then, the most dominant style used in the novel is the personification, 49 times.

Based on the description of the previous researches above, although they analyze the same object as the researcher, there are some differences. First, Footohi involves the relation between the novel and the researcher's topic even in her research, she describes how Nizami treats a woman while Mawardi concerns on the figurative languages. Second, Footohi uses the extrinsic elements such as the psychological and sociological that influences the content of this novel. However, Mawardi examines how the figurative languages play the role in the novel. As the opposite, the researcher only focuses on the character and the characterization from *The Story of Layla and Majnun* through the feminist theory limited by the objective criticism. Then, the research question are what kind of oppression in Layla Majnun story, how Layla faces the oppression from other characters, and what the oppression effect to Layla.

1.6 Theoretical Approach

As stated in the previous discussions, this research examines how Layla struggles for her freedom in *The Story of Layla and Majnun* novel by Nizami Ganjavi that is translated into English by Dr. R. Gelpke. The English version of this novel was created in 1966 but originally this novel was created by Nizami in 1188, while the feminism concept known by people in the 1890s. The concept of feminism replaced the womanism as the association for women right. The

research found the women situation in *The Story of Layla and Majnun* novel that has similarity with the concept of feminism as the concept to reveal the equality. Meanwhile, the awareness of gender issue and feminism theory is not known at that time. The aim of this research to find the feminism concept that will be appropriate for literary works that is created before the concept exists.

As cited from the *Encyclopedia Feminism*, feminism term itself comes from the Latin *femina* which means woman. Originally, *femina* means having the qualities of females. The terms of feminism began to be used in reference to the theory of sexual equality and the movement for women's rights in 1890s in the western (1986: 107).

According to David Carter, feminism theory that exists today is divided into three major stages. The first wave of feminism influences by the social and economic reforms result the Women's Rights and suffrage movements. The second wave of feminist theory is influenced by the various liberationist movements, especially in America, in 1960's. The second wave criticizes everything that shows women as inferior in everyday life and in literary works (2006: 92-93), and the third wave feminist theory comes in twentieth century where the feminists want to seek their new identity as women. Meanwhile in this research, the researcher only uses the general concept of feminism because this novel is created before the feminism concept exists.

The explanation about the cause in every stage of feminism shows that it develops rapidly in the western world until now. Every era brings different gender issues and settlement. Therefore, this research aims to discover how the awareness

of gender issue in the *The Story of Layla and Majnun* novel, a literary work made in the period before the theory of feminism appeared. The Middle Eastern cultures that exist in this novel will give different impression in the way women solve the gender issue, if it is compared in the cases of feminism which is actually growing in the western world. The culture in the Middle East that exist in this novel also influence with the way they solve the problem.

The common goals for feminism that stated by Carter are “to raise awareness of women’s role in all aspect of literary production (as writers, as characters in literature, as readers, etc.) and to reveal the extent of male dominance in all of these aspects” (2006: 91). Since *The Story of Layla and Majnun* novel talks about one of literary production where Layla as the main female character that should be struggling from the male domination. This concept has similarity with the common goal of feminism.

Besides, Abrams stated that various feminist has different ways to delivers the assumption and the concepts of what feminism are. Here, “those various feminism deals to share certain assumption and concepts that underline the diverse ways those individual critics explore the factor of sexual differences and privilege” (2009: 111). The feminist believe that there are three concerns of feminism, the basic of three concerns of this theory that has same context with this research is “the basic view is patriarchal (ruled by father) – that is male-centered and controlled, and is organize and conducted in such a way as to subordinate women to men in all cultural domain: familial, religious, political, economic, social, legal and in the artistic” (2009: 111).

The sentences above prove that feminism emerges dissatisfaction of the patriarchy in the society as the cause of women oppression. Michelle Barret also believes that women oppression is formulated by three things there are patriarchy, production and ideology (1986:10). Based on the Encyclopedia Feminism, literally patriarchy means “the rule of father, and was originally used by anthropologist to describe the social structure in which one old man (the patriarch) has absolute power over everyone else in the family (1986: 242). It is deals with the data found in *The Story of Layla and Majnun* novel.

This novel deals with the condition in which woman represented as the inferior class and man is superior in all culture domains. On the other words, the concept of patriarchy shows that father or man as the holder of all family members, the ownership of goods, and the holder of decision. The male domination not only happens in the blood relation between daughter and father but it is actually begins in the eligible marriage, when wife should obey what the rule of her husband as the man who has more power in the household.

To get the maximum conclusion, this analysis is also presented by the context description based on the novel. It helps the writer to explain the sentences which are taken from the novel and it leads to build the context. The context is an essential part to describe the whole idea from the novel.

1.7 Research Methodology

Research methodology is systematically way to solve the problem. It will describe the type of this research, the source of data, and the method of collecting the data, and the method of analyzing data.

1.7.1 Type of research

The type of this research is qualitative research. The qualitative research deals with the description of the data as the text. Kirk and Miller say that “in this approach the data belonging to the captured data (soft data), a speech language, and not the numbers” (1986: 214). Whereas the researcher uses the words in *The Story of Layla and Majnun* to elaborate the data, and the method that used in this research is the library research.

1.7.2 Data Sources

The data source of this research is taken from *The Story of Layla and Majnun* based on the sentences and the utterances of female characters that describe their activity in this novel.

1.7.3 Data collection Technique

The research uses library research as the method of collecting data. The method of library research is look like find some books, thesis, novels, articles, or online to be the reference. Specifically, Nawawi states “Library research is a research activity done by collecting the data from some sources either from library or other places” (2005:31). Based on that definition, the researcher analyzes the data using some literatures. Then, the researcher reads *The Story of Layla and Majnun*, identifies the sentences and the utterances as the representative of women oppression and the way Layla’s struggle to face it.

1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique

This research uses objective analysis that only focuses on the intrinsic elements, especially in character, characterization, and plot. Ratna explains, “An

objective analysis is an analysis which views on the intrinsic elements and throws away extrinsic elements such as historical aspect, sociological aspect, and political aspect” (2008: 73). The analyzing data steps are:

1. Reading *The Story of Layla and Majnun* novel and marking the sentences and utterances that indicate the expression of women oppression and the way to struggling for it.
2. Identifying the sentences and the utterances from Layla and others women that indicate as the expression of women oppression
3. Seeking the way Layla and others women to face the oppression
4. Analyzing the utterances that narrate the way Layla and others women character struggling from their oppression
5. Drawing conclusion.

1.8 Paper Organization

This research is divided into four chapters. The first chapter describes the general information of the research consisting of the background of study, research questions, objectives of study, significances of study, literature review, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. The second chapter describes the information about the novel of *The Story of Layla and Majnun*. The information regards to the intrinsic elements such as setting, plot, the character and characterization. The next chapter is the discussion that contains the data analysis and the last is the conclusion of the research.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

After processing the data, in this chapter the researcher wants to draw some conclusions of this research. The conclusion is drawn based on the feminism concept that applied in analyzing the male domination and the oppression in the women characters. They are Layla and her mother. Here, the researcher also gives some suggestion for the next students who are interested to analyze *The Story of Layla and Majnun* as the main data of their research.

1.1. Conclusion

Since this research applies the patriarchal concept in feminism theory to find out the kind of oppression. After several data that finds in the novel, the women oppression also experiences by another woman besides Layla, she is Layla's mother. By applying the concept of patriarchy, here the researcher finds that the most oppression happens in the family. The life of Layla and her mother is dominated by Layla's father as the leader of the tribe has similarity with the definition of patriarchy where ruler of family, tribe, or church, while the patriarchy itself is formal sociological or anthropological category for societies organized into kinship groups and governed or dominated by the elder male (2000:1493-1494).

This research, firstly aims to figure out the kind of oppression experiences by Layla. The researcher found that the cases of Layla oppression is

mostly happen in family, there are Layla as a daughter and Layla as a wife. As a daughter Layla experiences oppression since her father extremely protects her from Qays. Layla's father imprisons her in home because he wants to save Layla from her foolish deeds by loving the madman. Qays is a madman who always admires Layla by saying her name in his poem, it make Qays has to leave Layla. Then, Layla's father also rejects Qays father's proposal even he knows that his beloved daughter fall in love with Qays. He argues that he can give happy life for Layla even she does not marriage with Qays. He also forces Layla to marry with a stranger man whom she does not even know.

Based on the cases above, it is clear that Layla's life is controlled by her father. Here, Layla's respond from her father domination shows that she cannot prevent her father decision. Layla should hide her feeling and show if she is happy with her father's decision. As a daughter, Layla believes that she has to respect her father and has to obey every decision from her father. It makes Layla to be powerless and she also experiences the culture of silent when she cannot say her voice or her opinion to make her own decision. The effect of oppression from Layla's father is she separated from her beloved Qays. Since she imprison in home, she has to leave her activity in school and she cannot continue her study. Layla also experiences the changing identity, it has shown when she has to bury her sadness and her beauty only as he cover of her sadness. The last, Layla also experience the culture of silence. She thinks that her oppression is naturally happen and her father's decision is her fate.

At the first, Layla is under controlled by her father. Since Layla marry with Ibn salam, she is still the inferior because Ibn Salam reminds the superior. Everyday Layla has to hide her sadness and gives her sweetest smile in front of her husband. Layla always rejects when her husband asks her to sleep together in bed, she has to save her virginity for man whom she loves. Ibn Salam attack Layla from her back, he forces Layla to give her virginity. Since he does not get what he wants, he makes Layla imprisoned in her palace. When Layla's husband die, Layla as a wife has to obey the culture in her husband palace. She has to lament her husband, covers her face with veil and cannot meets with people in two years. Here, the researcher finds some equality. Since Ibn Salam bringing Layla in his palace, Layla's does not want to sleep in one bed with her husband because she does not love Ibn Salam. Then, she also can protect her virginity by threatening Ibn Salam with knife when the psychological violence attacks her. In one night Layla is succeed to escape from Ibn Salam palace and meet Qays. Layla realizes that she cannot be together with Qays because Layla see that Qays has been change to be the stranger in her life. Meanwhile, Layla gets her freedom when her husband dies. Her freedom here is she can express her feeling without hesitation because people believe that when Layla crying and sad, she laments her husband.

Secondly, this research aims to figure out that the male domination that is also experienced by any other woman, Layla's mother. The male domination experiences by Layla's mother can be seen from the absence of mother character. As a mother, she has never been involved in any decision that is taken by her husband, even in Layla's marriage she is not mentioned. She only accepts her

husband decision, even though she knows that her husband decision is not good for her daughter. It shows that wife is the inferior and she does not have important part in Layla's family.

Layla's mother responds the male domination only by her silence. She realizes that she has no power at all, even though she wants to help his daughter. As the effect of Layla's mother silences, she is alienated by her own daughter. Layla blames her mother that Layla's suffer is caused by her mother measurement.

1.2. Suggestion

The Stoy of Layla and Majnun is one of legendary romantic novel that not only talks about the love story, but also consists of the beautiful poem, social life, Islamic culture, and the gender issue. In this research the researcher only analyzes the gender issue. Moreover, the researcher analyzes this novel by using Feminist theory that focused on patriarchal system. The researcher believes that this research is not perfect. Therefore, in humbly the researcher open opportunities if the reader wants to give criticism and suggestions for this research.

The story of Layla and Majnun also can be the subject for another researchers because there are many part of this novel that can be analyzed. The next researcher can be analyzed the poem that written in this novel, or the relation between Islamic culture with this story and the meaning of figurative language that is used in this novel and many more.

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